It is doubtless that South Korea’s hard power and soft power has increased to a large extent for the latter half of the 20th century. While hard power’s trajectories has been strongly guided by the governmental sector with relatively grand and clear design, South Korea’s soft power has appeared influential without explicit planning stages. South Korea’s cultural products, institutional settings, and human resources acquired significant numbers of audience in East Asia, and even beyond Asia.

The mixture of hard and soft power, the so-called smart power, will be an important subject in thinking about South Korea’s future foreign policy. Advanced countries are differentiated from less developed countries in that they have pre-devised grand strategy in pursuing foreign policies. It is not an easy task to have a mutually coordinated view about every issue area of foreign policies. Frequently, foreign policies in separated areas produce results which are unexpected from the initial planning, making self-organizational emergence of national developmental direction. South Korea has not been different from other developing countries in that it has not rendered explicit grand strategy from political, military, economic, to cultural and foreign strategy. It lacked the soft power or knowledge power to predict the future situations and cope with structural constraints.

At the outset of the 21st century, South Korean leaders attempt to have a broader and more systemic national grand strategy in each area. In the area of foreign policy, South Korea tries to advance more developed grand design, specifying the long-term goal of foreign policies, explicit definition of diverse threats, national power and policy means, and the relationship of subcategories of policy agendas.

How to develop soft power will be one of the crucial agendas in the world where the megatrend of globalization, information revolution, and democratization emphasizes the importance of soft power. Strategy of developing and using soft power to realize foreign policy goals, however, is a challenging task. As the definition,
working mechanism, and exact effects of soft power is not validated theoretically and in reality, one should be very cautious in using the term and the power resources in real process of policy implementation.

In this paper, I will first, explain renewed South Korea’s thinking about grand foreign policy. Second, I will discuss the possible importance of soft power in security strategies. Third, I will go into the case of North Korean question, especially North Korean nuclear problems, showing how South Korea’s soft power might or is expected to work.

II. South Korea’s grand strategy in foreign affairs

Grand strategy in foreign affairs is composed of the following considerations: long-term goal of foreign policies; definition of friends and foe; nature of external threats; availability of a range of policy means; extent of relevant actors and regions; future status of the country in the system. Unlike great powers which have planned complex grand strategies and supported them by concreted policy means, small powers have had difficult times to make a grand strategy, and more difficulties in implementing it facing systemic constraints. South Korea, as a relatively weak country, has failed to make a coherent, and long-term grand strategy in foreign affairs. After entering into the modern states system, South Korea has suffered from competitive nature of international relations among surrounding great powers. The analogy of 19th century Chosun before Japanese colonization has contributed to the formation of particular diplomatic culture and strategic culture of South Korea.

With severe systemic constraints coming from the Cold War disappearing, South Korea has realized the need to produce a grand strategy in foreign affairs. Rapid economic development and political democratization, with a certain level of socio-cultural achievements stimulated the need for a long-term view. From the outset of this century, several objectives of foreign affairs has been on the agenda: how to achieve the status of middle power in regional and global politics; formation of vision and value of South Korea’s foreign policy and the construction of diplomatic and strategic culture; how to define the region that is closely related to South Korea’s national interests; how to set future time plan for realizing strategic goals; future possibility of extending South Korea’s influence globally; how to establish mutually favorable strategic relations with surrounding four great powers conducive to South Korea’s survival; how to establish endurable peace regime on the Peninsula by
solving North Korean problems; right path for future economic development producing new engines for the future; how to enhance socio-cultural achievements.

Whether South Korea may approach to these goals depend upon the nature of international relations, especially that of Northeast Asia. This region is characterized by particular features, different from other regions, requiring specific views of regional order and international relations. Theoretically this region has the following features: co-working of balance of power and power transition mechanisms; incomplete formation of modern state-units; the continuation of traditional and modern-transitional features of international relations in many issues such as nationalism, territorial disputes; lack of regional multilateral cooperative mechanisms; and then, composition of different organizing principles and constitutional structures.¹

Lacking Northeast Asian cooperative mechanisms, countries in this region still relies upon self-help, bilateral alliance networks, the role of extra-regional global power such as the US, and weak multilateral dialogues such as the Six Party Talks. Rapid power transition coming from the rise of China, and the development of Russia, for example, complicates the scene of balance of power competition. More complicated is the fact that this transition is not happening in the typical modern settings. Two China, two Koreas, and still not “normal” Japan tries to achieve unified, or modern status of state units, of which the origin lies in the first half of the 20th century. Systemic legacy goes further back to the 19th century when the ideology of nationalism and new politics of territorial competition started with the modern logic of international relations. Memory politics or the politics of identity in modern transition, and unfinished controversy of territorial demarcation is mixed with modern logic of balance of power. Development of civil society and new movement to make effective multilateral dialogue might help solve these problems. State-centric international relations might be overcome with the advent of more governance-type constitutional structures, even though democratization of China and North Korea is still to be accomplished.

