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# The Evolution of the ROK - U.S. Relations: A Multi-Method Analysis

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE ROK – U.S. RELATIONS: A MULTI-METHOD ANALYSIS

by

Dohee Kim

A Dissertation Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
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at

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August 2012

## ABSTRACT

### THE EVOLUTION OF ROK – U.S. RELATIONS: A MULTI-METHOD ANALYSIS

by

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The University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2012  
Under the supervision of Professor UK HEO

This dissertation examines the relations between South Korea and the United States and how they have evolved and what affected changes in these relations by focusing on the national development of South Korea. To address these two questions, this dissertation adopts both historical and empirical analysis. Historical analysis analyzes the evolution of the ROK – U.S. relations from the beginning to the present based on the framework of alliance theories such as the formation, maintenance, and termination of the alliance. Empirical analysis focused on factors affecting the relations between South Korea and the U.S. It adopts multiple regression analysis with event data from 1990 to 2011.

This dissertation argues three situational changes affect the evolution of the ROK – U.S. relations. The results of both historical and empirical analysis support that the three major changes such as the end of the Cold War, the economic growth, and political democratization in South Korea have a significant effect on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. In particular, it is meaningful that domestic changes in South Korea affect the ROK – U.S. relations. This result signifies less asymmetric relations between the two states. The changes in the alliance dilemma of South Korea also suggest a less asymmetric relationship. Furthermore, the enhanced economic interdependence and shared democracy enhances the relations of the two states. Therefore, this dissertation concludes that the relations between the U.S. and South Korea become less and less asymmetric from the 1990s until the present.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The South Korea – U.S. relationship began with the Korean-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce, signed in 1882. However, the relationship bloomed after WWII and deepened through U.S. participation in the Korean War. During the Korean War, the relationship was formulated as an exceptional form under crisis such that President Rhee Syngman placed South Korean troops under the operational command of U.S. General Douglas MacArthur. After the Korean War ended, the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) between South Korea and the U.S. was signed in 1953 and ratified in 1954; the U.S. – ROK relationship formally began and all interactions between the two states became legally based on the MDT. In addition, the MDT retained the military command arrangement set by President Rhee; thus, Korea continued its concession of military autonomy, the operational control of its military, to the U.S. (Korea's Defense White Paper 2000, 87-8).

After the end of the Korean War, Korea was under U.S. auspices and received full-scale military and economic aid from the U.S. At the same time, Korea sincerely needed the aid to recover its devastated economy and to guarantee firm security against North Korean threats. There was not another option for South Korea. That is, South Korea cannot help but bandwagon the U.S. at that time (Walt 1985; 1987). Therefore, South



Korea and the U.S. began a typical asymmetric alliance, so called a patron-client relationship (Lee, 2003). Since the U.S. had geo-political strategic interests in South Korea (as an outpost against the Communist countries in the region during the Cold War), this bandwagoning type of alliance was easily made. Containing the Communist forces was the most important principle of U.S. foreign policy at that time.

During the Cold War period, the relationship between the two states mostly fit into the patron–client type of alliance. Most South Koreans appreciated US aid and military protection from North Korea and took for granted the strong U.S. influence in South Korea. However, this could not be regarded as a normal relationship between two sovereign states. For example, the U.S. ambassador in South Korea, Winthrop Brown, expressed skepticism in a letter to the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, William Bundy. The U.S. ambassador questioned not only whether the intimate and special relationship between the two states was sustainable but also whether it should be sustained<sup>1</sup> (Hong 2010, 65). Some Koreans, such as President Park Chung-hee, were afraid of being abandoned and were distressed by South Korea’s weak autonomy. Thus, President Park pursued an aggressive export-led industrialization strategy and self-reliance of national defense.

By the late 1980s, South Korea achieved dramatic economic development and

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<sup>1</sup>“From Winthrop Brown to William Bundy”, Aug. 26, 1996, Box 17, Office of the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Subject Files 1961-1974, RG 59, NA.

political democratization. Meanwhile, the Cold War finally ended and the U.S. geo-political interests in South Korea waned considerably. These series of changes brought intra-change in U.S. – South Korea relations (Kwak and Joo, 2006). The strong anti-communist ideological solidarity and anti-communist alliance was so strong that most conflicts between the two states canceled each other out. However, this situation did not continue after the end of the Cold War. In addition, U.S. political and economic leverage weakened due to South Korea's democratization and economic growth. These alterations brought new changes and conflicts between the two states.

After democratization in South Korea new political elites appeared and new nationalistic and anti-American sentiment spread. These new nationalist elites began to demand more autonomy from the US and more self-reliance. Furthermore, without the anti-communist ideology, the tensions and conflicts once dealt with only those in politics began to spread to the public arena. Specifically, this conflict was closely related to the matter of the North Korean issue. President Kim Dae-Jung's *Sunshine policy*, an unconditional engagement policy, conflicted with President Bush's hardline policy (Kwak and Joo, 2006). These conflicts over policies toward North Korea continued into the Roh Moo-hyun and Bush administrations. President Roh accepted his predecessor's engagement policy. Although he emphasized the importance of ROK - U.S. alliance in his inaugural address, the conflict between the two countries did not disappear over his

term.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the combination of the pro-American Lee administration in Korea and the liberal Obama administration in the US shows more stable relations than before.

However, this does not mean that conflicts between the two countries are over.

As we have seen the brief history of the ROK - U.S. relationship, distinct changes has emerged in the relations between the two states after the end of the Cold War and South Korea's democratization and economic development. Although the ROK - U.S. alliance has sustained, some argue that the relations changed from patron-client relationship to a less asymmetric alliance. In addition, these situational changes moved the focus to national development of South Korea. Until the period of the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy and international power system was the most important factors for the relations between the two states. However, the international systemic factor such as anti-communism weakened after the end of the Cold War. In addition, South Korea achieved political democratization and economic growth. Therefore, these domestic changes in South Korea are the important factors for the change of the ROK -U.S. relations.

The research question would focus on the procedure of these adjustments of the ROK -U.S relationships. In other words, we need to ask how relations between Korea and the United States have evolved and what affected the changes in the ROK - U.S. relations focusing on the national development of South Korea. Finding answers to these

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<sup>2</sup> Inaugural Address of President Roh Moo Hyun, February 25, 2003 (Online at: <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/app01/app01a.pdf>).

two questions is the main purpose of this dissertation.

To address these two questions, this dissertation adopts both historical and empirical analysis. Conventional historical analysis provides thorough descriptions of what happened. It could suggest an answer to the first question and could provide background for empirical analysis. Based on historical analysis, empirical analysis will provide a systematic understanding of the changes of bilateral interactions between South Korea and the U.S. after the end of the Cold War. For empirical analysis, multiple regression analysis with event data from 1990 to 2011 will be conducted. This period of 22 years includes Korea's economic development, democratization, the appearance of new political elites, and the end of the Cold War. Therefore, this quantitative analysis will be able to provide causal relations between these factors and the changes in the relations between the two states through systematic investigation since 1990.

This dissertation consists of six chapters. First, the introduction will provide the broad foundations and scope while providing a sense of overall research interest in this topic and an overview of the sections. The second chapter provides literature reviews about the ROK - U.S. relations. The third chapter describes alliance theories as a theoretical background of this dissertation including historical and empirical analysis. The fourth chapter provides historical analysis based on alliance theory. This chapter will describe the brief history of the ROK -U.S. relations in terms of theoretical frameworks of alliance theories. Also, the historical analysis shows how the ROK – U.S. relations

have evolved. This will provide readers with background knowledge of the relations between South Korea and the U.S. Furthermore, factors that affect the change of the relationship between the states will be detected. The fifth chapter conducted empirical analysis. It includes the explanation of the theory, hypotheses, models, methods, data, and measurement. Chapter 5 also provides descriptive statistics and empirical findings. The final chapter concludes the dissertation based on the results of both historical and empirical analysis and provides their implications for the future relations between the U.S. and South Korea.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review**

This chapter will review previous literatures about the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. There are big differences in research interests between the U.S. and South Korea. Reflecting on the asymmetric relations between the two states, while significant volumes of articles in international politics in South Korea are related to the ROK - U.S. alliance, the number of U.S. studies about South Korea is few. In other words, many South Korean students in international politics have great interest in U.S. foreign policy or strategy, but American academic interest in South Korea is not much. Although there are differences in research interests between the two states, this dissertation was inspired by previous researches in both states. The following sub-chapters will review a few studies that are helpful to this dissertation. They are categorized into several topics: historical approach, factors for the change of the ROK – U.S. alliance, anti-Americanism, economic relations, and alliance theory.<sup>3</sup>

This dissertation owes much knowledge and insights about the ROK – U.S. relations to these previous literatures.

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<sup>3</sup> There is more literature but this chapter could not include them all. For example there are articles that deal with specific policy in the alliance (Han 2004; Lee 2005; Choi 2006), and focus on the specific administration's foreign policy (Moon and Bae 2005; Snyder 2009; Park 2011).

## **2.1. Historical approach**

Several studies cover the initial period to the present in a historical approach. Park (2006) described South Korea and the U.S. relationship from 1945 to 1980 with a historical perspective. He described every administration in detail based on declassified diplomatic documents. Park (2006) is very helpful to understand interactions between the two states. Some historical facts released from diplomatic documents in this book were new. These new facts were a good source for understanding the real relations between the two states at that time. In this book, Park (2006) argued that the relationship between South Korea and the U.S. since 1945 cannot be explained by any one model. Their relationship was different from each time and situation. The U.S. sometimes chose direct intervention, but at other times chose a wait and see approach. At the same time, South Korea was compliant sometimes but at other times made conflicts. He concluded that these compliances and conflicts consisted of the changing dynamics of the relationships between the two states.

Another book edited by Lee and Patterson (1999) provides solid historical analysis about the relations between South Korea and the U.S. from 1866 to 1997. Interestingly, this book provides both Korean and American views of the relations between the two states before 1910. There were big differences in their strategic interests in each other and therefore their relationships ended when Japan annexed Korea. Since the U.S. was not interested in North Korea before the North Korean nuclear crisis, it is interesting to

discuss the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea starting in 1945.

Also, there is a book, edited by the editorial board of Historical Criticism Inc. (Yeoksabipyongsa) that describes administrations for 60 years during the U.S. – South Korea relationship. This book is in Korean and consists of nine chapters; each chapter provides the details of the relations between the two states and suggests ideas about the dynamics of the relationships during each administration on both sides. All three of these books were very helpful in understanding what really happened between the two states and particularly very useful for historical analysis. Furthermore, these historical insights became a background idea for finding factors affecting the change of the relations between the two states.

## **2.2. Factors for the change of the ROK – U.S. alliance**

Several articles focus on the changes and the future of the ROK – U.S. alliance. There were two crucial turns in the history of ROK – U.S. relations; one in the late 1980s and the other in the 2000s. The first change in the late 1980s was caused by the end of the Cold War along with South Korea's democratization and economic development. The second change was due to the conflicts between progressive government's engagement policy in South Korea and the Bush administration's hardline policy toward North Korea in the U.S. Therefore, these articles focus on factors that affect the change of the alliance which are vitally important for this dissertation. Those factors include both international and South Korean domestic changes.



In terms of the first period, Niksch (1989) premises that the ROK - U.S. alliance is under transition and suggests three new factors that affect the ROK - U.S. relationship. New factors include South Korea's democratization, U.S. policy changes, and the growing regional security issues around the end of the Cold War (Niksch 1989, 127). For example, he focused on the U.S.' budget and trade deficit. Due to the budget deficit, the U.S. was not willing to provide strong commitment to South Korea even with the huge trade deficit it had with South Korea. This matter leads the U.S. to request defense burden sharing to South Korea. Furthermore, nationalists' anti- U.S. movements in South Korea were added to trade conflicts between the two states. Niksch (1989) worried about emerging conflicts after democratization but suggested that democracy would be a shared value for the future of the ROK – U.S. alliance. Finally, Niksch (1989) focuses on the roles of other superpowers in North East Asia, such as Japan, China, and the Soviet Union, and their complex influence on ROK – U.S. cooperation.

Second, Taylor (1989) suggests several challenges to ROK – U.S. relations. Most importantly, he argues that South Korea's unstable internal politics became threats to the relationship between the two states. For example, he saw emerging anti-Americanism and labor unrest after democratic reforms of President Roh Tae-woo. Taylor argues that trade problems could have been a potential threat to the ROK – U.S. relationship because of a huge trade imbalance between the U.S. and South Korea at that time (Taylor 1989, 120). The huge trade deficit caused anti-Korean sentiment and trade pressure toward South

Korea. At the same time, these pressures are feedback to South Korean anti-Americanism. Taylor does not question the overall cooperation between the two states because this transition period could be both risk and opportunity.

Third, Cha (1989) discusses the roles and future of U.S. forces in Korea (USFK). At that time, some radicals in both the U.S. and South Korea argued for the withdrawal of USFK. Cha argued that there were more benefits than costs for both countries in USFK staying in South Korea. For example, the U.S. provides major deterrence to North Korea and serves as the ROK - U.S. combined forces. In addition, he argues that USFK assisted South Korea's military technology development as well as its military education and training. On the other hand, South Korea provides a base for USFK and buys most weapons and equipment from the U.S. (Cha 1989, 147 -149). Therefore, he argues that the presence of USFK is necessary until the ROK - U.S. alliance is dissolved through the negotiation between the two states.

In the second period (after progressive administrations in South Korea met with hardline Bush administration policies), Cha (2004a) says there is a controversy over the role of the ROK - U.S. alliance and this controversy deepened after the Summit between the two Koreas in 2000. Also, he suggests several factors that affect the ROK - U.S. alliance: first, the changed U.S. strategy does not fit the current alliance between the two states and resulted in changes to the deployment of USFK. Second, the South Korean military is strong enough to defend itself and can share a large defense burden for USFK.

Third, a demographic gap appeared in South Korea after democratization. Younger and educated South Koreans tended to be unfavorable to the U.S. Fourth, the Sunshine policy, unconditional engagement policy is not consistent with the ROK – U.S. alliance because the purpose of the alliance is to defeat the North Korean threat. The Sunshine policy changed the perceived threat from North Korea for South Koreans thus endangering the very core reason for the ROK – U.S. alliance. In addition, some in Korea think that the alliance with the U.S. prohibits unification with North Korea. Finally, the U.S. promoted military transformation that could be sustained without an unwelcoming host nation. That is, the U.S. could withdraw USFK because its advanced military technologies allow it to perform its military strategy without stationing in a specific location. Therefore, Cha (2004a) argues that if South Korea does not want the USFK, the forces should be withdrawn. However, he also adds that the majority of South Koreans think that the alliance with the U.S. is still very important for them.

Second, Gregg (2004) provides five factors deteriorating the ROK – U.S. alliance. South Korea's changing perception of North Korea is the first reason. After the Summit in 2000, South Korea deemphasized the North Korean threat and this questions the role of USFK in South Korea. This is similar to Cha (2004a). The second factor is the Bush administration's hardline policy toward North Korea that conflicts with the Kim Dae-jung administration's Sunshine policy. The third factor is President Roh's outspoken unfavorable attitudes toward the U.S. For example, President Roh blamed Bush's

hardline policy for the reason of distrust between the two states (Gregg 2004, 148). The relocation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division is the fourth factor. This relocation even intensified the doubts of a U.S. preemptive attack on North Korea. The final factor is South Korea's shift to the larger Asian economy and China. The U.S. worried about this movement of South Korea and considered it as a form of betrayal of the alliance (Gregg 2004, 150). With the five factors above, Gregg (2004) said that the current relationship between the two states reached the lowest point. Nevertheless, he argues that both the U.S. and South Korean governments are interested in maintaining the ROK – U.S. alliance. The only obstacle is the conflicts between the two states over North Korean Policy. He warns that the costs of the conflicts will be very high for the U.S.

Third, Drennan (2004) points out many crises between the two states, such as military coup in Korea, the Nixon doctrine, Carter's withdrawal of USFK, and the Kwangju massacre of 1980. He analyses that these past crises were the results of complex mixture of the U.S. global strategy and South Korea's domestic affairs. Similarly, he argued that the deterioration of relations between the two states began from conflicts over North Korean policies between President Kim Dae-jung and President Bush. In other words, the overlap of U.S. restructuring USFK and South Korea's Sunshine policy exacerbated the tensions between the two states. The domestic changes in South Korea intensified these tensions. Examples of domestic changes are the North-South Summit in 2000 and the resulting changing threat perception, demographic changes, the rise of

unfavorable sentiment towards USFK, and anti-Americanism.

### **2.3. Anti-Americanism**

As mentioned above, South Korean anti-Americanism is often referred to as the major factor of the deterioration of the ROK – U.S. alliance. At first, anti-Americanism spread in South Korea because of the Kwangju massacre in 1980. The real surge of such sentiment began in 2002 and continued during two progressive governments. Since 2002, many studies on anti-Americanism have been published and these are important parts of the existing research on the ROK – U.S. alliance.

First of all, Sim (2008)'s argument that South Korean anti-Americanism is essentially the product of domestic politics is very interesting. It is different from the general approach finding the cause of anti-Americanism from the outside. Sim (2008) suggested six reasons for South Korean anti-Americanism. These six reasons include the leadership of Korean government, differences in legal culture between the U.S. and South Korea, increase of Korean identity, anti-war sentiments, national solidarity, and U.S. foreign policy. Among these six factors, Sim (2008) focuses on the leadership of government. He argues that South Korean anti-Americanism is not peoples' pure and voluntarily reaction but the products of domestic politics. He argues that the South Korean government took advantage of anti-Americanism in order to strengthen its position in power politics. This is because government can have the most impact on other actors such as elites or the public even with the smallest influence. For example,

President Chun Doo-hwan left the spread of anti-Americanism in order to turn the public discontents to outside of the authoritarian regime. The Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations fostered anti-American sentiments in public and social movement organizations to build and strengthen their power base and to change the U.S. hardline policy toward North Korea (Sim 2008, 98 – 99).

Second, Lee (2005) understands that anti-Americanism is influenced by Korean social and political changes after democratization and following the establishment of the progressive government. She suggests three main changes affect anti-Americanism in South Korea. The fundamental change is democratization and the establishment of the progressive government. It is through democratization that public participation in policies becomes active. New nationalism emerged after the establishment of the progressive government. She explains that new nationalism is expressed as “assertive nationalism” to the U.S. and as “inter-Korean nationalism” to North Korea (Lee 2005, 93). These new nationalist elites demand more autonomy from the U.S., emphasizing solidarity between the two Koreas. The perception of the threat from North Korea changes, causing conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea. In addition, there is a difference between current and past anti-Americanism in South Korea. Most notably, Lee (2005) explains that current anti-Americanism is a more popular sentiment that could develop strong political behaviors than did past anti-Americanism. Lee says that major actors of the anti-American movement are civic organizations and younger generations.

Third, Kim (2004a, 159 - 160) defines three kinds of anti-Americanism such as “ideological Anti-American sentiment, Policy-Oriented Anti-American sentiment, and Emotional Anti-American sentiment.” The first is based on socialist ideology of radical activists and students from the 1980s. After the end of the Cold War, this type of anti-Americanism significantly weakened. The second, Policy- Oriented type is “anti-Bush policy” (Kim 2004a, 159). These second groups oppose the Bush administration’s hardline policy toward North Korea and its anti-terrorist policy based on hegemonic unilateralism. Finally, the third Emotional-Anti-American sentiment is mobilized for specific issues. Kim argues that this type of anti-American sentiment is more dangerous because it could have huge impact and be politically manipulated (Kim 2004, 160). Kim suggests four structural factors that affect the rise of anti-Americanism in South Korea such as “diverging security perceptions, discord in the alliance rationale, presence fatigue, and inadequate awareness” (Kim 2004, 159). The first two factors are very similar to other articles above. In terms of the presence fatigue, the crimes and conflicts could increase by the USFK’s longtime station. In the process of resolving them, conflicts may be amplified due to the differences in legal culture.

Fourth, Oh and Arrington (2007, 331) suggest four characteristics of South Korean anti-Americanism such as “short-run variability, multidimensionality, diversity among and within ‘anti-U.S.’ groups, and polarization.” Short-run variability means issue-specific anti-Americanism. For example, anti-Americanism surges when specific issues

arise and decrease when the issues fade. Multidimensionality means that South Koreans will respond differently depending on the kind of issue; a person can have good and bad feelings toward the U.S. at the same time depending on the issues (Oh and Arrington 2007, 332). Various anti-American groups have different degrees of anti-American sentiments depending on a specific issue. Finally, South Korean attitudes toward the U.S. became polarized, causing internal conflicts and further exacerbates the relationship between the U.S and South Korea (Oh and Arrington 2007, 333). In addition to four characteristics, Oh and Arrington focus on the impact of democratic consolidation on anti-Americanism. They argue that improved press freedoms and the establishment of progressive governments based on democratic consolidation raised the anti-Americanism in South Korea. The Bush doctrine dramatically enhanced anti-Americanism in South Korea. However, Oh and Arrington (2007) also emphasize that the majority of South Koreans do not think that their protests toward the U.S. are anti-Americanism. They think that it is just a protest against the U.S.' faults. At the same time, they think that South Korea still needs USFK and the ROK - U.S. alliance.

Fifth, Larson et al. ( 2004, xiv) suggest six important factors that affect the South Korean attitude toward the U.S. such as "historical residue, U.S. and ROK leadership actions taken and not taken, the ROK's security and economic situations, the state of North-South relations, social and generational change, and the media." Among these six factors, it is interesting to focus on the role of the media. It is not an exaggeration that the



influence of all other six factors is affected by how the media reports them. South Korean media has a bad reputation for biased reporting and sometimes distortion or manipulation of the facts (Larson et al., 100). In addition, Larson et al. (2004, xv) finds that “age, educational attainment, and student status” are the most important factors affecting anti-American attitudes. However, they argue that South Koreans try to balance their favorable and unfavorable attitudes towards the U.S. based on practical views (Larson et al. 2004, xvii).

Sixth, Choi and Kim (2006) have a similar argument with Larson et al. (2004). Choi and Kim (2006, 198) categorize Korean attitudes into four types: “defiant, reciprocal, pragmatic, and accommodative attitude.” Defiant attitude recognizes a superpower ally as an exploiter and thus wants to escape from it. Reciprocal attitude recognizes the alliance as a positive relationship, but wants to change it to be an equal relationship. Pragmatic attitude believes that the alliance is beneficial and tries to maximize its benefits. Since their national capability is small, the disadvantages of an asymmetric alliance are taken for granted as the opportunity cost. Accommodative attitude recognizes that the alliance is absolutely necessary for a weak state’s survival. Therefore, asymmetric relations do not matter at all (Choi and Kim 2006, 198 – 200). Choi and Kim (2006, 204) find that the majority of South Koreans (60.5%) have a reciprocal attitude (60.5%) and pragmatic attitude (28.4%). That is, most South Koreans want to maintain the ROK – U.S. alliance but hope to improve it into a more equal relationship (Choi and Kim 2006, 204). In

addition, they argue that South Korean attitudes toward the U.S. could be changed depending on the issues. Therefore, the dichotomy of pro-U.S. or anti-U.S. only reflects the surface of Korean attitudes without deep interpretation (Choi and Kim 2006, 216).

Finally, Lee and Cheong (2005) have the same argument as Choi and Kim (2006). Lee and Cheong (2005) argue based on trend analysis of time series data beginning in the 1990's that anti-Americanism continues to show an upward trend but has very unstable and flexible characteristics. Therefore, they argue that anti-American opinion should not be looking at as a fixed phenomenon. They conclude that anti-Americanism was one of the major reason for the crisis of the ROK – U.S. alliance is an exaggeration.

## **2.4. Economic relations**

Conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea since the 1980's have been mostly over economic issues. The U.S. had a trade deficit with South Korea, some argued that economic concerns were more urgent issues than military and security ones (Albrecht 1990, 53). The U.S. pressured South Korea to open its market and increase its exports and South Korea struggled to respond to the pressure.

Kwon (1993) appeals the unfairness of the U.S. economic pressure in terms of Korean perspective. Kwon (1993) diagnosed that the economic relations between the U.S. and South Korea improved due to two factors. First, through bilateral negotiation most of the trade conflicts were resolved. Second, Korea's trade surplus with the United States was significantly reduced. Nevertheless, the U.S. still blamed South Korea as the Second

Japan. Kwon (1993) argued that this was very unfair from a Korean view. He warned that if the U.S. kept pressure on South Korea to open its market, it would face substantial resistance from South Korea.

Shin (1993) examined an issue of business in economic relations. He describes complaints of U.S. business in South Korea. The U.S. businesses in Korea argue that there were formal and informal barriers in South Korea. A formal barrier is Korean bureaucrats' discrimination against foreign business with regulations and their enforcement. Furthermore, they complained that Korean regulatory agencies did not monitor violations of the regulation or punish the violator(s) (Shin 1993, 173–174). In addition, the U.S. businesses complained about the difficulties of communication and the corruption of Korean officials as informal barriers (Shin 1993, 175–176). Shin points out that the U.S. businesses in Korea tend to solve the business issue through political channels. Sometimes they appealed to the U.S. government or embassy in Korea to pressure South Korea. In particular, American Chamber of Commerce in South Korea is the main actor for this type of political problem solving. Shin argues that this politicization of the business issue gives a benefit to the U.S. business in the short run, but is harmful for long-term economic relations between the two states. South Korea began to recognize the U.S. government's involvement as unfair intervention in internal matters, which causes conflicts to expand.

Noland (1993) examines the trade frictions between the U.S. and South Korea in the

1990's. According to him, South Korea has more extensive trade barrier such as tariffs and quantitative restrictions than the U.S. The U.S. believes that if the U.S. could eliminate those trade barriers, they would be able to export more. As the U.S. trade deficit with South Korea increased, the U.S. actively promoted to eliminate those protections for South Korean economy. The U.S. was concerned over the tariff, agricultural quotas, and even customs practices. The U.S. designated South Korea in "its priority watch list under the Section 337, special 301, intellectual property provisions of the 1988 Trade Act" (Noland 1993, 15–16). South Korea tried to remove itself from the watch list through bilateral negotiations with the U.S. and passed several laws to protect intellectual property (Noland 1993, 16). The U.S. president can retaliate against unfair trade practices of other states with Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974; South Korea found complaint with this. Since most conflicts were resolved through bilateral negotiations between the two states, anti-Americanism in South Korea significantly increased at that time. This anti-Americanism led to the campaign such as "anti-import" and produced other conflicts with the U.S. (Noland 1993, 19 -20).

## **2.5. Alliance theory**

Several studies adopt alliance theory as the theoretical framework for their analysis. These papers provide important insights to this dissertation. These papers commonly introduce the alliance theory first, and analyze the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.

Chun (2004) examines overall alliance theories through categorizing into the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of the alliance depending on the temporal flow of the alliance. This classification of the alliance theories provides a framework for this dissertation, particularly for historical analysis. In fact, since he focused on the explanation of theory rather than describe an example, he did not analyze the ROK – U.S. alliance in detail. However, since the purpose of the alliance formation, the North Korean threat, still existed, he expects that the alliance will sustain into the future. However, he concludes that if South Korea continues to demand more autonomy from the U.S., the prospect of the alliance might be changed.

Kim (2004b) defines the ROK – U.S. relations as an asymmetric or autonomy-security tradeoff alliance. For example, South Korea has accepted the U.S. influence of foreign policy and provided military bases in return for the U.S. security. However, as South Korea's national power grows, it wants to change the asymmetrical relationship with the U.S. South Korea will not terminate the alliance due to the presence of the North Korean threat. However, Kim (2004) expects that South Korea will more actively respond to the issues over its autonomy. On the other hand, Kim argues that the ROK – U.S. relations is not only asymmetric but also symmetric alliance. The U.S.'s goals in East Asia are to counterbalance China's rapid growth as a challenger and to prevent the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) from North Korea. Kim expects that South Korea will be a more important partner in order to fulfill these goals. Also, South

Korea supports the U.S. war against terrorism as a partner. Furthermore, Kim (2004, 12) focuses on the “pivotal role” of South Korea. That is, South Korea is a small state with limited sources of national capability, but it has the geopolitical advantage to be an important actor in regional politics. Therefore, Kim (2004, 20) argues that South Korea should take advantage of it in the relations with the U.S.

Lee (1999) presents a very interesting analysis about the alliance dilemma. Lee (1999) focuses on alliance dilemma such as the fear of abandonment and entrapment among various alliance theories. In terms of Korean security, collusion between the U.S. and North Korea causes South Korea’s fear of abandonment. On the other hand, when conflictual situations between the U.S. and North Korea escalate to war on the Korean Peninsula, South Korea fears the risk of entrapment. Interestingly, Lee (1999) argues that the fear of abandonment and entrapment cycles. First of all, the improvement of the relations between the U.S. and North Korea cause the South Korea’s doubt of the collusion between the U.S. and North Korea. In the meantime, if the U.S. does not comply with its special commitment or the U.S. denies South Korea’s requests for political and military support and North Korea’s provocations occurs at the same time, South Korea’s doubt of the collusion between the U.S. and North Korea will be amplified. Then, South Korea urges the U.S. to reassure its commitment for the security of South Korea and provides more concessions such as new military bases or more defense burden sharing. If the U.S. accepts South Korea’s request at this moment, South Korea’s fear of

abandonment will be dismissed. However, if the U.S. takes a hardline policy, the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea will become the starting point of South Korea's fear of entrapment. If the U.S. takes more aggressive action, South Korea's fear of entrapment will intensify. Then, South Korea pressures the U.S. to change its hardline policy towards North Korea. If the U.S. changes its policy, South Korea's fear of entrapment will be resolved. Until a new cycle emerges, the situation will be stable (Lee 1999, 26–28). Lee (1999) explains this cycle of fear of abandonment and entrapment with the case of the First North Korean nuclear crisis. At that time, South Korea and the U.S. followed the cycles of the fear of abandonment and entrapment as mentioned above. In conclusion, Lee (1999, 35) analyzes that since South Korea is more dependent on the ROK – U.S. alliance, it repeatedly experienced the fear of abandonment and entrapment. On the other hand, since the U.S. recognized the strategic interests in South Korea, it did not deviate from the alliance even in the case of conflicts with South Korea.

Shin (2006) focuses on the issue of threat perception. The change of threat perception is one of the main factors that affects alliance termination (Walt 1997). For example, he examines the conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea in a détente era in the 1970's. While the U.S. switched its international strategy focusing on the relations with China, South Korea still concentrated on the security of the Korean Peninsula. At that time, the U.S. thought that the partial withdrawal of USFK did not much affect the stability of Korean Peninsula and North East Asia. However, South Korea seriously

suffered from being abandoned. Then, South Korea opposed the withdrawal of USFK and at the same time promoted self-reliant defense. In addition, there is the difference of threat perception on North Korean threat. While South Korea accepted potential North Korean attack as a serious threat, the U.S. has determined that the South Korean government exaggerated the North Korean threat for the purpose of domestic politics. Therefore, the U.S. recognized South Korea's reaction as more aggressive and felt the fear of entrapment (Shin 2006, 363 – 365).

Chang (1996) raises a question as to why South Korea cannot enjoy more autonomy in the alliance with the U.S. even after its national capability grows. Chang (1996) defines the ROK – U.S. alliance as an asymmetric military alliance. In an asymmetric alliance, if a small state's national capability grows, it claims more autonomy from the strong state (Morrow 1991). However, Chang (1996) argues that it did not work for South Korea based on the following reasons. Until the late 1980's, South Korea achieved political democratization and economic growth. In particular, South Korea's economic and military power was superior to those of the North Korea. Thus, some argue that South Korea can defeat North Korea by itself without the U.S. military assistance. However, South Korea still needs USFK because preventing significant damage is more important than defeating North Korea in a war. Therefore, USFK is still very important for South Korea's security to deter the North Korean threat. Furthermore, after the end of Cold War, the U.S. became a unilateral superpower and did not have strong strategic



interests in South Korea. Providing security is not a priority in the ROK – U.S. alliance and South Korea cannot free ride anymore. South Korea should contribute to defense burden sharing. In conclusion, although South Korea's national capability grows, it still depends on the alliance with the U.S. and at the same time, the U.S. strategic interest in South Korea decreases. Therefore, South Korea cannot enjoy more autonomy than it expected in an asymmetric alliance with the U.S. (Chang 1996, 88 -98).

