

# Defense Ownership or Nationalist Security: Autonomy and Reputation in South Korean and Japanese Security Policies

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*Countries that rely on others for military capabilities or security guarantees face questions of ‘defense ownership’ in national strategy and domestic politics. This paper develops the concept of defense ownership and examines different campaigns for ownership in current South Korean and Japanese security policies. South Korea’s defense ownership campaign focuses on national autonomy while Japan’s focuses on international reputation. Traditional factors of security policy such as national capabilities, external threat perception, and ally reliability do not explain the differences between these campaigns. The ownership campaigns can, however, be understood within the context of South Korean and Japanese national identity debates about the appropriate role and position of the state in international affairs. In South Korea, the focal points of national identity debates are eventual unification with North Korea and overcoming a history of treatment as an international object rather than international actor. In Japan, national identity debates concentrate on regaining Japan’s status as a ‘normal’ country and filling the vacuum of national pride once filled by the Japanese economic miracle, especially in the present context of a rising China. The paper concludes with recommendations for avoiding nationalist-driven policies that could cause spirals in regional security relations.*

## Introduction

How to provide for the national defense is a primary question for every government. States generally emphasize self-sufficient military capabilities as essential to national sovereignty and seek to minimize reliance on foreign powers. Some states, however, lack sufficient resources to defend themselves and thus rely on an outside guarantor. Both cases, of strategic independence and strategic reliance, are well understood in the literatures of international relations theory, security policy, and diplomatic history. More interesting are cases in transition—where countries move from reliance toward greater strategic independence—exhibiting campaigns for defense ownership.

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Campaigns are underway in both Seoul and Tokyo for greater ownership of national security. South Korea and Japan have long maintained military alliances with the United States that have traditionally served as cornerstones of each country's defense strategy. Even as national capacity increased with rapid economic development, first in Japan and more recently in South Korea, both countries continued to rely on the United States for important aspects of national security. But the configurations of the U.S.-Japan and U.S.-South Korea alliances are changing. Both Tokyo and Seoul have come to rely less on Washington and plan to host fewer American troops. Political leaders and strategic planners in both capitals are engaging in spirited debates about their country's future defense posture.

The mere existence of internal debates in South Korea and Japan over the level of reliance on the United States is, of course, not new. For decades, these debates have focused on national capabilities (including burdensharing and defense costs), changes in the threat environment, and alliance reliability.<sup>1</sup> While these traditional concerns remain important, national identity considerations have become increasingly relevant in shaping security policies in post-Cold War Asia.

The defense ownership campaigns by current administrations in South Korea and Japan differ in how national identity politics inform debates over international strategy. The present campaign for defense ownership in South

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Korea emphasizes national autonomy, especially in terms of Seoul's freedom of action and ability to maintain a posture vis-à-vis North Korea independent of the United States. In contrast, Japan's defense ownership campaign focuses on reputational concerns, particularly on advancing Japan's international standing in a post-Cold War environment, which for Tokyo is largely defined by the rise of China.

The policy implications of South Korea and Japan's distinct drives for defense ownership involve not only alliance relations with the United States, but also Seoul and Tokyo's security relations with China, North Korea, and with each other. Greater defense ownership by South Korea and Japan could prove to be very positive developments. South Korea could provide conventional weapons-based deterrence of North Korea and engage Pyongyang from a position of strength. Japan could become increasingly capable of self-defense while expanding its involvement in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. In the process, the U.S.-South Korea and U.S.-Japan alliances would transform into more equal partnerships, offering greater contributions to international security.

Another future is possible, however, if nationalist agendas come to shape security policies. If Seoul's drive for autonomy opens a rift in the U.S.-South Korea alliance, North Korea would look to exploit the situation. Competition would increase among regional powers for influence on the Korean Peninsula. South Korea's security may tragically decrease as a result. Meanwhile, if Japan's assertive diplomacy in search of international reputation damages trust with its neighbors, regional security dilemmas may ensue and tensions could rise over disputed islands and waters.

