

Introduction

This book examines a unique security framework that joins the United States, Japan, and South Korea (Republic of Korea: ROK). This security framework is unique for two reasons: first, it is triangular, and second, it is hierarchical. The aim of this book is to show how the unique framework shapes the interactions between the three states with regard to two contentious issues—burden sharing and commitment.

From the Cold War era to the post-Cold War period, the United States has led two separate alliances: one is the Security Treaty between the United States and Japan, which was signed in 1952 (amended and renamed in 1960 as the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan), and other is the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea, signed in 1953. Relations between Japan and South Korea until normalization in 1965 were anchored by the United States and consisted of modest trade relations only. The Japan-ROK normalization per se was not directly related to security cooperation; indeed, the most important component of the normalization treaty was economic cooperation, as stipulated in the “Agreement on the Settlement of Problems Concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Cooperation.” With the Japan-ROK normalization, a triangular hierarchy was institutionalized among the United States, Japan, and South Korea in that order.¹ Although the nature of the hierarchy was informal and no one dared speak of it, each state’s status was created by the power that it possessed and by its capability for maintaining its own national interests. Certainly there was tension between South Korea’s official relations with the two others, on the one hand, and its unofficial rank in the hierarchy, on the other.

The particularly problematic part of the security triangle was the relationship between Japan and South Korea, which was marked by differing references regarding security and the resultant competing expectations, particularly on the burden sharing and commitment issues. To

Japan, the South Korean concern about bellicose North Korea was a secondary, if not trivial, concern. Japan's scope of security was broader than that of South Korea. The absence of rules or channels to resolve differences easily resulted in discord between the two on important security concerns. Japan, located in the middle of the hierarchy, had the upper hand since it could use its strategic importance in dealing with the two Koreas, as well as with China and other Asian states.

As the Cold War thawed, the security triangle in general and Japan-ROK relations in particular entered a new phase. The weakest power in the triangle, South Korea, benefited most from the grand change. South Korea opened normalized relations with the Soviet Union and China in 1990 and 1992, respectively. Furthermore, it became an OECD member country in 1996, graduating from aid-recipient status. North Korea was most disadvantaged by the change, and thus became an aggressive and destabilizing actor. In the post-9/11 era, changes in the U.S. security strategy and the rise of China have contributed to continued evolution of the security triangle. One of the most distinctive features is that the controversy over historical issues surfaced in Japan-ROK relations during the second half of the 2000s decade, despite increasing economic interdependence and cultural exchanges.

What has tied the three states together through friendly and troubling times? What has been the role of the United States? By addressing these questions, this book sheds new light on the internal dynamics surrounding the burden-sharing and commitment issues, and in doing so contributes to illuminating the intra-alliance politics in general. In the security triangle, the two U.S.-led security treaties have clearly stipulated the rules, whereas Japan-ROK relations have remained undefined and contentious. This situation has frequently invited U.S. intervention. The United States' dominant position and its binding role in the security triangle are important points in this book, whereas Japan's behavior in the middle is another point of nuanced analysis. During the Cold War era in particular, the policies and tactics of the three states were subsumed under the U.S. strategy of containing the Soviet Union. But there was room in which Japan was able to set its own policy preferences and indeed to pursue and achieve them even under this constraint. Japan adroitly used its strategic significance in order to take advantage of this space and maintain its interests and policy preferences. What led to Japan being established in the middle of the hierarchical order, even if informally? First, Japan had material power, and thus it could contribute substantially to burden sharing for assisting strategic areas around the world, including South Korea, during the Cold War. Second, Japan's

scope of security increasingly converged with that of the United States toward the end of the Cold War period. After the thawing of the Cold War the two have become even closer in dealing with important global issues, as well as in coping with the rise of China.

