

Who Heightens Regional Tension?

Ha Eun Park

A thesis

submitted to the Faculty of

the Department of Political Science

in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the Graduate School of the Morrissey College of Arts & Sciences

Boston College
Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences
Graduate School

March 2022

Who Heightens Regional Tension?

Ha Eun Park

Advisor: Dr. Robert Ross

The regional great power competition between the United States and China is escalating in various dimensions such as economic, political, and security realms. Who instigates such tension and how? To answer these questions, this paper inquires whether it is the declining power, the United States, or the rising power, China, that causes regional tension to heighten. Applying the theories on power transition and power transition war to the three case studies on South Korea, Taiwan, and the South China Sea dispute in Vietnam, how the United States is provoking China to adopt policies that increase tension will be examined.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	iv
Introduction	1
1.0 Theories of Power Transition and War	4
1.1 Arguments on the Declining Power Initiating Power Transition War	4
1.2 Arguments on the Rising Power Initiating Power Transition War	8
2.0 Case Study 01: THAAD Deployment in South Korea	9
2.1 Introduction on THAAD	9
2.2 South Korea's Reluctance to Deploy THAAD	10
2.3 Analysis on American Policy Objective	13
2.4 China's Responses to Locating THAAD in South Korea	22
2.5 Summary of THAAD Case Study	26
3.0 Case Study 02: Improving U.S.-Taiwan Relations	27
3.1 Taiwan's Domestic Politics	28
3.2 American Policy towards Taiwan	29
3.2.1 President Trump and One China Policy	29
3.2.2 President Trump Administration's Arms Sales Policy	31
3.2.3 Taiwan Travel Act and High Official Visits to Taiwan.....	33
3.2.4 Legislative Changes to Enhance Security Cooperation with Taiwan	34
3.2.5 Trump Administration's Navy Transits	35
3.2.6 President Biden Administration Policy towards Taiwan.....	36
3.3 Analysis on the Reasons for the Changed American Policy	37
3.4 Analysis on Taiwan's Response to American Policy	40
3.5 China's Response	41
3.6 Summary of Taiwan Case Study	42
4.0 Case Study 03: Conflict in South China Sea and Vietnam	43
4.1 Introduction on the Maritime Dispute	43
4.2 Vietnam	46
4.3 American Policies toward Vietnam: 2012-2017	46
4.3.1 American Policies to Conflicts between China and Vietnam	47
4.3.2 General American Policies toward Vietnam	48
4.4 China's Policy Response	51
4.5 Summary of South China Sea and Vietnam Case Study	53
Conclusion	54
Bibliography	55

INTRODUCTION

The regional great power competition between the United States and China is escalating in various dimensions such as economic, political, and security realms. Since President Trump's administration, the trade war has escalated. Chinese economic and political influence on its neighboring countries in the region, Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia has grown; therefore, relatively decreasing American influence in these countries. As the United States holds security alliances with several countries in the region, a conflict of security interest between the two great powers is inevitable. It is, however, less clear which country is driving the increasing tension. Is it China, driving the status quo, or is it the United States, the regional hegemon that is relatively declining?

These questions relate to the key analytical issue of which country launches power transition and war. More specifically, when wars occur during a power transition, and what country launches the war? Like other subjects in the study of international relations, the answer to this question differs among scholars. Some scholars like Jacek Kugler A. F. K. Organski and Douglas Lemke assert that rising power initiates war between competing great powers.¹ Others like Jack Levy, Dale Copeland, Richard Ned Lebow, Robert Gilpin, and Benjamin Valentino contend that the declining power causes great power war.²

¹ A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2d ed., [rev.], New York: Knopf, 1968; Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (1988): 591–613, <https://doi.org/10.2307/204816>; Robert Gilpin and Jean M. Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987; Douglas Lemke and Ronald L. Tammen, "Power Transition Theory and the Rise of China," *International Interactions* 29, no. 4 (2003): 269–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/714950651>.

² Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *Causes of War*, Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010; Jack S. Levy, "Declining Power and the Preventive Motivation for War," *World Politics* 40, no. 1 (1987): 82–107, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2010195>; Richard Ned Lebow and Benjamin Valentino, "Lost in

Scholars present different arguments to explain why either the rising or declining power initiates war. While this paper does not argue whether the two regional great powers will wage war or not, the United States and China's behavior will be analyzed to assess which theory is the most helpful in explaining the escalating tension.

Using a case study analysis of the congruence method as a methodology, this paper asks "What bilateral dynamic between the two major powers causes the heightening of tension and who is this primarily provoked by?" Using the two theories on power transition war and three East Asian countries as case studies, whether the heightening of tension between the region and the great powers are caused by the declining power or the rising power will be considered. In specific, both American and Chinese foreign policy toward East Asian countries, in specific South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam, will be analyzed. These case studies will help to assess between the United States and China which country is more assertively exercising détente. The independent variable is the power transition, more specifically the decline of the United States and the rise of China. The dependent variable is heightening tension between the great powers.

Through this research, I argue that in the case of the United States and China, while no one state is innocent, examining the behavior of the two countries, the declining power, the United States, is the one that is escalating tension more often than that of the rising power, China. Using the theories of hegemonic war and the origin of major war, this paper argues theories that assert declining power originates from a major war, either implicitly or explicitly, are more helpful in understanding today's regional great power dynamic.

Transition: A Critical Analysis of Power Transition Theory," *International Relations* 23, no. 3 (September 2009): 389–410, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117809340481>.

The first chapter of this paper examines the literature on power transition and war to examine the debates on the literature on causes of war. Following the theoretical literature review, the following chapters will focus on empirical case studies that show how the declining power's policies toward smaller powers are provocative to the rising power that the rising power responds in a way that the tension is heightened. This leads the second chapter illustrates how American pressure to deploy THAAD in South Korea angered China so that it would respond in a way that tension heightens. The third chapter will examine how President Trump and President Biden's policies, which are different from that of predecessors, toward Taiwan led China to respond as it did so that the tension on the sovereignty and territorial dispute between the two countries increased. The fourth chapter focuses on how the changed American policy towards Vietnam under President Obama caused China to escalate the tension.

1.0 THEORIES OF POWER TRANSITION AND WAR

As briefly discussed above, the two mainstream theories on the power transition and the origin of the great power war are divided between the two schools. One school argues that declining power initiates the great power war while the other argues that it is the rising power that causes the great power war. Even though these theoretical discussions focus on the causation of great power war, analysis of such theoretical literature will help to examine the behavior of the United States and China in that it will present two perspectives that are most helpful to understanding the power transition and the ongoing power dynamic in East Asia.

1.1 ARGUMENTS ON THE DECLINING POWER INITIATING POWER TRANSITION WAR

The group of scholars contends that the declining power causes a power transition war. Levy contends that the declining power chooses to wage war because of preventive motives.³ It wages war to prevent continue rise of rising power and its declining ability to fight war.⁴ He suggests that the rational cost-benefit calculation based on expected-utility.⁵ More specifically, the declining power's calculation of the cost and benefits of delay and fighting now are critical.⁶ If the rising power's growth is not significantly influential and not threatening to the great power, the declining power is less likely to initiate a major war.⁷ However, if the declining power's relative power decline is great that its bargaining power in future will be affected, the declining power may be more prone to start the

³ Levy, "Declining Power," 82.

⁴ Ibid, 82.

⁵ Ibid, 95.

⁶ Ibid, 97-100.

⁷ Ibid, 97.

conflict.⁸ Other influential factors include the decline in relative military power affected by domestic variables such as national, social, or political changes.⁹ Levy, therefore, claims that while the preventive motives cannot solely explain why the declining power initiates war, if it is complimented by other variables, together, they can explain the causal sequence why the declining power would choose to initiate a preventive war.¹⁰ In a collaborative work with Jonathan M. DiCicco, Levy and DiCicco together contend that because the presence of rising power challenges the status quo, the declining power may initiate conflict to maintain its advantage.¹¹

Copeland suggests that the theory of the dynamic differentials explains how the fear of relative decline causes great powers to initiate major war.¹² This, however, may be restrained in certain polarity.¹³ Focusing on the importance of the notion of power itself, Copeland explains how the existing realist approaches in understanding the major war are incomplete; thereby, suggests dynamic realist theory of major war.¹⁴ In his theory of the dynamic differentials, he reasons why the rising states would not initiate war with a reason that under the presumption that its rise continues, they find it more advantageous to fight

⁸ Ibid, 97.

⁹ Ibid, 103-104.

¹⁰ Ibid, 105-106.

¹¹ DiCicco, Jonathan M., and Jack S. Levy. "Power Shifts and Problem Shifts: The Evolution of the Power Transition Research Program." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43, no. 6 (1999): 675–704. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/174600>, 695; Kugler, Jacek and A. F. K. Organski, "The Power Transition: A Retrospective and Prospective Evaluation," in *The Handbook of War Studies*, ed. Manus Midlarsky (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 187-188.

¹² Copeland, Dale C. *The Origins of Major War*. Ithaca [N.Y.]: Cornell University Press, 2000, 2.

¹³ Ibid, 2.

¹⁴ Ibid, 1-2.

in future rather than today.¹⁵ This theory is based on the preventive war logic.¹⁶ On the contrary, according to Copeland, a declining state initiates a war against the rising power for the following reasons. First, a declining state wage war because of power differentials.¹⁷ This is an important factor as if the declining state is incompatible to defeat the rising power, it would not initiate a war due to foreseen consequences.¹⁸ Second, as mentioned, Copeland considers polarity to be vital importance in determining whether the power transition causes war or not.¹⁹ He argues that wars are more likely in multipolarity than it is in bipolarity.²⁰ Third, a state's extent of declining power and its inevitability of decline is another influential factors that lead a declining power to initiate war.²¹ Such decline is presented in three forms. Entrenched relative stagnation that relatively declining powers' economic, technological, and social power declines.²² While a state may be militarily more powerful, its economic and potential power is relatively weaker.²³ Problem of power oscillations depict the declining state's military and geopolitical influence decline due to the rising states' short-term achievement in arms racing and alliance formation.²⁴ Thus, as Dale Copeland integrates, the risks of decline and the risks of inadvertent spiraling that are discussed in his dynamic realist theory of major war explain reasons the declining power initiates war against the rising power.²⁵

¹⁵ Ibid, 2-3.

¹⁶ Ibid, 4.

¹⁷ Ibid, 4.

¹⁸ Ibid, 4.

¹⁹ Ibid, 4-5.

²⁰ Ibid, 4-5.

²¹ Ibid, 5.

²² Ibid, 5.

²³ Ibid, 5.

²⁴ Ibid, 5.

²⁵ Ibid, 7.

Lebow and Valentino assert while the power transition is the consequence of major wars rather than the cause, the perception of strength causes the declining power to wage war.²⁶ They consider this perception of power to be of utmost importance in that this is even considered more critical than actual power.²⁷ This argument leads to the conclusion that if a major regional war breaks out between the United States and China, it will be because of the misperception of the United States that China's rise will be a great threat to its regional hegemon.²⁸

Analyzing Thucydides' theory of hegemonic war, Robert Gilpin contends that it is the systematic changes that lead the declining power to wage war.²⁹ The rising powers' disproportionate growth causes systemic change as its prominence and formation of alliances causes the international system to become bipolar.³⁰ By examining the Peloponnesian War, Gilpin suggests three factors that lead the declining state to initiate war.³¹ First, certain geographical and demographic feature. According to his analysis, Athens incremented its power because of harsh geographical conditions and its increasing population.³² Second, the economy and technology were influential in causing the Peloponnesian War.³³ More specifically, the naval technology advancement and the economic growth, due to increase in commerce, enabled Athens to grow both economic

²⁶ Lebow and Valentino, "Lost in," 389–406.

²⁷ Ibid, 407.

²⁸ Ibid, 408.

²⁹ Robert, Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (1988): 597. <https://doi.org/10.2307/204816>.

³⁰ Ibid, 596.

³¹ Ibid, 597-598.

³² Ibid, 597.

³³ Ibid, 598.

and military power that it threatened Sparta.³⁴ Such attributes parted in diversifying alliances.³⁵ Therefore, forming bipolar society. Third, the political instability contributed to leading the rising power to initiate war as the declining power became isolated while the rising power flourished.³⁶ Therefore, facing limited choices, the power transition war is initiated by the declining power.

1.2 ARGUMENTS ON THE RISING POWER INITIATING POWER TRANSITION WAR

Organski first proposed the power transition theory in 1958 with an argument that the rising power causes major conflict.³⁷ In his publication with Kugler in 1989, he argues that the dominant power's say is facts with the status quo explains if lack of incentive to change the status quo by initiating the war.³⁸ The dominant power, therefore, suppress its willingness to wage war against rising power.³⁹ However, when the rising power is displeased with the status quo and capability, specifically in the postparity period, it challenges the declining power and initiates major conflicts as it can marginal gains.⁴⁰ As the declining power would not allow such challenge, it will defend against such challenge and potentially the two countries will pursue war.⁴¹

³⁴ Ibid, 598.

³⁵ Ibid, 598.

³⁶ Ibid, 598.

³⁷ Kugler and Organski, "The Power," 171.

³⁸ Ibid, 187-188.

³⁹ Ibid, 187-188.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 189.

⁴¹ Ibid, 189.

2.0 CASE STUDY 01: THAAD DEPLOYMENT IN SOUTH KOREA

Using South Korea as a case study, this chapter highlights the role of how the declining power is the one that heightens tension during the power transition. The power transition process between two or more great powers causes tension to rise but states' responses escalate the tension and cause conflict. Leading this section to answer the following questions. How and why has the United States continuously pressured South Korea to deploy the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) since 2014. Regardless of having a security alliance with the United States, why did it take South Korea about two years to agree to such a proposal? What explains its reluctance? What was China's response? By responding to these questions, this chapter argues that the deployment of THAAD in South Korea and its hesitance in making an official commitment reflects American pressure on the South Korean government to support American policy to consolidate its alliance by deteriorating South Korea and China's bilateral relations.