South Korea’s survival and development, then, depends on the future architecture of Northeast Asian regional political for the most part. Unless the basic mechanism of the region is transformed from balance of power system to multilateral cooperative networks, South Korea will continuously subject to great powers’ possible rivalry which has prevented it from sustaining meaningful grand strategies. South Korea’s grand strategy in foreign affairs, then, should be transformative of the regional politics. Obviously, weak powers’

foreign strategies are diverse as Paul Schroeder said: bandwagoning, hiding, transcending, and balancing.\textsuperscript{2} However, with multipolar competition in which coercion not much as aggression is being used, relatively less strong states such as South Korea will be in the middle of great powers’ rivalry. South Korea, then, should strive to transform the current competitive architecture of regional order into more cooperative, and multilateral one.

The question, then, is whether it is really possible for a relatively weak state such as South Korea can contribute to the transformation of constitutional features of international politics? If South Korea intends to achieve this objective, what should be the right policy measures? Especially in the “hard” domain such as foreign affairs in general, and security affairs in particular, what kind of “soft power” may help South Korea achieve this indispensible purpose?

III. Soft power and Security policy of South Korea

It is obvious that security can be guaranteed by hard power such as military and economic power, espoused by proper institutions such as alliance and collective security. The problem, however, is that under the changing security environments especially under the logic of balance of power or power transition, security by hard power is subject to countless factors of uncertainty. “Soft” aspects of security policy, such as the strategic knowledge and vision, role perception, and diplomatic and strategic culture will be the counterpart with “hard” aspect of security policy. Soft aspects of security policy are differentiated not just by the nature of these powers, but the characteristics of the power field. Soft power is wielded in a mutually interacting power field, in which the objects of power is attracted or persuaded, rather than coerced or oppressed. Then, the subjects who use soft power need to emphasize the common interests of the actors involved, rather than pursue his own interests.\textsuperscript{3}

Soft power in security policy should concern the joint vision of the actors involved, with specification of how to solve the security dilemma, how to aim at constructing mutually beneficial security institutions, and how


to transform the balance of power logic and manage the process of power transition.

Hard and soft power in security affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maintaining status quo</th>
<th>transformative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hard power</strong></td>
<td>Arms, alliance, and domination</td>
<td>Hegemony, imperialism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soft power</strong></td>
<td>Conflict resolution, security cooperation</td>
<td>Collective security, security community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conditions for “effective” soft power for non-great powers such as South Korea in foreign and security affairs are not easy to define. It has been the case that security affairs have been decided by great powers with hard power measures. Favorable factions in the current Northeast Asia, however, are not lacking. With the end of the Cold war, great powers’ rivalry both in hard and soft areas became much lessened. Even though the modern logic of balance of power is still formidable in this region, cooperations among great powers are principal possibilities. Second, structural changes such as increasing economic interdependence, broad socio-cultural exchanges and growing concerns about human security affairs allow countries in this region to sustain a series of dialogues and to regard security affairs from the perspective of common and transnational issues. Third, democratization with the trend of information revolution tends to create regional, transnational civil society, and regional public realm. Citizens in South Korea, Japan, and China meet on-line to discuss common interests either in cooperative or competitive moods. Security affairs, in this process, cannot be monopolized by governmental sectors in information and decision-making procedure.