Argument in Brief

The U.S.-Japan-ROK security triangle has retained hierarchical relations in that order. Here Japan and South Korea, the allies of the United States, are partners with each other. I call the Japan-ROK relations a partnership. Asymmetrical, uneven relations, not only between the United States and its allies but also between the U.S. allies, are undeniable facts that originated from the formative stage of the trilateral relations. The hierarchy has been an unofficial but virtual governing rule whereby the individual states have interacted with one another. Considering their different positions in the hierarchy, it is fair to call the relationship between Japan and South Korea an asymmetrical partnership. This was particularly true during the Cold War. The hierarchy was established in the context of the staging of the U.S.-led postwar order in the Asia Pacific region. At the heart of the hierarchy, there were the two U.S.-led treaties that shaped the two hub-and-spoke alliances. With the 1952 U.S.-Japan security treaty, the United States completed its policy of transforming a wartime enemy into an ally.² With the 1953 U.S.-ROK defense treaty, the United States committed itself to the defense of war-torn South Korea. In return, the two alliances incorporated Japan and South Korea into the U.S. strategy of containing the Soviet Union. Later, in 1965, Japan-ROK normalization supplemented the two U.S.-led treaties to complete the security triangle, although the normalization treaty did not explicitly mention security.

The security triangle has been a hybrid composed of two alliances and one partnership. And thus it has not operated as a single unified system. Particularly during the Cold War, the two U.S.-led security treaties and related agreements clearly stipulated constraints, obligations, and duties that each ally should bear. But the relations between Japan and South Korea, despite their shared value of anticommunism, suffered from an absence of rules for resolving differing interests and conflicting expectations. For example, South Korea considered North Korea the primary enemy and believed itself to stand on the front line, paying an extra cost that Japan should share. Japan, however, considered the expansion of the Soviet influence its primary concern, arguably without any indebtedness

to South Korea. In relation to the Korean peninsula, Japan had its own policy preference, that is, maintenance of stability even with continuing division, and tried to exert it regardless of South Korean demands and preferences. Such differences between the two developed into disputes, which in turn invited U.S. intervention. In other words, dispute was built into this partnership.

Just as in other intra-alliance politics, there are two important but contentious issues at the heart of the security triangle, particularly in the eyes of the dominant power—burden sharing and partnership commitment. Creation and maintenance of a security mechanism necessitates a financial burden, and individual participants should share it; otherwise, meaningful cooperation for security of the entirety cannot be expected. Commitment is another important element of the security mechanism. Commitment in general, or partnership commitment in this particular case of Japan-ROK relations, involves declarations of the linkage of one's security to the other's and explicit statements of the will to cooperate on the security front. Burden sharing and commitment are the core elements that bind the security mechanism, and the two are closely interconnected.³ Without burden sharing, it is difficult to say that a state is committed to the entirety to which it belongs; likewise, without commitment, a state is not likely to contribute to sharing the burden needed for the entirety. In the case of the triangle under investigation, burden sharing means that within the dominant power's (the United States') frame, a capable partner (Japan) provides aid to a less capable partner (ROK). Commitment means the dominant power's assurance vis-à-vis its allies' (Japan's and ROK's) cooperation with the dominant power to maintain the red line framed by the dominant power; it means also diplomatic and military cooperation between partners (Japan and ROK) in the triangle. The dominant power regards contention or dispute between the partners surrounding burden sharing and commitment as damaging its own interests and the security triangle as a whole.

In partnership within the hierarchy, owing to the absence of rules between the partners, the burden sharing issue, particularly the aid issue, becomes contentious. Against the dominant power's and the less capable state's expectations, the middle power (i.e., a capable state) is reluctant to take on a share of the dominant power's burden needed for the entirety. Whereas treaties normally stipulate the division of labor about burden sharing between allies, there is no clear or shared definition about it between partners. Likewise, the commitment issue is likely to remain contentious. The extent of fear of both abandonment and entrapment is not equal among the states of different capabilities. The

more capable state worries about entrapment into a conflict in which the less capable partner state is involved, whereas the less capable state is afraid of the capable state's abandonment. This difference makes the states act differently. The less capable one demands the capable state's expressed commitment, whereas the capable one tries to avoid such commitment. Consequently, partnership commitment remains contentious until the dominant power intervenes between the partners. The Japan-ROK disputes have taken place in this way, and the United States has intervened in them.

