

## **A Study on Role-Based Approach to Bilateral Alliances in Northeast Asia\***

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*In the IR literature on alliance, focus on multilateral security groupings has generated a tendency to approach alliance system in an aggregate manner, blurring the distinction between a multilateral and bilateral security grouping. Through a critical review of existing alliance theories, this paper attempts to build an analytical framework to understand intra-alliance management within asymmetrical bilateral alliances. Drawing on national security role conception arguments, this paper presents an analytical framework that will help understand dynamics of intra-alliance conflict within bilateral security groupings. As a case study to demonstrate the validity of the framework, U.S.-Japan alliance relations during the Gulf War will be examined in depth.*

**Keywords:** *Alliance, Role Theory, Bilateral Security Grouping, U.S.-Japan Alliance, Gulf War*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is an attempt to build an analytical framework to understand dynamics of intra-alliance management and conflict. In particular, this paper aims to build on previous studies relied on role-based approach and present an analytical framework that will help understand inter-alliance conflict within bilateral security alliance.<sup>1</sup> U.S.-Japan alliance relations the Gulf War will be analyzed as a case study to demonstrate the validity of the framework.

Current security landscape in Northeast Asia renders any research to understand intra-alliance management more relevant. The power transition between the U.S. and China is becoming increasing visible, and the U.S. is committed to the pivot of its policy towards Asia (Obama, 2012; U.S. Department of Defense, 2012). Changing regional security environments marked by the rise of China and the instability of North Korea continue to compel South Korea and Japan to redefine their security role within their bilateral alliance with the U.S., increasing chances of possible discord, if not conflict. While Asian allies support an active U.S. role in the region and the U.S. is strongly committed in Asia, the U.S. will soon begin to ask how much its Asian allies are willing to help, pressuring them to do their shares. Stephen Walt points out that:

The Asian states who are supposedly worried about China's rise don't seem willing to do very much to balance against it. Instead, they seem to be mostly interested in getting Washington do the heavy lifting, while they continue to enjoy profitable economic ties with Beijing and keep their own defense burdens low (Walt, 2014).

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<sup>1</sup> For studies that addressed the alliance conflict between South Korea and the U.S., see Shin (2007) and Cho (2004).

While there is no viable alternative to the U.S. security guarantee, stable management of its military alliance with the U.S. for East Asian policymakers is not a choice, but a necessity.

Alliance is a living organism.<sup>2</sup> Yet, the canons of international relations (IR) literature had exclusively focused on the formation of alliance (Waltz, 2010; Walt, 1987; Liska, 1968). Major scholarly interests have been laid on the conditions that determine who allies with whom under what conditions.<sup>3</sup> Relatively little attention has been paid to the intra-alliance dynamics, which include the evolution or transformation of an alliance and rearrangements of respective security roles after an alliance is formed. Besides, even when subject area was intra-alliance management after formation, much of the scholarship has concentrated on NATO, a multilateral collective defense system.<sup>4</sup> Despite ample research findings, focus on the multilateral security institution generated a tendency to approach alliance system in an aggregate manner, blurring the distinction between a multilateral security grouping and a bilateral one.

The same is true of studies on bilateral security alliance in East Asia. Significant scholarly attention has been paid to the ROK-U.S. alliance. Notwithstanding ample research findings, however, there are still gaps to be filled. As Victor Cha (2010) has asserted, even though the formation of U.S. military alliance in Northeast Asia was driven by U.S. strategic calculations different from other forms of collective defense, most notably NATO, few attempted to build an analytical framework to understand intra-alliance management of bilateral security groupings in a systemic way. An analytical tool to explain the alliance discord/conflict both in analytical and historical perspective has yet to come. This study attempts to enrich alliance literature by addressing this issue.

## 2. BILATERAL ALLIANCE AND DYADIC LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

The level of analysis problem remains relevant or, in a sense, becomes more important when it comes to the study of alliances. Since alliance politics is one of the core aspects of international politics along with war, peace, and conflicts, the level of analysis choice presents methodological challenges in a study of alliance. Then, what would be the most appropriate level of analysis for a study of alliance politics within asymmetric bilateral

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<sup>2</sup> For definitions of alliance by scholars, Hans Morgenthau defines alliances as a necessary function of the balance of power operating in a multi-state system. George Modelski refers to alliance as one of the dozen or so key terms in international politics (1963). Stephen Walt defines alliance in relatively broad sense of term and notes an alliance or alignment is a formal or informal commitment for security cooperation between two or more states, intended to augment each member's power, security and influence (1987).

<sup>3</sup> Morgenthau, for example, argued that alliance is indispensable to maximize one's chances of survival (1967). In similar vein, George Liska in *Nations in Alliance*, which is often regarded as one of the earliest attempts to provide systematic inquiry into the function of alliance, argued that "a weaker state seeks protection from a stronger state in response to a potential threat while a stronger state tends to act in self-interest of protecting the resources of the weaker states from an adversary" (1968: 13).

<sup>4</sup> A classic study is "collective goods argument" by Olson and Zeckhauser (1966). Meanwhile, Stephen Walt divided the literature on intra-alliance relations into four main areas: 1) the distribution of burdens within an alliance, 2) alliance cohesion and leadership, 3) twin dangers of abandonment and entrapment, and 4) the impact of norms and institutions on alliance dynamics (Walt, 2009: 89-91).

security groupings?

The level of analysis, ranging from the nation-state, dyadic, international institution, and systemic, affects the formation and management of alliance. Indeed, the different and sometimes contradicting outcomes of studies of alliance behavior were the result of divergent approaches in specifying the level of analysis. Traditional approaches to alliance relied on the status of balance of power defined by the international system; alliance was considered a major means for balancing by aggregating one's national power. Stephen Walt's balance of threat argument made a major modification to the traditional alliance theory by focusing not just on power but states' perception of power and aggressive intention of other states. Meanwhile, others attempted to approach alliance, focusing on state level analysis. For example, Randall Schweller's research on alliance came to a conclusion that states may prefer to bandwagon with powerful states or state alliances rather than balance against them as traditional realists would predict (1994). Similarly, Glenn Snyder incorporated both structural and intra-alliance level perspectives and developed the concept of the alliance security dilemma as a vehicle to understand intra-alliance relations.

Aforementioned seminal works on alliance theory, however, do not address the difference between multilateral and bilateral alliance dynamics. Instead, alliances have been analyzed in an aggregate manner. While it is a widely held view that any alliance behaviors are the results of tradeoffs between groups, institutions, and states, alliance literature has not paid enough attention to the view. Thus, multilateral and bilateral alliances were not studied in a separate manner despite their differences in formation and intra-alliance negotiations. That is partly because studies of military alliance were inclined to focus on the system level. While the polarity of the system and its impact on states' behaviors were the major interests of scholars, the difference between multilateral and bilateral security alliance was not fully addressed. Just as the number of hegemonic super powers has immediate effect on international politics, the number of allied partners and their relative power distribution determines ways in which states would respond to and interact with its partners.

A growing body of literature, however, has emerged to point out that analyzing security alliances as singular entities is problematic (Leeds, 2003; Leeds, 2005; Leeds and Anac, 2005; Leeds *et al.*, 2009; Leeds and Savun, 2007; Kimball, 2006). Recent researches on alliance have attempted to analyze alliance in a disaggregate manner, and they have profound impact on theories of alliance behavior. Leeds, for example, opposed the reductionist view on alliance and instead separated alliances based on the level of commitments and specific provisions found in the content of alliance treaties (Leeds, 2003: 427). Other scholars have attempted to analyze the role of different alliance relationships and treaty obligations in shaping alliance behaviors (Gibler and Rider, 2004; Leeds *et al.*, 2000; Morrow, 2000). For example, Leeds, Long, and Mitchell, through content analysis of alliance treaties, found that alliances are in fact reliable 75 percent of the time and highlighted the importance of analyzing alliance commitment in the context of specific provisions and obligations (Leeds *et al.*, 2000). A close examination of the alliance data, they found, demonstrated that contrasting processes take place after a state enters into an alliance, suggesting that pooling the bilateral and multilateral military alliance together is empirically problematic. Such findings imply that when poorly managed, the difference between bilateral and multilateral alliance would be a potential source of the level of analysis dilemma.

