

STRATEGY 21

통권42호 Vol. 20, No.2, Winter 2017

The Political and Cultural Restrictions in Building a Security Mechanism in Northeast Asia

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I. Introduction

II. The Politically Restrictive Factors In Building a Security Mechanism in
Northeast Asia

III. The Culturally Restrictive Factors In Building a Security Mechanism in
Northeast Asia

IV. Conclusion

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I . Introduction

The annual events of the North Korean regime, proposedly heightening tensions on the Korean peninsula through the threat of nuclear weapons and long-range missile tests, invariably have been the main element in bringing about a security crisis within the Northeast Asian region.

The profound problem of this region is that security affairs among the neighboring states of the Korean peninsula have been highly interconnected. The Northeast Asian region during the last several decades after World War II has been obviously subjected to a certain “security-complex”, with major security perceptions and concerns so intensely inter-linked that each nation’s own national security problems can be easily characterized by severe bloc competition, eventually making it difficult to have a cooperative and comprehensive military mechanism to solve the long-standing security dilemma in the region.¹⁾

Under the circumstances, in order to effectively make common grounds for an atmosphere of conflict resolution in the region, it is important to classify the immediate political and security threats that are prevalent in the region.²⁾ As the next step, it is necessary to analyze the negative psychological effects, particularly originating from emotional sentiments, which are mainly based upon the historical antagonism and mutual cultural misperception among the nations in the region. It is quite an undeniable fact that those historical and cultural misperceived factors in the region have worked as a great barrier in controlling and moderating strong and immature feelings of

1) Barry Buzan and Lene Hsensen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.384. Barry Buzan and Waever Ole, *Regions and Powers : The Structure of International Security* (New York : Cambridge Univeristy Press, 2003), pp.23-25.

2) Zdzislaw Lachowski, Martin Sjogren, John Hart, and Shannon Kile, *Tools for Building Confidence on the Korean Peninsula*, (Stockholm : Elanders, 2007), pp.7-8.

individual nation's hyper-nationalism against others.

As a matter of fact, under the highly fragile security circumstances, it is very hard to consider any possibility of building a firm security mechanism in the region. Furthermore, the deteriorating security situation on and around the Korean peninsula makes even the slightest chance of building a peaceful mechanism in the region all the more challenging.

Although the Korean peninsula has been faced with a somewhat complicated and devastated security situation in building a peaceful security mechanism, there exists an initial step for making a common ground which all the nations in the region can comprehensively share. It would be the analysis of the influence of German romantic nationalism, which has permeated each individual nation's political cultures and historical understandings in the region.³⁾

In this context, this paper tests two categories to find any possibility for building a common ground of a cooperative security mechanism in the region. One is to precisely calculate the major restrictive factors in terms of the current pending political and security issues, and the other is to draw causes out of cultural and emotional restrictive factors. The former will be highlighted in the five categorized issues, which have been serving as restrictive factors in building a peaceful security mechanism in the region and the latter will be evaluated in terms of the influence of romantic nationalism, internalized in the region since the late 19th century.

3) Ryang Kang, "The Political Influence of the Romantic Nationalism in the Northeast Asian Region", Korea Association of Chinese Studies, Vol. 57, No. 4, 2016, pp.301-322.

II. The Political Restrictive Factors In Building a Security Mechanism in Northeast Asia

1. The Strong Geopolitical Factors in the Region

Geo-politically, the Korean peninsula has been surrounded by four sinewy great power nations and the peninsula itself has been divided into two regions since World War II. Moreover, the ideologically different South and North Korea's security crisis is immensely worsening, because of North Korea's incessant, provocative military threats. North Korea has already completed the 4th and the 5th nuclear tests in the year of 2016, and now is seeking to have another nuclear test. At the same time, it has demonstrated its technical capacity of launching an ICBM against the targets in the US mainland.

