Analyzing Dissolution factors for Asian and Pacific Council

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1. Introduction

Why didn’t the South Korean-led Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC) succeed? In the same period, in Western Europe, where the same major regional security councils such as NATO remain active, what is the most important factor that ASPAC, which lasted for seven years, disbanded? This study is a study to analyze the process of dismantling the South Korean-led ASPAC from the perspective of constitutionalism in the Asia-Pacific region. Korea’s initiative for East Asian cooperation such the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG), which was promoted during the Kim Dae-jung administration period is also a current problem. Therefore, the study of the South Korean-led security and regional cooperation in East Asia that failed in the Cold War can be pointed out at this point.

In 1964, president Park Chung-hee promoted the Asia–Pacific ministerial meeting to be held in the year, but Japan expressed its displeasure in the expression ‘anti-communist alliance’. The council proceeded smoothly as the Korean government agreed to remove the word “military alliance” or “semi-public” from the agenda. Since then, the Korean government has emphasized the establishment of a ‘comprehensive regional consultative body’ that discusses cooperation in a wide range of fields such as politics, security, economy, and culture, rather than ‘anti-Communist meetings’ or ‘military alliances’. But throughout the 1966-1972 meeting this continued to be a heated debate. In the end, in 1972, Japan-Sino-Japanese relations were dramatically improved, Japan declared a non-participation, and ASPAC was disbanded in 1973, with no clear and practical identity between the regional council and the security mechanism within the member states.

This study uses the theory of constructivists to answer the question, "Why is the Korean-led ASPAC demolished?" Constructivism studies the explanatory power of abstract variables such as cognition, discourse, norms and ideas. This study utilized the theory of constructivism to empirically identify the impact of the anti-communist ideology on the formation of a common identity in ASPAC member states. The previous research used constructivist theory to analyze historical experience of regional cooperation or development plan. This study, on the other hand, uses constructivist theory to explain ASPAC, which is a case of local cooperation in the Cold War era.

The constructivist view argues that inter-state relations are described by the relationship identity, and that cooperation and conflict are determined by the degree of mutual subjective understanding and collective identity between states. Methodically, constructivist approaches also use historical documents as well as speeches and diverse records for case studies. In order to analyze the dismantling factors of ASPAC, this study examine the relations of member countries through diplomatic documents of R.O.K.

This study will identify the characteristic of the conference and the position of Japan and its partners on the cooperation mechanism through the Korean diplomatic document "ASPAC (Asia Pacific Council) Talks". In particular, this study will review the process of the Fourth Conference in 1969 and the characteristics of ASPAC demolition in 1972–1973. FRUS, which shows the relationship between South Korea and the US, and NARA(National Archives and Records Administration) documents, will be used to show the R.O.K. government’s perceptions.

2. Theoretical Discussion: Constructivist Approach

Among the theories criticizing the traditional paradigm, constructivism emerged after the end of the Cold War, actively refuting the new realism and emphasizing its identity. According to Alexander Wendt(1987: 1992: 1994), identity refers to the image of an individual state or the nature of a state group formed in the process of inter-state interactions. The constructivist theory of international politics explains international political phenomena by conceptualizing abstract

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1) For theoretical explanations that do not form a collective security system like NATO in Asia, see below. Christopher Hommer and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Why is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism," International Organization (Summer 2002).


variables such as cognition, discourse, norms and ideas.

Wendt has been interested in the problem of agent and structure in the two theories of new realism and the world system that have made great contributions to international. It was noted that there was no framework for analyzing social structure as the subject of interdependent behavior. Wendt proposed a structuration theory to solve the problems of agent-structure. It was the theory to solve the problem between the two by conceptualizing that the agent is an integrating unit of social relations. Constructivism, on the other hand, sees the systems of nations as constituted by subjective relations between nations. Traditional realists perceived egoism and power seeking as the cause of human nature, and in neo-realism and liberalism, anarchy was defined as the condition of war or the cause of war. Waltz identified the attributes of anarchy as the cause of war. On the other hand, in constructivism, humans act in a goal-oriented manner, and the state also exhibits various behaviors in response to a threatening enemy.

