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CHINA'S WOLF WARRIOR DIPLOMACY AND THE RELATIONS WITH REPUBLIC OF KOREA (2015 - 2020)

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Abstract

The famous diplomacy called “Wolf Warrior Diplomacy” from China, is a diplomacy that is seen as ‘assertive’ and ‘threatening’ other countries when defending the country’s national interest. “Wolf Warrior Diplomacy” is a new term under the administration of President Xi Jinping however the root of it has been there since back then. After ROK decides to cooperate with the United States and deploy Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), China openly confronted and pressed Republic of Korea (ROK) to halt the deployment of the technology. This would be discussed how this act could be categorized as Wolf Warrior Diplomacy and how it affects the relations between China and the ROK. The method that is used for this research is the qualitative method’s discourse analysis, by collecting data and information needed from the studies that have been made before then analyze the nuance of the references. Based on the research that has been done, the ‘assertive’ diplomacy done by China affects how ROK faces the country and the political relations between them. Remembering that ROK is a country between two great power countries, China and the US, ROK’s relations with China is essential.

Keywords: China’s diplomacy; Wolf Warrior Diplomacy; coercive diplomacy

Abstrak

Diplomasi yang terkenal dengan sebutan “*Wolf Warrior Diplomacy*” dari Negara Tiongkok, merupakan diplomasi yang dipandang ‘tegas’ dan ‘mengancam’ oleh negara lain ketika membela kepentingan nasional negara tersebut. “*Wolf Warrior Diplomacy*” adalah istilah baru di bawah pemerintahan Presiden Xi Jinping, namun akar dari diplomasi tersebut sudah ada sejak lama. Setelah ROK memutuskan untuk bekerja sama dengan Amerika Serikat untuk mendirikan *Terminal High Altitude Area Defense* (THAAD), Tiongkok secara tegas dan terbuka mengancam dan menginginkan Republik Korea (ROK) agar menghentikan pembangunan teknologi tersebut di negaranya. Pada artikel ini akan dibahas bagaimana tindakan ini dapat dikategorikan sebagai *Wolf Warrior Diplomacy* dan bagaimana hal itu mempengaruhi hubungan antara Tiongkok dan ROK. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif analisis wacana, dengan mengumpulkan data dan informasi yang dibutuhkan dari penelitian-penelitian yang telah dilakukan sebelumnya kemudian menganalisis suasana dari bahasa referensinya. Berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan, diplomasi yang bersifat ‘tegas’ yang dilakukan oleh Tiongkok mempengaruhi bagaimana ROK menghadapi negara dan hubungan politik di antara mereka. Mengingat bahwa ROK adalah sebuah negara di antara dua negara kekuatan besar, Tiongkok dan AS, hubungan ROK dengan Tiongkok sangat penting.

Kata kunci: Diplomasi Tiongkok; Diplomasi *Wolf Warrior*; diplomasi koersif

1. Introduction

Back in 2016, in response to the development of missile technology in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (from here would be written as North Korea), the Republic of Korea (from here would be written as South Korea) agreed to install Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) to defend their area. This decision came with the disagreement of the People's Republic of China (from here would be written as China). China argued that the THAAD would be able to cover some of China's area and it threatened the country. China demanded to halt the THAAD deployment and enforced its demands on South Korea by openly and actively confronting the parties involved. China's choice of act at that time was one of the examples of a diplomacy that would be the topic of this paper, recently known as Wolf Warrior Diplomacy.



Figure 1 Zhao Lijian's Pinned Tweet (Zhao 2022)

The term "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy" is taken from the Chinese movies *Wolf Warrior* and *Wolf Warrior II*, which are about a win by the Chinese over Americans in a battle that was located in Africa (Allen-Ebrahimian, as cited in Cheng, 2020). This diplomacy is done by China's diplomats to defend their national interests. Apparently, the diplomacy is seen as "aggressive" (Yau & Dlamini 2020; Cheng 2020) from the Western countries' point of view (Zhu 2020). The Wolf Warrior Diplomacy has been done in various ways; there were the statement from the officials, verbal and/or written, but there was also an economic pressure to the opposite party (Urbancová 2021). This kind of diplomacy is usually a response to what other countries have done that China deems it as a threat to its national interests. One of the acts that popularized the term Wolf Warrior Diplomacy which has been

in talks was done by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson, Zhao Lijian. His tweets responding to some regards from other countries, mostly to US, stirred public opinion from around the world.