The nettlesome problem of this region is that security affairs among the neighboring states of the Korean peninsula have been highly intertwined. The Northeast Asian region has been subjected to a certain "security-complex", and major security perceptions and concerns are geographically so inter-linked and clustered that each nation's own national security problems cannot reasonably be resolved apart from one another.⁴⁾

China is becoming a part of the regional security complex on and around the Korean peninsula. China cannot regard its security without such factors as arising from the conflicts on the Korean peninsula. The fact of the matter of is, the factor of adjacency is carries great weight for security, because many threats definitely travel more easily over short distances than over long ones. China with adjoining two koreas obviously constitutes a subsystem of the regional security complex

4) Su Hwan Lim, "Rebalancing of US Forces and the trust-Building Process on the Korean Peninsula", *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2013, pp.121-122.

evidenced in the Northeastern part of the Asian continent, while the US, as a global hegemonic power, enters the regional security complex of countries on and around the Korean peninsula.⁵⁾

The US government, in line with the concept of balance of power, is re-balancing its forces towards the region, while china is taking on a great power relationship standing within the region. In this situation, all the participants for the security matters on and around the Korean peninsula can be extremely sensitive for the changeable circumstances of security matters so that the perception of security dilemma can be automatically and easily prevailed.⁶⁾

2. Differences in Political Regimes and Social Ideologies

China and North Korea maintain a totalitarian communist regime, while South Korea, US, and Japan are upholding the regimes of a liberal democracy. Although China and North Korea alike stick to communism, recent lifestyles of China and North Korea differ so much that one is inclined to question the utility of communist regime as a classifying tool. The Chinese economy is integrated with the world economy, while the North Korean regime keeps its economy and people highly insulated from foreign influences.

Particularly, the North Korean system is so rigidly militarist that it is devoid of human rights and democracy. The complete exclusiveness of the regime allows for no window of pluralism or flexibility in the political decision-making process.⁷⁾

Furthermore, North Korea's continuous provocative nuclear and

5) *Ibid.*, pp.122-123.

6) Robert Art, "The United States and the Rise of China", in Robert Art & Robert Jervice, *International Politics : Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, (London : Pearson Education Press, 2015, pp.320-326.

7) James Carafano, "Implications of Iran Negotiations for North Korea", *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Vol. 29, No 2, 2015, pp.2-3

missile threats against the world bring upon itself heavy international sanctions. And the brutally horrific politics of North Korea's young political leader seems to undermine his effort to secure the North Korean regime. In this context, one can make an empirically based observation that North Korea will not give up its nuclear weapon development program and will not permit gradual economic changes for the prosperity of the North Korean people at all.

China obviously wants to maintain a strong security cooperation with North Korea on one hand and to expand the economic cooperation with South Korea on the other. This sort of complex combination of various regime types among three nations spread the perfect, negative influence in building a security common ground in the region.

Meanwhile, the US is persistently revealing its national security purpose in building and reinforcing the global order. The global order of the US is definitely a liberal one, which is based upon the rule of law and multilateral institutions that support the freedom of navigation, commerce, protection of human rights and nuclear non-proliferation.⁸⁾ It goes without saying that China and North Korea, are confronted with US principals.

South Korea and Japan willingly support these US commitments, sharing the liberal democratic values with each other. However, hyper-nationalism between South Korea and Japan still remains and sometimes has caused a political stalemate between the two countries in regards with the issues of Japanese historical distortion regarding the Japanese colonial period in Korea. As a result, during the years when Park Gyun Hae took office as the president, South Korea-Japan relations had suffered for more than three and a half years and under the current South Korean government, the South Korea-Japan relationship has not been moderated yet.

