

**Patterns of Role Transition:  
A Taxonomy, A Research Program, and the Three-Body Problem**

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**Abstract**

In foreign policy, role transition as a process of role change implies at least two roles (a state's old role and its new role) and a dynamic process of role location in which Ego's role changes over time. If every role for Ego presumes a counter-role for Alter, a pattern of role transition for Ego implies as well a potential process of role transition for Alter. In order to model the process of role transition, a taxonomy of mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive roles and counter-roles is desirable, in order to identify and specify the possible combinations of old and new roles as patterns of role transition. Binary role theory provides a taxonomy that meets these criteria and is employed in this paper to model the process of role transition as a transition in Grand Strategy Orientations. The binary model is complete in a way that three-way (or multi-way) models cannot be. Several hypotheses about the role of domestic politics in foreign policy role transitions, however, suggest the conditions under which unstable triads may become provisionally stable. Application of the resulting model to selected episodes of role transition in triadic relations among China, the Soviet Union, the United States, Japan, and South Korea illustrates the model's potential descriptive and explanatory power for analyzing strategic triads and the contours of a research program for understanding foreign policy change as a role transition process.

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**Introduction**

One of the inherent tensions within the realist approach to international relations theory is its ambivalence about variations in state responses to the same international environment. Realists in general, and neorealists in particular, anticipate that states will respond to the same structural constraints in more or less the same way. Realists argue that states are driven by some fundamental concern. This "fundamentalism" is perhaps more characteristic of realism, in fact, than is agreement about what the fundamental objective of states is. Several such objectives have been proposed: power (Morgenthau 1948), survival (Waltz 1979), threat reduction (Walt 1987), hegemony (Mearsheimer 2001), and so on. These objectives are conceptually related, and perhaps it might be said that all realists take survival to be the ultimate goal of states at some level of abstraction. Yet it seems equally clear that some other singular, intermediate goal figures prominently in many examples of realist theorizing. Disagreements about this goal have animated a series of debates among realists: between Hans Morgenthau and Henry Kissinger as realism rose to intellectual prominence in the United States, between conservative realists and neoconservatives in US foreign policy more recently, and between offensive and defensive realists within academia (see Zimmer 2011; Muravchik and Walt 2008; Snyder 2002).

The tension in realism is enhanced by the common disavowal that structural realism is a theory of foreign policy. Presumably, states that want the same thing and

that occupy the same structural position will behave in the same way. There is no obvious impediment to crafting a structural theory of foreign policy on this basis other than the healthy and pragmatic acknowledgment that the predictive record of such a theory would not be good. One might fall back on the "long run." In the long run Japan, for example, will be forced to pay more for its own defense. But a theory that specifies no time frame can scarcely be called a theory, and certainly not a falsifiable one.

One way that contemporary realism parts company with the classical realist tradition is in its commitment to a vision of states as isomorphic units. Another common realist formulation envisions the world as a zero-sum competition (Grieco 1988). This understanding reinforces the fundamentalism noted above: all states are seen as competing for some (singular) good whose supply is finite so that one state's gain is, *ipso facto*, another state's loss. Yet although Morgenthau (1948) identified this good as power, he also rejected an isomorphic view of states, distinguishing between status quo and revisionist powers. Both want power, and yet they behave differently. In fact, the two states Morgenthau had in mind, the United States and the Soviet Union, both occupied similar, superpower positions in the international system. Later realists found it better to dispense with Morgenthau's distinction and to argue, instead, that the United States and the Soviet Union did behave in essentially the same way.

Leaving aside the question of whether these two states always behaved in the same way—we find it unsurprising that they often did, but do not believe that they always did—we propose to focus on the underlying problem. If states respond to the same constraints in different ways, the prospects for predictive theories of international relations are much diminished. One response within the field of foreign policy analysis has been to formalize distinctions among states, though not necessarily by embracing Morgenthau's binary typology. This approach has given rise to role theory (Holsti 1970;

Walker 1979, 1987), image theory (Cottam 1977; Herrmann 1985; Herrmann and Fischerkeller 1995), and most recently a welter of state identity theories (Hopf 2002; Katzenstein 1996; Neumann 1999; Ringmar 1996; Wendt 1994, 2004).

### **Role Theory as a Theory of Symbolic and Strategic Interaction**

Image and identity theories anticipate that different kinds of states do different sorts of things, even in response to the same external stimuli. Arguably, role theory takes this claim one step further by conceiving of identities in an intrinsically relational fashion, thus endogenizing at least one aspect of the external environment. *Role* emerges from the ongoing interaction of self and other, not merely from beliefs about (national) self-conception. By specifying the role relationships in which states can locate themselves, role theory specifies the kinds of behavior that are possible (or likely) under specific circumstances.

Role theory is thus a theory of uncertainty reduction (Walker, Malici, and Schafer 2011) and, as such, a valuable complement to realist (particularly neoclassical realist) approaches. Roles make the social environment readily accessible by prescribing behavior according to agent type. Our brains are exceptionally good at identifying patterned behavior. Even infants as young as three months will stare longer at phenomena that are inconsistent with patterns they have already observed and with their rudimentary understanding of the physical world (Baillargeon 1994). Role theory is an expression of the same idea in the domain of international relations theory. States exhibit highly patterned interactions, and this reduces (though it does not eliminate) the uncertainty associated with predicting their behavior.

Role theory interrogates the other from the perspective of self, and is thus most extensively developed as a phenomenon of binary relationships. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say *role theories*, since they range in the study of foreign policy from simple, inductively informed typologies such as Wendt's distinctions among friends, rivals, and enemies (each expressing a dyadic relationship, loosely informed by George Herbert Meade's symbolic interactionism) to better elaborated and more complex accounts that specify preferences, cue-taking, and responses to the other for a variety of dyad types (Walker, Malici, and Schafer 2011; cf. Stryker and Stratham 1985).

Clearly the web of social relationships, at all levels of aggregation, encompasses triads and more complex relationships as well. At the level of individuals, for example, niece and nephew, aunt and uncle are inherently triadic concepts. So, at the level of international relations, are roles such as *mediator* or even, though it is less obvious, *loyal ally*. An alliance may be a binary relationship. But to be loyal presumes the possibility of defection: that one may betray one's allegiance and give it to a third party instead.

Dyadic roles have been identified and specified both inductively (Holsti 1970; Walker 1987) and deductively (Singer and Hudson 1987; Thies 2013; Walker, Malici and Schafer 2011; Walker 2013). Holsti's (1970) inventory of seventeen national role conceptions during the cold war inductively captures two dimensions of role enactment: active versus passive and cooperation versus conflict behavior in world politics. Taking a somewhat different tack, Thies identifies four master systemic roles in world politics—novice, small member, major member, and great power—based on a state's transition from lesser to greater power and status over time in the international system. He also points out that a state's level of activity and the variety of roles it adopts vary along a continuum of power (capabilities). The more powerful the state, the more active and varied its roles in world politics (Thies 2013).

In addition to the master role specified by a state's power position in the international system, Thies (2013) argues that a state acquires auxiliary roles toward other states in local and regional subsystems and at the global level of the international system. Walker (2013) identifies six auxiliary role identities: Client/Rebel for small members, Partner/Rival for major members, and Patron/Hegemon for great powers. These auxiliary roles represent ways of enacting the four families of Grand Strategy Orientations or GSOs—bandwagoning, appeasement, balancing, and hegemony—specified by the distributions of capabilities and interests between two states that form a role dyad. The four families of GSOs are shown in Figure 1 and are differentiated by their respective highest-ranked preferences for a stable outcome in the relationship between self (Ego) and other (Alter). Hegemony is a strategy that ranks domination as the preferred outcome, balancing prefers an outcome of deadlock, appeasement prefers settlement, and bandwagoning prefers submission. There are six variants of each GSO, depending on the ordering of the other three (less preferred) outcomes. All variations are shown in Figure 1 and numbered, 1 through 24, for ease of reference.

Foreign and domestic role demands on the selection and enactment of grand strategies help to account for the preference orderings in the game variants associated with the enactment of each type of strategy. Whether these role demands pertain to vital or secondary interests is shown on the left side of Figure 1. Role demands can act (and interact) as constraints on the role a state selects and on the variant a state selects as a role enactment strategy. The roles selected and enacted by Ego and Alter as members of a role dyad together construct the definition of the situation between them as an ordinal game of grand strategies with one or more equilibrium solutions. Role transition occurs in varying degrees when these roles change from those in the initial definition of the situation.

Role Demands (Interests)	Client/Rebel Identities			Partner/Rival Identities			Patron/Hegemon Identities		
	CO	CF	Rank	CO	CF	Rank	CO	CF	Rank
<b><u>Bandwagoning Strategies</u></b>									
Secondary	CO	3	4	CO	2	4	CO	2	4
	CF	1	2	CF	1	3	CF	3	1
Vital	CO	3	4	CO	1	4	CO	1	4
	CF	2	1	CF	2	3	CF	3	2
<b><u>Appeasement Strategies</u></b>									
Secondary	CO	4	3	CO	4	2	CO	4	2
	CF	1	2	CF	1	3	CF	3	1
Vital	CO	4	3	CO	4	1	CO	4	1
	CF	2	1	CF	2	3	CF	3	2
<b><u>Balancing Strategies</u></b>									
Secondary	CO	2	3	CO	3	2	CO	1	2
	CF	1	4	CF	1	4	CF	3	4
Vital	CO	1	3	CO	3	1	CO	2	1
	CF	2	4	CF	2	4	CF	3	4
<b><u>Hegemonic Strategies</u></b>									
Secondary	CO	2	3	CO	3	2	CO	1	2
	CF	4	1	CF	4	1	CF	4	3
Vital	CO	1	3	CO	3	1	CO	2	1
	CF	4	2	CF	4	2	CF	4	3
<b>Weaker</b>			<b>Equal</b>			<b>Stronger</b>			

**Figure 1. Taxonomy of Grand Strategy Orientations for Ego's Role Enactment**  
 Role Identities: Client/Rebel, Partner/Rival, Patron/Hegemon. Role Demands: Vital/Secondary Interests; Weaker/Equal/Stronger Power. Grand Strategies: Bandwagoning/Appeasement/Balancing/Hegemonic Strategies. Role Enactments: CO = Cooperation; CF = Conflict. Outcomes are ranked as preferences from 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). Grand Strategy Orientations (GSOs): #1-#24.

