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국제학석사학위논문

Chicken, Beer, and Missiles:
Chinese Retaliations against South Korea
During the THAAD Security Crisis

치킨, 맥주 그리고 미사일:
한국의 사드 배치에 대한 중국의 보복

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서울대학교 국제대학원

국제대학과 국제협력

Thomas Christopher Norris

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Abstract

Chicken, Beer, and Missiles: Chinese Retaliations against South Korea During the THAAD Security Crisis

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The deployment of THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense anti-ballistic missile defense system) presented a unique security challenge to the United States, South Korea, and China. Rather than respond through military means, the Chinese government elected to employ various retaliations against South Korean companies and public diplomacy initiatives. This study analyzes the pattern and motivation behind these retaliations from the beginning of the crisis until normalization. First, borrowing from Richard Solomon's definitive study of Chinese negotiating behavior, this paper examines the effort of the Chinese state to generate a wave of domestic nationalism to combat the Korean Wave and, all the while, maintain plausible deniability of official government involvement in the retaliations. Next, this paper examines the circumstances under which China-R.O.K. relations were normalized, determining that the retaliations were ultimately successful

in pressuring South Korea to show deference to Chinese security interests. Strictly speaking on security, China's retaliations and anti-Hallyu campaign had the intended result but, in regards to public diplomacy, the campaign was ruinous. Wasting its opportunity to portray itself as an alternative patron to the United States, China gained a reputation as an irresponsible and dangerous partner, with South Koreans coming to identify the country as a potential military threat rather than potential ally. Disregarding the effect of the retaliations on public opinion, the Chinese government's bullying strategy earned short-term security benefits but at the cost of the long-term goal of becoming South Korea's primary security partner. Lastly, this paper analyzes the national effort to diversify South Korea's international partnerships and the sub-state level effort to use gastrodiplomacy as a means of forging new friendships.

Keywords: THAAD; propaganda; retaliations; gastrodiplomacy; Hallyu; Indo-Pacific strategy; public diplomacy

Student number: 2016-28870

국문 초록

사드 배치는 미국, 한국, 중국에 독특한 안보 도전이었다. 중국 정부는 군사적 대응보다 한국 기업에 대한 다양한 보복과 공공외교 정책을 택했다. 이 연구는 위기 초기부터 정상화까지 이러한 보복의 배후 패턴과 동기를 분석한다. 이 논문은 중국 협상 행동에 대한 리처드 솔로몬의 결정적인 연구 결과를 인용한 것으로, 우선 중국이 한류에 맞서기 위해 국내 민족주의의 물결을 일으키려는 노력을 검토하고, 그러는 동안, 중국 정부가 보복에 개입하는 것을 그럴듯하게 부인하고 있다. 그 다음, 이 논문은 보복이 궁극적으로 한국에 중국 안보이익에 대한 경외심을 보여주도록 압력을 가하는데 성공했다고 판단하면서, 중국과 한국간의 관계가 정상화되었던 상황을 검토한다. 안보에 대해 엄밀히 말하면 중국의 보복과 반한류 캠페인은 의도된 결과를 가져왔지만, 공공외교에 있어서는 그 캠페인은 실패적이었다. 중국은 미국의 대안적인 후원자가 묘사되는 기회를 잃고, 무책임하고 위험한 파트너라는 평판을 얻었으며, 한국과는 중국이 잠재적인 동맹국이 아닌 잠재적인 군사적 위협의 존재로 인식되어졌다.

중국정부는 여론의 비판을 무시한 채 약자괴롭히기 전략으로 단기 안보 이익을 얻었지만 한국의 주요 안보 파트너가 되겠다는 장기적 목표는 희생시켰다.

마지막으로, 본 논문은 한국의 국제 파트너십을 다양화하기 위한 국가적 노력과, 관대한 우호동맹의 수단인 *gastrodiplomacy* 를 이용하는 하위 국가의 노력을 분석한다.

주제어: 사드; 공공외교; 한류; *gastrodiplomacy*; 민족주의; 반한류

학생 번호: 2016-28870

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1. Introduction

The deployment of THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense anti-ballistic missile defense system) presented a unique security challenge to the United States, South Korea, and China. Rather than responding to the challenge through military means, however, China implicitly voiced its disapproval of the THAAD deployment by blocking South Korea's gastrodiplomacy efforts and other public diplomacy initiatives. Maintaining plausible deniability of official involvement, the Chinese government used propaganda to generate a wave of domestic nationalism to combat the Korean Wave and spark a voluntary, nationalist boycott of Korean companies. The retaliations would damage South Korean business in China beyond repair but would they ultimately have the desired political effect? Would South Korea be pressured into adopting policies that would accommodate China's future security interests? Or would South Korea endure China's assault without yielding, finding new partners to replace China as the primary target of the Korean Wave?

2. Analytical Framework

This study examines primary sources in the form of propaganda produced by the Chinese government. Framing this analysis is the theoretical work of the late Richard Solomon, author of 'Chinese Negotiating Behavior'. This framework is used to examine the process by which the Chinese government stokes nationalist sentiment

across Chinese society and then leverages and references this domestic outrage as a point of consideration or constraint in international negotiations. Documenting the Chinese government's campaign to block the Korean Wave and disrupt Korean activities in China, this study catalogues and compares 'anti-public diplomacy' initiatives by the Chinese government over the course of the THAAD crisis.

Lastly, this paper studies the political outcome of the THAAD crisis by examining the annual domestic opinion surveys conducted by the South Korean think tank, the Asan Institute for Policy Studies. The Asan Institute uses a sample size of 1,000 respondents over the age of 19 through Random Digit Dialing (RDD) with Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The surveys produced by the institute have a +3.1% margin of error, with a 95% confidence level. These studies allow for an analysis of the Chinese government's public diplomacy response to the THAAD crisis. For an examination of South Korea's public diplomacy shift to target ASEAN countries and India, interviews as well as trade and tourism data are used.

3. Betrayal: The Chinese Reaction to the THAAD Deployment

South Korea's agreement with the United States to deploy THAAD shocked the Chinese government and left the Chinese government with a sense of betrayal. Despite China's support of the North Korean regime, relations with South Korea had

been steadily improving over the previous few years. President Park Geun-hye visited China in 2013 on a trip described by the administration as one to “build trust from the bottom of the heart”.¹ Returning the gesture in 2014, President Xi Jinping visited Korea and characterized the trip as “seeking relatives”. These trips were emotional displays and created the expectation that South Korea and China would develop a strong and growing bond. This expectation was shattered, however, when THAAD was deployed. It was the moment when Chinese perceptions of the US-ROK alliance were broken. With the increased visits and stronger relationship between their countries, Chinese expectations were that South Korea would eventually pull away from its military alliance with the United States. With the deployment of THAAD, however, any chance of a South Korean realignment to China in the near future was dashed. Fueled by this sense of betrayal, China decided to protest against the missiles deployment by blocking South Korea’s public diplomacy initiatives.

a. The Fall of Chimaek Diplomacy

To protest the THAAD deployment, the Chinese government made efforts to curb the influence of South Korean public diplomacy initiatives. In the previous few years, China-ROK relations had been deepening through the people-to-people aspect of

¹ “U.S.-ROK Alliance: Looking Ahead to the New Administration and Beyond.” Nuclear Stability in a Post-Arms Control World | Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Mar. 2018, www.csis.org/events/rok-us-strategic-forum-us-rok-alliance-looking-ahead-new-administration-and-beyond.

South Korean gastrodiploamacy. “Chimaek”, a combination of the Korean words for fried chicken and beer, had become something of a Korean cultural export over the last decade. Following the success of the wildly popular Korean television drama, *My Love from the Star* (2013), in which the main characters frequently eat fried chicken and beer together, chimaek suddenly became, along with kimchi, a representative food of the Korean culture wave. Wherever Korean culture gained popularity, so did chimaek. In China, where the Korean Wave had the most success, the explosion of chimaek restaurants even led to a public health crisis. But, besides contributing to Chinese obesity rates, chimaek contributed greatly towards Korea’s public diplomacy. Chimaek was a symbol of the Korean Wave and, consequently, could be used by Korea to promote tourism to Korea and to expand the nation’s image.

Not only did Chinese tourists travel to Korea in droves to attend chimaek festivals but Chinese and Korean municipal government officials made exchanges through official visits to each other’s chicken and beer festivals. Chimaek cooperation was expanding each year at the municipal level, with Daegu city officials traveling to Shandong province for the annual Qingdao Beer Festival and Qingdao city officials making visits to the Daegu Chimaek Festival. This people-to-people exchange and bilateral economic engagement was brought to an abrupt halt in 2016, however, after the deployment of THAAD. A Qingdao city official told newspapers, “we have called Daegu city government and told them we will not be sending any officials for fried

chicken and beer. Meanwhile, we proposed to them politely that it would be better if they did not come to our beer festival, and they agreed.”² In the context of the THAAD dispute, Chinese officials believed that continued people-to-people exchanges would be inappropriate.

Chinese efforts to curtail Korean gastrodiploamacy, however, were just the tip of the iceberg. By December 2016, just 7 months after the deployment of THAAD, China took a total of 43 retaliatory actions against the South Korean business and entertainment sectors, according to the Korea Institute for National Unification. Of the 43 total retaliations, the institute tallied 23 cases involving cultural areas, 15 cases involving economic trade, and the remaining 5 cases pertained to diplomatic, political, or military matters.³ People-to-people exchanges were not just blocked at the official level. Aiming to curtail the effect of the Korean Wave and punish South Korea economically, the Chinese government placed an unofficial ban on package tours to South Korea. The ban, which saw the number of Chinese tourists drop by 45 percent from 2.04 million in July 2016 to 1.12 million in July 2017, was crushing to both the South Korean tourism industry and the government’s public diplomacy campaigns.

² Connor, Neil. “South Korean Officials Barred from China Beer Festival amid Missile Row.” The Telegraph, Telegraph Media Group, 27 July 2016, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/27/south-korean-officials-barred-from-china-beer-festival-amid-miss2/

³ 박 보람. “China Takes 43 Retaliatory Actions over S. Korea's THAAD Deployment Plan.” Yonhap News Agency, 2 Feb. 2017, en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20170203010100315.

Rather than through official channels, the Chinese government protested the deployment of THAAD by launching a full-scale blockade of South Korean public diplomacy initiatives and cultural imports to China. This campaign, however, was publically denied, with China's foreign ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang, claiming at a press conference in November 2016 that he had "never heard about any restriction on the Republic of Korea", going on to say "the Chinese side is always positive to people-to-people and cultural exchanges".⁴ It was not until December 2016 that South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs made any public acknowledgement of the obvious diplomatic spat, reporting that Ambassador for Public Diplomacy, Cho Hyun-dong, in a meeting with Chinese officials, had "pointed out that there are worries over recently reported bans related to Korean Wave events".⁵ The timidity of this accusation indicated the delicate situation Korea's public diplomats now faced.

b. Tension at the 4th Joint China-R.O.K. Public Diplomacy Forum

No event better reflects this particular period of Chinese-Korean relations and the threat to South Korean public diplomacy than the 4th joint China-ROK Public

⁴Smith, Nicola. "South Korea's 'K-Pop' Stars Caught In The Crossfire Of Diplomatic Spat With China". *The Telegraph*.

⁵Smith, Nicola. "South Korea's 'K-Pop' Stars Caught In The Crossfire Of Diplomatic Spat With China". *The Telegraph*.

Diplomacy Forum held on November 28, 2016. The forum was jointly held by the Chinese Foreign Ministry and Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs with support from the China Public Diplomacy Association and the Korea Foundation. Representatives from the two countries' governments, think tanks, and media came together under the theme of "Strengthening Exchanges and Enhancing Mutual Trust". This theme, however, seemed a contradiction. Strengthening exchanges and enhancing mutual trust were the exact opposite effects of recent interactions. With China forming new perceptions of the U.S.-R.O.K. security alliance and blocking public diplomacy as a means of retaliation against the Korean government, the viability of future exchanges was brought into question and mutual trust was extremely low.

Acknowledging that, due to the deployment of THAAD, China-R.O.K. relations faced severe challenges, Chinese officials expressed the desire for "both countries to bear in mind the general direction of promoting friendly cooperation, unswervingly stick to the principle of bringing benefits to both peoples, contribute to peace and stability in the region, and unite people from all walks of life from both countries to work together for long-term and sound development of China-ROK relations".⁶ In anticipation of the following year's 25th anniversary of diplomatic

⁶"The 4th China-ROK Public Diplomacy Forum Successfully Held in Yangzhou." Xi Jinping Holds Talks with President Hage Geingob of Namibia The Two Heads of State Jointly Agree to Establish China-Namibia Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, 28 Nov. 2016, www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/wshd_665389/t1420034.shtml.

relations between China and South Korea, Chinese officials hoped that the forum could put forward suggestions for boosting people-to-people and cultural exchanges and make positive contributions to the development of China-R.O.K. relations.

On the Korean side, President of the Korean Foundation, Lee Si-hyung, noted the symbolism of the event's location. Besides hosting the public diplomacy forum, Yangzhou, China is also home to the memorial hall of Choe Chiwon, a famous scholar of the Silla dynasty and one of the earliest symbols of public diplomacy between the countries. In the spirit of this historical exchange, Lee called for personnel and academic exchanges to be expanded instead of being reduced. Ambassador for Public Diplomacy, Cho Hyun-dong referred to ROK-China relations as an irresistible trend and expressed his hopes that the forum would find solutions to challenges, ensure mutual trust and friendship between the two countries, and contribute to the further development of bilateral relations.

Were these calls for trust and increased exchange, made by both countries, overly optimistic in the face of the THAAD crisis? Seoul National University professor Dr. Chung Jao-ho was in attendance at the forum in Yangzhou, where he realized that the difficulties facing China-ROK relations were not caused by the technical issues of THAAD, but were caused by the Chinese awareness that South Korea could not be lured away from the US alliance frame. Asked about the difficult period facing Korea-

China relations, Dr. Chung replied that “somehow we have to get through it”.⁷ From the public statements of officials at the forum, it seemed that public diplomacy officials from both countries were guilty of wishful thinking.