The three structural factors that characterize constructivism are as follows. (1) Nations are an important unit of analysis for international political theory. (2) Structures that are important to the state system are intersubjective rather than material. (3) National identity and profits are made up of social structures rather than externally. Wendt distinguished the two identities of the nation. First, corporate identity has a self-organizing characteristic that constitutes the individuality of actors. Social identities, on the other hand, define their location in the process of recognizing other actors. In other words, the actor is able to make the decision "Who am I, who we are" in the social structure formed in relation to other actors. Neo-realists define structures in material conditions, while constructivists emphasize intersubjective structures. A intersubjective system shares understanding, expectations, and social knowledge. Nations will shape their identities and interests flexibly according to these factors.


3. Creation and demolition of ASPAC

3.1 Creation of ASPAC

At the time of the signing of the Korea-Japan agreement and the dispatch of the Vietnam War to the imminent social phenomenon, the Korean government announced a new initiative. It was peace, freedom, balanced prosperity, and great Asia-Pacific community construction. His idea was presented at the first ASPAC in Seoul in 1966. In 1966, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines agreed to attend and decided to hold it in Seoul.

In 1965, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea accepted the opinions of the embassies in each country and made a report on the areas that ASPAC would address. The major areas are divided into 4 areas: (1) political field of co-operation, (2) security field of co-operation, (3) economic, trade and technical fields of co-operation, (4) social and cultural fields of co-operation.

Japan announced its intention to participate in ASPAC in mid-December 1965 immediately after the ratification of the Korean-Japanese Treaty by the National Assembly. The passive reason for the decision to participate in Japan was that it was difficult to claim the cause of the absence of the meeting, which established diplomatic relations with Korea. However, for more active reasons, it was based on the positive judgment that "holding the conference successfully will not only greatly enhance Korea’s international status, but will also help promote goodwill." However, Japan’s attendance was not decided until March 1966, so attendance of Japan’s ASPAC preliminary talks was the most important issue.

The view of the Thai Foreign Minister’s preliminary talks is that "the most important question is whether or not the nine nations want to cooperate and cooperate politically and economically under the current international situation and if they have such discussions, It will be smooth." In addition, the foreign ministers of Thailand assumed that the issue of establishing permanent committees for cultural, economic cooperation, exchange of information and cooperation would proceed smoothly at the preliminary talks, but it would be difficult to agree on military matters.

The Korean ambassador to Thailand reported to the Korean government on March 31. The ambassador reported that he is more active than the preliminary
talks in 1965, recognizing that the preliminary talks are a clear meeting to prepare the Seoul foreign ministerial meeting. In a meeting with the deputy minister of Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was understood that it would be difficult to speak freely in the field of safety when neutral nations attended. In this context, it can be seen that the preparation for the preliminary talks has raised the issue of participation in the neutral region and the direction of the security-related meetings from the beginning.

The April 13, 1966 document showed Korea’s basic idea of ASPAC to be more specific. The Korean government emphasized the formation of a regional consultative system between the free countries of Asia and the Pacific in order to realize common goals such as stability, prosperity and anti-communism, and to strengthen the voice of Korea in that context. As for the nature of the conference, the first is the Regional Consultative Organization, the Roundtable on the basis of mutual benefit, and the third is that it is not an organization for the exclusion of American leadership in Asia, but rather an effective cooperation with the United States.

In fact, according to US State Department documents on US issues, the Korean government proposed to the US in 1965 about ASPAC. When the Korean government first proposed it, the US State Department was skeptical about whether the ASPAC in Seoul would be held properly. But the situation changed as the United States encouraged Vietnam to send Korean combat troops. The United States turned policy to encourage American allies, such as Thailand and the Philippines, to actively participate in this meeting in Seoul.

Also, the goal of the Foreign Ministers’ meeting was to emphasize that the meeting should be careful not to give the impression that the government is aiming at "anti-Communist meetings" or "military alliances". At the same time, it should also be wary of being a simple "friendly organization". As you can see, the Korean government has taken the ambiguous stance that the goal of the meeting should be to make clear the internal direction of liberal nations’ prevention of communist infiltration, but not give the impression that they aimed at anti-communism. Japan said it would not participate if ASPAC would become a strong anti-communist conference. The representative of Japan expressed the following basic position. ① ASPAC does not presuppose formation of anti-communist military alliance, ② selection of economic and cultural center which member countries can accept, ③ not to proceed long-term in order to avoid impression such as reinforcement of anti-communism system.