Ryan Dudley's work on alliance provides useful insights relevant to this paper (Dudley, 2010). His research is based on the assumption that the processes that states undertake to manage multilateral alliance and the nature of multilateral institution are theoretically distinct

from the bilateral alliance. It would be rational to assume that alliance behaviors in a multilateral alliance in which three or more partners make deals and necessary compromises would be much more dynamic than in a bilateral one. In other words, the management process in multilateral grouping is fundamentally different from alliance management in a bilateral setting. Based on this assumption, Dudley asserted, “Bilateral alliances are dyads and multilateral alliances are systems or networks operating at a different level of analysis” (2010: 6). To put it differently, the operation of a pair of states (bilateral alliances) is different from that of a group of states (multilateral alliances), and thus each requires different modeling and approach.

In his study on alliance, Dudley attempted to provide evidence to show that multilateral and bilateral alliances are designed to serve unique purpose for each member states. As the first evidence, he pointed to the fact that member states of NATO formed numerous bilateral alliances outside of the NATO obligations.<sup>5</sup> Second, he demonstrated that two alliances show stark difference in terms of formality and endurance. According to Dudley, for example, of the 35 multilateral alliances formed from during the Cold War, 15 (42.8%) are still in effect. In contrast, out of the 183 bilateral alliances formed during the same period, only 43 (23.4%) remain, which proves that bilateral alliances are relatively easy to be dissolved. Besides, multilateral groupings generate relative more formal institutions with designated organization committees and regular meetings (Dudley, 2010: 12). These facts lead us to believe that states view the two alliance types differently. These observations lead us to assume that different alliance grouping should be analyzed with different analytical framework.

More importantly, Dudley directly addressed the issue of adopting proper level of analysis when analyzing alliance dynamics. He contended that while the decision to ally with another states is made at the nation-state level, once formed, bilateral alliances function at the dyadic level of analysis and multilateral alliances operate at the international institution level of analysis (2010: 5). Dudley writes:

Once a state chooses to form a bilateral alliance, the process is dyadic. Two states enter into negotiations and form an alliance that satisfies the needs of each state. During the management phase, any negotiations to change the parameters of the alliance (extension, reconfiguration, termination) or conditions under which the alliance is enacted are also dyadic. The consequences of a bilateral alliance, or the conflict behavior of the two member states, are generated by actions taken by, or against, a member of the dyad. Thus, any theory addressing the hypothesized response should emerge from the dyad (2010: 9).

Drawing on the Dudley’s argument on the different traits of the two alliances, this paper will examine intra-alliance dynamics with focus on the dyadic level of analysis. Dyadic level seems to be the most appropriate approach given the subject matter and purpose of this paper. First, dyadic level analysis fits the purpose of this paper, which is to build an analytical framework to understand the U.S. alliance behavior vis-à-vis its bilateral alliance partners in East Asia. Establishing a theory that has general application to all different types of states

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<sup>5</sup> In 1963, France and Germany formed a bilateral alliance outside of NATO. Between 1990 and 1993 several Eastern European states—Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria—formed bilateral alliances with members of NATO, and when they became members of NATO, their bilateral ties with NATO remained effective (Dudley, 2010: 10-11).

and alliances is not what this paper aims to achieve. Rather, this paper aims to analyze intra-alliance dynamics of the U.S. bilateral alliances and, if possible, build an analytical framework that can explain U.S. alliance policies vis-à-vis its bilateral alliance partners.

Second, unique features of ROK-U.S. and U.S.-Japan bilateral alliances can be best explained by a level of analysis that focuses on intra-alliance dynamics. As many scholars have pointed out, bilateral alliances are analytically distinct, which compels researchers to approach alliances in disaggregated manner. Furthermore, San Francisco alliance system in Northeast Asia possesses unique character in its origins, asymmetry of power capability, unique role, the intensity of cooperation, and etc., which researchers cannot easily dismiss.<sup>6</sup> In sum, dyadic level of analysis would do best in analyzing U.S. bilateral alliance management if it can be modeled to capture the uniqueness of the U.S. bilateral military alliances.

Employing dyadic level of analysis, however, does not necessarily mean this paper would investigate into inter-state or intra-alliance relations only. Just as any researchers would do, explaining alliance behavior requires one to examine the situations of states as well as their individual characteristics and even system level considerations. The purpose of this paper is to understand and, hopefully, predict U.S. alliance behavior vis-à-vis specific states in bilateral military alliances. In doing so, this paper attempts to look into not only dyadic relations on sub-systemic level but also systemic level variables which has direct influence on U.S. bilateral alliances, such as changes in power balance and level of regional threats. For most cases, studies on alliance have tendency to treat systemic level and sub-systemic variables separately, championing one level of analysis over the other; therefore, their interactions were often neglected. However, this paper would carefully look into interactions between variables from different level of analysis.

For the study of U.S. alliance behavior with East Asian alliance partners, dyadic level of analysis has significant implications that go beyond merely focusing on relations of the two states. First, dyadic level analysis would address intra-alliance phenomena and negotiations which in traditional alliance studies have been understudied. Traditional approaches to alliance, with its reductionist view, have given much more weight to external phenomena. As studies have shown, however, bilateral alliances, once they are formed, function with different interactions among member states which is distinct from multilateral alliance. Dyadic level analysis would therefore delve into the dynamics of intra-alliance relationships between alliance members.

Second, adding a dyadic lens into alliance studies and focusing on intra-alliance relations can shed light on relations between security areas and other foreign policy arenas within a bilateral alliance. Studying alliances in a reductionist view, intra-alliance relations, despite its importance, have been under-addressed. Even though it is logical to assume that there is relationship between security and non-security cooperation, particularly when it is a bilateral one, the extensive nature of intra-alliance relationships between member states has not received enough attention in alliance literature. Endogenous relationship might help us better understand alliances behaviors that are often times at odds with traditional approaches that focus on external factors, and instead it might explain relation between security and other foreign policy areas.

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<sup>6</sup> It is often argued that based on the asymmetry of power, the U.S. formed the unique hub-and-spoke system in East Asia as a means to constrain its allies from committing reckless behavior, most notably starting a war with its communist neighbors (Cha, 2010).

### 3. A ROLE-BASED APPROACH TO BILATERAL ALLIANCES

#### 3.1 Holsti's Role Theory

Among numerous theoretical frameworks to explain states' foreign policy behavior, role theory, that focuses on the role of policymakers and traces their effect on states' decision, can be modified to explain intra-alliance conflicts. Role theory first appeared in foreign policy analysis in the 1970s when scholars attempted to identify behavioral patterns of states in the bipolar structure. Borrowing the concept of role from social psychology, which stressed the relational and social roots of roles, scholars asserted the existence of a number of social roles of states—such as leader, non-aligned, allies, satellites, follower, and aggressor—in the social structure of international relations, which was not unproblematic yet meaningful.

K. J. Holsti applied the role model to states and developed national role conceptions argument to explain state's foreign policy behavior (Holsti, 1970). Walker and Wish also attempted to incorporate the role theory into the IR scholarship (Walker, 1987; Wish, 1980). Meanwhile, Alexander Wendt stressed the systemic dynamics of the role identity of states.<sup>7</sup> While leading role theories differ with regard to the focuses and sources of role conception, there are two major strands in role conception perspective. The first strand emphasizes the actor's material or cognitive factors as determining factors of role conceptions.<sup>8</sup> The second strand follows constructivist understanding that explores language, identity, and social interactions.

