

## Introduction

KOKUBUN RYOSEI

WE DO NOT NEED to hark back to the Three Kingdoms period of third-century China to realize how hard it is to coordinate relations among three countries. Coordinating bilateral relations is easier. In bilateral negotiations, concern with only one other country is generally the top priority; the possible impact on third countries is a secondary consideration. If a trilateral relationship is to be viable, however, bilateral relationships must always take the third country fully into consideration. The difficulties are easy to understand if we think of the dynamics of human relations within society. Needless to say, it is even harder to coordinate relations among countries, which involve large and complex interests.

Nevertheless, those of us who live in the post-cold war Asia Pacific region must strive to coordinate relations among three countries: China, Japan, and the United States. This does not mean creating a cozy club of powers. In view of the importance of the region's dynamics, including the Korean peninsula, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and Russia, and as a step toward building a multilateral framework in Asia Pacific for the twenty-first century, coordinating the interests of these three countries and building a cooperative relationship among them is becoming ever more important.

Why are these three countries so important? What challenges do they need to address? What does the relationship between each pair of countries mean for relations with the third country? What can Japan in particular do within the context of the trilateral relationship? What is Japan's place within Asia Pacific as a whole? What, specifically, needs to be done to build a cooperative trilateral relationship, and what are the obstacles? The essays in this volume address these important and basic questions from various angles and aim to elicit answers.

Many intellectuals now talk about the importance of the China-Japan-U.S. relationship, and a number of joint research projects on the subject are under way. This volume, I believe, is a pioneering effort. While it is a collection of papers, it also represents the culmination of a process of exchanging and coordinating views. The members of the Japanese research team taking part in Global ThinkNet's China-Japan-U.S. Research and Dialogue Project began holding regular study meetings in June 1996, including an intensive retreat. In late November and early December 1996, the team visited Beijing, Hong Kong, and Shanghai to exchange views with political leaders and researchers there, and in June 1997 it took part in a workshop with its American and Chinese

counterparts in Tokyo. The papers that resulted, introduced briefly below, reflect these discussions and experiences in a variety of ways.

My essay provides an overview of the issues. I begin by defining the challenges facing the post-cold war Asia Pacific, then discuss what makes the China-Japan-U.S. framework important at this stage, identify the factors promoting and hindering trilateral cooperation, and consider ways to advance cooperation.

Lee Jong Won analyzes the United States' Asia policy from a historical perspective. He examines the spread and subsequent weakening of Americanism in Asia Pacific and discusses the significance of China-Japan-U.S. cooperation in the context of the multilateralism that is replacing Americanism.

Nakanishi Hiroshi examines the concept of comprehensive security, a subject frequently discussed in Japan in recent years. After considering the concept in the context of Japan's history, he redefines it in the light of present conditions and discusses Japan's future comprehensive-security policy in terms of relations between state and society, interstate relations, and relations among interdependent economies, with emphasis on relations with China and the United States.

Tennichi Takahiko analyzes Japanese debate on foreign policy, especially policy toward China and the United States, before and after World War II. Prewar debate centered on the Western and Asian factions, while debate in the cold war period was led by the pro-American faction, the left-wing Asian faction, and the conservative Asian faction. The author notes that although the end of the cold war is making this classification obsolete, the dichotomy between pro-American and pro-Asian proponents persists in different form.

Osaki Yuji reviews the historical and structural changes in post-cold war China-Japan relations. More broadly, he examines and assesses the relationship within the framework of the modern history of Asia Pacific, including the important role played by the United States in defining China-Japan relations over the last half-century. He also offers concrete proposals for developing a cooperative China-Japan relationship.

Wakisaka Noriyuki summarizes Japan's official development assistance (ODA) vis-à-vis China and explains why Chinese nuclear tests and other events in the mid-1990s led Japan to freeze grant aid and rethink its ODA program. He also discusses the characteristics of Japanese economic assistance to China and the ways in which it differs from the United States' development strategy toward that country.

Sawada Yukari, noting the increase in overseas Chinese entrepreneurs' business links with China as its market expands, argues that the way in which Japanese companies utilize these entrepreneurs will seal the success or failure of future business with China. She also suggests that for a variety of reasons the United States will continue to be an important factor in overseas Chinese business activities.

Finally, Wada Jun discusses the development of an “epistemic community” and intellectual exchange—an increasingly important theme in international relations—in Asia Pacific in general and Japan in particular. He also recommends that three-way exchange among China, Japan, and the United States begin with intellectual dialogue on the nongovernmental level.

All the authors are in their thirties or forties and, despite their relative youth, are making a noticeable contribution in their chosen fields, whether scholarship, journalism, or the nonprofit sector. Their youth reflects the fact that the important theme of the future of Asia Pacific and China-Japan-U.S. cooperation requires ongoing discussion and debate into the twenty-first century. Of course the authors represent diverse standpoints and viewpoints. We deliberately avoided trying to force them into a single mold. Instead we decided to give them free rein to address issues surrounding Asia Pacific and the trilateral relationship as they saw fit. We will be happy if this volume serves to stimulate further debate on a theme that is so important for the next century.