It was during this forum, however, that R.O.K. Ambassador for Public Diplomacy, Cho Hyun-dong, pointed out the worries over recent bans of Korean Wave events. This light protest, referred to so timidly the following week by Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, may have been more serious than a simple complaint lodged to Chinese officials. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ earlier statement on Chinese restrictions was a delicate response to an evolving situation and may have masked stronger efforts made by Ambassador Cho at the Yangzhou forum.

c. China Blocks the Korean Wave

Despite Ambassador Cho’s appeals and the Chinese claim that no such ban existed, the pattern of event cancellations and performance restrictions continued. The Korea Times reported in December 2016 that “no Korean entertainer has obtained

⁷“U.S.-ROK Alliance: Looking Ahead to the New Administration and Beyond.” Nuclear Stability in a Post-Arms Control World | Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Mar. 2018, www.csis.org/events/rok-us-strategic-forum-us-rok-alliance-looking-ahead-new-administration-and-beyond.

Beijing's permission to perform in the neighboring country since October".⁸ As K-pop performers were mysteriously barred from entering China to perform, stocks for K-pop companies plunged. Bloomberg reported that stocks for SM Entertainment, which manages K-pop groups such as Girls Generation, fell by more than 30% since the THAAD announcement. The Korean newspaper, *Dong-a Il-bo*, wrote that "according to Chinese entertainment media outlets, the ban is implicit, without an official document".

This claim was strengthened by evidence from the TV and film industry. A fan event in Beijing with South Korean film stars Suzy Bae and Kim Woo-bin was cancelled after the Chinese company hosting the event, Youku, received a notice from the Beijing police bureau, suggesting that the company delay the event. When the company announced the postponement of the event, it cited "forces beyond our control."⁹ Chinese authorities also cracked down on the hiring of Korean stars for Chinese TV dramas. Two sources at TV stations in Guangdong told reporters at SCMP that new programs featuring South Korean stars would not be granted approval to be aired. According to one source, authorities told the TV stations "to postpone any plans for programs that involve South Korean stars or copyrights of South Korean TV

⁸Smith, Nicola. "South Korea's 'K-Pop' Stars Caught In The Crossfire Of Diplomatic Spat With China". *The Telegraph*.

⁹Qin, A. and Choe, S. (2016). South Korean Missile Defense Deal Appears to Sour China's Taste for K-Pop. *Nytimes.com*

shows”.¹⁰¹¹ Data from the Korean Film Council supports the claim of a wide Chinese ban on Korean entertainment, showing that, since September 2015, not a single Korean film was aired on Chinese television nor shown in theaters.

With K-pop performances cancelled, Korean TV shows and films blocked, and Korean actors and models replaced by Chinese stars, Hallyu, the wave that carried Korean public diplomacy for over a decade, was under significant threat. By blocking EXO concerts in Shanghai and cancelling K-drama fan meetings in Beijing, the Chinese government aimed to erode the very foundation of Korean public diplomacy. What is more, despite the obvious pattern of retaliation against the Korean entertainment, retaliation through blocking cultural exports allowed the Chinese government to deny accusations of official political retaliation.¹²

d. Beyond the Wave: Chinese Cultural Retaliations

¹⁰ Zhou, Laura. “China 'Tightening up on Use of South Korean Stars in TV Dramas', Sources Say, in Wake of Missile Shield Row.” South China Morning Post, South China Morning Post, 3 Aug. 2016, www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/1998090/china-tightening-use-south-korean-stars-tv-dramas-sources-say.

¹¹ Winship, Robin. “Is China Banning South Korean Entertainers over THAAD Deployment?” Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2016/08/04/korean_entertainment_ban/.

¹² “S. Korea Voices Concerns over China's Ban on Korean Stars.” Yonhap News Agency, 변덕근, 28 Nov. 2016, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/search1/2603000000.html.

Beyond simply targeting the Korean Wave, in early 2017, the Chinese government expanded the scope of their ban to include Korean involvement with the arts, sports, education, and other fields. Kim Jong-ying, the lead dancer of the Korean National Ballet, was scheduled to perform with the Shanghai Ballet in April as the star of “Swan Lake”. At the beginning of the year, however, she was informed that she was no longer invited to perform with the group.¹³ In February, a joint art exhibition to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Chinese-ROK relations was cancelled. Cui Yinzhū, director of the Gyeonggi Museum of Fine Arts, explained that he had held consultations with the Chinese Ministry of Culture but that the ministry was no longer willing to take part in the exhibition at the National Museum of Korea. While the Chinese government had unofficially directed Chinese companies and ministries to pull out of quite a few joint events, until this point, none of those events were designed solely as a symbol of Chinese-Korean friendship. By refusing to participate in the art exhibition, the Chinese government explicitly signaled that relations were at their lowest.

e. China Takes Aim at the South Korean Community

¹³“韩中建交纪念美术展告吹 或受萨德牵累.” Yonhap News Agency, 22 Feb. 2017, chinese.yonhapnews.co.kr/newpgm/9908000000.html?cid=ACK20160222003300881.

Aside from targeting the activities of Korean celebrities and artists visiting China, the Chinese government took actions against the Korean community of immigrants living in China. In January 2017, the Chinese government deported 32 South Korean missionaries who lived in Northeastern China, some of whom had lived in the country for over a decade. Charging them with breaking immigration laws, one of the 32 was arrested and the rest deported to South Korea.¹⁴ In February 2017, the Chinese government went a step further, taking measures that impacted Korean schoolchildren living in China. 6,000 South Korean students in Korean schools across China had their classes delayed after Chinese authorities delayed the customs clearance for new textbooks. Chinese custom authorities introduced new conditions for release of the books, requiring submission of official documents from South Korean diplomatic missions to guarantee that the books would only be used for educational purposes. With the diplomatic missions caught unawares, the beginning of the semester for all Korean schools was delayed by over a week.¹⁵ Targeting not just the Korean community in China but Korean schoolchildren, the lengths to which the Chinese government was willing to go to prove their resentment towards the South Korean government was evident.

¹⁴Kim, Jack. "China Expels 32 South Korea Missionaries amid Missile Defense Tension." Reuters, Thomson Reuters, 11 Feb. 2017, www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-china/china-expels-32-south-korea-missionaries-amid-missile-defense-tension-idUSKBN15Q042.

¹⁵"China Delaying Customs Clearance of Textbooks to Set Back Classes at S. Korean Schools." Yonhap News Agency, 변덕근, 21 Feb. 2017, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/search1/2603000000.html.

Sporting events are often thought of as positive opportunities for mending strained relations between countries. The 2018 Winter Olympics famously helped draw South Korea and North Korea closer together, with the two countries marching and competing as one. During the THAAD conflict, however, sport was yet another avenue through which China expressed its discontent with South Korean foreign policy. In March 2017, the Korean Professional Golfer's Association (KPGA) announced that its jointly-certified tournament with the China Golf Association (CGA) was to be postponed after the CGA requested a delay, citing "Chinese coverage issues and a lack of preparation time". The tournament would have been a good opportunity for people-to-people exchange, as it would have brought together 70 golfers from both South Korea and China to compete in Gyeonggi Province, South Korea.

The same week in March that the KPGA announced the joint golf tournament's delay, Korean golfer, Kim Hae-rym, won the inaugural event of the Ladies Professional Golf Tour in Haikou, China. During her final putt for a winning birdie, however, China's CCTV network only showed the Korean's feet within frame. Once her victory was assured, the network only showed Kim from a distance, so that both she and the sponsor on her hat, Lotte, could barely be seen. As Lotte had provided a site for the THAAD battery, the company's logo and their sponsored golfer were

purposefully kept off Chinese television screens.¹⁶ However, by March of 2017, blocked advertising was the least of Lotte's problems in China, as the conglomerate found itself at the center of the THAAD controversy.

f. “You can’t make money off us with one hand and hurt us with the other”: China Retaliates Against Lotte

Having signed a land-swap deal with the Korean government for the deployment of the THAAD missile system, Lotte bore the brunt of China's economic retaliations. By March of 2017, the number of Lotte supermarkets to close down in China had risen from 23 to 79. Local Chinese authorities were responsible for shutting down 63 of the Lotte locations, ostensibly due to fire code violations. The rest of the stores had been forced to close due to nationalistic protests and resulting sales losses.¹⁷ In January 2017, a group of 20 Jilin residents protested in front of a Lotte supermarket, holding a banner that read: “South Korea’s Lotte Group has declared war on China. Lotte supports THAAD. They must immediately GET OUT of China.” Photos of the protest went viral on Chinese social media, motivating protests across other regions of

¹⁶Kim, Kyung-moo. “S. Korea-China Golf Event Also Scuttled by THAAD.” *Income Inequality in South Korea the Most Severe in Asia : National : News : The Hankyoreh*, 23 Mar. 2017, english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_international/787711.html.

¹⁷Tan, Kenneth. “80% Of Lotte Supermarkets in China Have Been Forced to Shut down in Wake of THAAD Backlash.” *Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist*, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2017/03/21/lotte_closings-3/.

China but, on the other hand, drawing ridicule from many citizens online.¹⁸ Some commenters accused the protesters of being “brainwashed” and others pointed out that “all the workers inside Lotte supermarkets are fellow countrymen”. A point underscored by the fact that Lotte had previously employed 20,000 Chinese people across the country.. Some netizens questioned whether the protesters had been paid and others wondered why the protesters didn't also gather in front of the North Korean consulate or restaurants, pointing out that “North Korean missile tests endanger Jilin as well”.

Photos of the protest, however, drew at least as much sympathy as ridicule. A poll by the Global Times, a nationalistic Chinese paper, found that 95% of survey-takers would boycott Lotte for agreeing to the land-swap deal for the THAAD deployment. The paper also published interviews with average citizens who were opposed to THAAD. One man told the paper that “after the THAAD incident, I will go [to Lotte Mart] less often”, adding that Lotte’s actions represented a “provocation to the Chinese people”.¹⁹²⁰

¹⁸“吉林大妈拉横幅围堵乐天超市。” Banner Lotte Supermarket, 2 Mar. 2017, weibo.com/1618051664/ExTN3q3Vz?filter=hot&root_comment_id=0&type=comment#_rnd148844730832

¹⁹Lei, Wang. Chinese Shoppers Boycott Lotte amid Controversial THAAD Deal. 1 Mar. 2017, https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d557a4d33636a4d/share_p.html?t=1488379798936.

²⁰Tan, Kenneth. “Jilin Aunties Protest in Front of Lotte Supermarket, Netizens Call Them ‘Brainwashed Boxers.’” Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2017/03/02/lotte_under_attack/.



Figure 1 Chinese citizens protest the deployment of THAAD outside a LOTTE store

Besides publishing interviews with disgruntled citizens, the Global Times sought to curb Lotte's growth in China by publishing editorials fiercely criticizing the company. One such editorial declared that the "Lotte Group's development in the Chinese market should come to an end". The editorial acknowledges that "offering land for the THAAD installation is not entirely Lotte's fault" but argues that "Chinese society has neither the obligation nor interest to examine and distinguish what role Lotte has played in the undertaking". Neither had the Global Times, it seemed. The author saw no point in determining if a boycott against Lotte would be fair but did, however, foresee major geopolitical benefits from the campaign. The piece argues, "Showing Lotte the door will

be an effective warning to all the other foreign forces that jeopardize China's national interests". Driving Lotte out of China would not only make an example out of the company to other foreign companies and governments but, in the eyes of the author, would also preserve "the dignity China should have as a major power".²¹ Calling for boycotts against Lotte, the paper, along with other Chinese media outlets, drove the narrative that the country had been betrayed by South Korea and helped to fuel a wave of nationalism large enough to counter the Korean Wave.²²

However, to crush the Korean Wave, it would take more than the newspapers' readership to stop shopping at Lotte. An effective boycott against the company would require a grass-roots campaign, utilizing even Chinese citizens who were too young to shop for themselves. In March, 2017, a video surfaced of Chinese elementary school students holding banners and joining their teacher in anti-Korean and anti-Lotte chants. The students chanted "Lotte, leave China! Boycott Korean goods! Protest THAAD! Love China!" Beyond chants, elementary students were educated on how to participate in the boycott

²¹Global Times. "Lotte's Development in China Should Come to an End." Global Times, 28 Feb. 2017, www.globaltimes.cn/content/1035171.shtml.

²²Tan, Kenneth. "South Korea's Lotte Group under Attack in China after Handing over Land to Build Missile Site." Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2017/03/02/lotte_under_attack/.

themselves. In a photo posted to Twitter, a teacher shows her young pupils which Korean snacks they should not buy.²³



Figure 2 A Chinese schoolteacher instructs students to not buy Korean snacks

Giving insight into the Chinese state’s geopolitical motivations for its campaign against Lotte and South Korean public diplomacy was military commentator Major General Luo Yuan, who wrote an article published on a social media account of the People’s Liberation Army Daily. Luo reasserted the Chinese government’s claim that the

²³Tan, Kenneth. “Chinese Primary School Students Are Being Brainwashed into Boycotting South Korean Snacks.” Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2017/03/13/chinese_children_boycott_lotte/.

THAAD system's radar could extend into China's Northeastern regions and, going beyond the technical specifications, claimed that "the United States is trying to create a 'mini-NATO' in Asia, which puts South Korea on the frontier of confrontation between the US and China and Russia". This accusation speaks to Luo's (and most likely the Chinese government's) revisionist ambitions for the region. To speak of South Korea as if the country has not always been a "frontier of confrontation", is to selectively forget that the two counties of the Korean Peninsula were borne from war and immediately a point of confrontation between the United States and the U.S.S.R.. To make the accusation that the United States' deployment of THAAD is what puts South Korea on the "frontier of confrontation" is to purposely ignore the fact that South Korea has been on that frontier for its entire existence. Major General Luo Yuan goes on, taking aim at "the public provocation by Lotte Group in cooperation with the South Korean government", writing "it cannot be ruled out that China may take necessary countermeasures against South Korean industrial chains and business chains related to the deployment of THAAD". This statement, coming from a former leader of the Chinese military, is perhaps the closest public declaration of the government's intentions at the time. Tellingly, the article ends with a call to Chinese consumers to "say no" to Lotte and its products. This call for a public boycott mirrors those written by newspapers and is in line with the actions of local Chinese authorities against Lotte stores.

Though much evidence hinted at government coordination behind the boycott of Lotte, no statements were ever officially made by the Chinese government on Lotte. It was not part of official school curriculum for teachers to instruct children to not buy Korean snacks. No official of the Chinese Communist Party had led the protests in front of Lotte stores. No law had been put into effect to ban television broadcasters from displaying the Lotte logo. Instead, Chinese official statements took a lamentable tone, implying that the damage being done to Lotte was beyond the government's control.