This article would focus on 1) how Wolf Warrior Diplomacy works in the case of South Korea?; 2) how Wolf Warrior Diplomacy affects the political relations between China and South Korea? Does it make a gap in their relations or does it stay the same?

There are some works that have discussed Wolf Warrior Diplomacy. In Yau & Dlamini's (2020) article, they talk about Wolf Warrior Diplomacy in general. They find out that Wolf Warrior Diplomacy is seen as bullying by the other countries besides China and how Wolf Warrior Diplomacy is also actually for China's image in the eyes of the people of China, so the Chinese believe that their government could 'handle' the 'attacks' for other countries, like the movie series "Wolf Warrior" are. Cheng (2020) discusses Wolf Warrior Diplomacy and gives his thought about how the US should face China's Wolf Warrior Diplomacy. He suggests the US increase its public diplomacy and utilize the existing media. Pak (2020) finds that South Korea is

an important country for both China and the US, thus China has paid attention to South Korea. Zhu (2020) researches the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy from some Chinese experts' view and finds that not all Chinese agree in terms of how the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy works; they think that making more enemies does not serve China's national interest. The work by Lee (2020) elaborates how the relations between China and South Korea from a geopolitics point of view; it explains that the relations between China and South Korea are affected by the Korean Peninsula situation and the rivalry between China and the US. The paper by Urbancová (2021) reports the cases that she thinks fit as some examples of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy that happened in the US, Australia, and some European countries. A paper by Akçevin (2021) explains how Wolf Warrior Diplomacy acts limit the spread of South Korea's K-pop on the mainland and mentions the terms 'official' and 'unofficial' acts of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy. A video from the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs (2021), that invited China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy's author, Peter Martin, explains that the roots of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy have been existing since the establishment of China.

From those works of literature, the authors find that the idea and the practice of China's Wolf Warrior Diplomacy have been there since before the term "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy" becomes famous and that South Korea, most likely, has been the object of the practice. Thus, the author would like to make the previous works as the references and data sources and dive in whether the act of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy has the effect on the political relations between China and South Korea.

2. Conceptual Framework

For this paper, the authors would like to use Coercive Diplomacy as the conceptual framework to help to discuss the topic related. To start with, diplomacy is one of the means that have been done to achieve national interest. In a journal article, Pouliot & Cornut (2015) define diplomacy as "a claim to represent a given polity to the outside world" (p. 299). Additionally, they stated in their paper:

As a category of analysis, the concept of diplomacy then boils down to three key components: 'first, diplomacy is a process (of claiming authority and jurisdiction); second, it is relational (it operates at the interface between one's polity and others); and third, it is political (involving both representation and governing)'. (Sending, Pouliot, & Neumann as cited in Pouliot & Cornut 2015, 299)

The ones who do diplomacy are varying, in this era. States to non-states such as non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, until individuals such as celebrities could contribute in the act of diplomacy (Cooper, Heine, & Thakur, 2013; Pouliot & Cornut, 2015).

There are some kinds of diplomacy and usually, the term "diplomacy" correlates with positive words such as "relationship" or "peace", such as cultural diplomacy and sport diplomacy. However, there is one under the diplomacy field which we think is not really fit with those words, "coercive diplomacy". As cited in Jönsson (2018), George distinguishes the characteristics of coercive diplomacy: 1) Done to affect the opponent's will; 2) to influence the opponent to discontinue or undo something, and 3) it could be a threats and good-things combination. Also, it is mentioned, almost similarly, in the paper by Art & Greenhill (2018), they categorize coercive by two types: deterrence and compellence, where deterrence is "do not

change things", and compellence is "you would better change or undo this" –however, the line between deterrence and compellence could be ambiguous as it depends on who sees it. In addition, from the same paper, based on how it is done, there are 'levels': 1) Threats, usually a talk or signal; then 2) some a bit action (Art and Greenhill 2018).