Soft power comes from knowledge, institution, culture, and human resources. If a country and that country’s message, behavior, and vision look attractive, other countries develop favorable perceptions and emotions toward that country, receiving more voluntarily those messages and visions. South Korea’s soft power in security affairs should have the following conditions. First, South Korea’s vision for the desirable security architecture should benefit not only South Korea, but also other countries equally. Any intention to develop and use soft power only for selfish reasons will fail, because the motive of selfish actors will not attract other audiences. Second, South Korea’s knowledge for the future security order should be very realistic and achievable. Theoretical analysis and practical implementation of any security affairs should be very plausible not to appear as idealistic. Third, South Korea needs to cooperate with other states in making future security
visions, which require not soft balancing, but soft network. Compiling, networking, and coordinating knowledge and information concerning security affairs will be significant. Fourth, South Korea needs to define its role with other states’ roles in a broader picture. As a relatively weak state, South Korea’s role has its own restraints. Restraints in soft power, however, are different from those in hard power. Critical is whether South Korea has developed its domestic network of knowledge, vision, and practical performance with various sectors of the society, regarding security affairs. With better resources of soft power, South Korea might work as a convener, mediator, agenda-setter, and moral force.

IV. North Korean problem and South Korea’s role with soft power

North Korean problem, best represented by North Korean nuclear crisis, provides a good example of underlying structural complexity of seemingly simple security matter. As well known, North Korean nuclear crisis is a problem of WMD proliferation and transfer. North Korea’s behavior of developing nuclear programs and weapons poses serious challenges to international community trying to preventing the proliferation of WMDs and further WMD terrorism.

Limiting the dimension of North Korean problem to the issue of nonproliferation, giving incentives and putting sanctions might be the major dimension of the debate. However, North Korean nuclear issue comes from more complicated structural factors of Northeast Asia. North Korea is a divided country, with exceptional totalitarian communism, under the threatening post-Cold War international situations to them. To have the security guarantee of the leadership, the regime, the system, and the country, North Korea desperately develops nuclear weapons. North Korea fears being united by South Korea, being challenged by its own people, and being threatened by outside powers for any reasons. Solution of North Korean nuclear crisis in any forms, will raise other issues regarding the future strategic orientation of North Korea, inter-Korean relations, changing balance of power in the region, and durable peace mechanism both in the Peninsula and the region.

In this sense, North Korean nuclear crisis is a crisis threatening surround countries’ security and international norms, but it is also an opportunity by which Northeast Asian countries solve North Korean problem as a whole and establish multilateral regional security mechanism conducive to transcend the current bare balance of power logic.
Solving the problem of North Korea as a political and international question, requires multi-layered visions and strategies, which South Korea can help to develop. It is a question of hard power to deter North Korean aggression and defend against North Korea’s attack. Also it is a question of economic power to put pressure and sanction upon North Korea. However, soft measures are indispensible in defining and analyzing the nature of North Korean problems, designing and implementing proper North Korea strategy, and suggesting the vision of solving the problems and Northeast Asian region with post-nuclear North Korea.

Then, what will be the role of South Korea in dealing with North Korean problem? First, South Korea may perform a mediating role in advancing the negotiation. Negotiation requires precise knowledge of the counterpart’s intention and resources. South Korea, with precise knowledge of North Korea’s true intention and strategic dilemma, may advance acceptable plans both to North Korea and the United States who are two main actors in North Korean nuclear crisis.

Second, South Korea may perform a role of long-term planner for North Korean problem. For this specific issue, all actors need to devise a common strategy about "the future of North Korea" by having strategic dialogue on that issue, not just on the issue of North Korean nuclear problems. It has been extremely hard to "study" North Korea due to the lack of data and information. Past experience in dealing with North Korea for the last sixteen years, however, has been a learning process for both South Korea and the US about what kind of state North Korea is, what purposes North Korea really pursue, and what coercions North Korea really fears. If South Korea systematically processes the past experience and reflects upon two countries policy results, new policy knowledge network can be established.

South Korea also needs to devise a long-term engagement plan for North Korea, and determine and prepare for the time when the South make an end to its policy of "neglect" and actively engage with the North. Without a long-term strategy of engagement that goes beyond both Sunshinist version of engagement and benign neglect, South Korea's policy cannot succeed as of now. "The Third Approach" with well-planned engagement on the one hand, and clear-cut coercion against North Korea's wrongdoings on the other hand, will be necessary.

Further, it will be desirable if South Korea succeeds in search for new policy issues that will contribute to the project of "normalizing North Korea." This should be distinguished from just rewarding the North for its behavior in the process of nuclear negotiations. The project of "normalizing North Korea" will include political, diplomatic, military, economic, and socio-cultural one, which is nearly a project of "state-building process." South Korea need to convince the North that common projects of South Korea and the US is about the long-term
future of North Korea. These projects might concern long-term policy areas such as education, infrastructure, and state finance. South Korea and the US, then, need to find out new policy issues that will contribute to the most fundamental purposes.