It is thus essential to understand the phenomena of defense ownership and consider the trajectory of related strategic and national identity debates in South Korea and Japan. Toward this end, the paper proceeds as follows. First, the concept of defense ownership is developed, building on existing studies of national strategy and alliances. Then, a section is devoted to defense ownership campaigns in both South Korea and Japan, putting the respective drives for defense ownership in context with different national identity debates. The paper concludes with recommendations for avoiding nationalist-driven policies that could cause spirals in regional security relations.

### **Understanding Campaigns for Defense Ownership**

#### *Defense Ownership in Theory and Practice*

Defense ownership refers to the physical and legal possession of military assets necessary to provide for national security and pursue international security efforts related to primary national interests.<sup>2</sup> Political analysts from Niccolò Machiavelli to Kenneth Waltz have emphasized the importance of defense ownership, and most states consider it an issue of national sovereignty.<sup>3</sup> The United Nations Charter recognizes the "inherent right" of states for self-defense, and for most governments, the state's need for capabilities to defend itself is a guiding assumption.<sup>4</sup> Hence, sufficient indigenous military capability is typically a top priority for governments.

Why then, do many governments forego defense ownership and instead rely on others for security? An obvious answer is because some governments lack the resources necessary to procure indigenous military capabilities equal to the task of national defense. This has been a perennial challenge for governments throughout history, the best-known studies of which belong to the realist tradition in international relations theory.<sup>5</sup> From the view of balance of power politics, if states are unable to fully provide for their own defense with indigenous military capabilities (internal balancing), states must then ally with others against the threat (external balancing) or accommodate the source of the threat (bandwagoning).<sup>6</sup>

Questions of defense ownership become more interesting when a state has the necessary resources to provide for more of its own defense, but still decides to rely on outside powers. The puzzle of why states forego defense ownership is addressed by economic theories of alliances.<sup>7</sup> Security cooperation can allow states to effectively pool resources, exploit economies of scale, apply divisions of labor, and develop force synergies. The strategic

choice of states to engage in some ratio of internal and external balancing depends on the weighed security benefits and political costs of each.<sup>8</sup> The major issues for states in alliances then become defense burdensharing and ally reliability, involving fears of entrapment and abandonment.<sup>9</sup>

Existing studies thus have a reasonable handle on why defense ownership is important and why states often compromise on defense ownership in formulating strategies for national security. But what explains variation in national campaigns for defense ownership? The body of academic and policy literature prioritizes defense ownership as a sovereignty issue and suggests that states exhibit a willingness to trade sovereignty for security as warranted by factors of national capabilities, external threat, and ally relations. These factors, however, are insufficient for explaining why some campaigns for defense ownership differ from others.

### *National Identity and Defense Ownership*

As will be elaborated in the sections that follow, the defense ownership campaigns underway in South Korea and Japan exhibit clear differences—the former being focused on national autonomy and the latter on international reputation. The traditional security factors of national capabilities, external threat perception, and ally reliability have difficulty explaining why.

First, considering national capabilities, Japan has greater latent power than South Korea in that it has more economic resources (also developed earlier than South Korea), which can be applied toward military procurement. However, the South Korean military represents a more complete fighting force than Japan's Self-Defense Forces, and remains ahead in terms of training, experience and readiness.<sup>10</sup> Despite these differences, South Korean and Japanese national capabilities are similar in ways most relevant for defense ownership. Both states have economic resources to support much higher levels of defense ownership than exhibited today. Moreover, South Korea and Japan have comparable burdensharing arrangements with the United States—both provide bases and host nation financial support for U.S. forward-deployed troops, and both receive security guarantees (including a nuclear umbrella) from the United States. National capabilities and defense burdensharing are important factors for South Korea and Japan's respective defense postures, but do not explain the difference between their defense ownership campaigns.

