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The scientific and expert support of cooperation between America and South Korea

Abstract. *Throughout history, the relations between America and South Korea have been considered friendly. The Republic of Korea undoubtedly is one of the fastest developing countries of the XXI century. The latest achievement in the economical, scientific, and technical progress of South Korea is impossible to be left unnoticed. However, according to different opinions made by experts all over the World, there is an idea that the main reason for such progress is concerned with mutual cooperation, existing between America and South Korea. As generally known, this cooperation is mainly directed to economics and military activities between them, and these basic directions are becoming one of the matters of dispute between the rivalry of China and America. Thuswise, it is clear fact that the future geopolitical situation in the Asian-Pacific region also depends on the progress or regress in the relations between South Korea and America.*

This article is aimed to analyze various experts' and scientists' opinions about the cooperation between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea. The researchers have been chosen among experts from several Western countries, including research institutions and think tanks. There were used various scientific methods of preparing the article as data selection, literature review, systematization of the gained information, and analysis of varied opinions and thoughts of the leading experts' conclusion in the frame of the given topic. Therefore, using the mentioned above methods, the authors of the given article had a try to analyze and compare these scientists' points of view to find out their common points due to the issue of the article.

Keywords: *scientific support, the U.S.-South Korea alliance, allies, cooperation, security partnership, military power, expert view.*

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Introduction

South Korea is an authentic country with an authentic culture and a lot of researchers around the world were attracted by its history, the development of international contacts, and the United States (hereinafter, US)-South Korean alliance that lifted from military cooperation to a bilateral alliance, specific cultural, linguistic,

demographic, and social changes, prospects for its progress and generally progress on the Korean Peninsula. Actually, starting from the Cold War period the Korean Peninsula took big attention of a lot of experts and researchers. The modern Trade War between two great countries as America and China is one of the most talked about and discussed topics both in the crowd and scientific world. Therefore, America and China

started to push their allies and partners to “choose sides”, using different methods to convince them to make the “right decision”. Today, in the Asia-Pacific region one of the most valuable partners is the Republic of Korea (hereinafter, ROK). The world has seen with its own eyes the success that South Korea has demonstrated lately. However, a lot of experts used to call South Korea a “shrimp” that got stuck in the fight with China and America, in other words - two “whales”, competing for leadership in the region, particularly in Korea.

It is widely known, that in the very beginning the rivalry took a place long before today’s Trade War. China and America had turbulence during Korean War, mentioning America became one of the closest allies of South Korea actually starting from that point in history. Starting from Truman’s decade, the US affected ROK’s both external and internal relations.

Research methods

There were used general scientific methods such as the selection of literature and its systematization, made it possible to create the first level for the analysis of various approaches, opinions, and points of foreign experts’ views about the development of cooperation between the United States of America and the Republic of South Korea. The analysis, as one of the main general logical methods, was used to identify the main topics and areas of the research on the US-ROK cooperation. A selection of data including demographics and indicators taken from RAND Corporation researchers’ works [1] constituted the next level of methodological approaches. The research used quantitative and qualitative methods for analyzing the selected data. Comparative analysis was used to identify common and specific features in the development of the U.S.-South Korea alliance. Moreover, such approaches as a descriptive method reveal the applied nature of the American and South Korean alliance. The synthesis method created the possibility of collection of various aspects of the issue under the research into a unitary whole to obtain the results of the study and formulate conclusions.

Discussion

Bruce W. Bennett, an adjunct international/defense researcher at the RAND Corporation and a professor at the Pardee RAND Graduate School, in the chapter named «South Korea: capable now, questions for the future» (2020) of the report done by RAND Corporation: «A Hard Look at Hard Power: Assessing the Defense Capabilities of Key US Allies and Security Partners» considers that the country is located in a heavily militarized region (North Korea, China, Japan), which poses challenges and threats in the field of national and regional security [2, p. 255-292].

According to the researcher, the greatest threat comes from North Korea. It is known that Pyongyang is ready to conduct the next 7th nuclear test with a «new type» weapon. US military support played a big role in containing North Korea.