The sources of role transition thus include: changes in role demands (power/ interest distributions), changes in the role identities of cooperation (Client, Partner, Patron) or conflict (Rebel, Rival, Or Hegemon), and the cooperation (CO) or conflict (CF) role enactments exchanged as positive (+) or negative (-) cues between Ego and Alter as variants of bandwagoning, appeasement, balancing, and hegemonic Grand Strategy Orientations (Walker 2011, 2013; Walker and Marfleet 2013). The positive or negative cues represent information from each member of a role dyad regarding their expectations about the other member's behavior and also communicate the resolve associated with those expectations. Each member interprets cues as the enactment of role identities in the context of the role demands specified by the distributions of power and interests between them. We will also develop an argument, in the next two sections, that the openness of domestic political systems to external information (see Hermann and Hermann 1989; Rokeach 1960; Rosenau 1966; Kowert and Hermann 1997; Kowert 2002; Solingen 1998, 2007), and comparisons across domestic systems, can serve as another important source of cues for role enactment. The enactment of role identity is thus conditioned by foreign and domestic role demands, which together specify the receptivity of a state's decision unit to external information. Decision units in closed (inward-looking) systems are less receptive to external information than open (outward-looking) systems and more prone to making decisions that are less responsive to external role demands and more responsive to domestic role demands (Solvingen 1998, 2007).<sup>1</sup> This responsiveness very much depends on subjective judgments by

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<sup>1</sup> The application of this argument to the mechanisms of different kinds of decision units (predominant leader, single group, or multiple autonomous actors) is modeled and tested in Hermann and Hermann (1989).



political leaders and not merely on structural aspects of the international power distribution or of domestic political systems.

Role-taking and role-making interactions among three states considered as a triad are more complex and potentially unstable than between pairs of states as dyads. Changes in the relations between two members of a triad can create pressures for change between the remaining pairs of states (Schweller 1998; Crawford 2003). As in physics, solutions to such three-body problems can be approximated inductively, which is the task that we undertake in this paper. Our approach is to understand the changes in roles between a pair of states (a dyad) by reference to changes in roles between each member of the dyad and a third state, which together with the pair constitute a triad of states.

Two possible general models are of particular interest to us. One is an externally driven source of role transition in which the role and counter-role constituting relations between two States A | B are disturbed by "perturbations" emanating from a third State C. The other is an internally-driven source of role transition in which domestic changes within a given State A alter the equilibrium of role and counter-role between A & B, which have perturbation effects on the other two role sets B | C and A | C leading to role transitions across the three role sets {A | B, A | C, B | C}. *Perturbation analysis* is a mathematical approach employed by classical and quantum physicists to achieve an improvement to an approximate solution for an unsolvable problem by starting with a problem that has a determinate mathematical solution, e.g., a two-body problem, and applying it to a three-body problem by introducing the two-body solution plus a new "perturbation" term that improves the initial approximate solution to the three-body problem (Avrachenkov 2013). In this paper the two-body problem is a strategic dyad with

a determinate solution to an ordinal game between Ego and Alter, which is employed along with a "perturbation" term (international or domestic) to improve the solution to the relatively indeterminate, three-body problem posed by a strategic triad.<sup>2</sup> Although we do not formalize the perturbation analysis in this paper, we believe the concept offers a good approximation of the approach we take.

### **A Proof of Concept Argument: The Sino-Soviet-American Triad**

Consider the best-known and most widely studied international triad in recent memory: the unstable relationship between the United States, China, and the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Ashley 1980; Goldstein and Freeman 1990). In highly simplified and abstracted terms, their three-way Cold War relationship began with the US and the Soviet Union arrayed against each other as adversaries, and with China occupying an inferior position within the Soviet bloc. Even though the Chinese potential for returning to great power status that became manifest in the twenty-first century was mostly latent in the twentieth, it was nevertheless apparent as China became a nuclear power that its size and potential set it apart from almost all other states.

Let's begin by considering only the US-Soviet relationship as a two-body problem. In general, their mutual enmity was overdetermined, but this is only one aspect of role taking. The enactment of this role, for example, might entail either cooperation or conflict. Consider their interaction in a crisis characterized by the game of chicken. With two Nash equilibria, and three nonmyopic equilibria (NME) defined

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<sup>2</sup> See Goldstein and Freeman (1990: 67-84) and Brams' (1994: 8-18, 183-206) for a general discussion of the problems created by the expansion from a 2 x 2 game to a larger game.

by Brams (1994) Theory of Moves (TOM), the indeterminacy of the game is resolved within the TOM framework by applying two principles: (1) that the starting point of the game matters, and (2) that game play avoids endless cycling (Brams 1994: 130-138). Thus, if one player begins from an initially dominant position, and if the other player will not make a move that leads the game to cycle back to the starting position, then this starting position is a nonmyopic equilibrium point in a game of Chicken. Invoking the obvious historical analogy, once the United States was able to establish a position during the Cuban Missile Crisis that would lead only to further undesirable escalation (cycling) in the event of a Soviet challenge, Nikita Khrushchev sought a way to defuse the crisis, ending the impasse.<sup>3</sup>

In this two-player game—and, in fact, in all such two-player games—TOM indicates at least one NME.<sup>4</sup> But this is not necessarily the case in a three-player game. The three-party game clearly began with China in the Soviet orbit. Yet even in the midst of war in Korea and later Vietnam, tensions in Sino-Soviet relations were apparent. These tensions came not only from their own territorial disputes, but also directly from their role relationship as the Soviets assumed the mantle of Communist leadership while China sought the role of partner and equal. Although Americans tended to view the Communist bloc as monolithic, Lüthi (2008) argues that Chinese and Soviet interpretations of Marxist ideology differed to such a great degree that they were

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<sup>3</sup> Brams (1994: 133) holds that, "although this thinking may be more or less correct, there are good reasons to believe that U.S. policy makers viewed the game not to be Chicken at all, at least as far as they ranked the possible states." He goes on to suggest another 2x2 game as an alternative model of the Cuban missile crisis.

<sup>4</sup> A nonmyopic equilibrium is defined by Brams (1994: 224) as follows: "in a two-person game, a nonmyopic equilibrium is a state from which neither player, anticipating all possible rational moves and countermoves from the initial state, would have an incentive to depart unilaterally because the departure would eventually lead to a worse, or at least not a better, outcome."

themselves a source of deep tension in Sino-Soviet relations. For all of these reasons, the United States offered China in particular an enticing opportunity to seek concessions from both sides, particularly after the Brezhnev Doctrine and subsequent Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 rang alarm bells in Beijing (Rea 1975).

Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong's 1972 Shanghai Communiqué set the stage for China to pursue this strategy, culminating in the 1979 normalization of relations with the United States and the American withdrawal of diplomatic recognition from Taiwan. There were extensive domestic hurdles to overcome in both China and the US (see Ross 1995), and these soon pushed China and the US further apart. Nevertheless, and despite the Soviet Union's own period of *détente* with the United States, the Soviet leadership was duly alarmed by the Sino-American overtures (see Su 1983). As Goldstein and Freeman (1990) have argued more formally, this "three-way street" was inherently subject to destabilizing shocks.

While the "three-body problem" in physics does not have a set of determinate mathematical solutions for modeling the entire range of relations among three moving objects—e.g., the sun, the moon, and the earth—approximations are possible with different strategies. One is to reduce the three-body problem to a sequence or series of two-body problems, subsequently expanded to "perturbated" three-body problems. This approach informs the strategy we will employ in this paper. Another approach is to change the mathematics from the algebra and differential calculus employed in three-body physics problems to rule-based, mathematical relationships such as the rules governing signed graph theory (Harary 1961, 1969). This reduction from interval to nominal binary levels of measurement permits a determinate set of mathematical solutions in the form of balanced triads as final states (equilibria) for three interacting states in world politics (Walker 2011; Walker and Malici 2011). Although we do not

formally apply this approach to identify triadic equilibrium states, we also employ signed graph theory as a helpful expedient.

The remainder of this paper proceeds within this conceptual framework, relying on the assumption that provisional equilibria are possible in three-body systems that approximate simplified, binary levels of measurement. These conditions may be affected by domestic politics as well as the international environment. In the following section, we offer several hypotheses about the perturbative conditions in domestic politics that create a suitable environment for NMEs to emerge in three-body systems at the international level.

### **Reducing Indeterminacy**

Multiple lessons can be drawn from the example of the United States-China-Soviet Union triangle. At a very general level, it serves as a potent illustration of the three-body problem in international relations. None of these three states could count on a stable and enduring alliance, or even close cooperation, with either of the other two during the Cold War. The state left out of an alliance of two is strongly motivated to offer incentives to one of the two allied states to "jump ship" and form a new alliance with it instead. This process can repeat itself indefinitely, and the Cold War showed some evidence of just this pattern.

One might counter that the US-China-Soviet Union triad was never so fluid as the above summary might suggest. The binary dynamics of East-West ideological confrontation meant that, however much Chinese and Soviet leaders might distrust one another, however much they might chafe at the competition for leadership of the communist world, and however severe their border disputes, neither could easily form

a real alliance with the United States. They could—and did—threaten rapprochement with the US for advantage in their dealings with each other, but neither could credibly abandon the communist bloc. Nor would domestic politics in the United States allow such an alliance without at least a fig leaf of progress toward democracy. In practice, therefore, a domestic politics of institutional and ideological compatibility restricted the range of possible alliance arrangements internationally.

Under great duress (as during World War II), such compunctions might be set aside, but such arrangements are very hard to sustain. This is the chief insight we wish to explore: provisionally stable solutions to three-body problems may emerge when either domestic or foreign political constraints reduce the degrees of freedom in a state's foreign policy. In the remainder of this paper, we will focus primarily on domestic constraints.

We hypothesize that domestic constraints may operate in several ways. First, as the above example suggests, incompatibility of domestic political institutions works against international alliance formation (cf. Kowert and Thies 2013). In particular, democracies will find it difficult to sustain close alliance relationships with non-democracies (Gibler and Wolford 2006).

- H<sub>1</sub> In multi-body systems, sustained alliances are unlikely among states with incompatible domestic political institutions.
- H<sub>2</sub> In multi-body systems, sustained alliances are unlikely among states with deeply embedded but clashing socio-political ideologies.

Institutional and ideological incompatibilities, as constraints on alliance behavior, are related both conceptually and empirically. From a Kantian perspective, one of the principle virtues of republican political systems is that they promote trust within a republican zone of peace (Doyle 1986).

Although democratic institutions may work on their own to constrain leaders, the Kantian interpretation—and the one supported by the preponderance of the literature on the democratic peace—is that it is their ideological similarity that creates a special relationship among democracies (Russett and Oneal 2001). This may constitute a positive inducement for cooperation. But for our purposes it is sufficient that it operates as a constraint on prejudicial foreign policies among democracies.

