THE DISSOLUTION OF A COLD-WAR ALIGNMENT: KOREAN-JAPANESE RELATIONS, 1969-1979

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the rapid deterioration in South Korean-Japanese relations during the early 1970s, a period during which the two countries experienced a series of intense diplomatic incidents that included the abduction of Kim Dae Jung, the attempted assassination of then Korean President Park Chung Hee, and a series of fabricated espionage charges. While South Korea and Japan were both under the international diplomatic umbrella of an American hegemon, the Korean and Japanese governments nevertheless sought for independent ways to navigate discrete diplomatic difficulties. This study seeks to understand how the emergence of this partial détente affected the relationship between South Korea and Japan within the context of the global Cold War.

Although Japan and South Korea (hereafter, Korea) were never directly allied with each other, the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1965 led them to often behave as if they were. In the latter half of the 1960s the triangular shape to relations between Korea, Japan and the United States was surprisingly amicable. One reason for this was the security needs precipitated by the United States' war effort in Vietnam, which led the State Department to push the governments of Korea and Japan to further develop economic as well as political ties.

This relationship began to crack in 1969 when the United States seemed to be disengaging from its Cold War obligations in East Asia. Unlike previous wisdom that found the reason for Korean-Japanese conflict in their antipathy, I argue in this thesis that the cause of this crack in their relations were political and economic in nature based on different situation that the détente brought to the each. Thereby this thesis seeks to better understand the historical context of this unique period in the diplomatic relationship between Korea, Japan and the United States.

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The greatest thanks go to my parents. They have always provided me with their best spiritual and material support, allowing me to purse studies in one of the least lucrative fields. To my parents, therefore, I dedicate this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

Key abbreviations used in text

ASPAC	Asian Pacific Council
CIA	United States Central Intelligence Agency
CINCUNC	Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea
DRP	Democratic Republican Party (Korea)
ECAFE	UN Economic Commission of Asia and Far East
FONOFF	(US) Foreign Office
GOJ	Government of Japan
HMT	Koreans' Congress for Democracy and Unification, *Han'guk minju hoebok t'ongil ch'okchin kungmin hoeŭi* (abb *Hanmint'ong*)
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
JDZ	Korea-Japan Joint Development Zone (continental shelf)
JSP	Japanese Socialist Party
KCIA	Korean Central Intelligence Agency
KPA	Korean People's Army (DPRK)
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party, *Jiyū minshū-tō* (Japan)
MAC	Military Armistice Commission
Mindan	Korean Residents' Union in Japan, *zai Nihon Daikanminkoku kyoryū mindan*
NDP	New Democratic Party, *Sinmin-dang* (Korea)
NFDY(S)	National Federation of Democratic Youths and Students, *chŏn'guk minju ch'ŏngnyŏn haksaeng ch'ong yŏnmaeng* (abb *Minch'ŏnghangnyŏn*)
NISDC	National Intelligence Service Development Committee for Clarifying the Past (aka fact-finding commission)
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China, Taiwan
ROK(G)	Republic of Korea (Government), South Korea
SDF	Japanese Self-Defence Forces
Sōren	General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, *zai Nihon Chōsenjin sōrengokai*
UNC	United Nations Command
UNCURK	UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea
Zainichi	*Zainichi Kankokujin* (Korean residents in Japan)

In notes

CIA	United States Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room
DAJ	Diplomatic Archives of Japan

DAK	Diplomatic Archives of Korea
DNSA	Digital National Security Archive, George Washington University
Fraser Report	Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, 'Investigation of Korean-American Relation', Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session (Washington DC: US Government Publishing Office, 1978)
FRUS	*Foreign Relations of the United States*
KDF	Open Archives, Korea Democracy Foundation
Kensei	Kensei-shiryōsitsu, National Diet Library, Tokyo
KTNC	Kim Taejung sŏnsaeng napch'i sakŏn chinsang kyumyŏng ŭl wihan simin ŭi moim, *Kim Taejung napch'i sakŏn ŭi chinsang* [Truth of the Kim Dae Jung abduction] (Sŏul: P'ŭrŭn namu, 1995)
NAJ	National Archives of Japan
NAK	National Archives of Korea
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration (US)
NISDC	Kukchŏngwŏn kwagŏ sakŏn chinsil kyumyŏng ŭl t'onghan palchŏn wiwŏnhoe, *Kwagŏ wa taehwa mirae ŭi sŏngch'al* [Dialogue with the Past, Reflection on the Future], 6 vols (Sŏul: Kukkachŏngbowŏn, 2007)
PAK	Presidential Archives of Korea
Sourcebook	*Kim Taejung napch'i sakkŏn kwallyŏn charyojip* [Sourcebook regarding the Kim Dae Jung abduction], 4 vols (P'aju: Hanguk haksul chŏngbo, 2010),

NOTE FOR NAMES

Korean names in this thesis are Romanised following the McCune-Reischauer system, Japanese names following the modified Hepburn system and Chinese names Hanyu Pinyin. Exceptions are made when a name appears in a primary source or when a name is widely known otherwise, such as Park Chung Hee instead of Pak Chŏnghŭi and Tokyo instead of Tōkyō. When needed for clarification, a different Romanisation appears in round brackets, eg Syngman Rhee (Yi Sŭngman)

Asian names follow the traditional format, with family names first and given names last. The names of authors of English works cited here appear in the way the authors prefer, however. Names of Korean authors of Japanese works or of Korean residents in Japan follow the McCune-Reischauer Romanisation, not Hepburn, and vice versa. This approach helps readers identify the names more easily.

Names of institutions are presented using their official translation if available. Many Korean and Japanese institutions do not anglicise their names and tend to follow American spelling conventions.

In terms of practicality the dominant exact what they can and the weak concede what they must.

Peloponnesian War

Yusin is to establish and practice the great Korean thought and philosophy that we try to pioneer our own destiny with our own strength.

Park Chung Hee

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

> I believe that [the Korea-Japan normalisation] will pave the way for our two countries' common prosperity and that under current international circumstances it will greatly contribute to security and peace of the Far East.[1]
>
> Park Chung Hee to Kishi Nobusuke, 1963

On 15 August 1974 Koreans were commemorating the twenty-ninth anniversary of liberation from Japanese colonialism. The official ceremony was being held at the National Theatre in Seoul. When the president of South Korea, Park Chung Hee, was delivering speech, a man in the audience stood up, walked down the aisle and started firing his pistol at the platform. The theatre turned into mayhem as the shooter and president's guards exchanged fire. The guards quickly suppressed the shooter while the president successfully hid behind the bulletproof rostrum. Unfortunately, however, one of the bullets fired hit the first lady on the platform, and she died that evening.

When he set off to the National Theatre, the shooter might have never imagined the results of his actions. He flew from Japan and passed through immigration with a Japanese passport and with a pistol that he had stolen from the Japanese police about a month ago. A close investigation disclosed the fact that he was a Korean national, born and raised in Japan. Nonetheless, an agitated Korean crowd stampeded to the Japanese embassy in Seoul, and anti-Japanese protests took place all over the country. Rumours spread that Korea would sever its diplomatic relations with Japan and that the president would be willing to order his air force to bomb Tokyo. Japan's national broadcaster NHK reported its suspicion that Koreans might have fabricated the assassination attempt only to infuriate the crowd even more. The Japanese government seemed to hold no legal responsibility for the incident, but the Korean government pushed the Japanese to make an apology for something with which the Japanese had little to do. South Korean-Japanese relations were reaching the worst point since the diplomatic normalisation in 1965.

The South Korea-Japan normalisation aimed at common prosperity and security of the two countries. As shown in the opening quote, President Park Chung Hee clarified such a purpose of the treaty in his letter to Kishi Nobuske who, as a

[1] Park Chung Hee, Letter to Kishi Nobusuke, 1 August 1963, Kishi Nobusuke kankei bunsho, 7-2, Kensei-shiryōsitsu, National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan.

former prime minister of Japan, was a leading pro-Korean politician. Regardless of whether Park was motivated by his own interests in the normalisation or pushed by the United States, he was convinced that South Korea (hereafter, 'Korea') could benefit from maintaining good relations with Japan. Indeed, it did. With the capital flow from Japan, Korea boosted its own economic development. Japan provided Korea with free grants and low-interest loans as well as industrial technologies.[2] Moreover Park embarked on his third five-year economic development plan in 1972, fostering a heavy chemical industry whose machinery and technology were dependent mostly on Japan.[3] Although the free grant and loan package would terminate in December 1975 and Korea experienced a chronic deficit from its trade with Japan, the normalisation seemed to be paving the way for prosperity to some extent. Korea nevertheless seemed determined to ruin its relations with Japan. The rosy prospect of the normalised Korean-Japanese relationship lasted less than a decade.

As a diplomatic history, this study examines how the optimistic Korea-Japan relations ended in the early 1970s and how the two countries resolved the conflict toward the latter half of the decade. This study focuses on the decision-making processes regarding Korea-Japan relations by the ruling elites, especially those within Korea's Park Chung Hee government. To that end, it explores transitions in both domestic and international political spheres that influenced the decision-making processes. By doing so, it attempts to better understand how the nature of Korea-Japan relations had changed in the course of the 1970s.

Yet this study does not attempt to find a pattern in Korea-Japan relations or to identify a single ultimate cause of the series of conflicts through which the two countries have gone almost every decade since the end of World War II. Instead, the following chapters unfold a story of two countries faced with the sudden absence of the Cold War, the period so-called détente, that forced the two neighbours to navigate discrete difficulties in their own ways, sometimes creating conflicts and sometimes seeking cooperation with each other.

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[2] As the result of the normalisation treaty, Japan provided Korea with a package that consisted of $300 million grant, $200 million low-interest long-term government loan and $300 million in private credits for the period of ten years or less. The estimates for the present value of the package range from $3.4 billion to over $20 billion. See, Mark E. Manyin, 'North Korea-Japan relations: the normalization talks and the compensation/reparation issue', *CRS Report* (June, 2001): pp.5-6.

[3] Martin Hart-Landsberg, *Korea: Division, Reunification, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Monthly Review, 1998), p.182, 187.

Making Sense of Korean-Japanese Relations

Antagonism and Korea-Japan conflict

Many have conveniently pointed at strong national antagonism between Korean and Japanese peoples as the obvious obstacle to their harmonious relationship. Koreans have been unsatisfied with Japan's insincere apologies or even lack thereof, for its colonial rule and wartime atrocities. Japanese have deemed the Koreans ungrateful and guilty of discrediting their country.[4] The dissatisfaction easily erupted in mass demonstrations, like the one the furious Korean crowd demonstrated on the death of their first lady, which hindered constructive state-level diplomacy.[5]

The influence of this antagonism looked indisputable in negotiations for the normalisation treaty between the two that took fourteen years. Having seen this protracted process, the US ambassador to Japan at the time, Edwin O. Reischauer, firmly advised the Japanese government to make an apology to assuage Koreans' feelings.[6] Among those feelings was a fear that Japan might reappear as a political and economic power in the region. One of the earliest authors on post-war Korean-Japanese relations, James Morley points out that Koreans' fear of Japanese economic aggression obstructed flows of capital and goods that would mutually benefit the both countries which otherwise would have become 'natural allies' – a classic realist prospect.[7] Koreans understood that in the mid-1960s Japan had achieved economic success and was making itself a leader in Asia.[8] Koreans retained their suspicion even after the normalisation that the normalised relationship with Japan might place Korea under Japan's political and economic domination.[9]

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[4] Kevin J. Cooney and Alex Scarborough, 'Japan and South Korea: Can these two nations work together?', *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 35, no.3 (2008): p.174; Taku Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image of South Korea: Identity in Foreign Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.113.

[5] Jane W. Yamazaki, *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study* (London: Routledge, 2006), p.27.

[6] Alexis Dudden, *Troubled Apologies among Japan, Korea, and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press. 2008), pp.43-4.

[7] James W. Morley, *Japan and Korea: America's Allies in the Pacific* (New York: Walker & Co., 1965), pp.61-3.

[8] J. Mark Mobius, 'The Japan-Korea normalization process and Korean anti-Americanism', *Asian Survey* 6, no.4 (1966): p.242.

[9] Shigeru Oda, 'The normalization of relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea', *The American Journal of International Law* 61, no.1 (1967): p.35.

The fear and mass demonstrations, however, could not stop the government from signing the treaty. The most notable impetus came from a new political leadership in Korea. The first Korean president, Syngman Rhee (Yi Sŭngman) was intransigent about the normalisation negotiation. Though he would unhesitatingly ally himself with colonial collaborators for domestic politics, Rhee, as a former liberation activist, remained anti-Japanese. Thus he would never give up the 'Rhee line', for instance, the sea boundary the Korean government unilaterally proclaimed on the sea between Korea and Japan in an effort to protect its fishing industry. The Rhee government indiscriminately seized Japanese fishing boats that crossed the line. Such a policy on the Korean side was one factor that protracted the normalisation negotiation.[10] The new democratic government after the 1960 revolution still remained antagonistic to Japan. But it did not seize a single Japanese boat anymore, which marked a symbolic change in attitude to the negotiation.[11] The new government was too short-lived to accomplish significant progress in relations with Japan. Park Chung Hee, who toppled the democratic government, was by no means anti-Japanese. Unlike his predecessors, Park had never participated in the liberation movement during the colonial days. And it was under his first presidency that Korea eventually signed the treaty in spite of fierce mass demonstrations against it.[12]

Realist approaches

There have been attempts to structuralise Korean-Japanese relations by examining more objective and impersonal factors such as politics and economy since even before the normalisation. As early as 1962, political scientist Donald Hellmann has indicated that what impeded the normalisation lay not only in 'the recent history of Japan-Korea contacts' and Syngman Rhee's hostile policy that exacerbated 'distrust and antipathy' between the two countries. More fundamental barriers dwelled in the nature of post-independence Japanese foreign policy.[13] Factional

[10] Kazuhiko Togo, *Japan's Foreign Policy, 1945-2003: The Quest for a Proactive Policy* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p.158.

[11] Chŏn Chaeho, 'Han'guk minjok chuŭi wa pan-Il' [Korean nationalism and anti-Japan]', *Chŏngch'i pip'yŏng* 9 (2002): p.135.

[12] For a comparison between Park Chung Hee and Syngman Rhee, see Charles J. Fuccello, 'South Korean-Japanese relations in the Cold War: a journey to normalization' (PhD dissertation, New School, 1977), pp.93-4, and chapter 3 in general, although Fucello's comparison – the psychoanalysis approach – appears to be arbitrary and fails to explain Park's conflict with Japan in the 1970s.

[13] Donald C. Hellmann, 'Basic problems of Japanese-South Korean relations', *Asian Survey* 2, no.3 (1962): p.19.

struggles within the conservative party as well as violent mass demonstrations by the socialists made it difficult to make major political decisions. Further, he has insisted, the US military presence in East Asia ironically discouraged rapport between Korea and Japan because the security guarantee saved them the necessity for security cooperation.[14]

Despite barriers, a better relationship between Korea and Japan had recognisable economic merit. Almost every researcher on this topic agrees that economic necessity was one of the pivotal factors that brought the two countries closer despite the nationalist sentiment. On one hand, experiencing retrenchment in economy immediately before the normalisation, Japanese industrial leaders viewed Korea could offer a partial remedy for the Japanese economy. On the other hand, it was critical for Korea to import foreign capital to continue its economic development as American aid was decreasing.[15] Despite the concern that the Japanese might encroach the Korean economy, the settlement with Japan to initiate a new relationship promised major resources for economic development. The economic development was especially important for Park Chung Hee and his military leadership since Park considered it a source of the legitimacy for his regime.[16]

The group of early research on post-war Korean-Japanese relations has been mostly concerned with issues regarding the normalisation. The researchers up to 1980 have usually examined its necessity, its delayed conclusion or the sudden development of negotiations under the Park regime. They have relied on limited sources such as public remarks of key politicians or conspicuous mass demonstrations. Naturally they have tended to conclude that national antagonism had barred the economically beneficial normalised relationship. Such a tendency would not easily disappear in later research. But later researchers would find Korean-Japanese relations oscillating between conflict and cooperation, or at least absence of conflict, and concern themselves in more generalised explanation of this peculiar diplomatic behaviour of the two countries.

Chong-Sik Lee, for example, argues anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea and economic necessity alternated to constitute the nature of Korea-Japanese relations that

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[14] Ibid, p.20. It takes more than two decades for this particular viewpoint to develop into an exquisite theory by Victor Cha as discussed later.

[15] Fucello, 'South Korean-Japanese relations', p.123, 154.

[16] Hanh Bae-ho, 'Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s', *Asian Survey* 20, no.11 (1980): p.1088.

fluctuated between conflict and cooperation. The two countries emotionally clashed under the Rhee regime, he contends, whereas under the Park regime economic necessity overcame public antagonism, leading Korea to the eventual normalisation. The antagonism would reappear in the early 1970s, hindering cooperation of the two countries once again, and it was the economic necessity that prevented a total rupture between the two. By 1966 Japan became Korea's biggest trade partner, surpassing the United States. Korea and Japan were already economic symbionts. While the economic necessity loosely glued the two countries together, it was the communist victory in Indochina that suddenly ended the conflict.[17] This point reminds us of the nature of post-war Korean-Japanese relationship which was a Cold-War political alignment as well as an economic community. Therefore international relations scholars have come to pay attention to the elephant in the room: the United States. That is, the relationship between the two countries was not so much a bilateral as fundamentally trilateral relationship.

Neo-realist political scientist Victor Cha theorises this trilateral relationship which he names 'quasi alliances'. Cha examines how fear of entrapment and abandonment functioned as the motive of Korean-Japanese relations. The quasi alliance model accounts for behaviours of two countries sharing common threats and a protector.[18] Korea and Japan have never formed a de jure alliance, but each of them has allied itself commonly with the United States and sometimes has regarded each other as a de facto ally, hence 'quasi' alliance. The model attaches importance to the common superpower, the United States, because both Korea and Japan have perceived external threats through the prism of the US commitment to their security. If Korea and Japan equally feared a lack of commitment to their security from the United States, Cha argues, they tended to cooperate; when that fear was less prevalent, friction was likely due to the imbalance of abandonment and entrapment concerns between the two countries.

Thus, according to Cha, Korea and Japan showed cooperative gestures from 1969 to 1971 under the Nixon doctrine. During this period, potentially contentious issues did not develop into a diplomatic conflict. With the Sino-American

[17] Chong-Sik Lee, *Japan and Korea: the Political Dimension* (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1985), pp.85-94. The economic ties between the two countries would develop into embers of conflict in the 1980s as dissatisfaction with the symbiotic economy gradually piled up among both Koreans and Japanese. See, p.139.

[18] Victor D. Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism: The United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p.36.

rapprochement, however, Japan perceived abandonment less than did Korea as Japan had desired to improve relations with China whereas Korea's fear of abandonment continued due both to the North Korean threat and to the withdrawal of the American ground troops from the peninsula. This was the period during which the Korean authorities abducted a prominent opposition politician Kim Dae Jung from Tokyo and the attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee took place, both entailing serious diplomatic conflicts. Cha points out for example that the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) had abducted a Korean citizen from Japan in 1969, before the Kim Dae Jung incident, and that then the Japanese government had not protested in the way it did at the time of Kim's abduction.[19] The two countries would return to cooperation again during the Carter presidency since they equally began to sense abandonment from the United States.[20]

These studies deny the inapplicability of international relations theories to East Asia for its different histories and cultures from those of Europe. They are sceptical of the role of national antagonism in Korean-Japanese relations. Chong-Sik Lee insists, if the antagonism had determined the international relations alone, Korea and Japan would have found their relations shattered in the early 1970s.[21] In a similar fashion, Cha states, 'feelings of enmity cannot account for significant variation in longer-term Japan-Korea foreign-policy outcomes'.[22] By doing so, they declare a departure from their predecessors who put emphasis dominantly on the role of emotion.

However these authors still recognise that the major cause of Korean-Japanese conflicts resided in the antagonism. In Cha's theory, the antagonism functions as a negative bias that made compromise in negotiations difficult and that eventually precluded rational interaction between Korea and Japan.[23] Their effort to minimise the

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[19] Ibid, pp.88-9.

[20] Victor Cha's effort to explain Korean-Japanese relations in the neo-realist theoretical framework attends a birth of other political scientific studies that supplement overlooked parts in his theory. See, for example, Jihwan Hwang, 'Rethinking the East Asian balance of power: Historical antagonism, internal balancing, and the Korean-Japanese security relationship', *World Affairs* 166, no.2 (2003): 95-108; Tae-Ryong Yoon, 'Fragile cooperation: Net threat theory and Japan-Korea-U.S. relations' (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2006); and Tae-Ryong Yoon, 'Historical animosity is what states make of it: The role of morality and realism in Korea-Japan relations', *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 9, no.1 (2011): 1-37.

[21] Lee, *Japan and Korea*, p.85.

[22] Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, p.35.

[23] Victor D. Cha, 'Bridging the gap: the strategic context of the 1965 Korea-Japan normalization treaty', *Korean Studies* 20 (1996): pp.126-7

influence of antagonism in Korea-Japan relations stops here. They posit the national antagonism was a norm between the two countries, conflict being their normal state.[24] But it is doubtful that the national antagonism was the fundamental source of the conflict. Not every nation with colonial experience has a nationwide antagonism against people of the colonising country, nor has every colonised country conflicted with its former coloniser.[25] This fact entails questions as to why the strong national antagonism was incarnated particularly in between Korea and Japan among other former colonies and colonisers and, more profoundly, whether the antagonism indeed caused the diplomatic conflicts between the two.

Return to antagonism: Constructivist approaches

In reaction to the neo-realist interpretation that objective and external factors determined Korean-Japanese relations, other political scientists look into subjective, internal and peculiar causes of conflicts and cooperation between the two countries. This trend, mostly from the constructivist tradition of international relations, postulates that the public has a meaningful influence on international relations. Supporters of this trend are therefore inclined to revisit factors like the national antagonism, which is most obvious from studies on identity.

According to the constructivist point of view, members of society identify themselves by their commonality that differs from others', and once established, identity prescribes the character and contents of diplomatic policies.[26] Applying it to Korea and Japan, Nam Kijŏng contends that the Cold-War structure formed discrete national identities in the two countries, the difference in which caused diplomatic conflicts. On the one side, as a 'battle-field state', Korea identified its national identity with anti-communism. On the other side, as a 'military-base state', Japan developed pacifism as its identity. The conflicting identities created different inter-subjective Cold-War realities for each country. As each country pursued different objects in diplomacy, it was difficult for Korea and Japan to ameliorate their relations. Studies on identity suggest that the national antagonism between Korea and Japan did not result merely from the colonial history. The public in each formed negative

[24] See for example Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, p.3.

[25] Chŏn Chaeho, 'Han'guk minjok chuŭi', p.129.

[26] Nam Kijŏng, 'Naengjŏn ideollogi ŭi kujohwa wa naesyŏnŏl aident'it'I hyŏngsŏng ŭi sanggwan kwan'gye: Han-Il pigyo [Correlation between structuration of cold-war ideology and formation of national identity: Korea-Japan comparison]', *Han'guk munhwa* 41 (2008): p.226.

images of each other from exchanges between governmental and business communities of the two countries as well as subnational entities over generations.[27] Thus identity discourse can answer to the question as to why Korea and Japan have experienced more conflicts than other former colonies and colonisers.

But this discourse entails drawbacks. First it is not only impossible but arbitrary to collectively characterise peoples in a few categories. For instance, the description of Korea as Cold-War minded and Japan as peace-seeking is based on partial social institutions or remarks of a few politicians and intellectuals. Second, the process in which national identity affects diplomacy remains elusive because policymakers are under the influence not only of their culture, education or ideology but also of considerations on political decisions, national interest and the like. This process looks more subtle especially when considering that Korea lay under the authoritarian or dictatorial regimes, in which the nation's policy hardly reflected public opinion.

One can circumvent these drawbacks by quantifying the ambiguous national identities as Glosserman and Snyder rely upon survey data. They state, 'Because South Korea and Japan are mature democracies, public opinion directly influences the parameters of foreign policy making'.[28] But influence of national identity on diplomacy seems to be a recent phenomenon. It was only after 1990 that democracy of Korea and Japan ripened enough. So their research treats only post-Cold-War period. Although the public of Korea and Japan increasingly gained their voice in their foreign policies, Glosserman and Snyder make it clear, 'the rise of "inter-mestic" issues and their influence on alliance management started in the mid-1990s'.[29]

This is not to say that public opinion did not matter before the 1990s. For example, the Korean government collected a large amount of Japanese media publications, which demonstrates that the government was sensitive to and cautious of the Japanese public reaction.[30] Also global civil movements emerged in the 1970s,

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[27] Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image*, p.176.

[28] Brad Glosserman and Scott A. Snyder, *The Japan-South Korea Identity Clash: East Asian Security and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p.5.

[29] Ibid, p.3.

[30] Kim Yŏngmi, 'Oegyo munsŏ rŭl t'onghaesŏ pon Kim Taejung napch'i sakŏn kwa Han-Il yŏndae [The abduction of Kim Dae Jung and the Korean-Japanese alignment viewed through diplomatic documents]', *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndaesa hakhoe* 58 (2011): p.216.

starting to exert their influence on governments.[31] Nevertheless the role of civil societies in international relations remained limited. Neither the Korean nor the Japanese public had agreed on the terms of the normalisation, and yet the two governments signed the treaty in the end. No matter what emotion or identity the public had, it had little influence on foreign policies of its government at the time. In other words, as much as it was a rational decision of a few policymakers to cooperate with each other government, to come into conflict was a choice of the few too.

Realpolitik revisited

Recently, historians have paid more attention to the political background of Korea-Japan relations with relatively greater access to government sources. Politics undoubtedly determine diplomatic behaviour. That is to say conflict or cooperation results from political needs of the ruling elites. Victor Cha criticises this approach of interpretation because situation-specific arguments hamper a generalised understanding of the dynamics of the Korean-Japanese relationship.[32] The ruling elites do make political choices in foreign relations for the sake of their own interests, regardless of whether the interests serve individuals, parties, regions or even countries. This long list of purposes creates 'messiness', in Cha's words, that offends the parsimony of political science models.[33] This complexity, however, sheds light on the simple fact that causes of conflicts or cooperation between Korea and Japan might lie in political choices at the time in lieu of certain peculiarities unique to the two countries such as the strong national antagonism.

For example, Syngman Rhee's anti-Japanese attitude resulted neither from his pre-presidential career as a liberation activist nor from his intransigent personality. Rather, according to Sŏ Chungsŏk, Rhee's anti-Japanese policy stemmed from his anti-communist policy; few policies of the first Korean president were in fact nationalist. Rhee's government was so anti-communist that its foreign minister would demonstrate hostility even to the United Kingdom as British merchant ships sought

[31] For example, Gavan McCormack, who has partaken in anti-Korean government movement in London in the mid-1970s, defines the linkage among civil societies around the world as the 'genesis and early stages of global civil society'. 'The Park Chung Hee era and the genesis of trans-border civil society in East Asia', in *Reassessing the Park Chung Hee Era, 1961-1979*, ed. Hyung-a Kim and Clark W. Sorensen (London: University of Washington Press, 2011), p.188.

[32] Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, pp.17-8.

[33] For concise discussions on realist pursuit of parsimony, see Tamaki, *Deconstructing Japan's Image*, p.17; John Swenson-Wright, *Unequal Allies?: United States Security and Alliance Policy toward Japan, 1945-1960* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 14-5.

for access to North Korea in 1957. Sŏ Chungsŏk insists that the anti-Japanese movement under Rhee became vehement only after Japan decided to repatriate some Korean residents in Japan to North Korea. Emphasis lay on the latter. Therefore, Sŏ concludes, anti-Japanese movement apart from anti-communism was meaningless to Rhee.[34]

Within Korea, anti-Japanese discourse functioned as a political tool for the ruling elites. The strong support for anti-Japanese discourse from the below enabled authoritarian regimes to demonstrate their nationalist legitimacy or to escape from political crises.[35] This is not to say that the anti-Japanese sentiment among the Korean public thus in a way contributed to creating Korea's adversarial Japan policy. True, the public, full of nationalist emotion, was prone to political manoeuvre in search for electoral support, and especially hatred had power to unite people.[36] But it was not until politics triggered the nationalist sentiment, antagonism, that the public erupted into fury. In other words, the political decision to commence a conflict resulted not from but in the strong national antagonism to Japan in Korea.

Park Chung Hee's conflict with Japan exemplified scapegoating Japan in order to escape from political crises. Nakagawa Nobou indicates that Park Chung Hee had shown a hostile attitude to Japan after the assassination attempt on him in 1974 as a means to prolong the lifespan of his regime. After the abduction of Kim Dae Jung in 1973, the Park regime was in crisis, confronted by criticism from within and without the country. The Korean public started a campaign to demand revision of the constitution that enabled Park's dictatorship. The president countered such a movement by proclaiming emergency decrees, which in turn caused a reduction of American military assistance and rising Americans' interest in human rights issues in

[34] Sŏ Chungsŏk, 'Yi Sŭngman taet'ongnyŏng ŭi pan-Il undong kwa Han'guk minjok chuŭi [Anti-Japanese movement of Syngman Rhee and Korean nationalism]', *Inmun kwahak* 30 (2000): 293-320. Although he has made an similar argument in an earlier article, Sŏ has also emphasised the strong anti-Japanese sentiment while admitting lack of primary source. See Sŏ Chungsŏk, 'Pak chŏnggwŏn ŭi tae-Il chase wa p'ahaengjŏk Han-Il kwan'gye [Park Chung Hee regime's attitude to Japan and crippled Korean-Japanese relations]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 30 (1995): p.39, 41.

[35] Chŏn Chaeho, 'Han'guk minjok chuŭi', p.146.

[36] In his discussion on nationalism, Eric Hobsbawm notes, '[nationalism's] very vagueness and lack of programmatic content gives it a potentially universal support within its own community'. Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.169. For political use of hatred, see Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951; repr. 2010), pp.91-2.

Korea. Under these circumstances, Nakagawa argues, Park found a political breakthrough in turning people's attention to the Korea-Japan conflict.[37]

The political practice of scapegoating Japan established a pattern of abnormal diplomacy between the two countries. Those who criticise this abnormality emphasise remarkably inert professional diplomats of both countries and formal diplomatic channels through respective foreign offices during the moments of conflict. Since the normalisation, Yi Wanbŏm asserts, the two governments gained no public consensus in their diplomatic relations. The two countries settled abnormal incidents like the abduction of Kim Dae Jung through abnormal measures, meaning exchanges of special envoys who were politicians or non-governmental figures, not diplomats.[38] One can also point to the suspicious process to settle diplomatic problems that the abduction of Kim Dae Jung entailed. In his book on the abduction, journalist Furuno Yoshimasa supposes that the Korean president conspired with the Japanese prime minister to hand over four hundred million yen of unlawful political funds for covering up the problems.[39] Diplomatic discourtesy was just another abnormality. For example, a few days before Park Chung Hee staged the coup d'état in 1972, he announced that he would visit Japan to meet *Tenno* for the first time as president. He did not make the visit since this announcement was to camouflage his plan for the coup. But the Japanese government made no complaint about the discourtesy. Such behaviour of both governments gave Park confidence, which eventually led him to venture another abnormality like the abduction of Kim Dae Jung.[40]

In the meantime, this abnormal diplomacy sometimes accompanied positive outcomes. Choe Hŭisik assesses the unofficial negotiations behind the curtain as an inevitable measure to bypass official inter-governmental channels, which were prone to public exposure. This way the ruling elites of Korea and Japan could practically draw bilateral agreements, thereby managing conflicts below the breakdown point in

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[37] Nakagawa Nobuo, *Nikkan mondai no rekishi to kōzō* [History and Structure of Japanese-Korean Problems] (Tōkyō: Miraisha, 1975), pp. 200-11.

[38] Yi Wanbŏm, 'Kim Taejung napch'i sakkŏn kwa Pak Chŏnghŭi chŏgyŏk sakkŏn [The Kim Dae Jung abduction and the attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 80 (2007): p.345.

[39] Furuno Yoshimasa, *Kimu Dejun jiken no seiji ketchaku: Shuken hōkishita Nihon seifu* [Political Conclusion of the Kim Dae Jung incident] (Nagano: Tōhō shuppansha, 2006). Also see his *Kimu Dejun jiken saigo no suku-pu* [Last scoop of the Kim Dae Jung incident] (Nagano: Tōhō shuppansha, 2010).

[40] Han Honggu, *Yusin: Ojik han saram ŭl wihan sidae* [*Yusin*: an era only for one] (Sŏul: Han'gyŏre, 2014), p.41.

the end. Despite recurring conflicts, Korea and Japan have managed to continue the normalised relationship without an armed clash or severance of the diplomatic relationship.[41]

Due to the fact that the Korean-Japanese conflicts have never been serious, some suspect that the Korean ruling elites after Syngman Rhee were in fact not anti-Japanese. This view arises mostly from a part of Korean academics. Sŏ Chungsŏk, for instance, states that the governments after 1961 were all pro-US and pro-Japanese so that continuous anti-Japanese movement was impossible.[42] Likewise Chŏn Chaeho points out the authoritarian governments after the normalisation implemented policies that stressed a cooperative relationship with Japan. The authoritarian governments compensated for their lack of legitimacy with economic development, for which Japanese support was essential.[43] Some others simply omit discussions after the normalisation and jump into the late 1980s.[44] They tend to stigmatise Park Chung Hee as pro-Japanese. They would couple Park's pro-Japanese career during the colonial period with conclusion of the normalisation treaty that Park pushed ahead against the people's will. In spite of fragmentary conflicts with Japan, so they insist, Korean-Japanese relations remained amicable in general.

These arguments are obviously misleading. An armed clash or diplomatic severance was impossible because the two countries had already formed a symbiotic politico-economic relationship as discussed before. The risk and cost of losing each other were so great that even after Korea became democratised in 1989, the two countries would still experience recurrent conflicts that never led to a total rupture of the relationship. Conflicts between Korea and Japan since the normalisation have always been merely verbal.

The view that the Korean authoritarian governments kept amiable relations with Japan seems to stem from the oversimplified image of Park Chung Hee as a traitor to the nation. Those who opposed his rule devised a dichotomous structure of the pro-Japanese authoritarian regime versus the nationalist democratisation

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[41] Choe Hŭisik, *Chŏnhu Han-Il kwan'gye 70-nyŏn: Uri nŭn ŏttŏke kaltŭng ŭl kŭkpok haewanna* [70 Years of Post-War Korean-Japanese Relations] (Sŏul: Sŏnin, 2016), p.22

[42] Sŏ Chungsŏk, 'Yi Sŭngman', 295.

[43] Chŏn Chaeho, 'Han'guk ŭi pan-Il minjok chuŭi yŏn'gu: Tamnon ŭi pyŏnhwa wa t'ŭkching' [On Korea's anti-Japanese nationalism], *Han'guk kwa kukchechŏngch'i* 35, no.2 (2019): p.127.

[44] For example, Nam Kijŏng, 'Naengjŏn'; Pak Yŏngjun, 'Han'guk oegyo wa Han-Il anbo kwan'gye ŭi pyŏnyong [Korean diplomacy and evolution of Korean-Japanese security relationship]', *Ilbon pip'yŏng* 12 (2015): 134-167.

movement. An earlier paragon of this structure appears in an essay published in a popular Korean progressive literature journal, *Silch'ŏn munhak* (practical literature) in 1984. Dwelling on Korean-Japanese relations during Park's reign, the author condemns Japanese neo-imperialist cultural and economic infiltration into Korea with an enhanced cosy relationship between the ruling elites of the two countries. He insists that the Korean ruling elites were subordinated to the Japanese and so was the Korean economy. He finishes the essay with the remark, 'non-government figures, clergy, intellectuals, students and numerous peasants and workers are vigorously developing movements to stop reinvasion of Japan'.[45] This radical view reflected a sense of anxiety about growing Japanese influence in the society at large and of abomination for Park Chung Hee for letting it happen. The view was not so much a strict observation as a political statement.

Indeed many Koreans and Japanese have disliked each other. This fact, nevertheless, does not necessarily mean that emotion significantly affected the international relations. In order to show national antagonism, studies rely on poll results.[46] But they tend to take it for granted that such popular sentiments were linked to states' foreign policies, overlooking the quite common gap between the popular will and actual policy. Sometimes those poll results demonstrate that Koreans wanted a closer relationship with Japan in spite of the antagonism. On the eves of the normalisation, for instance, those Koreans who favoured the treaty outnumbered those who opposed.[47] In fact the primary reason for opposition to the treaty lay not in anti-Japanese sentiment but in the terms of the treaty which seemed disadvantageous to the Korean side.[48]

It is essential to distinguish polemics and emotional outbursts. Victor Cha indicates, 'if the Japanese do not agree with Korean demands, there arise accusations that Japan lacks moral repentance for past aggressions' and 'on the Japanese side,

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[45] Kim Chongch'ŏl, '80-nyŏndae Han-Il kwan'gye ŭi hyŏnhwang kwa chŏnmang: "Han-Il saesidae ŭi kaemak kwa kwallyŏn hayŏ [Present situation and prospect of Korean-Japanese relations in the 1980s]', *Silch'ŏn munhak* (October, 1984): p.211.

[46] See for example, Lee, *Japan and Korea*, p.2; Takazaki Shūji, *Hannichi kanjyō: Kankoku · Chōsenjin to Nihonjin* [Anti-Japanese sentiment: Koreans and Japanese] (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 1993), pp.3-4. Poll results cited in these works show that Koreans and Japanese have almost always been one of the least-liked peoples by each other.

[47] Lee, *Japan and Korea*, p.55.

[48] Pak T'aegyun, 'Han-Il hoedam sigi ch'ŏnggukkwŏn munje ŭi kiwŏn kwa Miguk ŭi yŏkhwal [The origins of the demand for war reparations and US' role during the Korean-Japan treaty negotiation]', *Hanguksa yŏn'gu* 131 (2005): p.37 n.5.

there is disdain over Korean attempts to use the colonial legacy to extort concessions'.[49] The Japanese might have disdained such behaviour from Korea, but the colonial legacy Korea made use of was a fine political leverage for the Koreans, not necessarily an emotional outburst.[50] That is, the past problems or territorial issues between the two countries did not prevent rational interactions at negotiation tables, but rather those issues themselves were rational actions. Circumstances were more complicated than they seemed on surface. And, in order to accurately understand what happened, one needs to explore the political labyrinth that political scientists often consider superfluous due to its intricacy.

The *Yusin* Period

This study focuses on Korea-Japan relations during the so-called *Yusin* period, or the Fourth Republic of Korea (1972-1979). As the latter half of the rule of President Park Chung Hee, this period saw Park's rule conspicuously becoming dictatorial, with violence and with lack of election and separation of powers. As will be discussed in chapter 2, this abnormal form of government directly and indirectly affected Korea's relations with other countries, especially with the United States and Japan.

However, Korea's international relations during the *Yusin* period have somewhat fallen outside the academic spotlight. Above all, the 1970s have been more or less overlooked in the study of modern Korean history. Historian Pak T'aegyun states the 1970s are overshadowed by the more celebrated 1960s. He points out that much of the research is concentrated on why and when the *Yusin* regime was founded. He also indicates that post-1972 history tends to be rather conveniently explained within the framework of the unique characteristics of *Yusin*.[51] Nonetheless, even the unique characteristics of *Yusin* have received little attention from the field of Korean diplomatic history and far less attention from the specific subject of Korea-Japan relations.

Characteristics of Yusin

[49] Cha, 'Bridging the gap', p.126.

[50] For how the Korean government encouraged anti-normalisation movement to acquire more bargaining power, see Yoon, 'Fragile cooperation', p.304.

[51] Pak T'aegyun, 'Wau ap'atŭ, Kyŏngbu kosoktoro, kŭrigo chu-Han Mi-gun kamch'uk [Wau apartment, Seoul-Busan highway and downsizing American forces in Korea]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 93 (2010): p.166.

Studies on the *Yusin* regime generally view its characteristics from two opposing perspectives: international and domestic. The former group of studies understands *Yusin* as a form of authoritarian government that emerged simultaneously with similar regimes in East Asia and Southeast Asia. The Nixon doctrine had a widespread impact across East Asia, and the rise of authoritarian regimes can be seen as a general response to the decline of American commitment, as observed in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Taiwan.[52]

Others interpret *Yusin* within the framework of bureaucratic-authoritarianism, a concept developed by Guillermo O'Donnell to explain the emergence of authoritarian governments in Latin America in relation to the political structure and level of industrialization. As a late-industrialising country, Korea under Park Chung Hee's rule was susceptible to becoming an authoritarian regime. To better adapt the model to the Korean situation, political scientists Hyug Baeg Im and Hyung-A Kim propose a modified version. Im emphasises the role of Korean leadership, arguing that they deliberately chose bureaucratic authoritarianism to avoid compromising with the popular sector, which demanded a greater distribution of income. Kim associates the model with the diminishing American commitment, asserting that Park Chung Hee was determined to elevate Korea's industry to the level of heavy-chemical industry to enhance defence capabilities.[53]

The other group of studies focuses more on the domestic characteristics of *Yusin*. Much of the research conducted immediately after the demise of *Yusin* viewed the *Yusin* period through a dichotomous lens, often categorizing it as *Yusin* versus anti-*Yusin* or dictatorship versus democratisation movement.[54] These studies, which are often critical of the regime, examine *Yusin* in the context of Park Chung Hee's political ambitions. According to them, Park's life represented a consistent pursuit of

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[52] Pae Kŭngch'an, 'Niksŭn tokt'ŭrin kwa Tong'asia kwŏnwi chuŭi ch'eje ŭi tŭngchang [The Nixon Doctrine and the Advent of East Asian Authoritarian Regimes]', *Han'guk chŏngch'i hakhoebo* 22, no.2 (1988): 321-338. According to Pae, one third of the Third World states became authoritarian between 1964 and 1973 owing to changes in US Third World Policy. See, p. 338. Hong Sŏngnyul, 'Yusin ch'eje wa Han-Mi kwan'gye [The Yusin system and Korea-US relations]', *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 88 (2013): 35-67; Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 358- 9.

[53] Hyung-A Kim, *Korea's Development under Park Chung Hee: Rapid Industrialization, 1961-79* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p.111.

[54] Pak T'aegyun, 'Segyesach'ŏk pop'ŏnsŏng kwa t'ŭksusŏng ŭI ch'ŭngmyŏn esŏ pon Yusin ch'eje [The Yusin sytem with universality and uniqueness]', *Yŏksa wa hyŏnsil* 88 (2013): p.20.

power, with the *Yusin* regime being the culmination of his ambition.[55] While acknowledging that Park was concerned with security and economic issues, they argue that his primary motive for establishing the *Yusin* regime was to maintain or enhance his power. Some even insist that there was no internal threat, political or economic, strong enough to prompt a transition in regime, emphasizing the fact that Park had no lawful means to remain in power after his third term.[56] Other studies emphasise Park's personality. For example, Pak Hyŏnmo regards Park as an elitist republican who could not tolerate increasing criticism of his policies, which led him to adopt strong authoritarian measures. Similarly, Sŏ Chungsŏk views the Yusin regime as the manifestation of Park's obsession with anti-parliamentarism, anti-party politics, military-style efficiency and similar ideals.[57]

All of these studies recognise, to certain extent, the different characteristics of the *Yusin* regime, whether they were universal or unique to Korea, or structural or personal. It is sufficient to say that *Yusin* represented a Korean adaptation of the authoritarianism that emerged in some late-industrialising countries during the global détente. Apart from Park's personality, the geopolitical structure also contributed to this Korean transformation. One of the most conspicuous features unique to Korea was its direct confrontation with North Korea. This confrontation made (South) Korea more sensitive to détente, thereby intensifying Cold-War tensions on the peninsula.[58]

Another unique aspect was the close relationship Korea had with the United States. Gregg Brazinsky introduces the concept of 'developmental autocracy' to broadly describe Korean military regimes, including but not limited to Park Chung Hee or *Yusin*, which pursued industrial development as a means to eventually satisfy certain preconditions for democratisation. Although the United States did not necessarily intend to support such regimes, as Brazinsky argues, it did not actively

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[55] See, for example, Yi Chunsik, "Pak Chŏnghŭi ŭi singminji ch'ehŏm kwa Pak Chŏnghŭi sidae ŭi kiwŏn [Park Chung Hee's Colonial Experience and the Origins of the Park Chung Hee Era]," *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 89 (2009): 236-256; Hwang Pyŏngju, "Pak Chŏnghŭi ŭi kŭndae chŏk ch'ulse yongmang [Park Chung Hee's Modern Desire for Success]," *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 89 (2009): 257-283.

[56] For the absence of internal threat, see O Ch'anghŏn, *Yusin Ch'eje wa hyŏndae Han'guk chŏngch'i [The Yusin System and Modern Korean Politics]* (Sŏul: Orŭm, 2001), pp.84-98.

[57] Pak Hyŏnmo, 'Pak Chŏng-hŭi ŭi 'minju konghwa chuŭi yŏn'gu: Pak Chŏng-hŭi taet'ongnyŏng yŏnsŏl munjib ŭl chungsim ŭro [On Park Chung Hee's Democratic Republicanism: Focusing on 'Park Chung Hee Addresses']', *Tongyang chŏngch'i sasangsa* 6, no.2 (2006): p.77; Sŏ Chungsŏk, 'Pak Chŏnghŭi Yusin ch'eje nŭn wae 7-yŏn mane punggoe toeŏnna [Why Park's Yusin System Collapsed in Seven Years],' *Naeil ŭl yŏnŭn yŏksa* 49 (2012): pp.64-5.

[58] As cited in Pak T'aegyun, 'Segyesach'ŏk pop'ŏnsŏng', p.21.

oppose them and, in some cases, even provided support, viewing them as conducive to economic development, security, and American interests.[59]

Dictatorship and dictatorial behaviours

None of the studies on *Yusin* would disagree that the *Yusin* regime was dictatorial. Scholars employ various terms to describe the regime, such as dictatorship, autocracy, authoritarianism or even despotism, often using these terms interchangeably without much consideration for their semantic and taxonomical differences. For instance, Brazinsky categorises *Yusin* as an autocracy, while Michael Robinson refers to *Yusin* as a legal dictatorship, considering Park's earlier military coup in 1961 as a return to authoritarian politics.[60] Historian Han Honggu describes *Yusin* as a 'period for only one person', alluding pejoratively to the extremely autocratic nature of the regime.[61] At the very least, *Yusin* was an undemocratic polity with limited political pluralism, and while each of these terms has its merit, dictatorship or authoritarianism seems to be the most comprehensive words to describe the *Yusin* regime.[62]

Certainly, *Yusin* had not the typical form of democratic government with functioning state apparatus and checks and balances. This dictatorial political system could explain many behaviours of the Park government, although such behaviours were not necessarily unique to Korea but rather common among dictatorial regimes in some degree. Han Honggu emphasises that the *Yusin* regime did not allow for any 'number two' who would be recognised as the prospective successor of Park, even from within Park's own power group.[63] Kim Tongch'un asserts that the government in this period employed 'war politics'. Society became militarized, bureaucratic hierarchies stiffened, and the government created 'enemies' within the country to instil

[59] Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), pp.5-6.

[60] Michael E. Robinson, *Korea's Twentieth-Century Odyssey: A Short History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), p.128, 136.

[61] Han Honggu, *Yusin.*

[62] For one of the most oldest and famous definitions of authoritarianism, see Juan Linz, 'An authoritarian regime: Spain', in *Cleavages, Ideologies and Party Systems: Contributions to Comparative Political Sociology*, ed. Erik Allardt and Yrjo Littunen (New York: Free Press, 1964), p.297.

[63] Han Honggu, *Yusin*, pp.30-3.

fear among the people.[64] These 'enemies' included students who opposed the regime, whom the regime framed as part of a large-scale organisational conspiracy to isolate them from the public.[65]

Yusin *and foreign relations*

The characteristics of *Yusin* were not confined to domestic affairs; Korea's foreign relations often fell directly or indirectly under the influence of this dictatorial system. In his thesis, Choi Lyong argues that the foreign policy of the *Yusin* regime was a process aimed at justifying Park's 'despotic-style' rule and ensuring Korea's security, which evolved over time under domestic and international pressures.[66] Similarly, regarding Park's 'northern policy' – a foreign policy seeking diplomatic relations with Eastern Bloc countries – some see the policy's intent as primarily political. In other words, the 'northern policy' served as a means for Park to achieve his political objectives, such as extending his governance. In the early 1970s, Park faced crises of governance due to economic recession. To overcome these crises, he attempted to secure more capital for economic development from countries with which Korea had not yet established relations.[67]

Yet little research has examined Korea's relations with Japan during the *Yusin* period in a similar manner. Many studies on Korea-Japan relations have not given special attention to the *Yusin* regime, while those focusing on *Yusin* have made little effort to connect characteristics of the regime and its foreign policy toward Japan. It is the purpose of this study to fill this less-explored gap in Korea's modern diplomatic history.

Children of the Cold War

[64] Kim Tongch'un, '"Kanch'ŏp mandŭlgi" ŭi chŏnjaeng chŏngch'i: chibaejilsŏ rosŏ Yusin ch'eje [War politics of spy-making]', *Minjusahoe wa chŏngch'aek yŏn'gu* 21 (2012): 146-174.

[65] Namhee Lee, 'The South Korean student movement: *Undongkwŏn* as a counterpublic', in *Korean Society: Civil Society, Democracy and the State*, ed. Charles K. Armstrong (New York: Routledge, 2007): pp.106-7.

[66] Lyong Choi, 'The foreign policy of Park Chunghee: 1968-1979' (PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012), p.16.

[67] Chang Tŏkchun, 'Pak Chŏnghŭi sigi taeryuk chihyang oegyo ŭi paegyŏng kwa t'ŭkching [Continent-oriented Diplomacy in the Park Chung Hee Era: Its Background and Characteristics]', *Chungso yŏn'gu* 43, no.2 (2019): 181-225; Pak Hongsŏ, 'Pak Chŏnghŭi sigi pukp'ang oegyo ŭi chongch'I kyŏngjejŏk paegyŏng: t'ongch'isŏng wigi wa kŭ taeŭng [The Political Economy analysis of Northern Policy in the Park Chung Hee's Era]', *Han'guk tongbuga nonch'ong* 26, no.1 (2021): 23-41.

Not a few works on modern Korean-Japanese relations tend to start their narratives from the colonial period or even before that. This way of writing history has inevitably led the authors to magnify the role of 'historical factors' in the interstate relations. That is to say, memories of the colonial period governed the post-colonial relations between Korea and Japan. Espousing this view, Chong-Sik Lee states in the beginning of his book, 'Anyone interested in Japanese-Korean relations, therefore, must have an understanding of the contrasting Japanese and Korean perspectives on the colonial era'.[68] Indeed past legacies continue to affect the present as an a priori for current decision making. But, as Lee's statement paradoxically shows, what matters is 'perspectives' on the past, which is in fact a 'present-day environmental factor' in Lee's words, rather than memory, experience or the past itself. Thus, in order to understand Korea-Japan relations of the 1970s, one needs to start from examining the immediate past of the decade that composed 'present-day environmental factors' at the time rather than further history of Japanese colonialism.

The San Francisco system

Korea and Japan were almost recreated after 1945 under an American hegemon. The US occupation and the subsequent Korean War transformed Korea into a pro-American, anti-communist country, if not a liberal and democratic one. Likewise Japan was reborn as a pro-American regional core, if not as much demilitarised and democratised as the American planners had envisioned.[69] More broadly in the region, America's major war partner China now retreated to the small island of Taiwan while the new communist regime occupied the continent. In a few years following the end of World War II, the world ruptured with the past.

In the Asia-Pacific, the world war legally ended as the belligerents signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951, which came into effect the next year. At the time of the peace treaty Japan and the United States also signed a bilateral security treaty. The outcomes of the two treaties were militarised Pax Americana in the region and

[68] Lee, *Japan and Korea*, p.2.

[69] In case of Korea, anti-communism had emerged as its national identity even before the Cold War began. Nam Kijŏng, 'Naengjŏn', p.227; Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*; Bruce Cumings, 'Japan's position in the world system', in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 34-63; Howard B. Schonberger, *Aftermath of War: Americans and the Remaking of Japan, 1945-1952* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1989); John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

the San Francisco system that Akira Iriye defines as 'the new regime of American-Japanese relations'.[70]

With regard to Korea-Japan relations, the San Francisco system brought about some of basic elements of possible future friction between the two countries. One was the ambiguous position of Korea under the international law. Korea was not recognised either as a victor or a victim of Japan's war. Therefore Korea was not invited to San Francisco, nor did it have a right to war reparations. Korea had to normalise bilaterally with Japan, if it so wished, and merely held a right to claim restitution from Japan – let alone the question as to which of the two Koreas would be 'Korea'.[71] Another element was the territorial boundary that the peace treaty did not clarify enough. The two parties would have to finalise this issue – especially on the island of *Tokto/Takeshima* – in their bilateral treaty.[72] In sum, the San Francisco treaty left all the bothersome matters between Korea and Japan in the hands of the two.

Despite its marginal role in stipulating Korea-Japan relations, the San Francisco system encompassed the two within a single international community. Instead of a collective security organisation like NATO in Asia, the United States constituted the hub-and-spokes system through multiple bilateral security treaties with its junior partners.[73] Thereby the junior partners such as Korea and Japan were indirectly linked together via the United States. The system relieved Asian countries' concern over Japan's remilitarisation and reduced their competitive economic policies towards each other. Moreover, as the United States provided reliable security,

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[70] Akira Iriye, *The Cold War in Asia: A Historical Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974), p.182; Some argue that the San Francisco was not a system but a loose framework. For the full discussion see Kent Calder, 'Securing security through prosperity: the San Francisco system in comparative perspective', *Pacific Review* 17, no.1 (2004): pp.137-8.

[71] See for detail Kim Yŏngmi, '"Kugik" ŭro tongwŏn toen kaein ŭi kwŏlli: Han-Il hoedam kwa kaein posang munje [Private right mobilised in the name of national interest]', *Tongbuga yŏksa nonch'ong* 22 (2008): p.104.

[72] Kimie Hara, *Cold War Frontiers in the Asia-Pacific: Divided Territories in the San Francisco System* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p.15; John W. Dower, 'The San Francisco system: past, present, future in U.S.-Japan-China relations', *Asia-Pacific Journal* 12, issue 8, no.2 (24 February 2014); and the first chapter of Dudden, *Troubled Apologies*.

[73] For Asian countries' desire for a collective security organisation, see Calder, 'Securing security', pp.140-1; for absence of such a collective organisation, see Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective identity, regionalism, and the origins of multilateralism', *International Organization* 56, no.3 (2002): p.575; Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origins of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

technology and a market, the junior partners were able to pursue export-oriented development and economic success.[74]

The southern triangle

The loose relationship between Korea and Japan within the San Francisco system grew into a triangular alignment with their diplomatic normalisation in 1965. While, in the north, North Korea, China and the Soviet Union formed the so-called 'northern triangle', in the south, South Korea, Japan and the United States moulded the 'southern triangle'. If not formal alliances, these triangular relationships miniaturised the global Cold War on the Korean peninsula. Thus, the triangular relationships were Cold-War alignments, wherein each country expected support – including but not limited to military actions – by its potential friends against potential opponents, with or without formal alliance treaties at the time of Cold-War confrontation.[75]

The northern triangle was almost dismantled by the mid-1960s as North Korea opposed Khrushchev's Soviet Union and Mao's China under the Cultural Revolution.[76] Meanwhile in the south, the three bilateral treaties strengthened the bond and division of labour between the three countries. Dependent on the southern triangle, the United Sates could save its foreign expenditure and focus more on Vietnam; Korea could secure capital from Japan through the normalisation and from the Vietnam War; Japan acquired access to the Korean market and also enjoyed the wartime boom. For Korea, it was a chance to surpass North Korea whose post-war economy had been a step ahead of the South. As a subordinate system to the San Francisco, the southern triangle exhibited its power as a Cold-War alignment as intended by its American designers.[77]

Although the Korean-Japanese relationship was not a security alliance, this unofficial triangular alignment aimed at reinforcing the defence capability of the

[74] G. John Ikenberry, 'American hegemony and East Asian order', *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 58, no.3 (2004): pp.355-7.

[75] This definition of alignment is from Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p.6.

[76] For the influence of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation and the Chinese Cultural Revolution on North Korea, see Bernd Schaefer, 'North Korean "adventurism" and China's long shadow, 1966-1972', Working paper #44, Cold War International History Project (2004).

[77] Nam Kijŏng, 'Saenpŭransisŭko p'yŏnghwa choyak kwa Han-Il kwan'gye: "kwandaehan p'yŏnghwa" wa naengjŏn ŭi sanggwansŏng [The San Francisco treaty and Korean-Japanese relations]', *Tongbuga yŏksa nonch'ong* 22 (2008): p.37.

'liberalist' camp in the region. Besides the fact that the US forces were stationed in Korea and the Korean forces fought in Vietnam, the adversaries of the southern triangle considered it a military alliance and thus menace. China condemned the Korean-Japanese treaty as a 'serious step taken by the Satō government to accelerate the revival of militarism' and by 'US imperialism … in expanding its war of aggression in Asia'.[78] North Korea's party organ *Rodong sinmun* even stated that the Japanese militarists planned to attack the north and China as well as the Soviet Union in joint military actions with the United States.[79] The Chinese and North Koreans directly called the southern triangle the 'Northeast Asian military alliance' (see figure 1.1 for example).

Figure 1.1 'You have been waiting for long'
This *Rodong sinmun* editorial cartoon accurately shows how North Korea viewed the southern triangle. In it, 'US imperialism' is welcoming the approaching 'Japanese militarism' in the trench with a banner that read 'Northeast Asian military alliance' while 'Park Chung Hee' is saluting at the entrance.
Source: *Rodong sinmun*, 6 January 1966, p.3.

The communist worry originated in Japan's 1963 General Defence Plan of Operation also known as *Mitsuya* study. Japanese Socialist Party Dietman Okada Haruo disclosed this top-secret operational plan of the Defense Agency on February

[78] Government statement, 'China protests Sato government's forcible adoption of the "Japan-ROK treaty"', *Peking Review* 47, 19 November 1965, p.5.

[79] *Rodong sinmun*, 19 January 1966, p.1.

1965. According to the study, Japan would be a part of American Far Eastern strategy; the Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF) would train with the US, Korean and Taiwanese forces; in case of another Korean war the SDF would fulfil defensive assignments, thereby partaking in the war; and at the time of emergency Japan would act on a basis of total mobilisation.[80] Further, the 1965 Joint Operation Plan (codenamed 'Flying Dragon') and its 1966 version (codenamed 'Bull Run') assumed a regional war in which Japan would turn into an unsinkable aircraft carrier.[81] These plans presumed an attack from the communist forces, especially North Korea, and therefore had not been in effect in reality. Through these plans, however, Japanese officials at the time perceived the regional situation within a Cold-War paradigm which neatly separated the world into two parties.

Korean officials had a similar worldview at the time when the southern triangle saw its heyday. If, ostensibly, the United States went to Vietnam following the domino theory, what brought Koreans into the war was the second-front theory; in case of a communist victory in Vietnam its aftermaths would affect Korea, and therefore Vietnam was the second frontline of the unending Korean War. While the Korean government did not disguise its economic desires, it sold the war to its people mainly with this ideological rhetoric at least up until 1966. Speaking from a political perspective, by dispatching its troops, Korea could prevent the foreseeable decrease in American aid after the Korean-Japanese normalisation while keeping economic profit from the war and giving a good impression to the United States simultaneously.[82]

The southern triangle thrived, unlike its northern counterpart, as long as the Cold War continued. It was a great relief for the Koreans that Japan recognised the Republic of Korea as the sole lawful polity on the peninsula in the normalisation treaty; the Article 3 of the treaty indicated, 'It is confirmed that the Government of the

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[80] Tsukasa Matsueda and Geroge E. Moore, 'Japan's shifting attitudes toward the military: *Mitsuya kenkyu* and the Self-Defense Force', *Asian Survey* 7, no.9 (1967): p.614.

[81] While Satō admitted the existence of *mitsuya* study (see ibid), the Defense Agency officially denied the existence of the Flaying Dragon. See *Asahi shinbun*, 1 July 2004, p.1. In 1975 when Dietman Okada claimed again that Japan and the United States had joint operation plan, then the Defense Agency denied it, saying, 'while US and Japanese military personnel have conducted joint studies, they do not have authority to make agreements and such an agreement on plans for joint US-Japanese operations does not exist'. Tokyo 15284, 'Charges of joint US-Japan military plans', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[82]Hong Sŏngnyul, 'Wihŏmhan mirwŏl: Pak Chŏnghŭi Chonsŭn haengjŏngbugi Han-Mi kwangye wa Pet'ŭnam chŏnjaeng [Dangerous Honeymoon: Korean-American relations and the Vietnam War under the governments of Park Chung Hee and Johnson]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 88 (2009): pp.223-4.

Republic of Korea is the only lawful Government in Korea as specified in the Resolution 195 (III) of the United Nations General Assembly'.[83] As the Cold War tension subsided, however, potential elements of friction surfaced between Korea and Japan. Japan began to extend its contacts with North Korea, which behaviour the South Koreans denounced because, if the south was the only lawful government, the north must be unlawful. The Japanese thought otherwise. In the UN Resolution 195 (III) the General Assembly simply declared that the Republic of Korea government was elected under the observation of the UN Temporary Commission on Korea and that the government was the only 'such' government.[84] To the Japanese, 'such' government did not have to be the only legitimate government. Or even if the south held the sole legitimacy, that fact alone was not enough for Japan to stop contacting North Korea. Toward the end of the 1960s, the southern triangle began to be shaken, and Korea-Japan relations were proceeding to peril.

The 1970s

This study focuses on the 1970s, a decade that roughly coincided with the period of the *Yusin* regime in Korea (1972-1979) and with the era of détente. By doing so, this study aims to illuminate a period that has received relatively little attention in the field of modern Korean diplomatic history, as discussed in the previous section. Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s hold significant academic importance not only because it is a less explored subject, but also because the decade witnessed the very first conflict between Korea and Japan since their diplomatic normalisation. By examining the process of conflict and reconciliation, one can gain better insight into the nature of the post-war Korea-Japan relationship, its developmental aspects, and inherent challenges.

Plenty of studies have examined diverse topics related to the Korea-Japan normalisation treaty, from its initial attempts to the eventual agreement. However, not as many studies have been written about the events that unfolded after the treaty. This sudden disappearance of academic interest appears to result from the tendency to frame pre-1990s Korea-Japan relations within the so-called '1965 system'. This viewpoint suggests that the normalisation treaty governed Korea-Japan relations until

[83] 'Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea Signed at Tokyo, on 22 June 1965', United Nations Treaty Collection v.583, no.8471, <https://treaties.un.org/>.

[84] United Nations General Assembly (3rd sess.: 1948-1949), 'The problem of the independence of Korea', A/RES/195(III), 1948, United Nations Digital Library, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/>.

the end of the Cold War. Thus, while many studies concentrate on the process leading to the agreement of the treaty, they often perceive post-1965 Korea-Japan relations as a simple extension of the relations established by the normalisation treaty, with little change. For example, in his book on post-war Korea-Japan relations, Choi Hŭisik states that the 1965 system exerted significant influence on managing conflicts between Korea and Japan, despite structural fluctuations during détente in the 1970s and the neo-Cold War in the 1980s.[85]

However, as this study discusses, the 'structural fluctuation' began to dismantle the 1965 system from the 1970s. In 1972, East Asia experienced major political changes. Following 'Ping Pong Diplomacy', the Sino-American rapprochement became evident. In Korea, Park Chung Hee established his dictatorial *Yusin* regime, while in Japan, long-serving Prime Minister Satō Eisaku stepped down from office.

Some harbingers of these changes began to appear in 1969, marking the beginning of the end of the Cold War. In January, Richard Nixon became the president of the United States and announced his doctrine to limit American security support for Asian countries. Signs of US-China rapprochement emerged as the Sino-American Ambassadorial Talks reopened. Additionally, in Korea, the Park Chung Hee regime successfully amended the constitution to allow Park to run for a third term, displaying his ambition to remain in power as long as possible. This constitutional amendment served as a link between the earlier Park regime in the 1960s, which was relatively more popular, and the *Yusin* regime in the 1970s, which was relatively more dictatorial. The global détente mood and Park's decision to cling to power were closely related. As Bruce Cumings notes, 'If Richard Nixon was declaring his independence from America's Cold War commitments in the region, Park would declare Korean independence in politics, economics, and national security'.[86]

This study concludes with Park Chung Hee's death in 1979. The focus on the *Yusin* regime of Korea necessitates this endpoint, as the regime also came to an end with Park's death. The subsequent Korean military regime undoubtedly comprised 'Park Chung Hee kids', Military Academy graduates who rose to become key generals in the army under the Park regime. However, the new regime differed from its

[85] Choi Hŭisik, *Chŏnhu Han-Il kwan'gye 70-nyŏn*, p.17.