## **Chapter 3**

### **Alliance Theories**

This chapter reviews alliance theories as the theoretical background of this dissertation. Alliance theories will be reviewed according to several subjects such as the formation, maintenance, and termination of the alliance to provide analytical tools for historical analysis (Chun 2004).

Walt (1997, 157) defines alliance as “a formal or informal commitment for security cooperation between two or more states” and regardless of its type, “the defining feature of any alliance is a commitment for mutual military support against some external actors in some specified set of circumstances.” Therefore, an alliance provides some external support for a country that cannot deal with a threat by itself and allied countries will be against the threat together.

There are several types of alliances depending on the purpose of the formation (Walt 1997, 157). First, they can be either an offensive or a defensive alliance. Sometimes alliances are formed for attacking yet another country; and other times it is formed to defend against external threats.

Alliances also are categorized into defense pact, neutrality pact or nonaggression pact, and entente by the degree of the commitment. Defense pacts are characterized as the strongest commitment. If a hostile enemy attacks a country involved in a defense pact, all

the signatory states will defend the attacked state. It is the same when a member country attacks nonmember states; member countries promise to be on the same side. Neutrality pacts, or nonaggression pacts, are when member states remain neutral when one of member becomes involved in a dispute with a non-member state. Finally, entente is the relationship between member states resulting after an actual event. Entente is the weakest form of alliance among the three above (Bueno de Mesquita 1981, 114-115).

Alliances can be symmetrical or asymmetrical based on the capabilities of member states. Symmetric alliances are between countries with equal national power and capabilities. Both parties obtain security and autonomy benefits through such an alliance. For this reason, this type of alliance is also called the alliance of the capability aggregation. However, asymmetric alliances are between great powers and weak states; there is an inequality of national power. In this relationship, tradeoffs between security and autonomy are more important than in a symmetric alliance (Morrow 1991). This alliance is called the autonomy-security tradeoffs or the patron–client relationship (i.e., a commitment between a major and a minor power) (Gasiorowski and Baek 1987).

Based on the definitions above, the ROK – U.S. relations are defined as the asymmetric, patron-client relationship based on formal defense pact in the initial period. The details of the alliance formation will be next.

### **3.1. The formation of an asymmetric alliance**

The most fundamental problem for the survival of a state is how to deal with

external threats. Simply speaking, there are two options: dealing with any external threats by itself or forming an alliance. In other words, we need to answer why a state chooses forming alliance rather than facing the external threat with its own military power (Chun 2004, 67). This is the matter of arms versus alliance. Internal resistance is always possible when a state attempts to improve its military prowess in order to deal with an external threat. For example, Congress and public opinion tend to oppose tax increases for expanding military spending. Furthermore, the difficulties go beyond public opinion and legal entities for small countries who cannot afford the necessary economic power and scientific technology to face these threats. In this case, it is easy to achieve military power in a short time through forming an alliance (Morrow 1993, 207-33). According to Walt (1987, 18-31), a “bandwagoning” type of alliance is more attractive to a small state rather than a “balancing” alliance type. Bandwagoning is an asymmetric alliance. Generally speaking, a small state is not fully capable of forming a balancing type of alliance due to its minor impact on improving the aggregate capability of the alliance. Therefore, an asymmetric alliance, such as bandwagoning, is the usual form of alliance for small states. This is true for a small state such as South Korea, surrounded by big powers. Since small states wish to maintain their independence and survival throughout the hostile international conditions, they join asymmetric alliances (Morgenthau 1985, 196-197).

The qualification of asymmetry is first based on the power capabilities of the state.

The capabilities of a state can be variously defined with its size of territory, population, economic and military development. These are relative concepts rather than definitive concepts. According to Rothstein (1968, 29), “a small power is a state which recognizes that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities, and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of other states, institutions, processes, or developments to do so.” Therefore, the capability of self-survival is important for deciding its status of recognized power. In this sense of international politics, the small states tend to obey the lead of great powers (Rothstein 1968, 13). The types of benefits from the alliance also define the asymmetry. As briefly mentioned above, both countries in symmetric alliances exchange either security or autonomy. However, allies in asymmetric alliances exchange security and autonomy (Morrow 1991, 905). In this definition of asymmetry, security of a nation is defined more broadly as “its ability to maintain the current resolution of the issues that it wish to preserve” on top of the narrow concept of its survival. Autonomy means “a state’s ability to determine its own policies” (Morrow 1991, 908). These two standards of qualification are consistent such that great powers provide the guarantee of security to a small state and gain more autonomy in their policy projection (Hlatky 2008, 4).

The logic in forming an asymmetric alliance is based on the fact that all countries have similar degrees of autonomy but different levels of security. Each state decides whether to form an alliance through its rational choice of tradeoff between security and autonomy depending on its utility function (Altfeld 1984; Morrow 1987). By forming an

alliance, security is heightened at the cost of some autonomy. The attractiveness of an alliance is decided by its utility function of “comparing the benefits of the ally’s ability to advance its interests to the costs of advancing the ally’s interests” (Morrow 1991, 905). Thus, a state will reach a very simple conclusion that it wants to form an alliance when the benefits exceed the costs of the alliance (Morrow 1991, 911). This applies equally to both great and small states.

However, the standpoint of the minor and major power in terms of their capability is very different in the beginning. While a small state has a low level of security and high level of autonomy, a great state has both high levels of autonomy and security. Therefore, a great state can ally with a small state through providing some security without the cost of its autonomy. However, a small state sees a cost to its autonomy to gain security from a great state. There is a bargain between security and autonomy here. Still, not all minor states can make an ally with a great power. A small state provides the benefit of autonomy to a great power through concessions such as strategic military bases or political agreements in foreign or domestic politics but not all small states can participate in these manners. If a small state cannot deliver these kinds of autonomy concessions, it cannot find a great power to ally with no matter their need for high security (Morrow 1991, 905-913).

### **3.2. Issues in the maintaining of asymmetric alliance**

Even if an asymmetric alliance is formed between two countries, it does not

guarantee the success of the alliance. On top of the initial costs during the formation of the alliance, there must be continuing costs to maintain the alliance. According to Leeds and Savun (2007, 1119-1120), several aspects require management in order to maintain alliances and credible positions there within; these include the management of official organizations and other entities, foreign policy consultation, coordination of policies, and dealing with the loss of autonomy. It also involves the choice between going into war and abandoning an ally. Therefore, several typical political issues such as balance of dependence, alliance dilemma (abandonment and entrapment), and burden sharing to maintain the alliance between allies will be reviewed in this chapter (Chun 2004, 76 - 84).

### **3. 2.1. Balance of dependence: security vs. autonomy**

According to Morrow (1991, 930), it is easier to maintain an asymmetric alliances than a symmetric alliance because the trade-offs between autonomy and security are an even combination. The conflict over how to balance trade-offs between security and autonomy often occurs even in an asymmetric alliance. When an asymmetric alliance is formed, all possible situations affecting the trade-off between security and autonomy are taken into account. However, as things change over time, new areas and problems are bound to appear in the relationship between allied countries. In asymmetric alliances, a great state controls not only the issues in formal pact but also all other areas over the relationship between the two countries. This is because the asymmetric relationship creates a hierarchical structure. Lake (1996) explains that the hierarchy in asymmetric

alliances provides the great state with residual control over all other areas that were not originally specified but has a feature of implicit issue linkage that a small state supports the great states on other issues in return for its supplying security (Leeds and Savun 2007, 1120). In fact, the issue linkage promotes the cooperation and coordination of the policy between the member states. The reason is that a small state cannot be on the opposite side of the great power because it might lose the benefit of cooperation on other issues (Axelrod and Keohane 1985).

For example, the patron-client relationship is a typical asymmetric alliance. In this relationship, the patron gains autonomy through transferring security to a client state. In return for security, a client performs the role that the patron wants in the international system they both belong to (Shoemaker and Spanier 1985; Carney 1982). Although a patron-client relationship starts from the threat environment, the relationship is not just limited to security issues but extends to other issues. In history, it is easy to find that a patron state did not only affect security but also economic, political, and social aspects of the client state (Shin 1993).

However, it is still important to remember that this is not a one-sided relationship. Even in a hierarchical structure, this is a fluid and bargaining relationship where each state tries to maximize its benefit from the other side under the given situations. In other words, when a patron state tries to maximize its autonomy with less security costs over the client state, a client state shows not just reactive but adaptive behavior to patron states



(Rosenau 1981). It is sure that a client state is a weaker party in a hierarchy, but they at least have some bargaining power to the patron. The small state's bargaining power comes from the patron's motivation to maintain the alliance for strategic interests and political support of a client state (Baek 1982, 120-121). For instance, during the Cold War, the U.S. is a prime example of a patron state. During the Cold War, the U.S. wanted to extend its control over international politics to stand against the Soviet Union through networking asymmetric alliances. Generally, these alliances continue even now and provide the U.S. with more autonomy to project its foreign policies as a hegemon (Morrow 1991, 929). Since the U.S. has the strong purpose of maintaining asymmetric alliances, a weak party of alliances can bargain to maximize benefits such as military support and economic aid in return for the concessions of their autonomy.

### **3.2.2. Alliance dilemma: the fear of abandonment and entrapment**

As mentioned earlier, an asymmetric alliance is the bargaining between autonomy and security. Since each state tries to maximize its benefit and minimize its costs, there are always some strains between the two allies. These strains are called the dilemma of alliance, "abandonment," and "entrapment" (Snyder 1984, 466).

According to Snyder (1984, 466), abandonment is defection. However, defection might present itself in a variety of forms such as the following: an ally may 'switch sides' by realigning with the opponent, de-align completely, revoke the alliance contract, fail to provide the promised commitments, or fail to provide support in contingencies. No matter

how the alliance security is firm, the fear of being abandoned is ever-present. If an ally fails to provide enough benefits for the other, the risk of betrayal of the other is even bigger. On the other hand, the other side of the dilemma is entrapment. Snyder (1984, 467) defines entrapment as a state being pulled into a conflict over an ally's interests that it does not share or only partly shares. Each state and their interests do not always overlap perfectly and when states share interests, it is not always the case that those interests are valued in the same manner. Thus, entrapment is present when a state values the preservation of the at-risk alliance more than the cost of being involved in a fight over interests that do not match. The risk of entrapment varies with the ally's dependence on the alliance, the strength of the commitment, and the degree of aggressiveness. For example, if a state highly depends on the alliance, the risk of entrapment cannot be avoided. If a country has a strong commitment to the ally, it has higher risk of entrapment. Furthermore, if a state trusts its ally's commitment, the state can be more aggressive and intransigent with opponents (Snyder 1984, 467).

Interestingly, the risks of abandonment and entrapment are inversely related. If a state tries to reduce the risk of abandonment through strong commitment, that attempt increases the risk of entrapment at the same time. Since strong commitment of a state tends to restrain its own option to change the strategy, firm commitment has the counterproductive effect on its strategy for bargaining. Therefore, states usually want to avoid showing clear and strong commitment to keep favorable bargaining leverage

(Snyder 1984, 467-468).

Snyder (1984, 472-475) suggests five important determinants affecting states' bargaining strategies. First of all, the relative dependence on the alliance is the most important. Here, the dependence is decided by how much one needs the ally's aid. A state that is more dependent on the alliance has stronger motivation to keep an alliance. Therefore, this more dependent state perceives that the cost of abandonment is higher than that of entrapment.

Next, the degree of strategic interest is important. Snyder (1984, 472) defines the strategic interests as "an interest in keeping ally's power resources out of the opponent's hand... Since it refers not the need for aid in case one is attacked, but to the need to block an increase in the adversary's power." This component was very important during the Cold War. The U.S. and Soviet Union tried to keep their allies that had strategic interests in their boundary not to be taken away from each other. Also, the strategic interest is very important for a small state to obtain aid from a great state in asymmetric alliance. If a small state does not have a strategic interest of a strong state, its perception of the fear of abandonment will be high or in the worst case, it is not easy to find an ally to support it. On the other hand, if a small state has strategic interests of a great state, the small state can have a better bargaining position. This is because the existence and importance of a strong state's strategic interests are well known, and extremely lessens a small state's fear of abandonment and a strong state's leverage over its weak partners (Snyder 1984, 473).

The third element is the degree of explicitness of the alliance agreement. As mentioned above, an alliance based on formal pact lowers the risk of abandonment because the explicitness of the alliance limits the options that a state chooses. Therefore, a state preferably tries to keep vague or ambiguous commitments. In an asymmetrical alliance, a weak state tries to lessen the risk of abandonment by having a more explicit contract, but this raises the risk of entrapment for the strong state. Fourth, the strategy can be different depending on the allies' shared interests. If they share few interests, they both fear the risk of entrapment rather than abandonment in a certain case. However, if they shared many interests, they are willing to take the risk to keep the alliance. Finally, these decisions are based on an ally's own and others' past experiences. The strategies of each state are predictable based on one's history (Snyder 1984, 474) because each learns from their experience; this helps states to balance the costs and benefits of an alliance (Reiter 1994).

However, these five determinants have an issue-specific effect on each state's strategy. Also, the relative effects of these five determinants have unique patterns in asymmetric alliances. A weak state definitely depends more on the alliance. Thus, the fear of abandonment is higher than entrapment. In other words, the weak state should comply with an alliance even though it faces higher costs of entrapment. In this case, the costs of entrapment that a weak state endures are bigger because a weak state usually tends to share only a small portion of the great state's interests. Generally, a weak state's interest

is peripheral from that of a strong state that has global interests (Snyder 1984, 484).

Furthermore, if a weak state does not have similar strong strategic interests, the fear of abandonment is ever-present. Therefore, weak states generally want to build a strong alliance based on an explicit formal contract in order to ensure their own security. In sum, the fear of abandonment and entrapment is bigger for a weak state than a strong state.

On the other hand, sometimes this is not true. For example, the alliance dilemma is weak under a bipolar system such as in the period of the Cold War. In the Cold War period, the strategic interests of the great power are so clear that even a small state does not much feel the risk of abandonment. Also, even weaker states can have some leverage to restrain the superpower's aggressiveness decreasing the risk of entrapment "by appealing to consensus norms or by exploiting the superpower's need for collective legitimization" without the fear of abandonment (Snyder 1984, 485). However, even in the bipolar structure, when their common security interests become less robust through specific movement of reconciliation such as *détente* between two superpowers, the alliance dilemma appears again. The *détente* between two strong adversaries makes small states feel the anxiety of abandonment.

### **3. 2.3. Alliance Burden sharing**

Olson and Zeckhauser (1966, 1967) explain that security is a public good within an alliance. In the nature of public goods, no one can be excluded from its use and another state's use of security does not prohibit its own use. Therefore, each member state of an

alliance will feel the temptation of free riding and then military goods will be underproduced unless a strong state produces it for all by itself. According to Morgan and Palmer (2000, 8), this type of “free-rider” model exists in an asymmetric alliance. In an asymmetric alliance, a strong state provides security with very little or none of a small state’s contribution (Morgan and Palmer 2000, 8).

On the other hand, there is a “bargaining model” that a small state contributes whatever it can or is asked to do in return for the security provided by a strong state (Morgan and Palmer 2000, 8). That is, the basic logic of this model is that a strong power provides sufficient security for a weak state that yields its autonomy in return. Therefore, security could not be considered as a pure public good in asymmetric alliances. Since the substitutability of security is very low, it is rather regarded as a private (Oh 1989, 181) or quasi-public good that can be used for only member countries that provide their autonomy benefits to a strong state (Sandler and Cauley 1975; Sandler 1977). Also, since the security is provided by a dominant state, most of the military spending is disproportionately borne by the dominant state. According to Theis (1987), this unequal burden sharing only exists in asymmetric alliances. Therefore, military force structures are more important than the matter of the military expense sharing in an asymmetric alliance. As the strains between autonomy and security continue there might be a conflict over the direction of the force configuration such as the different interests between a dominant power that wants to increase its autonomy benefits and a weak state that wants

solid security (Morrow 1984, 929). Furthermore, the military cost sharing problem is not absent even in an asymmetric alliance. For example, a typical dominant state, such as a hegemon, uses asymmetric alliances to extend its autonomy in the international system. According to Morrow (1991, 930), “the hegemon provides its allies with security from their neighbors and receives both some control over the allies’ policies and strategic locations to advance its interests further.” The important issue here is the hegemon’s military expenditures. The disproportionate military spending in the asymmetric alliance will raise the hegemon’s military expenditures and finally have adverse effects on the financial situation of the dominant country. In other words, as Gilpin (1981) and Kennedy (1987) expect the decline of the great power, this financial burden will decrease the dominant state’s power and then will bring the burden sharing issue even in an asymmetric alliance. Thus, it is not exaggeration that the rise of burden sharing cues some improvement in the degree of asymmetric situation in an asymmetric alliance no matter whether due to the decline of the great power or the growth of the weak state.

### **3.3. Factors affecting alliance termination**

While an alliance persists, there are several issues of management. Depending on how these issues are managed, the alliance might be maintained or terminated. Several studies provide useful insight about the endurance and termination of the alliance. According to Morrow (1991, 916), there are three motivations that make it difficult to manage the alliance well. In other words, a state might want to break the alliance based

on these three motivations: “a deterioration of its security or autonomy in the alliance, an improvement in its security and autonomy out of the alliance, and a shift in the nation’s utility function.” He also suggests three important changes to produce these motivations as follows (Morrow 1984, 917). First, if a state grows in power, it might not want to continue the alliance because it can provide for its own security. Second, if a state’s capability declines, its allies might try to find security from outside of the alliance. Finally, if a state’s utility function is changed, the alliance might not be attractive anymore.

Even though in these three cases, if member states have a large “utility of surplus” for the alliance, the alliance might not be broken because they make concessions for the change of the alliance (Morrow 1984, 917). In other words, they will produce a new status quo instead of breaking the alliance. In this sense, it is true that asymmetric alliances last longer than symmetric alliances. Since the asymmetric alliance is between larger and smaller states, the capability change of a small state does not have a considerable effect on the alliance because the overall security is still provided by the major state. In addition, “utility surplus” will be greater in asymmetric alliances than symmetric alliances because two parties exchange autonomy and security and thus are able to produce an appropriate level of balance between autonomy and security (Morrow 1984, 917).

Walt (1997, 158–164) suggests three main changes affecting the end of an alliance.



First, it is the change of the threat perceptions. The fundamental purpose of alliance formation is to deal with external threats. The change of threat perception is based on the change in the balance of power. If the original adversary that was the major threat becomes weaker, the alliance is likely to dissolve because the threat will disappear and thus member countries do not need external support from the alliance. In addition, if a state changes its perception toward the main external threat to be more favorable or its ally becomes combative, the existing alliances are less useful for the alliance member. Finally, although the threat is not gone, if the capability of a member state grows faster than its adversary, it does not need the alliance anymore because it can sufficiently defend itself without external support. This is the same as what Morrow (1991) argues above.

Next, if its members start to cast doubt about the efficacy of the alliance, the alliance is not likely to last longer. The doubt of whether the alliance is enough to guarantee its member state's security is based on the question of the real capabilities to deter external threats and the credibility of the member states' commitment. This is similar to abandonment in the alliance dilemma mentioned earlier. When the alliance is asymmetric and geographically distant, the fear of abandonment is even greater.

Finally, there is an alternative perspective that focuses on domestic politics within a member state. This perspective suggests four main hypotheses. First, since demographic and generational changes produce different perceptions of the alliance and threat, these changes disrupt the fundamental foundation of the alliance. Next, if there is domestic

competition where one side of the competition tries to improve its position by attacking the alliance, the alliance can be weakened by domestic opposition. Similarly, if there are certain ideological divisions in the member states, it adversely affects the existing alliance. The internal schisms promote conflicts in domestic politics and it lead to the conflict over whether or not the continuation of the alliance. At last, regime change is detrimental to the existing alliance. Once the regime is changed, new leadership will not prefer the existing alliance and not agree to the current level of commitment. At the same time, the member states of the alliance will suspect the will of the newly changed regime.

On the other hand, Walt (1997, 164 - 168) suggests five reasons why alliances can persist even after the original motivation of its formation has disappeared. First, if there is a hegemonic power in the alliance, it can prevent the termination of the alliance against its will. This is very similar logic of asymmetric alliance of Morrow (1991) because if there is a hegemon in the alliance, the alliance must be asymmetric. Hegemonic leadership is more likely in a bipolar system and the dominant leadership guarantees strong commitment trying to keep the member states from straying from the alliance. Since the hegemonic leadership has global interests, it needs to keep its influence strong and broad over other states in international politics.

Second, if an alliance symbolizes a strong state's credibility, it will be likely to persist. For example, if a hegemonic state such as the U.S. that has several bilateral alliances terminates one of them, it could be seen as the decrease of U.S. interest in that

area. In other words, it could produce a domino effect of the fear of abandonment.

Third, there are often self-interested elite groups who support the alliance not for the entire country's interest but for their own benefit. If these elite groups are strong, it will be helpful to the continuation of the alliance.

Fourth, if an alliance is highly institutionalized, it is more likely to endure. The high level of institutionalization promotes alliance cohesion through building professional bureaucracy which has expertise. Also, once the institution is established, it is not likely to disappear even after the original tasks of the institution vanish. The momentum to maintain the organization makes the alliance more sustainable.

Finally, shared identity and ideology can be helpful in sustaining the alliance through reducing conflicts between member states; the orientation toward similar ideology can maintain a commitment in a similar level even after its original rationale is no longer valid.

In sum, changes in the threat perception, national capabilities, and domestic politics can adversely affect the maintenance of the alliance. However, the hegemonic leadership in an asymmetric alliance, similar political ideology, strong interest groups in domestic politics, and alliance institutionalization hinder abrupt collapse of the alliance.

Leeds and Savun (2007) provide several factors that affect the abrogation of the alliance through affecting the member states' perception of the value of the alliance. Their main argument is that if there is a change in the original conditions of the alliance

formation, it will cause the leader to abrogate the alliance. However, a leader's decision is also depending on the costs of the abrogation.

Leeds and Savun (2007) find empirical support that the changes in international power, domestic political institutions, and the formation of new alliances increase the risk of alliance termination. First, when a member state experiences the change of international power that is altered from the original condition and a significant decrease of external threat, the alliance is likely to be abrogated. Next, a member state undergoes the change of domestic political process and institutional structure, its calculation of the benefits and costs of the existing alliance might change. Finally, when a state forms a new alliance outside of the existing alliance, the alliance can be replaced by the new one (Leeds and Savun 2007, 1119 – 1121).

However, there are costs to ending the existing alliance. First, an alliance between democratic countries lowers the risk of the abrogation of the alliance. Its constituents can replace the leader of a democratic state so that it is helpful for the leader to maintain favorable international relations. In other words, it is good for the leader not to make conflict or abruptly terminate the existing alliance (McGillivray and Smith 2000; Gaubatz 1996). Leeds and Savun (2007) also found that asymmetrical alliances last longer than symmetric alliances as what Morrow (1991) argues. As mentioned earlier, the end of an alliance for a weak state means not only the loss of firm security but also other linked benefits. Particularly, Leeds and Savun found that issue linkages involving extensive

coordination of nonmilitary issues in an asymmetric alliance is help to hinder the collapse of the alliance. At the same time, the end of alliance means the decrease of autonomy and the decline in its credit for the large state. Therefore, the costs of terminating the alliance are even bigger in asymmetric alliances (Leeds and Savun 2007, 1128 -1129).

Bennett (1997) tests the four major theoretical perspectives such as capability-aggregation, security-autonomy, domestic politics, and institutionalization perspectives on alliance termination. The capability-aggregation model is based on realist or neorealist view of international politics. The motivation of forming an alliance is to defeat an external threat through increasing aggregate capabilities of the alliance. Therefore, if the external threat disappears, the alliance will be terminated (Bennett 1997, 848).

Next, security-autonomy perspective developed by Altfeld (1984) and Morrow (1991) argues that a state makes an asymmetric alliance through the tradeoff between security and autonomy. Therefore, there are various possible tradeoff combinations between autonomy and security. The important point here is bargaining to maximize its benefit and minimize the costs; the optimal combination is a balance of the security benefits and autonomy costs (Bennett 1997, 849).

Third, the importance of democratic politics is based on its effect on a state's utility function. Various domestic politics affect foreign policy decisions of the leader and Bennett (1997, 853-854) considers internal regime change and type as major changes of domestic politics. Regime change affects the state's status quo. That is, the existing

alliance could be less useful for new status quo of a new regime based on changed utility function (Siverson and Starr 1994; Bennett 1997, 850). In case of regime type, Siverson and Emmons (1991) found that alliances are more often made among democratic states. Gaubatz (1996) argues that democracies are less likely to end their alliances because of the feature of democratic procedures and common interests (Bennett 1997, 854).

Finally, as mentioned earlier, formal institutions created as a direct cause of an alliance have momentum to be maintained. For example, organizations tend to expand their tasks, size, budget, and influence. Also, they try to perpetuate themselves based on the efficacy of institutionalization which also helps successful operation and maintenance. Thus, the higher institutionalization of an alliance could hinder the opportunistic dissolution of the alliance (Bennett 1997, 850, 855).

Taken together, the changes of states' capability and threat perception, asymmetric alliance, and domestic politics are major critical factors for the maintenance and termination of an alliance. It is interesting that domestic politics are pointed out as an important factor for the alliance unlike the traditional realist argument that international affairs are not influenced by domestic politics (Bennett 1997, 854). In fact, as mentioned above, domestic politics emerged as very important factor for the issues of an alliance because it has a considerable effect on the change of state's utility function and then favorable status quo that control the overall process of the alliance (Barnett and Levy 1991; Gaubatz 1996; Siverson and Emmons 1991; Siverson and Starr 1994).

## **Chapter 4**

### **Historical Analysis: The Evolution of the Korea – U.S. relations**

This chapter provides historical analysis in the framework of alliance theories described in the earlier chapter. However, this is not the typical type of historical analysis that describes the whole history in a chronological order. Instead, the main focus of this chapter is on the theoretical analysis of the framework. This includes the formation, maintenance, and termination of an alliance. For purposes of this dissertation we should also include the change of an alliance because the ROK – U.S. alliance has not been terminated.

The ROK-US relationship can be defined as a formal defense treaty. However, the current relationship between the two countries is not the same as when they first faced each other in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The formal relationship between the two states started on May 22, 1882, when they concluded a Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation. At that time, Korea was in danger surrounded by three strong powers, Japan, China, and Russia, who wanted to control the Korean peninsula.

According to Morgenthau (1985, 196 - 197), there are three ways for a small state to be independent. First, there is a balance of power between strong states. Second, a small state can go under the protection of a strong state. Finally, strong states do not have strategic interests in a small state. However, none of the three conditions fit Korea. There

was no balance of power among China, Japan, and Russia and these three imperialistic countries had been competing to occupy Korea because Korea was not under protection of any country. In this peril, the U.S. could be the one that could protect Korea with relatively less strategic interests in Korea because it was geographically distant. However, the U.S. did not want to get involved in the political swirl in East Asia. In fact, President Theodore Roosevelt thought that Korea would not be able to rely on itself and should be under protection of another strong country. Since the U.S. wanted to counterbalance the expanding influence of the Soviet Union, Japan was considered as the best option to control Korea (Baek 1982, 122–123). The U.S. and Japan recognized each other's substantial domination for the Philippines and Korea respectively through Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905 (Patterson and Conroy 1999, 4).

The initial history of Korea – U.S. relations shows that it is not easy for a small and weak country, such as Korea, lacking considerable strategic interests, to find a good ally in order to obtain firm security and guarantees of independence. For South Korea, it was the best option to find an ally that was geographically distant from it and bandwagon the ally's power, but it was difficult to be realized until the collapse of Japan and the outbreak of the Korean War.

#### **4. 1. The Formation of the asymmetric Korea-U.S. alliance**

From the formation, the ROK – U.S. alliance was very asymmetric. Shortly after the U.S. and the Soviet Union received the surrender of Japan in the South and North of



Korea respectively, Korea was divided under the trusteeship of two countries. This was unlike the original announcement promising a unified and independent Korea.

Under U.S. military occupation, although Korea did not have a formal relationship with the U.S., the U.S. provided massive economic aid in order to overcome the devastation of the colonial period in Korea. In fact, it would have been impossible for Korea to survive without U.S. aid at that time. However, the U.S. military withdrew on June 8, 1949. It was the U.S.'s justification that the Soviet Union that had occupied the North of Korea withdrew. However, the real reason for U.S. military withdrawal was due to the low strategic interest of Korea. Before the U.S. emerged in the Cold War, Korea did not possess any strategic interest given its limited defense budget. In January 1950, U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, announced the so-called Acheson line, a policy statement that excluded South Korea from the U.S. defense perimeter in the Pacific (Baek 1982, 124). Five months after Acheson's announcement, North Korea invaded South Korea. In contrast to the expectation of North Korea and its allies, the U.S. dispatched its military immediately to the Korean War without a formal defense treaty with South Korea because the U.S. thought that North Korea's invasion of South Korea was part of the expansion of Soviet Communism.

On July 27, 1953, the U.S., North Korea, and the People's Republic of China signed an armistice agreement without South Korea's signing. From the beginning of the armistice agreement, South Korean President Syngman Rhee strategically resisted to sign

the agreement. However, the U.S. strongly desired a conclusion to the war and thus persuaded President Rhee with several incentives. One of the strongest commitments was the ROK - U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT).<sup>4</sup> As discussed in earlier chapters, the MDT is the foundation for the current ROK – U.S. alliance (Baek 1982, 125).

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the fastest and easiest way for a small state to gain firm security is to conclude a formal defense treaty with a strong state (Handel 1981). This is not always possible due to the powerful state lacking strategic interests in such a small state. Without any strategic interests, the powerful state faces entrapment risks and the costs of providing security without much to gain (Snyder 1984; Morrow 1991). Even when states make a treaty, it will not show a strong commitment to the ally because a clear mention of strong commitment increases the risk of entrapment and restricts the bargaining leverage of the state (Snyder 1984, 467). The U.S. felt this same pressure.

The ROK – U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty shows the reluctance of the U.S. on concluding the treaty with Korea at first. For example, among the six articles of the treaty, Article III includes main contents of the Treaty.<sup>5</sup> In Article III, the U.S. clearly stated that

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<sup>4</sup> The Mutual Defense Treaty between Korea and the U.S. was signed in 1953 and ratified in 1954.

<sup>5</sup> Article III of MDT: Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the Parties in territories now under their respective administrative control, or hereafter recognized by one of the Parties as lawfully brought under the administrative control of the other, would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. (from the Website of Embassy of the ROK in the USA : Online at [http://www.koreaembassyusa.org/bilateral/military/eng\\_military4.asp](http://www.koreaembassyusa.org/bilateral/military/eng_military4.asp)).

the U.S. would only protect those parts of South Korea that were part of its legal territory at the time the treaty was signed. Furthermore, the U.S. limited its commitment by including a provision in Article III that said it would protect South Korea when attacked from an external threat. The U.S. would not protect South Korea if external attacks were the result of any South Korean aggressive military action. In other words, since the U.S. tried not to stipulate a strong commitment in the treaty, it does not guarantee the immediate and automatic participation of the U.S. in any war on the Korean Peninsula (Baek 1982, 125).