**g. Making the Chinese Nationalist Wave: Maintaining Deniable
Plausibility by Generating Nationalism through Propaganda**

When the South Korean government finally did bring the matter of Chinese retaliations before the WTO, in March 2017, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying responded to the complaint by telling a daily news briefing: “We support normal business and other exchanges between China and South Korea. But everyone knows this needs a corresponding basis in public opinion.”²⁴ The Ministry Spokesperson’s statement gives the impression that the well-being of South Korean business is out of the hands of the Chinese state; further implying that the Chinese government would like to improve the bilateral ties but, lamentably, its hands are tied due to the sentiments of

²⁴Tan, Kenneth. “80% Of Lotte Supermarkets in China Have Been Forced to Shut down in Wake of THAAD Backlash.” Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2017/03/21/lotte_closings-3/.

the Chinese domestic public. While, on the one hand, the ministry referred to public opinion to justify the government's inability to defend South Korean business, it also referred to public opinion as the basis for any measures taken to defend its security interests. Speaking directly on the topic of protests against the Lotte Group, Geng Shuang, another spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said at a press conference that the protests are an indication of the Chinese people's stance towards THAAD. Geng added that now, because of the protests, “the relative parties know well of the Chinese people's stance on the deployment of THAAD” and that he believed “they have noticed their voices”. Finally adding the warning that South Korea and the United States will “have to bear all the resulting consequences” as China will take the “necessary measures to safeguard its security interests.”²⁵ Professing an almost deferential respect for public opinion, the Chinese government could justify both inaction to protect Lotte from its angered public as well as any action it took against the company or other South Korean interests.

This ploy was not simply the strategic rhetoric for public statements. Behind closed doors, in negotiations with the South Korean government, Chinese officials stuck to the same playbook. A South Korean Blue House official told newspapers that “China repeated this stance during discussions, saying difficulties faced by South Korean

²⁵Lei, Wang. Chinese Shoppers Boycott Lotte amid Controversial THAAD Deal. 1 Mar. 2017, https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d557a4d33636a4d/share_p.html?t=1488379798936.

companies were prompted by individual Chinese citizens angered by the THAAD deployment”. The gall of the Chinese negotiators to make this claim apparently came as a shock to the South Koreans. However, this negotiating behavior is by no means a recent adaptation. In his groundbreaking book, entitled ‘Chinese Negotiating Behavior’, the late Richard Solomon wrote that “in the post-Mao years of negotiating contact with the PRC, American officials began to hear Chinese leaders invoke the issue of public reaction to their policies as a way of pressing the United States to accommodate to their views”. Whether the sentiments of a nationalistic domestic public is a true consideration or constraint for the Chinese government, it can be sure that the claim was not made for the first time in the context of actions against Lotte. It was in the context of Taiwan’s legal status that Richard Solomon first described the negotiating tactic, writing: “Deng Xiaoping claimed that public opinion and the purported resentments of his billion countrymen on matters related to Taiwan were serious constraints on his negotiating flexibility.” In this initial example, Deng Xiaoping used public opinion to make the case to American negotiators that the Chinese state’s hands were tied when it came to recognizing Taiwan as an independent country. As with the case of retaliation against Lotte and the Korean Wave, the “purported resentments” of the Chinese people were used as the basis for inaction by the Chinese government.

In his study, Solomon questions the veracity of Deng Xiaoping’s claim, writing, “Was this merely a rhetorical device for obtaining American acquiescence to his position?”

Solomon's answer at the time was: "To some degree, but probably not entirely". Following the end of the Mao era, outside analysts had very little idea of how the Chinese government measured public opinion or how it took domestic sentiment into account. However, Deng Xiaoping's restructuring of China's political and economic system, in the minds of scholars at the time, gave the Chinese people "at least a limited and constrained voice". Solomon thusly concluded that, while "U.S. decision makers must quite properly formulate China policy on the basis of American interests and not considerations of China's domestic politics, Deng Xiaoping no doubt includes in some considerable way 'the feelings of a billion Chinese' in *his* policy calculations."²⁶ Solomon's conclusion gives some validity to the Chinese bargaining position beyond its usefulness as a rhetorical device. However, based on current evidence, if given the chance to reevaluate China's negotiating behavior, perhaps Solomon would reconsider.

While Solomon is certainly correct in saying that Chinese public opinion does, to a certain degree, shape or restrain the policies of the Chinese state, his analysis does not taken into account efforts by the Chinese state to hand-tailor domestic opinion to suit international bargaining needs. In the context of the Lotte and Korean Wave retaliations, at least, the Chinese state used propaganda to artificially generate nationalism amongst a domestic audience. By boosting nationalism to the right degree, Chinese negotiators could point to national sentiment as a justification for not defending South Korean

²⁶Solomon, Richard H. *Chinese Political Negotiating Behavior, 1967-1984*. Rand, 1995.

business or public diplomacy interests in China. At the same time, any blame for retaliations could be put on the shoulders of individual Chinese citizens, thus giving Chinese negotiators the ability to claim innocence in discussions with South Korean counterparts. The nationalist behavior of “individual Chinese citizens” was an intentional product of the Chinese government but created through obscure, unofficial action in order to maintain plausible deniability. Through these actions, the government blocked the Korean Wave and retaliated against Lotte successfully, with only whispers and rumors of official intervention reaching the press. No official policy documents ever reached the public eye, but the Chinese government’s involvement was not perfectly obscured; the wave of nationalism had some clear ties back to the government.

To stoke nationalist opposition to the THAAD deployment amongst Chinese teenagers and young adults, the government could not rely upon newspaper editorials or indoctrination in schools. To reach this demographic, the government needed to use a medium that young people cared for: hip-hop music. To this end, the Chinese Communist Youth League commissioned a rap group, called CD Rev, from Sichuan to create a hiphop song that would make young people unite in opposition to THAAD. Asked about the decision to hire the group by the Guardian Newspaper, Wu Dezu, the head of the Communist Youth League production company, said that the thoughts expressed by CD Rev are representative of how young Chinese feel about their country,

adding that “their rap skills and artistic performance are great too”.²⁷ Whether or not the group’s lyrics truly captured the sentiments of Chinese youth, the decision to commission the group to produce an anti-THAAD song reveals the Communist Youth League’s explicit approval of nationalist, anti-South Korean sentiment and, moreover, sheds light on the Chinese government’s concerted effort to propagate a domestic wave of nationalism.

CD Rev, hailed as the “strongest voice of the young” by the Communist Youth League, released their song in May 2017, quickly earning 70,000 YouTube views and millions more on Chinese domestic platforms.²⁸ With lyrics in English and Chinese, as well as Korean subtitles on a version of the track released on Facebook, the video clearly targets not just Chinese youth but young people in the other countries involved in the conflict as well. To study the exact message that CD Rev and, by extension, the Chinese government, wishes to convey through the song, it is necessary to examine the track’s lyrics and accompanying visuals.

²⁷Tom Phillips. “Chinese Officials Hire Gangsta Rappers to Boost China's Image Abroad.” The Guardian, 30 June 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/30/chinese-officials-hire-gangsta-rappers-to-boost-chinas-image-abroad>.

²⁸Zhen, Liu. “THAAD? No Thanks, Say Officially-Sanctioned Rappers.” South China Morning Post, South China Morning Post, 2 Feb. 2018, www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2094747/thaad-no-thanks-say-officially-sanctioned-chinese-rappers.

The music video opens with a TV news bulletin about THAAD, with the rapper beginning: “How many times do I have to warn you my lovely little neighbor boy? You don't really want that little toy. You know, big brother is annoyed.” In hip-hip style, the rap immediately takes on the subject of THAAD and reveals the sense of fraternal betrayal that the Chinese government had expressed in its initial opposition to the THAAD deployment. Next, the lyrics take on a harsher, more aggressive tone, referring to South Korea as a “21st-century colony, some puppet committing felonies enough to make me sick”. The visuals, captured below, show pictures of then-President Park Geun-hye, who the rapper then accuses of duplicity, singing “you always got so many faces”. Going after the country and its leader in such a manner, the rap video, much like the country’s wider anti-Korean retaliations, pulled no punches.

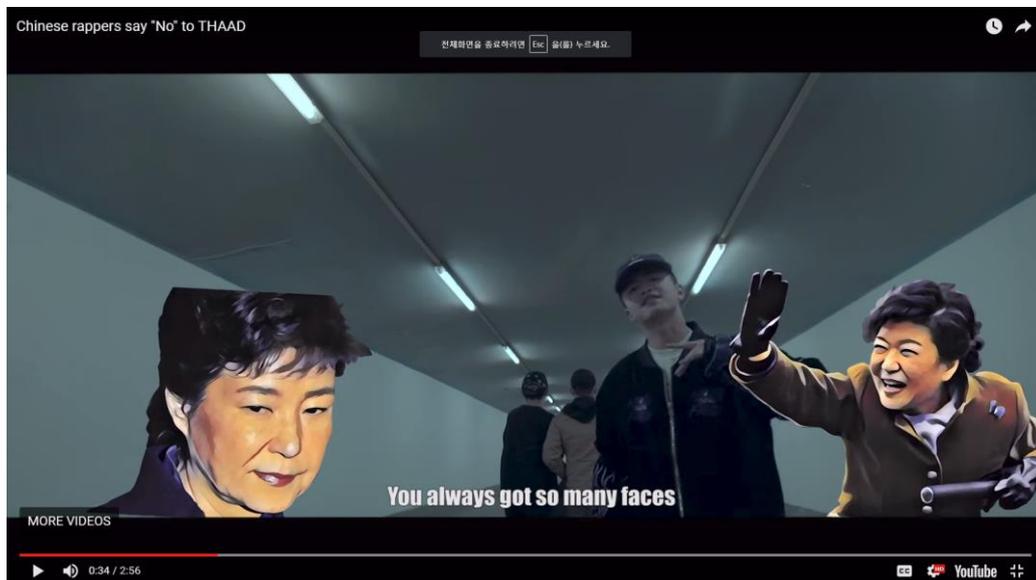


Figure 3 Opening lyrics of CD-Rev's song, targeting former Pres. Park Geun-hye

The rap also invokes the Chinese government's realist logic to argue against the practical drawbacks of the defensive missile system. Arguing that the system will do more to destabilize the region than guarantee peace, the rap continues "What's THAAD? Terminal what? It ain't gonna terminate violence." Even more interestingly, the rap delves into the real crux of the entire THAAD conflict: South Korea's decision to maintain a security alliance with the United States over China. Filming in front of the Forbidden Palace, the symbol of China's historic hegemony over the region, the rappers proclaim that the "situation seems to be out of control" and ask of South Korea, "Why not choose us rather than Uncle Sam?" Directly imploring the South Korean government to choose a security alliance with China over the United States, CD Rev puts in words what the Chinese government will not.



Figure 4 CD-Rev characterizes South Korea's security policies as a bad 'attitude'

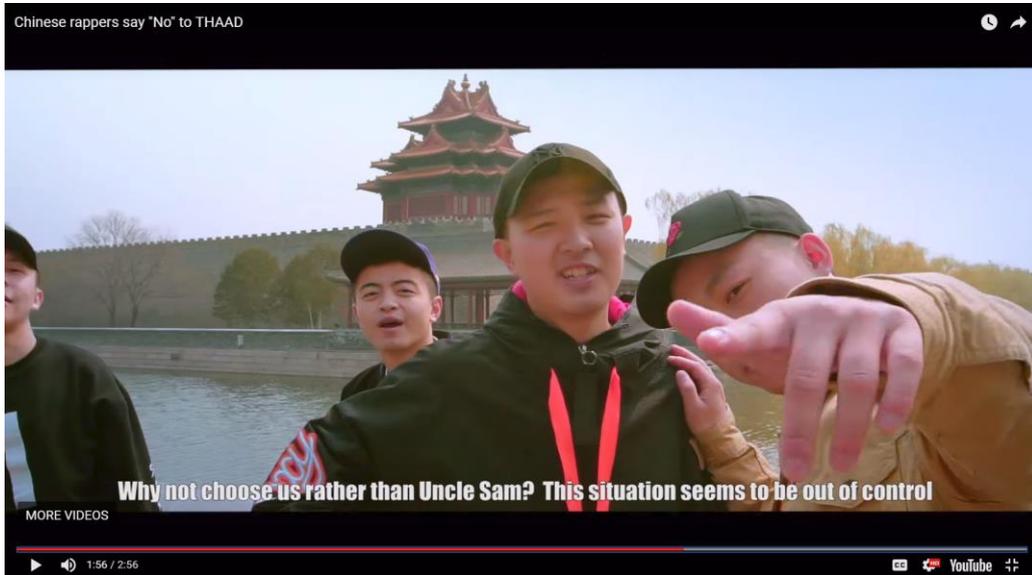


Figure 5 The song directly implore the South Korean government to choose a security alliance with China over the US

If the choice of English and Chinese lyrics, with Korean subtitles, did not already identify the song's target audience, the chorus itself speaks to the song's anticipated global reach. The rappers, flanked by other Chinese youth, sing "I'm telling everybody all over the globe, about THAAD, we say no no no."²⁹ Singing this chorus with non-

²⁹ Zhen, Liu. "THAAD? No Thanks, Say Officially-Sanctioned Rappers." South China Morning Post, South China Morning Post, 2 Feb. 2018,

musicians walking alongside them, the group presents the image that the Chinese youth is united in opposition to THAAD.³⁰³¹³²



Figure 6 The song presents the image that the Chinese youth is united in opposition to THAAD

Interestingly, despite the song's aggressive tone and emotional rhetoric, the group urges the Chinese people to show some restraint in their own expressions of nationalism. Referencing a viral video of a Chinese woman breaking Korean goods inside a Lotte

³⁰DuVall, Eric. "Chinese Rap Song Warns against THAAD in South Korea." UPI, UPI, 12 May 2017, www.upi.com/Chinese-rap-song-warns-against-THAAD-in-South-Korea/1531494601782/.

³¹Mullany, Gerry. Chinese Rappers Take Aim at American Antimissile System in South Korea. 12 May 2017, www.nytimes.com/2017/05/12/world/asia/china-south-korea-thaad-rap-video.html?_r=3.

³²Zhen, Liu. "THAAD? No Thanks, Say Officially-Sanctioned Rappers." South China Morning Post, South China Morning Post, 2 Feb. 2018, www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2094747/thaad-no-thanks-say-officially-sanctioned-chinese-rappers.

Mart, the rappers sing: “You steal things in Lotte mall and you break down Korean phones and cars. You don't even love people in China, so how can we call this patriotism?” In the music video, the Lotte Mart logo is shown alongside the rapper ³³ The wave of nationalism that the government intended to generate had, apparently, reached levels that the government, and ordinary citizens alike, recognized as a problem. Despite encouraging protests and boycotts of Lotte products, the government was not supportive of street-level criminal acts against the company.