[86] Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, p.364.

predecessor in many aspects, including its approach to diplomacy.[87] Korea-Japan relations under this new regime in the 1980s functioned within a different global and regional political milieu. The onset of the new Cold War in 1979 and the record-breaking economic boom in Korea and Japan during the 1980s led to different problems and solutions between the two countries compared to the previous decade.

The Dissolution of a Cold-War Alignment

Argument and sources

The emergence of détente caused a stir in the stabilised southern triangle. Each country came to be faced with its own political and economic difficulties, and the rapidly changing world spared no time to tend to other's problems. Their differing positions in global politics also drove them to discretely seek for solutions to the difficulties. These solutions were not always agreeable to other side, sometimes leading them into conflict. The Korea-Japan conflict in the early 1970s was a part of the process in which the southern triangle, a Cold-War alignment, was dissolving. In other words, although Korea-Japan relations never thoroughly broke down, the two countries were losing their expectation of support in the Cold-War confrontation.

It is not a completely new argument that the Korea-Japan conflict stemmed from their disparate perspectives on the world – especially on North Korea – and consequential policy differences.[88] This study however breaks from the previous scholarship of Korea-Japan relations by focusing less on the roles played by the public sentiment or American intervention. The Korean and Japanese public at the time were not competent enough to move the directions of states' diplomacy. The governments were free from public opinion to some extent, and the public often failed to have states' policies reflect not only their sentiment but also their practical interests. If not as incompetent, the United States at the time was generally indifferent to the relations between its two junior allies. As the overlord of the southern triangle, the United States would have preferred less conflict between Korea and Japan but did not enthusiastically intervene in bilateral problems. The 'liberalist' world during the détente period was not as hierarchical as before or after this period.

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[87] See, for example, Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, pp.254-5.

[88] For example, see Sung Chull Kim, *Partnership within Hierarchy: The Evolving East Asian Security Triangle* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2017), pp.3-4; Yi Hyŏngch'ŏl, '1970-nendai no Ajia detanto to Nikkan kankei [Asian détente and Japanese-Korean relations in the 1970s]', *Genritsu Nagasaki Sīboruto Daigaku Kokusai Jōhō Gakubu kiyō* 8 (2007): p.100.

This study investigates, among others, diplomatic documents from the Korean, Japanese, and US governments. Many of reports, telegrams or dialogue memoranda of the 1970s were declassified after the mid-2000s, about thirty years after they had been produced. By examining the language of diplomats, both professional and political, appearing in these documents, one can most directly comprehend how and on what basis the diplomats framed particular policies, especially in countries like Korea and Japan where executive power was relatively strong. Depending on government sources may disparage the agency of the public sector in international relations. Yet the governments did note activities of the public sector and selectively, and therefore independently, reflected public demands in diplomacy, which process does appear in the diplomatic documents.

At the core of this study lie Korean diplomatic documents. They are mostly from the Diplomatic Archives of Korea, but also from the Presidential Archives and the National Archives of Korea. As more documents are gradually released to the public, some of the recent works on Korea-Japan relations as well as Korea's foreign policy in general examine documents from these archives.[89] This study relies much less on Japanese documents than on Korean. This imbalance of sources stems from the different volumes of released primary documents in the two countries. Compared to the Korean archives, their Japanese counterparts are more conservative in declassifying previous official documents. American documents fill in the gaps left by the Japanese documents. Although the US government remained a bit indifferent to issues between Korea and Japan, the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency still gathered and documented relevant information, from which later researchers can access the minds of Japanese as well as Korean officials at the time, not to mention American interpretations of them. Most of the original American documents are accessible through the National Archives and Records Administration, but the development of online databases has extended their accessibility. These databases include the Digital National Security Archives and the Public Library of US Diplomacy of Wikileaks; the former is a subject-specific collection while the latter consists of telegrams since 1973. Government documents from countries other than these three countries and their English translation are largely from the Wilson Center Digital Archive although this study use them less frequently.

[89] For example, Kim, *Partnership within Hierarchy*; Kungmin taehakkyo Ilbonhak yŏn'guso, ed., *Pak Chŏnghŭi sidae Han-Il kwan'gye ŭi chaejomyŏng* [Reillumination on the Korean-Japanese relations during the Park Chung Hee period] (Sŏul: Sŏnin, 2011); Lyong Choi, 'The foreign policy of Park Chunghee: 1968-1979' (PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012).

These sources indicate that what the Korea-Japan conflict in the early 1970s resulted from the political and economic needs of the two countries. On one hand, the new international circumstance of détente lessened the necessity of the Cold-War alignment. The ideological yoke disappeared, and instead the two countries entered the international arena where they had to fight the war of all against all for their own survival and prosperity. On the other hand Korea failed to adapt to the new international circumstances whereas Japan quickly turned to a new diplomatic policy. Korea demanded that Japan cooperate with Korea as it had done in the late 1960s, which Japan viewed as no longer necessary. The sources also show that Korea and Japan never went back to their heyday of cooperation in the late 1960s even after they settled the conflict.

Cooperation and conflict

It is challenging to determine whether relations between countries are good or bad, cooperative or discordant. Firstly, there are different actors in international relations, each of which may have different relationships with their counterparts. The relationship between two governments may not align with that between the public of those countries, while business interests may differ further. Apart from the debate on which actor holds primary importance in international relations, different statuses of international relations can independently exist at the same time.[90] For example, the harmonious inter-governmental relations between Korea and the United States in the 1980s sharply contrasted with the growing anti-Americanism among Korean students and intellectuals during the same period.[91]

Secondly, there is no quantitative touchstone that definitively measures the status of international relations. While some indicators, such as trade volume or the number of visitors, may suggest a general direction of the status of international relations, these numbers can only demonstrate relative tendencies compared to those in periods before and after a certain time and cannot independently function as standards. Similarly, conceptions of cooperation and conflict, along with any other terms to the same effect, inevitably raise questions of degree. For instance, political scientist Robert Keohane defines cooperation as an actual policy adjustment, the

[90] For the debate between realist and liberal scholars on actors in international relations, or 'state debate', see John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[91] Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, pp.386-91.

result of which the counterpart government considers beneficial to its own objectives. A harmonious relationship would not necessitate policy adjustment, while a discordant relationship either achieves no policy adjustment or, if it does, is not beneficial to the other country.[92] In the frame of alliance theory, Victor Cha defines cooperation and defection as strong and weak commitments to the alliance, respectively.[93] These definitions help to better understand what kind of state behaviour should be considered cooperative, but the question of 'how much' still remains in the hands of researchers to decide.

In practice, despite this ambiguity, the press, critics, politicians, and bureaucrats analyse and anticipate the status of international relations without much difficulty based on diverse indicators and policies. As a historical research, this study focuses on these analyses and anticipations of contemporaries at the time as they appeared in the media, bureaucratic reports, or utterances of politicians. Therefore the status of international relations narrated in this study is more about the mainstream perception of reality at the time than certain state behaviours that fit into specific scholarly definitions of cooperation or conflict.

To vividly portray this perception, this study does not precisely distinguish between different terms used to depict the status of international relations. Various forms of government documents or newspaper articles interchangeably use words such as harmony, reconciliation, cooperation or collaboration for situations considered 'good', and conflict, friction or discord for situations considered 'bad'. Furthermore authors often choose their own preferred word to depict the same event without much consideration for possible semantic differences between those words. This study attempts to follow the same word choices as those found in primary sources whenever possible. Regarding Korean or Japanese words such as *hyŏmnyŏk*(K) / *kyōryoku*(J) or *kaldŭng*(K) / *kattō*(J), this study translates them into cooperation and conflict, respectively.

There was no significant difference between the terms 'conflict' and 'friction' in American sources at least when depicting Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s. 'Conflict' might be more comprehensive than 'friction' and is often used to characterise more serious situations, such as military clashes. However, the fact that

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[92] Rober O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp.51-3.

[93] Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, p.38.

these two words were used interchangeably suggests the relatively low intensity of the Korea-Japan conflict at the time, which was mostly verbal and diplomatic. Meanwhile, the term 'dispute' was generally used in, if not limited to, specific contexts where the two countries had clashes of legal views or interests, such as trade disputes and territorial disputes. An interesting point to note is the repeated use of the Japanese word '*ketchaku*' (complete conclusion) or its Korean pronunciation, '*kyŏlch'ak*', between Korean and Japanese politicians at the time of the Kim Dae Jung abduction. By choosing this word over others such as 'agreement' (J: *gōi*) or 'settlement' (J: *kaiketsu*), it appears that the Japanese side desperately hoped the abduction case would not be discussed at all on the diplomatic stage.

The 'perception' of reality, of course, did not always accurately reflect the states of affairs at the time. They were often myopic and fragmentary. For example, the Japanese declaration of the complete conclusion of the abduction case was far from the reality, where the issue continued to recur between Korea and Japan until the end of the 1970s. At the time of the silk dispute as discussed in chapter 6, the American ambassador to Korea confidently reported its resolution to the State Department, but the dispute never completely vanished. This study attempts to resolve such discrepancies between the text and reality through a diachronic cross-analysis of sources.

Domestic politics and international relations

The following chapters of this study illustrate a process in which changes in the global politico-economic landscape affected the formation of the domestic politico-economic landscape, which in turn influenced regional international relations. As some political scientists have examined, external factors can influence domestic politics.[94] In the 1970s, domestic politics in Korea and Japan were likely more intertwined with global politics and the economy than in other countries. Korea and Japan were at the centre of the Cold War in East Asia, serving respectively as an outpost and a base for the US armed forces with their actual enemies in close proximity. Additionally, they had export-led economies heavily reliant on crucial resources like oil. As maritime countries, their trade chiefly relied on sea routes.

[94] For a theoretical overview, see Peter Gourevitch, 'The second image reversed: The international sources of domestic politics', *International Organization* 32, no.4 (1978): 881-912; for empirical research, see Robert O. Keohane and Helen V. Milner, ed., *Internationalization and Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

These characteristics made their domestic politics sensitive to the global politico-economy. Indeed, events such as the Nixon doctrine and the oil crises came as a 'shock' to these countries.

While the domestic political landscapes of Korea and Japan were influenced by significant global changes such as the receding Cold-War tensions, escalating insecurity in Indochina, uncertainties in maritime regimes and oil crises, these domestic politics began to impact the relations between the two countries. There have been numerous studies on the role of domestic politics in international relations, particularly focusing on the negative effects of the former on the latter, such as war. According to the diversionary theory of war, 'political elites often embark on adventurous foreign policies or even resort to war to distract popular attention away from internal social and economic problems and consolidate their own domestic political support'.[95] From this perspective, as reviewed in the previous section, Nakagawa Nobou points out Park Chung Hee's use of Korea-Japan relations for his political breakthrough. While the diversionary theory may offer an interpretative framework for some of the international behaviours of Park Chung Hee and his government, as this study finds, the Park Chung Hee regime sought more than mere diversion of public attention from the domestic political situation and occasionally sought cooperation with Japan. Thus, more than what the diversionary theory suggests seems required for a comprehensive explanation.

During at least the first half of the 1970s, Korea-Japan relations appear to have been influenced by regime changes in both countries. Political scientist Zeev Maoz argues that 'Revolutionary regime and government changes tend to result in drastically increased conflict behavior of the focal state during the first period following these changes'. [96] From this perspective, chapter 2 discusses how regime changes in Korea and Japan led to changes in their foreign policies, which would contribute to their diplomatic conflict.

To comprehend Korea-Japan relations beyond the cause of diplomatic conflicts, this study adopts a perspective similar to that of diplomatic historian Michael Grow in his analysis of US-Latin America relations. Examining US interventions in Latin America during the Cold War, Grow argues that national

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[95] Jack S. Levy, 'The diversionary theory of the war: A critique', in *Handbook of War Studies*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p.259.

[96] Zeev Maoz, *Domestic Sources of Global Change* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1996), p.86.

security and economic self-interest alone cannot fully explain US interventionism. Instead, he emphasises the decisive influence of credibility concerns, domestic politics and lobbying by Latin American countries on presidential decisions to intervene.[97] Similarly, Park Chung Hee's *Yusin* regime prioritised its political self-interest throughout the 1970s. Domestically, the regime employed legal and extra-legal means to eliminate political rivals. Internationally, it sought to establish and maintain credibility amid the North-South rivalry while suppressing expatriate organisations deemed threatening. Additionally, the regime's legitimacy was grounded in industrialisation and economic progress, elevating the significance of the economy. Notably, domestic politics and the international image of the country played pivotal roles in international relations within two distinct geopolitical contexts, albeit with nuanced differences. This similarity offers insight into the behaviours of the ruling elites in Korea-Japan relations, highlighting political self-interest as the primary motive guiding their foreign policies, whether fostering cooperation or engaging in conflict.

This study identifies why political self-interest played a pivotal role in the global circumstances that shaped the domestic landscapes of Korea and Japan. As previously discussed, factors such as the détente mood, unstable security and deteriorating economy all contributed to shaping this landscape. Among these, the receding Cold-War tensions stood out as the most significant factor throughout the 1970s, while others exerted influence to a lesser extent. The rapid global changes brought about uncertainty and instability in domestic politics, making political self-interest imperative for the ruling elites in Korea and Japan. Consequently, this would influence the relations between the two countries. This study adopts a framework that examines this interplay between the global, domestic, and regional factors, alongside the political self-interest of the ruling elites, to understand Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s.

As historical research, this study does not aim to generalise or predict certain phenomena in Korea-Japan relations. Instead, the following chapters attempt to reconstruct the development of relations between the two countries during the specific period of the 1970s through a literary critique of diplomatic and other documents. The limitations of this approach are evident: it focuses on state affairs and easily fails to capture the perspectives of historical actors outside the core state system. A more

[97] Michael Grow, *US Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), p.xi.

comprehensive understanding of Korea-Japan relations during that period would require further studies from additional perspectives.

Chapter overview

The following chapter demonstrates that the conflict between Korea and Japan began as early as the late 1960s though earlier research regards years between 1968 and 1971 as a period during which Korea and Japan did not conflict, although they did not cooperated. Omens of the deteriorating Korea-Japan relationship surfaced in economic and security issues. Trade imbalance, delimiting continental shelves and export/import of Korean textile products meant the two countries accumulated grievances with each other. Besides, security concerns for the Korean side arose as Japan increased its personal and material exchanges with North Korea. The most remarkable change in this period was the emergence of the *Yusin* regime in Korea. The new regime concentrated power more in the president, strengthened his dictatorship and emphasised self-reliant economy, security and way of life. The *Yusin* regime eventually caused the abduction of Kim Dae Jung and democratisation activities that led to the assassination attempt on Park Chung Hee and imprisonment of Japanese students in Korea, as discussed in chapters 3 and 4. Lastly, Japan also witnessed a regime change as Tanaka Kakuei replaced Satō Eisaku to become the prime minister. This intraparty regime change entailed changes in policy. Tanaka approached the world more pragmatically, with clear separation between politics and economy, than his ideologically-oriented predecessor. The new cabinet increased exchanges with communist China while distancing itself from Taiwan, which dissatisfied Korea since the latter lay in a similar situation as Taiwan.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore the period when Korea-Japan relations reached the worst point, as depicted in the introductory anecdote above. These chapters deal in detail with the two incidents that directly caused the diplomatic conflict – abduction of Kim Dae Jung in 1973 and attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee in 1974. This series of incidents represented a process in which changes in the global political sphere affected domestic politics that in turn wielded influence on regional international relations. That is, as discussed in chapter 2, Park Chung Hee's reaction to détente was to build a dictatorship that did not allow any resistance to him; to Park, Kim Dae Jung was a paramount enemy to eliminate at all cost. Though the assassination attempt originated from Park's dictatorship, his regime made use of the attempt to silence the Japanese government, Korean residents in Japan and the

domestic democratisation movement. Meanwhile the Tanaka cabinet exhibited incompetence in dealing with the Park government. In the end the Tanaka cabinet gave in to Park's 'audacious' attitude and accepted most of the Korean demands even though it did not have to do so.

Chapter 5 narrates how the two countries recovered from the conflict of the previous years and to what extent they improved their relations. Particularly this chapter focuses on another regime change in Japan and the global economic recession after the oil crisis. The new prime minister of Japan, Miki Takeo, was politically weaker and receptive to the conservative demand of a more cautious approach to Korea and Taiwan. The oil crisis not only impacted the Korean and Japanese economies but also emphasised the importance of a self-reliant oil supply. Especially the latter led the two countries to agree on the joint development of the disputed continental shelf. Furthermore, to the dictatorial Park government, economic development was almost the only legitimacy; thus economic recession would put the regime in peril and, in order to prevent it, Japanese economic support was a must. Finally this chapter also investigates the role of the security crisis after 1975 in improving Korea-Japan relations. This chapter argues, however, that the reconciliation between the two meant not a recovery of the previous Cold-War alignment but an outcome of individual pursuit of self-interest.

Chapters 6 and 7 deal with the years up to 1979, the period that can be called 'years of cooperation'. In these years Korea and Japan cooperated in some degree as security concerns rose. North Korea turned conspicuously hostile to the South and Japan, and the Soviet Union was expanding its military capabilities. Moreover the second oil crisis once again impacted the global economy. These common difficulties drove Korea and Japan to be more cooperative. At the same time, however, these very difficulties also created friction between the two. Despite the regionally growing security concerns, the main opponent of Japan was the Soviet Union while that of Korea was the North. Thus Japan leaned more toward China as capable of restraining the Soviet expansion. In the meantime Korea also wanted to join this new alignment, but China's preference for North Korea frustrated the south. Economically, Japan grew protectionist and hesitated to buy more Korean products. One the one hand the Japanese protectionism reflected the same attitude of any other advanced economy at the time. On the other hand the protectionism was also an election strategy; to some politicians votes mattered more than better relations with Korea.

This study ends with the sudden death of Park Chung Hee and, thus, the demise of his *Yusin* regime. Although some Japanese politicians had criticised Park's dictatorship by often bringing up problems regarding Kim Dae Jung, most of the ruling elites in Japan did not wish for a drastic regime change or democratisation in Korea. One reason behind this irony was the fear that a new democratic regime might reveal evidence of unlawful collusion between politicians of the two countries. This way, Japan condoned the new military regime in Korea and opened a new couple of years of cooperation.

CHAPTER TWO
PRELUDE TO CONFLICT

> I am well aware that the challenge we will be faced with will come not only from communists but also from our friendly nations of today … We learn courage and wisdom from our history to reject and overcome any absurd or contradictory relationship that is not established upon trust and respect of equal participation in peaceful order, but rather is economically subordinated, politically controlled and ideologically unified.[1]
>
> Park Chung Hee, 1971

By 1971 Park Chung Hee realised that he had barely anything to expect from his foreign friends. As early as 1968 when North Korea carried out the Blue House raid and capture of the USS *Pueblo*, Park lost his trust in the American security commitment.[2] Moreover, when American President Lyndon Johnson announced that he would not run for another term, Park felt his 'old friend' had betrayed him.[3] Lastly, although he believed that the United States would not apply the Nixon doctrine to the Korean peninsula, his anticipation proved to be wrong when the Americans withdrew 10,000 of their troops from Korea without advance notice.[4] Besides security concerns, the economic protectionism of the Nixon government caused struggles over fishing rights in the northern Pacific and textile trade with Korea. Such disharmony in the Korean-American alliance could have strengthened the bond between Korea and Japan. Another junior ally of the United States in the region, Japan had been going through similar problems with the Americans. Like Korea, Japan was also a victim of

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[1] Park Chung Hee, *Minjok ŭi chŏryŏk* [The Potential of the Nation] (Sŏul: Kwangmyŏng ch'ulp'ansa, 1971), pp.245-6.

[2] Hong Sŏngnyul, '1968-nyŏn P'uebŭllo sakŏn kwa Namhan, Pukhan, Miguk ŭi samgak kwan'gye [The Pueblo incident and the triangular relationship between South Korea, North Korea and the United States]', *Han'guksa yŏn'gu* 113 (2001): p.196.

[3] Park Chung Hee valued 'his close, personal relationship with Johnson'. See, 189, 'Editorial Note', *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1964-1968, v.29, Part 1. The expression 'old friend' is from Hong Sŏngnyul, 'Wihŏmhan mirwŏl: Park Chung Hee Chonsŭn haengjŏngbugi Han-Mi kwan'gye wa Pet'ŭnam chŏnjaeng [Dangerous Honeymoon: Korean-American relations and the Vietnam War under the governments of Park Chung Hee and Johnson]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 88 (2009): p.236.

[4] *Tonga ilbo*, 28 August 1970, p.1. Also see its editorial on 29 August 1970, p.3. The Fraser Report explains why the troop reduction mattered to Park: 'President Park's resistance to troop reduction was based partly on genuine security concerns. However, he was also worried about possible negative impacts on economy and the 1971 Presidential election'. See, the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, 'Investigation of Korean-American Relation', Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1978), p.33 (hereafter, 'Fraser Report').

the Nixon doctrine and US' economic protectionism. Yet the two victims did not cooperate actively in order to cope with the security and economic crises. Rather, as can be seen in the opening quote, the Korean president expressed his distrust of friendly nations in general. Though he never clarified what he meant by 'friendly nations of today', it had been with Japan and the United States that Korea had had the closest relations.

The Birth of the *Yusin* Regime

Both Korea and Japan went through regime changes in the early 1970s, just before the two countries experienced full-scale diplomatic conflict. In Korea President Park Chung Hee who had first seized power through his 1961 coup d'état staged another coup in October 1972 so as to pass a new constitution that would practically secure his presidency for life. In Japan Tanaka Kakuei became the prime minister in July 1972 succeeding Satō Eisaku, Japan's second longest-serving prime minister until then. The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) anticipated, 'ROK [Republic of Korea] foreign policy and related interests would also seem to be poorly served by Park's new authoritarianism', and 'it is conceivable that Japanese public opinion might turn against South Korea and contribute to a less favorable atmosphere in official ROK-Japanese relations'.[5] According to the CIA, due to the new authoritarianism Park would find it difficult to secure US military and economic assistance, which would cause internal instability. The internal instability would subsequently bring about a decrease in Japanese investment in Korea. As anticipated, in about ten months the Japanese investment began to decrease, and Korea and Japan started to have a series of diplomatic frictions. The CIA anticipation was not perfect since the Japanese investment decreased because of the first oil crisis in 1973, not of insecurity in Korea.[6] Still, the conflict did take place, which hints that the regime change could be one of the pivotal causes of the conflict.

The new regimes in Korea and Japan demonstrated different attitudes towards international politics from those of their predecessors. Growing more nationalistic, Korea pursued autonomous ways in foreign policy while Japan pushed forward equidistance diplomacy. In part these changes were response to changes in domestic

[5] The Central Intelligence Agency, 'The Political Outlook in South Korea', Special National Intelligence Estimate, 26 October 1972, CIA Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, p.18.

[6] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 21 December 1973, p.1.

society. Having been in power for a decade, Park needed a new creed to group the entire country under his rule once again. In this course he emphasised the virtue of self-reliance both inside and outside of the country. Japan wanted more markets for its overflowing products as a result of rapid economic development; no longer could it be satisfied with the existing capitalist markets. At this moment the international situation also began to change. The Nixon doctrine and the ensuing Sino-American rapprochement forced countries like Korea to be self-reliant in the system competition with North Korea. Meanwhile détente provided Japan with an opportunity to broaden its overseas markets by lowering barriers between socialist and capitalist countries. Where their common cause disappeared, each country put forwarded selfish foreign policies, which eventually led them to a series of conflicts in the years to come.

The birth of the Yusin regime

The *Yusin* was a system designed for only one person. It indicated the Fourth Republic of Korea constitution created in October 1972.[7] A former army general, Park Chung Hee first became president in 1963 after two years of military rule. Then he was elected again in 1967, and he amended the constitution in 1969 so as to run for another term. He managed to win the 1971 election, defeating his political enemy Kim Dae Jung of the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) by a margin of fewer than a million votes. In the following general election, as Park's Democratic Republican Party (DRP) failed to acquire more than two thirds of National Assembly seats needed for constitution amendment, Park could not help but step down from the presidency in 1975.

Under these circumstances, Park announced a state of national emergency in December 1971 and paralysed the National Assembly. In less than a year he disassembled the National Assembly and put the new constitution, '*Yusin* constitution', to a referendum, which was passed with 92.2 per cent of yes votes.[8] The new constitution authorised the National Assembly to indirectly elect president and entitled the president to 'recommend' one third of National Assembly members; it

[7] *Yusin* means reformation or restoration. It is the same word as Japanese *ishin* as used in the Meiji restoration. *Yusin* (or *weixin* in Chinese) originally appeared in the Chinese classic *Shi Jing*, and then it seems often used in traditional Korea. Though Park Chung Hee's aides argued they borrowed the term from the Chinese classic, it is more likely that when Park used this word, he recalled the Meiji restoration or the Showa restoration. See Han Honggu, *Yusin: Ojik han saram ŭl wihan sidae* [Yusin: the period for only one] (Sŏul: Han'gyŏre, 2014), pp.47-50.

[8] The election results are retrieved from the Korean National Election Commission webpage <http://www.nec.go.kr>.

also allowed the president to take super-constitutional 'emergency measures', thereby effectively placing the president above the constitution permanently.

With the new constitution came a new ideology of strong nationalism and of self-reliance. This new ideology would become a source of forthcoming conflicts with Korea's 'friendly nations'. At the time of his 1961 coup, Park had proclaimed his 'revolutionary pledge' which included such creeds as anti-communism, bonds with the United Nations and the United States, social order, economic development, and unification of the nation by cultivating national capabilities.[9] However, the Sino-American rapprochement and the following détente invalidated Park's strong anti-communism. Korean-American relations deteriorated as Nixon attempted disengagement from East Asia. Though he might have restored social order in general, student protests remained almost chronic throughout his rule. The booming economy was slowing down. And despite talks with North Korea, unification still seemed remote. Thus the ideology that had sustained the Park regime in the 1960s began to break down in the early 1970s, and Park tried out a new creed, placing unprecedented emphasis on self-reliance.

Park Chung Hee's crisis, 1969-71

Since its birth Korea had never been politically stable. While Park Chung Hee was in power as the chairman of his junta, Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR), and later as president of Korea, the opposition, students and other activists continued to protest against his dictatorial rule. However Park did not perceive all these disturbances as a threat to his rule. He perceived them serious enough to threaten his power only when they seemed to obstruct his efforts at the extension of his presidential term. Thus the crisis Park perceived was that from the political sphere, specifically from the arena of realpolitik, the National Assembly, through which most critical events were filtered and reproduced into weapons to attack Park. Though Park had been faced with oppositions before, he had rarely shown a lack of confidence, but he clearly did after 1969.

Park turned restless from 1969 on as his future presidency became uncertain and opposition arose from within his own party. Earlier, in the 1967 presidential election, he defeated the opposition candidate Yun Posŏn by more than 10 percentage points. Compared to the 1963 election where the margin was merely 1.5 percentage

[9] *Tonga ilbo*, 16 May 1961, extra edition.

points, this result demonstrated that Park had obtained a high degree of legitimacy and recognition from his people. At the dawn of the 1970s, however, the situation changed.

In 1971 attacks on Park arose from every corner of Korean society, and in the National Assembly opposition politicians made use of the social instability to frustrate Park's ambition.[10] The opposition NDP also tried to hold the regime responsible by submitting a motion to dismiss ministers of justice, internal affairs and the Economic Planning Board. To Park's surprise, thirty-two members of Park's DRP agreed with the NDP to pass the motion. Park's ensuing behaviour shows how seriously he perceived this issue. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency detained the related DRP National Assembly members, which in turn provoked NDP's backlash against this administration's impingement upon the legislature.[11]

At the same time Park was under pressure from external crises too. Park thought that the world economy was going through a period of turbulence due to the downscaling of the Vietnam War, developed-countries' protectionism, instability in financial markets and the like, all of which would slow down Korea's development.[12] Park's finance minister Nam Tŏgu too recollected in his 2009 memoir that in the early 1970s Korea was faced with internal and external troubles and that, to cope with the troubles, Park came up with four policies: the South-North communiqué, the *Yusin* system, self-reliant defence (the *Yulgok* plan) and the moratorium on private loans (the 3 August measure).[13] As the Cold-War confrontation was decreasing, economic slowdown would have delegitimised Park Chung Hee who was running for a third term. The entire situation, domestic and international, in and out of the National Assembly, was pointing at the end of Park's political life.

New creed: self-reliance

[10] For example, in June resident doctors of the National Medical Centre first went on strike which was spread to other national hospitals; in July 150 judges resigned in a protest to the administration's prosecution of judges; in August professors at the renowned Seoul National University demanded independence of university education; and in the same month mostly poor residents of a dormitory town near Seoul, *Kwangju* in *Kyŏnggi* province, revolted and occupied the town.

[11] *Tonga ilbo*, 7 October 1971, p.1.

[12] Park Chung Hee, *Minjok*, pp.239-40.

[13] Nam Tŏgu, *Kyŏngje kaebal ŭi kilmok esŏ: Chiam Nam Tŏgu heogorok* [At the corner of economic development: Nam's memoir] (Sŏul: Samsŏng kyŏngje yŏn'guso, 2009), pp.84-6.

By the late 1960s Park Chung Hee had lost much of his popularity. The intensive social unrest in this period indicated that the public began to question Park's rule and became sceptical of his rhetoric. In short Park's 1961 pledge stopped functioning. In the 1960s Park had practiced populist politics on the one hand, and on the other, he employed developmentalist discourse and nationalism in order to prevent the general public from being radicalised. Nonetheless, toward the end of the 1960s, public antagonism against him intensified, and new frameworks of social conflict appeared such as capitalist versus proletariat or urban versus rural. Park needed to introduce a new creed that would help him unite the fragmented society under his rule.[14]

The Park regime consciously or unconsciously came up with virtues of self-reliance. International political and economic circumstances in the late 1960s affected Park's preoccupation with self-reliance. Politically Park decided to behave independently in the diplomatic world as the United States had first done so.[15] Park had to stress self-reliance as though the new line was his own choice when the Nixon doctrine forced him to be self-reliant. Though Park had stated that he would maintain the close relations with the United States in his 1961 pledge, now the changed international political situation pushed him to choose other rhetoric to persuade his people. Economically, by the mid-1960s direct aids from the United States had ended, and the Nixon government also limited shoe and textile imports and floated the dollar.[16] As a consequence South Korea could not help being self-reliant in the economic world too.[17]

While the international circumstances pushed Park Chung Hee towards self-reliance, he tried to rationalise this change in his own words. In the preface of his

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[14] Hwang Pyŏngju, 'Yusin ch'eje ŭi taejung insik kwa tongwŏn tamnon [The mass perception of the Yusin regime and its mobilization discourse]', *Sanghŏ Hakpo* 32 (2011): pp.154, 156.

[15] Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), p.359. Pak T'aegyun meanwhile argues that Park Chung Hee chose certain diplomatic line among other options in accordance with his preference when the international situation forced him to change. See Pak T'aegyun, 'Pak Chŏnghŭi ŭi Tongasia insik kwa Asia-T'aep'yŏngyang kongdong sahoe kusang [Park Chung Hee's perception of East Asia and scheme for Asian-Pacific community]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 76 (2006): p.121.

[16] Bruce Cumings, 'The origins and development of the Northeast Asian political economy: industrial sectors, product cycles, and political consequences', *International Organization* 38, no.1 (1984): pp.33-4.

[17] O Yusŏk, 'Nam-Pukhan ŭi kukka chudo palchŏn chŏllyak kwa taejung tongwŏn: Saemaŭl undong kwa Ch'ŏllima undong pigyo [The state-led development strategy and public mobilisation in South and North Koreas: comparison between the New Village Movement and the *Ch'ŏllima* movement]', *Tonghyang kwa chŏnmang* 64 (2005): p.199.

1971 book *Minjok ŭi chŏryŏk* (The Potential of the Nation) he wrote, 'I have confidence that our nation will magnificently revive on the foundation of the spirit of independence and self-help'.[18] He wanted each individual to realise this self-reliant 'spirit', and he also demanded that the people concentrate the entire national 'energy' on 'strong leadership'. At the same time he criticised those who uncritically adopted foreign culture, ie those who demanded democracy, asserting 'The idea of granting each individual liberty … did not harmonise with our traditional way of thinking'.[19] In other words Park was urging his people to unify, not to accept western democracy, and to concentrate all the national capability on the leadership.

A series of new policies in the early 1970s reflected this new creed of self-reliance. In 1971 he had given shape to the idea of self-reliant defence capability which became realised in 1974 under the name, *Yulgok* plan.[20] The third five-year economic development plan (1972-1976) aimed at fostering heavy chemical industries which would be eventually linked to localisation of weaponry.[21] Park had his Blue House staff lead these plans so as to bypass the Economic Planning Board which opposed the heavy chemical industrialisation in Korea under heavy influence of western economists. Though not every policy in the early 1970s was an outcome of the new creed, the *Yusin* regime itself and its several initial policies apparently reflected Park Chung Hee's perception of crisis and the new creed he had to embrace.

New creed and foreign policy

Along with those policy changes for domestic affairs, Korean foreign policy also began to change in the 1969-1971 period. Initially Korea did not give up the hope that the United States would never abandon Korea, and strengthened its effort to make American aids continue. At the same time, Korea was also decreasing its dependency on Japan and the United States and extended the scope of its foreign exchange in preparation for forthcoming self-reliance. Yet it could not easily give up its structural

[18] Park Chung Hee, *Minjok*, p.iii.

[19] Ibid, pp.253-4, 266.

[20] In his statement on the state of national emergency announced on 6 December 1971 too Park enunciated that he could not continue the defence strategy that relied on the United States and Japan. *Tonga ilbo*, 6 December 1971, p.1; Pak T'aegyun, 'Pak Chŏnghŭi', p.137.

[21] The third development plan was an idea of Chief Secretary O Wŏnch'ŏl who proposed to Park to introduce the heavy chemical industries for the sake of self-reliant national defence. See Kim Chŏngnyŏm, *Ch'oebin'guk esŏ sŏnjin'guk munt'ŏk kkaji: Han'guk kyŏngje chŏngch'aek 30-yŏnsa [From the poorest country to the corner of the developed country: 30-year history of the Korean economic policy]* (Sŏul: Raendŏm Hausŭ, 2006), p.394.

dependency on American security commitment and on the Japanese economy. Thus the years between the late 1960s and early 70s was a transitional period when dependency and self-reliance co-existed.

In 1969 the Korean government made a judgment that the Nixon administration's policy vis-à-vis Korea would not change much.[22] A foreign ministry report anticipated, 'The Korean-American bond would continue to support Korean defence capability to prepare for North Korean aggression, but the trade protectionism of the Nixon government interferes with Korea's effort to increase the trade with America'.[23] In other words, without political and diplomatic acumen, the Korean government 'believed' that the American military support would continue. In fact the US Department of Defense intended to continue the support for Korea whereas the White House thought differently.[24] It does not mean that Korea sat back naïvely. Quite the contrary, the Korean government kept pressing the US government to hasten the modernisation of the Korean military, which the both governments were aware, was a step toward the withdrawal of American troops from Korea. In addition, Korea began to approach Europe and Latin America in which it had had little interest thus far (see figure 2.1).

[22] According to the Fraser Report, for instance, 'Because of its contribution in Vietnam and its historical ties with the United States, the Seoul Government had assumed that its special relationship with the United States would exempt from it from the new policy [ie Nixon doctrine]'. Fraser Report, p.60.

[23] '1969-nyŏn ŭi uri oegyo [Our diplomacy in 1969]', 721.1 1969, 2939, Diplomatic Archives of Korea, Diplomatic Archives of Korea (hereafter, 'DAK'), p.4.

[24] Fraser Report, p.7.

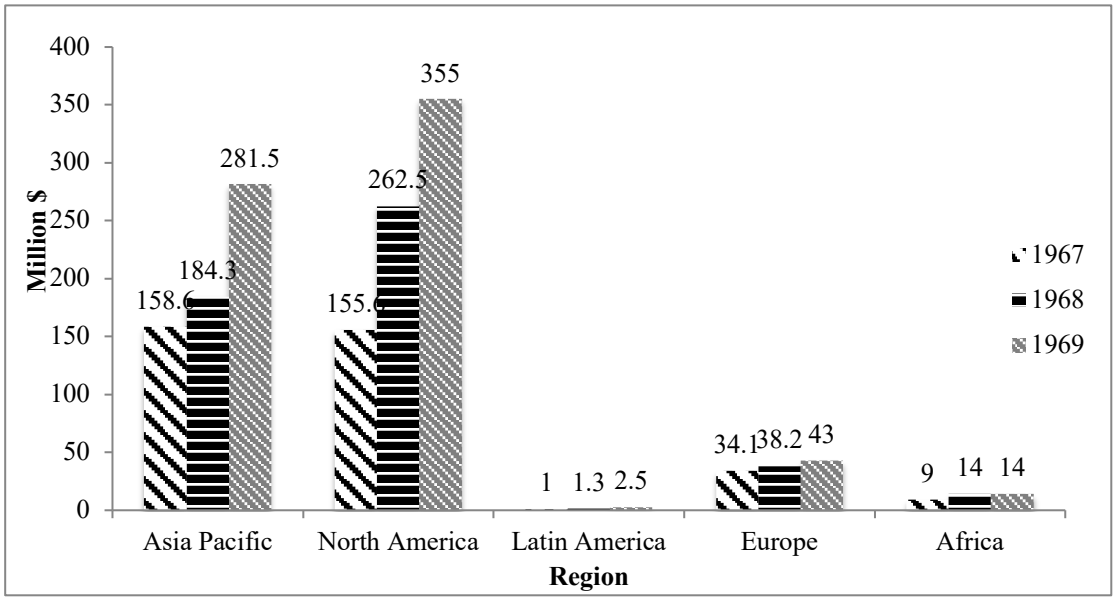

Figure 2.1 Korea's export by region, 1967-1969
Source: '1969-nyŏn ŭi uri oegyo [Our diplomacy in 1969]', 721.1 1969, 2939, DAK, p.18

But Korea's effort to diversify its trade partnerships was a reaction not only to American disengagement from East Asia but also to North Korea's attempt to expand its foreign exchange. Having realised the necessity for independent international politics, North Korea had approached the Third World and other countries earlier than South Korea. Though South Korea had diplomatic relations with more countries than North Korea had (see figure 2.2), South Korea recognised the North Korean effort as an 'aggressive challenge on the diplomatic font'.[25] At the same time, in the mood of thaw, South Korea sensed that it was getting left alone in confrontation with North Korea and worried if countries in the 'liberalist camp' would turn against South Korea to approach North Korea instead for their economic profit.[26] South Korea's expansion of its trade and diplomatic partners was, thus, pushed by inevitable self-reliance that the president himself pursued from the inside of the country and that the outside world simultaneously forced him to. On the one hand the Korean government was coping with the thaw, but on the other its coping method was to keep the 'liberalist camp' on its own side. In this sense Korea still remained in the Cold-War framework.

[25] Ibid, p.31.

[26] Ibid.

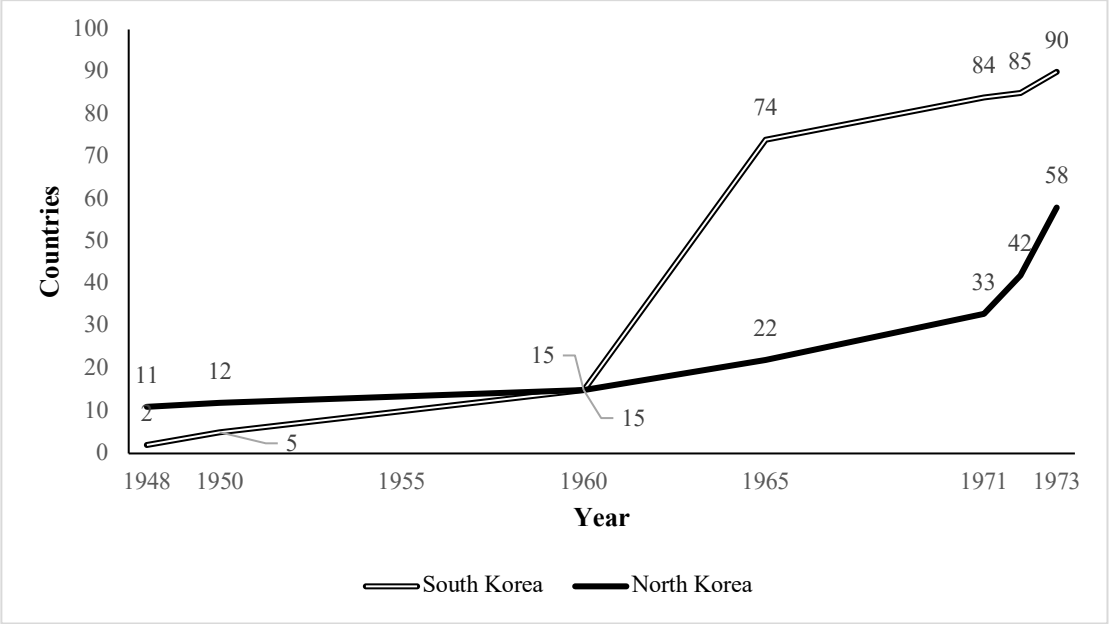

Figure 2.2 The number of countries with which two Koreas had diplomatic relations (aggregative)
Source: 'Pukhan ŭi oegyo kwan'gye surip hyŏnhwang [Current state of foreign relations of North Korea]', 725.1 1974, 7005, DAK, p.5.

Such ambivalence of the Korean government continued in the early 1970s. By then, the East Asian policy of the United States would allow some diplomatic autonomy to those countries that had been previously under strong American hegemony as far as they stayed out of Chinese hegemony, even if they no longer stuck to the Americans.[27] Accordingly Korea also attempted not to aggravate its relations with China by insisting that its relations with Japan were primarily economic in their nature, not military.[28] But, at the same time, Korea was not able to approach China as actively as Japan or the United States did. It still cherished the relations with Taiwan and tried to improve Taiwan's degrading international status, although it did not want to unnecessarily provoke the communist Chinese.[29]

In this way, Park embraced the virtue of self-reliance regardless of whether he liked it or not. Park in fact had advocated a 'self-reliant economy' as early as 1963,

[27] 'Miguk ŭi Asea chŏngch'aek kwa Han'guk ŭi t'ongil munje e kwanhan ŏndong pogo [Report on US' Asian policy and Korean unification problem]', 729.19 1971, 4322, DAK.

[28] CNW 0840 and CNW 0902, ibid. According to these two secret telegrams, Korea secretly asked the government of Canada to relay the message to China, which however the Korean government did not confirm to the media when asked.

[29] 'Uri nara ŭi tae Chunggong chŏngch'aek [Our policy to the PRC]', 721.1CP 1971, 4087, DAK, p.15

and Korean economy grew almost strong enough to sustain itself in the late 1960s.[30] Paradoxically, however, when the United States forced him to be self-reliant, he and his government reacted as if they had never aimed at self-reliance and kept asking for 'favours' from their old friends. It did not take very long before they fully realised the fact that they had to stand alone.

Regime Change in Japan: Satō to Tanaka

The Japanese case was less significant and less complex than the Korean case. At the time of regime change the Japanese political sphere was more stable and predictable compared to that of Korea. True, there were some factors that made this regime change in 1972 less than smooth: Satō Eisaku had been the longest-serving prime minister since the end of World War II, and succeeding Tanaka Kakuei was rather unconventional compared to other major politicians at the time. Tanaka had not graduated from a prominent national university nor did he have experience in bureaucracy. While the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)'s continuous rule was promising, he competed for the party chairmanship with Fukuda Takeo whose career quite contrasted to Tanaka's. Just a few months before the election Tanaka's faction separated from the Satō faction, and the prime minister endorsed Fukuda. Consequently Tanaka won. But in terms of foreign policy the new cabinet generally followed its predecessor's without a chasm in the regime change. Since the late Satō government, Japan had been moving toward contact with communist China at the expense of Taiwan, even earlier than the Americans. In other words, Japan's effort to get rid of Cold-War burdens began in the Satō period and was completed in the Tanaka period.

In 1971 many Japanese politicians, especially pro-Korean ones, still championed the solidarity of the southern triangle at least on the surface. In the fourth Korean-Japanese representatives meeting held in September, fervent anti-communist Kaya Okinori mentioned that wide cooperation between Korea and Japan was the minimum necessary condition for Korea's defence and that if communists reached the southern tip of the peninsula, Japan would be evidently threatened. This echoed the typical 'Busan red-flag theory' that Japanese politician Sawada Kenzō had coined in

[30] Fraser Report, p.25.

the late 1950s.[31] However, this was not necessarily a common opinion within the LDP or Japan in general. A bit earlier when he reorganised his third cabinet in July, Prime Minister Satō revealed some degree of ambivalence. He said that while the United States wanted the Japanese government to intervene in the textile issue, he did not intend to do so, leaving the matters to the private sector. In regard to China he still thought Taiwan was as important as mainland China and to China's membership in the United Nations he reserved judgment until other countries decided.[32] Though prudent, he was walking a fine line between Cold-War solidarity and pursuit of Japanese unilateral benefit.

By the beginning of the following year, the Japanese prime minister made everything clear. As China replaced Taiwan in the United Nations in October 1971, Satō mentioned that he wanted to call 1972 the year of normalisation (with China). Foreign Minister Fukuda Takeo anticipated that the US-China normalisation would be difficult whereas Japan's position was different from that of the United States since Japan was China's biggest trade partner. He also said that Nixon's visit to China was to be welcomed as far as the United States did not exclude Japan in its East Asian policy.[33] It was now clear therefore that by January 1972 the Japanese government had established a firm foreign policy, especially regarding the communist world. By June Fukuda declared that the Taiwan clause, which had appeared in the 1969 US-Japan communiqué, now ceased to exist. Although some argue that the Sino-Japanese rapprochement was made possible especially due to Japan's policy change in July 1972, above moves demonstrate that at least key officials in the government had already decided to lean toward China and that the Tanaka cabinet starting from July was carrying over its predecessor's policy.[34]

Still, Nixon's visit to China was the watershed that led overall Japanese public opinion to turn pro-China. While explaining the process of normalisation to his Soviet counterpart Andrei Gromyko, the foreign minister of the new Tanaka cabinet, Ōhira

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[31] 'Che 4-ch'a Han-Il kukhoe ŭiwŏn kandamhoe hoeŭi kirok [The minutes of the 4th Korea-Japan representatives' meeting]', 724.53JA 1971, 4223, DAK. The 'Busan red-flag theory' is if the communist power reaches the southern tip of the Korean peninsula (City of Busan), then Japan is equally in peril (therefore Japan should prevent South Korea from being communised).

[32] JAW-07155, 772JA 1971, 4693, DAK.

[33] JAW-01027, 772JA 1972, 5579, DAK.

[34] Hong N. Kim, 'Sino-Japanese relations since the rapprochement', *Asian Survey* 15, no.7 (1975): p.559. When he first became prime minister, Tanaka said to the press that his government was thoroughly an LDP government, and therefore his policies mainly follow LDP's policies. Ilchŏng 700-91, 721.2JA 1972, 4852, DAK.

Masayoshi, said that Japan's former policy on China, that only recognised the Taiwanese government, had been confronted with criticism not only from the entire opposition but also from within the LDP. As China acquired membership in the United Nations and as Nixon visited China in February, Ōhira mentioned, the opposing view had grown too difficult to suppress any longer.[35]

What mattered most to Korea was Japan's attitude to Taiwan whose international status was similar to that of Korea. In reality nothing much would change between Japan and Taiwan. Instead of embassies, similar organisations were established in both capitals, respectively called the Japan-Taiwan Interchange Association and the East Asian Relations Association in Tokyo and Taipei right after their embassies were closed. Diplomats and government functionaries worked in both organisations just as before. The idea, nonetheless, that Japan had recanted its recognition of Taiwan as the sole lawful Chinese government was shocking to Taiwanese and Koreans, and especially their dictators. In a series of statements Taiwanese Premier Jiang Jingguo condemned Japan for unilaterally abrogating the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty of 1952.[36] In divided countries legitimacy played an important role, at least among the conflicting governments themselves even if the outside world viewed it as meaningless; the withdrawal of other countries' official recognition meant the loss of legitimacy. Though the Japanese government obtained Korea's 'understanding' of its normalisation with China, the Korean government asked the Japanese not to approach North Korea or expand exchanges with it too rapidly.[37] Such a response of the Korean government shows that it apparently identified its precarious international status with that of Taiwan.

It was much less significant for Japan to honour others' legitimacy. Japanese foreign policy in this period was to separate politics and economy and thus to treat all countries equally regardless of their ideological affiliations (hence, equidistance diplomacy). Ideologically much more tolerant than other countries, Japan was probably the only country in East Asia that could separate politics and economy. If only possible, the separation would bring substantial fortune to Japan. As the

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[35] 'Ōhira daijin·Guromuiko daijin dai ikkai kaidan kiroku [Ōhira-Gromyko 1st conversation record]', 01-1376-1, Diplomatic Archives of Japan (hereafter, 'DAJ').

[36] The Taiwanese government handed the statements to the Korean government. See especially the statement issued on 29 September 1972, the day when Japan and China made public their communiqué in 722.12CH/JA 1972, 4892, DAK.

[37] 'Ōhira daijin·Guromuiko daijin', op cit.

skyrocketing quantity of Japan-China trades shows in table 2.1, Japan's pro-Chinese and equidistance policy was an economically rational choice.

Table 2.1 Japan's Annual Trade with the People's Republic of China (in 1,000 US Dollars)

Year	Export	Import	Total
1965	245,036	224,705	469,741
1966	315,150	306,237	621,387
1967	288,294	269,439	557,733
1968	325,438	224,185	549,623
1969	390,803	234,540	625,343
1970	568,878	253,818	822,696
1971	577,575	322,168	899,743
1972	608,921	491,115	1,100,036
1973	1,039,493	974,010	2,013,503
1974	1,988,309	1,305,080	3,293,389

Source: Institute for Economic and Industrial Research, 'Nitchū bōeki kankei shiryō [Materials related to Japan-China trade]', Bunkan-12-105-Hei 23-Kaigen 07606100, NAJ, p.1.

Considering what happened to Taiwan, Korea had good reason to worry about Japan's increasing contacts with North Korea, which was in the very framework of equidistance diplomacy. As can be seen in table 2.2, Japan's trade with North Korea was increasing, and especially after 1972 the quantity sharply rose. In fact Japan did not turn totally against the southern triangle. Japan at least tacitly gained China's consent to the US-Japan security treaty, and by no means did the Japanese government intend to normalise with North Korea at the cost of South Korea. Japan's trade with North Korea was slight compared to that with South Korea. But Japan was about to chase two hares, which South Korea could never accept. Japan swiftly jumped on the bandwagon of détente, and by doing so, was considered a menace by South Korea regardless of the actual current status of its relations with Japan.

Table 2.2 Japan's Annul Trade with North Korea (in 1,000 US Dollars)

Year	Export	Import	Total
1965	16,505	14,723	31,227
1966	5,016	22,692	27,708
1967	6,370	29,606	35,976
1968	20,748	34,032	54,780
1969	24,159	32,186	56,345
1970	23,344	34,414	57,758
1971	28,907	30,059	58,966
1972	93,443	38,311	131,754
1973	100,159	72,317	172,476
1974 (Jan-May)	71,287	38,444	109,731

Source: Institute for Economic and Industrial Research, 'Nitchō bōeki kankei shiryō [Materials related to Japan-North Korea trade]', Bunkan-12-105-00-Hei 23-Keigen 07602100, NAJ, p.3.

Although Japan's approach to communist countries did not start with Tanaka, the regime change accelerated détente in East Asia as Tanaka completed the Japan-

China normalisation even before the United States. At the base of Tanaka cabinet's foreign policy was its view of the world that Japan was faced with no imminent external threat.[38] Obviously Korea had a completely different view. This difference would be one of the fundamental causes of the conflict to come between Korea and Japan.

Economic Troubles

From 1969 the Korean-Japanese relations were already beginning to break down. In regard to the Korean economy, Japan was an ambivalent entity. On one hand Japan provided Korea with important capital and technology essential to grow the economy. On the other, nevertheless, Korea could not help worrying about the chronic trade deficit in its trade with Japan. While Japan was one of the few countries at the time that bought Korean products, Korea was losing much more than it was gaining in the trade. They never cooperated when the US government allotted quotas on textile importation; rather they individually approached the United States either to postpone the quota system or to gain larger quotas.

Trade deficit

From the beginning, Korea had been losing rather than gaining in its trade with Japan. No wonder, Japan was more industrialised than was Korea and thus had more products to sell; Korea had few areas of comparative advantage with the only exception of the relatively cheap labour. Korea's trade deficit was chronic. And, as trade with Japan increased in volume, its total deficit also mounted. Table 2.3 shows Korea's balance on trade with Japan, and figure 2.3 shows the import/export rate. The figure also indicates the number of times the keyword 'trade deficit with Japan (*taeil muyŏk yŏkcho*)' appeared in major Korean newspapers. From these one can understand that what mattered to the Koreans was the rate rather than the increasing imbalance. Clearly the media were talking about it most in the late 1960s when the import/export rate reached its zenith. In this situation the Koreans recognised the Japanese as 'salesmen' as appeared in a survey.[39] Though the American and Japanese

[38] Kim Tongmyŏng, 'Tanaka Kakuei seikenkini okeru tai Kankoku gaikō: "Kankoku jōkō no shūsei heno kokoromi [Korean policy of the Tanaka regime]', *Shōwa joshi daigaku kiyō*, no.967 (2021): p.3.

[39] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 1 January 1969, p.29.

capital vitalised the Korean economy, the Koreans – both in and out of the government – kept piling up their dissatisfaction with Japanese in economic relations.

Table 2.3 South Korea's Annual Trade with Japan, 1965-1979 (in 1,000 US Dollars)

Year	Export	Import	Total	Balance
1965	44,646	174,980	219,626	-130,334
1966	64,931	293,805	358,736	-228,874
1967	84,724	443,033	527,757	-358,309
1968	100,000*	623,199	623,199	-623,199
1969	113,327	753,779	867,106	-640,452
1970	234,329	809,282	1,043,611	-574,953
1971	261,988	953,777	1,215,765	-691,789
1972	407,876	1,031,085	1,438,961	-623,209
1973	1,241,539	1,726,901	2,968,440	-485,362
1974	1,380,196	2,620,551	4,000,747	-1,240,355
1975	1,292,904	2,433,603	3,726,507	-1,140,699
1976	1,801,554	3,098,964	4,900,518	-1,297,410
1977	2,148,287	3,926,576	6,074,863	-1,778,289
1978	2,627,266	5,981,487	8,608,753	-3,354,221
1979	3,353,028	6,656,699	10,009,727	-3,303,671

Source: Korea International Trade Association webpage, <http://stat.kita.net/>.

*According to the above source, the 1968 export figure is 0. This figure '100,000' is approximate value from Lee, *Japan and Korea*, pp.88-9.

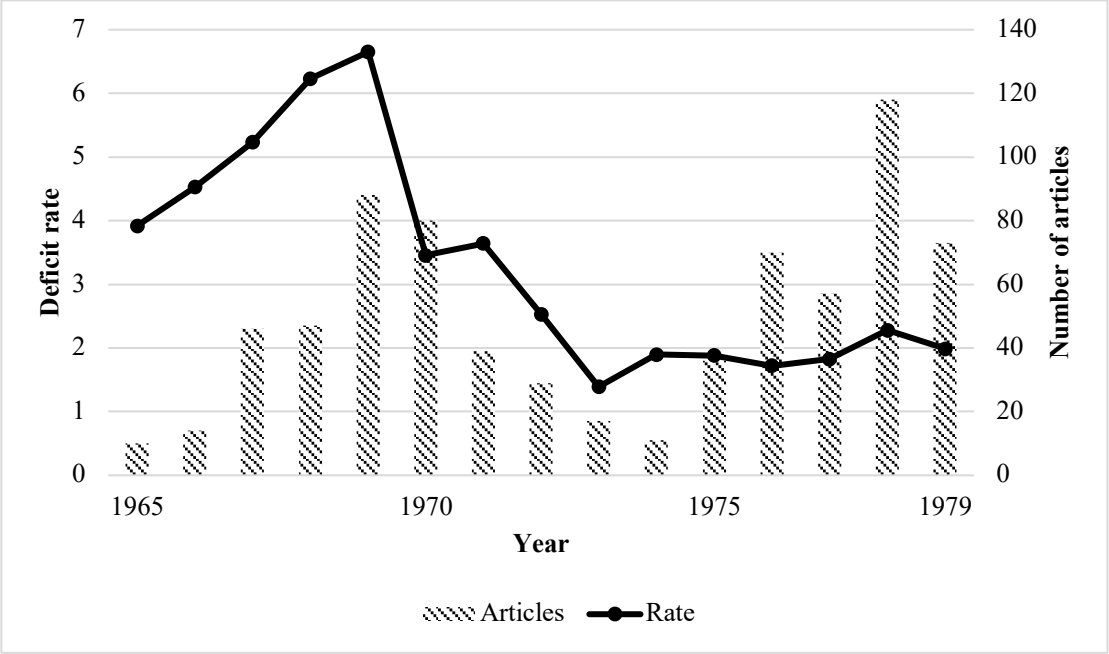

Figure 2.3 The number of Korean news articles on Korea's trade deficit against Japan and actual trade deficit rate, 1965-1979
Source: The Korea International Trade Association, <http://stat.kita.net/>; the Naver news library, <http://newslibrary.naver.com/>.

The deficit rate equals to Korea's import from Japan divided by Korea's export to Japan. The 1968 export value is presumed to be 100 million. The number of articles is the total number of articles of three Korean newspapers, *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, *Tong'a ilbo* and *Maeil kyŏngjae*, retrieved from the news library by the keyword, and thus this result may contain those articles that covered other countries' trade deficit with Japan (eg deficit in US-Japan trade) albeit not significantly.
The deficit rate equals to Korea's import from Japan divided by Korea's export to Japan. The 1968 export value is presumed to be 100 million. The number of articles is the total number of articles of three Korean newspapers, *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, *Tong'a ilbo* and *Maeil kyŏngjae*, retrieved from the news library by the keyword, and thus this result may contain those articles that covered other countries' trade deficit with Japan (eg deficit in US-Japan trade) albeit not significantly.

This is not to say that the media or the government intentionally instigated anti-Japanese sentiment by exaggerating Korea's loss in trade. Korea's imbalance was gradually increasing, and in the late 1970s when the deficit rate was lower than that of the past decade, the media still carried many articles on the issue. Though the media might care about actual deficit in the trade, they seem to have reflected the Korean people's general recognition that did not have to coincide with the index.

In any case, Korean officials found the trade deficit the worst problem in relations with Japan. From 1969 the top priority in the Korean government's policy towards Japan was to adjust the trade imbalance. To this end the government asked the Japanese to allow joint investment and import duty exemption for Korean products while domestically controlling imports from Japan.[40] In principle the Korean

[40] 'Che 6-ch'a Han-Il muyŏk hoedam pogosŏ [Report on the 6th Korean-Japanese trade conference]', 765.311 JA 1969, 3312, DAK. First digits (765.311 JA 1969) indicate the category

government aimed at increasing exports rather than controlling imports. But at the same time the government also demanded 'sincerity' from the Japanese. This fact appeared in the reply to an enquiry by a member of the National Assembly who told the government that the deficit seemed unsolvable unless the Japanese exhibited sincerity and the Japanese would not do so. In other words, though the Korean government did try some practical efforts to cope with the deficit problem, it was still expecting Japanese 'favour'.[41]

True, the trade deficit was a structural problem and therefore had few ways to adjust promptly. What the Korean side could do was simply introducing more Japanese capital (in the form of government loan) and more products to reprocess and export. Korea found its way to survive in international division of labour, which was its basic policy in Korean-Japanese cooperation. While Prime Minister Satō Eisaku optimistically said that Korea would surpass Japan sooner or later as Japan had done vis-à-vis the United States, the Korean side had to be satisfied with Satō's confirmation that Korean-Japanese relations were 'special'.[42]

Zhou Enlai's Four Principles

To Koreans' dissatisfaction, however, the Japanese side had little intention to treat the Koreans specially. Japan had been trading with the People's Republic of China since 1962 according to the so-called 'LT Trade Agreement' and to the 'Memorandum Trade' from 1968, an extended version of its predecessor.[43] For its annual renewal a Japanese envoy visited Beijing in 1970 where the Japanese accepted the four principles that Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai proclaimed. The four principles were that China would stop its trade with those Japanese companies (1) that cooperated with South Korea or Taiwan, (2) that invested in South Korea or Taiwan, (3) that exported armaments to cooperate in American war efforts in Vietnam, and (4)

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number and the second (3312) indicate the registration number of the file in which cited document can be found. The page number is that of the document, not of the microfilm. I omit the titles of files from the Diplomatic Archives of Korea or of Japan since, unlike document titles, compilers named file titles later and since one can identify files simply with the numbers.

[41] Chŏngmu 100-38 (73-0098); Oet'ong 321-314 (72-6241); T'ongil 764-30, 721.1 JA 1969, 2940, DAK.

[42] JAW-03082, 722.1 JA 1969-70, 3438, DAK.

[43] For detail, see Linus Hagström, *Japan's China Policy: A Relational Power Analysis* (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), p.79.

that were Japanese-American joint companies or subsidiaries of American companies. Simply put, China would not distinguish politics from economics.

The Japanese government might have regarded the principles as mere propaganda and expected the Chinese government would not really apply the principles. The Japanese government initially remained 'cool' and accepted the terms that the envoy had made in Beijing.[44] Such an attitude of the Japanese was shocking to Koreans, however. A major Korean newspaper *Tonga ilbo*'s editorial employed rather strong words to criticise the Japanese:

> The Memorandum on Comprehensive Trade between Japan and China on 19 April is outrageous. Although this memorandum is nothing but a curse at the current prime minister of the Japanese government, Satō Eisaku, 'elders' of the Liberal Democratic Party Deitmen Matsumura, Fujiyama and others signed the memorandum and announced it as a communiqué … Like North Korea, China has many products to import from but few to export to the West … Therefore, it is clear, if Japan endures a bit, then China will beg Japan to sell these products … As far as Japan's submissive attitude to China abets and encourages China's aggression, which threatens the freedom and independence of Asian countries, we cannot be indifferent to this matter.[45]

Nothing more than an emotional outburst, the editorial made the completely wrong conclusion that China was more impatient than Japan. Japan was looking for ways to diversify its trade partners and maximise its benefit just as Korea was, and not less exigently than Korea.[46]

The Korean government had few cards to reverse Japan's decision. The Korean foreign minister told the ambassador in Tokyo to 'request' that the Japanese government direct Japanese industries and trading companies so they could affect the Korean economy as little as possible.[47] Obviously, however, the Japanese did not want to miss the Chinese market at the cost of the Korean. The Japanese ambassador to Korea, Kanayama Masahide, said to a Korean bureaucrat that the Japanese did not worry much about Korea simply because Japanese companies could take a detour by founding their subsidiary companies.[48] Even a pro-Korean politician, Kishi Nobusuke, asked the Korean ambassador not to use such words as 'defence industry' or 'military

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[44] *Asaihi shinbun*, 20 April 1970, p.1.

[45] *Tonga ilbo*, 23 April 1970, p.3.

[46] 'Nitchū bōeki kankei sōtei mondō [Assumed Q&A regarding Japanese-Chinese trade]', Bunkan-12-105-7363, National Archives of Japan ('NAJ'), p.39.

[47] WJA-05157, 722.1 JA 1969-70, 3438, DAK.

[48] T'onghyŏp 762-516, ibid.

industry'; if (the Chinese found) Japanese business was involved in Korean defence industry, that could cause a grave problem due to the Zhou principles.[49] Whether or not to accept the Zhou principles eventually depended on individual companies. And one by one, those companies began to accept the principles. The Japanese industry minister, Miyazawa Kiichi, made it clear that the government would not intervene in this matter.[50]

Fortunately for Koreans, China was concerned mainly with Taiwan and thus was flexible in the matter of trades between Korea and Japan. Yet it became manifest that the Japanese could abandon Korea at any time for the sake of the Chinese market and that Korea had few diplomatic means to change the course the Japanese were about to take. Korea could only appeal to abstract emotion like these:

> We will doubt Japan's sincerity [*sinŭi*] if the economic cooperation and friendly relations that Korea and Japan have built are affected by a scheme of a third party, especially communists, so we will keep our eye on this matter.[51]
>
> Though Korea and Japan have shared many common things, after the war too many ways of thinking became different … Though Japan may think it strange for Korea to cry out for the opposition to communism all the time, I believe Japan can understand our special condition and position.[52]

The first quote is from a dialogue between two high foreign ministry officials of Korea and Japan, and the second is between the Korean ambassador to Japan and Prime Minister Satō. To Koreans, Japan was never a foe but was a partner that stood on the same side in the Cold War, and therefore Korea could ask 'sincerity' or 'favour' of the Japanese with justice. However the Koreans were sensing that the Japanese were growing away from them. Evoking Cold-War brotherhood was the last resort the Koreans could choose, and nevertheless the two countries were becoming competitors rather than partners.