Although the U.S. had many reasons not to join in a treaty with South Korea, it was eventually ended up with doing so. Due to the U.S.' desire to end the Korean War (because of domestic pressure related to high expenditures and casualties), the U.S. drafted a treaty with South Korea. The U.S. did have strategic interests in South Korea, as pointed out by Snyder (1984, 472), because of the potential expansion of Communism via the Soviet Union was not seen as ideal by the larger country. Further, as Morrow (1991) argued, if entered into an alliance, South Korea could provide military bases as a frontline post against the communist world in return for the guarantee of the security.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In fact, although Japan was the closest ally of the U.S., it was too much burden for Japan alone to be against the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. Furthermore, during the Korean War, President Rhee placed South Korea's forces under the operational command of U.S. General Douglas MacArthur. After the Korean War ended, the MDT mostly retained this military command arrangement; thus, Korea continued its concession of autonomy (Korea's Defense White Paper 2000, 87-8).

Taken together, the outbreak of the Korean War and seriousness of the Cold War made the U.S. find strategic interests that led to the asymmetric defense treaty with South Korea despite its initial hesitation of involvement.

## **4. 2. The issues of maintaining the alliance**

This sub-chapter analyzes the issues related to the maintenance of the ROK – U.S. alliance. Since the MDT was ratified in 1954, it has lasted for 58 years. Although the MDT was concluded at the beginning of the Cold War, it was not terminated after the end of the Cold War. It is not true that there has been no conflict over the relationship between the two allies. In fact, there were many conflicts during the period of the alliance; some strengthened the alliance while others put the alliance in danger. However, there have been conflicts for most of the period of the alliance and these conflicts are due to the features of an asymmetric alliance in general. This chapter includes the issues of tradeoff between security and autonomy, the alliance dilemma, and alliance burden sharing.

### **4. 2. 1. The bargaining in the tradeoff between security and autonomy**

The ROK – U.S. alliance has been a typical asymmetric alliance from the beginning. It was so called patron–client relationship, particularly in the initial period. Gasiorowski and Baek (1987, 114) define that “an international cliency relationship is a mutually-beneficial, security-oriented relationship between the governments of two countries, known as the patron and client which differ greatly in size, wealth, and military and political power.” Therefore, it seems that the cliency relationship is a form of asymmetric

alliance but the asymmetry is severe. In this relationship, since a client state is more dependent on the patron state, the latter should provide more benefits to the client and will enjoy more autonomy over the relationship in return. Furthermore, the patron can influence domestic politics through the cliency relationship as mentioned above. For example, economic aid and security assistance provided by the patron can be used to repress societal opposition groups claiming to be in the interests of social stability. This is particularly important when the client state is under crisis. Furthermore, the patron can coercively force the client government to do what the patron wants such as changing a specific policy for its favor (Gasiorowski and Baek 1987, 117). Also, the influence of the patron on the client's domestic politics can be broad over the issue linkage. The more reliance the client has on patron the greater impact is on the client. This is the main reason why conflicts occur over the tradeoffs between security and autonomy in an asymmetric alliance.

Although South Korea and the U.S. were in an asymmetric alliance, the degree of the asymmetry has changed. In fact, the relationship gradually developed into a more symmetrical form. However, the early period of the alliance from the Rhee administration to the Park administration can be described as the cliency relations as defined above. Conflicts often arose during these periods over the tradeoffs between security and autonomy, particularly, the American influence on South Korea's domestic politics and Korea's reaction.

After Japan was defeated in the Second World War, South Korea was under the control of the U.S. military government. From this initial period up to the 1980s, South Korea was under the strong influence of the U.S. as the patron. This is evident in U.S. ambassador Brown's letter in 1966 in which he mentioned that the U.S. had very special relationships with South Korea. His letter also stated South Korea would not exist without the support of the U.S.<sup>7</sup> It was true that the U.S. had operational control of the South Korean military and participated in all important economic decisions. American advisors were even placed for the governors of local government. Furthermore, the U.S. military shared most of the important information with the South Korean military and even looked into South Korean defense spending. All of this American power in Korea was based on the firm security and massive economic aid provided by the U.S. government (Park 2006, 14).

#### **4.2.1.1. Conflicts in the Syngman Rhee administration**

After the collapse of Japan, the U.S. military was looking for a new leader to stabilize South Korea. At that time, nationalists and socialists were excluded because they resisted foreign influence. In addition, since the Soviet-backed Communist government was established in the north of Korea, the U.S. wanted to found democratic government

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<sup>7</sup>"Letter From the Ambassador of Korea (Brown) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs(Bundy)," August 26, 1966, Foreign Relations of the U.S. (FRUS) 1964-1968, Vol. XXIX, no.84.

in favor of the U.S. in South Korea. In the end, Syngman Rhee became the first President of South Korea. President Syngman Rhee was chosen by the U.S. as part of the attempts to secure democratic government on the Korean peninsula. The successful establishment of U.S. favored democratic government has been praised as the triumphant result of the U.S. policy to South Korea (Cumings 2002).

While the South Korean military was under U.S. military occupation, the U.S. provided massive economic and military aid. This dependence on the U.S. further intensified at the onset of the Korean War. As mentioned earlier, South Korean President Rhee handed over South Korean military's operational control to the US General Douglas MacArthur at the beginning of the Korean War. However, unlike the period of U.S. military occupation that South Korea was substantially ruled by the U.S., conflicts between them began to occur after establishment of the legitimate government in South Korea. The conflicts deepened in spite of the increase of U.S. supports due to the outbreak of Korean War.

The conflicts between South Korea and the U.S. were based on *New Look* policy of the Eisenhower administration, which pursued reduction of fiscal deficit, balanced budget, and sound economy. At the end of the Korean War, the Eisenhower administration tried to reduce government spending through lessening the increased military spending and foreign aid (Gaddis 1982, 129-136). These problems were mostly due to the Korean War so the Eisenhower administration tried to finish the war as soon as possible (Park 2010,

20). However, as mentioned earlier, President Rhee in South Korea vigorously opposed the plan and even released anti-Communist prisoners without U.S. consent as a sign of opposition. By the time of a ceasefire, President Rhee finally got U.S. signing for the MDT. In fact, it has been known that President Rhee thought that the cease-fire was inevitable. Nevertheless, he continued to argue against signing the agreement in order to secure a firm security commitment and economic and military aid from the U.S (Shin 2001, 14).

In other words, although South Korea was very weak and poor compared to the U.S., it had a certain bargaining power because President Rhee took advantage of the strategic interests of the U.S. However, if the Cold War had not occurred, the situation would not be different from that of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because U.S. would not have any strategic interest in South Korea without breaking the Cold War.

Second, South Korea and the U.S. had struggled over the reduction of South Korean forces after the Korean War. The Eisenhower administration promoted the reduction of the Korean military force in order to both lessen military aid and prevent military conflicts between North and South Korea. This is because President Rhee kept arguing the unification through conquering North Korea (Park 2010, 24). The reduction plan



specified in NSC 5514<sup>8</sup> at first continued to reduce ultimately more than 50% of the entire South Korean military (Macdonald 1992, 98-99). The South Korean government absolutely opposed this reduction plan because the large-scale military was very important for its ruling ideology such as anti-Communism and Unification of Korean Peninsula (Park 2010, 26). In the end, the reduction plan was defeated due to the deepening of the Cold War. Although the South Korean government's role was limited in the conflicts over the reduction of the Korean military force as a unilateral receiver of an aid, it is interesting that it did not just obey the plan. It is through actively taking advantage of the international Cold War situation that the Rhee administration was able to occupy an advantageous position in bargaining with the U.S.

Third, there were disputes over economic policy. Since the U.S. economic aid exceeded more than 40% of South Korea's total budget in the 1950s, the influence of U.S. government was very powerful indeed (Park 2007, 38). The Eisenhower administration pursued two policies to reduce economic aid. First, the U.S. government prevented its aid from being used for Korean government's economic revival plan. Next, it urged the Korean government to control the matters of inflation and exchange rate. However, the purpose of the Korean government was not to revive its economy but to gain more aid from the U.S. through exchange rate manipulation. For example, this policy minimized

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<sup>8</sup>"Note by the Executive Secretary to the National Security Council on U.S. Objectives and Courses of Action in Korea, "NSC 5514, Feb. 25, 1955, FRUS 1955-1957, vol.23, part 2, p.46.

the amount of Korean currency that can be exchanged by U.S. dollars low as possible to gain more aid. This conflict over economic policy continued up to the end of the 1950's. The second policy to reduce economic aid is to hand over the burden to Japan through normalizing the relationship between South Korea and Japan. However, this plan caused the greatest conflict. The South Korean government refused to normalize its relationship with Japan due to the harsh experience of the colonial period (Park 2010, 19-23).

Above all, the policies of the Eisenhower administration did not succeed. The Eisenhower administration thought that all the failures of the policies could be attributed to President Rhee and formulated *Ever-ready plan* to remove President Rhee (Park 2010, 24; Cha 2005, 116 -138). Although this plan was not carried out, when the 4.19 revolution broke out, the U.S. withdrew its political support and urged for the resignation of President Rhee.

#### **4.2.1.2. Conflicts in the Park Chung-hee administration**

At the time of military coup in Korea on May 16, 1961, the U.S. government implicitly approved the coup for the stability of South Korea (Hong 2010, 41). In fact, since the resignation of President Syngman Rhee, South Korea fell into disarray and the government did not function well. The U.S. government worried that this chaotic situation might lead to North Korea or other Communist countries to attack or invade. Therefore, the U.S. would gladly welcome the junta if it could stabilize the disorder. At the same time, the U.S. urged that the junta should transition to civilian government

quickly. The U.S. expressed that it would no longer support the junta if the government did not turn into a democratic government. They argued that there was no justification for the U.S. government to support non-democratic government (Hong 2010, 42; Lee 2002; Baek 1982, 128).

On the other hand, U.S. support was very critical for the junta. At that time, good relations with the U.S. was “a symbol of (political) legitimacy” and U.S. aid consisted of “more than 50% of the national budget and 72 percent of the defense budget” of South Korea (Baek 1982, 128). Therefore, the Junta could not refuse the U.S.’ demands. With these political, economic, and military leverages, the U.S. could pressure the Junta to reestablish civilian government. Finally, the Junta transformed into the Third Republic of South Korea as a nominal civilian government on October 15, 1963. Furthermore, the U.S. influenced the first economic development plan of the Junta in 1962 and currency reform in 1963 (Park 2006, 183). The U.S. blamed the Junta’s initial economic plans for being too nationalistic and socialistic and the Park administration had to abandon its original economic plan (Mason et al. 1980, 196 – 197).

The U.S strategy at that time was similar to the time of establishing the Republic of Korea in 1948. That is, the U.S. wanted to establish the nominally democratic government that was in favor of U.S. policies. For this purpose, it effectively used its political, economic, and military leverages and finally succeeded. The Park administration, the Third Republic of South Korea was an outright pro-U.S., anti-

communist country.

The next important pressure from the U.S. on the Park administration was the matter of rapprochement with Japan. This policy was not new and in fact was pursued from the Eisenhower administration but failed due to the opposition of the Rhee administration. On the one hand, the normalization of the relationship between South Korea and Japan was an important factor to the U.S. strategy in several aspects. First, it would promote the solidarity of the anti-Communist camp in Asia. It was too big a burden for Japan alone to face Communist power in North East Asia. In addition, the U.S. wanted Japan to share the economic burden of military aid to South Korea. At that time, Japan was already one of the strongest economic powers in the world. Finally, South Korea could become self-reliant through rapprochement with Japan. If then, the U.S. policy can be supported by an additional democratic ally in Asia and U.S. burden of aid to South Korea will be reduced (Baek 1982, 129).

On the other hand, unlike the Rhee administration, the Park administration was practical enough to agree the normalization of the relationship with Japan (Shin 2001, 17). In fact, the Park administration really needed seed money to develop its poor economy. Also, the Park administration wanted to promote its poor legitimacy of the regime through economic development. Furthermore, it took credit for meeting the needs of the U.S. and resolved the conflicts over this matter for 14 years since the Rhee administration. In the end, the alliance between South Korea and the U.S. was strengthened. Therefore,

the Park administration was actively involved in the negotiation for the normalization of the relationship in spite of intense domestic opposition. South Korea and Japan finally signed the normalization treaty on June 22, 1965. The Park administration earned a total of about \$800 million dollars in the name of indemnities and economic aid from Japan and it became important seed money for rapid economic development of South Korea (Eom 2005, 26).

Taken together, it is true that the interest of the Park administration was critical for concluding the normalization treaty with Japan. However, the role of the U.S. as an initiator and mediator of the negotiation was more powerful than anything else (Cha 1996). The strong U.S. pressure was applied consistently throughout the negotiation process. For example, when Korea and Japan conflicted over the total amount of reparations, U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Rusk actively mediated, suggesting the appropriate amount and finally helped them reach an agreement (DongAilbo, August 27, 2005). This situation is a typical example of the control or influence a patron state has over the foreign policy of the client state.

In the meantime, a unique case appeared unlike the existing relationships between South Korea and the U.S. Until then, South Korea always asked something of the U.S. and the U.S. decided to accept or reject it. However, the matter of dispatching the Korean army to the Vietnam War was exactly the opposite. This was the first case that South Korea could do something for the U.S.

Until 1963, the U.S. did not ask Korea to support the Vietnam War. However, after President Johnson took office, Ambassador Winthrop G. Brown sent President Johnson's message on December 19, 1964 to President Park asking South Korea to dispatch noncombat troops to Vietnam. At first, President Park decided to dispatch noncombat troops to Vietnam to prevent the movement of U.S. troops within South Korea on their way to Vietnam. However, after dispatching combat troops in 1965, the Park administration began to take advantage of this action. The Park administration used the dispatch of troops as leverage in bargaining. For example, President Johnson promised that the level of both U.S. forces and South Korean forces would remain at the current levels in return for the dispatch of South Korean troops. Furthermore, Johnson promised that he would consult South Korea in advance of any future withdrawal of U.S. troops in Korea. Johnson accepted the Park administration's requests to strengthen the Korean military, both directly to infantry members and indirectly to the establishment of the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST)<sup>9</sup> (Hong 2010, 46-48). In other words, it is through dispatching combat troops to the Vietnam War that South Korea prevented the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Korea, and gained economic benefit, and finally had leverage in the bargaining process with the U.S.

However, South Korea's good fortune did not last long because the U.S. wanted a

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<sup>9</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation, President Johnson and Park, Chung-hee," May.17 & May.18, 1965, Box10, Executive Secretariat; Presidential and Secretary of State Correspondence with Head of State 1961-1971, RG 59, NA.

quick end to the Vietnam War. As the war was ending, all the advantages that South Korea had gained quickly disappeared. Adding to the decrease of these advantages were the provocations by North Korea in 1968. The presidential mansion raid (January 21) and the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo (January 23) worsened relations between South Korea and the U.S. While the Park administration called for urgent retaliation, the U.S. rejected it and preferred the resolution of the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo through negotiation with North Korea. Furthermore, the U.S. urged South Korea not to retaliate in any way against North Korea by itself.<sup>10</sup> In spite of the disappointment of the Park administration, the U.S. was concerned about the escalation of the war on the Korean Peninsula. In other words, the U.S. was anxious about the appearance of a second Vietnam War in Korea. Regardless, South Korea argued not only to attend the negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea for resolving the seizure of U.S.S. Pueblo but also to include the presidential mansion raid in the negotiation.<sup>11</sup> South Korea threatened to withdraw its troops from Vietnam in order to be involved in the negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea. The U.S. rejected all the requests of South Korea and tried to diffuse the troop withdrawal threat by sending Cyrus R. Vance as a presidential envoy. Finally, it was through promising \$100 million worth of additional support that Vance secured assurances from

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<sup>10</sup> Department of State, Outgoing Telegram, For Ambassador, From Secretary, Subject: USS Pueblo Incident, Ref: State 102940, Jan 23, 1968.

<sup>11</sup> Department of State, Telegram, From AmEmbassy, Seoul, to SecState, Immediate 8804, Feb. 4, 1968.

South Korea that it would not retaliate against North Korea or withdraw from Vietnam.<sup>12</sup>

While South Korea thought that it actually enjoyed its leverage to negotiate this case with the U.S., the U.S. had a great aversion to having its autonomy constrained by South Korea. Thus, the U.S. did not want to be involved directly in the issues of South Korea or the Korean peninsula in order not to limit its autonomy (Chung 1999, 31 – 34).

Furthermore, the U.S. resumed the plan of reducing U.S. troops in Korea that was interrupted by the dispatch of South Korean combat troops to Vietnam.<sup>13</sup>

#### **4.2.1.3. Conflicts in the Chun Doo-whan administration**

Since its tacit approval of a military coup in 1961, the U.S. was worried that its political support to the Park administration was being exploited to domestic politics. This concern was valid. After the assassination of President Park Chung-hee in 1979, another Junta led by General Chun Doo-whan resulted in another coup. Despite South Korea's desire for democratization, this coup was another dictatorship. When the U.S. did not intervene, especially in the brutal suppression of demonstrations in Kwangju in May 1980, South Koreans blamed the U.S. South Koreans recognized the U.S.'s lack of involvement as its approval of the regime in South Korea. South Koreans thought that if the U.S. had intervened, the situation would be very different. U.S. leaders denied U.S.

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<sup>12</sup> Department of State, Outgoing Telegram, State 114006, Action: AmEmbassy Seoul, Feb. 12, 1968.

<sup>13</sup> "Paper Prepared by the Policy Planning Council of the Department of State: U.S. Policy Toward Korea," June 15, 1968, *FRUS* 1964 – 1968, Vol. 29, part. 1.



responsibility in the Kwangju massacre; many Koreans accused the U.S. of noninvolvement because it was the same as implicit consent (Gleysteen 1999; Wickham 1999).

Although the U.S. wanted the stability of South Korea as soon as possible, it did not agree with the brutal oppression in Kwangju. However, the new Junta took advantage of U.S. noninvolvement and behaved as if it had U.S. approval and support. The new Junta had full control of the press and media and through censorship it popularized its regime citing U.S. approval. The new Junta needed U.S. approval for its regime legitimacy to compensate for domestic justification (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 1990, 454; Snyder 1997, 13; Oh 1998, 253). The U.S. strongly denied Junta's announcement and criticized anti-democratic actions of the new junta<sup>14</sup> (Oh 1998, 253). Unlike the two cases discussed above, the U.S. was actively involved in saving the life of Kim Dae-jung who was an opposition party leader and later became the 15th President of South Korea. Kim Dae-jung was sentenced to death accused of plotting insurrections on November 3, 1980. Also, the U.S. pressured the new junta to release Kim Dae-jung even before President Reagan took office (Cheong 2010, 103–111). The Chun administration called for the approval of the U.S. in return for the release of the Kim Dae-jung. Finally, Reagan administration accepted the trade-off between the Reagan's invitation for President Chun to visit

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<sup>14</sup> U.S. Information Service, "Backgrounder: U.S. Government Statement on the Events in Kwangju, Republic of Korea, in May 1980," press office, USIS, Seoul, June 19, 1989, p.24.

Washington and the commutation of Kim Dae-Jung. According to the New York Times, Chun announced the commutation of Kim Dae-Jung just two days before he received the formal invitation from Washington<sup>15</sup> (Oh 1998, 254).

After President Chun's visit to Washington, the formal relationship between South Korea and the U.S. was favorable because the Reagan administration focused more on the firm security alliance in the advent of the new Cold War period. However, this close relationship between the U.S. and the Chun administration after the brutal suppression of Kwangju uprising arouse full-fledged anti-Americanism in South Korea. It became a "tipping point" of South Korean's perception of the U.S. (Drennan 2005).

Nevertheless, the U.S. approval of the Chun administration was not outright but conditional political support for the authoritarian regime. The U.S. pressured the Chun administration toward democracy at every opportunity (Cheong 2010, 108 – 110). The Chun administration gradually began to liberalize in order to overcome its lack of legitimacy. The U.S. pressure on the Chun administration was gradual; however, it provided for the transition to democratization. In the parliamentary election in 1985, the opposition party, the New Korea Democratic Party acquired 24.2 % of the seats (Lee 2007, 475). Based on this political success, the people's aspiration towards democratization heightened and involved mass demonstrations and civil disobedience.

In the midst of this confusion, Gaston J. Sigur, assistant secretary for East Asian and

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<sup>15</sup>New York Times, February 2, 1981, p.A-8.

Pacific affairs of the US Department of State, advised that the ruling and opposition parties should amend the Constitution through dialogue and compromise. Also, he said that the U.S. would positively support the security, economic development, and political development of South Korea without its direct intervention.<sup>16</sup> In addition, U.S. ambassador, James R. Lilley met several leading people in opposition parties and discussed the political situation in Korea at that time (Cheong 2010, 116). Even though the U.S. promised not to interfere in domestic politics of Korea, these U.S. movements put much more pressure on the Chun administration to move towards democratization. Furthermore, the U.S. began to intervene more publicly at the height of democratization movement in 1987. Beginning with U.S. Secretary of State, George Shultz urging dialogue between ruling and opposition parties on May 14, 1987, the subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific of the U.S. House of Representatives adopted a resolution calling for dialogue between Korean politicians on June 18. In addition, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution of democratization in Korea on June 26. In the meantime, U.S. ambassador James R. Lilley conveyed a letter from President Reagan to President Chun clearly opposing the issue of martial law gave warning not to use military force to repress movements toward democratic regime (Cheong 2010, 117). It is through these series of U.S. interventions and civilian pressure that Roh Tae-Woo, the leader of ruling

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<sup>16</sup> "Korean Politics in transition," Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Gaston J. Sigur, Jr.'s address before the U.S.-Korea Society in New York City on February 6, 1987, US Department of State Bulletin, April, 1987.

Democratic Justice Party finally announced so called *6.29 declaration* including free presidential election and several democratic reforms on June 29, 1987. This was the historical moment of the transition to democracy in South Korea.

The Roh Tae-woo administration was the first government that established through direct elections after democratization. The Roh administration promoted moving the Yongsan military base that was President Roh's election pledge in 1987. Providing a military base in return for guaranteeing security is a typical aspect in an asymmetric alliance. Thus, the fact that South Korea raised the issue of moving a military base showed its confidence based on its legitimacy by direct election after democratization and the growth of national capability. Also, it was a sign of change in the relationship.<sup>17</sup>

South Korea joined the United Nations with North Korea at the same time in September 1991. In the meantime, the two Koreas concluded the treaty of reconciliation and nonaggression and denuclearization agreement in December 1991. Furthermore, the Roh administration established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union on September 30, 1990 and China in August 1992 (Cheong 2010, 122; Eom 2005, 36). On the one hand, these diplomatic efforts were reactions to the Bush administration's reduction plan of

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<sup>17</sup> However, since the issue of relocation of USFK military base was first raised in 1987, two countries agreed to it in 2007. It was originally planned to finish in 2008, but it was extended to complete in 2016 (the Website of South Korean Ministry of National Defense: [http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiPending/hanmiPending\\_2/index.jsp](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiPending/hanmiPending_2/index.jsp) )

USFK, East Asia Strategic Initiative (EASI)<sup>18</sup> in April 1989 (Lee 2011, 14 -15). On the other hand, these diplomatic efforts were based on the Roh administration's confidence on its legitimacy and the growth of national capability. At the same time, these democratic successes also heighten the confidence of the regime. Furthermore, the relationship between South Korea and the U.S. was very good and cooperative in this period and the U.S.' support also helped the diplomatic success of South Korea.

#### **4.2.2. Alliance dilemma: the fear of abandonment and entrapment**

This chapter analyzes the cases of alliance dilemma in South Korea. It includes the fear of abandonment and entrapment and the cycle of these two fears.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, five important factors affect states' bargaining strategies (Snyder 1984, 472 - 475). They were the relative dependence on the alliance, the degree of strategic interest, the degree of explicitness of the agreement, the allies' shared interests, and its own, or other's experience. Although these five determinants have an issue-specific effect on each state's strategy, there is a unique pattern of these determinants in an asymmetric alliance.

That is, a weak state is definitely more dependent on the alliance such that a client state heavily relies on the patron state. Thus, the fear of abandonment is higher in a weak

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<sup>18</sup> According to EASI based on Nunn-Warner amendment of 1989 in 1990, 6,250 people of USFK was withdrawn but, Dick Cheney, U.S. Secretary of Defense announced the suspension of the reduction of USFK in November 21, 1991 and it was stopped in the Clinton administration (Lee 2008, 185 – 186).

state. In addition, since a weak state's interests are more peripheral so that it only shares a small portion of the great state's interests (Snyder 1984, 484). Therefore, the cost of entrapment is very high for a weak state in this case. Furthermore, since strategic interests of a great state can vary depending on the international political situation, the fear of abandonment is ever-present for a weak state if it does not have an explicit formal contract to guarantee a strong state's commitment. In sum, the fear of abandonment and entrapment is bigger for a weak state than a strong state in asymmetric alliance.

However, a bipolar system weakens the alliance dilemma due to the strong strategic interest of a great state, but the risk of abandonment in a small state will emerge again in case of reconciliation such as a *détente* between two great powers.

In terms of this theoretical framework, South Korea is a weak state in an asymmetric alliance with the U.S. The risk of abandonment and entrapment of South Korea will vary depending on the U.S. global strategy. However, the fear of abandonment was greater than that of entrapment in the early period of its alliance. In particular, since South Korea was dependent entirely on the U.S. for its security, South Korea was easily influenced by any changes in the U.S. global strategy and therefore South Korea faced a high risk of abandonment. Also, South Korea's strategic interests for the U.S. were not as important as Japan or other allies. Furthermore, it did not share much of U.S. global interests and only focused on the issue of Korean Peninsula. On top of the above reasons, the MDT did not stipulate strong U.S. commitment. Finally, it had been abandoned twice by the U.S. in

the 19<sup>th</sup> century and right before the Korean War. However, as the relationship between the two countries changed over time, the pattern of alliance dilemma is also changed. In the later period of the alliance such as the Roh Moo-hyun administration, the risk of entrapment in South Korea was greater than the fear of abandonment.

#### **4. 2. 2. 1. The fear of abandonment: the withdrawal of USFK**

We cannot tell the history of South Korea without mentioning the role of U.S. Since the MDT concluded in 1953, the security of South Korea has been considerably dependent on the U.S. In particular, the USFK is a symbol of strong U.S. commitment to South Korea. Since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of USFK was stationed immediately adjacent to the Demilitarized Zone, any attack from North Korea would immediately involve the U.S. This situation helped South Korea feel less vulnerable in the alliance dilemma. In other words, the presence of the USFK was to ensure the security of South Korea both physically and psychologically. Therefore, the issue of the withdrawal or reduction of the U.S. forces is sensitive and an important factor in the South Korea and U.S. relations. South Korea felt serious fear of abandonment whenever the issue arise.

The first withdrawal of U.S. troops in Korea was a full-scale reduction leaving only 496 military advisors between September 1948 and June 1949.<sup>19</sup> However, since the U.S. participated in the Korean War, about 325,000 forces returned by 1953. These forces were

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<sup>19</sup> Instead, the U.S. provided South Korea with nearly \$15 million of material and educational support (Lee 2008, 176 – 177).

withdrawn after the War, but two divisions of 70,000 remained in Korea. During the 1960s and the Kennedy administration, the reduction of U.S. forces was discussed from time to time and seriously planned during the Johnson administration because of the lack of U.S. forces for the Vietnam War (Lee 2004, 238 – 240). The Park administration in South Korea dispatched South Korean forces to Vietnam to prevent the reduction or withdrawal of U.S. forces in Korea (Chung 1999, 30).

In the meantime, the presidential mansion raid and the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo occurred in January 1968. In the midst of dealing these two provocations by North Korea, the U.S. did not accept South Korea's request of retaliation. At this time, the U.S. was worried by the potential spread of war from Vietnam to the Korean Peninsula. In other words, it wanted to avoid the risk of entrapment. Therefore, since it processed secret negotiation with North Korea without the participation of South Korea, the relationship between the two countries worsened and South Korea's confidence in the U.S. was greatly reduced.

On top of this worsening situation, the third withdrawal of U.S. forces resumed in 1971. The third reduction involved the seventh division of 20,000 forces. They were withdrawn in March 1971 based on Nixon Doctrine that called for self-reliant defense by Asia. Furthermore, U.S.'s domestic pressures for anti-war represented as Vietnam Syndrome and problems such as balance of payments, inflation, hostile congress were the other reasons for the withdrawal. Although President Nixon reaffirmed U.S. commitment



to South Korea, President Park began to worry about being abandoned more because of the détente between the U.S. and China. At that time, the U.S. tried to reconcile with China, taking advantage of the Sino-Soviet split. The rapprochement with China was U.S. strategy to manage the Cold War environment, but it was an extreme shock to South Korea because China was the closest ally of North Korea who backed and participated in the Korean War (Kwak and Patterson 1999, 85). Consequently, the Park administration's fear of abandonment reached its peak and trust for U.S. commitment fell sharply.

The announcement of the reduction of the U.S. forces caused strong resistance within the South Korean government. It argued that it was definitely bad timing to withdraw U.S. forces given the unstable situation on the Korean Peninsula caused by North Korea's provocations in 1968 (Baek 1982, 139). President Park wanted to discuss these matters with the U.S. and suggested a summit meeting but President Nixon rejected it (Chung 1999, 17)<sup>20</sup>. It was time for the Park administration to think about a strategy to deal with the new U.S. policy towards South Korea based on Nixon doctrine in the changed international political situation.

First, the Park administration tried to block the withdrawal of U.S. troops through diplomatic efforts. Prime minister Chung Il-Kwon visited the U.S. and urged the U.S. not to withdraw USFK without consulting South Korea, mentioning the Korean War due to

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<sup>20</sup> Department of State, Telegram, Action: AmEmbessay Seoul, Ref: A. Seoul 7206 B. Seoul 7238, Dec. 1. 1971.

the announcement of Acheson line.<sup>21</sup> However, the withdrawal proceeded as scheduled. In the end, the South Korean government was forced to accept the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Korea. Then, the Park administration changed the strategy to maximize U.S. compensation for military modernization in return instead of accepting minimal reduction of the U.S. forces. As a result, the U.S. promised to pass the 150 million of the Supplement Military Assistance Bill to strengthen and modernize the South Korean military (Chung 1999, 23)<sup>22</sup>.

On the other hand, the Park administration had taken several more strategies to deal with the reduction of U.S. forces because it started to doubt the credibility of U.S. commitment. First, it promoted the policy for the development of defense industry, nuclear weapons, and missiles that caused conflicts later with the U.S. (Kim 2001). Next, the Park administration pursued reconciliation between South and North Korea. At that time, unlike international mood of *détente*, Cold War tensions between the two Koreas intensified even more. After several series of secret negotiations without U.S. participation, the North-South Joint Communiqué was announced on July 4, 1972. It was

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<sup>21</sup>Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation. The White House, Prime Minister Chung Il Kwon of Korea, Lee Hurak, Secretary General of Korea, Ambassador Kim Dong-jo of Korea, The President, Winthrop G. Brown, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Richard L. Sneider, NSC Senior Staff Member, April 1, 1969.