The Chinese regime is antagonistic to the US intervention in the

8) John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan : The Origin, Criss, and Transformation of the American World Order*, (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2011), pp.78-80

domestic affairs on the basis of liberal and moral standards. The Chinese do not still fully adapt themselves to the existing international order, or global standard that the US pursues. The Chinese hyper-nationalism, mainly encouraged by the Chinese Communist Party, is focusing on popularizing a sense of Chinese-centered regional order under the ideal catch phrase of “Chinese Dream”.⁹⁾ Exacerbating the situation is this kind of Chinese sentiment that has been growing out of popular struggles against anti-imperialism rather than the internal political changes. Therefore, the Chinese government can easily fabricate, with confidence, domestic opinion so that it goes against the US intervention in China. As a result, the deep Chinese national sentiments have been easily mobilized in the political and security troubles with the US and Japan, and recently in the THAAD missile arrangement issues with South Korea and the US.¹⁰⁾

3. The Severe Security Competition between the US and China

China has been persistently demanding a new type of great-power relationship between the US and China since the summit talks between Obama and Xi in 2013. A new type of great-power relationship refers to something other than a liberal international order under which the US-led global standard that has been built during the post-war US hegemony. China wants to lead security relations on the Northeast Asian continent in its own way, rather than as an agent of the US-led global standard.

China has been boldly arguing that the Pacific Ocean is large

9) Mingfu Liu, *The China Dream : Great Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in the Post American Era*, (New York : CN Times Books, 2015), pp.34-35.

10) Bruce Klingner, “The Importance of THAAD Missile Defense”, *The Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Vol. 29, No 2, 2015, pp.21-22

enough to be commonly shared between the US and China, and that the Chinese claim to the South China Sea should be recognized. As the US strategic interest lies in the prevention of China from gaining predominance over the Asian continent, it is obvious for the US not to bandwagon with the Chinese claims. Therefore, the US has no intention whatsoever to tolerate the building of artificial islands by China in the South China Sea.¹¹⁾

The US involvement in the East Asian security Zone is more than welcome by South Korea and Japan, particularly because South Korea absolutely depends on the extended deterrence of US against the North Korean nuclear threat. It is China whose strategic interest is undermined by the enhanced intervention by the US forces in the Northeastern Asian region, mainly induced by the consistent North Korean nuclear and missile threats. As the US military intervention has been extended in the Korean peninsula, Chinese stance towards North Korea is likely to be firm, regarding North Korea as its own precious and unchangeable security asset.¹²⁾

Although China wants to have a Chinese-centered Asian model of security cooperation, it is still ambiguous whether China wants to forge, with the help from Russia, a common front against the US-Japan security alliance in the region. It is also not clear whether the Chinese and Russian leaders' agreements on the Chinese support of the Russian strategy in Ukraine and the Russian support of the Chinese strategy in Eastern and Southern China Seas adamant respectively. Particularly, in front of Trump's recent security challenges against China, the prospect of the Chinese and Russian security collaboration can be easily turned into questionable matters.¹³⁾ Therefore, in this context the Chinese

11) Imogen Sanunders, "The South China Sea Award : Artificial Islands and Territory", *Australian Year Book of International Law*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 2016, pp.121-122.

12) Er-Win Tan, *The US versus the North Korean Nuclear Threat : Mitigating the Nuclear Security Dilemma*, (London : Routledge, 2015), pp.121-134.

13) Uri Friedman, "The Testing Ground for Trump's Russia Policy", *The Atlantic Daily*, July 30, 2017.

concept of regionalism can be revealed as the Chinese centered a limited continentalism, which is mainly focused on blocking the US and Japanese security involvement in the Northeast Asian Continent.¹⁴⁾

4. The Consistent North Korean Nuclear and Missile Threats

Its frequent threats of arousing war have caused the Chinese leaders to partially share the same perspective of the US and South Koreans. So far, China seems to be officially, but somewhat reluctantly, cooperating with the US in drafting international sanctions and enforcing them towards North Korea.

It has been revealed that China wants to maintain a balance between the two Koreas for the peace and stability in the region. As a result, it is hard to think of a solution to the security problems on and around the Korean peninsula without considering the role of the Chinese government. However, Chinese' persistent call for the Six-party Talks after North Korea's fifth nuclear test has been taken as an unrealistic and a deceptive manipulation to the US, Japan and South Korea. The North Korean nuclear weapon development program and the fourth and fifth nuclear bomb tests in 2016, and the continuously developing ICBM capability make negotiation with North Korea by the US, Japan, and South Korea not feasible until North Korea completely discontinues the on-going nuclear bomb and missile launching test.