Textile issues

The US President Nixon's policies had a hard impact on East Asian countries in general and both Korea and Japan in particular. The thaw with communist China,

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[49] JAW-05308, ibid.

[50] JAW-05343, appendix 1, ibid.

[51] T'onghyŏp 762-530, ibid.

[52] JAW-07269, ibid.

moratorium on engagement in Asian matters and economic protectionism including the abolishment of the Bretton Woods system brought about a 'shock' to those countries that economically and militarily relied upon the United States. Koreans were anxious about decreasing American military assistance and the actual withdrawal of US troops from the peninsula, despite United States' commitment that the US forces could always come to support the Korean military through a massive airlift operation. In Japan, 'families cancelled vacations and curtailed their purchases' as the new American policy reminded the Japanese of the days right after the end of the Second World War.[53] The two peoples' anxiety was a mix of economic and security issues, but their primary fear in short was abandonment.[54]

This shared fear appeared to lead economic cooperation of Korea and Japan. When the US government forced bilateral quota agreements, Japanese textile companies turned their attentions to less developed countries such as Korea, Taiwan and Southeast Asian countries, increasing their foreign direct investment.[55] With this capital flowing in, Korea launched heavy chemical industrialisation scheduled in its third economic development plan. Also, the Japanese government initially insisted on a multilateral agreement in which all the textile-exporting countries would partake.[56] And the Japanese clearly stated that they did not want to link the textile issue with the Okinawa issue – ie the return of Okinawa on which Japan and the United States were negotiating; so that Japan would not individually negotiate with the United States on better terms.[57]

However, the increase of Japanese investment did not necessarily mean that Korea and Japan cooperated. The Korean government had sought for more Japanese investment in order to compensate for losses in trade. Moreover the governments of Korea and Japan did not attempt to jointly cope with America's unilateral change of policy. From a Korean perspective, Japan was in a better condition in the negotiation

[53] Hugh Sidney, 'Asia feels "the Nixon shock"', *Life* 17 September 1971, p.4.

[54] Go Tsuyoshi Ito, *Alliance in Anxiety: Détente and the Sino-American-Japanese Triangle* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p.50.

[55] Kim Chong Min, 'The United States' economic disengagement policy and Korea's industrial transformation: implications of the textile disputes (1969-1971) for the quasi alliance in East Asia', *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 27, no.1 (2014): p.133.

[56] JAW-11075; JAW-11152, 765.01US 1969, 3308, DAK.

[57] Not only ostensibly but also even at the closed meeting with President Nixon, Prime Minister Satō told the president that he did not want to talk these issues together. 'Satō sōri-Nikuson daitōryō kaidan (dai ni kai 11 gatsu 20 nichi gozen) [Sato-Nixon talk, 20 November 1969 morning]', 01-527-3, DAJ.

due to the Okinawa issue.[58] Korea also preferred a multilateral negotiation like Japan. But, as the pressure from the United States continued, the Korean government had no choice but to independently deal with the American request, emphasising the differences between its situation and those of Japan and others.[59] On one hand the Korean government employed a lawyer to represent the government in the trade with the United States, while on the other it requested 'special consideration' and a favour – namely, exemption from the textile restrictions – just as it did to the Japanese government to adjust the trade deficit.[60]

The Korean economy was dependent on Japan and the United States. When Japan and the United States turned attention away from Korea, Korea had not many options to get their attention back. Thus the Koreans resorted only to ask a favour of these countries. When the United States forced Korea and Japan to accept quotas on textile export, however, Korea and Japan might have been able to form a united front for the American textile market. But the American insist on bilateral negotiation was stubborn on the one hand, and the Koreans did not have confidence in Japan's commitment to the multilateral negotiation with the United States. In the end Korea and Japan came to no significant economic cooperation.

Security Issues

North Korea had always been a menace to the south. Therefore South Korea was extremely sensitive to North Korea's behaviour and relations with other countries. Although the two Koreas ostensibly followed the international détente mood to announce their first communiqué in July 1972, they remained suspicious of each other and continued their system competition, if in low-profile, for years before and after the communiqué. Especially the South Korean government realised that the North Korean policy to the south changed from armed guerrilla warfare to diplomatic competition after 1969.[61] The south thus concentrated on preventing ideologically

[58] USW-1158, 765.01US 1969, 3307, DAK.

[59] USW-11190, which relayed a *Daily News Record* article on 24 November 1969.

[60] Documents in 765.1US 1969, 3309, DAK; Kim, 'The United States', p.126.

[61] The North Korean leader Kim Il Sung purged military hardliners of the *Manchu* faction in November 1968. But North Korea still remained aggressive with some tactical change for some time. In fact North Korean aggression vis-à-vis South Korea began to decrease from 1969, which the South Korean government condemned as North Korea's camouflaged 'peaceful aggression'. 'Han'guk anbo ch'eje ŭi hyŏnhwang [Current stage of Korean security system]', 729.19 1968-1971, 4323, DAK.

flexible countries from contacting the north, not only militarily but also culturally and economically.

Korea wished Japan to remain in such a framework. That is, Korea wanted Japan to contribute to security of the Far East at least within the US-Japan security agreement frame, maintain the role of the Okinawa base, try to prevent withdrawal of the US troops in the region, contribute to South Korea's economic development and stop contacting North Korea.[62] In short Korea desired to continue the Cold-War relations with Japan that they had had in the latter half of the 1960s. As sketched above, however, Korea and Japan had been conflicting in their economic relations. And despite several complaints that the Korean government made, the Japanese kept contacting North Korea in one way or another. Such an attitude of the Japanese government mounted Koreans' suspicion and dissatisfaction.

The Koreans had reasons to be alert to Japanese-North Korean relations. First, without much doubt, Korea concluded that Japan recognised the Republic of Korea as the sole legal government on the peninsula when they normalised their diplomatic relations. It was outrageous to South Korea that Japan nonetheless traded with North Korea, which from the Seoul's viewpoint was merely an outlawed group that illegally occupied the northern territory of the Republic of Korea.[63] Second, more practically, North Koreans could use Japanese products to directly or indirectly threaten the south. Third, many *zainichi* (in-Japan) Koreans were pro-North, and they travelled to North Korea not infrequently for business purposes. The Korean government worried that such contacts between Japan and North Korea could raise North Korea's international status, which would eventually result in strengthening of its war potential.[64] However, Korea's wish notwithstanding, Japan never stopped contacting North Korea or letting Korean residents in Japan contact North Korea, astounding South Koreans each time.

Germs deal and other trades

In February 1970 a Japanese private company, the Yanagida Corporation, secretly received orders from North Korea for germ colonies. No actual sale was made. The Korean government and press nonetheless 'reacted with anger to reports

[62] Mii 723, '70-nyŏndae kukka anbo oegyo ŭi panghyang [The course of national security diplomacy in the 70s]', ibid, pp.7-11.

[63] Ibid, pp.18-9.

[64] Ibid, p.11.

from Tokyo'.[65] Korean Foreign Minister Ch'oe Kyuha alluded, 'the north Koreans may have been responsible for the cholera epidemic in the West Coast of the Republic in September 1969', thereby simultaneously laying a charge against Japan.[66] The world regarded such a claim of the Korean government as nonsense and believed that the government was 'attempting to make the maximum propaganda use out of those reports in order to put pressure on the Japanese government to curb its trade with north Korea'.[67] Whether or not the North Koreans successfully smuggled, or imported, the germs, the South Korean government was extremely cautious of Japan-North Korea contacts and trying to forestall those contacts no matter how meaningful they were.

In a few days the germs deal became a hot political issue between Korea and Japan. On the one hand the Japanese government argued that no evidence showed the Japanese firm had received an order from North Korea. On the other hand the Korean government whipped up anti-Japanese campaign in the press and tried to attract world's attention on the issue. Also the Koreans still emphasised the cholera epidemic in the past year, implicitly blaming the Japanese. This emphasis continued despite North Korea's denial of the order for germs. As the government intended, mass rallies took place to denounce the Japanese.[68]

The Korean government considered taking a firm diplomatic measure and requiring the Japanese government to completely ban Japan-North Korea trade.[69] The Korean government warned that if the Japanese companies kept exporting strategic materials to North Korea, South Korean-Japanese relations would deteriorate, in spite of the Japanese counterargument that Japan did not ship strategic materials to the north. The Principal Secretary of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK) Zouheir Kuzbari analysed these circumstances:

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[65] 'Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, 6 February 1970', Japan and the Korean Peninsula collection, Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars Digital Archives (hereafter, 'Wilson Center').

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] 'Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, 13 February 1970', Japan and the Korean Peninsula collection, Wilson Center.

[69] *Tonga ilbo*, 13 February 1970, p.1.

> It appears that the main motive behind the ROK Government's protest is its concern that some of the exported Japanese machineries to the DPRK has been reportedly used for military purpose. It is unlikely though that the Japanese government will heed the ROK's protest and curb its trade with north Korea since its policy has always been to distinguish trade and ideology. [70]

That is, the basis of this South Korean-Japanese conflict was the different attitudes of the two countries towards trade and ideology; to Korea they were inseparable whereas to Japan they were not so much interrelated.

Visiting the North

For the same reason, South Korea and Japan disputed over whether to allow Koreans in Japan to visit North Korea. As a legacy of the imperialist era, many of *zainichi* Koreans did not acquire either Japanese or South Korean nationality and remained in Japan as special aliens without nationality. Many of them were inclined to North Korea ideologically regardless of their origins, and sometimes spoke for North Korea in Japan. The Japanese government occasionally allowed a few of them to visit North Korea for non-political purposes, which obviously provoked the South Korean government. The Japanese government had no uniform policy on the Korean peninsula. While the germs deal issue aggravated South Korean-Japanese relations, South Koreans welcomed Prime Minister Satō's remark in the Diet that Japan would consent to US combat operation in the event of aggression against South Korea.[71] Soon, however, on 8 March 1970 the Japanese government also allowed six of those *zainichi* Koreans who belonged to the pro-north General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (*zai Nihon Chōsenjin sōrengokai*, abb *sōren* in Japanese or *ch'ongnyŏn* in Korean) to visit North Korea. That means when they came back from North Korea, the Japanese government would allow re-entry to Japan. The Japanese government also planned to resume the repatriation of *zainichi* Koreans to North Korea, which had been terminated in 1967.

This permission of re-entry was a part of Japan's broader policy on its relations with communist countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan had formulated a policy of relaxing regulations on travel to unrecognised communist countries such as China, North Korea, North Vietnam and East Germany. Accordingly the Japanese government had allowed Chinese in Japan to visit

[70] 'Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, 27 February 1970', Japan and the Korean Peninsula collection, Wilson Center.

[71] Ibid.

Guangzhou in Mainland China to partake in the Canton Export Commodities Fair. It was in accordance with this policy change that the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Justice of Japan almost mechanically allowed the six Koreans to visit North Korea without a serious consideration of international politics. Some conservative Japanese as well as many South Koreans worried that if those communist countries allowed entry of visitors from Japan, Japan would also have to issue visas to visitors from those countries too, in accordance with reciprocity.[72]

Japan's seemingly indecisive attitudes were sufficient to make the Korean government feel betrayed. Only two days before the Japanese Foreign Ministry announced its new policy, on 6 March, the Korean ambassador to Japan met the prime minister who told him that while he was contemplating allowing the Chinese-in-Japan to visit Guangzhou, North Korea was a completely different issue, and therefore he would not allow the *zainichi* Koreans to visit North Korea even on a humanitarian basis.[73] But in fact the situation turned into something different from the prime minister's promise, and Korean Foreign Minister Ch'oe warned the Japanese ambassador to Korea that such a policy of the Japanese government would 'adversely affect and harm relations between the two countries'.[74] The warning notwithstanding, the Japanese remained firm. Japanese Foreign Minister Aichi Kiichi told the Korean ambassador to Japan that the Japanese government would not change the policy.[75]

On 19 March Japan again attempted to compromise with South Korea. In the conversation between Foreign Minister Aichi and the Korean ambassador to Japan, the minister told the ambassador that he would not allow visits or repatriation to North Korea any more at least during his incumbency. The minister said that even if the minister of justice had a different opinion, he would prevent the justice minister and that when he retired, he would make sure his successor followed his line. He also assured the ambassador that Japan traded with North Korea with cash, not credit or usance, and that all the items sold were non-strategic materials. The minister then reassured the ambassador that what he said was the official policy of the Japanese

[72] *Tonga ilbo*, 9 March 1970, p.1, 4.

[73] JAW-03082, p.6. Interestingly in this secret telegram somebody underlined this part of Satō's utterance.

[74] 'Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, 13 March 1970', Japan and the Korean Peninsula collection, Wilson Center.

[75] Ibid.

government. The ambassador in turn asked the minister not to unilaterally decide anything like this case regarding the peninsula in the future.[76]

The aggravated South Korean-Japanese relations seemed to improve when the *Yodo-gō* incident took place. On the last day of March 1970, nine members of Red Army Faction hijacked Japan Airlines Flight 351 to leave Japan for North Korea. The Korean Air Force guided the hijacked plane en route to Pyongyang and landed it at Seoul Gimpo Airport. There the Japanese government exchanged the hostages with the vice-minister of transportation and let the hijackers leave for their destination. On 5 April North Korea sent back the hostage and pilots with the aircraft. In part this affair seemed to encourage security cooperation between the two countries. The South Korean government took a tact to give an opportunity to Japan to exchange the hostages and thus thought that it did a favour to the Japanese government. But some Japanese intellectuals asserted that if the Korean government had not forced the plane to land in Seoul at will, the hostages would have come home sooner. Moreover, as the North Koreans returned the people and the plane sooner than expected, South Koreans thought, Japan now might feel indebted to North Korea in accordance with the 'oriental art of diplomacy'.[77] South Koreans' grievance appeared in a *Tonga ilbo* editorial which pointed that the Japanese had never appreciated the presence of South Korea although Japan benefited a lot from trade with it as well as from the Korean War.[78]

North Korea: untouchable issue in South Korea

Japan's attitude to North Korea was one of the most important factors that determined the status of South Korean-Japanese relations. Probably the best example is the Korean government's first deportation of the foreign press. In September 1972 an affiliated company of Japanese *Yomiuri shinbun* newspaper, *Shūkan Yomiuri* published a book called *Chuche no kuni, Chōsen* (North Korea: a country of *Juche*), which introduced North Korea's politics, economy, military and culture. The South Korean government found in this book a sentence that it thought denounced South Korea. The sentence was: 'the "country" called the Republic of Korea was created as

[76] Ilchŏng 700-38, 722.1 JA 1969-70, 3438, DAK.

[77] 'Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan, 10 April 1970', Japan and the Korean Peninsula collection, Wilson Center.

[78] *Tonga ilbo*, 6 April 1970, p.3.

an instrument of American imperial policy of containing the Communist camp in Asia and has been used as a pawn.'[79] On 7 September the Korean embassy at Tokyo made an official complaint to *Yomiuri shinbun*. Next day, having received this news from Tokyo, the South Korean government revoked *Yomiuri*'s press permit in Korea and ordered its journalists to leave the country by 11 September.[80]

This would not have had to develop into a major event. Officially the South Korean government made it clear that the matter had nothing to do with South Korean-Japanese relations but to do exclusively with *Yomiuri*.[81] Even in Japan overall opinion was that *Yomiuri* had crossed the line.[82] A problem occurred, nonetheless, when a crowd of people in Korea broke into the Japanese embassy at Seoul and committed vandalism. Some Japanese press understood this incident as something based on anti-Japanese sentiment.[83] One thing worth noting, however, is that the crowd consisted mostly of disabled veterans who were generally pro-government and ideologically extremely anti-communist. This is not to say that the Korean government mobilised these people; in fact the government apologised to the Japanese and paid for the damage. Instead the point is that the crowd was not anti-Japanese but anti-communist. They were infuriated at *Yomiuri*'s attitude toward North Korea, not at Japan. Likewise those Korean residents in Japan, who belonged to *Mindan*, the pro-South residents' organisation, protested in front of the *Yomiuri* headquarters at Osaka. These people were also ideologically biased toward South Korea although it might be difficult to say that they followed the Korean government's instruction.

The South Korean government took this matter seriously. Before the Korean government deported the Japanese journalists, it fully considered this action's possible diplomatic effect. While the Korean government officially expressed that it did not want this matter to affect current South Korean-Japanese relations, it actually risked diplomatic friction with Japan. When Japanese Ambassador to Korea Ushiroku Torao complained in low profile that the deportation was an immoderate measure and that the Korean government could have warned *Yomiuri* instead of deporting its

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[79] Ilchŏng 700-4991, 754.52JA 1972, 5438, DAK.

[80] JAW-09122, WJA-09136, ibid.

[81] AM-0906, ibid.

[82] JAW-09117, JAW-09180, ibid.

[83] *Tokyo shinbun*, 10 September 1972 as appeared in JAW-09187, ibid.

journalists, the Korean vice-minister of foreign affairs adamantly said that though Korea acknowledged freedom of speech, newspapers could not talk about simply any topic at will.[84] Thus the Korean government made it clear that issues related to North Korea were untouchable without the South Korean government's consent.

In these trilateral relations between Japan and the two Koreas, South Korea feared possible abandonment from Japan. From the South's perspective, increasing cultural and economic exchange between Japan and North Korea could conclude in normalisation between the two and eventually in abandonment of the South.[85] Therefore the South Korean government ceaselessly reminded the Japanese that Japan had recognised the Republic of Korea as the sole legitimate regime on the peninsula in the 1965 normalisation treaty regardless of how differently the Japanese interpreted the treaty. To South Korea, Japan's recent attitudes were dubious. For instance, some members of the Liberal Democratic Party urged the Japanese government to refer North Korea by its official name, Democratic People's Republic of Korea.[86] The resumption of repatriation was another instance. Obviously Japanese-North Korean relations were improving. Under these circumstances the South Korean government strongly protested to the Japanese about the groundless suspicion that a Japanese firm was responsible for the cholera epidemic. The two Koreas now competed for economic development as well as military dominance. The South Koreans thus wanted to monopolise relations with Japan. Japan's wish was different, however. Even though it might feel closer to the south, it wished to maintain good relations with both Koreas, if possible. Here did relations of the two begin to break down.

* * *

With the advent of the 1970s international circumstances started to change. The East and West were seeking for rapprochement while each country, which formerly firmly belonged to one of the two camps, was pursuing an independent way to navigate an uncertain future. In this process Japan was faster than Korea in adopting the new international trend. Viewing it as an opportunity, Japan swiftly changed its foreign policy into equidistance diplomacy and approached the communist world, especially

[84] Report from the Foreign Ministry to President, 11 September 1972, ibid.

[85] 'Kuzbari to Narasimhan, 10 April 1970', op cit.

[86] Ibid.

China and including North Korea, in an effort to expand its overseas market. Viewing it as a crisis, Korea initially tried in vain to cling to the already old-fashioned Cold-War trilateral relations with Japan and the United States. Korea kept asking these countries to provide material and ideological support as they had done in the previous decade. Simultaneously, as the changing global circumstances stopped supporting Park Chung Hee's legitimacy, Park began to be more dictatorial and to emphasise self-reliance. As will be discussed in the following chapter, these changes formed basic conditions for the abduction of Kim Dae Jung.

It is rather widely known that the abduction of Kim Dae Jung in the following year brought about a full-scale conflict between the two countries. However, the abduction did not take place in a vacuum. Korea and Japan were economically dissatisfied by and politically distrustful of each other. Their short-lived bond as Cold-War friends, if not allies, began to break down with the advent of détente. Now that their common purpose had disappeared, each began to pursue its own benefit for the sake of survival in the international arena.

CHAPTER THREE
ABDUCTION

> The friendly relationship between the two countries should be maintained and developed through both countries' endeavour … This incident is poignant, yet we have no choice except for finding truth and aiming at its fair settlement. It might be momentarily distressful, but by doing so the friendship of both countries will last for long.[1]
>
> Ōhira Masayoshi, 1973

In August 1973 the former Korean presidential candidate Kim Dae Jung was staying in Tokyo. After Park Chung Hee established the *Yusin* regime, Kim was practically in exile. Moving between Japan and the United States, he delivered speeches and founded anti-Park organisations among Koreans living abroad. On 8 August the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) abducted him from Tokyo and released him in Seoul. The abduction brought about a major conflict between Korea and Japan. Although Korean-Japanese relations had suffered from friction for the last few years, the abduction escalated the previous war of nerves into a real diplomatic battle. Each belligerent had to fight for its own maximum benefit until they agreed on a truce.

The abduction and the diplomatic conflict that followed were an outcome of the emergence of the *Yusin* system. The dictatorial regime in Korea could not overlook Kim Dae Jung's political activities abroad and had to bring him over to Korea at all costs for the sake of the regime's political security. Meanwhile the dictatorship attracted the attention of Japanese intellectuals and opposition politicians to Korean democracy. If their concern for Korea had been limited to those Koreans living in Japan, or *zainichi*, the scope of their concern broadened to Korean domestic politics and Japan's relations with two Koreas, with decreasing Cold-War tension. They urged the Tanaka government to take a high posture towards the Korean government. Reluctant to be entangled in the Korean domestic affair, Tanaka hovered on a brink of a decision and, in the end, gave in to the Korean demand for covering up the problems related to the abduction.

This agreement was far from collusion between the two governments, not to mention cooperation. Unlike what Japanese Foreign Minister Ōhira Masayoshi said in the opening quote, the two governments tried to find a way out of the 'momentarily

[1] Ōhira Masayoshi, Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Councillors, 71-san-gaimu iinkai-23go, 6 September 1973, National Diet Library (hereafter, 'NDL'), p.8.

distressful' situation by not 'finding truth' and 'aiming at its fair settlement'. Rather the agreement resulted on the one hand from the audacious diplomacy of the Park Chung Hee regime and on the other from the passive and incompetent diplomatic policy of the Tanaka cabinet toward Korea. Such an abnormal and temporary agreement did not lead the two countries to a long-lasting friendship, as Ōhira wished, but only to another conflict in a few months.

Aftermath of the *Yusin*

The *Yusin* was a period of naked power, a reign of terror. It was an abnormal polity whose raison d'être was to prolong the withering political life of Park Chung Hee through all possible means. Park mobilised his military forces to pass the new constitution and launch the fourth republic while oppressing the resistance of intelligentsia and opposition politicians. Surveillance, detention, torture and murder, all with or without legal warrant served as instruments for the regime to keep its power. It was a Korean version of the 'dirty war', if less intense compared to the original in Argentina during a very similar period. Because of its abnormality, the regime had to explain its legitimacy to the outside world, particularly the United States, on the one hand. On the other hand, in the same vein, the regime needed to silence the arising anti-regime movement among Korean societies abroad. The abduction of Kim Dae Jung was a combined outcome of these two efforts of the Park regime.

Aftermath of the Yusin

Within Korea the ferocity of the *Yusin* regime came fast and furiously. In December 1971, when Park Chung Hee proclaimed a state of national emergency, Christian journalist Ham Sŏkhŏn vociferously denounced the government in his own periodical, *Ssial ŭi sori* (Voice of the People), saying, 'Now the government is ordering unconditional obedience from its people'.[2] After the regime was formally established, however, such criticism could not last. From October 1972 when Park staged a coup for himself by invoking martial law, to October 1973, for about a year it was almost impossible to find an article in newspapers on student protests against the regime, which had not been unusual before. Many of ordinary Koreans might have

[2] Ham Sŏkhŏn, 'Pisang sat'ae e taeha nŭn uri ŭi kago [Our resolve against the state of emergency]', *Ssial ŭi sori*, December 1971, p.6.

lived everyday life, but for the intelligentsia the winter of 1972-3 must have been the coldest one with their mouths forcibly shut.[3]

The outside world viewed this demise of democracy with caution but also with silence. According to a *Newsweek* article, most countries remained silent on the matter of the new regime, and the United States concluded that the self-coup was Korea's internal affair.[4] The attitude of the US government was indeed ambivalent. Take a look at a secret US government document:

> We have made clear to the Korean Government that we see no need for the extraordinary measures President Park has taken and will not associate ourselves with them in any way. We have expressed our hope to the Korean Government that the state of martial law will end as soon as possible and that the past commitment to democratic institutions will not be abandoned. We do not intend, however, to confront the government publicly on these matters.[5]

So the US government did not endorse the coup d'état while not opposing it explicitly either. While the White House regarded the new Korean regime as an indirect challenge, it acknowledged Park's contribution to the Sino-American rapprochement by remaining silent. Besides, due to the forthcoming presidential election in December 1972, the United States remained rather indifferent to foreign affairs at the moment and simply 'complained' about the new regime.[6]

Park Chung Hee might be becoming more ultranationalist in rhetoric. But, in practice, it was impossible for his government to dissatisfy the US government. Above all Korea was faced with a reduction of American security assistance and withdrawal of American troops from the peninsula. Although the Korean government anticipated that the Nixon administration would not attempt a sudden and total withdrawal of the troops, it did not have much hope as to whether Congress would approve Executive's request for aid to Korea. In fact, starting in 1972, the actual assistance grant Korea received showed a wide gap from the amount the Executive

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[3] According to a CIA document, 'Several newspaper executives have already been placed under house arrest for questioning government tactics ... The police … [undisclosed] have [sic] been instructed to make certain that … the new constitution is endorsed by 86 percent of those voting. The public has remained largely indifferent'. CIA, 'Korea', November 21, 1972, United States and the Two Koreas collection, Digital National Security Archives (hereafter, 'DNSA').

[4] 'Another domino falls – to the right', *Newsweek*, 30 October 1972, p.56.

[5] [Origin unknown], 'Republic of Korea: martial law developments', October 27 1972, United States and the Two Koreas collection, DNSA.

[6] Lyong Choi, 'The foreign policy of Park Chunghee: 1968-1979' (PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012), p.93.

requested (see table 3.1). The Korean government therefore felt it necessary to persuade representatives in the US Congress and to demonstrate to them that Korea still held values such as anti-communism and democracy which the Americans fancied. In consequence the Korean government fostered enthusiastic propaganda towards the United States and other parts of the world.[7]

Table 3.1 American security assistance for fiscal years 1971-75 to the Republic of Korea (in millions of US Dollars)

	Military assistance program–grant assistance		Foreign military sales–sales on credit terms		Excess defence articles–grants of equipment	
Fiscal Year	Requested	Actual	Requested	Actual	Requested	Actual
1971	290.8	291.2	10.0	15.0	–	137.7
1972	239.4	155.5	15.0	17.0	40.0	227.8
1973	215.7	149.6	25.0	24.2	33.6	29.7
1974	263.7	94.1	25.0	56.7	43.0	17.7
1975	161.5	82.6	52.0	59.0	20.8	3.1

Source: Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, 'Investigation of Korean-American Relation', Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session (Washington DC: US Government Publishing Office, 1978), p.70.

Selling the Yusin

The Korean government intended to affect American policy-making procedure in diverse ways for its own sake. It also tried some illegal ways under the American legal system, thereby causing the so-called 'Koreagate' scandal in 1976. A document, prepared by the Korean embassy Washington DC, suggested seven ways to propagandise Korea's policy. The suggestions included not only conventional ways such as planning a summit conference and exchanging of envoys but also some novel ways such as hiring professional PR firms in the United States or making use of American academia.[8] In the same vein the Korean government tried to convince those American representatives who visited Korea of the new regime.[9]

The president's excuse for the *Yusin* somewhat changed to suit the Americans' taste. When Park proclaimed a state of siege, he declared, 'We must be alert to the point that major powers can sacrifice small countries under the name of détente'.[10] To

[7] 'Miguk ŭi taehan chŏngch'aek e taehan chŏnmang – Uri anbo wa kwallyŏn hayŏ [Perspect of US policy to Korea: regarding our security]', 721.2US 1973, 5746, Diplomatic Archives of Korea (hereafter, 'DAK').

[8] Ibid.

[9] 724.52US 1972-73, 5948, DAK, passim.

[10] Republic of Korea government, Official gazette (*kwanbo*), 6290, no.2, 17 October 1972, National Archives of Korea.

the American representatives such remarks on powers were omitted. Instead the president emphasised that the old constitution did not accord with the new tide of the world – ie détente– and thus that it was difficult to push forward national unification with the old constitution. He never told a lie; he simply clarified the necessity for efficiency and self-governance, to paraphrase his remarks.[11] Those representatives who visited Korea usually belonged to the committees on foreign affairs, armed services or appropriations. They had no reason to dislike such terms as efficiency and self-governance, which could help the United States to curtail its foreign expenditure, just as a US Department of Defense report indicated, 'It is in the US interest as tensions abate in Korea to achieve a lower level of commitment in South Korea and for that country to handle more of its own defense burden, preferably at a reduced level of armament'.[12]

A result of US Congress' investigation in the 'influence campaign' of the Korean government, the Fraser report detailed all such efforts by the Koreans.[13] According the report, the Korean government had conducted the influence campaign in the 1960s too, but the activities of the KCIA had not been as significant as they were in the 1970s.[14] An average of six or seven KCIA agents were stationed in the Korean embassy Washington DC as consuls, and they were responsible for maintaining Korea's image in the executive branch, the Department of Defense, Congress, academia, the media and the Korean community.[15]

While political-manoeuvring scheme towards the administration or Congress might be rather a conventional diplomatic means, the effort at influencing academia and media showed the KCIA's plan was vast. This report explained the gist of the KCIA plan:

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[11] 'Myŏndam charyo [conversation material]', 724.52US 1972-73, 5948, DAK. See those for Rep. Jagt and Sen. Inouye.

[12] Defense Technical Information Center, 'The reduction of tension in Korea', vol.1, technical report, June 1972, Nautilus Institute FOIA document, p.9.

[13] Along with the Fraser Report, another report by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct dealt with Korean government's efforts to influence Members of Congress via illegal means. See United States House of Representatives Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, 'Korean influence investigation', Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session (Washington DC: US Government Publishing Office, 1978). Representative names listed on the report were Richard T. Hanna, Cornelius E. Gallagher, Otto E. Passman, Edwin W. Edwards and William E. Minshall as recipients of bribes offered by Korean lobbyist Pak Tongsŏn ('Park Tongsun'). According to the report, the Korean government adopted 'a plan or series of plans at least as early as 1972'. See p.93.

[14] Fraser Report, p.102.

[15] Ibid, p.90.

> Part of a 1973 Government plan to influence American public opinion included efforts to "organize indirectly, or to finance covertly scholastic meetings, seminars, and symposia of Korean and American professors to rationalize [President] Park's dictatorship or at least, to curb their criticism." … Such efforts to use American academic institutions and scholars for political purposes were part of a larger clandestine KCIA plan to improve the image of the Government in this country through "seduction, payoff, and intimidation."[16]

The Korean government financed a number of Korean studies programmes in American universities. From 1972 to 1978 total funds the Korean government offered reached over $2.4 million.[17] In a similar fashion the Korean government also approached media in the United States. It treated those foreign correspondents who were friendly to the regime while denying entry of those who were not.[18] To Korean media in America the KCIA would simply 'harass and intimidate' or 'slander through charges of Communist affiliation' those who were critical to the regime.[19]

Kim Dae Jung abroad

The greater the Korean government's struggle to sell the *Yusin* regime, the more uncomfortable it was with what Kim Dae Jung was doing abroad. Opposing the Korean government's efforts, Kim criticised the regime and its policies in Japan and the United States. Fortunately Kim had left Korea right before the *Yusin* constitution was adopted, and therefore he became almost the only politician who could criticise the regime without much concern for detention, slander or torture, which some of

[16] Ibid, p.262. Original brackets.

[17] Ibid, p.265. For the entire report on academia, see pp.262-96.

[18] Ibid, p.311. Anybody who suspects credibility of the Fraser Report should refer to a Korean government document at least on this point. One of the telegrams sent from the Korean embassy Washington DC reported to the foreign minister in Seoul that the embassy was considering following options as measures to take against a newspaper article that quoted Kim Dae Jung. The measures were (1) to contact the journalist who wrote the article and have him write another favourable to 'us', (2) to have other columnist in the same newspaper write a favourable column who had been invited to Korea by the cultural ministry, (3) to extensively contact columnists in Washing DC who were expected to meet Kim and (4) to have a consul in New York City take a precautionary measure against the *New York Times*. See USW-0468, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Korea, *Kim Taejung napch'i sakkŏn kwallyŏn charyojip* [Sourcebook regarding the Kim Dae Jung abduction] v.1 (P'aju: Hanguk haksul chŏngbo, 2010), p.12. This sourcebook is a compilation of declassified foreign ministry documents related to Kim's abduction. The same documents can be found at the DAK, but for the sake of convenience, I use this book in this thesis. Pagination follows pages of the sourcebook in this case, not of original documents therein (hereafter, 'Sourcebook').

[19] Fraser Report, pp.301-2. For the entire report on American media, see pp.301-11.

anti-*Yusin* politicians in Korea had experienced at the time.[20] From abroad he issued statements when Park proclaimed a state of siege, when Park announced the *Yusin* constitution and when the constitution passed the referendum. As the KCIA agents approached political sphere, academia and media, Kim also met those politicians, scholars and journalists who were sceptical of the *Yusin* regime. These people included Utsunomiya Tokuma (LDP); Den Hideo (JSP); Marshall Green, US Department of State; Edward 'Ted' Kennedy, US Senate; and Edwin Reischauer, Harvard University. He interviewed with major publishers of the world such as *Asahi, Sekai, Chūō kōron* or the *Economist* and even published his own book about his struggle against the dictatorship.[21]

Kim Dae Jung exuberantly travelled around the world, giving speeches on the Korean domestic situation, which people could hardly learn from newspapers or lectures. And where he went, KCIA agents followed. In almost all telegrams these followers sent to their Seoul headquarters, Kim appeared to be constantly involved in anti-regime activities except when flying between countries. Further, the KCIA reported all the behaviours of Kim to the president.[22] Along with the KCIA, the Foreign Ministry also kept checking on Kim.[23] Embassies in Washington DC and Tokyo as well as consulates around the United States wired full texts of Kim's addresses, interviews and related news articles. They secretly investigated those whom Kim met, and especially in the case where their targets were Koreans, they demanded background checks to Seoul. To them Kim was not a mere former politician; they treated him as if he was a political dissident only slightly less dangerous than North Korean guerrillas or terrorists.[24]

To summarise Kim's remarks until his abduction, he pointed out regime's dictatorial nature, it's corruption, and the ill-managed economy; the regime was, in a word, unstable. To Americans Kim tried to correct what he believed to be

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[20] Kukchŏngwŏn kwagŏ sakŏn chinsil kyumyŏng ŭl t'onghan palchŏn wiwŏnhoe, *Kwagŏ wa taehwa mirae ŭi sŏngch'al* vol.5 [Dialogue with the past, reflection on the future] (Sŏul: Kukkachŏngbowŏn, 2007), pp.446-7 (hereafter, 'NISDC').

[21] Ibid, p.448. The book he published is Kin Taejun, *Dokusai to watashi no tōsō* [Dictatorship and my struggle] (Tōkyō: Kōwadō, 1973).

[22] Ibid, pp.449-452.

[23] It is necessary to note that although many of KCIA agents were stationed in Korean embassies in the capacity of diplomat, their chain of command differed from that of real diplomats who reported to the foreign minister. Of course, however, they would cooperate if necessary.

[24] In fact, as well known, the judiciary prescribed the HMT as an anti-state organisation and convicted Kim of founding it in 1980.

misconceptions, to impress upon them the realisation that there was no freedom in Korea at all. He added, 'As we yearn for freedom, we are tired of being called "a free nation without freedom," the same as other non-communistic nations are called'.[25] In a statement he gave in Tokyo, he even urged Korean people, especially those abroad, to rise up against the regime.[26] It is impossible to judge how much these remarks by Kim affected Koreans and others in Japan and the United States, although Korean government documents reported approximately how many people gathered to listen to him. Nevertheless his remarks undoubtedly had a certain influence on Koreans abroad as well as local politicians, activists, scholars and journalists.

Korean societies abroad

The regime's ability to control Korean societies abroad was limited, of course. Regardless of whether they were naturalised to their host countries or gained permanent residence there as Korean nationals, the Korean residents served as a bridge between Korea and foreign countries. A number of Koreans had left for the Americas and Germany as well as Japan and China, and founded sizable societies in the world's metropolises.[27] Since Park's 1961 coup, many former bureaucrats and politicians had sought political asylum usually in the United States, including former mayor of Seoul, Kim Sangdon; ambassador to the UN, Im Ch'angyŏng; ambassador to West Germany, Ch'oe Tŏksin; KCIA director, Kim Hyŏnguk; director of the Korean Cultural Centre in Washington DC, Yi Chaehyŏn and etc.[28] Besides these big figures, many of former high-ranking military officers also emigrated or sought asylum. Some of these so-to-speak elites came to organise anti-Park organisations or demonstrations.

In their activities, Kim Dae Jung functioned as the symbolic pivot. For instance, when Kim visited New York, he met a retired army general Ch'oe Sŏngnam

[25] *Hanmin sinbo*, 15 May 1973, as in Sourcebook, pp.78-9.

[26] *Minjok sibo*, 11 May 1973, as in ibid, pp.80-1.

[27] For Korean emigration to Japan see, John Lie, *Zainichi (Koreans in Japan): Diasporic Nationalism and Postcolonial Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), pp.4-12.

[28] The list of these figures appears in a North Korean work, Choguk t'ongilsa, *Maegungno Pak Chŏnghŭi yŏkchŏk ŭl tanjoe handa* [Punish traitor Park Chung Hee] (P'yŏngyang: Choguk t'ongilsa, 1978), p.310. However this text has some flaws in recording these names. Amongst them also was Kim Kiwan (aka Kim Chaegwŏn) who as a KCIA attaché to Korean embassy Tokyo partook in the abduction of Kim Dae Jung.

and they held a ceremony (a de facto demonstration) together at Central Park.[29] Ch'oe planned with Kim to found an anti-regime organisation, and in February 1974 he officially founded the Democratic ROK Veteran's Association in USA (*Chae-Mi kuguk hyanggunhoe*).[30] In his recent memoir, a member of this association recalled, 'We longed for a leader. Mr Kim Dae Jung … became the pivot'.[31] Even after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung, this association continued demonstrations and issuing statements throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[32]

Overseas anti-regime organisations had one common reason behind their foundation: democratisation.[33] Although the Korean government found the reason for such overseas resistance in the low standard of living of those Koreans, these organisations had clear-cut self-identities.[34] Ch'oe declared his rationale for founding the Veteran's Association, saying, 'We deplore this dark world where the beacon of democracy is completely off, so much so that we founded the association'.[35] Meanwhile Koreans' Congress for Democracy and Unification (*Han'guk minju hoebok t'ongil ch'okchin kungmin hoeŭi,* abb *Hanmint'ong*, hereafter 'HMT') in Japan released explanatory material on its own nature in 1988, in which it clarified that its seventy initiators had aimed at democratisation, national self-reliance and national unification and that all these initiators came from the pro-South *Mindan*.[36] In Japan there had been anti-Park movements even before the arrival of Kim Dae Jung and the beginning of the *Yusin*. One of the statements by an organisation named the

[29] NYW-0453, Sourcebook, p.15.

[30] USW-04142, ibid, p14. The official English name of the association appeared in the first issue of its organ *Kuguk hyanggunbo*, 1 December 1975, p.7, Open Archives, Korea Democracy Foundation (hereafter, 'KDF').

[31] Ko Segon, *MinJok TongShin*, 1 June 2014, <http://www.minjok.com/bbs/board.php?bo_table=othernews&wr_id=3995> (5 October 2014).

[32] Minutes, statements and other documents of this association can be found in KDF.

[33] Lie, *Zainichi*, p.71.

[34] 'Chaemi kyop'o tongt'ae mit kŭ ŭi sŏndoch'aek [Movements of Koreans in the US and guiding measures]', 791.72US 1973, 6600, DAK, p.3.

[35] *Kuguk hyanggunbo*, 1 December 1975, p.1, KDF.

[36] 'Sŏlmyŏng charyo: Hanmint'ong chojik sŏngkyŏk e kwanhayŏ [About the nature of the HMT]', 00033409, KDF (the number here indicates document's registration number at the archives).

Council for National Unification had also criticised Park's state of siege proclamation in light of the fact that the current constitution would not hinder national unification.[37]

Due to these budding anti-regime organisations all over the world, the Park regime possibly chose to bring in Kim Dae Jung, or at least not to send him back to Japan as the Japanese government demanded after the abduction. It is hard to imagine that the regime did not expect a diplomatic conflict with Japan as the Koreans had already experienced friction with West Germany in 1967 when the KCIA arrested a number of Koreans in West Germany on charge of espionage (the East Berlin incident). Of course the Park regime could have miscalculated the extent to which Korea and Japan would conflict. As some indicate, these two countries had precedents of mutual understandings about diplomatic discourtesy.[38] Still the regime risked a diplomatic conflict for the sake of its political security, and Japanese attitude somewhat differed from before. The prelude to conflict that had gradually unfolded in the last few years suddenly took centre stage with the abduction of Kim Dae Jung.

Abduction: Operation KT

The abduction of Kim Dae Jung differed from Park regime's other acts of political terrorism in three aspects. First, unlike numerous victims of the state terrorism, Kim was a prominent politician. He competed for the presidency with Park in 1971 and impressed many Koreans that year through his speeches in the campaign. Second, unlike other prominent figures the government victimised such as Chang Chunha or Professor Ch'oe Chonggil of Seoul National University who mysteriously died, Kim survived. His survival made things complicated from the regime's perspective. Third the abduction took place across the borderline, thus developing into a diplomatic, international problem. A similar example was the East Berlin incident. Still, unlike the Berlin, this time the KCIA aimed at only one person, and the game was a very famous figure in and out of the country.

Background of the abduction

[37] HMT Japan, *Hanmint'ong Ilbon ponbu charyojip* [HMT Japan sourcebook], vol.1, KDF, p.12. The Council for National Unification (*Minjok t'ongil hyŏbŭihoe*) composed the HMT Japan with other organisations. This council was different from the Central Association for National Unification of Korea (*Minjok t'ongil chungang hyŏbŭihoe*) which was founded in 1981 in Korea despite the similarity of their names. In Korean abbreviation, the former is called '*Mint'onghyŏp*' whereas the latter '*Mint'ong*'.

[38] Han Honggu, *Yusin: Ojik han saram ŭl wihan sidae* [*Yusin*: an era only for one] (Sŏul: Han'gyŏre, 2014), p.41.

From a narrow point of view the ultimate culprit of the abduction was Yi Hurak as the director of the KCIA. Whether Park Chung Hee instructed Yi remains unknown. Yi Hurak reportedly said at one point that Park ordered him to remove Kim Dae Jung whereas in an official interview he strongly denied Park's order.[39] No remaining document indicates or alludes to Park at the top of the command chain. If Park either ordered or knew about the abduction beforehand and let it happen nonetheless, it would mean that he could have weighed the importance of Kim Dae Jung's being in Japan and Korea's relations with Japan, and selected the first. Even if not, Park at least ratified the abduction later. And Korea must have been aware of this after its experience in Berlin in 1967.

Yi Hurak had a good reason to plot the abduction of Kim Dae Jung or anything else with a similar effect. In December 1970 Park appointed Yi as the director of the KCIA. Previously Yi had been the chief secretary for the president from 1963 to 69, and after that for about a year he had served as the ambassador to Japan. In 1973, however, Yi was involved in the so-called Yun P'ilyong incident in which the Capital Defence Commander Yun privately told Yi that Yi should succeed Park sooner or later. According to the investigation by the National Intelligence Service Development Committee for Clarifying the Past (NISDC), Yi had met Park 12-24 times a month from 1972 to February 1973, but after March when the Yun incident took place the number decreased to below 10 a month, based on which the NISDC report concludes Park's trust in Yi sharply fell.[40] This circumstance placed Yi under great pressure, so much so that Yi could have demonstrated his loyalty to Park by removing Park's political rival Kim Dae Jung. The staff of the Blue House were totally unaware of the plot, and some testified that on hearing the news, Park was quite upset. But this circumstance only shows Yi's possible motive. Considering the serious consequences for Korea-Japan relations the abduction might bring about and clandestine nature of KCIA operations, it is difficult to completely dismiss Park's involvement.[41]

Nevertheless more important is the fact that Park Chung Hee apparently gave an ex post facto approval, if in an implicit way. In other words, Park determined to

[39] The report by the National Intelligence Service Development Committee for Clarifying the Past (NISDC) juxtaposes two sets of evidence which respectively shows possibilities of Yi Hurak's independent decision and of Park's order. See NISDC, pp.515-9.

[40] NISDC, pp.454-5.

[41] Especially Kim Dae Jung's remark. NISDC, p.518.

confront diplomatic friction with Japan at the cost of protecting those involved in the abduction operation. Most of the agents retained their jobs. Kim Tongun, whom the Japanese police identified as a suspect, and some others were first dismissed and reinstated in a few years with, of course, Park's approval. On one hand the Korean government officially denied its involvement in the abduction and therefore had no reason to fire the agents. On the other, as the agents were aware of the secret, Park Chung Hee could not hastily dismiss them. On this point, the former KCIA director who fled to the United States after the *Yusin* coup, Kim Hyŏnguk compared Yi Hurak and Lavrentiy Beria, chief of the Soviet secret police NKVD under Stalin, both of whom knew too many secrets to be purged.[42] Kim Hyŏnguk concluded that Park Chung Hee's not dismissing Yi Hurak proved that the president actually instructed the abduction.[43] Meanwhile the NISDC report makes an inference that Yi Hurak possibly conducted the abduction alone from the fact that Park eventually dismissed Yi from his post as director in November 1973.[44] Still, according to Kim Hyŏnguk, Yi Hurak's dismissal was the result of a power game with then Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil (Kim Chongp'il) in which Yi lost.[45] Here no concrete evidence corroborates all the arguments. Yet suffice it to say that Park Chung Hee after all sided with Yi Hurak, choosing Kim Dae Jung's matter over relations with Japan in light of the fact that Park gave special treatment to the agents while detaining Kim, the victim, in his house.

Operation KT

In 1971, while campaigning for the general election that year, Kim Dae Jung met with a mysterious car accident. Whether the accident was a pre-plotted political terrorism or a simple traffic accident caused by the poor road conditions at the time, Kim injured one of his legs, making him disabled for the rest of life.[46] On 11 October

[42] Kim Kyŏngjae, *Hyŏngmyŏng kwa usang: Kim Hyŏnguk hoegorok* [Revolution and Idol: Memoir of Kim Hyŏnguk] vol.4 (Sŏul: Inmul kwa sasangsa, 2009), pp.138-9.

[43] Ibid, p.139.

[44] NISDC, p.521.

[45] Kim Kyŏngjae, *Hyŏngmyŏng kwa usang*, pp139-43. Kim insisted that he heard this information from several sources including O Ch'isŏng, Blue House secretary; Kim Jong Pil; and Chŏng Ilgwŏn, then the chairman of the National Assembly.

[46] American journalist Donald Kirk argues against the conspiracy theory that the government was responsible for Kim's accident and blames terrible road condition in Korea at the time. See Donald Kirk, *Korea Betrayed: Kim Dae Jung and Sunshine* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.37.

1972 he went to Japan for medical treatment for the leg. On 17 October Park Chung Hee declared an emergency state of siege and on 27 proclaimed the *Yusin* constitution. In this situation Kim decided to stay abroad and launched overseas anti-Park movements, primarily in Japan and the United States. On 6 July 1973 he prepared to found Koreans' Congress for Democracy and Unification (HMT) in Washington DC and flew back to Japan where he tried to found the HMT Japan headquarters. The HMT Japan was scheduled to launch on 13 August on which day Kim planned to assume its chairmanship. On 8 August he went to Tokyo Grand Palace Hotel for lunch with his fellow Korean politicians. Upon coming out of the suite after lunch and a chat, he encountered a group of unidentified men who attacked and took him away. It was five days after his disappearance, on 13 August, when he appeared in his own neighbourhood in Seoul.[47]

The KCIA had monitored Kim Dae Jung since the 1971 presidential election. The KCIA produced more than a thousand documents reporting his activities between the election and his departure to Japan.[48] It seems that the KCIA internally called Kim 'KT', which probably came from his initials ('Kim Taejung' in the Mccune-Reischauer transcription system). Even before the KCIA conducted Operation KT to abduct – or assassinate – Kim, the secret agency had surveiled and sometimes sabotaged Kim's political activities abroad. Especially from May to August right before the abduction, the KCIA had attempted to persuade Kim to return to Korea. Kim's wife warned him in her letter that by no means should he come back to Korea. Kim Dae Jung himself and his colleagues in Japan also sensed danger. According to his autobiography, Kim even heard from one of his assistants that somebody in the embassy had planned to kidnap him.[49]

From early July when Kim returned to Tokyo from Washington DC, the KCIA planned a certain operation against Kim. Reportedly a KCIA attaché in Japan produced a plan, which is not preserved, on 19 July, and from 21 July all the KCIA agents in Tokyo were mobilised for surveillance with evident purpose of abduction. The KCIA continued to persuade Kim to come back through his wife on the one hand,

[47] As the abduction took place in daytime (about 1 pm), media could carry quite detailed information on the abduction. Most major Korean and Japanese media (newspapers) carried the abduction case from the day after the abduction. For the most updated and detailed account, however, see NISDC, p.435.

[48] Ibid, p.445.

[49] Kim Taejung, *Kim Taejung chasŏjŏn* [Autobiography], vol.1 (Sŏul: Samin, 2010), pp.305-8.

and on the other it was waiting for an opportunity to kidnap him. It seems that the KCIA planned the actual abduction a day before when they procured the intelligence that Kim would appear in Grand Palace Hotel.[50] The agents prepared rucksacks, plastic bags, ropes and etc; this list of equipment may suggest that they planned assassination rather than abduction. At the same time, however, they kept coaxing Kim into coming to Korea, which behaviour may rebut the assassination hypothesis. The agents seem to have either received a vague order or prepared for all imaginable kinds of options.[51]

The abduction operation, codenamed 'KT', seemed to lack professionalism. Six of the agents waited in the next room of the suite where Kim had lunch and easily overpowered him as he came out of the room. The six anesthetised him there and took him to the basement parking lot through a lift, in which two other guests witnessed them. They placed Kim under the rear seats and left the hotel for Osaka. They were supposed to rendezvous with their colleagues in Ōtsu city, but they failed and moved to a safe house in Osaka. That night they relocated Kim into KCIA's spy ship, *Yonggŭm-ho*, and sent him off to Busan of Korea. KCIA agents there took him to Seoul. In the evening of 13 they released Kim in his own neighbourhood, claiming that they belonged to a group called 'Patriotic Youths Nation Salvagers (*Aeguk ch'ŏngnyŏn kuguktae*)'.[52]

The problem was that the KCIA agents were so clumsy as to leave behind too much evidence that they actually belonged to the Korean government, not to some unheard-of terrorist group.[53] So much so that as early as 14 August *Asahi shinbun* carried an article about the argument that the KCIA was involved in the abduction; a few days later, on 28 August, North Koreans insisted that the KCIA planned the abduction and therefore they could not talk with KCIA Director Yi Hurak any

[50] The activities of the KCIA are documented under the title, 'KT monitoring report (*KT tonghyang kamsi*)' which daily reported Kim Dae Jung's deeds and whereabouts. Details of the reports are collected in NISDC, pp.475-86.

[51] The NISDC has concluded that the plan might be initially to assassinate Kim but in the course it was changed to simply abduct him. See, NISDC, p.535.

[52] Chronological progress of the abduction can be found in NISDC, pp.501-9. Translation of the name of the organisation varies. English newspapers at the time called it 'save-the-nation-federation' or 'action corps of the national salvation union'. These different translations were introduced in a telegram from the US Department of State to embassies: STATE 160973, 'August 14 EA press summary', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[53] Nevertheless the agents were by no means inexperienced laymen. The field leader was from the Headquarters of Intelligence Detachment, and the team members consisted of those from the HID or the Counterintelligence Corps. NISDC, p.495.

longer.[54] After kidnapping Kim Dae Jung, the KCIA agents hurried out of the hotel, leaving their equipment behind. Moreover one of the agents, Kim Tongun, left his fingerprint in the room. As a KCIA agent, Kim Tongun had entered Japan before in the capacity of journalist and registered his fingerprint. Later he came to Japan once again, but now as a diplomat, a first secretary of the Korean embassy Tokyo. His fingerprint was the most obvious piece of evidence that the Korean government was involved in the abduction in one way or another. The fingerprint thus was a catalyst for the ensuing diplomatic friction between Korea and Japan.

To Park, Kim Dae Jung mattered a lot, not merely because of his rivalry but because of the legitimacy of the *Yusin* regime. Ironically the United States wanted this East Asian country to remain as a Cold-War stronghold under its hegemony and as a democratic country at least on surface at the same time. The Korean government had to explain to its patron, the United States, and others why it had jettisoned democracy. And Kim's remarks on the Korean situation differed markedly from the Korean government's own explanation. In these circumstances Kim and his organisation HMT were a thorn in Park's side. Therefore, whether or not Park himself instructed the abduction, Park could not but rejoice over Kim's being confined to Korea and placed under his surveillance. But this extreme measure inevitably entailed a cost, that is, conflict with Japan.

Korean-Japanese Conflict: Stage One

Many Koreans, Americans and Japanese had a foggy idea that it was the KCIA that took Kim Dae Jung home. What made it all clear was Kim Tongun's fingerprint discovered at the crime scene. The fingerprint was undeniable evidence that convinced every one of the Korean government's involvement in the abduction.[55] According to declassified Japanese documents, the Japanese government initially did not know for sure who the kidnappers were. On 5 September the Tokyo Metropolitan Police confirmed the fingerprint belonged to Kim Tongun and requested Kim's voluntary appearance through the foreign ministry.[56] The Korean government

[54] *Asahi shinbun*, 14 August 1973, p.1; *Kyŏnghyang shinmun*, 29 August 1973, p.1.

[55] 'Kin dejun shi jiken no sōsa jyōkyō oyobi yōbō jikō ni tsuite [On investigation situation of the Kim Dae Jung incident and demand list]', 15 September 1974, 01-306, Diplomatic Archives of Japan (hereafter, 'DAJ'). Most part of this document still remains classified including the name of the suspect. But it was Kim Tonun alone whose fingerprint was found at the scene.

[56] 'Kin dejun jiken ni kansuru Kankoku eno mōshiire irai ni tsuite [On demand request to Korea related to the Kim Dae Jung incident]', 5 September 1973, 01-306, DAJ.

immediately ordered the other five KCIA agents to return to Korea; Kim Tongun had already left Japan as soon as the police had launched investigation.[57] The police also tried to summon those Korean politicians who had had lunch with Kim before the abduction, but they left Japan too abruptly despite the request.[58] The Japanese government was aware that without these witnesses the investigation would be delayed, which would function as a 'big minus' in Korean-Japanese relations.[59] This expectation literally came true.

Japanese media and intellectuals

The Japanese government came under pressure from its own people to thoroughly investigate the abduction.[60] In the early 1970s the Japanese public, especially the intelligentsia, tended to be concerned about the Korean domestic situation. Their resentment against the KCIA, which they thought infringed on Japanese sovereignty, and sympathy for Kim Dae Jung turned public opinion strongly enough that the government could not ignore it. Also, by the time of the abduction, the Japanese media had widely reported 'every new development and hypothesis' on the abduction, leading to 'genuinely wide-spread interest'.[61] The Japanese public and media criticised the uncooperative posture of the Korean government and began to 'call for a reassessment of [Korean-Japanese] relations'.[62] This force pushed the Japanese government into a dilemma to choose between keeping good relations with Korea and responding to domestic pressure.

Some Japanese intellectuals had had interest in Korea in general since the 1950s. But this interest tended to stem from the *zainichi* problems as a minority group within Japanese society. For example prominent film director Ōshima Nagisa once wrote, 'I continued to depict the Korean problem … Needless to say, both crime and the Korean problem are ultimately national concerns'.[63] A few Japanese intellectuals

[57] NISDC, p.536.

[58] 0810 196-00; 0813 159-101, 01-306, DAJ.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Tokyo 10380, 14 August 1973; Tokyo 10750, 22 August 1973, Japan and the United States, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[61] Tokyo 10750, ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Nagisa Oshima, *Cinema, Censorship, and the State: The Writings of Nagisa Oshima*, ed. Annette Michelson, trans. Dawn Lawson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), p.166.

became concerned about the abysmal social and economic status of *zainichi* Koreans through a few crimes these people had committed such as the Komatsugawa and Kim Hŭiro incidents in 1958 and 1968 respectively.[64] After the former case Korean historian Hatada Takashi led a petition campaign against the death penalty; in the trials for the latter case many Japanese as well as *zainichi* Koreans supported the criminal.[65] Besides these two outstanding cases, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many *zainichi* Koreans fought against ethnic discrimination in their schools and workplaces, which activities popularised issues regarding Korea.[66]

This way, empathy and concern for Korea and Koreans amongst progressive intellectuals in Japan arose. Simultaneously some activists partaking in anti-Vietnam War movements became interested in Korean issues as a part of the question about Japan's relationship with Asia.[67] Accordingly one of the most popular progressive periodicals, *Sekai*, had also carried many articles on Korea from 1972.[68] These articles carried a more-or-less pro-North Korean and anti-South Korean tone.[69] Especially, right after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung, *Sekai* carried four articles in its September issue, including an interview with Kim. Although in January 1973 *Sekai* had carried an interview with Kim, the one in the September issue must have attracted much more attention due to its timely publication. *Sekai* also serialised 'Correspondences from Korea' which criticised the Park regime and urged Japanese intellectuals to ally themselves with and support Korean revolutionaries.[70]

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[64] The Komatsugawa incident indicates two rape-murders committed by then eighteen-year-old *zainichi* Yi Chinu (Ri Chin'u, Kaneko Shizuo), one of whose victims was a student from Komatsugawa high school. Yi was sentenced to death and executed in 1962. The Kim Hŭiro (Kin Kirō) incident indicates a criminal case where Kim killed two yakuzas and held thirteen hostages confronting the police. See Lie, *Zainichi*, pp.92-3.

[65] Chae-Il K'orian pyŏnhosa hyŏphoe, *Ilbon chaep'an e nat'anan chae-Il Korian* [Zainichi Korean in Japanese trials] (P'aju, Han'gukhaksul chŏngbo, 2010), p14, 20. Inspired by the Komatsugawa incident, Ōshima made a film *Kōshikei* (Death by Hanging, 1968).

[66] Lie, *Zainichi*, pp.94-5.

[67] Misook Lee, 'The Japan-Korea solidarity movement in the 1970s and 1980s: from solidarity to reflexive democracy', *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 12, issue 38, no.1 (2014): p.1.

[68] A few researchers have analysed *Sekai* articles on Korea. Han Sangil, *Ilbon chisigin kwa Han'guk: Han'gukkwan ŭi wŏnhyŏng kwa pyŏnhyŏng* [Japanese intellectuals and Korea] (Sŏul: Orŭm, 2000); Han Sangil, *Chisigin ŭi oman kwa p'yŏngyŏn: Sek'ai wa Hanbando* [*Sekai* and the Korean peninsula] (Sŏul: Kip'arang, 2008); Im Sŏngmo, 'Naengjŏn'gi Ilbon chinbop'a chisigin ŭi Han'guk insik: *Sek'ai* ŭi puksong Han-Il hoedam podo rŭl chungsim ŭro [Japanese radical intellectuals' perception on Korea in the Cold War era]', *Tongbuga yŏksa nonch'ong* 33 (2011): 125-153.

[69] Han Sangil, 'Chisigin kwa "sinnyŏm ŭi chŏnt'ong": *Sek'ai* wa Hanbando munje' [*Sekai* and Korean peninsula problem]', *Asia ribyu* 3, no2 (2013): p.18.

[70] Han Sangil, 'Chisigin', pp.25-6.

Along with *Sekai*, other intellectual magazines also began to carry articles related to Kim Dae Jung or Korean democratisation movements. Although more conservative than *Sekai*, *Chūō kōron* carried five articles on the matters in the October 1973 issue. These articles included pro-Kim Dae Jung Dietman Utsunomiya Tokuma's letter to Kim and an article by former foreign minister Dietman Fujiyama Aiichirō. Here Fujiyama demanded that the Japanese government clarify the fact of infringement of sovereignty as the West German government had done in the East Berlin incident.[71] *Bungei shunjū*, another magazine of a similar sort, also carried an article that dealt with the Korean domestic situation in November 1973.[72] Consequently the major media created a situation where their readers could easily form anti-Park public opinion.

The biggest blow came from a daily newspaper *Yomiuri shinbun*. On 23 August *Yomiuri* headlined a report that claimed a KCIA agent was involved in the abduction.[73] In the report *Yomiuri*'s Seoul correspondent argued that his Korean government source confirmed this fact. Noteworthy is that it was before the Japanese police confirmed Kim Tongun's fingerprint.[74] Next day the Diet dealt with the Kim Dae Jung abduction case, and the Japanese minister of justice remarked that he 'felt' the CIA of a certain country committed the crime but he could not say so in Diet questionings.[75] The opinion section of this day's *Yomiuri shinbun* published an article by a university professor, which read that the LDP cabinet should follow the example of the West German government.[76] Similarly Japanese scholars and other intellectuals demanded that the Korean and Japanese governments secure the safety of Kim and his family.[77] Such public opinion drove the Japanese government to adopt a high profile on the Kim Dae Jung case.

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[71] Fujiyama Aiichirō, 'Nikkan kankei o ukaeru [Worrying about Japanese-Korean relations]', *Chūō Kōron,* October 1973, p.87.

[72] Ri Heichū and Yasuoka Shōtarō, '"Kin Dejun jiken" Kankoku no koe [The Kim Dae Jung incident, voice of Korea]', *Bungei shunjū,* November 1973, pp.152-66.

[73] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 23 August 1973, p.1.

[74] Japanese Ambassador to Korea Ushiroku witnessed that the correspondent was close to ranking officials in the Korean government including Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil although the ambassador did not think the intelligence came from the prime minister. Seoul 05663, Japan and the United States, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[75] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 24 August 1973, morning edition, p.3.

[76] Ibid, p.15.

[77] *Asaihi shinbun*, 24, August 1973, p.3.

Attitude of the Japanese government

By no means did the Japanese government want to be entangled in this complicated case that seemingly had nothing to do with the cabinet. The US embassy Tokyo reported to the State Department that the Japanese government was 'obviously searching … for way out of the situation'.[78] The Japanese government believed that clearer evidence of the Korean government's involvement would make the situation even more difficult, and therefore it wished the US government to intervene and influence the Korean government. In reply, the US government secretly met Korean officials to urge a prompt and credible investigation, emphasising this case's possible impact on the United Nations General Assembly, which had dealt with the 'Korean question', as well as on Korean-Japanese relations.[79] Interestingly the US and Japanese governments asked the Korean government for the impossible, ie a thorough investigation, although they were somewhat aware of its involvement, if vaguely.

Of course the two governments did not ask for the impossible with an intention to push the Koreans into trouble. Again, although Korean-Japanese relations were not great at the time, the Japanese government did not attempt to worsen them. The US and Japanese governments expected that the Korean government would not comply with their demand. Yet they had scarce means to satisfy the Japanese public, members of the United Nations and the Korean government equally. The US ambassador to Korea expressed this hardship:

> Unfortunately I see no easy way for the ROKG to get out of the mess which they are now in. In the end the only fully satisfactory solution from outsider's point of view would be to permit Kim Tae-Chung to leave the country. This the ROKG will not agree to, at least for the present. Beyond that best that can be hoped for is that ROKG will allow Kim to remain unmolested at home and allow him some freedom of movement within ROK. At this point ROKG is not prepared for even this step and we cannot rule out possibility that, despite my warnings, ROKG would attempt to bring Kim to trial.[80]

The ambassador also warned the Korean foreign minister, 'The finger was being pointed at an agency of [the Korean] government … Any attempt at obfuscation would be discovered and only complicate matters further'.[81] But the warning was the

[78] Tokyo 10886, Japan and the United States, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[79] Seoul 05715, ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Seoul 05716, ibid.

best that the United States could do; so important to the Park regime was keeping Kim Dae Jung under its own surveillance.