<sup>22</sup> Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation, Subject: ROK/US Relations: Supplemental and Congressional Relations: Chong's Program: Fair Elections?; US Position on Korea Elections, Participants: CHONG Il Kwon, KIM Dong Jo, Marshall Green, Winthrop G. Brown, etc. Jan. 15, 1971.

the first agreement between the two Koreas to discuss basic principles of unification, but they both failed to follow-up due to mutual distrust. In fact, the major purpose of the reconciliation with North Korea was to buy time until South Korea was ready to have self-reliant defense power (Ma and Park 2010, 78). This was because the South Korean government was the most concerned with the signal U.S. troop withdrawal might be giving to North Korea. South Korea wanted to be ready for any North Korean provocations (Chung 1999, 36-7). Finally, the Park administration imposed so called *SiwolYusin* (October revitalization reform) which included the declaration of martial law, the disposal of the current Constitution, the dissolution of Parliament, and indirect election of the President. To justify Yusin, the Park administration cited the increasing external threats, i.e., North Korea and the U.S. – China détente. Yusin was publicly promoted as South Korea's reaction to the withdrawal of USFK and the reduction of U.S. commitment. Furthermore, it was promoted as a reaction to overcome South Korea's fear of abandonment. However, Yusin was clearly an attempt to extend the Park administration (Kim 1999, 12). While the U.S. recognized this strategy of the Park administration and publicly criticized South Korea's justification for Yusin, it tried to put distance from Korean domestic politics.<sup>23</sup> The U.S. had its own strategy in progress; the

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<sup>23</sup>Emb. Cable, "Comment on Martial Law and Government Change in Korea," Oct. 16, 1972, secret (declassified 1996); DOS cable, Oct. 16, 1972, secret (declassified); Emb. cable, "U.S. Response to Korean Constitutional Revision," Oct. 23, 1972, secret (declassified 1996); DOS cable, "Ref: Seoul 6119," Oct. 26, 1972, secret (declassified 1996).

situation of South Korea was favorable to the U.S. except for the dictatorship aspect. Even though the U.S. anticipated that South Korea would be more authoritarian than democratic when it achieved a self-reliant economy and defense, the U.S. decided not to create more conflict, this time in Korean domestic politics, if the overall situation was helpful in U.S. strategy (i.e., to reduce the U.S. burden and meet U.S. policy) (Chung 1999, 45 - 46).

The establishment of Yusin in South Korea worsened the relationship with the United States and was the main culprit of the poor and negative events which followed. In the 1970's, the U.S. Congress was very critical of the U.S. supporting right-wing dictatorships. The U.S. support of South Korea fell into this category and the ROK – U.S. alliance was also criticized in this context. Therefore, the U.S. Congress cut the budget for supporting the modernization of the South Korean military which was U.S. compensation for the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Korea. South Korea was desperate to keep the U.S. invested in it so they had Park Dong-sun, a South Korean businessman, contact U.S. Congressmen. Park Dong-sun gave money to congressmen in a type of bribe to get the U.S. to approve more support for South Korea. This so-called *Koreagate* backfired and outraged U.S. politicians and citizens. The relationship between South Korea and the U.S. worsened as a result (Harrison 1974-1975; Reischauer 1975; Boettcher and Freedman 1980).

Once the U.S. decided to withdraw troops, reduce the allowed budget, and South

Korea's attempt at bribery soured the relationship, South Korea did not have a bright outlook regarding the future of ROK – U.S. alliance. This sour relationship further intensified with the beginning of the Carter administration in 1977, which advocated human rights diplomacy. There were many conflicts between the Park and Carter administration during their tenure. In particular, the Carter administration pursued the fourth reduction of U.S. forces in Korea. The Carter administration suggested four step withdrawal plans aiming to complete withdrawal of U.S. forces in South Korea. However, it was formally suspended on February 9, 1979 due to the accusations of the military, Congress, and the press etc. as well as South Korea. In addition, the Park administration attempted to improve the situation of human rights in Korea to prevent Carter's withdrawal plan (Ma and Park 2010, 84-87).

Taken together, the history of the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Korea showed that the withdrawals were carried out without prior consultations with South Korea. Since the presence of U.S. forces was the symbol of strong U.S. commitment to South Korea, its withdrawal, or the mere threat of withdrawal, brought extreme fear of abandonment to South Korea until the 1970's. This was because South Korea thought that it was not ready to deal with North Korea alone in terms of economic and military development. On the other hand, the U.S. was worried about the risk of entrapment in most crisis cases in South Korea. However, this pattern changed dramatically in the later period. South Korea was much less dependent on the U.S. due to the development of its military and economy.

In other words, although the relationship between two countries is still asymmetric and South Korea is dependent on the U.S. for its security, the fear of being abandoned is much less. However, that does not mean that the risk of abandonment entirely disappeared. We will see another example of South Korea's fear of abandonment in the next section.

#### **4.2.2.2. The cycle of the alliance dilemma over the North Korean issues**

Another pattern of alliance dilemma for South Korea tends to depend on the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea. In other words, it shows a cycle of the fear of abandonment and entrapment depending on U.S.-North Korea relations. This is because the ROK - U.S. alliance was established to deal with North Korean threat as one unit against it.

If security relations between the U.S. and North Korea improve, South Korea suspects that there might be collusion between the two countries, sacrificing the security of South Korea. In particular, South Korea's suspicion is amplified to the fear of abandonment in cases where the U.S. did not fulfill its commitment for the security of South Korea, it denies the request of South Korea's political or military support, and finally such U.S. actions match the timing of North Korea's provocations (Lee 1999, 27). Then, South Korea will urge the U.S. to guarantee its strong security commitments. South Korea would offer additional concessions such as new military bases or an increase in defense spending in return for continuation of U.S. security commitments. If the U.S.

takes South Korea's request, South Korea's fear of abandonment will be dismissed. However, if the U.S. takes stronger military action toward North Korea and their relationship is under duress, this perpetuates South Korea's fear of entrapment. The crisis caused by hostile confrontation of the U.S. and North Korea might trigger an arms race or lead to the unwanted outbreak of war on the Korean Peninsula. In this case, South Korea pressures the U.S. to change its hardline policy and improve the relations between the U.S. and North Korea (Lee 1999, 28). This situation can feed back into the first phase, the advanced North Korea-U.S. relationship just mentioned. This is South Korea's cycle of fear of abandonment and entrapment.

The situation of the 1<sup>st</sup> nuclear crisis in the Kim Young-sam Administration is the typical example of the cycle of fear of abandonment and entrapment. At first, North Korea withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on March 12, 1993. Before this date, North Korea had remained as one of the poorest dictatorships and the U.S.'s enemy based on MDT since North Korea began the Korean War. However, since North Korea's withdrawal from NPT, it became important others for the U.S. The negotiations with the U.S. were even more crucial for North Korea than ever. Although North Korea denounced the U.S. as an imperialist and the main enemy to its people, it also demanded recognition, security guarantees, and economic supports from the U.S. (Lee 1999, 29-30). Since North Korea withdrew from NPT, the U.S. and North Korea continued to negotiate until the withdrawal took effect in June 1993. Although meetings

did not always go smoothly, joint agreement between the U.S. and North Korea was finally established on June 11. North Korea reversed its withdrawal from NPT and the two countries agreed to continue negotiations for follow-up of the joint agreement (Koo and Ahn 2010, 137).

These were positive results for all three states. Yet, South Korea could not participate in negotiations. It was North Korea's strategy to negotiate only with the U.S. and not include South Korea. Therefore, there was no significant progress between South and North Korea from the beginning of the Kim Administration in 1993. This is the starting point of South Korea's anxiety. That is, this situation made South Korea doubt that the U.S. might establish diplomatic relations with North Korea. These doubts, initially raised by some conservatives at first, soon developed into the fear of abandonment such that the U.S. did not want to cooperate with South Korea (Wit et al. 2004, 67). As a result, in an interview with BBC on June 17 President Kim publicly urged the U.S. not to provide any additional concessions to North Korea (DongAIlbo, June 26, 1993). After a month, President Kim again gave warning that the U.S. was being exploited by North Korea. It was reported such that "President Kim Young Sam cautioned today that North Korea was manipulating its current negotiations with the U.S. to buy time to finish their project to build nuclear weapons" in the New York Times (the New York Times, July 2, 1993). President Kim's public caution to the U.S. caused conflicts which continued to the summit on November 11, 1993. However, during the



summit, the U.S. substantially accommodated South Korea's requests such as the exchange of a special envoy between two Koreas before the meeting of the North Korea and the U.S. and South Korea's discretion to stop Team Spirit (Koo and Ahn 2010, 139). Fortunately, the U.S. catered to the needs of South Korea. South Korea's fear of abandonment lessened. This is different from the previous cases in the Park Administration. The Nixon and Carter administrations did not accept the requests of the Park administration. Therefore, it can be said that the Kim administration was able to have some autonomy from the U.S. because of its legitimacy as South Korea's first civilian government since the transition to democracy in 1987. That is, it could be seen as a sign of change in the asymmetric alliance between South Korea and the U.S. However, the nuclear crisis was not over and the cycle of fear did not end for South Korea.

In 1994, there was no significant progress in negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea. The U.S. and South Korea agreed to pressure North Korea with more coercive measures. The U.S. planned for deployment of Patriot missiles in South Korea in January of that year. However, South Korea was afraid of provoking North Korea through the deployment (DongAIlbo, January 28, 1994). On March 21, the representative of North Korea threatened South Korea and the U.S. that if two states continued to pressure North Korea, Seoul would be a sea of fire (DongAIlbo, March 21, 1994). Then, the U.S. urged South Korea to agree to the deployment of Patriot missiles and to the start of Team Spirit again. If necessary, the Clinton Administration would refuse to rule out the

use of force. When negotiations between North Korea and the U.S. were over without agreement, the U.S. considered the option of Osirak, bombing North Korea in June 1994, even though it did not run after all (Oberdorfer 2002; Sigal 1998; Perry 2002, 121 -122). At that time, South Korea was worried about the outbreak of war on the Korean Peninsula. This was the worst scenario for South Korea because South Korea would lose everything due to the war. This is the starting point of South Korea's fear of entrapment. South Korea should prevent the outbreak of war on the Korean Peninsula.

In response, South Korea rejected the deployment of Patriot missiles. South Korea thought that it was not good timing to place the missile considering North Korea's harsh reaction and negative domestic public opinion. In addition, President Kim refused to accept James T. Raney, U.S. ambassador's plan to evacuate U.S. citizens from Korea. It was certain that the evacuation would cause psychological war panic in South Korea. In the midst of highest conflicts, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter visited North Korea and delivered the message of Kim Il-sung, Dictator of North Korea to the White House. According to Carter, Kim Il-sung agreed to freeze the development of nuclear weapons and accept the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspectors to stay in North Korea. Furthermore, it was said that Kim Il-sung was willing to accept the summit between the two Koreas (Wit et al. 2004, 220-244). It is through unexpected suggestions by Kim Il-sung that the conflicts were almost over and South Korea's fear of entrapment was resolved. Furthermore, the summit between the two Koreas planned for July 25 in

Pyongyang would be good for South Korea to release from the fear of abandonment. The fear of abandonment can be resolved when the relationship between South Korea and North Korea and the U.S. improved at a similar rate. Since it is through a summit between the two Koreas that South Korea can improve the relationship with North Korea, South Korea's fears of collusion between the U.S. and North Korea were decreased.

However, the situation started to go wrong again due to the sudden death of Kim Il-sung on July 8, 1994. While President Clinton offered condolences to North Korea, South Korea did not express condolences and allow citizens to visit North Korea for condolences (New York Times, July 15, 1994). In response, North Korea strongly denounced the Kim administration and the summit was defeated. Unlike the South and North Korea's relations, the U.S. and North Korea continued to have negotiations and finally Agreed Framework was drawn in Geneva in October 1994. The critical agreement of the Framework was to provide Light Water Reactor (LWR) in return for freezing North Korea's nuclear programs. Also, they agreed to defer special inspection for North Korea's past nuclear activities until the main components of LWR were ready (Wit et al. 2004, 220-244).

Again, South Korea could not be satisfied with the agreement between the U.S. and North Korea. South Korea complained that if South Korea could not verify North Korea's past nuclear activities, it would not provide for the cost of LWR. Furthermore, President Kim again publicly criticized the U.S.'s innocence and ignorance of North Korean

strategy (New York Times, October 8, 1994). However, South Korea had no choice but to accept the agreement due to several reasons such as the high risk of negotiation failure and the U.S.'s intense anger to President Kim's interview with the New York Times. Also, South Korea again accepted the second best option by the U.S. in the matter of the notion of LWR's name (Wit et al. 2004, 311-321, 368-369). That is, it is through actively participating in follow-ups, building LWR that South Korea tried to overcome the fear of abandonment caused by exclusions from negotiations. However, it was not fully resolved because North Korea was still stubborn to South Korea.

Since signing the Agreed Framework, the U.S. provided heavy oil to North Korea and lifted several economic sanctions. In addition, the U.S. and North Korea continued to negotiate over the repatriation of remains of U.S. troops and open liaison offices. However, North Korea refused to talk with South Korea even though it was the precondition for implementing the Agreed Framework. In the meantime, a North Korean submarine was stranded in the East Sea and 20 submarine agents infiltrated Gangneung in South Korea on September 18, 1996. South Korea strongly accused North Korea for violating the armistice. In addition, diplomatic efforts paid for sanctions against North Korea through international organizations. Also, South Korea urged the U.S. to restart Team Spirit. However, the U.S. refused to start Team Spirit because it did not want to spoil smooth improvements in relations with North Korea. In addition, keeping North Korea's nuclear activities frozen was more important to the U.S. (Koo and Ahn 2010, 152;

Lee 1999, 32). Of course, this attitude of the U.S. amplified South Korea's fear of abandonment. South Korea urged the U.S. to call for North Korea's apology and promise to prevent recurrence. South Korea even argued that the U.S. should suspend additional negotiations with North Korea (DongAIlbo, December 16, 1996). Finally, North Korea expressed deep regret for the submarine incident on December 29, 1996 after several working level contacts with the U.S. (Hankyoreh, December 30, 1996). North Korea's apology was important in two ways. First, it was face-saving for the South Korean government. The Kim administration was criticized that it did not have any reward or expressions of gratitude from North Korea even though it spent almost \$4 billion toward the cost of LWR and provided material support (such as rice). If the Kim administration did not get an apology from North Korea even in this situation of submarine infiltration, the administration would seem highly incapable. The second way the apology was important is because it showed the amount of power the U.S. had over North Korea. In other words, this means that the U.S. did not ignore the security interests of South Korea and collude with North Korea and thereby betray South Korea. Therefore, North Korea's apology washed away South Korea's fear of abandonment at this time.

In sum, at the time of North Korea's first nuclear crisis, the Kim administration felt both the fear of abandonment and entrapment under South Korea - U.S. alliance. South Korea's fear was greater because the U.S.-South Korea alliance was asymmetric. However, since South Korea had politically democratized and economically developed

after 1987, it did not show such an extreme fear and response as it did in the Park administration during the 1960s -70s. Also, South Korea had somewhat better autonomy and bargaining power in the relations with the U.S. compared to the Park administration era because it paid for the costs of LWR. Finally, while it was mostly for the U.S., South Korea began to feel the fear of entrapment. In fact, the fear of entrapment was rare for South Korea in during the 1960s-1970s. We will see more examples of the fear of entrapment in the next section of this chapter.

#### **4.2.2.3. The fear of entrapment: Sunshine policy vs. the U.S. hardline policy**

Kim Dae-jung administration was the first liberal government through a peaceful change of government in the history of South Korea. President Kim Dae-jung thought that the possibility of the collapse of North Korean regime was very low and unrealistic. He argued that North Korea should be changed gradually through reconciliation and cooperation. The Kim administration's so called Sunshine policy was a symbol of its engagement policy representing his principles of reconciliation and cooperation with North Korea.

The Kim administration made a great working relationship with the Clinton administration towards North Korean policy. For example, President Clinton said that the matter of North Korea would be led by President Kim and his role would be secondary in the summit in June 1998 (Park and Cheong 2010, 169).

However, since there were several issues such as the Geumchangri nuclear facilities

and Taepodong-1 missile test launch by North Korea, hard liners in the U.S. pushed the Clinton administration to reevaluate the policy toward North Korea. Former Secretary of Defense William Perry was appointed as a special advisor and policy coordinator for North Korea in November 1998 and promoted the so-called Perry Process. Since Perry's report did not deviate from existing engagement policy, the Kim administration's Sunshine policy was able to move forward and the result was the historical summit between South and North Korea in June 2000 and the South-North Joint Declaration on June 15. After the Summit, North Korean special envoy, Cho Myoung-rok visited Washington for the first time in history for four days beginning October 9, 2000. Also, he signed the U.S.-North Korea Joint Communiqué on October 12. After two weeks, Madeleine K. Albright, U.S. Secretary of State, visited North Korea in return and even discussed President Clinton's visit to North Korea. However, Clinton failed to visit because of the short remainder of his term and U.S. presidential elections in November 2000 (Park and Cheong 2010, 170 -172; Kim 2003, 112).

In this period, the relationship between South Korea and the U.S. was very cooperative based on their engagement policy towards North Korea. Therefore, there was no fear for South Korea in this period. Everything was good and South Korea had never expected the crisis under the coming Bush administration.

The majority of the Republican Party in the U.S. had criticized the Agreed Framework in Geneva in 1994 as a succumbing to threats from North Korea. They

criticized the Clinton administration for rewarding evil doing because the U.S. provided North Korea with heavy oil and LWR in return for merely freezing its nuclear activities. Therefore, unlike the Kim administration's expectation, it could be expected that the Bush administration's fundamental attitude towards North Korea was *ABC* (Anything But Clinton). Bush's ABC policy was disclosed in several cases from 2001.

First, President Bush revealed his abhorrence of Kim Jong-il, the dictator of North Korea and the clear disinterest in the Sunshine policy of Kim Dae-jung in the ROK–U.S. summit in March 2001 (Woodward 2002). Next, this hardline policy was intensified through the terror attacks of September 11. September 11 provided for ample justification for the Bush administration's hardline policy such as preventing production and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and preemptive blocking possible terrorism against the U.S. (Lee 2005, 83; Sheen 2008, 207). Finally, President Bush labeled North Korea as part of the Axis of Evil together with Iran and Iraq in his state of the Union address in January 2002. Furthermore, in January, 2002 *the Nuclear Posture Review* (NPR) by the U.S. Department of Defense designated North Korea to be a possible target of U.S. preemptive nuclear attack<sup>24</sup> (Cho 2003, 81; Suh 2006; 68). In response, North Korea strongly criticized that the U.S.'s accusation of North Korea as an evil country was the same as the declaration of war and thus completely refused to talk with the U.S. (Park and Cheong 2010, 180).

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<sup>24</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review," Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2002.



These hawkish moods of the U.S. were sufficient to stimulate the fear of entrapment of South Korea. The Bush and Kim administrations were in the antipodes in terms of each of its policy towards North Korea. Therefore, unlike the previous Clinton administration, the Kim administration could not provide any input on the process of policy making of the Bush administration towards North Korea. Furthermore, the Bush administration openly revealed its hostility toward North Korea and even publicly mentioned the possibility of preemptive attack on North Korea. South Korea has been afraid of a U.S. preemptive attack against North Korea because it is sure to escalate to the Korean Peninsula as a whole. For South Korea, this is not a matter of who wins or loses, but the matter of destroying all things in developed South Korea. However, the mainland of the U.S. is not likely to be damaged by the war. Also, the U.S. had enjoyed the privilege of a safe war minimizing the loss of life through the war system of high-technology. Therefore, it is more horrifying for South Korea that regional warfare was not the matter of life but a means for achieving its policy for the United States (Lee 2003, 30).

In response, South Korea tried to strengthen the relations between the two Koreas and advised North Korea to understand the U.S. and develop the relations with it through dialogue. Also, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited North Korea and had a summit with Kim Jong-il. It also helped to make a peaceful atmosphere on the Korean Peninsula. Meanwhile, North Korea accepted the visit of the U.S. special envoy (Park and Cheong 2010, 182- 183).

Finally, U.S. special envoy, James A. Kelly, assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the State Department visited Pyongyang in October 2002. However, contrary to the hopes of South Korea, Kelly claimed that North Korea admitted its existence of a Highly Enriched Uranium Program (HEUP). The U.S. argued that the presence of HEUP in North Korea was a violation of the Agreed Framework and then pressured the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) to suspend the supply of heavy oil to North Korea. In contrast, North Korea insisted that the intention of suspending heavy oil support was the nullification of the 1994 Geneva Agreed Framework. Then, North Korea expelled three IAEA inspectors and unsealed Yongbyon nuclear facilities. Furthermore, it declared its withdrawal from NPT and IAEA (Moon and Bae 2005, 41). This was the time of the nullifying the Agreed Framework in 1994 and at the same time, the starting point of the second North Korean nuclear crisis. This was more seriously problematic because the Bush administration was more aggressive and did not want dialogue or compromise with North Korea unlike the previous Clinton administration. The Bush administration stubbornly forced North Korea to accept “Complete, Verifiable, and Irreversible Dismantling (CVID)” of its nuclear programs with no precondition. However, North Korea refused and asked for guaranteeing its regime and demanding compensation for freezing nuclear programs (Moon and Bae 2005, 39).

In sum, the period of Bush-Kim administration was like running a parallel. Although

the Kim administration tried to relieve the hawkish mood in the U.S. to relieve the fear of entrapment, many things did not work well due to the strong hardliners in the Bush administration. In the end, the resolution of this second nuclear crisis was passed over to Roh Moo-hyun in the next administration.

#### **4.2.2.4. The fear of entrapment in the Roh Moo-hyun administration**

The Presidential transition team of Roh Moo-hyun presented Roh Moo-hyun doctrine including the succession and development of Sunshine policy and performed the leading role for the peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula and North East Asia on February 21, 2003 (Bae 2008, 159-160; Lee 2009, 397). It was clear that the Roh Moo-hyun doctrine would cause conflict with the Bush administration in many ways.

First, the Roh and Bush administration were different from how they recognized North Korea. South Korea recognized North Korea as equal partner and attempted to improve the relations with North Korea through reconciliation and cooperation. However, the U.S. distrusted North Korea defrauding the U.S. and its allies. In addition, while the Roh administration thought that the collapse of North Korea was not only uneasy but also not a purpose of its policy, the Bush administration expected that if it pressured, it could easily collapse the regime of North Korea (Kim 2008, 378; Armacost 2004; 21 -22). Furthermore, there were significant differences in how the two countries dealt with the threat of North Korea. While the Roh administration tried to mitigate threatening situations through more active attempts of embracing North Korea, the Bush

administration thought that punishment, including military options, was inevitable against the North Korean threat. However, although there were many differences in dealing with North Korea, the two countries agreed to solve the problems over North Korea through six-party talks including the U.S., China, Russia, Japan, and the two Koreas.

In fact, South Korea tried to make the U.S. participate in six-party talks because participating in the talks meant that at least the U.S. would not punish North Korea with military options. This was a type of failsafe. The U.S. publicly mentioned that all options including military ones were on the table many times, which made South Korea worry about the outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula. In addition, the U.S. attacked Iraq on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003 to punish it for hiding weapons of mass destruction. It was the first preemptive attacks. After Iraq, John Bolton, Undersecretary of the department of State of the U.S. suggested North Korea might be the next target, in turn with Iran (New York Daily News, April 3, 2003). Thus, South Korea's fear of entrapment emerged again.

In response, the Roh administration made an effort at every opportunity to convince the U.S. to give its confirmation of not using military means to confront North Korea. For example, President Roh tried to confirm the exclusion of the use of force from President Bush even though he knew that president Bush was not in favor of being convinced (Park 2010, 208).

In addition, when the Bush administration asked South Korea to dispatch Korean forces to Iraq, the Roh administration accepted the request considering the importance of

the ROK – U.S. alliance. This was the second time since the Park administration dispatched Korean forces to Vietnam War that South Korea dispatched its military in order to relieve the fear of abandonment or entrapment. However, there were differences in many aspects between the two cases. The Park administration sent the troops to Vietnam to prevent the movement of U.S. forces in Korea to Vietnam. That was the response of South Korea to relieve from the fear of abandonment because the Park administration thought that if the U.S. forces moved out of South Korea, the security of South Korea would be in danger. However, the Roh administration was worried about the possibility of entrapment (Lee 2011, 22). Since the inauguration of President Roh, South Korea and the U.S. have had many conflicts due to differences in policy toward North Korea. Many observers argued that there were cracks in the ROK – U.S. alliance. In fact, it was very difficult for South Korea to persuade the U.S. to participate in six-party talks. In other words, since South Korea could not closely cooperate with the U.S., it was not easy to provide input to the U.S. policy and it heightened South Korea's fear of entrapment. Therefore, the Roh administration would like to demonstrate the robustness of the ROK – U.S. alliance and to do so it wanted to have U.S. support for policy toward North Korea through sending Korean forces to Iraq. From the perspective of the U.S., it was difficult to associate North Korean nuclear issues and the dispatch to Iraq. However, it was true that South Korea's dispatch of forces to Iraq helped strengthen the position of the U.S., which was criticized by others due to the weak justification of Iraq war (Kim

2008, 381). As a result, the dispatch to Iraq of South Korean forces seemed to be successful in terms of intensifying the cooperative relationships between South Korea and the U.S. For example, after two days of the Roh administration's decision to dispatch to Iraq, President Bush said that he was willing to provide a written guarantee for North Korea's safety<sup>25</sup> (Park 2010, 218).

On top of the North Korean issues, there were several issues surrounding the restructuring of the ROK – U.S. alliance in the Roh and Bush administrations. Initially, the restructuring of the ROK – U.S. alliance began with the U.S.' Global Posture Review (GPR). After the September 11 terrorist attacks, GPR was suggested in order to respond to the uncertain terror attacks. The main point of GPR was fast and free movement of U.S. troops deployed throughout the world. The USFK was no exception. Rather, USFK was the main target because it was fixed near the border against North Korea for a long time. Therefore, the U.S. suggested Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiatives (FOTA) to promote restructuring of the alliance between two countries in the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual ROK-US Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in Washington, December 5, 2002 (Park 2010, 215).

After President Roh took office, restructuring of the ROK – U.S. alliance was fast

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<sup>25</sup> He said that "we're all willing to sign some kind of document, not a treaty, but a piece of paper that says, we won't attack you." ("Roundtable Interview of the President by the Press Pool," abroad Air Force One, October 22, 2003, online at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031022-7.html>).

tracked because President Roh hoped the rebalance of alliance in order to establish more symmetric relationships between South Korea and the U.S. (Cheong 2008, 113). In the past, these claims might result in conflict, but it did not at this time because the U.S. also wanted to restructure the ROK –U.S. alliance.

First, the U.S. started to reposition the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) along the border of North Korea to a more southerly part of South Korea. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division was a symbol of strong U.S. commitment to South Korea. Because the 2<sup>nd</sup> division was stationed near the DMZ, any North Korean army would meet U.S. troops first before reaching Seoul. Therefore, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division was regarded as a de facto tripwire and strong psychological deterrent to North Korean aggression (Baek 1982, 144). Considering this, moving the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division out of the DMZ obviously weakened the U.S. commitment to South Korea. Public opinion in South Korea reflected general worry about the weakening of the ROK – U.S. alliance and the fear of abandonment emerged again. Interestingly, the fear of entrapment appeared at the same time in this case. Some in South Korea and North Korea argued that the movement of 2<sup>nd</sup> Division out of DMZ was the beginning of the process for a preemptive attack on North Korea. In other words, it is through moving the 2<sup>nd</sup> division away from the DMZ that the U.S. troops could escape from the range of North Korea's missiles and artillery so that it could easily attack North Korea without losing its troops (Gregg 2004, 150).

However, there was no way for South Korea to stop this plan. The U.S. deputy

assistant secretary of the Department of Defense, Richard P. Lawless, notified South Korea in February 2003 that the U.S. would relocate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division to a more southern part of South Korea and if South Korea did not agree, the U.S. might withdraw entirely. In fact, according to the U.S. new military strategy, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division was not in a state to exercise its capacity well because it was scattered on 44 or more small bases around the Uijeongbu area. South Korea could not help but accept U.S. requests to readjust the locations of USFK. Instead, President Roh claimed in Independence Day speech on August 15, 2003 that this situation should be an opportunity to build a self-reliant defense. In fact, as a progressive government, the Roh administration had a different view of the presence of USFK. The Roh administration argued that South Korea should not rely on the U.S. for its security anymore. This was a similar reaction to the Park administration in the 1970s, but the Roh administration felt less fear of abandonment based on the confidence of the growth of the national capability of South Korea. However, the Roh administration did not downplay the importance of the relationship between the U.S. Therefore, the self-defense policy became “Cooperative self-reliant defense” that focused both on comprehensive alliance with the U.S. and self-reliant defense of South Korea.<sup>26</sup>

In the end, South Korea and the U.S. agreed to move the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division to the Pyongtaek area through signing the Land Partnership Plan (LPP). In addition, they agreed

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<sup>26</sup> National Security Council, Peace Prosperity and National Security, Seoul, March 2004. (in Korean).



to relocate Yongsan military base according to LPP (Cheong 2008, 114). Also, the withdrawal of USFK was promoted. Without notification in August 2004, 3,600 members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division were re-stationed to Iraq (Lee 2005, 88). In addition, the two countries agreed to reduce 12,500 people of total 37,000 USFK by 2008 gradually. Instead, USFK allocated 11 billion for strengthening its military power by introduction of new advanced weapon systems.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, USFK transferred several important missions such as guarding Joint Security Area (JSA), preventing infiltration of marine Special Forces of the North Korea to South Korean forces (Kim 2004, 18 -22).

All of these reorganizations of the USFK were to achieve the strategic flexibility of the U.S. forces, the main point of the new U.S. global military strategy. Simply speaking, strategic flexibility meant that whenever the U.S. needed, USFK would leave South Korea for its mission. That is, USFK would become a Rapid Dispatch Force (RDF). In South Korea, conservatives were afraid of weakening the U.S. commitment but progressives were concerned for being the place of the U.S. military's departure. That is, South Korea was afraid of both the fear of abandonment and entrapment depending on political ideology. The Roh administration was in trouble because it was difficult to take care of these two fears at the same time.

Furthermore, the ROK – U.S. alliance faced changes to its characteristics. In other

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<sup>27</sup> *Washington file*, U.S., S. Korean Officials explore Ways to Enhance Security (<http://usinfo.org/wf-archive/2003/030606/epf501.htm>).

words, if USFK become RDF based on strategic flexibility, the nature of ROK – U.S. alliance would change. Originally, the ROK – U.S. alliance was a passive military alliance for dealing only with the North Korean threat, but it would be changed to a strategic regional alliance. In this case, South Korea might get involved in potential regional disputes that it does not want and its fear of entrapment is increased. Particularly, if China would emerge as the competitor of the U.S., South Korea would be in a very difficult situation because it is very essential to cooperate with China to deal with North Korea. Therefore, South Korea was reluctant to participate in the exercise of Joint military operations in the areas of regional conflict such as Taiwan Strait (Kim 2008, 386; Kim 2004, 40 -42).

In response, while South Korea accepted the strategic flexibility, it tried to reduce the risk of abandonment and entrapment through the agreement mentioned its concerns about the concept of flexibility. In the first Strategic Consultation for an Allied Partnership in January 20, 2006, South Korea and the U.S. concluded the agreement as follows (Choi 2008, 66). “The ROK, as an ally, fully understands the rationale for the transformation of the U.S. global military strategy, and respects the necessity for the strategic flexibility of U.S. forces in the ROK. In the implementation of strategic flexibility, the US respects the ROK position that it shall not be involved in a regional conflict in Northeast Asia against the will of the Korean people” (The Korea Herald, January 22, 2006). Although the sentence was rather ambiguous, it satisfied both South

Korea and the U.S.

At last, the Roh administration promoted the transition of wartime operational control to South Korea. Following the transfer of peacetime operational control in 1994, the Roh administration actively asked for return of the wartime operational control from the U.S. On the one hand, South Korea had already felt the fear of entrapment several times due to the possibility of arbitrary U.S. military action without considering South Korea's position. For example, the Clinton administration stopped the option of bombing North Korea almost at the last moment by former President Carter's phone call from Pyongyang with Kim Il-sung's message. Also, the Bush administration designated North Korea as part of an axis of evil that was eligible for preemptive nuclear attack. Furthermore, there was a conflict between South Korea and the U.S. over Operation Plan 5029 in 2005. Operation Plan 5029 was prepared for sudden change in North Korea. However, the Roh administration thought that the situation of being able to intervene in North Korea was so broadly defined that there was the possibility of abuse of military action (Park 2010, 227).

In all three instances above, South Korea could be involved in a war against its interest. That is, the fear of entrapment was very high in South Korea. Furthermore, if USFK became RDF and the U.S. –ROK alliance was not confined to Korean Peninsula, the risk of entrapment would be higher. Therefore, it was through getting back the wartime operational control that the Roh administration would control the situation of

being involved in a war without its will and ultimately decrease the risk of entrapment (Lee 2011, 23).