Even when there are no obvious incompatibilities among political institutions or ideologies, however, there is no guarantee of stable alliance arrangements. This is the three-body problem in its simplest form: the external (international) dynamics of a three-state system create an ongoing incentive to change alliance partners. When internal political coalitions themselves depend on support from an external partner, however, these incentives may be removed or reduced. So long as the Chinese civil war raged and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) received crucial support from the Soviet Union, there was little chance of Sino-American rapprochement. After the new People's Republic of China stabilized its borders and Mao consolidated his authority, however, the likelihood of conflict with the Soviet Union increased dramatically.

H<sub>3</sub> In multi-body systems, states whose dominant political coalitions are dependent on external alliance partners will be unlikely to abandon those partners. A shift toward inward-looking political coalitions will reduce the likelihood of stable external alliances

Emerging from civil war, of course, the Communist Party of China (CPC) was not only institutionally dependent on Soviet support, but there was a clear imbalance in power and resources between the two countries. Yet even weaker partners in an international alliance can find ways to play on the fears of their patron state. Germany and Japan were both able to leverage American fears of any rapprochement with the Soviet Union, for example, and to establish a certain policy latitude as a result (see

Weber and Kowert 2007). Conversely, even when China began to pull away from the Soviet Union, it was not so much because its military capabilities had increased, but rather because the CPC had secured its position domestically.

In general, then, we anticipate that domestic politics can serve as a constraint, or in weaker cases as a brake, on international realignments among states. Conversely, releasing this brake may lead to instability and role transition. These dynamics can take two forms, impacting the relations between a pair of allies either directly or indirectly through the effects of changes within a third state on the relations of two other states. In advancing this claim, we are merely repeating arguments made by many other scholars.

However, this paper is an effort to apply such arguments more systematically to the three-body problem in international relations as one part of extending role theory by developing a general model of role-making and role-taking in international relations. To this end, we argue that several factors—notably the role of institutional politics among states and coalition politics within states—can serve to reduce the indeterminacy of the basic three-body problem and to permit a deeper understanding of role transition patterns among members of a dyadic or triadic role set.

### **The US-Japan-South Korea Security Triangle**

In the case of relations among the US, the PRC and the USSR, both domestic politics and ideology worked to simplify the instability of the relationship so that role transition in the form of rapprochement between the US and China could only go so far. Despite antagonisms between China and the Soviet Union, these constraints reinforced an East-West polarity. In short, domestic politics worked to simplify international role-



taking and limit role transition. This case has suggested the superficial plausibility of our arguments and acts as a preliminary "proof of concept."

In the case of US-Japan-South Korea (ROK) relations, in contrast, domestic politics are increasingly working to complicate rather than to simplify role taking. Although this triad does not contradict our general argument—if features of domestic politics can serve to reduce uncertainty in international role taking, then they might also have the opposite effect, increasing uncertainty and destabilizing role relationships—the US-Japan-ROK triad also illustrates the opposite effect of domestic politics on international role taking compared with the earlier story of the Sino-Soviet-American triad. As a matter of case selection, this is no accident. We are sensitive to the tendency of most case studies to consider only confirming cases (*modus ponens*). If certain domestic political arrangements may facilitate stability in international role taking, then the absence of those arrangements should lead to greater instability (*modus tollens*). The US-Japan-ROK triad, as it has evolved over the course of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, is an example of the latter sort of case and, for this reason, a good test of our argument.

The remainder of this paper examines the three-way relationship among the United States, Japan, and South Korea (with additional reference to China) in the postwar era in order to probe the plausibility of the three hypotheses advanced in the previous section, and of H<sub>3</sub> in particular. We will focus especially on inflection points in the history of this East Asian triad, moments when its internal role relationships were challenged in some fashion. We begin with the postwar establishment of these relationships in the context of war on the Korean peninsula and general US supremacy in East Asia. The economic rise of Japan in the 1970s and 1980s provided the next major

shock to these three-body systems. It was also toward the end of this period (the late 1980s) that South Korean democratization began to lay the foundation for another change. As economic malaise took hold in Japan while Chinese and South Korean growth accelerated, we have entered a third phase of potential instability within this system.

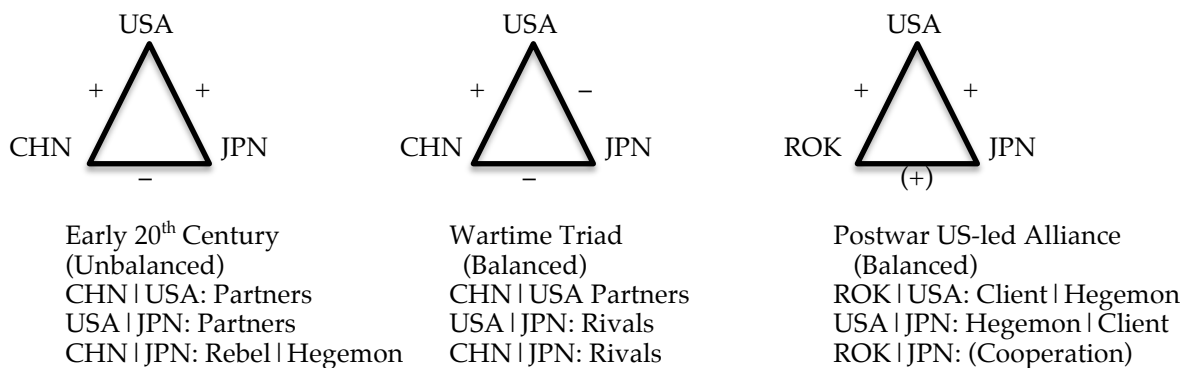
### *Period I. Early Postwar US Dominance*

Historically, the roles adopted by the kingdoms and empires of East Asia were defined with respect to China as the region's dominant power. Where kingdoms and other forms of large-scale political organization arose, they mostly found it advisable to pay tribute to the Chinese core. If they had the power to mount a direct challenge instead—after the rise of the Tibetan empire in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, for example, or the Mongol Empire in the 13<sup>th</sup> century—China was the object of their challenge. British and Russian colonialism combined with the decline of the Qing to change this pattern beginning in the nineteenth century. After Japan's brief rise to regional dominance in the early twentieth century, its subsequent defeat established the United States as the predominant regional power in Asia as in other parts of the world. The conclusion of civil war in China also meant that China would gradually resume its role as a crucial player within the regional system. Other powers meanwhile were rapidly on the decline as France left Indochina and Britain held on to only a few key outposts (and those only until the end of the century).

In order to put in historical perspective the transition and evolution of roles and counter-roles among South Korea, Japan, and the United States, we begin with a brief review of relations among them leading up to World War II. This review also introduces the notation conventions for signed graph theory, which facilitates tracing

the structural changes that generated the postwar system of relations among them. In the 1930s, Japan occupied Korea, making them a single node in the Sino-U.S.-Japanese strategic triad shown in Figure 3. China is also a single node in this figure, although its internal dynamics involved a triadic confrontation among nationalist, communist, and warlord agents who controlled different parts of China and shared an opposition to Japanese encroachment from Korea into China. The US, meanwhile, tended to consider Japan a stabilizing influence on the mainland, at least for a time.

The early twentieth century was therefore a period of considerable flux in the roles of major East Asian powers after a long interval of comparative stability. A decade of war culminating in the Japanese defeat in 1945 swept away the prewar Japan-China-United States triad and established a new international order in which major nodes included a unified People’s Republic of China (sans Taiwan), a divided Korea, a subordinate Japan, and a victorious United States. Figure 3 depicts this evolving regional subsystem and illustrates the role transitions between agents that span these three time periods.



**Figure 3. Triadic Relations in East Asia during Three Time Periods**

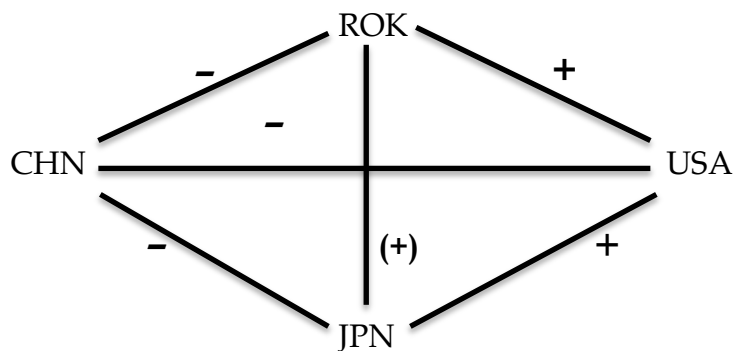
Cooperation (+); Conflict (-). Unbalanced triads have an odd number of negative (-) relations while balanced triads have an even number of negative (-) relations (Harary 1960).

The roles in the China-Japan role set change from Rebel and Hegemon, respectively, to mutual cold war rivals cemented in place by their alliances to the Soviet Union and the United States. Japan's role changed in this re-alignment from a great power in the international system to a defeated major member and a U.S. Client. The U.S. role toward Japan evolved from a Partner at the beginning of the century to a wartime Rival and then to a post-war Hegemon as an occupation power. South Korea emerged as a novice member of the international system and became a Client of the United States. As allies of the United States against the Sino-Soviet bloc in the early years of the cold war, the logic of signed graph theory suggests that South Korea and Japan should also align (+) with each other against China (and the Soviet Union). As we shall discuss, however, a postwar domestic politics of "restoration versus atonement" has made this relationship fraught.

For Japan and South Korea, foreign policy roles since the end of World War II have been defined above all by their relationships with the United States and China (also to a more limited extent the Soviet Union). After 1945, they were each cast in the role of Clients by their alliance with the United States. Domestic role demands initially had little to do with the adoption of the Client role, because their political systems were "penetrated" (Rosenau 1966; Hanrieder 1967) with relatively little domestic autonomy and high receptivity to cues from their postwar military occupier. The United States adopted the role of Hegemon in its capacity as the agent of socialization for these two states into their new roles as a novice (South Korea) or demotion from a great power to a minor member (Japan) in the emerging East Asian regional international system after World War II.

In the first instance, therefore, international role taking in the East Asian regional subsystem was a matter of foreign rather than domestic policy. South Korea and Japan

were tightly bound to the United States and reliant on it for their external security. As China resumed its role in this system, its relationships with South Korea, Japan, and the United States were more conflictual than cooperative (the indeterminate dynamics of the US-China-Soviet Union system notwithstanding). These bilateral relationships are illustrated as a signed graph in Figure 4. The Soviet Union could be inserted into this graph in China's place without changing any of the other signs, incidentally, but we will focus here and in what follows on China's interaction with the other three countries.



