

## Abstract

Buck-passing, an increasingly prominent concept to explain states' foreign policy, suffers from inconsistency in both theory and application. This thesis proposes a revised theoretical framework of buck-passing, which is established on the distinguishment of three images of buck-passing—intent, action, and outcome. The conceptualization of buck-passing, in contrast to other strategies, should center the image of outcome because buck-passing is a strategy that intrinsically involves three parties, and its outcome cannot be fulfilled unilaterally. The revised framework also challenges the traditional consensus that no buck-passing occurs under bipolarity, arguing that the regional great power is possible to stop a superpower's aggression in a limited war. In the case of the Munich Crisis, the involved great powers, except for bandwagoning Italy, adopted the buck-passing strategy at the end, leading to the signature of the Munich Agreement as the outcome of appeasement, where no collective good as checking aggression was provided. In the case of the Korean War, while facing the US aggression in a bipolar world, although the Soviet Union refused to engage in, China caught the buck and militarily intervened in the Korean Peninsula. The discrepancy between the Chinese and the Soviet policies was fostered by the tacit understanding of limiting the war scale among involved agents and the divergent strategic values of the Korean War's result between China and the Soviet Union.

**Key Words:** Buck-passing, Munich Agreement, Korean War, Three-party Interaction, Realism