Figure 7 Lyrics urging Chinese people to show restraint in their own expressions of nationalism

³³Tan, Kenneth. “Chinese Netizens Ashamed by Woman Vandalizing Lotte Supermarket in the Name of 'Patriotism'.” Shanghaiist, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2017/03/14/lotte_hooligan/.

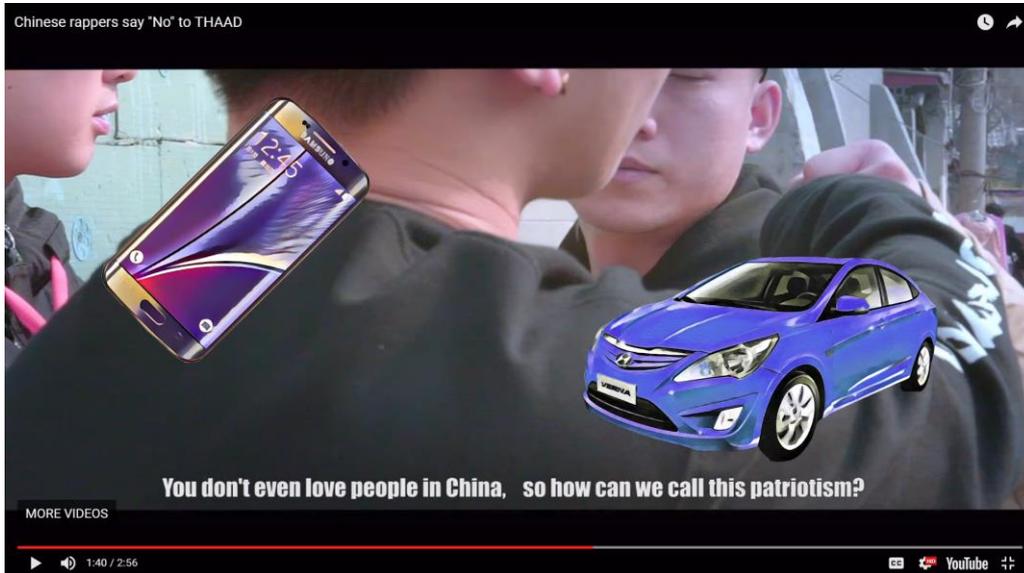


Figure 8 Lyrics criticizing destructive forms of nationalism as unpatriotic

This was not the first time, however, that a nationalist wave had grown uncomfortably large in the eyes of the Chinese government. In the summer of 2016, after the Hague had ruled in favor of the Philippines in a South China Sea ruling, Chinese citizens directed their anger at the United States, perceiving the country to be pulling the strings behind the court's decision. To let their indignation be known, Chinese citizens protested against KFC and Apple, local symbols of American strength in China. Photos of smashed iPhones went viral on Weibo and protesters gathered in front of KFC locations in at least 12 Chinese cities. Rather than support the protests, however, on this occasion, state-run media labeled the protests as "irrational" and "disruptive"- rather

than “patriotic”.³⁴ Whereas Chinese media had defended citizens protesting in front of Lotte stores, those protesting KFC and Apple were disparaged. As the protests against KFC and Apple were not part of a state-led effort and would not have had any effect in influencing the United States’ stance on the South China Sea, it is likely the Chinese government saw no potential for the protests and saw them as only a cause of local disruption.

The difference in the response to the Lotte and KFC protests, comes down to the potential of the protests for international influence and the difference in government involvement. Whereas the KFC protests did nothing to influence the Hague’s decision or change the stance of the United States government, the Lotte protests and wider retaliations against the company were putting the South Korean government under real pressure to make concessions to the Chinese government. Ye Hailin, an expert of international studies from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, lauded the effects of the Lotte boycott and protests, telling the Chinese news source, *Can Kao Xiao Xi*, that the “attitudes of the Chinese people and the Chinese government are similar [on the issue of THAAD] and are forming a joint force”. While Ye acknowledged that the mutual trust between China and South Korea as well as friendship among ordinary citizens on both sides would be damaged, the researcher declared, “We must make it clear to South

³⁴Tan, Kenneth. “Chinese State Media Calls for More 'Rational Patriotism' as KFC Protests Spread to a Dozen Cities.” *Shanghaiist*, Shanghaiist, 5 May 2018, shanghaiist.com/2016/07/20/kfc_protest_crackdown/.

Korea that you cannot earn money from Chinese people on the one hand and do harm to China on the other”.³⁵ The “joint force” of public and government condemnation of Lotte, was what was missing with the protests against KFC, a key reason why the protests were labeled as “irrational” across Chinese society.

As we can see from the Chinese Communist Youth League’s financial backing and endorsement of CD Rev, the joint force of public opinion and government action was an artificial creation- designed to counteract the Korean Wave by generating a wave of nationalism. Along with blocking South Korean public diplomacy efforts and counteracting their effects with anti-South Korean propaganda, the Chinese government used economic retaliations against Lotte to exert political pressure on the South Korean government. While these actions were devastating to both South Korean public diplomacy efforts and the South Korean economy, the retaliations did not end there. In April 2017, the Wall Street Journal reported that China-based hackers linked to the Chinese People’s Liberation Army had been targeting South Korean institutions involved in the deployment of THAAD. According to the U.S.-based cybersecurity firm, FireEye, “two cyberespionage groups...linked to Beijing’s military and intelligence agencies...launched a variety of attacks against South Korea’s government, military,

³⁵Lei, Wang. Chinese Shoppers Boycott Lotte amid Controversial THAAD Deal. 1 Mar. 2017, https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d557a4d33636a4d/share_p.html?t=1488379798936.

defense companies and a big conglomerate.”³⁶ The increase in cyber attacks marked an escalation of the Chinese government’s strategy. The retaliations were in opposition to a security challenge and, now, were no longer aimed at solely South Korea’s public diplomacy and trade. While the South Korean government would not confirm FireEye’s report, in March 2017, it announced that it would be raising its cyber attack alert level to the second-highest level in order to deter further cyber provocations. Yonhap News also reported that “the homepages of 10 South Korean firms and some South Korean embassies in other countries have been disrupted by distributed denial of service attacks”.³⁷ With retaliations now escalated to the point of cyber-warfare, summer of 2017 perhaps marked the height of the THAAD conflict.

h. Doom and Gloom at the 5th Joint Public Diplomacy Forum

As a window into the pessimism that loomed over the future of South Korean-Chinese relations, we can once again examine the South Korea-China Public Diplomacy Forum. The mood of the 2017 forum, this time held in South Korea in August, starkly contrasted to that of the previous year in Yangzhou. Since the forum in 2016, when South Korean

³⁶Cheng, Jonathan. China Hacked South Korea Over Missile Defense, U.S. Firm Says. 12 Apr. 2017, www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-secret-weapon-in-south-korea-missile-fight-hackers-1492766403?emailToken=JRydPtyYnqTg9EyZsw31FwuZ7JNEOKCXF7LaW/HM1DLsjnUp6e6wLgph560pnmiTAN/5ssf7moyADPQj2p2Gc+YkL1yi0zhLiUM9M6aj1HTYQ==.

³⁷김승연 . “S. Korea Raises Cyber-Attack Alert Level.” Yonhap News Agency, 2 Mar. 2017, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/business/2017/03/02/0501000000AEN20170302012700320.html.

officials had cautiously hoped for Chinese retaliations against the Korean Wave to be short-lived, retaliations had expanded to encapsulate all aspects of the South Korean-China relationship. Characterizing the now-established tension between the countries, South Korean Ambassador for Public Diplomacy Enna Park's opening speech began, "I think friends refer to relations in which each other understands and respects different views, not to agree on everything. In particular, they are supposed to help each other when the other side is in trouble". Beginning a bilateral event with what amounted to a plea for mutual understanding and tolerance, the ambassador's thoughts on the strength of the relationship were abundantly clear. Despite the awkwardness of the situation, the ambassador did not attempt to dodge the issue of THAAD altogether, continuing, "In particular, at a time when the security of the other is in jeopardy, they have to help each other get over the challenge. It appears to be a time for South Korea and China to advance their relations to those of genuine friends that help each other get over difficulties". Making the implication that China's actions had not been that of a "genuine friend", Ambassador Park cautiously laid the blame on China for deteriorating relations. In reply, Chinese Ambassador to South Korea, Qiu Guohong, described the ongoing friction over THAAD as "the most difficult challenge" to face the two countries in its 25 year history of bilateral relations, before adding that the progress in relations between China and South Korea had been based on "mutual understanding and respect". This statement, as well, had an indirect meaning and implied that South Korea's initial decision to deploy THAAD showed disrespect towards China. The ambassador, however, ended his speech

with some optimism, saying “I hope the two will muster the soft power and positive energy from public diplomacy to overcome the challenges and move relations in a healthy way once again.”³⁸ Despite the apparent friendliness, the 2017 forum could not be characterized as an event held by “genuine friends” and was symbolic of the overall deterioration that had taken place over the last year.

Not all attendees at the Public Diplomacy Forum in Jeju made the same effort to see past the THAAD conflict. Bringing the conflict to the fore was Jiang Yuechun, head of China Institute of International Studies, who warned that the THAAD deployment had created a “vicious cycle” that could lead to a regional arms race. Jiang made the assertion that it “would be inevitable for Beijing to expand investment in its defense capabilities [and] establish a system to counter the X-band radar”. Addressing the elephant in the room, Chinese retaliations, Jiang stated that, “All in all, the THAAD issue is expected to translate into an economic loss for South Korea to the tune of \$15 billion [and] likely shrink Korean annual gross domestic product by 0.59 percent”.³⁹ In addition, Jiang’s presentation cited the automobile, cosmetic, and tourism sectors as the most affected areas in the short term, with the agricultural and entertainment industries to be hit hardest

³⁸김덕현 . “S. Korea, China Hold Annual Public Diplomacy Forum amid THAAD Row.”
Yonhap News Agency, 17 Aug. 2017,
english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2017/08/17/0401000000AEN20170817010700320.html.

³⁹고병준 . “Chinese Expert Warns THAAD Deployment Will Spark Regional Arms Race.”
Yonhap News Agency, 16 Aug. 2017,
english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2017/08/17/0301000000AEN20170817006851315.html.

in the long term. With forecasts of economic doom, Jiang's presentation led to further pessimism amongst South Korean industry leaders that their plight would not be over any time soon.

i. Making Sense of the Economic Retaliations Against South Korea

South Korean trade with China, by the summer of 2017, was almost beyond repair, with the resulting loss in gross domestic product disproportionately affecting South Korea. According to the Hyundai Research Institute, in just one year, Chinese retaliations had cost South Korea \$7.5 billion, a 0.5 percent hit to the national gross domestic product. \$4.7 billion of South Korea's overall loss was due to lost tourism revenue, as the number of Chinese visitors to South Korea had been cut by 48.3 percent from the year previous. Meanwhile, China had, in comparison, lost a small figure of \$880 million, marking only a 0.01 percent drop in GDP.⁴⁰ The economic retaliations which had devastated South Korean trade were designed by the Chinese government as a small economic sacrifice to earn a large political reward. This was not, however, the first time that the Chinese government had implemented such a strategy on the world stage.

⁴⁰Perlez, Jane. China Blinks on South Korea, Making Nice After a Year of Hostilities. 1 Nov. 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/01/world/asia/china-south-korea-thaad.html>.

To make sense of the economic retaliations aimed at South Korea, we must look at the recent history of Chinese retaliations against other countries. Relying on its economic might, China has, for some years, sought to use trade sanctions as a means of safeguarding national interests or expressing political indignation. Despite entering the WTO in 2001, China has utilized economic measures to protect its interests in various disputes, whether they be political, territorial, or military in nature.⁴¹ The first of such disputes came in November 2008, when French President Nicolas Sarkozy upset China by meeting with the Dalai Lama. Chinese media called the meeting a “rude intervention” into Chinese domestic affairs and called off a major China-EU summit in protest. In addition, Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Ha Yafei berated the French ambassador in Beijing, alleging that the meeting had “undermined China's core interest, gravely hurt the feelings of the Chinese people and sabotaged the basis of China-France and China-EU relations”.

As Richard Solomon described decades earlier, the “feelings of 1 billion Chinese” were invoked in order to harden the Chinese governments political stance, with the deputy foreign minister making the accusation that “Sarkozy gave no consideration to numerous Chinese citizens' intense opposition” by seeing the Dalai Lama. This intense opposition

⁴¹ Tong Zhao, “Sanction experience and sanction behavior: An analysis of Chinese perception and behavior on economic sanctions,” *Contemporary Politics* vol. 16 no 3 (2010), pp. 263 – 278.

was seen on the streets in China as, just like with Lotte Mart, protesters gathered in order to protest against the affronting country. Dozens of Chinese protesters gathered outside the Changchun location of the French supermarket chain, Carrefour, in April 2008 to protest the French President's meeting with the Dalai Lama. Their banner reads "Support China. Support the Olympics. Against Tibetan Independence". Meanwhile, Chinese scholars suggested that the country would likely take justified economic retaliations against French businesses. Feng Zongping, European studies director at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, wrote that France had "underestimated China's resolution to protect its sovereignty", accusing Sarkozy of wanting to "play the Tibet card and at the same time maintain good economic trade relations with China". Feng wrote that this would be "very difficult to achieve [as] China doesn't want the West to think 'Okay, we will meet the Dalai Lama and business will go on as usual'".⁴² Sure enough, state-owned Chinese airlines would cancel orders for 150 Airbus airplanes from France that year, as a means of economic retaliation.

⁴²Bodeen, Christopher. China: Sarkozy-Dalai Lama Meeting Threatens Trade. 29 Nov. 2008, <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-china-france-112908-2008nov29-story.html>.



Figure 9 Protesters gathered outside the French supermarket chain, Carrefour, in April 2008

Did the stern government rhetoric and angered domestic public combine to form an effective ‘joint force’? In this case, it appears it certainly did. The protests and economic retaliations succeeded as, nine months after the meeting between Sarkozy and the Dalai Lama, France declared that it recognized Tibet as an integral part of Chinese territory. As if to reward the country for reaching this decision, France went “back on China's shopping list”, receiving its first Chinese trade delegation since the tensions began.⁴³ The successful economic retaliations and endorsed public protests exerted the intended political pressure and yielded the desired results for the Chinese government.