As a matter of fact, the continuous North Korean nuclear tests greatly heightens the security crisis in the region. Recently, North Korea claimed that it has miniaturized a nuclear warhead that can be fit onto ballistic missiles and that it can deliver a preemptive nuclear

14) For the concepts of Regionalism and Continentalism, Lucia Rivera Rana, *Beyond Regionalism : The Future of Regionalism, Continentalism?*, (London : Routledge, 2000), pp.12-20.

strike against the US, Japan, and South Korea. Although severe and unilateral sanctions have been imposed on North Korea, the question still remains whether the measures would be effective enough in persuading North Korea to abandon its provocative nuclear weapon program.¹⁵⁾

Hard-liners in the US think that although China supports enforcing the UN sanctions against North Korea, it still sees North Korea as an unchangeable strategic asset to China. They are extremely suspicious of the fact that China is confident enough to manage the North Korean nuclear weapon program issue and that North Korea cannot be militarily challenged in the region if China can sufficiently manage North Korea. Their worst case scenario is that North Korea, as a nuclear weapon state, can play the role of Israel in the Northeast Asian continent.¹⁶⁾

On the contrary, most of the South Koreans' strategic understandings are very optimistic in nature. The South Korean people consider, in geopolitical terms, that China is an integral part to South Korea, and at the same time, they think the US, as a close alliance, is an essential entity to South Korea in terms of maintaining security on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, this kind of strategic understanding leads South Koreans to think that to effectively manage the US and Chinese global strategies on the Korean peninsula, the two superpowers should not forego the strategic importance of South Korea. However, this kind of relatively self-centered and optimistic understanding is ever-more vulnerable for the small states, entangled between the two great powers, because there are no cases in history where the great powers pandered to the wishful thinking of the small powers.

15) Alan Dupong, "This Time, Ignoring North Korean Nuclear Weapons is No Longer an Option", *The Australian*, July 6, 2017.

16) Abdul Ruff, "Solution for North Korea Nuclear Issue Lies in Israel", *Modern Diplomacy*, April 28, 2017.

5. Territorial Disputes in the Region

In the Northeast Asian region, there are four cases of territorial disputes over the dominance of islands and maritime sovereignty. Those are firstly territorial dispute between China and Japan (Diaoyu/Senkaku Island), secondly Kuril Islands dispute between Russia and Japan, thirdly Tocco conflicts between Korea and Japan, finally Ieodo disputes between Korea and China. Among them, the Chinese and Japanese territorial dispute has severely intensified the possibility of developing diplomatic conflict into the military counteractions during the last decade.¹⁷⁾

The territorial disputes in Northeast Asia have been displayed as playing the role of a detonator for revealing hyper-nationalisms which are often linked to military strategic values, economic advantages, national pride, political populism, public opinions, and energy resources, etc. The problem of territorial disputes, highly linked with nationalism within the region, has a tendency to easily expand the original problem into the area of other problems, in regards with the distorted understanding on the past history and a self-centered, emotional feelings of nationalism.

In the history of diplomatic negotiation in the regional territorial disputes, it is obvious that each nation's particular nationalism has worsened the possibility of a solution. Therefore, without any solution for the dispute involving nation's nationalism, the countries enmeshed in the dispute have no choice but to discuss the strict principles, clinging to their own self-centered national interests, which can easily adapt to the emotional sentiments of the people. If there is no effective solution in paving the road for making common ground to solve the deepening cultural and historical sediments, the territorial disputes

17) Shantnu Roy-Chauhury, "The Senkaku Islands Dispute", *International Policy Digest*, August 1, 2016.

must be maintained as a great source for the enlargement of highly unstable regional security situations, which can easily induce an unexpected military conflict.¹⁸⁾