Coercive diplomacy is diplomacy that depends on the imbalance of power between the parties involved and based on Alexander George and William Simons as cited in Jönsson (2018), there are five factors and eight conditions of parties involved that could affect the effect of coercive diplomacy, it states:

Noting that coercive diplomacy is highly context-[dependent] and that contextual factors vary from one case to another, they point to five recurrent contextual variables: (1) global strategy environment, (2) type of provocation, (3) image of war, (4) unilateral or coalitional coercive diplomacy, and (5) isolation of the adversary. (George & Simons as cited in Jönsson 2018, 3)

The eight conditions are for the party who does the coercive diplomacy, and these conditions might affect the success rate of the diplomacy and below is what they state:

... they identify eight conditions meant to be relevant for any situation in which coercive diplomacy might be contemplated: (1) clarity of objective, (2) strength of motivation, (3) asymmetry of motivation, (4) sense of urgency, (5) strong leadership, (6) domestic and international support, (7) opponent's fear of unacceptable escalation, and (8) clarity concerning the precise terms of settlement of the crisis. (George & Simons as cited in Jönsson 2018, 3)

Based on Art & Greenhill (2018), the coercive would be counted as a success if: 1) it is deterrence, the target does not change a thing; and 2) it is compellence, the target changes or undoes thing.

The theory of "coercive diplomacy" has been seen fit by the author sees that the eight points of coercive diplomacy's condition have met in the case of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy by China and its relations with South Korea. It is because Wolf Warrior Diplomacy has protecting China's national interest as their objective, which means to make others not to do something or undo something that has threatened the national interest of China. South Korea's decision to cooperate with US and deploy the THAAD in South Korea is seen as something that urgently needs to be stopped by China because the technology might cover China's area and it would be a threat to China's security. China pressured South Korea to stop continuing the THAAD program by using its influence and the economic power gap between the two countries – China is one of the countries that South Korea doing trade with and one of the countries that South Korea became dependent on (Pak 2020).

3. Research Method

This research would use the method of reading and contextualizing the existed articles and studies (secondary data sources), known as qualitative methods. Qualitative methods are widely used in studies of the social domain, using observations, interviews, and/or other follow-up sessions to study complex phenomena (Njie and Asimiran 2014). The data collected and the results of the study

are descriptions, interpretations, reviews, and evaluations. (Peshkin cited in Njie & Asimiran 2014). Building on Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger (2020), the qualitative research methods go from "what works" to "what works for whom, when, how, and why". improve. , focused on improving interventions. Under the categorize qualitative methods, we believe that discourse analysis would be appropriate to be method for this article. Based on Luo (2019), the discourse analysis examines "how language functions and how meaning is created in different social contexts." She stated that by using discourse analysis method, a specific effect of the languages used in some narratives, such as building trust, creating conflict, etc. could be analyzed.

This paper would discuss how the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy that has been done by China affects the relations between South Korea and China, thus the qualitative method has been seen fit and chosen in an effort to answer the research question. The discourse analysis is seen fit as the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy covers how the narratives work and how the scholars perceive the image of China after the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy. The data would be collected from the works of literature and official documents related to the topic. Additionally, the information from related news, social media, and/or any other sources' observations might be included in the discussion. The data needed is: 1) The act of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy from China to South Korea; 2) The effect that South Korea received; and 3) The response from South Korea towards the act of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy. After data collection, the results would be analyzed in order to find the answer to the research question of this paper and that would be concluded in the last part of this article.