Meanwhile the Japanese public grew vociferous enough to prevent the Japanese government from simply relying upon the US government any longer. The Japanese government had already postponed the ministerial conference between Korea and Japan scheduled to be held in early September. Within the cabinet the prime minister and the foreign minister advocated prudence whereas the industry and justice ministers adopted relatively hard-line measures. The industry minister even conceded that the Japanese government 'might have no other course but to reconsider aid to ROK, depending on the development of Kim case'.[82] Accordingly cabinet members presented different ideas. The government as a whole decided to 'strongly demand' that the Korean government return Kim back to Japan.[83] Foreign Minister Ōhira nonetheless remarked that the Japanese side did not have clear evidence as to the matter of the infringement of sovereignty.[84] Chief Cabinet Secretary Nikaidō Susumu in the meantime enunciated that the Japanese side could not wait forever and that depending on the Korean government's attitude, the Japanese government would be contemplating possible countermeasures, although he did not think that the Korean government was taking a dismissive attitude.[85] It seems thus that the Japanese government did not have a unified approach to this matter or a clear master plan.[86]

In the Diet opposition parties attacked the prudent line that the prime minister and the foreign minister championed. Dietman Kuroyanagi (*Kōmeitō*) contended that for a fair settlement some damage in friendly relations with Korea was inevitable and that the government nevertheless placed relations with Korea before 'proper measure'. He also remarked that it was hard to imagine for Kim Tongun to have privately behaved, which was therefore imbued with intent to infringe the sovereignty.[87] Dietman Hoshino (JCP) already convinced himself of the involvement of the Korean

[82] Tokyo 10941, ibid.

[83] *Asahi shinbun*, 2 September 1973, p.1.

[84] Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Representatives, 71-shū-gaimu iinkai-34go, 7 September 1973, NDL, p.7.

[85] *Asahi shinbun*, 7 September 1973, p.2.

[86] On 7 September Foreign Minister Ōhira said in the foreign affairs committee, House of Representatives that there was no different opinion within the government. Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Representatives, 71-shū-gaimu iinkai-34go, 7 September 1973, NDL, p.8.

[87] Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Councillors,71-san-gaimu iinkai-23go, 6 September 1973, NDL, p.8-11.

government, saying 'As far as it is confirmed that the Korean government committed the crime, I think our policy toward Korea should change'.[88] Dietman Yoneda (JSP) insisted that the government had tried to safeguard the Park regime and that he viewed the cause of the abduction lay in unconditional collusion between the Park regime and the LDP government.[89]

The Cabinet's attitude was ambiguous between a rock and a hard place, between collusion and solution.[90] The cabinet alternated hard line request to Korea and submissive recognition of Korean government's statements. On 5 September the Japanese government summoned Kim Tongun and suspended economic cooperation later. On 2 November on the contrary Chief Cabinet Secretary Nikaidō announced that the result of the Korean investigation into Kim Tongun jibed with that of Japanese authorities. Moreover one day Prime Minister Tanaka suggested early convening of the postponed ministerial conference while Foreign Minister Ōhira stressed that the Japanese government was 'still waiting for acceptable resolution' of the abduction case.[91] The muddle within the cabinet lasted until 2 November when the Korean and Japanese prime ministers ultimately agreed on not mentioning the abduction any more.

Korean strategy: 'Offence is the best defence'

Compared to the Japanese counterpart, the Korean government maintained a straightforward strategy. The strategy consisted of two parts; never admit but attack. First of all the Korean government treated Kim Dae Jung not as a victim but as a criminal, as exemplified in his house arrest. As early as 23 August Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil 'alluded to the possibility that … Kim had some complicity in his own kidnapping' as the Korean authorities had 'disclosed "discrepancies" in Kim's story pointing to his own involvement'.[92] The US ambassador to Korea reported to the State Department,

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[88] Ibid, p.11.

[89] Plenary session, House of Representatives, 71-shū-honkaigi-58go, 7 September 1973, NDL, p.5.

[90] 'Yūkō to kaiketsu no itabasami [dilemma between friendship and solution]' was a title of an article of *Asahi shinbun*, 2 September 1973, p.2.

[91] Tokyo 13452, Japan and the United States, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[92] Seoul 05664, ibid.

> Within the ROKG there has been a casting about for scapegoats for the affair. Ironically, it appears that some in government have focused on Kim Tae-Chung himself as most desirable scapegoat. There is now a concerted effort by some government and political leaders of both DRP [Democratic Republican Party] and NDP [New Democratic Party] to again create impression that Kim in some way was involved in arranging his own kidnapping.[93]

According to KCIA internal documents, the KCIA induced the investigation to conclude in either Kim's self-fabrication or involvement by selecting an extreme-right organisation. Also the agency tried to manipulate anti-Kim figures within the opposition NDP into circulating the self-fabrication scenario. At the same time it tried to have large-scale festivals held to turn people's attention or to emphasise Kim's toadyism thereby weakening Kim's popularity.[94]

Then the Korean government began to attack the Japanese government. The first thing the Korean government pointed out was that Kim had entered Japan for the purpose of medical treatment but Kim had violated the purpose of his visa and instead engaged in political activities; the Japanese government had allowed such illegal activities, and therefore the Japanese government should assume responsibility. The second was that Kim had spread pro-North ideas in Japan and there were many anti-communists among Korean residents in Japan; thus the Japanese police should have anticipated danger to Kim by those anti-communists and should have taken security precautions. Lastly, in regard to Kim Tongun, as a diplomat he held diplomatic immunity, and hence the Japanese government had no right to summon him. It was rather an infringement of Korean sovereignty that the Japanese government nevertheless requested his appearance.[95] From the Japanese point of view, the Korean strategy was audacious.

In the same vein the Korean government attacked *Yomiuri*'s report on possible government agents' involvement in the abduction. The Korean government denounced the *Yomiuri* article; first the government authorities found no hard evidence of involvement of government apparatus; and second they could not identify anyone who talked to *Yomiuri*. The Korean government thus concluded that this article was fabricated. The Korean government demanded the cancellation of the article and insisted it would close *Yomiuri*'s Seoul branch if the newspaper did not

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[93] Seoul 05708, ibid.

[94] NISDC, p.537.

[95] 88th National Assembly stenographic record, no.2, plenary session, 22 September 1973, pp.17-8.

accept the demand.[96] On the next day the Korean government revoked *Yomiuri*'s journalist license as it had announced.[97] In response the Japanese government remonstrated about the closure of the branch, while the Korean embassy Tokyo suffered from unidentified verbal threats over the telephone.[98]

With regard to summoning Kim Tongun, the Korean foreign minister directly condemned the Japanese government. The foreign minister told Japanese Ambassador to Korea Ushiroku Torao that he was extremely regretful over the Japanese government's public announcement of Kim's name and that he wanted to solve the case more 'cool-headedly'.[99] Although the Korean government had criticised discussions in the Diet or journalist reports, it was the first time for the Korean government to denounce the Japanese government directly. Just as some Dietmen required the Japanese government to keep a high profile vis-à-vis the Korean government, some members of the National Assembly required the Korean government to reconsider Korean-Japanese relations. National Assemblyman Kim Yongsŏng (Yujŏnghoe) mentioned, 'We would rather bomb ourselves on the peninsula than rely on Japan', insisting that Korea should diversify its diplomacy.[100] National Assemblyman Sin Hyŏngsik (DRP) even suggested that taking this opportunity, the Korean government should maintain a high profile vis-à-vis Japan.[101] It seemed politicians of the two countries prodded their governments into fighting. The difference between the two countries was that the Korean government attuned to the demand whereas the Japanese government remained puzzled and ambivalent.

Diplomatic conclusion?

On 1 November the Korean foreign minister announced a statement, in which he said that he and Ambassador Ushiroku agreed on concluding the negotiation. Next day Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil left for Japan to meet Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka. In the meeting the two prime ministers agreed that they would

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[96] 'Chŏnŏn t'ongsin [Message communication]', 23 August 1973, 754.6JA 1973, 6368, DAK.

[97] 'Chŏnŏn t'ongsinmun [Message communication]', 24 August 1973, ibid.

[98] 'Myŏndam yorok [Dialogue record]', 25 August 1973, ibid.

[99] *Asahi shinbun*, 7 September 1973, morning edition, p.1.

[100] 88th National Assembly stenographic record, no.2, plenary session, 22 September 1973 p.24. Kim Yongsŏng used to belong to the NDP and with the *Yusin* moved to the pro-government Yujŏnghoe.

[101] Kuksaŭi 419, 701 1973 v.4, 5668, DAK.

diplomatically conclude the case and that they would not raise questions about the case any more in so far as the Korean government kept the Japanese informed regarding the investigation. In detail, the Korean government would continue to investigate Kim Tongun and treat his case under the Korean legal system, while the Japanese government closed the case. That the both sides would not mention the abduction again meant that the Japanese government would abandon summoning Kim Tongun while the Korean government would not call Kim Dae Jung's conduct in Japan into question. Lastly the two sides decided to open a ministerial conference in December which would discuss a Japanese loan to Korea. Thereby Korea and Japan could stop their diplomatic relations from reaching a worse crisis after the series of mutual slander and offence.[102]

It is not clear whether the Park regime handed over illegal bribe to Tanaka as a quid pro quo for concluding the case. There have existed not a few testimonies to the bribe including those by Donald Ranard, director of Korean affairs at the State Department, and Tanaka's secretary Kimura Hiroyasu. Kim Dae Jung wrote in his autobiography that the conclusion of the case was therefore a result of collusion between the Korean autocracy and Japanese plutocracy.[103] But it is doubtful if the quid pro quo was ever necessary. This bribery theory presumes that the Korean government was defensive whereas the Japanese was offensive in this diplomatic battle. What actually happened was quite contrary. The Japanese government could not find a way to re-counter the Korean government's countermeasure. Thus the Japanese had to agree on a truce regardless of the bribe.

The severe criticism of the cabinet from the opposition combined with Tanaka's indecisiveness could make the cabinet look cooperating with the Park regime. In several Diet hearings the opposition parties demanded the cabinet to deport KCIA agents in Japan, abolish the 1965 Korea-Japan normalisation treaty, stop economic assistance to South Korea and even establish diplomatic relations with North Korea.[104] No matter how bad Korean-Japanese relations were by the time, such demands were too onerous for the government to accept. Meanwhile, although the Japanese government eventually agreed with the Korean not to investigate deeper into

[102] 88th National Assembly stenographic record, no.11, main session, 5 November 1973, pp.249-53.

[103] Kim Taejung, *Kim Taejung chasŏjŏn*, p.331.

[104] See remarks by Dietmen Yoneda (JSP) and Yonehara (JCP) on 7 September 1973 at the plenary session, the House of Representatives, 71-shū-honkaigi-58go, NDL.

the abduction case and did not try further to bring Kim Dae Jung back to Japan to recover the status quo ante, this was not so much cooperation with Korea as reluctance to be entangled with the troublesome matter of Korean domestic politics.[105] Ironically, concealing the truth was not evidence of cooperation or collusion with the Koreans but of an attempt for the Tanaka cabinet to distance itself from Korea.

The diplomatic conclusion notwithstanding, the two countries could not fully recover from the friction. Instead they continued to conflict over the matter of Kim Dae Jung until Park Chung Hee died in 1979. Their truce could not last even for months. It was because the very nature of the abduction of Kim Dae Jung revolved around the question of Korean democracy. Not until the domestic political situation in Korea changed could the aggravated Korean-Japanese relations improve. Japanese intellectuals wanted to see Kim Dae Jung freed whereas the Park regime had no intent to free him. The US government anticipated this correctly in February 1974:

> While Kim case has faded from public attention in Japan, FONOFF believes it could reappear as significant issue in Diet and press, particularly if ROKG makes definitive decision not to release Kim, contrary to ROKG-GOJ understanding of November 1973.[106]

With the invitation of Professor Edwin Reischauer Kim Dae Jung would go to Harvard University where he could wait for an opportunity to return to the Korean political world. The Park regime would not allow his study-abroad, however. Right before the diplomatic conclusion with Japan, the Korean government notified the US ambassador to Korea that it hoped Kim's travel to Harvard would not to 'be pushed too quickly or given too much publicity in the immediate future' due to 'the need for a cooling off period'.[107] Later in March 1974, though the Korean government announced that Kim had 'all the rights and duties of ordinary Korean citizens', the government never issued a passport for him. Again the US embassy anticipated correctly:

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[105] Reportedly some high-level figures in the Japanese government did not want Kim Dae Jung to leave Korea even for the United States. See, Seoul 01487, Japan and the United States, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA; also see, Yi Wanbŏm, 'Kim Taejung napch'i sakkŏn kwa Pak Chŏnghŭi chŏgyŏk sakkŏn [The Kim Dae Jung abduction and the attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 80 (2007): p.345; Han Honggu, *Yusin*, p.92.

[106] Tokyo 02117, Japan and the United States, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[107] Seoul 07308, ibid.

> We believe there [is] no prospect that Kim will be allowed to leave the country in the foreseeable future. We had earlier heard this from the prime minister's office. In a March 6 conversation with ambassador, Chief Presidential Secretary Kim Chong-Yom [Kim Chŏngnyŏm] also stated categorically that Kim will not be allowed to depart [from the] country.[108]

It was only in December 1982 when he left Korea.

* * *

Kim Dae Jung confessed that he thought the Japanese government would strongly complain to the Korean government so he could be sent back to Japan just as the West German government had done at the time of the East Berlin incident. He also wrote, 'The Japanese and Korean governments growled at each other, but at crucial moments they conceded to each other'.[109] However the two governments had little motive to collude, and the Japanese people, mostly intellectuals, began to question Korean political situations. The Korean and Japanese governments did stop total destruction of their diplomatic relations, which neither side ever wished, and did stop exchanges of attack that could last for long without benefit. Thus they reached an agreement. But this was far from collusion. Rather this was a subtle point of contact where the audacious diplomacy of the Park Chung Hee regime met with Tanaka cabinet's indifference to and disengagement from the complicated Korean domestic matter.

The abduction of Kim Dae Jung piled more distrust and dissatisfaction between the two governments, which had been gradually developing in the fields of economy and international politics. Through the abduction case the Korean government began to stand up against its Japanese counterpart. To the Japanese government, which had been seeking for equidistance diplomacy, the old Cold-War friend of South Korea became more bothersome. Although both governments agreed on keeping their relations, that was as far as they could agree. The relationship sutured in an ad hoc way would only bring about a bigger problem when a young *zainichi* Korean set off for Seoul with determination to assassinate the Korean president.

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[108] Seoul 01487, ibid.

[109] Kim Taejung, *Kim Taejung chasŏjŏn*, p.345, 336.

CHAPTER FOUR
ASSASSINATION

> Overthrowing the autocracy is the most important task in Korean revolution. I go into a revolutionary war which will culminate in either my death or victory.[1]
>
> Mun Segwang, 1973

Mun Segwang reportedly wrote this death letter before he left for Hong Kong to purchase a pistol. Also in a manuscript that he titled 'Battle manifesto' he stated, 'The way to love the fatherland and the people can be opened only by victory in the revolutionary war; the time to pray to the god has already passed'.[2] This twenty-two-year-old was born and raised in Japan and had a poor command of his fatherland's language, Korean. Nonetheless this high school dropout devoted himself to his own revolution for Korea on 15 August 1974. The attempt at revolution fruitlessly ended in his death and made little change in the Korean political sphere. It instead caused a major side effect of recreating diplomatic friction between Korea and Japan.

Inevitably diplomatic negotiations ensued from the Mun case as it occurred across the border like the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. Mun's nationality belonged to South Korea while he was a permanent resident in Japan; he stole a pistol from Japan and used it in Korea; he received a visa from the Korean consulate in Osaka, but he obtained a passport from the Japanese government. The Korean and Japanese authorities separately advanced investigations and announced their results individually. If the case had been a simple criminal case, the two countries might not have gone to such trouble. But the case was political by nature, and so was each government's approach to the case.

The Korean and Japanese authorities held completely different views on the case. On the one hand the Korean authorities insisted that behind Mun stood *Sōren*, the pro-North Korean residents' community in Japan, and that North Korea ultimately instructed Mun to assassinate the president. On the other hand the Japanese authorities argued that Mun committed the crime alone with the help of the Yoshiis, one of whose passports Mun used. That is, the Korean side saw an international conspiracy whereas the Japanese side dismissed the case as simple terrorism.

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[1] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 26 December 1974, p.1.

[2] *Tonga ilbo*, 19 August 1974, p.1.

By linking the assassination attempt to North Korea, the South Korean government used the death of the president's wife for greater purposes. First, whether or not the government intended, the death silenced rapidly growing democratisation movement after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. Second the government could silence Japanese voice that continued to question the abduction problem despite the settlement between the two governments in the previous year.[3] In fact the Korean government accomplished much of this purpose before the assassination attempt. But the Mun case gave the Korean government an opportunity to become far more offensive than before. Third, most importantly, the Korean government took this opportunity to push the Japanese government to sever its relations with North Korea. For these purposes, the Korean government exacerbated Korea-Japan relations instead of solving diplomatic issues at an early stage, condoning or sometimes instigating anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea.

Aftermath of the Abduction

By abducting Kim Dae Jung, the Park Chung Hee regime could place its most dangerous menace under its own surveillance. From a second-guesser's point of view, however, keeping Kim in Korea was the worst choice for regime's political security. The Kim Dae Jung abduction reignited student movements in Korea. Overseas anti-Park movements also intensified without Kim. Toward the end of 1973 anti-Park movements proliferated. From January 1974 Park Chung Hee resorted to 'presidential emergency measures', the super-constitutional rights that the *Yusin* constitution bestowed upon him. Relying on emergency measures, the regime attempted to oppress dissidents by arrest, detention and execution. At the centre of these attempts was Emergency Measure Number 4, which aimed at the eradication of an organisation called the National Federation of Democratic Youth and Students (*Chŏn'guk minju ch'ŏngnyŏn haksaeng ch'ong yŏnmaeng*, hereafter 'NFDY').

The NFDY incident and two Japanese

[3] Yi Wanbŏm, 'Kim Taejung napch'i sakkŏn kwa Pak Chŏnghŭi chŏgyŏk sakkŏn [The Kim Dae Jung abduction and the attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 80 (2007): pp.341-2, 346; Kwak Chino, 'Yuk Yŏngsu ŭi chugŭm kwa Han-Il kan ŭi kaldŭng: Kaldŭng kujo kŭkpok han'gye rŭl chungsim ŭro [Yuk Yŏngsu's death and Korean-Japanese conflict]', *Han-Il kwan'gyesa yŏn'gu* 16 (2002): p156; Kimu Dejun-shi ratchi jiken shisō chōsa iinkai, ed, *Zen hōkoku, Kimu Dejun jiken* [Report: the Kim Dae Jung incident] (Tōkyō: Horupu shuppan, 1987), p.345.

Reacting to the abduction of Kim Dae Jung, university students resumed their protests against the regime from October 1973. Starting with the College of Arts and Science of Seoul National University, other colleges and universities sporadically demonstrated until December when the regime forced universities to start winter break early. Starting in November a few Seoul National University students planned a massive demonstration involving multiple universities. The authorities began to arrest some of the leaders of this plan in March, and at 10 pm on 3 April – D-day of the planned demonstration – the president issued Emergency Measure Number 4. According to the emergency measure the authorities arrested anyone related to this organisation, or the NFDY. Eventually the authorities investigated more than a thousand people and prosecuted about one hundred eighty. The court-martial convicted a total of fifty-five indictors including two Japanese nationals.

The government transformed this insubstantial group into a full-scale anti-state organisation. Taking this opportunity to smash the entire democratisation movement, the authorities and the judicial branch concluded that the NFDY conspired to violently overthrow the government and to establish a government of workers and peasants.[4] The accused denied not only such an attempt at a revolution but also the existence of the NFDY itself; they argued that they simply used the name to make their publications look more plausible.[5] Nevertheless the authorities painted a much more sinister picture. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) identified the de facto powers behind the NFDY as the former Peoples' Revolutionary Party (*Inmin hyŏngmyŏngdang*), domestic leftists and Japanese communists instructed by *Sōren*.[6]

The authorities initially did not place much emphasis on *Sōren*. Rather it seems that they used *Sōren* as a link between the students and North Korea in an effort to emphasise pro-North tendency of the accused.[7] But in the process of including two Japanese, Tachikawa Masaki and Hayakawa Yoshiharu, whom the students had met in their grand plot, the authorities clearly decided to blame Japan and *Sōren* this time. According to KCIA's announcement, Tachikawa was supported

[4] Sŏul taehakkyo 60-nyŏn sa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, ed., *Sŏul taehakkyo 60-nyŏnsa* [60-year history of Seoul National University] (Sŏul: Sŏul taehakkyo, 2006), p.858; Kukchŏngwŏn kwagŏ sakŏn chinsil kyumyŏng ŭl t'onghan palchŏn wiwŏnhoe, *Kwagŏ wa taehwa mirae ŭi sŏngch'al* [Dialogue with the Past, Reflection on the Future], vol.2 (Sŏul: Kukkachŏngbowŏn, 2007), p.159 (hereafter, 'NISDC').

[5] Ibid, p.162.

[6] *Tonga ilbo*, 25 April 1974, p.1.

[7] NISDC, p.178,

by a secret *Sōren* member who had infiltrated *Mindan*, the pro-South Korean residents' organisation in Japan, instigated a violent revolution and financed the NFDY with Hayakawa who had been a partisan of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP).[8] Behind the scene the KCIA instructed the authorities to delete from reports any evidence that could deny involvement of the Japanese. The agency also instructed the authorities to secure hard evidence showing the Japanese conspiracy to subvert the state. This way the authorities created the command chain that linked North Korea and the NFDY through the JCP and *Sōren*.[9]

The government apparently had certain diplomatic intent in its effort to include the two Japanese in the list of the accused. One of the defence counsels persuaded his client that, due to diplomatic matters, the client should testify in accordance with the police report during the trial and that they should reveal the truth later.[10] It is unclear what the counsel meant by diplomatic matters and what the government intended at the time. However it became obvious later that the government used the two Japanese as hostages in negotiations with the Japanese government that continued to raise questions about Kim Dae Jung's status.

Continuing Kim Dae Jung case

In conformity with its previous diplomatic understanding with the Korean government, the Japanese government did not mention Kim Tongun's fingerprint that corroborated the hypothesis that the Korean government was involved in the abduction of Kim Dae Jung in one way or another. But it kept questioning Kim Dae Jung's political status in Korea. To some Japanese politicians the Kim Dae Jung case never ended, and they were not satisfied with the fact that the Korean government did not allow Kim to travel abroad. If the Japanese government wished to proceed with some of its policies related to Korea (for example continental shelf negotiation at the time), it had to satisfy those politicians. To that end the Japanese government could not help but press the Korean government to allow Kim to travel out of the country.[11]

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[8] It is important to note that *Sōren* had distanced itself from the JCP since 1958 when then JCP Secretary-General Miyamoto Genji criticised Kim Il Sung's line. *Sōren* instead partnered the Japanese Socialist Party. See, Ch'oe Sŏgyŏng, 'Ilbon e sewŏjin Pukhan ŭi ch'ŏlongsŏng, "Choch'ongnyŏn" [*Sōren*: North Korean fortress built in Japan]', *Inmul kwa sasang* 184 (2013): p.153.

[9] Ibid, pp.186-90.

[10] Ibid, p.192.

[11] Tokyo 03207, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, Digital National Security Archives (hereafter, 'DNSA').

The Japanese government pushed the Korean counterpart only indirectly. But even the slightest interests of the Japanese government in Kim was enough to annoy the Korean government.

The Japanese government took a half-hearted attitude because it did not reach a consensus on this matter. On one hand it was not much concerned about Kim Dae Jung. On the other, the foreign ministry seemed to sense public pressure on the matter. Again the Japanese government hesitated in regard to Kim Dae Jung. And, again, it relied on the US government. Donald Ranard, director for Korean affairs at the State Department, believed that the Japanese government was trying to encourage the US government to take the lead on this matter. According to Ranard:

> The Japanese prefer to let sleeping dogs lie, and only become somewhat concerned when some sort of incident makes them feel uneasy or they realize this may not be possible. They then scurry around, check with us, and finally rationalize that inasmuch as the U.S. is playing quiet, they should do the same.[12]

That is, the basic approach of the Japanese government was to remain distanced from Korean matters while ascribing action or inaction to the US government. The US government did not want to become entangled in this matter either, however, because as Ranard remarked, 'The fact is that our positions are not the same; the crime was committed in Japan'.[13]

In the meantime the Korean government had no intention to listen to the US or Japanese government's requests to release Kim Dae Jung. On 1 June 1974 the Korean court summoned Kim to a trial regarding his charge on violation of the election law in 1967. The Japanese government viewed the summons as a play by the Korean government to keep Kim in the country. Japanese Foreign Minister Ōhira Masayoshi instructed Ambassador to Korea Ushiroku Torao to ask the Korean government about the trial's impact on the previous mutual understanding which had promised Kim's freedom.[14] Interestingly it is highly possible that the Korean government did not promise Kim's freedom to the Japanese.[15] In response Korean government's stance was that summoning Kim was not only a domestic affair but also a decision by the

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[12] Letter from Donald Ranrad to Robert Duemling, 10 May 1974, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[13] Ibid.

[14] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 3 June 1974, morning edition, p.1.

[15] Ranard to Duemling, op cit.

judiciary. Therefore neither Japan nor the Korean executive had the right to intervene. The Korean foreign minister further elucidated that the trial had nothing to do with the understanding with Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei since the prosecution had been made prior to the understanding.[16]

The two countries had completely different reactions. On one hand the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri shinbun* wrote in its editorial that the Korean government did not notify the Japanese government before the arrest of the two Japanese nationals and the summons of Kim Dae Jung, which behaviour was hardly possible between friendly countries.[17] On the other hand the Korean newspaper *Kyŏnghyang sinmun* editorial condemned Japan for interfering in domestic affairs. The editorial stated that still having colonialist characteristics, Japan infringed on Korean sovereignty in the name of humanitarianism.[18] This statement was no exaggeration. High-ranking officials in the Korean government shared the feeling that the government had been 'too patient with the Japanese' and that the 'Japanese had far over-stepped the bounds of their relations with the ROKG'.[19] It is uncertain whether the Korean government fabricated the resentment or the high officials were indeed upset. Yet it seems true that anti-Japanese sentiment pervaded the Blue House and the foreign ministry in some degree.

Korean offensive

The Korean government amalgamated anti-Japanese sentiment with the prosecuted Japanese people and the Kim Dae Jung case as its tactic in a deal with the Japanese government. On 6 June the Japanese government in fact took a step back as Vice Foreign Minister Tōgō Fumihiko acknowledged the Korean insistence that there was no relationship between Kim's trial and the previous diplomatic understanding.[20] Nevertheless the Korean government maintained a high profile vis-à-vis the Japanese counterpart. The Korean prime minister had 'warned the Japanese that the only way to secure "leniency" for the two Japanese nationals now being held was to adopt a

[16] *Tonga ilbo*, 5 June 1974, p.1.

[17] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 5 June 1974, p.7.

[18] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 6 June 1974, p.3.

[19] Memo for the file, 'ROKG attitude on Kim Tae Chung case and the Japanese', 10 June 1974, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[20] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 7 June 1974, p.1.

low posture and wait until after the Court-Martial trial was over'.[21] 'However', a Korean official added, 'their conduct in reacting to the Kim Tae Chung trial [was] infuriating the President and [would] undoubtedly make more difficult efforts to secure "leniency" in the handling of the two Japanese'.[22] At least by this point the Korean government regarded the two Japanese indictors as hostages for a trade-off with Kim Dae Jung.

The Korean government passed this message directly to the Japanese embassy Seoul. In early June the embassy received 'a number of feelers from persons purportedly close to President Park' who proposed 'some trade off between the cases of Kim Tae-Chung and the two Japanese under indictment'.[23] Reportedly the proposal even included Prime Minister Tanaka's visit to Seoul to make an apology and total closure of the Kim Dae Jung case. An anonymous Japanese official noted that his embassy 'was greatly disturbed by the ROKG's apparently deliberate attempt to arouse anti-Japanese feelings and to use Japan as a whipping boy in distracting public attention from ROK's internal activities'.[24] The 'internal activities' here seem to mean Kim Dae Jung's trial and the political persecution which democratisation protesters suffered. Therefore, consciously or unconsciously, the Korean government could achieve two objectives: stopping Japanese interference in the Kim Dae Jung case and averting public attention from the recent raid on the NFDY. To these ends the memory of Japanese colonialism worked best.

The Japanese government never wanted deeper aggravation of its relations with the Korean government. But at the same time it also worried about intensifying Park Chung Hee's draconian rule and wished for the stabilisation of the Korean domestic political situation. Its concern stemmed mainly from the possibility that Park might resort to military action against North Korea to avert public attention from domestic politics or 'lend credence to the draconian measures' Park introduced.[25] The Japanese government thus worried such actions would have an adverse effect on peace in East Asia. From this perspective the Japanese government kept questioning

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[21] 'ROKG attitude', op cit.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Memorandum of conversation, 'Kim Tae-Chung case and ROK/Japan relations', 11 June 1974, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Briefing memorandum, 'Highlights of the 19th U.S.-Japan planning talks and my trip to Korea', 31 July 1974, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

the status of Kim Dae Jung, which the Korean government regarded as interference. The Japanese government understood that 'Japanese lectures on Park's domestic policies would be counterproductive' due to 'Korean memories of Japanese tutelage' and asked the United States to intercede with Park 'to moderate his repressive measures'.[26]

Meanwhile some Korean officials began to sense the danger with which Korea would be faced if Korean-Japanese relations deteriorated further. By July, according to American diplomat Winston Lord's report, Korean leaders sensed the international impact of the unstable domestic political situation. Lord also reported that the Korean officials he met with recognised the growing problems in Korean-Japanese relations, but they indicated that 'their hands were tied for the time being by their leadership'.[27] In other words, the Koreans were aware that the diplomatic offensive was enough. That the leadership continued the offensive nevertheless indicated that the leadership was aiming at other objectives than merely the Kim Dae Jung case.

The Korean government attempted to use the two Japanese indictors to affect the Japanese government's attitude towards *Sōren*. On 18 May, a day after the two indictors were brought to the court-martial, a deputy foreign minister handed the Japanese ambassador to Korea a note verbale that urged the Japanese government to take measure against North Korea's operations against South Korea through Japan. The note verbale clearly pointed *Sōren* as a North Korean apparatus that aimed at diverse anti-South Korean operations.[28] By then the Japanese government was not aware of the fact that the court-martial had tried two of its people, as the Korean government notified the Japanese embassy of the trial four days after the court-martial had been convened and one day after a Japanese official visited the foreign ministry to confirm his hearsay. Moreover the Korean government had informed a *New York Times* correspondent of the trial before the Japanese official's enquiry.[29] It is unlikely that the Korean government mistakenly breached diplomatic protocol; instead the Korean government deliberately took a dismissive attitude to the Japanese government and coercively required the Japanese to put pressure on *Sōren*.

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Report 74-300, 22 May 1974, EA0003416, Presidential Archives of Korea (hereafter, 'PAK').

[29] Report 74-[?], 'Kingŭp choch'i wiban Ilbonin e kwanhan myŏndam', 22 May 1974, EA0003417, PAK.

A similar occasion took place in late June, about half a month before the court-martial convicted the indictors. In a meeting between the Korean ambassador to Japan and the Japanese deputy foreign minister on 29 June, the ambassador mentioned that if the Japanese government wanted political settlement for the two Japanese indictors so as to release them sooner, it should take certain measures first to prevent such an incident from recurring, such as a measure against *Sōren*. Perhaps significantly, the deputy minister in reply asked the ambassador to conclude Kim Tongun's involvement in the Kim Dae Jung abduction.[30] As the Korean side opened a new front of Korean residents in Japan, the Japanese side brought up the old issue of the abduction which the two governments had agreed not to mention.

In early August the Japanese government attempted yet another secret mutual understanding on a working level. Seo, the director of the Northeast Asia desk at the Japanese foreign ministry, visited the Korean foreign ministry on 2 August to 'find a solution for the Kim Dae Jung case, the NFDY incident and the like'.[31] In the dialogue with his Korean counterpart, Seo explained that the position of his government differed from those of the opposition parties or public opinion and requested to save face for his government. The Japanese government would not nitpick at the Kim Dae Jung case again, according to him, but it needed an excuse to disband the investigation headquarters. He wished the Korean government to take certain measure for this excuse. The two officials agreed that the Japanese government should draft the outline of a note that the Japanese government wished to receive from the Korean government thereby preventing violation of this off-the-record agreement. In so far as the Korean government accepted these minimum demands of the Japanese government so that the Japanese could 'save face', the Japanese government would not call Kim Dae Jung or NFDY into question again. Seemingly, thus, the Korean government succeeded in achieving some of its objects.

The Korean government appears to have tried to solve two or three issues at once through the two indictors implicated in the NFDY incident. First the government evidently tried to offset Japanese questioning on Kim Dae Jung's status. Second, as the Japanese insisted, the government might have wished to turn public attention from the democratisation issue. Third, with this as momentum, the government attempted to manipulate the Japanese government to suppress *Sōren* which its jurisdiction could

[30] JAW-07007, 722.1JA 1974, 6761, Diplomatic Archives of Korea (hereafter, 'DAK').

[31] 'Myŏndam yorok [Dialogue record]', 2 August 1974, 701 1974-75 v.7, 6646, DAK.

not reach. From sometime in May to early August the Korean government took a high posture vis-à-vis the Japanese government, sometimes even a dismissive attitude. Although the Kim Dae Jung abduction could have made the Korean government defensive in its diplomacy with Japan, the Koreans leaned towards the offensive, forcing the Japanese on the defensive instead. This structure of conflict only deepened after Mun Segwang's assassination attempt on 15 August.

Attempted Assassination

It is unclear why Mun Segwang attempted to assassinate the Korean president. Mun left many mysteries behind his death as the investigation results of the Korean and Japanese authorities contradicted each other. The Korean authorities relied mainly on Mun's confession with little hard evidence whereas the Japanese authorities conducted a rather cursory investigation. The Koreans argued that North Korea instructed Mun through *Sōren* whereas the Japanese predicated that the attempted assassination was Mun's spontaneous crime. But, regardless of the truth, the important thing is that the Korean government tried to make use of the death of the president's wife to push the Japanese government to suppress *Sōren*.

Investigation

Not long after Mun's attempt at assassination, the Korean authorities rapidly extracted a confession from Mun. Whether by torture, fabrication or Mun's own will, the authorities grasped the full account about Mun's journey to Seoul. According to his confession, Mun Segwang belonged to the anti-Park organisation, Korean Youths' League (*Han'guk ch'ŏngnyŏn tongmaeng*, abb *Hanch'ŏng*) that had been a part of the pro-South residents' community, *Mindan*. Immediately after the 4th of July Communiqué between the two Koreas in 1972, Mun met with Kim Horyong, director of the political affairs department of *Sōren* Osaka headquarters' west-Ikuno chapter. Through a series of meetings and dialogues with Kim Horyong, Mun adopted the people's democratic revolution line of North Korea. Kim trained Mun ideologically, financed him and prepared him for an assassination that would trigger a South Korean people's revolution. Mun persuaded his acquaintance and ideological comrade Yoshii Mikiko and her husband Yoshii Yukio to lend him Yukio's passport. Then, following Kim's instruction to obtain a weapon, Mun stole two pistols and bullets from a police substation in Osaka. Having successfully received a visa from the Korean consulate in Osaka, Mun flew to Seoul on 24 July with his pistol concealed in a transistor radio.

On 15 August he disguised himself as a Japanese VIP and entered the National Theatre.[32]

In fact there are some suspicious parts in the confession that needed more explanation. For example Mun was spuriously hospitalised in a *Sōren*-affiliated hospital in Tokyo where, following Kim Horyong's instruction, Mun plotted the assassination and studied Kim Il Sung's *Juche* ideology. Yet, for about a month Mun simply read basic *Juche* ideology pamphlets or some other socialist works such as Trotsky's *Terrorism and Communism*. Mun seems to have received minimum training in regard to how to handle a pistol, possibly without any actual shooting. It is mysterious why Kim Horyong spent 160,000-yen to hospitalise Mun for ideology education that could have been done at home in Osaka while teaching little about shooting that would constitute the core task of an assassin. Also North Korea had chances to give a pistol directly to Mun – or to dispatch a professional assassin after all – but Mun had to go through the dangerous process of stealing the weapons from the police substation at the risk of being caught even before departing for Korea.

Nevertheless the Korean authorities hastily announced Mun's confession before verifying his testimony.[33] Only one day after the attempted assassination, the foreign ministry directed all of its diplomatic offices abroad to engage in publicity activities and measures on media 'lest other countries misunderstand the nature of the case'.[34] The Korean government's effort to propagate its understanding of the assassination attempt was not limited to American and European powers but even reached African and Southeast Asian countries; its campaign was immediately worldwide. In a week the Korean government produced a bulletin that explained details of the incident and blamed North Korea. In early September the foreign ministry directed all of the overseas offices to contact people and spread the message that Japan should make a sincere apology and that the Japanese government should either criminalise *Sōren* or regulate it. In addition, although the Korean government would like to maintain friendly relations with Japan, relations would worsen unless

[32] 'Taet'ongnyŏng chŏgyŏk sakkŏn p'iŭija Mun Segwang ŭi chinsul naeyong [Suspect Mun's testimony' and Reference material, 'On the August 15 incident', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 24 August 1974, 701 1974-75 v.10, 6649, DAK.

[33] It was on 4 September when the investigation headquarters requested verification of Mun's statement from the foreign ministry. '[title illegible]', 701 1974-75 v.11, 6650, DAK.

[34] '8.15 chŏgyŏk sakkŏn ilchi (1) [Daily record of the assassination case]', 701 1974-74 v.1, 6640, DAK.

the Japanese government complied. Next day the ministry directed its ambassador to the Unites States to push the US government to influence the Japanese.[35]

The Korean government focused primarily on Kim Horyong and whether the Japanese government would extradite him to Korea. Korea and Japan had not entered into a treaty on extradition. Thus, in order to find a way to have Kim extradited from Japan, the Korean foreign ministry looked for precedents in Japan's relations with other countries. The Korean authorities realised that extradition of the Yoshiis was impossible in accordance with the principle of non-extradition of nationals; however Kim Horyong's case was complicated. To this legal issue a study report by the Korean embassy Tokyo indicated,

> The Japanese investigation authorities will be in a predicament if a foreign resident in Japan emerges as an accomplice. In case an alien commits a crime in the country, he will be punished under domestic law, but if the place of the crime is on foreign soil and the suspect resides within the country, no statute is applicable … Therefore the Japanese have no other option than placing the suspect under an indirect surveillance system. However, if the suspect agrees on voluntary accompaniment, [the Japanese] can have the suspect aboard on a ship or airplane, and once [the suspect] enters Korean territory, the Korean government can secure the suspect.[36]

The report asserted that the Japanese authorities nevertheless could accuse Kim of plotting murder and that otherwise the Japanese authorities would contradict themselves by abandoning their own jurisdiction. The report concluded that it was unlikely that the Japanese government would extradite Kim and that because extradition was based on reciprocity, consideration was necessary before requesting extradition. That is, the report expected, the Japanese government might request extradition of the suspects involved in the Kim Dae Jung abduction in return. However the report finally suggested that by requesting extradition the Korean government could force the Japanese to investigate and punish Kim Horyong and required political decision regarding this point.

In other words the Korean government pressed the world as well as the Japanese government to launch an investigation into Kim Horyong and *Sōren* to which Kim belonged, being well aware that the Japanese government would not extradite Kim Horyong to Korea. The Korean ministry of justice requested extradition of Kim on 3 September, the same day when the Korean embassy Tokyo sent the above report to the foreign ministry. While the government contemplated the legal

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ilbon (yŏng) 725-185, 701 1974-75 v.10, 6649, DAK.

issues for the next couple of days, the director of the Asian desk at the foreign ministry suggested that the government require the extradition of the Japanese government on 5 September. That is, the request for extradition was clearly a political decision. Another report pointed out the necessity of this extradition. First it had diverse advantages such as regulating *Sōren* and making Japanese-North Korean relations difficult. Second, in a similar future case, this extradition would be a decisive precedent allowing Korea to secure suspects from Japan. Third Korea could 'test' the Japanese attitude. Forth, 'regardless of realisation of the extradition, it would function as a tool to press the Japanese government for a sincere solution of the case and regulation of *Sōren*'.[37]

Sōren that mattered

Sōren mattered to both Korea and Japan for the same reason that it functioned as a channel between Japan and North Korea. From the Japanese perspective, *Sōren* was the de facto North Korean mission to Japan, through which both countries could trade and communicate. From the South Korean point of view, North Korean spies came and capital flowed back into North Korea through this channel. And, still competing with the north, the South Korean government had disliked the idea of any kind of Japanese-North Korean relations. Moreover Japan was ideologically flexible compared to Korea, and intercourse between pro-South *Mindan* Koreans and pro-North *Sōren* Koreans was frequent as well as natural.[38] Under these circumstances some radical *Mindan*-affiliated youths were easily exposed to leftist ideas although they did not necessarily adopt the North Korean style communism in full scale. One good example was the Korean Youths' League and Mun Segwang who had been in the league once.[39] And, whether or not they belonged to the league, not a few *Mindan* youths came to South Korea to study in their fatherland. To the South Korean government *Sōren* was a menace to eradicate whereas the Japanese government did not have many reasons to do so except for the South Korean dissatisfaction.

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[37] 'Kim Horyong ŭi sinbyŏng hwakpo munje [On securing Kim Horyong]', ibid.

[38] See a report by *Mindan*: 'Ch'ongnyŏn taech'aek [Measures against *Sōren*]', 791.76 1972-73, 6603, DAK.

[39] The league often openly advocated Kim Il Sung's plan of unification. 'Hanch'ŏng "Oosakka ponbu chuch'oe "ipkuk kwalli pŏban pandae" chiphoe kachoe tonghyang', 791.72 JA 1973, 6599, DAK.

With the détente mood in East Asia the Japanese government had gradually expanded its contact with North Korea. Despite continuous complaints by the South Korean government, the Japanese government had allowed some of those who belonged to *Sōren* to visit North Korea – ie re-entry permission back to Japan – from a humanitarian standpoint. Although the Japanese government did not allow visits to North Korea for political purposes, the government allowed business trips from late 1972.[40] It was the ministry of justice that made such decisions, and in so doing, it seems, the justice ministry did not much contemplate its impact on Japan's relations with South Korea. So much so that the Japanese foreign ministry was sometimes surprised by such decisions and requested the justice ministry to refrain from too rapid expansion of exchange with North Korea.[41] In general from 1973 visitors from North Korea to Japan sharply increased (see figure 4.1). The upward tendency reflected growing Japanese-North Korean exchanges in most fields excepting politics.

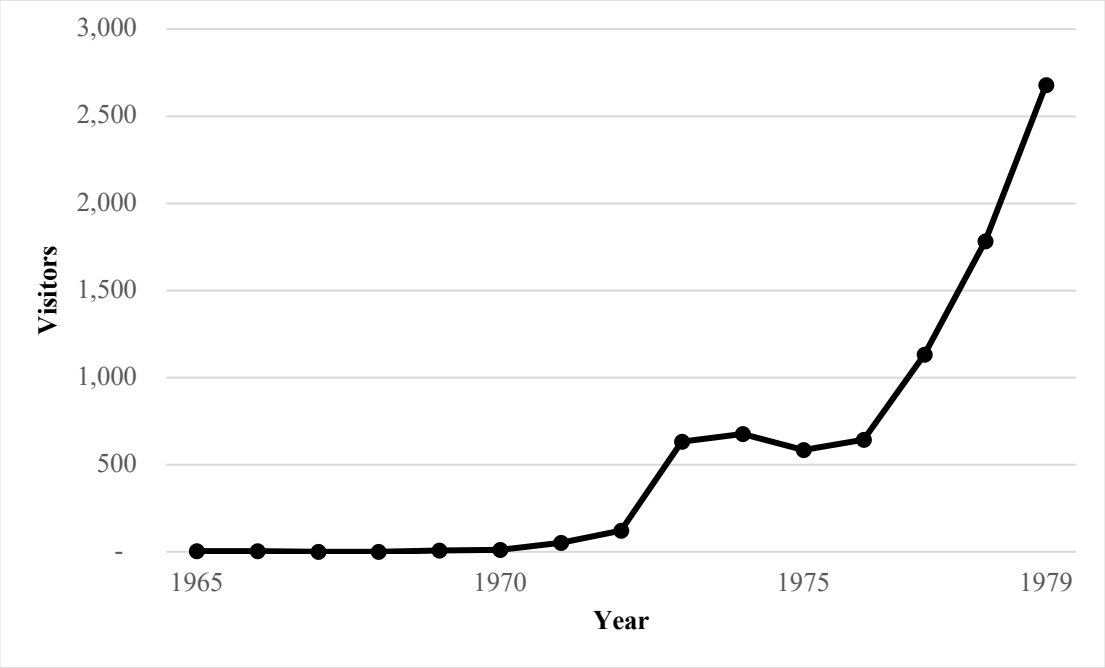

Figure 4.1 The number of North Korean visitors to Japan, 1965-1979
Source: Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, <http://www.e-stat.go.jp/>

In the same vein, as discussed in chapter 2, economic relations between Japan and North Korea also grew. Although Japan had had trade relations with North Korea

[40] JAW-03210, 791.76 1972-73, 6602, DAK.

[41] JAW-07457, ibid.

since the 1950s, Japan's interest in North Korean markets was becoming serious in the early 1970s, which corresponded to the North Korean desire to reach the First World. On one hand the détente mood in East Asia opened an opportunity for Japan to approach communist markets; North Korea did not demand that Japan sever relations with the south but simply that Japan take a friendly posture to the north.[42] It meant that North Korea did not take the Hallstein style, ie, my enemy's friend is my enemy. On the other hand Japan needed a breakthrough for its economy which was beginning to slow down compared to its skyrocketing growth in previous years. In the near future the first oil crisis would smash the Japanese economy, but even before the crisis Japan witnessed its economic momentum cooling off.[43] In this situation Japan focused on exporting more, and as a result, its total trade with North Korea in 1974 recorded six-fold increase over 1971.[44] Although the number of North Korean visitors and the volume of North Korea's trade with Japan were by no means comparable to those of South Korea, the South Korean government was concerned about the upward tendency itself.

The South Korean government's suspicion of and dissatisfaction with *Sōren* had been gradually accumulating from the beginning. However, as Japan and North Korea became closer in the early 1970s, the concern of the South Korean government also grew. For instance, having acquired intelligence that *Sōren* tried to convert South Korean visitors to the Osaka World Expo 1970 to communism, the South Korean government proclaimed that it would punish any South Korean for simply meeting with those who belonged to *Sōren*.[45] According to its 1972 policy on Japan, the South Korean government would never acknowledge (1) any governmental contact between Japan and North Korea (2) and any activity that could help North Korea increase its military power while (3) it would try to keep other contacts between the two countries to a minimum.[46] The 1973 policy on Japan succeeded the same basis. In other words the South Korean government needed 'serious alerts and proper measures' to

[42] For Japan-North Korea relations in the 1970s, see Jung Hyun Shin, 'Japanese-North Korean relations in the 1970's: From a linkage politics perspective', *Asian Perspective*, vol.4, no.1 (1980): 74-96.

[43] Shigeto Tsuru, *Japan's Capitalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.121-2.

[44] Yi Ch'anu, 'Nihon to Chōsen minshushugi jinmin kyōwakoku no keizai kankei no rekishi to genkyō [History and present of Japan-DPRK economic relations]', *ERINA Report* 47 (2002): p.32.

[45] *Tonga ilbo*, 14 February 1970, p.7; *Maeil kyŏngje*, 7 March 1970, p.7.

[46] 'Tae-Il chŏngch'aek [Policy on Japan]', 721.1 JA 1972, 4847, DAK.

expanding Japan-North Korea exchanges in economy, culture and sports.[47] And *Sōren* played the role of a mouthpiece for North Korea in Japan in such exchanges, or what the South Korean government called North Korea's 'peaceful offensive' towards Japan. For example the chairman of *Sōren*, Han Tŏksu, had a press conference in January 1973 where he urged the Japanese government to practice equidistance diplomacy with the two Koreas, to mutually establish trade missions between Japan and North Korea and to exchange journalists.[48]

Political usefulness of Mun

The court processed Mun's trial quite fast. In the first trial held on 7 October Mun admitted most of the prosecutor's facts, and the court sentenced him to death on 19 October. In the ensuing court of appeals Mun plead not guilty, but the court dismissed the appeal anyway. On 17 December the supreme court finally dismissed his appeal. Only three days later he was hanged to death. At the time the US embassy Seoul thought that it was possible for the Korean president to change the death sentence to life imprisonment and use Mun for anti-North Korean propaganda.[49] In fact the Korean government kept Kim Sinjo alive who was arrested at the time of the Blue House raid in 1968 as one of the guerrillas. Years later, the government also preserved the life of a North Korean terrorist Kim Hyŏnhŭi who bombed a Korean Airlines civil aircraft in 1987. On this unprecedentedly swift execution a Japanese newspaper commented that with withering public attention Mun's political usefulness had run out and that by the execution, questions regarding the mastermind would remain mysterious.[50]

The Korean government might have aimed at two objects by using the Mun case politically: on one hand silencing domestic outcry for democratisation and suppressing *Sōren* in Japan on the other. In the domestic political sphere, the Park regime benefited from the death of the president's wife, whether the regime intended it or not. For the time being no Korean did or could support Mun. The Mun case aroused a red scare in Korean society, under which circumstances the anti-regime

[47] '73-nyŏndo tae-Il oegyo ŭi kibon pangyang [Basic direction of Japanese policy in 1973]', 721.1 JA 1973, 5741, DAK.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Seoul 8427, 'Supreme court upholds death sentence for Mrs. Park's assassin', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[50] *Hokkai Taimuzu*, 20 December 1974 as scrapped in 701 1974-75 v.11, 6650, DAK.

protest seemed inappropriate. Protest leaders worried that their momentum had flagged since last October in the national atmosphere of mourning.[51] On 23 August, whether Park felt it unnecessary to maintain repressive measures against his people or he calculated it was time for a carrot instead of a stick, he withdrew the Emergency Measures Number 1 and Number 4, the first of which had prohibited denying, opposing or slandering the constitution.

Yet democratisation movements soon resumed. On 23 September four thousand Ewha Womans University students protested against the regime on campus. In about a month *Tonga ilbo* journalists announced the 'free press declaration'. Again in November a civil organisation called the 'National Council for the Restoration of Democracy' (*Minju hoebok kungmin hoeŭi*) was founded. In response the regime expelled American Methodist Reverend George E. Ogle who had engaged in missionary work in poverty-stricken neighbourhoods. To suppress *Tonga ilbo*, a thus far somewhat anti-Park newspaper, the regime pressed private companies not to advertise in the newspaper. In short the clash between the democratisation movement and the repressive regime continued after a month-long silence. The Mun case was little help for the Park regime in overcoming the domestic political crisis with which it had been faced since the late 1960s.

Nowhere in any source is it clear that the Korean government intended to use the Mun case on the home front. Yet the government evidently used this opportunity to suppress *Sōren*. Above all the president directly requested assistance in this effort from Japanese high-ranking officials.[52] Such a request to the Japanese government was so straightforward that the Korean government looked as if it had determined to eradicate the pro-North Korean organisation no sooner than Mun fired his pistol. In fact, in the morning of 17 August, Mun admitted that 'one of his close political associates [was] "political director" of Chosun Soren [sic] Osaka Chapter [ie Kim Horyong]'; however 'Mun did not link him to the assassination plot and … refused to further elaborate on his association with the Chosun Soren official'.[53] Nevertheless the Korean authorities announced that evening that Kim Horyong had instructed the

[51] Seoul 5439, 'Park assassination attempt: Reaction and possible consequences', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[52] 'Myŏndam yorok [Dialogue record]', 19 September 1974, 701 1974-75 v.7, 6646, DAK.

[53] Seoul 5389, 'Investigation of Park assassination attempt', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

assassination.[54] Unless Mun shifted his confession during the day of the 17th, the investigation announcement was a falsehood.

It is not to say however that the Korean government totally fabricated the North Korean background plot, which is ever unknowable. Rather the Japanese government did not wish to dig deeper into the case. Though the Korean and Japanese governments shared their investigation progress, they agreed not to reveal the details of the progress.[55] And the detailed Japanese investigation reports are still classified. According to the memo attached to the report, the Japanese police did not find evidence that linked Mun to North Korea, and thus it concluded that Mun committed the assassination based on his own communist revolutionary ideology.[56] Handing over this report to the Korean government, the Japanese government stated that it would not publicise the contents of the report. The Japanese also added that the government prepared the report in a hurry for the supreme court trial on 10 December. Judging from these remarks, the Japanese government does not seem to have wanted to make the situation more complicated, but by passing its own investigation results, it simultaneously attempted to affect the trial result to some extent, if passively.

Though the Japanese investigation headquarters had initially stated that it would investigate as deep as the Japanese law allowed, the headquarters disbanded on 25 December, leaving truths of the funds Mun used or of his mastermind unclear.[57] The Korean government wanted the Japanese police to continue the investigation. Urging the Japanese, a Korean foreign ministry spokesman emphasised that the assassination was 'plotted and planned in Japan'.[58] As the Korean government had pushed the Japanese to suppress *Sōren*, this urge also seems to be an expression of dissatisfaction that the Japanese police 'failed' to find a link between Mun and *Sōren*. However the Japanese government appears to have intentionally evaded finding this 'link'. For instance the police never summoned or interviewed Kim Horyong and prosecuted only Yoshii Mikiko on a charge of violating the immigration control

[54] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 18 August 1974, p.1.

[55] JAW-09266, 701 1974-75 v.10, 6649, DAK.

[56] JAW-12208, 701 1974-75 v.11, 6650, DAK.

[57] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 26 December 1974, morning edition, p.14.

[58] *HK Standard*, 27 December 1974, scrapped in Hyangch'ong 770-38, 70-2517, 701 1974-74 v.11, 6650, DAK.

law.[59] Not interviewing Kim at all does not necessarily mean that Kim was innocent; it rather means that the police had no intent to relate the case to *Sōren* from the beginning as opposed to the wish of the Korean government. Instead the Japanese police investigated the Korean Youths' League, to which Mun Segwang belonged and to which the Korean authorities paid relatively little attention.[60] As the Korean government approached the Mun case from a realpolitik viewpoint, so did the Japanese government. As appeared in an opinion section of *Asahi shinbun*, 'Mun was a loser who threw himself into the middle of political dynamics … the "wall of fate" that crushed him was the wall of cruel politics between Japan, South Korea and North Korea'.[61]

Korean-Japanese Conflict: Stage Two

A staff member at the Japanese embassy Seoul recollected that after Mun's assassination attempt Ambassador Ushiroku ordered his staff to prepare for leaving Korea. According to him the embassy was determined to leave the country in a day or two once the Korean government notified them of the severance of diplomatic relations. Agitated crowds gathered around the embassy, and much anti-Japanese sentiment prevailed among Korean public. A few months from August 1974 witnessed the worst point in contemporary Korean-Japanese relations since their normalisation in 1965.[62] Japan had almost no responsibility in regard to the Mun's attempt. In this sense Korea's condemnation of Japan was excessive. Yet the Japanese government provided a pretext for the Koreans to denounce Japan by not admitting any responsibility, legal or moral, regardless of whether the Japanese were right. In Japan too the opposition parties and the police had accumulated dissatisfaction with the Korean government's recent behaviour in the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. So much so that the Japanese government did not intend to improve its relations with the Korean government. In this vicious circle Korean-Japanese relations developed from bad to worse.

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[59] Kim Horyong's statement in the interview with a Korean reportage TV programme, *Ije nŭn malhal su itta*, episode 88 (MBC, aired on 27 March 2005).

[60] 'Kugoe ilil chŏngbo [Daily international intelligence]', 701 1974-75 v.11, 6650, DAK.

[61] *Asahi shinbun*, 22 December 1974, p.5.

[62] *Mainichi shinbun*, 21 January 2005, p.7.

Anti-Japanese sentiment

After Mun Segwang's assassination attempt, Koreans were infuriated. Park Chung Hee's resentment is understandable; above all his wife was dead. Likewise so is the emotion of the general Korean public. The president's wife had tried to be so forthright to her husband that she had been called the 'opposition party within the Blue House'.[63] Reportedly Park Chung Hee was willing to order his air force to bomb Tokyo.[64] Ordinary people gathered to protest against North Korea and Japan although some of them might have belonged to rightist and pro-regime organisations such as associations of veterans, anti-communists and the like. Figure 4.2 shows how big the crowd was in an anti-Japanese, anti-communist protest. In it appear those organisations that are not necessarily considered as pro-regime such as a mothers' association or this and that unions and companies. In short the anti-Japanese sentiment was genuine, and those protests were spontaneous to a certain extent.

Figure 4.2 Anti-Japanese, anti-communist protest at Tongdaemun stadium, 1974
Source: Open Archives, Korea Democracy Foundation. Date unspecified.

[63] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 16 August 1974, p.5.

[64] Kim Ch'ungsik, KCIA: *Namsan ŭi pujangdŭl* [Directors of the KCIA] vol.2 (Sŏul: Tonga ilbosa, 1992), p.134.

Even if the emotion was real, nonetheless, the Korean government did make use of the anti-Japanese sentiment. In early September, as the Korean government attempted to prevail in negotiations with the Japanese government, anti-Japanese demonstrations became intensified. From 27 August to 12 September eight cases of vandalism took place against the Japanese embassy Seoul, the Japanese consulate in Busan and Japanese companies.[65] Especially on 6 September three youngsters trespassed on the property of the Japanese embassy Seoul to vandalise the embassy building and deface the Japanese national flag.[66] Although some of those who participated in the vandalism were high school students, employers of private companies and the like, the others belonged to rightist organisations. The Japanese embassy Seoul suspected that the Korean police could have prevented the vandalism although it did not take the matter seriously. That might be partly because the Korean government immediately apologised and partly because Japanese people had vandalised Korean diplomatic offices in Japan too.[67]

Of course the involvement of the rightist organisations itself does not mean that the Korean government mobilised these organisations. However the US government thought so. Investigating Korean-American relations in 1976, the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the US Congress found that the KCIA instructed the (in)famous Korean-born heresy Unification Church to stage anti-Japanese demonstrations in front of the Japanese embassy Washington DC and of the White House on 4 September 1974. The KCIA financed the Unification Church for the demonstrations although the KCIA eventually cancelled the plan because of the opposition of the State Department. The report by the subcommittee, 'Fraser report', found that the Korean government sponsored anti-Japanese demonstrations in Seoul over a period of several weeks.[68] Besides the State Department believed that the vandalism in the Japanese embassy on 6 September was a 'clearly officially sanctioned attack'.[69]

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[65] Oesa 2068-6887, 701 1974-75 v.8, 6647, DAK.

[66] Kŏmch'al 820-28684, ibid.

[67] 722.1JA 1974, 6759, DAK, passim.

[68] Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, 'Investigation of Korean-American Relations', Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session (Washington DC: US Government Publishing Office, 1978), pp.343-4.

[69] State 196331, 'Deterioration of Japanese-Korean relations', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

It is unclear on what basis the US government drew the conclusion that the Korean government sponsored the anti-Japanese demonstrations. Except for the cancelled demonstration in Washington DC, the US government did not suggest clear-cut evidence of Korean government's sponsorship. Of course the Korean government left no document that shows its sponsorship of anti-Japanese demonstrations. However, as it had whipped up its people with anti-Japanese sentiment at the time of the NFDY incident, the Korean government could possibly have organised, instigated or connived fierce anti-Japanese demonstrations to press the Japanese government in the ongoing negotiation. The coincidence was strange enough to convince the Americans at least.

Japanese government: honne or tatemae

The diplomacy of the Japanese government after the attempted assassination exemplified typical *honne-tatemae* differentiation. Hiding one's ulterior motive (*honne*) from a semblance (*tatemae*) might be a universal and rudimentary skill in diplomacy. But the Japanese were so equivocal that the Koreans struggled to grasp what the Japanese really meant. At a glance the Japanese government appeared to be moving back and forth just as it had done at the time of the Kim Dae Jung abduction a year ago. Nonetheless the Japanese were clearly distancing themselves from the Koreans.

The Japanese government initially did not have a unified measure against the Korean government this time either. The earliest response from the Japanese government was that it had nothing to do with the attempted assassination; Mun was a Korean national, and thus all that the Japanese government needed to do was to revoke the passport he had used.[70] Albeit not officially, the Japanese government took a stance that it held no legal or moral responsibility.[71] Such an attitude lasted for a few days, even after Prime Minister Tanaka visited Korea to attend the funeral of the president's wife. Suddenly, however, some high-ranking officials began to express their opinions to the effect that though the Japanese side might not have legal responsibility, it was excessive not to admit moral responsibility at all. Once such opinions surfaced, a deputy foreign minister acknowledged that denying all the responsibility did not accord with the official position of the foreign ministry. The

[70] Chŏnŏn 16, 701 1974-75 v.10, 6649, DAK.

[71] WJA-08245, 701 1974-75 v.2, 6641, DAK.

Korean government understood that the shift of attitude reflected growing anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea.[72]

However Japanese Foreign Minister Kimura Toshio was practically uncooperative with regard to the investigation into the Mun case. On 19 August he made it clear in the Diet that the government could not accept the Korean request to suppress anti-Park movement in Japan, if any, as far as the movement was lawful under the Japanese legal system. Japan guaranteed maximum freedom of thought and speech. Therefore, he enunciated, the Japanese government would not suppress *Sōren* with no clear evidence of illegal activity.[73] His attitude was at best vague when having a dialogue with the Korean ambassador to Japan. Though he promised to cooperate in the investigation, he said, there was a gap between the two countries' authorities due to a difference in the legal systems. He also emphasised that the Japanese government would do its best to take administrative measures against *Sōren*, but he added that the matter of *Sōren* fell under the jurisdiction of the Public Security Intelligence Agency.[74] On surface he seemed agreeable to the Korean requests. Inside, however, he was preparing a way out of trouble.

In the meantime, apart from the Mun case, Foreign Minister Kimura expressed a series of remarks that alluded to Japan's new attitude towards Korea. Before the attempted assassination, on 9 August, he suggested that the United States, Japan, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China commonly assume responsibility for the Korean peninsula. The suggestion was Kimura's own opinion that other foreign ministry officials were not aware of.[75] While the Korean government wondered what Kimura really meant, the foreign minister further worried the Koreans on 19 August by remarking on the possibility of normalisation with North Korea. In reply to questions of Dietman Hoshino Tsutomu (JCP) as to whether Japan could recognise North Korea, Kimura answered that the Japanese government did not consider recognition of North Korea 'at this point'. In the context of a series of questions and answers, Kimura seemed to defend the government's position of not recognising North Korea. But after Hoshino's captious questions, Kimura ended up

[72] 'Il chŏngbu, taet'onyŏng chŏgyŏk sakkŏn e ch'aegim siin t'aedo rŭl p'ymyŏng [The Japanese government shows an attitude that recognises responsibility for the attempted assassination]', ibid.

[73] JAW-08452, 721.2JA 1974, 6746, DAK.

[74] JAW-08782, 701 1974-75 v.10, 6649, DAK.

[75] JAW-08217, 721.2JA 1974, 6746, DAK.

saying that the Republic of Korea lawfully governed only the southern part of the Korean peninsula and that in regard to the northern part of the peninsula the Korean-Japanese basic relations treaty had remained blank.[76]

As discussed in chapter 1, the interpretation of the treaty on the jurisdiction of the Republic of Korea had been a recurring issue between Korea and Japan. That is, it was controversial whether the phrase 'the only lawful Government in Korea as specified in the Resolution 195 (III) of the United Nations General Assembly' meant that the Republic of Korea was the only lawful government in the southern part of Korea or the entire peninsula including the part that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea occupied. Kimura's remark reflected the latter interpretation, and therefore people could understand from the remark – and he seemed to mean it by 'at this point' – that Japan could sign a normalisation treaty with North Korea in due time. After the Sino-American and Sino-Japanese rapprochement, it was South Koreans' nightmare that today's friendly countries could turn against them in favour of North Koreans one day.

Making things worse, Kimura mentioned North Korea once again on 29 August. In reply to questions of Dietman Den Hideo (JSP) in regard to a military threat from North Korea, the foreign minister answered that the Japanese government objectively concluded that there was no such a thing as North Korean threat.[77] This remark was a tongue slip. The foreign minister soon had his deputy add that his remark meant the balanced military power between the two Koreas and little possibility of an imminent large-scale military clash.[78] Such explanation scarcely satisfied the Koreans, however. Instructing the ambassador to Japan to dig into the motive behind the remark, the Korean foreign minister said, 'It is suspicious that [he] repeats such a thoughtless posture at the time when Korean-Japanese relations witness such a great crisis, as if he did not understand the aggressive attitude of the northern puppet and the actual state of affairs on the Korean peninsula'.[79] Although Japanese officials urged that Japan's Korean policy had not changed, the Korean Embassy in Tokyo believed that the Japanese foreign ministry under Kimura had come to a

[76] Accounts Committee, House of Councillors, 73-san-kessan iinkai-hei-1go, 19 August 1974, National Diet Library (hereafter, 'NDL'), p.32.