Holsti's work is one of the first analytical approach to states' role conception. Role theory, Holsti posits, offers a framework not only for describing national role performance and roles conceptions but also for exploring sources of role conceptions. Tradition approaches to the world politics, he found, are only rough categorization of reality. Balance of power argument, for example, has made references to national roles such as aggressor, defending group, and a balancer as possible causal variables in explaining the foreign policies of individual states. However, "treatments based on the polar model of the world," he contends, "generally ignore the great variety of roles that smaller states play in the system and in various regions" (Holsti, 1970: 234). Representing the world in terms of power balance and the Cold War roles does not reveal all the behavioral variation in the different sets of relationships into which states enter. Instead, he assumed that how policymakers view the roles their nation should play in international arena determines behavioral pattern of states. The followings are the questions that Holsti had in mind: what are the major national

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<sup>7</sup> Wendt writes, "[R]ole theorists have tended to assume that the social structure of international politics is too "ill-defined, flexible, or weak" to generate significant role expectations, and so states' foreign policy roles are entirely a functions of policy makers' beliefs and domestic politics, rather than their relations to Others. In effect, the agentic, *role-taking* side of the equation has been emphasized at the expense of the structural, *role-constituting* side, which strips the concept of role of much of its interest Neorealists seem to agree" (1999: 227-228).

<sup>8</sup> For example, a strand of role-based approach incorporated material traits of a role conception, in particular the size and capability of states (Wish, 1987; Neack, 1995). For them, size was readily recognized as a structural variable since size determined a state's place in the global hierarchy of powers.

role types in the contemporary system? And what are the sources of role conceptions held by policymakers?<sup>9</sup>

Drawing on the literature of behavioral science, role theorists developed concepts to explain states' foreign policy decisions. In role theory of behavioral science, the term *role* (or role performance) refers to behavior (decisions and actions) and is distinguishable from *role descriptions*, which are the norms and expectations that cultures, institutions, or groups attach to particular *positions*.<sup>10</sup> Just as human behavior is a function of position and expectations the other projects on the position, *the role performance* (decisions and actions) of governments, role theorists assumed, can also be explained by policymakers' own conceptions of their nation's role in a region or in the international system.

Key concepts of role theory that can be modified and employed in the analysis of foreign policy are defined as follows. *Role expectations* consist of ego and alter expectations. The former refers to individual or domestic expectations of proper role. The latter is implicit or explicit demand by others. The role sets, therefore, entail a potential for conflict within a role and between roles, which has implications for the study of asymmetric bilateral alliance. *Role conceptions* refer to an actor's perception of its position vis-à-vis others and of role expectations of others. In that way role conceptions can be expanded to encompass actions and perceptions of others as well as identity.

However, there are differences between the social and international context. Therefore, Holsti observed some modifications had to be made when adopting social role theory into the analysis of states behavior. For instance, the concept of *position* was replaced by *status* which refers to the estimate of a state's ranking in the international system. Assuming that role performance of a state results from policymakers' conceptions of their nation's orientations in the regional and international system, Holsti defined *national role performance* as the general foreign policy behavior of governments which includes patterns of attitudes, decisions, responses, functions, and commitments toward other states. *National role conceptions* refer to a set of role conceptions constituted by states. National role conceptions include, Holsti says, "the policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules, and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their states should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional system" (Holsti, 1970: 245-246). In other words, *national role conceptions* delineate the scope of foreign policy behaviors that decision makers perceive as appropriate for their state to undertake. In that way, *national role conceptions* are separated from *role performance*, the actual foreign policy behavior.<sup>11</sup>

After reviewing evidence gained from reading diverse sources over 71 states, Holsti identified 17 different national roles that policymakers seem to have. Table 1 shows the list of national conception roles, arranged along the degree of activity and passivity in foreign policy that each role conceptions imply. It should be noted that a state with regional or global interests and power can have multiple role conceptions, each directed to a specific region or

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<sup>9</sup> In fact, IR theories are replete with implicit national role models. This paper contends that the following arguments can also be read in the framework of role models: balancer/offshore balancer argument (balance of power theory), satisfied/non-satisfied or status-quo power/revisionists power (power transition theory), and Japan's middle power argument.

<sup>10</sup> In social science theory, roles are social positions that are constituted by ego and alter expectations in achieving common purpose in an organized group (Linton, 1936; Turner, 1956).

<sup>11</sup> For key concepts of role theory, see Holsti (1970); Wish (1987); and Krotz (2002).

**Table 1.** Holsti's Role Types and Description

Role Type	Description
1. Bastion of revolution-liberation	Governments that have a duty to organize or lead various types of revolutionary movements
2. Regional leader	Governments that perceive they have duties or special responsibilities in its relation to states in a particular region
3. Regional protector	Governments that bear special leadership responsibilities on a regional or issue-area basis
4. Active independent	Governments supporting the concept of non-alignment
5. Liberal supporter	Governments supporting liberation movements
6. Anti-imperial agent	Governments seeing themselves as agents of struggle against imperialism
7. Defender of the faith	Governments that view their foreign policy objectives and commitments in terms of defending value systems
8. Mediator-integrator	Governments that perceive they are responsible for fulfilling special tasks to reconcile conflicts between other states
9. Regional-subsystem collaborator	Governments that have far-reaching commitments to cooperative efforts with other states to build wider communities
10. Developer	Governments that have a special duty or obligation to assist underdeveloped countries
11. Bridge	Governments that believe to have a communication functions, acting as a "translator" of information between peoples of different cultures
12. Faithful ally	Governments that have alliance commitments made through mutual assistance and other types of treaties
13. Independent	Governments that value the element of policy self-determination
14. Example	Governments that emphasize the importance of promoting prestige and gaining influence in the international system by pursuing certain domestic policies
15. Internal Development	Governments that direct most of their efforts directed toward problems of internal development
16. Isolate	Governments that have a minimum of external contacts of whatever variety
17. Protectee	Governments that allude to the responsibility of other states to defend them, but do not indicate any particular functions toward the external environment

Source: Holsti (1970: 260-271).



state. Therefore, while traditional balance of power approach does not adequately address great variation of diplomatic behavior, the distribution of national role conception model emphasizes a rich and varied diplomatic life.

In sum, role theories incorporate cognitive variables and offer analytical framework to explain diverse foreign policy decisions by states in rich detail. Since role theories have attempted to set role conceptions by states that can explain general tendency of states policy preferences, they are relatively free from criticism of losing explanatory capability at the expense of descriptive capability. Yet, the literature has exclusively focused on role conceptions by states themselves (ego) while paying little attention to the roles prescribed by other external forces (alter). More importantly, few have attempted to apply role conception approach to intersubjective role conceptions in bilateral security groupings.

### **3.2 A role-based Approach to Bilateral Alliance**

This paper adopts Holsti's role-based approach to build an analytical framework to explain fluctuating relationships between the U.S. and its bilateral allies in Northeast Asia. In Holsti's theory, national role conception has important roles both as a dependent and an independent variable. As we have discussed in detail, Holsti's role conception argument asserts that states' decision to act or respond through policy is mainly determined by policymakers' national role conception in the international system. In a nutshell, the purpose of this paper is to explain states' behavior, which is dependent variable, with national role conceptions as an independent variable. At the same time, on the basis of the role-based approach, the sources of role conceptions, both external and internal, are to be explored over a period of time. More importantly, among many different sources that contribute to role conception, the issue of which source has the most influence has to be a researcher's major concern, when national role conception is a dependent variable. Based on the analytical framework of role theory, it can be assumed that within bilateral alliances discrepancy between role conception by policymakers' and prescriptions by alter can explain cooperative and conflictive behavior between alliance partners.

In order to build an analytical framework based on national role conceptions and apply the framework to bilateral alliance behaviors, following issues have to be carefully addressed with some necessary adjustments to existing role theory. First, identifying national role conceptions and sources of the conceptions should constitute the key part of this paper. On the one hand, regarding the enactment of national role conceptions, this paper recognizes the shortcomings of the purely material and structural explanations. For example, size as a material factor matters in constituting role conceptions; however, size alone does not determine the content of role conceptions. On the other hand, this paper emphasizes foreign policy decision makers and systematically evaluate their conceptions of their state's role in a given alliance system and probes into sources of national role conceptions. This paper regards decision makers' role important because they articulate a vision of a state's role in international community, and decision makers' official statements and stated foreign policy objectives represent the outcome of debate and discussion within a government. Accordingly, in order to determine the content of the national role conceptions of decision makers, empirical researches should take a careful look at official policy statements; leaders' speeches, acts, and reactions to policy outcomes; and government documents and reports.