4. Discussion

4.1. China and South Korea Relations

The relations between South Korea and China have been in a long way since and been in ups and downs. The relations between the two countries were normalized back in 1992 after the Korean War (1950 – 1953) and have continued since then. Lee (2020) and Pak (2020) mention that the relations have been developed in four stages, from "Friendly Cooperative Relations" in 1992 to 1) "Cooperative Partnership Toward the 21st Century" in 1998; 2) "Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership" in 2003; 3) "Strategic Cooperative Partnership" in 2008; then 4) "Enriched Strategic Cooperative Partnership" in 2014. In this part, we focus on some of the points that we believe are affecting China - South Korea relations development, and those points are: 1) economy; 2) the situation in Korean Peninsula; and 3) the relations between China and US.

China and South Korea are notably good in their economic relations. In 2003, China replaced the US as a country that traded most with South Korea (Lee 2020), and after that, under the administration of former President Park Geun-Hye especially, China and South Korea have continued to cooperate in various fields and are in a good relation as neighboring countries in the Northeast Asia region. Experts mention that the 2013-2016 era is where China and South Korea are at the highest point in their relations to the point it worried South Korea's ally, the US (Lee 2020; Pak 2020). In 2015, South Korea joined the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank –led by China, instead of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and from 2015 – 2019, China has become the

country that trades most with South Korea, with an average of more than 20% of South Korea's export and import are from and to China (OEC n.d.). Additionally, both countries have their people in each other's country, as it is in tourism and/or in exchange, making South Korea and China's relations also counted as interdependent relations (OEC n.d.).

The relations of South and North Korea in the Korean Peninsula also play role in South Korea and China relations (Lee 2020). The hostile relations between South and North Korea are the result of the history of the Korean War. The Korean War that left in a truce is the cause that South Korea has high alert towards North Korea; thus, it needs to have preparation anytime. Besides having US troops inside the country, the decision to install US' THAAD by South Korea is also an effort to protect the nation from North Korea who has an advanced nuclear program (Lee 2020; Pak 2020). Peace and stability in Korean Peninsula are some of the objectives by South Korea and China offers their support in the two Korea-s good relations.

As stated in the previous paragraph, the situation in Korean Peninsula is the result of the Korean War in the past, and so is the rivalry between China and the US, which also is one of the variables that influence the relations between China and South Korea. The Korean War was a battle in the Cold War era between USSR-and-China-supported North Korea and US-and-UN-supported South Korea. The ideology clash between the two Koreas shows that the two different influences have tried to balance each other and that is what could be seen from China and US. As the US tries to balance rising China, China would also do the same (Ye 2019). The influence over a country shows the power of a hegemony country in a region thus South Korea is essential. South Korea is one of the US allies in Northeast Asia, yet South Korea's economy mostly depends on trades between the country and China; those situations make South Korea in the middle two powerful countries thus the relations between China and South Korea are affected by their relations with US (Lee 2020).

The ups and downs of the relations between China and South Korea, specifically their political relations, could be seen from the situation between the two Korea-s. The previous paragraph mentions that the peace in Korean Peninsula is both countries' goal, however, China is an "ally" of North Korea in the Korean War and is in a treaty relationship with the country, while South Korea's on US' side. There were times where these relations, China – North Korea and US – South Korea, could be seen playing roles in the relations between China and South Korea. Lee (2020) states that in 2008, China openly express dissatisfaction where South Korea's President at the time, Lee Myung-bak, was more siding with the US (Lee 2020; Pak 2020). Then in her paper, Pak (2020) states that in 2010, North Korea attacked the South Korean warship the Cheonan and its shelling of Yeonpyeong Island, which combined led to casualties on South Korea's side which was the death of 50, yet China at that time did not punish North Korea and put the blame on the policy of President Lee Myung-bak. Thus, this paragraph explains how China's influence and the US' influence happen in Korean Peninsula.