[77] Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Councillors, 73-san-gaimu iinkai-hei-2go, 29 August 1974, NDL, p.12.

[78] JAW-08716, 721.2JA 1974, 6746, DAK.

[79] WJA-08457, ibid.

different understanding of East Asian circumstances, which was more flexible than before and which could cause an actual change in Japan's Korean policy in the future.[80]

Kimura in fact repeated 'such a thoughtless posture' on 5 September in the foreign affairs committee of the House of Representatives where he was supposed to explain his previous remark on 29 August. The problem occurred when Dietwoman Doi Takako (JSP) enquired about Article 3 of the basic relations treaty that prescribed the jurisdiction of the Korean government as mentioned above. Director of the Treaties Bureau Matsunaga Nobuo answered that the government's understanding was that the Republic of Korea governed only the southern part of the peninsula and that the purpose of Article 3 was to clarify this condition. Foreign Minister Kimura added that he shared the same understanding.[81] Director Matsunaga later explained to a Korean official what he meant was that the Republic of Korea was the only lawful government on the entire Korean peninsula, that, however, its jurisdiction was limited to the southern part and that the Republic of Korea did not effectively control the northern part.[82] The Japanese side insisted that the Korean side was misunderstanding its remarks. In his interview with *Newsweek*, Kimura shifted the responsibility of arousing public criticism of his remarks in Korea to incorrect reports by Korean media.[83] True, the Korean government did not believe everything just as told. But the Japanese government did not try to convince the Koreans of its unchanged Korean policy either. From the Korean perspective, the Japanese government had unquestionably changed its policy on the Korean peninsula.

Korean government: straight to press the Japanese

The Korean approach to the Japanese government was much more straightforward in several policy proposals. One proposal, which seems to have been prepared in August, recommended the government to create a favourable international atmosphere to Korea and at the same time to create pressure on Japan within Korea. To list a few details of this proposal, the Korean government should seek supports

[80] JAW-08793, ibid.

[81] Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Representatives, 73-shū-gaimu iinkai-3go, 5 September 1974, NDL, p.5.

[82] JAW-0967, 721.2JA 1974, 6746, DAK.

[83] *Newsweek*, 30 September 1974, p.60 as cited in WJA-0939, ibid.

from scholars of international law, press and friendly governments while looking for favourable international precedents. Besides, the proposal suggested, the government should maintain a high profile and mobilise people in legal circles while rejecting Japanese customers.[84] A proposal prepared on 21 August suggested that the Korean government make the Japanese government take political and moral responsibility for the attempted assassination and the death of the president's wife, while postponing legal responsibility due to lack of basis in terms of international law. In concrete the proposal suggested documenting all the requests by the Korean government as well as the responsibility of the Japanese government so that the Korean government could exert all its 'rights' as necessary.[85]

Another proposal on 27 August suggested as few contacts with the Japanese government as possible. It advised not to propose governmental conferences with the Japanese for the time being; if the Japanese government offered to open a regular meeting, the Korean government would accept it as far as the meeting was essential for national interest, and otherwise the government would delay it. In the same fashion the government should minimise government-level personnel exchanges, nor should the Korean side offer new cultural or religious exchanges before the Japanese although existing events would be held as scheduled. Moreover the government would degrade the level of protocol for Japanese officials.[86]

Meantime in September the Korean Society of International Law held an academic conference in order to discuss international-legal issues regarding the Mun case and to gather academic support to strengthen the legal basis of the Korean government in its diplomacy with the Japanese. Despite the conference, the Korean government did not find a way to rely on international law. Another proposal by the foreign ministry on 4 September suggested not to depend on law because the Japanese could rebut, and instead to try extra-legal measures to pursue Japanese cooperation. In regard to Kim Horyong, it further advised that the government request deportation rather than extradition, which was not so much a legal as political solution.[87]

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[84] 'Taet'ongnyŏng chŏgyŏk sakkŏn tae-Il kyosŏp pangan [Measures for negotiations regarding the attempted assassination]', 701 1974-75 v.2, 6641, DAK.

[85] 'Taet'ongnyŏng chŏgyŏk sakkŏn kwa kwallyŏnhan tae-Il choch'i pangan (sian) [Measures against Japan regarding the attempted assassination (proposal)]', ibid.

[86] Pugil 700-157, ibid.

[87] 'Taet'ongnyŏng chŏgyŏk sakkŏn kongbŏm Kim Horyong ŭi indo yoco'ŏng munje [Kim Horyong extradition problem]', 701 1974-75 v.9, 6648, DAK.

A proposal prepared on 12 September proposed a more tactical approach. The proposal clearly suggested relying on international law merely as a means of diplomatic negotiation and not to develop into a legal dispute. It read, 'It is not advisable for the government to officially raise legal issues in terms of negotiation technique, but it is desirable in unofficial negotiation process for civil academia, press and political institutions to press the Japanese side on the basis of international law'.[88] Specifically with regard to *Sōren*, the proposal pointed out that the Korean government had officially requested the suppression of *Sōren* on 18 May 1974, namely at the time of the NFDY incident, that the Japanese government nevertheless failed to prevent Mun's assassination attempt and that therefore to relieve the Japanese government of responsibility, the Korean government could reasonably and lawfully request investigation into *Sōren* and people who belonged to it.

Ultimatum

The persistent Korean requests and reluctance of the Japanese government drove the two countries to desperation. It was a chicken game which neither side was willing to concede. As Japan had asked the US government to intervene at the time of the Kim Dae Jung abduction, this time the Korean government asked for help from the United States. On 7 September the Korean foreign minister requested that the US government influence the Japanese to take 'sincere' attitudes. The foreign minister specifically wanted Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to influence Yasukawa Takeshi, then Japanese ambassador to the United States.[89] By 'sincere attitudes' the Korean government meant, letting the *Sōren* problem alone, a signed letter from the Japanese prime minister which a special envoy would pass to the president with an expression of apology.

The US government would assume the role of 'honest broker' between Korea and Japan but never seriously intervene in the diplomatic battle between the two.[90] The United States did not support the Japanese equidistance attitude between two Koreas and between two Vietnams. The United States thought the equidistance policy might destabilise East Asia. While the State Department understood the political need of the Tanaka cabinet to balance in its relations with the divided countries, in the State

[88] '[no title]', 12 September 1974, ibid.

[89] WUS-09123, 701 1974-75 v.3, 6642, DAK.

[90] 'Myŏndam yorok [Dialogue record]', 74-707, ibid.

Department's view the Japanese government nevertheless did not have to be neutral.[91] Still, the basic position of the US government was that Korea and Japan should end the diplomatic conflict and keep good relations. This attitude resulted in the US taking a tepid role of messenger between the two parties. In a conversation with the US ambassador to Japan, the Japanese foreign minister simply repeated what he had said to Korean officials, generalities that the Japanese government would cooperate with the Koreans and that Japan's Korean policy had not changed.[92] Again, therefore, the Japanese *honne* was unknowable.

On 9 September the Korean government issued an ultimatum. In the morning that day the Korean foreign minister summoned the Japanese ambassador and notified the Japanese government that they should show 'sincerity' by either sending a special envoy with the prime minister's own letter or arresting Kim Horyong by 12 September when the prime minister would make his trip to the Americas. 'Otherwise', the foreign minister added, 'Japan must bear all the responsibility for the results that would emerge from not doing so'.[93] The possible 'results' included summons of the Japanese ambassador, resignation of the Korean foreign minister himself or deportation of all the diplomatic offices of Japan from Korea. Ambassador Ushiroku did not promise anything on the spot. Rather he said that if his prime minister sent a letter, it would simply contain 'regret' for the preparation for the assassination attempt that had taken place in Japan, nor would the letter contain any message regarding *Sōren*. The Korean foreign minister emphasised that such contents were unacceptable and had his ambassador to Japan meet Satō Eisaku and Shiina Etsusaburō, respectively former prime minister and foreign minister, to press the Japanese government.[94]

The Korean government wanted a Japanese apology exactly in its own terms whereas the Japanese wished to make the terms as abstract as possible. Foreign Minister Kimura insisted that the term 'regret' connoted everything that the Koreans wanted. He urged that the special envoy, who would be as important a figure as Shiina, should discuss details with the president verbally while the letter should

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[91] 'Memorandum for Mr Arthur W. Hummel', 3 October 1974, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

[92] 'Myŏndam yorok', 74-707; USW-09145, 701 1974-75 v.3, 6642, DAK.

[93] 'Myŏndam yorok', 74-707.

[94] WJA-09161, 701 1974-75 v.3, 6642, DAK.

exclude the details. Similarly, the Japanese prime minister and foreign minister tried to persuade the Korean ambassador to Japan to use such vague expressions as 'to control terrorism and other criminal activities' or to 'try to prevent incidents that would alienate Korea and Japan'. The ambassador maintained that *Sōren* – or anything else that could describe this organisation if the Japanese so wished to avoid this name – be included in the letter. Further the ambassador suggested to arrange the contents of the prime minister's letter by working-level staff, but the foreign minister made it clear that most of the contents were decided and that therefore there was no room for change.[95]

On 19 September Shiina Etsusaburō visited Seoul in the capacity of Prime Minister Tanaka's special envoy. Although the Japanese government clarified that the envoy was not to offer an apology, the Koreans believed otherwise, deliberately or not. In his meeting with the Korean president, Shiina had to listen to Park Chung Hee's acrimonious reproach. Shiina first admitted that with the international détente mood the Japanese government had focused too much on China and left Korea unattended. Then, apart from Tanaka's letter, Shiina promised Park to have the Japanese government suppress *Sōren*, the promise which was known later as 'Shiina memo'. In reply Park rhetorically asked whether the Japanese government regarded Korea as a friendly nation, raising issues of *Sōren* and of recent remarks of Japanese officials, mainly Foreign Minister Kimura. But Park's comments centred mostly on *Sōren*. He pushed the special envoy, saying,

> Looking at the recent state of affairs, I cannot but doubt if the LDP government of Japan is determined to remain as a member of the free world to the end. If so, I think, it will be difficult [to do so] unless [the Japanese government] makes a decision now. If [the Japanese government] leaves the opposition parties and press as they please, they will become more enthusiastic … It seems to me that the Japanese government, especially the foreign ministry, regards it as a taboo on mentioning *Sōren*, but in so far as Japan does not want to take leftward drift, [the Japanese government] should make a decision for the sake of the future of Japan's politics. Certainly Kim Il Sung's aim is to communise South Korea and to communise Japan with the help of the JCP.[96]

In short the president required that the Japanese choose either one side or the other of the two Cold-War camps. It is not certain whether such a dichotomous viewpoint was Park's own understanding of the state of affairs or it was simply rhetoric. Either way,

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[95] JAW-09281, ibid.

[96] Pugil 700-1394, 701 1974-75 v.4, 6643, DAK.

the Korean supreme power thereby clearly requested that the Japanese government step back from the North Koreans.

The diplomatic conflict between Korea and Japan paused with Shiina's visit to Seoul although noise on the investigations continued. This was a typical envoy diplomacy. As the Korean government sent Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil to Japan after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung, the Japanese government dispatched Shiina to Korea. A common characteristic in this envoy diplomacy was that the sending side wished to conclude the conflict in an ad hoc way and move on. But without fixing fundamental causes of dissatisfaction, their conflict would continue. Here American commentators understood the situation correctly when they expected, 'ambiguities in the settlement, particularly the implementation of Tokyo's promise to curb anti-Pak Koreans in Japan, will provide additional ground for misunderstanding'.[97] As mentioned above, the Japanese government neither investigated Kim Horyong nor suppressed *Sōren*, to the Korean government's dissatisfaction. This proved that Shiina's promise had been nothing more than lip service. Consequently the two governments became faced with another necessity for a diplomatic settlement in 1975.

* * *

After Mun Segwang's assassination attempt, the Korean government harshly attacked the Japanese government. The central purpose of the excessive pressure on the Japanese was to stop Japan from expanding its contact with North Korea and to suppress *Sōren,* which served as a link between Japan and North Korea. The Park Chung Hee regime's effort to outlaw *Sōren* in Japan began in the course of a crackdown on democratisation movement that had flowered after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. The regime successfully defended Japan's continuous presentation of the abduction problem with the two Japanese people it detained during the crackdown. Then it changed to the offensive, importunately asking the Japanese to distance themselves from North Korea and from *Sōren*. The regime accelerated its offensive after the assassination attempt. In the end the regime gained Japan's promise to suppress *Sōren*. Arguably with no conspicuous misbehaviour, the Japanese government gave in to the Korean demand, as it had done a year before at the time of Kim Dae Jung's abduction.

[97] 'South Korean-Japanese relations', November 1974, Japan and the US, 1960-1976 collection, DNSA.

In both the Kim Dae Jung and Mun Segwang cases, members of the public exhibited their keen interest in diplomatic matters. It was Japanese media and intellectual society that first put pressure on the Tanaka government to take a firm attitude to Korea after the abduction. This pressure along with political attacks by opposition Dietmen moved the reluctant Tanaka cabinet. The fierce anti-Japanese movement in Korea gave the Park regime gave leverage in negotiation with Japan. The Japanese attitude that it had nothing to do with the death of president's wife did change a little bit probably due to the growing anti-Japanese sentiment in Korea. It is indisputable that the public played certain role in these cases.

Yet, how much agency the public had is a different question. The conflict in 1973 took place not because the Japanese public pushed the Japanese government but because the Park Chung Hee regime risked the conflict. The conflict in 1974 also stemmed from Park regime's persistent demand for suppressing *Sōren*, not from the Korean public enraged at the death of the beloved first lady. Especially the anti-Japanese sentiment among the public was more or less an outcome of Korean government's tenacious propaganda that denounced Japan, even if the public feeling was real. If there was a genuine, spontaneous anti-Japanese sentiment, that would be among government officials who were annoyed by the uncooperative Japanese government.

The Cold-War alignment was dissolving. Park Chung Hee tried to solidify his waning power due to détente by removing threats to regime's political security, first Kim Dae Jung and later *Sōren*. Tanaka focused too much on expanding Japan's relations with China and North Korea to give Park's Korea uneasiness. The United States stayed aloof from the conflict between Korea and Japan. Although it hoped the two of its junior partners to keep good relations, the United States never enthusiastically intervened in the conflict as an honest broker. In this situation, the apology from the Japanese government alone could not improve the aggravated Korea-Japan relations. The apology was the minimum condition to stop the relations from growing worse. What led the two countries to the way to reconciliation were change in the Japanese political sphere, economic necessity and the demise of détente.

CHAPTER FIVE
WAY TO RECONCILIATION

> I understand that the Korean government exerted its maximum authority, and I judge that this incident is now closed … I think that Korea, as an independent country, has done its best.[1]
>
> Miyazawa Kiichi, 1975

On 25 July 1975 Japanese Foreign Minister Miyazawa Kiichi declared that the abduction case of Kim Dae Jung was completely concluded (*ketchaku*). Thereby the diplomatic battle that Korea and Japan had fought during the first half of the 1970s ended. A day before Miyazawa's declaration, the Korean government handed the Japanese government two note verbales; one on Kim Tongun, the diplomat whose fingerprint the Japanese police found at the scene of the abduction, and the other on Mun Segwang who had shot at the Korean president about a year before. The gist of the first note was that though the Korean authorities found no clue to prove Kim Tongun's involvement in the abduction, the government dismissed him from his official position simply for being suspected by the Japanese police. In the second note the Korean government expressed its dissatisfaction with the Japanese government's failure to punish any activity that attempted to overthrow the Korean regime and exhorted the Japanese to promptly carry out what it had promised to do.[2] The Japanese foreign minister accepted such a unilateral and uncompromising attitude of the Korean government.

A variety of domestic and international factors contributed to promoting this reconciliation between Korea and Japan. The oil crisis, Tanaka Kakuei's resignation and the demise of détente all helped the two countries recover from the previous friction. The economic recession following the first oil crisis necessitated improvement of Korea-Japan relations. This was not only an economic but also a political problem especially for the Park Chung Hee regime. Economic development was one of the core elements that legitimated the dictatorial regime. Economic failure

[1] Kimu Dejun-shi Ratchi Jiken Shinsō Chōsa Iinkai ed., *Zen hōkoku, Kimu Dejun jiken* [Report: the Kim Dae Jung incident] (Tōkyō: Horupu shuppan, 1987), pp.356-7.

[2] Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Korea, *Kim Taejung napch'i sakkŏn kwallyŏn charyojip* [Sourcebook regarding the Kim Dae Jung abduction] v.2 (P'aju: Hanguk haksul chŏngbo, 2010), pp.319-21 (hereafter, 'Sourcebook'). Pagination follows pages of the book, not of original documents.

would undermine Park's authority, and thus the regime had to rely on the Japanese economy to minimise the economic hardship. Japan's attitude towards Korea substantially changed with new prime minister, Miki Takeo. Miki was not able to carry out diplomacy completely at his own will owing to his relatively weak political foundation in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Shiina Etsusaburō wielded power in the Miki cabinet, and Japan's Korean policy grew conservative according to Shiina's political perspectives. Lastly the demise of détente increased security concerns in East Asia and led Japan to distance itself from North Korea and to approach South Korea once again.[3]

Among these three factors, the economic necessity and political change preceded the demise of détente. While the economic necessity encouraged the Korean side to finalise the political conflict, the change in the Japanese political ground created an environment for improvement in Korea-Japan relations from the Japanese side. The security concerns that stemmed from the demise of détente was less decisive than it looked in the improvement of the relations at this point. Therefore, the reconciliation between Korea and Japan itself did not mean the return to the golden age of their Cold-War alignment.

Deteriorating Korean Economy

The deteriorating Korean economy initially caused the Korean government to change its attitude. The aftermath of the first oil crisis of 1973 struck Korea hard as well as the entire world in the following two years. In order to recover from the economic recession, the Korean government tried to re-open the Korean-Japanese ministerial conference that was not held in 1974 due to the troubled diplomatic relations with Japan. In the conference the Korean government could request economic aid, or a loan, from the Japanese. Thus the Korean government attempted to quickly finalise the Kim Dae Jung issue, specifically suspected abductor Kim Tongun's status, and urged the Japanese government to open the ministerial conference as soon as possible.

Falling Korean economy

[3] Victor D. Cha, *Alignment Despite Antagonism: the United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), chapter 5; also see Chong-Sik Lee, *Japan and Korea: the Political Dimension* (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1985), pp.87-94.

Over its eighteen-year rule, the Park Chung Hee regime achieved on average about a ten per cent economic growth rate. This economic achievement was not free from periodic stagnation although even in those periods the economy grew by more than seven per cent annually (see figure 5.1). From 1965, after Park's development plan got under way, three periods of stagnation visited Korea: first in 1972 (7.2% growth rate), then in 1975 (7.9%) and finally to the end of the regime in 1979 (8.6%, and in -1.7% in 1980). It is important to note that in the periods between 1974 and 1975 and after 1979, consumer prices drastically inflated. The consumer price index (CPI) reached 25.3 per cent in 1975 and 28.7 per cent in 1980. The ratio of the growth rate to the CPI was merely 0.31 in 1975 and -0.05 in 1980 (the higher the ratio is, the more comfortable people feel in their economic life).

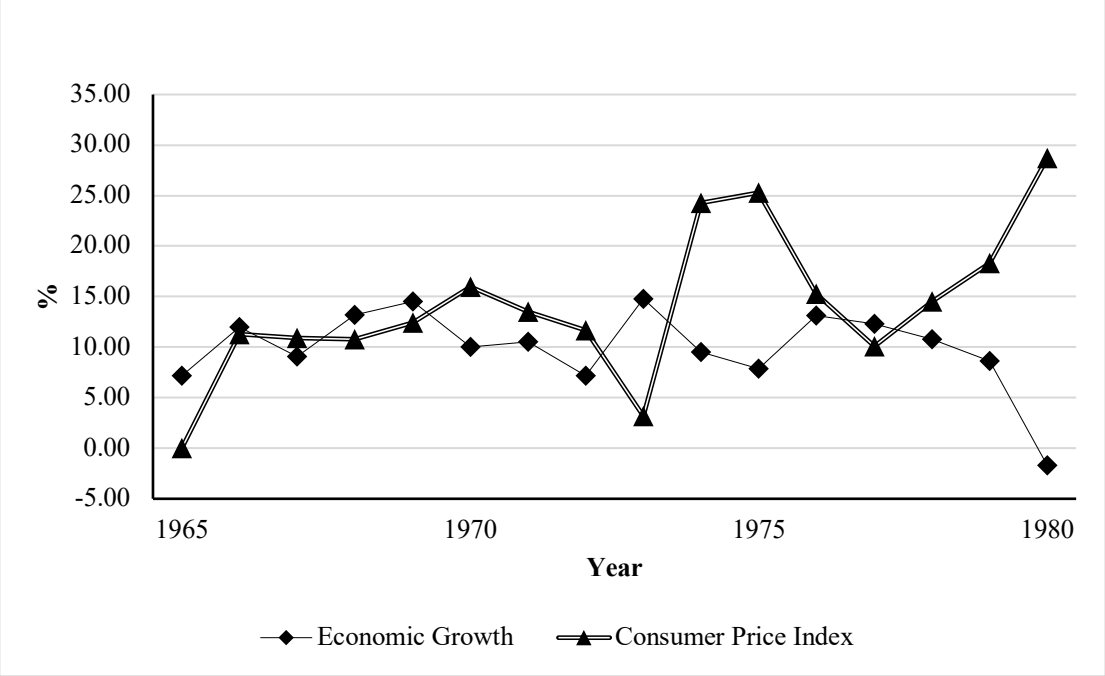

Figure 5.1 Korean economic growth rate and consumer price index, 1965-1980
Source: Economic Statistics System, Bank of Korea <http://ecos.ok.or.kr/>.

These depressions resulted largely from the oil crises of 1973 and 1979.[4] As the price of oil increased, all other prices went up accordingly. The Korean economy depended heavily on manufacturing exports, and the increasing oil prices affected prices of those products based on crude oil. Korea's international balance of payments

[4] Gavan McCormack, 'The South Korean economy: GNP versus the people', in *Crisis in Korea*, ed. Gavan McCormack and John Gittings (Nottingham: Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 1977), pp.58-9.

degenerated so much that Korea almost fell into default. As can be seen in figure 5.2, trade balance first reached the nadir in 1974, which was temporarily recovered in 1976-7 but was overtaken in 1978. From 1974 the Korean government tried to compensate for its loss by investing in the Middle East, countries which benefited from the increased oil price. Korean conglomerates (*chaebŏl*) thus entered construction markets in the Middle East. Although there was plenty of demand, the Korean companies lacked manpower with technology to input, and thus there were limits to how much could be earned from 'oil money'.[5] In short the Korean economy began to plummet from the first oil crisis.

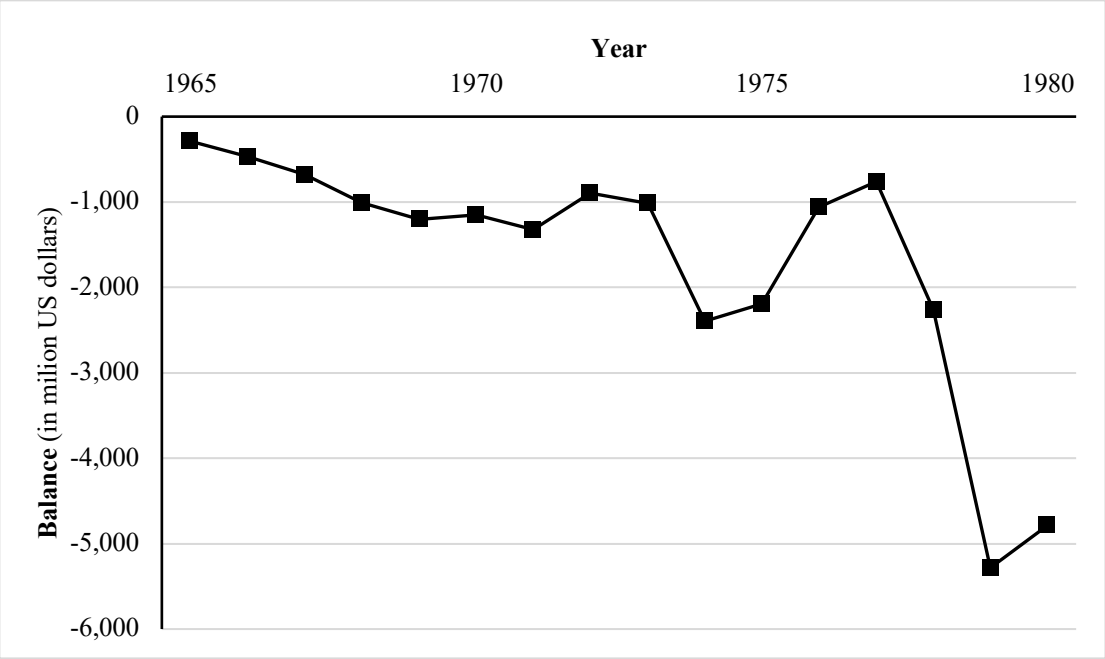

Figure 5.2 Korea's total trade balance, 1965-1980
Source: The Korean International Trade Association, <http://stat.kita.net/>.

Of course the Park regime never welcomed recessions since one of the few sources of its legitimacy came from economic development. Moreover Korea withdrew its forces from Vietnam in 1973. Economically speaking, Korea had been benefiting from the Vietnam War. The United States paid the salaries of the Korean

[5] Kim Chŏngnyŏm, *Ch'oebin'guk esŏ sŏnjin'guk munt'ŏk kkaji: Han'guk kyŏngje chŏngch'aek 30-yŏnsa* [From the poorest country to the corner of the developed country: 30-year history of the Korean economic policy] (Sŏul: Raendŏm hausŭ, 2006), pp.415-6; Byung-Kwon Cha et al., 'The political economy of fiscal policy in the Republic of Korea: consensus seeking under the strategy of export-oriented industrialization', in *The Political Economy of Fiscal Policy*, ed. Miguel Urrutia et al. (Tokyo: United Nations University, 1989), pp.38-9; Jong Kyu Lee and Sanghak Lee, *Recurring Economic Crisis in Korea* (New York: Nova, 2008), pp.15-9.

soldiers and entrusted Korean companies with reconstruction business.[6] If North Vietnam defeated the South, anti-communist Korea could expect less from Indochina, unlike Japan which had already normalised its diplomatic relations with North Vietnam. In order to keep its development thrust, therefore, Korea needed another source of external capital.

Political crisis

Coupled with the economic crisis, political disturbance threatened the Park Chung Hee regime. Despite the tyranny of the regime, democratisation movements continued in early 1975. Founded in November 1974, the National Council for the Restoration of Democracy (*Minju hoebok kungmin hoeŭi*) functioned as the headquarters of the democratisation movement. The council embraced diverse anti-regime social strata ranging from Christian clergies to opposition politicians.[7] On one hand, in response to the intensifying demand for democratisation, the Park regime held a national vote of confidence of the current *Yusin* constitution and the president on 12 February. On the other hand, as the motion of confidence was passed, the regime released political prisoners three days later, in a fine gesture of national unification.[8] Yet 73.1 per cent of yes votes from 79.8 per cent of the total constituents meant a virtual defeat of the regime in light of the fact that in these days the government gained votes with coercion and corruption and that the *Yusin* constitution had been passed with 92.2 per cent of yes votes only three years ago.[9]

The democratisation movement did not simply oppose the tyranny of the regime but also criticised economic policies of the government. In its public declaration the National Council for the Restoration of Democracy announced that the government should correct ill distribution of wealth and secure welfare of the poor.[10]

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[6] For Korea's economic benefit from the Vietnam War see Ch'oe Tongju, 'Petŭnam p'abyŏng i Han'guk kyŏngje ŭi sŏngjang kwajŏng e mich'in yŏnghyang [Impact of the Vietnam-dispatch upon Korean industrialization]', *Tongnam Asia yŏn'gu* 11 (2001): 205-244.

[7] An Ch'ŏlhŭng, 'Minju hoebok kungmin hoeŭi esŏ myŏngdong kuguk sŏnŏn kkaji [From the National Council for the Restoration of Democracy to the myŏngdong declaration]', *Wŏlgan Mal* (May 1996): p.170.

[8] Note that this was the time when the two Japanese prisoners convicted as regards the NFDY incident were released. See the previous section.

[9] The Korean National Election Commission, <http://www.nec.go.kr>.

[10] 00444379, Open Archives, Korean Democracy Foundation.

Similarly, in the message to the people, The Christian Society to Protect Democracy (*Minju suho kidokchahoe*) declared,

> We used to be blinded by the mammonism of the $1,000-income [GDP], but we experienced that it was a mere means for the government to extend its rule. The government's economic policy totally failed. Although the government is paying lip service to the stabilisation of livelihoods for the poor, we believe it is trying to deceive by a transparent guile. The government blames international recession, covers up graft and corruption, and madly seeks for extension of its rule under the excuse of North Korea.[11]

Although economic growth had thus far provided an excuse for the expense of democracy, now that the economic policies of the government had failed, the government lost its legitimacy. Despite the fact that the oil crisis aggravated the Korean economy, the democratisation activists considered government policy fundamentally wrong, a policy which did not aim at the distribution of wealth. When the economy was good, wealth could also be distributed to an extent to satisfy majority of society, no matter how unequally it was distributed. This time, as the economy recessed, unequal distribution of wealth stood out. Though democratisation movements had continued among activists, intelligentsia and the like, an anti-regime atmosphere could pervade in the general public with the economic problem.

In order to cope with the political and economic crises, the Korean government on the one hand intensified its repression of demand for democratisation and one the other tried to recover from the aftermath of the oil crisis by any means. Having lifted Presidential Emergency Measures No.1 and 4 in August 1974 and adopted appeasement for a while, the Park Chung Hee regime proclaimed the Emergency Measures No.7 and 9 in April and May 1975 respectively. The former closed Korea University and prohibited assembly and demonstration in it. Also, if necessary, the minister of defence could have the armed forces enter the campus to maintain order. This measure was the government's response to intensified students' demonstrations from late March. In May the government expanded this measure to prohibit all students' assembly and demonstration and banned any activity to oppose or slander the *Yusin* constitution. The minister of defence now could dispatch his forces anywhere for the purpose of maintaining order in response to local governments' request. Besides, while proclaiming the Emergency Measure No.7, the

[11] 00479695, ibid.

regime executed eight convicts implicated in the NFDY incident of 1974.[12] Simply put, the regime resumed its reign of terror.

Economically, the Korean government had to rely on Japan. Above all, by the 1970s, the Korean economy was merged into Japanese economic system. The symbiotic relationship of the two economic systems was a result of the heavy chemical industrialisation that Korea had sought for since the early 1970s, for which Japanese capital and technology were essential.[13] Meanwhile Japan had also suffered from the aftermath of the oil crisis. The shock was greater for the Japanese since inflation had already been rising before the oil crisis. This was because of increased real estate prices and increased amount of currency as a result of trade surplus and social welfare policy. Due to the crisis Japanese foreign direct investment in Korean industries decreased from 1973.[14] If the Koreans wanted to attract Japanese capital – in the form of grants, governmental or private loans, or investment – the two governments needed to meet and discuss, and the ministerial conference used to be the venue for such negotiations.

The Miki Cabinet

In November 1974 few expected Miki Takeo to become the next president of the ruling LDP and prime minister of Japan. Amongst the four power wielders in the LDP (Fukuda, Ōhira, Nakasone and Miki), Miki led one of the smallest factions. But, after a few days of backroom politicking, LDP seniors – chiefly Shiina Etsusaburō – selected Miki as the next president of the party.[15] This oligarchic decision resulted from the political crisis that the LDP was faced with. Due to the unprecedented 'money network (*kinmyaku*)' scandal, Japanese people required undoubted integrity of politicians and wanted as their prime minister somebody who had zeal for

[12] Sŏul taehakkyo 60-nyŏn sa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, ed., *Sŏul taehakkyo 60-nyŏnsa* [60-year history of Seoul National University] (Sŏul: Sŏul taehakkyo, 2006), p.860.

[13] To incorporate Korea into a single Japanese-run economic system had also been a Japanese strategy since 1965. See Gavan McCormack, 'Japan and South Korea, 1965-75: ten years of "normalisation"', in *Crisis in Korea*, ed. Gavan McCormack and John Gittings (Nottingham: Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 1977), p.136. For the result of heavy chemical industrialisation see, Han'guk kyŏngje 60-yŏnsa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Han'guk kyŏngje 60-yŏnsa* [The Korean economy, six decades of growth and development], vol.3 (Sŏul: Han'guk kyŏngje 60-yŏnsa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, 2010), pp.175-6.

[14] Han'guk kyŏngje 60-yŏnsa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Han'guk kyŏngje*, pp.175-6.

[15] Masumi Junnosuke, *Contemporary Politics in Japan*, trans. Lonny E. Carlile (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp.158-165.

reformation of the LDP. Reflecting such a popular request, Shiina also contemplated political dynamics, that is, Miki's weak political foundation within the LDP would enable Shiina to manipulate Japan's leader in his favour. As assessed in table 5.1, while Miki had been famous for his integrity and international mindset, he had lacked leadership and political drive compared to his competitors. In his own way, to make up for his weak points, Miki allied himself with influential Fukuda, and as such the so-called 'clean' Miki cabinet was born.[16]

Table 5.1 Qualification assessment for LDP leadership, 1971

	Miki	Tanaka	Ōhira	Fukuda
Policy-making	63	59	56	63
Policy-enforcement	59	70	63	68
Party leadership	54	72	61	70
Integrity	69	44	58	49
International mindset	70	57	60	54
Party-president expectancy	59	52	52	49
Total	374	354	350	353

Source: Miki Yōnosuke, *Miki Takeo: kōyū 50-nen no sugao* [Miki Takeo: bare face of 50-year friendship] (Tōkyō: Sankei shinbunsha shuppankyoku, 1975), p.99. Originally from a survey *Shūkan Asahi* conducted to ten critic, artists, etc. and published on 17 September 1971.

Shiina arbitration and Miyazawa diplomacy

Miki himself had demonstrated an unyielding attitude to the Kim Dae Jung abduction. As the deputy prime minister under Tanaka, he insisted that the starting point of the abduction problem lay in Koreans' abduction of Kim, not in therefore anything related to the Japanese government. Accordingly, he argued, the Japanese government ought to bring Kim back to Japan and to interrogate the usual suspect Kim Tongun. As the Korean government had maintained that the abduction problem had been concluded, should the new Prime Minister Miki have continued to adhere to his previous stance, the Korean government would have been uncomfortable with its diplomacy with Japan.[17]

Yet a sign of change emerged as Miki appointed Miyazawa Kiichi as his foreign minister. Before Miki announced his cabinet members, prevailing expectation was that the previous foreign minister Kimura Toshio would remain in office as he had assumed the office only about five months ago. Miki was concerned with 'rupture

[16] Wakatsuki Hidekazu, *Taikoku Nihon no seiji shidō, 1972-1989* [Political leadership of great Japan, 1972-1989] (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2012), pp.40-2.

[17] Kimu Dejun-shi Ratchi Jiken Shinsō Chōsa Iinkai, *Zen hōkoku*, p.352.

of diplomacy' and wished to continue cooperation with the United States and Tanaka's China policy that aimed at the eventual conclusion of a peace treaty.[18] The man behind the scenes, Shiina, thought otherwise. Shiina aimed to eradicate every trace of Tanaka's plutocracy and replace it with the image of 'clean' Miki although Kimura was classified as non-factional.[19] As discussed in chapter 4, Kimura had worsened Korean-Japanese relations by intended or unintended remarks. The replacement of the foreign minister thus would bring about certain changes in Japan's policy to its closest neighbour as well as to the world.

In the realm of foreign policy Shiina mapped out Japan's new attitude towards international politics. In an interview with *Mainichi shinbun* he contended that the vague relaxation of tension should be corrected. He pointed out the danger of allowing the naïve coexistence of two ideologies, which would hopefully contribute to mutual prosperity. He thought there was a profound difference between the two. Then he demanded that the new cabinet plainly distinguish the two camps before contemplating what real harmony meant.[20] While he admitted the necessity for harmony between the two camps of ideology, he preferred a dichotomous approach to international politics to indiscriminative friendly relations with every country. It was not much different from the traditional Cold-War worldview. From this perspective Shiina disapproved of Kimura who was labelled as a dove.

Shiina wanted to reorganise the deteriorating Korean-Japanese relations in accordance with his worldview. A *Sankei shinbun* critique argued that Shiina was obsessed with selecting the next foreign minister because he attached importance to the improvement of Korean-Japanese and Taiwanese-Japanese relations. Shiina reportedly wrote to Miki to the effect that Kimura would be unable to improve Korean-Japanese relations and that thus Kimura was the last man he preferred. The critique indicated it was unprecedented that Korea became such a strong factor in appointment of foreign minister.[21] That is, the Japanese leadership aimed at betterment of Korean-Japanese relations as early as December 1974. As the Tanaka cabinet collapsed and Shiina grasped power behind the scenes, Japan's attitude began

[18] *Asahi shinbun*, 11 December 1974, p.2.

[19] Ibid.

[20] *Mainichi shinbun*, 10 December 1974, p.1.

[21] *Sankei shinbun*, 13 December 1974, p.3

to change. Although the new Prime Minister Miki might have pursued a different idea personally, he could not but follow the policy of the real person in power of the regime, Shiina.

The Korean government received an ambivalent impression. First, Korea welcomed that former Foreign Minister Kimura stepped down and correctly anticipated that the replacement would help develop Korean-Japanese relations in a better way. Yet the Korean government worried about Miki's leftist attitude (among conservatives). Miki had consistently criticised Cold-War diplomacy and had many Dietmen in his faction who championed equidistance diplomacy with China as well as the two Koreas. One example was Dietman Utsunomiya Tokuma who belonged to the Miki faction and who not only befriended Kim Dae Jung but also maintained a pro-North Korean stance. Although conservative Fukuda or Shiina could balance out such a leftist tendency in the new cabinet, the Koreans were disturbed by the facts that Miki continuously insisted on including Utsunomiya in the cabinet and that he attempted to adapt the LDP to socialism and public request for progress.[22]

New Foreign Minister Miyazawa however alluded to better Korean-Japanese relations along with Shiina's plan. In his press conference on 10 December 1974 Miyazawa confirmed that he considered it enough for the Korean prime minister to have expressed regret after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. Miyazawa had already recognised the political conclusion – or mutual understanding – of the abduction case. He also enunciated his will to re-open the regular Korean-Japanese ministerial conference that had been suspended by the recent diplomatic troubles.[23] At the House of Councillors Miyazawa further remarked on issues pertaining to Korea. On Kim Dae Jung and two Japanese citizens the Korean authorities had arrested earlier in 1974, he acknowledged Korean government's jurisdiction and held some distance from the issues. In contrast he promised to take strong measures against any crime or terrorism to subvert the Korean government. This remark was aimed at *Sōren*, the pro-North Korean residents' organisation in Japan, which the Korean government had

[22] 'Ilbon Mikki sinnaegak ŭi sŏngkyŏk [the nature of the new Miki cabinet]', 721.2JA 1974, 6746, Diplomatic Archives of Korea (hereafter, 'DAK').

[23] *Mainichi shinbun*, 11 December 1974, p.2.

pressed the Japanese to suppress especially since the attempted assassination of the president.[24]

In January 1975 Miyazawa's diplomacy seemed in line with his earlier statements. Japanese press, especially *Asahi shinbun*, reported that Miyazawa would 'concentrate on improving relations with the ROK at expense of developing ties with North Korea'.[25] Although American diplomats failed to confirm alteration of Japanese policy yet, they sensed Japanese bureaucrats had the impression that the attitude of the Japanese government to Korea was warming up. The Americans judged at least temporarily that the 'outlook for improved ROK-Japan relations seem[ed] somewhat better now under influence of LDP Vice President Shiina, Deputy Premier Fukuda and [Foreign Minister] Miyazawa'.[26] Press reports expected that the Japanese foreign ministry might suspend Export-Import (Ex-Im) credits to North Korea for the time being. And, as he had made clear before, Miyazawa 'regarded ministerial meeting as opportunity for "fresh start," and hoped ROK did too'.[27]

On 13 January Miyazawa met with Shiina. Before this meeting, from the last few days of 1974 to the first few days of the next year, Miyazawa had met with other LDP seniors such as Satō Eisaku, former prime minister; Nadao Hirokichi, then LDP chairman of the executive council, who was close to Shiina and Fukuda but not so much to Miki; and Hori Shigeru, former LDP secretary-general who was also close to Fukuda. In these meetings Miyazawa agreed with these conservative hawks on his policies. Among the agreed four points, two were related to Korea. The first was, as previously stated, to push forward improvement of relations with Taiwan and Korea. The second was to wholeheartedly partake in multilateral agreements on development of petroleum and natural resources.[28] Japan had signed an agreement with Korea for joint development of the East China Sea seabed about a year ago, and the agreement was pending in the Diet for ratification (see continental shelf issue subsection below for detail). What the LDP conservatives required did not mean a sharp rupture from previous Tanaka cabinet's policy. In fact, among the four agreed points, the peace

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[24] Plenary meeting, House of Councillors, 74-san-honkaigi-3go, 17 December 1974, National Diet Library (hereafter, 'NDL'), p.6.

[25] Tokyo 00136, 'ROK-Japan relations', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 14 January 1975, p.3.

treaty with China and natural resources parts were what the Tanaka cabinet had carried forward. To add to those policies, the conservative seniorities simply demanded a more cautious approach to Korea and Taiwan, and Miyazawa accepted such a demand.

The never-ending Kim Dae Jung case

Despite the omens for better Korean-Japanese relations, there still was a chance for the Japanese government to continue its previous equidistance policy between the two Koreas. Nothing was sure yet. On 3 February at the House of Representatives, Prime Minister Miki mentioned the possibility of politician-level personnel exchanges with North Korea in the future.[29] The Japanese foreign ministry assessed this remark as something discordant with reality and different from the opinion of the ministry. A Japanese foreign ministry official grasped that such a remark might have been influenced by Dietman Utsunomiya who was close to the prime minister. He added that Miyazawa's foreign ministry was in fact trying to improve Korean-Japanese relations and told his Korean counterpart to trust the effort of his ministry.[30] This prime minister's remark shows possible discord within the LDP, at least between the prime minister and the foreign minister.

Starting in March the Miki cabinet appeared to deviate from its initial reconciliatory attitude to Korea. In a telegram to Washington the US embassy Tokyo reported, 'Ambassador Nishiyama [Akira] has taken up his new post in Seoul with instructions from the top of his government to keep the Kim Tae-Chung case alive'.[31] The new ambassador to Korea had been nominated in December, right after the appointment of the foreign minister, and officially appointed to the office in January. And when he moved to Seoul, he came with a clear directive. Earlier on 15 February the Park Chung Hee regime had released, with a few exceptions, those imprisoned for violation of the Presidential Emergency Measure No.4 that prohibited any activity related to the organisation, National Federation of Democratic Youths and Students (NFDY). Amongst those released were the two Japanese whom the Korean government had taken hostage to be used in diplomatic negotiations with Japan as

[29] Budget Committee, House of Representatives, 75-shū-yosan iinkai-5go, 3 February 1975, NDL, p.27.

[30] JAW-02310, 721.2JA, 1974-5, 7875 (4784), DAK.

[31] Tokyo 03700, 'ROK-Japan relations', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

seen in chapter 4. The Japanese foreign ministry announced on 18 February that Kim Dae Jung now seemed to have as much freedom as general Korean citizens, if not equivalent to Japanese citizens, and therefore the issue regarding his freedom was over on the Japanese side, although the Japanese government would continue to take measures regarding Kim Tongun, the suspect of the abduction case.[32] The instruction that the new ambassador to Korea received thus seems to have merely dealt with this part of matter.

Yet it was not certain why the top level of the Japanese government instructed Ambassador Nishiyama to keep the case alive and how the ambassador would do so. Japanese foreign ministry official Seo conveyed to Americans in the US embassy Tokyo that 'Nishiyama saw Prime Minister Miki and Foreign Minister Miyazawa twice … and that his instructions reflect[ed] their views'.[33] Even this high-ranking official did not have any idea what these ministers had in their minds. It could be either that Miki wanted to fulfil his own principle regarding the abduction case or that the government intended some kind of political manoeuvre, domestic, international or both. On the one hand Vice Foreign Minister Tōgō Fumihiko reckoned that Miki did not understand the complexities of relations with Korea, confessing that he had failed to educate the prime minister.[34] On the other hand the Japanese government was using the ministerial conference with Korea as a card for progress in resolution of the Kim Dae Jung abduction case, whether it meant permission for Kim Dae Jung to travel abroad or punishment for Kim Tongun.

Despite the complexity the US embassy Tokyo pointed out the inborn weakness of the Miki cabinet as the ultimate cause of such ambivalence. The cabinet might have miscalculated the level of dissatisfaction with the abduction case within the party and the Diet. Those LDP leaders who wanted to ratify the joint continental shelf development treaty with Korea also might have conceded the abduction case to those critics whose support they needed. Making things more complicated, Ōhira Masayoshi, now the finance minister, summoned the Korean ambassador to Japan and notified that Korea should no longer be entitled to commodity aid. This was Ōhira's independent initiative. Although Miki's political influence had been weak from the

[32] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 18 February 1975, p.3.

[33] Tokyo 03700, op cit.

[34] Ibid.

beginning, it had become even weaker recently after his failure to pass new laws to reform political culture. The first of the series of reformative acts, the 'Political Funds Control Bill', was faced with internal resistance from the LDP, and therefore 'clean' Miki had to abandon the original bill in February, only two months after he assumed 'power'.[35] This kind of intraparty struggle might have come into view through Miki's sudden change of direction or Ōhira's uncoordinated behaviour.

The Korean government by no means liked the ambivalent move of the Japanese government. As the above US embassy report concluded, to the Koreans what the Japanese showed was probably a 'somewhat different response [than the Koreans expected] after releasing Japanese prisoners'.[36] The Korean government must have taken this situation seriously and sent Foreign Minister Kim Tongjo to Tokyo to meet with the prime and foreign ministers. Miki told the Korean foreign minister that the Kim Dae Jung case remained a 'shadow on the heart of the Japanese people' and that until this matter was solved, 'confidence could not be restored between the two peoples'.[37] Thereby the prime minister made it clear that the Korean government needed to do something with the Kim Dae Jung case so as to hold the ministerial conference. This uncooperative attitude of the prime minister even dismayed some Japanese foreign ministry officials who thought Miki 'had come on too strong'.[38] In the following talk between the two foreign ministers Miyazawa offered a more concrete proposal: permission for Kim Dae Jung's short trip abroad, 'perhaps to give lectures at foreign university'.[39] If Kim Dae Jung refused to go, Miyazawa added, Japan would still consider the case closed by then. Though the Korean foreign minister promised to study the matter, whether the Korean side would accept was uncertain. Above all the Korean government had not accepted such a condition since the abduction had taken place.

Japan's general direction was heading to better Korea-Japan relations. But Miki's government lacked uniformity. Each minister had his own agenda pertaining to Korea. Moreover, although Shiina held power and planned out a different

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[35] Wakatsuki, *Taikoku Nihon*, pp.42-4.

[36] Tokyo 03700, op cit.

[37] Tokyo 04356, 'ROK-Japan relations: Kim Dong-jo visits Tokyo', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

diplomacy from that of the previous regime, he was not the prime minister. Neither was Miki a mere figurehead. Factional dynamics were intertwined and convoluted. There was hardly a predetermined trajectory. Nonetheless the Japanese government maintained a certain consistency in regard to keeping good relations with Korea. Such an effort appeared in the issue, recurring probably as often as that of the Kim Dae Jung abduction, the joint development of the East China Sea continental shelf.

The continental shelf issue

In May 1975 Miki presented six 'important' items to the Diet. Three of them were related to domestic affairs: the anti-monopoly bill, the political funds control bill and the election redistricting bill. The other three dealt with international matters: the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the treaty of peace and friendship between Japan and the People's Republic of China and the agreement between Japan and the Republic of Korea concerning joint development of the southern part of the continental shelf adjacent to the two countries. By making a commitment to these six items, 'weak' Miki attempted to lead the agenda of his party. Although he had recently gained reaffirmation of support from the Fukuda and Nakasone factions, his political influence was still deemed weak, and therefore he would be considered successful if he could have the Diet pass even one of the six items. In this sense these six items constituted the core of Miki's policy. Interestingly the prime minister considered the continental shelf agreement with Korea as important as the treaty with China and the worldwide one.[40]

Korea and Japan had disputed over the delimitating of their continental shelf since the late 1960s. The disputed area lay between Korea's southernmost island of Cheju (Jeju) and the Japanese archipelago. The centre of the controversy was where to draw the boundary of the continental shelf between the two countries. The Korean side insisted that its continental shelf extended as far as it geologically formed an ocean deep (natural prolongation) whereas the Japanese side insisted on the median line that equally divided the strait into two. Each side tried to acquire as much area as possible in the East China Sea so as to exploit natural resources on the seabed, especially petroleum and natural gas.

Although the Japanese side had proposed to jointly develop the area where the claims of the two countries overlapped from late 1970, Korea began to accept the idea

[40] Tokyo 06136, 'Miki's Diet challenge', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

only from September 1972. Since then, both sides had been passionately negotiating for the details until the abduction of Kim Dae Jung in August 1973 obstructed the negotiation. Yet after the first oil crisis, the two industrialising countries recognized a shared necessity for stable energy supply and signed the agreement on the joint development in January 1974 with the hope that they would become oil-producing countries sooner or later (see figure 5.3). The Korean National Assembly ratified the agreement in December 1974 while the Japanese Diet was deliberating on passage until 1978 when it finally ratified the agreement.

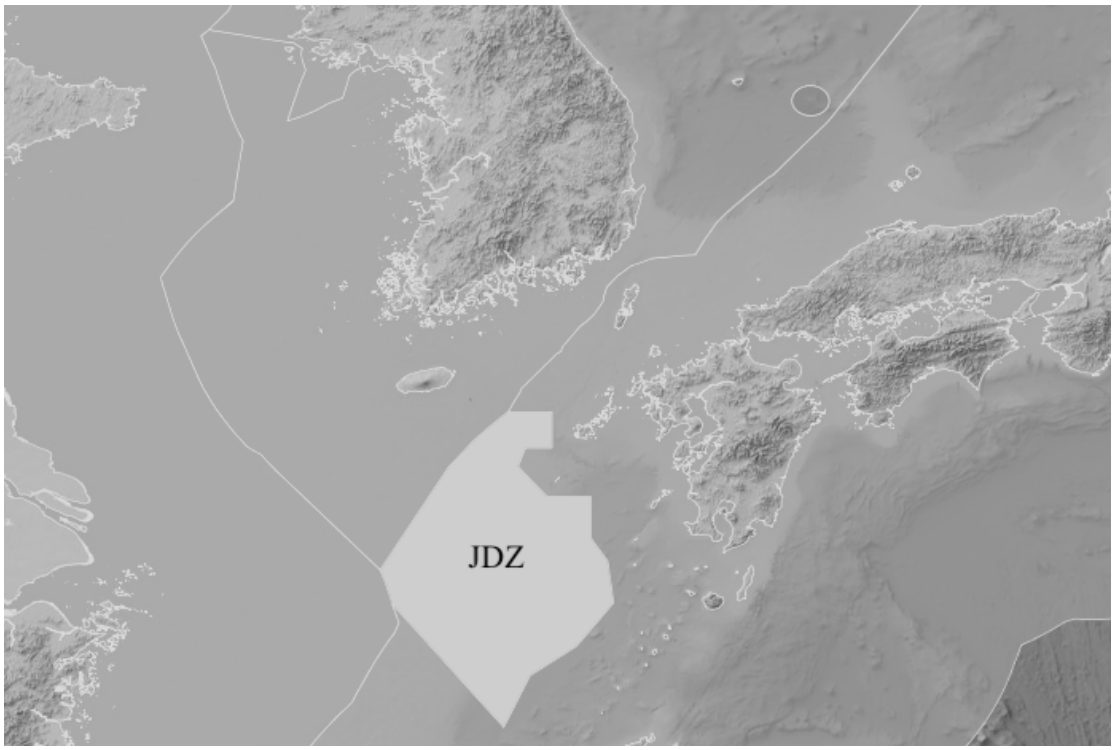

Figure 5.3 Korea-Japan Joint Development Zone
Source: Flanders Marine Institute, MarineRegion.org <http://www.marineregion.org/>.

Largely three factors hampered the ratification in Japan. First Japan worried about China's reaction as the joint development zone (JDZ) lay in the East China Sea. If China – and Taiwan too – insisted, the Chinese claim would overlap with some part of the JDZ. Japan's China policy sometimes conflicted with its other policies. One was whether to include the so-called 'hegemony' clause in the peace treaty, which could provoke the Soviet Union. Another was this joint development agreement. As mentioned above, the Miki cabinet – especially the prime minister himself – wanted to wrap up the peace treaty with China, and to that end Japan needed not to provoke the Chinese. Some Dietmen must have worried whether the agreement with Korea

would unnecessarily dismay the Chinese. In the Q&A scenario the government prepared for Diet deliberation, six out of a total of fifty-eight questions treated Chinese reaction while only one question was allotted for Taiwan and North Korea each.[41] China had in fact denounced the agreement as infringing on its territorial right.[42]

The second factor that delayed the ratification was the suspicion that Japan had given too much to Korea. Energy diplomacy was one of Tanaka cabinet's main policies. Even before the first oil crisis Tanaka had visited France, West Germany, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union looking for more energy sources required for Japan's steady industrial development.[43] Among non-OPEC areas of energy supply, the continental shelf between Korea and Japan had short-term potential while the East China Sea and the Sakhalin island continental shelf had long-term potential.[44] The nearest Korean-Japanese continental shelf and the East China Sea must have been tempting to Tanaka. Moreover, having declared its continental shelf around the peninsula unilaterally in 1969, Korea could have started developing the area alone that later became the JDZ.[45] This situation could have pushed the Tanaka cabinet to hurriedly sign on the agreement that established the JDZ deep inside to the Japanese side from the median line.[46] Besides, the agreement might establish formal positions that could differ from the results of the on-going third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which tried to set common policies to delimitate continental shelves. Those who reckoned that Japan might acquire more continental shelf

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[41] Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, 'Nihonkoku to Daikanminkoku tono ryōgoku ni rinsetsu suru dairikudana no nanbu no kyōdō kaihatsu ni kansuru sōtei shitsumonshū [QnA scenario regarding the joint development for the continental shelf near Japan and Korea]', National Archives of Japan, Tsukuba shoko 7, 7-45-34.

[42] Tokyo 02849, 'Japan-ROK continental shelf treaty encountering ratification problems', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[43] Wakatsuki, *Taikoku Nihon*, pp.21-2.

[44] Tokyo 00634, 'Alternative energy source', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[45] This point became clearer after the Korean National Assembly ratified the agreement in December 1974. See a minute of the Committee for Korean-Japanese Cooperation, 723.9JA 1974-75, 8034 (4940), DAK, p.22. Later, in 1977, the sense of urgency among Japanese politicians that the Korean might unilaterally begin exploitation appeared in a US embassy Tokyo telegram to Washington. Tokyo 17973, 'Diet consideration of Korean continental shelf implementing legislation postponed', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[46] Why Japan sustained the loss was one of the expected question in the above scenario. Ministry of Economy, 'Nihonkoku', op cit.

according to the result of the conference preferred waiting to hastily ratifying the agreement.[47]

The last factor was the continuing Kim Dae Jung issue. Even if Japan wanted to develop the JDZ as much as did Korea, Japan occasionally brought up the Kim Dae Jung issue, demanding the Korean government to do something for it as a quid pro quo for accelerated ratification. As seen in chapter 4, in 1974 high-ranking Japanese foreign ministry official Seo 'observed that Kim case continues to influence thinking in some Japanese political quarters and that its resolution along satisfactory lines ... would greatly simplify GOJ task in handling domestic Japanese aspects of relations with ROKG (continental shelf treaty being a current example)'.[48] Indeed in 1974 some LDP doves regarded that 'it would be premature to conclude major agreement with ROK before mutual trust has fully recovered from rupture created by Kim Tae Jung incident'.[49] The Kim Dae Jung case however did not function as an obstacle to the ratification under the Miki regime. In the Miki period simply other issues, domestic or international, seem to have had priority over the continental shelf issue.

Nonetheless Miki kept asking the Diet to ratify the treaty. Possibly Miki might have been merely following the agreement between Foreign Minister Miyazawa and LDP seniors on participating in multilateral energy resource development. Plus no Japanese leader now could ignore the energy issue in general. As the US embassy Tokyo reported to Washington,

> Japan still fears confrontation on energy. It still looks for a UN or other multilateral framework within which it can seek to exercise an influence without being projected into the contentious point of a problem area. From the Japanese point of view this style is essential for the survival of a country without domestic energy and raw materials supplies and without the power to control or substantially affect the world's problem.[50]

The energy issue was not of Tanaka's or Miki's own but something that Japan was inevitably faced with. So much so that Miki set up a cabinet level council for energy

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[47] Tokyo 02849, op cit.

[48] Tokyo 03207, 'Continuing GOJ interest in Kim Tae Jung case', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks. Original brackets.

[49] Tokyo 02849, ibid.

[50] Tokyo 04419, 'Miyazawa visit – the setting', ibid.

policy, chaired by him.[51] Founding the council shows in some degree his sincerity in the energy policy.

Some of those who opposed the joint development agreement with Korea suspected Miki's effort. Above all the natural prolongation theory that Korea had insisted on was losing its persuasive power in the international society, and if Japan waited, there still was possibility for Japan to secure more continental shelf. Thus some questioned whether Miki had a separate intent behind his effort at the ratification. They argued that Miki sought for huge interest that would rapidly increase as the result of the agreement itself regardless of actual exploitation of petroleum. Once the agreement became effective, the government would inject funds into oil field development, refineries and the like, and politicians could receive donations from related companies in return.[52] Even a rightist magazine *Shūkan shinchō* carried an article in February 1975 which reported that recently unheard-of small petroleum and development companies emerged and that these small companies in fact worried if there really was petroleum.[53] But, although Miki did receive donations from petroleum companies such as San-Ai Oil or Tokuma Oil, the amount he received was too small to compare with what other LDP leaders had received.[54] Such an argument sounds plausible but lacks evidence.

From the birth of the Miki cabinet to early May 1975 when Miki put forward the continental shelf issue as one of his six agendas, Japanese attitudes to Korea fluctuated. First, influential Shiina attempted at a different Korea policy from that of the previous Tanaka cabinet. As the Korean government released two detained Japanese citizens, Korean-Japanese relations seemed to be warming. Then Miki suddenly brought up the old Kim Dae Jung issue once again, slowing down the pace of improvement of relations with Korea. Whether he did so because of a political deal with the LDP left and opposition parties or because of later awareness of public opposition to the resolution of the Kim case, the sudden change of direction in his Korea policy was due fundamentally to the innate weakness of the new cabinet.

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[51] Tokyo 05133, 'Japan to form new energy policy body', ibid.

[52] Nikkan kankei o kirokusuru kai, ed., *Shiryō Nikkan kankei* [Korean-Japanese relations sources], vol.2 (Tōkyō: Gendaishi shuppankai, 1976), pp.87-90.

[53] As cited in ibid.

[54] Miki Yōnosuke, *Miki Takeo: kōyū 50-nen no sugao* [Miki Takeo: bare face of 50-year friendship] (Tōkyō: Sankei shinbunsha shuppankyoku, 1975), pp.104-6.

Nonetheless he tried another step forward to improve Korean-Japanese relations with the continental shelf agreement. The timing needs more attention. One was in early April; right after the Korean foreign minister met with Miki and Miyazawa, the Korean government began to accept Japanese requests for the status of Kim Dae Jung. And the other was that South Vietnam collapsed on 30 April 1975.

Another Mutual Understanding

While the Miki cabinet maintained conciliatory attitude to Korea to a certain extent, the Korean government also began to move one step closer to Japan. The Korean government conveyed a desperate economic situation to Japan in January 1975 at the twelfth standing committee meeting of the Korea-Japan Cooperation Committee which consisted of parliamentary members and other civilians of the two countries. In the meeting Assemblyman Kim Chuin summarised the difficulties of the Korean economy at the time in inflation and lack of foreign capital. The inflation problem was, as explained above, due to the increased price of imported goods affected by the oil crisis. For the capital issue the assemblyman pointed out trade deficit as its main cause. He said, 'In order to solve this issue, we need to increase exports, but the United States and Japan that are our main markets strictly regulate imports, and especially Japan does so'.[55] The trade imbalance had been a chronic problem in Korean-Japanese economic relations as discussed in chapter 2. In fact, after the first oil crisis, Korea was the only market that generated a surplus for Japan while the latter's general figures fell into the red.[56] As can be seen in table 5.2, Korea's deficit in trade with Japan in 1974 recorded more than half of its total trade deficit. Further, the deficit in trade with Japan was not comparable to that with the United States.

Table 5.2 Korea's trade balance, 1973-1980 (in 1,000 US Dollars)

	Balance		
Year	Japan	United States	World total
1973	-485,362	-180,702	-1,015,252
1974	-1,240,355	-208,648	-2,391,478
1975	-1,140,699	-344,857	-2,193,418
1976	-1,297,410	529,666	-1,058,289

[55] 'Han-Il hyŏmnyŏk wiwŏnhoe che 12-hoe haptong sangim wiwŏnhoe hoeŭirok [The minute of at the twelfth standing committee meeting of the Korea-Japan Cooperation Committee], 723.9JA 1974-75, 8043(4940), DAK, p.32.

[56] McCormack, 'Japan and South Korea', p.138.

1977	-1,778,289	671,209	-764,081
1978	-3,354,221	1,015,395	-2,261,288
1979	-3,303,671	-228,652	-5,283,158
1980	-2,818,402	-283,623	-4,786,801

Source: The Korea International Trade Association, <http://stat.kita.net/>.

Assemblyman Kim Chuin simply asked a favour of the Japanese. He insisted that a trade surplus of half a billion to one billion dollars would be enough for Korea to overcome the economic crisis. Besides the trade imbalance, the assemblyman also pointed out that the grant package from Japan in the capacity of Korea's claims against the Japanese colonialism ended in 1975, ten years after the normalisation. About fifty million dollars per annum had flowed into Korea according to the normalisation treaty. In replacement of the terminating grant package, the Korean side wished the Japanese to provide an equivalent amount of capital for the next ten years in the form of an agricultural development fund. With this kind of help Korea would accomplish a self-reliant economy by 1980 and establish 'economic security', under which situation the Japanese investment would also make profits. 'For this reason', the assemblyman concluded, 'I suggested Japanese cooperation with Korea that faced difficulties'.[57]

The link between Korea's economic hardship – and the ensuing instability in the realm of domestic politics – and the reconciliation with Japan can be found in the fact that the Korean foreign minister mentioned the agricultural development fund at the meeting with the Japanese ambassador to Korea, from which time the reconciliation became concrete. It was in March 1975 when Japanese Prime Minister Miki brought up the Kim Dae Jung issue once again and the Korean government sent the foreign minister to Tokyo to meet the Japanese prime minister and foreign minister. Having come back from his trip to Tokyo, Korean Foreign Minister Kim Tongjo met with Japanese Ambassador to Korea Nishiyama Akira on 7 April.

Noteworthy is that the first topic of their dialogue was not the Kim Dae Jung issue but economic issues. The foreign minister enquired why the fifty-million-dollar worth agricultural commodity loan was reduced to thirty million. The ambassador answered that the reason was for the Japanese government to evade possible criticism within Japan and that the Japanese government wished to continue economic cooperation without the criticism by reducing the amount of the loan. The following

[57] 'Han-Il hyŏmnyŏk wiwŏnhoe', op cit, p.33.

topic was when to open the ministerial conference. Though they had a slight difference of opinion on the specific date, they confirmed each other's will that the earlier they opened the conference, the better. A remarkable point is that in this process the ambassador prioritised the conference before the Kim Dae Jung Issue:

> I would like to discuss the Kim Dae Jung affair in due time. I have requested Prime Minister Miki to refrain from mentioning Korean-Japanese relations until I discuss the ministerial conference with Korean leaders and come to a resolution. This is because if, in the Diet, opposition Dietmen raise issues, and the government answers, to which again the Korean government responds sensitively, all these will not help to solve problem.[58]

The ambassador wished the Japanese government not to make the same mistake it had made under the late Tanaka cabinet, namely a tongue slip. Taking a low profile was in the same vein as reducing the amount of the agricultural loan. Thereby the ambassador attempted to circumvent unnecessary political friction within Japan and with Korea on the one hand, and to accelerate economic cooperation with Korea on the other.