Ⅲ. The Cultural Restrictive Factors in Building a Security Mechanism in Northeast Asia

1. The Influences of Romantic Nationalism in Northeast Asia

Romantic nationalism is the form of nationalism in which the state derives its political legitimacy as an organic consequence of the unity of those it governs. This includes, depending on the particular manner of practice, the language, race, culture, religion, and customs of the 'nation' in its primal sense of those who were born within the culture. This form of nationalism arose in reaction to dynastic or imperial hegemony. This form of nationalism also seriously excluded the logic of rationalism, which was the main column in the enlightenment philosophy.¹⁹⁾

The ideas of J. J. Rousseau and J. G. Herder inspired much in establishing the early romantic nationalism. Particularly Herder greatly provided inspiration in stressing that geography formed the natural economy of the people, and that their customs and society developed along the lines of their favored, basic environments.²⁰⁾

18) Ryang Kang, "Islands Disputes in East Asia and the Role of Confidence Building Measures : The Cases for Korea-Japan, Russia-Japan, Korea-China, and China-Southeast Asian Nations", *Nation and Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2011, pp.99-130.

19) Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism*, (Princeton : Princeton Univ. Press, 2013), pp.1-3.

20) Ryang Kang, "The Political Influence of the Romantic Nationalism in the Northeast Asian Region", *Korea Association of Chinese Studies*, Vol. 57, No. 4, 2016, pp.223-225.

During Napoleon's reign and his attempt to take over Europe, German intellectuals saw the increasing importance in creating an economically, politically, and socially unified nation, independent from other European countries. It is a well known account that in Prussia, the development of spiritual renewal as a means to engage in the struggle against Napoleon was argued by G. Fichte.

Fichte stressed the importance of "German Geist" as the inseparable concept of the 'nation'. It is the typical legacy of the romantic nationalism to divide 'we' and 'they' by the standards of parentage, language, religion, custom, and historical heritage. Despite the fact that the original romantic nationalism shares some ideological values of Rousseau's liberty and equality concepts, it maintains very strong risky elements of supporting irrational counter-reformation activities, which can be misled into Nazism or Fascism and any other notorious totalitarian ideas. Killing other races with cultural oppression in extreme racism can be remembered as the most painful historical error, in which a distorted romantic nationalism could have carried out.²¹⁾

After Meiji revolution, Japanese intellectuals inherited German romantic nationalism. In order to build a modern-state in a relatively short period, Germany, which had been in the process of late industrialization, building a strong, unified, and powerful modern-state in a very short period under the 'Kaiser' leadership, was the best model for Japan to follow up.

The famous Japanese philosopher in Meiji period, Fukuzawa Yukichi, had ambitiously translated most of the imported western modern languages into Chinese chartered Japanese languages. Among them, he translated German concept of 'Volk'(folk) into 'nation'. At the same time, he also translated 'state' into 'nation' as well. Because of the two concepts in one same word, the meaning of 'nation' brought about serious confusions for the Asian intellectuals in understanding and

21) Ibid., pp.224-226.

distinguishing precisely the differences between ‘nation–state’ and ‘state–nation’ as one of the forms of modern–states.²²⁾

In the process of idolizing the Japanese Emperor, he effectively utilized the concept of the organic relationship between Emperor and his people, and created the concept of “Japan Geist” (Japanese Spirit), which originated from the ‘German Geist’ in the German romantic nationalism.²³⁾

Meanwhile, after the Empress Dowager Cixi’s counter–revolution against the chinese reformists (1899), Kang Yu–wei and Liang Qi–chao fled to Tokyo and associated with Fukuzawa and his friends. Particularly, Liang was greatly influenced by Fukuzawa on the theory that the ‘nation’ was an organism which was formed by the national spirit. He enthusiastically translated many Japanese thoughts on romantic nationalism and introduced them to the Chinese intellectual society. Liang’s theory of ‘the great Chinese ethnicity’ and the nation–oriented nationalism greatly influenced the mental world of Chinese intellectuals, including Mao Zedong, who established the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