**Figure 4: Signed Graph of Postwar East Asian Strategic Triads**  
 Data Source: See power map of strategic dyads in Appendix I.

In the terms of the Grand Strategy Orientations identified in Figure 1, Japan and South Korea both initially pursued *Bandwagoning* strategies from the upper-left portion of Figure 1 as US Clients, while the United States pursued a *Hegemonic* strategy from the lower right portion as a Hegemon toward Japan and South Korea. Japan as a disarmed major member demoted to minor member status and South Korea as an emerging novice and small state member both initially preferred subordinate relationships with the United States as a great power—not necessarily in a permanent or existential sense, but in the specific context of the postwar East Asian regional subsystem given the devastation of their economies, their general reliance on the United States as an occupying power, and the absence of any other viable security alternatives.

The hypothesized grand strategies and associated role enactment games for the ROK | USA dyad and Japan | USA dyad appear in Figure 5. The steps for specifying the hypothesized choice from among the GSOs in Figure 1 for each of the players were: first, to decide on Cooperation or Conflict grand strategies; then, second, to pick in Figure 1 the variant of a grand strategy (Client or Rebel/Patron or Hegemon) consistent with their interests (Vital or Secondary) and their status as Weaker, Equal to, or Stronger than Alter.

South Korea and Japan were both constrained by their weakness vis-à-vis the US to choose from Column 1 in Figure 1. Clearly, in both cases, this relationship affected their vital interests. Fundamentally, moreover, both preferred cooperative strategies toward the US. They may also have preferred for the US to play as benign and cooperative a role as possible, but the majority of postwar Japanese and Korean elites (at least the majority to whom the US gave power) preferred to cooperate rather than oppose the US even if the latter took a more assertive or dominant approach toward Japan and South Korea. It is important to keep in mind that *conflictual* in the context of this game does not signify armed conflict between the US and its Clients. Rather, a conflictual strategy (CF) for the US would be one that prioritized and asserted US interests over those of Japan or South Korea rather than seeking compromise. Unsurprisingly, occupation authorities put in place Korean and Japanese leaders who themselves accepted and supported this US dominance, at least for a time. US dominance (CF in this game) did have the double virtue of keeping the US actively engaged in the protection of these states while, at the same time, suppressing internal dissent. Although this would change over time, very quickly in Japan, it remained preferable for many early Cold War South Korean elites to a more egalitarian relationship that would also have meant tougher choices at home. In these

circumstances, US dominance was the security guarantee, and so the ROK government continued for a time to prefer subordination (CO,CF) even over cooperation (CO,CO). The resulting strategy, for Japan and South Korea, is a variant of Bandwagoning identified as GSO #4 in Figure 1. They were also constrained, as shown in Figure 4, to cooperative relationships with each other by virtue of their subordination within the US-dominated triad.<sup>5</sup>

	<b># 24</b>				<b># 24</b>				<b># 24</b>		
	(NC)	Alter (US)			(NC)	Alter (US)			(G2)	Alter (US)	
		CO	CF			CO	CF			CO	CF
<b>Ego (ROK) # 4</b>		3,2	<b>4,4*</b>	<b>Ego (JPN) # 4</b>		3,2	<b>4,4*</b>	<b>Ego (JPN) # 10</b>		4,2 →	<b>"3,4"*</b>
	CF	2,1	1,3		CF	2,1	1,3		↑	↓	
									CF	2,1 ←	1,3
	Ego Role: Weak Client (-, <)				Ego Role: Weak Client (-, <)				Ego Role: Weak Partner (-, <)		
	Alter Role: Strong Hegemon (-, >)				Alter Role: Strong Hegemon (-, >)				Alter Role: Strong Hegemon (-, >)		
	<b>I. Postwar ROK   US</b>				<b>II. Early Postwar JPN   US</b>				<b>III. JPN   US 1950s-1960s</b>		

**Figure 5: Intersections of ROK-US and Japan-US Grand Strategy Orientations during the Era of Strong American Dominance**

Outcomes are ranked from 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). CO = Cooperation; CF = Conflict. Games: G-numbers for conflict games are from Brams (1994); NC are No Conflict games where both players rank the same outcome highest (4,4). Role Demands: Vital (-) and Secondary (+). Interests: Weaker (<), Equal (=), Stronger (>) Power. Initial States are in quotation marks. Nash myopic equilibria are asterisked; Brams nonmyopic equilibria are in bold.

From the US perspective, playing a Hegemonic strategy meant that the preferred relationship with both Japan and the Republic of Korea was one of American dominance and subordination on the part of the United States' East Asian Clients (CF,CO). Even for the US, vital interests were at stake, and thus the US adopted a Hegemon variant GSO (#24) at the bottom-right corner of Figure 1. The intersection of the roles and corresponding strategies for relations between the US and both South Korea and Japan are identical and shown as the first and second 2x2 ordinal games in

<sup>5</sup> This was far from a moot point since the new South Korean government under Syngmann Rhee would have preferred a more antagonistic relationship with Japan, and formal peace negotiations between the two US allies went nowhere (Yang 1999). We depict this relationship as de facto cooperation (+) in Figure 4, which is the predicted relationship that balances the US-ROK-JPN triad according to graph theory.

Figure 5. The intersection of strategies constructs the same game with (4,4) as the nonmyopic equilibrium that defines each ally's role as a Client in relation to the US counter-role as the US Hegemon.

In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, therefore, Japan and South Korea embraced identical role enactment strategies in their relationships with the United States. Deference to the United States was the only option as a practical matter, and there were reasons to prefer it both internationally (to secure American support) and domestically (to suppress dissident groups).

Because the Japanese government was able to secure its domestic position far more quickly than the South Korean government, however, it would soon be in a position to prefer a more equal, rather than purely subordinate, relationship with the US. Japanese postwar politics were thus rapidly characterized by the dynamics of Appeasement with the US, in which Japan sought to cooperate with the US and to give Americans what they required while preserving as much latitude for itself as possible and working as quickly as possible to regain a more equal footing (see the third 2x2 game in Figure 5). This tension resulted in some role strain (difficulty in role enactment) for Japan's conservative government. The outcome of this new game (GSO #10 for Japan and #24 for the US) is predicted to be submission by Japan and domination by the US. Unlike the immediate postwar period, this new game permitted clockwise "cycling"<sup>6</sup> from (3,4) by Japan, which made it more difficult for the US to maintain the (CO,CF) nonmyopic equilibrium of (3,4), Japanese submission and US domination.

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<sup>6</sup> Brams (1994: 221) defines a cyclic game as follows: "A 2 x 2 strictly ordinal game is ... cyclic if moves either in a clockwise or counterclockwise direction never give a player its best payoff when it has the next move." A player who can cycle continuously from the nonmyopic equilibrium to a cell with a better payoff with the next move can prolong the final outcome indefinitely so long as s/he is willing to spend the transaction cost (see Brams 1994: 27-28, 88-94).



Once Japan's new constitution was in place in May 1947, Japanese leaders very quickly discovered some leeway to play on US fears of Russian influence, and they used this leeway primarily to disengage Japan from further regional entanglement. The Yoshida Doctrine, formulated by Japan's first major postwar prime minister, was notable as an accomplishment of role-taking both domestically and internationally. Domestically, Yoshida Shigeru's concern was to create institutional constraints limiting a resurgence of militarism (which, it was evident, had led Japan badly astray in the previous two decades) while at the same suppressing a political reaction that forced Japan to the left. Yoshida laid the foundation for the emergence of the Liberal Democratic Party (Japan's conservative party), for a patronage politics that cemented its influence, and for institutional bargains that preserved the role of a conservative bureaucracy that dominated the Japanese state (Dower 1979). In this way, Yoshida managed to preserve the influence of a centralized and comparatively strong state over Japanese society, and in particular over political forces such as labor unions that he mistrusted.

At the same time, Yoshida's quick embrace of the MacArthur constitution was a deft political compromise. Although it did not give conservatives everything they wanted (and these regrets are an important refrain in contemporary Japanese politics), the constitution and the defense treaty that followed with the United States had the enormous virtue of cementing a US-Japan alliance *without* committing Japan to rearmament. As the United States turned its attention to war in Korea, it soon regretted the stipulation that Japan would not re-arm. For Yoshida, on the other hand, Article 9 (the peace clause) was exactly what he needed to hold the US at arms length and to prevent entanglement in another war while turning his attention instead to economic re-development (see Pyle 1992; Weber and Kowert 2007).

In general, then, Yoshida was able to operate within the constraints of American dominance to get much of what he wanted: political arrangements at home that preserved the influence of conservatives, and the state more generally, while excluding militarists; and a defensive alliance with the US that committed Japan to nothing and expressly forbade re-militarization. The domestic and international objectives reinforced each other and, together, defined a role for the Japanese government that has persisted in its general contours until the present.

If Yoshida experienced great success in carving out a certain degree of autonomy for Japan, and in putting in place the foundation for the "1955 System" of conservative political dominance at home, Japan was nevertheless constrained to a Client role in its foreign policy. The domestic political costs of the 1960 Security Treaty revision perfectly illustrate this status. Although the opportunity to renegotiate the Security Treaty initially held the promise of placing US-Japan relations on a somewhat more equal basis (if not yet quite that of Partners), these hopes were quickly dashed by the left-right rift within Japan over the treaty negotiations (Packard 1966).

By the time Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke finally managed to push through a treaty that committed the US to little more than a vague promise of "consultation" with Japan before the use of American bases on Japanese territory, the issue had grown so contentious that he was obliged to resign after the Diet approved the treaty and Eisenhower was forced to cancel his planned visit to Japan in the wake of massive anti-American protests in Tokyo. Clearly there were domestic political costs to be paid as a result of Japan's subordinate international status.