2.1 INTRODUCTION ON THAAD

What is THAAD? THAAD detects a ballistic missile within two hundred kilometer distance and one hundred fifty kilometer height range, it will defend the territory as it seizes a falling ballistic missile.⁴² It is a part of American Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS)'s multi-layered defense and THAAD in especial targets to terminate missiles that are in high altitude at terminal stage.⁴³ There are four components per battery; and, these

⁴² Ethan Meick and Nargiza Salidjanova, *China's Response to U.S.-South Korean Missile Defense System Deployment and its Implications* (Washington, D.C., USA: United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2017), 3.

⁴³ Dong Yub Kim, "사드 한반도 배치의 군사적 효용성과 한반도 미래" [Military Effectiveness of THAAD Deployment and the Future of the Korean Peninsula], *Gukjejeongchinonchon* 57, no. 2 (2017): 298.

include AN/TPY-2 X-band radar, at the most 72 interceptors, launchers that are mounted by six to nine trucks, and THAAD Fire Control and Communication (TFCC) device.⁴⁴ When it is operating, an AN/TPY-2 X-band radar identifies external threat such as a missile.⁴⁵ When the instrument, THAAD, is identified, a THAAD Fire Control and Communications (TFCC) support and prepare for an attack on the detected threat.⁴⁶ Afterwards, launchers mounted by six to nine trucks fire interceptor, which uses kinetic energy, to eliminate the threat.⁴⁷ When necessary, such process is completed in less than four hours.⁴⁸

2.2 SOUTH KOREA'S RELUCTANCE TO DEPLOY THAAD

In June 2014, General Curtis Scaparrotti, who was the commander of the United States Forces Korea (USFK), asserted that he, as the commander, strongly advise South Korea to deploy an American initiative, THAAD, to the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses.⁴⁹ General Curtis presented it as if it was a defensive measure against North Korea's Rodong missile it fired on March 26, 2014, which this paper questions as it is not because of North Korea's missile testing but enrooted in great power competition.⁵⁰ In July 2016, which is after about two years since THAAD was officially suggested by the USFK,

⁴⁴ Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response*, 3.

⁴⁵ Ibid, Appendix.

⁴⁶ Ibid, Appendix.

⁴⁷ Ibid, Appendix.

⁴⁸ Kim, "사드 한반도," 300.

⁴⁹ Samuel (Songhoon) Lee, "Why Wouldn't S. Korea Want U.S. Missile Defenses?," CBS News, last modified June 3, 2014, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/u-s-proposes-advanced-missile-defense-system-in-south-korea/>.

⁵⁰ Sang-Hun Choe, "North Korea Launches Two Midrange Missiles," *The New York Times* (New York City, NY), March 25, 2014, [Page #], accessed February 22, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/26/world/asia/north-korea-launches-two-midrange-missiles.html>.

did South Korea issued a joint statement with the United States on their agreement of installation of THAAD in July 2016.⁵¹ Between 2014 and 2016, South Korea remained ambiguous and stressed “strategic ambiguity” in its stance on THAAD deployment.⁵² Why did it take South Korea about two years to come to such agreement? Regardless of having a security alliance with the United States, why did South Korea maintain strategic ambiguity for these two years?

First, having several domestic political issues, since it was suggested, former President Park Geun-Hye’s administration faced an increasingly low support rates and domestic opposition; therefore, becoming increasingly cautious in its policies that may affect public opinion. Since March 2014, when THAAD was first suggested, President Park’s administration faced several domestic political turbulences such as the sinking of

⁵¹ Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response*, 3-4.

⁵² Ho-Jin Lee, "Missile Defense and South Korea: President Park's Strategic Ambiguity Is Warranted," Brookings, last modified March 27, 2015, accessed February 22, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/missile-defense-and-south-korea-president-parks-strategic-ambiguity-is-warranted/>; On the sinking of Sewol Ferry, see BBC News, "Sewol Ferry: Bone of Missing Victim from South Korea Disaster Found," BBC, last modified May 17, 2017, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-39945224#:~:text=The%20Sewol%20sank%20off%20Jindo,floor%20and%20towed%20to%20port>; On the withdrawal of prime minister candidates’, see KookJe Newspaper Digital Contents Team, "박 정부 총리 후보 수난...1년5개월간 3명이나 낙마" [The Hardships of the Park Administration's Prime Minister Candidate... 3 People Fell out in 1 Year and 5 Months], Kookje Newspaper, last modified June 24, 2014, accessed February 25, 2022, <http://www.kookje.co.kr/news2011/asp/newsbody.asp?key=20140624.99002153904>; On the spread of MERS, see Financial News, "[사스·메르스 대응 어땠나②] 지지율 최저치 만든 차정부 '메르스 대응'" [[How Was the Response to SARS and MERS ②] The Government 'Response to MERS' that Made the Lowest Approval Rate], Financial News, last modified January 26, 2020, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://www.fnnews.com/news/202001262015503698>.

the Sewol ferry in April 2014, prime minister candidates' withdrawals due to political scandals, and the spread of epidemic, the East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). These led to a low support rate for President Park's administration as it was only 29 percent.⁵³

Second, the South Korean government questioned General Curtis's assertion that it is needed to defend against North Korea. Even though THAAD is a mean of defense mechanisms, as its primary function is to seize ballistic missiles that are in high elevation, it is an inadequate defense tool against North Korea, which uses mostly short distance missiles toward South Korea.⁵⁴ Being very close geographically, the THAAD is not a practical defense mechanism to use against North Korea's missiles. There is no nuclear missile threat from North Korea that necessitates South Korea to deploy THAAD.⁵⁵ Furthermore, as some argued, if the THAAD's aims to deter North Korean missile, rather than after 2014, South Korea should have participated in American missile defense when North Korea initially tested nuclear weapons in the mid-2000s.⁵⁶ This is not a new provocative action North Korea present to its neighbors. Leads the timing of this proposal to be inadequate as well.

Third, for an ineffective machine, the deployment and maintenance of THAAD are too costly; and, there are more efficient and less costly alternatives if its purpose is to defend against North Korea.⁵⁷ An example of such includes decoys, outnumbering tactics,

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ethan Meick and Nargiza Salidjanova, *China's Response to U.S.-South Korean Missile Defense System Deployment and its Implications* (Washington, D.C., USA: United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2017), 5.

⁵⁵ Kim, "샤드 한반도," 293.

⁵⁶ Yong Sub Choi, "Keeping the Americans in: The THAAD Deployment on the Korean Peninsula in the Context of Sino-American Rivalry," *Contemporary Security Policy* 41, no. 4 (2020): 633.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 636.

tumbling and spiral motions.⁵⁸ Even though the United States first proposed to fund all the expenses for THAAD installment and maintenance, the government acknowledged that this may change. Thus, at the time of deciding, the South Korean government could not ignore the potential monetary burden it might have to carry in the future.

Fourth, the potent of THAAD is uncertain as it has never been used in an actual warfare.⁵⁹ The only empirical evidence of its capability is shown by flight tests.⁶⁰ According to a fact sheet on “Ballistic Missile Defense Intercept Flight Test Record” by Missile Defense Agency, an agency under the Department of Defense, since July of 2006 to December of 2018, except for four times when they failed to conduct the test itself, its fifteen flight tests have a success rate of hundred percent.⁶¹ The problem, however, is that while the manufacturer contends these testing to be successful, there are no clear nor specific evidence on how these tests were conducted.⁶² Accordingly, as the effectiveness and productiveness of THAAD were and still are debated, South Korean government was cautious in making a commitment.

Fifth, domestically, the administration wanted to take time to promote a positive image of THAAD deployment to lessen pessimistic views on the administration and to promote support for this policy. As presented above, having a relatively low and continuously declining advocacy rate, the Park administration acknowledged how this sensitive issue may affect them. Both at the governmental and public levels, there was a

⁵⁸ Ibid, 636.

⁵⁹ Kim, "사드 한반도," 303.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 303.

⁶¹ Department of Defense Missile Defense Agency, *Missile Defense Agency Fact Sheet: Ballistic Missile Defense Intercept Flight Test*, by Missile Defense Agency (n.p., 2019), 2.

⁶² Kim, "사드 한반도," 304.

lack of statistical empirical evidence and limited information on THAAD and its predictable contribution to national security was minimal. Due to a lack of information and known facts about the THAAD, Korean people were concerned not only about Korean national security and diplomatic relations but also about environmental and health concerns. The residents in a city where THAAD was planned to be installed, Seongju, opposed it as they were concerned about the potential negative health and environmental side effect of installing THAAD in their town.⁶³ The potential side effect of stationing and practicing THAAD raised a great environmental and health-conscious among people who lived in the neighborhood. Such public concern is reflected through the surveys conducted by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, an independent policy think tank, and Realmeter, a group that surveys Korean political and economic public polls on the public opinion on THAAD.⁶⁴ They indicate how some have been influenced and come to agree with the deployment of THAAD prior to the Korean and American governments' mutual declaration on the THAAD deployment.

Last but not least, another major reason is the South Korean government's concern for its foreign relations with China. The rise of China does not only mean Chinese economic development but also its increasing diplomatic influence, at least regionally. Consequently, through bilateral and multilateral networks, China has been striving to

⁶³ Ibid, 35.

⁶⁴ Byung-jin Park, "미·중 패권대결의 시험대, 사드(THAAD) 배치에 대한 한국인의 생각은?" [What Do Koreans Think about the Deployment of THAAD, the Test Bed for the Battle for Hegemony between the US and China?], *Segye Daily* (South Korea), January 24, 2017; Realmeter, "[MBN Issue] THAAD Deployment," table, 2015; Realmeter, "[MBN Issue] South Korean Public Opinion Poll Survey on THAAD Deployment," table, 2016.

improve its relations with its neighbors and expanded its influence throughout the region. It has been focused on improving bilateral relations with its neighbors in the region and in establishing new regional and potentially international organizations that would allow them to be the leading member. An epitome example would be the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. However, as the power transition theory explains, when a country like China rises, the status quo, in this case, the United States relatively declines. Thus, in general, middle and small powers in the region no longer balance against China but hedged between the two great powers, and South Korea was no exception. Especially a year before the United States suggested South Korea to implement THAAD for its national security, South Korea began to further develop its economic relations with China.⁶⁵ In 2008, China and South Korea used a phrase “strategic cooperative partnership” to further develop their relations yet due to souring relations between North and South Korea since 2010, this remained as a mere rhetoric.⁶⁶ Yet, as the heads of the two governments changed to President Park through presidential election in 2013 and Xi Jinping became a General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2012, the two countries developed a more amicable relations between them.⁶⁷ For instance, China was the first foreign country to dispatch foreign official to congratulate President Park’s victory.⁶⁸ President Park also

⁶⁵ Ji-Young Lee, *The Geopolitics of South Korea-China Relations: Implications for U.S. Policy in the Indo-Pacific* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020), 1-2.

⁶⁶ Voice of America, "South Korea, China Agree to Create 'Strategic and Cooperative Partnership,'" VOA, last modified October 27, 2009, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/a-13-2008-05-27-voa43-66647852/557463.html>.

⁶⁷ Ren Yuanzhe et al. “China’s Perspective on the China-ROK Strategic Partnership: Developments, Debates, and Difficulties,” *Chinese Perspectives: Towards the Korean Peninsula in the Aftermath of North Korea’s Fourth Nuclear Test*, Stimson Center, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep10996.7>, 31.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 32.

chose China as one of the primary countries she sent diplomats for special envoy.⁶⁹ Unlike former leaders, Hu Jintao and Lee Myung-bak, the two leaders in 2013 were more communicative and pursued economic common interest rather than focusing on resolving security conundrum in Korean Peninsula.⁷⁰ Between 2013 and 2014, not only the two heads of the government but also visits between the two country government officials became common.⁷¹ Unlike previous administration, the general secretary of the CCP clearly demonstrated its initiative to balance between South and North Korea through means such as visiting South Korea before visiting North Korea in July 2014.⁷² In 2015, President Park made her third visit to China for sixth bilateral summit meeting in China and attended military parade in September 3rd, 2015.⁷³ This event, in especial, was significant in that she was the first Korean president to attend Chinese military parade and as the Secretary General Xi discussed Japanese colonialism, which both China and South Korea have been victims of.⁷⁴ Economically, one of the significant events during these years was the signing of the bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) between South Korea and China on June 1, 2015.⁷⁵ Due to its proximity and enlarging Chinese economy, export-oriented economy, South Korea, has been keen on developing its economic relations with China. China replaced the United States as South Korea's largest trading partner in 2014.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Ibid, 32.

⁷⁰ Lee, *The Geopolitics*, 9.

⁷¹ Ibid, 33.

⁷² Ibid, 33.

⁷³ Ibid, 33.

⁷⁴ Shannon Tiezzi, "South Korea's President and China's Military Parade," *The Diplomat*, last modified September 3, 2015, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/09/south-koreas-president-and-chinas-military-parade/>.

⁷⁵ Yuanzhe et al. "China's Perspective," 34.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 34.

Thus, an establishment of a free trade agreement between the two countries were greatly beneficial for the South Korean economy and a direct currency exchange between the Chinese yuan and Korean won was economically beneficial for both countries.⁷⁷ Therefore, as THAAD was proposed by the American government in 2014, when South Korea was beginning to improve its political-economic relations with China, its relation with China was South Korea's one of the greatest concern and the primary reason for its reluctance.

