

# Complexity, Security and Civil Society in East Asia

Foreign Policies and the Korean Peninsula

*Edited by*  
*Peter Hayes and Kiho Yi*

## Preface

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# Preface

*Peter Hayes and Kiho Yi*

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This book was born after intensive dialogue among the staff of the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability in the United States, South Korea, and Australia on the nature of complex global problems and the development of strategies to solve them in East Asia. The essence of the Nautilus approach is to shift from singular, sequential problem-solving to simultaneous, multiple problem-solving and to implement initiatives that demonstrate this shift is possible in tangible, measurable ways.

This change in approach is simple to state, but profoundly difficult to execute. Most individuals and organizations frame their identities and missions in terms of one primary issue. Doing one thing really well is the mantra of management advisors. Donors frown on projects that span issue areas and don't fit easily into predefined round or square holes. Individuals find it hard to multi-task on more than one priority at a time. It's difficult enough to comprehend the extraordinary complexity of one global problem in its real manifestation at a local, national, or regional level, let alone the interrelationships between problems that have common causes or shared solutions. There's no "global problem-solving" manual to turn to when one asks, "How do I make this shift?"

The specific genesis for the book was the convergence of the Korea Foundation's interest in emerging theories of statecraft that addressed complex diplomatic and security issues and the Nautilus Institute's interest in complex global problem-solving and the specific role played by civil society organizations and individuals in advancing this field in East Asia. For many years, the Nautilus Institute and its partners have addressed global problems such as nuclear weapons proliferation and the risk of

nuclear war, energy insecurity, ecological sustainability, trade, climate change, and urban adaptation, but generally in a stove-piped manner, not dissimilar from most civil society organizations.

In 2008, the Korea Foundation provided the funding and stimulus to enable us to step back from specific applications in each of these areas so that we could examine the interconnections between these problems in terms of causality and solution, with particular emphasis on South Korea, China, and Japan, but nested in a global context. For the purposes of this research, we chose three global problems — energy insecurity, nuclear insecurity, and urban insecurity — and identified specialists in these problem areas from each country. We held two workshops aimed at identifying common understandings and conceptual differences in relation to each problem. We searched to understand the differences in the perception of solutions to each of the problems. Wherever possible, we strove to identify interlinkages across countries in each problem and solution set and between the different problems and solutions. For example, we deliberately examined how the nexus between energy insecurity, nuclear insecurity, and urban insecurity intersect with both climate insecurity, on the one hand, and the specific challenges posed by the parlous state of North Korea, on the other.

In each of these in-depth analyses, we sought to understand the role civil society played in formulating and applying new ways to handle the complexity of these common global problems and shared solutions in East Asia. To do so, we conducted a set of case studies of the networked strategies of civil society in the region, especially those originating from South Korea, and compared these strategies and their results with those of “complex diplomacy” as developed and implemented by the South Korean government since the turn of the century. We termed these civil society efforts “civic diplomacy” to capture their civilian, value-based, and non-state characteristics, and we examined their efficacy relative to South Korea’s “complex diplomacy.”

The research scope of this project required the participation of nearly thirty expert participants at the two workshops (2009, 2010 in Seoul), largely from the three regional countries, but also from as far afield as Australia and the United States. To reflect the future orientation of civil society, we also convened two scenario workshops after each of the research meetings, the reports of which are summarized in the book’s concluding chapter.

The result has been six years in the making. It would not have been possible without all the researchers who contributed to the 2008 and

2010 research and scenarios workshops where many of the issues were explored and debated, nor without the herculean efforts of the staff of the Asia Research Center at Hanshin University and the Nautilus Institute in the United States, South Korea, and Australia. We also thank our editors Maureen Jerrett and Arabella Imhoff. We are grateful to independent reviewers and to Alessandra Tosi at Open Book Publishers. Above all, we thank the Korea Foundation for its financial support for this research project and the resulting book.

This work is dedicated to the memory of O Jae Sik whose spirit lives on in civil society in East Asia and beyond.