U.S. intervention has taken various forms: superpower coercive pressure, a legalistic approach, moralistic preaching, businesslike intermediation, and nonintervention. In some cases the United States has remained mute or ambivalent, believing it useful for the management of the alliances. During the Cold War, U.S. behavior normally exhibited a combination of these forms. The more the United States considered disputes to be directly related to burden sharing and partnership commitment, the more likely it intervened assertively (e.g., the United States' intervention in the Japan-ROK normalization talks, its drawing of a red line on Japan's approach to North Korea, its close cooperation with Japan in protecting the ROK's legal standing in the UN, its encouragement of Japan's economic aid to South Korea, and its mediation of the Japan-ROK negotiations over the comfort women issue). The more the United States perceived a situation to be detracting from its influence, the more likely it was to rely on superpower coercive pressure (e.g., the ROK's use of delaying tactics on the repatriation issue, Japan's and the ROK's foot dragging in normalization negotiations, and the ROK government's mismanagement of a domestic scandal during the normalization negotiations). Japan's legalistic and moralistic approaches toward Korea-related issues were by and large aligned with the United States, thus its position usually prevailed (e.g., Japan's and the United States' reference to international law on maritime borders, and their reference to the humanitarian principle of free choice of residence). In the post-Cold War era, U.S. intervention in the differences between Japan and South Korea has become by and large businesslike, and has taken more ambivalent forms, for example, in the case of such sensitive issues as the comfort women and Dokdo/Takeshima.

The security triangle has persisted for more than six decades, even though relations among the three states in the post-Cold War era differ from those of the Cold War. In the Cold War period, despite frequent disputes between Japan and South Korea over burden sharing and partnership commitment, the security triangle produced a feedback effect

to the system itself and to all three states. The feedback effect here means that a cooperative relation between states yields benefits, albeit in varying degrees and in asymmetrical ways, and in turn makes exiting the relation extremely costly. (Here I do not use such terms as *positive* and *negative* in order to avoid confusion in the adjectival connotations. Some proponents of historical institutionalism view positive feedback as the process of producing gains to the institution. In contrast, systems scientists have long held the view that positive feedback “alters variables and destroys their steady states,” while negative feedback controls deviation and maintains homeostasis. Certainly there has been no serious communication between different disciplines on the notion of feedback.)⁴ The United States has succeeded in shifting to Japan a part of its burden for sustaining strategically important states around the world, including South Korea. The burden sharing between the United States and Japan, for South Korea’s defense and economy, was legitimized by their declared statements on the close relevance of the defense of Seoul to Tokyo’s security—the Korea clause or the new Korea clause that frequently appeared in the U.S.-Japan joint statements. The declaration of relevance was certainly a U.S.-framed expression of Japan’s security commitment to its partner South Korea. The United States and South Korea earnestly wanted it, although Japan was halfhearted on it.

On the flip side of the persistence, there has been internal dynamics of the security triangle. Since the thawing of the Cold War, the rank between the U.S. allies has been substantially relaxed because of South Korea’s graduation from Japanese aid and its expanded diplomatic scope beyond the security triangle—that is, the opening of normalized relations with Russia and China. Also, Japan’s activist security policy, aligned with U.S. strategy especially in coping with China, has contributed to an overall change in the security triangle. Despite above-mentioned changes, the security triangle has continued to yield a certain degree of feedback effect. The increasing North Korean threat has remained a common denominator that has continued to demonstrate the utility of the security triangle, although Japan’s and the U.S.-Japan alliance’s global roles reach far beyond East Asia.

Whereas burden sharing (specifically Tokyo’s aid to Seoul), even if contentiously, has sustained the Japan-ROK partnership within the hierarchy during the Cold War, the absence of it in the post-Cold War era has markedly relaxed the asymmetrical relations. Given this, the escalating dispute over historical issues is not a surprise. With U.S. intervention, the partners reached an agreement in December 2015 over the long-contentious comfort women issue, but the historical enmity

continues to reverberate in both societies. It is worth noting that the U.S. alliances and its intervention continue to sustain the Japan-ROK partnership and the security triangle as an entirety.

Six Cases

For this book, I select six contentious cases of Japan-South Korea relations—four during the Cold War and two in the post-Cold War period. Concentrating on burden sharing and commitment, I analyze those cases from the Cold War era by using primary sources: U.S. State Department archives, South Korean diplomatic archives, and some Japanese archives. These cases disclose details of Japan-South Korea differences, negotiations, disputes, U.S. interventions, and solutions (Table 1.1, page 8). The degree of animosity and acrimony differed from case to case. The four cases during the Cold War commonly show that Japan's policy toward the Korean peninsula subscribed to hierarchy, and they also shed light on how the United States as the dominant power intervened in the disputes involving Japan and South Korea and utilized different combinations of interventions, depending on the nature of the dispute. The two cases from the post-Cold War period illustrate new features of interstate relations owing to both the internal changes within the security triangle and the changing international environment in which the triangle is embedded.