In South Korea, meanwhile, Syngman Rhee, operated at a similar nexus of domestic and international politics, though with concerns that were even more pressing than those faced by Yoshida and Kishi. Direct US military administration ended in 1948,

but the South Korean military dominated internal politics, excepting the brief interlude of the Second Republic (1960-1961), until the advent of the Sixth Republic in 1987. Even the first president of the Sixth Republic, Roh Tae-woo, had a military background. Perhaps this is unsurprising given South Korea's far less stable security environment and the persistence of a state of war with the North. For Yoshida, the threat of the left was real enough, but in South Korea it was existential. This meant that Rhee was completely unable to achieve the sort of latitude that Japan enjoyed in its relations with the United States. South Korea and the Rhee government in particular were far more dependent on American support. Whereas domestic political arrangements in Japan grew out of a bargain that held the US at a certain distance and allowed the LDP to dominate patronage politics internally, both Rhee and the South Korean military relied on the US. In fact, foreign aid from the United States "constituted a third of [the] total [South Korean] budget in 1954, rose to 58.4 percent in 1956, and was approximately 38 percent of the budget in 1960" (Savad and Shaw 1997: 36). It is worth keeping in mind, moreover, that the South was less industrialized than the North in this era, and this further exacerbated its economic dependency on the US. For all of these reasons, the key political coalition in South Korea was *external* (with the US) rather than internal (as was increasingly the case in Japan). As a matter of fairly crude generalization, therefore, the political coalitions that dominated South Korean politics in the early Cold War era were closely linked to the military and, as such, externally dependent on the United States. This arrangement bound South Korea tightly within what Katzenstein (2005) called the "American imperium."

Katzenstein's phrase, "the American imperium," is a pithy summary of American role taking not only in the context of the US-Japan-South Korea triad, but in US relations with many other countries as well from 1945 onward. Having finally and

reluctantly assumed the mantle of international leadership, American elites gradually but overwhelmingly came to see this as the natural and inevitable role for the United States. Internationalism replaced isolationism as the new foreign policy consensus in the United States (Holsti and Rosenau 1986; cf. Hartz 1955). But it was not only a more thorough internationalism that set the new US foreign policy apart from that of the republic's first 150 years. Internationalism was accompanied by a conviction that the United States must play a distinct, hegemonic role in the postwar world. John F. Kennedy drew on the inspired phrasing of his compatriot, Massachusetts Bay Colony founder John Winthrop, and on the imagery of the Sermon on the Mount to declare that the United States must be a city upon a hill, serving as an example to other countries. More succinctly, the US must be a leader. Charles Kindleberger (1973) fleshed out the intellectual underpinnings for this conviction in response to fears of a new Great Depression. By the time Robert Keohane (1984) formalized this notion as *hegemonic stability theory*, it had already become canonical among US elites.

### *Period II: The Rise of Japan*

As Japan became the "country that could say no," it entered a new era in its relations with the United States (Ishihara and Morita 1989). Perhaps this era could be said to have begun with Prime Minister Satō Eisaku's enunciation of the three non-nuclear principles in 1967.<sup>7</sup> Symbolically, at least, these principles distanced Japan from US nuclear deterrence, one of the linchpins of American grand strategy. But the

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<sup>7</sup> The Three Non-nuclear Principles held that nuclear weapons would not be produced in Japan, possessed by Japan, or introduced into Japan. The third principle was made somewhat moot by American refusal to comment on whether US ships or warplanes in Japan carried nuclear armament. In 2010, Japanese officials confirmed the existence of secret pacts with the US whereby the Japanese government assented to the presence of American nuclear weapons in Japan (Fackler 2010).

underlying development that sustained an evolution of Japan-US relations was the growth of Japan's economic clout.

As the decade of the 1970s began, Japan had finally reached rough parity with France and West Germany in real per capita GDP (Tipton 2008: 192). US spending on the war in Vietnam had undeniably been an economic boon to Japan. By the 1970s, however, strategic decisions taken by Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) were having an independent effect (Johnson 1982). Japan celebrated its new technological prowess at the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka. By 1976, Japan, with three percent of the world's population, accounted for ten percent of global economic output (Andressen 2002).

Meanwhile, in 1971, President Nixon took the United States off the gold standard (without bothering to consult Japan). The Nixon Shock, and the oil shocks that followed, encouraged sentiments of self-reliance in Japanese foreign economic policy. Okinawa's reversion to Japanese control, also in 1971, removed another important symbol of Japanese subordination to the United States. The seeds of later political developments were sown in this era. As the decade of the 1960s came to an end, a series of high profile environmental lawsuits over industrial pollution captured headlines (Tipton 2008: 199-200). Then, at almost the same time that Nixon was undone by the Watergate scandal, Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei succumbed to a bribery scandal involving Lockheed Corporation.

Tellingly, the Prime Minister's successor, Miki Takeo, took office at the head of a "clean government" movement. But Tanaka retained his seat in the Diet where he controlled the LDP faction that brokered key leadership positions for the next decade and eventually brought Nakasone Yasuhiro to power in 1982. Although Japan would

effectively remain a single party democracy (Pempel 1990) throughout this period, the seeds of public dissatisfaction with the LDP had taken root.

The 1980s brought the apotheosis of Japanese economic power. This era was bracketed by the publication of Ezra Vogel's *Japan as Number One* and, a decade later, Ishihara and Morita's (1989) *The Japan that Can Say "No,"* the latter coming just before the bottom fell out of Japan's bubble economy. At its peak, real estate speculation drove up land values, particularly in Tokyo, to absurd levels. The value of the land under the imperial palace in Tokyo was estimated, at this time, to be equivalent to the value of all land in California (Kindleberger and Aliber 2011: 173). By the summer of 1989, the world's eight largest banks were all Japanese (Frantz 1989).

Japan's capabilities grew explosively during this era. And Ishihara and Morita's (1989) point, of course, was that its military capabilities were increasing, at least implicitly, along with its economic capabilities. This in itself led to a shift in Japan's role enactment with the United States. Although neither Japan nor the United States' basic strategies changed within this dyad, the game variations played by each changed as their overall capabilities approached parity, particularly in economic terms. Each became less tolerant of conflictual strategies enacted by alter. Put another way, there were greater demands for reciprocity in their relations. For the United States, this particularly meant reciprocity in economic relations, greater access to the Japanese market, and a reduction in the dyadic trade imbalance. In Japan, slowly at first but picking up momentum after Nakasone took office, it meant a cautious desire for diplomatic reciprocity that would give Japan an independent presence in world affairs, while continuing to pledge strategic support to the US. As the LDP consolidated its power within Japan, moreover, domestic politics meant intra-party factional politics.

The key political coalitions within Japan were, by this time, almost completely inward-looking.

The same could not be said in South Korea, where Cold War security politics and an evident US-ROK power imbalance still dominated the political scene. As in Japan-US relations, however, the 1970s ushered in a series of shocks to the ROK-US alliance. President Nixon's decision to pull 20,000 US troops out of South Korea in 1971 was a slightly-more-dramatic-than-usual instance of a recurring theme: the ROK government's fear of abandonment. President Park Chung-hee, who led South Korea from 1961 until his assassination in 1979, was prompted by the troop withdrawal to declare that the American presence in South Korea was "absolutely necessary until we have developed our own capability to cope successfully with North Korea" (*New York Times*, June 24, 1970; quoted in Snyder 2009: 4). Later in the same decade, President Carter attempted even more extensive cuts, citing the poor human rights record of Park's government. The North Korean threat continued to make the government in Seoul dependent on the United States in a way that Japan was only briefly during the era of direct occupation. Throughout this period, the United States also remained by far South Korea's largest international trading partner (Kang 2003).

When President Park was suddenly assassinated in 1979 by the Chief of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, the resulting political instability prompted a military coup d'état by General Chun Doo-hwan only six days after Prime Minister Choi Kyu-hah succeeded Park as president. In the following year, pro-democracy protests broke out all over the country, prompting Chun to declare martial law on May 17, 1980. The next day, a protest in Gwangju led by university students was brutally suppressed, with nearly 200 fatalities. The Gwangju Massacre became a cause célèbre for the democracy movement. When a Seoul National University student died in police

custody in 1987, public outrage led to massive protests that prompted a constitutional referendum and the inauguration of the Sixth Republic with a direct presidential election.

Although the 1970s and 1980s were characterized by undemocratic regimes in South Korea, therefore, they nevertheless brought an important political transition. Even before the ROK's shift toward democracy in 1987, a more subtle change had taken place. Internal politics, which had been utterly dominated by war with the North and heavily influenced by the United States, took on an internal life of its own. The US still played a crucial role, to be sure, and the ROK government remained dependent on this alliance for its external security. But the shift toward democracy also marked a shift towards an internally driven politics of corruption reform and economic rejuvenation.

The politics of clean government and economic growth were familiar to Americans of the same era, of course. The Watergate Scandal propelled first Gerald Ford and then Jimmy Carter into the presidency under the banner of restoring Americans' faith in their government. The decade that began with the collapse of the gold standard also saw massive increases in energy prices and the rapid decline of the US auto industry, and concluded with a humiliating hostage crisis in Iran. It was an era that begged for a new politics of American strength (Winter 1987).

At the same time, the failure of the war in Vietnam meant that the desire for American strength was gradually decoupled from the willingness to translate this strength into support for American designs on an international stage. Instead, the purpose of American power shifted from institution building to freedom: freedom from the Soviet threat, freedom from perceived inequities in trade relationships, and freedom from humiliating encounters like the failed hostage rescue attempt and, more generally,



the Vietnam War. This led gradually to an interesting dualism in US strategic thought: internationalism was on the decline, but a commitment to American leadership was not.

To put this dynamic in the terms of Figure 1 and the four basic grand strategy role orientations, the US embrace of a hegemonic role did not change. US politicians continued as ever to talk of the necessity of American leadership. But the purposes to which this leadership would be put changed and grew more restrictive. For many, the purpose of this leadership was forthrightly self-serving. The rationale for American power was to restore American power itself. Even those who saw the advent of new forms of American "soft power" (Nye 1990) envisioned this power primarily as a mechanism for advancing US interests.

As a result, the US was less tolerant of international relationships that did not clearly serve US interests. The preferential treatment in international trade accorded Japan and South Korea would have to give way as the US enactment of the Hegemon role shifted to a new Grand Strategy Orientation of rivalry vis-à-vis Japan (compare Figure 5 to Figure 6). Lacking the capability to enact a Strong Hegemonic strategy, the US reverted to a Hegemonic strategy (GSO #23) of ranking preferences consistent with an ordinary Hegemon in which it was possible to be coupled with an Alter of equal capability.

At the same time that the US began its retreat from unequivocal internationalism, a domestic political realignment was also underway. The election of Ronald Reagan heralded what Stephen Skowronek (1993) has called a new cycle in American political time. Many forces were at work in this realignment, including the decline of labor unions, the political emergence of evangelical Christians, and the aftereffects of the 1964

Civil Rights Act and the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*.<sup>8</sup> Whatever the causes, these shifts set the stage for a more inward-looking political environment in the United States in the decades that followed.