Second, in terms of external threat, there are again more similarities between South Korea and Japan than there are differences. The two states reside in the same neighborhood. Both face an unstable North Korea that is developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technologies. Both face a resurgent Russia willing to assert itself with military hardware and natural resources. And both face the uncertainty of a China rapidly rising in economic, military, and diplomatic respects. There are, of course, important differences between South Korea and Japan's threat environments. South Korea shares a border with North Korea and is far more physically susceptible to Pyongyang's military. But interestingly, recent politics in Seoul have consistently played down the threat from North Korea, while recent politics

in Tokyo have emphasized the North Korean threat. Likewise, China should be of greater material concern to South Korea than for Japan, but in the world of perceptions, Tokyo demonstrates just as many reservations about Beijing as does Seoul. Differences in South Korean and Japanese threat perceptions therefore appear incapable of explaining variation in defense ownership campaigns.

Third, on the point of alliance reliability, South Korea and Japan again face similar situations. For both, the external security guarantor is the United States. While the United States remains committed and engaged in Northeast Asia, Washington's post-September 11th War on Terrorism, and its preoccupation with the Middle East in particular, have Seoul and Tokyo concerned about U.S. attention and resource allocation for Northeast Asia. Thus, both Seoul and Tokyo are carefully monitoring U.S. commitment for any signs of strategic abandonment.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, the United States continues to encourage transformation of its security partnerships with South Korea and Japan. In both cases, alliance transformation entails decreasing the footprint of the U.S. military. But the main goal of transformation is internationalization of the alliances toward more global security roles and missions. This process involves entrapment concerns for both South Korea and Japan vis-à-vis international coalition of the willing operations and specifically a Taiwan contingency. While Seoul and Tokyo certainly have different trust issues in their security relations with Washington, their concerns for ally reliability are similar.

The traditional security factors of national capabilities, external threat perception and ally reliability thus have difficulty explaining differences between South Korea and Japan's defense ownership campaigns. While traditional security factors remain important for national strategy, other factors must be at work. This paper argues that the differences between South Korea and Japan's defense ownership campaigns are attributable to differences between Korean and Japanese national identity politics. The concept of national identity employed in this paper draws from role theory.<sup>12</sup> The international position governments have endeavored to obtain will be considered, with attention to the motivations for national pride that define domestic debates on the international role of the state. Through the content and contestation of national identity goals, government implementations of defense ownership can be better understood.<sup>13</sup>

The sections that follow examine the defense ownership campaigns of South Korea and Japan and look to explain these campaigns in the context of national identity debates currently underway amongst the policymaking elite in both countries.

### **South Korea: National Security and Autonomy**

#### *Seoul's Campaign for Defense Ownership*

The campaign for defense ownership being undertaken by the South Korean government focuses on greater autonomy in security affairs. While still maintaining its alliance with the United States, South Korea is decreasing

the integration of its military forces with the United States and increasing self-sufficiency in terms of military hardware and capabilities.<sup>14</sup> The two main pillars of South Korea's defense ownership campaign are command and control changes representing greater strategic independence from the United States and a defense modernization plan aimed at increasing self-reliance.

South Korea's decreasing integration with U.S. forces largely entails the transfer of operational control (OPCON). Ever since the Korean War, South Korean and U.S. forces have been highly integrated to deter (and if necessary, defeat) a North Korean invasion. This involved the South Korean military being under the control of a U.S. general in case of military operations. With advancements made by the South Korean military in terms of C3I (command, control, communications, and intelligence) capabilities, Seoul took over peacetime OPCON in 1994. Reversion of wartime OPCON has since been a goal for U.S.-South Korea alliance transformation.

In 2006, Washington and Seoul concluded an agreement specifying a timeline for returning wartime OPCON to South Korea. But given the international security context, including North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations and the United States' preoccupation with the Middle East, the OPCON transfer negotiations became highly politicized in South Korea. Rather than OPCON transfer providing a positive indicator for alliance burdensharing, it raised concerns of U.S. abandonment and of the South Korean government acting not out of military considerations but out of pride for national sovereignty and improving Seoul's position for engaging North Korea.