Repatriation of Korean Residents from Japan to North Korea in 1959 (Chapter 3)

Japan's repatriation of Korean residents to North Korea started in 1959. Following Japan's achievement of *de jure* independence in 1951 as a result of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the repatriation marked the first major Japanese policy in relation to the Korean peninsula. Despite the tense Cold War divide, Japan struck a deal with North Korea on the repatriation issue, and obtained the ICRC's support in carrying out the project. Japan's repatriation project was fiercely resisted by South Korea, which considered it a threat to its own legitimacy. However, the U.S. position relied on a legalistic interpretation based on the free-will principle, thus releasing Japan to implement the mass repatriation. That is, the United States sustained the Japanese position while sacrificing South Korea's interest. At this particular juncture, during U.S.-Japan negotia-

Table 1.1. U.S. Interventions in Japan-ROK Discords and Disputes

	<i>Repatriation of Korean Residents to the North</i>	<i>Japan-ROK Normalization</i>	<i>Japan's Two Koreas Policy</i>	<i>"Security-based Economic Cooperation"</i>	<i>Comfort women, Dokdo/Takeshima</i>	<i>North Korean Nuclear Program</i>
Japanese Government's Position	Political support for ICRC and JRC-NKRC deal	"Economic cooperation," not compensation	Proactive approach toward the North	No aid-defense link; calling it "economic cooperation"	Reexamination of Kono statement; Passage of screening of textbooks	Sanctions; Activist security policy
Japanese Domestic Politics	Chongryon's mobilization; Domestic consensus	Opposition by socialists, but convergence on national interests	China fever, and North Korea fever	Avoidance of entrapment	Revisionist rise	Politicization of abduction issue; Bashing North Korea
ROK Government's Position	Call for stopping repatriation; Request for compensated return to the South	Maximizing compensation	Questioning partnership commitment; Request for ban on plant exports	Aid-defense link; "security-based economic cooperation"	Diplomatic protest	Engagement and sanctions
ROK Domestic Politics	Criticism of and protest against Japan	Demonstrations weakening the government's negotiation	No particular protest	No particular response	Criticism of Japan; Request for government action	No particular difference from the government's position

U.S. Concern	Kishi cabinet's stability; Minimizing impact on Japan-ROK talks	Burden sharing; Establishment of a triangular tie	Red line (no recognition of the North); Military balance on the peninsula	Burden sharing; Framework of strategic aid	Concern about the partnership; Avoidance of mixed-in between Japan and ROK	Commitment to nonproliferation
U.S. Intervention	Legalistic and moral call for "free will" principle; Businesslike mediation for Japan-ROK talks; Pressure on ICRC and ROK	Coercive pressure on both for early conclusion; Businesslike mediation for claims issue; Legalistic fishery solution	Moralistic and businesslike intervention in Japan-ROK; Legalistic no-recognition of the North	Businesslike mediation for strategic aid regardless of title	Ambivalence between Japan and South Korea; Businesslike mediation	Businesslike mediation

tions on the revision of their security treaty, the United States wanted the Kishi cabinet to successfully carry out the domestically popular repatriation project. The dispute, particularly the South Korean protest, was centered on the question of Japan's commitment or noncommitment to anticommunist partnership, although burden sharing was another hidden agenda, as seen at the later stage.

Japan-ROK Normalization Talks in the First Half of the 1960s
(Chapter 4)

These talks, which dragged on from 1951 to 1965, might be regarded as one of the most protracted negotiations in the history of postwar international diplomacy. Earnest negotiations started only after the Kennedy administration put pressure on the Ikeda cabinet to have talks with the military regime in 1961 in South Korea. And the United States facilitated its intervention through its embassies in Tokyo and Seoul. Here the United States' strategic aim was to ensure Japan's burden sharing for the South Korean economy. When serious disturbances in South Korea—caused by protests against the government going ahead with the talks—brought about a standoff in the negotiations, the United States increased its direct coercive pressure on the ROK government. As Washington, instead of Tokyo, became the driving force of the negotiations, Japan's alignment with the U.S. legalistic viewpoint negatively affected the outcome for South Korea, particularly in the fishery issue. The normalization brought about a formalized U.S.-Japan-ROK security triangle, although it did not explicitly refer to security but instead to "economic cooperation" between the two U.S. allies.