4.2. Wolf Warrior Acts

The experts' explanation of "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy" includes the words "assertive", "aggressive" and "offensive" – the acts that affiliated with those words and are done by China's officials to protect their national interest are the acts of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy (Cheng 2020; Yau & Dlamini 2020; Martin, Gvosdev, & Serafin 2021; Urbancová 2021). The words "aggressive" and "offensive" mean that the opposition sides might feel attacked and/or suffer some loss because of the act, in material or image. To be "the" China these days, the history of China behaviors towards other countries in the past is essential. In this part of the paper, the authors would like to discuss a little bit of China's background, the acts that are deemed as "aggressive" and/or "offensive" done by China, and then we would continue towards the specific case, the acts towards South Korea post-THAAD decision.

The history of China's "aggressive" acts started to surface under the administration of Xi Jinping. Experts write that before President Xi's administration, the approach was not as assertive as nowadays' are (Ye 2019; Cheng 2020), but then it has been changing between assertive and non-assertive throughout eras (Martin, Gvosdev and Serafin 2021). After the establishment of the government of China, China focused on how to build the country internally first (Ye 2019). At that time, under the administration of Mao Zedong (1949 – 1976), Zhao Enlai pioneered this approach they called a "fighting spirit" where diplomats were –and still are, super loyal to the Communist Party and ready to protect China's interest, basically "...Chinese diplomats would think and act like the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in civilian clothing" (Martin, Gvosdev and Serafin 2021). Martin, Gvosdev, & Serafin (2021) believe that approach is the foundation of what is nowadays called Wolf Warrior Diplomacy. Then after that era, the development of China rapidly became good enough to make the countries around it wary (Ye 2019). Thus, to reassure the wary neighbors at that time (Ye 2019), the prominent character in this era, Deng Xiaoping (1978 – 1992), made the principle "韬光养晦 · 有所作为" (Tāoguāngyǎnghuì, yǒu suǒ zuòwéi), which means "Keep a low profile and do something" (焦非 2012).

As the president changed, so did the national interest. Ye (2019) explains that in the 1992 – 2010 era, China focused on cooperating and strategic partnership with the countries, especially its surroundings. Cheng (2020) states that after President Jiang Jemin (1992 – 2002), under President Hu Jintao (2002 – 2012) the way China did its foreign policy became more forward; it slowly showed the power that China had possessed and spread its influence.

Then, after Xi Jinping was elected as the President of China, he chooses to push forward China's national interest in the face of the international world, from "Keep a low profile, and do something" approach, it has become "奋发有为" (fenfa youwei), which means "strive for achievement" (Ye 2019). Yau & Dlamini (2020) states that this comes from other emphasizes, which were "agile" and "flexible", to "fit" and "face" the situations. The "situations" is explained by Ye (2019) that the national interest

of China is affected by the situation where China is in the position of a rising country, rivals with US' power. The confidence and insecurity from the position result in its approach becoming more assertive (Martin, Gvosdev and Serafin 2021). The interests cover various fields such as economy, security, sovereignty, politics, etc.

In China's point of view, the acts of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy have been done to protect the country from the "attack" from outside. It is also described by Yau & Dlamini (2020) that China's objective through Wolf Warrior Diplomacy is "to maintain legitimacy amid the negative international image it is earning as a result of the coronavirus", while a report by Urbancová (2021) claims that it is more than that. Martin, Gvosdev, & Serafin (2021) also mention that China is open to the world and learning from it, but at the same time protecting its political system and culture. Thus, if it is against those interests, it could trigger Wolf Warrior diplomats. In addition, Yau & Dlamini (2020) state that Wolf Warrior Diplomacy is for Chinese Government's public image in the eyes of the Chinese people themselves – it is to show that the country is capable to face the 'threats' from the outside and all the acts of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy are for the country.