On the other hand, for the Roh administration, it was a matter of restoration of military sovereignty for defending South Korea to receive back the wartime operational control. South Korea expected that it could have a leading role to deal with North Korea and a better position to ease the military tension on the Korean Peninsula. It was the issues of national pride both internally and externally commensurate with the growth of national capability and military power (Kim 2008, 383). U.S. officials were displeased with South Korea's request to restore its sovereignty through getting back the wartime operational control because it sounded like the U.S. forcefully took it from Korea (Lee 2007, 481). However, it was through transferring wartime control that the U.S. could share the defense burden with South Korea on the Korean Peninsula (Lee 2011, 23). Therefore, the U.S. agreed to transfer wartime operational control to South Korea on April 17, 2012 in the meeting of ROK-U.S. secretary of defense in 2007 (Park 2010, 234).

As soon as President Lee Myoung-bak, a conservative (unlike the previous two liberal presidents, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun) took office, President Lee claimed to strengthen the ROK – U.S. alliance. For example, President Lee and Bush agreed to maintain 28,500 people of USFK in the summit in Washington in April, 2008 and it was reaffirmed in the summit between the two states in London in April 2009 (Yonhap, April 11, 2011). Also, South Korea and the U.S. agreed to develop the ROK-U.S. alliance into a

comprehensive strategic alliance including bilateral, regional, and global levels in the summit on June 16, 2009. In addition, the U.S. reaffirmed to support South Korea's leading role with its advanced capability. Furthermore, the two states agreed to postpone transferring wartime operational control until December 1, 2015 considering North Korean provocations such as the Cheonan sinking and the change in the security situation around the Korean Peninsula.<sup>28</sup> As such, the Lee administration so far has shown a smooth relationship with the U.S. under the banner of strengthening the ROK – U.S. alliance.

#### **4.2.3. Alliance burden sharing**

In an asymmetric alliance, a great power provides security and a weak state yields autonomy in return. Therefore, military spending in the alliance is disproportionately borne by the dominant state. This unequal burden sharing only exists in asymmetric alliances (Theis 1987). However, the issue of burden sharing is also raised in an asymmetric alliance. Even for a strong state, unequal defense spending over an extended time tends to be a serious financial burden that will add to decline in the dominant state's power (Gilpin 1981; Kennedy 1987). Therefore, a strong state will raise the burden sharing issue even in an asymmetric alliance. In particular, when the strategic interest in a

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<sup>28</sup>*The evolution of military relations between ROK and the U.S.*, The Website of South Korean Ministry of National Defense (Online at: [http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiAlly/hanmiAlly\\_4/index.jsp?topMenuNo=2&leftNum=12](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiAlly/hanmiAlly_4/index.jsp?topMenuNo=2&leftNum=12)).

small state declines and the national capability of a small state increases, the burden sharing issue will be raised by a strong state. Thus, it might not be an exaggeration that arising issues of burden sharing cues some improvement (less asymmetry) in the degree of the asymmetric situation whether due to the decline of the great power or the growth of the weak state. In other words, it is through sharing the defense burden in return for a strong state's security supply that a weak state could provide relatively fewer autonomy concessions to a strong state. Therefore, the alliance becomes less asymmetric.

This theoretical logic makes sense for the ROK – U.S. alliance. Formal alliance burden sharing between South Korea and the U.S. are based on article 4<sup>29</sup> of MDT and article 2<sup>30</sup> of Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). U.S. forces could legally station in Korea and use land and facilities free of charge based on these two articles. Therefore, while South Korea provided land, facilities, and service of labor, the U.S. bore most of the necessary expenses for USFK until the 1980s. Furthermore, in the early period of the ROK-U.S. alliance, the U.S. supported South Korea through economic and military Grant aid, Loan, Foreign Military Sales (FMS) credit, and so on.

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<sup>29</sup> Article 4 of Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of Korea and the U.S. of America (signed in 1953) : “The Republic of Korea grants, and the U.S. of America accepts, the right to dispose U.S. land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement.”

(USFK website: <http://www.usfk.mil/usfk/sofa.1953.mutual.defense.treaty.76>).

<sup>30</sup> Article 2 of SOFA (signed in 1966): “1. (a) The U.S. is granted, under Article IV of the Mutual Defense Treaty, the use of facilities and areas in the Republic of Korea “

(USFK website: [http://www.usfk.mil/usfk/Uploads/130/US-ROKStatusofForcesAgreement\\_1966-67.pdf](http://www.usfk.mil/usfk/Uploads/130/US-ROKStatusofForcesAgreement_1966-67.pdf)).

However, in the late 1980s, the U.S. tried to cut financial and security support for South Korea due to the change to the security environment, the deterioration of domestic economy, and the economic growth of South Korea. Actually, it was an easy target for Congressional budget cutters to suspend overseas commitment. Furthermore, South Korea's economic development remained strong enough to be one of Four Tigers in East Asia. In particular, increasing U.S. trade deficit with South Korea became direct motivation to cut aid to South Korea (Merritt 1989, 171). In fact, other military grant assistance had already ended in 1976 except FMS credit (Baek 1982, 148). FMS credit ceased (Hwang 1989, 199) and Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of Defense of the U.S., argued that since South Korea had developed into a newly industrializing country, it was the right time for the U.S. and South Korea to evolve into a new security partnership instead of their patron – client relationship (ChosunIlbo, February 27, 1987; Lee 2008, 181).

The U.S. asked South Korea to share the burden during the 20th ROK – US Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in 1988 (Kim 2008, 382). Since 1991, South Korea shared some of the costs through Special Measures Agreement (SMA) between ROK and the U.S. SMA was signed in 1991 for the first time and the 8<sup>th</sup> agreement is coming into effect in 2011. South Korea's defense contributions are listed in Table 1.<sup>31</sup> Although

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<sup>31</sup>From the Website of South Korean Ministry of National Defense  
([http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiPending/hanmiPending\\_4/index.jsp](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiPending/hanmiPending_4/index.jsp)).

South Korea's defense contributions were reduced around its financial crisis in 1998, it has gradually increased in general.

Table 1. South Korea's contribution of defense spending of USFK

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	
Dollar(Hundred Million)	1.5	1.8	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.3	3.63	1.35	1.41	1.55	
Won (Hundred Million)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,456	2,575	2,825	
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
	1.67	0.59	0.65	0.72	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	3,045	5,368	5,910	6,601	6,804	6,804	7,255	7,415	7,600	7,904	8,125

Therefore, it could be said that South Korea could be less dependent on the U.S. and become a more equal partner of the alliance around this time. Still, the presence of USFK shows the security dependence of South Korea on the U.S., but it is not as fully dependent as it once was a client state that was accused of being a free rider (Johnson and Keehn 1994, 103 – 104). However, there have been some conflicts over deciding the amount of South Korea's defense contribution. While the U.S. argued that South Korea should increase its contribution to an appropriate level in return for stable security, South Korea claimed that defense contributions should be decreased due to the reduction and relocation of USFK. Furthermore, if the nature of alliance is changed to a regional strategic alliance and USFK is fully transformed into an RDF in the near future, these factors will further affect the decision regarding South Korea's defense contributions.



However, some argued that if South Korea wanted to have more symmetric relationship with the U.S., it should contribute more expenses and responsibility especially when one compares relations and burden sharing between Japan and the U.S. (Japan provided about \$5 billion for its contributions of U.S. forces in Japan (USFJ)) (Lee 2008, 315).

### **4.3. The issues of the alliance termination**

As we have seen in Chapter III, there are several theoretical and empirical studies that provide useful insights on the endurance and termination of alliances. Based on those theories (Morrow 1991; Walt 1997; Leeds and Savun 2007; Bennett 1997), we can categorize several factors that affect the endurance or termination of alliance. This chapter will analyze the effect of these factors on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.

On the one hand, we can group six factors that affect the termination of an alliance. The first factor is the changes of national capability of a member state. This includes both the growth of a weak state's and the decline of strong state's national capability (Morrow 1991). Second, if the threat perception is changed, it will affect the alliance termination. It also contains the cases that the adversary becomes friendlier, but the ally becomes more bellicose. In addition, if a state's capability surpasses that of its adversary, it will affect the termination of alliance (Walt 1997; Leeds and Savun 2007). Third, if a member state questions the efficacy of the alliance, it also affects the termination of an alliance. For example, when a weak state cannot believe its ally's commitment, it will have the

fear of abandonment and try to find another way to protect itself (Walt 1997). Fourth, if a member state undergoes domestic changes such as the change of regime, political process, and institutional structure, the necessity of an alliance could be decreased (Walt 1997; Leeds and Savun 2007; Bennett 1997). Fifth, if a member state experiences the change of international power structure, it will have a negative impact on the existing alliance. Finally, if a member state forms a new alliance outside, the existing alliance might be terminated (Leeds and Savun 2007).

On the other hand, there are four factors that help the alliance sustain. First, if there is a hegemonic power, the alliance can last longer (Walt 1997). It is similar to what Morrow (1991) argues; that asymmetric alliance is better to be continued than symmetric alliance. Second, if there are strong interest groups supporting the alliance, the alliance can last longer. Third, a highly institutionalized alliance is more likely to endure (Walt 1997). Finally, if member states share the same identity and ideology such as democracy, it will have a positive impact on the endurance of alliance (Walt 1997; Bennett 1997).

These ten factors above affect the termination of alliance positively or negatively. However, the effect of these factors will vary from case to case. In some cases, the impact of these factors might cancel each other out. Therefore, the impact of these factors should be analyzed in detail on a case-by-case basis.

### **4.3.1. Factors affecting alliance termination**

#### **4.3.1.1. The change of international power**

In the period of the Cold War, alliances were symbolized by the political, economic, military and ideological conflicts between liberal and communist powers. Therefore, the U.S. concluded several bilateral or multilateral alliances with states that had vital geopolitical strategic interests to contain the threats of Communist Soviet Union. The main functions of the alliances were mostly defensive and primarily a deterrent for the enemy and its threats to secure the territory of member states and regional stability. Since the structure of the Cold War was bipolar with two superpowers such as the U.S. and the Soviet Union, these alliances were mostly asymmetric and stationary types of alliances. Furthermore, these alliances lasted longer than any other type of alliance and were institutionalized to be more than just military alliances (Lee 2008, 120 -123). The ROK - U.S. alliance is one of these alliances. It was formed to deal with the threat from Communist forces and North Korea. Until the end of Cold War, this initial purpose of the alliance was maintained without change.

Meanwhile, the world and international powers had changed. The Berlin Wall, the symbol of the Cold War, collapsed on November 11, 1989. One month later, the end of the Cold War was declared at the U.S. – U.S.S.R (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) summit in Malta, December 3, 1989. After German reunification in October 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the atmosphere of reconciliation spread in

Northeast Asia. Encouraged by this peaceful international order, South Korea concluded a treaty of reconciliation and nonaggression and denuclearization agreement with North Korea in December 1991. Furthermore, it is through establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in September 30, 1990 and China in August 1992 that South Korea helped to ease tensions in the region (Cheong 2010, 122; Eom 2005, 34 - 36).

Since then, a unipolar system with the hegemonic U.S. was formed in the world. Therefore, traditional security threats were weakened and accordingly existing alliances were questioned in terms of their purposes, functions, and effectiveness. Also, the U.S. geopolitical strategic interests in South Korea weakened. In response, the Bush administration announced EASI in April, 1990. According to EASI, the reduction of USFK would be promoted in three phases from 1990 and a small residual of USFK would stay in South Korea in the late 1990's. In addition, the dissolution of the ROK – U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC) would be examined (Eom 2005, 37). However, this plan was stopped by the Clinton administration due to the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1993. Since then, the North Korean nuclear program and Weapons of Mass destruction (WMD) are new security threats to the hegemonic U.S. Because the North Korean threat remained on the Korean Peninsula, the ROK-U.S. alliance lasted even after the end of the Cold War.

However, the situation changed again in 2001. Under the new hegemonic unipolar system, new asymmetric security threats such as terrorism emerged and shocked the U.S.

(e.g., the September 11 terrorist attacks). The Bush administration declared a war on terrorism and restructured its alliances and U.S. forces in foreign bases focusing on the transformation of U.S. forces to RDF and capability based alliance such as fragmented and ad hoc coalition of the willing (Lee 2008, 126). The ROK - U.S. alliance was not exceptional. This restructuring of USFK weakened the U.S. commitment to South Korea. Furthermore, the Bush administration designated North Korea as one of the rogue states with Iraq and Iran that supported international terrorism. South Korea pursued a different route, quite the opposite of the Bush administration. The progressive Roh administration continued to pursue engagement policy with North Korea as South Korean government had been doing since the Kim Dae-jung administration. All of these situations worsened the instability of Korean Peninsula and stimulated South Korea's fear of abandonment and entrapment at the same time.

In conclusion, the change of international structure from a bipolar to a hegemonic unipolar system and the emergence of non-traditional threats such as international terrorism as a new power affected the existing alliance's functions, structures, and effectiveness. Moreover, although during the Cold War many conflicts arose, they were ignored or tolerated to deal with the larger purpose - to contain Communist powers. However, since the end of the Cold War, it was expected that more conflicts would occur between allies. In addition, domestic factors would be more focused instead of the impact of the international power system.

#### **4.3.1.2. The growth of national capabilities**

South Korea's economic development was one of the most important domestic factors affecting ROK – U.S. alliance. While it was one of the world's poorest countries in 1954 after the Korean War, South Korea became the top 13<sup>th</sup> economic power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The per capita Growth Domestic Product (GDP) of South Korea increased from \$ 65.6 in 1954 to \$1,172,803 in 2010.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, South Korea is the 7<sup>th</sup> leading exporter in the world as of 2010.<sup>33</sup>

In the early period after liberation from Japan, U.S aid was the most important supply to South Korean economy until 1970s. For example, 80 percent of import bill of South Korea was funded by the U.S. by late 1950s (Noland 1993, 13). From 1945 to the 1970s, the U.S. aided a total \$3.8 billion to South Korea (Chung 1983, 181). With the U.S. aid, the Park administration pushed strong export oriented industrial policies based on the statist approach in the 1960s. Also, the Park administration had secured seed money for economic development through normalization with Japan. Since then, the South Korean economy grew rapidly. Furthermore, the Chun administration successfully controlled high inflation to maintain export competitiveness. Therefore, South Korea was recognized as a developing industrialized country in the late 1980s. Even President Bush

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<sup>32</sup>GDP Per Capita from the database of International Financial Statistics in International Monetary Fund (IMF), (online at <http://elibrary-data.imf.org.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/QueryBuilder.aspx?s=323&key=1445284>).

<sup>33</sup> WORLD TRADE 2010, PROSPECTS FOR 2011, World Trade Organization (WTO)(online at [http://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/pres11\\_e/pr628\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres11_e/pr628_e.htm))

praised that “Korea has become an industrial power, a major trading power, and a first-class economic competitor” in 1989<sup>34</sup> (Albrecht 1990, 56). In addition, since U.S. FMS formally ended in 1986, South Korea was no longer a recipient but an equal player and even became the top 7<sup>th</sup> trading state of the U.S. in 2005 (Manyin 2007, 2). At one time the U.S. could interfere in the domestic affairs of South Korea through means of suspending aid, but, since 1987 the U.S. lost its economic leverage over South Korea. Thereafter, conflicts between the two states over trade rather than autonomy more intensely developed. Since the 1990s, while the U.S. continued the trade pressure that began in the 1980s, it started to force South Korea to accept neoliberal economic systems such as finance and foreign exchange market liberalization at the same time. In the end, the Kim Young-sam administration adopted it, and finally joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1996.

Meanwhile, South Korea pursued self-reliant defense based on economic development. South Korea’s defense spending had overtaken that of North Korea in 1972 for the first time; the gap has widened more and more since then (Suh 2006, 66). While South Korea was the world’s 12<sup>th</sup> military spender and its defense spending was \$24.27 billion in 2011,<sup>35</sup> North Korea’s defense spending was only about \$6 billion.<sup>36</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>34</sup> Address before the Korean national Assembly, July 27, 1989, Department of State Bulletin, May 1989, p.20.

<sup>35</sup> The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Military Expenditure Database (Online at <http://milexdata.sipri.org/files/?file=SIPRI+milex+data+1988-2010.xls>).

although North Korea has long-range artilleries and WMD, South Korea could be superior to North Korea including both quantity and quality of conventional power even without considering USFK's military power (Suh 2006, 65; Hamm 1999, 115; Aspin 1992). Since then, South Korea had some confidence in its defense power to deal with the North Korean threat. Furthermore, South Korea provided its defense contributions of USFK since 1991. Therefore, it can be no exaggeration that South Korea is less dependent on the ROK – U.S. alliance now than in the past for its security except for the dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Finally, on top of economic and military development, South Koreans had a sense of national pride for their economic success and achievements such as hosting the Asian games in 1986, the Olympics in 1988, the World cup in 2002 and Joining OECD in 1996. With this national pride, South Korea asserted the ROK – U.S. alliance to be more symmetric and this caused more conflicts with the U.S. (Shin 1996; Lee 2005, 93; Lim 2006, 2).

#### **4.3.1.3. Domestic changes: democratization and new nationalist elites**

In general, economic growth expanded the opportunities of education and access to information. Then these changes led to the increase of the educated middle class. Based on their wealth and education, the middle class would have political aspiration of

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<sup>36</sup> It was approximately estimated by the author based on the fact in the U.S. Department of State website (online at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2792.htm#defense>).



democratization. The desire of democratization would soon spread across the whole society. Furthermore, democratization accompanied not only political institutional change but also political and social liberalization such as the expansion of information sharing, freedom of expression, and the press (Kim and Lee 1993). This also expanded social diversity through forming competitive social discourses by various groups. Moreover, democratization liberalized the activities of new social elites who were oppressed under the authoritarian regime.

That is, it is through democratization that new social democratic elites came to be on the political stage. These democratic elites are based on nationalism because they equated authoritarian government and foreign powers. In other words, they thought that foreign powers in fact helped the authoritarian regime remain. Therefore, foreign powers should be removed to realize democratization. According to Lee (2007, 471), “Nationalist elites who believe in the principle of national sovereignty pursue foreign policy goals that are potentially damaging to asymmetric alliance. First, they decline to grant political influence to the allied government and demand an equitable, autonomous relationship, often regardless of the power disparity between two nations. The powerful ally, however, finds it hard to accept these policies.”

Political influence is one of the critical rewards for a strong ally in return for its security guarantee for a small state. Furthermore, a strong ally tries to maximize its political benefits and minimize the risk of entrapment in the alliance with a small state

through its political control. Therefore, if nationalist elites refuse the strong ally's political influence, it would cause danger to the alliance. On top of denying political influence, nationalist elites tend to refuse to provide a strong ally with political benefits such as providing military bases (Lee 2007, 473). The Case of the Philippines that ended patron-client relationships with the U.S. in five years after its democratization in 1991 is a good example (Lee 2007, 469 – 470). To make matters worse, “new democratic elites might pursue another nationalist ideal – solidarity with other co-national groups – which further undermines alliance. Nationalism views the unification of ethonational kin under a single political authority as natural and inevitable” (Lee 2007, 473). In other words, the solidarity with other co-national groups make nationalist elites underestimate the security threat and thus the necessity of the alliance is doubted by both allies based on different threat perceptions. As a result, all of these nationalistic behaviors after democratization will reduce a strong ally's commitment and endanger the existing alliance.

In the history of South Korea, the Park Chung-hee and Chun Doo-hwan administrations had several things in common. They both seized power through a coup so that they had very weak legitimacy. Also, it was very similar for them to achieve high economic growth to justify their weak legitimacy. However, paradoxically, the high economic growth was the biggest role to break down these regimes. As mentioned above, this was because economic development promoted democratic aspirations and offered a favorable environment to democracy (Lipset 1959; Dahl 1989). On top of that, there was

one more thing they both did; Each obtained approval from the U.S. The approval of the U.S. was another way to compensate for both of their weak legitimacy at that time. Therefore, even though when a regime change occurred through a coup, the alliance became more important for South Korea rather than weakened. This made sense because the authoritarian regime of South Korea and the U.S. were connected through an asymmetric, patron – client relationship until then. Also, this was the reason why nationalist elites blamed the U.S. for supporting authoritarian regimes. Therefore, it is not strange that as their authoritarian government collapsed, the U.S political leverage over South Korea also disappeared.

However, after democratization in 1987, the ROK – U.S. alliance did not collapse or weaken much in a short period. This was because even after democratization, nationalist elites did not have enough power to affect the alliance. As mentioned earlier, the transition to democracy in South Korea was made by compromise between ruling and oppositional political powers.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, even after the democratization in 1987, Roh Tae-woo, a ruling party's handpicked presidential candidate by President Chun became

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<sup>37</sup> This type of democratization is called as “transplacements” by Huntington (1991). According to him, “In transplacements democratization is produced by the combined actions of government and opposition. Within the government the balance between standpatters and reformers is such that the government is willing to negotiate a change of regime – unlike the situation of standpatter dominance that leads to replacement – but it is unwilling to initiate a change of regime. It has to be pushed and/or pulled into formal or informal negotiations with the opposition. Within the opposition democratic moderates are strong enough to prevail over antidemocratic radicals, but they are not strong enough to overthrow the government. Hence they too see virtues in negotiation” (Huntington 1991, 151).

the 13<sup>th</sup> president defeating the divided opposition candidates, Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung. Hence, although it was new democratic government in appearance, it was in fact the extension of the old authoritarian government but had procedural legitimacy. During the Roh administration, society became more liberalized than the previous authoritarian period, but it was very limited. In 1993, Kim Young-sam, a political dissident under the authoritarian government finally became the 14<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea. Although he was the first civilian president, he won the presidential election as the candidate of ruling Democratic Liberal Party created by the coalition with conservative elites (Lee 2007, 475). New democratic elites entered into the powerful position, but many of the old conservatives were still in power. Therefore, it could be said that South Korea was still in a transitional period of democratization and thus conservative policy was maintained during the Kim Young-sam administration.

Taken together, since democratization in 1987, the process of democratic consolidation was very slow and gradual taking almost 10 years. During this period, there were old conservative elites still in powerful political positions. Therefore, although new administrations promoted democratic reforms, it was very limited.

However, there were several changes in the relationship between South Korea and the U.S. First of all, as a patron, the U.S. had used its political and economic leverages to control the South Korean political economy to suit their interests. However, the U.S. influence on South Korea ended by the economic growth and political democratization in

South Korea. Furthermore, since the end of the Cold War, because South Korea's geopolitical strategic importance was weakened and thus USFK was reduced, U.S. leverage in security matters also shrank.

According to alliance theory, these conditions were enough to doubt the necessity or efficacy of the ROK – U.S. alliance. However, the alliance was not terminated and no serious conflicts between the two states during the Roh and Bush administrations transpired because the Roh administration's initiative towards North Korea and ex-communist states matched the interests of the U.S. In addition, it was because this time was transitional period not only in South Korea's domestic dimensions after democratization but also in the global level after the end of the Cold War (Park 2010, 257).

On the contrary, the U.S. leverage on security began to work again due to the 1<sup>st</sup> North Korean nuclear crisis during the Kim Young-sam administration in 1993. Although the Kim administration was the first civilian government, it still had conservative and hostile tendencies toward North Korea. During this period, the Kim administration was in fact isolated between the U.S. and North Korea and suffered from the fear of abandonment. Therefore, there were many conflicts over policy towards North Korea between South Korea and the U.S., but these conflicts did not cause a change in the alliance between the two states. Also, these conflicts were not derived from the effect of democratization of South Korea except President Kim's caprice in policy decision toward

North Korea and the U.S. based on South Korean public opinion.

After transitional phases, the real period of democratic consolidation in South Korea began in 1998 when President Kim Dae-jung was inaugurated. Kim Dae-jung was the first President from the opposition party in the history of South Korea. He was a longtime leader of the opposition party and democratic movement. He had been imprisoned many times and even sentenced to death under the authoritarian regime. Therefore, his inauguration meant that new democratic elites replaced the old conservative elites and this power shift finally occurred from conservatives to liberals in South Korea in ten years after democratization. First, and foremost, the Kim administration actively promoted the so called Sunshine policy, engagement policy towards North Korea. This was typical nationalist policy to show solidarity with other co-national groups. The new nationalist elites in the Kim administration focused more on the reconciliation with North Korea than questioning the asymmetric alliance with the U.S. Until President Clinton was in office, the relationship between South Korea and the U.S. was very cooperative. An historical summit between the two Koreans was held in 2000. North Korea and the U.S. exchanged a special envoy of high ranking officials. Therefore, the U.S. leverage over security matters in the Korean Peninsula worked in a cooperative manner until the Clinton administration.

However, President Bush's inauguration and the September 11 terrorist attack changed the cooperative mood between South Korea and the U.S. The Bush

administration accused North Korea as an axis of evil in 2002 and refused to agree to South Korea's engagement policy. Furthermore, the Bush administration designated North Korea as a target of possible preemptive attack with nuclear weapon to overthrow its regime in NPR in 2001 (Cho 2003, 81). The U.S. hardline policy toward North Korea caused serious conflicts with the Sunshine policy of South Korea in overlapping tenure of President Bush and Kim Dae-jung.

Finally, the conflicts between South Korea and the U.S. reached its peak appearing in the form of anti-Americanism in 2002. South Korean's anger about two school girls' innocent death by USFK accident led to the victory of progressive presidential candidate, Roh Moo-hyun in 2002. President Roh took full advantage of anti-Americanism in Korean public opinion from the campaigning period. In particular, his appeals to anti-Americanism had very powerful influence on young Koreans who were the main participants in candlelight vigils (Lee 2004, 18). Furthermore, the Roh administration involved more progressive nationalist elites, so called 386 generations who were in "their 30s in the 1990s, pro-democracy university students in the 1980s, and born in the 1960s" (Larson 2004, 93). Since they witnessed the Kwangju massacre in 1980, these new nationalist elites claimed anti-America and anti-authoritarianism in their 20s because the U.S. supported authoritarian government in Korea. Therefore, although conflicts with the U.S. were expected, the Roh administration continued the unconditional engagement policy toward North Korea deemphasizing the North Korean nuclear threat. Furthermore,

the Roh administration assertively requested a more equal relationship with the U.S. and the return of wartime operational control (Lee 2011, 21 -23; Niksch 2006). In return, the U.S. did not formally express its temper, but subsequent plans such as the reduction and relocation of USFK showed its decreasing interest of the ROK – U.S. alliance. In fact, these plans were originally designed for U.S. GPR for a war on terrorism and both governments announced that it was what should be done as planned for strengthening the ROK - U.S. alliance in the future. However, its progress weakened the alliance.

On top of the conflicts with the U.S., the rise of anti-Americanism based on progressive nationalism produced sharp internal divisions. These internal conflicts mostly arose from the difference of perception on the necessity of USFK or ROK –U.S. alliance and the North Korean military threat (Lee 2004, 203). There were two types of internal divisions in South Korea. The conflicts between so called Jajupa, a group who claims more symmetric relations with the U.S. based on anti-American perspective and unconditional engagement policies towards North Korea, and Dongmaengpa, a group of a pro-alliance with the U.S. who argues strong response to North Korean nuclear is a good example of serious internal division (Sim 2008). These conflicts existed in the past, but it was not noticeable because the anti-American group was not able to enter into the political system under the suppression of the authoritarian government. However, it was through the victory of Roh Moo-hyun that the progressive nationalist group finally entered into political system. These progressive nationalists took advantage of both



internal conflicts and external conflicts with the U.S. to strengthen their political position in South Korea. This was available because of the spread anti-American sentiment in South Korean public opinion during the Roh administration. At that time, if anyone claimed to strengthen the alliance with the U.S., he or she was accused as a traitor. However, exploiting the division between pro and anti-alliance further exacerbated the relationship with the U.S. (Lee 2011, 9-10).

Next, there was a generational gap in South Korea. That is, while the more progressive and younger generation was critical of the U.S., the conservative older generation was favorable to the U.S. in general (Lee and Cheong 2005, 237 – 238). Also, the research by Rand Corporation found that “age, educational attainment, and student status” were the most important factors regarding sentiment toward the U.S. and concluded that “the younger and better educated South Korean typically tended to have the least favorable views of the U.S.” (Larson et al. 2004, XV).

However, the meaning of the generation gap also changed according to historical change. The generation gap originally used to refer to the difference between pre-Korean War and post-Korean War generation (Lee 2005, 97). Yet the post-Korean War generation became old and the new generation who was called the P generation or the World Cup generation emerged. This new generation grew in economically developed and politically democratized South Korea without experiencing a poor and devastated period. Therefore, this generation did not have gratitude or respect to the U.S. unlike their grandfather

generation. Also, this generation has national pride through successful holding a symbolic event such as World Cup soccer game in 2002 (Jaung 2007, 6). Although the U.S. is a hegemonic superpower in the world, this does not mean for them that the U.S. is superior to South Korea. For this generation, the U.S. is a competitor like other states in the world. In addition, this generation has not experienced North Korean military threats but has seen the historical North-South summit in 2000. Therefore, this generation believed that the ROK -U.S. alliance should be more symmetric and the reconciliation between two Koreas should continue (Jaung2007, 7). Furthermore, the Internet, online networks such as news webzine are the main resources of news and their political stance. In addition, their views spread like wildfire through social network services (SNS). In contrast, the traditional media is limited in terms of accessibility and velocity of propagation (Kim and Kim 2004, 112). That is why this generation became the main protestors who participated in candlelight vigils in 2002. In other words, this new generation played an important role in the spread of anti-Americanism in Korea in recent period and as a result, the future of the alliance between South Korea and the U.S. would not be much positive.

Although the alliance between the two states was strengthened after the Lee Myoung-bak administration was inaugurated, these progressive elites still remained as important political forces. In particular, progressive forces with younger generation were mobilized against the conservative Lee administration in case such as renegotiation of full opening of beef market in 2008 (Snyder 2009, 829) and the previous President Roh

Moo-hyun's suicide in 2009.

In sum, although the U.S. lost its political leverage to South Korea after South Korea's democratization in 1987, the alliance did not change much for the first 10 years. However, Since the nationalistic elites entered into power in the Kim Dae-jung administration, ROK – U.S. alliance fell into the conflicts over the engagement policy towards North Korea. The conflicts between the two states were even worse during the Roh administration because more progressive elites with anti-American sentiment were in power. Furthermore, these conflicts over the alliance caused internal ideological and generational divisions and these divisions again strengthened the political stance of progressive elites. As a result, although the ROK – U.S. alliance did not rapidly change right after South Korea's democratization, it has gradually declined.

#### **4.3.1.4. The change of threat perception**

The conflicts between South Korea and the U.S. during progressive governments in South Korea were based on the difference of their threat perceptions of North Korea. However, the differences of their threat perceptions were not new in this period. There have been differences between South Korea and the U.S. even in the period of the Cold War. That is, while the U.S. focused more on containment of Communist power based on its global security interests, South Korea only peripherally responded to North Korean threat in terms of its survival. Also, this difference was fundamentally based on the possibility of escalation of the military threats to the mainland of the U.S. Because the

U.S. is geographically apart from the Korean Peninsula, the possibility of escalation almost disappeared with the end of the Cold War (Lee 1999, 23). Therefore, the Bush administration recognized less threat coming from the Korean peninsula and pursued the reduction of USFK based on EASI as a result of the change of U.S. threat perception. However, unlike the international atmosphere of peace, the threats on the Korean Peninsula did not disappear and was emerged again with North Korean nuclear crisis in 1993.