Japan's Two Koreas Policy in the 1970s (Chapter 5)

Japan's normalization with South Korea in 1965 and its Okinawa reversion negotiations with the United States in 1969 significantly contributed to expanding Japan's diplomatic scope. Indeed, Japan's approach to North Korea, following the 1972 Sino-Japanese normalization, took place relatively independently of the U.S. viewpoint. Taiwan's abandonment was the price of Sino-Japanese normalization, and Japan's approach to North Korea was basically a two Koreas policy, both steps rendering South Korea nervous and North Korea emboldened. South Korea protested Japan's approach to the North, claiming that Japan-North Korea economic cooperation would increase Pyongyang's war potential. South Korea's protest focused on the issue of Tokyo's commitment to the part-

nership between the two. The United States' main concern was the red line at Tokyo's diplomatic recognition of Pyongyang, but otherwise it remained neutral between its allies as far as Japan-North Korea economic relations were concerned.

"Security-based Economic Cooperation" in the First Half of the 1980s (Chapter 6)

In 1983, Japan provided South Korea with an aid package, the largest since economic cooperation had begun at the time of 1965 normalization. The aid was a microcosm of Japan's role in the U.S.-framed strategic burden sharing. There were differing views and interpretations on the nature of the aid relationship between the two U.S. allies. South Korea saw it as economic cooperation for strengthening security, whereas Japan argued that there would be no aid-defense linkage, using plain terms such as "economic cooperation." Japan's 1983 aid was certainly strategic in nature, and this was confirmed by the new Korea clause that appeared in the 1981 joint U.S.-Japan summit statement as well as in the 1983 Japan-ROK summit statement. That clause formally stipulated the connection between stability on the Korean peninsula and the security of East Asia as a whole, including Japan. The Japan-ROK contention was basically focused on burden sharing, that is, the aid issue, but this aid was legitimated by the declared security commitment between the partners.

Controversy over Historical Issues since the 1990s (Chapter 7)

This chapter sheds light on the historical setting and undercurrents of the controversies surrounding the "comfort women" issue and the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute. Because of its hasty, strategic handling of Japan's wartime responsibility in the early years of the Cold War—in order to transform an enemy to an ally—the United States is not immune from involvement in these disputes. The revisionist rise in Japanese society is the main driving force for the continued disputes in the post-Cold War era. This revisionism is not simply a reactive backlash against Tokyo's apology diplomacy in the first half of the 1990s, but is also a reflection of domestic political changes that have gained new momentum in the age of Japan's perceived vulnerability. For the South Korean side, the disputes over historical issues reflect both its economic and diplomatic rise as well as the substantial balancing of the Japan-South Korea asymmetry (particularly the end of the donor-recipient relationship) in the post-Cold War era. After sustaining an ambivalent attitude for an extended time, the United

States intervened in the comfort women issue and guided its allies to an agreement on December 28, 2015, whereby Japan stated its apology over the comfort women issue and pledged financial support for the victims, and in return South Korea accepted the solution as final and irreversible. The United States felt that its intervention was strategically necessary in order to cope with a rising China and a nuclearizing North Korea.

North Korea Factor in the Security Triangle in the Post-Cold War Era
(Chapter 8)

North Korea's pursuit of nuclear arms has produced a certain feedback effect underpinning the persistence of the security triangle even after the end of the Cold War. That is, the increasing threat posed by North Korea helps the three to bind together, maintaining the security triangle in place. However, this does not mean that all three perceive the North Korean threat equally, nor that the benefits of the security triangle are of equal value for the three. For the United States and Japan, and for the U.S.-Japan alliance, a rising China is the most important reference point for their security policies. In contrast, South Korea perceives the North Korean threat most seriously and thus frames its security policy accordingly. North Korea, as seen in its fourth and fifth nuclear tests in 2016 and its continued defiance, has taken advantage of the diverging interests between the United States and China. The United States, in response, exerts more efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Japan-ROK military cooperation.

Implications for Scholarship and Policy

This book sheds new light not only on the hierarchical relations in the security triangle in general but also on the asymmetrical partnership between the two U.S. allies. Remaining dominant in the hierarchy, the United States has controlled boundaries and red lines with regard to security of the three and increasingly institutionalized the triangular security and military cooperation. Notably, its instrumental pursuance of burden sharing has actually empowered Japan. While acknowledging the quasi alliance theory on the asymmetry in alliance politics,⁵ my book highlights the point that hierarchical rank and the absence of rules regarding security between Japan and South Korea have been the sources of bilateral disputes that have resulted in U.S. interventions.