In the preliminary talks, the name of the meeting is designated as Foreign Ministers’ Conference of Asia and Pacific, and the delegate is the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in principle, or above the ministerial level. In particular, Japan will participate in the Seoul meeting, but emphasized not to include anti-communist organization and security issues in relation to the agenda of the meeting. It also suggested that information exchange and mutual consultation be conducted through regular diplomatic channels without regular meetings. Malaysia also proposed to discuss economic and cultural issues rather than political security issues in the discussion. After the preparatory meeting, the ASPAC meeting was held from June 14 to 16, 1966, but it had many problems from the start.

3.2 ASPAC Development Process: Focusing on the Fourth Meeting in 1969

The Korean government, which succeeded in holding the first ASPAC meeting, gained confidence in the US-ROK relationship, and hoped that Korea could become the most important ally in the US, especially in Southeast Asia. This led to the conception of President Park Jung-hee’s "Great Asia-Pacific Community." Park decided that he had successfully held the meeting and sought to set Southeast Asia as the first security zone on the Korean peninsula as a result of sending troops to Vietnam.

The details of Korea were as follows. ① In Korea, the dramatic increase in invasive provocations of North Korea since 1.21 and the illegal capture of Pueblo has posed a grave threat to the peace and security of the Korean peninsula as well as the Asian region. In order to overcome this situation, Korea will explain the achievements of the economic construction and strengthening of the defense force in detail and draw more attention of the member countries. ② There is a need to jointly condemn the possibility of strengthening the expansionist foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China. ③ Regarding the Vietnam War, South Korea supported the struggle of the Vietnamese government for the sovereignty of independence and criticizes the fact that the communist party. ④ Each Member State needs to provide a form of support to the Republic of Vietnam. ⑤ The problem of developing into an alliance of ASPAC is the necessity of re-discussing after establishing the foundation as a cooperation organization in all fields of political economy and culture.” The expansion of ASPAC as an alliance may conflict with the US strategy toward Asia, so it would not have been easy to draw
from discussions at the 1969-year talks.

At the fourth meeting, ASPAC’s military and security positions were mainly divided among member countries. In the case of New Zealand, it made clear that "the primary purpose of ASPAC is to achieve regional cooperation based on a unified purpose, not a military organization". In the case of the Philippines, "ASPAC is a peace organization that provides a variety of means that are active in the development of political, economic, social and humanitarian areas without any military commitment". Japan insisted that "the functions that ASPAC should pursue need not be linked to military.

As mentioned above, ASPAC’s emphasis was on the promotion of the peace mechanism, but the agenda of the main discussion was mainly security-related topics. The threat situation on the Korean peninsula, the threat of the People’s Republic of China, the Vietnam War, the Soviet advance into Southeast Asia, US defense policy implementation, and regional security issues were the most security-related topics. Member states said they must strengthen their own defense posture to deal with the destruction of communism in relation to regional security issues. Member States agreed to: "First, for regional security, we should pay close attention to the interests of the United States in this region and to the peace of Asia and the world. Second, we must focus on strengthening the new cooperation and solidarity of the countries in this region."

Despite these discussions, however, the Fourth Session did not achieve significant results. Through the meeting, the member countries said that they highly appreciated the achievement of Korea’s efforts to strengthen its defense capabilities and economic construction, and continued to pay attention to the invasion policy of the People’s Republic of China. Member countries also recognized the need to develop an international cooperation system for the reconstruction of Vietnam. However, according to the Korean government’s report, there was no part of the results that could be presented as concrete achievements in these discussions. In particular, it confirmed the original slogans but failed to present concrete results of the meeting.

Particular attention should be paid to the identity of ASPAC at its fourth meeting. The report emphasizes that it is not a military alliance. "ASPAC is a consultation and cooperation organization that consults on common interests of the region and cooperates for the construction of a local welfare society. It is not a military alliance, it is also an extrovert and open mechanism." The report also stressed: "ASPAC is open to all free countries in Asia and the Pacific, with free and equitable Asian and Pacific free countries discussing common interests in the region. Therefore, we will not confuse the issue of enlargement of the member countries and the application of the principle of open door to ASPAC. Especially, we should actively prevent ASPAC participation in communist countries." Despite the fact that the security issue was the most important issue at the fourth session, the recognition of self-identity, which refused to be a military cooperation organization, ultimately led to a situation in which the organization itself was extinguished over Taiwan’s member states.