Urbancová (2021) has summarized some of the acts of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy by China to the US, European countries, and also Africa countries; and believed that the act of Wolf Warrior diplomacy is a special case of coercion diplomacy, which means diplomacy that is seen as an offensive to stop other country doing something or to make others redo something that might threaten China's national interests. Based on Urbancová (2021)'s report, it is most likely that there is a common flow of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy: 1) China being triggered by some act that has been done by a country or its representative; 2) Official's act, it could be statements from China's representative –usually condemnation or threats, or cancellation of an event, such as diplomats visit; and the last, this stage is could be done or not 3) Sanction, usually an economic one, but could be other. The second stage could involve technology, such as social media or mass media. The example of Zhao Lijian's twitter case is a case where Wolf Warrior Diplomacy happened because of the "attack" on China's national image. As cited:

CDC was caught on the spot. When did patient zero begin in US? How many people are infected? What are the names of the hospitals? It might be US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe us an explanation! (Westcott & Jiang as cited in Cheng 2020)

His tweet was full-on direct towards the opposition sides. The example of the third stage of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy could be seen from this case, where Eswatini was seen as a threat to China's national interest "One China Policy":

On January 10, 2020, the PRC started putting economic and diplomatic pressure on Eswatini, the only country on the African continent to recognize Taiwan as an independent state. The Chinese ambassador to South Africa issued a statement threatening to sever diplomatic and trade relations between Eswatini and the PRC. He limited the issuance of travel visas to Eswatini residents of the PRC's Embassy in Pretoria. Furthermore, the embassy appealed to other states in Africa to reduce diplomatic ties with

Eswatini. Eswatini has not succumbed to pressure from the PRC and has retained its diplomatic and economic ties with Taiwan. (Urbancová 2021)

The Wolf Warrior Diplomacy to South Korea has the similar flow. After South Korea had an agreement to install THAAD with the US vis-à-vis North Korea's missile technology, China showed its dissatisfaction towards the country; its concern is the security of its country. Vice Foreign Minister of China, Zhang Yesui summoned US' and South Korea's Ambassador to China, Max Baucus, and Kim Jang-soo, to stress that THAAD could "destabilize regional strategic balance, seriously undermine China's strategic security interests, and harm the maintenance of peace and stability in the Northeast Asian region" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2016). China's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi claims that THAAD "goes far beyond the defense need of the Korean Peninsula" and that the US and South Korea should not threaten other countries' security for their own security (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2016). Following those statements, Wang Yi also stated that South Korea needs to seriously consider China's concerns, "seriously weigh the pros and cons", "think twice before taking action", and "cherish and maintain the hard-won sound situation of China-ROK relations" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2016). Additionally, the representative of China in South Korea at the time, Qiu Guohong even said that could "destroy" the relations between the two countries (Pak 2020).

The act did not stop until the second stage but continued to the third. Pak (2020) states that China unofficially put an economic boycott on South Korea, then Lee (2020) explains that China reduced tourists to South Korea, canceled the application of simplified visa's procedure, and blocked South Korea's products into the Chinese market, including cultural exchanges (Pak 2020), thus anything related to South Korea was verbally banned by State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television to be shown, concerts by South Korean artist were canceled, and those acts made the sale of anything South Korea-related products fell (Lim and Ferguson 2019). Additionally, the one who provided the land for THAAD, South Korean company Lotte also got the consequence; it states that Lotte's stores, Lotte Mart in China were shut because they "hurt Chinese people", and finally all of Lotte Mart was closed in 2018 (Lim & Ferguson 2019; Pak 2020). Those actions caused South Korea to get quite a loss to compare to China, as one of the countries that trade most with South Korea is China, and gave some Korean companies quite a hard time –especially for Lotte, Lim & Ferguson (2019) states that the group lost est. 1.78 billion USD in 2017; while China's market is still huge.

4.3. Risk of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy

Wolf Warrior Diplomacy indeed lites the patriotic spirit inside the mainland's netizens and shows how 'nationalist' and 'loyal' the Chinese are, but on the other hand, the famous Wolf Warrior Diplomacy's has its risks; the practice of the diplomacy that has gone too far triggers various countries – makes them in high-alert and skepticism towards China. The high-alerted countries have high possibilities to establish 'preparation' to counter whatever China might do in the future and it will increase the difficulties for China to

spread its influence, for example, the increasing Anti-China sentiment in the US has driven the government ready to pay extra to counter-measure China and also the Xinjiang cotton boycott by China did not really affect the sale of international brands, instead it brought more attention to the issue, making consumers and shareholders observe more. The other Wolf Warrior diplomacy's risk is this diplomacy 'urge' countries to choose a side between China and US while the other countries have more flexibility to change their foreign policy towards this issue, unlike China with its one-party dictatorship system, most of the countries change their foreign policy as they change their leader – thus it might advantage the anti-China when the party rotates, and it could make disrupt China's diplomacy. The Wolf Warrior Diplomacy has a high possibility to make countries think twice to side with China – to summarize, Wolf Warrior Diplomacy might become a weapon for others to attack China.