According to Kim (2003, 110), “Korean Peninsula issues can be categorized into inter-Korean issues and international issues. The first category encompasses North-South reconciliation, the separated families issue, and economic cooperation; while the WMD issue, establishment of a peace regime on the Peninsula, and the future status of US armed forces in Korea, belong to the second.” As mentioned above, while South Korea focused on the former issues, the latter issues were more important for the U.S. Thus, when the inter-Korean issues promoted without involving international issues, there was no conflict between South Korea and the U.S. However, if these two issues affected each other, it is likely to cause conflicts between the two states. This is because South Korean threat perception is dual for North Korea. On the one hand, originally South Korea thought of North Korea as a brother based on their ethnic homogeneity. In addition, they are divided but should be unified into one nation again sometime in the future (Shin and Chang 2006, 46). This basic sentiment developed into “inter-Korean nationalism” that

inter-Korean affairs should be handled by the two Koreas themselves without foreign powers (Lee 2005, 93). This is the same context as the June 15<sup>th</sup> Joint declaration between Kim Dae-jung and Kim Jung-il. This joint declaration advocated solving the issue of unification independently. On the other hand, when the North Korean issue was an international one, South Korea approached it based on realistic threat perception like other states. That is, North Korea is the main enemy who threatens South Korea and thus must be necessarily defeated. Before the end of the Cold War, since inter-Korean nationalism was suppressed by authoritarian governments under strong anti-communism, the boundary of the two perceptions was clear. However, after the end of the Cold War and democratic transition in Korea, South Korea's threat perception changed to be more ambiguous or mixed at some times.

A watershed of the change of threat perception in the U.S. - ROK alliance was the inter-Korean summit in 2000 with the emergence of new nationalistic elites during the liberal and progressive governments in South Korea and the Bush doctrine with the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 with the reemergence of neoconservative elites in the U.S. First of all, the change of South Korea's threat perception of North Korea was illustrated by President Kim Dae-jung's speech on his way home from Pyongyang as follows, "now, there is no possibility of a second Korean War on the peninsula" (Snyder 2000, 58). Since the summit, inter-Korean nationalism represented by the Sunshine policy became the main perception rather than realistic threat perception in South Korea.

That is, from the summit, South Korea perceived even international issues with the view of inter-Korean nationalism. Therefore, new nationalistic elites in Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun administration tended to deemphasize the North Korean military threat. They argued that the North Korean nuclear program was defensive for its security (Lee 2007, 478). For example, there was widespread *nuclear naiveté* in South Korea in terms of North Korean nuclear program. It was general belief that although North Korea had a nuclear program, it would not use it to its brother, South Korea. In addition, if Korea is united in the future, any nuclear program of North Korea will be an important strategic asset for Unified Korea (Lee 2004, 205). Therefore, South Korea generally perceived the North Korean nuclear program as less dangerous and tried to deal with it focusing on the maintenance of the stability of Korean peninsula.

On the contrary, the perception of the U.S. on the North Korean nuclear program is quite different from that of South Korea. As the sole superpower since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. perceived the North Korean issues as the prevention of the WMDs at first. However, it entirely changed after President Bush's inauguration and the September 11 terrorist attacks because of the reemergence of neoconservative elites, so called neocons. These neocons such as Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Jon Bolton, Richard Perle, and Paul Wolfowitz were originally responsible for the foreign policy in the Reagan administration and reemerged in the Bush administration advocating the Bush Doctrine that completely changed the American foreign and defense policy. These

neocons tried more aggressively to transform the international affairs using the U.S. hegemonic superpower status (Gurtove and Van Ness 2005, XV).

The Bush administration dealt with North Korea focusing on the matters of WMDs and global terrorism based on three main components of Bush Doctrine, “moral absolutism, hegemonic unilateralism, and offensive realism”<sup>38</sup> (Moon and Bae 2005, 40). First, President Bush designated North Korea as one of the axis of evil in his speech at West Point. His perception of North Korea as an evil shaped the U.S. policy toward North Korea. In his religious belief based on moral absolutism, there is no neutral between good and evil. Also, evil cannot be a negotiator with the U.S. for anything. Therefore, the U.S. would not talk with North Korea until it is freed from evil dictatorship. In addition, the U.S. accused North Korea of violating the Agreed Framework and the Nonproliferation Treaty through developing HEUP. Furthermore, the U.S. accused North Korea of becoming the background of terrorism through exporting missiles and WMDs to potential terrorist countries. Therefore, the Bush administration argued that the North Korea should be handled as a criminal regime in terms of international terrorism. Next, the U.S. hegemonic unilateralism is strong background for its arbitrary judgment about the issue of North Korean nuclear programs. Hegemonic unilateralism in Quadrennial Defense

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<sup>38</sup> See George W. Bush, “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People,” United States Capitol, Washington, DC, September 20, 2001; George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,” Washington, DC, January 29, 2002; George W. Bush, “Remarks by the President at 2002 Graduation Exercise of the United States Military Academy,” West Point, New York, June 1, 2002.

Review (QDR) in 2001<sup>39</sup> suggested the U.S. hegemonic leadership based on the primacy of American values. In addition, if any state supports terrorism, it will be regarded as hostile regime by the U.S. That is, for these neocons, dialogue with North Korea is to succumb to its blackmail and is contrary to American values. Therefore, the Bush administration accepted punitive measures instead of bilateral talks with North Korea. Finally, According to NPR,<sup>40</sup> North Korea could be a target of the U.S. nuclear preemptive attack based on the U.S. offensive realism. Based on U.S. offensive realism, the U.S. would not recognize the sovereignty of terrorism-supporting states and could preemptively attack those states with nuclear weapons. As a result, if North Korea would not abandon its nuclear program first, it could not talk with the U.S. and even become the possible target of a U.S. nuclear attack (Moon and Bae 2005, 46 - 52).

For neocons in the Bush administration, North Korea is no more than one of the troublesome rogue states that supports international terrorism. Therefore, they tried to handle it in terms of a war against terrorism. Also, the U.S. thinks that if it is necessary to resolve the North Korean nuclear issues, the U.S. alliance or the U.S. forces should be rearranged (Kim 2003, 68 -29).

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<sup>39</sup> According to QDR in 2001, "US leadership is premised on sustaining an international system that is respectful of the rule of law. America's political, diplomatic, and economic leadership contributes directly to global peace, freedom, and prosperity. US military strength is essential to achieving these goals, as it assures friends and allies of an unwavering US commitment to common interest." (US Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report 2001, September 30, 2001, p.1.).

<sup>40</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review," Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2002.



As a result, due to the appearance of nationalists in South Korea and neocons in the U.S., there were significant differences in threat perception of North Korean issues between the two states. Of course, the different perception of North Korea caused conflicts over the response against North Korea between the two states. In other words, it caused serious conflicts between the Sunshine policy which is engagement policy focusing on the stability of Korean Peninsula and the Bush doctrine which is a hardline policy focusing on the prevention and punishment of nuclear programs and global terrorism. Furthermore, some South Koreans argued that the U.S. hardline policy was even more dangerous than North Korea's nuclear program because it could lead to war on the Korean Peninsula (Shin and Chang 2006, 57). This matter is related to the rise of anti-Americanism in Korea and the efficacy of the alliance that will be discussed in the next section.

In terms of anti-Americanism, when a member state changes its perception of its ally to be more combative, the alliance could be weakened (Walt 1997). In this chapter, anti-Americanism could be defined as "significant manifestations of anger and hostility toward the United States and its policies, practices, institutions, and citizens – either military or civilian" (Oh 1998, 246). That is, anti-Americanism here includes both negative sentiments or feelings and attitudes (Oh and Arrington 2007, 331). South Korean perception of the U.S. changed to be more unfriendly than the past and even further evolved into anti-Americanism in recent years. The anti-Americanism in Korea began in

earnest from the Kwangju massacre in 1980 that South Korean filed the U.S. responsibility but stayed mainly in radical protestors until 1990s. However, such situations began to change through the summit between two Koreas in 2000. Furthermore, since the Bush administration appeared, the anti-Americanism in South Korea was rapidly deepened and widespread (Sim 2008, 19).

In particular, there were many incidents in 2002 that led to anti-Americanism had peaked in South Korea as follows:

Media publicity given to the Nogunri incident, U.S. Army personnel dumping toxic waste into the Han River, the deaths of two Korean teenage girls run over by a U.S. armored vehicle, a subway scuffle between a U.S. serviceman and Korean activists, including a former National Assemblyman, and the U.S. Embassy's plan to construct a new embassy building and high rise apartment near the old Deoksu Palace site in the heart of Seoul have shaped anti-American sentiment among Korean people. Among these various incidents, the series of candlelight vigils after the late November 2002 is believed to have had the most significant impact on the rise of anti-American sentiment in Korean society (Kim and Kim 2004, 104).

These incidents in 2002 triggered anti-Americanism in South Korea and helped the victory of Roh Moo-hyun in the presidential election. Although Roh Moo-hyun was not from the 386 generation, a large part of his move exposed anti-Americanism during his campaign. For example, although it was a kind of political tradition for presidential candidate to visit the U.S. during campaign period, he did not and it was understood as a symbol of his anti-American position. Furthermore, he made a pledge to be more

symmetric relationship with the U.S. and to revise SOFA. A little after winning the election, he tried to calm anti-Americanism in South Korea, but after then he did not conceal his anti-American tendencies during his tenure (Sim 2008, 95 -96).

The heightened anti-Americanism in South Korea with the war in Iraq and North Korean nuclear crisis widely spread the risk of entrapment in South Korea. Even some Koreans argued that the alliance with the U.S. endangered the survival of South Korea rather than North Korea. Furthermore, this argument led to doubts of the efficacy of the ROK – U.S. alliance.

Meanwhile, anti-Korean backlash was spreading in the U.S. The main logic of their argument is “the United States need not stay, and certainly not if it was not wanted” (Carpenter and Bandow 2004, 124). According to Scott Snyder, this anti-Korean sentiment was widely spread in the U.S. government and Congress in Washington (New York Times, January 27, 2003). Before the rise of anti-Americanism in Korea, the confidence of the ROK – U.S. alliance was strong. However, when the conflicts between the progressive government in Korea and the Bush administration continued to occur, some hawks argued the uselessness of the ROK – U.S. alliance. They claimed that the U.S. should focus only on the U.S. national interest. They insisted that defending South Korea was not vital to the security interests of the U.S. Moreover, since South Korea could provide defense for itself, there was no need for USFK to stay in South Korea. As a result, these hardliners argued the complete withdrawal of USFK from South Korea

(Carpenter and Badow 2004). Furthermore, U.S. politicians were more indignant because the South Korean government implicitly condoned and even took advantage of the anti-Americanism in South Korea (Lee 2007, 481). In addition, majority of U.S. public opinion polls showed the adverse attitude to support South Korea against North Korean attack (Cha 2004b, 153; Lee 2007, 481).

However, the change of threat perception and hostile anti-Americanism did not continue forever. As soon as the Lee Myoung-bak administration began, conservative elites came back to the office. Therefore, they strengthened the alliance between South Korea and the U.S. rather than solidarity with North Korea. The Lee administration promoted hardline policies toward North Korea emphasizing reciprocity. Since then, the difference in threat perception between the two states significantly weakened and policy cooperation began. For example, the reduction of USFK was suspended to maintain 28,500 people and the transfer of wartime operational control was postponed until 2015 (Yonhap, April 11, 2011).

In addition, anti-Americanism in Korea tended to be temporal and emotional sentiments about specific issues such as the deaths of two female students in 2002 (Lee and Cheong 2003, 59). Heightened anti-Americanism in 2002 significantly weakened in June 2003, just six months later. Furthermore, most South Koreans want the continuation of the ROK – U.S. alliance, and the extreme anti-American fundamentalists are just a minority group in South Korea (Choi and Kim 2006).

In sum, as well as the change of threat perception toward the common enemy, the change of mutual recognition of member states also have considerable effect on the alliance between the two states during the progressive governments in South Korea . Furthermore, these changes rose to doubt of the efficacy of the existing alliance discussed in the next.

#### **4.3.1.5. Doubts about the efficacy of the alliance**

If a member state begins to doubt the commitment of other member states, the alliance cannot last longer. In particular, this is related to the matter of alliance dilemma in asymmetric alliance. If a weak state cannot believe the strong state's commitment, it will fear abandonment. However, if a strong state doubts the commitment of a weak state, it will be disinterested in providing commitment to the weak state. At the same time, if a member state thinks the other member states are too combative, it will have the fear of entrapment. Then the efficacy of the alliance is seriously lessened.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, the change of threat perception over North Korea, anti-Americanism in South Korea and anti-Korean backfire in the U.S. had raised questions of the efficacy of the ROK – U.S. alliance. However, the background of the doubts originates from the summit between two Koreas in 2000. As soon as the 6.15 joint declarations announced after the Summit, the U.S. worried that it might adversely affect the presence of USFK in Korea. Although South Korea had ensured the long-term presence of USFK, at the same time, it canceled the event of Korean War memorial that

might undermine the favorable relations between the two Koreas. In addition, it reduced the U.S. military participants in the ROK – U.S. joint military exercise and even canceled it. Therefore, because South Korea's pursuit of national solidarity rather than the strong alliance between the two states, the U.S. began to have doubts in the security policies of South Korea (Lee 2008, 171–172).

Next, the doubts for the alliance's efficacy worsened after President Bush was inaugurated in the U.S. Right before he had a summit with President Bush, President Kim Dae-jung supported the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty in the summit with Russia. At that time, the Kim administration refused to join Missile Defense (MD) initiated by the U.S. in order not to stimulate North Korea, China, and Russia. However, since ABM should be abolished to promote MD, the Kim administration's support of ABM was seen as clear opposition to U.S.' MD. Although the Kim administration tried to explain the reasons of its policy, distrust of the U.S. in South Korea was already a serious level. On top of MD, South Korea did not cooperate with the U.S. over the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) that was designed to contain rogue states' deal of WMDs and illegal goods. South Korea was not interested in PSI because it focused on the engagement policy toward North Korea. The U.S. did not even invite South Korea to PSI because it knew of South Korea's disinterest. The U.S. also tried to prevent information leakage to North Korea via South Korea (Kim 2004, 36 – 37). This is good example of how much the U.S. distrusted South Korea at that time.

Furthermore, the conflicts between the two states were even more amplified surrounding the readjustment of ROK – U.S. alliance and the Iraq War. Readjustment of the alliance between the two states began based on the U.S.' GPR and South Korea's request to have an equal status (i.e., the return of wartime control to South Korea). However, more fundamentally, it is based on the fear of entrapment in South Korea. Although the U.S. commitment to South Korea declined through readjustment of the alliance, South Korea lessened their fear of being abandoned. Instead, South Korea was worried about being entrapped by U.S. hardline policy toward North Korea. This is exactly the opposite situation during the concurrent Kim Young-sam and Clinton administrations. At that time, South Korea feared of being abandoned because the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea was very close. However, it is through the Summit and the Sunshine policy that South Korean did not feel much threat from North Korea. Instead, South Korea worried the possible war on the Korean peninsula initiated by the U.S. (Shin and Chang 2006, 56). Furthermore, if the ROK – U.S. alliance become a regional alliance based on U.S. strategic flexibility and USFK as RDF, the risk of entrapment for South Korea would be enhanced (Kim 2008, 387). In addition, the risk of entrapment increased even more when the U.S. requested ROK troops to Iraq. Although South Korea dispatched Korean troops to Iraq, the long process and internal opposition toward this decision showed South Korea's strong fear of entrapment and thus, was enough to disappoint the U.S. (Sim 2008, 275).

Finally, although South Korea is one of the closest ally of the U.S., it tried not to side with the U.S. in some cases. For example, Although North Korea has been a common enemy of the two states, South Korea acted as an impartial mediator between North Korea and the U.S. during the North Korean nuclear crisis. Such attitude exacerbated the U.S.'s distrust of South Korea's intention (Armacost 2004, 21 – 22). Furthermore, President Roh's proclamation of South Korea as a self-reliant balancer in East Asia also caused serious conflicts between the two states. In the view of the U.S., this is a challenge to the U.S. leadership in this region and as a kind of betrayal of the alliance (Lee 2007, 481). In particular, some in the U.S. criticized that South Korea opportunistically hesitated to be on the one side between the U.S. and China (Kim 2008, 386).

#### **4.3.1.6. Forming a new alliance**

When a member state forms a new alliance outside of the existing alliance, the existing alliance is likely to be terminated (Leeds and Savun 2007, 1119 – 1121). As a hegemonic state, the U.S. cannot be replaced by any state. However, China might be a strong challenger for the new alliance partner of South Korea in East Asia. Even some said “Korea shift” from the United States to China based on their economic and political relationship since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1992 (Lim 2006, 6). Furthermore, South Korea and China have long relations in history and share a lot in terms of culture and history.



First, unlike the past economic relationships, South Korea had reduced its economic dependence on the U.S. and China is now the biggest market and top trading partner of South Korea. For example, the total bilateral trade volume between South Korea and China has increased from about 9 billion (U.S. dollars) in 1992 to 188 billion in 2010. In addition, the total trade in 2010 was more than double of 90 billion between South Korea and the U.S. in 2010.<sup>41</sup>

Next, since the Kim Dae-jung administration adopted the Sunshine policy towards North Korea, the relationship between South Korea and China is even closer to each other and South Korea began to pay special attention to the reaction of China. For example, South Korea refused to join the Bush administrations' MD not to annoy China and North Korea. In addition, South Korea was not willing to discuss China-related issues at the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) that was a meeting for discussing North Korean issues between the U.S., Japan, and South Korea (Chung 2005, 215). In addition, South Korea and China worked closely during the series of six-party talks for solving North Korean nuclear crisis.

However, there are also conflicts between South Korea and China. For example, South Korea has been worried about China's increasing influence on North Korea. Some

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<sup>41</sup>Major economic statistics data, the Ministry of foreign affairs and trade. 2011. P.17 (Online at <http://www.mofat.go.kr/webmodule/htsboard/template/read/korboardread.jsp?typeID=6&boardid=360&seqno=335396>) ; the Korea International Trade Association, trade dataset (Online at [http://stat.kita.net/top/state/n\\_submain\\_stat\\_kita.jsp?menuId=01&subUrl=n\\_default-test\\_kita.jsp?lang\\_gbn=kor^statid=kts&top\\_menu\\_id=db11](http://stat.kita.net/top/state/n_submain_stat_kita.jsp?menuId=01&subUrl=n_default-test_kita.jsp?lang_gbn=kor^statid=kts&top_menu_id=db11)) .

in South Korea even raised the possibility that North Korea might merge into China as one of its provinces (Lim 2006, 6). In addition, South Korea has been anxious about China's distortion of Korean ancient history such as Goguryeo. Furthermore, there is anti-Korean sentiment in China related to the Korean Pop stars and culture (Snyder 2009, 91 – 92). Therefore, it can be said that South Korea has dual attitudes toward China.

In the meantime, South Korea and the U.S. suffered from serious conflicts over the North Korean nuclear issues. Furthermore, Roh Moo-hyun administration promoted strategies using such a situation to improve the status of South Korea. For example, South Korea tries to become an economic hub and political balancer in Northeast Asia (Shin and Chang 2006, 57). These strategic actions of South Korea appeared to be receding from the U.S. In the U.S., some criticized South Korea's betrayal and others argued that the U.S. should strive to maintain a close relationship with South Korea (Brzezinski et al. 1996, 49).

The U.S. has ambivalent attitudes toward China such as “congagement” that mixed both containment and engagement (Lim 2006, 6). Although the U.S. supported the principle of One China and promoted engagement policy, it also has been to prevent China from becoming a U.S regional challenger in Northeast Asia. Therefore, the U.S. reaffirmed its hegemonic role and will of involvement in this region through the East Asia Strategy Report (EASR) and Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in response to the rise of China in Northeast Asia (Chung 2005, 232).

The relationship between South Korea and China is rapidly expanding economically and politically. It is true that it has a little negative impact on the ROK – U.S. relationship. However, this will not lead to the end of the ROK – U.S. relationship in the near future because the ambivalent attitudes toward China exist similarly in two States. Therefore, on the one hand, South Korea will maintain strong political and military alliance with the U.S. and on the other hand, it will expand pragmatic economic and political relations with China without offending both the U.S. and China.

#### **4.3.2. Factors affecting the endurance of an asymmetric alliance**

There are four factors that help the alliance sustain. In other words, these factors increase the cost of the alliance termination for member states or reduce the effect of negative factors on alliance termination. These are the presence of hegemonic power (Walt 1997) or power asymmetry in the alliance (Morrow 1991), strong interests group, high institutionalization, and shared ideology (Walt 1997; Bennett 1997).

##### **4.3.2.1. Hegemonic power and asymmetric alliance**

From the beginning, the U.S. - ROK alliance was asymmetric. As a patron state, the U.S. provided economic, political, and military support to South Korea. Under the Cold War, the asymmetric alliance was firmly based on a strong bipolar international system. Also, the U.S. controlled South Korea to reduce the risk of entrapment using its political and economic leverage. Although overall the relationship was sustained in the boundary of asymmetrical alliance, there had been conflicts between the two states. These conflicts

were mostly over the reduction of U.S. commitment in South Korea. For example, when the U.S. promoted détente with China, South Korea suffered from the risk of abandonment. Furthermore, South Korea dispatched Korean troops to Vietnam War to prevent U.S. forces in Korea moving out of South Korea. That is, the factor affecting the termination of the alliance was the U.S. strategic interests in this period. Since the U.S. had vital interests in South Korea to contain the communist forces, the asymmetric alliance could be maintained under the bipolar Cold War system.

Furthermore, it is interesting that there was no multilateral or collective security system in Northeast Asia unlike Europe. Most countries in Northeast Asia mainly concluded bilateral alliance with the U.S. such as the hub and spokes (Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002). That is, the U.S. as a hub maintained the regional stability with a rim by establishing bilateral alliances with each state as a spoke. These bilateral relations allow the U.S. extraordinary power without multilateral constraints in East Asia (Cha 2010, 5). Therefore, if a bilateral relation is broken, the overall stability will collapse, very much like a domino. This is another factor helping maintain each bilateral alliance such as the ROK – U.S. alliance.

In the meantime, South Korea became less dependent on the alliance with the U.S. because it had politically democratized and economically developed into a country with middle status. That is, the U.S. lost political and economic leverage to control its ally. In addition, the U.S. strategic interest in South Korea considerably reduced because of the

end of the Cold War. This entire situation had been predicting a weakening of bilateral alliances. However, the emergence of the North Korean nuclear issue postponed the end of the Cold War in Korean Peninsula. Also, the U.S. leverage began to work again over the North Korean issue in South Korea and the asymmetric bilateral alliance had regained its momentum. Even hegemonic U.S. power became stronger under the international unipolar system.

The September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 afforded the U.S. even stronger extraordinary power. The Bush administration actively promoted a war against terrorism based on the Bush doctrine. The hegemonic power allowed independent U.S. actions without the consent of other states. This is so called, “hegemonic unilateralism, which can be defined as unilateral US efforts to promote American values and interests worldwide through the projection of its power” (Moon and Bae 2005, 47). U.S. hegemonic unilateralism over the North Korean nuclear issues caused conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea. For example, when the Bush administration claimed that North Korea admitted the presence of HEUP, it decided to suspend the supply of heavy oil without consulting other states in Northeast Asia, particularly South Korea. Such unilateral action triggered North Korea’s reaction to nullify the Agreed Framework and as a result, aggravated the situation (Moon and Bae 2005, 48). Furthermore, the U.S. designated North Korea as axis of evil that could be a target of preemptive nuclear attack. South Korea was worried about the U.S. military option against North Korea because it

might escalate a war on the entire Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, since the Summit between the two Koreas in 2000, South Korea deemphasized the North Korean threat but felt more fear of entrapment from the U.S.' hardline policy. Therefore, hegemonic U.S. power had a rather negative impact on the bilateral alliance with South Korea at that time unlike the Cold War period.

#### **4.3.2.2. The presence of strong interest group**

As mentioned earlier, the ROK – U.S. alliance gradually weakened, but it did not abruptly terminate even after democratization in South Korea. This is related to the process of moderate democratization, or “transplacements” by Huntington (1991). The main component of transplacements is that old conservative elites are not entirely replaced by new nationalist elites. In other words, the transition to democracy is promoted through compromise between old and new elites and thus, the old conservative elites became strong interest group for their vested interests in the past.

It is true that many new progressive elites who once were dissidents against authoritarian regimes occupied powerful positions after democratization, but it was limited until 1998 when President Kim Dae-jung took office. Until then, the conservative nature of governments continued and more progressive reforms were postponed (Oh and Arrington 2007, 355). It is a good example of delayed fully democratic consolidation that the progressive parties could not share more than 50 percent of National Assembly seats until the Roh administration (see Table 2 below).

Table 2. The share of progressive parties in National Assembly since 1985

National Assembly	Progressive parties' share of Seats (%)	Progressive Parties
12 <sup>th</sup> (April 1985)	24.2	New Korea Democratic Party
13 <sup>th</sup> (May 1988)	43.1	Party for Peace and democracy Democratic Reunification Party
14 <sup>th</sup> (May 1992)	32.4	Democratic Party
15 <sup>th</sup> (May 1996)	31.4	National Congress for New politics, Democratic Party
16 <sup>th</sup> (May 2000)	42.1	National Congress for New Politics
17 <sup>th</sup> (May 2004)	57.1	Uri Party, Democratic Labor Party, Democratic Party
18 <sup>th</sup> (May 2008)	29.8	Democratic Party, Creative Korea Party, Democratic Labor Party

\* Table is from “progressive parties’ share of National Assembly seats since 1985”, Lee (2007, 475). The contents for 18<sup>th</sup> are from the website of National Assembly in South Korea (Online at: [http://www.assembly.go.kr/renew10/asm/ifn/yat\\_04.jsp](http://www.assembly.go.kr/renew10/asm/ifn/yat_04.jsp)).

According to Lee, “the result of a slowly paced transition process, old pro-alliance South Korean elites retained enough political clout to proscribe a radical shift in foreign policy away from the bilateral alliance with the United States” (Lee 2007, 471). Pro-alliance conservative elites as a strong interest group also became a protagonist of internal division in the Roh administration. For example, the disputes between Jajupa and Dongmaengpa during the Roh administration prevented South Korean foreign policies from being more radical against the U.S. In other words, these conservative elites acted as a buffer against rapid change of Korean foreign policies. Foreign policy has been considered that it is desirable for a state government to exercise its right exclusively because it requires a rapid response. However, the aspects of bureaucratic politics appeared in foreign policy after progressive governments took the office.

When the U.S. asked South Korea to dispatch its forces to Iraq in 2003, there were serious internal conflicts in South Korea. In addition to the negative public opinion, there were conflicts between pros and cons of dispatch of Korean troops even in the government. Argument for and against sending troops to Iraq was directly related to their disposition of alliance with the U.S. For example, the Ministry of Defense and Foreign Affairs and Trade was a position in favor of sending the troops. They were typical pro-alliance groups and favored restoration of U.S. trust in South Korea. However, the Blue House, National Security Council (NSC), and some members of the ruling Uri Party were in opposition because they were afraid that the dispatch was seen as succumbing to U.S. pressure. As typical anti-alliance groups, they opposed sending troops and extending the deployment. In the end, South Korea dispatched the troops to Iraq and extended the deployments three times, but the conflicts clearly showed that the anti-alliance nature of progressive elites. Furthermore, if there were not conservative bureaucrats and elites such as the opposition Grand National Party, South Korea might not have sent the troops to Iraq and the relationship between the U.S. and South Korea would have been worsened.

#### **4.3.2.3. High institutionalization**

If an alliance is institutionalized, it is likely to be sustained besides other conditions are changed. Institutionalization of an alliance can maintain the alliance longer due to asset specificities that derives from it. An institutionalized alliance produces asset specificities such as consultation mechanism, military planning and command structures,



shared infrastructures, joint military exercise, common weapon system, and combined forces. These asset specificities could be formed through the entire adjustment process during the time the alliance lasts (Suh 2009, 35). In other words, the assets of the alliance became special forms only suitable for this alliance and thus the asset specificities increase the costs of terminating alliance but lower the maintenance costs. Furthermore, asset specificities will acquire political bastion by creating an alliance supporters who benefited from the maintenance of the alliance (Suh 2009, 157).

Asset specificities of the ROK-U.S. alliance were formed by institutionalization through combined defense system based on the ROK – U.S. MDT ratified in 1954. It includes the ROK – U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM), and Combined Forces Command (CFC). It is through these two mechanisms that the ROK – U.S. alliance created special assets for the alliance. SCM was established in the incidents of the presidential mansion raid and the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo in January 1968. In the initial period, SCM was important as a symbol of regular meetings between high-ranking officials of the two states. However, since the early 1990s, SCM became more important as the policy consultative mechanism between the two states dealing with policies towards North Korea, terrorism, and defense burden sharing. CFC was established for complementing the reduction of USFK and enhancing combined operational capabilities in 1978, the Carter administration. It is through establishing CFC that the wartime operational control that has been exercised by the Commander of United Nations was

delegated to the Commander of CFC. Therefore, CFC replaced the United Nations Command (UNC) and became the headquarters of combined forces of the U.S and South Korea to defend Korean Peninsula from war both nominally and virtually.<sup>42</sup> South Korea and the U.S. can build a cooperative defense posture over from routines to more important tasks such as policies toward North Korea through these combined defense mechanisms. In addition, it is through institutionalization of these defense mechanisms that the U.S. - ROK alliance can be maintained without driving into an end even in the crisis. South Korea and the U.S. agreed to postpone the return of wartime operational control until the end of 2015 on June 26, 2010. After wartime operational control is returned to South Korea, CFC will be dissolved but SCM will be maintained. In addition, combined defense system will be changed to the new one that South Korea leads and the U.S. supports.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, even after the type of formal mechanism of combined is changed, the alliance itself is expected intact.

#### **4.3.2.4. Shared values**

During the Cold War period, ideological solidarity was the most important factor for forming and sustaining an alliance. Since the ideological solidarity against communism

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<sup>42</sup> The Website of the Ministry of Defense of South Korea  
(Online at  
[http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiUnion/hanmiUnion\\_1/index.jsp](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiUnion/hanmiUnion_1/index.jsp))

<sup>43</sup> The Website of the Ministry of Defense of South Korea  
(Online at  
[http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiUnion/hanmiUnion\\_4/index.jsp](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/hanmiSecurity/hanmiUnion/hanmiUnion_4/index.jsp)).

was the biggest reason to maintain the alliance, other matters that might endanger the alliance could be ignored. However, after the end of the Cold War, ideological solidarity weakened and other issues such as economic relations began to emerge affecting the alliance.

Before South Korea democratized in 1987, South Korea and the United States did not have common values except anti-communism. South Korea was under authoritarian dictatorship and state-led economic developmental system, while the U.S. had democratic political and free market economic systems. Nevertheless, they shared anti-communism and South Korea was an outpost of anti-communist forces. After democratization in 1987, South Korea became a successful showcase of political democracy and economic capitalism planted by the U.S. (Park 2010, 247). However, after the end of the Cold War, the disappearance of the common denominator of the alliance, anti-communism reduced the U.S. strategic interests in South Korea. Furthermore, North Korea without U.S.S.R was not much of a threat to the ROK – U.S. alliance. Since then, economic relations became more important in the ROK – U.S. alliance.

In fact, economic relations have a dual face to the alliance. First of all, since the rapid economic development of South Korea, South Korea has emerged as economically important country to the U.S. In the late 1980s, President Bush made remarks to acknowledge Korea's economic growth as a major trading partner of the U.S. (Noland 1998, 148; Albrecht 1990, 56). However, South Korea's economic growth did not have

only a positive impact on the relations with the U.S. As the U.S. trade deficit with South Korea increased, there was some argument in the U.S. such that the real threat to the U.S. not the Soviets but the Asian exports such as Japan and Korea (Albrecht 1990, 53).