Compromises and conciliation

The next topic they talked about was the status of the suspected abductor of Kim Dae Jung, Kim Tongun. The Korean foreign minister seemed concessive regarding this issue. However, in this dialogue, it became clear that Japan embraced a problem that Korean bureaucrats would barely have to consider, namely public opinion. The Korean foreign minister asked the Japanese ambassador why the Japanese government wished for certain legal procedures in dealing with Kim Tongun's disposal. The Japanese government had demanded that the Korean government indict him first and the prosecutors' office make a non-prosecution disposition afterwards for lack of evidence, finally the Japanese police would express regret, thereby closing the case entirely. When he questioned the Japanese ambassador, the foreign minister could have done so rhetorically as a complaint against the continued discussion on the abduction case or he could have had absolutely no understanding of the necessity for the Japanese politicians to deal with the public. Either way, the Japanese ambassador answered that his government intended to have a 'cooling-off' period so as to appease the Diet and the public. He

[58] 'Myŏndam yorok [dialogue record]', Sourcebook, vol.2, p.121.

further tried to convince the foreign minister of the necessity to satisfy the Japanese police. Should the Japanese government embark on cracking down on *Sōren*, the pro-North Korean residents' organisation in Japan that the Korean government had demanded that the Japanese suppress, the ambassador explained, the Korean government would have to satisfy the Japanese police first by taking a judicial measure to Kim Tongun, not simply an administrative measure, ie dismissing him from his official position.[59]

Ambassador Nishiyama also suggested an expedient for the Kim Dae Jung matter. That is, the Japanese government would invite Kim to the reception of the sovereign, Tennō's birthday. That way, he thought, the Japanese public would be convinced of Kim's freedom. In response the foreign minister said that the invitation fell in discretion of the Japanese government and that if necessary, he would explain to his government afterwards. The foreign minister added that once the pending trial on Kim was over, Kim could leave Korea and that even if Kim would not be able to talk about overthrowing the Korean government, he would be free to speak about anything else. In the end the Japanese ambassador and the Korean foreign minister agreed on improving Korean-Japanese relations.[60]

From this point to July the Japanese government paid special attention to relations with the public. The Japanese government was concerned that the public would become aware of the agreement and criticise the government for colluding with the Korean government. Then all the effort at reconciliation with Korea could come to nothing. Thus those Japanese bureaucrats who negotiated with the Koreans were entreated not to leak anything about the agreement. In this vein, when a Japanese newspaper *Mainichi shinbun* reported – quite correctly – about this 'political compromise' on the Kim Dae Jung case, Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Tōgō Fumihiko immediately denied the report.[61] The two governments agreed on a text of note verbale in late June, and Prime Minister Miki consented to this way of concluding the abduction case. But the Japanese government wanted to keep a low profile, asking the Koreans to send the note after the current session of the Diet ended.

[59] Ibid, pp.119-127.

[60] Ibid.

[61] JAW-06214, JAW-06261, ibid, pp.135-7; *Mainichi shinbun*, 9 June 1975, p.1.

The Japanese government seemed determined this time to solve the diplomatic problem.[62]

In the meantime the collusion between the two governments became firmer as Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil visited Japan in May. The visit was on the way back to Korea from his trip to the Middle East and France. In this visit he had two separate dialogues with the Japanese foreign minister and prime minister. On both occasions the Korean prime minister enunciated his will to improve Korean-Japanese relations and hold the ministerial conference as soon as possible. At least on the former point the Japanese ministers also agreed although they showed reservations about the latter. Especially they all agreed that the younger generations of both countries were troublemakers. Japanese Foreign Minister Miyazawa remarked that in Japan those born before World War II or right after the war understood Korea's current problem was impossible to solve with civil right movements. He added, 'However Japanese journalists and the younger generation are not aware of this and intervene in Korea's problem as if Japan was democratic for the last thousand years'.[63] In other words the 'journalists and younger generation' were responsible for the series of recent diplomatic mishaps. In response the Korean prime minister complimented Miyazawa, saying that conditions had improved significantly after Miyazawa took the office.

In this spirit of reconciliation Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil conveyed his wish that Japan become the 'top of the Korean-Japanese-American triangular relations'.[64] He further requested,

> Whether Japan likes it or not, Japan should assume active leadership in security, and in this sense the Vietnam situation is significant. Japan should actively engage in Korean security issues, and Japan should establish peace there [Korea]. To this end, I hope that Japan makes its position clear.[65]

The 'active leadership' did not mean that Japan should take any military action. Neither Korea has ever wished Japan's military presence in the region although, compared to the north, South Korea did not make much of Japanese military

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[62] JAW-06827, JAW-06842, JAW-06846, Sourcebook, vol.2, pp.142-6.

[63] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni - Miyajawa oesang hoedam [Kim-Miyazawa talk]', 724.21JA 1975, 8045 (2423), DAK.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

augmentation. Rather this remark as a whole was aimed at Japan's relations with North Korea. If one recalls the remarks of former Japanese foreign minister Kimura from the previous chapter that North Korean threat was non-existent, this Korean prime minister's request to engage in Korean security connotes that Japan should distance itself from North Korea. It becomes clearer in the last sentence. As the Korean government had demanded, this time too, the prime minister wanted Japan to choose a side in this actually dichotomous world, if seen from the Korean perspective. The Korean government was longing for the good old days of the Cold-War alignment between Korea, Japan and the United States, the so-to-speak 'southern triangle'.

To some degree Miyazawa agreed on returning to the security alignment. The Japanese foreign minister clarified that even before the fall of Saigon, he had expected the defeat of South Vietnam would amplify the possibility for North Korea to miscalculate the current international situation. He tried to convince the Korean prime minister of 'Japan's position' by saying that at the time of his visit to Washington he had mentioned the 'Korea clause' that recognised the importance of Korean security for the sake of that of Japan and broader East Asia in a way to illustrate Japan's friendly attitude to Korea.[66] Regarding the US Congress problem in recovering the triangular security alignment, Miyazawa also denounced American Congressman Donald Fraser who, as the chair of the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations in the US House of Representatives, had been critical of Korean domestic politics. Later in 1976 Congressman Fraser held a hearing to investigate illegal activities of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) in the United States to affect policy making processes in favour of the Korean regime. The hearing and its report, the so-called 'Fraser report' published in 1978, aggravated Korean-American relations. But this time, at the meeting with the Japanese foreign minister, Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil told Miyazawa not to be concerned too much about Congress, since the Korean government had been taking measures. Putting the blame on Congress,

[66] Only in the 1977 Carter-Fukuda communiqué was the Korea clause fully reborn in its original shape of the 1969 Nixon-Sato communiqué. For the former see Jimmy Carter, 'Visit of Prime Minister Fukuda of Japan United States-Japan joint communiqué issued at the conclusion of the prime minister's visit', 22 March 1977, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7217>; for the latter see Richard Nixon, 'Joint statement following discussions with Prime Minister Sato of Japan', 21 November 1969, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2334>.

journalists and youngsters for the strained Korean-Japanese relations, Kim and Miyazawa thereby agreed on recovering Korean-Japanese relations.

Having confirmed Miyazawa's will, Kim got to the point, that is, to 'conclude [the Kim Dae Jung abduction and the Mun Segwang incident] in a way to satisfy both parties and hold the ministerial conference as soon as possible'.[67] The ministerial conference could be a symbolic event to demonstrate improved relations between the two countries, as Miyazawa answered to Kim's point. But noteworthy is that, compared to the reservations that Miyazawa showed, Kim wanted to open the conference 'as soon as possible'. Kim added that he hoped to hold the conference before Prime Minister Miki left for America in early August. Although Miyazawa's reservation came not from hesitation but from the current session of the Diet which could be extended to early August, Kim obviously hurried Miyazawa. Miyazawa answered, 'Let's make it seem we hold the conference as soon as possible superficially. Of course I understand Your Excellency's intent'.[68] It is not clear from the dialogue what Kim intended or whether Miyazawa indeed understood his intent whatever it was. Nevertheless Kim pressed Miyazawa once again. This continued behaviour implies that Kim's view on the ministerial conference differed from that of Miyazawa who considered it as simply a symbolic event. To Kim, to Korea, the conference meant more than that, something practical and economically essential.

Despite the difference of opinion on the ministerial conference, suffice it to say that the two governments came to reconciliation after the Korean Prime Minister's visit to Tokyo in May. By late June Prime Minister Miki consented to finalising the reconciliation process by exchanging pre-approved note verbales. Afterwards bureaucrats of the two governments prepared the note verbales. A few days before the Korean government actually handed over the note verbales, on 15 July *Yomiuri shinbun* falsely reported that the Korean government sent the note verbales and that the Korean government admitted Kim Tongun's crime.[69] This happening could have ruined the culmination of the months-long process of ultimate reconciliation. The Koreans worried that when the Korean government actually handed over the note verbales, it might look as if the Korean government really

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[67] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni - Miyajawa oesang hoedam', op cit.

[68] Ibid.

[69] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 15 July 1975, p.1; JAW-07394, Sourcebook, vol.2, p.230.

acknowledged Kim Tongun's crime.[70] Thus the Korean government made a last-minute change of a word 'crime' to 'suspicion' with agreement of the Japanese government.[71] The Korean government handed over the final note verbales to Japanese Foreign Minister Miyazawa who visited Seoul on 23-24 July, and Miyazawa declared the conflict with Korea was over on arriving in Tokyo, thereby Korea and Japan came to another mutual understanding.

The Fall of Saigon

On 30 April 1975 North Vietnam defeated the south regime to unify Vietnam. A few days before, on 17 April, the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh. At a glance the communist victories in Indochina aroused a sense of security crisis in the Western bloc. Conservatives of Korea and Japan also felt the necessity to solidify their Cold-War alignment to certain extent. Indeed, as South Vietnam's defeat had seemed inevitable from March, suffice it to say that the collapse of South Vietnam coincided with the conciliation process of the two countries. The substantial menace to the Northeast Asian capitalists was North Korea. No one could forecast exactly what action North Korean leader Kim Il Sung would take, inspired by the change of atmosphere in Southeast Asia. The uncertainty of the time led the conservative leadership of Korea and Japan to cooperation in the field of security although, as discussed above, political and economic circumstances in both countries had already created a conciliatory environment between the two before March. Despite the security consideration, however, the defeat of South Vietnam was not so much an issue of security as of politics to Korea. As the Koreans as well as others expected the defeat, its aftereffect was not significant. Instead, emphasising the security crisis, the Koreans used the defeat in negotiations with Japan as a means of expediting general Japanese support for Korea.

Security crisis and security cooperation

On the surface the sense of crisis of the Korean regime appeared in the president's statement to the nation released on 29 April, on the eve of the fall of Saigon. In the statement the president argued,

[70] WJA-07210, Sourcebook, vol.2, pp.202-4.

[71] WJA-07222, JAW-07531, ibid, p. 246, 267.

> The 'war to liberate people' or 'strategy of violent revolution' that the communists introduced in Indochina are the same as the so-to-speak 'South Korean liberation' or 'strategy of South Korean revolution' that the North Korean communists are using. We must be aware that this is a part of the strategy of Asian international communism and that this is their united front. Therefore we have to consider what the most bellicose and notorious North Korean communist group is thinking after seeing the current incidents in Indochina. Probably they are making wicked plans … Probably they are enormously encouraged and stimulated.[72]

It was in fact not a totally groundless forecast although the 'Asian international communism' had not formed a united front. As the Khmer Rouge entered Phnom Penh, Kim Il Sung visited Beijing where he met with Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping. On this point the president said,

> Visiting communist China this time, Kim Il Sung triumphantly raised his voice at Beijing. We do not know the purpose of his visit to communist China or the contents of his dialogue with the Chinese leadership, but we can conjecture what he talked about and what he plotted. In Beijing he blustered, 'We are ready for a war for the sake of South Korean revolution, and we are all prepared to win in case of the war'. This is no less than a direct challenge to us.[73]

No matter what Kim Il Sung and his Chinese comrades actually talked about, the circumstances provided the South Koreans with a good reason to suspect that the Chinese communists could have promised Kim to support his effort at invasion of the south. If so, South Korea too might need to reorganise relations with friendly countries.

It remains unknown what the Chinese and North Korean leadership discussed.[74] Some testified that Kim Il Sung assured the Chinese 'it would be "no problem" to liberate South Korea' while Premier Zhou Enlai opposed the idea. A Soviet diplomat also attested that the Soviet Union made it clear to Kim that the Soviet Union supported only peaceful means for the Korean problem.[75] Historian Pak T'aegyun recently argues that unlike the contemporary rumour, Kim Il Sung might

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[72] 'Kukka anbo wa siguk e kwanhan taet'ongnyŏng t'ŭkpyŏl tamhwa [Presidential special statement on national security and state of affairs]', 29 April 1975, National Archives of Korea.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Chinese archives seem to house the minute of conversation between Kim and Mao, yet the minute has not been declassified. See Ria Chae, 'East German documents on Kim Il Sung's April 1975 trip to Beijing', NKIDP e-Dossier no.7 (May 2012).

[75] Don Oberdorfer, *Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Washington DC: Basic Books, 2002), pp.63-4.

not have urged the Chinese to support his invasion of the south because of the presence of the US troops there, which South Vietnam did not have. Instead Kim might have visited China, and other Eastern bloc countries, to ask for economic support. Just like its southern counterpart, North Korea too suffered from the oil crisis.[76] Even if so, in no way could the South Korans know Kim Il Sung's own intent of his visit to China at the time. The best way to cope with uncertainty was by strengthening defence capabilities, militarily or diplomatically – a typical phenomenon during security dilemmas.

Korea carried forward security cooperation with Japan that focused on transferring military technology. A secret report to the president detailed the armaments whose production techniques the Korean government intended to learn from the Japanese or to develop together (table 5.3). According to the report, the Technical Research and Development Institute of the Japanese Ministry of Defense and the Korean Agency of Defense Development would conduct research exchange while the Korean government would purchase necessary supplies from Japan. This security/technology cooperation appears to have been a part of Korea's effort at weaponry modernisation (the first force improvement plan, aka *Yulgok* project, 1974-1981). This report does not mean that the Korean armed forces introduced Japanese weaponry systems, but that in the process of domestication of armaments the Korean government considered the transfer of Japanese technology. However, considering the recent history of Japanese militarism, it is still striking that the Korean government adopted Japanese military technology without reservation.

Table 5.3 List of weaponry whose technology to be transferred from Japan to Korea

Weaponry	Detail
Tank	New type STB tank [Type 74]
Submergence Vehicle	Hayashio class
Torpedo Boat	PT-11 class
Torpedo	G-9B [Type 73], GR-X1 [Type 80], Oxygen torpedo
Artillery	105mm tank gun
Antiaircraft gun	35mm Oerlikon*, fire control equipment
Optical tools	Lens, image amplifier, metal reflector, infrared filter
Materials	Special copper, gunpowder, propellant, etc

* Oerlikon is a German brand. Most others are Japanese.

[76] Pak T'aegyun, *Pet'ŭnam chŏnjaeng: Ich'ŏjin chŏnjaeng, panchok ŭi kiŏk* [The Vietnam War] (Sŏul: Hankyŏre, 2015), p.286.

Source: 'Ilbon kwaŭi t'ŭksu hyŏmnyŏk [Special cooperation with Japan]', EA0004846, 13 June 1975, Secret, Presidential Archives of Korea.

The old Cold-War alignment between Korea, Japan and the United States seemed to be reviving. Right after the Indochinese incidents the United States reconfirmed its security commitment in the Korean peninsula on several occasions. In May Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said, 'In South Korea there can be no ambiguity about [US] commitment'. When the Khmer Rouge captured an American merchant ship SS *Mayaguez*, the Secretary of State once again made it clear that the US security commitment was valid. The US Secretary of Defense also mentioned using tactical nuclear weapons in case of North Korean aggression.[77] These commitments were undoubtedly direct results of the Indochinese incidents. Therefore, to certain extent, the fall of Saigon affected improvement of Korean-Japanese-American relations.

Politics of crisis

However the Korean government did not simply fear potential communist aggression but tried to convert the crisis to an opportunity in its alliance politics. Such behaviour seems to have been possible because the sense of crisis the Koreans recognised was in fact not so serious. About a week after South Vietnam collapsed, when Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil visited Japan to meet Japanese Foreign Minister Miyazawa and Prime Minister Miki, Kim emphasised how well Korea was prepared for the Indochinese incidents thanks to President Park's anticipation. According to Kim, 'in Korea at the time of the 1973 Paris Peace Accords … President Park already asserted that South Vietnam would not last for three years'. Kim continued, 'Therefore the Indochinese incidents are not a surprise to Korea … under such an anticipation Korea has strengthened its security and regime in the meantime'.[78] It is unclear whether Korea was really well-prepared for possible communist aggression. But at least the Korean government had initiated the weaponry modernisation programme on the one hand and had strengthened the power of the executive through the *Yusin* constitution on the other, whether or not these policies resulted from 'Park's anticipation'.

[77] Chae-Jin Lee and Hideo Sato, *US Policy toward Japan and Korea: A Changing Influence Relationship* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p.103.

[78] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni - Miyajawa oesang hoedam', op cit.

Despite Korea's preparations, the Korean prime minister also emphasised the seriousness of communist menace in the dialogue. Behind this irony lay the political intent of the Korean government to make use of the crisis. The Korean side seems to have expected two outcomes from this dialogue: convincing the Japanese of the domestic political situation of Korea and obtaining a security commitment from Japan. As discussed in chapter 3, the Korean government had tried to sell the *Yusin* regime, its undemocratic policies, by emphasising the security menace from the north. As the regime resumed its oppression of the democratisation movement, it had to persuade not only the governments of Japan and the United States but also those who opposed the authoritarian Korean regime in these countries. The Korean prime minister denounced the post-Korean War generation for being idealist democrats. He viewed that the universalist position the democrats took ignored the special circumstances in which Korea lay. These remarks hinted that the Korean government had to rely on forcible measures against the internal instability to cope with the external threat. In his following dialogue with Prime Minister Miki, Kim also explained the spirit of the *Yusin* constitution in the same vein.[79]

The other intent of the Korean prime minister, and probably more important than the first, was to obtain a security commitment from Japan. Kim emphasised that North Korea was under strong auspices of the communist camp, which raised its morale and could lead it to miscalculate the current situation. He said, 'From now on North Korea and Communist China will take several political offensives against South Korea. We, Korea and Japan, will have to show them definite evidence that we will not be defeated'.[80] That is, as Kim Il Sung had visited Beijing and gained Chinese support – true or not, that is what happened from the South Korean perspective – Korea and Japan now needed to cooperate in order to maintain balance of power in the region. Kim's request was more direct when he talked to the Japanese prime minister. Kim told Miki that he wished Japan to help Korea for the sake of security and maintenance of peace in Korea.[81] This 'help' does not necessarily mean military assistance. Although Korea and Japan attempted military cooperation to certain degree as seen in above table 5.3, Japan basically did not have the legal right

[79] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni – Mikki susang hoedam' [Kim-Miki talk], 724.21JA 1975, 8045 (2423), DAK.

[80] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni - Miyajawa oesang hoedam', op cit.

[81] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni – Mikki susang hoedam', op cit.

to militarily intervene in overseas conflicts, whether it was direct military action or indirect support. Rather, by emphasising the collusion between China and North Korea, the Korean prime minister requested the Japanese to clearly sever relations with North Korea, as discussed in the above section. He wished the collapse of South Vietnam to function as a watershed that would separate Japanese foreign policy from the previous equidistance policy.

In other words, at the time of the Indochinese incidents, Korea aimed to strengthen ties with Japan in general. Such behaviour did not stem from direct military threat from the communist camp. Rather the Korean government used the security crisis as an opportunity to reincorporate Japan into the dichotomous camp politics. Korea did not lack military capability to deter North Korea from invading the south. This fact was evident from Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil's own remarks. He said in his dialogue with Miyazawa,

> South Korea will thoroughly defend itself from Kim Il Sung's attack ... this morning [9 May], when North Korean speedboats intruded into our jurisdiction, we sank them. Later, when about thirty North Korean fighters, including MiG-21 and 19 intruded in our jurisdiction, we also had thirty two of our Phantoms [F-4] pursue them, and they retreated two miles before the contact point with the Phantoms. Here we showed them our resolution to counterattack. Then Pyongyang retreated.[82]

Therefore, although it is true that the Korean government intended to strengthen its pseudo-alliance relations with Japan after the Indochinese incidents, the Korean side expected from the Japanese not direct security cooperation but general support including economic cooperation and recognition of the undemocratic regime. As Kim Il Sung visited China and Kim Jong Pil went to Japan, the Northeast Asian politics at the time may appear to be a rebirth of the previous two-triangular alliance politics. Yet its contents changed. The nature of the Korean-Japanese reconciliation was not so much a return to ideological warfare as a result of the necessity to survive from Korea's own economic and political crises.

* * *

Having conflicted on diverse issues in the early 1970s, Korea and Japan came to reconciliation in 1975. The year coincided with communist victories in Indochina. The United States was defeated, and the North Korean leader visited Beijing.

[82] Ibid.

Northeast Asia seemed to be returning to the bipolar Cold War after the short period of détente. True, the security cooperation did revive, but only in part. Rather it seems that their political and economic factors worked as more direct catalysts for the reconciliation. In fact economic factors and internal stability composed as important portions of national security as military. However the Korean and Japanese statesmen did not primarily aim at the betterment of their national security, which was a result, not the cause of the reconciliation.

In Japan the sudden collapse of the Tanaka cabinet resulted in the politically weak Miki cabinet. The new cabinet was an alliance of several key factions, without a strong leadership. Vice President of the LDP Shiina Etsusaburō and Foreign Minister Miyazawa Kiichi led the changes in foreign policy, from equidistance to pro-South Korea, if gradually. Simultaneously the oil crisis of 1973 invoked the necessity for stable energy sources. In order to develop the continental shelf between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese islands, the Japanese government needed cooperation with the Korean government to a certain extent. If the Korean government could demonstrate a reconciliatory gesture to Kim Dae Jung whose political status had been a serious issue between the two countries, the Japanese government could also persuade its people and stop the conflict with Korea.

In Korea too, the oil crisis brought about the necessity to secure stable energy sources. But more seriously than the energy problem, the oil crisis caused a fatal economic crisis. The low economic growth coupled with the democratisation movement threatened the dictatorial *Yusin* regime. To make things worse, the Japanese economic support would end in 1975. The Park Chung Hee regime needed to negotiate with the Japanese in order to extend Japanese economic support. Therefore, after Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil visited Japan to ultimately conclude the Kim Dae Jung abduction issue, Korean bureaucrats immediately started discussing with the Japanese how much money they could borrow.

The main driving force of the Korean-Japanese reconciliation was not so much a common cause such as ideological warfare as individual political and economic necessities in each country. Accordingly the reconciliation did not mean that the two countries recovered their Cold-War relations that had been formed a decade ago. Since the détente period of the early 1970s, the dichotomous camp politics disappeared and did not re-appear at least until the neo-Cold War began in 1979. In the mid-1970s Korea and Japan still pursued their own national/regime

interest, and their reconciliation after years of conflict was also an outcome of individual pursuit of interest, rather than a result of their effort at cooperation itself.

CHAPTER SIX
PRECARIOUS COOPERATION

> With regard to Japan-Korea relations, although there have been various problems, the foundation of our friendly relationship is not stirred. However, I think we should not be indolent about promoting mutual understanding.[1]
>
> Miki Takeo, 1976

In the latter half of the 1970s Korea and Japan more or less recovered their amicable relationship. As Japanese Prime Minister Miki Takeo pronounced in his speech to the Diet in January 1976, however, the two countries were not free from potential problems that could lead them to another conflict. Largely three issues stood out as such potential problems between Korea and Japan: North Korean threat, silk product trade dispute and territorial dispute. First, with the demise of détente, North Korean threat substantially increased. Especially the North Korean navy captured a Japanese fishing boat, *Shōseimaru*, in September 1975. Japan contacted North Korea frequently to get the crewmen repatriated. The direct contact between the two could have irritated the South Korean government. Second, the continuing economic recession drove Japan to adopt protectionist policies. As a result the Japanese government regulated silk product imports from Korea. Coupled with Korea's chronic trade deficit with Japan, this measure of the Japanese government aggravated the Korean dissatisfaction. Lastly, the emergence of a new international maritime regime motivated coastal countries to competitively declare their territorial waters. In this process the small islets lying between the two countries, *Tokto/Takeshima*, surfaced once again as a controversial issue for the first time since their normalisation negotiations.

Eventually all these issues did not develop into further diplomatic conflict. Especially after the seizure of the *Shōseimaru*, the Japanese government completely dispelled the Korean fear that Japan might recognise the North Korean regime, if implicitly. But, when it comes to the matters of national interest, the two countries still remained unyielding. The silk and territorial disputes were global phenomena at the time, and all the relevant countries struggled for more benefit. Korea and Japan

[1] Plenary meeting, House of Representatives, 77-shū-honkaigi-2go, the 77th National Diet, 23 January 1976, National Diet Library, p.6.

were no exception, no matter how amicable their relations had become. They were growing from partners of international division of labour to competitors in the global marketplace. Having recovered from conflict only recently, however, they managed the level of conflict in these disputes so as not to put their relations in peril again. Their relationship was precariously trudging the narrow road of cooperation.

Demise of Détente in Korea

By 1975, South Koreans had already lost their faith in the possibility of a peaceful coexistence with North Korea. The military tension between the two began to increase again after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung. Right after the abduction the North Korean government blamed its southern counterpart, and therefore the somewhat peaceful mood between them disappeared, military confrontation replacing it. North Korea had been building up its military capability since the mid-1960s. By 1974 the United States estimated that the North Korean army was the fourth largest among communist armies.[2] Although North Korea did not employ the guerrilla warfare strategy it had in the 1960s any longer, it continued to manoeuvre its forces in a way or another, which began to sharpen in the mid-1970s. The escalating North Korean threat had Park Chung Hee seek for clearer security commitment from the United States and, if possible, from Japan.

On 15 February 1974 the North Korean Navy sank one South Korean fishing boat and captured another, claiming the vessels were engaged in espionage in its territorial waters. In June another incident occurred on the east side of the peninsula. This time, the North Korean Navy attacked and sank South Korean Coast Guard patrol boat no.863, as the North Korean government insisted on a twelve-mile contiguous waters, while the United Nations Command (UNC) recognised only a three-mile zone.[3] The third incident was on a larger scale. On 26 February the South Korean Navy detected two North Korean fishing boats, which the South Koreans suspected were armed vessels, in international waters south of its five northwest islands and sank one of them. As the South Korean Navy engaged the boats, North

[2] Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Washington DC: Basic Books, 2002), p.61.

[3] Narushige Michishita, 'Calculated adventurism: North Korea's military-diplomatic campaigns, 1966-200' (PhD dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2003), p.340. When his book based on the dissertation was published, Michishita has omitted some details he has elaborated in his dissertation, and the difference of view on contiguous waters appears only in the dissertation.

Korean Air Force fighters rushed south and encountered South Korean Air Force fighters, supported by US Air Force Phantoms. At sea, North Korean Navy vessels entered South Korean territorial waters and confronted their Southern counterparts for hours. By the next morning, all forces on both sides were on high alert.

Around the same period, North Korea also attempted to infiltrate the South clandestinely through the DMZ — ironically one of the world's most heavily militarized zones despite its name. In November 1974 South Korean soldiers detected and intercepted a tunnel originating from the North Korean side. South Korea found two other tunnels in March 1975 and October 1978.[4] President Park Chung Hee took the tunnels seriously, according to his chief secretary, because it was evident that North Korean troops could use them to launch a large-scale surprise attack behind South Korea's defence lines in the event of an emergency.[5] Heightened tensions eventually escalated into violent events at Panmunjom, culminating in the widely known axe murder incident on August 6, 1976. The simple tree-trim operation resulted in the deaths of two US Army officers, followed by a massive deployment of forces.

In this series of conflicts on the Korean peninsula, the United States consistently tried to keep the South Korean regime from excessively reacting to the North Korean actions while attempting to settle the dispute by cooperating with China and the Soviet Union.[6] The US government wished to settle the dispute with dialogue and to that end urged the South Koreans to utilise the hot line with the North to tell the North Koreans that the South Korean government 'intends no provocative initiatives'.[7] In the meantime the US government approached China and the Soviet Union so that these two countries could place pressure on their ally, North Korea. The United States wished to keep such an effort in confidence even from its own allies

[4] The fourth tunnel – the last one officially found – was intercepted in March 1990.

[5] Kim Chŏngnyŏm, *Ch'oebin'guk esŏ sŏnjin'guk munt'ŏk kkaji: Han'guk kyŏngje chŏngch'aek 30-yŏnsa* [From the poorest country to the corner of the developed country: 30-year history of the Korean economic policy] (Sŏul: Raendŏm Hausŭ, 2006), p.430.

[6] The US-South Korea alliance was built on a design to prevent the South Korean regime from going 'rogue', unnecessarily pulling the United States into unwanted conflicts. See Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origins of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), p.3.

[7] 'Joint State/Defense message, 'Korean northwest coastal situation'', 4 December 1973, Northern Limit Line Dispute collection, Wilson Center.

like Japan except only for South Korea. Clearly the US government did ‘not wish to see or provoke military incidents over these issues’.[8]

The South Korean regime did not concurred with the United States in the passive measures. The South Koreans believed if the UNC side took a low profile, North Korea would make things more complicated.[9] As North Korean military actions had become frequent at the sea, the South Korean government had reinforced garrisons in the northwest islands since 1974. In May 1975 President Park Chung Hee instructed his defence minister to devise a contingency plan to defend the islands. Eventually the US government decided to discontinue its ‘hand-off’ policy and to provide due defence for the islands under a condition that the UNC should exercise control of the South Korean forces.[10]

With regards to the tunnels under the DMZ too, the South Korean regime made the best out of the situation. On 15 November 1974 the UNC publicised the fact that it found the tunnel while US President Gerald R. Ford scheduled to visit Korea on the 22nd of that month en route to Vladivostok. President Park Chung Hee ‘described [to Ford] the threat to peace and stability of hostile acts by North Korea, exemplified most recently by the construction of an underground tunnel’, while President Ford ‘reaffirmed the determination of the United States to render prompt and effective assistance to repel armed attack against the Republic of Korea’.[11] According to Donald Gregg who headed the CIA station in Seoul, the visit by the US president made Park Chung Hee feel ‘a lot better about his relations with Washington’.[12] So far, the situation on the peninsula had not intrigued Japan. However, as Japan soon faced a similar North Korean threat, the old 'southern triangle' appeared to be back in play.

The Seizure of the *Shōseimaru*

[8] Ibid.

[9] ‘Myŏndam kirok [dialogue record]’, 18 December 1973, 722.9US 1973, 5863, Diplomatic Archives of Korea (hereafter, ‘DAK’).

[10] ‘Memorandum for General Scowcroft from W.R. Smyser, “Defense of the northwest UNC-controlled islands in Korea"’; ‘Note for LTG. Brent Scowscroft from John A. Wickham, jr., “Defense of UNC controlled islands"’, Northern Limit Line Dispute collection, Wilson Center.

[11] Gerald R. Ford, ‘Joint communique following discussions with President Park of the Republic of Korea,’ 22 November 1974, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=4582>.

[12] Donald Gregg, *Pot Shards: Fragments of a Life Lived in CIA, the White House, and the Two Koreas* (Washington DC: New Academia, 2014), p.143.

Most of the North Korean 'provocations' aimed at South Korea or the United States. The seizure of the *Shōseimaru* was one of the few cases in which Japanese citizens became targets of North Korean threat before North Korea started to abduct Japanese citizens from late 1970s. On 2 September 1975 a North Korean navy patrol boat fired on a 49-ton Japanese fishing boat, *Shōseimaru*, and seized it in the northern Yellow Sea. In the process the patrol boat killed two of the nine crewmen and wounded two others. According to the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency, the *Shōseimaru* was operating in international waters, near the sea border between China and North Korea, 108 miles east of Dalian (see figure 6.1). The North Korean authorities justified their navy by insisting that the fishing boat intruded into North Korean territorial sea near the estuary of the Yalu (Amnok) River. Although North Korea often seized South Korean vessels, fishing or military, near the Northern Limit Line that the South Korean government considered a de facto borderline, it was the first time that North Korea captured a ship with the Japanese flag far north of the Northern Limit Line. As each side maintained the fishing boat had been in a different position, Japanese-North Korean relations began to break down.

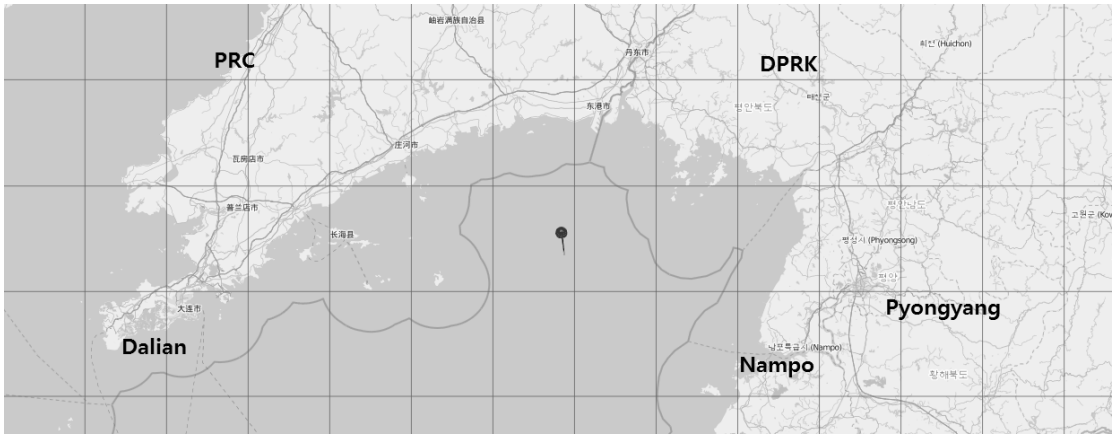

Figure 6.1 The point of the seizure of the Shōseimaru (Japanese insistence)
N39º10′, E123º55′. Approximately the pinpoint in the middle of the chart. The line around the land area indicates today's territorial sea, ie twelve nautical miles off the land.

The nautical chart from OpenSeaMap.

The *Shōseimaru* incident resembled the *Pueblo* incident of 1968. One difference was that while the USS *Pueblo* was equivocally close to the North Korean claim of its territorial sea, the *Shōseimaru* was on the high seas, according to the Japanese, clearly far from the point where the North Korean authorities insisted they seized the boat. North Korean leader Kim Il Sung said that South Korean and

American spy ships had frequently intruded into the area, and that if the North Koreans had known that it was a Japanese vessel, the navy would not have fired. Nevertheless, Kim Il Sung added, the captain of the boat admitted that the boat entered the North Korean territorial sea at the point of N39º37′5″, E124º10′4″ (official Japanese claim was N39º10′, E123º55′).[13] Though the North Korean government returned the boat, the crew and the two dead bodies to Japan on 14 September, it held the two wounded crewmembers behind. The North Korean government released the two in November. Until then, the two crewmembers were hostages of North Korea. Because of this, the captain, who had already returned to Japan, could not testify as he might have wished. Neither could the Japanese government take any aggressive diplomatic measures against North Korea.

As the two countries failed to resolve the conflict, the pro-North Korean organisation in Japan, *Sōren*, fell into a paradoxical situation. In non-official circles, *Sōren*'s position weakened as it advocated the behaviour of North Korea. Right after the incident, some Japanese rightists thronged into the *Sōren* headquarters and protested, brandishing swords.[14] Japanese public sentiment also tended to move away from North Korea. The North Korean government delayed in providing information on the casualties. Such a behaviour seemed insincere to the Japanese, especially after killing two people.[15] Nevertheless, as Japan and North Korea had no formal diplomatic relations, the Japanese government had to rely on *Sōren* as well as the International Red Cross or a third country in order to communicate with the North Korean government. Thus, despite a complaint of the South Korean government, the Japanese government permitted the chairman of *Sōren*, Han Tŏksu, to visit North Korea and return to Japan. This was the first time that the Japanese government gave permission for re-entry to the chairman of *Sōren*. And the Japanese government requested the chairman to work as a middleman between the two governments.[16]

Ironically the seizure of the *Shōseimaru* could have become an opportunity to improve Japanese-North Korean relations. At the time of the *Pueblo* incident, in order to have the imprisoned crew repatriated, the US government contacted the North

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[13] JAW-09422, 725.1JA 1975, 8213(17701), DAK. Also most major Japanese media reported the remark of Kim Il Sung in the evening of 13 September 1975.

[14] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 4 September 1975, p.22.

[15] *Han'guk ilbo*, 4 September 1975, p.1.

[16] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 5, 6 September 1975, p.1 for each.

Korean government directly, not via either the United Nations or the South Korean government, as usual. The US government admitted the North Korean claim that the USS *Pueblo* intruded into the North Korean territorial waters, thereby implicitly recognising the sovereignty of North Korea.[17] The Japanese government too attempted to directly contact North Korea in a classified third country. Moreover the Japanese foreign minister indicated his hope to establish a permanent diplomatic channel with North Korea in order to prevent any such event in the future.[18] Japanese media also denounced the North Korean behaviour on the one hand while asserting that the government should establish a diplomatic route to North Korea on the other.[19] South Korea of course worried that the closer Japanese-North Korean relations could aggravate the current Japanese-South Korean relations that had just recovered from diplomatic friction.[20] In the case of the *Pueblo* incident, the US government notified the South Korean government that its apologising to North Korea did not mean recognition of the North Korean state.[21] This time, it was uncertain to the South Korean government whether the Japanese government would give that kind of commitment to the South Koreans, secretly or not.

Japan's Miki cabinet did not intend to aggravate its relations with South Korea once again. A Japanese diplomat told a South Korean consul that although the Japanese government had considered contacting North Korea via a third country, it communicated with North Korea only through the Red Cross. The Japanese government was not considering contacting North Korea without advising the South Korean government in advance in any event.[22] In fact, Japanese Foreign Minister Miyazawa Kiichi refused the suggestion by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko that the Soviet Union could work as a channel to communicate with North Korea. Instead Miyazawa approached Chinese Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua to ask China to become the middleman, yet the Chinese government was in turn indifferent to the

[17] That the US government directly talked with the North Koreans and that the US government recognised North Korean 'territorial' waters appeared as if the United States recognised North Korea as a sovereign state with 'territory'.

[18] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 6 September 1975, p.3.

[19] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 6 September 1975, p.1.

[20] Ibid.

[21] State 129108, March 13, 1968, POL 33-6 KOR N-US, NARA.

[22] JAW-09243 (illegible), 725.1JA 1975, 8213(17701), DAK.

Japanese request.[23] The Japanese government seems to have refused the Soviet suggestion to give consideration to then uncomfortable Sino-Soviet relations; the Miki cabinet was especially enthusiastic to sign a peace treaty with China at the time.[24] In light of Japan approaching China to pressure North Korea as a senior ally, it seems indeed Japan did not put priority on directly contacting North Korea.

Furthermore, as North Korea was about to repatriate the two wounded crewmen in late October, Japan seemed to resume diplomatic measures against North Korea. Making things worse, the North Korean navy drove out those Japanese fishing boats operating in a similar area to where the *Shōseimaru* was captured. Consequently the Japanese fishing community autonomously refrained from operating in the northern part of the Yellow Sea.[25] Also, as soon as the two wounded crewmen were repatriated, the captain of the *Shōseimaru* began to speak up about the seizure. He insisted that his ship was certainly in international waters, that the North Korean navy fired live ammunition without prior warning, that the Japanese national flag was hoisted at the stern, and that the North Korean government forced him to falsely confess to trespassing.[26] On the one side, the North Korean government insisted that the crewmen misunderstood its generosity and warned that Japan would be responsible for any result of Japan's 'unjust' behaviour.[27] On the other side, the Japanese government decided to make an official complaint to North Korea. But, without a diplomatic relations with North Korea, the Japanese government tried to hand over a note verbale in a third country, and the North Korean government refused to contact the Japanese at all. The Japanese government could only announce a statement that described the incident from the Japanese perspective.[28]

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[23] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 7 October 1975, p.3.

[24] By mid-1975 Prime Minister Miki was about to accept inclusion of an anti-hegemony clause that the Chinese side had demanded to include in the peace treaty, which could provoke the Soviet Union as the anti-hegemony clause had been understood to aim at the Soviet Union. See Robert Hoppens, *China Problems in Postwar Japan: Japanese National Identity and Sino-Japanese relations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), pp.136-7.

[25] *Sŏul sinmun*, 30 October 1975, p.3.

[26] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 14 October 1975, evening edition, p.1, 10. Also see most major Japanese newspapers on this day. Korean newspapers reported the same content next day.

[27] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 18 November 1975, p.1.

[28] JAW-11461, JAW-11462, 725.1JA 1975, 8213(17701), DAK.

The North Korean seizure of the Japanese fishing boat *Shōseimaru* made the deteriorating Japanese-North Korean relations worse.[29] The Tanaka cabinet from 1972 to 1974 had shown a relatively friendly attitude to North Korea, adopting an equidistance policy towards both Koreas so as to almost recognise the North Korean government at the risk of aggravating Japanese-South Korean relations. According to a piece of intelligence that the Korean Central Intelligence Agency obtained, Japanese media anticipated that Japan under the Tanaka cabinet would normalise its relations with North Korea in the autumn 1975.[30] In turn the North Korean regime had paused its slander of Japan as militarist and imperialist. But the succeeding Miki cabinet had tried to recover its relations with South Korea and distanced itself a bit from North Korea. Due to the economic crisis that followed the first oil crisis of 1973, the North Korean government declared a moratorium. Japan, whose economy had also fallen into crisis, decided to improve its relations with South Korea, the trade with which still appeared lucrative.[31] In these circumstances the North Korean navy seized the *Shōseimaru*. It is uncertain whether the North Korean government schemed the seizure in advance or the seizure took place without knowledge of the leadership. Either way, the Japanese and North Korean governments came to no harmonious settlement of the incident but insisted on different viewpoints of it, thereby clearly denoting their aggravating relations.

The demise of détente in Korea and its effect

The seizure of the *Shōseimaru* as well as general increase of North Korean threat could have revive the old 'southern triangle' between Korea, Japan and the United States. Although Korea-Japan relations did look much closer than before, Japan's aggravated relations with North Korea itself did not unconditionally brought the southern triangle back to the Cold-War era. Earlier in May 1975, when Korean

[29] As analysed by an article in the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* published on 26 November 1975, which was translated and telegrammed to the Korean government in GEW-1167, 725.1JA 1975, 8213(17701), DAK.

[30] 'Ilbon pukkoe kan ŭi sugyo kanŭngsŏng mit kŭ sigi e kwanhayŏ [on Japan-North Korean normalisation and its timing]', 725.1JA 1974, 28857(13019), DAK.

[31] See the previous chapter. Also see Gavan McCormack, 'Japan and South Korea, 1965-75: ten years of "normalisation"', in *Crisis in Korea*, ed. Gavan McCormack and John Gittings (Nottingham: Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 1977), p.138; Sung Chull Kim, *Partnership within Hierarchy: The Evolving East Asian Security Triangle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2017), p.110.

Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil met with Japanese Foreign Minister Miyazawa, Kim indicated and deplored the lack of solidarity within the liberalist camp:

> The solidarity in the liberalist has almost collapsed. Meanwhile the communist camp in this region is unshakable. The Soviet Union and the Communist China can simply wait for the liberalist camp to collapse. Nevertheless the liberalist camp has not realised such a weak point. The détente is meaningful only between the United States and the Soviet Union; for those countries in between, the détente does not exist.[32]

Miyazawa tried to dispel Kim's worry by pointing at changing public opinion on North Korea in Japan. He said that recently those who had stood against South Korea disappeared whereas those who had been neutral turned to the side that regarded South Korean security more urgent than before.[33] This remark reflected some truth but was not completely correct.

A nation-wide poll conducted in Japan in November 1975 illustrated that most of the Japanese public viewed the situation on the Korean peninsula as a 'plague on both your houses'. After the series of North Korean provocations against the South and the Indochinese crisis, only 26 per cent of those surveyed viewed a North Korean invasion as imminent while 32 per cent thought such an attack was unlikely (see figure 6.2). Of course expecting a full-scale North Korean invasion of the south might be a little bit paranoid. But only 50 per cent of those surveyed believed a North Korean conquest of the South would pose a threat to Japan's security (see figure 6.3). Although not a small portion of those surveyed considered the security crisis on the Korean peninsula a threat to Japan in some degree, the number was not overwhelming. It is particularly important to note that 41 per cent of those surveyed answered that they had no opinion on the likelihood of a North Korean invasion and 29 per cent also had no opinion on the possible influence of a North Korean conquest of the South on Japan. In short, many Japanese did not care about the Korean situation.

[32] 'Kim Chongp'il kungmu ch'ongni - Miyajawa oesang hoedam' [Kim-Miyazawa talk], 724.21JA 1975, 8045(2423), DAK

[33] Ibid.

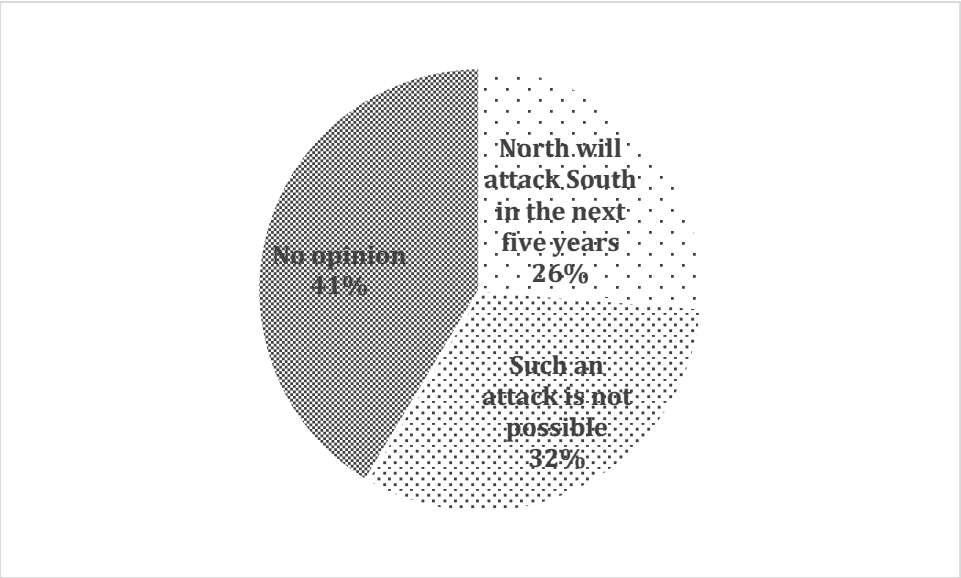

Figure 6.2 Japanese opinion on security links with South Korea: Likelihood of North Korean invasion of South Korea, November 1975
Source: US Information Agency Office of Research and Media Reaction, 'Japanese opinion on security links with South Korea', Research memorandum, M-2-76, RG 306, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter, 'NARA').

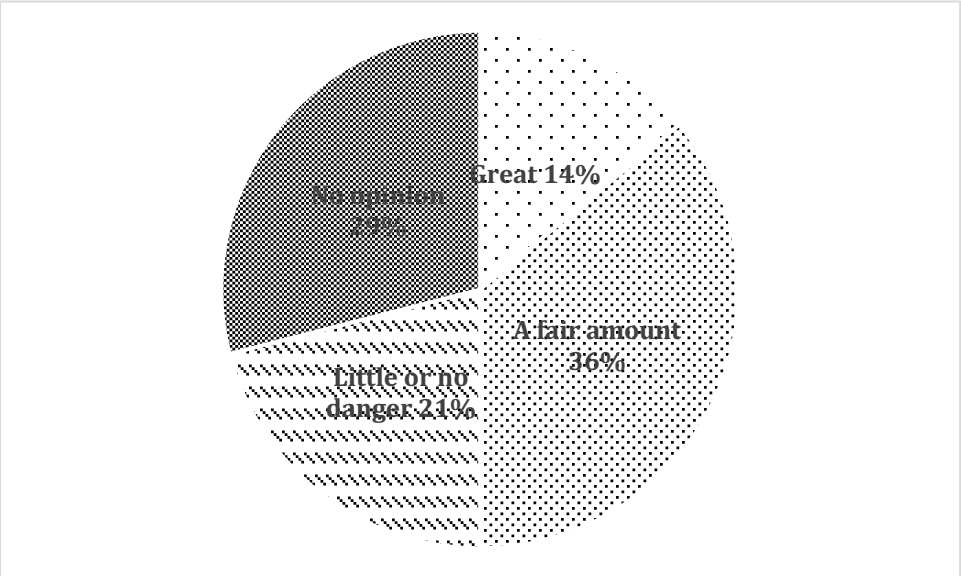

Figure 6.3 Japanese opinion on security links with South Korea: Threat to Japan's security if North Korea were to conquer the South, November 1975
Source: US Information Agency Office of Research and Media Reaction, 'Japanese opinion on security links with South Korea', Research memorandum, M-2-76, RG 306, NARA.

It might be fair to say that the influence of the North Korean threat to South Korea on the Japanese public was not great. According to the same poll, 25 per cent of those surveyed answered that they disliked South Korea most among other countries, and the exact same number disliked North Korea most; only 1 per cent

most liked South Korea while other 1 per cent liked North Korea most. The poll result also indicated that the majority of the Japanese disliked the idea of using US bases on Okinawa or mainland Japan to defend South Korea in case of a North Korean attack.[34] In other words, the conflict with North Korea did not lead the Japanese public to like the South; only the leadership shifted their policy a bit.

For the South Koreans it was fortunate that the Japanese did not directly talk to the North Koreans at the time of the seizure of the *Shōseimaru*, which was different from the attitude the Americans had shown at the time of the *Pueblo* incident. By doing so Japan lessened Korea's long-standing anxiety that Japan and North Korea were becoming so close that one day they might normalise their diplomatic relations. But the security concerns did not intrigue many members of the Japanese public. Unlike the Koreans who had their life-threatening enemy in their immediate vicinity, the Japanese were relatively free of security concerns. Probably the *Shōseimaru* alone was not enough to scare off the Japanese people to the extent that they suddenly liked South Korea. Therefore, when other issues appeared between Korea and Japan, the two countries easily returned to the state of conflict, if not as intense as before.

Silk Dispute

Despite the common security interest, Korea and Japan had to navigate their own economic hardship that the international recession had brought since the first oil crisis. Many developed countries strengthened trade protections, which successively struck a blow to export-oriented developing countries like Korea. Japan also began to restrict imports from Korea from 1974, and Korea's trade deficit against Japan began to skyrocket.[35] When Japan reduced the import of Korean silk products, which was one of the Korea's largest foreign exchange earners, both countries plunged into a trade war. Such a conflict over trade was not limited to the two countries. For example, American textile workers boycotted Korean products while the European Community tried to regulate Japanese imports.[36] What distinguished the conflict between Korea

[34] US Information Agency Office of Research and Media Reaction, 'Japanese opinion on security links with South Korea', Research memorandum, M-2-76, RG 306, NARA.

[35] See chapter 2.

[36] For the boycott of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union of the United States, see *Maeil kyŏngje*, 6 February 1976, p.2; for the trade war between Japan and European countries, see *Maeil kyŏngje*, 16 November 1976, p.5. Albeit not mentioned in this section, the People's Republic of China, being a major silk exporter to Japan, also had dispute over silk export with Japan at the same time.

and Japan from others was the fact that they had only recently improved their relationship and did not intend to fall into conflict again. At the same time they found it difficult to make concessions in order to protect their immediate economic interests. They were faced with a difficult situation where they had to discreetly satisfy domestic interest groups, pursue national economic profit and maintain amicable relations with each other simultaneously.

Regulating silk imports

Japan's official rationale behind the import control was that its domestic demand for silk was shrinking. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Japan was pessimistic over the future of silk consumption in Japan due to the decreasing birth rate.[37] More directly, however, Japan's silk consumption drastically declined after the first oil crisis, and thus free trade of silk might put domestic sericulture industry at risk.[38] In these circumstances, in 1974, Japan required that raw silk be imported only through the Japan Raw Silk Corporation, thereby practically prohibiting import of raw silk from Korea. Subsequently, from June 1975, Japan tried to curb imports of another silk product – thrown silk yarn – and requested voluntary export regulation from Korea, with which the Korean government complied.[39] Nevertheless Japan implemented a prior import approval system from September, bringing an outcry of protest in Korea.

Koreans took the Japanese move as an act of betrayal. Not to mention Korean sericulturists, the media acrimoniously condemned the series of protective measures from Japan. *Chosŏn ilbo* editorialised that the Japanese measures were a beggar-my-neighbour policy and that Japan was oblivious to its leading role and duty as an economic power.[40] The Rambouillet declaration of November 1975 frustrated the Koreans even more. Japan partook in the G6 summit at Rambouillet, France to discuss the international recession, and one of the points the economic powers declared was: 'In a period where pressures are developing for a return to

[37] Tokyo 16381, 'Japanese silk yarn import system', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[38] *Tonga ilbo*, 3 March 1976, p.2.

[39] *Maeil kyŏngje*, 16 August 1975, p.7; Japan had placed quotas on total fourteen commodities, and the two governments had already agreed on voluntary export regulation of textile in April 1975.

[40] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 12 July 1975, p.2.

protectionism, it is essential for the main trading nations … to avoid resorting to measures by which they could try to solve their problems at the expense of others, with damaging consequences in the economic, social and political fields'.[41] In an editorial in December, *Tonga ilbo* criticised such an antinomic attitude of Japan, called it immoral and insisted that Korea should retaliate if Japan continued the restriction.[42] In February 1976, as Japan applied the prior approval system to all other countries, Korean press viewed it as a measure to block Korea's using a third country to bypass the imposed quota. The press also 'sought to equate the largest ever 1975 balance of trade deficit with Japan as being a whole with the restrictions'; these reports seemed even to a Korean foreign ministry official 'greatly exaggerated'.[43]

The Koreans were fundamentally dissatisfied with the size of the trade imbalance as can be inferred from the above exaggeration. Korea's trade deficit with Japan in 1974 was recorded as almost two-and-a-half times as big as that of the previous year. Although the number dropped a bit in 1975, the imbalance stayed about the same until 1978 when it nearly doubled again. During the same period, Japan regulated imports of not only silk products but also various seafood, footwear, textiles and the like.[44] This situation appeared to the Koreans to directly violate the Rambouillet declaration, with Japan solving its own problem at the expense of Korea.

That said, however, the Korean perception might not have reflected the reality. As discussed in chapter 2, in spite of the skyrocketing trade deficit, the export-import rate was generally on the decrease. In other words, while the Koreans were buying more every year, they were selling even more at the same time. Whereas the export to import rate in 1969 was over 6:1, in 1974 the rate had dropped to 1.8:1.[45] Regarding

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[41] 'Declaration of Rambouillet', Rambouillet Summit, Documents of Summit Meetings in the Past, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan Homepage*, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2000/past_summit/01/e01_a.html>. In fact Prime Minister Miki himself stated to the same effect in the summit, 'We should avoid engaging in measures in violation of the principles of free world trade in solving each of our problems'. See, 'Memorandum of Conversation', Economic Summit, Second Session, Rambouillet Economic Summit, Box 16, NSA Memoranda of conversations, Gerald R Ford Presidential Library & Museum, p.13.

[42] *Tonga ilbo*, 1 December 1975, p.2.

[43] Seoul 01493, 'GOJ curbs on Korean silk exports', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[44] 'Han-Il kan muyŏk yŏkcho sijŏng pangan kŏmt'o [Review of measures to rectify Korea-Japan trade imbalance]', 765.2JA, 25688(9838), DAK.

[45] An exception was in 1973 when the export-import rate was 1.3 to 1, which rose in 1974 to 1.8:1. For the trade volume, see chapter 2.

the silk export, moreover, the value of all kinds of Korean silk exports in fact increased. This was because, despite Japan's curb on the raw silk in 1974, Korea's thrown silk export was virtually nil then, which markedly increased later. When combined therefore, the total silk export increased.[46] Due to this fact, the American ambassador to Korea suspected that the Korean government might have 'carefully orchestrated' the press reports that criticised the Japanese import regulations, although he did not fail to recognise the unfavourable trade balance to Korea.[47]

Negotiation and retaliation

The Korean government had expected at least a small, inevitable decrease of silk exports to Japan. That was why it supported manufacturers who tried to found silk fabric processing facilities as early as mid-1975 when Japan restricted raw silk imports from Korea. Also, while continuously requesting resumption of imports on the one hand, the Korean government attempted to diversify export destinations of raw silk on the other.[48] In the same vein, Korea accepted Japan's request for voluntary export regulation in August 1976 in expectation that then Japan would not totally ban silk imports from Korea as a quid pro quo. So, when Japan adhered to the prior approval system, the Korean government considered the Japanese to have discredited Korea's sincerity.[49] In general the Korean government had a modest goal in negotiations with Japan to 'limit the Japanese restrictions to those already imposed'.[50]

Korean press and sericulture business circles exhorted the Korean government to use a hard line. *Tonga ilbo* editorialised as early as February 1975 on the necessity of retaliation. The newspaper argued that Japan deserved criticism and retaliation because its protectionist policy accelerated, instead of alleviating, the global economic recession.[51] At the end of the year the newspaper emphasised once again the importance of retaliating to balance Korea's losses thus far.[52] As working level

[46] Seoul 01493, op cit.

[47] Ibid.

[48] *Maeil kyŏngje*, 31 July 1974, p.7; 30 May 1974, p.5. In 1973, Korea sent 99.6% of its raw silk export to Japan.

[49] *Maeil kyŏngje*, 13 October 1975, p.5.

[50] Seoul 01493, op cit.

[51] *Tonga ilbo*, 22 February 1975, p.2.

[52] *Tonga ilbo*, 1 December 1975, p.2.

negotiations between Korea and Japan broke down in late 1975 and Japan raised tariffs on silk products up to twenty per cent, Korean sericulture businesses also began to urge the government to impose retaliatory measures on Japan.[53]

Initially, the Korean government was cautious of retaliatory measures. Although Korea's chief negotiator threatened Japan to consider retaliatory measures, the Korean government had a concern that retaliation would bring about Japan's further restrictions on other imports.[54] Even when press featured reports that the Korean government would impose a ban on imports of Japanese textile machinery in retaliation, the chief negotiator told American officials in the US embassy Seoul that the reports were part of the Korean strategy in the negotiations.[55] The cautious approach notwithstanding, the retaliation seemed to work to certain extent. At least, no one was sure how serious Korea was about imposing the ban. The Koreans could be sounding out Japanese response by 'flying an observation balloon' of retaliation or trying to gain an advantage on the negotiation table.[56] In this confusion, voices against the Japanese regulation began to arise in Japan. Although Japanese sericulture business people wanted the Japanese government to continue the import regulation at the risk of the Korean retaliation, some machinery business suggested yielding to the Koreans.[57] And *Asahi shinbun* editorialised on a criticism of the Japanese regulation that disagreed with the principle of free trade.[58]

Nonetheless it does not seem that the ban on textile machinery was the main method of retaliation as press reported. Instead, the Korean government reminded the Japanese of growing anti-Japanese sentiment among the Korean public and warned about possibility of friction in Korean-Japanese relations. From March 1976, Korean sericulture business began to promote a national boycott of Japanese goods, and women's organisations sympathised with the boycott.[59] Referring to the boycott,

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[53] See *Maeil kyŏngje*, 11 February 1976, p.5, *Tonga ilbo*, 27 February 1976, p.1.

[54] *Tonga ilbo*, 9 February 1976, p.2; Seoul 01493, op cit.

[55] Seoul 01493, op cit.

[56] *Asahi shinbun*, 9 March 1976, p.9. In fact the US Embassy Seoul viewed there could be a business opportunity for American machinery manufacturers, should Korea start the ban. See, Seoul 01890, 'Special trade opportunity: Textile machinery; ROKG considering ban on Japanese textile machinery imports', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[57] *Nihon keizai shinbun*, 10 March 1976, p.7; 11 March 1976, p.8.

[58] *Asahi shinbun*, 9 March 1976, p.5.

[59] *Maeil kyŏngje*, 3 March 1976, p.1; *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 9 March 1976, p.7.

Korean foreign ministry officials urged their Japanese counterparts to review the import regulation so as to prevent the boycott from causing anti-Japanese sentiment that would harm the interests of both countries.[60]

The Korean side also employed the continental shelf issue. The Japanese Diet had not ratified the continental shelf joint development agreement for over two years. It was nonsense to Korea that the Diet passed bills to continue the import regulation so rapidly while not ratifying the joint development agreement. Therefore, the Korean foreign minister told the Japanese ambassador to Korea that Seoul, especially the National Assembly, was displeased at the Diet's legislation and that, if the joint development was not promising, Korea would take a unilateral measure, so at least the silk problem should come to an agreement.[61] The Japanese ambassador said in response that political consideration was required in this matter. In fact, starting in April, Korea and Japan decided to discuss the silk trade problem at a diplomatic – that is, political and not working – level. This decision eventually helped them reach an agreement.

Politics mattered here because the import regulation was largely a politically-driven policy. From 1975 the Miki cabinet had hinted at a possibility of an earlier general election, and, even without the government's decision, the Diet was scheduled for automatic dissolution at the end of 1976. With the election in sight, a few members of the Diet began to support the protectionist policy. These members included several from agricultural districts in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP): Nakasone Yasuhiro, Kosaka Zentarō, Funada Naka and Fukuda Takeo who would become the next prime minister as a result of this upcoming election.[62] These politicians were regarded broadly as pro-Korean. Kosaka, for example, expressed in October 1976 his concern over Carter's plan to withdraw American troops from Korea.[63] Though Fukuda would trigger a territorial dispute with Korea as discussed in the next section, he was basically pro-Korean as a political heir of Kishi Nobusuke.

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[60] 'Myŏndamnok [Memorandum of conversation]', 12 March 1976, 722.1JA, 25499 (9092), DAK.

[61] 'Myŏndam yorok [Memorandum of conversation]', 31 March 1976, ibid.

[62] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 5 April 1976, p.3.

[63] Victor D. Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1999), p.153; 'Hanbando kwan'gye Ilbon chŏngbu tanggukcha kyŏnhae [Japanese officials' view on the Korean peninsula]', October 1976 – March 1977, 721.2JA, 25547 (9067), DAK.

Thus the Japanese government explained LDP's pre-election need for the regulation to Korean political leaders who seem to have comprehended the imminent political interest of their Japanese partners.[64]

Sic semper sericulturus?

On 10 April 1976 Korea and Japan reached an agreement. Japan would accept a similar amount of silk imports from Korea as the previous year, while Korea would continue voluntary export regulation of silk products and lift the ban on machinery imports from Japan. On the one hand, the agreed amount of raw silk trade was 43,000 bales which was closer to the Korean request of 48,000 bales than to the Japanese request of 26,000 bales. The continued voluntary regulation, on the other, was a Korean gesture of compromise. An important factor driving the agreement, besides the political necessity, was that the Japanese government successfully convinced the Korean politicians of 'the necessity of attaining a ceiling on fabrics to use as a lever in restraint negotiations with the PRC, which [was] the principle factor in Japanese fabric problems'.[65] Also, as *Tonga ilbo* analysed, the fact that the agreement did not explicitly include a time line made it politically acceptable to Japan whereas Korea had a practical interest in securing a certain amount of exports; the win-win situation was an attractive point of this agreement.[66] The U.S. Ambassador to Korea, Richard Sneider, seemed so pleased with the relatively swift conclusion of the dispute that he attached a comment to a telegram to Washington in a Latin sentence: '*Sic semper sericulturus*'.[67]

It was not until August, however, that Japan cleared entry of silk import from Korea. In early May, the Japanese political circle showed a move to legislate yet another possible regulation on silk imports. The new bill was designed to impose a surcharge on imported silk fabrics that were cheaper than domestic products so as to align the price of domestic and imported silk. With the election still coming, the bill

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[64] Seoul 02688, 'Overall agreement reached in ROK-Japan silk dispute'; Seoul 02758, 'Details of ROK-Japan silk settlement', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks. According to the second telegram, Japanese vice-ministers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Ministry of International Trade and Industry 'provided first hand briefings to ROK political leaders on … LDP pre-election needs'.

[65] Seoul 02758, op cit.

[66] *Tonga ilbo*, 10 April 1976, p.2.