The author analyzes the quality and quantity of the armed forces of South Korea, based on the overall demographic picture of the country, noting that the birth rate of the future age group of military personnel is reduced by 1.2 times. During incumbent President Moon Jae-in’s time (2017-2022) planned to reduce the size of the ROK armed forces from about 600,000 people (end of 2018) to 500,000 people (2022), while reducing the term of service of conscripts from 21.5 months to 18 months [2, P.268]. By 2026, the strength of the ROK armed forces will fall below 400,000 due to a combination of unfavorable demographics and a political decision to shorten the service life of conscripts [2, P.290].

New President Yoon Seok Yeol was elected in May 2022 and it is currently not possible to trace his actions to the country’s armed forces. The author calls the number of the country’s armed forces in active service one of the indicators of the country’s hard power, capable of countering any military action.

In our opinion, taking into account the current geopolitical situation, which, in addition to the actions of North Korea, is due to the deepening confrontation between the United States and China, there will be no reduction in the armed forces of South Korea, but, on the contrary,

their increase, taking into account the growth in the capabilities of the South Korean armed forces, which are currently the largest active forces equipped with many advanced weapons systems, some of which, as the author notes, are outdated and need to be replaced.

Giving a positive assessment of Korea's capabilities, the expert believes that in practice many elements of military and strategic development are carried out jointly with the joint command of the US and ROK armed forces: "The qualitative military potential of the Republic of Korea is growing to counter North Korean threats; however, these threats have increased significantly," as the author rightly concludes [2, p. 270]. For years, the American command in Korea was confident that the North Korean invasion could be repelled and contained. It should be noted that an American general was at the head of the unified command of the armed forces. This military dependency leaves the Korean military vulnerable to the US.

Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the South Korean armed forces, B. Bennet pointed out the main component: a strong alliance with the United States, being protected by the US extended deterrence, including the American nuclear umbrella [2, p.290]. Among the weaknesses, he highlights the main military weapons systems, the lack of ability to collect key intelligence information, especially on North Korean nuclear weapons; insufficient protection against North Korean weapons of mass destruction; lack of basic military equipment, etc. These problems can be solved with sufficient funding from the Ministry of National Defense, including adequate training and retraining of military personnel. And the author fully supports a strong military alliance with the United States, which increases the capabilities of the ROK.

A different point of view is shared by Marcus Noland, who is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the East-West Center and Executive Vice President and Director of Studies at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, DC, and he calls this collaboration «Alliances under stress» [3]

We decided to have a proper look to the research of the East-West Center because

the center incentivized better relations and understanding among the people of America and Eastern countries through cooperative study in the frame of their center. US Congress established the East-West Center in 1960, from that time the Center serves as a think tank, the place, where considered existing different sorts of information, making analyses, and discussions on hot topics of the modern world. The American government gives some funding for the given Center, but it is still an independent, public, nonprofit organization. Not including governmental support, it is also sponsored by private agencies, individuals, foundations, corporations, and governments in the region.

The researcher believes that the United States does not contribute to the rapprochement of South Korea and Japan, its allies, between which stands North Korea. Tensions between South Korea and Japan threaten American security interests. Tensions increased over trade violations in chemicals used in semiconductor manufacturing (August, 2019) when Japan initiated export controls on them, hurting South Korean competitors. In response, the South Korean government said it would refuse to renew the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), a bilateral intelligence-sharing agreement between South Korea and Japan. Its termination was a serious blow to American security interests.

Some political analysts have interpreted South Korea's withdrawal from the GSOMIA as a «call for a help» to Trump's United States, which would require serious personal involvement in diplomacy, which he did not seek. According to M. Noland, of the three governments, the United States has the most room for maneuvering but the Trump administration has been inactive, which has become serious long-term consequences for US security. Based on this situation, the author concludes that at this time, negotiations on the distribution of defense spending between the United States and South Korea became very contentious. This situation had a double effect: increased frustration in Seoul, and the realization that the United States could be an unreliable partner. In this case, South Korea and Japan

should themselves be responsible for the defense against North Korea, which has nuclear weapons. And then the author concludes that South Korea and Japan can become nuclear powers by developing nuclear potential a kind of stressful alliance [4, p.328].