Shin Chae–ho, a Korean modern philosopher, was deeply influenced by Liang and he wanted to theorize the basic concepts of the romantic nationalism to fight against Japanese imperialism to liberate Korea. He fully recognized the concept of the ‘nation’ as an organic and historical body and he created, for the first time in the history of Korea, the concept of Hanminjok (One Grand Chosun Ethnic Nation), which had been prosperous in the 5 thousand years’ splendid history at the territories of both Korean peninsula and Manchuria. He also redecorated the myth of Dangun (Tenggri), who built up the ancient Chosun nation about 5 thousand years ago, to emphasize the purity of Chosun nation.

Shin Chae–ho made an effort to advocate the ethnic Korean

22) Ibid., pp.225–226.

23) Elichii Kiyooka, *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa*, (New York : Columbia University Press, 2007), pp.112–134.

nationalism to unify a national resistant awareness against Japanese imperialism. His collective resistant awareness of having nation's political self-determination and independence had been strongly linked with history, culture, and ethnic solidarity. Until now, Shin Chae-ho has been admired by the South and North Korean people as the reformer and fighter for the national independence and specially as the creator of the concept of Hanminjok.²⁴⁾

2. The Influence of Romantic Nationalism in the Current Political Regimes in Northeast Asia

After World War II, Japan accepted the liberal democracy as an essence of political regime under the guidance of the US military government. Although Japan established a high level of civil democracy and economically abundant nation-state, the influence of romantic nationalism still exist in the roots of society.

So far, the Japanese right-wing politicians still highly venerate the Emperor and admire the value of the so-called "Japan Geist". They are exclusively expressing an intention to romanticize the Japanese spirit of pacific war and to glorify the achievement of the Meiji movement as a leader of Asia against the Western inventions. The Japanese efforts to romanticize its past history are recently causing much diplomatic disorder with neighboring countries, such as South and North Korea and China. Therefore, if Japan does not solve the problem of romanticizing the past history, Japan can hardly be a decent leading country in the futuristic international society.

In the process of establishing PRC, the Chinese ethnic nationalism against the Japanese imperialism and the western imperialism had been largely reflected. In the basic ideas in Maoism, the romantic elements

24) Ryang Kang, op. cit., pp.314-315.

of heroism, collective culture, and Chinese ethnic nationalism had highly been intermingled. The present PRC is running a complex political and economic systems in terms of both a communistic regime and a liberal market economic system. Therefore, this regime seems to be not based upon the original international communism. In a sense, PRC is running a kind of totalitarian republicanism, which reveals and encourages a strong organic solidarity between the top leaders and their people.

Because of this aspect, there is a great tendency that the power of Xi would be rapidly increased despite Chinese economic development and the expansion of middle class people in the society. However, as the nation's title, PRC, implies, China is likely to face the problem of the people's sovereignty in the long run.²⁵⁾

After liberation of Korea, and despite his great efforts to plant the liberal democracy in South Korea, President Rhee Syng-man also created and occasionally utilized 'one nation principle' as a symbol for building both Korean nationalism and anti-communism. It could be understood that although one nation principle was created to remove many threatening elements of internal social system at that time, it became the obstacle in the development of individualism and liberalism in the South Korean society of the liberal democracy. Thus, the South Korean liberal democracy could be misunderstood, that it naturally emphasized the importance of group loyalties rather than individual values in an immature civic community.

The Park Chung-hee government also combined the concept of the nation for the purposes of achieving national mobilization and Korean unification. He restored the Hyeonchungsa Shrine and the statue of Admiral Yi Sun-shin, and tried to rediscover other traditional cultures and national consciousness to encourage an internal social solitude.²⁶⁾

The nationalism discourse of the radical student movement between

25) Ibid., pp.312-313.