Meanwhile, South Korea is embarking upon a military modernization effort known as its Defense Reform Plan 2020.<sup>15</sup> The plan stipulates increased defense spending for modernizing military hardware and professionalizing military personnel.<sup>16</sup> It also demands more jointness among the South Korean army, navy, and air force. Notably, the plan envisions significant upgrades in South Korean naval and air force capabilities in addition to the acquisition of more sophisticated communications, reconnaissance, and intelligence technologies to reduce reliance on U.S. forces and capabilities. Such modernizations make military sense, but are extremely expensive. The motivations on the part of Seoul to make such investments are related to national identity debates in South Korea.

### *South Korean Identity Debates*

Recent national identity debates in South Korea were fueled and enabled by democratization and rapid economic growth.<sup>17</sup> The focal points of these national identity debates are eventual unification with North Korea and overcoming Korea's self-perceived historical and geopolitical position as 'a shrimp among whales.'

The Cold War basically froze North-South Korean relations at their 1953 stalemate. Since the 1990s, the end of the bipolar international order, collapse of the Soviet Union, China's opening to the world, and South Korea's economic success compared to the nearly failed North, all allowed

Seoul to engage Pyongyang from a position of newfound confidence. The concurrence of these events with South Korean democratization led to a resurgence of long suppressed desires for unification. The artificial division of the Korean Peninsula and the Cold War context produced a South Korean nationalism focused on competition with the North. Post-Cold War circumstances returned Korean nationalism to its prior purpose: a unified independent Korean state encompassing the entire peninsula. How to pursue this goal is politically contested, but a critical mass of domestic support for this international role is evident in the continuation of President Kim Dae-jung's 'Sunshine' engagement of the North. President Roh Moo-hyun expanded engagement projects despite North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations and human rights abuses. Even if the next South Korean president comes from the opposition Grand National Party, it is likely that inter-Korean projects at Kaesong and Kumgangsan will continue.<sup>18</sup>

The second focal point of South Korea's national identity debates involves overcoming the historical misfortune of being acted upon by foreign powers. Going back many hundreds of years, Korea has been a battleground for China-Japan competition. In the South Korean national consciousness, the nation was first a victim of Chinese hierarchy, then of Japanese colonialism, then of superpower rivalry and national division. The intersection of this history with South Korea's recent democratization and burgeoning civil society produces a strong populist, anti-imperialist sentiment. National identity debates in South Korea today thus place a premium on the state being an international actor rather than an object to be acted upon. These national identity issues are behind President Roh Moo-hyun's concept of 'regional balancer,' his objections to the U.S. 'strategic flexibility' doctrine, and his rhetoric of standing up to the United States and Japan.

These national identity debates help explain South Korea's particular defense ownership campaign focused on autonomy. Autonomy is a natural motivation for defense ownership, but the question is autonomy from whom for what. In a traditional sense, autonomy means a government can manage its domestic affairs and conduct its international affairs without undue influence of the alliance partner causing the government to compromise on national interests. South Korea already has this level of autonomy from the United States. What is interesting is that Seoul appears to be striving for additional autonomy for reasons of international appearances (*vis-à-vis* engagement of North Korea) and national pride (overcoming the 'shrimp among whales' concept). Thus, South Korea's national identity considerations account for differences in its campaign for defense ownership from that of Japan, detailed in the next section.

### **Japan: International Security and Reputation**

#### *Tokyo's Campaign for Defense Ownership*

The campaign for defense ownership underway by the Japanese government focuses on international reputation concerns. In addition to maintaining its alliance with the United States, Japan is further integrating its military

forces with the United States and taking greater ownership of the roles and missions of the alliance. While Japan is making important upgrades to its military hardware, these improvements are still modest; more significant are changes to Japan's defense doctrine to raise its international security profile.

Japan's expanding roles in the U.S.-Japan alliance and increasing integration with U.S. forces are outlined in the recent "2+2 agreements."<sup>19</sup> These agreements are so named because they are signed by the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense from the United States and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Defense from Japan. These agreements outline Japan's upgrades to cooperative roles and missions with the United States, further integration of C3I, closer strategic planning, and the establishment of new shared headquarters. In line with the 2+2 agreements, Japan has provided rear area support for coalition efforts in Afghanistan, airlift support and ground forces for Iraqi reconstruction, and increased coordinated procurement and deployment of ballistic missile defenses (BMD). Japan is now launching a study on its ability to exercise collective defense (hitherto prohibited by constitutional interpretation) in order to use BMD against a missile on a trajectory to U.S. forces or the U.S. homeland.