One of the leading experts on South Korea, Gregg Brazinsky, recreates the stages of the creation of South Korea. Mentioning about US foreign policy, he highlights the main component which is state-nation building in the regions of the globe that have been freed from colonialism [4, p. 4]. The American professor believes that the South Korean state would never have arisen in 1948 without American intervention, without the great military and economic assistance of the United States [3, p. 24]. Washington has made huge investments just to promote democracy and security in this country. One of the main stages is institutional building in the face of civil society, forming an influence on South Korean society, restoring the country's education system, and professionalizing the media, which contributed to political change. However, the researcher focuses on the fact that security is more important than democracy, based on the fact that the country went through the war [4 p. 43].

The next step in institution building is the military one [4, p. 75]. At this point, the author concludes that the political leaders who were most successful in transforming South Korea into a modern, industrialized nation came from military forces. Although the prestige of the military declined throughout the 19th century, and during the 35 years of Japanese colonialism, no national armed forces existed in the peninsula.

Professor Brazinsky evaluates the contribution of Americans to stimulate demand for modernization and democracy among various groups of South Korean society, its sensitivity to socio-economic changes. He considers economic development to be more important than democracy, that is, once again it relegates democracy to the background, as in the case of security. Reflecting on the prospects for the development of South Korea, the professor shapes not only the presence of the country but also, its future in the face of the young generation

of South Koreans, in whose hands is the key to the economic and political development of the country. However, young people are both a source of hope and a source of anxiety because the main group of young people is students and intellectuals [4, p. 208].

Thus, the author, based on the analysis, presents how the transformation in South Korea in the 35 years after the Korean War became stunning and unpredictable. Since no one could have imagined that a once-considered economically hopeless country became the 11-1 economy of the world. Among the dozens of countries that emerged from formal colonialism after World War II, South Korea was one of a select few to achieve economic prosperity and political democracy. Not without the help of the United States.

On July 28, 2022, on the website of Chatham House, one of the leading think tanks in England and generally in the world, shortly before N. Pelosi's trip to Taiwan and South Korea, an article «Contested politics in South Korea» by Dr. John Nilsson-Wright appeared, Korea Foundation Korea Fellow and Senior Fellow for Northeast Asia, Asia-Pacific Program. The article identifies 5 stages of the country's political evolution after 1945: «illiberal democracy» (1945-60), «democratic authoritarianism» (1961-72), «authoritarian exclusivity» (1972-87), «democratic paternalism» (1987-2001) and «participatory democracy» (since 2002). The article argues that a number of researchers disagree on the strength and durability of democracy in South Korea. On the one hand, these opinions are based on the reliability of the political system, and on the other hand, mass protests, abuse of power, and identity politics negatively affect the process of democracy.

We consider it appropriate to provide a detailed disclosure of the democratic evolution of South Korea, which includes the following 5 stages:

1. A period of democratic innovation and experimentation that can best be described as an illiberal democracy from 1945 to 1960, marked by liberation from Japanese colonialism and the student- and academic-led «April Revolution» of 1960, which ended Rhee Syngman's presidency.

2. Decade of democratic authoritarianism from 1961 to 1972, following the military coup on May 16, 1961, orchestrated by Park Chung-hee.

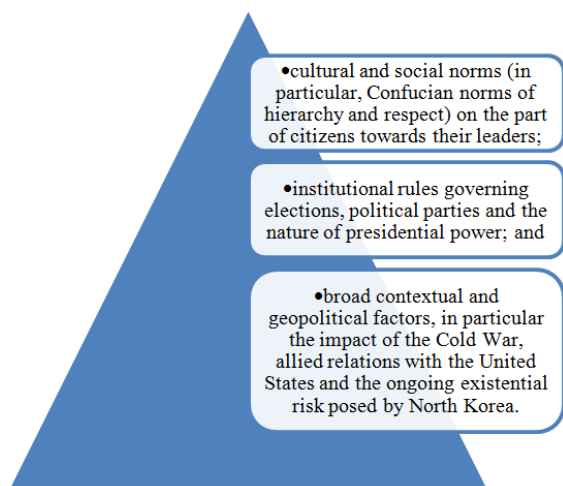
3. The introduction of clearer restrictions on political freedom, marked by the adoption of the Yusin Constitution in 1972, ushered in a period of authoritarian exclusivity and accelerated economic growth. This period, which was also marked by Park's assassination in 1979 and his eventual successor, General Chun Doo-hwan, culminated in the transition to civilian-led democratic governance in 1987.