In 1980s, trade conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea were very serious. President Reagan strongly urged the opening of the South Korean market when he visited South Korea in 1983. Under the principles of free trade and reciprocity, the U.S. argued that as the U.S. opened its markets to other states, they also had to open their market to the U.S. In addition, the U.S. proclaimed that they would retaliate on a state violating these principles with the Super 301 provisions of the 1988 Trade Act (Bae 2006, 270). In return, South Korea tried to open its market and solved trade conflicts through bilateral negotiations with the U.S. South Korea made serious efforts to avoid being designated as an unfair trading state under the Super 301. While South Korea's trade surplus with the U.S. was decreasing, the conflicts between the two states gradually decreased. In addition, trade issues were dealt with in the multilateral negotiations such as GATT, WTO rather than bilateral negotiations in 1990s.

In the 1990s, South Korea began to accept neo-liberal economic principles, opened more markets to the U.S., and joined OECD. In 1997, South Korea experienced serious financial crisis but overcome it with the bailout from IMF backed by the U.S. The U.S. tried to influence to reform the South Korean economy in return for the bailout (Niksch2002, 3). Since then, the South Korean economy was reformed thoroughly in

accordance with neoliberal principles. Therefore, South Korea had a common value of neoliberal economy with the U.S.

In 2000s, South Korea and the U.S. began to discuss the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) based on their intensified economic relations. The U.S. and South Korea believed that FTA would be economically beneficial for both states because they could access each other's market more easily without tariffs. Since working level meeting for checking for precondition of FTA in 2005, the two states finally signed the Korea – United States Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) on June 30, 2007. It was approved by the U.S. Congress on October 12, 2011, and by Korea's National Assembly on November 22, 2011. Finally, KORUS FTA came into force on March 15, 2012 in both states. The U.S. appraised that KORUS FTA is “the United States’ most commercially significant free trade agreement in almost two decades.”<sup>44</sup> In other words, South Korea and the U.S. can strengthen the economic partnership as well as economic benefit through KORUS FTA (Kim 2003, 123). Furthermore, it is through FTA that the ROK – U.S. alliance expanded from a military alliance to an economic alliance and was able to be a real comprehensive alliance in the near future (Lee 2008, 295).

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<sup>44</sup> The Website of Office of the United States Trade Representative  
(Online at <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/korus-fta>).

## **Chapter 5**

### **Empirical analysis**

This chapter focuses on what factors affect the relationship between the U.S. and South Korea using multiple regression analysis from 1990 to 2011. According to the historical analysis, the U.S. and South Korea have undergone large and small conflicts during the entire duration of the alliance. However, those conflicts in the earlier period could be resolved under the banner of anti-Communism. During the Cold War period, the alliance was very solid and was never close to termination. That is why the alliance was maintained relatively successfully for a long time.

However, the situation changed after the end of the Cold War in 1989. The most important common interest of the alliance, anti-Communism disappeared and U.S. strategic interests in South Korea considerably weakened. In the meantime, South Korea achieved economic growth and political democratization. South Korea gained confidence in its national capability to overwhelm North Korea. Then, the efficacy of the ROK - U.S. alliance seemed to be weakened for both. However, the situation reversed again with the North Korean nuclear crisis in 1993. The North Korean nuclear crisis provided the alliance with new motivation for both side to work together closely.

Although their alliance between the U.S. and South Korea maintained, the shared interests became smaller than that under the Cold War period. That is, since North Korea

is not an outpost of Communist force anymore but is instead a rogue state on the Korean Peninsula, the threat from North Korea had to be different between the U.S. and South Korea. Unlike the initial period of the patron-client relationship with the U.S., South Korea's economic and political dependence on the alliance greatly reduced. On the contrary, the U.S. became a hegemonic superpower in the unilateral world system and South Korea was unable to reduce its military dependence on the U.S. because of the North Korean nuclear threat. This is because South Korea entirely depended on the U.S. nuclear umbrella since the declaration of nuclear free in 1991. This dissertation pays attention to these situational changes. It assumes that these changes affect the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. Therefore, this empirical analysis examines what factors of these changes have an impact on the relations in the ROK – U.S. alliance.

This chapter includes the theory and hypotheses, model and method, and data and measurement of the variables to test the research question empirically. Also, descriptive statistics and empirical findings will be presented in this chapter.

### **5.1. Theory and Hypotheses**

Based on alliance theory and historical analysis, this dissertation suggests several factors that affect the relations of the ROK – U.S. alliance. In the previous chapters, these factors are expressed as determinants for the termination and endurance of the alliance (Morrow 1991; Walt 1997; Leeds and Savun 2007; Bennett 1997). However, it would not be unreasonable to assume that those factors affect the changes of the alliance because

those factors possibly give rise to conflicts (cooperation), worsen (enhance) the relationship, and then lead to the termination (endurance) of it in the end. The process above does not necessarily conclude with the termination of the alliance. In some cases, a conflict may be resolved before it leads to the end of the alliance such as the ROK – U.S. alliance that is maintained without being terminated for nearly 60 years. Therefore, this dissertation assumes that those factors affect the changes in the relations between the two states instead of the termination and endurance in empirical analysis.

Theoretically, if a member state experiences the change of international power structure, it will have a negative impact on the alliance (Leeds and Savun 2007). In history, the international power structure has changed from bipolar to unipolar structure. It is through the end of the Cold War that the U.S. becomes the hegemonic superpower in the unipolar global structure. Since it did not need to contain the communist powers, the U.S. strategic interests in South Korea considerably declined. In the meantime, South Korea entered into relations with former communist countries such as Russia and China. Until this time, the reason for the existence of the alliance between the two states seems weakened. However, the first North Korean nuclear crisis soon appeared in 1993 and reversed the seemed weakening after the end of the Cold War. In other words, the Cold War continued but only in the Korean Peninsula. Although the main purpose of the ROK – U.S. alliance is to defeat the North Korean Communist threat, the focus on North Korea reduced considerably after the end of the Cold War. However, the importance of the



North Korean issue resurfaced and continued to be the most important factor on the ROK – U.S. alliance with the first North Korean nuclear crisis. The U.S. involvement in the North Korean issue focused on preventing the spread of WMD but the U.S. motivation of this purpose was rather less strong than the previous aim of containing the communist power in the unipolar world structure. On the contrary, South Korea's dependence on the alliance could not be reduced because of the North Korean nuclear crisis. South Korea's national security was dependent on the U.S. nuclear umbrella. The situation became even worse for South Korea because North Korea refused talks at that time. South Korea was isolated from the problemsolving process and relied on the negotiations between the U.S. and North Korea. These situations caused South Korea fall into the alliance dilemma and thus caused conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea.

Therefore, this dissertation assumes that the end of the Cold War and the rise of North Korean nuclear issue enhanced the U.S. hegemonic power and reversed South Korea's growing military self-reliance. In particular, it assumes that there is alliance dilemma in the relations between the U.S. and North Korea after the Cold War period because alliance dilemma depends on an ally's dependence on the alliance, the strategic interests, and shared interests of allies (Snyder 1984). Furthermore, since the North Korean nuclear issues are not yet resolved, it is important to test the presence of South Korea's alliance dilemma in order to examine the changes of relations between the U.S. and South Korea. Two possible alliance dilemmas of South Korea are as shown in Table

## 5.1.

Table 5.1. South Korea's possible alliance dilemma in the ROK – U.S. alliance

	The U.S. – North Korea relations		
		Conflict	Cooperation
The U.S. – South Korea relations	Conflict	Fear of entrapment	Fear of abandonment
	Cooperation	No Fear	No Fear

According to Table 5.1, both cooperative and conflicting relationships between the U.S. and North Korea can cause the conflicts between ROK – U.S. alliance. As mentioned above, it depends on the mixture of conditions such as dependence on the alliance, allies' strategic interest and shared interests. Both of these fears can be seen in the history of South Korea. For example, the cooperation between the U.S. and North Korea caused conflicts with South Korea during the first North Korean nuclear crisis. However, it was the opposite in the second crisis. Therefore, this dissertation assumes that there is an alliance dilemma in the ROK and U.S. alliance and it will be tested by the hypotheses as follows,

**Hypothesis I: the conflictual relationship between the U.S. and North Korea has a negative impact on the U.S. – ROK relations (the fear of entrapment).**

**Hypothesis II: the cooperative relationship between the U.S. and North Korea has a negative impact on the U.S. – ROK relations (the fear of abandonment).**

Second, the changes of national capability have a negative impact on the existing

alliance (Morrow 1991). This includes two cases such as the growth of a weak state's and the decline of strong state's national capability, but the former will only make sense for the ROK –U.S. relationship because the U.S. is the only hegemonic superpower. In the former, if a state grows in its national capability, it might not want to be in the alliance anymore because it can provide for its own security. Or a state's national capability growth will change its utility function of the alliance (Morrow 1991). That is, it will change status quo of the tradeoffs between autonomy and security. Since the 1980s, South Korea achieved middle- level economic development. Furthermore, since the FMS was terminated in 1987, the formal economic dependence of South Korea ended. Now, South Korea is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest economic power in the world and joined the OECD (which is the symbol of developed states).

Therefore, this dissertation argues that although the ROK – U.S. alliance continues to exist, there might be some changes in the tradeoff between autonomy and security. Also, it is assumed that growth of the national capabilities of South Korea has a negative impact on the relations between the two states. Hypothesis related to the second factor is as follows,

**Hypotheses III: the growth of South Korea's national capabilities has a negative impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.**

The third factor affecting the relationship between allies is the domestic changes of a member state. The domestic changes in an ally will increase the conflicts between allies

(Walt 1997; Leeds and Savun 2007; Bennett 1997). As mentioned above, since the administration changed from a conservative to a progressive government in South Korea in 1998, South Korea's perception and attitudes towards the U.S., and the ROK – U.S. alliance changed considerably. New nationalist elites during the progressive governments demanded more autonomy and a more symmetric relationship from the U.S. Some argued that the U.S. was the real threat to South Korea rather than North Korea. Therefore, this dissertation assumes that South Korea's domestic change (i.e., the emergence of the progressive elites) increases the conflicts in the alliance

Fourth, if an ally's threat perception is changed, it will have a negative impact on the existing alliance (Walt 1997; Leeds and Savun 2007). Since MDT in 1954, North Korea has been the common enemy for the U.S. and South Korea and the purpose of the alliance has been to defeat the North Korean threat together. However, since the establishment of the progressive government after the democratization in 1987, the new nationalist elites became important political actors in South Korea. These new elites have significantly deemphasized the North Korean threat since the Summit between the two Koreas in 2000. Furthermore, they focused on the solidarity with North Korea rather than the intensification of the ROK – U.S. alliance. These nationalistic attitudes of new elites caused serious conflicts with the U.S., particularly with the Bush administration. In other words, the changes of threat perception toward North Korea in South Korea have a negative impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.

Hypothesis related to these third and fourth factors is as follows,

**Hypothesis IV: the presence of progressive government has a negative impact on the ROK – U.S. alliance.**

Furthermore, the change of threat perception includes the perception of ally. According to Walt (1997), when a member state perceives its ally more unfavorably or combative, the alliance could be weakened. The rise of South Korean anti-Americanism could be explained in this context. Anti-Americanism has been designated for the reason of worsening the relations between the U.S. and South Korea (Taylor 1989). South Korean anti-Americanism, which began in 1980, was reinforced in the 2000s. It peaked in 2002 with the death of two schoolgirls at the hands of the USFK.

Interestingly, it is argued that the educational attainment is an important factor in the South Korean anti-Americanism (Larson et al. 2004). That is, it has been known that people who achieved higher education tend to have anti-Americanism. Since anti-Americanism has been blamed for worsening the ROK-U.S. relationship, this dissertation will test this assumption of the effect of higher education on the ROK – U.S. alliance.

Hypothesis related to this assumption is as follows,

**Hypothesis V: the higher educational attainment in South Korea has a negative impact on the ROK – U.S. alliance.**

Fifth, if a member state questions the efficacy of the alliance, the conflicts in the alliance will be increased. This issue mostly occurs when a weak ally doubts its ally's

commitment and faces the fear of abandonment (Walt 1997). In addition, it also occurs when two allies' threat perception changes and thus they do not agree with the reaction to the threat anymore. As seen in historical analysis, South Korea has been constantly plagued with the alliance dilemma. The U.S. was worried about the nationalistic attitudes of the progressive governments in South Korea and criticized them as a betrayal. Therefore, this dissertation assumes that if allies doubt the efficacy of the alliance, the conflicts will increase in the alliance. Hypotheses I, II, and IV above will test this factor.<sup>45</sup>

The sixth factor is the shared ideology. If member states share the same values such as democracy and capitalism, it will help the endurance of the alliance (Walt 1997; Bennett 1997). South Korea and the U.S. were conflicts over authoritarian regimes' anti-democratic repression of human rights in South Korea. The U.S. tried to improve the human right situation with a warning to discontinue aid. South Korea resisted and strongly blamed for interference in domestic affairs and South Korea's autonomy. These conflicts over autonomy were due to the authoritarian regime. Therefore, since the transition to democratization in South Korea in 1987, these conflicts were no longer

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<sup>45</sup> The other factor affecting an alliance is the presence of the new alliance. This factor increases the conflicts in the existing alliance (Leeds and Savun 2007). In historical analysis, this dissertation mentioned China as a possible challenger for the U.S. However, South Korea did not conclude a formal alliance with China and the relationship is mostly focusing on the economic relations. Therefore, this dissertation assumes that China is not a new alliance for South Korea and the relationship between China and South Korea could not replace the existing ROK – U.S alliance. Then, it will not be tested in this dissertation.

present. Based on this historical analysis, this dissertation assumes that the democratization of South Korea has a positive impact on the relations between two states.<sup>46</sup>

Hypothesis related to this assumption is as follows,

**Hypothesis VI: the democratization in South Korea has a positive impact on the ROK – U.S. alliance.**

Finally, this empirical model includes one factor for controlling the effect of economic relations. As mentioned above, there have been repeated trade conflicts between the U.S. and South Korea. However, the relations between the two states have been more important with deepening economic interdependence. That is, the importance of economic relations for overall relations between the two states has been increasingly emerging for a long time. Therefore, this dissertation assumes that the economic interdependence of the two states has a positive effect on the relations between the two

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<sup>46</sup> The factors of hegemonic power and asymmetric alliance could help also the endurance of the alliance (Walt 1997; Morrow 1991). However, this dissertation did not include these two factors in empirical analysis with following reasons. First of all, most factors in empirical analysis focus on the internal change in South Korea except the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea. Second, the effect of hegemonic power and asymmetric alliance has much weakened after the end of the Cold War because the U.S. strategic interests significantly decreased. This is even worse after the September 11 terrorist's attacks. The Bush administration emphasized the mission rather than existed alliance in the war against terrorism (Moon and Bae 2005, 48). In addition, the institutionalization factor is not included in this empirical analysis because of the difficulty to find appropriate information for measurement. Since the ROK – U.S. alliance is institutionalized based on MDT in 1954, most information is related to the military affairs. Therefore, it was not easy to access to the information of it.

states and vice versa.

**Hypothesis VII: The economic interdependence of the two states has a positive impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.**

## **5.2. Model and Method**

The primary purpose of the dissertation is to examine how the ROK – U.S. relations have changed over time and what factors affect their relations. In particular, empirical analysis focuses on the latter with seven hypotheses. To test these hypotheses, this dissertation will use multiple regression analysis with longitudinal event data. Durbin-Watson statistics is used to test serial correlation of the data and if it is found, it will be corrected by the Cochrane- Orcutt procedure. For the statistical analysis, Intercooled STATA 11 is used.

This dissertation adopts four models to test factors affecting the ROK – U.S. relations. Multiple regression model I is as follows,

**Model I: the ROK – U.S. relations (*Rscore*)**

$$= \beta_1 + \beta_2 gdp_{pc} + \beta_3 progovt + \beta_4 eduattainment + \beta_5 polity + \beta_6 trade + \epsilon$$

The first model is to test hypotheses III - VII. The dependent variable is the score of the ROK-U.S. relations (*Rscore*). This model includes five independent variables. The variable of the gross domestic product per capita (*gdp<sub>pc</sub>*) is to test hypothesis III. The variable for the presence of the progressive party government (*progovt*) is to test



hypothesis IV. The educational attainment of South Korea (*eduattainment*) is to test hypothesis V. The variable of the democratization in South Korea (*polity*) is to test hypothesis VI. The variable of the trade interdependence of the two states (*trade*) is to test hypothesis VII.

The second, third, and fourth models are to test South Korea's alliance dilemma in the ROK-U.S. relations.

The models are as follows,

**Model II: the ROK – U.S. relations (*Rscore*)**

$$= \beta_1 + \beta_2 NU_{score} + \beta_3 gdppc + \beta_4 progovt + \beta_5 eduattainment + \beta_6 polity + \beta_7 trade + \varepsilon$$

**Model III: the ROK – U.S. relations (*Rscore*)**

$$= \beta_1 + \beta_2 NU_{con} + \beta_3 gdppc + \beta_4 progovt + \beta_5 eduattainment + \beta_6 polity + \beta_7 trade + \varepsilon$$

**Model VI: the ROK – U.S. relations (*Rscore*)**

$$= \beta_1 + \beta_2 NU_{coop} + \beta_3 gdppc + \beta_4 progovt + \beta_5 eduattainment + \beta_6 polity + \beta_7 trade + \varepsilon$$

The second model adds one independent variable, the relations between the U.S. and North Korea (*NU<sub>score</sub>*) to test the effect of the relations between the U.S. and North Korea. Other variables are the same as Model I. This model is not for the specific hypothesis but will help to understand model III and model IV. The third and fourth models add the conflicts and cooperation between the U.S. and North Korea (*NU<sub>con</sub>* and

*NUcoop*) to test hypothesis I and II relatively. These models also have the same dependent and independent variables as Model I.

Next, this dissertation employs multiple regression analysis using event data for empirical analysis. Event data is often used to measure dyadic interactions of political actors. According to Gerner et al. (1994, 95), an “event is an interaction, associated with a specific point in time, that can be described in a natural language sentence that has as its subject and object an element of a set of actors and as its verb an element of a set of actions, the contents of which are transitive verbs.” Thus, this dissertation investigates the conflicting and cooperative interactions between South Korea and the U.S. from 1990 to 2011. It is through building up event data for 22 years that this dissertation will provide the patterns of the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.

As mentioned earlier, the reason that this dissertation chooses the time period from 1990 to 2011 unlike historical analysis is to focus on the relocation of ROK – U.S. relations. In other words, three major changes took place before 1989 (i.e., the end of the Cold War, South Korea’s economic growth and democratization). The ROK and the U.S. relations have been considered as an asymmetric alliance and the actual relations have fit it before 1990. However, since the situational conditions around the relationships between ROK and the U.S. started to change after 1990, it is useful to focus on the period for looking at how these changes affected the relations between the two states.

In addition, since authoritarian governments strongly controlled the media, the

critical or negative news on the U.S. or the ROK – U.S. alliance could not be reported until after democratization in South Korea. Even South Korean national security laws prohibited questioning the validity of the ROK – U.S. alliance under the anti-communism (Sim 2008, 73; Oh and Arrington 2007, 336). Therefore, event data through content analysis of the newspaper in this period cannot provide reliable information.

Finally, time-consuming coding procedures to build up event data are also considered due to the limited study completion time. The details of the coding procedures are described more in the next section.

### **5.3. Data and Measurement**

#### **5.3.1. Variables and Data**

The four models of multiple regression analysis in this dissertation include one dependent variable and eight independent variables. The primary data of this dissertation is event data produced by content analysis of daily newspapers. This will provide data for a dependent variable (*Rscore*) and three independent variables (*NUscore*, *NUcon* and *NUcoop*). The details of building event data will be discussed in the next section. Other data for independent variables are from several different data sources online. The explanation of the variables and data in detail as follows.

The dependent variable is the relations between the U.S. and South Korea.

***Rscore*** This is the dependent variable for all models in this empirical analysis. *Rscore* is annual scores of the ROK – U.S. relations. It is made up by summing the weighted events

between the U.S. and South Korea from 1990 to 2011.

Independent variables are the gross domestic product per capita (*gdppc*), the presence of the progressive party government (*progovt*), the educational attainment of South Korea (*eduattainment*), the democratization in South Korea (*polity*), the trade interdependence of the two states (*trade*), the relations between the U.S. and North Korea (*NUscore*), and the conflicts and cooperation between the U.S. and North Korea (*NUcon* and *NUcoop*).

***gdppc*** This is the first independent variable. This is the gross domestic product per capita of South Korea (constant 2000 US\$). This variable represents the growth of national capability of South Korea. This is from the World Bank data set.<sup>47</sup>

***progovt*** The second independent variable is the dummy for the presence of the progressive government in South Korea. This variable is included to test the domestic change and the change of threat perceptions in South Korea. For measurement, the tenure of the progressive government is 1 and otherwise is 0. However, since the new term of South Korean presidency starts in February, the last year of the departing presidency was coded as the beginning of the new presidency.

***eduattainment*** The third independent variable is the percentage of tertiary schooling attained in population aged 15 and over. This variable is adopted for the proxy of anti-

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<sup>47</sup> The Website of World Bank  
(online at World Bank <http://databank.worldbank.org/ddp/home.do?Step=3&id=4>)

American attitudes in South Korea. This data is from Barro-Lee Educational Attainment dataset.<sup>48</sup>

**polity** The fourth independent variable is the democratization in South Korea. This represents the presence of democracy in South Korea. The data is from Polity IV Project. The Polity IV provides polity score from -10 (hereditary monarchy) to +10 (consolidated democracy). From +6 to +10 of the Polity Score is belonged to democracies.<sup>49</sup>

**trade** The fifth independent variable is the trade interdependence of the U.S. and South Korea. This variable will test the effect of the economic relations on the overall relations between the U.S. and South Korea. The trade interdependence is calculated by Oneal & Russett (1997, 1999 a, b).<sup>50</sup>

**NUscore** This represents the relations between the U.S. and North Korea. This is an annual score measured by summing up the weighted events from 1990 to 2011.

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<sup>48</sup>The Barro-Lee Educational Attainment dataset (Online at <http://www.barrolee.com/>).

<sup>49</sup> Polity IV Annual Time-Series 1800-2010 (Online at <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm>).

<sup>50</sup> According to Oneal&Russett (1997, 1999a,b), the equations are as follows,

Trade dependence<sub>ij</sub> = (import<sub>ij</sub> + export<sub>ij</sub>)/GDP<sub>i</sub> = Trade<sub>ij</sub>/GDP<sub>i</sub>,

Trade dependence<sub>ji</sub> = (import<sub>ji</sub>+export<sub>ji</sub>)/GDP<sub>j</sub>= Trade<sub>ji</sub>/GDP<sub>j</sub>, and

Trade interdependence<sub>ij</sub> = lower of (dependence<sub>ij</sub> and dependence<sub>ji</sub>) (Gartzke and Li, 2003).

The data used in this equation is from various internet sources as follows: the trade data, the Website of the Korea International Trade Association

([http://stat.kita.net/top/state/n\\_submain\\_stat\\_kita.jsp?menuId=01&subUrl=n\\_default-test\\_kita.jsp?lang\\_gbn=kor^statid=kts&top\\_menu\\_id=db11](http://stat.kita.net/top/state/n_submain_stat_kita.jsp?menuId=01&subUrl=n_default-test_kita.jsp?lang_gbn=kor^statid=kts&top_menu_id=db11)), South Korea and U.S. GDP (billions), IMF International Financial Statistics (Online at: <http://elibrary-data.imf.org.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/ViewData.aspx?qb=79d6deb661ab1004113eff57e1a8e9e7>).

***NUcon*** This is the seventh independent variable. This represents the conflicts between the U.S. and North Korea coded as annual scores by event data.

***NUcoop*** The cooperation between the U.S. and North Korea is the last independent variable. This is also measured as the annual scores of the cooperation between the two states and is produced by event data.

### **5.3.2. Coding scheme for event data**

The primary purpose of this empirical analysis is to find factors that affect the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. In this topic, the biggest problem facing the study is how to quantify the relations between the two states. In the field of international studies, event data is often used to deal with this matter. International events provide the details of international interactions such as “who did or said what to whom about what issue-area(s) and when” (Azar 1993, 6). It is through coding these events that event data offer a quantitative form of international relations (Goldstein 1992, 369).

There are four variables that need to be built up by event data in this dissertation as mentioned above. First of all, the dissertation will build the *Rscore* as dependent variable. The *Rscore* is a quantitative form of the relations between South Korea and the United States. With this variable, we can trace the trend of the changes of the relations as well as analysis of influencing factors. In addition, this dissertation also needs to build up *NUscore*, *NUcon*, and *NUcoop*. These three variables are for relations between North Korea and the United States.

There are disputes around the method of building up event data. Measuring events based on the conflict-cooperation continuum such as conflictual, cooperative, and neutral events are one of the most common methods. This method simply counts the frequency of each conflictual and cooperative event. However, this is criticized because there is no established way of defining the categories of conflict and cooperation. Furthermore, there is no consensus about how to count these events on a single continuum (Goldstein 1992, 372). Alternatively, a weighting method is used. That is weighting each event depending on its type and aggregating them (Goldstein 1992, 370 -373). Although researchers also do not agree on the method of weighting, it seems that aggregating events by weighting is a clear recent trend. Therefore, this dissertation will use both approaches to build up event data. Each event will be categorized into conflict, neutral, and cooperation and at the same time they are weighted and aggregated annually.

Among the existing event data, the World Event Interaction Survey (WEIS) and the Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB) are the most widely used event data in studies of international interactions (Howell 1983, 150). WEIS is originally a categorical dataset with 22 verb categories which includes 61 WEIS event types. Later, McClelland and Hoggard (1969) grouped these categories into conflictual, cooperative, and neutral events (Goldstein 1992, 370-371) and several weighting methods were developed for WEIS. Among them, New Weights for WEIS Events created by Goldstein (1992) is appropriate for this dissertation. This weights system was developed by the judgments of eight

panelists who are the faculty of the School of International Relations at the University of Southern California. These panelists placed 61 WEIS events along a “net cooperation scale running from extreme conflict or hostility at one end to extreme cooperation or friendliness at the other” (Goldstein 1992, 374).

On the other hand, COPDAB originally focused on the Middle East but it expanded to about 135 countries between 1948 and 1978 (Azar 1980). Although this dissertation only uses international scale, COPDAB originally offered both an international scale and a domestic scale that consisted of 15 points. On the each scale, point 15 is the most conflictive event and point 1 is the most cooperative event. Furthermore, each scale point has a weighted value from 1 to 102 to measure the comparative intensity between scale points (Azar 1993, 36).

If it is available, it is good for this dissertation to use existing WEIS or COPDAB data in terms of practicality and efficiency of the study because building up new data is time consuming and requires much effort. In fact, COPDAB data have been used for the study of dyadic relations such as United States and USSR (Howell, 1983). Unfortunately, there are two reasons that this dissertation cannot use WEIS or COPDAB for South Korea-the U.S. relations. First of all, the time period of this dissertation, from 1990 to 2011, is not covered by both WEIS and COPDAB. In addition, the sources of COPDAB do not seem to provide much information about South Korea. The original sources of COPDAB even do not include contents from South Korea.



Therefore, this dissertation makes a compromise to build up event data using WEIS's coding scheme with new sources for the period of this dissertation. There are several reasons that this dissertation chooses WEIS over COPDAB. The first reason is the advantage of WEIS's verbal categorization. Since the building up of data through content analysis is necessary, it is very important to interpret the verbal expression in news articles for this study. However, the scale of COPDAB is relatively broad to contain many events for one scale value. Furthermore, most of the events tend to gravitate to the center around neutral in COPDAB scale in the relationship between ROK and the United States. Finally, Conflict-Cooperation continuum by McClelland and Hoggard (1969) will be used for counting frequency in this dissertation. Therefore, this dissertation decides to use the WEIS's coding rule. This choice has several advantages. First, since this dissertation can use the well-developed WEIS's coding scheme, it saves time and effort for making new one. In addition, it is through using coding scheme of WEIS that the reliability matter of the data could be weakened. In other words, there are two problems in terms of the reliability of the coded data. One is the matter of one coder's idiosyncratic view; another is the problem of intercoder reliability (Shin 2010, 40). In this dissertation, the only coder is the dissertator. Thus, the latter problem does not need to be considered. It is through using WEIS's coding scheme that the former problem could be alleviated, too. In other words, well-defined coding scheme could mitigate not only the problem of intercoder reliability but also idiosyncratic view of a single coder to some extent. This is

because a well-defined coding scheme does not give much room for discretion to a coder.

### **5.3.3. Sampling**

In discussing coding scheme, sampling should be considered. In this dissertation, two newspapers are used as sources for event data: DongAIlbo (South Korea) and the New York Times (the U.S.). Unlike the nineteenth-century, since most U.S. news media have high standards of the objectivity nowadays, the tendency of news media does not need to be considered. Instead, I have two reasons for choosing the New York Times. First, the New York Times is a well-known newspaper with many readers in the United States. Second, it is presumed that the New York Times provides very influential reports especially in the field of foreign policy (Shin 2010, 34). On the other hand, South Korean newspapers are generally divided by their political ideology and some of them express their ideology on the news such as ChosunIlbo (extreme right) or Hankyorehshinmun (extreme left). However, it seems that DongAIlbo holds a similar position as the New York Times among South Korean newspapers. Although DongAIlbo is a moderate conservative unlike the liberal New York Times, it is one of the most influential newspapers with many nationwide readers. Articles will be obtained from the LexisNexis Academic database<sup>51</sup> for the New York Times data and from KINDS (Korean Integrated

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<sup>51</sup>The LexisNexis Database  
(Online at <http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/>).

News Database System) database<sup>52</sup> for the DongAIlbo data.

In terms of selecting news articles that have a relevant event, Shin (2010)'s work provides a critical idea of sampling. This dissertation will search several keywords only for the news article's headline to get a manageable amount of articles. The keywords for the New York Times are "Korea," "Seoul," and "Pyongyang" and "미국" and

미국(America),"美 and 美國 (Chinese characters for America)," and

"워싱턴(Washington)"for the DongAIlbo (Shin 2010, 36 – 37). These three keywords are the name of states and each state's capital. Most newspapers mention one or all of these three keywords in their international news reports. The Chinese character used for America is used as a search term because Korean print uses this character and by discounting it, the type of articles obtained would not be included (Shin 2010, 36-37).

The final criterion for sampling is about event. Although an article is selected through sampling above, it should be distinguished from "the constant flow of transaction (trade, mail flow, travel, and so on)" (Azar 1980, 146). In other words, it should be "reportable" or "newsworthy" as an international interaction (Azar 1980, 146). For example, an introduction of a new movie or daily sports news is not a newsworthy event for this dissertation. Therefore, two more additional restrictions were needed for this

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<sup>52</sup>The KINDS Database (Online at <http://www.kinds.or.kr/>).

dissertation. First, keywords of events were searched for only the article's headline to control the size of sample manageable (Shin 2010, 37). This is particularly important because the dissertator is the only coder in this research. Second, the coder ruled out a considerable number of articles that lacked relevance to this study after the first Keyword searches.

#### **5.3.4. Coding procedures**

Coding procedures in this dissertation are very simple. Unlike COPDAB and WEIS, this dissertation is only interested in the dyadic relationships between South Korea, North Korea, and the United States. Therefore, the original coding rule of WEIS or COPDAB should be simplified to fit this dissertation. In fact, these two datasets are also very similar except their weighting system of events. Therefore, this dissertation will follow the common coding procedures of these two datasets. According to Azar (1980, 148), the coding procedure will proceed as follows including components below:

- (1) The date (year, month, and day of the event)
- (2) The actor (who initiated the event)
- (3) The target (to whom the event was directed)
- (4) The source (where the event description was gathered)
- (5) The activity (the verbal and physical act which and actor initiated)
- (6) The scale value (assessment of the cooperativeness or conflictiveness of the event using Goldstein (1992)'s New Weights for WEIS Events)
- (7) The event type (describing the issues and content of the event)

Since this dissertation focuses on the formal relationship, non-state actors are excluded. Therefore, the actor and target will be only three states such as South Korea,

North Korea and the U.S. In addition, the source will be either DongAIlbo or the New York Times. This dissertation does not distinguish a verbal or physical activity. Event types are categorized by political, economic, military, and other. In fact, the former three are the most important issues in international relations. Any problem that might occur during coding procedures will be solved based on WEIS, COPDAB, or other generally accepted rules and will be described as needed.