3.3 Dissolution of ASPAC

The relationship between Japan and the People’s Republic of China has improved since 1972, and many East Asian countries have sought to promote relations with the People’s Republic of China. This has been a direct impact of changes in local conditions on ASPAC members. Since 1972, ASPAC member countries have had to decide whether the organization will progressively break down or continue to strengthen ASPAC.

In the "Study on the Future of ASPAC" report written on October 30, 1972, the following analysis was made. "Japan will continue to improve relations with the People’s Republic of China, and bilateral relations in the fields of politics, economy and society will become more intimate. The People’s Republic of China will strengthen its diplomacy toward Southeast Asia in the future, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries, and interest in the People’s Republic of China in Southeast Asia will increase." According to the report of the Government of the Republic of Korea, with the emergence of the People’s Republic of China, Japan will be passive about ASPAC, which Taiwan is a member of, and would like to weaken or dismantle ASPAC. The Asahi that was Japanese newspaper predicted: "ASPAC has been a pillar of Asian diplomacy in Japan, but it has been difficult for Taiwan to continue participating in this organization, and Taiwan is not likely to withdraw easily. Therefore, it is a practical solution to keep realistic functionality while maintaining ASPAC."

Thailand has not discussed the dismantling of ASPAC and strongly urged to maintain ASPAC, saying that it is a matter of unity among the countries concerned regarding the future of ASPAC. The Nation newspaper in Thailand said in an article on October 19, 1972, that when Japan withdraws, ASPAC is likely to be
dismantled. The newspaper also said that Malaysia would not participate in the eighth meeting and that the only way to rescue ASPAC is to join the People’s Republic of China. Australia sought to create a new organization to replace ASPAC while Vietnam was active in ASPAC and opposed Taiwan’s exclusion, but agreed with other members. The Philippines actively approved to maintain ASPAC. New Zealand was also seeking to improve relations with the People’s Republic of China.

The Korean government has pointed out the advantages and disadvantages of dismantling ASPAC. The first disadvantage is that ASPAC, which was established under the leadership of the Republic of Korea, is the foundation of South Korea’s diplomacy with South East Asia. ASPAC has played a big role in checking North Korea’s entry into Southeast Asia and emphasized that it is an important institution to check Japan’s Asian diplomatic solo. However, the Korean government was also considering a way to force ASPAC to dissolve and remove Taiwan from its membership, creating a new organization to maintain ASPAC’s founding spirit.

The Korean government has pursued diplomatic negotiations to continue to participate in or withdraw voluntarily from ASPAC in Taiwan. Secondly, it advocates the creation of a new Korean organization and looks for ways to prepare for the creation of a new regional cooperation organization if it is difficult to maintain ASPAC in order to secure advance command in a new organization. Thirdly, Korea has participated in the ministerial meeting of Southeast Asian Economic Development, and expanded it to integrate with ASPAC.

As a result of the increasing number of countries approved to the People’s Republic of China in 1973, there was a general question about the existence and function of ASPAC. Member States are faced with difficulties in participating in the ASPAC of the People’s Republic of China because Taiwan is a member of ASPAC, thus raising the issue of representation in Taiwan. In a report to President Park Chung Hee on January 31, 1973, the following report was presented as a countermeasure to the current situation. “We hold a special committee to confirm the attitude of the member countries to the Taiwan issue. We will not ask Taiwan representatives to attend this meeting, and if they cannot reach a conclusion, we will hold a standing committee without Taiwan’s presence until it is resolved.”

The report in April 1973 stated that Japan, Australia and New Zealand had established diplomatic ties with the People’s Republic of China and that they could not attend with Taiwan. However, it was clear that Taiwan would not withdraw from ASPAC. In addition, the host country, Thailand, in the issue of holding the eighth Ministerial Conference, said that it would not host the ministerial meeting unless four or more countries attended the ministerial meeting. Malaysia has already withdrawn from the organization in March, and Japan, Australia and New Zealand were also very negative attitudes toward participation. In this situation, the Standing Committee held in Thailand on 1 June decided to postpone the 8th meeting indefinitely in light of the current situation, and ASPAC was discontinued.

4. Dissolution factors for ASPAC

The reason why the collective identity of ASPAC member countries was not achieved through the consideration of inertia, this study shows that there is a perception difference according to the degree of anti-communism of the member countries. Several factors can be considered to analyze these factors. For example, the perception of threats to the People’s Republic of China, the trade volume of the People’s Republic of China and the People’s Republic of China, the geographical distance between the Member States and the People’s Republic of China, the East Asian intervention of the United States, The factors listed above are explained in terms of new realism, which sees international relations as systems and structures as important actors rather than individual state units. Or from the perspective of neoliberalism, which places an emphasis on the role of institutions. However, when applying these factors to ASPAC demolition cases, it is impossible to explain the overall factors that could not be achieved as a collective identity of ASPAC member countries.