4. The gradual strengthening of democratic norms and practices from 1987 to 2001, covering roughly the presidencies of Roh Tae-woo, Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung, which can be described as democratic paternalism.

5. And finally, the period from 2002 up to the present time, is characterized by a form of expanding participatory democracy, in which the use of social networks, the influence of modern technologies, and orderly public demonstrations suggest a partial weakening of the power of traditional political elites.

The author believes that culture, institutions, norms of identity, and geopolitics are the driving forces of political changes in the country. There are three groups of factors that influenced this process, which is demonstrated in chart 1.

Chart 1. Three groups of influencing factors to the political changes in South Korea



The main evidence that politics in South Korea continues to function according to

taken democratic norms is the orderly process associated with the March 2022 presidential election and the willingness of the electorate to make their choice based on their own interests. And here, common problems for politicians and the electorate appeared, such as support for the alliance between the United States and South Korea, maintaining a strong defense policy, the need to solve the problem of a growing China, strengthening the autonomy of South Korea as a diplomatic and economic entity in relations with North Korea.

The author's final conclusion is that democracy in South Korea continues and the future of the country's politics as a whole is bright.

Research Professor at the Institute of East Asian Studies at Sogang University in Seoul, Arnaud Leveau characterizes the period 2009-2012 as the deepening of relations between South Korea and the United States, one of the factors of which is increased coordination on the North Korean issue [5, p. 327 -342].

Having analyzed the development of relations, the author came to the historical method, outlining the main historical stages in the development of relations, starting from the 14th century, the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897).

The researcher believes that throughout the first half of the 20th century, the West showed limited interest in Korea. Relations between the two countries were strengthened during the Korean War (1950-1953). The Americans indirectly supported the bloody persecution in Gwangju in May 1980. South Korea supported the American war in Vietnam (1965-1973). There is a strong dependence on Korea on the United States.

The author identified 4 main threat factors to South Korea before the early 1970s:

- fear of a new invasion of North Korea,
- terrorist activities organized by North Korea, espionage, and destabilization attempts,
- fear of a further invasion of North Korea,
- very strong military dependence on the United States, including intelligence.

And we can sum it up in one-word security. Chart 2 shows visually the connection between these main threat factors.

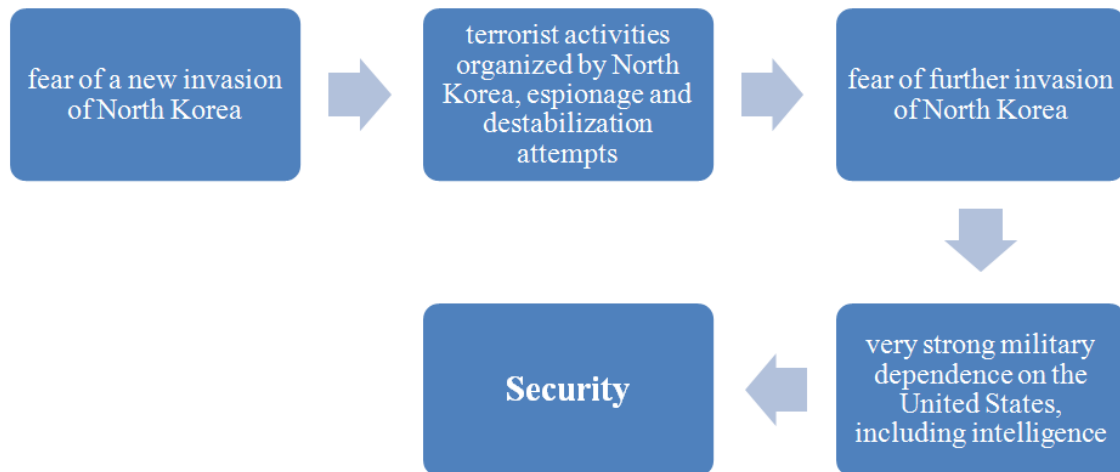


Chart 2. Main threat factors to South Korea before the early 1970s.