#### **5.4. Descriptive statistics**

Basic descriptive statistics of nine variables in this empirical model is in Table 5.2 below. When comparing *Rscore* and *NUscore*, the mean of *Rscore* (20.9901) is higher than that of *NUscore* (-22.46364). This means that the ROK – U.S. relations are more cooperative than the U.S. – North Korea relations. However, the score itself does not provide the information about how much good this relationship is. Also, both *Rscore* and *NUscore* is created through summing up the conflicts and cooperation of each states' with the U.S. Therefore, as seen in *Nucon* and *NUcoop*, the real score of the conflicts and cooperation is much higher than *NUscore*. In addition, not only the conflict score but also the cooperation score could be higher in the period of crisis. For example, if the U.S. and North Korea have more meetings to solve a problem such as the North Korean nuclear crisis, their cooperation score may be higher because their meeting and discussion will be coded as cooperative action in the event data. More details of descriptive statistics of event data will be presented later in this section.

The difference between the minimum and maximum scores of *gdppc* shows the growth of South Korea's national capability. South Korea's GDP per capita grew by about 2.5 times for 22 years. Since *progovt* is a dummy variable, the descriptive statistics is not meaningful. The mean of 12% of adults aged 15 and older completed tertiary schooling in South Korea. The variable of *polity* is ranged from 6 to 8. Therefore, South Korea is not consolidated democracy yet but has maintained democratic regime since 1990.

Table 5.2. Descriptive statistics of nine variables

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
<i>Rscore</i>	20.99091	16.97272	-4.6	52.2
<i>gdppc</i>	11526.81	2895.043	6895	16372
<i>progovt</i>	.4545455	.5096472	0	1
<i>eduattainment</i>	12.51818	2.631971	9.2	16.2
<i>Polity</i>	7.238095	.9952267	6	8
<i>trade</i>	.0060325	.0008679	.0047686	.0077789
<i>NUscore</i>	-22.46364	51.6301	-157.9	50
<i>NUcon</i>	66.3	46.81232	1.1	200
<i>NUcoop</i>	43.83636	27.83185	6.2	122

Tables 5.3 – 5.6 provide more information for event data. According to Table 5.3, a total of 1,296 events were coded for the relations between the U.S. and South Korea and a total of 1,028 events were used for the U.S. – North Korea relations. The number of news articles in the New York Times is far less than that of DongAIlbo. Furthermore, North Korea is more often reported on than South Korea in the New York Times. The reason can be explained in two ways. First, the U.S. interest in South Korea is low. In

other words, South Korea to the U.S. is not as important as the U.S. is to South Korea.

Second, the U.S. media focuses more on the special issues such as nuclear crisis that can attract more attention of readers. According to Powlick (1998, 189), most American do not have much knowledge about South Korea and recognize little importance of it except big events hit the headline such as nuclear crisis, assassination of the president, and so on.

Table 5.3. Reported frequency of agents by sources

Dataset	Source	Actor		Total
		U.S.	South Korea	
The U.S. – South Korea	DongAIlbo	806	348	1,154
	New York Times	86	56	142
	Total	892	404	1,296
The U.S. – North Korea	DongAIlbo	540	220	760
	New York Times	153	115	268
	Total	693	335	1,028

In terms of type of issues in Table 5.4, military issues are the most important and often reported. In the U.S. – South Korea relations, while there is more cooperation than conflicts in the military issues, it is the opposite in the economic issues. However, the relations between the U.S. and North Korea mostly focused on the military (or security) issues.

Table 5.4. Cross-tabulation by the type of issues and conflict/cooperation

Dataset	Type of issues	Conflict / Cooperation			Total
		Cooperation	Neutral	conflict	
The U.S. – South Korea	Political issues	107	10	42	159
	Economic issues	153	15	272	440
	Military issues	466	48	174	688
	Other issues	4	0	5	9
	Total	730	73	493	1,296
The U.S. – North Korea	Political issues	79	4	73	156
	Economic issues	9	0	14	23
	Military issues	299	28	482	809
	Other issues	23	0	17	40
	Total	410	32	586	1,028

In Table 5.5, overall, there are more cooperative actions and conflictual ones in the U.S. – South Korea relations but it was the opposite between the U.S. and North Korea. It is reasonable results for the ROK – U.S. alliance.

Table 5.5. Cross-tabulation by the actor and conflict/cooperation

	Actor	Cooperation / conflict			Total
		cooperation	neutral	conflict	
The U.S. – South Korea	The U.S.	470	64	358	892
	South Korea	260	9	135	404
	Total	730	73	493	1,296
The U.S. – North Korea	The U.S.	291	22	380	693
	North Korea	119	10	206	335
	Total	410	32	586	1,028

In terms of type of issues in table 5.6, the U.S. action in economic issues is more reported than that of South Korea. This might be not only because the more sources are from DongAIlbo, but also because the U.S. high interest in economic issues. Nevertheless,



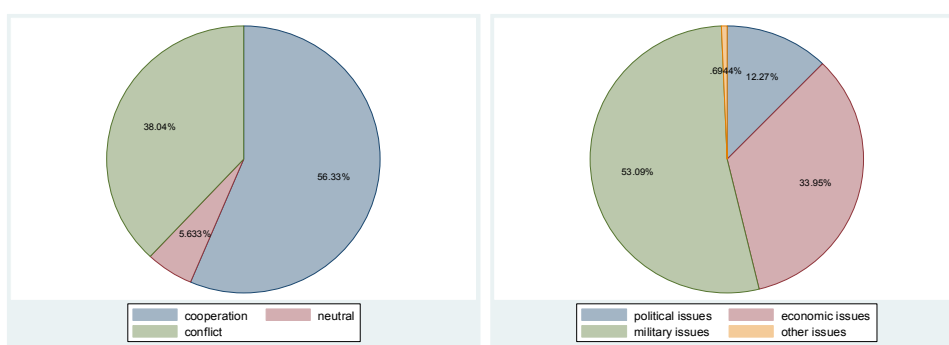
military issues are still the most important issues for the relations between all three states.

Table 5.6. Cross-tabulation by the actor and type of issues

	Actor	Type of issues				Total
		Political	Economic	Military	Others	
The U.S. – South Korea	The U.S.	101	327	461	3	892
	South Korea	58	113	227	6	404
	Total	159	440	688	9	1,296
The U.S. – North Korea	The U.S.	94	17	551	31	693
	North Korea	62	6	258	9	335
	Total	156	23	809	40	1,028

Figure 5.1 shows the percentage of conflict/cooperation and the type of issues in the relation between the U.S. and South Korea. As mentioned above, cooperative actions and military issues are more than 50 % of the overall actions in their relations.

Figure 5.1. The conflict /cooperation and type of issues in the ROK –U.S. relations.



## 5.5. Empirical Findings

Table 5.7 reports the results of the four models of multiple regression analysis with the event data. Overall, the results moderately support most of the hypotheses suggested in this dissertation. Among the seven hypotheses, the results support four of them.

First of all, Hypotheses I and II were tested for the presence of the alliance dilemma in the ROK – U.S. alliance. The *NUscore* is not statistically significant in Model II. That is, the overall relations between the U.S. and North Korea do not have a significant effect on the ROK – U.S. relations. This is the same as the Model III. In Model III, the effect of the conflicts between the U.S. and North Korea on the ROK – U.S. relations is examined. The *NUcon* is not statistically significant and this result does not support Hypothesis I. That is, South Korea does not have the fear of entrapment overall. Finally, the *NUcoop* is statistically significant in Model IV. However, the variable of *NUcoop* has a positive impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. Therefore, this result also does not support Hypothesis II, the presence of the fear of abandonment.

According to this result, South Korea does not have both fears of abandonment and entrapment in the ROK – U.S. relationship. The results of the Models II, III, and IV are different from historical analysis. In historical analysis, this dissertation argues the importance of North Korean issues and the presence of alliance dilemma in the ROK – U.S. alliance. There are three possible reasons for this. First of all, historical analysis is more like issue-specific case study. Therefore, there might be some cases for the presence

of the alliance dilemma in the ROK – U.S. alliance but that does not have a significant impact on the overall relations between the two states. Second, this might be the proof of the less dependence of South Korea on the alliance. As mentioned earlier, the alliance dilemma depends on the dependence on the alliance, strategic interests, and shared interests (Snyder 1984). Therefore, either South Korea less relied on the ROK – U.S. alliance or it shared more interests with the U.S. or both with reduced U.S. strategic interests in South Korea. Based on the results of empirical analysis and historical analysis, this dissertation argues that the growth of national capability in South Korea makes it less dependent on the alliance. In addition, the democratization and deepening economic interdependence makes South Korea share more common interests with the United States. Finally, this is because of a special relationship between the two Koreas. As mentioned earlier, South Korea has dual perceptions toward North Korea; one as a brother and two as an enemy. Therefore, South Korea might not feel typical alliance dilemma over the relations between the U.S. and North Korea. That is why the cooperation between the U.S. and North Korea has a positive impact on the ROK – U.S. relations.

Second, the *gdppc* is statistically significant in all four models. The *gdppc* has a negative impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. That is, due to the growth of its national capabilities, the dependence of South Korea on the alliance is reduced. At the same time, South Korea becomes more assertive to the U.S. demanding more autonomy such as the request for war time operational control. This result supports

Hypothesis III, that the growth of national capability of South Korea worsens the relations between the two states.

Third, the *progovt* is also statistically significant in all models except Model III.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, Hypothesis IV is supported by this result. As mentioned in historical analysis, the new nationalist elites emerged after democratization in Korea, but they actually have the government in 1998 from the Kim Dae-Jung administration. This change of administration from conservatives to progressives was the most important for democratic consolidation in South Korea. In addition, the change of threat perception in progressive governments caused considerable conflicts with the U.S. Therefore, this dissertation infers that the domestic changes and the change of threat perception in South Korea have a negative impact on the ROK – U.S. relations from the results of both historical and empirical analysis.

Fourth, the variable of *eduattainment* is statistically significant but has a positive impact on the relations of the U.S. and South Korea. Therefore, Hypothesis V is not supported by this result. The variable of *eduattainment* is used in this model as the proxy of anti-Americanism. Since it is not possible to collect stable time-series data of anti-Americanism in South Korea, this dissertation uses *eduattainment* instead. Unlike general expectation of attainment of higher education, the result does not support the conclusion of anti-Americanism. On the contrary, this result suggests that as people attain higher

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<sup>53</sup> In model III, it is significant at 1.0 level (p value = 0.070).

levels of education, they will have positive opinions regarding the ROK – U.S. relation. This context is similar to the argument that elites are more positive toward the ROK – U.S. alliance than the public (Kim and Kim 2004).

Fifth, the variable of *polity* is statistically significant in all four models. Therefore, this result supports Hypothesis VI that the democratization in South Korea has a positive impact on the ROK – U.S. alliance. As mentioned earlier, the conflicts over anti-democratic regime have been very politically sensitive issues because they can be seen as U.S. intervention in internal politics in South Korea. Since these conflicts disappeared after the democratization in 1987, it is natural for it to have a positive impact on the relations between the two states.

Finally, *trade* is statistically significant in all four models. This result supports Hypothesis VII, that economic interdependence of the two states has a positive impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. This result also supports the importance of economic relations for overall relations between the two states. Although the ROK – U.S. alliance originally began as the military alliance, the deepening economic relations intensified the importance of the relations between the two states.

Table 5.7. The results of multiple regression models of ROK – U.S. relations

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Model I</b>	<b>Model II</b>	<b>Model III</b>	<b>Model IV</b>
<i>NUscore</i>		.0828948 (.0793489)		
<i>NUcon</i>			.0639195 (.0780799)	
<i>NUcoop</i>				.2574079* (.0813658)
<i>Gdppc</i>	-.0189323* (.0037625)	-.0194194* (.0038243)	-.0196661* (.0038793)	-.0234351* (.0032314)
<i>Progovt</i>	-20.81425* (8.293877)	-26.29395* (9.888674)	-17.79915 (9.03301)	-25.52199* (6.531993)
<i>Eduattainment</i>	12.22295* (3.788603)	14.53407* (4.362887)	11.82043* (3.784296)	17.83714* (3.429045)
<i>Polity</i>	15.34866* (7.034726)	16.30084* (7.183601)	15.49021* (7.010308)	18.73424* (5.497649)
<i>Trade</i>	18666.99* (4706.496)	15007.85* (5783.167)	20841.49* (5288.389)	16105.86* (3734.706)
Constant	-123.9234* (41.9344)	-127.0239* (42.4642)	-130.5357* (42.46235)	-159.8474* (34.11094)
Sample size	20	20	20	20
R <sup>2</sup>	0.6989	0.7173	0.7191	0.8333

\*significant at 0.5 level, two-tailed; numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

The research question of this dissertation is how relations between South Korea and the United States have evolved and what affected the changes of the South Korea-US relations focusing on the national development of South Korea. To address these two questions, this dissertation adopts both historical and empirical analysis based on the framework of alliance theory. This dissertation argued three situational changes (the end of the Cold War, economic growth and political democratization of South Korea) affect the bilateral relationship with the U.S. Based on historical analysis, empirical analysis provided a systematic understanding of the changes of bilateral interactions between South Korea and the U.S. after the end of the Cold War. The empirical analysis was completed using multiple regression analysis with event data.

From the beginning of the alliance, the ROK – U.S. alliance was an asymmetric alliance by formal military pact. In spite of initial U.S. reluctance to conclude the MDT with South Korea, the ROK – U.S. alliance was established after the Korean War. Since then, the patron – client relationships between the two states continued until the late 1980s. This dissertation assumes that the patron – client relationships formally ended when the U.S. FMS to South Korea was terminated in 1987.

In terms of the tradeoffs between security and autonomy, the initial period of the

Rhee administration shows a typical example of asymmetrical alliance formation and the bargaining of a weak state. Although South Korea was very weak, poor, and small, it can still bargain with the U.S. and argue its position taking advantage of its strategic interests in the Cold War. Therefore, in spite of the fact that South Korea was entirely dependent on the U.S., there were endless conflicts between South Korea and the U.S. in the 1950's.

In the 1960's, South Korea gained some economic benefits and political supports from the U.S. through dispatching its troops to Vietnam, but this leverage ended quickly. The infringement of the autonomy by South Korea really annoyed the U.S. and the reduction of U.S. forces in Korea South Korea had originally hoped to prevent by dispatching its forces to Vietnam resumed.

The role of U.S. intervention in South Korea was very contradictory. On the one hand, it implicitly approved the authoritarian government focusing on the security and stability of South Korea in some cases such as two military coups in 1961 and 1980. On the other hand, it publicly pressured the authoritarian government and supported the civil movement towards democratization in 1987. The U.S. influence on Korea whether positive or negative varies with researchers. However, it is still clear that the U.S. saved South Korea from the Korean War and provided firm security. Furthermore, although it was prolonged, the U.S. played a substantial role in the transition to democracy in South Korea. Particularly, it was just as crucial for democratization that the U.S. pressured President Chun against the use of military force to repress the growing civil



democratization movement as when the U.S. called for the resignation of President Syngman Rhee. Based on the patron-client relationship, the U.S. as a patron state had political and economic leverage to influence Korean politics until 1987 which allowed for these kinds of pressures to translate into action within South Korean domestic politics. However, after democratization in Korea, the political influence of the U.S. was reduced changing the tradeoff situation between security and autonomy (Park 2010, 260).

Next, the patterns of alliance dilemmas in South Korea also have changed over time. Until the 1980s, South Korea showed the typical patterns of alliance dilemma of a weak state. Whenever the U.S. withdrew USFK, or planned to do so, South Korea faced extreme fear of abandonment. However, the post-Cold War atmosphere, democratization, and economic growth influenced much of the ROK –U.S. alliance and had an impact on the changes of alliance dilemma. Even after these major situational changes, the alliance between ROK and the U.S. is still asymmetric. South Korea is a weaker ally, more dependent on the alliance for security than the U.S. because of the North Korean nuclear crisis.

However, the degree of dependence weakened entering into the late 1990s. This is because of South Korea's democratization and economic growth and its national confidence on security based on both. In addition, after the South-North Summit in 2000, South Korea had a better relationship with North Korea through its engagement policy based on the establishment of the progressive government and the Sunshine policy.

Therefore, as South Koreans feel less of a threat from North Korea, South Korea's dependence on the alliance with the U.S. also decreased. Furthermore, U.S.' GPR was promoted after 2001 and U.S. commitment weakened because USFK became RDF, South Korea tried to be self-reliant on defense. Beginning in 1991, South Korea shared some of the costs for USFK through Special Measures Agreement (SMA). South Korea's dependence on the ROK – U.S. alliance shrank because of USFK becoming RDF and cost sharing through SMA, as did the risk of abandonment.

Next, U.S. strategic interests in South Korea considerably diminished after the end of the Cold War. However, it did not completely disappear because of the North Korean nuclear crisis. While the North Korean nuclear issues increase South Korea's military dependence on the U.S., the change of threat perception toward North Korea might cancel out this effect. In addition, South Korea was important for containment of a rising China because the U.S. consistently tried to check the emergence of competing countries as a global hegemon. Therefore, in spite of the reduced U.S.' strategic interest, South Korea's fear of abandonment did not increase.

Finally, as a divided country, it is understandable that South Korea focused more on inter-Korean affairs. The North Korean nuclear crises made South Korea concentrate more on the Korean Peninsula (Lee 2005, 100 -101). However, as a global hegemon, the U.S. has broader interests with many allies other than South Korea (Mitchell 2004, 7). Furthermore, after the September 11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. had begun to focus on

responding to uncertain terrorism. South Korea supported and joined the U.S. war on terrorism, but when North Korea became a target, South Korea was reluctant to participate because of possible danger of escalation of war on the Korean Peninsula. That is, South Korea tried to avoid the possible risk of entrapment.

For these three reasons, this dissertation argues that since South Korea is less dependent on the ROK – U.S. alliance, it became less asymmetric. In addition, there are still possible reasons to cause the alliance dilemma but South Korea seems to actively manage these situations to avoid the risk of alliance dilemma. This explains why the patterns of alliance dilemma in South Korea changed over time.

This dissertation analyzes the factors affecting the alliance. These factors had both positive and negative effects on the alliance. Although there were conflicts, due to the combination of positive and negative factors, the ROK – U.S. alliance was not terminated. In the late 1980's, the end of the Cold War reduced the U.S. strategic interests in South Korea at the global level. On the other hand, South Korea achieved rapid economic development and democratization. It is through fast economic growth that the dependence of South Korea on the ROK – U.S. alliance considerably reduced. In addition, new nationalist elites entered into power positions and started to conflict with the U.S. in terms of policy toward North Korea. The conflicts between the two states based on the change of threat perceptions of new nationalist elites in the newly progressive government affected the ROK – U.S. alliance. These nationalist elites deemphasized the

North Korean threat and put emphasis on the solidarity with North Korea rather than on the ROK – U.S. alliance. Even these deepened conflicts raised doubt of the credibility of the allies each other. Furthermore, as China became a more important actor in Northeast Asia, the close relationship between South Korea and China also became a problematic issue in the ROK – U.S. alliance.

However, these conflicts did not terminate the alliance between the two states. First, the change of threat perception did not mean the permanent disappearance of the threat itself. Therefore, since the common threat that was the main target of the alliance formation still existed, there was no reason for dissolution of the alliance. In addition, after the conservative government came back in 2008, the threat perception changed again. These conservative elites survived even after democratization and still had their political clout due to the gradual democratic consolidation in South Korea. During the progressive governments, these conservative elites slowed radical shift in foreign policy. Next, as hegemonic states with many bilateral alliances other than the one with South Korea, the U.S. still was motivated to maintain the ROK – U.S. alliance. It is through sustaining the alliance that the U.S. wants to keep its hegemonic superpower status and prevent the rise of a potential challenger such as China. Furthermore, the ROK – U.S. alliance is highly institutionalized based on and produces asset specificities such as consultation mechanism (SCM), combined forces, and command structures (CFC), shared infrastructures, joint military exercise, and common weapon systems. These

shared military assets significantly raise the costs of alliance termination. The more institutionalized an asymmetrical alliance is, the harder it will be for the alliance to be abruptly terminated. Finally, economic relationships, such as FTA, expanded the ROK – U.S. alliance more than just military alliance. It is through growing interdependence in many areas that the ROK – U.S. alliance would be further developed into a comprehensive alliance.

The empirical analysis tests the alliance dilemma over the issues of North Korea and some of these factors affecting the relations between the U.S. and South Korea with four multiple regression models. According to the empirical findings, the overall relations between the U.S. and North Korea do not have significant effect on the ROK – U.S. relations. Furthermore, the conflicts and cooperation between the U.S. and North Korea does not have a negative impact on the ROK – U.S. alliance. Therefore, unlike the initial period, South Korea does not suffer from the alliance dilemma. This result is not exactly consistent with the changes of patterns of alliance dilemma in historical analysis above. However, the results from the two analyses match the direction to less dependence. Second, empirical analysis finds that the growth of national capabilities has a negative impact on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. Due to the growth of its national capability, the dependence of South Korea on the alliance is reduced and thus South Korea becomes more assertive to the U.S. Third, the domestic change of administration from conservatives to progressives has a negative impact on the relations

between the two states as expected. On top of domestic change, the change of threat perception in progressive South Korean governments caused considerable conflicts with the U.S. Finally, the democratization in South Korea and the increase of trade interdependence has a positive impact on the ROK – U.S. alliance. In addition, the significance of trade interdependence proposes the importance of economic relations for overall relations between the U.S. and South Korea. These results suggest the positive effects of shared ideology on the endurance of the alliance.

Taken together, the results of both historical and empirical analysis support that the three major changes such as the end of the Cold War, the economic growth, and political democratization in South Korea have a significant effect on the relations between the U.S. and South Korea. In particular, it is meaningful that domestic changes in South Korea affect the ROK – U.S. relations. In asymmetric alliances, the capability changes in small states do not have much impact on the overall alliance (Morrow 1991). This result could signify less asymmetric relations between the two states. In addition, the changes in the alliance dilemma of South Korea also suggest a less asymmetric relationship. Furthermore, the enhanced economic interdependence and shared democracy helps the relations of the two states deepen and widen. Therefore, this dissertation concludes that the relations between the U.S. and South Korea become less and less asymmetric from the 1990s until now.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Coding Sheet**

Coding Date (year/month/day):

The source of report:

Event Date (year/month/day):

Event summary:

Comment:

The Actor:

The Target:

The Activity:

The Event Type:

The Scale Value:

The Conflict/Cooperation:

## **Appendix B**

### **Codebook**

1. Coding Date (year/month/day):

It is the real date of coding. For example, if it is April 8, 2011, coding date will be 110408.

2. The source of report:

001 – DongAIlbo

002 - The New York Times

3. Event Date (year/month/day):

This is not the reporting date but the real date of occurring event. For example, if the event occurred in April 8, 2011 and ported in April 9, 2011, event date will be 110409.

4. The Actor (the actor code is the same in WEIS and COPDAB)

732 - South Korea

731- North Korea

002 - The U.S.

5. The Target:

732 - South Korea

731- North Korea

002 - The U.S.

6. The Event Type:

001 – Political/Legal Issues

002 – Economic issues

003 – Military/Strategic Issues

004- Other/Unidentifiable

7. The Scale Value: New Weights for WEIS Events by Goldstein (1992, 376 - 377)

Event code	Event Type	Weight
223	Military attack; clash; assault	-10.0
211	Seize position or possessions	-9.2
222	Nonmilitary destruction/injury	-8.7
221	Noninjury destructive action	-8.3
182	Armed force mobilization, exercise, display; military buildup	-7.6
195	Break diplomatic relations	-7.0
173	Threat with force specified	-7.0
174	Ultimatum; threat with negative sanction and time limit	-6.9
172	Threat with specific negative nonmilitary sanction	-5.8
193	Reduce or cut off aid or assistance; act to punish/deprive	-5.6
181	Nonmilitary demonstration, walk out on	-5.2
201	Order person or personnel out of country	-5.0
202	Expel organization or group	-4.9
150	Issue order or command, insist, demand compliance	-4.9
171	Threat without specific negative sanction stated	-4.4
212	Detain or arrest person(s)	-4.4
192	Reduce routine international activity; recall officials	-4.1
112	Refuse; oppose; refuse to allow	-4.0
111	Turn down proposal; reject protest, demand, threat	-4.0
194	Halt negotiation	-3.8
122	Denounce; Denigrate; abuse	-3.4
160	Give warning	-3.0
132	Issue formal complaint or protest	-2.4
121	Charge; criticize; blame; disapprove	-2.2
191	Cancel or postpone planned event	-2.2
131	Make complaint (not formal)	-1.9
063	Grant asylum	-1.1
142	Deny an attributed policy, action, role or position	-1.1
141	Deny an accusation	-0.9

023	Comment on situation	-0.2
102	Urge or suggest action or policy	-0.1
021	Explicit decline to comment	-0.1
094	Request action; call for	-0.1
025	Explain or state policy; state future position	0.0
091	Ask for information	0.1
011	Surrender; yield to order, submit to arrest	0.6
012	Yield position; retreat; evacuate	0.6
031	Meet with; send note	1.0
095	Entreat; plead; appeal to; beg	1.2
101	Offer proposal	1.5
061	Express regret; apologize	1.8
032	Visit; go to	1.9
066	Release and/or return persons or property	1.9
013	Admit wrongdoing; apologize, retract statement	2.0
062	Give state invitation	2.5
054	Assure; reassure	2.8
033	Receive visit; host	2.8
065	Suspend sanctions; end punishment; call truce	2.9
082	Agree to future action or procedure, to meet, or to negotiate	3.0
092	Ask for policy assistance	3.4
093	Ask for material assistance	3.4
041	Praise, hail, applaud, extend condolences	3.4
042	Endorse other's policy or position; give verbal support	3.6
053	Promise other future support	4.5
051	Promise own policy support	4.5
052	Promise material support	5.2
064	Grant privilege; diplomatic recognition; de facto relations	5.4
073	Give other assistance	6.5
081	Make substantive agreement	6.5
071	Extend economic aid; give, buy, sell, loan, borrow	7.4
072	Extend military assistance	8.3

## 8. The Conflictive/Cooperation

001 – (1) Verbal cooperation (approve, promise, agree, request, propose)

Cooperative action (yield, grant, reward)

002 – (0) Neutral Participation (comment, consult)

003 – (-1) Verbal conflict – defensive (reject, protest, deny)

Verbal conflict – offensive (accuse, demand, warn, threaten)

Conflict action (demonstrate, reduce, relationship, expel, seize, force)



## **Appendix C**

### **WEIS Event Code<sup>55</sup>**

#### **1. Yield (01)**

011. Surrender, yield or order, submit to arrest, etc. This category requires explicit statement of surrender, or yield to a command or an order, or of submission to arrest.

012. Yield position, retreat; evacuate. This category involves actual physical movement.

013. Admit wrongdoing; retract statement.

#### **2. Comment (02)**

021. Explicit decline to comment. This category is reserved for an expressed “decline to comment” statement by an official spokesperson. This category does not include a reported “failure to comment.”

022. Comment on situation – pessimistic. This category is used only when the actor explicitly expresses the feeling that the situation is adverse or foreboding.

023. Comment on situation – neutral.

024. Comment on situation – optimistic. This category is used only when the actor explicitly expresses the feeling that the situation is favorable.

025. Explain policy or future position. This category is used when governments express their goals, hopes, policies, or future plans to others.

#### **3. Consult (03)**

031. Meet with at neutral site, or send note. This category is used for meetings at an unspecified or neutral site, or between a resident ambassador and the host country. This

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<sup>55</sup> WEIS event code is downloaded from

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/05211> (March 13, 2012)

category applies, in addition, when notes are sent between nations but their content is unknown.

032. Visit; go to.

033. Receive visit; host.

#### **4. Approve (04)**

041. Praise, hail, applaud, condole. This category includes the “politeness” events such as expressions of gratitude, condolences, and ceremonial salutations.

042. Endorse other’s policy or position; give verbal support.

#### **5. Promise (05)**

051. Promise own policy support.

052. Promise material support. This category specifies men and/or resource aid forthcoming.

053. Promise other future support action.

054. Assure; reassure. This category is used for expressions or reiterations of earlier pledges.

#### **6. Grant (06)**

061. Express regret; apologize.

062. Give state invitation.

063. Grant asylum. This category includes both the announcement of a policy and reported cases of granting of refuge to nationals of other countries.

064. Grant privilege, diplomatic recognition; De Facto relations, etc.

065. Suspend negative sanctions; truce.

066. Release and/or return persons or property.

### **7. Reward (07)**

071. Extended economic aid (as gift and/or loan).

072. Extend military assistance. This category includes both men and material, in addition, joint military training exercises are coded in this category.

073. Give other assistance.

### **8. Agree (08)**

081. Make substantive agreement.

082. Agree to future action or procedure; agree to meet, to negotiate. This category includes the acceptance of invitations from other states.

### **9. Request (09)**

091. Ask for information.

092. Ask for policy assistance.

093. Ask for material assistance.

094. Request action; call for. This category includes bids from United Nations membership and requests for asylum.

095. Entreat; plead; appeal to; help me. This category applies to requests made from a distinctly suppliant position, the actor nation pleading for aid or support.

### **10. Propose (10)**

101. Offer proposal.

102. Urge or suggest action or policy.

### **11. Reject (11)**

111. Turn down proposal; reject protest demand, threat, etc.

112. Refuse; oppose; refuse to allow.

**12. Accuse (12)**

121. Charge; criticize; blame; disapprove.

122. Denounce; denigrate; abuse. This category often applies when derogatory adjectives embellish the accusation.

**13. Protest (13)**

131. Make complaint (not formal).

132. Make formal complaint or protest. Protests are assumed to be formal unless otherwise stated.

**14. Deny (14)**

141. Deny an accusation.

142. Deny an attributed policy, action role or position.

**15. Demand (15)**

150. Issue order or command; insist; demand compliance; etc.

**16. Warn (16)**

160. Give warning. Occasionally the words “demand” or “threaten” are used in news items which should be coded as warnings.

**17. Threaten (17)**

171. Threat without specific negative sanctions.

172. Threat with specific non-military negative sanctions.

173. Threat with force specified.

174. Ultimatum; threat with negative sanctions and time limit specified.

**18. Demonstrate (18)**

181. Non-military demonstration; to walk out on. This category applies to activities such as marching, picketing, stoning, etc., when they are performed by citizens of one nation against another nation. The category also includes occasions when representatives to international meetings walk out in protest.

182. Armed force mobilization. Exercise and/or display routine ceremonial displays such as weapons parades and “fly bys” are not included in this category.

**19. Reduce Relations (as negative sanctions) (19)**

191. Cancel or postpone planned event.

192. Reduce routine international activity; recall official; etc. Events coded in this category must be connected with some on-going international problem, thus the usual rotations of Foreign Service officers or normal changes in foreign aid are not regarded as “reduction of relations.” Embargoes, bans, and smaller activities do fall within this category.

193. Reduce or halt aid.

194. Halt negotiations.

195. Break diplomatic relations.

**20. Expel (20)**

201. Order personnel out of country. This category includes the expulsion of foreign individuals and the declaration of individuals as PERSONA NON GRATA.

202. Expel organization or group.

**21. Seize (21)**

211. Seize position or possessions. The category may also be used when a nation militarily takes or occupies another’s territory.

212. Detain or arrest person (s).

**22. Force (22)**

221. Non-injury obstructive act. When actual physical destruction is reported, demonstrations are coded in this category.

222. Non-military injury-destruction. This category also includes acts not committed by organized military forces such as terrorist bombings.

223. Military engagement. Notice that this category may often be “double-coded” because when two nations battle, each is an actor and each is a target of force.

## CURRICULM VITAE

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