Second, when applying role theory to alliance system, the role prescription by alliance leader—external role expectations—should be of major concern. The role prescribed by an

alliance partner sets expected behavior from its partner and thus functions as a reference to the alliance commitment or faithfulness of its alliance partner. Drawing from behavioral science,<sup>12</sup> Holsti recognized that the foundation of national foreign policy performance consists of role conception defined by policymakers and the role prescribed by external environment. However, as we discussed, since Holsti and other scholars have concentrated on the role of cognitive and psychological variable in explaining foreign policy outcome, they regarded external environment as constant and instead examined patterns of national role types and their sources. Holsti argued that “[E]go part of a national role is more influential than the alter part since international relations provide only weak role prescription” (Holsti, 1970: 243).

However, we can assume that when two nations are tied in security commitments, there are role expectations formulated both by alliance leader itself and by respective alliance partners in relationship with other partners. In that context, role prescription by alliance leader can affect role performance of its alliance partner as much as role conception does. That is particularly true when the alliance in question is asymmetric in power capability just as U.S. hub and spoke system in Northeast Asia. In an asymmetric alliance, unlike capability aggregation type of alliance with similar level of capability, major power in alliance would have a role conception of its minor power partner though not clearly articulated, and in contingencies the major power would evaluate partner’s role performance based on the prescribed role.

More importantly, the role conceptions between states might share some aspects or might be different yet compatible; however, some elements of conceptions might be conflictual. Competing or clashing role expectations about ego and others could lead to conflict between states. In a bilateral security alliance, when a state’s national role conceptions are broadly incompatible and conflicting with the role prescription by an alliance leader, the alliance partners would have conflicting relationship.

Third, it should be noted that the national role conceptions are subject to change over time and that a change in conceptions is contingent upon specific circumstances. Therefore, researches on security role conceptions in alliance system address specific conditions under which role conceptions change over time. The sources for role changes may be internal, external, or both, and within states they may occur bottom-up, top-down, or both. In other words, foreign policy as role performance or enactment, changes could originate from fundamental structural changes in the international system or external pressure from alliance leaders, or changes could be driven by changes in domestic politics, say change in political leadership, or security crisis. The role change could also occur as a result of inter-role conflicts when a state was encouraged or forced to change its role conceptions. Pace and scope of changes will also be contingent upon specific conditions, and the core of national role conceptions might remain unchanged.

Lastly, conflicts in bilateral alliance should be analyzed in the dyadic level. In dyadic level of analysis, intra-alliance relations should be stressed. That is to say that as the source of divergent role conceptions and performance among allies, the contents of intra-alliance

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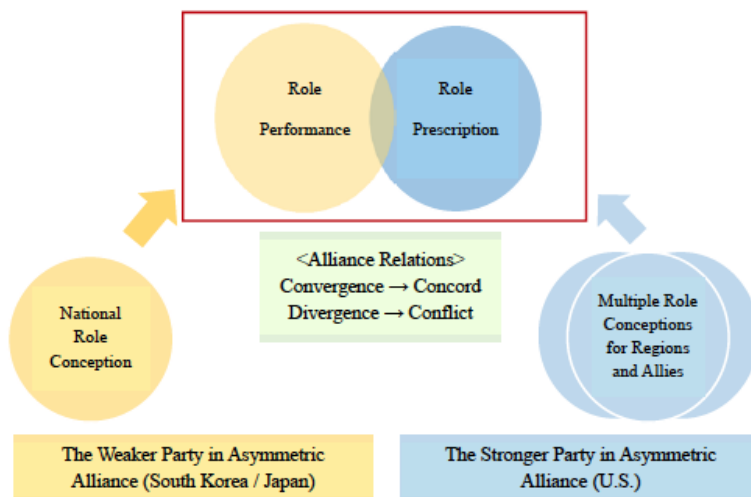
<sup>12</sup> In behavioral science, external role expectations by “significant others” are considered to play an important role in shaping ego’s behavior. Significant others are often associated with primary socializing agents such as parents and siblings. In parent and child relationship, parents assert considerable leverage because children would face significant material or psychological barriers if they choose to withdraw from the relationship (Harnish *et al.*, 2011: 11).

relationship should be carefully examined. Intra-alliance agreements, compromises, exchanges, and negotiations between member states can also shape inter-subjective role conceptions as much as external power balance or domestic socio-economic and political needs do. In doing so, we should also pay attention to possible inter-relations between security and security-related or even non-security issues. In asymmetric bilateral alliance, policymakers tend to view intra-alliance relations in terms of relative gain or interest vis-à-vis its alliance partner. It can be assumed that negotiations or agreements in foreign policy issues could affect negotiations in other issues, or vice-versa.

As we have noted, bilateral alliance behavior—fluctuation between cooperative and conflictive mood—might be better explained through role-based framework, in which role conceptions serve as the foundation of states’ foreign policy decisions. According to the role theory, policymakers constitute national role conceptions based on both external and internal sources. It is often the case that a state’s national role conception alone might not be a useful indicator of explaining or predicting states’ foreign policy outcomes in the international system. In particular, in an asymmetric bilateral alliance grouping, a major power’s role prescription of its minor alliance partner, who is relatively more dependent upon the major state for its security, immediately take effect throughout the process of constituting nation’s proper role and making important policy decisions when both parties have national interests at stake on the decision.

Based on the alliance role conception approaches, it is assumed that convergence/divergence dynamics between US role prescriptions and allies’ role performance have resulted in different U.S. attitudes towards two states’ responses in the wars and that different role conceptions that U.S. had vis-à-vis its of allies led to different response to each supports. Figure 1 shows conceptualization of how alliance behavior can be understood through dyadic role model. Convergence of roles would lead to harmonious relations; divergence of role performance and role prescription would result in uneasy relations or intra-alliance conflict. If the gap between the two widens, that means common grounds or common interests between the two parties are diminishing. If the gap widens further and becomes unbridgeable, the alliance could eventually break apart.

**Figure 1.** Dynamics of Intra-Alliance Relations in Bilateral Alliances



In the next chapter, this paper aims understand intra-alliance conflicts over alliance partners' wartime contributions. To be specific, this paper, as a case study, attempts to analytically understand the dynamics of intra-alliance conflict within U.S.-Japan security alliance through examination of U.S. alliance behavior, its response to Japan's coalition contributions.

#### 4. A CASE STUDY: US-JAPAN INTRA-ALLIANCE CONFLICT DURING THE GULF WAR

##### 4.1. Japan's Alliance Role Conceptions during the Post-Cold War era

During the Cold War, the U.S. provided security guarantee to Japan even after Japan made economic success and became strong enough to provide its own security, mainly because it was interest of the U.S. to thwart Communist expansion and maintain stability and economic order.<sup>13</sup> The U.S. provided strategic deterrence, including nuclear umbrella, security commitments, and forward deployed forces. For its part, Japan provided basing rights and logistics support, under which the U.S. could operate its military forces for its own security interest in the Asia Pacific Region. This security arrangement, albeit asymmetrical, suited U.S. strategic interest in East Asia.<sup>14</sup>

However, changes international security landscape inevitably led to changes in U.S.-Japan alliance management. During the Cold War, the Yoshida Doctrine remained the basic tenet of Japan's foreign policy, Japan was bent on economic development while relying on U.S. deterrence capability and nuclear umbrella for its security.<sup>15</sup> However, as the Japanese economy grew and trade relations between U.S. and Japan became increasingly competitive, the U.S. began pressure Japan to assume more security burden (Giarra and Nagashima, 1999). U.S. domestic circumstances—budget deficit incurred by Cold War military spending, stagnant economy, and Japan-bashing—combined with the U.S. reassessment of Japan's economic and military capability forced the U.S. strategic thinkers to redefine the role of Japan not only in the bilateral relations but also in regional and global arena. The Secretary of State James Baker's following remark reflects the attitude felt by the U.S. policymakers:

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<sup>13</sup> According to Robert Art, the U.S. did so for three reasons, other than geopolitical logic of deterring Soviet threat. First, historical reason. The U.S. did not want Japan as the World War II aggressor to rearm. Second, stability reason. The provision of the U.S. security to Japan was needed to assuage the fears of Japan's neighbors and help foster economic openness. Third, non-proliferation reason. The U.S. thought extending nuclear umbrella to Japan was necessary to discourage Japan to acquire its own nuclear weapons. Art also cites Israel's case as a convincing example (Art, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> Richard Betts argues that in terms of the domino theory, the defense of Japan was intrinsic interests to the U.S. while the defense of South Korea was derivative (1993: 43).