But since 1998, relations between the two countries have become increasingly problematic. There comes a delicate decade (1998-2008) when the United Democratic Party wants more independence from the United States. Further, the author deduces the next stage: alternation and convergence (2008-2012), characterized by the alternation of political changes after conservative Lee Myung-bak came to power in February 2008. In 2009 he opened a new Asian policy, which was included in a broader strategy called Global Korea. It is organized around the development of network diplomacy, the purpose of which is to move the alliance with the United States from the regional to the global level.

This alliance with the United States was originally conceived in response to the threat posed and continues to be posed by North Korea. If the North Korean issue remains the focus of the North Korean alliance, then from the point of view of the South Korean administration, it should be expanded to promote common values and be based on trust.

The author commented separately on the nuclear cooperation between South Korea and the United States in the field of civil nuclear energy continues, having begun in the 1960s. South Korean President Yun Sok-yeol, following talks with his American counterpart Joe Biden in May 2022, said that the countries would develop cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. Note that Biden arrived in South Korea for his first

summit with the newly elected president of the country, Yun Sok-yeol. South Korea was the first stop on Biden's Asia tour from May 20 to 24, 2022, demonstrating South Korea's role and importance to the United States in this Asian part.

According to A. Leveau, nuclear cooperation is part of the overall military cooperation (including agreements on cybersecurity and ballistic missile programs) between the two countries that both of them attach great importance, but with a greater emphasis on South Korea's dependence on the United States. The researcher believes that the political and military influence of the United States far exceeds its economic and commercial influence. Moreover, South Korea cannot fulfill the role of regional stabilizer that the country claims. And since the foreign policy of South Korea depends on changes in domestic policy, it cannot perform this function of a stabilizer. It should be borne in mind that China and Japan are very strong players in the region, to which South Korea is inferior and which does not have many opportunities to consolidate its position in the region. The author expresses the idea that it is important for South Korea to develop cooperation with Europe, Australia, Canada, and Southeast Asia. And this cooperation should become an imperative of the country's foreign policy.

Senior Research Fellow at IRIS, Barthelemy Courmont believes that Joe Biden's work in Asia is to unite all of Washington's historical partners and allies in confronting China in the political

and technological fields and also to find new allies. The May 2021 meeting between Joe Biden and President Moon Jae-in was significant in 2 ways:

- the first summit between Moon Jae-in and his American counterpart Donald Trump in 2017 contributed to the rupture of relations between the two countries in trade relations, as Trump pursued his trade policy and «trade wars» against Beijing,

- Donald Trump's presidency was marked by 3 meetings with Kim Jong-un, which, despite the lack of drastic measures, became a turning point in US policy on the peninsula. The meetings were part of Moon Jae-in's peninsula appeasement policy, dedicated to bringing Seoul back to the forefront of the inter-Korean diplomatic scene.

According to the international political scientist, Biden wants to take his position in the inter-Korean affair, putting the nuclear issue at the center of negotiations. The US is unhappy with South Korea's signing of the RCEP in November 2021, which was signed by Japan and China also. The United States sees this alliance as a threat to its activity in the region. Trade relations with Washington are strong and important for Seoul, and Beijing remains a constant partner of South Korea, and therefore any attempts by the Biden administration to torpedo relations between Seoul and Beijing will be treated pragmatically and cautiously in South Korea.

The researcher analyzes the position of South Korea as a leading technological power, which makes it a competitor to Japan and causes tension on the part of the United States.