⁴³Ding, Qingfen. “France Goes Back on China's Shopping List.” Pressure Leaves Millions of Youth Exposed to Suicide Risk - China - Chinadaily.com.cn, 29 Oct. 2009, www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-10/29/content_8865307.htm.

j. The Dalai Lama Effect: the Precursor to the THAAD Retaliations

Labeled by economics scholars as the “Dalai Lama Effect”, countries that received the Dalai Lama in official state meetings were similarly met with economic retaliations by the Chinese government. China first began to use economic pressure to discourage foreign governments from meeting the Dalai Lama in 1989, when the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. The Chinese government threatened to cut economic ties with Norway if the Norwegian government met with the Dalai Lama at the awards ceremony. Six years later, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's plans to meet the Dalai Lama provoked warnings that the Italian government would “damage a matter of principle” for China and that “it may also damage trade relations”.⁴⁴ At the time, Berlusconi recognized the delicate position the Chinese threat placed his government in, openly stating that the international community was “caught between the importance of maintaining trade relations and protecting human rights”.⁴⁵ In 2007, this was made evident once again when China warned German Chancellor Angela Merkel that her meeting with the Dalai Lama would result in severe economic damage. After Merkel went ahead with the meeting anyway, China responded by cancelling bilateral meetings with various German officials. Over time, the cost-benefit analysis of meeting

⁴⁴ “Li Peng “diffida” Berlusconi; Il Cavaliere l'aveva promesso a Pannella. Ma Pechino avverte: “Sono in pericolo le relazioni commerciali”,” *La Stampa*, June 15, 1994, p. 4

⁴⁵ ““Italia, grazie per il coraggio””; Il leader tibetano a Palazzo Chigi, per la prima volta un governo italiano sfida il veto cinese,” *La Stampa*, June 18, 1994, p. 7

the Dalai Lama, forced governments to reconsider head-of-state level talks, opting to take less risk by only meeting with the Tibetan leader at the ministerial level. The Dalai Lama himself recognized this trend, remarking that politicians started to avoid meeting him after they became minister or president. With a wider recognition of his effect upon bilateral economic ties with China, the Dalai Lama lamented that “economic relations with China gained the upper hand”.⁴⁶

In a 2011 study of the Dalai Lama effect, scholars found that, as a consequence of a political leaders receiving the Dalai Lama, exports to China decreased, on average, 16.9 percent. This trade damage tended to return back to normal levels in the second year after a meeting took place. This gave strong evidence that China exploits its trade ties as a tool of foreign policy. The authors concluded that, “with the asymmetry of trade dependencies between China and its trading partners shifting in China's favor...China is enabled to enforce political compliance among its trading partners to an ever increasing extent”. With this strategy's success, the Chinese government was likely emboldened to expand its use of economic retaliations to safeguard other Chinese interests, ultimately leading to its unofficial sanctions against Lotte as a response to the deployment of THAAD. The obscure, unofficial nature of sanctions was a behavior that, perhaps, was also learned by the Chinese government at this time, with scholars at the time taking

⁴⁶Fuchs, Andreas, and Nils-Hendrik Klann. “Paying a Visit: The Dalai Lama Effect on International Trade.” SSRN Electronic Journal, 2010, doi:10.2139/ssrn.1694602.

note that the Chinese government did “not communicate in a transparent manner whether, and to what extent, it actually retaliates after a Dalai Lama reception has taken place”.⁴⁷ The Dalai Lama retaliations can be viewed as a precursor to the THAAD retaliations in an economic sense but they did not have the scope of the anti-Korean Wave strategies implemented from 2016-2017. There was little evidence of top-down propaganda efforts and few, if any, steps taken to disrupt the public diplomacy campaigns of offending countries.

The Chinese government, through its successful strategy of holding trade relations at ransom, discovered that it could use its economic might to achieve geopolitical aims. Over the last decade, this newfound power was experimented with and ultimately expanded, eventually leading to the wide-ranging economic assault against South Korean businesses. In addition, the Chinese government discovered its ability to limit the soft power of countries that drew its political ire. The Philippines became the target of Chinese retaliations in April 2012, after arresting Chinese workers who had landed on Spratly Island. The case was brought to international arbitration tribunal, where the Chinese military buildup in the South China Sea was ruled illegal. Rather than fight the ruling through the court, China elected instead to fight back against Philippines in a similar manner to its quarrels with France and other countries that had countenanced the

⁴⁷Eaton, Jonathan, and Maxim Engers. “Sanctions: Some Simple Analytics.” *American Economic Review*, vol. 89, no. 2, 1999, pp. 409–414., doi:10.1257/aer.89.2.409.

Dalai Lama. As with France, China immediately cancelled high-level bilateral talks. Next, the government quarantined Filipino shipments of bananas and pineapples, effectively mirroring the trade retaliations against Airbus. To hurt the Philippines further, however, the Chinese government turned to tourism. Placing an unofficial ban on Chinese group tours to the Philippines, the Chinese government found that it could essentially cancel out a massive source of revenue for the Filipino tourism industry at the drop of a hat. Unofficial tourism bans would be added to China's diverse set of economic retaliations for future political conflicts to come.

Tourism bans would form a key aspect of Chinese economic retaliations and would later be used to limit the soft power of offending countries. In 2016, the Taiwanese people elected Tsai Ing-wen, of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), as president. As Tsai, in her election campaign, had expressed ambiguous views on the 'One China' policy, her election was met with a firm but unofficial reminder from China, that any ideas of political independence would come with a massive economic cost. This reminder came in the form of an unofficial tourism ban against Taiwan. Describing the effect on Taiwan's tourism figures, Lu Shiao-ya, Chief of the National Joint Association of Tourist Buses, was frank, complaining, "China is using its tourists as a bargaining chip against Taiwan's new government". A Chinese travel agent in Xiamen, speaking to Reuters on the condition of anonymity, admitted, "The National Tourism Administration told us in February and March [2016] to cut the number of tourists we send to Taiwan",

adding that, since the unofficial ban took effect, “from Xiamen, the number of tourists has fallen sharply, down more than 50 percent”.⁴⁸ The tourism ban not only signalled Chinese dissatisfaction through economic punishment but significantly limited Taiwan’s soft power influence on Chinese tourists. By banning tours to Taiwan during a national election, the Chinese government blocked their citizens from witnessing the democratic process. If thousands of Chinese tourists were exposed to democratic elections in a Chinese-speaking setting much similar to home, the experience could have the effect of stirring ideas of Chinese democratic revolution. Very aware of this possible threat, the Chinese government has limited tours to Taiwan during subsequent elections as well, most recently in March of 2018. By limiting the exposure of Chinese tourists to Taiwanese elections, the Chinese government undercuts Taiwan’s potential soft power as a democratic state. Mixing economic retaliation with soft power countermeasures, the Chinese government’s range of possible retaliations had once again expanded, reaching the penultimate stage of its evolution.

k. The Benefits of the Chinese Retaliation Strategy

China’s economic retaliations were, in part, so effective because of the ways in which they mirrored China’s anti-Korean Wave measures. The real ‘joint force’ of

⁴⁸Blanchard, Ben. “China, Taiwan Add Tourists to Their Squabbles.” Reuters, Thomson Reuters, 12 May 2016, www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-china-tourism/china-taiwan-add-tourists-to-their-squabbles-idUSKCN0Y305W.

Chinese retaliations, economic and public diplomacy countermeasures, shared many similarities and were likely formed in conjunction. Just as countermeasures against Korean Wave events were strictly unofficial, so were all of China's economic countermeasures. Standing behind the claim that the actions of "individual Chinese citizens" were to blame for Korea's trade woes, China not only maintained plausible deniability but also economic legality. Unlike the United States' economic sanctions which are formalized through domestic legislation, China's economic retaliations are very rarely official. Instead, China's retaliations are carried out through lower-level administrative actions, such as closing Lotte stores for violating fire code regulations. These countermeasures, ostensibly taken as independent, lower-level decisions, do not run afoul of WTO regulations and prevent other countries from suing the Chinese government. Through propaganda and unofficial anti-public diplomacy tactics, the Chinese government boosts the effectiveness of these lower-level countermeasures by generating the necessary levels of nationalism to spark voluntary boycotts nationwide. Beyond the matter of legal protection and plausible deniability, China's informal countermeasures provide Chinese leadership with the benefit of political flexibility. If countermeasures never officially exist, then, when circumstances change or the country's political goal has been achieved, countermeasures do not need to be removed through a potentially embarrassing reversal of official policy. This can easily be contrasted with U.S. sanctions, which are generally put forth in congress or by the president in order to uphold an international norm such as nonproliferation or the

protection of human rights. If the United States wishes to lift such sanctions, for whatever reason, be it political or economic, the President or leaders in congress must justify the easing of sanctions with evidence that shows an improvement in the behavior of the target country. Meanwhile, Chinese sanctions are only ever levied in protection of the country's own national interests, meaning that the sanctions can be lifted entirely according to the government's own interests.

4. The 'Three Nos' and the Beginning of Normalization

The Chinese government began to unofficially reverse its retaliations policy at the end of October 2017, after South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha told Korean lawmakers that the Moon administration was not considering additional THAAD deployments. In what would become known as the "Three Nos", Kang told members of the assembly that South Korea would not join a U.S. missile defense network nor enter into a trilateral military alliance with the United States and Japan.⁴⁹ This announcement did not signal a break in existing policy and was downplayed by South Korean and U.S. officials but, to the Chinese government, the 'Three Nos' represented firm "commitments" and were used to justify a diplomatic "consensus". Shortly following Kang's statement, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a

⁴⁹Jung, Min-Kyung. "Seoul Not Considering Joining US Missile Defense System: FM Kang." The Korea Herald, 30 Oct. 2017, www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20171030000817.

press release stating that, after talks between Assistant Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou and ROK Second Deputy Director Nam Gwan-pyo, “The two sides believe that strengthening exchanges and cooperation between the two countries is in the common interest of both sides and agree to promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields to return to normal relations as soon as possible”.⁵⁰ The timing of this ‘consensus’ was particularly noteworthy, as the Chinese press release came less than a week before President Trump’s first visit to South Korea. The motivation behind the timing of the announcement was thus quite clear- by mending relations with South Korea before President Trump’s arrival, President Xi ensured that U.S.-R.O.K. relations would not be bolstered in order to meet a Chinese security or economic threat. By announcing normalization before Trump’s arrival, the Chinese government undercut the potential of President Trump’s visit and ensured that President Moon would not make any promises or commitments to the U.S. that would jeopardize this positive and vital restoration of Chinese ties.

The major motivation behind President Trump’s visit to South Korea was to form a joint policy to respond to the threat of North Korea. If China wanted to influence South Korea’s response to the threat and prevent the U.S.-R.O.K. alliance from

⁵⁰“China and South Korea Communicate on China-ROK Relations.” Xi Jinping Holds Talks with President Hage Geingob of Namibia The Two Heads of State Jointly Agree to Establish China-Namibia Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, 31 Oct. 2017, www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/wjbxw_673019/t1506044.shtml.

becoming even more entrenched, it would have to signal an end to sanctions and mend relations with South Korea. By signaling the start of normalization, the Chinese government essentially offered an end to sanctions in return for a role in South Korea's response to the North Korean threat. The South Korean government, desperate for respite from the economic retaliations, took the offer, despite knowing it would then have to walk a tightrope in order to balance the security concerns of both China and the United States.

The Chinese government had avoided the potential security repercussions of the Moon-Trump summit through calling for normalization and, a month later, sought to gain further benefit by directly influencing South Korea's policy on North Korea. In a December meeting in Beijing, President Moon reached an agreement with President Xi on "four principles to secure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula". The principles included the following: 1) "war on the Korean Peninsula can never be tolerated"; 2) "the principle of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula will be firmly maintained"; 3) "all issues, including the denuclearization of North Korea, will be peacefully resolved through dialogue and negotiations"; and 4) "improvement in inter-Korean relations will be ultimately helpful in resolving issues involving the Korean Peninsula". While none of these principles were in opposition to current South Korean policy, their guarantee by the Chinese government was symbolic of China's desire for influence over South Korean security policy. This influence, the Chinese government likely hoped, would eventually

lead to a devaluation or weakening of the U.S. security alliance. At the time, these principles ran counter to President Trump's bellicose rhetoric of "fire and fury" and a policy for "improvement in inter-Korean relations" was not likely to gel with the U.S. policy of maximum pressure.

Rather than continue the maximum pressure campaign, the Chinese government wanted South Korea to follow its proposed "freeze-for-freeze" strategy, which would halt joint military exercises with the U.S. military in return for the discontinuation of North Korean missile testing. As the Winter Olympic games were soon to be held in Pyeongchang, it was the South Korean government's intention to postpone joint military exercises anyway, offering an olive branch to the North Korean government and the opportunity to improve ties through joint participation in the Olympic Games. Although the U.S. agreed in January, at the Moon administration's request, to postpone the annual Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military exercises, the strategy for improving inter-Korean relations was clearly not one the U.S. government was comfortable with. When the Olympics did come around, President Moon engaged with the attending North Korean delegation, even dining with Kim Jong-un's sister. Meanwhile, U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence sat uncomfortably on the other side of the row from the North Korean attendees at the opening ceremony, refusing to countenance a meeting of any kind with them. In addition, the agenda for his Olympic trip was clearly designed to counter the North Korean charm offensive at the games. The Vice President brought

with him Fred Warmbier, the father of an American college student who died at the hands of North Korean jailers, and met with North Korean defector groups who were against the Olympic strategy. At the opening ceremony, when the athletes of both North Korea and South Korea emerged as one united team, the North and South Korean leaders stood up to cheer as Pence, stone-faced, remained pointedly in his seat.

While the ‘three nos’ and the December joint declaration of principles had done little to influence South Korea’s actual policy on North Korea, the statements had accomplished China’s goal of driving a wedge in U.S.-R.O.K. relations. The policy repercussions of the ‘Three Nos’ had been quickly dismissed by South Korean and U.S. officials in early November. When U.S. National Security Adviser, H.R. McMaster, was questioned by White House press about the impact of the ‘Three Nos’, he replied skeptically, saying that 1) he did not “think that South Korea would give up its sovereignty in those three areas” and 2) that he did not think Foreign Minister Kang’s statements were “definitive” enough to call them actual policy principles.⁵¹ While McMaster was perhaps right, he missed the point of the declaration and failed to see the bigger picture behind the normalization. McMaster told the press, “I think what China may be realizing as well is that it makes more sense...to prioritize its relationship with South Korea over its relationship with North Korea...and so we welcome the news that

⁵¹“McMaster: US ‘Welcomes’ News of South Korea-China Agreement.” 한겨레, 4 Nov. 2017, www.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/817470.html.