<sup>15</sup> It is often argued that Japan's foreign policy was reactive in nature, which means Japan would change would policy not because strategic concern but because outside pressure (Calder, 1988). However, rejecting arguments that Japan lacked a national strategy thanks to the constitutional restraint, Richard Samuels argued Japan's foreign policy was guided by strategic thinking (2011). For Japan's strategic thinking, see also Pyle (1998) and Nara (2007).

At Treasury, Tokyo had required a lot of my attention, particularly on market-opening and exchange-rate issues. I had called for a “global partnership” with Japan while still Secretary of the Treasury, but now at the State I could actually implement it. Of course, I would once again have to be mindful of domestic considerations, as Japan-bashing had become a prominent Democratic campaign theme, notably in the primary campaign of Representative Dick Gephardt. *Our goal had to be to try to turn Japan from an inward-looking, mercantilist economic giant to an outward-looking economic and political power with strong ties with the United States* (Baker, 1995: 44).

The threat of New Cold War in the late 1970s pushed the U.S. to alter its overall defense posture. In 1979 the Soviet Union invaded into Afghanistan. In response to the Soviet act of aggression, the Reagan administration took a hard stance against the Soviet Union and went on to upgrade U.S. military capability, including nuclear weapons. In order to strike a balance between strategic need and necessarily resources, the U.S. had to turn to its allies. In particular, the U.S. repeatedly encouraged among others Germany and Japan to assume more responsibility in security of its own and region because of their increased economic status. Germany and Japan in the 1970s, once the villains and defeated parties of World War II, recovered from post-war misery and reemerged as the leading industrialized economies after the U.S., with potential of being great powers. It would have been logical for the U.S. to demand these allies to assume more security responsibility as their GDPs increase.<sup>16</sup>

Japan responded to America’s demand for more security role. In response to America’s repeated requests, Japan committed to shouldering the financial cost of the stationing of U.S. forces in Japan. In 1978 as part of host nation support program, the Japanese government introduced the so-called “sympathy budget (*omoiyariyosan*)” system. The measure was taken under the reason that Japan should help the U.S. to deal with financial difficulties at the time of strong yen.<sup>17</sup>

Besides financial support, the Japanese government officially expressed willingness to assume more responsibility in the division of security effort between the U.S. and Japan. Japan’s acceptance of increased role, for example, was clearly delivered to the U.S. during a U.S.-Japan summit meeting in 1981. Japan promised to improve defense capability not only in its territories but also in sea lanes and to alleviate the cost of U.S. military presence in Japan. The Japanese government in the 1980s embarked on enhancing defense capability and increased its defense spending accordingly.<sup>18</sup> Despite being only 1% of GNP, Japan’s defense budget kept increased thanks to strong yen. In 1988, Japan’s defense budget (\$45 billion)

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<sup>16</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski once remarked that it would be logical to assume Japan with its economic power to increase its share of defense. That Japan spends only 1% of its GDP on defense means, he argued, other states should spend more for common defense (Jin, 2006: 30).

<sup>17</sup> The U.S. and Japan concluded a five-year special measures agreement in which Japan promised to pay labor costs and utility bills of U.S. forces. In November 1978, Defense Cabinet Secretary Shin Kanemaru and U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown agreed that Japan would offer about \$33.3 million as part of labor cost. In 1984, Japan’s burden sharing totaled \$2 billion, and Japan’s host nation support continued to increase through the first special measures agreement in 1987 (Yoda, 2006: 940).

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion on the rise of new strategic perspective, “military realism,” expressed by Prime Minister Nakasone in the early 1980s, see Mochizuki (1983).

was close to leading European countries such as France, Germany, and U.K.<sup>19</sup>

Despite substantial increase in host nation support and defense spending, however, Japan did not fundamentally review its security policy and the security alliance with the U.S. until the demise of the Soviet Union. Like other former postwar Japanese Prime Ministers, Toshiki Kaifu, assuming his position in August 1989, had to reaffirm Yoshida Doctrine and define Japan's role in the world mainly in economic dimensions (Kaifu, 1990). Tendency to be dependent on the U.S. persevered. Even though Kaifu recognized the growing pressure for Japan's more active political role, Kaifu was a Japanese pacifist. For example, in August 1990, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Kaifu demonstrated his commitment to a peaceful vision by attending the memorial ceremonies at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and paying a visit to Okinawa where nearly 270,000 Japanese died during the World War II (Tomamoto, 1990: 92). The peace constitution and the alliance with the U.S. had served as the two pillars of postwar Japanese foreign policy. As the U.S. policymakers began to push Japan to assume more active security role, however, the two pillars became increasingly at odds with each other.

In conclusion, while Japan stepped up its efforts in cost-sharing, Japan's alliance role conceptions were still anchored in the traditional role of *protectee* and *internal development*. Even though the Communist threat greatly diminished, Japan continued to rely on the U.S. security guarantee. Counting on the U.S. role of *a regional leader and protector*, the Japanese policymakers expected the U.S. to do the heavy lifting in regional security in return for the provision of a forward floating base to the U.S. forces. First, rooted in Yoshida Doctrine, Japan's interests lay in reducing security burdens so that it can divert resources into other sectors, such as economy and social welfare. Second, keeping low military profile was required to prevent political resistance not only from domestic political forces but from its neighbors and economic powers in the region.<sup>20</sup> Third, while the Cold War geopolitics was coming to an end, the Soviet military presence in the Far East forced Japan to find measures to hedge against potential threat and acquire whatever security it can get from the U.S. In that way, Japan's security dependence gave the U.S. political leverage to advance its interest in U.S.-Japan relations.

**Table 2.** Japan's Post-Cold War Alliance Role Conceptions

Role Type	Description
Protectee	Ally that allude to the responsibility of U.S. to defend its country, while not displaying any serious security commitment toward the external security environment in a way that is commensurate with its economic power.
Internal Development	Ally that attempts to direct most of its efforts and resources toward internal development

<sup>19</sup> According to SIPRI, the defense spending of the U.S. was \$557 billion, calculated in constant 2011 U.S. dollars. France, Germany, U.K., and Japan spent \$69 billion, \$68 billion, \$58 billion, and \$45 billion respectively.

<sup>20</sup> For the interrelation between Japan's military and economic interests in North East Asia, see Hunt (1989).

#### 4.2. The Gulf War and U.S.-Japan Alliance Burden Sharing

The Persian Gulf War in 1990-91 was a defining moment for U.S.-Japan security relations. Japan often claimed itself as an equal partner of the U.S., but the crisis clearly demonstrated the limitation of Japanese foreign policy. While the U.S. was seeking to organize a broad international coalition under the auspices of the UN, Japan faced a fundamental challenge whether it could transcend the Yoshida doctrine and redefine its rules for handling international security issues. Notwithstanding economic and industrial power, Japan's political role in the U.S.-led coalition was marginal. Japan could not provide anything beyond monetary contribution to the U.S. The Kaifu cabinet attempted to deploy peace-keeping force under the UN, but failed to gather domestic support. Japanese policymaker's indecisive and late response brought severe criticism from U.S. and other Western countries. Therefore, even though Japan made significant financial contributions, Japan earned little gratitude.<sup>21</sup> Instead, Japanese foreign policy was derided as "check book diplomacy."

