

**Alon Levkowitz: The Security Aspect of
Kim Dae-Jung's policy: The TMD Case**

Critique by Dr. Sebastian Harnisch
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Heidelberg, May 30, 2000

The TMD Case

- Very good paper:
 - A very important and pressing issue
 - A very well researched paper with lots of (technical) information
 - A very useful list of pros and cons of TMDS from a South Korean Perspective
 - A clear hypothesis with some theoretical underpinnings

Main argument I

- ROK policy to stay out of US-TMDS reflects broader policy regarding the desired degree of military independence => autonomy seeking
- Based on (neo)realist alliance theory small allies face three policy options:
 - Dependent path
 - Middle compromise
 - Limited dependency

Main argument II

- President Kim had to play a two-level-game convincing the US to support his policy and the conservative Korean public (defense establishment);
- therefore he chose a mix of Sunshine policy plus deterrence (p. 3, 4)

Criticism I: Theoretical Perspective

- Assumption of autonomy seeking behaviour of small allies in alliances (p. 14)
 - is substituted with liberal argument about interest group formation and personal preference of KDJ for Sunshine policy (p. 3,4)
 - is substituted with the argument that the term independence is socially constructed, i.e. differently understood or perceived (p.16)

Criticism II: Policy Perspective

- Is there supporting data for the independence hypothesis in the security realm
 - independent nuclear weapons development;
 - long-range-missile development to balance J, PRC?
- Did the China factor weigh in?
- Will South Korean Chaebol look for international markets after the Defense spending meltdown due to the East Asian Financial crisis?
- Will KDJ use his missile option to negotiate away DPRK short-range missiles?

Conclusion

- **Theoretically:** several added assumptions about ROK preferences fudge a clear causal pathway (e.g. autonomy seeking accelerates under KDJ?)
- **Empirically:** autonomy hypothesis does not fit easily into recent pattern of ROK binding behaviour, i.e. Joining MTCR, ROK-J alignment; TCOG; KEDO; other multilateral initiatives
- **Policy-oriented:** Does autonomy seeking behaviour mean independence in case of future Korean unification? I doubt!!

**Manfred Pohl: Creating Tension, Repelling
Rapprochement – and Seeking Help: The Paradox of
North Korean Policy on the Korean Peninsula**

Critique by Dr. Sebastian Harnisch
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Paradox of North Korea's Unification Policy

- Very good paper:
 - Important and pressing problem
 - interesting personal insights
 - A useful account of North Korean Perspective on Unification
 - Balanced judgement on prospects of Korean Unification

Character of the paper

- Rather a policy-oriented paper than a scientific paper in a theoretical sense
- Main arguments:
 - KDJs sunshine policy is well taken since NOK will never succumb to foreign pressure (p. 2, 9)
 - NOK blackmailing strategy is rational and has so far paid off by stabilizing the regime
 - Korean Unification has to occur gradually not to overwhelm South

Criticism and points for discussion

- Benign neglect of nuclear and missile issue:
 - Even if one does not subscribe to US position, the perception that NK might have developed a nuclear device or will be able to build a Taepo-Dong II in the near future has already had and certainly will have significant effects on NEA security and global insitutions
- Limited role of PRC as a „big brother“:
 - although PRC remains outside KEDO, Beijing has been helpful in bringing Geneva accord about and has been supportive of KEDO process

Criticism and points for discussion

- Unification scenario - ROK blocking refugees:
 - It's imaginable that ROK blocks – it is plausible? Refugees might turn North to China or East to Japan, so an international understanding might be necessary
- After Unification Korea develops unified, anti-Japanese nationalism:
 - Q: If nationalism is that strong, why does it not guide policy now;
 - A: in event of unification, Korea needs all its friends it has
=> KDJ administration seems to have understood that it needs Japan to stabilize NK; from my point of view administration could lead society into more friendly relations with Japan