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Overcoming Military Pessimism and Excessive Deterrence: Re-examination of a Strategy against North Korean SLBM Threat

Jungsup Kim

As North Korea's SLBM capabilities have become more advanced, many are calling for special countermeasures. They say that the SLBM is a "game changer" that can undermine the existing North Korean nuclear strategy and bring about a rift in the U.S.-ROK alliance itself. Therefore, the introduction of offensive operational concepts and the ground breaking buildup of anti-submarine warfare capabilities are being emphasized. This paper attempts to revisit the evaluation of SLBM threats and the presentation of alternatives in these existing studies. This is to point out that the existing SLBM threat assessment is too pessimistic and that the response strategy is excessive. This is because excessive military pessimism can undermine the credibility of deterrence against North Korea on our own, and an offensive response could lead to unintended side effects. Re-examining existing research will take place in three dimensions. First, the question of incapacitation of the existing three-axis strategy, second, the credibility of extended deterrence, and third, the appropriateness of introducing offensive operational concepts. Through this analysis, the paper will propose a 'deterrence by punishment' as the best response to the North Korean nuclear threat. Controlling crisis instability is a key to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and it should be noted that deterrence based on threat of retaliation is the most realistic and stable strategy in that regard.

Keywords: SLBM, Game-Changer, Extended Deterrence, KAMD, Kill Chain, North Korea's Nuclear Threat

Parliamentary Exchanges Between China and Russia During Xi Jinping's Era: Diplomatic and Security Implications

Taeho Kim and Sunjae Kim

This paper analyzes the development process of China's parliamentary diplomacy and analyzes the characteristics of parliamentary exchanges between China and Russia during Xi Jinping's era. It also seeks to derive diplomatic and security implications of parliamentary exchanges between the two countries. Research shows that the diplomatic activities of the National People's Congress (NPC) in China have recently increased, and among them, exchanges with the Russian parliament are the most active. In particular, since President Xi Jinping took power, parliamentary exchanges between the two countries have become more solidified as the China-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee has been expanded and reorganized. Given the fact that the two countries have been continuously exchanging views on international affairs through parliamentary exchanges recently, the China-Russia Council for Parliamentary Cooperation is expected to make significant contributions, including providing a necessary legal basis in the process of expanding bilateral diplomatic and security cooperation in the future.

Keywords: National People's Congress, Russia's Upper and Lower Houses, Parliamentary Diplomacy, China-Russia Committee for Parliamentary Cooperation, China-Russia Relations.

Net Assessment: Concept, Methodology and Application to Sample Case

Changhee Park

This article introduces the concept and methodology of ‘net assessment’ and applies it to a sample case for improving our understanding. Net assessment can simply be defined as evaluation of military balance between opposing countries or parties. Through comparing military capabilities, we can acknowledge where we stand in the long-term competition with our competitor. That is, we can identify whether we are strong or weak in the balance, and, if we are strong, what our strengths and opponents weaknesses are, and also, if we are weak, what our weaknesses and opponent’s strengths are. These are the strategic asymmetries where we can exploit areas of opportunity in the long run, while taking early action to mitigate our vulnerabilities. Still, we are not accustomed to the concept of net assessment and its methodology. Net assessment, however, is the logical process of thinking that should be preceded before the planning of national defense. If we consider that neighboring countries could be a threat in the future, we should carefully look at what kind of threat it would be, what is the problem, whether we can dominate the threat or not, how we can overcome such threat if we are weak in the future. Net assessment will provide insights to our strategic thinking and force building, and enable innovative development of our defense planning.

Keywords: Net Assessment, Military Balance, Strategic Asymmetries, Competitive Strategy, Strategic Thinking

Big Data Analysis of Foreign Policy with a Focus on the Speeches by Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Park Geun-hye and Moon Jae-in Administration

Sion Lee

This paper examined the changes of foreign policy during Park Geun-hye and Moon Jae-in government with official speeches of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in each administration. The results were as follows. First, some keywords were actively used in both administrations such as ‘North Korea’, ‘Korean peninsula’, and ‘peace.’ Meanwhile, the Park administration preferred the words including ‘Northeast Asia’, ‘economy’, ‘security’, and ‘reunification’ while the Moon government often used specific words such as ‘people’, ‘human rights’, ‘sustainability’, and ‘communication.’ Next, based on the results obtained by LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation) analysis, the diplomatic policies of the Park government could be summarized as 8 topics while the major foreign policy agendas of the Moon administration were identified as 6 topics, which indicates the difference in foreign policies between the two governments. The study also showed that the policy priorities might differ over time within a single government.