Japan's initial reaction to Saddam's invasion into Kuwait was swift and responsive. Immediately after the invasion, the Japanese government officially condemned Iraq's aggression. After freezing Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets, Prime Minister Kaifu expressed Japan's willingness to implement economic sanctions in accordance with the UN resolution 661. Getting beyond this initial diplomatic support, however, proven difficult. After timely diplomatic responses, the Japanese government proved to be ill-prepared to redefine its security roles and respond decisively to external security crisis. Japan's poor response came as no surprise to some Japan specialists. Confronted by external difficulties, Michael Armacost, U.S. Ambassador to Japan (1989-93), recalled, "Japanese leaders had become accustomed to react by keeping their heads down, minimizing the risks, and leaving security responsibilities to others—mainly to the United States" (Armacost, 1996: 99-100).

Outraged by Iraq's aggression and disregard for the UN resolution that U.S. went great lengths to draw consensus on, the Bush administration began to draw coalition contributions from its partners and allies that were essential for both practical and political reasons. James Baker recalled the necessity of mobilizing international support as follows:

From a domestic political standpoint as well as a moral one, we needed to insist upon substantial financial commitments from other countries to help underwrite the costs of the operation. The President was prepared to bear the brunt of the burden, in that if forces were required to eject Iraq from Kuwait, Americans would die in the Gulf. The very least we could expect in return was that the countries we were helping, and all our other allies with stakes in the crisis should join not only in supplying forces to the extent they could, but also in financing the costs of Operation Desert Storm (Baker, 1995: 287-289).

The U.S. policymakers understood that costs of war would be staggering and felt an obligation to make money to help offset the severe economic loss that the trade embargo would incur on coalitions partners, especially Egypt and Turkey. At the same time, domestic

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<sup>21</sup> After the war ended, the Kuwaiti government published a full-page advertisement in major newspapers including *New York Times* and to thank members of U.N. coalition for liberating its country. Japan was absent from the list (Washington Post, March 17, 1991).

consideration also could not be ignored. At a time of economic difficulties at home, Washington knew that it would be impossible to draw and sustain domestic support for military operation unless other countries are also paying the bill and taking necessary risks.

Armacost as U.S. Ambassador to Japan, having in mind the unique history and the constitution of Japan with respect to military engagement, hinted to Japanese officials that it would be better for Japan to consider performing noncombat duties in the Gulf region so that Japan could be seen as an active participant in international multilateral security effort. However, Armacost's suggestion met with little action from key members of the Japanese political establishment. For most Japanese, he regretfully recalled, the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait was a "fire on the other side of the river."<sup>22</sup>

In a telephone conversation made on 13 August 1990 with Toshiki Kaifu, the President Bush requested not only financial but also military contributions from Japan.

The President (Bush): *I wanted to touch base with you on the economic side and military side. Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and Australia have agreed to contribute naval forces. I also think that Spain and Italy will do the same. I would certainly encourage as much support as Japan can give on the economic and military side. One we are looking at is giving help to the countries that are making the largest sacrifices: Turkey, Jordan and Egypt.*

Any support you can give on the military side would be helpful. I know in the last Persian Gulf crisis Japan helped to defray some of the costs. Anything that Japan can do would be appreciated. *I would like you to consider a direct Japan contribution to the multinational naval force. I realize that would be a watershed event in the post-World War II history of Japan, but if it could be worked out it would really send a signal that Japan was a full participant in the western alliance. This would protect our common interests and would show Japan in a common alliance to protect against Saddam Hussein.*

The multinational peacekeeping effort will probably be coordinated through the UN military staff committee and perhaps Japan could participate in those consultations. *Although these issues require further consultation, initial ideas being kicked around are mine sweeping and ships to carry equipment to Saudi Arabia—something of that nature. The big thing is, the more that Japan can do to emphasize Japan making a full commitment, the better for everybody (Bush Presidential Library and Museum of George Bush, 1990).*

Prime Minister Kaifu pledged cooperation, but he gave a skeptical response to Bush's call for military support on the scene, citing legal constraints and domestic opposition.

Prime Minister Kaifu: The people here on our side have already agreed to extend as much cooperation as possible in the economic field, especially for Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt. These countries were visited by Foreign Minister Nakayama, and I have already instructed the Foreign Ministry to explore what cooperation would be possible at this stage.

With respect to the military side that you have touched upon, because of our constitutional constraints and Diet resolutions, it is almost a national policy in this regard so it would be next to unthinkable to participate directly in the military sphere. Perhaps this point is already known

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<sup>22</sup> Prime Minister Kaifu had been scheduled to visit to the gulf region on August 14, 1990. However, senior Foreign Ministry officials did not wish to expose the prime minister to Arab's request for help, nor did they think Mr. Kaifu was in position to respond. They opposed the trip, and the trip was postponed (Armacost, 1996: 100-102).



to the military people concerned in your government. It is not immediately possible to take part in the multinational naval force (Bush Presidential Library and Museum of George Bush, 1990).

On August 15, 1990 the U.S. government sent general guidelines of Japan's coalition contributions through U.S. Embassy in Japan after the President Bush talked to the Prime Minister on the phone. Ambassador Armacost at that time enumerated possible responses to the military part, for the Japanese government's consideration. These included medical support, logistic support to the coalition forces in transporting personnel and equipment to Saudi Arabia, refugee evacuation support in Kuwait, and participation in the multinational naval force through the dispatch of minesweepers to help clear the Gulf and transport vessels to carry equipment from Egypt to Saudi Arabia. He emphasized that the quick, substantial, and visible Japanese response is important if bilateral relationship was to be maintained in good health. What Washington at the initial states wanted the most from Japan, He writes, was "the deployment of a Japanese ship manned by Japanese personnel and bearing a Japanese flag as a symbol of Tokyo's involvement in a common effort" (Armacost, 1996: 102).

Armacost discussed the contents of desired Japanese contribution with Vice Minister Kuriyama, but his response was mixed. Kuriyama readily expressed willingness to offer more than financial subventions. But at the same time he stressed the political and constitutional difficulties associated with the dispatch of Japanese Self-Defense Forces, including minesweepers. Kuriyama hinted that providing even non-combatant military support to the coalition would be improbable (Armacost, 1996: 102-103).

Days later, the U.S. dispatched a team of officials—*tin cup mission*—from State Department, Department of Defense, and NSC to encourage Japanese decisions. However, the Japanese government seemed unable to approach decisions with a sense of urgency because all the usual constraints were in the way. The Finance Ministry was reluctant to release necessary funds, and the political establishments were reluctant to consider urgent security measures, which would enable Japan to send Japanese personnel for logistical support (Armacost, 1996: 104). The Japanese government officially announced its first support package on August 29, 1990. The package included financial support to Egypt, Turkey, and Jordan in the form of loans and grants, medical support, supply of service support equipment, and transportation of various nonlethal items through commercial aircrafts and ships (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1991). Hours before making a public announcement of the package, Kaifu called President Bush and explained the package. The conversation started with Kaifu's excuse of not making military contribution. Kaifu said, "Accordingly, we have considered all of the options open to us to see how we can help, with the exception of sending our self-defense forces, which has significant constitutional limitations" (Bush Presidential Library and Museum of George Bush, 1990). Besides military assistance, the issue of Japanese host nation support, which Prime Minister Kaifu pledged to make, was not addressed, and the amount of financial contribution was not specified. Kaifu later notified President Bush that Japan's financial support to the multinational forces would amount to \$1 billion.

Japan's support package, however, failed to meet U.S. officials' expectations and raised frustrations. While Washington's official response to Japan's package was muted, the U.S. exasperation with the level of Japan's assistance was not concealed. In response, President Bush decided to send cabinet-level envoys to press Japan. Secretary of the Treasury Nick Brady and Deputy Secretary of State Larry Eagleburger were assigned to twist Japan's arms.