2.3 ANALYSIS ON AMERICAN POLICY OBJECTIVE

The United States suggested the deployment of THAAD in June 2014 yet due to South Korea's reluctance, Lt. Gen. Thomas Vandal, the deputy minister for policy for the South Korean Defense Yoo Jeh-seung officially announced the two countries' decision to deploy THAAD on July 8, 2016.⁷⁸ Therefore, in the previous section, the reasons for South Korea's reluctance and hesitation had been considered; therefore, leading to a conclusion that it was continuous pressure from the United States that led South Korea to finally agree and commit to the deployment of THAAD. But why was the United States so insistent on pushing South Korea to adopt the THAAD? Why for almost two years, did the United States pressure South Korea to commit? This section argues that contrary to official and public statements, it was the rise of China and the United States' relatively declining power that threatened them and to push for such policy; and, the second, third, and fourth reasons discussed above also support this argument.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 34.

⁷⁸ Sang-Hun Choe, "South Korea and U.S. Agree to Deploy Missile Defense System," *The New York Times* (United States), July 7, 2016, n.p., accessed February 25, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/08/world/asia/south-korea-and-us-agree-to-deploy-missile-defense-system.html>.

First, this was inspired by the American interest to intervene in improving relations between China and its allies in East Asia. As the Chinese economic rise continued, East Asian countries' economic (inter)dependence on China also has significantly increased since the 2000s.⁷⁹ In the mid-2000s, China became the largest trading partner of South Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan.⁸⁰ In late 2000s, China became the largest trading partner of Malaysia and Singapore. In the early 2010s, China became the largest trading partner of Indonesia and Thailand. In the mid-2010s, China became the Philippines' largest trading partner. For most of these countries, both China's share in total bilateral trade value and the weight of bilateral trade with China on the country's GDP also increased since 1995.⁸¹ While there are some exceptions, such as the weight of trade with China on Singapore's GDP in 2005 to increase by around twenty percent and lessen since, looking at the statistics and numbers, since 2005, the weight of trade with China on Singapore's GDP has maintained around 30 percent, which is high.⁸² Such trade volume and economic relations are politically influential for these countries as many of them are export-oriented economies. Thus, many countries in East Asia adopted hedging strategies between the two great powers over balancing as it had been previously. South Korea is no exception as South Korea has been increasingly economically (inter)dependent on China and when the Park administration started, it sought to further enlarge its economy and improve its diplomatic relations with China. Leading the United States to be inevitably concerned about its allies in East Asia. Thus, acknowledging how China would disapprove of the

⁷⁹ Tomoo Marukawa, "Dependence and Competition: Trade Relationship between Asian Countries and China," *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies* 10, no.2 (2021), 253.

⁸⁰ Refer to the Table 4 on page 253. See, *Ibid*, 253.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 253.

⁸² *Ibid*, 253.

deployment of THAAD and how that would affect China and South Korea's bilateral relations, the United States pressured South Korea as hard as it did for two years.

Second, the United States was confident that South Korea would deploy the THAAD if pressured as regardless of its improving relations with China, South Korea is still in a midst of warfare and the United States is its security ally. The United States understood that when it is a choice between economy and security, a rational state would choose security for national survival. Security is of a greater priority in the national interest than that of the economy. As of 1948, South Korea's relationship with the United States became one of the prominent diplomatic relations for South Korea as the United States provisioned security assistance to South Korea and ideological assistance in becoming a liberal democratic country. Since South Korea and the United States signed the Mutual Security Treaty, the United States had increased its military and economic subsidy to South Korea by 8 percent.⁸³ The American government has been deploying its troops to its allies, such as South Korea and Japan, to ensure their security and to protect them from possible conflict with North Korea.⁸⁴ In addition, the United States had been one of the pivotal economic partners of South Korea since the end of the Korean War. This leads the American influence in South Korea to be significant; and, the United States wanted to maintain such power. Thus, South Korea's agreement to station THAAD regardless of its potential consequences confided the American government that the American influence in

⁸³ Sungjoo Han, "South Korea and the United States: The Alliance Survives," *Asian Survey* 20, no. 11 (1980): 1075-1086.

⁸⁴ *Senators Urge Trump to Complete THAAD Deployment to South Korea, Press China to End Retaliation*, Washington: Federal Information & News Dispatch, 2017.

South Korea is still maintained, and while China might be becoming increasingly significant, the status quo maintains.⁸⁵

Third, As the United States expected China to fiercely oppose the deployment of THAAD, the United States did not only want to maintain the status quo where its influence in South Korea is of great significance but also to drive a wedge between the two countries to hinder the development of amicable relations between China and South Korea. As discussed in previous paragraphs, a major reason for the deepening of bilateral relations between China and East Asian countries is their economic dependence.⁸⁶ The United States, therefore, could rationally foresee potential economic sanctions China would pose in South Korea if THAAD deployment was to carry out. The possibility of the AN/TPY-2 X-band radar component of THAAD threatening China's national security, such as affecting nuclear deterrence capability, is worrisome to China.⁸⁷ Foreign Minister Wang Yi commented on how the deployment of THAAD may undermine China's strategic security interests as it would not only oversee North Korea but also China.⁸⁸ Under the circumstance where the United States is a present hegemonic state and China is a rising great power, stationing THAAD in South Korea would advantage the United States and disrupt the strategic power balance between the two nations.⁸⁹ Thus, the United States could have foreseen Chinese backlash to "punish" South Korea and to halt the deployment that would eventually lead South Korea to diversify its economic partners rather than maintaining a relatively high economic dependence on China.

⁸⁵ Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response to*, 4.

⁸⁶ Marukawa, "Dependence," 235.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 5.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 5.

⁸⁹ Watts IV, "Rockets' Red Glare," 86.

Fourth, predicting that China's great opposition to the deployment would significantly affect South Korea and potentially lead South Korea to lessen its dependence on China and possibly increase its security network with the United States and its other allies in the region. Therefore hopefully to slow down the expanding Chinese regional influence and power transition between itself and China. The insisting pressure that the United States posed on South Korea that the United States acknowledged to potentially cause conflict, therefore, is not carried out primarily because of North Korea nor to oversee Chinese military activity or Chinese territory but as a response to power transition. Rather the United States could have believed that worsening relations between South Korea and China would lead South Korea to be a more active participant in American-led security alliances in the region as Japan is. As the theorists who support the declining power cause conflict and war posits, the United States wanted to maintain the status quo and limit the rising power even if it knew that this would cause heightened tension between the great powers and between South Korea and China.

Fifth, as assumed by some, another American interest in pressuring South Korea to adopt THAAD is that in the long-term, the presence of THAAD in South Korea could strengthen the United States' political and security influence in the region, which China is greatly concerned of.⁹⁰ For instance, an editorial in the *China Daily* presumed THAAD will strengthen the trilateral security alliance formed among the United States and its allies in the Northeast Asia, Japan and South Korea on July 9, 2016.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Ibid, 86.

⁹¹ Ibid, 86.

2.4 CHINA'S RESPONSES TO LOCATING THAAD IN SOUTH KOREA

From July 2016 until October 31, 2017, Chinese foreign relations with South Korea intensified. To be specific, as the United States and South Korea declared their joint statement of locating THAAD in South Korea in July 2016, China began to practice what some may refer to as a “coercive economic diplomacy.”⁹² The impact of coercive diplomacy, which is usually practiced by the great powers to countries that are (inter)dependent on the great powers, is practiced when the executing state seeks to attain targeted state’s conformity to its demand or to lead the targeted state to discontinue its policies that are controversial to the administrating state’s will.⁹³ Its effectiveness is debatable and there are several studies on this critical issue. What is important here, however, is not whether it is effective or not but on the Chinese response itself.

Chinese government voluntarily practiced coercive economic policies as it enforced many regulations and economic sanctions against South Korea after locating THAAD. As of March 2017, the Chinese government unofficially restricted Chinese tour companies from planning and selling tour packages to South Korea.⁹⁴ This was highly influential as most Chinese tourists belong to the older generation, who have money and time to travel and prefer traveling in a group. As the tourism companies no longer offered a tour packages to South Korea, the number of Chinese tourists to South Korea dropped. To present specific numbers, while about an 8.5million Chinese traveled to South Korea in

⁹² Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response to*, 7.

⁹³ Christina Lai, “Acting One Way and Talking Another: China’s Coercive Economic Diplomacy in East Asia and Beyond,” *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 2 (2018): 170-172.

⁹⁴ Jethro Mullen, “China Can Squeeze Its Neighbors When It Wants. Ask South Korea,” *CNN Business*, last modified August 30, 2017, accessed November 20, 2018, <https://money.cnn.com/2017/08/30/news/economy/china-hyundai-south-korea-thaad/index.html>.

2016, as of 2017 only a 4.1 million Chinese traveled to South Korea.⁹⁵ As the number of Chinese tourists to South Korea is great and their consumptions are high, such drastic decrease number of Chinese tourists also affected many businesses in South Korea like airlines, hotels, duty-free shops and local traveling agencies.⁹⁶ As some restaurants in South Korea only served Chinese tourists, these restaurants were closed as an aftermath of the policy.⁹⁷ As the tourism industry was harshly beaten by the radically decreased number of Chinese tourists, along with other factors, the policy reduced South Korea's national economic growth.

The Chinese government also adjourned the spread of the Korean Wave, which also is referred to as Hanryu (韩流). Since South Korea issued the joint declaration, China prohibited the broadcasting of South Korean TV programs and South Korean singers and actors' performances in China.⁹⁸ In January 2017, an internationally famous soprano, Sumi Jo's concert in China was canceled without sufficient explanation.⁹⁹ The collaborated dramas or programs produced by actors from South Korea and China were also indefinitely suspended.

South Korean corporations, which are critical to the Korean economy, also were affected.¹⁰⁰ While the government did not formally specify its actions to be economic

⁹⁵ Reuters, "Chinese Tourists Returning to South Korea after Missile Tensions Cool," *South China Morning Post* (China), May 2, 2018, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2144327/chinese-tourists-returning-south-korea-after-missile>.

⁹⁶ Brian Padden, *China Objects to THAAD, south Korea's Tourism, Imports Suffer*, D, Washington: Federal Information & News Dispatch, 2017.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response*, 7.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 7.

¹⁰⁰ South Korean conglomerates, which are ran by family members, are one of leading actors in bringing forth economic prosperity. These conglomerates include Samsung,

sanctions, as South Korean corporations' goods were banned, strictly inspected and regulated, the businesses were severely hit; therefore, affecting Korean national economy.¹⁰¹ Lotte corporation, one of ROK's conglomerates who owned a part of the land that THAAD was planned to be stationed, was especially severely punished.¹⁰² Its branch stores in China were forced to close.¹⁰³ Its launched project in Shenyang was withheld.¹⁰⁴ As Lotte was acknowledged to have violated advertising law of China, it was fined for about 6,915 dollars (44,000RMB).¹⁰⁵ In addition, Korean car corporates like Hyundai and Kia that had a factory in China and made a high sale in China faced domestic pressure from China in operating its companies.¹⁰⁶ South Korean goods export to China were also restricted.¹⁰⁷

Not Chinese government, but the Chinese people also practiced economic sanctions on South Korea. Examining Chinese people's response to foreign countries when they conflict with China, such as an anti-Japanese demonstration in 2012 when China contended with Japan over Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, the particularity of Chinese people's voluntary will to boycott South Korean goods and services in the THAAD case could be understood.¹⁰⁸ South Korean car companies sales were plunged as the sales drastically

Lotte, Hyundai and many other big corporates in South Korea. See, Peter Pae, "South Korea's Chaebol," Bloomberg, last modified October 5, 2018, accessed January 5, 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/quicktake/republic-samsung>.

¹⁰¹ Brian Padden, *South Korea Impeachment Intensifies Divide Over THAAD*, Washington: Federal Information & News Dispatch, 2017; Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response to*, 7.

¹⁰² Mullen, "China Can Squeeze."

¹⁰³ Ibid."

¹⁰⁴ Ibid."

¹⁰⁵ Ibid."

¹⁰⁶ Ibid."

¹⁰⁷ Padden, *South Korea Impeachment*.

¹⁰⁸ China's conflict with Japan is further elaborated in the source. See, Lai, "Acting One

reduced by 64 percent.¹⁰⁹ Korean food imports also decreased by about 5.6 percent between 2016 and 2017.¹¹⁰ In total, in 2017, South Korea's economic growth rate slowed down by 0.4 percent.¹¹¹

Since China's economic reformation and economic development, an increasing number of Asian countries like South Korea and Southeast Asian countries became dependent on the Chinese market and the Chinese economy.¹¹² As of the present day, South Korea's economic dependence on China is greater than its dependence on any other country. Its export to China and imports from China overwhelms its economic relationship with other countries. For example, as of 2017, South Korean export to China more than doubled that of the United States, which is listed as the second in South Korean export to foreign countries.¹¹³ In 2017, South Korea's imports from China almost double that of the United States as well.¹¹⁴ As illustrated with the figure, an increasing economic (inter)dependence on China enabled China, the rising regional great power, to pose a serious threat to the Korean economy.¹¹⁵

Way," 177-178.

¹⁰⁹ Mullen, "China Can Squeeze."

¹¹⁰ Meick and Salidjanova, *China's Response*, 7.

¹¹¹ Reuters, "Chinese Tourists."

¹¹² Lai, "Acting One Way," 169-170.

¹¹³ South Korea's export to China adds up to be about \$142,119,046,217. South Korea's export to the United States is about \$68,852,265,159. See, Michigan State University, "South Korea: Trade Statistics," Global Edge, Accessed December 6, 2018, <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/south-korea/tradestats>.

¹¹⁴ South Korea's import from China is around \$97,859,480,414 while its import from the United States is around \$50,908,004,200. See, Michigan State University, "South Korea: Trade."

¹¹⁵ Lai, "Acting One Way," 169-170.

2.5 SUMMARY OF THAAD CASE STUDY

Therefore, as discussed in the first section where theoretical literature on power transition and power transition war was stressed, the United States had a political objective in pursuing THAAD deployment in South Korea. Regardless of what their public statements may state, it was not to defend South Korea against North Korea as it is incapable of doing so and it is not the most efficient means. Rather, it is provocative to another regional giant, China. As a declining power, the United States wanted to maintain the status quo and potentially aggregate greater support for its policies. South Korea also understood these political reasons to a certain extent, which was why South Korea delayed issuing a public statement for two years, but as it prioritized its political and security alliance with the United States, South Korea felt the need to follow American demands.