4.4. South Korea's Policy Post-Coercion

After the THAAD decision which ruptured its relations with China and the 'consequences' they had been through, South Korea continues to develop the relations as the newly appointed President Moon decides to 'restore' the relations with four countries, including both China and US, also Russia and Japan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea 2018). Why South Korea decides to rebuild the relations with China and try to work the demands? The experts state that as South Korea is a country between two powerful countries thus it decides to 'balance' its relations with the power countries (Lee 2020; Park 2020) as it is necessary to reach South Korea's national interests; Park (2020) explains that is called the "Hedging Strategy", taken from finance's world strategy where it minimalizes risk by taking two contrast sides in some limitation and the exercise of this strategy is flexible, depending on the situation. Thus, South Korea actively continue to work on building its relations with other countries.

The national interest of South Korea includes how to make Korean Peninsula peaceful and stabilized and it still believes that having cooperation with the US is essential vis a vis North Korea, even after all 'sanctions' that China gave to South Korea. The alliance between South Korea and the US has been established long and close enough for their relations having one chapter explaining them in South Korea's Diplomacy White Paper. The alliance was not limited to the security field however the denuclearization in Korean Peninsula has been in both countries' national interest thus it was mostly discussed in their relations.

After the installment of four launchers, however, in order to restore the relations which were going downhill with China, South Korea actively explained to China that the decision would not harm any third country and it was just an effort to face the 'threatening' North Korea when the representatives of the two countries meet. To preserve the relations from going worst, on October 31, 2017, President Moon agreed to do what is called "three Nos", as cited:

The South Korean government is not considering additional deployment of THAAD; it will not participate in the U.S. missile defense system; and it does

not intend to develop U.S.–South Korea – Japan tripartite security cooperation into a military alliance. (Lee 2020)

After the declaration of the "three Nos", South Korea always stated in its Diplomacy White paper that the South Korean government wants to reconcile the bilateral relations between South Korea and China by "communicating" and "cooperating" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea 2018). In addition, in their Diplomacy White Paper 2018, it states that South Korea wants to strengthen its relations with the four countries: US, Japan, China, and Russia; it is also a part of its efforts for South Korea to face North Korea and it did not stop until there and has been expanding by actively engaging other countries to get international support through meetings, both bilateral and multilateral (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea 2018).

Then in 2018, North Korea signaled a green light to negotiate regarding the situation in Korean Peninsula, the inter-Korea held several high-level meetings and on April 27 they established what they called the "Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity, and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula" to improve relations between inter-Korea. After the declaration, South Korea actively worked to make denuclearization in Korean Peninsula happen by maintaining the cooperation with the US and encouraging the US-North Korea summit to be held vis a vis denuclearization, thus South Korea also encouraged the other neighboring countries to support; China is the country that South Korea cooperates with to consult regarding North Korea (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea 2019).

In 2017, South Korea introduced the "New Southern Policy" and implemented the "New Northern Policy" in an effort to expand South Korea's diplomacy. Lee (2020) and Botto (2021) claim that this signals that South Korea expands further the 'option', especially India and Vietnam as some of the top traders with South Korea; since China used its power and the gap between dependency in the economy. South Korea's "New Southern Policy" increases its relations with ASEAN and India in various fields as the countries refer to the area of partnership as 3P – people, prosperity, and peace (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea 2018). Based on Botto (2021), the partnership with ASEAN and India in "New Southern Policy" has more focused on the "prosperity" aspect, which covers "economic cooperation", while the least developed aspect is the "peace", which covers "political and strategic cooperation".