On September 7, 1990 they arrived in Japan, and in meetings with Japanese cabinet members, they outlined U.S. request of \$3 billion, which far exceeded Japan's initial proposal of \$1 billion. Ryutaro Hashimoto, Finance Minister, asserted that no further contribution would be possible during the fiscal year. The U.S. representatives had to come back without much visible result (Armacost, 1996: 108). The U.S. policymakers became more blunt in expressing their frustrations over Japan's indecisive response.

While the alliance did not reach a breaking point, the U.S.-Japan relation, once hailed as the most important and reliable one, became filled with friction and mutual recrimination, with its tone becoming increasingly acrimonious. The U.S. Congress got furious and did not hesitate to press Japan for more assistance. On 12 September 1990, the House of Representatives passed an amendment to a military spending bill by a vote of 370 to 53.<sup>23</sup> The amendment, also known as Bonior Bill, required Japan to pay for all deployment costs associated with U.S. troops stationed in Japan, including the salaries of U.S. personnel. And if the Japanese government refused to comply, the bill required to withdraw U.S. troops in Japan at a rate 5,000 per year, beginning at the end of 1991.<sup>24</sup>

For its part, the Japanese policymakers did not hide their dismay over U.S. In response, Taizo Watanabe, spokesman of Foreign Ministry said, "Some of those 370 Congressmen may not be aware that Japan is the biggest supporter of United States forces overseas. ... We hope that once they know the full magnitude of what we are doing, their appreciation will increase" (*New York Times*, September 14, 1990). Other Japanese officials warned that the idea of cutting down 5,000 troops a year would destroy not only the national interest of Japan, but of the U.S. as well. Defense Agency Director General Ishikawa stated that Japan had not asked for the stationing of U.S. forces and added that Japan would tell U.S. forces to "please go home." Notwithstanding such concerns, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution signaling that if allies do not make appropriate level of contributions to the coalition, they have to face downgrading of U.S. security commitment. The resolution explicitly targeted Germany and Japan (Armacost, 1996: 109).

The Japanese policymakers quickly reacted to Congressional pressure. Immediately after the Congress' decision, on the night of September 13, Kaifu made an urgent call to President Bush, having dinner with Barbara. Kaifu explained Japan's plan for additional monetary support for frontline states and multinational force. On the next day, Prime Minister Kaifu officially announced that Japan would offer another \$3 billion in support of the U.S., making Japan's total monetary contribution \$4 billion. The officials said that \$2 billion will be used for economic aid to Egypt, Turkey, and Jordan, which includes \$600 million to make up for financial loss incurred by joining sanctions against Iraq, and \$1 billion for the multilateral military effort in the Gulf. In addition, Kaifu announced that Japan would seek to pass a legislation to make necessary amendment and create an unarmed, civilian United National Cooperation Corps, through which Japan would support UN peacekeeping missions by

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<sup>23</sup> The bill (H.Amdt.712.) was amendment to H.R.4739—National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991—sponsored by Congressman David E. Bonior in 101st Congress (1989-1990).

<sup>24</sup> Senator John McCain termed the Japanese meager contribution as a "contemptible tokenism." In his words, the "contemptible tokenism of the actions of the Japanese government merits nothing but the world's contempt and American hostility." Congress also instructed President Bush to convey in his meeting with the foreign leaders, that "failure by any country to actively contribute its military assistance in the most appropriate manner could have a detrimental impact on its bilateral relations with the United States" (LaFeber, 1998: 388).

sending vehicles, medical aid, and other items. Kaifu's suggestion, however, faced domestic political opposition, and the peace keeping operations bill drifted over time.<sup>25</sup> Despite Japan's belated effort, however, the U.S. officials regarded Japan's plan "too little, too late."

As the January 15, 1991 deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait approached without any conciliatory signs from Saddam Hussein, the U.S. urged the Japanese government to make new and substantial support. During the G-7 ministerial meeting, on 21 January 1991, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady met the Japanese Finance Minister Hashimoto to discuss the multilateral coalition's financial needs. Secretary Brady appealed for \$9 billion, and Japan this time responded in a timely manner and pledged to support. Japan's timely decision helped dissipate criticism of Japan in the United States (Armacost, 1996: 118-124). After all, Japan's financial contribution made during the Gulf crisis totaled \$13 billion (U.S. Congress, 1991: 66).

After the truce was signed on 3 March 1991, Japan made belated efforts to address post-Gulf War problems. In April, Japan dispatched minesweepers to the Persian Gulf to clear sea lanes for trade. Overall circumstances made the dispatch possible: military leaders of Self-Defense Force had strongly urged the deployment; after facing internal criticisms, Foreign Ministry had become responsive; military risks associated with the minesweeping mission dramatically decreased; and Japanese economic interests were at stake in securing safe passage of trade cargoes. After the Gulf War, Japan suddenly seemed determined to exercise a more active diplomacy in the Middle East. Noting this unexpected behavior of the Japanese, Armacost wrote in a sarcastic manner:

Not the least of the ironies in this affair [Japan's dispatch of four minesweepers to the Gulf] was the fact that Japan's deployments were undertaken without benefit either of PKO legislation—the UN Cooperation Bill having failed in the Diet—or a revision of the Self-Defense Force Law. As usual, the Japanese government demonstrated flexibility when it perceived compelling reasons to do so (1996: 124).

Although President Bush himself did not publicly express his exasperation, U.S. officials and public did not hide their disappointment over Japan's self-indulgent attitude during the crisis. After the crisis, a press poll found that Americans were still upset after receiving \$13 billion. More than 70% of Americans surveyed thought that Japan did not contribute its fair share (Samuelson, 1991). Another poll showed that 30% of Americans had lost respect for Japan just because of its attitude during the crisis—no other country showed any comparable decline except China. And most notably, there was the exclusion of Japan by the U.S. from postwar diplomatic events celebrating the victory. Immediately after the end of war, Japanese Foreign Minister Nakayama, unlike his Western counterparts, was not invited by the U.S. to visit Washington (Purrington, 1992: 169-170). Richard Holbrooke, former Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, stated that "Had Japan not given such a vast sum [of \$13 billion], the American reaction undoubtedly would have been worse, but it was bad enough: Americans felt that Japan's support of the coalition was slow, grudging, and inadequate, especially since three-fourths of Japan's oil comes from the Middle East"

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<sup>25</sup> Armacost observed that the delay in the passage of the bill was attributable to the interplay of two considerations. He writes, "international concerns encouraged the LDP to seek the swift passage of a peacekeeping operations bill, while domestic realities required it to secure the acquiescence of some opposition votes to put together the necessary majority in the Upper House." (1996: 114).

(Holbrooke, 1991: 51). After all, the U.S. policymakers' perception that Japan was taking refuge behind its Constitution and leaving all the hard works regarding international peace and stability to the U.S. was solidified. The Gulf crisis resulted in a crisis in the U.S.-Japan alliance.

#### **4.3. Summary and Analysis**

In the role-based perspective, Japan's coalition support and the U.S. response to it can be read as the result of divergent security role conceptions between Washington and Tokyo. Japan's security role performance during the Gulf crisis was far short of what the U.S. policymakers had prescribed to the post-Cold War Japan. Japan's indecisive and passive response to America's demand compelled the U.S. policymakers with congressional back- up to twist Japan's arms and exact more support. Yet Japan could not get beyond financial assistance, ended up offering \$13 billion. Japan's "too little, too late" response bought about international embarrassment.

The U.S. role prescription about Japan underwent significant change as the Cold War struggle wound down. With much of the Cold War threat is gone, many both in the U.S. and Japan began to question the validity of the bilateral alliance. The focus of bilateral relations shifted from security to economic issues. The issue of trade imbalance was magnified as a new controversy. During the Cold War, pressing security needs overrode economic concern. Despite the U.S. policymakers were aware of long-term implications of trade deficits incurred from trade with Japan, they maintained that trade dispute should not undermine bilateral security cooperation with Japan, which had long served as the linchpin of the U.S. security policy in the region. However, unconstrained by the desperate need to preserve the alliance, that argument gradually lost support. Instead, many in the U.S. pointed out lopsided security commitment to Japan is largely responsible for economic difficulties at home. Such demand from domestic audience coincided with the strategic shift of the grand U.S. national strategy from containment to preponderance, and to offshore balancing. As the U.S. realigned its defense posture to meet new security challenges, the U.S. sought to redefine its security parameters towards Japan. The U.S.-Japan alliance gradually transformed from an asymmetrical one into relatively equal partnership.