Meanwhile, Japan is making concerted efforts to increase its international security profile.<sup>20</sup> Japan notably upgraded its Defense Agency into a full ministry earlier this year. The roles and missions of its Self-Defense Forces have been expanded to include international humanitarian and peacekeeping operations on a greater scale than in the past. Japan has developed its own reconnaissance satellite program and is actively participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi pushed Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and the current prime minister, Shinzo Abe has prioritized increasing security cooperation with NATO and fellow democracies Australia and India.

After North Korea's October 2006 nuclear test, concerns arose that Japan might develop its own nuclear deterrent. Nuclear weapons would give Japan greater strategic independence from the United States and might be considered necessary if Tokyo perceived U.S. extended deterrence as insufficient or unreliable. But thus far such a contingency has been considered only rhetorically and by relatively few strategic thinkers in Japan. Most strategic planners reject the idea of Japan pursuing nuclear armament and a robust public majority remains firmly against the idea. Most Japanese strategists argue development of nuclear weapons would imperil international cooperation necessary for Japan's vital civilian nuclear program and would seriously damage Japan's international reputation.

Japan's campaign for defense ownership appears reputation conscious—concentrating on expanding roles and missions and enhancing Japan's international profile rather than increasing military budgets and developing new capabilities. To understand this focus on reputational concerns, it is necessary to turn to national identity debates ongoing inside Japan.

*Japanese Identity Debates*

Realist approaches to international security would attempt to explain Japan's changing defense posture in terms of the North Korean threat and increasing Chinese comprehensive national power. But it is difficult to understand Japan's particular campaign for defense ownership without considering the major goals of current national identity movements in Tokyo: filling the vacuum of national pride once filled by the Japanese economic miracle and attaining Japan's rightful status as a 'normal' country.

In the 1990s, Japan lost the great source of national pride associated with rapid economic growth and the prospect of becoming the world's number one economy. During the so-called 'lost decade' of economic recession, Japanese engaged in much soul-searching about the global role and standing of their nation. During and after the first Gulf War, Japan contributed an enormous sum to the allied effort, approximately US\$13 billion. Instead of receiving recognition for this contribution, Japan was criticized for an unwillingness to put Japanese soldiers in harm's way. Japan began to see its 'checkbook diplomacy' as both unaffordable financially and ineffective politically. This view manifested itself in Japan's bid for a Security Council seat in the United Nations, an organization in which Japan has little influence despite funding more than 20 percent of the UN budget.

Japanese national pride is suffering not just from a lack of recognition or loss of the Japanese economic model as 'number one,' but also from the prospect of being overtaken by China as the world's second largest economy. As a result, Japanese national identity debates are searching for other positive distinctions, or what might be considered identity comparative advantages. Possibilities include Japan as a "global civilian power" or a "high standard of living power." The current government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe emphasizes Japan's democratic values and respect for human rights. These debates show how Japan's redefinition of its international role is very much connected to redefinition of what it means to be Japanese.

The second major facet of national identity debates in Japan involves reclaiming Japan's rights as a normal country. What 'normal' means is the subject of political contestation. Prime Minister Abe emphasizes that the current Japanese constitution was written while Japan was under occupation. He argues that now a democratic and economically developed Japan must write its own constitution, reflecting a nation that is forward-looking and internationally engaged rather than tied by history and reactive to world events. Along this line of reasoning, a normal Japan should be able to engage in collective security and be accepted as a legitimate actor in international security affairs.

Japan's normalization process aims to lock in Tokyo's international political relevance before its economic clout wanes with demographic change (aging society) or is eclipsed by China. These identity motivations explain the reputational focus of Japan's campaign for defense ownership and why it differs from South Korea's defense ownership campaign for greater national autonomy.