26) Ibid., p.317.

the late 1980's and the early 1990's in the South Korean society displayed the forms of organic nationalism, suggesting national unification as a keyword. Conceiving the nation as an organism validated the appropriateness of national unification. The discourse of unification changed its direction toward emphasizing national unification, as an organism along with criticism of South Korea's economic subordination to the US and Japan, Anti-Americanism for the practical independence, and a new situational understanding on North Korea.²⁷⁾

One of the most significant characteristics in the South Korean nationalism might be the parentage-based ethnic nationalism. It might not be difficult for the researchers to encounter the various kinds of public surveys regarding Korean 'nation' and nationalism in which more than 70% of the South Koreans consider 'blood' as the most important standard for the Korean race. Therefore, it is difficult to deny that the parentage-centered characteristic is the basis of South Korean nationalism.

At first, North Korea denied nationalism but followed the Stalin's concept of the national ideology in the Communist's frame until the 1960's. However, North Korea's national ideology became connected to the Juche (Self-Reliance) ideology in 1970-80s.²⁸⁾ Nation was defined as a social group where blood, language, culture, and territorial commonness are on the basis through the history of independence of people who used to live as clan and tribes. Being outside of the Stalin's concept of nation, North Korea's own concept of nationalism was established. In the process of idolizing Kim Il-sung as an hero-king for the North Korean people, it was a well known story that Kim Il-sung directly ordered his close ideology researchers to plagiarize the cases of idolizing the Japanese Emperor soon after Meiji revolution.

The concept of North Korean nationalism in the Kim Jung-il era

27) Ibid., pp.311-312.

28) Kwang-Chul Kim, *The Political Strategies of Kim Il-Sung Nationalism : A Critical Analysis*, (Seoul : Book-lab, 2014), pp.91-107.

became much more romantic and cultural. In 1989, Kim Jung-il said “nation is a nation-state living in a same territory with one blood, language, and culture.” If he directly borrowed and indoctrinated the concept of nation from the Hanminjok (One Grand Chosun Laced) theory of Shin Chae-ho, making himself as the legitimized heritor of Dangun (Tanggri), who governed the grand territories of both Korean peninsula and Manchuria, the heroic ruler of North Korea is automatically legitimized to unify and to govern the currently divided two Koreas in the Korean peninsula. Therefore, it is quite strategic for North Korea to intentionally establish the concept of nation in order to pave the road for achieving highly goal-oriented mission of revolutionizing South Korea.²⁹⁾

The basic characteristics of romantic nationalism, such as heroism, historical illusion, myth, superiority of ethnic nation, collective entity, nation as an organic body, and a self-centered political culture, etc., definitely hampers constructive efforts to make a guiding principle for building a peaceful security mechanism in the region. Particularly it makes it extremely hard to find any attempts of bargaining over each nation's sovereignty and softening each nation's borders in the region. Therefore, in order to effectively facilitate a constructive environment for solving the problem of hyper-nationalism and historical antagonism in the region, a deep and wide comparative analysis of each nation's romantic nationalism should be followed.

IV. Conclusion

It is obvious that there are deep and profound barriers for the Northeast Asian countries to pursue a cooperative security mechanism. Particularly, a strong sense of sovereignty and hyper-nationalism makes

29) *Ibid.* pp.77-86.

the possibility of softening the border, which can be assumed to be the beginning stage for a constructive way of confidence building, extremely far-off. Furthermore, a general issues for human security and regional welfare programs are also easily overshadowed by the frequently occurring, various military-oriented security confrontations in the region.