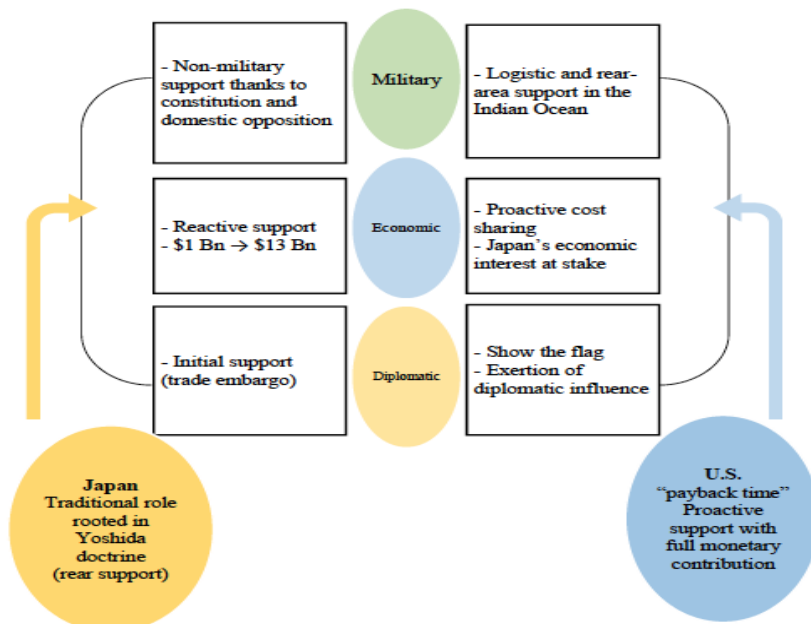
The Bush administration expected Japan to assume increase security role that is commensurate with its increased industrial power and international standing. During the 1980s, Japan emerged as the second largest economy, with potential to be a new great power. As Japan's national interest became global, the U.S. policymakers assumed, Japan should behave accordingly. During the Gulf crisis, Armacost stressed that, "Naturally we would expect your [Japanese] response to reflect what your national interests and your stature in the international community require. Predictably, your American friends hope you will be generous and far-sighted" (1996: 116). Even militarily, the U.S. policymakers assumed that Japan's military capability should no longer be strictly confined to the defense of Japan. Even though Japan's military spending had been kept under 1% of GDP, Japan's defense budget in 1990 was the fifth largest in the world. With this background, the U.S. urged Japan to shift away from the traditional foreign policy grounded on Yoshida doctrine and play an active role in maintaining regional and global security order.

Despite renewed U.S. expectations regarding Japan's security, Japan was unprepared to enact new security role conceptions. The Gulf crisis proved that Japan was ill-prepared to assume proactive role in support of the U.S. Without clearly defined security role enactment,

the Kaifu cabinet walking eggshells was busying trying not to upset the U.S. Armacost observed that “Japan’s action appeared to be prompted more by the sting of international criticism or the fear of diplomatic isolation than by the pursuit of a clear-cut foreign policy design” (1996: 100). Kaifu belatedly tried to step up its support by providing non-combatant military support under the flag of UN. However, he lacked political power of command and thus failed to gather domestic support to make timely contribution. After all, the crisis in the Persian Gulf was the crisis of Japan’s security role conception. Content with traditional security role conception confined to Japan’s own security, Japan failed to adjust to new security role conceived by the U.S. policymakers.

As illustrated in Figure 2, seen from the role-based approach, the alliance discord between the U.S. and Japan resulted from the fact that Japan was unprepared to take a new post-Cold War security role that the U.S. policymakers wanted Japan to assume. Despite pressing demand from the U.S. for proactive contribution, Japanese policymakers could not provide even non-combatant military contribution to the multinational forces, taking refuge behind the peace constitution. Japanese policymakers’ serious concern that the dispatch of SDFs to the Persian Gulf would violate the constitution led the U.S. policymakers to abandon the hope of Japan playing a more proactive security role under the purview of the bilateral alliance treaty. A U.S. state official rightfully captured American resentment towards Japan’s foreign policy orientation and claimed, “The key question Americans should ask themselves is, how long are we prepared to be loyal allies of Japan and act as volunteer Hessians serving Japanese interests, without demanding genuine military reciprocity?” (Olsen, 1992). Ultimately, the Gulf War challenged Japan’s security role conceptions, and the U.S. delivered clear message that Japan should transform itself from “consumer” to “provider” of regional and international security and be ready to participate fully in managing post-Cold War international security

**Figure 2.** Role-based Approach to the U.S.-Japan Relations during the Gulf War



## 5. CONCLUSION

This research called for the use of a role-based approach when analyzing a bilateral alliance relationship. The role-based approach to bilateral security groupings has following implications. First of all, this research contributes to alliance literature in IR by introducing a role model in analyzing bilateral alliance relations. Previous studies in alliance in IR have dealt with two major domains: alliance formation and alliance management. This research attempted to contribute to the latter. So far, theories and studies on alliance approached the subject of alliance management with focus on material variables, such as military and economic capability, interests, threats, and bargaining power. By incorporating role variable, this research highlighted the role of respective role conception perceived, defined, and performed by alliance partners in alliance management. Convergence and/or divergence of role conceptions constitute an important indicator that shows whether an alliance is in full harmony and ready to achieve common security goals.

The virtue of incorporating role conception into the analysis of alliance management is that it helps capture the diversity of the intra-alliance relations. The focus on asymmetry in power within an alliance relations helped understand the asymmetrical alliance and its unique nature that separate it from power aggregation model of alliance. Yet, power capability alone cannot explain diverse alliance relations that were designed to serve specific strategic goals and interests. The alliance relations, as this research demonstrates, can be further divided according to different roles and responsibilities that an alliance member have *vis-à-vis* its partner(s). The role model of alliance provides an analytical framework to analyze the sub-division of labor within an alliance system. The case in point is the “hub and spoke” alliance system in East Asia, which served as the political and geographical foundation for the U.S. security strategy of the region. The role model approach, as this research attempted, would help understand different and specific roles and missions the U.S. prescribed to each bilateral relations in order to achieve regional security goals. In short, the role model approach could provide a systemic view of the U.S. alliance network in the region, in which each alliances as organs perform specific functions to sustain the massive alliance network as an organic whole.

The second advantage is that the role-based approach helps identify factors that affect the changes in security arrangements. As in the cases of the ROK-U.S. and U.S.-Japan alliance, the division of labor within an alliance is influenced by not only changes in external security environment but domestic political, economic, and social conditions. More importantly, the research shows that changes in respective security roles do not merely reflect changes in external and domestic environment. Rather, even in asymmetrical alliance setting, the changes are also the result of intensive and continuous negotiations, formal/informal agreements, and compromises reached by mutual concessions between alliance partners, which often even involve enticement and coercion.

For the third advantage, the role model approach assumes that alliance is not static but ever-changing security binding, the terms of which continue to change. The majority works of alliance formation and management focus on systemic and sub-systemic conditions that determine who align with whom and on what terms, in a specific time or very limited time frame. The common security interests, the terms of agreement, and major security arrangements are assumed to remain unchanged once an alliance is fully developed. Even if they acknowledge the changing nature of alliance system, they lack a tool to explain it. For

instance, relative capability matters, but capability alone cannot grasp the scope and direction of changes in intra-alliance relations. The role-based approach allows us to trace the evolution of an alliance in a diachronic way since the most important challenge in alliance transformation is how to recalibrate and redefine roles and responsibilities and how to ensure mutual commitment. As this research demonstrated, the role model provides a proper explanatory tool to explain the undergoing alliance transformations in U.S.-led bilateral security groupings in East Asia in long term perspective.

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