3.0 CASE STUDY 02: IMPROVING U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

In 1972, as a part of President Nixon's foreign policy strategy of détente, the United States and China issued a joint communiqué, which is often referred to as Shanghai Communiqué.¹¹⁶ Here, the United States recognized Taiwan as "a province of China... the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere..."¹¹⁷ However, since then, through explicit and implicit foreign policies towards Taiwan, the United States has shown inconsistency in its policy towards Taiwan and implicitly intervening in China and Taiwan affairs with a contention that China is not to use force on Taiwan.¹¹⁸ Therefore, influenced by the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) and the three joint communiqués the United States signed with China, the United States maintained what some refer to as a "strategic ambiguity" in its Taiwan policies.¹¹⁹ However, as President Trump entered the office, American policies toward Taiwan seems increasingly imbalanced compared to the past.¹²⁰ While it does not significantly digress from its previous policies, the United States seems to use Taiwan as its leverage more tactfully. Leads this case study to assert that the reason for such change is because American power conflict with China. What caused such change and how are the changes

¹¹⁶ Office of the Historian, "203. Joint Statement following Discussions with Leaders of the People's Republic of China," Office of the Historian, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v17/d203>.

¹¹⁷ Office of the Historian, "203. Joint Statement following Discussions with Leaders of the People's Republic of China," Office of the Historian, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v17/d203>.

¹¹⁸ Dean P. Chen, "The Trump Administration's One-China Policy: Tilting Toward Taiwan in an Era of U.S.-PRC Rivalry?" *Asian Politics & Policy* 11, no. 2 (2019): 250. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12455>, 250.

¹¹⁹ Charles Chong-Han Wu, "The End of Washington's Strategic Ambiguity? The Debate over U.S. Policy toward Taiwan," *China Review* 21, no. 2 (2021): 178. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27019014>.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 250.

reflected? How did Taiwan and China respond? To examine these questions, this section identifies American policies toward Taiwan under President Trump and Biden administrations. Afterward, China's responses will be discussed to see causal effect relations.

3.1 TAIWAN'S DOMESTIC POLITICS

Foremost, a brief introduction of Taiwan's domestic political affairs before President Trump entered office will be introduced. Regardless of having a sovereignty dispute with China, Taiwan's relationship with China has not always been sour. Taiwan's independence movement has been fading throughout the years.¹²¹ Also, similar to American policy towards Taiwan, depending on the Taiwanese leader and elected major party, Taiwan's relationship with China has been amicable from time to time. When President Ma Ying-jeou from the Kuomintang, the Chinese Nationalist Party, was in office from 2008 to 2016, the two countries have developed relatively amicable relations.¹²² However, after Tsai Ing-wen from the Democratic Progressive Party assumed office in 2016 and President Trump won 2016 American presidential election, the tension between Taiwan and China began to heighten again.¹²³

¹²¹ Robert S. Ross, "Taiwan's fading independence movement." *Foreign Affairs* (2006): 141-148.

¹²² Kristin Huang, "Explainer: How Taiwan's Relations with Mainland China Have Changed under President Tsai Ing-wen," *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), June 15, 2021, China/Diplomacy, n.p., accessed March 1, 2022, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3137231/timeline-cross-strait-relations-under-taiwans-president-tsai>.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

3.2 AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS TAIWAN

3.2.1 President Trump and One China Policy

A significant event that differed from previous presidents was President Trump's reconsideration of the One China Policy before his presidency started up to an early month of his presidency. While this was not a policy but his initiative, as it affects the Taiwanese government it will be briefly discussed. Following his victory in the presidential election, on December 2, he had his first diplomatic call with Taiwanese President Tsai in December 2016.¹²⁴ This was striking as the direct phone conversation between the two leaders was unprecedented.¹²⁵ The problem arose after the phone call when President Trump began to indicate his questions over the One China Policy that the United States agreed to in 1972; and, his plans to potentially use it as leverage in trade deals with China.¹²⁶

In response to President Trump's implicit and to a certain extent explicit address on his objections to the One China Policy, the Chinese reaction was mixed yet firm.¹²⁷ Chinese high officials such as the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and the Chinese ambassador in the United States all addressed how the One China policy is not an issue to be reconsidered.¹²⁸ Simultaneously, as there was no serious action that followed up to signal that the United States is to disregard the One China Policy,

¹²⁴ Reuters Staff, "Timeline: Trump Questions Then Honors 'One China' Policy," Reuters, last modified February 10, 2017, accessed March 2, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-china-xi-timeline/timeline-trump-questions-then-honors-one-china-policy-idUSKBN15P00Q>.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Reuters Staff, "Timeline: Trump Questions."

¹²⁸ Ibid; BBC News, "Trump-Taiwan Call Breaks US Policy Stance," BBC, last modified December 3, 2016, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38191711>.

China tried to react calmly and not as a great significance. For instance, Foreign Minister Wang Yi's public statement referred to it as a chicanery.¹²⁹ Still, in January, China exercised a military drill across a 112-mile distance from the Taiwan Strait and sailed its aircraft carrier Liaoning and warships close to the Taiwan Strait.¹³⁰ The problem was that the aircraft carrier was in Taiwan's air defense zone.¹³¹ While this can be viewed as another Chinese regular military exercise, due to events that occurred beforehand, which were provocative to China, many were concerned of how Chinese response is heightening the tension between not only China and Taiwan but also between China and the United States. Such tension was alleviated after President Trump assured the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Xi over the phone of how he respects the One China policy.

Here, it should be considered who caused this heightening of tension. Is it Taiwan as Taiwanese President Tsai did contact President Trump first in December 2016? No. While China may have been discontent with such phone calls, the main reason for it reacted assertively is that President Trump questioned the One China Policy. He may have not implemented policies or acted upon it but as China takes the national sovereignty dispute with Taiwan seriously, coming from the leader of an oppositional regional great power, Trump's message led China to practice foreign policies that heightened tension as the One China Policy regards to its sovereignty and legitimacy.

¹²⁹ BBC News, "Trump-Taiwan Call," BBC.

¹³⁰ Nicola Smith and Tom Phillips, "Taiwan Carries out Drills amid Rising Fears of Chinese Invasion," *The Guardian*, last modified January 18, 2017, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/18/taiwan-carries-out-drills-amid-rising-fears-of-chinese-invasion>.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

3.2.2 President Trump Administration's Arms Sales Policy

Another developed American policy towards Taiwan under President Trump is arms sales. The arms sales to Taiwan has been the center of the American policy of strategic ambiguity towards China because while there is no formal security alliance between the two countries the arms sales indicate American commitment to the Taiwan Relations Act.¹³² The question, then, is how did this differ under President Trump's administration compared to that of previous administrations? First, the Trump administration approved arms sales of weapons that are more sophisticated and provocative. In October 2020, President Trump administration sought to sell three additional weapon systems, which are sophisticated, to Taiwan.¹³³ One of the three systems is the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System that in a five-ton truck, it carries either a single six-pack of GMLRS rockets or one TACMS missile.¹³⁴ Designed by the Lockheed Martin, it is believed to be one of the most practical and advanced artillery weapon.¹³⁵ Another system is Standoff Land Attack Missile-Expanded Response (SLAM-ER) is developed by Boeing and is a long range missile that range over 135 nautical miles.¹³⁶ It is shot from the air and hit the hard target

¹³² Wu, "The End of," 183-184.

¹³³ Keoni Everington, "US Pushes 3 Advanced Weapons Sales to Taiwan amid Chinese Aggression," *Taiwan News*, October 13, 2020, n.p., accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4028917>.

¹³⁴ Lockheed Martin, "HIMARS: The Long-Range, Mobile, Precision Fires Launcher Interoperable with C2 Systems," Lockheed Martin, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.lockheedmartin.com/en-us/products/high-mobility-artillery-rocket-system.html>.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Everington, "US Pushes 3;" Defense Daily, "Standoff Land-Attack Missile-Expanded Response (SLAM-ER)," Defense Daily, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.defensedaily.com/standoff-land-attack-missile-expanded-response-slam-erma/>.

either on the ground or in the sea.¹³⁷ The third system is external sensor pods for F-16 jets.¹³⁸ This is also designed by the Lockheed Martin and is to enhance F-16 jet's electronic warfare ability.¹³⁹ Additionally, the Trump administration suggested the arms sales of MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones, Harpoon, an anti-ship missile, and M109A6 Paladin.¹⁴⁰ These were both ground and naval weapons that could be used against China. Second, President Trump's administration also sold weapons that were disputed or stopped previously due to their sensitivity. One of the contentious issues in President Trump administration's arms sales to Taiwan is President Trump's approval to provide a market license to help Taiwan develop an indigenous submarine program in 2018.¹⁴¹ This was also halted since former President George W. Bush due to its sensitivity to China yet President Trump is giving the concession to continue.¹⁴² Another sensitive issue that President Trump approved of is his approval to sell 60 F-16V fighter jets in 2019.¹⁴³ The F-16 model was sold for the last time in 1992 due to Chinese opposition; and, since then previous administrations, President Obama and George W. Bush administration rejected Taiwan's request to purchase F-16

¹³⁷ Defense Daily, "Standoff Land-Attack," Defense Daily.

¹³⁸ Everington, "US Pushes 3."

¹³⁹ Defense World.Net Bureau, "Taiwanese Jets to get External Pods for Electronic Warfare Capability," Defense World.Net, last modified April 13, 2020, accessed March 5, 2022, https://www.defenseworld.net/news/26724/Taiwanese_Jets_to_get_External_Pods_for_Electronic_Warfare_Capability#.YkIXLijMI2w.

¹⁴⁰ Everington, "US Pushes 3."

¹⁴¹ Reuters Staff, "Trump Administration Grants License for Taiwan Submarine Project: Report," Reuters, last modified April 7, 2018, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-usa-submarines/trump-administration-grants-license-for-taiwan-submarine-project-report-idUSKBN1HE0PU>.

¹⁴² Ibid; Qingmin and Eric Hyer, "US 'Dual Track'," 93.

¹⁴³ Lara Seligman, "Trump's Fighter Jet Sale to Taiwan Advances despite China's Protests," Foreign Policy, last modified July 3, 2019, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/03/trumps-fighter-jet-sale-to-taiwan-advances-despite-chinas-protests-f-16-lockheed-martin/>.

models. Thus, President Trump's consideration approval to sell this F-16 model is provocative to China.¹⁴⁴ Leading Beijing to be concerned. Third, the total amount of arms sales was greater than that of the previous administration. According to a database from the Congressional Research Service on American sales of major defense articles and services to Taiwan, President Obama sold about 14 billion dollars worth of arms sales to Taiwan.¹⁴⁵ This was the greatest number since 1979.¹⁴⁶ President Trump, however, exceeded that amount and spent about 18 billion dollars for arms sales to Taiwan.¹⁴⁷ This in especial was due to the great amount of arms sales since 2019.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, both quality, the total amount of arms sales, and the sale of sensitive arms sale to Taiwan has been provocative against China.

3.2.3 Taiwan Travel Act and High Official Visits to Taiwan

The changes that heighten tension are not limited to the above-mentioned two policies. Other significant changes also exist. An approval of the Taiwan Travel Act (TTA) in the spring of 2018 can be considered.¹⁴⁹ With Congress's unified approval, the official visits of American and Taiwanese governmental officials were advocated; and, President Trump approved it to execute it into law as of March 16, 2018.¹⁵⁰ Since then a number of high official visits were conducted. Initiated by a visit Paul Ryan led that included 26 high

¹⁴⁴ Ibid; Zhang Qingmin and Eric Hyer, "US 'Dual Track' Policy: Arms Sales and Technology Transfer to China Mainland and Taiwan," *The Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 26 (2001): 93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560123882>.

¹⁴⁵ Wu, "The End of," 186-200.

¹⁴⁶ Wu, "The End of," 187.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 187.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 187.

¹⁴⁹ Chen, "The Trump Administration's," 263.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 263-264.

officials, in April 2019, American officials visited Taiwan.¹⁵¹ For instance, as the first Cabinet-level American official, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, visited Taiwan in August 2020.¹⁵² For memorial service of former Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, an Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Keith Krach, visited Taiwan in September 2020.¹⁵³ The American ambassador at the United Nations, Kelly Craft, also took a visit to Taiwan in 2021 regardless of Taiwan not being a member of the United Nations.¹⁵⁴ Thus, with the TTA, comparatively frequent visits were made to Taiwan. Before leaving office, President Trump and his administration also lifted a ban on diplomatic interactions between diplomats in 2021.¹⁵⁵

3.2.4 Legislative Changes to Enhance Security Cooperation with Taiwan

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2018 and 2019 were signed.¹⁵⁶ Especially the section 1259 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2018 instructs the American government to further promote military cooperation and assistance to

¹⁵¹ Nick Aspinwall, "High-Level US Visits to Taiwan Mark 40 Years of Unofficial Ties," *The Diplomat*, last modified April 13, 2019, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/04/high-level-us-visits-to-taiwan-mark-40-years-of-unofficial-ties/>.

¹⁵² Reuters Staff, "Factbox: Recent Taiwan Visits by Top U.S. Officials," Reuters, last modified January 7, 2021, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-usa-diplomacy-factbox/factbox-recent-taiwan-visits-by-top-u-s-officials-idUSKBN29C16B>.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Gerry Shih and Lily Kuo, "Trump Upsets Decades of U.S. Policy on Taiwan, Leaving Thorny Questions for Biden," *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2021, [Page #], accessed March 5, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/trump-biden-taiwan-china/2021/01/13/1bbadee0-53c0-11eb-acc5-92d2819a1ccb_story.html.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 264.