[67] Seoul 02758, op cit.

received the support of all parties involved. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry officially opposed the bill due to its protectionist nature but did not seem to have any enthusiasm for deterring the Diet from passing the legislation.[68] Further, the chair of the House of Representatives Commerce and Industry Committee expressed that it was unlikely for the bill to be rejected as a result of conversation with Korea and that the bill would not affect trade with Korea so long as Korea abided by the April agreement.[69] With regard to the legislation effort, the Korean public became outraged once again. The Korean press and sericulture business described the legislation move as an act of betrayal and forecast the possibility of a trade war.[70] Although the April agreement did not stipulate any further legislation, as the US embassy Seoul analysed, 'the public statements made by political figures and the treatment given to this issue by the press [had] given the public the impression that the April agreement [had] at least been violated in spirit'.[71] The Korean government and the ruling Democratic Republican Party also drew up a retaliatory plan in preparation for passage of the bill. The retaliatory options included imposing surcharges and quotas on Japanese imports and lodging a complaint with the GATT.[72]

The trade war did not happen in the end. After a discussion with ministers of the foreign, agriculture and trade ministries, the LDP decided to deter the legislation on 20 May. Instead of a further import regulation, the LDP also decided to implement remedial measures for domestic sericulture business.[73] It is uncertain why the LDP suddenly put off the legislation, but the discussion with the government seems to have been effectual to some degree. The further import regulation was undoubtedly a short-sighted election strategy, a 'political sop to Japanese silk producers'.[74] It seems that the Japanese government and the LDP weighed the agricultural votes against relations with Korea and concluded the latter was graver. As an American telegram reported to

[68] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 4 May 1976, p.1.

[69] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 5 May 1976, p.1.

[70] *Tonga ilbo*, 4 May 1976, p.1; *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 6 May 1976, p.2 and 7 May 1976, p.3.

[71] Seoul 03486, 'ROK-Japan silk trade dispute exhumed', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[72] Ibid. The telegram informed however that the Korean government did not make any conclusive decision yet and that the government was aware a retaliatory legislation might rather undermine Korea's position.

[73] *Nihon keizai shinbun*, 21 May 1976, p.3.

[74] Seoul 03486, op cit.

Washington, both the governments of Korea and Japan recognised 'the importance of leaving undisturbed the fundamental relationship that now exist[ed]'.[75] The telegram anticipated that if the Diet passed the bill, the Koreans would be faced with a dilemma between a commitment to action for home consumption and a reluctance to push the dispute to a point that would damage their relationship with Japan. The same dilemma was applicable to Japan. When the two countries managed to reach an agreement, difficult though that was, it was unnecessary to risk a trade war. Therefore, the Japanese government distanced itself from the legislation and assumed the role of arbitrator between Japanese parliamentarians and Korea.[76]

Although it took more than two months before the silk trade resumed, this delay was mainly due to unresolved details on trade methods. The different opinions of Korea and Japan on trade methods could have become a source of another dispute, but the two governments mediated a settlement relatively easily. Japan accepted the Korean request for sellers' quotas, while Korea agreed to the Japanese demand for an abolition of the check price. However, the amicable trade relationship did not last long. Next year, in 1977, Japan reinforced the silk import regulation, and the two countries had to go through yet another negotiation, which only resulted in a more-or-less similar trade agreement. The global economy did not improve much, and most developed countries employed protectionist policies.[77] Even the United States submitted to the GATT a complaint on Japanese restrictions on thrown silk import.[78] Now that trade disputes became a global phenomenon, the silk problem was no longer a source of conflict exclusive to Korea and Japan.

Territorial Dispute

In the latter half of the 1970s, international competition for more maritime resources intensified. Both the United States and the Soviet Union declared two-hundred-mile

[75] Ibid.

[76] It is somewhat clear from the following quote that the further import regulation was not an interest of the Japanese government: 'After the April agreement, the Japanese embassy [in Seoul] was sanguine that the law would not be submitted to the Diet and understood that the GOJ was seeking to avoid involvement in what appeared to be a political move by representatives of silk interests who were currying favor in an election year'. Ibid.

[77] See the gist of a speech by the governor of the Bank of Korea in Seoul 07639, 'Growing restrictions on Korean exports', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[78] Geneva 06328, 'Thrown silk', ibid.

exclusive fishery zones in 1976, and the European Community and numerous North and South American countries soon followed the fashion. Such a seaward extension of sovereign rights caused a potential conflict of interests in parts of the world where neighbouring countries shared relatively small portions of the sea. Being coastal countries as well as large fish consumers, Korea and Japan could easily expect a severe blow to their fishing industries. With regard to Korean-Japanese relations, a dispute over the *Tokto/Takeshima* islets remained unresolved. This dispute over the islets and waters around them surfaced again from January 1977, for the first time since the normalisation negotiations.

Legalising further territorial sea

Both Koreans and Japanese had ignored the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue for about a decade once the normalisation treaty was signed. Figure 6.4 shows the numbers of articles that dealt with the islets in the Korean newspaper *Tonga ilbo* and the Japanese *Yomiuri shinbun* from 1960 to 1989. Even in 1973-74, when Korea-Japan relations reached their lowest point, the islets stayed out of general public interest. On the one hand, as the third UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) started only in 1973 in an effort to render a comprehensive treaty, maritime delimitation issues did not attract public attention much until the mid-1970s.[79] On the other, confrontation was practically impossible between the two countries. Had they gone to war over the islets, theoretically speaking, the United States might have had to align with its one ally against the other.[80] The triangular relationship between Korea, Japan and the United States had, thus, contained the territorial dispute.

[79] Although the UNCLOS III was concluded in 1982, broad agreement emerged by 1977 regarding most of maritime demarcation principles. See Motoo Ogiso, 'Japan and the UN-Convention on the Law of the Sea', *Archiv Des Völkerrechts* 25, no.1 (1987): p.64.

[80] Alexis Dudden, *Troubled Apologies among Japan, Korea, and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp.4-5; Jennifer Lind, *Sorry States: Apologies in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), p.51.

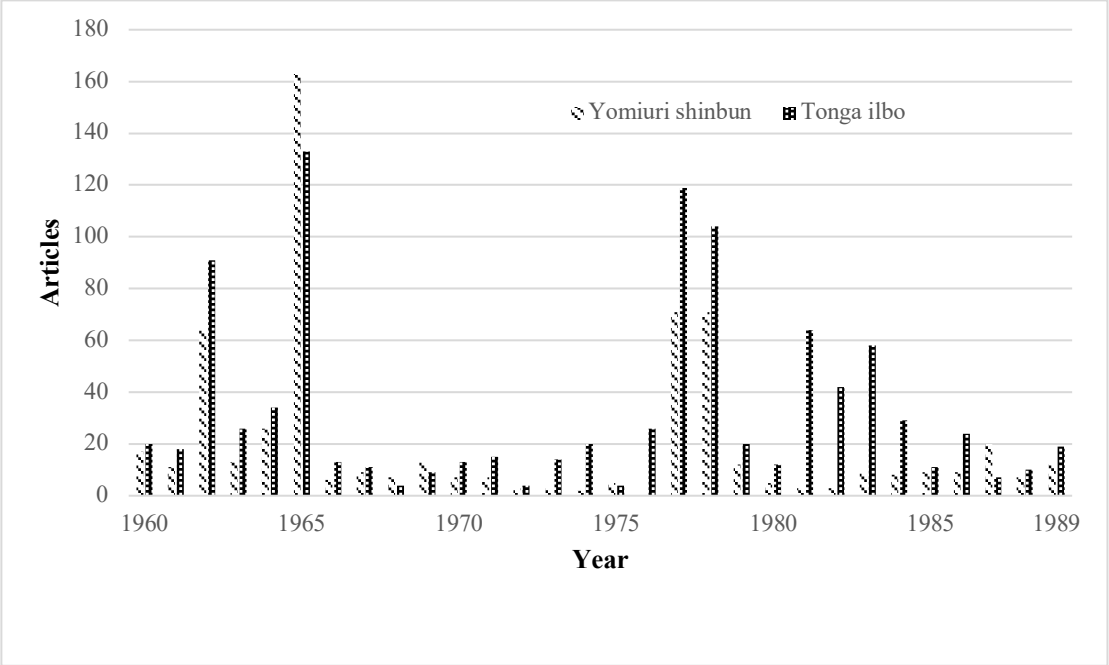

Figure 6.4 The number of news articles on *Tokto/Takeshima*, 1960-1989
Source: *Tonga ilbo* and *Yomiuri shinbun*

Nonetheless, the decision made by maritime superpowers in late 1976 triggered a global war of all against all regardless of ideology. And Korea and Japan were no exception. In response to the Soviet Union's declaration of their exclusive fishery zone, residents of Hokkaido urged the Japanese government to immediately declare their twelve-mile territorial waters.[81] The Japanese government began to legalise the twelve-mile territorial waters from January 1977. In this process, the fishing community in Shimane Prefecture, the closest region to *Tokto/Takeshima*, insisted that the government include the islets in the territorial waters.[82] Fukuda Takeo, who had just become the prime minister in December 1976, eventually expressed his view in the Diet that the islets were indigenous land of Japan. On 5 February 1977, the prime minister said if the government had to declare the twelve-mile territorial waters, he would do so on the premise that *Tokto/Takeshima* as well as the *Senkaku/Diaoyudao* islands and the northern territory were indigenous to Japan.[83]

[81] *Asahi shinbun*, 12 December 1976, morning edition, p.1.

[82] *Tonga ilbo*, 20 January 1977, p.1. The demand of Shimane residents was not considered as important in Japan as it was in Korea, and therefore national newspapers in Japan did not publish articles about the demand.

[83] Plenary meeting, House of Councillors, 80-san-honkaigi-4go, the 80th National Diet, 5 February 1977, National Diet Library, p.25.

Emotional outburst

Brief as it was, the prime minister's mention of the islets resonated with the Korean public. One of the opinions that appeared in a newspaper was that Fukuda's mention seemed like a resurrection of the spectre of Japanese imperialism. Another was that if the Koreans had insisted *Tsushima* belonged to Korea, Japanese people would have fallen into emotional turmoil like the Koreans and that Fukuda's mention was same as an infringement of sovereignty.[84] These opinions came from the general public, not officials, analysts or academics.

Unlike the public, those in the government remained calm and did not consider the dispute over the islet such a big issue. Although political parties issued statements that criticised the Japanese intention to include *Tokto/Takeshima* in its territorial waters, foreign ministry officials had clarified that Japan's declaration of territorial waters would not affect the status quo.[85] The fisheries agreement of 1965 had already guaranteed Korea's fishing rights on the waters around *Tokto/Takeshima* and Japan could not unilaterally change that. The foreign ministry evinced its policy not to discuss the territorial issue when the media raised the possibility of ministerial negotiation over the islets.[86] Even a Japanese newspaper, *Asahi shinbun*, editorialised on surging public emotion over the territorialising issue. The newspaper opined that getting upset over this issue was not good for the bilateral relationship when the both parties had not a few diplomatic problems that required cool-headed dialogue.[87]

Despite the efforts to soothe the public distress, a set of events stirred up the public far more. On 8 February an aircraft belonging to the Japanese newspaper company *Yomiuri shinbun* flew near *Tokto/Takeshima* to take a photograph of the islets. In doing so, the aircraft possibly violated Korea's airspace although this airspace, ie territory, was the core of controversy per se and was the reason for the aircraft to take the photo.[88] The Korean government made a protest to the Japanese, but this was merely a verbal protest and made a week after the incident. The Korean foreign ministry tried to keep aloof from the territorial issue as it feared being trapped

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[84] *Kyŏngyang sinmun*, 7 February 1977, p.7; *Tonga ilbo*, 9 February 1977, p.7.

[85] For the party statements, see *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 7 February 1977, p.1; for the foreign official's opinion, see *Kyŏnghynag sinmun*, 27 January 1977, p.1.

[86] *Tonga ilbo*, 8 February 1977, p.1.

[87] *Asahi shinbun*, 9 February 1977, p.5.

[88] *Yomiuri shinbun* published the photo on the next day, 9 February 1977, p.1.

in provocative plots of certain anti-Korean groups in Japan. In a similar fashion some judged that the photo mission of the *Yomiuri* was a malicious provocation to instigate public antagonism between Koreans and Japanese.[89]

The inflamed antagonism materialised in the form of a misdemeanour by a group of Japanese hooligans who presumably belonged to a right-wing gang. Having read in newspapers about the territorial issue, the hooligans desecrated the Korean national flag in Osaka at dawn on 17 February, and the police apprehended the leader of the group. The Japanese penal code defined insulting foreign flags as a crime but required an accusation of the relevant foreign government in order to prosecute the accused.[90] At the outset, the Korean consulate in Osaka, determined to accuse the hooligans to prevent similar incidents, requested direction from Seoul. But the Osaka consulate soon changed their stance to recommend Seoul not complicate the issue anymore. The Korean foreign ministry accordingly made another verbal protest to their Japanese counterpart.[91]

The low-key posture of Korea arose from the fact that the Japanese political circle at the time was embroiled in controversy over collusion between the ruling powers of Korea and Japan. In late January of 1977, Donald L. Ranard, former director of US State Department's Korean Affairs Office, disclosed his suspicion that 'South Korean agents made cash payments to Japanese politicians in order to promote a favorable climate in Tokyo for the Seoul government's political interest', saying that the 'Korean payoffs went to members of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party'.[92] None of Korean media reported this disclosure, and even the Korean government did not pay special attention to it. Though the Korean embassy Washington DC forwarded articles that Ranard contributed, Seoul did not take any follow-up measures.[93] In Japan, however, opposition parties attacked the Liberal Democratic Party almost every day. While the US government neither confirmed nor denied Ranard's disclosure, the opposition parties demanded a government

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[89] *Tonga ilbo*, 16 February 1977, p.3.

[90] Article 92 'Damage of Foreign National Flag', The Japanese *Penal Code*; The Japanese police first apprehended the hooligan on charge of violating the traffic laws and indicted him on the same charge without detention.

[91] OSW-0228; OSW-0229; OSW-0230, 722.1 19776, 10271, DAK.

[92] 'S. Koreans paid politicians in Japan, U.S. ex-aide says', *Washington Post*, 28 January 1977.

[93] USU-02008; Miguk(chŏng) 700-338, 722.1 1562, 10282, DAK.

investigation into the collusion with Korea and the illegal political donations that originated from it. The Korean government attempted to avoid this issue and wanted to handle other issues with Japan as quietly as possible.[94]

But the anti-Japanese sentiment among the Korean public intensified. Moreover, another aircraft from Japanese broadcaster flew over the *Tokto/Takeshima* islets on 19 February. Although the Korean government professed suspicion that the violation of airspace was an act to inflame nationalist sentiment, the Japanese government responded with its view that the islets belonged to Japan and therefore the aircrafts did not violate the Korean airspace.[95] A Korean newspaper expressed the view in its editorial about the motives of the Japanese government behind the airspace violations:

> The behaviour of the young right-wing men who tore our national flag, which is the symbol of the nation, and the chop logic [of the Japanese government] that though it is illegal for aircraft to enter other country's airspace without prior permission, flying over *Tokto* is not a violation of the Korean airspace are nothing but public exposure of [Japan's] ulterior motive … It is suspicious that [the Japanese] are trying to establish a pretext for international dispute by temperamentally violating the airspace. We cannot but be concerned whether it is [Japan's] scheme to create a certain de-facto relation.[96]

In a similar vein, the Heritage of Korean Independence, a society for former independence activists and their heirs, announced a statement that protested the attitude of the Japanese government. Under the provocative title 'Arrow of rage aimed at Japan', the statement read, '[We] cannot repress our rage, anger and hostility regarding the series of events and denounce their behaviour which is the same as the spectre of Japanese imperialism … If they keep up this shameless and thoughtless behaviour, we will raise our anti-Japanese beacon fire'.[97] The rage did not develop into any serious action, only public precautions taken against possible action. For instance, later in April, in the football World Cup qualifier between Korea and Japan held in Seoul, the Korean police augmented its security force in preparation for

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[94] The Fukuda government remained in low profile while continuing its role to support Korea against the Carter plan to withdraw the US forces from the Korean peninsula. In his defence against the domestic opposition, Fukuda could not exhibit allegiance to Korea despite his pro-South Korean character. See, Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, pp.164-5.

[95] 'Myŏndam yorok [Memorandum of conversation]', 21 February 1977, 722.1 19776, 10271, DAK; *Tonga ilbo*, 22 February 1977, p.1.

[96] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 22 February 1977, p.3.

[97] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 28 February 1977, p.7.

possible eruption of anti-Japanese sentiment among the Korean fans, but nothing that the police worried happened that day.[98]

Between public anger and diplomacy

Yet the sensitivity of the public surrounding these issues made it difficult for the Korean government to continue its low-key posture vis-à-vis Japan. Also, in regard to the flag incident, the Japanese government persisted in its stiff legal interpretation instead of making an apology as the Korean government wanted. That is, the Japanese government regarded the desecrated flag as not, in fact, the official national flag of Korea but as a similar one, and therefore the police considered the hooligans clear from suspicion. The Korean embassy Tokyo tried to convince the Japanese government that the problem lay in media reports that described the object of desecration as the Korean national flag so that the legal approach to this matter did not help to solve the problem.[99] This is not to say that the Korean government tried to take diplomatic advantage by making use of this opportunity. But the Korean government wanted the Japanese to accommodate the Korean demand for an apology and promise to make effort to prevent similar events in the future. So Korean diplomats continued to convince their Japanese counterparts in their subsequent dialogues that the core of the problem was that the Japanese behaviour irritated the Korean public. The Korean diplomats warned the Japanese, 'In case similar events happen again, Korean national sentiment will grow more intense, and then we might have to take a stiffened posture'.[100] In other words, the Korean government was warning the Japanese and simultaneously being cautious about losing control of its own diplomacy.

In April 1977 a train of events involving Kim Dae Jung took place. This time it was Koreans living in Japan, or *zainichi*, rather than the South Korean public that jeopardized Korean diplomacy with Japan. In late March the Korean Supreme Court found Kim Dae Jung and others guilty of violating the presidential emergency measure when they had gathered a year before to pronounce a statement (the '*Myŏngdong* incident'). The court sentenced Kim to five years in prison. In protest

[98] *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 4 April 1977, p.8.

[99] WJA-02510, 722.1 19776, 10271, DAK.

[100] JAW-03096, ibid.

against the sentence, on 13 April, an anonymous call to the Korean embassy Tokyo threatened in Japanese to bomb the embassy building.[101] On 17 April members of the Korean Youths' League ('*Hanch'ŏng*') – the anti-Park Chung Hee organisation of Koreans in Japan to which Mun Segwang had belonged – attempted to break into the embassy building. On the next day the same group of people burst into the Tokyo branch office of the Korean newspaper *Chosŏn ilbo* to complain about reporting on the threatening call the other day.[102] Also, in Seoul in early May, the police arrested a Japanese tourist who disseminated leaflets that slandered the Park Chung Hee regime. The tourist, Sawanobori Yukiatsu, was asked as a favour from his own tenant, who happened to be a local executive of *Sōren*, to disguise himself as a tourist and scatter the leaflets. The Korean authorities indicted Sawanobori for violating the Presidential Emergency Measure No.9 that prohibited slandering the constitution. All these events were reminiscent of the events a few years prior when Korea-Japan relations reached the nadir point; that is to say, Kim Dae Jung was imprisoned and the Japan-based anti-Park movement became active again.

Unlike the first half of the 1970s, however, the Korean government in 1977 was visibly pursuing a better relationship with Japan. Such an attitude of the Korean government to Japan was apparent from how the Koreans coped with those events in April. The Korean side simply invoked the so-called Shiina memo – an addendum of Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei's letter to Park Chung Hee sent after the 1974 assassination attempt by Mun Segwang to express the prime minister's regret and promise to regulate anti-Korean activities in Japan. In addition to Tanaka's letter, Shiina Etsusaburō, who delivered the letter in the capacity of prime minister's special envoy, purportedly promised in a memorandum to extend the scope of the anti-Korean activities to *Sōren* and to prevent recurrence of similar incidents.[103] So, as per the direction from Seoul, the Korean embassy Tokyo requested a thorough investigation and took legal steps against the group of people who made the threat.[104]

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[101] *Tonga ilbo*, 14 April 1977, p.1.

[102] 'Podocharyo', 19 April 1977, 722.1 19776, 10271, DAK.

[103] See chapter 4. The Shiina memo itself is not made public. The Korean prime minister reported a summary of the Tanaka letter and Shiina memo to the National Assembly. See 'Han-Il kwan'gye e taehan pogo, 1974-9-24-10:21', 701 1974-75 v.4, 6643, DAK.

[104] WJA-0435; JAW-04630; JAW-04733, 722.1 19776, 10271, DAK.

With regard to the Sawanobori case too, the Korean government exhibited a different attitude from what it had shown before. As discussed in chapter 4, the Korean government had sentenced two Japanese nationals to twenty years in prison in 1974 for the charge of breaking the presidential emergency measure although the Korean government set them free in early 1975. Moreover, the Sawanobori case was reminiscent of the Mun Segwang in the sense that they came to Korea after having contacted a *Sōren* executive. In fact, so much so that the Korean government expressed regret that the Japanese government continued to fail to crack down on such subversive activities.[105] But the Korean government did not try to make use of the case for any political purpose. The court sentenced Sawanobori to five years' imprisonment in July. Sawanobori did not appeal, and the Japanese government soon asked the Korean government to grant clemency.[106] The Korean government, especially the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, had been considering granting clemency even before the court made decision.[107] The Korean government willingly released Sawanobori in August.[108]

Leaving the islets as they were

Both of the governments successfully extinguished outbursts of emotion among their publics, but the source of friction, namely the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue, remained unresolved. Like Japan, Korea also claimed its twelve-mile territorial waters in September although the territorial sea act deliberately omitted any mention of the islets.[109] In October a Korean fisherman moved to the islets with his family and officially registered his residence there for the first time. The Japanese foreign minister expressed in the Diet his will to make a compliant about the residence registration, and the foreign ministry sent a note verbale, requesting that Korea demolish the police installation on the islets.[110] Meanwhile, when asked in the

[105] 'Myŏndam yorok', 24 May 1977, 701 25059, 10102, DAK.

[106] 'Myŏndam yorok', 18 July 1977, ibid.

[107] 'Chŏnhwa yorok', 6 August 1977, ibid.

[108] 'Myŏndam yorok', 12 August 1977, ibid.

[109] The National Assembly passed the government-proposed bill in December, and the law came into effect in April 1978.

[110] For the residence matter, see Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Councillors, 82-shū-gaimu-3go, the 82th National Diet, 25 October 1977, National Diet Library, pp. 17-8; for the note verbale, see *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 31 October 1977, p.1.

National Assembly if there was a plan to fortify the islets, the Korean defence minister said that should the islets be invaded, self-defence measures ought to be taken.[111] These remarks appeared in newspapers in both countries though they did not make further trouble.

Apart from the inflammatory language, politicians of the two countries clearly eschewed the territorial dispute. The Korean guideline regarding the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue can be found in the materials prepared for the management meeting of the Korea-Japan Parliamentarians' Union. It directed that parliamentarians should dismiss Japanese claims on the islets, since the islets should not be an object of diplomatic bargaining, but that otherwise they should remain silent on the issue as they did not wish it to develop into a bigger conflict.[112]

The Japanese too were aware that Korea had practical dominium of those islets. In March 1978 a Liberal Democratic Party Dietman stated that the Japanese government should construct buildings on the *Senkaku/Diaoyudao* islands. The Korean side was worried that escalating tension between Japan and China over the islands might affect the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue. But the Japanese were trying to apply the Korean example of stationing an armed police detachment on the islets to the *Senkaku/Diaoyudao* situation, so as to establish Japanese dominium on the islands before Japan signed the Peace and Friendship treaty with China, just as Korea did.[113] In fact the Japanese government internally discussed constructing a heliport on the islands, and the rumour circulated that Japan attempted to build a fishing base there, which frightened Taiwanese who were also party to the dispute.[114] According to intelligence the Korean embassy Tokyo obtained from the Japanese Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office, the real intent of the Japanese government behind the territorial dispute with China was to show Chinese that the conclusion of the peace treaty would not mean Japanese recognition of Chinese sovereignty over the

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[111] The 98th National Assembly stenographic record, no.7, The Special Committee on Budget and Accounts, 17 November 1977, p.60.

[112] 'Han-Il ŭiwŏn yŏnmaeng haptong kansahoe charyo', 14 November 1977, 724.53, 4949, 10461, 1977, p.19.

[113] This Dietman, being cautious of the Japan-China treaty, could have also intended to postpone conclusion of the treaty. JAW-04094; 'Ch'ŏmgak yŏlto kŭnhae ŭi Chunggong ŏsŏn choŏp sakŏn', 743.12, 25003, 12094, 1978, DAK.

[114] JAW-04343; CHW-0485, ibid.

islands.[115] That is, despite claims of bureaucrats and politicians over the disputed islands – both *Tokto/Takeshima* and *Senkaku/Diaoyudao* – as well as attempts to make these islands disputed areas, the Japanese government never tried wholeheartedly to gain sovereignty over the islands. However it might have considered securing farther sea territory by doing so in the midst of world-wide competition for the sea.

In 1978 *Tokto/Takeshima* was still a hot potato. Japanese fishing fleets would enter the waters around the islets, and the Korean coast guard would send ships and helicopters to repel them. Then the Japanese government would protest against the Korean measures.[116] Incomplete or misleading information exacerbated the situation. For example, a *Tonga ilbo* article reported that the Japanese Foreign Minister Sonoda Sunao 'took a strong stand' by saying 'If Korean patrol boats use force against Japanese fishing boats, Korean-Japanese relations will become entirely different from now'.[117] But what Sonoda actually said had quite a different nuance: 'It is impossible for Korean patrol boats to use force because if that happens, [it would mean] the relationship between Korea and Japan must be different from what it has [really] been'.[118] It sounded like not so much a 'strong stand' as a conviction that Korea would not worsen the problem. Likewise, though major Korean newspapers reported that the Japanese government decided to dispatch its coast guard to the islets to protect fishing boats, this time the Korean government clarified that the Japanese did not specify the destination of the coast guard.[119] In Japan *Asahi shinbun* headlined a report that the Japanese government was delaying its loan to Korea to exhibit its unyielding attitude vis-à-vis the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue, despite immediate denial of the Japanese foreign ministry.[120]

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[115] Ilbon(chŏng) 700-2197, ibid.

[116] *Tonga ilbo*, 10 May 1978, p.1.

[117] '한국 순시선이 일본 어선에 대해 실력행사를 한다면 한일관계는 현재와는 전혀 다르게 되어버릴 것'. See, *Tonga ilbo*, 12 May 1978, p.1.

[118] '韓国の警備艇等が実力行使をすることは断じてあり得ない。そういうことがあるならば、韓国と日本の関係はいままでの関係とは違うわけでありますから' See, Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Councillors, 84-san-gaimu-21go, the 84th National Diet, 11 May 1978, National Diet Library, p.4.

[119] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 13 May 1978, p.1; *Tonga ilbo,* 13 May 1978, p.1; *Kyŏnghyang sinmun* 13 May 1978, p.1

[120] *Asahi shinbun*, 19 June 1978, p.1.

Among this plethora of uncertainties, what the Japanese government unequivocally did was to bring the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue to a formal negotiation. Of course, as the keynote of its diplomacy, the Korean side opposed this idea to make the islets an object of negotiation. But the Japanese seemed to be aiming at certain practical purposes by negotiating the territorial issue. According to a CIA analysis, Japan might be amenable to a similar solution as the continental shelf joint development agreement. Moreover, 'if Seoul object[ed] to this idea', the analysis reported, 'Japan might even concede on the ownership issue in return for an equitable shelf partition that would reduce the influence of [*Tokto*] on the final boundaries'.[121] In other words *Tokto/Takeshima* itself was not the primary purpose for Japan.[122] In fact, the Japanese government began to stop claiming ownership of the islands and instead suggested establishing a joint fishing zone.[123] Korea and Japan did not reach an agreement on this suggestion during the ministerial meeting held in September.[124]

Nonetheless it is possible that they came to an undisclosed agreement. In November, the Japanese foreign ministry made an announcement that the two countries had decided to avoid the territorial issue during the ministerial meeting and they reached a deal that Korea would condone Japanese fishing in the waters around the islets. Though the Korean government confirmed the decision to avoid the territorial dispute, it denied the deal with Japan.[125] Whether the deal ever happened is unknown, but the Shimane Prefecture – the closest prefecture of Japan to the islets – never experienced a decrease in catch during the late 1970s, and in the cases of some kinds of fish, the catch rather increased in 1979 and 1980.[126] Public fervour waned at

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[121] National Foreign Assessment Center, 'Maritime claims and conflict in Northeast Asia: An intelligence assessment', July 1978, CIA, p.15.

[122] As the report elaborated, not only did Japanese have a less fervent attachment to the islets, but also the islets were a 'surrogate for the real dispute over the surrounding waters and seabed'. Ibid.

[123] *Asahi shinbun*, 22 July 1978, p.1.

[124] With regard to this matter too, Japanese media reported that the both parties agreed on the joint fishing apart from the ownership claim on the one hand, while the Korean government denied the report on the other. See *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, 5 September 1978, p.1.

[125] *Tonga ilbo*, 17 November 1978, p.1. Other Korean newspapers also covered this announcement, but most major Japanese newspapers did not.

[126] Alexander Bukh, 'Japan's quest for Dokdo and the South Kurile islands', *The Journal of Territorial and Maritime Studies* 1, no.2 (2014): p.124. Meanwhile, in the sense that Korea and Japan continued to talk about the fishing problem in 1979 too, it is possible that there was no deal and that the Japanese side nonetheless exaggerated outcomes of the negotiation with Korea. See, 'Myŏndam yorok', 24 January 1979, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

the dawn of 1979. But the two countries failed, consciously or unconsciously, to resolve anything about the islets, which only planted seeds of another conflict in the early 1980s.[127]

It was a dilemma for both Korea and Japan whether to struggle for the sea around the small islets. On the one hand, while every other coastal country attempted to extend its control of the sea, Korea and Japan could not but partake in the enthusiasm. Though the dispute between the two began with the Japanese prime minister's proclamation of the twelve-mile territorial waters, all the other countries in Northeast Asia did the same by 1978, save for Taiwan which did only in 1998. North Korea even set an unprecedented large 'military security zone', prohibiting any kind of foreign maritime activity in the zone without prior approval.[128] Proclaiming the wider territorial and economic sea was a low-risk and yet highly effective policy for national leaders.[129] On the other hand, Korea and Japan had to do so while curbing their peoples' chauvinist fervour so as to continue their cooperative relations. Often inflammatory language emerged as bureaucrats and cabinet members answered questions that their parliamentarians asked. Also, a series of events and newspaper articles that stimulated nationalist sentiment left the foreign offices of each country with few options for lubricating the diplomatic process. Though the two governments could not do much to calm their publics down, they at least did not exacerbate the situation. While the Japanese willingly complied with the Shiina agreement, the Korean government offered clemency to Japanese convicts. And both parties at least agreed to discontinue the territorial dispute, shelving the uncomfortable issue.

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In spite of several crises between them, Korea and Japan eventually managed to restore their amicable relationship. The increasing security threat from North Korea did not necessarily strengthen solidarity between South Korea and Japan. The threat did not stimulate much of a sense of fear among the Japanese public. Nonetheless, as

[127] For the disputes in 1981 and 1983, see Chong-Sik Lee, *Japan and Korea: The Political Dimension* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press,1985), pp. 119-20; Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism,* p.192.

[128] Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 'Maritime zones of Northeast Asia', Report No. 923, February 9 1978, CIA.

[129] James Krasaka, *Maritime Power and the Law of the Sea: Expeditionary Operations in World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.22.

appeared in the *Shōseimaru* incident, South Korea and Japan could confirm their alignment to a certain extent, as Japan neither established official diplomatic relations with North Korea nor recognised the North Korean government in any form during the process of negotiation. Still, when their interests conflicted in trade and territorial matters, South Korea and Japan were reluctant to yield to each other. This reluctance to compromise is understandable in light of trade and territorial issues that could directly affect their national interests.

In the meantime there was certain gap between public response to these disputes and actual diplomacy between Korea and Japan. At a glance, the diplomacy seemed affected by the public opinion. During the silk dispute, Korean press exhorted the Korean government to take retaliatory measures while Japanese sericulture businesses urged the Japanese government to continue the import regulations. However, what affected the settlement was not the boycott of Japanese goods by Korean sericulture business; it was the Korean government that almost threatened the Japanese by mentioning the boycott. Also the Japanese government did not listen to the voice of Japanese textile machinery manufacturers who urged their government to yield to Korea. Behind this selective reflection of public opinion was the necessity for some key politicians to win agricultural votes in general election. In the end, Korean politicians' understanding of the position of the Japanese counterparts stopped the dispute from developing into a bigger conflict. Similarly, when anti-Japanese sentiment prevailed among the Korean public with regard to *Tokto/Takeshima*, the Korean government tried either to keep low-profile or to warn the Japanese so as to quickly accomplish its intended limited goals such as an apology for the desecration of the national flag.

It is also noteworthy that the silk and territorial disputes were parts of global phenomena. These disputes differed from the earlier elements of conflict such as the Kim Dae Jung case, Mun Segwang case or Japan-North Korea relations by nature. Therefore Korea and Japan showed cooperative gestures in the *Shōseimaru* incident and other *Sōren*-related events; these issues had come to certain conclusion with Shiina's visit to Korea as discussed in the previous chapter and with Miki's declaration of friendly relationship as shown at the top of this chapter. But the silk and territorial disputes had new aspects. The silk dispute was not a conflict between Korea and Japan but between exporting countries and importing countries of the world. The territorial dispute concerned all the maritime powers and coastal countries.

Thus Korea and Japan alone could not conclude these disputes. All they could was eschewing the problems and leaving them unsolved. The emergence of the globalised competition of all against all was making the cooperative Korea-Japan relations precarious.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE END OF AN ERA

> The death of President Park means all the harm in politics, diplomacy, economy, society and security is removed … To the people, it is the end of an era.[1]
>
> Kim Dae Jung, 1979

In the final couple of years of the 1970s Asia was witnessing re-emergence of bipolar confrontation. In late 1978 the People's Republic of China concluded the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Japan and normalised diplomatic relations with the United States. The three countries came together to contain the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union attempted to break the containment by signing the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Vietnam and thus gaining access to air and naval facilities in Indochina. With these resources, the Soviet Union could press China from the south and threaten Japan's oil-import line. Vietnam's full-scale invasion of Kampuchea brought about the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. And, concerned by a rising Vietnamese hegemon, countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) moved closer to the United States. In Northeast Asia, the Soviet Union augmented its military forces on the southern Kurils, or the northern territory as the Japanese called it. In response, Japan redefined the Self-Defense Forces and expanded military cooperation with Korea and the United States.[2]

During this period Korea also saw sudden changes in its economy and politics. Initially caused by the second oil crisis, the Korean economy began to plummet. Those opposed to the Park Chung Hee regime now included workers as well as opposition politicians and university students. Park's economic advisors left the Blue House, and power centred on a smaller circle of people such as the chief presidential security officer and the director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA). Park Chung Hee's *Yusin* regime came to an abrupt end when the KCIA director shot the president and the chief security officer to death at their closed dinner party. The precipitous death of Park made room for the military to meddle in politics. In December, a less widely-known army general, Chun Doo Hwan (Chŏn Tuhwan)

[1] *Asahi shinbun*, 8 December 1979, evening edition, p.1

[2] Lorenz M. Lüthi, *Cold Wars: Asia, the Middle East, Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p.520; David S. Painter, *The Cold War: An International History* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp.88-9, 92;

arrested the chief martial law commander and gradually gained the control of the nation. It took merely a few months more for Chun to quell the democratisation movement and rise to the political forefront.

At the end of the détente era, Korea and Japan found themselves standing on a similar but unequal foothold. Whereas Japan formed an anti-Soviet coalition with China and the United State, Korea dreamed of a reinforced version of older-fashioned Korea-Japan-United States relations. Despite their different prospects, they were able to develop closer relations. They had a mutual interest in strengthening their security cooperation and in refraining from endless – and therefore useless – disputes over territory in a time of economic hardship. The abrupt end of the *Yusin* system freed Kim Dae Jung, who had been the core of friction between Korea and Japan for years. But neither party wanted to bring up the problematic abduction issue again. The end result was still a cautious relationship but with less friction.

The Neo-Cold War and the Southern Triangle

Cautious Korea-Japan security cooperation

Korea's security cooperation with Japan developed alongside that with its ally the United States. Starting in 1977, the possibility of security cooperation between Korea and Japan surfaced. In January, a *Tonga ilbo* report revealed that the Korean government was seeking to form a security consultative group among Korea, Japan and the United States. To that end, the government would start by expanding security cooperation with Japan, gradually promoting personnel exchanges with the SDF and consultations between defence bureaucrats of both countries.[3] In July a retired Maritime SDF admiral argued in an academic conference that military cooperation between Korea and Japan was inevitable. In case of an armed conflict on the peninsula, according to the admiral, Japanese commercial or fishing ships might lie under communist attack, and Japan would be entangled in the conflict whether willingly or not. Therefore, he argued, naval cooperation was essential, although this seemed unfeasible in the imminent future. The JDA dismissed the idea of cooperation since such cooperation deviated from the task of the SDF. But, as *Asahi shibun* reported, those in active duty had a deep-rooted sense of crisis and an inclination towards cooperation, which the retired admiral might have reflected in his argument.[4]

[3] *Tonga ilbo*, 7 January 1977, p.1.

[4] *Chosŏn ilbo*, 6 July 1977, p.1, 3; *Asahi shinbun*, 7 July 1977, p.2.

The necessity of the security cooperation arose largely from US President Carter's plan to pull out the American troops from Korea. Juxtaposed with the Soviet military build-up, the scaling down of US military presence in Asia increased the sense of crisis among Asian countries.[5] Moreover, as the pull-out plan followed the American retreat from Vietnam, the Carter plan gave the impression that the United States had disengaged itself from Asia in general. So much so that that the Japanese government had continuously opposed the plan.[6] This opposition coincided with Korea's interest. When the Korean government sought for cooperation with Japan, as the above *Tonga ilbo* article reported, its purpose was to offset possible military imbalances against the North Korean forces that the troop pull-out might cause.

It is remarkable that while they seemed eager for security cooperation, Korea and Japan approached the matter with caution at the same time. There had been news about the director-general of the JDA visiting Korea since 1977. Mihara Asao, who headed the agency from 1976 to 1977, was hesitant, however, about such a trip. When asked by a journalist about sending SDF executives instead, he answered that was possible. A deputy minister of the agency also showed his strong desire to visit Korea himself.[7] The JDA seemed supportive of the idea of personnel exchanges with Korea by this time, but a ministerial visit still looked premature. The next director-general, Kanemaru Shin, was also keen to personally visit Korea in 1978 and asked the Korean government to send him an invitation. This time Japan's political circle was busy with the controversy over emergency legislation (*yūji rippō*).[8] For this reason, an official from the Japanese foreign ministry thought that the director-general's visit was still premature, especially with the defence issue creating turbulence.[9]

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[5] Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, 'The Soviet factor in US-Japanese defense cooperation, 1978-1985', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 15, no.2 (2013): 'The Soviet factor', p.77.

[6] Victor D. Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp.152-3, 163-8.

[7] JAW-07138, 729.14JA, 18445 (10552), Diplomatic Archives of Korea (hereafter, 'DAK').

[8] The controversy over emergency legislation took place in July 1978 when Chairman of the Joint Staff Council General Kurisu Hiroomi warned that the SDF might take actions that went beyond legal sanctions and subsequently when Prime Minister Fukuda directed the JDA to study emergency legislation to stipulate what the SDF should do in case of a conflict. The lack of legislation becomes clearer in a criticism from Nakanose Yasuhiro, who had headed the JDA in 1970-1971: 'If an enemy comes to Hokkaido, tanks must stay in the left lane and stop at a red light'. See, Sheila A. Smith, *Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), p.49, 105; *Asahi shinbun*, 28 July 1978, p.1; 29 July 1978, p.4. For Nakasone, see *Asahi shinbun*, 22 August 1978, p.2.

[9] JAW-10616, 729.3JA/US, 3757 (13112), DAK.

Yamashita Ganri, the successor of Kanemaru, visited Korea for the first time in the capacity of director-general of the JDA in July 1979. His visit reciprocated that of the Korean chairman of the joint chiefs of staff to Japan, both visits marking an epochal change in Korea-Japan military cooperation. Even then, the JDA requested the Korean government to maintain confidentiality until the agency finalised the itinerary and made an official announcement, despite the fact that as early as April Yamashita had publicly revealed his desire to make a visit.[10] Also a Japanese foreign ministry source expressed regret to *Yomiuri shinbun* that the visit might give the impression that Korea, Japan and the United States were forming a military alliance. The source complained that the timing of the visit was inappropriate because it could irritate North Korea and the Soviet Union to no purpose. According to the newspaper's analysis, this reflected different approaches to the Soviet expansion of power in Asia; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised conversation and the JDA sought to strengthen countermeasures to the Soviet Union.[11]

The Koreans had a similar ambivalence, though for different reasons. Before the Yamashita's visit, a major general of the Air SDF had visited Korea. This was also the first time for those in charge of operations in the SDF to make an official visit to Korea. However, in a report that appraised this visit, the Korean Ministry of Defense articulated its reservation about rapid security cooperation with Japan. The report admitted that the time was ripe for extended military exchanges and cooperation from a long-term and macroscopic perspective. Nonetheless, the report continued:

> We judge that further military exchanges and cooperation [with Japan] should be conducted slowly and by stages after sufficiently weighing the gains and losses at security level because we must consider possibilities of weakening relations [with the United States] based on the Korea-US mutual defence treaty; of expediting the pull-out of the US ground troops; of America's transferring its military role to Japan; and of leaking of Korean military information to communist countries.[12]

The defence ministry worried that aggressive cooperation with Japan in security and military fields might prompt American disengage from Korea. Ironically, though the pull-out plan catalysed the security cooperation between Korea and Japan, it limited

[10] JAW-07278, ibid. For Yamashita's desire to visit Korea, see *Asahi shinbun*, 5 April 1979, p.2.

[11] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 25 July 1979, p.2.

[12] Chŏngil 770-51, 729.3JA/US, 3757 (13112), DAK.

the extent of the cooperation. Carter had his Korea policy reviewed in January 1979 and temporarily froze the pull-out in February. Although the Korean defence ministry wrote the report in March, and the Korean government was aware by then that the US government halted the pull-out plan, the official announcement of the postponement came out in July.[13] Further, the fact that the United States suspended the pull-out did not mean a full recovery of the American security commitment to Korea. The change of plans was based on intelligence that, despite an increase in North Korean military forces, the United States was maintaining similar numbers of ground troops on the peninsula as before, instead of augmenting them.[14] Thus the Korean government prioritised tightening its relationship with the United States over forming a new one with Japan.

Interestingly enough, the ambivalence did not result from suspicion that Japan might become a regional military power, as it had been in the 1930s. Emotional antagonism against military cooperation was absent. One of the biggest reasons why Japan had abstained from strengthening its military was that Japanese rearmament could evoke Japanese militarism. Now that Japanese economic influence in Asian countries had increased, Japan needed to assure its neighbours it had abandoned militaristic ambition.[15] Of course North Korea and the Soviet Union condemned Yamashita's visit to Korea as a revival of Japanese militarism or completion of military alliance.[16] Yet such a criticism did not come from South Korea. A *Tonga ilbo* editorial, in fact, appraised the security cooperation between the two countries as very helpful, because Korea and Japan both pursued peace, not tension, in East Asia.[17] Considering the emotional outburst against Japan's history textbook in 1982 that looked overly right-oriented, the South Koreans clearly distinguished the past and current issues and approached the latter practically.[18]

Rather, Japan was more strident in security matters than Korea. In addition to the repeated criticism from the Japanese foreign ministry of the 'premature' defence

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[13] For the postponement of the Carter plan, see Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, pp.304-5 n.22. For the Korean government's awareness of this, see WJA-03237, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[14] Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, p.146.

[15] Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, p.51.

[16] *Tonga ilbo*, 28 July 1979, p.1; 30 July 1979, p.1.

[17] *Tonga ilbo*, 27 July 1979, p.4.

[18] For Japan's history textbook controversy, see Chong-Sik Lee, *Japan and Korea: The Political Dimension* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1985), chapter 6.

director-general's visit to Korea, Japanese media castigated Korea and the United States for their ill-timed joint military exercises. When Korea and the United States began their annual combined military exercise, Team Spirit, in March 1979, the Japanese media universally criticised the exercise. The media questioned whether the exercise was necessary at a time when the world was moving towards peace.[19] By 'peace', the media meant not only the recent treaty between Japan and China but also Park Chung Hee's proposal to North Korea for an unconditional dialogue that he revealed at the beginning-of-the-year press conference in January – albeit Park's proposal made no significant difference in North-South relations.[20]

Japanese Foreign Minister Sonoda Sunao was at the core of this criticism. During interpellations at the Diet, Sonoda made remarks to the effect that the exercise would not be helpful for the dialogue and that the Japanese government would prefer the US government not irritate North Korea in the exercise.[21] Also, in an interview with a newspaper, he criticised US-oriented bipolar diplomacy. He said, in particular, that Korea was no longer 'Japan's lifeline' and that Japan was not a 'branch office of the United States'.[22] It seems he was indicating Japan's more autonomous diplomacy and the importance of the ASEAN countries to Japan that had been overlooked. But this comment left an impression that Japan might be distancing itself from Korea and the United States. As no other official accompanied the foreign minister at the interview, it was uncertain in what context and wording Sonoda made the comments.[23] An LDP official told a Korean diplomat that while the party's basic Korea policy never changed, Sonoda might have intended 1) to test the reaction from the public and the Korean government to a new Korea policy, if any; 2) to reflect the new Prime Minister Ōhira's approach to diplomacy that, unlike that of his

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[19] *Asahi shinbun*, editorial, 26 February 1979, p.5; *Yomiuri shinbun*, editorial, 1 March 1979, p.4.

[20] The proposal for a dialogue was a part of Park Chung Hee's measures to cope with the then-forthcoming withdrawal of the US ground troops. See, Lyong Choi, 'The foreign policy of Park Chunghee: 1968-1979' (PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012), p.170.

[21] Budget Committee, Second Subcommittee, House of Representatives, 87-shū-yosan-1go, the 87th National Diet, 27 February 1979, National Diet Library, p.22; Budget Committee, House of Councillors, 87-san-yosan-2go, the 87th National Diet, 8 March 1979, National Diet Library, p.6.

[22] *Tōkyō shinbun*, 29 March 1979, p2, as cited in JAW-03656, 729.13JA, 18282 (13088), DAK. The Korean government immediately complained that such comments were interference in domestic affairs. See, WJA-0370, 729.13JA, 18282 (13088), DAK.

[23] JAW-03665, 729.13JA, 18282 (13088), DAK.

predecessor Fukuda Takeo, promoted unlimited omnidirectional diplomacy; and 3) to prevent North Korea from getting closer to the Soviet Union.[24]

It is unlikely that the Ōhira cabinet attempted to set a fundamentally new course for Korea and East Asia. Ōhira came from the Tanaka faction and served as a foreign minister in the Tanaka cabinet, during which period Korean-Japanese relations nearly collapsed. Although he temporarily aligned himself with Fukuda to take down the Miki cabinet, Ōhira and Fukuda were essentially political rivals and had different attitudes toward policy-making.[25] Nevertheless, Sonoda had been in office since the Fukuda cabinet until he was replaced in November 1979, and it is difficult to believe that he suddenly turned his back on Korea.[26] Sonoda was well aware that Team Spirit symbolised the US commitment to the security of East Asia regardless of the withdrawal of US troops.[27] The Japanese foreign ministry also continuously assured the Koreans that Japan's policy toward Korea under the Ōhira cabinet had not changed.[28] In this light, Sonoda's comments on Team Spirit seem to have resulted from the concern that the military exercise could irritate North Korea, making it tilt more toward the Soviet Union, then the arch-enemy of Japan.

Soviet military expansion and Japan

In the latter half of the 1970s the Soviet Union strengthened its military presence in East Asia. Soviet military build-up itself was not new. Since the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union had continued to augment its forces there, primarily due to its rivalry with China. The Soviet Union found it disturbing that China had been improving its relations with Japan and the United States. After the conclusion of the

[24] JAW-04112, ibid.

[25] For the factional competition, see Tomohito Shinoda, *Contemporary Japanese Politics: Institutional Changes and Power Shifts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp.34-5; Masumi Junnosuke, *Contemporary Politics in Japan*, trans. Lonny E. Carlile (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp.181-94. For different policymaking styles between Fukuda and Ōhira, see Nakanishi Hiroshi, 'Overcoming the crises: Japanese diplomacy in the 1970s', in *The Diplomatic History of Postwar Japan*, ed. Makoto Iokibe, trans. Robert D. Eldridge (New York: Routledge, 2011), p.132.

[26] After he signed the peace and friendship treaty with China, Sonoda explained the Koreans that the signing of the treaty did not signify any change in Japan's Korea policy. See, Donald W. Klein, 'Japan 1978: The consensus continues', *Asian Survey* 19, no.1 (1979): p.38.

[27] See Sonoda's conversation in 1978 with US Deputy Secretary of Defense Charles Duncan: Tokyo 04281, 'Visit of Deputy Secretary of Defense Duncan: Calls on foreign minister and defense minister', Japan and the US, 1977-1992, DNSA.

[28] JAW-03689; WSG-0393; (Document number illegible) 'Sonoda oesang ŭi Han'guk anbo kwallyŏn parŏn', 729.13JA, 18282 (13088), DAK; JAW-04134, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

Peace and Friendship Treaty between China and Japan in 1978 and the normalisation of Sino-American relations in 1979, the Soviet Union viewed China's closer relations with the liberalist countries as posing a 'serious long-term threat', increasing the possibility that the Soviet Union might 'have to fight all three countries in a conflict in the Far East'. China's better relationship with the two could also possibly help China's military modernisation.[29]

The military expansion of the Soviet Union aroused a sense of threat in Japan. Especially the Soviet presence in Indochina posed a direct threat to the Japanese shipping routes from the Middle East. Following the Chinese invasion of Vietnam, the Soviet Union established access to Vietnamese air and naval facilities. A memorandum from the US Department of Defense explained the significance of this development in Indochina:

> Until now, these routes were highly vulnerable to interdiction, but – in the absence of logistic support and deployed forces – the threat seemed remote, and didn't enjoy significant attention. This is all changed now that Soviet submarines, surface combatants and logistic support ships have been reported using the excellent base facilities along the Vietnamese coast. The greater clarity of a threat to Japanese tankers makes a countervailing Japanese response possible. If we are able to persuade the Japanese to reply appropriately, the end result could be a substantially improved anti-submarine warfare (ASW) posture in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean.[30]

The other direct threat to Japan was on the southern Kuril islands which the Japanese considered their northern territory. Whereas the Soviet military in Indochina posed an actual threat, it was more of an imagined menace in the Kurils. By the second half of the 1970s the Soviet Union came to possess nuclear-powered submarines in the Sea of Okhotsk with capabilities to attack the United States homeland. Further, in January 1979, the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA) estimated that the Soviet Union had deployed 5,000-6,000 troops to the Kuril islands. These forces were not sufficient for an invasion of Japan but enough to alarm the Japanese.[31]

The Soviet military build-up in East Asia helped to diminish controversy over defence in Japan. Previously, public opinion had been predominantly peace-oriented,

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[29] Director of Central Intelligence, 'Soviet military forces in the Far East, v.2: supporting analysis', NIE 11-14/40-81, 1 September 1981, Central Intelligence Electronic Reading Room, p.2.

[30] US Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary, 'Implications to Japan of Soviet use of Vietnamese bases', 11 May 1979, Japan and the US, 1977-1992, Digital National Security Archives (hereafter, 'DNSA').

[31] Hasegawa, pp.76-9.

and thus politicians had avoided discussing military-related issues.[32] The ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had been downplaying defence issues to avoid opposition attack. But a consensus began to appear with the increasing sense of threat. Moreover Self Defense Forces (SDF) officers and civilian military experts fostered and disseminated a fear that the northern part of Japan was vulnerable to Soviet attack, highlighting the incapability of Japan's defence. The political circle, too, began to change. An opposition party, *Kōmeitō*, recognised the SDF and the US-Japan security treaty from 1978, and the LDP also vigorously discussed defence issues within the party.[33]

The increased Soviet threat led Japan to tighten its security with the United States and strengthening its defence capabilities.[34] Cabinet ministers enunciated this direction of Japan's defence policy. In July 1978, Foreign Minister Sonoda Sunao told journalists from ASEAN countries, 'Japan has no alternative but to re-arm to defend itself against any external threat in the face of the Soviet naval build-up in the Pacific'.[35] In February 1979, JDA Director-General Yamashita Ganri stated that the Soviet forces in the Far East were a potential threat to Japan.[36] In March, Prime Minister Ōhira Masayoshi stressed at the graduation ceremony of the National Defense Academy that Japan's defence should be genuine deterrence.[37] In April both Ōhira and Yamashita emphasised importance of Japan's closer relationship with the United States. In a meeting with higher ranking officers of the SDF, Ōhira highlighted necessity to adhere to the US-Japan security treaty for Japan's comprehensive defence,

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[32] A survey conducted in 1977 showed that 75-78% of the Japanese public supported the SDF and the US-Japan treaty. See, 'Ilbon chawidae chŭnggang munje [On SDF's build-up]', 729.14JA, 25815 (11770), DAK.

[33] Yi Kit'ae, 'Tet'angt'ŭ malgi Han-Il hyŏmnyŏk ŭi mosaek: Han-Il ŭiwŏn anjŏn pojang hyŏbŭihoe sŏllip ŭl chungsim ŭro [Examining Korea-Japan security cooperation at the end stage of détente]', *Tongsŏ yŏn'gu* 21, no.2 (2009): pp.154-6; Joseph P. Keddell, *The Politics of Japanese Defense: Managing Internal and External Pressures* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p.60, 71; For the Soviet fear, see Tomoyuki Sasaki, *Japan's Postwar Military and Civil Society* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), pp.133-7.

[34] Interestingly, Hasegawa argues that, although the Soviet military build-up did not pose a threat to Japan's security, Japan and the United States exploited the Soviet threat to justify increasing the US-Japan security cooperation. This is not to say, however, that the Soviet factor was meaningless. As Hasegawa writes, 'the Soviet threat was the most decisive motivation for the development of a closer US-Japanese security alignment'. See Hasegawa, 'The Soviet factor', p.73.

[35] *AFP*, Manila, 1 July 1978 in 729.14JA, 25815 (11770), DAK.

[36] Budget Committee, House of Representatives, 87-shū-yosan-16go, the 87th National Diet, 21 February 1979, National Diet Library, p.14.

[37] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 19 March 1979, p.2.

while Yamashita underscored the necessity for a study for combined operation with the US forces.[38] As a Korean intelligence report appraised, it was unprecedented for both the prime minister and JDA director-general to mention the importance of the US-Japan cooperation simultaneously. The report analysed that this reflected the Soviet military build-up, American request for more burden-sharing and drastic increase of cooperation with the United States.[39]

Under this situation the anti-Soviet coalition appeared among Japan, China and the United States. China not only ceased to oppose US-Japan security cooperation but urged Japan to strengthen its military capabilities, although Japan did not respond immediately.[40] From 1978, the United States criticised Japan with Congressional resolutions for spending too little for defence on the one hand, while on the other the United States became reluctant to implement trade retaliation against Japan in the hope of securing Japanese cooperation against the Soviet Union. Japan could pursue economic benefits from its improved relationship with China. By the mid-1980s, China had become Japan's second largest trade partner.[41] Thus the three countries became an economic and political triangle, whose cordial relationship lasted until 1989 when the Soviet Union collapsed.[42] Noteworthy in this coalition is the absence of Korea; Korea was no more at the forefront of this new Cold War.

North Korean factor

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[38] The concept of comprehensive defence (*Sōgō anzen hoshō*) first appeared in 1978, and Ōhira made it into a policy in 1980. Reflecting Japan's 'peace constitution', the comprehensive defence was characterised by emphasis on non-military means for Japan's security. See, Tsuneo Akaha, 'Japan's comprehensive security policy: A new East Asian environment', *Asian Survey* 31, no.4 (1991): pp.324-6.

[39] Chŏngil 700-44, 729.14JA, 25816 (13089), DAK. This report also analysed that these utterances could be a gesture of its will to share the burden of defence with the United States in light of the prime minister's upcoming visit to the United States.

[40] Akira Iriye, 'Japan's defense strategy', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 513 (1991): p.44; See Deng Xiaoping's talk with Fukuda Takeo in 1978 where he elucidated the rationale behind changes of China's attitude: Chūgokuka, 'Fukuda sōri-Tou fukusōri kaidan kiroku (dai ikkai me)', 23 October 1978 (Shōwa 53), 04-1022, Diplomatic Archives of Japan, p.9.

[41] Michael Schaller, 'Japan and the Cold War, 1960-1991', in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* vol.3, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.176; 'Japan plays a China card, keeps Russia up its sleeves', *New York Times*, 7 January 1979, p.3.

[42] Ezra F. Vogel, 'Introduction' in *The Golden Age of the US-China-Japan Triangle, 1972-1989*, ed. Ezra F. Vogel, Yuan Ming and Tanaka Akihiko (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), p.2, 8.

Although North Korea had tilted to China more than to the Soviet Union in communist politics, it had been oscillating between the two allies, maximising its self-interest by playing off one against the other.[43] However, starting with the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, North Korea began to distance itself from China. China's new leadership purged the radical group that North Korea probably favoured. At the same time, the Soviet Union was pulling North Korea towards itself by promising more aid on the one hand and stressing hard-line proletarian internationalism on the other.[44] China's conspicuous conversion to the pro-US side as well as its invasion of Vietnam only distanced it from North Korea more.[45] China could not afford to lose North Korea in a situation where the Soviet Union and its presence in Vietnam pressured China from both the north and the south. This situation encouraged China to maintain cordial relations with North Korea. This meant it became more difficult for South Korea to approach China, than it was for Japan and the United States, and therefore it could not fully partake in the anti-Soviet coalition.

The South Korean government did seek a better relationship with China. Since Korea did not have a formal communication channel with China, Korea made use of Japan as a messenger. The Korean foreign minister told the Japanese ambassador to Korea that Korea had not made vile propaganda about China and had no intent to be hostile to Beijing. As if he had been speaking to Chinese diplomats, the foreign minister explained Korea's China policy to the Japanese diplomat: 'China seems to be concerned about South Korea's contact with the Soviet Union, but this contact is only superficial. Our goal is to contain a war on the peninsula, to stabilise public welfare through economic development, and externally, to continue to keep good neighbour relations.'[46] Obviously the Koreans wanted the Japanese to relay this message. In a conversation with the Japanese prime minister, the Korean ambassador to Japan enunciated the Korean request:

> We require that Japan make it clear as its official position when Deng Xiaoping visits Japan [in February 1979] that unless China and the Soviet Union open doors to South Korea, Japan will not change its position towards North Korea. Also we hope Japan

[43] B. C. Koh, 'North Korea and the Sino-Soviet schism', *The Western Political Quarterly* 22, no.4 (1969): p.962.

[44] Chong-Sik Lee, 'New paths for North Korea', *Problems of Communism* 26, no.2 (1977): pp.62-3.

[45] JAW-04412, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[46] 'Myŏndam yorok', ibid.

> will convey our intent that Korea does not have any reason to have bad relations with China and desires trade and economic exchanges with China.[47]

This Korean request sounds audacious because it demanded that Japan choose a particular course of diplomacy regarding North Korea. Surprisingly the Japanese prime minister agreed with Korea's approach to China and accepted the request.

China's response was lukewarm. Deng Xiaoping welcomed North Korea-South Korea dialogue and was willing to exert its influence to resume the dialogue, if indirectly. But, as to the proposal for non-political exchanges with South Korea, Deng's answer was 'no'. By not having relations with the south, he thought, it was easier to make North Korea participate in the dialogue with the south. Contrary to South Korea's expectations, Deng did not bring up Japan-North Korea issues, a weapon that the South Koreans had urged the Japanese to use. Though Deng put forward the dialogue between the two Koreas, it seems North Korea's ambiguous position between China and the Soviet Union was an important factor to the Chinese decision too. According to Japanese foreign ministry officials, North Korea had recently turned pro-Soviet or at least was equidistant between the two allies, seeing from the fact that, though the North Koreans had denounced Vietnam in the Cambodian-Vietnamese war, they stopped their denunciation of Vietnam after China invaded Vietnam. Also, as the Japanese understood, China was sufficiently recognising and being concerned by the possibility that North Korea could approach the Soviet Union. For these reasons, the Japanese foreign ministry analysed the Chinese attitude regarding South Korea as prospective. In other words, China did not dislike South Korea but had to keep its distance from the south for the sake of the north.[48]

South Korea did not share strategic interests with China. Therefore, it was difficult for South Korea to form a similar relationship with China as Japan did. Japan, for example, warned Vietnam that if the Vietnamese port of Da Nang became a Soviet military base, Japan would cease all of its aid to Vietnam.[49] Not only could Japan exert such pressure because it was the biggest provider of aid to Vietnam second only to the Soviet Union, but also the Soviet military presence in Indochina

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[47] JAW-01472, ibid.

[48] JAW-04412; JAW-02232, ibid.

[49] JAW-04412, ibid. For Japan's foreign aids in the late 1970s, see Sung Chull Kim, *Partnership within Hierarchy: The Evolving East Asian Security Triangle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2017), pp.118-23.

substantially threatened Japan's trade sea lane.[50] China, too, had been dissatisfied with Vietnam. Deng told the Japanese that Vietnam was the 'Cuba of the east' and that this 'Cuba of the east' deserved sanctions.[51] To South Korea, the Soviet Union posed no direct threat, and vice versa, unless a war were to break out between the two Koreas.[52] Nor did South Korea have any merit whatsoever to entice China away from North Korea.[53] Although North Korea was a decisive factor that protected US-South Korea relations by making the United States suspend the troop withdrawal from the peninsula, the very same factor hindered South Korea from joining the trilateral coalition among the United States, Japan and China.

Korea's position in the southern triangular alignment

South Korea's security still mattered to Japan and the United States. The JDA paid special attention to North Korea's military augmentation, which could disrupt the military balance in East Asia.[54] The United States not only suspended the withdrawal of troops but also reconfirmed its commitment to Korea through the combined military exercises. Furthermore, White House National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski expressed the importance of the security of Korea and Japan and of their stable relations to the United States as well as Asia.[55] Both Japan and the United States showed a firm commitment to Korean security, and they were certainly willing to continue their security cooperation, but probably not to the extent that South Korea wished. Although not every Korean wanted a single form of security cooperation among the three countries, a KCIA report proposed that the Korean government make diplomatic efforts to integrate the US-Japan cooperation regime into a trilateral

[50] US Secretary of State, 'Your meeting with Masayoshi Ohira, prime minister of Japan, May 2, 1978 10 am', Memorandum to the President, Japan and the US, 1977-1992, DNSA, p.6.

[51] JAW-02232, op cit; Deng Xiaoping had said about Vietnam in a similar way a year before too. See, Chūgokuka, 'Fukuda sōri-Tou fukusōri kaidan kiroku (dai ikkai me)', op cit, p.14.

[52] Director of Central Intelligence, 'Soviet military forces in the Far East', op cit.

[53] This is not to say that there was no relations between China and South Korea at all. They did start economic trade from 1979. But their official exchanges were prohibited, and China wanted to hide the fact it had been trading with South Korea, so much so that they need to employ intermediaries for trade. See Jae Ho Chung, *Between Ally and Partner: Korea-China Relations and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p.32.

[54] *Mainichi shinbun*, 6 April 1979, p.2.

[55] *Yomiuri shinbun*, 18 August 1979, evening edition, p.1.

Korea-Japan-US defence system, in which the Korean government sought to increase its diplomatic leverage.[56]

From late 1977, the Korean government began to design a trilateral security organisation among Korea, Japan and the United States. The Korean foreign ministry drafted two reports in November and December regarding the trilateral security cooperation. In response to initiatives of Japan's LDP conservatives, the Korean government attempted to form a non-governmental security consultative group and build a friendly diplomatic environment. What the reports proposed was not a collective military alliance but a loose diplomatic and economic sphere of influence. The long-term policy goal was, as the first report elaborated, to have the trilateral cooperation settled and to expand the diplomatic and economic sphere to Southeast Asia and South America. The report also clarified the limit of cooperation with Japan; that is, bilateral Korea-Japan security cooperation was limited to expanded economic, informational and personnel exchanges. In the end, the Korean government sought to found pro-Korean groups in Japan and the United States and thereby to increase its influence in these countries.[57]

Based on the first report, the second report laid out a detailed plan to constitute a security consultative group. Its aim was first to raise the sense of solidarity among the three countries, second to compose a security consultative group at a new level that reflected Korea's increased national power, and third to contain anti-Korean groups in Japan and the United States and influence public opinion. Again, it is notable that this 'security consultative group' aimed at creating a pro-Korean environment in Korea's international relations, rather than directly at security issues.[58] When a group of LDP dietmen visited to Korea to discuss constituting the consultative group, Minowa Noboru, the leader of the dietmen, said 'deterrence is not only about possessing weapons but also about conferences and joint resolutions in pursuit of peace'.[59] He added that the dietmen were trying to prevent emergencies beforehand because Japan could not support the Korean militarily in case of emergencies due to its constitution. It is doubtful whether a non-governmental

[56] Chŏngil 770-44, 729.14JA, 25816 (13089), DAK.