For this reason, it is necessary to confirm how the degree of anti-communism and the ideological tendency of the member countries affect the ASPAC participation. To this end, it would be most helpful to examine the situation of the ruling political parties and the existence of the Communist Party or socialist political parties in order to derive the degree of anti-communism. This study examines the activeness of these party activities and the position of ASPAC in the nations concerned.

In Korea and Thailand, the anti-communist tendency was concentrated. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Republican Party in South Korea were the ruling party and the anti-communism was an important national ideology, so communist and socialist parties were prohibited from any party activity. Also, as a host country of ASPAC, Korea has been coordinating positions among other member countries,
mainly anti-communism. In the case of Thailand, there was a coup d’état of Luang Phibun Songkhram in 1947, and since this period, there was no stable party activity due to military power struggle and seizure. Especially during the 1971–72 period when ASPAC dismantlement became a problem. It was the situation that prohibited activities. Thailand has a strong positive stance on ASPAC. Thailand emphasized that the future of ASPAC depends on the unity among the countries concerned. In addition, Thailand claimed that ASPAC Secretary General should be hardened due to the fact that the Standing Committee was not held.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Nations</th>
<th>Member’s position on ASPAC</th>
<th>Party distribution (Ruling party/existence of communist party, social party)</th>
<th>Degree of anti-communism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R.O.K.</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Republican, Communist Party Prohibition</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>1971 military coup, ban party activities</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>The military</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>The Liberal Party (UP) and the Nationalist Party (NP) until 1972, the bipartisan system, the dictatorship system, Socialist Party, Communist Party Illegal</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Nationalist Party, Authoritarian Government</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>passive (ASPAC continued to join the People’s Republic of China)</td>
<td>Axis of MCA (People’s Republic of China), UMNO (Malay), MIC (India)</td>
<td>middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>passive (Seeking to improve relations with the People’s Republic of China)</td>
<td>Labor Party, the opposition party is Nationalist Party</td>
<td>weakness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Negative (creation of a new organization to replace ASPAC)</td>
<td>Labor Party, the opposition party is Nationalist Party</td>
<td>weakness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>negative, (Actual function suspension of ASPAC)</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party, Supervision of Socialist Party and Communist Party</td>
<td>weakness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Members’ position on ASPAC and anti-communism

Vietnam and the Philippines were in favor of ASPAC. Vietnam was divided into South and North through the Geneva talks in 1954, and pro-American and conservative Ngo Dinh Diem took office and proclaimed the Republic of Vietnam. The government rejected the election in 1956 because it had not signed the Geneva Agreement, and from that time on, it began to crack down on communists. Vietnam was active in ASPAC and opposed the exclusion of Taiwan, but was in a position to cooperate with the member countries. Since 1946, the Philippines has been struggling with the issue of dealing with pro-Japanese ancestors and has been divided into the Nationalist Party and the Liberal Party. Since then, the Philippines has operated as a bipartisan system until the march of Ferdinand Emmanuel Edralin Marcos in 1972. This two-party system was in the form of an outline, and it was predominantly evaluated to be only two factions of the same party. Peasant movement supporters of radical opposition parties such as the Socialist Party and the Communist Party, but these parties were defined as illegal groups and did not perform normal party activities. The Philippines has maintained an active position in ASPAC.

In the first election of Malaysia in 1955, UMNO (Malay), MCA (People’s Republic of China) and MIC (India) constituted the dominant alliance, while the opposition party was also divided into the People’s Republic of China, India and Malay. Malay Communist Party (MCP) existed in Malaysia, but it did not have a big impact because it appealed to the emotions of the poor people of the People’s Republic of China or the Malays. Malaysia announced its absence at the eighth meeting, and the only way to rescue ASPAC was to stay in the People’s Republic of China.