Third, South Korea need to broaden the perspective of the question, reaching a new discourse and vision about the "future governance" on the Peninsula which goes beyond limited imagination of making one "modern" nation state. If South Korea pays special attention to the process of various regional networks, new visions about how two Koreas will coexist peacefully under changing environments might grow. It is a possibility that the concept of "national sovereignty" is changing slowly but fundamentally, enlightening the future course of new governance of the Peninsula.

Fourth, South Korea might work to design a new security framework in which North Korean problems are dealt with multi-layered networks. South Korea may design a new multilateral framework to deal with North Korean nuclear problem and the problem of North Korea itself. The current six-party talks lost momentum not just because of North Korea's provocations, but also due to rising skepticism in other countries as well. To solve North Korean problem, the six-party talks need to be restructured as a complex network of multilateral, minilateral, and a set of bilateral talks to deal with diverse issues covering from nuclear ones to ones for normalizing the North. To do this, South Korea needs to consult with other countries in the region, especially China and Russia about the desirable future of North Korea. South Korea should draw common understanding that transformed North Korea and new inter-Korean relationship will not hurt Chinese or Russian national interests, and that North Korea's conformity to international norms will benefit them.

Fifth, South Korea can develop a sense of political prudence in dealing with North Korean problem, or possibility with other regional problems as well. Then, South Korea needs to strengthen realist notion of prudence, by keeping away from moral judgment of North Korea and focusing upon specific issues guided by strategic principles. New systems of discourse and speech acts need to be developed to differently represent North Korea in public discourse. New concepts and new sets of hypotheses will convince not only publics in Northeast Asian countries, but also North Korean leadership. "Smart" engagement should include both "hard" and "soft" means.

V. Expanding South Korea’s role toward the region
Solving serious security problems such as North Korean nuclear crisis with enlightened level of soft power will be notable, much more with the possibility of transforming the current balance of power logic into regional multilateral ones. As discussed above, Northeast Asia moves by the logic of balance of power. All great powers have been former imperialist powers, striving for regional or global leadership or hegemony in the 21st century. In the midst of efforts toward regional cooperation and integration, the situation of Northeast Asia is deplorable. Therefore, the most fundamental role for South Korea must be a facilitator for regional mediation of conflicts, and subsequently a transformer of the logic of balance of power. Of course, South Korea does not have sufficient power to transform the organizing principle of the region, especially hard power, which situates South Korea only in the place of incomplete “soft transformer” that is, a middle power who tries to change the basic logic of regional order by relying on soft power resources such as mediating policy ideas, knowledge, and cultural influence. If South Korea works successfully to transform the regional order, then it role would be emulated by other middle powers in other regions.

Moreover, Northeast Asia is doubly defined by balance of power and power transition. If states and people in the region fail to manage the phenomenon of power transition, the gloomy prediction of power transition theorists will materialize by producing hegemonic war or strife among major powers. Fortunately in the 21st century, power transition is transition of soft power, as well as that of hard power. The hegemonic candidate, in the era of informatization and democratization, needs to develop the soft power resources to lead the region, inventing better soft power vision for the region than that of existing hegemon. Then, soft power transition occurs during the times of rise of competing states, making the regional identity, normative politics more complicated. For example, China tries to strengthen its soft power strategy, both to advance a better regional framework than that of the US, and to search for the space of soft balancing against the US with possible soft power alliances.

In this process, the role of middle power might be enhanced in mediating great power competition based on soft power type of justice, reasonableness, and normative politics, rather than on pure hard power competition. For mediation, literature has converged on three basic styles that mediators can adopt in their efforts to resolve the facilitator, the formulator, and the manipulator. South Korea, as a mediator as facilitator, serves as a channel of communication among disputing parties. This type of mediation is also referred to as third-party consultation, good offices, or process facilitation. Also it can work as a mediator as formulator.
Unlike facilitation, formulation involves a substantive contribution to the negotiations, including developing and proposing new solutions to the disputants, to assist the disputants when the parties reach an impasse in the negotiation process.\(^4\)

It is not obvious if South Korean soft power might grow to go beyond an actor with some soft power in dealing with problems of Korean Peninsula. But South Korea’s future role of mediator and “soft transformer” seems not to be an option, but an imperative for its own survival and sustainable development.

---