In general, although the international relations of Japan, South Korea, and the United States remained relatively cooperative in this middle period, the rise of Japan and decline of the United States shifted somewhat the game variants each perceived itself as playing to enact their roles. Japan preferred an Appeasement role leading to mutual cooperation with the US, but it had gained the economic clout to insist on something in return (and to ignore US entreaties for greater access to Japanese markets if it chose). The US continued to prefer a dominant relationship towards both Japan and South Korea, and it also grew less tolerant toward perceived defections. The issue of reciprocity thus became central to US-Japan relations.

<p><b># 23</b> (G27) <b>Alter (US)</b> CO    4,3   ← 1,4 CO</p>	<p><b># 20</b> (G31) <b>Alter (US)</b> CO    "4,3" → 1,4 CO</p>	<p><b># 23</b> (NC) <b>Alter (US)</b> CO    3,3    "4,4" * CO</p>
<p><b>Ego (JPN)# 11 ↑</b>    <b>↑</b> CF    2,1 ← "3,2" *</p>	<p><b>Ego (JPN)# 11 ↑</b>    <b>↓</b> CF    2,2 ← 3,1</p>	<p><b>Ego (ROK)# 4</b> CF    2,1    1,2</p>
<p>Ego Role: Partner (-, =) Alter Role: Hegemon (-, =) <b>I. JPN   US 1970s-1980s</b></p>	<p>Ego Role: Partner (-, =) Alter Role: Hegemon (+, =) <b>II. US Secondary Interests</b></p>	<p>Ego Role: Weak Client (-, &lt;) Alter Role: Hegemon (-, =) <b>III. ROK   US 1970s-1980s</b></p>

**Figure 6: Role Transitions and Role Strains Affecting Grand Strategies in US-Japan and US-ROK Relations in the 1970s and 1980s.**

Outcomes are ranked from 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). CO = Cooperation; CF = Conflict. Games: G-numbers for conflict games are from Brams (1994); NC are No Conflict games where both players rank the same outcome highest (4,4). Role Demands: Vital (-) and Secondary (+). Interests: Weaker (<), Equal (=), Stronger (>) Power. Initial States are in quotation marks. Nash myopic equilibria are asterisked; Brams nonmyopic equilibria are in bold.

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of ideological shifts in public opinion, and an argument that they actually came after the "Reagan revolution" rather than before, see Abramowitz and Saunders (1998).

The games in Figure 6 formalize the role transitions and role strains in US relations with Japan and South Korea in the later days of the Cold War. The ROK-US dyad remains relatively unchanged with a nonmyopic equilibrium of (CO,CF), as the US role transitions from a Strong Hegemon (#24) to a Hegemon (#23) strategy of domination as the highest-ranked outcome and the Weak Client counter-role strategy (#4) remains the ROK counter-role. The ROK-US game thus persists as a No Conflict game with a (4,4) outcome. Japan's transition from a Weak Partner role (#10) to a Partner role (#11), coupled with a transition by the US from a Strong Hegemon (#24) to a Hegemon (#23) role, leads logically to a loss of U.S. domination as a stable equilibrium in Brams' Game 27. Both the United States and Japan can block domination by the other player, leading to a deadlock outcome (3,2) as a stable but Pareto-inferior equilibrium. The path in Game 27 to the Pareto-inferior equilibrium of mutual cooperation (4,3) from deadlock (3,2) logically requires the US to choose "move" from (3,2) to (2,1) for Japan to then choose "move" to (4,3). Japan will not logically choose "move," because it leads to (1,4) where US will logically choose "stay" rather than move to (4,3).

If the US changes its assessment of interests from Vital (-) to Secondary (+) and to the corresponding Hegemon strategy (#20) shown in Brams' Game 31 (see the middle game in Figure 6), then the outcome is mutual cooperation (4,3) as a nonmyopic equilibrium. The US can "cycle" clockwise to postpone the logically inevitable (4,3) outcome with Tokyo, but Washington cannot reach a domination outcome (1,4) as an equilibrium in this game.

*Period III. The Rise of China (and South Korea)*

The role transitions in US-Japanese relations and the role strains experienced by the US in US-ROK relations during the 1980s masked a pattern of deeper change, as political developments in all three countries at the end of the Cold War along with the rise of China helped set the stage for an emergent conflict in their three-way alliance relations. If the rise of Japan dramatically increased tension in the bilateral US-Japanese relationship, then one might expect Japan's relative decline beginning in the 1990s to have the opposite effect, and for a time it did. Yet this decline was accompanied by two other developments, one obvious and the other less so, that introduced very different tensions. The more obvious of these developments was the rise of China and the concomitant strengthening of security cooperation among all three states in the US-led Asian alliance system. At the same time, however, domestic political incentives in both South Korea and Japan set off new forms of antagonism that had been dormant for many years.

Although it has become apparent that the bursting Japanese real estate and stock market bubble exposed important weaknesses in Japanese banking regulation and fiscal policy (Krugman 1998), this was less obvious in the early 1990s. Fingleton (1995) argued, at least for a time, that Japan remained on course to overtake the United States as the world's largest economy. What was perhaps more obvious, both inside and outside Japan, is that Japan could not continue to play the role of the world's banker without political and strategic consequences. The Persian Gulf War was a new sort of international crisis for Japanese leaders.

For the first time in 45 years, the threat was not that Japan would be dragged into a conflict by the United States, but instead that it was seen as irrelevant despite

bankrolling the international coalition's war effort to the tune of \$13 billion. As Funabashi (1991: 58) summed up the dawning realization:

A crisis almost always reveals the reality, and the Persian Gulf crisis revealed the real Japan. In the moment of truth, an economic superpower found itself merely an automatic teller machine—one that needed a kick before dispensing the cash. The notion that economic power inevitably translates into geopolitical influence turned out to be a materialist illusion. At least many Japanese now seem to subscribe to that view.

The LDP, and particularly its right wing, concluded that Japan needed a far more robust set of institutions for political and even military-strategic engagement with the rest of the world.

The LDP eventually managed to enact a law authorizing the deployment of Japanese peacekeepers outside Japan. Its passage arguably helped take down not one but two Prime Ministers: Kaifu Toshiki, whose administration managed (or mis-managed) the initial response to the Gulf War and proposed a new peacekeeping operations (PKO) law; and Miyazawa Kiichi, under whose leadership a version of the PKO law was finally passed in 1992. Between this politically divisive measure, President Bush's disastrous trip to Japan seeking trade concessions for the US, and the failure of the Japanese economy to rebound, the stage was set in Japan for a dramatic political shake-up.

In a general election on July 18, 1993, for the first time since its formation in 1955, the LDP lost power and became an opposition party after Ichirō Ozawa brokered an agreement with the support of socialists and social democrats to elect Hosokawa Morihiro as Prime Minister. This government lasted for only eleven months. In order to regain power, however, the LDP formed an alliance with its erstwhile opposition, the Japan Socialist Party (JSP). One condition of this alliance was that the JSP accept the LDP interpretation of Article 9 as allowing Japan to maintain "self-defense forces." In a

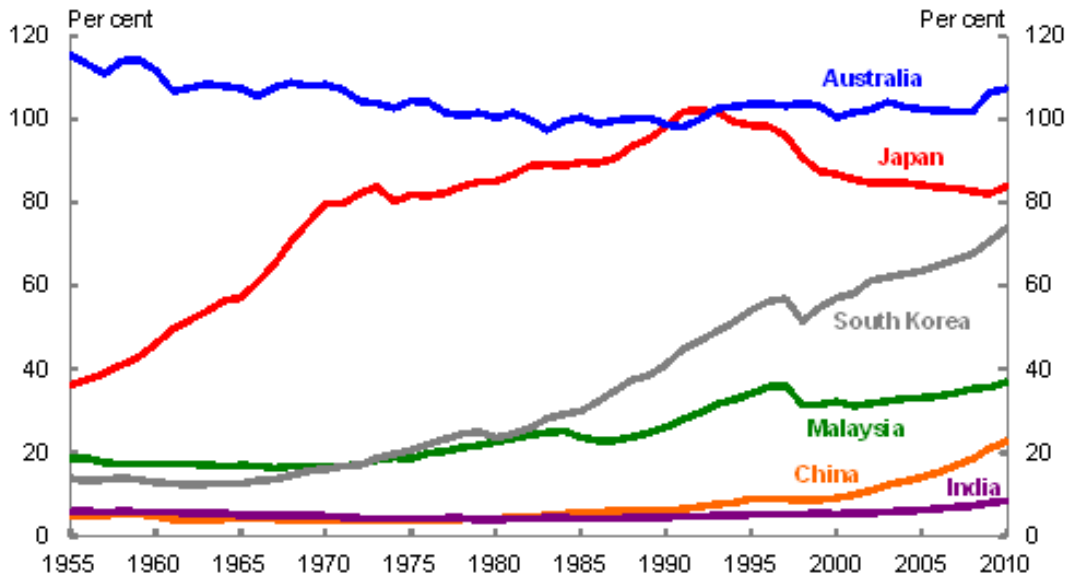
single stroke, the JSP attained power and destroyed its own power base by repudiating a central principle of its political platform for the past half century (that the peace constitution permitted no military forces of any kind).

These developments inaugurated a new era in Japanese domestic politics in several important respects. They represent, to begin with, the end of the 1955 System and the beginnings of a new era of party politics without party ideology. Prior to 1993, the two principle political parties in Japan, the LDP and the JSP, took very clear ideological positions (on the right and left, respectively). Yet the JSP never attained enough support to generate true party politics within Japan. Instead, as already noted, the most important political divisions shaping policy were those among LDP factions.

After 1993, inter-party competition became much more intense, and yet the parties lost their ideological attachments. The principal opposition party today, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is often hard to distinguish from the LDP ideologically. This ideological ambiguity notwithstanding, however, Japan's political parties must find new ways to appeal to voters. The LDP in particular can no longer expect to treat rule as an internal matter to be managed within the party. It must compete. And it is in this context that conservatives such as Abe Shinzō have embraced a more divisive politics of national chauvinism. Before saying more about the consequences of Japan's newfound nationalism, however, it will be helpful to turn to the South Korean case.

In South Korea, democratization also brought economic dynamism. Figure 7 shows the pattern of growth in GDP per capita (as a percentage of the OECD-15 average) that began as democracy took hold in South Korea in the late 1980s. Over the course of the next two decades, and despite the important but momentary downturn caused by the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the South Korean economy steadily grew to the position of the twelfth largest economy in the world, on a par with Canada and

Mexico (measured using PPP adjusted GDP; see World Bank 2013). Woosang Kim (2007) thus argues that South Korea has become a "middle power" in the East Asian regional subsystem.



**Figure 7:** GDP Per Capita in Selected Countries of the Asian Pacific as a Percentage of Average GDP Per Capita in the OECD-15  
Source: Parkinson 2011.