Taiwan.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, section 2736 was legislated into law under approval of President Trump in December 2018,¹⁵⁸ In section 1257 and 1258 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, the bill states measures to strengthen Taiwan's security affairs through American assistance, arms sales, and further cooperation with Taiwan.¹⁵⁹ Overall, there has been a number of legislative and congressional changes since President Trump's presidency due to the unilateral agreement in American congress on the need to further contribute its assistance and aid to Taiwan as they unilaterally define China as a threat.

3.2.5 Trump Administration's Navy Transits

The Trump administration also practiced an active naval activity, which heightened tension with China as China does not want American influence in its sovereignty or territorial disputes. The United States' navy transits in the disputed islands of the South China Sea were conducted about ten times per year in both 2019 and 2020.¹⁶⁰ This was twice greater than that of its activities in 2014.¹⁶¹ Specifically in Taiwan, the American navy transits were conducted 13 times in 2020.¹⁶² In 2017 and 2018, which were President Trump's initial presidency term, only a few navy transits were carried out. However, this

¹⁵⁷ Library of Congress, "H.R.2810 - National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018," Congress.Gov, accessed March 1, 2022, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2810>.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid; Chen, "The Trump Administration's," 264.

¹⁵⁹ One Hundred Fifteenth Congress of the United States of America: At the Second Session, H.R. Doc. No. H.R. 5515 ().

¹⁶⁰ Lolita C. Baldor, "Sharp Jump in US Navy Transits to Counter China under Trump," AP News, last modified March 15, 2021, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/politics-beijing-south-china-sea-china-taiwan-6e8129431137ef822344677092285dbd>.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

greatly enlarged since 2019.¹⁶³ This is significant as the United States have not had as frequent transit for 14 years before 2020.¹⁶⁴

3.2.6 Biden Administration Policy towards Taiwan

President Biden did not revert to former President Trump's policies on Taiwan but continued therefore further contributing to heightening tension between not only the United States and China but also between China and Taiwan. This is evident through the following practices. First, Taiwan's de facto ambassador was invited to attend President Biden's inauguration ceremony in 2021.¹⁶⁵ This is significant in that even in President Trump's inauguration ceremony, no Taiwanese ambassador was invited and this was the first time Taiwanese representative attended the event since 1979.¹⁶⁶ Publicly, President Biden administration also expressed its interest to support Taiwan.¹⁶⁷ In May 2021, the Secretary of State Antony Blinken suggested Taiwan to participate in the World Health Assembly.¹⁶⁸ In June, the two countries initiated talks on bilateral trade and investment.¹⁶⁹ In August 2021, President Biden's first approval of arms sales to Taiwan was decided.¹⁷⁰ This arms sales compromise of 40 M109A6 Medium Self-Propelled Howitzer Systmes and their equipment resulting the administration to suggest 750 million dollars for approval.¹⁷¹ The

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Derek Grossman, "Biden Administration Shows Unwavering Support for Taiwan," Rand Corporation, last modified October 20, 2021, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2021/10/biden-administration-shows-unwavering-support-for-taiwan.html>.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Jennifer Hansler, "Biden Administration Proposes \$750 Million Arms Sale to Taiwan in a Move Likely to Anger Beijing," CNN, last modified August 5, 2021, accessed March

administration also has been maintaining President Trump's naval transits around the Taiwan Strait by sending vessels monthly.¹⁷²

3.3 ANALYSIS ON THE REASONS FOR THE CHANGED AMERICAN POLICY

Have there been any changes in American policy towards Taiwan? The American interest in Taiwan is mostly tactical. It primarily uses it as leverage against China, the regional rising power. Accordingly, the United States' aid and support to Taiwan also have been a sensitive issue to China as it considers it to be a national sovereignty issue that a foreign country should not intervene. Accordingly, compared to other matters, this matter is taken more seriously in China. Therefore, while President Trump's foreign policy towards Taiwan does not greatly digress from America's previous foreign policies toward Taiwan, there are apparent differences that are sure to be conflictual. These policies are indicative of how President Trump initiated a heightening tension not only between Taiwan and China but also between China and the United States.

What caused such changes? As this paper contends throughout the paper, this phenomenon also is explained by the rise of China and the a relative decline of the United States, so the power transition. As the scholars who contend the declining power to be the one that initiates a power transition war as a defensive measure, this is a practice the United States adopted either to maintain the status quo. While the United States is not causing a power transition war as the theoretical literature focuses on, it is heightening tension

5, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/04/politics/biden-administration-taiwan-arms-sales/index.html>.

¹⁷² Grossman, "Biden Administration Shows."

between it and China through these provocative policies. In the case of America's changed policy towards Taiwan, the following reasons could be given.

First, American leaders' changing attitude toward China. Previously, in the United States, the Congress has been a great advocate in America's support to Taiwan.¹⁷³ Since 1940s, when China bloc appeared, in American Congress, there has been a group of supporters who advocated American support for Taiwan whether it was economic or security.¹⁷⁴ For instance China bloc formed in the 1940s, Taiwan lobby was founded in 1980s and 1990s, the Congressional Taiwan Caucus in 2002, and the Senate Taiwan Caucus in 2003.¹⁷⁵ Leading Taiwan issues to typically attain bipartisan support.¹⁷⁶ However, the reason one cannot find a history of highly apparent and strong American support towards Taiwan is limits imposed by American leaders, presidents.¹⁷⁷ On the contrary to highly pro-Taiwan Congress, American presidents, regardless of their political party, the presidents have been cautious in showing great support for Taiwan as they did not want to provoke China and was favored in improving relations with China.¹⁷⁸ Since 1972, when the United States signed a joint communiqué with China and agreed to its One-China policy, the presidents have been often not so apparently assisting and providing aid and support to Taiwan to avoid confrontation with China. Nevertheless, as China's rise continues and as America continues to relative decline in comparison to China, which also

¹⁷³ Joshua Su-Ya Wu, "Economics, Lobbying, and U.S. Congressional Support for Taiwan: Buying American Support, 2002–2006," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 2 (2009): 381. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2009.49.2.380>.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 381.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 381-382.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 382.

¹⁷⁷ Chen, "The Trump Administration's," 251.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 251.

is proven by East Asian countries' adoption of hedging strategy between the two regional great powers over balancing, the United States has been concerned. It was concerned about its relative power and influence decline in comparison to China. It has been concerned over improved relations and closeness its allies have with China. Resulting in former President Trump and President Biden practicing more confrontational policies toward China and policies that could provoke confrontational issues between China and American allies through the changes mentioned above.

Second, while many East Asian countries are adopting hedging strategies, due to nationalism, Taiwan remains to be strong leverage to the United States in relation to China. As mentioned above, before the deployment of the THAAD issue, South Korea has adopted a hedging strategy between the two regional great powers, the United States and China. As China's rise includes greater economic significance, which is pivotal to the neighboring countries that are highly export-oriented economies, becoming increasingly (inter)dependent on the Chinese economy, South Korea no longer balanced against China but sought ways to improve relations with China. Taiwan, however, is different. As it will be discussed below, in Taiwan, depending on which party has a majority and the party president is from greatly matters in its relation to China. Yet, the One China and nationalism issue remains a great difficulty for both China and Taiwan; therefore, limiting their relations. Accordingly, as Taiwan's newly elected president in 2016, Tsai Ing-wen, showed an unhistorical political move by calling former President Trump before he assumed office in December 2016, Taiwan remains to be a strong ally of the United States. Therefore, where the great power conflict between the United States and China is ever so heightening, acknowledging the sensitivity of the issue, the United States wanted to

reassure its significance to Taiwan and to represent its strong leverage in regional great power competition.

Third, regardless of these changes, as President Trump and President Biden reassured China, while this may heighten tension, it does not mean a complete change in American policy nor a greatly significant change in the region.¹⁷⁹ As public officials have reacted, China may not be content and these actions may deepen tension that China has with the United States and Taiwan, they do not cause a drastic change in American nor Taiwan's attitude toward China. Therefore, going back to the literature review, the American interest maintains to be maintaining status quo and potentially limits Chinese influence.

3.4 ANALYSIS ON TAIWAN'S RESPONSE TO AMERICAN POLICY

As discussed in the previous section, since President Trump's administration, Taiwan has been improving its diplomatic and security relations with the United States. For Taiwan, this is both a great assurance and worrisome as it is bound to be tangled in the two great powers' great power conflict. Before President Tsai Ing-wen and President Trump, Taiwan's opposition to China was minimal and the two countries' relations developed as former President Ma Ying-jeou did not focus on confrontations but on common interests. Acknowledging China to be a great power that is incomparably stronger than Taiwan, Taiwan acknowledges it cannot solely balance against China. Also, as argued here, American support was not as large as it was under President Trump. However, when President Tsai Ing-wen and President Trump assumed office, the two countries began to improve their relations; thus, heightening tension with China. For instance, in addition to

¹⁷⁹ Chen, "The Trump Administration's," 252.

the changes discussed above, Taiwan's defense budget also increased. Taiwanese government sought to increase its defense budget by ten percent in 2021.¹⁸⁰

President Tsai's government favors such development with the United States. While weapons matter as well, what is more important is the American commitment to secure Taiwan. As China has, Taiwan also has examined changes in American policy towards Taiwan since 1972. Being increasingly economically dependent on China, Taiwan also wants to avoid waging war with China. However, it is still concerned about its national security and seeks an ally who is competent enough to defend against China and potentially hinder China from forcing the One China Policy. China does acknowledge that the United States still maintains the One China Policy with China yet as Taiwan is leverage in the great power conflict, Taiwan believes that deepening relations with the United States could help them.

3.5 CHINA'S RESPONSE

Regarding American arms sales to Taiwan, this has been always troublesome to China because once again, China identifies its affair with Taiwan as a national sovereignty issue. Traditionally, China also has resolved disputes bilaterally rather than multilaterally. Leading it to question the United States' interference in this matter. Thus, the deepening diplomatic and security relations between the United States and Taiwan is alarming to China. Leading China to express its discontent through assertive military exercises such as sending military aircraft into the air defense identification zone and naval vessels near Taiwan Strait. In 2019, Chinese military jets started to incursion around Taiwan's air

¹⁸⁰ Lindsay Maizland, "Why China-Taiwan Relations are so Tense," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 10, 2021, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/background/china-taiwan-relations-tension-us-policy>.

defense identification zone (ADIZ); leading to 10 incursions.¹⁸¹ In 2020, this number significantly increased to about 380 incursions. In the first ten months of 2021, there were at least 600 incursions.¹⁸² China has not only practiced air drills but also naval drills using naval vessels in the Taiwan Strait.¹⁸³

3.6 SUMMARY OF TAIWAN CASE STUDY

While China's practices are viewed to cause a heightening of tension, following the analysis in this section, I argue that this heightening of tension is not caused by China. The changing American policies towards Taiwan in a way that the two countries are becoming increasingly amicable and cooperative with common opposition, China, causes China to react as it is. As highlighted several times, China takes a national sovereignty issue seriously and the Taiwan dispute is one of the most concerning matters to China. China also acknowledges how American interest in Taiwan is that of strategy to balance against China in the midst of power transition. Thus, to prevent Taiwan from becoming too confident that it will challenge China, instead of maintaining the status quo, and to show how serious China is in this matter to the United States, China behaves increasingly assertively in Taiwan Strait.

¹⁸¹ Kelvin Chen, "Taiwan Reports More than 600 Chinese Military Sorties so Far This Year," *Taiwan News*, October 15, 2021, n.p., accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4306541>.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Reuters, "Taiwan Reports New Large-scale Chinese Air Force Incursion," Reuters, last modified January 24, 2022, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-reports-new-large-scale-chinese-air-force-incursion-2022-01-23/>.

4.0 CASE STUDY 03: CONFLICT IN SOUTH CHINA SEA AND VIETNAM

The last case study to be considered is how American policies toward Southeast Asian countries are incrementing tension not only between the United States and China but also between China and Southeast Asian countries over the South China Sea. The South China Sea is complex yet one of the most critical issues in the region. This is because unlike the previous case studies, there are several countries involved in it and various dimensions are disputed. However, by focusing on American policies towards Vietnam, which shows a distinctive policy change during President Obama's administration, how the United States both indirectly and directly caused the heightening of tension over the South China Sea disputes will be examined.

4.1 INTRODUCTION ON THE MARITIME DISPUTE

To begin with, a brief background on the South China Sea maritime dispute will be briefly introduced. There are various factors such as economic, political, historical, and nationalism that affect the four countries' foreign policies against one another in this issue yet this paper will focus on the security aspect.

Due to evident changes, a conflict to be focused on in this chapter is the one over the nearby territories' sovereignty. Specifically, Spratly and Paracel Islands, which are disputed areas around the South China Sea. The Spratly island dispute is between China and the four Southeast Asian countries that including Vietnam. The Paracel island dispute is also between China and Vietnam. The issue with these islands is that these countries are all asserting them to be either partially or wholly part of their territory by referencing historical records and geography.¹⁸⁴ The reason for its significance in the two regional

¹⁸⁴ Marlav Ross, "China, the Philippines, and the Spratly Islands," Asian Affairs, an

great powers' relations, however, is that the American influence to the Southeast Asian countries change these countries' policies and attitude towards China on this issue, which China dislikes. Unlike some argue, the primary interest in these islands and surrounding ocean cannot be for natural resources.¹⁸⁵ According to the United States Energy Information Agency, the energy resources here are minimal.¹⁸⁶ The relocation of troops and military advantage here also is not of a great significance to China.¹⁸⁷ Located in islands, they are not a practical weapon but "vulnerable target."¹⁸⁸ Rather, for China, concerning the disputed territories in the South China Sea, the biggest concern is American influence and intervention in the South China Sea dispute between East Asian countries. As the United States is comparatively stronger in naval power and will have a comparative advantage in the event of naval warfare, China does not want to challenge the status quo in the area yet China does not want the United States nor Southeast Asian countries to challenge them.¹⁸⁹ Leading China to have taken the following actions such as practicing maritime activities to retain Southeast Asian countries from further cooperating and seeking security assistance from the United States.¹⁹⁰

American Review (New York) 23, no. 4 (1997): 200-203.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0092768.1997.10771160>.

¹⁸⁵ U.S. Energy Information Agency, "Contested Areas of South China Sea Likely Have Few Conventional Oil and Gas Resources," EIA: U.S. Energy Information Agency, last modified September 24, 2015, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.eia.gov/analysis/studies/worldshalegas/>.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Robert S. Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations in the Era of Rising China: Power, Resistance, and Maritime Conflict," *The Journal of Contemporary China* 30, no. 130 (2021): 617. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2020.1852737>.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 617.

¹⁸⁹ Robert S. Ross, "The Geography of the Peace: East Asia in the Twenty-First Century." *International Security* 23, no. 4 (1999): 111. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.23.4.81>.

¹⁹⁰ Robert S. Ross, "It's Not a Cold War: Competition and Cooperation in US–China Relations." *China International Strategy Review* 2, no. 1 (2020): 65.

Another conflict is the understanding and activities of freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. One of the reasons for the matter's complexity is that there is no consensus over land sovereignty between Southeast Asian and China in the South China Sea and that greatly matters in freedom of navigation.¹⁹¹ Even if there are clearly distinguished land sovereignty, the ways to measure maritime zones using the distance from land features is opaque and unsystematic.¹⁹² Here, the problem between the regional great powers is China's usage of straight baselines to measure its naval territory.¹⁹³ Leading China to draw a 9-Dash Line and contend the inner area within that 9-Dash Line to be its maritime territory while the United States challenges this using the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).¹⁹⁴ Additionally, there is a problem regarding activities in these maritime areas.¹⁹⁵ More specifically, the two regional great powers disagree on which maritime military activities in the South China Sea are permissible or not under the UNCLOS.¹⁹⁶ The two powers agree on the commercial and economic activities regarding the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) established around yet there is a security dilemma on the permissible military and security practices around here.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹¹ James W Houck and Nicole M Anderson, "The United States, China, and Freedom of Navigation in the South China Sea," *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 13, no. 3 (2014): 441.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, 442.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, 442.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 442.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 442.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 442-443.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 443.

4.2 VIETNAM

The contention I make in this chapter is that the American policies toward Vietnam assure Vietnam to practice more assertive policies and responses toward China in their maritime conflict leads to a heightening of tension. To support and illustrate this contention, this section will be divided into two parts. First, how American policies toward Vietnam changed under President Obama's administration will be discussed. Here, how Vietnam responded to the maritime conflict with China also will be illustrated. Second, how China reacted to such changed changes will be discussed. Vietnam's policy change will not be separately discussed as these are elaborated in these two sections.

4.3 AMERICAN POLICIES TOWARD VIETNAM: 2012-2017

American policy in Southeast Asia, in general, has been relatively minimal since the Vietnam War ended.¹⁹⁸ During President Bush's administration, the United States had sought to further develop the two countries' relations but after the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, the administration was more focused on the Middle East and defeating terrorism.¹⁹⁹ This, however, changed in President Obama's administration and these changed policies toward Vietnam. Since President Obama entered office, American policy towards South China Sea became more assertive. The United States' high officials often asserted and commented on the South China Sea territorial issues. Due to China and Vietnam's conflict over the South China Sea, in particular, since 2009, the United States

¹⁹⁸ Hang Nguyen, "The Obama Administration and Southeast Asia: Dynamics of a New Engagement," *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs* 29, no. 1/2 (2016): 40. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44123128>.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 42.

has been emphasizing its increasing attention to the South China Sea disputes.²⁰⁰ Not only through high officials' speeches but also in multilateral meetings such as July 2010 ASEAN Regional Forum, the United States supported the Southeast Asian countries and amended its 1995 statements.²⁰¹ Until 2012, however, other than speeches and words, there has been no major activity. Therefore, focusing on security relations development and agreements focused on maritime security and the South China Sea, this chapter specifically focuses on American policies between 2012 to 2017.

4.3.1 American Policies to Conflicts between China and Vietnam

First, American policies to Vietnam in response to the ongoing maritime conflicts between China and Vietnam will be considered. In June 2012, Vietnam passed a maritime law claiming its sovereignty over the disputed maritime islands, Paracel and Spratly Islands.²⁰² Fiercely subjecting to such law and Vietnam's claim, the Foreign Ministry subjected to Vietnam's claim and asserted that it would transform the three islands in the area, the Paracels, Macclesfield Bank, and the Spratlys, to be recognized as a prefectural-level over county-level status under the name of Sansha city.²⁰³ In doing so, China also installed military post.²⁰⁴ In response, using the Su-27 fighters, Vietnam conducted air patrols over the Spratly Islands as it claimed its sovereignty over the disputed maritime

²⁰⁰ Taylor Fravel, "US policy towards the disputes in the South China Sea since 1995," In *Power politics in Asia's Contested Waters*, pp. 394, Springer, Cham, 2016.

²⁰¹ Ibid, 394-395.

²⁰² Jane Perlez, "Vietnam Law on Contested Islands Draws China's Ire," *New York Times*, June 22, 2012, New York edition, sec. A, 8, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/world/asia/china-criticizes-vietnam-in-dispute-over-islands.html>.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Dennis J. Blasko and M. Taylor Fravel, "Much Ado about the Sansha Garrison," *The Diplomat*, last modified August 23, 2012, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2012/08/much-ado-about-the-sansha-garrison/>.

territories.²⁰⁵ As a response, the American State Department spokesperson publicly criticized Chinese behavior.²⁰⁶

In May 2014, China sought to establish an oil rig around the Paracel islands.²⁰⁷ Vietnam criticized China for this and claimed that the rig was inhibiting its maritime territory and China contested.²⁰⁸ Accordingly, Vietnam sent naval vessels to prevent the oil rig in the disputed territory and they collided with Chinese ships.²⁰⁹ In proximate, about 29 armed ships were deployed from Vietnam.²¹⁰ Domestically, anti-China protest arose in Vietnam and Chinese oil company decided to withdraw a month sooner than it planned to due to confrontation.²¹¹ Following this event, in October 2014, the United States declared its intention to ease the military arms embargo to Vietnam for maritime security.²¹²

4.3.2 General American Policies toward Vietnam

Second, American policies toward Vietnam in this period will be discussed. Adhering to Vietnam's "the Three No's" defense policy, Vietnam does have not signed a

²⁰⁵ Fravel, "US policy towards", 395.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 397.

²⁰⁷ John Ruwitch and Nguyen Phuong Linh, "Chinese Oil Rig Moved Away from Disputed Waters off Vietnam," Reuters, last modified July 15, 2014, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-vietnam-rig/chinese-oil-rig-moved-away-from-disputed-waters-off-vietnam-idUSKBN0FL00Y20140716>.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Chris Brummit, "Vietnam Tries to Stop China Oil Rig Deployment," USA Today, last modified May 7, 2014, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/05/07/vietnam-china-oil-rig/8797007/>.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Council on Foreign Relations, "China's Maritime Disputes: 1895 – 2020," Council on Foreign Relations, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/chinas-maritime-disputes>.

²¹² Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. Eases Embargo on Arms to Vietnam," *The New York Times*, October 3, 2014, New York edition, sec. A, 8, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/world/asia/us-eases-embargo-on-arms-to-vietnam.html>.

formal military alliance with the United States.²¹³ As for specific security agreements and memorandum, the following ones could be considered as a development by President Obama's administration. First, the United States and Vietnam developed defense cooperation in the 2010s. In 2010, the two countries initiated naval engagement that became annual afterwards.²¹⁴ An American Navy nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS George Washington, operated in the disputed maritime territory and held a delegation with Vietnamese officials.²¹⁵ In 2011, two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Advancing Bilateral Defense Cooperation.²¹⁶ In 2015, the two countries also signed U.S.-Vietnam Joint Vision Statement on Defense Relations.²¹⁷ One of them being the maritime security, the two agreements both highlight five areas of key issues between the two countries.²¹⁸ Proposing the Southeast Asia Maritime Security Initiative in 2015, the United States issued 49.72 million dollars in 2016 so that five Southeast Asian countries, which include Vietnam and Philippines, and three other East Asian countries could improve their capabilities of maritime security through investment in practices such as joint operations center, maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR), patrol

²¹³ Derek Grossman, *Regional Responses to U.S.-China Competition in the Indo-Pacific* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020), 10.

²¹⁴ Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 618-619.

²¹⁵ Agence France-Presse, "U.S. Navy Warship Docks in Vietnam," Taiwan News, last modified August 11, 2010, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/1343360>.

²¹⁶ The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, "Joint Statement: Between the United States of America and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam," The White House: President Obama, last modified May 23, 2016, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/05/23/joint-statement-between-united-states-america-and-socialist-republic>.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

vessel activities.²¹⁹ Second, American policy on the South China Sea dispute, which was largely focused on freedom of navigation and the finding resolution of the dispute peacefully, transformed in 2010s.²²⁰ While the United States still was interested in these matters, the United States became more involved. For instance, in 2010, during her visit to Vietnam, Hilary Clinton highlighted the collaborative efforts of Southeast Asian countries in resolving the issue.²²¹ Additionally, the historical authority in the territorial sovereignty dispute was discouraged.²²²

Diplomatic development also progressed under President Obama's administration. Many visits by high officials from the two countries were conducted during these years. For instance, in 2010, both Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates visited Vietnam.²²³ The leaders of the two countries also visited each other. For the first time, in July 2015, the General Secretary of Vietnam's Communist Party visited the United States.²²⁴ During his visit, General Secretary Trong signed agreements that regard the two countries' acceptance of different political regimes and means to further promote cooperation and understanding of one another.²²⁵ President Obama declared to lift

²¹⁹ Prashanth Parameswaran, "US Kicks Off New Maritime Security Initiative for Southeast Asia," *The Diplomat*, last modified April 10, 2016, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/04/us-kicks-off-new-maritime-security-initiative-for-southeast-asia/>.

²²⁰ Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 619.

²²¹ U.S. Department of State, "Remarks at Press Availability," U.S. Department of State, last modified July 23, 2010, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2010/07/145095.htm>.

²²² Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 619.

²²³ Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 618.

²²⁴ *Ibid*, 46.

²²⁵ Loc Doan Xuan, "US and Vietnam Finally and Fully Normalize Relations," *Asia Times*, last modified May 23, 2016, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://asiatimes.com/2016/05/us-and-vietnam-finally-and-fully-normalize-relations/>.

American embargo on arms sales, which was exercised since 1984, to Vietnam when he visited Vietnam in May 2016.²²⁶ Thus, the two leaders' visits were significant change from the previous years.

Another factor to consider, the economy, is not the crucial factor here as I seek to focus on the development of the security relations but it helps to show improved foreign relations between the United States and Vietnam. According to Vietnam's General Statistics Office, the two countries' total trade in 1995 was around 200 million dollars.²²⁷ However, this increased to 43.5 billion dollars in 2015.²²⁸ This is comparatively smaller than that of Vietnam and China, which was 66.3 billion dollars in 2015, the American market was Vietnam's greatest export market in the year as while Vietnam exported around 33.5 billion dollars worth goods and services to the United States in 2015, it only exported about 17 billion dollars worth of goods and services to China.²²⁹ Vietnam also joined the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) led by the United States in February 2016.²³⁰

4.4 CHINA'S POLICY RESPONSE

China's core interest in its policy response to these maritime disputes can be summarized in the following three. First, China considers its dispute with Vietnam as a power struggle between not equal powers but between a great and a smaller power.²³¹ As a relatively stronger power, China's dispute with Vietnam is that of great power and a

²²⁶ BBC, "Obama Lifts US Embargo on Lethal Arms Sales to Vietnam," BBC, last modified May 23, 2016, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36356695>.

²²⁷ Xuan, "US and Vietnam," Asia Times.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid, 617.

smaller power.²³² Second, China does not want to internationalize the issue but resolve it bilaterally as it had been.²³³ China has been discussing its conflicts with other countries bilaterally. Therefore, China does not want Vietnam to internationalize the dispute by associating the United States in their bilateral and regional dispute.²³⁴ Third, China considers the change in American policy of intervention in this bilateral conflict to be means to show its opposition to the rise of China.²³⁵ Chinese government analysts consider such policies to be in the interest of balancing against China.²³⁶ If not, why would the United States suddenly change its attitude toward the issue? Why suddenly lift the arms sales embargo on Vietnam? Why suggesting to resolve the dispute multilaterally among Southeast Asian countries against China rather than maintaining its core interests in freedom of navigation and supporting “peaceful resolution?”²³⁷

These interests led China to respond strongly against Vietnam in their maritime dispute. When Vietnamese vessels did seismic surveys for oil exploration in the maritime disputed area in 2011 and 2012, Chinese vessels cut Vietnamese ships’ cables.²³⁸ In March 2013, Chinese boats fired flares at Vietnamese fishing boats in the proximity of the Parcel islands.²³⁹ On April 2013, China conducted tourism to Paracels Islands area.²⁴⁰ Vietnam

²³² Ibid, 613.

²³³ Ibid, 619.

²³⁴ Ibid, 618.

²³⁵ Ibid, 620.

²³⁶ Ross, “China-Vietnamese Relations,” 617.

²³⁷ Ibid, 619-620.

²³⁸ Jeremy Page, "Vietnam Accuses Chinese Ships," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 3, 2012, n.p., accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323717004578157033857113510>.

²³⁹ BBC, "China 'Fired Flares' at Vietnam Boat in South China Sea," BBC, last modified March 27, 2013, accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-21950321>.

²⁴⁰ Edward Wong, "Chinese Tourist Boat Heads Toward Disputed Islands," *The New York*

detested to such tourism organization but China conducted it regardless.²⁴¹ The attempt to renew the 2005 agreement between China and Vietnam on South China Sea joint exploration also was unsuccessful.²⁴² Followed by China's attempt to oil rig around the EEZ near Paracel islands in May 2014.²⁴³ This was significant in that before this, since 1994, China has not attempted to drill oil in the South China Sea.²⁴⁴ Therefore, as mentioned, Vietnam sent naval vessel yet China did not immediately back down but also responded as they fired water cannons.²⁴⁵

4.5 SUMMARY OF SOUTH CHINA SEA AND VIETNAM CASE STUDY

As shown, the maritime conflict between China and Vietnam escalated during President Obama's presidency. The central reason for the strain in China and Vietnam's relations has been over the maritime dispute and the exclusive economic zones demarcation between the two countries.²⁴⁶ However, Vietnam has not always been as assertive in its maritime policies against China as China's ground military and naval force grew increasingly powerful with its rise. Leading changed American policies under President Obama's Asia diplomatic strategy, which is referred to as Pivot to Asia, that greatly enhanced its military assistance and security relations with Vietnam to have encouraged Vietnam to be more assertive.

Times, April 29, 2013, n.p., accessed March 5, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/30/world/asia/chinese-tourist-boat-headstoward-disputed-islands.html>.

²⁴¹ Ibid; Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 621.

²⁴² Xinhua News Agency, "China, Vietnam Launch Consulations on Sea-Related Joint Development," *Xinhuanet*, January 9, 2014, n.p., accessed March 5, 2022, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-01/09/c_133032429.htm.

²⁴³ Ruwitch and Linh, "Chinese Oil Rig," Reuters.

²⁴⁴ Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 621.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 621.

²⁴⁶ Ross, "China-Vietnamese Relations," 613.

CONCLUSION

While China's policies are portrayed as confrontational and to be the cause of heightening tension in the region, this is not necessarily true. At least for the cases examined here, it is evident that China is provoked by the United States and its usage of the alliance. Even in bilateral or regional matters between China and its neighbors, the United States seek to increase its role in the past few years. Therefore, increasing its significance. These changes in American policies can be considered as the American responses to the power transition. When bilaterally compared, as its power is in relative decline, the United States seeks to challenge China and its rise. As illustrated in the case study of THAAD and Taiwan, East Asian countries also understand this dynamic. However, for the two countries, in especial, the United States is pivotal for their survival. Therefore, conforming to it.

The interesting subject to further research on this topic will be to compare the cases that heighten tension due to China's behavior. Also, with the change of the American head of governance since last year, it will be interesting to see whether this dynamic would carry on. As shown in the case of Taiwan case study, it does seem to carry on yet this may change due to external influences such as a change in Taiwan leadership.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agence France-Presse. "U.S. Navy Warship Docks in Vietnam." Taiwan News. Last modified August 11, 2010. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/1343360>.
- AP. "Anger Grows in South Korea over US Anti-Missile System." CNBC. Last modified May 3, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/03/anger-grows-in-south-korea-over-us-anti-missile-system.html>.
- Aspinwall, Nick. "High-Level US Visits to Taiwan Mark 40 Years of Unofficial Ties." The Diplomat. Last modified April 13, 2019. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/04/high-level-us-visits-to-taiwan-mark-40-years-of-unofficial-ties/>.
- Baldor, Lolita C. "Sharp Jump in US Navy Transits to Counter China under Trump." AP News. Last modified March 15, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://apnews.com/article/politics-beijing-south-china-sea-china-taiwan-6e8129431137ef822344677092285dbd>.
- BBC News. "China 'Fired Flares' at Vietnam Boat in South China Sea." BBC. Last modified March 27, 2013. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-21950321>.
- BBC News. "Obama Lifts US Embargo on Lethal Arms Sales to Vietnam." BBC. Last modified May 23, 2016. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36356695>.
- BBC News. "Sewol Ferry: Bone of Missing Victim from South Korea Disaster Found." B

- BC. Last modified May 17, 2017. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-39945224#:~:text=The%20Sewol%20sank%20off%20Jindo,floor%20and%20towed%20to%20port>.
- BBC News. "Trump-Taiwan Call Breaks US Policy Stance." BBC. Last modified December 3, 2016. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38191711>.
- Bennett, Bruce. "Why THAAD Is Needed in Korea" RAND Corporation. Last modified August 7, 2017. Accessed November 20, 2018. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2017/08/why-thaad-is-needed-in-korea.html>.
- Blasko, Dennis J., and M. Taylor Fravel. "Much Ado about the Sansha Garrison." *The Diplomat*. Last modified August 23, 2012. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2012/08/much-ado-about-the-sansha-garrison/>.
- Blazte, Agne. "Chinese Tourists Spent a Quarter of a Trillion Dollars Abroad." Statista. Last modified September 26, 2018. Accessed December 5, 2018. <https://www.statista.com/chart/15588/international-tourism-expenditure-in-2017/>.
- Boon, Hoo Tiang, and Hannah Elyse Sworn. "Strategic ambiguity and the Trumpian approach to China-Taiwan relations." *International Affairs* 96, no. 6 (2020): 1487-1508.
- Brummit, Chris. "Vietnam Tries to Stop China Oil Rig Deployment." *USA Today*. Last Modified May 7, 2014. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/05/07/vietnam-china-oil-rig/8797007/>.
- Capaccio, Anthony. "First Taiwan Arms Sale in Biden Administration Is Approved."

- Bloomberg. Last modified August 4, 2021. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-04/first-arms-sale-to-taiwan-by-biden-administration-is-approved>.
- Chen, Dean P. "The Trump Administration's One-China Policy: Tilting Toward Taiwan in an Era of U.S.-PRC Rivalry?" *Asian Politics & Policy* 11, no. 2 (2019): 250–78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12455>.
- Chen, Kelvin. "Taiwan Reports More than 600 Chinese Military Sorties so Far This Year." *Taiwan News*, October 15, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4306541>.
- China Outbound Tourism in 2017." Travel China Guide. Last modified November 6, 2018. Accessed December 5, 2018. <https://www.travelchinaguide.com/tourism/2017statistics/outbound.htm>.
- Choe, Sang-Hun. "North Korea Launches Two Midrange Missiles." *The New York Times* (New York City, NY), March 25, 2014. Accessed February 22, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/26/world/asia/north-korea-launches-two-midrange-missiles.html>.
- Cho, Kye-wan. "South Korean Companies Look to Southeast Asia in Bid to Increase Exports." Hankyoreh. Last modified March 2, 2018. Accessed January 2, 2019. http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_business/834409.html.
- Choe, Sang-Hun. "South Korea and U.S. Agree to Deploy Missile Defense System." *The New York Times* (United States), July 7, 2016. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/08/world/asia/south-korea-and-us-agree-to-deploy-missile-defense-system.html>.

- Choi, Yong Sub. "Keeping the Americans in: The THAAD Deployment on the Korean Peninsula in the Context of Sino-American Rivalry." *Contemporary Security Policy* 41, no. 4 (2020): 632–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2020.1733314>.
- Collinson, Stephen, Nicole Gaouette, Elise Labott, and Laura Smith-Spark. "China lodges complaint over Trump-Taiwan call." *Sat* (2016).
- Copper, John F. "Understanding President Trump's Taiwan Policy." *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 24, no. 2 (2017): v–viii. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44759209>.
- Congressional Commission. The United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission. *China's Response to U.S.-South Korean Missile Defense System Deployment and its Implications*. By Ethan Meick and Nargiza Salidjanova. Washington, D.C., US: USCC.gov, 2017.
- Council on Foreign Relations. "China's Maritime Disputes: 1895 – 2020." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/chinas-maritime-disputes>.
- Council on Foreign Relations. "Timeline: U.S. Relations with China 1949-2021." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china>.
- Christensen, Thomas J. "Obama and Asia." *Foreign Aff.* 94 (2015): 28.
- Defense Daily. "Standoff Land-Attack Missile-Expanded Response (SLAM-ER)." Defense Daily. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.defensedaily.com/standoff-land-attack-missile-expanded-response-slam-erma/>.
- Defense World.Net Bureau. "Taiwanese Jets to get External Pods for Electronic Warfare

- Capability." Defense World.Net. Last modified April 13, 2020. Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.defenseworld.net/news/26724/Taiwanese_Jets_to_get_External_Pods_for_Electronic_Warfare_Capability#.YkIXLijMI2w.
- Department of Defense Missile Defense Agency. *Missile Defense Agency Fact Sheet: Missile Defense Intercept Flight Test*. By Missile Defense Agency. N.p., 2019.
- Department of Defense Missile Defense Agency. *Missile Defense Agency Fact Sheet: Successful Missile Defense Intercept Test Takes Place off Hawaii*. By Missile Defense Agency. N.p., 2007.
- Department of Defense Missile Defense Agency. *Missile Defense Agency News Release: Successful Terminal High Altitude Area Defense Intercept Flight Achieved*. By Missile Defense Agency. N.p., 2006.
- Easley, Leif-Eric. "China's Charm Offensive on South Korea Is Starting to Work." *Foreign Policy*. Last modified November 13, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/13/chinas-charm-offensive-on-south-korea-is-starting-to-work/>.
- Everington, Keoni. "US Pushes 3 Advanced Weapons Sales to Taiwan amid Chinese Aggression." *Taiwan News*, October 13, 2020. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4028917>.
- Financial News. "[사스·메르스 대응 어땠나②] 지지율 최저치 만든朴정부'메르스 대응'" [[How Was the Response to SARS and MERS ②] The Government 'Response to MERS' that Made the Lowest Approval Rate]. Financial News. Last modified

- fied January 26, 2020. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://www.fnnews.com/news/202001262015503698>.
- Fravel, Taylor. "US policy towards the disputes in the South China Sea since 1995." In *Power politics in Asia's contested waters*, pp. 389-402. Springer, Cham, 2016.
- Gallagher, Michael G. "China's Illusory Threat to the South China Sea." *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 169–94. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539152>.
- Glaser, Bonnie S., and Lisa Collins. "China's Rapprochement With South Korea: Who Won the THAAD Dispute?" *Foreign Affairs*. Last modified November 7, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2017-11-07/chinas-rapprochement-south-korea>.
- Gordon, Michael R. "U.S. Eases Embargo on Arms to Vietnam." *The New York Times*, October 3, 2014, New York edition, sec. A, 8. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/world/asia/us-eases-embargo-on-arms-to-vietnam.html>.
- Grossman, Derek. "Biden Administration Shows Unwavering Support for Taiwan." *Rand Corporation*. Last modified October 20, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.rand.org/blog/2021/10/biden-administration-shows-unwavering-support-for-taiwan.html>.
- Grossman, Derek. *Regional Responses to U.S.-China Competition in the Indo-Pacific*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020.
- Han, Sang-Hee. "[이슈칼럼]사드배치, 헌법 60 조따라 국회 동의 받아야" *[[Issue Column] THAAD deployment must be approved by the National Assembly in accordance with Article 60 of the Constitution]*. The 300. Last modified Jul

- y 21, 2016. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://the300.mt.co.kr/newsView.html?no=2016072014057677243>.
- Hansler, Jennifer. "Biden Administration Proposes \$750 Million Arms Sale to Taiwan in a Move Likely to Anger Beijing." CNN. Last modified August 5, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/04/politics/biden-administration-taiwan-arms-sales/index.html>.
- Han, Sungjoo. "South Korea and the United States: The Alliance Survives." *Asian Survey* 20, no. 11 (1980): 1075-1086.
- Harris, Bryan. "South Korea: The Fear of China's Shadow." Financial Times. Last modified August 19, 2018. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.ft.com/content/c2d6dad0-a13e-11e8-85da-eeb7a9ce36e4>.
- Herman, Tamar. "In A Post-THAAD World, K-Pop Focuses On New Markets Aside from China." Forbes. Last modified February 28, 2018. Accessed January 5, 2019. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tamarherman/2018/02/28/in-a-post-thaad-world-k-pop-focuses-on-new-markets-aside-from-china/#2846e6de6d81>.
- Horton, Chris. "Taiwan Set to Receive \$2 Billion in U.S. Arms, Drawing Ire from China." *The New York Times* (NY), July 10, 2019, New York edition, sec. A, 6. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/09/world/asia/taiwan-arms-sales.html>.
- Houck, James W, and Nicole M Anderson. "The United States, China, and Freedom of Navigation in the South China Sea." *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 13, no. 3 (2014): 441.
- Huang, Joyce. "South Korea, China Make Amends, But THAAD Dispute Lingers." Voice of

- America. Last modified December 17, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2018.
<https://www.voanews.com/a/china-south-korea-xi-moon-meeting/4165368.html>.
- Huang, Kristin. "Explainer: How Taiwan's relations with mainland China have changed under president Tsai Ing-wen." *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), June 15, 2021, China/Diplomacy. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3137231/timeline-cross-strait-relations-under-taiwans-president-tsai>.
- Jung, Min-Hee. "Lotte Faces 500 Billion Won Losses in China over THAAD Retaliation." *Business Korea*. Last modified May 8, 2017. Accessed November 20, 2018.
<http://www.businesskorea.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=18007>.
- Jung, Suk-Yee. "US-China Trade War Threatening S. Korea's Exports." *Business Korea*. Last modified July 12, 2018. Accessed November 20, 2018.
<http://www.businesskorea.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=23612>.
- Kim, Dong Yub. "사드 한반도 배치의 군사적 효용성과 한반도 미래" [Military Effectiveness of THAAD Deployment and the Future of the Korean Peninsula]. *Gukjejeongchinonchon* 57, no. 2 (2017): 290-327.
- Kim, Kyung-Eun. "China Cancels Jo Su-mi Concerts Amid THAAD Tensions." *Chosun Media: The ChosunIlbo*. Last modified January 25, 2017. Accessed November 20, 2018.
http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2017/01/25/2017012501616.html.
- Klingner, Bruce. "The Importance of THAAD Missile Defense." *The Journal of East Asian Affairs* 29, no. 2 (2015): 23. <http://www.jstor.org/43685234>.
- KookJe Newspaper Digital Contents Team. "박 정부 총리 후보 수난...1년 5개월간 3

- 명이 낙마" [The Hardships of the Park Administration's Prime Minister Candidate... 3 People Fell out in 1 Year and 5 Months]. Kookje Newspaper. Last modified June 24, 2014. Accessed February 25, 2022. <http://www.kookje.co.kr/news2011/asp/newsbody.asp?key=20140624.99002153904>.
- Kuehn, David. "Managing the Status Quo: Continuity and Change in the United States' Taiwan Policy." (2021): 11.
- Lai, Christina. "Acting One Way and Talking Another: China's Coercive Economic Diplomacy in East Asia and Beyond." *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 2 (2018): 169-187.
- Lee, Brianni. "THAAD Deployment in South Korea: Militarism Leading to Political Regression." *Harvard International Review* 37, (2017): 34-37.
- Lee, Ho-Jin. "Missile Defense and South Korea: President Park's Strategic Ambiguity Is Warranted." Brookings. Last modified March 27, 2015. Accessed February 22, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/missile-defense-and-south-korea-president-parks-strategic-ambiguity-is-warranted/>.
- Lee, Ji-Young. *The Geopolitics of South Korea-China Relations: Implications for U.S. Policy in the Indo-Pacific*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020.
- Lee, Samuel (Songhoon). "Why Wouldn't S. Korea Want U.S. Missile Defenses?" CBS News. Last modified June 3, 2014. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/u-s-proposes-advanced-missile-defense-system-in-south-korea/>.
- Library of Congress. "H.R.2810 - National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018." Congress.Gov. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2810>.

Lin, Cheng-Yi. "Obama's South China Sea Policy: China's Response and Implications for Taiwan." *Soochow Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 1 (2016): 1.

Lockheed Martin. "HIMARS: The Long-Range, Mobile, Precision Fires Launcher Interoperable with C2 Systems." Lockheed Martin. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.lockheedmartin.com/en-us/products/high-mobility-artillery-rocket-system.html>.

Mackby, Jenifer. "The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty." Center for Strategic and International Studies. Last modified May 10, 2010. Accessed January 5, 2019. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/nuclear-non-proliferation-treaty>.

Maizland, Lindsay. "Why China-Taiwan Relations are so Tense." Council on Foreign Relations. Last modified May 10, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/china-taiwan-relations-tension-us-policy>.

Marlay, Ross. "China, the Philippines, and the Spratly Islands." *Asian Affairs, an American Review (New York)* 23, no. 4 (1997): 195–210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00927678.1997.10771160>.

Marukawa, Tomoo. "Dependence and Competition: Trade Relationship Between Asian Countries and China." *Journal of contemporary East Asia studies* 10, no. 2 (2021): 246–261.

Meick, Ethan, and Nargiza Salidjanova. *China's Response to U.S.-South Korean Missile Defense System Deployment and its Implications*. Washington, D.C., USA: United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2017.

Michigan State University. "South Korea: Trade Statistics." Global Edge. Accessed

- December 6, 2018. <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/south-korea/tradestats>.
- Mullen, Jethro. "China Can Squeeze Its Neighbors When It Wants. Ask South Korea." CNN Business. Last modified August 30, 2017. Accessed November 20, 2018. <https://money.cnn.com/2017/08/30/news/economy/china-hyundai-south-korea-thaad/index.html>.
- Nguyen, Hang. "The Obama Administration and Southeast Asia: Dynamics of a New Engagement." *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs* 29, no. 1/2 (2016): 39–56. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44123128>.
- Office of the Historian. "203. Joint Statement following Discussions with Leaders of the People's Republic of China." Office of the Historian. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v17/d203>.
- One Hundred Fifteenth Congress of the United States of America: At the Second Session, H.R. Doc. No. H.R. 5515.
- Padden, Brian. *South Korea Impeachment Intensifies Divide Over THAAD*. Washington: Federal Information & News Dispatch, 2017.
- Padden, Brian. "South Korea Rejects Trump's \$1B THAAD Demand." Voice of America. Last modified April 28, 2017. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/article/northkorea-usa-thaad/south-korea-says-u-s-reaffirms-it-will-pay-thaad-costs-trump-calls-asia-allies-idINKBN17W03H>.
- Pae, Peter. "South Korea's Chaebol." Bloomberg. Last modified October 5, 2018. Accessed January 5, 2019. <https://www.bloomberg.com/quicktake/republic-samsung>.

Page, Jeremy. "Vietnam Accuses Chinese Ships." *The Wall Street Journal*, December 3, 2012. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB1000142412788732371700457815703385>.

Park, Byung-jin. "미·중 패권대결의 시험대, 사드(THAAD) 배치에 대한 한국인의 생각은?" [What Do Koreans Think about the Deployment of THAAD, the Test Bed for the Battle for Hegemony between the US and China?] *Segye Daily* (South Korea), January 24, 2017.

Perlez, Jane. "Vietnam Law on Contested Islands Draws China's Ire." *New York Times*, June 22, 2012, New York edition, sec. A, 8. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/world/asia/china-criticizes-vietnam-in-dispute-over-islands.html>.

Qingmin, Zhang, and Eric Hyer. "US 'Dual Track' Policy: Arms Sales and Technology Transfer to China Mainland and Taiwan." *The Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 26 (2001): 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560123882>.

Realmeter. "[MBN Issue] South Korean Public Opinion Poll Survey on THAAD Deployment." Table. 2016.

Realmeter. "[MBN Issue] THAAD Deployment." Table. 2015.

Reuters. "Chinese Tourists Returning to South Korea after Missile Tensions Cool." *South China Morning Post* (China), May 2, 2018, accessed December 5, 2018. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2144327/chinese-tourists-returning-south-korea-after-missile>.

Reuters Staff. "Factbox: Recent Taiwan Visits by Top U.S. Officials." Reuters. Last

- modified January 7, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-usa-diplomacy-factbox/factbox-recent-taiwan-visits-by-top-u-s-officials-idUSKB>.
- Reuters Staff. "Timeline: Trump Questions Then Honors 'One China' Policy." Reuters. Last modified February 10, 2017. Accessed March 2, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-china-xi-timeline/timeline-trump-questions-then-honors-one-china-policy-idUSKBN15P0OQ>.
- Reuters Staff. "Timeline: U.S. Arms Sales to Taiwan in 2020 Total \$5 Billion amid China Tensions." Reuters. Last modified December 7, 2020. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-security-usa-timeline/timeline-u-s-arms-sales-to-taiwan-in-2020-total-5-billion-amid-china-tensions-idUSKBN28I0BF>.
- Reuters Staff. "Trump Administration Grants License for Taiwan Submarine Project: Report." Reuters. Last modified April 7, 2018. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-usa-submarines/trump-administration-grants-license-for-taiwan-submarine-project-report-idUSKBN1HE0P>.
- Taiwan Reports New Large-scale Chinese Air Force Incursion." Reuters. Last modified January 24, 2022. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-reports-new-large-scale-chinese-air-force-incursion-2022-01-23/>.
- Rotberg, Robert I., Rabb, Theodore K, and Gilpin, Robert. *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*. Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Roosevelt, Ann. "Ballistic Missile Defense System Successfully Engages Five Targets

- Simultaneously." *Defense Daily*. Accessed February 20, 2022. <https://www.defensedaily.com/ballistic-missile-defense-system-successfully-engages-five-targets-simultaneously/#:~:text=In%20the%20largest%20missile%20defense,missile%20and%20cruise%20missile%20targets>.
- Ross, Robert S. "Beijing as a Conservative Power." *Foreign Affairs (New York, N.Y.)* 76, no. 2 (1997): 33–44. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20047935>.
- Ross, Robert S. "China-Vietnamese Relations in the Era of Rising China: Power, Resistance, and Maritime Conflict." *The Journal of Contemporary China* 30, no. 130 (2021): 613–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2020.1852737>.
- Ross, Robert S. "It's Not a Cold War: Competition and Cooperation in US–China Relations." *China International Strategy Review* 2, no. 1 (2020): 63-72.
- Ross, Robert S. "Taiwan's fading independence movement." *Foreign Affairs* (2006): 141-148.
- Ross, Robert S. "The Geography of the Peace: East Asia in the Twenty-First Century." *International Security* 23, no. 4 (1999): 81–118. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.23.4.81>.
- Ross, Robert S. "The Problem with the Pivot: Obama's New Asia Policy Is Unnecessary and Counterproductive." *Foreign Affairs (New York, N.Y.)* 91, no. 6 (2012): 70–82.
- Ross, Robert S. "The Stability of Deterrence in the Taiwan Strait." *The National Interest*, no. 65 (2001): 67–76. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42897358>.
- Ross, Robert S. "US Grand Strategy, the Rise of China, and US National Security Strategy for East Asia." *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (2013): 20–40. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26270764>.

Senators Urge Trump to Complete THAAD Deployment to South Korea, Press China to End Retaliation. Washington: Federal Information & News Dispatch, Inc, 2017.

Ruwitch, John, and Nguyen Phuong Linh. "Chinese Oil Rig Moved Away from Disputed Waters off Vietnam." Reuters. Last modified July 15, 2014. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-vietnam-rig/chinese-oil-rig-moved-away-from-disputed-waters-off-vietnam-idUSKBN0FL00Y20140716>.

Seligman, Lara. "Trump's Fighter Jet Sale to Taiwan Advances despite China's Protests." Foreign Policy. Last modified July 3, 2019. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/03/trumps-fighter-jet-sale-to-taiwan-advances-despite-china-protests-f-16-lockheed-martin>

Shih, Gerry, and Lily Kuo. "Trump Upsets Decades of U.S. Policy on Taiwan, Leaving Thorny Questions for Biden." *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2021. Accessed March 5, 2022. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/trump-biden-taiwan-china/2021/01/13/1bbadee0-53c0-11eb-acc5-92d2819a1ccb_story.html.

Singer, Adam. "Obama, Trump, and Xi: Three South China Sea Strategies in the US-China Battle for Global Hegemony." (2020).

Smith, Nicola, and Tom Phillips. "Taiwan Carries out Drills amid Rising Fears of Chinese Invasion." *The Guardian*. Last modified January 18, 2017. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/18/taiwan-carries-out-drills-amid-rising-fears-of-chinese-invasion>.

Sobrero, Arnaud. "Does Japan Need to Develop a New Fighter Aircraft?" *The Diplomat*, January 11, 2021. Accessed February 14, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/01/does-japan-need-to-develop-a-new-fighter-aircraft/>.

Song, Ki-Choon. "한·미간 사드(THAAD) 배치 합의와 이에 대한 국회의 동의 필요성

" [The Agreement to Deploy THAAD at USAFK and the Necessity to get Consent of the National Assembly to Its Conclusion and Ratification]. *Democratic Legal Studies* 62 (November 2016): 95-131.

Taylor, Brendan. "The South China Sea is not a flashpoint." *The Washington Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2014): 99-111.

Thayer, Carlyle A. "The Tyranny of Geography: Vietnamese Strategies to Constrain China in the South China Sea." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 33, no. 3 (2011): 348–69. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41446234>.

The White House: Office of the Press Secretary. "Joint Statement: Between the United States of America and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam." The White House: President Obama. Last modified May 23, 2016. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/05/23/joint-statement-between-united-states-america-and-socialist-republic>.

Tiezzi, Shannon. "South Korea's President and China's Military Parade." *The Diplomat*. Last modified September 3, 2015. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/09/south-koreas-president-and-chinas-military-parade/>.

Tunsjø, Øystein. *US Taiwan Policy: Constructing the Triangle / Øystein Tunsjø*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Voice of America. "South Korea, China Agree to Create 'Strategic and Cooperative Partnership.'" VOA. Last modified October 27, 2009. Accessed February 25, 2022. <https://www.voanews.com/a/a-13-2008-05-27-voa43-66647852/557463.html>.

Vuving, Alexander L. "South China Sea: Who Occupies What in the Spratlys?" *The*

- Diplomat. Last modified may 6, 2016. Accessed March 15, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2016/05/south-china-sea-who-claims-what-in-the-spratlys>.
- Watts IV, Robert C. "Rockets' Red Glare." *Naval War College Review* 71, no. 2 (2018): 80.
- Wong, Edward. "Chinese Tourist Boat Heads Toward Disputed Islands." *The New York Times*, April 29, 2013. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/30/world/asia/chinese-tourist-boat-headstoward-disputed-islands.html>.
- Wu, Joshua Su-Ya. "Economics, Lobbying, and U.S. Congressional Support for Taiwan: Buying American Support, 2002–2006." *Asian Survey* 49, no. 2 (2009): 380–402. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2009.49.2.380>.
- Xiaohui, Su. "Dynamics of the Trump Administration's Policy on the South China Sea." *China Int'l Stud.* 69 (2018): 168.
- Xinhua News Agency. "China, Vietnam Launch Consulations on Sea-Related Joint Development." *Xinhuanet*, January 9, 2014. Accessed March 5, 2022. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-01/09/c_133032429.htm.
- Xuan, Loc Doan. "US and Vietnam Finally and Fully Normalize Relations." *Asia Times*. Last modified May 23, 2016. Accessed March 5, 2022. <https://asiatimes.com/2016/05/us-and-vietnam-finally-and-fully-normalize-relations/>.
- Yuanzhe, Ren, Yu Tiejun, and Wang Junsheng. "China's Perspective on the China-ROK Strategic Partnership: Developments, Debates, and Difficulties." *Chinese Perspectives: Towards the Korean Peninsula in the Aftermath of North Korea's Fourth Nuclear Test*. Stimson Center, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep10996.7>.