Keywords: Big Date Analysis, Public Discourse, Korean Foreign Policy, Diplomatic Strategy, Text Mining, Topic Model

China's Maritime Expansionism and Its Impacts on Maritime Security Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific

Ji-Yong Lee

China's assertive expansionism provokes active responses from countries of the Indo-Pacific. The on-going dynamic processes stimulates not only theoretical analysis but also policy implications for the regional security environment. The paper begins analysis on the recent movements of countries in the Indo-Pacific region, based on the assumption that dynamics of traditional security arises in the region, which is caused by China's maritime expansionism. It focuses on 'arms building' and 'balancing' to assess dynamics of traditional security. The great power like the U.S. and China and major power in the region are included in the scope of analysis. The results of analysis shows the regional countries have been engaging in massive arms race especially since around 2010. It also exhibits active balancing movements against China's expansionism in the region. Regarding arms building, the regional countries on the one hand have been spurring naval building, and the U.S., Japan, and China have been developing competitively their military strategic concepts on the other. As for balancing, the U.S. plays a leading role in reinforcing its 'Hub & Spokes' alliance system and expanding security coalitions with non-allies like Vietnam. Still, another particular feature is a 'multi-centric balancing,' which means major countries including Japan, Australia, and India also commit to active roles in forming security coalitions against China's expansionism. The current competitions between China and liberal countries are characterized as a geo-strategic game in the Indo-Pacific region. It implies that it is reshuffling not only geo-political arrangement but simultaneously, perhaps more importantly, extending a geo-economic terrain in Asia. South Korea is not an exception of the recent geo-strategic changes and challenges. South Korea needs to pay special attention to the changes.

Keywords: Indo-Pacific Strategy, Arms Building, Balancing, Maritime Security, China

Change of Strategic Environment and Korea's War Strategy: "Hyper-Blitzkrieg" through Strategic Paralysis by Fire

Yoonkee Han and Hanbyeol Sohn

This paper aims at how the Korean military will plan and prepare for war in the changing strategic environment. The change in the threat posed by North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons is critical and imminent, and the development of missile technology and the "war revolution" brought by advanced military technology are leading to changes in the aspect of war. In planning the war, the Korean military needs to meet the strategic requirements of countervailing threats, minimizing damage, preventing nuclear use and third-party intervention, and achieving the defense goal of conditions shaping for reunification. To meet the changing strategic environment and strategic needs, this paper put forward "Hyper-Blitzkrieg" as the concept of Korea's war strategy. Hyper-Blitzkrieg is a strategic level concept, which aims to change the regime of North Korea and seeks strategic paralysis by fire with missile as a key means. It aims to prevail the effects of North Korea's strategic surprise attacks, paralyze the North's ability and will to conduct war, remove the regime and establish an alternative regime. In order to achieve the strategic concept, "core capability" for paralysis by fire, "major capability" for completing the missile defense cycle, national security and crisis management systems, the creation of designate units, and the protection of the people were presented as "infrastructure capability."

Keywords: War Strategy, Blitzkrieg, Hyper-Blitzkrieg, Paralysis by Fire, Rapid Terminative Maneuver, Regime Change

Japan's Regional Initiative as a Geo-Strategy: Focusing on the Indo-Pacific Vision

Ga-ram Hwangbo and Chang-Gun Park

The purpose of this study is to examine how Japan's regional initiative is being unfolded. The focus of this discussion is to track the process that Japan's regional initiative has shifted from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific from the perspective of geo-strategy. This study focuses on the current status and prospects of the Abe government's regional initiative from the multi-faceted perspective of Japan's international structure and norms as an actor in the Indo-Pacific. This is because there are various factors such as regionality and geographical factors, as well as the interests of domestic politics, in order to establish a regional initiative. This study explores to how Japan's Indo-Pacific vision has surfaced though Geo-strategy in terms of regionality, quality of stratum, and connectivity. Because Geo-strategy mean that political, economic and cultural elements are interlinked and expressed as strategy in geographical space. The Indo-Pacific vision as a geo-strategy is a new approach to broaden Japan's diplomatic role during the G2 era, and the scope of the region has been broadened by moving from East Asia to Indo-Pacific, and regional issues have changed ocean-centric. In addition, the regional economy shows a change in the trade regime that emphasizes connectivity. On the other hand, Japan's Indo-Pacific vision has the limitation that there are no institutionalized partnerships, the participating countries have a great difference in perception, and the concept of "Indo-Pacific region" among Japanese people is still ambiguous. Nevertheless, when it comes to the Indo-Pacific vision, we cannot deny that Japan's regional initiative has been changing from East Asia to Indo-Pacific. As the strategic competition between the United States and China intensified, Japan needed to have a broader strategic space. Therefore, Japan's Indo-Pacific vision focuses on strengthening the linkages between regions using an identity or "connectivity" of a maritime country while accommodating this international environment.

Keywords: Japan, Indo-Pacific Vision, Regionality, Quality of Stratum, Connectivity