**Conclusion: Saving Security Policy from Nationalism**

Campaigns for defense ownership matter not only for national security, but also for international cooperation and conflict. Indeed, these policies are significant for issues of collective security and alliance maintenance as well as general patterns of diplomacy, deterrence and potential applications of force. The ways in which South Korea and Japan's defense ownership campaigns differ thus have important implications.

South Korea's campaign focuses on greater autonomy, as evidenced by its policies for increasing strategic independence from the United States and its defense modernization plan for greater self-reliance. In contrast, Japan's campaign for defense ownership focuses on international reputational concerns, as evidenced by its expanding roles and missions within the U.S.-Japan alliance and its efforts at raising Japan's international security profile. South Korea's defense ownership campaign raises concerns about the health of the U.S.-South Korea alliance and ironically fuels misperceptions that South Korea is appeasing North Korea or bandwagoning with China. Implications of Japan's defense ownership campaign appear to be the opposite of South Korea's: prompting concerns that Tokyo may be getting too close to Washington and that Japan may be looking to contain China.

While traditional factors of security policy such as national capabilities, external threat perception, and ally relations are important for South Korea and Japan's changing defense postures, these factors do not explain differences between the two country's defense ownership campaigns. This paper accounts for those differences by considering the content and contestation of national role conceptions in South Korea and Japan.

South Korea's national identity debates focus on how to inclusively deal with North Korea and the necessity of overcoming a history as a 'shrimp among whales.' These identity concerns help motivate a defense ownership campaign for greater national autonomy. Japan's national identity debates focus on regaining the pride once supplied by the Japanese economic miracle and attaining the status of a 'normal' country. These identity concerns help motivate a defense ownership campaign for enhancing Japan's international reputation.

It is important to understand these defense ownership campaigns, and their national identity contexts, because of their significant policy implications. South Korea's increasing military self-reliance, in terms of command structure and greater independent defense capabilities, can improve U.S.-South Korea alliance burdensharing, better deter North Korea, and help reassure Japan. But if pursued within a context of an unraveling U.S.-South Korea alliance instead of a comprehensive plan for alliance transformation, Seoul's military upgrades could fuel regional security dilemmas and tragically decrease South Korean security.

Like South Korea's increasing military self-reliance, Japan's normalization process can improve alliance burdensharing with the United States, help deter North Korea, and encourage China's growth into an international role of 'responsible stakeholder.' But if the normalization process is overtaken

by nationalism and does not make due efforts to reassure Japan's neighbors, there could be unintended consequences. China could perceive Japanese normalization and upgrading of the U.S.-Japan alliance as directed against it. The result would not only be opportunity costs in multilateral cooperation with China, but also expensive and destabilizing arms buildups.

In an environment of competing nationalisms and defense modernizations, the probability of miscalculation and miscommunication increases. A military accident (such as a collision at sea in areas of disputed gas fields or islets) or incident (such as a chase of a Chinese submarine out of Japanese waters by Japanese naval vessels, or some Japanese show of support for Taiwan's security) could present dangerous points of escalation. Moreover, Japanese efforts to play a greater international security role—a development welcomed by most countries—could raise suspicions in South Korea and across Southeast Asia if not accompanied by sophisticated Japanese diplomacy.

It is thus worth concluding with several policy related points on avoiding nationalism not in the national interest—specifically, nationalism that could motivate spirals in regional security. First, it is important that governments handle historical issues with care. Nationalism is easily fueled by historical revisionism, so governments are advised to stay above the fray of divisive history debates and remain sensitive to the perceptions of neighboring countries. Second, it is necessary to coordinate and make clear national strategic visions. Seoul can better articulate its vision for inter-Korean reconciliation and assuage Japanese concerns that such efforts might rely on anti-Japanese nationalism. Tokyo can better articulate the endpoint of Japan's normalization process and persuade its neighbors that a more assertive Japan will look nothing like the aggressor state of more than sixty years ago.