Under the circumstances, it is undeniably very hard to define and classify the main sources of restrictive factors in building a security mechanism in the region. Nevertheless, this paper has been focused on molding the two patterns of analytical elements. As the political restrictive factors in building a security mechanism in the Northeast Asian region, it has classified and pointed out the following five elements. Firstly, the strong geopolitical impacts exist in the form of a security complex, in which each nation's major security problems cannot be reasonably analyzed and resolved apart from one another. Secondly, there is a huge difference in the characteristics of political regimes and social ideologies among the nations in the region. South Korea and Japan follow the international liberal order of the US, while on the contrary, China and North Korea are going against the US-led international liberal order. Such regional circumstances hamper constructive dialogues among nations. Thirdly, a new type of great power relationship between the US and China is creating a heavily competing security situation, in terms of pursuing their own hegemonic, goal-oriented, global and regional strategies. In the competition process, China seems to be consumed with understanding the challenges of Japan solely in terms of regionalism against continentalism. Fourthly, there are consistent North Korean missile and nuclear threats, and hence the main element of the security crisis in the region. At present, this issue has been understood as the most pending issue to be solved in the region. Finally, a longer existing serious territorial disputes have been activated as a great barrier for regional cooperation and particularly this has done a role of detonator for the habitual national confrontations, motivated by the distorted history and the culturally

misperceived emotionalism.

As for the cultural restrictive factors in building a security mechanism in this region, this paper has also pointed out that a different acceptance of romantic nationalism has generally motivated a great misperception in building a common ground for a confidence building measure among nations. It cannot be arguable that a distorted historical and ideological perception, which has been based upon the romantic nationalism in this region, often causes a hyper-nationalism and a feeling of historical antagonism. So far, these two factors have served as the main sources of persistent national conflicts in the region.

Nevertheless, the fact that the influence of the romantic nationalism in the four Northeast Asian nations, despite its huge negative role in the constructive dialogue among the states, can be the first step for building the common ground for making a peaceful security mechanism in the region if this matter of the complicated cultural influences in the region can be successfully analyzed and moderated.

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요 약

동북아시아 내 안보협력체형성을 가로막는 정치, 문화적 장애요인

강 량*

동북아시아지역에서 집단안보와 관련된 지역협력체가 형성되기 어려운 이유에는 먼저 체제와 이념이 다른 국가들 사이에서의 강한 지정학적 역학관계가 작동하고 있고, 두 번째로 개별국가 내부의 사회이념과 정치체제의 차이로 인한 이질성이 매우 강하며, 세 번째로 새롭게 형성되고 있는 미-중 관계의 대립적 구도가 군사안보적인 차원에서의 과도한 경쟁관계를 유발하고 있는 동시에, 네 번째로 북한의 지속적인 핵과 미사일위협이 지역을 넘어 범세계적인 위협요인으로 작용하고 있으며, 다섯 번째로 장기간 미해결상태에 있는 도서 분쟁이 항시 관련국가들 사이에서의 과도한 민족주의적 갈등을 유발시키고, 이로 인한 적대적인 갈등관계가 지속되고 있는 점 등을 동시대적인 현실적 차원에서의 정치적 장애요인들로 규정해 볼 수 있다.

동시에 이런 현실적 차원에서의 정치적 장애요인들의 근원적인 발생요인으로도 평가될 수 있으며, 특히 동북아 개별국가들이 내세우고 있는 강력한 민족주의 성향과 과거사와 연관된 역사인식에 따른 문화적 이질성의 내면에 존재하는 낭만적 민족주의요소가 동북아 개별국가들 간의 신뢰형성과정을 강력하게 가로막고 있음을 지적할 수 있다. 19세기말에 동북아에 유래된 낭만적 민족주의에 대한 비교국가 차원에서의 심도 있는 분석과 이를 통한 절충점의 발견은, 역설적이지만, 세계 어느 지역보다도 극심한 갈등과 대립국면이 심화된 동북아시아 내의 국가들이 군사안보 및 정치경제차원에서의 보다 원활한 협력관계를 도모하기 위한 첫 단계로서의 공동의 장을 마련할 수 있는 주요한 동기가 될 수 있다.

핵심어: 낭만적 민족주의, 지정학, 도서분쟁, 지역협력체, 과거사, 북한 핵, 미중대립

논문접수: 2017년 9월 2일 | 논문심사: 2017년 11월 15일 | 게재확정: 2017년 12월 12일

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