China was lifting sanctions over South Korea.” Seeing normalization of China-R.O.K. relations as a strategic prioritization over North Korea, McMaster was blind to the Chinese intention of destabilizing the U.S.-R.O.K. relationship. Rather than simply favoring South Korea over North Korea, China was gaining influence in how South Korea handled the North Korean threat and, in turn, gaining influence in how South Korea aligned itself more generally.

a. The Effects of the ‘Three Nos’

Although analysts were quick to label the deal to end the economic retaliations in exchange for the hollow commitments of the ‘Three Nos’ as a victory for South Korea, there were, however, perceptible effects on the security balance. Vice President of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, Choi Kang, told the Washington Post that South Korea had not offered any real concessions to China and that “since South Korea had maintained a very firm position on THAAD, the Chinese side decided to move instead”.⁵² While China did have to change its position first, in the face of strong South Korean resolve, the Chinese shift in policy should not be simply viewed as an admission of defeat. Despite not receiving true concessions from the South Korean government on the issue of THAAD, the power of the Chinese government to injure the South Korean

⁵²Taylor, Adam. “South Korea and China Move to Normalize Relations after THAAD Dispute.” The Washington Post, WP Company, 31 Oct. 2017.

economy had been made painfully clear and, from November onwards, South Korean security policy showed much greater deference to China.

The first sign of this deference was a shift away from South Korea's relations with Japan. Immediately, military cooperation with Japan suffered, with the Asahi newspaper reporting in November that South Korea had limited the scope of a 2016 military intelligence sharing agreement between the two countries. The limitation clearly favored Chinese security interests as the alteration placed a limit on sharing only intelligence related to North Korean missile programs.⁵³ On November 13, the Nikkei Asian Review reported that South Korea had rejected Japanese participation in joint exercises with the United States and South Korean naval forces.⁵⁴ South Korean diplomatic sources claimed that the rejection came down to the fear of public backlash over Japanese inclusion but, as the rejection came only after the normalization of Chinese relations, it can be inferred that Chinese security concerns had an influence on the decision. Another clear indicator that Chinese relations had gained priority over military cooperation with Japan was President Moon's actions during his trip to China

⁵³“レーダー照射、沈黙化する韓国 抗議非公表、日本に求め：朝日新聞デジタル。”

The Asahi Shimbun, 朝日新聞デジタル, 22 Dec. 2018, www.asahi.com/articles/ASLDQ36H5LDQUHBI00G.html.

⁵⁴Minegishi, Hiroshi. “South Korea Rejected Japan Involvement in Joint US Military Drills.” Nikkei Asian Review, Nikkei Asian Review, 13 Nov. 2017, asia.nikkei.com/Politics-Economy/International-Relations/South-Korea-rejected-Japan-involvement-in-joint-US-military-drills.

in December. As the visit coincided, perhaps purposefully, with the 80th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre, an opportunity presented itself for President Moon to play up the historical bonds of the Chinese and Korean people as victims of Japanese imperialism. Claiming a historic kinship, President Moon told an audience of South Koreans living in China that the “two countries together faced hardship under imperialism and together pulled through difficult times fighting against the Japanese imperialist rule.”⁵⁵ Bringing up historic pains which, hitherto, the administration had tried to resolve in favor of maintaining healthy diplomatic relations with Japan, the Moon administration was clearly willing to sacrifice relations with Japan if it would help guarantee the end to sanctions and smooth the process of normalization with China.

The South Korean shift away from Japan represented not only a concession to China but also a blow to U.S. security goals in the region. During his visit in November, just a week after China initiated the process of normalization, President Trump pitched the goal of a “free and open Indo-Pacific region” to President Moon. Prior to seeing President Moon, President Trump had met Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, agreeing to work closer together “to promote stability and growth in a region spanning both sides of the Indian Ocean, from Asia to Africa”. The concept, viewed by some analysts as a strategy aimed at containing China and its expansionist maritime ambitions,

⁵⁵Moon, Jen. “President Moon's State Visit to China: Focus on Shared History and Future Together.” Super K-Pop | Radio Programs Home | The World On Arirang, 14 Dec. 2017, www.arirang.com/News/News_View.asp?nseq=211781.

was dismissed by the South Korean government. The joint statement produced by Moon and Trump's meeting noticeably attributed the idea of the alliance as a "linchpin for security, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific" solely to President Trump. Just days after China had agreed to normalize relations, the South Korean government was not willing to risk renewed Chinese trade in order to espouse such a diplomatic strategy. Rather than admit this was an act of deference towards China, however, the Blue House characterized their refusal as a rejection of Japanese strategy. Blue House aide, Kim Hyun-chul, claimed to reporters soon afterwards that the "[Japanese government] is trying to build a diplomatic line including Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., but there's no need for us to be part of it."⁵⁶ Attributing the "Indo-Pacific" strategy to Japan, rather than the United States, allowed South Korea to quietly decline an invitation to join the strategy and, in doing so, show consideration to Chinese security concerns.

The South Korean government's newfound consensus with China was labeled "humiliating diplomacy" by leaders of the minor opposition party but, amongst the business community, the deal was being celebrated.⁵⁷ To underscore the importance of normalization for South Korean business, one only needs to examine the entourage

⁵⁶Kim, Bo-hyeop. "President Moon Takes Aim at Japan in Bid to Improve China-South Korean Relations." *한겨레*, 4 Dec. 2017, www.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_international/823528.html.

⁵⁷"Opposition Party Calls THAAD Deal with China 'Humiliating Diplomacy'." Yonhap News Agency, *변덕근*, 1 Nov. 2017, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/search1/2603000000.html.

President Moon took with him for his December summit in China. The president was accompanied by top executives from all the major South Korean conglomerates including Samsung, Hyundai Motor, LG, SK, and Hanwha. The meeting between President Xi and President Moon was reinforced by meetings between various business and economic leaders who sought to put bilateral trade back on track. ROK Commerce Minister Paik Un-gyu and his Chinese counterpart, Zhong Shan, even sought to expand the existing bilateral FTA to encompass other sectors, such as services and investment. Across various industries, trade and business leaders sought to reestablish broken lines of communication and lost modes of cooperation. In the field of agriculture, government ministers Han Changfu and Kim Young-rok signed an agreement to initiate information sharing on contagious animal disease. Guiding the overall progress was President Moon who laid out three principles for bringing the bilateral economic ties back to what they once were: 1) strengthening the institutional foundation of cooperation; 2) pursuing future-oriented cooperation; and 3) expanding cultural exchange.

President Moon underlined the importance of cultural exchange when, in his opening address to the December China-R.O.K. business forum in Beijing, he stated that partners “must first become friends before doing business together”. The hope was that renewed cultural exchange and public diplomacy could form the foundation of relations and ease along the normalization process. As former Chinese Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoxing, had wished at the China-R.O.K. Public Diplomacy Forum back in August

2017, the two countries could “muster the soft power and positive energy from public diplomacy [to] overcome the challenges and move relations in a healthy way once again”.⁵⁸ With unofficial bans on tours to South Korea now lifted, tourism numbers began to return to pre-2016 levels. Supporting this recovery through new institutional framework, South Korea’s Land, Infrastructure, and Transport Vice Minister, Maeng Sung-kyu, met with Chinese aviation officials in Beijing on January 30 to reach an agreement on reviving the bilateral aviation market. With flights recommencing, the number of Chinese tourists from February to March increased by 16.5 percent.⁵⁹ The entertainment industry showed a similar reversal, with Beijing theaters ending a two-year boycott by screening South Korean films in April ahead of the Beijing International Film Festival. Lastly, people-to-people exchange was encouraged at the official level, with President Xi’s special envoy, Vice Premier Liu Yandong, urging South Korean and Chinese students to play a leading role in promoting bilateral partnership during her visit to Seoul National University in February.

b. Restarting Chimaek Diplomacy with China

It was perhaps at the municipal level, however, where renewed cooperation was most fervent. Heeding the national calls for normalization, Chinese and South Korean

⁵⁸김덕현 . “S. Korea, China Hold Annual Public Diplomacy Forum amid THAAD Row.” Yonhap News Agency, 17 Aug. 2017, english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2017/08/17/0401000000AEN20170817010700320.html.

⁵⁹Snyder, Scott. “Moon’s Olympic Diplomacy.” *Comparative Connections*, 23 May 2018, cc.pacforum.org/2018/05/moons-olympic-diplomacy/.

municipal leaders made various overtures in international cooperation. Evidence of this was most apparent in the lead-up to the 2018 Daegu Chimaek Festival. In 2017, Chinese involvement in the festival had entirely vanished, with cooperation agreements between Daegu officials and Chinese municipal leaders in tatters. As opposed to years previous, no Chinese officials had visited the festival and none had taken part in the Daegu Amigos Program- a program put on by Daegu City Hall for foreign government officials to come to Korea for the Chimaek festival and for knowledge exchange. In 2018, the impact of normalization could be clearly seen at the municipal level through China's newfound involvement in the 'Amigos' program.

Perhaps the most symbolic figure of the refound friendship was Jiangsu city government official, Yin Wen-yi. Dispatched to Daegu City Hall for 6 months, Mr. Yin made it his goal to "add the power of the Chinese to make the Chimaek Festival as global as the Oktoberfest in Munich".⁶⁰ Since April, Mr. Yin dedicated himself to the success of the festival amongst Chinese tourists, making a guidebook and publishing online promotional materials in Chinese. The biggest of his responsibilities though, was promoting the festival to Chinese municipal officials. Utilizing the framework of the Daegu Amigos program, Mr. Yin facilitated the participation of 35 Chinese officials at the festival. This brought the total for the program up to 52 foreign officials from 11

⁶⁰Jeon, Junho. "Daegu Chimaek Festival Public Relations Ambassador." 한국일보, 28 July 2017, www.hankookilbo.com/.

countries: China, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Russia, Germany, Indonesia, Mongolia, Cambodia, and Panama. Along with visits to the festival and Daegu City Hall, Mr. Yin took the group to Daegu Citizens Safety Theme Park. One Chinese official, from the sister city of Yancheng, after experiencing the emergency simulations at Daegu's Public Safety Theme Park said "I want to go back to Yancheng and make this systematic safety education program". Encouraged by normalization, Mr. Yin, the Chinese municipal officer, was facilitating cultural exchanges at the festival, forming the framework that President Moon had deemed necessary for restored business ties and building the public diplomacy ties that former Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing had hoped would bring the countries back together.

Cultural exchanges and public diplomacy initiatives had helped smooth the path of economic and political normalization. On April 20 in Beijing, China's Vice Commerce Minister, Gao Yan, and South Korea's Second Vice Foreign Minister, Cho Hyun, resumed Sino-R.O.K. economic committee meetings to renew the commitments made to each other in December. Also in April, the head of South Korea's Presidential Committee on Northern Economic Cooperation, Song Young-gil, met Jin Liqun, the President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, to present the South Korean vision for energy and infrastructure integration projects under Xi's "One Belt, One Road"

policy.⁶¹ Plans for regional economic integration were invigorated by political cooperation with China on DPRK denuclearization. Following normalization, South Korean leaders publicly praised China for “mediating” the denuclearization process. In return, Chinese leaders gave credit to President Moon’s Olympic diplomacy for enabling dialogue with North Korea. The economic and political cooperation marked a successful return to normalized relations but masked, however, incredible damage to China’s national brand in the eyes of South Koreans.

c. Potential Ally to Potential Threat: The Damage to China’s National Brand

The damage from economic retaliations and public diplomacy countermeasures had mostly recovered in terms of economic and political ties but, in regards to public diplomacy, the nation brand of China had been damaged beyond repair. The economic retaliations had been designed to make South Korea reconsider the practical implications of choosing a security alliance with the United States instead of China. The retaliations, in terms of public diplomacy, however, had the opposite effect. As relations with China soured, the South Korean people viewed China more as a bully and the United States more as a reliable security partner. Public opinion surveys conducted by the Asan

⁶¹Snyder, Scott. “Moon’s Olympic Diplomacy.” *Comparative Connections*, 23 May 2018, cc.pacforum.org/2018/05/moons-olympic-diplomacy/.

Institute reveal that South Koreans became much more likely to view China as a threat. Asked in 2015 which country would be most threatening to a unified Korea, 32.7% of South Koreans picked China. This trailed behind Japan which was chosen by 48.9% of respondents. The United States, meanwhile, was only chosen by 11.1% of the survey participants. Answering the same question in 2017, however, respondents showed a remarkable shift in their perception of the countries in question. Whereas the percent of respondents who viewed the United States as the most threatening country raised by 2.4%, China was picked by almost 30% more participants than in 2015, viewed by a total of 62.3% of respondents to be the most threatening country to a united Korea.⁶² At a time when a U.S. president was openly casting doubt upon previous security arrangements, South Korea would not have been blamed for considering alternatives to the U.S. security alliance. Wasting the opportunity to convince the South Korean public of the benefits of switching allegiances, however, China's bullying tactics only removed itself from consideration as an alternative patron and demonstrated that the country could not be trusted as a partner.⁶³

⁶² Kim, Jiyeon. "South Korean Public Opinion." The Asan Forum, 27 Feb. 2018, www.theasanforum.org/south-korean-public-opinion/.

⁶³ Snyder, Scott. "North Korea, THAAD Overshadow Beijing and Seoul's 25th Anniversary." Comparative Connections, 19 Sept. 2017, cc.pacforum.org/2017/09/north-korea-thaad-overshadow-beijing-seouls-25th-anniversary/.