As the South Korean economy took off, its political relationship with the United States also began to improve after the low point of President Carter's objections to Park Chung-hee's human rights record and threats of a major troop withdrawal. Ronald Reagan, in contrast, saw South Korea through the lens of the Cold War as a steadfast ally in the struggle against communism (Cha 1999: 170-175). As fears subsided in Seoul (and Tokyo) of a US withdrawal, suppressed tensions began to bubble up. One of the most important, and least suppressed, was public frustration in South Korea over the impact of a large US military presence in the country, particularly as Washington and Seoul began to diverge in their approaches to Pyongyang. After President Kim Dae-jung adopted a new "Sunshine Policy" toward the North in the late 1990s, South Korean

and American policy were increasingly at odds. Kim and his successor, Roh Moo-hyun, sought to open up new avenues of communication with the North, whereas the United States mostly sought to isolate Pyongyang. Then, with public sentiment already swinging toward the view that the United States was obstructing rather encouraging progress with the North, two 14-year-old Korean schoolgirls were struck and killed by an armored vehicle in a US military convoy on June 13, 2002. The public outpouring of grief was immediate and sustained. In November of the same year, the soldiers operating the vehicle were acquitted on charges of negligent homicide, further inflaming the public response. Protests over the "Yangju Highway Incident" erupted across the country, and the death of the two girls has been commemorated annually ever since.

As South Korea's relationship with Washington began to deteriorate, so did its relationship with Tokyo. Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro's visit to Yasukuni Shrine on August 15, 1985 to mark the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II prompted bitter criticism, from China and South Korea in particular. Nakasone was the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit Yasukuni (which enshrines Japan's war dead, including those classified as war criminals) since the end of the war, and he did not repeat the visit given the controversy it provoked. Beginning in 2001, however, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro made a series of visits to the shrine that further inflamed the issue so that it has become a litmus test for the prime minister in Japan-China and Japan-South Korea relations. The leaders of both China and South Korea thereafter refused to meet with Koizumi. When Prime Minister Abe Shinzō visited the Shrine on December 26, 2013, even the United States expressed its disappointment. The South Korean government called it a "deplorable and



anachronistic act' that would damage bilateral relations and stability in northeast Asia" (Soble, Anderlini, and Song 2013).

One reason Abe may have felt at liberty to visit Yasukuni Shrine, playing to a key political constituency, is that he had very little to lose in terms of the effect on relations with South Korea. Other controversies had already left Japan-South Korean relations in tatters. Protests erupted in 2001, for example, over newly approved Japanese textbooks that appeared to whitewash Japan's wartime actions (see Saaler 2006). An official visit by South Korean President Lee Myung-bak to the disputed Liancourt Rocks (Dokdo in Korean; Takeshima in Japanese) provoked a backlash in Japan, prompting it to temporarily withdraw its ambassador from Seoul (*Asahi Shimbun* 2012). And although Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi issued an apology in 1994 to those sexually enslaved by Japan's armies during the war, recent statements by senior Japanese officials have tended to undermine the apology (see, e.g., *Asahi Shimbun* 2013; on the fraught nature of state apologies, see Lind 2008). Increasingly, South Korea and Japan simply weren't speaking the same language. From the time of the Chun government onward, in fact, this was quite literally the case, as the new generation of South Korean leaders replaced an earlier generation of leaders who had learned Japanese in school.

If the trend in Japan-South Korean relations has generally been negative over the course of the past two decades, relations with the US have been more complicated for both countries. As noted above, South Koreans took a dimmer view of their alliance with the US as Washington began to take a harsher line toward Pyongyang, and particularly after the Yangju Highway Incident. At the same time, the United States was becoming less important to South Korea economically. Whereas the US accounted for 40% of South Korea's international trade in the mid-1980s, this pattern shifted markedly thereafter. Trade with East Asia increased, while the US share of South Korean exports

fell by 50% at the century's end (as did the Japanese share). China, meanwhile, rose to become the single largest importer of South Korean products (Kang 2003: 194). Some Koreans and Americans began to advocate a US drawdown, precisely what South Korea had most feared a decade earlier (see Bandow and Carpenter 1992).

Others drew the opposite conclusion. The 1995 "United States Security Strategy for the East Asia Pacific Region" (the Nye Report) emphasized the importance of a forward US presence in East Asia (Nye 2001). The collapse of the 1994 Agreed Framework for negotiations with North Korea over nuclear technology also prompted some to stress the important of renewed cooperation among the US, Japan, and South Korea, as did the US proclamation of a "global war on terror" (Hughes 2007). And in 2012, the Obama administration proclaimed a "pivot to East Asia" in US defense policy (Clinton 2011; Lieberthal 2011). Meanwhile, over 70 percent of South Koreans still say they support the alliance with the United States (Snyder 2013). And Japanese sentiment toward the US is also considerably warmer than in the 1980s and 1990s (see Hughes 2007).

	# 24			# 24			# 12	
	<b>(G24)</b>	<b>Alter (US)</b>		<b>(G2)</b>	<b>Alter (US)</b>		<b>(NC)</b>	<b>Alter (US)</b>
		CO    CF			CO    CF		CO    CF	
<b>Ego (JPN)# 11</b>	CO	4,2    1,4		CO	4,2 → "3,4" *		CO	4,4*    1,3
	CF	2,1    3,3 *	<b>Ego (ROK)# 10</b>	CF	2,1 ← 1,3	<b>Client Ego # 11</b>	CF	2,1    3,2
	Ego Role: Partner (-, =)			Ego Role: Weak Partner (-, <)			Ego Role: Partner (-, =)	
	Alter Role: Strong Hegemon (-, >)			Alter Role: Strong Hegemon (-, >)			Alter Role: Patron (-, >)	
	<b>I. JPN   US 1990s Onward</b>		<b>II. ROK   US 1990s Onward</b>			<b>III. Client   US Alternative</b>		

**Figure 8: Intersections of US-Japan and US-South Korea Role Dyads and Grand Strategies from the 1990s to the Present**

Outcomes are ranked from 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). CO = Cooperation; CF = Conflict. Games: G-numbers for conflict games are from Brams (1994); NC are No Conflict games where both players rank the same outcome highest (4,4). Role Demands: Vital (-) and Secondary (+). Interests: Weaker (<), Equal (=), Stronger (>) Power. Initial States are in quotation marks. Nash myopic equilibria are asterisked; Brams nonmyopic equilibria are in bold.

The games in Figure 8 reflect the shift in the US role from Hegemon (#23) back to Strong Hegemon (#24) and a continued strategy of domination following the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union. The counter-roles of Japan and South Korea after the cold war converge as US Partners with the same Appeasement GSO in their relations with the United States. The outcome of the ROK-US game is predicted to be submission by South Korea and domination by the US; however, the game (G2) permits clockwise "cycling" by South Korea so that it is more difficult for the US to maintain the (CO,CF) nonmyopic equilibrium of (3,4) submission by Seoul and domination by Washington. The predicted outcome in Figure 8 for the US-Japan game is deadlock (3,3) as a nonmyopic equilibrium.

The different outcomes in Game 24 and Game 2 are due to the different variants of the Appeasement strategy pursued by Japan and South Korea as Partners against the Strong Hegemonic strategy of the US Hegemon. Japan's Appeasement strategy (#11) permits Tokyo to block US domination and make deadlock (3,3) a nonmyopic equilibrium while Seoul's Weak Appeasement strategy (#10) is sufficient to delay but not to prevent the US preference for domination (3,4). One resolution of the outcomes for these two games is the No Conflict game in Figure 8, wherein the U.S. transitions from a Hegemon to a Patron role enacted with a Strong Appeasement strategy (#12) leading to a nonmyopic equilibrium of (4,4) mutual cooperation. This Grand Strategy Orientation complements either Partner strategy of the allies and is consistent with the Obama Administration's emphasis on multilateral partnerships with both allies and clients based on mutual cooperation rather than US domination.

### *Perturbation in the US-Japan-South Korea Triad*

To this point, by tracking the evolution of domestic and intra-alliance politics within the US-Japan-South Korea triad, as well as shifts in the international distribution of power, we have sought to show that the three constituent dyads in this alliance experienced a gradual evolution over the course of the past seventy years. First Japan and then South Korea shifted their Grand Strategy Orientations to reflect preferences for a more cooperative (rather than subordinate) relationship with the United States as their increasing power and capabilities placed them on a more equal footing with the United States, though still in an inferior position. The United States meanwhile remained fairly constant in its GSO, generally preferring a strong form of Hegemony. We said little about dyadic relations in the third leg of this triad, JPN | ROK, during the first and second periods (the 1950s-1960s and the 1970s-1980s, respectively) because they were so thoroughly subordinated to these countries' relationships with the United States. Yet in the third period, from the 1990s onward, Japan-South Korean relations took on an increasingly turbulent life of their own.

As Chinese power has risen, and in response to threats from North Korea, Japan and South Korea have had important reasons to deepen their own dyadic security cooperation in addition to cooperation brokered or mandated by the US. And at times, they have done just that. Gradually, however, their dyadic relations have broken down in a way that is not anticipated by the signed graph in Figure 4. Insofar as Japan and South Korea remain allied with the United States, and insofar as all three perceive threats elsewhere in Asia, they should remain close partners. Lingering animosity, temporarily suppressed by the United States, plausibly explains the breakdown in the Japan-ROK relationship. But the broader strategic situation suggests that the timing is odd. The US, Japan, and South Korea have *more* reason to cooperate now rather than

less as China grows stronger, depending on whether or not Beijing pursues a Hegemon's role toward them.

Yet there has been a gradual shift toward more inward-looking political coalitions across all three states. Even the United States, whose power immunized it from a preoccupation with international politics up to a point, nevertheless saw the postwar internationalist consensus gradually eroded, in part by events in Asia (notably the war in Vietnam). In Japan, the period during which domestic political coalitions depended on American influence was surprisingly brief after Yoshida Shigeru successfully fabricated the political coalition that led to the rise of the LDP. This period lasted longer in South Korea, in good measure precisely because the process of democratization took longer. As it did, however, internal politics was fractured to a far greater extent than in Japan. In the twenty-first century, the domestic political arrangements of all three countries are characterized by coalition politics that are primarily inward looking and divided (in the sense that coalitions are fragile and the political security of the ruling coalition is low).