This book contributes to the existing literature on intra-alliance politics by showing the ways in which burden sharing and partnership commitment may become contentious in the hierarchical order. Hierarchy produces a variant form of security dilemma between abandonment and entrapment, a dilemma that Glenn Snyder has elaborated.⁶ That is, a hierarchical security order provides the states that possess different capabilities with different settings of the dilemma. The less capable state is mostly afraid of abandonment, whereas the more capable state fears entrapment. Given this, the less capable one tries to obtain expressed commitment to common security from the more capable state, but the latter does not want such commitment. Between them, this differing commitment is closely associated with their different expectation of the burden sharing. The dominant power is likely to worry that any disputes between its allies may give an advantage to the enemy eventually. The case studies in this book show such internal politics within the security mechanism—contentions and disputes between asymmetric partners, as well as the dominant power's interventions.

In addition, this book examines underexplored aspects of the East Asian security triangle, as follows. First, it illuminates the position of Japan, the middle power in the security triangle, while highlighting the United States as the dominant power. Because of Japan's relative power and broader scope, the two U.S.-led alliances have differed from one another in capacity and role. Particularly during the Cold War, Japan became a significant burden-sharing partner for the U.S. policy of strategic aid around the world, including aid for South Korea, and in turn, Japan had the upper hand in dealing with the Korean peninsula issue. Second, the book illustrates the ways in which the United States took into account domestic politics when it intervened in the various disputes between its allies. The form of U.S. intervention depended not only on its allies' approaches toward the issue that Washington was concerned about but also on its assessment of the sensitivity of the issue in the domestic politics of the allies. Thus, each ally government needed to employ triple-edged diplomacy. Third, the book explains the Japan-ROK disputes over historical issues as not simply stemming from different views of history per se, but emerging from internal dynamics in the security triangle.⁷ Chapter 7 shows that the historical issues developed into bilateral disputes at the thawing of the Cold War, owing to both domestic changes in Japan and South Korea and substantial balancing in the Japan-South Korea asymmetry. Fourth, the book deals with the reasons why the security triangle has persisted for so long.⁸ U.S.

intervention has not simply maintained its own strategic interest but also continued to produce a feedback effect advantageous to the three member states. The intervention has brought about mostly balancing outcomes to the entirety. Today, the perceived North Korean threat sustains and increasingly strengthens the security triangle.

For policymakers, this book suggests that, first, there needs to be a new outlook on the relations between the three, particularly on the role of South Korea in the region. The present security triangle is not same as the old one that existed in the Cold War era. Significant changes have occurred in each bilateral relationship. More broadly, with the rise of China, power dynamics in the Asia Pacific has shifted dramatically. China today is not a replacement for the Soviet Union, and thus South Korea's engagement with China may contribute to absorbing shock that may arise from the contention between the powers in the Asia Pacific. South Korea may play a pivotal role in easing differences and frictions among the contenders.⁹ This role is now symbolized by South Korea's status in the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS), which was established in Seoul in 2011 as an arena of cooperation among China, the ROK, and Japan. The TCS's capacity, and the trilateral cooperation, is limited in promoting cooperation in traditional security affairs; however, South Korea is in a position to balance the different preferences of China and Japan and to expand the scope of trilateral cooperation from nontraditional security issues to traditional security affairs.¹⁰

Second, the U.S. rebalancing of the Asia Pacific, particularly in coping with assertive China, brings about emergence of new partnerships surrounding territorial disputes in Southeast Asia. Analytically, the U.S.-Japan-ROK triangle is a model case of partnership within hierarchy embedded in hub-and-spoke alliances. Between the United States and ASEAN states, Japan and Australia as U.S. allies are engaging in the security affairs in the South China Sea. Various combinations of security cooperation—such as U.S.-Japan-Australia, U.S.-Japan-Philippines, and their linkages with ASEAN as a whole—include different capabilities and roles of the partner states, and thus discords and disputes surrounding burden sharing and commitment will be natural consequences. Just as the question of who pays how much is an emerging burden-sharing issue, so who commits to what kind of security will become a thorny commitment issue.