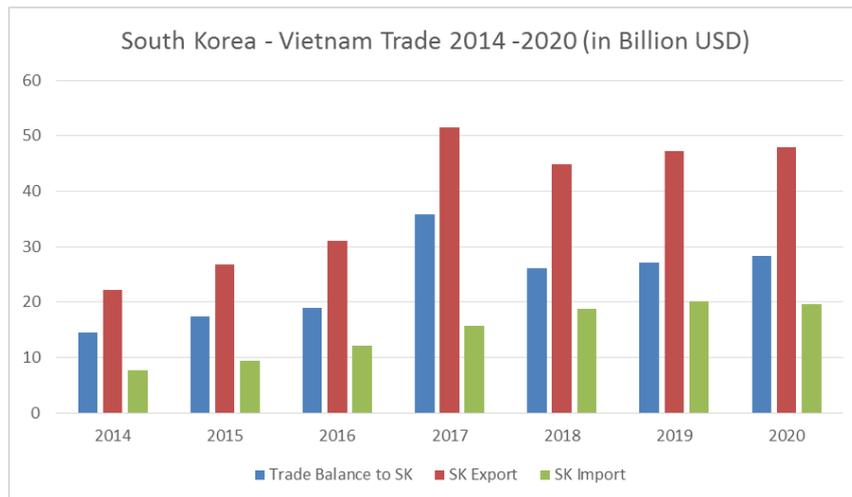


Figure 2 South Korea – Vietnam Bilateral Trade (OEC n.d.)

On the other side, the "New Northern Policy" has been focusing on improving relations with Russia, Mongolia, the countries of Central Asia, and the Eastern part of Europe, and the policy has more focused on economic cooperation. Additionally, Botto (2021) also explains that the "New Southern Policy" by South Korea is not something like Belt and Road Initiative like China's nor rival it, however "it is to create additional layers of cooperation, often parallel to those regional initiatives, to minimize the risk of being caught between the major powers' competing priorities".

5. Conclusion

After the THAAD decision and the 'boycott' that China gave to South Korean products and tourism, what South Korea did was explaining and making efforts to restore the bilateral relations between them. South Korea showed the result of the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy – which the open-confrontation and the 'boycott', that they would comply by announcing the "three nos". This shows that South Korea's strategy to keep its relations with the two major power countries balanced has not been really changing as South Korea is a country that has the 'closest' strategic partnership with the US yet its biggest economic partner is with China. Additionally, as South Korea believes that the two countries also play roles in its national interest regarding stability and peace in Korean Peninsula, South Korea keeps preserving its relations with China. South Korea consulted China regarding North Korea to make the US-North Korea summit diplomacy happen.

The new policies, "New Southern Policy" and "New Northern Policy", are seen as the efforts of South Korea to minimize the risk of being in the middle of the two great power countries – this shows that South Korea has practiced the "hedging strategy". There is the possibility that the 2017's "New Southern Policy" and the implementation of the "New Northern Policy" are South Korea's 'assurance' just in case 'if' something bad happens, especially in the economic aspect, as South Korea's top 1 and 2 traders are China and the US.

Thus, the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy creates a gap to some point between the China and South Korea and decreases China's appeal to some point from the eyes of South Korea. It is most likely that in the future, besides the new policies that have

been mentioned before, South Korea will continue to find other ways in order to widen its options so they will have some cards to play when it's needed.

In this case, China's "success" of stopping other countries to interfere its national interest has the potential to affect how China and the other countries works. We learn from the previous literature works that while the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy is an act of warning to not interfere China's national interests, there were some harms happened in the target of the diplomacy, done by China's agents, and the diplomacy is not being well-accepted. As the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy is not accepted by some of the parties, the diplomacy is prone to produce opposition and is most likely to possess some risks, thus, China needs to study the overall results of the Wolf Warrior Diplomacy from the others' point of views and also what China gains from the diplomacy in order to prevent further conflicts or harms.

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