One might expect the fragility of political coalitions to lead to a more diversified politics of international role taking as potential coalition partners compete for influence. Instead, more nearly the reverse has occurred in all three states, though for somewhat different reasons. In both Japan and South Korea, the left-right dynamics of international role taking have been subsumed by a left-right politics of national chauvinism. This politics of nationalism increasingly and dramatically interferes with the maintenance of good intra-alliance relations. In the United States, the same chauvinism is both intensified (in some regions) and tempered (in others) politically by the electoral role of immigrants. Although an early-twenty-first-century resurgence of US military and economic power prompted a return superficially to the game variant

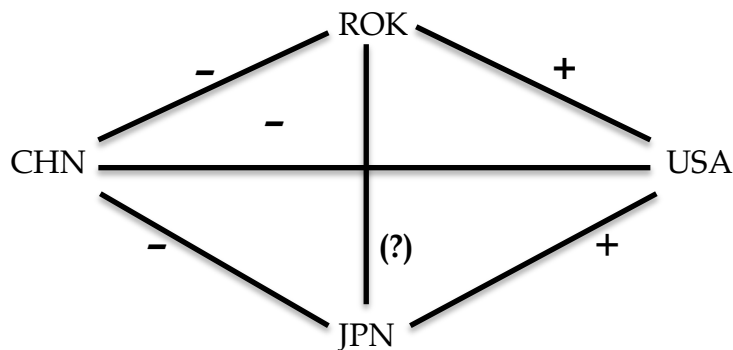
the US played in the early Cold War, this game is now played in a very different political context, one that exhibits less of the bipartisan internationalism of the earlier period, greater political polarization in foreign policy (Gries 2014), and greater isolationism both among some elites and in public opinion.

<b>Table 1: Summary of International Role Taking in the US-Japan-South Korea Triad</b>				
		Capabilities	Domestic Coalition	International Role
<b>Japan</b>	1950s	Low	External/Internal (Unified?)	Client
	1970s	Rising	Internal (Unified)	Weak Partner
	1990s	High (Declining?)	Internal (Divided)	Partner
<b>S. Korea</b>	1950s	Low	External	Client
	1970s	Low	External/Internal (Unified?)	Client
	1990s	Rising	Internal (Divided)	Weak Partner
<b>U.S.</b>	1950s	High	Internal (Divided)	Strong Hegemon
	1970s	High (Declining)	Internal (Unified?)	Hegemon
	1990s	High (Rising)	Internal (Divided?)	Strong Hegemon

Both Park Geun-hye in South Korea and Abe Shinzō in Japan have relied on a politics of assertive nationalism to secure their domestic political coalitions and to govern. For Park (the daughter of Park Chung-hee), this "politics of toughness" has brought South Korean and US policy toward North Korea back into alignment and improved their relations, but it has tended to work against improving relations with Japan (LaFranchi 2013). Instead, Park has made Japan's unrepentance a part of her

political agenda. In a trip to China in July 2013, she and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to the construction of a monument to Ahn Jung-guen, a Korean independence fighter who assassinated the Japanese governor of Korea (and former Prime Minister) Itō Hirobumi. And Park has found in Abe the perfect foil. As Takahara Akio has put it, "Abe is very rightwing by traditional measures. He is a historical revisionist at heart" (Takahara, quoted in Tisdall 2014).

Relations between South Korea and Japan have fluctuated, of course, depending on changes in leadership. No doubt, they will continue to do so. But the shifts in domestic political coalitions described in Table 1 suggest a secular trend, as well, toward more unpredictable and fraught relations among the United States, Japan, and South Korea, particularly among the latter two. This corresponds closely to the third hypothesis about domestic politics and external alliances (H<sub>3</sub>): that that inward-looking political coalitions reduce the likelihood of stable external alliances.<sup>9</sup>



**Figure 9: Signed Graph of Contemporary East Asian Strategic Triads**

<sup>9</sup> In a related finding, Sato and Hirata (2008) show that in contemporary Japan, when international and domestic norms conflict, it is the domestic norms that generally prevail.

It is far too soon to write off the US-Japan-South Korea alliance. China has also engaged in a foreign policy that might be characterized as "assertive nationalism," and this works to reinforce the US | JPN | ROK triad. Moreover, our argument is not deterministic. Domestic politics now has the effect of creating uncertainty within this US-dominated triad, which we have also described as a "perturbation" effect. Hence, we may plausibly replace the plus sign (+) characterizing the Japan-ROK relationship in Figure 4 with a question mark (see Figure 9), if not yet a minus sign (-).

## **Conclusion**

As Organski (1958) observed, moments of role transition in international relations are notoriously dangerous. Rising powers are motivated to change international arrangements in accordance with their growing capabilities, and declining powers may seize the moment to fend off a challenger whose power can be expected to increase. Yet Organski's well-known discussion of such power transitions is only one example of how changes in international role relationships can have profound consequences.

To facilitate an understanding of these consequences, we undertake several tasks in this paper. First, we present a comprehensive typology in Figure 1 of Grand Strategy Orientations that define role relationships. The combination of Ego's and Alter's Grand Strategy Orientations, in turn, defines a game that characterizes their dyadic role enactment. All such games have equilibrium solutions in terms of Nash equilibria, Brams' nonmyopic equilibria, or both. Role taking among three or more players, on the other hand, is more complex and lacks determinate equilibrium solutions.



For this reason, we adopt the alternative approach of perturbation analysis, arguing that domestic politics in particular may exert either a stabilizing or destabilizing force in such multi-body international systems. The Cold War US-China-Soviet Union triad is an example of domestic stabilizing. Although the system tended toward instability, as each of these states sometimes carried favor with its rivals in an effort not to be left *à soi-même*, ideological and political differences between the US and the two communist states tended to stabilize the triad and reduce it to an East vs. West affair.

In contrast, relations among the United States, Japan, and South Korea have progressively become less stable as this triad has progressed through three historical phases. In the first phase (roughly, the 1950s and 1960s), both Japan and South Korea were tightly bound to the US, with little choice but to cooperate with each other as well. In the second phase (1970s and 1980s), Japan's economic rise and the relative decline of the US complicated their relations and produced tensions reflected in shifts of their mutual role definitions, particularly between Japan and the US. It was not until the third phase (post-1990), however, that more inward-looking domestic politics began to destabilize all three legs of the US | Japan | ROK triad and to call into question the basic role orientations of these states toward one another. For Japan and South Korea, in particular, the international relationship has become fraught. Undoubtedly, skillful leadership can find (and sometimes has found) a path toward more cooperative relations. What has changed, however, is that such skillful leadership is now a necessity rather than a luxury since domestic politics in all three countries increasingly rewards forthrightly self-serving foreign policies. The legacy of ill will between Japan and South Korea makes nationalist policies especially likely to undermine a stable alliance.

The US | USSR | China triad thus reflects two hypothesized effects of domestic politics on international role taking within indeterminate, multi-body systems: (1) institutional and (2) ideological differences reduce uncertainty and constrain cooperative role taking within incompatible dyads. The US | Japan | ROK triad reflects a third hypothesized effect of domestic politics, that inward-looking political systems increase uncertainty and tend to destabilize (though not necessarily prohibit) cooperative role taking within potential dyadic alliances.

In advancing these arguments, we have ultimately followed a procedure that is closer to what Charles Sanders Pierce called *abduction* than either induction or deduction (Fann 1970; Lipton 2001). We have sought to deduce certain hypotheses about the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy role selection and enactment, but these hypotheses pertain to conditions of stability or instability in role taking. We regard these hypotheses as plausible, but we recognize that many other factors influence role selection. Conversely, we have also considered cases of role selection and enactment drawn from the behavior of major and minor powers in East Asia during the Cold War, paying special attention to role selection in three-body systems. But too few cases of this sort have been analyzed to permit confident inductive generalization. What we are left with is a plausible fit between the hypotheses and the cases.

Abduction takes the form of inference that a hypothesis is supported as an explanation for observed phenomena that would be remarkable were the hypothesis invalid but expected if the hypothesis is valid. To put this another way, consider the following statements (see Frankfurt 1958):

The surprising fact, C, is observed.  
But if A were true, C would be a matter of course.  
Hence, there is reason to suspect that A is true.

We have argued that it would be remarkable for two alliance partners (Japan and South Korea) to have a falling out and experience serious challenges to their Grand Strategy Orientations toward each other just as a major challenger to both (China) is asserting newfound power and while both are already tightly bound in a triadic alliance with the United States. But we have also argued that a shift toward inward-looking political coalitions makes such alliances less stable or binding. And we have documented just such a shift, over three periods during the past 70 years, in the US | Japan | ROK triad. We believe that  $H_3$  is a plausible inference by abduction.

Much more could be done, of course, to explore the consequences of shifting Grand Strategy Orientations such as those identified here. In particular, we have not traced the effects of shifting equilibria in the games played by the US, Japan, and South Korea as they have enacted their gradually evolving roles toward one another. The stability of these games is, itself, likely to have an important influence on their behavior toward one another, and this may in turn have a recursive effect on their role definitions. This recursivity is one more reason that a purely deductive approach, even if it were available in three body systems, is unlikely to produce deterministic solutions.

**Appendix I:  
Cold War Power Map of Strategic Dyads in East Asia**

(E \ A)	USA=	SOV>	CHN>	JPN>	ROK=	PRK
USA	-	-	-	-	-	-
SOV	-	+	-	-	-	+
CHN	-	+	-	-	-	+
JPN	+	-	-	-	-	-
ROK	+	-	-	-	-	-
PRK	-	+	+	-	-	-

Sources: Walker, Malici and Schafer (2011) for power map and graph applications. See also Harary (1961, 1969).

The information in the above Cold War power map for the United States (USA), the Soviet Union (SOV), China (CHN), Japan (JPN), South Korea (ROK), and North Korea (PRK) includes their ordinal ranking for power defined as capabilities (<, =, >; see column headings) and their exercise of social power defined as positive (+) or negative (-) sanctions toward one another. For example, the United States as Ego (E) and Soviet Union as Alter (A) in the (E, A) dyad are equal (=) in power defined as capabilities, and each superpower exercises negative (-) sanctions toward one another: the valence of USA toward SOV is (-) in Row 1 Column 2 while the valence of SOV toward USA is also (-) in Row 2, Column 1. With this information it is possible to construct signed graphs of strategic triads in East Asia, e.g., the triads connecting China, Japan, the two Koreas, and the United States as shown in Figure 4 of this paper (Walker, Malici and Schafer 2011: 34-37; Harary 1961, 1969). The signs of the lines in a signed graph connecting members of a set of triads, e.g., {USA | JPN | ROK | CHN} in Figure 4 depend on the strategic game each dyad is playing with the other, which is constructed from the capabilities and sanctions information in Figure 1 (see also Walker, Malici, and Schafer 2011: 257-266).

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