[57] 'Chae-Il ch'in-Han seryŏk hwakch'ung pangan: Han-Il-Mi samgak hyŏmnyŏk kusang kwa kwallyŏn hayŏ [Plan to increase pro-Korean group in Japan]', 724.53JA/US, 18082 (11651), DAK.

[58] 'Han-Mi-Il anbo hyŏbŭich'e kusang: Han-Mi-Il anbo samgak hyŏmnyŏk ŭl wihayŏ [Korea-US-Japan security consultative group plan]', ibid.

[59] Pugil 700-351, ibid.

organisation could have achieved enough deterrence with only conferences and resolutions. In fact, though the consultative group was inaugurated in February 1979, it was dissolved after three general meetings, leaving no significant legacy behind.[60]

One day in May 1979 Japanese newspapers reproduced an article from a Korean news agency. Quoting an undisclosed Korean high official, the article reported that Korea, Japan and the United States embarked on forming a trilateral security regime. The Japanese foreign ministry immediately denied the report, stressing, '[Japan is] neither examining a plan for combined exercises or co-production of military articles, nor even has any intention to strengthen the security relationship of the three countries'.[61] Even the Koreans could not figure out who the source was; there was a big handwritten question mark next to the text 'Korean high official' in the telegram that the Korean embassy Tokyo wired to Seoul about the report.[62] Nor did any major Korean newspaper feature this news from Seoul that day. The identity and intent of this source remain unknown. The best guess is that somebody possibly in the government might have misrepresented his personal thought or wish.

The US State Department confirmed that there was no such plan. During Japanese Defense Director-General Yamashita's visit to Korea, a State Department official clarified to a Korean diplomat that the United States was not considering a trilateral security regime. According to the American official, some policy planners in the US Department of Defense had examined the trilateral security cooperation from a long-term perspective and only at the theoretical level, but this examination had not considered either historical factors between Korea and Japan like Koreans' antagonism against Japan or the possible Chinese and North Korean reactions to the cooperation. The Department of Defense did not officially notify the State Department of details of the examination either.[63]

Meanwhile a few politicians from Korea, Japan and Taiwan attempted to form yet another security coalition among the three countries. Affected by the Carter plan, Japan's LDP right-wing 'Asian Problems Study Group' advocated this so-called 'Asia

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[60] Yi Kit'ae, 'Tet'angt'ŭ malgi', pp.162-4.

[61] *Mainichi shinbun*, 17 May 1979, evening edition, p.1; *Yomiuri shinbun*, 17 May 1979, evening edition, p.2.

[62] JAW-05415, 729.3JA/US, 3757 (13112), DAK.

[63] USW-07357, ibid.

and Western Pacific Defense Council', and the most conspicuous figure in it was former Japanese JDA Director-General Kanemaru Shin. When the council met in April 1979, the politicians resolved, among other things, to strengthen security cooperation and to do research ways to support each of the three members in case of emergency. They also sent letters to US senators and representatives in the hope that they could discuss the matter with the Americans. The Americans were neither aware of the council nor willing to positively respond to the letter. The Korean government, too, was indifferent to the council and, if possible, hoping to form a council between Korea, Japan and the United States – excluding Taiwan – because a four-way council seemed unfeasible.[64]

The United States wanted an international division of labour. The US government would remain committed to Korean security. At the same time, the US government wanted Japan to economically support Korea and Korea to defend itself. When Secretary of Defense Harold Brown met JDA Director-General Yamashita Ganri in 1979, Brown made this clear while welcoming the recent Korea-Japan cooperation created by Yamashita's visit to Korea. Brown indicated that military capabilities were primarily Korea's responsibility and that Japan could help economically. He even specified, 'Maybe Japan can … consider trade liberalization or the provision of credits', and toward the end of the conversation, Brown told Yamashita straightforwardly, 'Let me be candid. We look for Japan to find more ways to share costs'.[65] His words suggest Korea-Japan cooperation meant to the United States at this time a cost-saving strategy rather than increasing military capabilities of the traditional 'southern triangle'.

To put it simply, during the last few years of détente, no significant development took place in the triangular relationship among Korea, Japan and the United States in terms of security cooperation. There were some changes such as expanded personnel exchanges and forming consultative groups. But it is dubious whether they could have effectively strengthened the triangular relationship. One of the reasons why the triangular relationship failed to develop further was Korea's less significant position in the anti-Soviet coalition. The Japanese government placed

[64] Hanŭiyŏn-69 ho; USW-05364; WUS-05270, ibid. The 'Asian Problems Study Group (*Ajia mondai kenkyūkai*) of the LDP was a pro-Taiwan and pro-Fukuda group. Instead of this group, the Korean government preferred the Federation of National Defence Parliamentarians (*Kokubō giin renmei*) as its partner for security cooperation in the Diet. See Yi Kit'ae, 'Tet'angt'ŭ malgi', p.157.

[65] US Department of Defense, Memorandum of conversation, 'Brown-Yamashita visit', 16 August 1979, Japan and the United States, 1977-1999, DNSA.

priority on Japan-US-China triangular relations and regarded the conservative Korea-Japan security relations as not being helpful to the former.[66] Only a minority of conservative politicians and the JDA enthusiastically pursued cooperation. Another reason might be the strong anti-Japanese sentiment in the Korean public. But the Korean public displayed little antagonism.[67] The United States approached Korea-Japan cooperation from a cost-effective perspective, and Korea regarded it as a chance to increase its diminished international influence. Japan's approach – especially that of the foreign ministry – was half-hearted. Consequently, Korea was not abandoned in the Korea-Japan-US triangular relationship, but it stayed out of the new order for anti-Soviet coalition and thus out of main interests of Japan and the United States.

The End of the *Yusin* Regime

The last days of the Park regime

Korea's economy plummeted in 1979. The recession was partly due to the global oil crisis that the Iranian revolution triggered. But the Korean economy had its own structural problems. In the late 1970s the consumer and land prices began to inflate, and companies went bankrupt. Overlapping investments by the government and conglomerates (*chaebŏl*) into the heavy-chemical industry caused a drop in the operating rate of factories of nearly fifty per cent. Labour costs increased due to a lack of skilled workers who had been sent to construction sites in the Middle East. Korea was also short of foreign currency because the amount of its loan redemption increased from 1978, and rising international interest rates after the second oil crisis only added to this liability. Korea's debt grew to the extent to be comparable to that of Argentina. Throughout the 1970s, income inequality became generally more severe. In a combination of all these factors, 1980 marked a negative growth rate for the first time since 1952.[68]

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[66] Yi Kit'ae, 'Tet'angt'ŭ malgi', p.164.

[67] Even today Korea, Japan and the United States do conduct combined military exercises, and the Korean government still rejects Japan's role on the peninsula. This means not only that public sentiment may matter and hamper the security relationship, but also that the security cooperation is possible regardless of the public sentiment. For the combined exercise, see Smith, *Japan Rearmed*, p.157.

[68] Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), p.378; Sŏ Chungsŏk, 'Pak Chŏnhŭi ch'eje nŭn wae 7-nyŏn mane punggoe toeŏnna? [Why the Park regime collapsed in seven years]', *Naeilŭl yŏnŭn yŏksa* 49, (2012): pp.61-2; Yi Myŏnghwi, '1950-80-nyŏn Han'guk kŭmyung sijang ŭi wigiwa taeŭng [Crises and responses in the Korean financial market, 1950-80], *Sahoe kwahak yŏn'gu nonch'ong* 22 (2009): pp.106-7; Han Hyŏngsŏk,

The slackening economy immediately affected politics. In the December 1978 general election, the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) won more votes than the ruling Democratic Republican Party (DRP) which nonetheless remained in the majority thanks to the medium constituency system. In May 1979 the NDP elected Kim Young Sam (Kim Yŏngsam) as the party president. Kim instantly began to criticise the government and outspokenly demanded the abolition of the *Yusin* constitution.[69] In August, Kim had the workers of the YH Trading Company escape to the NDP headquarters as police evicted them from the factory where they were on a sit-down strike. The strike ended two days later as a thousand police officers stormed the NDP headquarters.[70] In an interview with the *New York Times* in September, Kim contended, 'The time has come for the United States to make a clear choice between the dictatorial regime … and the majority who aspire to democracy'.[71] Kim's chain of actions provoked the government so that the DRP and the government-patronised *Yusinhoe* ousted Kim from the National Assembly on 4 October.

After that, it took less than a month for the Park regime to collapse. All the NDP assembly members resigned, and major protests took place in Busan and Masan, Kim Young Sam's political stronghold as well as export centres. Not only students but dissatisfied middle class members, workers, merchants and lumpenproletariat also joined the protest to make it an uprising. Ten days after the protest, the KCIA director who had advocated liberal response to the protest killed the president and his chief security officer who championed a harsh crackdown. Three days after Park's death, military generals unofficially agreed to abolish the *Yusin* constitution, and on 10 November, the acting president Prime Minister Ch'oe Kyuha announced that the constitution would be revised as soon as possible.[72]

'1970-nyŏndae Han'guk kajŏng ŭi kyŏngje saenghwal [Economic lives of Korean households in the 1970s]', *Yŏksa yŏn'gu* 37 (2019): pp.562-3; Pak T'aegyun, 'Pak Chŏnghŭi-sik kyŏngje sŏngjang ŭi chongchŏm ŭrosŏ kyŏngje anjŏnghwa chonghap sich'aek [The economic stablisation policy in 1979 as an end of Park Chung Hee's economic growth policies]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 128 (2019): p.12.

[69] O Ch'anghŏn, '10.26 sakkŏn ŭi wŏnin punsŏk: Kim Chegyu ŭi haengwi wa tonggi rŭl chungsim ŭro [Analysis on the 10.26 incident]', *Chŏngch'i chŏngbo yŏn'gu* 4, no.1 (2001): p.150.

[70] Cumings, *Korea's Place*, p.378; John Minns, 'The labour movement in South Korea', *Labour History* 81 (2001): p.183; Kim Wŏn, '1979-nyŏn, kŭnyŏtŭl ŭi sŏnt'aek: YH nodong chohap Sinmindangsa nongsŏng [Their choice in 1979: YH labour union occupation of the NDP headquarters]', *Yŏksa pip'yŏng* 128 (2019): 111-144.

[71] 'Foe of Seoul regime asks decision by U.S.', *New York Times*, 16 September 1979, p.17.

[72] Sŏ Chungsŏk, 'Pak Chŏnhŭi ch'eje', p.41, 61; For KCIA Director Kim Chegyu's motives behind the assassination, see O Ch'anghŏn, '10.26'.

Korea-Japan relations in 1979

Although Korea and Japan briefly quarrelled over the US-Korea combined exercises in January, their relations were generally tranquil for the rest of the year. As discussed above, the Ōhira cabinet continued to reaffirm its commitment to Korea. In fact, a vice-foreign minister of Japan said in April that Korea-Japan relations had grown much stronger than before.[73] The Korean government did not try to turn people's attention from aggravating economic and political situation to any issues related to Japan either, as might have been expected. This tranquillity was partly because of the global security situation that made the two more cooperative. But it was also because, at least temporarily, they were practical instead of falling into a vain and unproductive series of quarrels.

The *Tokto/Takeshima* issue was one of such cases. As discussed in the chapter 6, the two governments were cursorily wrapped up the territorial dispute over the islets. The dispute had no practical benefit for either side, and the two governments barely managed to prevent the dispute from developing into further conflict between the two countries. The two governments came to understand that maintaining the status quo was best and dealt with the issue with more flexibility. In March, the Korean foreign ministry recommended to the newly appointed ambassador to Japan that he deal with the *Tokto/Takeshima* issue with prudence because adding to or subtracting from the status quo would lead both sides to trouble.[74] The Japanese also wanted to solve the problem without relating it to a territorial dispute. All that the Japanese wanted seemed to be an assurance that their fishing fleet could operate there for crab and squid in April and May. The Japanese added that Japan would not persist in documentation of the assurance if Korea opposed it. Although the Koreans did not promise anything at this point, both sides agreed to keep this dialogue from the public since otherwise it would become difficult to discuss further.[75]

Whereas the Japanese wanted fishing rights around *Tokto/Takeshima*, the Koreans wanted similar rights around Hokkaido. From late 1975, the Japanese government had complained about large-scale Korean fishing fleets off the southeast

[73] JAW-04134, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[74] WJA-03237, ibid.

[75] JAW-03474; 'Chu-Il Kim Taesa-Sonoda oesang myŏndam naeyong yoyak [Summary of dialogue between Ambassador Kim and Foreign Minister Sonoda]', ibid.

coast of Hokkaido where Soviet fishing fleets often appeared, too. The Japanese government asked the Korean government to keep its fleets at least twelve miles from the coast so as not to irritate local Japanese fishers.[76] The Korean government tried to compensate the local fishermen there on the one hand and to self-regulate catch on the other. But Korean fishermen continued to operate within twelve miles from the coast, and the Japanese government annually asked the Koreans to move out to international waters. In February 1979, Japanese Foreign Minister Sonoda expressed his intent to regulate the Korean fishers, saying that he could consider proclaiming the two-hundred-miles of exclusive economic zone.[77] In response, the Korean government attempted to persuade the Japanese that unilateral measures would not solve the problem but only aggravate it.[78] When the Korean ambassador to Japan met the Japanese ambassador to Korea in April, the Korean ambassador told the Japanese that if the Japanese government took unilateral measures, the Korean government would confront them and that Japan's 'all-or-nothing attitude' was not appropriate to solve the problem.[79]

Just as the Japanese focused on fishing rights around *Tokto/Takeshima*, the Koreans aimed at permanent use of the Hokkaido fishery. Japan had made a law in 1977 that prohibited foreign fishing activities in waters designated by the agriculture minister to protect maritime resources.[80] The Korean foreign ministry was worried that the Japanese government would exercise this law in Hokkaido. If so, Korea could claim two-hundred-mile exclusive economic zones as a countermeasure. But that would cause other problems in *Tokto/Takeshima* and on the continental shelf that Korea and Japan agreed to develop together. Thus, the Koreans presumed that the Japanese knew that Korea would not claim the economic zone. Korea also could have combined the Hokkaido issue with the *Tokto/Takeshima* one. The Korean foreign ministry viewed that as unfeasible, since this approach was beneficial only to Japan. Under these conditions, the Koreans did not have many other options. The Korean

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[76] *Tonga ilbo*, 2 February 1976, p.1. As discussed in chapter 6, Japan's territorial sea was three miles from the coast at the time. The Japanese government proclaimed the twelve-mile territorial sea in July 1977. Also Japan did not established the exclusive fishing zone on the east of Hokkaido.

[77] *Asahi shinbun*, 27 February 1979, p.2.

[78] WJA-03237, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[79] JAW-04566, ibid.

[80] Act on provisional measures related to fishing waters (*Gyogyō suiiki ni kansuru zantei sochihō*), Act No. 31 of 1977, 2 May 1977, Article 5, Clause 2.

government concluded that Korea should regulate catch to a certain extent and show the Japanese they were making a good faith effort to protect the fish stock.[81] Consequently, in October 1980, Korea agreed with Japan to self-regulate its fleet and fish around Hokkaido for the next three years although, by doing so, its catch of pollack would be halved.[82]

Trade imbalance was another standing problem. Korea's trade balance with Japan plunged from -1.7 billion US dollars in 1977 to -3.3 billion in 1978, and Korea's total trade balance also dropped from -2.2 billion dollars in 1978 to -5.2 billion in 1979.[83] Japan's total trade balances were also recording negative figures during the global recession. But Japan's economy was one of the best at the time in terms of unemployment rate, economic growth, inflation and the like.[84] In this situation, Korea needed Japan's goodwill. In particular the Korean government wanted Japan to lift official and unofficial regulations on imports. Not only did the Japanese government implement regulations on diverse items through administrative guidance, but Japanese firms also formed cartels to control imports by themselves. Despite its dissatisfaction with Japan, the Korean government did not demand immediate change in Japanese trade policies. According to the Korean ambassador to Japan, the Koreans were deferring bringing up the subject in consideration that Japan was now dealing with economic troubles with the European Commission as well as the United States. The Korean ambassador told the Japanese ambassador to Korea that once the G7 summit in Tokyo and US-Japan summit were over, the Korean government would start discussing the trade problem with Japan.[85] But they did not have a chance to discuss the problem in detail. The Ōhira cabinet decided to hold an early general election, so the Korean foreign ministry expected that the ministerial meeting could be held at least in late November.[86] Unfortunately the meeting had to wait until 1981 due to the sudden deaths of Park Chung Hee on 26 October and of Ōhira Masayoshi on 12 June 1980.

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[81] Ail 700-117, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[82] *Tonga ilbo*, 20 October 1980, p.1.

[83] The Korean International Trade Association, <http://stat.kita.net/>.

[84] Donald W. Klein, 'Japan 1979: The second oil crisis', *Asian Survey* 20, no.1 (1980): p.42.

[85] JAW-04566, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[86] JAW-10022; JAW-09098; Ail 700-117, ibid.

Korea-Japan relations in the power vacuum

Although the *Yusin* regime came to a sudden end with the death of Park Chung Hee, there was no immediate chaos. The Korean government declared nation-wide martial law, started a curfew, closed universities and prohibited assembly. The interim government controlled the emergency in such an orderly manner that the US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance expressed how impressed he was by the continuity of civil control.[87] On 5 December, Prime Minister Ch'oe Kyuha became the president under the *Yusin* constitution but with a promise to step down once the new constitution was ready. Nevertheless Ch'oe was a mere caretaker; with a diplomat's background, he was a follower rather than leader. The Korean foreign minister described him as inactive and not aggressive, albeit honest, sincere and hardworking.[88] His personality may explain why he could not stop the military from rising to power. On 12 December, Army Major General Chun Doo Hwan, then commander of the Army Intelligence Command who directed the investigation on the assassination of Park Chung Hee, arrested the four-star martial law commander on the suspicion of conspiring the assassination. By this mutiny Chun gained control of the military, and it became obvious he would seize political power soon too.[89]

Everyone wanted stability in Korea. After the December mutiny, US Ambassador to Korea Gleysteen wrote Secretary of State Vance , 'the odds are that we will be disappointed'.[90] The Americans attempted to frustrate the military by requesting the Korean government's assurances regarding its future intentions and by considering economic sanctions and postponing the annual security meeting.[91] The Korean ambassador to the United States made efforts to exert influence on the inactive president, urging him to be more forceful toward the military. The ambassador also depended on the defence attaché in the embassy who happened to be Chun's academy classmate.[92] In spite of all these efforts, the United States decided

[87] Seoul 17017, 'Korea Focus--Secretary's Discussion with Foreign Minister Park Tong-jin November 3', Korea, 1969-2000, DNSA.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), p.233.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid; State 326393, 'Korea Focus--Amb. Kim Conveys ROKG Assurances on Political Development', Korea, 1969-2000, DNSA.

[92] State 322555, 'Korea Focus: ROK Ambassador Kim Trys [sic] to Exert Influence', Korea, 1969-2000, DNSA.

not to do anything to rein in Chun's ambitions.[93] The Pentagon, in the meantime, even thought that the military was the most effective group to control the country.[94] For the Japanese too, the recent developments in Korea were worrisome, although the Japanese government might have had less interest in Korea's democratisation. Not only was Korea important to Japan's security, but it was now one of its key investment destinations and trade partners.[95] Therefore, when the Japanese ambassador to Korea met the Korean prime minister, the mutiny incident was one of the main talking points. But the ambassador's interest was limited to the prospect of change in Korean politics, and thus he received only the official answer that the military would not intervene in politics.[96]

What concerned the Japanese more was the collusion (*yuchaku*) issue between political and economic circles of the two countries. That is, a new regime after Park Chung Hee could reveal secrets between the two groups of ruling elites. As discussed in chapter 6 briefly, the opposition parties in Japan had criticised the LDP government for possible illicit ties with Korean businesses and government.[97] Those accused had thus far denied the allegations, and so had the Park regime. Now a new Korean government, whether democratic or military, could tell a different version of the story, which would obviously create a stir in the Japanese political circle. Therefore, the Japanese foreign minister called ministry officials' attention to a change of the ministry's attitude from denial-only to a more flexible one with regard to Korea-related matters.[98]

The Japanese concern was not groundless. Koreans were trying to erase the ubiquitous residue of the *Yusin*. Foreign Minister Pak Tongjin explained to Secretary of State Vance, 'The people got tired of the long reign of President Park, despite his contributions to the economy. They feel that the *Yushin* constitution is the wrong kind of constitution. So, along with the disappearance of President Park, people expect important reforms'.[99] In December, the Ministry of Education decided to remove

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[93] Brazinsky, *Nation Building*, p.233.

[94] Cumings, *Korea's Place*, p.380.

[95] Klein, 'Japan 1979', p.42.

[96] 'Myŏndam yoji [Dialogue briefing]', 22 December 1979, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[97] See, Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, pp.164-5.

[98] *Asahi shinbun*, 8 November 1979, p.2.

[99] Seoul 17017, op cit.

Yusin-related contents from primary and secondary textbooks. The president lifted the Presidential Emergency Measure No.9 that prohibited slander of the constitution and pardoned some convicts charged with violating the emergency measure.[100]

Among those freed was Kim Dae Jung. No sooner did he gain freedom than he became the centre of concern. Although Korean media did not feature most of his utterances and activities, he raised his voice, and the Japanese media paid special attention to him and his abduction in 1973. Especially, in an interview he had with *Asahi shinbun* the day after he was released from house arrest, Kim insisted that the true story of the abduction should be thoroughly investigated, although the ultimate culprit was Park Chung Hee and Kim did not wish anybody else involved in the abduction to be punished.[101] Considering how much trouble the Korean and Japanese governments had gone through over the abduction issue in the previous years, Kim's interview was enough to alarm diplomatic lines on both sides. Japanese intellectuals demanded that both governments reveal the truth of the abduction and restore all of Kim's civil rights – such as the right to hold public office and to visit foreign countries freely.[102] Kim himself met with the American and Japanese ambassadors and wrote to the Japanese prime minister to same effect that the Japanese government should reveal the truth of the abduction.[103]

Both the Korean and Japanese governments wanted the details of the abduction to remain untouched. In his reply to Kim, the Japanese prime minister reiterated the official stance of the government that the abduction case was politically closed and that the Japanese government would not ask the Korean government to restore Kim's rights unless new evidence indicative of the involvement of the Korean government power in the abduction appeared. The Japanese foreign minister enunciated that, if Kim wanted to visit Japan, he would issue him a visa and meet him in the capacity of foreign minister. Yet a top-ranking official of the ministry commented that Kim did not have to come to Japan in order to restore his rights.[104]

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[100] *Tonga ilbo*, 12 December 1979, p.1; 7 December 1979, p.1; 20 December 1979, p.1.

[101] *Asahi shinbun*, 8 December 1979, p.1.

[102] *Asahi shinbun*, 8 December 1979, evening edition, p.15.

[103] *Asahi shinbun*, 21 December 1979, p.2. Details of Kim's meeting with the American ambassador are not disclosed yet (as of 2014). It can be surmised that he advocated to the ambassador forming an advisory council for President Ch'oe. See, Seoul 19118 'Kim Tae-Chung sees the December 12 incident as working on his favor', Public Library of US Diplomacy, Wikileaks.

[104] *Asahi shinbun*, 21 December 1979, p.2; evening edition, p.2.

The Korean prime minister told the Japanese Ambassador to Korea Sunobe that he appreciated Japan's straightforward attitude towards the abduction that it was politically concluded.[105] The Korean foreign minister also said to Sunobe that Kim's problem was basically a domestic issue and thus it looked inappropriate for the Japanese to give an impression of interfering in domestic affairs. The Japanese ambassador defended himself against the reproach by saying that he simply met Kim since, if he had not, the media would have made things worse, and he found nothing interesting in the conversation with Kim.[106]

After these meetings, Ambassador Sunobe temporarily returned to Tokyo for four days, during which it seems he particularly discussed the Kim Dae Jung matter among other things. As soon as he came back to Seoul, he delivered Prime Minister Ōhira's above-mentioned reply to Kim on one hand, and on the other he precipitously requested meetings with the president, prime minister and foreign minister. Toward the end of the meeting with the foreign minister, Sunobe cautiously asked the minister if the Korean government intended to re-examine the abduction incident. The ambassador also conveyed the Japanese foreign ministry's concern regarding a diplomat in the Korean embassy Tokyo who was thought to have been involved in the abduction. The Japanese police was trying to investigate him as a witness, Sunobe added, and if the Diet raised this issue, it would become serious. The foreign minister played innocent, demanding concrete evidence. Then Sunobe hurriedly concluded the topic, saying 'Anyway, it is best not to bring this issue to the surface'.[107]

Kim Dae Jung restored his civil rights on 29 February 1980. It looked as if spring was coming to Seoul. However Chun Doo Hwan's military must have thought otherwise. It is ironic that Kim had once been optimistic about Chun; after the December mutiny, Kim told US embassy officials, 'The younger generals are more democratic than the old ones. I'm not pessimistic'.[108] On 17 May, the 'younger generals' staged a coup and proclaimed nation-wide martial law once again. Next day, the military arrested prominent politicians including Kim Dae Jung while quelling the student demonstration in the southwestern city of Gwangju. Later the junta court-

[105] 'Myŏndam yoji', op cit.

[106] WJA-12221, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), DAK.

[107] 'Myŏndam yorok [memorandum of dialogue]', 28 December 1979, ibid.

[108] Seoul 19118, op cit.

martialled Kim on the charge of conspiring to start a rebellion. Kim was silenced and thus made no more trouble for Korea-Japan relations either.

*　　*　　*

1979 marked the end of an era in several ways. Globally, détente faded away, while a new cold war was replacing it. In Korea, the economy plummeted, and poor management of the economy and the dissatisfied public led to Park Chung Hee's death. Park's death abruptly ended the *Yusin* system, which was not merely a name for the constitution, but a symbol of Park's reign in the 1970s that placed extraordinary emphasis on Park's unsurpassed power and the value of self-reliance. In Japan, the unrivalled LDP started losing power on the one hand, and on the other the public grew more approving of its military in light of the increasing Soviet threat. A new era was about to start with a new decade.

As discussed in chapters 5 and 6, Korea and Japan had gradually advanced their security cooperation for the last few years. With the obvious Soviet expansion, the level of cooperation also rose to the extent that high-ranking military officers visited each other's country. However this cooperation was not exactly what the Korean government had longed for, the revival of the southern triangle. In spite of Korean government's effort to form again an alignment with Japan and the United States, the other two countries chose China. Because of North Korea, South Korea's strategy was limited to the Korean peninsula, the Soviet Union being not its primary concern. Also, due to North Korea's intra-communist political position, China was reluctant to establish relations with South Korea. Consequently Korea could not have a chance to take a seat in the anti-Soviet coalition and to show the world its increased national power as it had wished.

Meanwhile, having experienced the silk and territorial disputes as discussed in chapter 6, Korea and Japan began to pursue practicality in lieu of exhausting conflict. The Koreans gained access to the Hokkaido fishery while the Japanese were allowed in the waters around *Tokto/Takeshima*. The Koreans still wanted the Japanese to lift import regulations but also understood Japan's own economic troubles with Europe and the United States. As Korea and Japan had sought reconciliation after the first oil crisis as discussed in chapter 5, the economic hardship that the second oil crisis caused brought the two closer once again. Above all, the two countries were economic symbionts and, to cope with the economic hardship, cooperation was their natural choice.

At the end of the 1970s, détente disappeared and so did Korea's infamous *Yusin* regime. The Korea-Japan conflict in the earlier half of the 1970s started with the Kim Dae Jung abduction, which was a product of the abnormal *Yusin* system. The *Yusin* system was again an unexpected outcome of détente. Now that both détente and *Yusin* regime disappeared, the 1980s could have hoped for a new, cordial relationship between Korea and Japan. But the world was changing once again. The United States could not afford 'another Iran' in Korea and condoned the new junta in order to maintain a pro-US regime, no matter how undemocratic it was.[109] Kim Dae Jung was imprisoned one more time, and another dictatorship emerged in Korea. Japan grew conservative enough to begin beautifying its imperialist history in textbooks after a few years. These developments would eventually become the basis of a whole new chapter of Korea-Japan conflict in years to come.

[109] Brazinski, *Nation Building*, p.237.

CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSION

> In terms of practicality the dominant exact what they can and the weak concede what they must.[1]
>
> *The Peloponnesian War*

> *Yusin* is to establish and practice the great Korean thought and philosophy that we try to pioneer our own destiny with our own strength.[2]
>
> Park Chung Hee, 1972

Over the course of the 1970s, Korea and Japan went through a severe conflict and then a gradual reconciliation with each other. The vicissitudes of Korea-Japan relations resulted ultimately from the demise of the Cold War and the advent of détente. They were a process in which the two countries were adapting themselves to this new order of the world where the previous bipolar tension of the Cold War had retreated. The post-war relationship between Korea and Japan was a Cold-War alignment in essence. When this alignment began to dissolve with détente, the two countries started to seek independent ways to navigate their difficulties. Their different directions fundamentally caused the diplomatic conflict in the first half of the 1970s. When they found common interests in politics, economy and security in the second half of the decade, they stopped the conflict, although the lack of conflict did not mean the recovery of their former Cold-War alignment.

What mattered most in this process was the political choices that the ruling elites of the two countries made. When their choices were accordant with each other, Korea and Japan had cooperative relations or at least lacked conflict; when discordant, conflict appeared. The ruling elites made these choices for the sake of their own political interests that sometimes might correspond with interests of their countries or peoples but not always necessarily so. They were looking after their best political interests.

Of course there were elements that conditioned and limited these choices. These elements were potential causes of conflict or cooperation, ranging from

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[1] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 5:89, trans. Martin Hammond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.302.

[2] Park Chung Hee, *Charip e ŭi ŭiji: Pak Chŏnghŭi taet'ongnyŏng ŏrok* [The determination at self-reliance: President Park Chung Hee quotations], ed. Sim Yungt'aek (Sŏul: Hallim Ch'ulp'ansa, 1977), p.35.

domestic to regional and global ones. They included public antagonism against each other's country, structural trade imbalance, North Korea, the oil crises, the international maritime regime and the like, not to mention superpower confrontation. Each or combinations of these elements created specific circumstances which obliged Korea and Japan to behave in certain ways. However, the circumstances alone did not precipitate Korea-Japan relations into either conflict or cooperation. Rather, the choices of the ruling elites in the given circumstances finally determined the directions of their diplomacy.

The Vicissitudes of Korea-Japan Relations in the 1970s

The prelude of conflict between Korea and Japan began in the late 1960s. The Korean trade deficit with Japan was rapidly increasing. The Chinese pressure on Japanese private companies to break off their business connections with Korean companies only dissatisfied the Koreans more. When the United States implemented the bilateral quota system for textile imports, Korea and Japan could have formed a united front against the American pressure. But they eventually failed to do so owing to the persistent insistence on bilateral agreement by the United States and the disparity of negotiation power between Korea and Japan. Omens of the conflict also appeared in security matters from the Korean perspective. That is, Japan's exchanges with North Korea were growing markedly. For the Japanese, expanding exchanges with North Korea was a part of their effort to expand Japanese business to those countries that had been previously less accessible like China. For the South Koreans, however, Japan's conciliatory approach to North Korea was a matter of security. Japan-North Korean relations had been of particular interest to South Korea until the latter half of the 1970s when Japan certainly distanced itself from North Korea.

It is noteworthy that both Korea and Japan went through regime changes in 1972, a year before they entered into the conflict. Détente undermined the ideological base of the Park Chung Hee regime. In order to extend its political life, the Park regime fortified his dictatorship by introducing the *Yusin* constitution. Park's pursuit of uncontested power would lead to the abduction of Kim Dae Jung a year later. In Japan, Satō Eisaku's long tenure as prime minister ended. His replacement, Tanaka Kakuei, took over Satō's late China policy and successfully established Japan's relations with China. Moreover Tanaka paid relatively little attention to South Korea and extended Japan's exchanges with North Korea. In a similar fashion, the Japanese government no longer remained blindly supportive of the Park regime of Korea. Due

to such a neglectful attitude of Tanaka towards South Korea, Japan was not able to cope with the diplomatic conflict with Korea with resilience after the abduction of Kim Dae Jung.

The abduction of Kim Dae Jung was entirely Korea's domestic problem, except that it took place in Japan. Kim Dae Jung was not only Park Chung Hee's long-standing political enemy, but Kim was also sabotaging Park's effort at selling his new ruling system, *Yusin*, to the United States and to the world. Park needed Kim under the control and thus had to bring him back to Korea. However, the poor execution of the abduction by the Korean intelligence agents left leads that corroborated the Korean government's involvement in the abduction. The simple criminal case now developed into a problem of sovereignty infringement. The Tanaka cabinet was more or less indifferent to Korean domestic affairs and so to the abduction. Yet, pushed by the public, media and opposition demand to reveal the truth that the Korean government was responsible for the abduction, the Tanaka cabinet reluctantly tried to summon Kim Tongun, whose fingerprint was found at the crime scene. The Korean government began a counterattack against the Japanese government for summoning Kim Tongun who as a diplomat had immunity from criminal jurisdiction. The Korean government also denounced Japan's failure to protect Kim Dae Jung from the abduction – this was possible because the Korean government denied its involvement in the abduction. In the end the Tanaka cabinet agreed with the Koreans on not bringing up the abduction problem. This was a diplomatic victory for the Park Chung Hee regime.

Though the Park regime succeeded in bringing Kim Dae Jung under its control, the harshness it showed in the abduction intensified the domestic democratisation movement all the more. In the process of crackdown on the democratisation movement, the regime apprehended two Japanese nationals. The regime bargained with the Japanese government for silence on Japan's continuous interest in Kim Dae Jung's status in Korea in exchange for clemency to the arrested Japanese. Moreover the regime began to demand that the Japanese government repress *Sōren*, the pro-North Korean residents' community in Japan, for the reason that North Korea intervened in the democratisation movement through *Sōren* and the two arrested Japanese nationals. This demand only became more severe after Mun Segwang's attempted assassination of Park Chung Hee in 1974.

The attempted assassination benefited the Park regime in two ways. On the one hand the death of the first lady quietened the growing democratisation movement

in the country. Not only did it look inappropriate to make political demands at the time of national mourning, but also people's attention moved onto Japan's responsibility for her death. This might be an unintended outcome of the assassination attempt. On the other hand, with a firm intention, the Korean government once again demanded a crackdown on *Sōren*, with the logic that if the Japanese government had cracked down on *Sōren* as requested a few months before, the attempted assassination would not have taken place. Eventually the Korean government exacted a promise from the Japanese government to comply with the Korean demand through Shiina Etsusaburō. Once again, the Korean government gained all that it wanted while the Japanese government remained only reactive to the Korean demand, despite the fact that the Japanese government was not involved in the attempt.

Korea-Japan relations conspicuously improved from 1975. At the core of the improvement was Tanaka's resignation. The succeeding Miki cabinet was a loose confederation of diverse factions of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, and thus Shiina Etsusaburō and other conservatives had room for turning Japan's foreign policy back to a pro-Korean one. What moved the Korean side towards reconciliation with Japan was economic necessity. The economic hardship that the first oil crisis caused was not merely an economic problem but also a political one to the Park regime. The economic dissatisfaction of the Korean public led to dissatisfaction with the regime in general and further with lack of democracy. For this reason, the Park regime swiftly changed its attitude towards Japan and desired resumption of the ministerial conference with Japan that had been suspended by the diplomatic conflict. Meanwhile the security concerns that stemmed from the communist victory in Indochina had only marginal effect on the reconciliation itself between Korea and Japan in 1975.

After the reconciliation, Japan clearly distanced itself from North Korea. When the North Korean navy captured a Japanese fishing boat, *Shōseimaru*, the Japanese government enunciated its intent not to directly contact the North Koreans in negotiations to have the captured crew and boat repatriated. The Japanese government also made it clear to the South Korean government that it would consult with South Korea before contacting the North. This attitude of Japan was exactly what the South Koreans had wanted. South Korea had feared being excluded from peninsular matters and other countries' recognition of the North Korean regime, even in the most implicit way such as directly talking to North Koreans. In the *Shōseimaru* incident, Japan dispelled such South Korean fears.

Despite Japan's cooperative attitude regarding North Korean matters, South Korea and Japan still disputed over other issues such as silk trade and *Tokto/Takeshima*. These disputes differed from the diplomatic conflict between the two countries in the first half of the 1970s in the sense that the silk and territorial disputes were global in nature. Economic protectionism and seaward expansionism were global phenomena at the time, causing conflicts among relevant countries. This characteristic led the ruling elites of Korea and Japan to settle the disputes relatively quickly and to settle them in ad hoc ways. This was because they understood no bilateral settlement could completely solve the problems, which led to compromises. Also the fact that the two countries recently experienced the severe conflicts catalysed the speedy settlement of these new disputes. Yet, above all, the most decisive factor that stopped these disputes from developing into further conflicts was mutual understanding between politicians. Korean politicians sympathised with their Japanese counterparts who needed agricultural votes for their election while Japanese politicians recognised Korea's practical dominium of *Tokto/Takeshima* and never wholeheartedly pursued the sovereignty over the islets.

However the improvement of Korea-Japan relations did not mean they returned to their previous Cold-War relationship even after omens of a new Cold War began appearing. Despite increasing security cooperation between Korea and Japan, Japan and the United States formed a new triangular relations with China in response to augmenting Soviet military presence in East Asia. Without North Korea, South Korea might have been able to join this new alignment. But North Korea's position between China and the Soviet Union attracted China more to the North Korean side than to the South. Consequently South Korea's diplomatic position among Japan, China and the United State became ambiguous; it was neither in the new triangular alignment nor totally outside of the pro-US camp in the neo-Cold War.

The sudden death of Park Chung Hee and ensuing end of his *Yusin* regime would also terminate the confrontational manner of Korean diplomacy. The end of Park Chung Hee's era had notably little impact on Korea's relations with Japan. This was not so much because of a regime change in Korea as because of the cooperative attitude of Japan. Although a part of the Japanese ruling elite had continuously questioned the legal and political status of Park's rival, Kim Dae Jung, in Korea, most of the ruling elites were anxious about release of any evidence of their collusion with Koreans during Park's tenure by a new democratic Korean government. Just as the Korean side had insisted that problems regarding the abduction of Kim Dae Jung had

been concluded, now the Japanese side took the lead to reconfirm this conclusion. Thus a new military dictatorship could settle down without opposition from Japan and form a friendly relationship with Japan at least for the next couple of years.

Audacity, Inconsistency and Illegitimate Diplomacy

Both Korea and Japan were creations of the Cold War, and so were their initial relations. When the Cold War seemed to end in the late 1960s, therefore, the two countries fell into confusion. At first, South Korea sought talks with North Korea while Japan approached China. But the inter-Korean dialogue discontinued soon. And, although Japan's China policy continued, the Tanaka cabinet that had enthusiastically established China-Japan relations also collapsed quickly, and the new Miki cabinet began to pay attention to Korea again to some extent. Neither country could not determine firm diplomatic lines in the face of changing international circumstances. In the confusion that détente brought about, one of the most conspicuous differences between the two countries was regime change. Korea experienced too few regime changes whereas Japan went through too many during the same period. This difference resulted in the audacious manner of Korean diplomatic policy, especially towards Japan, and in Japan's inconsistent and thus incompetent policy towards Korea, which characterised Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s.

Regime changes and their diplomatic effects

The *Yusin* regime of Korea marked one of the most distinct changes in the 1970s. The demise of Cold-War tension from the late 1960s to the early 1970s had undermined Park Chung Hee's legitimacy. Coupled with his own political ambition, this situation gave birth to a new political system which would not allow anyone other than Park to be in power. Park Chung Hee's second coup did not just bring about a new constitution and a de facto dictatorship. It came with overall political, social and cultural transformations. The creed behind these changes was a sort of ultra-nationalism, and an unprecedented emphasis on the virtue of self-reliance. In Korea's foreign policy, the emphasis on self-reliance materialised in the form of import-substitution industrialisation, self-defence and autonomous diplomacy. In part Korea had to become more self-reliant in defence as the United States was decreasing its security commitment in East Asia following the Nixon doctrine. In part Park Chung Hee turned this situation into his own initiative and basis for the new regime.

Park Chung Hee's dictatorship and the new creed of self-reliance resulted in the audacious character of Korean diplomacy. Although the diplomacy of the Park government prior to the *Yusin* era had often displayed unsophisticated manners, the Korean attitude towards Japan in the 1970s was obstinate, unilateral and illogical. The Korean government stubbornly denied anything disadvantageous to the regime while denouncing and threatening the Japanese government in order to achieve what it aimed for. This audacious manner mostly succeeded in gaining what the Koreans desired, which might be a reason why the Korean government continued to do so.

During the same time, Japan's diplomacy with Korea was not competent enough to counter Korea's audacious diplomatic manner. This incompetence resulted from frequent changes in leadership and resulted in a reactive attitude to Korea. Three months before Park staged the *Yusin* coup d'état, relatively Korea-friendly and Cold-War minded Satō Eisaku finished his eight-year long premiership. After that, the following prime ministers served for approximately two years in office. Not only did prime ministers change frequently, but, more importantly, the dominating political factions also alternated. For instance, while Satō was the last prime minister to visit Taiwan during his term of office, his successor Tanaka Kakuei marked his achievement by normalising relations with the People's Republic of China. Of course, Japan had been changing its direction between the two Chinas since the latter part of Satō's term, and the change of dominant faction was more a result rather than the cause of the Japan's diplomacy. But the Tanaka cabinet's relative negligence in Korea made Korea-Japan relations only worse.

Tanaka's resignation approximately coincided with the start of the improvement of Korea-Japan relations. The change in Japan's Korea policy stemmed from the relatively weak leadership of the new prime minister, Miki Takeo, and increased influence of conservatives like Shiina Etsusaburō behind the curtain. Due to this dual power system, however, Japan still looked indecisive. The Japanese government never completely dispelled the Korean fear of resuming controversy over the Kim Dae Jung issue. But, pushed by economic necessity, the Korean government had to compromise with the Japanese on admitting Korea's responsibility in the abduction to the extent that a Korean official might have been involved in the abduction.

It was during Fukuda Takeo's term, beginning in December 1976, that Korea and Japan fully recovered from the conflict. As the conflict was a gradual process, so was improvement of the relationship, and this transition did not exactly coincide with

the regime change. Neither was it free from disputes between Korea and Japan during Fukuda's term. Nonetheless the two governments resolved the disputes relatively quickly in this period. The demise of détente in the late 1970s further consolidated their security relationship too, if not to the level of the late 1960s. So much so that when Ōhira Masayoshi succeeded Fukuda in December 1978, Japan's basic attitude toward Korea did not change, even though the Ōhira faction's approach to international politics differed from that of the Fukuda faction. Korea was concerned about the factional transition, but Ōhira retained Fukuda's foreign minister, Sonoda Sunao, for about a year and continuously reconfirmed the basically friendly approach to Korea.

During the 1970s, overall, Japan neither totally abandoned its relations with Korea nor supported and cooperated with Korea to the extent it had done in the 1960s. Although Japan expanded its exchanges with China and North Korea, and although it left South Korea somewhat unattended, it never intended to break up the relations with South Korea. So Japan managed to keep the conflicts with Korea from developing to a destructive level on the one hand, but it also meant that Japan tended to accept the unreasonable demands of Korea on the other hand. Consequently the equivocal attitude of Japan dissatisfied Korea while simultaneously restricting Japan's bargaining power in negotiations with Korea.

Illegitimate diplomacy

Another characteristic of Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s was that a few key politicians exerted predominant influence on their policies for each other. In December 1976 the Korean government announced that it would enhance 'legitimate diplomacy (*chŏngt'ong oegyo*)'. Although it was unclear what the government meant by legitimate diplomacy in detail, the government proclaimed that it would reject behind-the-curtain type of diplomacy and instead focus on the roles of the foreign ministry and diplomatic offices abroad.[3] About a week after the proclamation, the Korean newspaper *Tonga ilbo* suggested in an editorial that the government refrain from squarely denouncing irritating foreign public opinion and discontinue parliamentarian diplomacy since parliamentarians tended to attach importance more to their domestic reputation than to diplomacy.[4] The government proclamation and

[3] *Tonga ilbo*, 30 December 1976, p.1.

[4] *Tonga ilbo*, 7 January 1977, p.2.

the editorial exhibited that Korea's diplomacy thus far had been illegitimate – in its own definition – and the Koreans had realised it. By 1979 the Japanese government also changed its attitude to Korea. The Korean ambassador to Japan reported that the Japanese foreign ministry began to consider approaching Korean matters with 'reason and theory' and therefore that Korea's request for solicitude based on their 'special relationship' would no longer work.[5]

During the 1970s the Koreans continuously emphasised this 'solicitude' in relations with Japan. They reminded the Japanese of their special relationship to fix the chronic trade deficit or to deter Japan from pursuing exchanges with North Korea. No one had explained clearly what made their relationship so special. Presumably the special relationship simply indicated their close – perhaps friendly – political and economic relationship based on either their colonial history or Cold-War partnership, just as the Koreans considered US-Korea relations special, characterising it as an alliance bonded by blood. The Koreans seem to have naturally expected special treatment from Japan. This way of thinking led the Koreans to make a series of seemingly unreasonable and audacious demands on Japan. The problem was that Japan found its relations with Korea not as much special. Not only did Japan lack any sense of indebtedness to Korea in economy and security, but, even if it did, Japan had already been conferring a benefit on Korea in terms of loans and technology transfers. Moreover Japan had more interest in China and Southeast Asia than in the Korean peninsula. Such a difference of viewpoint on the special nature of Korea-Japan relations constituted one of the reasons for dissatisfaction between the two countries.

Meanwhile the Shiina memo might be one of the most representative examples of the illegitimate diplomacy between Korea and Japan. Shiina Etsusaburō promised Park Chung Hee that Japan would suppress *Sōren* as Korea had requested when he came to Korea in the capacity of prime minister's special envoy after the assassination attempt. Not only did the memo itself remain undisclosed, but it was not even an official statement of the Japanese government. However, this promise was crucial to end a series of diplomatic conflicts in the 1973-74 period. Also, the memo seems to have remained effective in 1977 too when the *Sōren*-related Sawanobori case took place. A personal promise of a senior politician without binding force had in fact enormous influence on Korea-Japan relations.

[5] 'Kim Chŏngnyŏm chu-Il taesa ilsi kwiguksi chŏngmu pogo [Political affairs report of Ambassador to Japan upon his temporary return to Korea]', 7 November 1979, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), Diplomatic Archives of Korea.

Therefore, should they choose to solve their problems and alleviate the level of conflicts, Koreans and Japanese needed to deepen their 'understanding' of mutual positions, in which process politicians played central role. In contrast, bureaucrats of both foreign ministries below ministerial level played not so much leading roles in bilateral relations as functional roles. In the end, it was the politicians that resolved major conflicting issues between the two. This 'illegitimate' diplomacy in Korea-Japan relations on one hand contributed to limiting conflicts to a manageable level.[6] However, on the other, the very same fact could become a source of conflict too because state-level relations based on personal relations were relatively vulnerable to external influence. Fukuda Takeo, for instance, could not outspokenly exhibit his allegiance to Korea to avoid accusations of having improper ties with Koreans.[7] No matter how cordial relations were between politicians of the two countries, this limit left Korea-Japan relations precarious even when the relations looked free from conflict.

Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s were characterised by Korean audacity and Japanese inconsistency. The Korean side continuously made excessive demands while the Japanese side mostly yielded to the Koreans, not so willingly. This feature precipitated their diplomatic relations into the status of conflict in the first half of the decade. In the process of the conflict and its settlement later, the foreign ministries of Korea and Japan did not play leading roles. Instead political decisions determined the status of the relations. Although this did help prevent the conflict from developing into a destructive level, the same factor also made the relations unstable to a certain extent. While the former characteristics were an outcome of détente, the latter practice of diplomacy was something that had been continued since even before the normalisation. These two features combined created the peculiar conflict and settlement between Korea and Japan in the 1970s.

Popular Agency in Diplomacy

As much as Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s were ruled by structural changes like détente and the political choices of politicians in response to those structural changes, the public opinion had limited influence on the relations. This is not to say that the

[6] Ch'oe Hŭisik, *Chŏnhu Han-Il kwan'gye 70-nyŏn: Uri nŭn ŏttŏke kaltŭng ŭl kŭkpok haewanna* [70 Years of Post-War Korean-Japanese Relations] (Sŏul: Sŏnin, 2016), p.22.

[7] Victor Cha, *Alignment despite Antagonism: The US-Korea-Japan Security Triangle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p.165.

public had no role at all or was completely excluded from decision-making process in the foreign relations. Japanese media, intellectuals and others had continuously had their own interest in the Korean situation while Koreans had often displayed their resentment towards the Japanese. The question is to what extent these public actions and reactions impacted on actual diplomacy between the two governments and to what extent the public was able to lead the diplomacy in the direction it desired. Certainly, the attitude of the Japanese government to the Korean government initially reflected Japanese public opinion in such matters as the Kim Dae Jung abduction, silk-product import regulations and sovereignty over *Tokto/Takeshima*. But the Japanese government eventually made decisions that did not necessarily accord with public opinion. Meanwhile the Korean public seemed either to generally agree with the government on its Japan policy or to have little influence on its government's decisions. Though the public voiced opinions on Korea-Japan relations, these opinions hardly determined the ultimate path of their relations.

Role and limit of the public sphere

Japanese media and intellectuals had a decisive effect on heightening the tension between Korea and Japan in the early 1970s. Some progressive Japanese intellectuals had paid attention to issues regarding Korea, ranging from *zainichi* Korean problems to the division and democratisation. Especially, since the early 1970s when Kim Dae Jung was in Japan, Japanese media began to carry articles with anti-Park Chung Hee tones, contributing to forming and disseminating anti-Park public opinion. Such interest and public opinion also began to be reflected in the Japanese political sphere through members of the Diet who officially tackled the government about collusion with the Park regime. The interest of some Japanese intellectuals and politicians in Kim Dae Jung and democratisation of Korea continued even after the Korean and Japanese governments agreed on concluding the abduction of Kim Dae Jung problem. In this way, the public opinion on the one hand ceaselessly burdened the Park regime and on the other hand placed the Japanese government in a situation where it could neither easily cooperate with the Korean government nor satisfy the Japanese public. This situation also caused the abovementioned inconsistency of Japan's Korea policy.

The Japanese government seemed aware of this process in which media reports affected Japan's Korea policy. In April 1979, for example, a Japanese foreign ministry official diagnosed in a meeting with the Korean ambassador to Japan how

conflicts had previously taken place between the two countries. That is, when newspapers reported this and that, then opposition politicians questioned the government about those issues in the Diet, during which the Japanese government sometimes found itself in an awkward situation; the government might say something in exchange of words that would bring Koreans' misconstruction and immediate reaction although the Japanese government did not intend or prepare the phrasing. The official, therefore, requested that the Korean government trust the Japanese government to prevent conflict in the future.[8] What can be observed here is that public opinion in Japan could affect Japan's Korea policy to some extent at least in an indirect way regardless of will of the Japanese government. Also, as discussed above, the continuous public questioning about possible improper collusion between Korean and Japanese politicians did restrict cordial relations between the two governments.

But public opinion was not always reflected in Japan's Korea policy. In spite of the continuous tackling from a part of the public and the opposition, the Japanese government generally accepted the diverse demands that the Korean government made. After Park Chung Hee died, the Japanese government even took the lead to reconfirm the conclusion of the Kim Dae Jung matter. Furthermore, even if the Japanese government had to accept some of the public opinion, it did so only selectively. At the time of the territorial dispute over *Tokto/Takeshima*, the Japanese government basically neglected the position of the Shimane Prefecture whose interest was most closely related to the dispute. Similarly, at the time of the silk dispute, the government reflected the opinions of the sericulture businesses, but not those of the machinery businesses. Thus the public could exert only limited influence on Japan's relations with Korea at the government level.

The Korean public, in the meantime, did not have as much influence on its government. On the one hand, the Korean media generally tended to maintain an anti-Japanese tone. In many cases where Japan made complaints about the Korean government, the media often regarded those complaints as interference in Korean domestic affairs and criticised Japan for its 'colonialist' attitude. Such a tone accorded with that of the Korean government at the time of conflict with Japan. Not only the media but the general public also shared its anti-Japanese sentiment with the government. On the other hand, when the government attempted to restore relations with Japan from the mid-1970s, the public did not express an opposing opinion to the

[8] JAW-04385, 722.1JA, 24830 (12691), Diplomatic Archives of Korea.

same extent which, for example, it had done on the eve of the Korea-Japan normalisation in 1965. This absence of opposition was partly because the reconciliation was a much more inconspicuous process than the normalisation and partly because Park Chung Hee's dictatorial rule had grown much more brutal over the past ten years.

Public antagonism and diplomacy

The fact that the Korean public and the government had a shared anti-Japanese stance has often led many to think that the public antagonism towards Japan caused Korea-Japan conflicts. However, it is difficult to say so, at least for the conflict in the 1970s. Above all, the government – Park Chung Hee's *Yusin* regime – was able to make decisions on foreign affairs quite independently of public opinion; thanks to the dictatorial rule, the government did not have to care much about public opinion or political criticism by opposition parties that would have put the regime at risk of regime change if it had been a democracy. Therefore, when the Korean government sought reconciliation with Japan, it could do so relatively easily and quickly without a process of persuading and obtaining consent from the public and the opposition.

Moreover, the Korean government occasionally instigated anti-Japanese sentiment among the public. Most conspicuously, the Park regime deliberately emphasised responsibility of Japan for the abduction of Kim Dae Jung in 1973 and the death of the first lady in 1974 with which Japan seemingly had little to do. This is not to say that the regime generated anti-Japanese sentiment among the public that had not existed. The public seemed to have had such antagonism against Japan. So much so that the regime did not have to mobilise the people to arouse the antagonism; it simply made announcements that blamed Japan, and the people began to rally spontaneously. The dictatorial government needed not form anti-Japanese public opinion for domestic purposes. But the national outburst of anti-Japanese sentiment functioned as a means to press the Japanese side. As political scientist Kenneth Schultz points out, 'when there is strong domestic consensus behind the government's threats, the support of domestic opposition groups – freely given – can send a signal of resolve that is more effective than can be sent by a government that routinely coerces such support'.[9] The Korean government used the public antagonism, for

[9] Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.2.

example, when the Korean flag desecration took place in 1977 as an aftermath of the *Tokto/Takeshima* dispute, in an effort to induce a Japanese apology for the event.

If the Korean public antagonism affected Korea's Japan policy at all, that was a very indirect process. In other words, the widespread anti-Japanese sentiment among the public could have led decision makers to easily incline towards an unyielding attitude to Japan or have amplified the level of the conflict. However the antagonism did not necessitate diplomatic conflict with Japan. It was the ruling elites that decided whether or not to trigger the antagonism for their own political purposes. Even if Japan's actions did inflame the Korean public, like at the time of the territorial dispute, the government could relatively easily disregard the public opinion and make peace with Japan. In the end, the antagonism was a variable that was not directly linked to the conflict in the 1970s.

Democracy and diplomacy

Both the Korean and Japanese public lacked agency in Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s. This stemmed from the lack of democracy in the both countries. The little more influence that the Japanese public had on its government than that of the Korean public was also because Japan was more democratic than Korea which was at the apex of Park's dictatorship. In democracies people have chances to influence the state's policy direction through elections.[10] The Japanese sericulture businesses exemplified this influence when they successfully pressed pro-Korean Fukuda Takeo to control Korean silk-product imports. Meanwhile the Korean public did not have as much influence on decision making in the 1970s. Like their Japanese counterparts, for example, the Korean sericulture businesses also demanded retaliation against Japan's import restrictions, but the Korean government did not eventually satisfy their demands. Although there were other factors that affected the silk dispute, whether or not the public could actually elect the leadership also determined the ways in which the two countries dealt with the dispute.

Nonetheless, no matter how much more democratic Japan was than Korea, the Japanese public had only limited political choices. Although the Liberal Democratic Party began to lose its parliamentary seats from the mid-1970s, the 1955 system of Liberal Democratic Party hegemony continued. The ruling party was relatively free from an actual opposition force that could pose a threat as a political alternatives. This

[10] Brad Glosserman and Scott A. Snyder, *The Japan-South Korea Identity Clash: East Asian Security and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p.18.

practical one-party dictatorship failed to reflect the diverse voices of the public. Some opposition politicians did question the government's Korea policy, which put both the Korean and Japanese governments in trouble. Still these opinions were marginal in the central political circles and did not lead to a significant policy change.

In the meantime, from a broad viewpoint, the Korean public sometimes indirectly influenced Korea's relations with Japan despite the lack of democracy. That is, the growing democratisation movement by overseas Korean communities hampered Park Chung Hee's effort to sell his *Yusin* regime and raised the Japanese public's interest in the Korean political situation. It can be said, therefore, that behind the Kim Dae Jung and Mun Segwang incidents were also the public efforts to democratise Korea, although Park's political ambition might be the fundamental cause. The eventual public influence on Korea's relations with Japan, however, does not mean that the public possessed agency in diplomacy, since what determined the direction of diplomacy was not the opinions of the public but those of the leadership.

The public had minimal agency in Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s. The Japanese public had some influence on its government's attitude to Korea, but the unbalanced structure of Japanese politics ultimately marginalised those opinions that opposed government's policy. In Korea, though anti-Japanese sentiment looked vociferous, the public opinion was decoupled from actual government policy. If at all, the Korean public affected Korea's relations with Japan in a very indirect way through the democratisation movement. But this process was a natural development, not a reflection of public will. Both in Korea and Japan, the public had limited means to determine the path of their countries.

A New Perspective on Korea-Japan Relations

Earlier studies on post-war Korea-Japan relations placed significant emphasis on the role of emotion. Koreans appeared deeply entrenched in the past, resisting potentially beneficial relations with Japan. On one hand, Koreans feared Japan's resurgence as a regional power, which could potentially encroach on the Korean economy, even if Japan posed no security threat. On the other hand, they consistently demanded apologies from Japan for its colonial and wartime wrongdoings, a gesture Japan seemed unwilling to make to the extent Koreans desired. Observers of the prolonged process of the Korea-Japan diplomatic normalisation treaty naturally concluded that emotion – historical animosity, specifically – primarily influenced policies in Korea-

Japan relations. This viewpoint, consciously or unconsciously, suggested that Western political science theories were difficult to apply to the Korea-Japan case.

It is Victor Cha's monumental work, *Alignment despite Antagonism*, that first tackles this conventional idea.[11] Cha and his successors successfully attempted at placing post-war Korea-Japan relations within the framework of realist political interpretation. However, these studies still view the normal state of Korea-Japan relations as conflict, with historical animosity serving as a source of this friction to a certain extent.

This study begins by questioning whether conflict rooted in human emotion represents the normal state of bilateral state relations. While concurring with Cha's assertion that emotion alone is insufficient to explain state behaviours in Korea-Japan relations, this study endeavours to comprehend not only cooperation but also conflict between the two countries in terms of rational choices made by the ruling elites of Korea and Japan. However, to achieve this goal, the study adopts a perspective centred on domestic politics, which Cha acknowledges possesses explanatory power but rejects due to its subject-specific nature.[12]

While many political science theories discuss the role of domestic politics in international relations, this study focuses on Zeev Maoz's argument that revolutionary regime changes tend to result in increased conflict behaviour. This is pertinent because the demise of the Cold War in the late 1960s brought about major regime changes in both Korea and Japan, leading to one of the most severe diplomatic conflicts between the two countries. During a period of global changes that undermined their political stability, the ruling elites of Korea and Japan chose to either cooperate or engage in conflict with each other based on their political self-interest.

Especially in Korea, political self-interest was a core motive behind the birth and existence of Park Chung Hee's *Yusin* regime, although studies acknowledge the security and economic circumstances that supported the regime. Park's ambition to remain in power influenced several characteristics of the regime, if not unique to Korea. These characteristics, such as intolerance to challenges to supreme power, a rigid bureaucratic hierarchy, a highly politicized intelligence agency, and the creation of internal enemies, were reflected in Korea's foreign policies, directly or indirectly.

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[11] Cha, Alignment despite Antagonism, p.2.

[12] Ibid., pp.17-9.

In a contemporary critique of Korea-Japan relations in 1975, Nakagawa Nobou pointed out the political intent behind Park's anti-Japanese attitude following the failed assassination attempt. More recent and rigorous research identifies Park's political self-interest in his foreign policies toward the United States and Eastern countries. This study largely shares this viewpoint but differs in applying the same perspective to Japan to better understand the interaction between the two countries.

Interpreting Korea-Japan relations through the lens of domestic politics represents a relatively new approach in the field. The previous neglect of domestic politics can be attributed primarily to a lack of sources. Classified government documents, which provide the most direct and precise insight into high-level decision-making processes, typically take more than thirty years to be declassified and made public. Additionally, the declassification process varies from country to country, and Japanese sources remain largely limited. In the fields of Korean political and diplomatic history, therefore, literature has been piled up in the order of presidents. Only with the dawn of the twenty-first century have scholars begun to comprehensively understand the events of the 1970s, albeit within certain limitations. This study represents one of the latest attempts to examine these new sources, shedding light on previously unexplored areas and revisiting well-known but ungrounded contemporary rumours and less historical works on the subject.

In doing so, this study proposes a new perspective on the timeline of Korea-Japan conflict and cooperation. Unlike the works of Victor Cha and Chong-Sik Lee, which suggest that Korea-Japan relations fluctuated according to specific conditions, this study concludes that Korea and Japan never returned to their harmonious relations of the late 1960s. Although their relations recovered from the diplomatic conflict in the early 1970s, doubt still lingered between the two, and the remainder of the 1970s witnessed a gradual drifting apart of their relations.

Conclusion

The diplomatic conflict between Korea and Japan in the 1970s was a process in which the two countries readjusted their relations that had been established at the height of the Cold War, a process of dissolution of the previous Cold-War alignment. The conflict and its resolution were a series of rational choices made by the ruling elites of the both countries to maximise their personal, governmental and national interests in given international circumstances. Although many have pointed at the long-lived and widespread national antagonism between Koreans and Japanese as the cause of their

seemingly perennial conflict, diplomatic sources show that public opinion hardly affected national decisions in the 1970s. More than that, the difference between the political systems of Korea and Japan seems to have contributed to the diplomatic conflict.

Korea-Japan relations in the 1970s shed light on a few aspects of international relations during the Cold War. First, the 'liberalist' camp was also not free from potential for intra-camp struggle just like the 'communist' camp. Although Korea-Japan relations looked generally amicable when Cold-War tensions were at their height in the 1960s, no sooner did the tensions disappear than the relations entered into conflict. This sudden change suggests that potential elements of conflict had been existent even before the actual conflict in the 1970s. Second, the ancient maxim in international relations that 'the weak suffer what they must' needs reconsideration. Whilst many cases have illustrated exceptions to this maxim in, for example, Vietnam or North Korea, Park Chung Hee's *Yusin* regime could be put on the list. Park's proclamation that Korea would pioneer its own destiny was an expression of his will not to adapt to the international situation conditioned by the powers and of the beginning of conflict with those powers. Korea under the *Yusin* regime was never a weak nation that had to suffer. Lastly, the public had minimal influence on Korea-Japan relations. In the situation where the popular vote could hardly change the existing political landscape, people exerted merely limited influence on the foreign relations, mostly indirectly, despite their often vociferous demonstrations of public opinion.

The 1970s was rather a distinctive period both for Korea and Japan. Korea was ruled by arguably the harshest dictatorial regime in its modern history. On the one hand the regime would willingly go to extremes for the sake of its own security. On the other hand, with external push and internal initiative, self-reliance became the new national creed. Japan was emerging as the 'number one'. No longer was it a junior partner of the United States that had just emerged from defeat, it was now flexing its muscles as one of the world powers. Thus relations between Korea and Japan in this period also differed from those before or after the 1970s. The process of conflict and its resolution too would be different according to the specific milieu of the time: the international and domestic politico-economic situation, the will of leadership, level of economic and cultural exchanges, public awareness of each other's country, accessibility to information and the like. How some or a combination

of these elements made Korea-Japan relations in other periods will be something to be explored in further studies.

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