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Finally, South Korea and Japan can redouble efforts for reassuring neighbors by increasing multilateral security cooperation.<sup>21</sup> Numerous opportunities exist for enhanced cooperation with the United States, trilaterally (U.S.-Japan-South Korea) and in reaching out to China and ASEAN nations. Possibilities include: combining training for natural disasters in the region, coordinating deployments and emergency relief efforts in the event of a catastrophic earthquake or tsunami, and studying complementarities of forces for deployment in other humanitarian and even peacekeeping operations. Further opportunities for security cooperation could involve holding transparent discussions on force modernization and restructuring, deterring and dissuading terrorism, addressing root causes with coordinated development assistance, minimizing vulnerabilities of populations and

key infrastructure, and cooperating on standards and implementation for export controls and transportation security. Numerous non-traditional security issues, from the environment and infectious diseases to demographic change and transnational crime, could also be added to this list.

While national identity debates clearly have bearing on campaigns for defense ownership, the formulation of security policy need not be distorted by nationalism. South Korea's recently signed free trade agreement with the United States and Japan's recent 'ice-melting' diplomacy with China are positive indicators that governments can keep nationalist spirals in check. But there are issues on the horizon that present question marks.

If Six-Party Talks fail to make progress on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and if South Korea opts for near unconditional engagement of the North, then five-party cooperation on nonproliferation could be jeopardized. Nationalist mismanagement of the realignment of U.S. bases in South Korea could place serious strain on the U.S.-South Korea alliance. Nationalist moves in Japan concerning Yasukuni Shrine or over disputed islets could fuel perceptions of regional rivalry. Japan's purchase of advanced F-22 fighter jets and the further development of airborne refueling and other power projection capabilities could unsettle its neighbors.

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**Security dilemmas can be avoided through responsible management of history, consultation on strategic visions, and efforts to build trust through multilateral cooperation.**

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Issues such as these will need to be carefully monitored moving forward, so that potential security dilemmas can be avoided through responsible management of history, consultation on strategic visions, and efforts to build trust through multilateral cooperation. South Korea and Japan's drives for defense ownership have tremendous policy implications for

both countries' alliances with the United States, as well as security relations with Beijing, Pyongyang, and between Seoul and Tokyo. Understanding campaigns for defense ownership—and the national identity debates behind them—is thus essential for shared ownership of continued peace and stability in East Asia.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> For comprehensive coverage of the alliances, see Armacost, Michael and Daniel Okimoto, eds. *The Future of America's Alliances in Northeast Asia*. Stanford, CA: Asia-Pacific Research Network, 2004. See also Blackwill, Robert D. and Paul Dibb, eds. *America's Asian Alliances*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> The concept of defense ownership is naturally dependent on how one defines 'security' and 'national interest.' For the purposes of this paper, security focuses on material capabilities for the use of military force by states in defense of core national interests. These national interests include territorial integrity, deterrence of external threats, prevention of outside subversion of the state, protection of critical trade and supply mechanisms, and maintenance of regional stability. The author recognizes however, that what national lead-

ers deem necessary for security has subjective elements; see Katzenstein, Peter J., ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, 9.

<sup>3</sup> See Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1515) and Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (1979). On sovereignty, see Krasner, Stephen D. *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999, 3–72.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter VII, Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter>.

<sup>5</sup> Donnelly, Jack. *Realism and International Relations*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> On balancing behavior, see Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 2001, pp. 138–167. On bandwagoning, see Schweller, Randall L. “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In.” *International Security* 19 (1994): 72–107. For the modified realist concept of threat-based (as opposed to capabilities-based) balancing, see Walt, Stephen. *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987.

<sup>7</sup> Sandler, Todd. “The Economic Theory of Alliances: A Survey.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 37 (1993): 446–483.

<sup>8</sup> Morrow, James D. “Arms versus Allies: Tradeoffs in the Search for Security.” *International Organization* 47 (1993): 207–233.

<sup>9</sup> Goldstein, Avery. “Discounting the Free Ride: Alliances and Security in the Postwar World.” *International Organization* 49 (1995): 39–71.