In Australia and New Zealand in the 1970s, the Labor Party became a ruling party. With the change of power from the Nationalist Party to the Labor Party, it began to take into account a flexible relationship with communist states during the Detente period. In 1966, when Robert Menzies retired, the Liberal Party of the Nationalist Party split inside, and in 1969 the Labor Party won the general election. New Zealand’s security diplomacy has been reviewed since anti-communist diplomacy and entering the Vietnam War. However, there was a difference in the position of participation in ASPAC. Australia has a tough negative stance that it agrees with the search for a new agency to replace ASPAC. New Zealand is seeking to improve its relationship with the People’s Republic of China, but expressed its modest stance on ASPAC. In general, however, the two countries were not positive about the ongoing ASPAC.
In the case of Japan, in November 1955, the Liberal Democratic Party formed a majority, and the ‘1955 system’, in which the Liberal Democratic Party and Socialist Party were active, began. The biggest task of the Hatoyama Cabinet was the restoration of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Soviet Union and the amendment of the Constitution, and the opposition party, including the Socialist Party, tried to stop the constitutional amendment. The Socialist Party and the Communist Party also showed a single action against the government against the Vietnam War. The Communist Party and the Liberal Democratic Party had some degree of autonomy, as can be seen from the Liberal Democratic Party’s checks. Japan was reluctant to participate in ASPAC, and hoped to weaken or dismantle ASPAC.

As for the ASPAC of each country surveyed in the foreign diplomatic documents of Korea, it could be classified into three kinds of positively, passively, and negatively. Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan showed strong intentions to participate, while Malaysia and New Zealand are not open to participation, but they show a passive stance to participate in ASPAC if the People’s Republic of China joins. Finally, Australia and Japan showed a negative opinion.

The position of member countries on ASPAC seems to be closely related to party activities of related countries. Countries such as Japan, New Zealand, and Australia, who have a negative or passive stance on ASPAC participation, were relatively weak in anti-communism. Malaysia did not show strong anti-communism, and at the same time, participated in ASPAC passively. On the other hand, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan faced directly or indirectly the threat of communism and thus a powerful anti-communist government was established. Therefore, it was difficult for the Communist Party to have free activities. Countries with high anti-communist intensity are also active in ASPAC.

In constructivism, the social identity and the interests of the state seemed to be stable or unstable depending on the interactions between countries. Therefore, not only cooperation among countries but also conflicts can be explained by the inertia. South Korea and its member nations have defined ASPAC as a consultative body working together to build a welfare society in the region rather than a military alliance. Nevertheless, most of the agenda of the meeting focused on security related issues such as North Korean provocations, the expansion of the People’s Republic of China, and the Vietnam crisis. Thus making it difficult to construct a stable set identity.

In addition, Japan, Australia and New Zealand showed a positive attitude toward participation of ASPAC in the People’s Republic of China, and Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, Philippines and Thailand opposed. Differences in perceptions of these countries in the People’s Republic of China made it difficult to draw a common collective identity. As such, ASPAC’s participation in the People’s Republic of China was closely linked to the anti-communist stance of the member countries. Therefore, this is a crucial factor that clearly shows that the mutual subjective understanding is very different. Ultimately, inter-subject perception among these different Member States made it difficult to form a collective identity, and ASPAC followed the order of dissolution.

5. Conclusion

The disparate factors that emerged from the beginning of ASPAC are as follows. As a leading ASPAC country, Korea has not provided a clear position between ASPAC’s cooperative and security organizations. ASPAC’s first agenda was always about the issue of regional security, despite the fact that ASPAC is an organization that cooperates to build a welfare society in the region and is clearly not a military alliance. Therefore, the agenda of ASPAC was pushed in the direction of ambiguity in security issues and regional joint business issues, emphasizing only low level of exchange cooperation. As ASPAC’s personality regulations were not completed in the early stage of the establishment of the organization, the issue of Taiwan’s withdrawal from the membership of the Organization decided to preserve the institution.

Failure to elicit the collective identity of the Member States in the early 1970s is the decisive cause of dismantlement. In 1972, as the relations between the member countries and the People’s Republic of China were relaxed, the member countries discussed the accession of the People’s Republic of China to ASPAC and the withdrawal of Taiwan. Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan were positive about maintaining the ASPAC organization. However, Malaysia and New Zealand were passive, and Japan and Australia were negative. This is closely linked to the activities of the Communist Party in party activities within the member countries. Countries with weak anti-communism, allowing communist parties, showed a negative attitude to ASPAC, and countries with strong
anti-communism showed a positive attitude toward ASPAC. Therefore, the member states revealed their cognitive differences and disassembled without creating a common collective identity.