The Most Threatening Country After Unification

■ 2015 ■ 2017

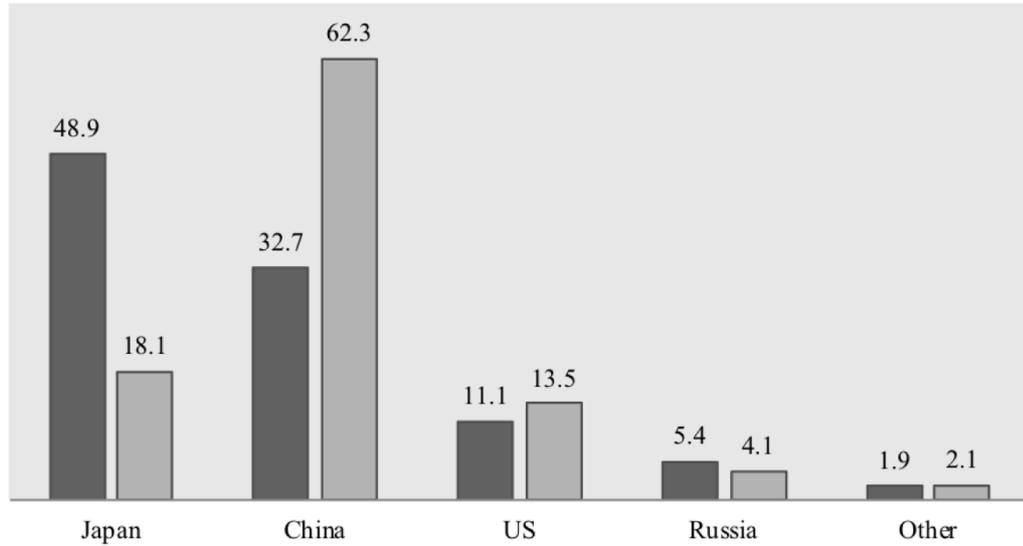


Figure 10 Source: *The Annual Studies of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies*

The change in the South Korean perception of China was also reflected in responses to another question of the Asan Institute survey. Rather than ask which country would be the greatest threat to a united Korea, this question asked participants if they thought China, specifically, would take sides with North Korea if another Korean war were to break out. From 2012 to 2015, the percentage of South Korean respondents that believed China would support North Korea steadily dropped from 75.9% to 43.2%. However, 2016 saw a massive jump in this percentage, with 66.7% of respondents answering that they believed China would support North Korea in the event of war. Chinese retaliations against South Korea throughout 2016 led to an even higher percentage in 2017, with 69.8% of respondents mistrusting China.

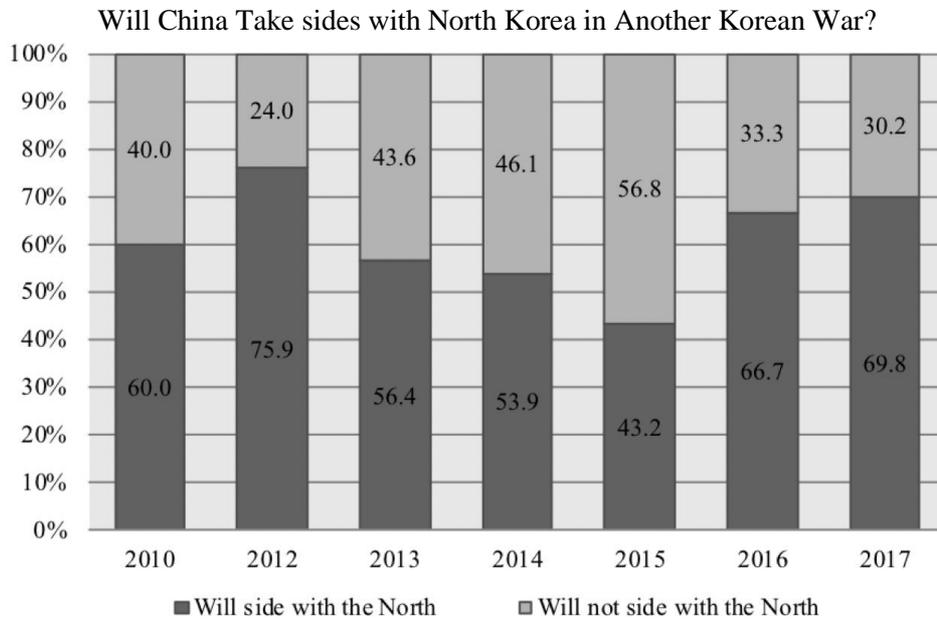


Figure 11 Source: The Annual Surveys of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Conversely, support for the South Korean alliance with the United States was relatively stable over the same period. The Asan Institute’s annual surveys demonstrate that from 2012 to 2016, support for the alliance remained at roughly 94%, rising to 96% during 2013. While support did dip by 0.9% from 2015 to 2016, when opposition to THAAD was most vociferous, the support grew to 95.6% in 2017, marking a 4-year high. It can be inferred from this rise that the actions of China made the alliance with the United States look more favorable.

Support for the Alliance between South Korea and the United States

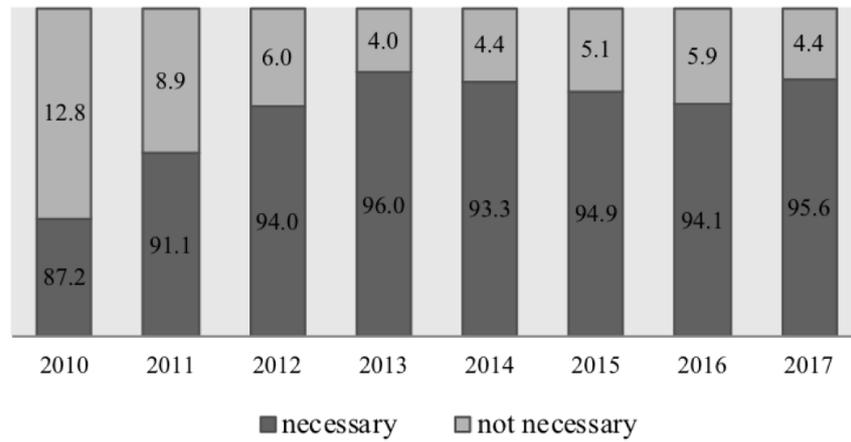


Figure 12 Source: *The Annual Surveys of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies*

This is not to say, however, that following China’s retaliations against South Korea, U.S. public diplomacy did not face any major challenges. During President Trump’s November visit to South Korea, at the beginning of China and South Korea’s rapprochement, President Moon refused to be drawn into the new “Indo-Pacific” U.S. strategy. With South Korean security decisions now taking Chinese interests more into consideration than those of Japan, the U.S.-R.O.K. alliance would likely not be the “lynchpin” of the Indo-Pacific strategy that U.S. officials envisioned. Reflecting this frustration, U.S. Embassy Seoul redirected its public diplomacy campaign, with South Korean approval of the Indo-Pacific strategy as an objective. The funding criteria of the U.S. Embassy Seoul’s Small Grants Program, ran through the embassy’s public diplomacy section, made this goal clear. The announcement of the Small Grants Program for 2017, advertized that funding would be granted to projects that, “Enhance

understanding of the economic and security benefits attained through U.S.-ROK-Japan trilateral cooperation and a free and open Indo-Pacific”.⁶⁴ Listed under the category “Strengthen Security Cooperation”, the motivation behind the newly added program criteria is clear to see. With South Korea spurning the invitation to join the Indo-Pacific strategy and declaring a trilateral security alliance with Japan and the United States off the table, U.S. public diplomacy from 2017 sought to convince the South Korean public that these moves were not in the interest of the country. Through selected public diplomacy projects, the U.S. embassy will continue to fund efforts that will convince the South Korean population that trilateral security cooperation with Japan is a natural step in further stabilizing the region.

d. South Korea Shifts to ASEAN Partnerships

The mistrust that South Koreans developed towards China during the retaliations was not just represented in changes to public opinion but through changes to South Korean business and public diplomacy strategies as well. Lotte, in particular, had no choice but to invest elsewhere after being forced to close most of its 112 stores in China. The South Korean conglomerate chose to expand its investments in Vietnam and Indonesia both during and after the period of Chinese retaliations. Other South

⁶⁴“FY2018 Funding Opportunity: U.S. Embassy Seoul PAS Annual Program Statement.” U.S. Embassy & Consulate in Korea, 12 Jan. 2018, kr.usembassy.gov/u-s-embassy-seoul-pas-annual-program-statement-3/.

Korean companies followed suit, wary of the possibility of Chinese retaliations in the future. In fact, a survey of 1,015 mid-sized export companies by the Korea International Trade Association revealed that over 33% plan to expand business to Vietnam and another 10.7% planned to expand in other Asean countries. Meanwhile, only 19% of companies planned to further their businesses in the Chinese market. Midyear trade figures clearly illustrated this shift in the mindset of Korean business executives, as bilateral trade between South Korea and Asean hit a record-high of \$71.8 billion. South Korea also rose to become Vietnam's largest foreign investor, with total investment surpassing \$6.02 billion.

South Korean public diplomacy mirrored this shift towards Asean countries, with much more importance placed on establishing cultural links. The South Korean government designated 2018 as the Asean-Korea Cultural Exchange Year and an Asean Culture House opened in Busan in September. The government's promotional effort had a great effect, as new electronic visas helped 1.06 million tourists visit South Korea from Southeast Asian countries. Visitors from Vietnam in particular rose 29.3% in the first half of the year. Accompanying official promotion and public diplomacy efforts were official state visits by President Moon, who stressed that the relationship with Asean countries was "as important" as the relationship with the United States. In addition, K-pop stars who had previously had concerts or fan meetings cancelled in China, now scheduled their appearances in Singapore, Thailand, and other Asean

nations instead. The South Korean rush to develop economic relations with Asean countries and promote Korean public diplomacy to the Asean community was a necessary step to decrease the country's independence on the Chinese market.

e. The Municipal Mirror: Diversifying Daegu's International Partnerships

The shift to appeal to Asean countries was evident not just at the national level but at the municipal level as well. While organizers of the Daegu Chimaek Festival made overtures to bring back Chinese tourists to the festival, reaching agreements with travel agencies in Guangzhou and Shenyang, the bulk of new marketing efforts were aimed at Taiwan and Asean countries.⁶⁵ Daegu city officials announced that it would live broadcast scenes from the festival through Facebook at an event in Taipei. The broadcast was hosted by Taiwanese social media influencers and introduced Daegu's sightseeing locations, medical industry, and events to people online and at the live event at Taipei National University. The festival's overseas market development team, headed by Kim Seung-soo, attracted 630 Taiwanese tourists by signing MoU's with

⁶⁵“2018 대구치맥페스티벌, ‘외국인 관광객 1000 명 찾는다.’” 대한민국 대표 주간신문 - 일요신문, 16 July 2018, ilyo.co.kr/?ac=article_view&entry_id=321574.

four travel agencies as well.⁶⁶ In addition, Vietnamese tourists on the first flights of Bjet airlines from Da Nang to South Korea were also attracted to the festival.⁶⁷

Daegu city officials sought not only to diversify the source of its tourists but also its international partnerships. 2018 saw the expansion of the Daegu Amigos program to include officials from 11 countries, amongst them the Asean nations of Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Cambodia.⁶⁸ In addition, Daegu city sought to establish a stronger partnership with the Indian government. Despite turning down President Trump's offer to join the Indo-Pacific strategy, President Moon had led an effort to boost bilateral relations with India, with the Blue House recognizing the need to decrease reliance on Chinese trade. This effort was mirrored by Daegu city, as the municipal government focused on stoking relations with the alternate superpower. Daegu city hosted a celebration of the 68th anniversary of India's Republic Day on January 26, 2018. Indian Ambassador to South Korea, Vikram Doraiswami, thanked the hosts, saying "Daegu is a special city that proves the India-Korea friendship". At the event, the Embassy of India and Daegu City signed a memorandum of

⁶⁶Sik, Jin. "치맥페스티벌 대만서 SNS 라이브방송." 영남일보, 13 July 2018, www.yeongnam.com/mnews/newsview.do?mode=newsView&newskey=20180713.010200750550001.

⁶⁷"2018 대구치맥페스티벌, '외국인 관광객 1000 명 찾는다.'" 대한민국 대표 주간신문 - 일요신문, 16 July 2018, ilyo.co.kr/?ac=article_view&entry_id=321574.

⁶⁸박은숙 . "대구 치맥축제, 외국 공무원 52 명 대구 아미고(Amigo) 프로그램' 참가." Yeongnam Top News, 7 July 2017, www.yntopnews.com/default/index_view_page.php?part_idx=127&idx=57207.

understanding to boost India-Daegu cooperation on business, trade, and culture. The Indian ambassador announced that the India Embassy had at least three objectives for cooperation with Daegu in 2018, with the first to enhance business ties in the textile industry. Highlighting South Korea's recent struggles in international trade, the ambassador said "South Korea's [textile machinery business] is one of the best in the world but it is starting to face challenging times. India can be a big support base for Korean textile companies to come back to the global market". Just as South Korea saw the need to diversify its trade partnerships, India saw an opportunity to gain the trade links that China had cut off.

At the Republic Day celebration, Daegu City mayor, Kwon Young-in, spoke on the value of expanding business ties with India, saying "India, with some 1.3 billion in population and an annual growth rate of some 7 percent, is truly the new growth engine in the world". He added, "I am happy to say that the economic and business partnership between Daegu and India has been growing every year too". This growth was significant. As the mayor reported, "There are some 250 companies in Daegu that are exporting some \$230 million annually to India". Besides participating in the India-Korea Business Summit in New Delhi in January 2017 where agreements were made to boost cooperation in the textile and automobile parts industries, Daegu City officials worked with officials in New Delhi on developing smart city policies.

To reach such business and public diplomacy outcomes, South Korean and Indian officials turned to gastrodiploamacy. India's ambassador to South Korea declared the Indian embassy's intention to bring Indian beer and Indian-style grilled chicken to the Daegu Chimaek Festival, describing it as "an opportunity to showcase things we like in common". Although such large-scale public diplomacy efforts by embassies usually take place in Seoul, where there are more people to attend events, the Indian embassy, however, chooses to specifically target cities outside of the capital, taking advantage of the autonomy and will of municipal governments to conduct their own international affairs. This strategy allows India, in the words of the ambassador, "to reach out directly to cities and businesses and say 'Here we are, let's do business together'".⁶⁹ For Daegu city officials, the growing friendship with India was more than welcome, especially as the city's partnership with Qingdao, its Chinese sister city, had fallen apart during the THAAD crisis. Replicating the national effort to court India as an alternative trade partner, Daegu city embraced gastrodiploamacy to diversify its international partnerships in the wake of the THAAD crisis.

⁶⁹Chung, Esther. "Daegu and India Strengthen Ties with Anniversary Festival." Korea JoongAng Daily, 27 Jan. 2017, koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3056681.

Conclusion

The deployment of THAAD presented a unique security challenge to the United States, South Korea, and China. Rather than responding to the challenge through military means, China implicitly voiced its disapproval of the THAAD deployment by blocking Korean public diplomacy initiatives and retaliating against various private interests of Korean businesses, artists, athletes, and citizens in China. Across all levels of government, the Chinese government sought to curtail bilateral exchange, from cancelling high-level government meetings to withdrawing municipal-level official participation in the Daegu chimaek festival. The Chinese government also sent a message to the Korean people and to the South Korean government by launching a domestic anti-hallyu campaign. This campaign was conducted entirely unofficially, with Chinese officials pointing to the actions of individual Chinese citizens as the cause of losses for Lotte and other South Korean businesses.