B. Courmont draws attention to the fact that South Korea and Japan have been united by strategic partnerships and the Free Trade Agreement: behind this equation are the relations between Washington and its main Asian allies, which have changed, just as the whole world has

changed, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. Also, the author asks the following question: how does the United States view an ally like South Korea, is it a partner treated as an equal, or an ally by circumstance? [6]

Conclusion

The visits of D. Biden and N. Pelosi to South Korea testify to the high level of US interest in the situation on the Korean Peninsula, especially in the context of containment policy. Seoul and Washington are intensifying bilateral military cooperation in order to contain Pyongyang. This means that the allies are resuming full-scale military maneuvers, and the United States will send strategic weapons to Korea.

An analysis of articles, monographs, and reports by American and French researchers showed that the new government of South Korea confirmed its intention to cooperate more actively with Washington, following its global policy forward. Particular attention is paid to economic security, technology, and active participation in various regional political and trade, and economic structures created by the United States. Moreover, the new president of South Korea supports the US strategy in the Indo-Pacific region. However, Seoul promised to actively participate in American programs in building new global supply chains, and cooperation schemes, creating production chains where there is no Chinese presence and where the strategy of technological isolation of the Celestial Empire is being implemented, ensuring, on the one hand, its economic security, on the other hand, violating the regional balance of power and hindering regional cooperation.

South Korea will continue to depend on the United States. The main driver of this dependence is North Korea.

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АҚШ және Оңтүстік Корея арасындағы ынтымақтастықтың ғылыми-сараптамалық сүйемелденуі

Аңдатпа. Америка мен Оңтүстік Кореяның бүкіл тарихында, олардың арасындағы қатынастарды достық қатынастар ретінде саналатын. Корея Республикасы сөзсіз, ХХІ ғасырдағы ең қарқынды дамып келе жатқан елдердің бірі. Оңтүстік Кореяның экономикалық, ғылыми және техникалық ілгерілеуінің соңғы жетістіктеріне назар аудармауға мүмкін емес. Алайда, бүкіл әлемдегі сарапшылар жасаған әр түрлі пікірлер бойынша, мұндай прогресстің басты себебі Америка мен Оңтүстік Корея арасындағы өзара ынтымақтастыққа қатысты деген ой бар. Әдетте, бұл ынтымақтастық негізінен олардың арасындағы экономикалық және әскери іс-әрекетке байланысты және бұл Қытай мен Американың бәсекелестері арасындағы даулардың негізгі бағыттарының бірі болып табылады. Осылайша, болашақ Азия-Тынық мұхиты аймағындағы болашақ геосаяси жағдай Оңтүстік Корея мен Америка арасындағы қатынастардың күшеуі немесе нашарлануына да байланысты екені түсінікті.

Бұл мақалада, Америка Құрама Штаттары мен Корея Республикасы арасындағы ынтымақтастық туралы түрлі сарапшылар мен ғалымдардың пікірлерін талдауға бағытталған. Зерттеушілер бірнеше батыс елдерінің сарапшылары арасында, соның ішінде ғылыми-зерттеу мекемелері мен сарапшылар орталықтары арасында таңдалды. Мақаланы даярлау барысында, әртүрлі ғылыми әдістер қолданылды, атап айтқанда: мәліметтерді таңдау, әдебиетке шолу, алынған ақпаратты жүйелеу, алынған ақпаратты жүйелеу және әр түрлі пікірлерді талдау және осы тақырып бойынша жетекші сарапшылардың ойларының қорытындысы бойынша талдау жүргізілді. Сондықтан, аталмыш әдістерді қолдана отырып, берілген мақаланың авторлары осы ғалымдардың пікірлеріне байланысты олардың көзқарастарын талдауға және салыстыруға әрекет жасап көрді.

Түйін сөздер: ғылыми қолдау, АҚШ-Оңтүстік Корея Альянсы, одақтастар, ынтымақтастық, қауіпсіздік серіктестігі, әскери күш, сарапшылар пікірі.

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Научно-экспертное сопровождение сотрудничества между США и Южной Кореей

Аннотация. На протяжении всей истории отношения между Америкой и Южной Кореей считались дружелюбными. Республика Корея, несомненно, является одной из самых быстро развивающихся стран ХХІ века. Последние достижения в экономическом, научном и техническом прогрессе Южной Кореи