<sup>10</sup> This contrast is attributable to two historical points. First, the South Korean military has been in direct competition with the North Korean military since the 1950–53 Korean War for which there is still no peace treaty. Second, the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) have developed under the restrictions of Japan's postwar pacifism, specifically Article IX of the Japanese Constitution. Thus, South Korea's military is trained and equipped for offensive or counter-attack operations where Japan's military is not.

<sup>11</sup> For details on South Korea and Japan's concerns over U.S. alliance commitments during the War on Terrorism, see the quarterly analysis of U.S.-South Korea and U.S.-Japan security relations provided by the Pacific Forum CSIS journal *Comparative Connections*, available at <http://www.csis.org/pacfor/ccejournal.html>. For historical coverage of Seoul and Tokyo's concerns for ally reliability, see Cha, Victor D. *Alignment Despite Antagonism: the United States-Korea-Japan Security Triangle*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> See Holsti, Kal J. “National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy,” and Rosenau, James N. “Roles and Role Scenarios in Foreign Policy.” In *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, edited by Stephen G. Walker, 5–65. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987.

<sup>13</sup> On the importance of content and contestation as the dimensions on which to study collective identities, see Abdelal, Rawi, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott. “Identity as a Variable.” *Perspectives on Politics* 4 (2006): 695–711. The present study surveys South Korean and Japanese identity debates to explain differences in defense ownership campaigns, but a more lengthy and rigorous study would attempt to treat identity as a causal variable and look to account for national role concepts via such methods as content analysis. See Herrera, Yoshiko M. and Bear F. Braumoeller. “Discourse and Content Analysis.” *Qualitative Methods Newsletter* 2 (2004): 15–39. Bauer, Martin W. “Classical Content Analysis: a Review,” and Kelle, Udo. “Computer-Assisted Analysis: Coding and Indexing.” In *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound*, edited by Martin Bauer and George Gaskell, 131–151, 282–298. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2000.

<sup>14</sup> For review of related alliance management issues, see Easley, Leif-Eric. “Forward-deployed and Host Nation Interaction: U.S.-ROK Cooperation under External Threat and Internal Frictions,” *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, 18 (2006): 123–149.

<sup>15</sup> Han, Yong-sup. “Analyzing South Korea's Defense Reform 2020.” *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 18 (2006): 111–34. South Korea's Ministry of National Defense makes policy outlines available at <http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndEng/DefensePolicy/DefenseReform2020/ebook>.

<sup>16</sup> The South Korean military currently relies on mandatory service of all South Korean males. The new defense plan envisions decreasing mandatory service and overall troop numbers, but increasing the number of career soldiers.

<sup>17</sup> Notable are differences of opinion among older Koreans, who lived through the Korean War, and the younger generation that grew up in relative prosperity and has no first-hand memory of war. On the relevance of generational change for South Korean and Japanese identity debates, see Easley, Leif-Eric. “Managing Generational Change in Korea-Japan Relations: Bilateral Frictions should not Impede Trilateral Efforts.” *JoongAng Daily* (with *International Herald Tribune*), February 27, 2007.

<sup>18</sup> The Kaesong Industrial Complex is a joint venture (just north of the North-South border) of South Korean investment, management, and manufacturing technology with low-cost North Korean labor. The Mount Kumgang project is a tourist resort that brings South Korean visitors to North Korea. The conservative-leaning Grand National Party criticized both projects, but the GNP has recently adopted a more pro-engagement stance. “GNP Debates About-Turn in N.Korea Policy.” *Chosun Ilbo*, March 15, 2007.

<sup>19</sup> The text of U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee agreements is available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/scc>.

<sup>20</sup> These efforts are detailed in Japan’s 2006 Defense White Paper, available at <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publications/wp2006>.

<sup>21</sup> For more details, see Easley, Leif-Eric. “Securing Tokyo’s Positive Role in North-South Reconciliation: The Need for a Strong U.S.-ROK Alliance to Reassure Japan.” *KEI Academic Paper Series 2* (2007): 1–11.