To maintain plausible deniability of official involvement, the Chinese government artificially generated a wave of nationalism to combat the Korean Wave. This propaganda effort was aimed at all levels of Chinese society. Through anti-Korean pieces published in state media, older Chinese citizens were convinced to voluntarily boycott Korean products. Chinese children, meanwhile, were taught to avoid South Korean products and sang anti-Korean songs at their schools. Lastly, the government's appeal to young Chinese citizens was most visible, with the Chinese

Communist Youth League funding the production of a nationalist hip-hop song. Strategically choosing to begin normalization shortly before the first visit of President Trump to South Korea, the Chinese government decided that South Korea had likely learned its lesson.

But was this the case? Had China's retaliations ultimately had the desired effect? While the South Korean government did not reverse its decision to deploy the THAAD system, the crushing effect of the retaliations certainly convinced the South Korean government to show a greater deference to Chinese security concerns. Despite promising very little change with the initial '3 Nos', South Korean policy has since favored Chinese security considerations over expanded cooperation with Japan. This shift in diplomatic priorities was further symbolized by the announcement of a new China Bureau within South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Previously handled by a division within the Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau, matters related to China, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan would be entrusted to a newly launched bureau as of January 2019. Elevating the division to become its own bureau, the move symbolizes a greater focus on, if not deference to, Chinese interests within the South Korean government.

President Moon's rejection of President Trump's offer of involvement in an Indo-Pacific strategy, symbolized the beginning of a tightrope walk for the South

Korean government, balancing its commitment to the stable U.S. alliance with an acute awareness of China's security interests. To mitigate the risk of failing this delicate balancing act, however, the South Korean government followed the business community in diversifying its international partnerships. Just as Lotte and other Korean companies transferred its Chinese assets to ASEAN countries, the government rushed to establish stronger relations with the emerging powers of Southeast Asia, targeting the region with various public diplomacy campaigns. Following the national campaign to develop diverse international partnerships, local governments also learned from the mistake of over-reliance on China and sought out stronger relations with both India and Asean countries. At the municipal level, gastrodiploamacy was used to both foster these new partnerships and rekindle broken relations with China.

Politically speaking, China's retaliations and anti-Hallyu campaign had the intended result but, in regards to public diplomacy, the campaign was ruinous. Ending a trend of growing South Korean trust of China, the obvious pattern of retaliations led to irreversible damage for China's national image in the eyes of South Koreans. Wasting its opportunity to portray itself as an alternative patron to the United States, China gained a reputation as an irresponsible and dangerous partner, with South Koreans now identifying the country as a potential military threat rather than potential ally. If the motivation behind the THAAD retaliations was to convince South Korea to choose a military alliance with China over the United States, then the campaign failed

entirely. Disregarding the effect on public opinion, the Chinese government's bullying strategy earned short-term security benefits but wasted the long-term opportunity of becoming South Korea's primary security partner.

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8. Appendix



Figure 1 Chinese citizens protest the deployment of THAAD outside a LOTTE store



Figure 2 A Chinese schoolteacher instructs students to not buy Korean snacks

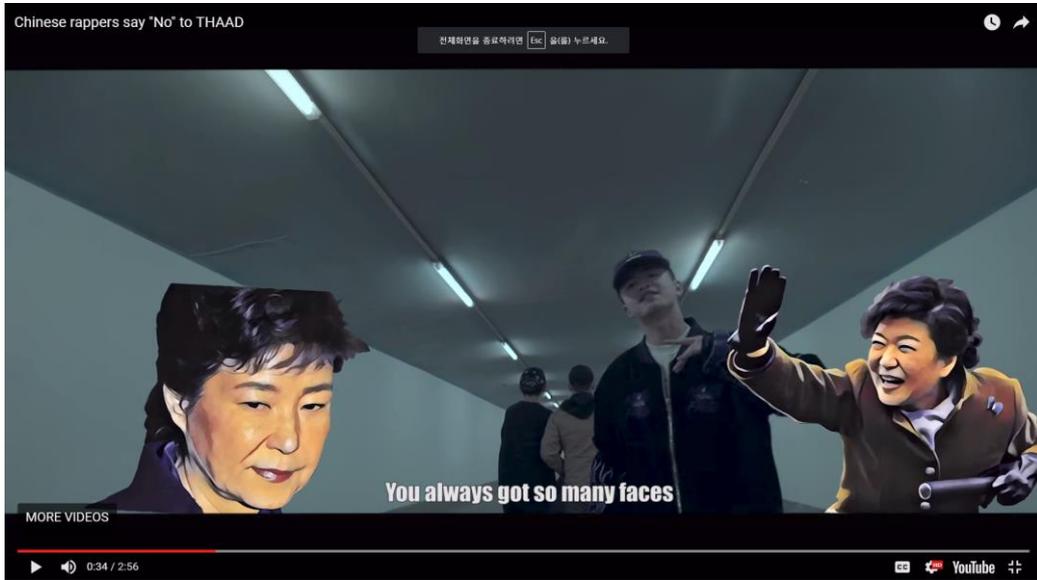


Figure 3 Opening lyrics of CD-Rev's song, targeting former Pres. Park Geun-hye



Figure 4 CD-Rev characterizes South Korea's security policies as a bad 'attitude'

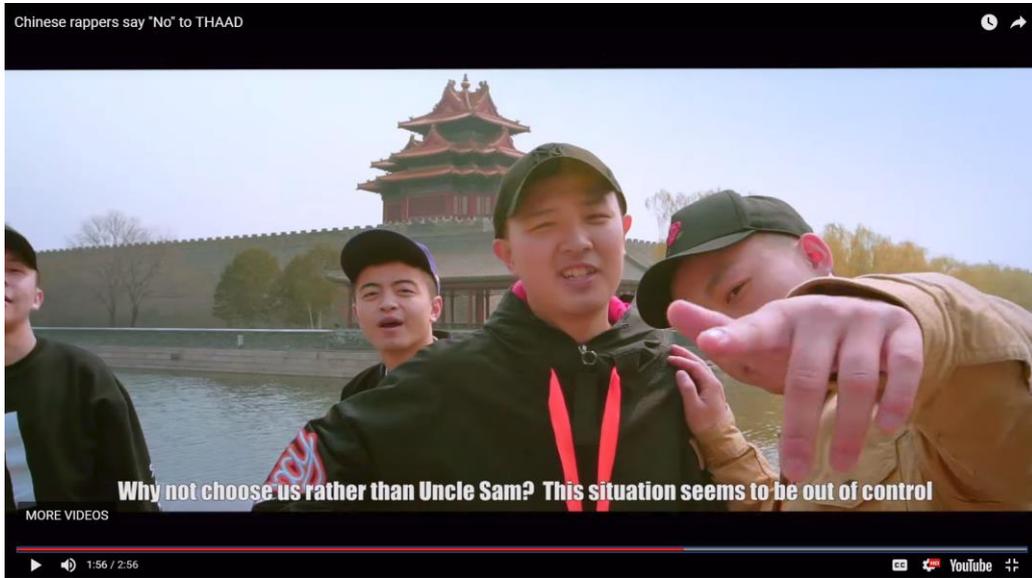


Figure 5 The song directly implore the South Korean government to choose a security alliance with China over the US



Figure 6 The song presents the image that the Chinese youth is united in opposition to THAAD



Figure 7 Lyrics urging Chinese people to show restraint in their own expressions of nationalism

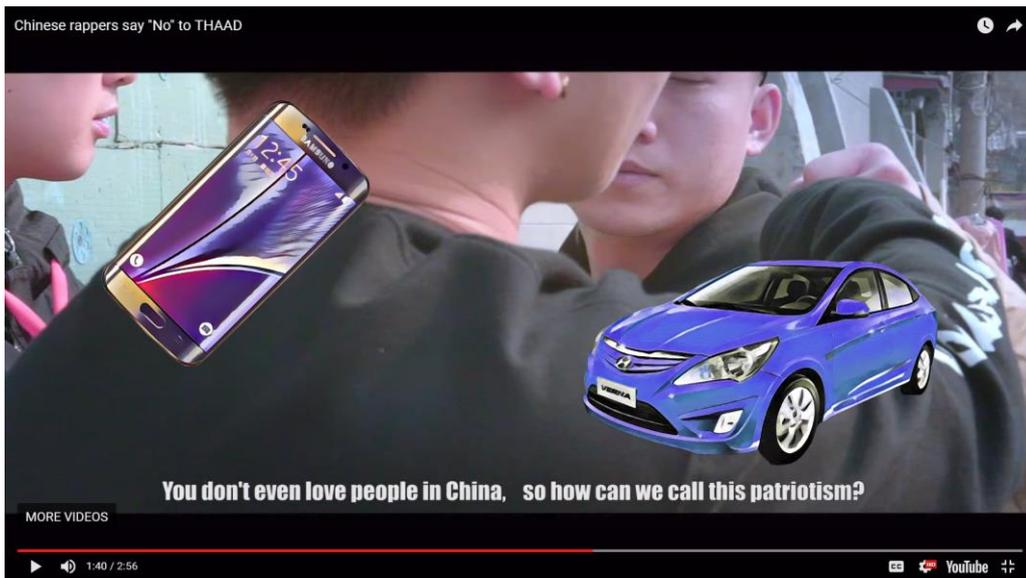


Figure 8 Lyrics criticizing destructive forms of nationalism as unpatriotic



Figure 9 Protesters gathered outside the French supermarket chain, Carrefour, in April 2008

The Most Threatening Country After Unification

■ 2015 ■ 2017

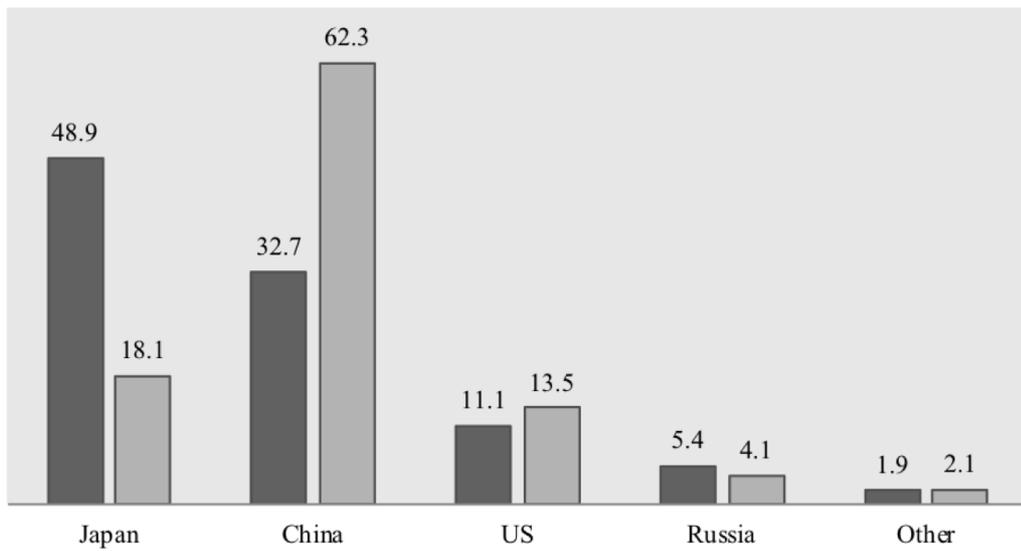


Figure 10 Source: The Annual Studies of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies

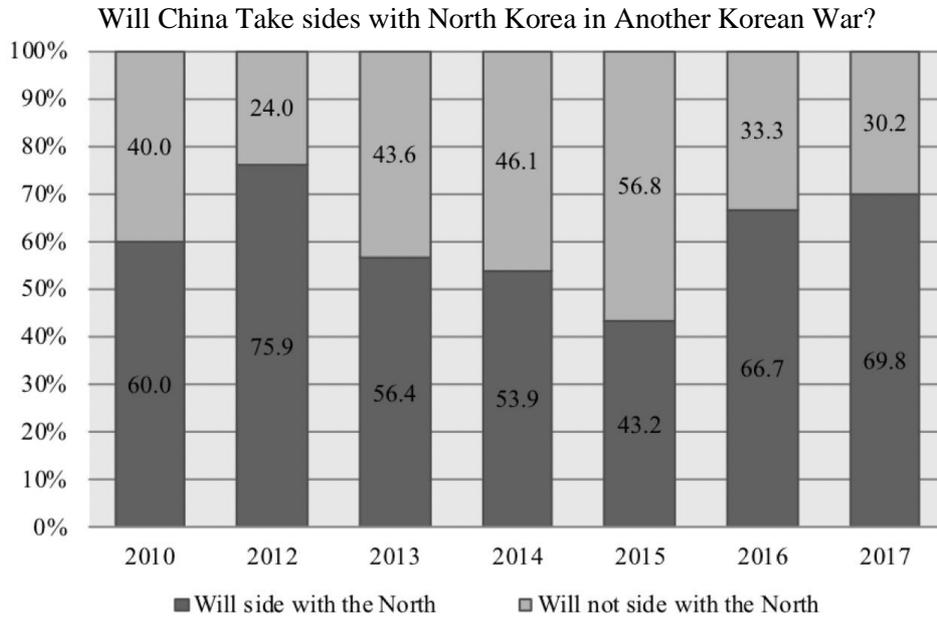


Figure 11 Source: The Annual Surveys of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Support for the Alliance between South Korea and the United States

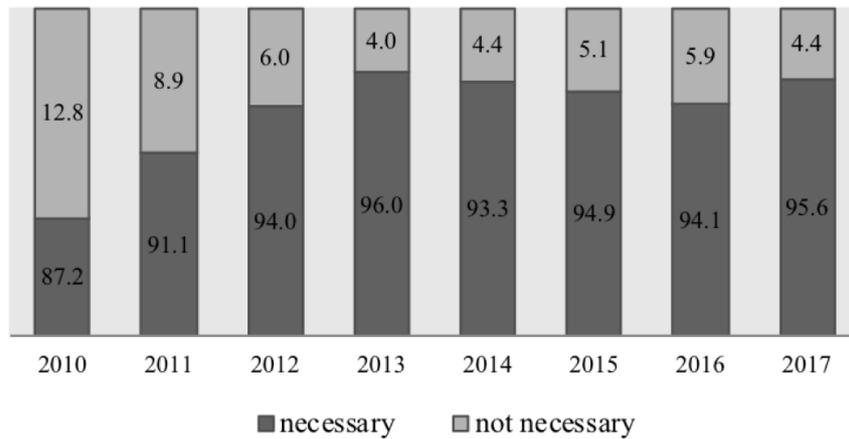


Figure 12 Source: The Annual Surveys of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies