

ROMANCING INDIA, REINVENTING JAPAN: EXPLAINING CONTINUITY IN THE  
INDIA-JAPAN PARTNERSHIP

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# **ROMANCING INDIA, REINVENTING JAPAN: EXPLAINING CONTINUITY IN THE INDIA-JAPAN PARTNERSHIP**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Why did the Hatoyama Yukio administration in Japan continue to build its partnership with India, despite changes in policy toward the U.S. and China? This paper argues that continuity prevailed because partnership with India fit into Hatoyama's vision for Japan's future role in East Asia, not for solely economic reasons or merely as a strategic counterweight to a rising China. The project has two distinct methodological components. The first is a review of the existing secondary literature that seeks to find analytical flaws in explanations for the partnership centered on power and economics. The second part of the project is a review of primary sources, including Japanese and Indian Prime Ministers' official statements, joint statements and agreement texts to distinguish changes in the ideological justification for the partnership given by leaders of differing political leanings. The dominant explanation for the India-Japan partnership put forth by Michael Green and Harsh Pant, among others, has been the powers' mutual concern about China. Others have explained the partnership in purely economic terms as motivated by the complementarity of labor-abundant India and capital-abundant Japan. This paper provides a more constructivist response that fits the Indian partnership into the nationalist visions that Japan's leaders have had for their nation on both the right and left, exploring the differing reasons that each had for pursuing the partnership and explains policy continuity across administrations.

The research and writing of this thesis  
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Many thanks,  
ALEXANDER FORBES

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## INTRODUCTION

When predicting the future of East Asia, many scholars have focused on the rise of China and have expounded at length the reasons why its rise will or will not threaten the existing U.S.-led order. In such discussions, Japan is often discounted, seen as an aging power falling behind China, perhaps useful as part of an effort to contain China, but otherwise too weakened by an aging population and a prolonged economic downturn to rival its larger, more vibrant neighbor. China analysts' regional focus on East Asia also leads them to ignore India, since it is traditionally separated into South Asia, but this is decidedly unwise. Although its growth has not matched China's, it has still been swift, with growth rates only a few percentage points lower than the PRC.<sup>1</sup> Its large population and relatively strong military make it a rival for China in sheer heft, if not in hard power. Japan and India, while not superpowers, nonetheless have power enough to substantially shape the future of the future of East Asia.

Upon closer inspection, however, the gradual upward trend of Japan-India ties reveals a puzzle. The transfer of power in Japan from the LDP to the DPJ brought changes to Japan's policy toward both China and the United States. Yet, Japan continued to gradually build ties with India without major interruption. What conventional wisdom exists about their understudied relationship suggests that the main driver of their increased ties is their mutual fear of a rising China, but this realist hypothesis does not explain the continuity of the relationship under the pro-China Hatoyama government. While China certainly does figure prominently in both states' estimations of their future, their relationship can be better understood as part of a

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<sup>1</sup>Balaji Viswanathan. "Why Isn't India a Superpower or Global Leader?" *Forbes*. October 23, 2012. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2012/10/23/why-isnt-india-a-superpower-or-global-leader/>.

broader effort by both powers to increase their regional influence, rather than solely an exercise in balance-of-power politics.

## **THE HISTORY AND THE CURRENT STATE OF THE JAPAN-INDIA PARTNERSHIP**

In order to understand Japan's present motivations for seeking partnership, it is helpful to examine the history of the relationship and its current status. The earliest modern proponents of Japan-India partnership were early twentieth-century Pan-Asianists like Okakura Kakuzo and Okawa Shumei who were the first to extend the definition of East Asia to include India, bringing it ideologically closer to Japan, which they saw as the unity of all Asian cultures. While it is easy to dismiss pan-Asianism as the cover for Japanese imperialism that it became in the 1930s, the Pan-Asianism of Okakura and Okawa was a liberal variety that sought a racial and cultural unity among Asians, in opposition to what they saw as an imperialist and excessively Western state. Indian elites of the time were sympathetic to Japan and its pan-Asian ideals; the one dissenting justice at the Tokyo war crimes tribunal was the Indian judge Radhabinod Pal, who decried the proceedings as victor's justice. Relations between Japan and India were stunted by the necessities of the Cold War, as Japan allied with the United States and India remained unaligned, though it shifted gradually toward the Soviet Union, especially after 1971.

The end of the Cold War brought new challenges to both states that began to move them toward cooperation. India's Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao presided over India's economic liberalization in 1991, and began India's "Look East" policy in an attempt to replicate the economic success of Asian countries. Japan at this point began low levels of investment in India, but relations remained cool throughout the 1990s. Japan's strong condemnation of the Indian nuclear tests was, as Satu Limaye has argued, part of its effort to be seen as capable of

taking on the role of a major power, eventually aimed at attaining a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.<sup>2</sup> After Japan failed to persuade the Security Council to impose sanctions on India, relations remained cool until Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori offered the idea of a “global partnership” agreement in 2000. Mori’s intention was to allow both sides to escape from their narrow bilateral interests, that is, the nuclear dispute, and focus on wider regional and global issues like counter-terrorism, maritime security, and energy. Mori’s open hand toward India was part of a broader effort in Japan to widen its impact in regional institutions, which included ASEAN +3 and the Asian Monetary Fund, an alternative to the IMF created in response to the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Mori’s administration held its first dialogues with their Indian counterparts in 2001; they later became an annual occurrence.<sup>3</sup>

Since Mori, subsequent Japanese administrations have gradually added security and economic elements to the budding relationship. Koizumi Junichiro and Manmohan Singh signed a Joint Statement on Japan India Partnership in a New Asian Era in 2004, which expanded the scope and number of military-to-military talks, and aimed to raise trade volumes and lower trade barriers. Prime Minister Aso upgraded the relationship to a Strategic Global Partnership, which added to the previous statements a mutual commitment to peace and stability, and particularly emphasized naval cooperation. The next significant change in ties came in 2008, with the Aso-Singh Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. This statement, while reaffirming previous commitments to defense cooperation, trade, and dialogue mechanisms, also included “bilateral cooperation within multilateral frameworks in Asia” with particular reference to the Asia Regional Forum and East Asia Summit. The transition to of the Hatoyama administration in 2009 brought more

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<sup>2</sup> Satu Limaye. "Japan and India After the Cold War." in Yoichiro Sato and Satu Limaye eds., *Japan in a Dynamic Asia: Coping With the New Security Challenges* 2006. 232-234

<sup>3</sup> K. V. Kesavan *India and Japan: Changing Dimensions of Partnership in the Post-Cold War Period*. New Delhi: Observer Research Foundation, 2010.

intensive work on the Japan-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and an action plan to implement the items in the Aso-Singh agreement. The CEPA was signed in February 2011, resulting in a significant reduction in Japan's trade barriers to India.<sup>4</sup> Finally, 2012 saw the first bilateral naval exercises between Japan and India, as well as Abe Shinzo's return to power. Abe advocates Japanese cooperation with India and other democracies in East Asia to shape regional architecture, and his return suggests that Japan-India ties will continue to increase.<sup>5</sup>

### **EXPLAINING CONTINUITY: BALANCING AGAINST CHINA**

Having traced a brief overview of the history of Japan's relationship with India, it now remains to elaborate the possible reasons for the continuity. Numerous scholars, including Michael Green, Harsh Pant, and Rajaram Panda, have argued that the principal purpose of the Japan-India partnership is to hedge against a rising China. This theory makes intuitive sense, and has a great deal of explanatory power. The persuasiveness of the China thesis comes in large part from the common strategic threat that China poses to both countries. Both Tokyo and New Delhi have territorial disputes with Beijing; the Chinese contest ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island group, while the Indians and Chinese have an unresolved dispute over their border area in Aksai Chin. These disputes remain active; there were a spate of anti-Japanese protests in China over the Japanese government's decision to purchase the contested islands, and a PLA unit entered

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<sup>4</sup> Michael J. Green. "Japan, India and the Strategic Triangle with China." In Tellis, Tanner and Keogh eds., *Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers: China and India*. Washington, DC: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2012. 150

<sup>5</sup> Harsh V. Pant. *Japan Chair Platform: Shinzo Abe and Delhi-Tokyo Ties*. Jan 24, 2013. <http://csis.org/publication/japan-chair-platform-shinzo-abe-and-delhi-tokyo-ties>.

Aksai Chin in May 2013. Both also have reason for concern over China's recent aggressive posture in the South China Sea, and the "string of pearls," a series of Chinese naval stations that extend into the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean is India's backyard, and both depend on the Sea Lines of Communication in the South China Sea, particularly the Straits of Malacca, as a critical path for trade. In light of the threat China poses to both states, it makes sense that they see one another as valuable allies against a newly powerful China.

In an effort to demonstrate that China's rise is the primary cause of Japan-India partnership, scholars who hold this view, Green in particular, place the evolving Japan-India relationship in the context of a continuously deteriorating Sino-Japanese relationship. Green notes that the politicians responsible for the initial India-Japan Global Partnership included India's defense minister, the anti-China George Fernandes, and that Mori himself was politically tied to anti-China conservatives within Japan.<sup>6</sup> Koizumi and Abe each presided over marked deteriorations in Sino-Japanese relations and Chinese attempts to expand their regional influence that motivated them to seek greater ties with India. For example, Japan's proposal to invite India to the East Asia summit in 2002 directly followed China's motion, tabled in cooperation with Cambodia, that the organization's next meeting be moved to Beijing, which Japan and several others saw as an attempt to tilt regional architecture to favor China.<sup>7</sup> Green links the signing of the Joint Statement on Security Cooperation between Japan and India to Abe's unsuccessful efforts to form a regional Quad of India, Japan, Australia, and the United States, which were abandoned out of fear that China would view them as containment. In this view, the maritime focus of the Joint Statement on Security Cooperation has a direct parallel in a similar agreement

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<sup>6</sup> Michael J. Green "Japan, India and the Strategic Triangle with China." 135-136

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 136-137

made with Australia.<sup>8</sup> Green argues that the India-Japan partnership is an attempt to build the Quad coalition one side at a time, with the naval concerns that each country shares about China as the primary driver for the relationship.

The China thesis, though founded in observations about military power, also provides an explanation for the increased economic ties between India and Japan; they are a hedge against dependence on the Chinese economy. India surpassed China in 2008 as a destination for Japanese official development assistance (ODA), and has also seen a sudden increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) from Japanese firms. Harsh Pant points to the 2011 Memorandum on Cooperation on rare earths as clear evidence that economic ties are being built to reduce vulnerability dependence on China.<sup>9</sup> While Japanese FDI to India remains smaller than its FDI to China, since 2005, it has increased fivefold, whereas Japan-China FDI has only doubled in the same period. A survey of Japanese businesses in 2010 also found that India had become the most attractive destination for FDI in next decade, as businesses cited concerns about the political situation in China as a disincentive to investment.<sup>10</sup> Taken together, these facts suggest an economic hedging strategy to match Japan's political hedging against Chinese dominance.

While the China thesis is powerful, there are gaps in this explanation. Japanese and Indian behavior does not always follow a clear hedging pattern. For instance, in light of increased Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea in 2010, it would be reasonable to expect at the least an increased number of high-level ministerial visits as the two sides reacted to the threat. However, contrary to expectations, the total of Japanese ministerial visits to India and Indian ministerial visits to Japan is not notably higher than the totals for the year before or

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<sup>8</sup> Rajaram Panda. "India and Japan: Exploring Strategic Potentials." *Journal of Defence Studies* 4 no. 4, 2010: 89-107.

<sup>9</sup> Harsh V. Pant. *Japan Chair Platform: Shinzo Abe and Delhi-Tokyo Ties*.

<sup>10</sup> K. V. Kesavan *India and Japan: Changing Dimensions of Partnership in the Post-Cold War Period* 31

after.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, there is a two-year time lag between Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and the first bilateral Japan-India naval exercises in 2012. A similar time lag exists in the economic dimension of Japan-India relations. Between 2010 and 2011, Japanese FDI in China actually increased faster than FDI to India, despite the unfavorable political situation. The increase was less pronounced between 2011 and 2012, though, which may reflect political concerns.<sup>12</sup> While there is some economic hedging, it is weak, and there is no clear indication that FDI in India has consistently increased at China's expense.

This weakness in their hedging behavior also carries over to the two countries' military ties. A comparison of the Japan-India Declaration on Security Cooperation and the Japan-Australia Declaration on Security Cooperation demonstrates some critical deficiencies in the former as a means to counter China. It focuses on talks between high-level military officials and coast guard cooperation, which are useful for anti-piracy operations, but does not discuss classified information-sharing or large-scale logistical cooperation, both present in the Japan-Australia agreement.<sup>13</sup> Despite the inconsistency in hedging behavior, it would be naïve to argue that China did not factor at all into India and Japan's strategic calculations. Still, such inconsistency indicates that there may be other intervening factors that provide a more fundamental and consistent reason for continuity in their partnership. Since the China thesis is unable to explain why the pro-China Prime Minister Hatoyama supported a partnership that is mainly aimed at countering China, an alternate theory is needed to explain this apparent contradiction.

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<sup>11</sup> "Japan-India Relations(Basic Data) *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*. November 2012. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/data.html#basic>

<sup>12</sup> Malcolm Cook. "Japanese FDI: Asia + China." *The Interpreter: Lowy Institute for International Policy*. February 15, 2013. <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2013/02/15/Japanese-FDI-Asia-China.aspx>.

<sup>13</sup> Sourabh Gupta. "Japan and India in a 'Broader Asia:' Allies or Casual Friends in Foreign Policy Research Centre New Delhi." *FPRC Journal 12:India-Japan relations.* *Foreign Policy Research Centre Journal*. 12(4) 2012. <http://www.japan-india.com/files/libs/release/415-1.pdf>. 177

Applying the liberal theory that the prospect of economic gains can provide incentives for cooperation despite security concerns seems to resolve the question of why Hatoyama was willing to maintain continuity in the Japan-India partnership. If Hatoyama viewed the partnership as one primarily motivated by economic concerns, continuing to expand it would be compatible with improving relations with the PRC. Certainly Hatoyama was interested in expanding trade, as his advocacy for China-Japan-Korea dialogue demonstrates. Placing economic ties as the fundamental driver of the relationship also makes sense the inconsistency of hedging behavior on security issues. While there have been no authors who argue for economics as an explanation for Hatoyama's support, there are some who view the relationship in purely economic terms, divorced from significant political considerations.<sup>14</sup> This theory makes some sense, as both sides' commitment to economic partnership has been consistently ahead of the political and military developments. For instance, work on the CEPA began with Koizumi and Singh, whereas the security aspects of the partnership did not move much beyond dialogue until the partnership was upgraded to a Security Global Partnership in 2006. More recently, economic interests have continued to lead; the CEPA was concluded in 2011, a year before the first bilateral naval exercises. In the last few years there have been a number of agreements on the economy, including the Agreement on Social Security to facilitate labor movement between the two countries and the Memorandum on Cooperation on rare earths, while there have been no major new agreements dealing with security issues.<sup>15</sup> Combined with the general upward movement of Japanese ODA and FDI to India, and the fact that India is both a labor source and a destination for Japanese capital, the liberal pursuit of economic gains seems reasonable as a basis for the Japan-India partnership.

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<sup>14</sup> For example Sanjana Joshi and Isha Dayal "Trends in Japanese ODA to India" in *Ibid.* 206-217

<sup>15</sup> Harsh V. Pant. *Japan Chair Platform: Shinzo Abe and Delhi-Tokyo Ties*. January 2012

The argument against this theory is relatively straightforward; most of the economic initiative has not come from the Japanese private sector, which is still leery of investing in India due to its poor infrastructure and voluminous red tape. The raw increases in Japan-India FDI mean little because of the low starting point, and the predominance of ODA over FDI suggests that the government is the primary force behind the economic interest in India. This is confirmed by the low number of firms with investments in India, only about eight hundred as of 2012.<sup>16</sup> If there were commercial interests rather than government aspirations for stronger economic ties, that should lead to a more equal level of interest and action from the private and public sectors. Also, the lack of substantive movement on security-related agreements suggests that while economic interests may be important, they are not producing the expected spillover effects.

## **LIBERAL NATIONALISM, CONSERVATIVE NATIONALISM, AND EXPANDING JAPAN'S ROLE IN ASIA**

The previous theories advanced as explanations for the continuity in the development of Japan-India ties have focused on the particular benefits that Japan can receive from the bilateral relationship, either gains in economic and political security relative to China or absolute economic gains from expanded trade. These theories however, adopt too narrow a lens and do not see the more fundamental role of the relationship with India: as a part of both liberal and conservative nationalists' attempts to reinvent Japan's regional role in a way that increases its influence in East Asia. Prominent politicians on both the left and right in Japan have expressed a

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<sup>16</sup> Foreign Policy Research Centre New Delhi. "FPRC Journal 12:India-Japan relations." 2012. 7

desire to “reinvent Japan”. Prime Minister Abe’s recent book has been republished as *Toward a New Country*<sup>17</sup> and Hatoyama Yukio ended his first major policy speech in 2009 with the exhortation to “together create a new Japan.”<sup>18</sup> Indeed, it is because the partnership with India fits within both the liberal and conservative visions for Japan’s future role in East Asia that the relationship has continued to develop despite the power transition.

One of the most important benefits of the India-Japan partnership for both liberals and conservatives in Japan is that it allows Japan to build its presence in the region unencumbered by historical disputes. India has no territorial or historical disputes with Japan, and elite opinion in India is more favorable to Japan than it is in any of its neighbors in Northeast Asia. According to a 2009 elite opinion survey conducted by Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 92% of Indian political and business leaders surveyed believed that Japan was a reliable friend of India,<sup>19</sup> in contrast to China and Korea, where majorities of respondents worried that Japan would become a threat.<sup>20</sup> India also supported Japan’s 2005 bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.<sup>21</sup> Because of the lack of historical disputes, India’s support for Japan, and the expansion of its role in Asia, India is an ideal place to begin Japan’s expansion of influence outside its unwelcoming immediate neighborhood. The history problem also explains why Korea is not part of Abe’s Quad despite its democracy; if Korea were included, the Quad would no longer be a regional institution in which Japan could wield influence untroubled by the past.

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<sup>17</sup>Shinzo Abe. *Atarashii kuni e : Utsukushii kuni e kanzen pan*. Tokyo: Bunshun Shinsho, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet. "Policy Speech by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama at the 173rd Session of the Diet." *Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet*. October 26, 2009.

[http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200910/26syosin\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200910/26syosin_e.html).

<sup>19</sup>"Opinion Survey on the Image of Japan in India." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*. May 8, 2009.

[http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2009/5/1191566\\_1134.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2009/5/1191566_1134.html).

<sup>20</sup> The Chicago Council on Global Affairs. *Soft Power in Asia: results of a 2008 Opinion Poll*. Chicago, IL: The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> Limaye, "Japan and India After the Cold War." 288

The conservative nationalist image for the reinvention of Japan is more commonly understood as nationalist than its liberal competitor.<sup>22</sup> Richard Samuels calls those who support this kind of nationalism “normal nation-alists” because they emphasize Japan’s becoming a “normal nation” that can use military force.<sup>23</sup> They are generally pro-state, advocate for increased patriotism and the deployment of the Japanese military in service to civic ideals like democracy and human rights.<sup>24</sup> Koizumi’s 2004 declaration that Japan would stand for democracy and human rights, and his decision to send Japan Self Defense Forces troops in non-combat roles to Iraq and to aid in resupply efforts in the Indian Ocean, exemplify the future direction that normal nation-alists envision for Japan in the region. For normal nation-alists, the partnership with India is an opportunity for the Japanese military to take a more active role in the region, especially through anti-piracy measures that secure regional commons. The 2006 and 2008 agreements focus heavily on cooperation between the two coast guards to combat piracy and terrorism as part of maintaining both political and economic security in the region. The Memorandum of Cooperation was the most salient element of the 2006 Strategic Partnership Agreement, and had the most extensive means of cooperation elaborated in the 2008 Joint Declaration. Conservative normal nationalists see this as an intermediate step to a broader security alliance between the MSDF and the Indian navy. Abe argued that “this [anti-piracy] role should be upgraded to almost the [sic] full alliance relationship.”<sup>25</sup>

Normal-nationalists see the mutual commitment to democracy and human rights as the primary ideological basis for the relationship. They also envision India as one part of a broader

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<sup>22</sup> For example, in Nobuchi, Hiroko. “Former Prime Minister in Japan Elected to Lead Opposition Party.” *New York Times* September 26, 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Samuels, Richard J. *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Takekawa, "Forging Nationalism From Pacifism and Internationalism," 76

<sup>25</sup> Japan Institute for National Fundamentals. *Japan & India: Democracies Joining Hands for Security and Stability in Asia and the Pacific*. November 6, 2012. <http://en.jinf.jp/news/archives/1568>. 2

regional architecture committed to those values. Aso labeled India part of an “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” that would be “based on universal values such as democracy, freedom, human rights, and rule of law.”<sup>26</sup> Abe has called the “Quad” of India Japan, the U.S. and Australia the “Democratic G3 plus America.”<sup>27</sup> Recognition of the commonality of democratic norms between Japan and India is the first point on all of the major Joint Declarations that the two countries have made. Of course, it is easy to dismiss talk of democracy as window dressing that conceals their true concern, countering China. But to do so is to ignore the utility that a partnership with India based on democracy would have in solidifying the normal-nationalist vision of the Japanese as a civic nation bound by pro-state values like democracy and human rights rather than as an ethnic nation that considers the state and military as dangerous for their ability to make war.

Insisting that democracy is nothing but cover also ignores the ambivalence that even those who do see China as a threat show about describing the Japan-India partnership in those terms. Abe described the partnership as vital to “restoring the balance” of power that China’s rise has upset,<sup>28</sup> but did not include any mention of China in the section of his recent book on partnerships with other members of the Quad.<sup>29</sup> Recasting China as only a single part of the more fundamental concern about expanding Japan’s role in the region also makes sense of the inconsistent rhetoric and weak hedging in the partnership. The conceptual military threat of the Chinese navy has caused only a small response, mostly composed of talks and a few bilateral exercises. In contrast, when China challenged Japan’s ability to shape the region by threatening to move the East Asia Summit to Beijing and unofficially embargoed rare earths to gain

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<sup>26</sup>“Speech by Mr. Taro Aso, Minister for Foreign Affairs on the Occasion of the Japan Institute for International Affairs Seminar: Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons.” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*. November 30, 2006. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0611.html>.

<sup>27</sup>Shinzo Abe, *Atarashii kuni e*, 164

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.* 62-64

<sup>29</sup>Japan Institute for National Fundamentals. *Japan & India: Democracies Joining Hands for Security and Stability in Asia and the Pacific*. 2

economic leverage over Japan, the Japanese response was much swifter. This suggests that Japan responds most clearly to specific actions that threaten the normal nation-alists' vision for Japan and the region, not to Chinese military buildup in general. It is possible that these non-military issues are simply easier for a reluctant India to cooperate on, but without records showing which side proposed each clause of the joint declarations, which this author has not found, it is difficult to show conclusively.

In contrast to conservatives' state oriented nationalism that promotes the normalization of the military and civic values, liberal nationalism, as Takekawa describes argue for a closer relationship with Asia, and a greater role for Japan, not as a normal nation, but as a part of a cultural community. If the Japanese military must act, it should always do so in a limited capacity under the auspices of international institutions rather than alone or with the U.S. Japan should act as a peaceful, mercantile mediator and connect countries and regions, based on its unique history and peaceful ethnic identity.<sup>30</sup> Samuels calls these politicians "middle-power internationalists" and notes that they advocate relations with East Asia and the U.N. to counter what they see as excessive and entrapping reliance on U.S. power.<sup>31</sup> This description certainly fits Hatoyama, who moved to encourage relations with China by holding high-level visits by the pro-China Ozawa Ichiro, made overtures on the history issue, and suspended controversial visits to Yasukuni shrine at the same time that he reneged on the Futenma base agreement and ended refueling operations in the Indian Ocean.<sup>32</sup>

A comparison of the Hatoyama-Singh and Aso-Singh statements will demonstrate the differences in their vision between Hatoyama and Aso founded in their different nationalisms.

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<sup>30</sup> Takekawa, "Forging Nationalism From Pacifism and Internationalism," 76

<sup>31</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 129-131

<sup>32</sup> "Signs of Good Ties." *China Daily*. December 14, 2009. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2009-12/14/content\\_9170683.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2009-12/14/content_9170683.htm).

The Hatoyama statement mentions a Fissile Material Cutoff and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which do not appear in the Aso statement, an indication of Hatoyama's liberal internationalist focus on the nuclear issue.<sup>33</sup> Singh's positive receptivity to Hatoyama's proposal of an East Asian community suggests that he saw the partnership in similarly regionalist terms. While the Aso statement mentions "democracy, human rights and rule of law" in accordance with Aso's normal nationalist view of the partnership,<sup>34</sup> the Hatoyama statement mentions only "common values," which in conjunction with East Asian Community suggest that Hatoyama saw Japan-India ties as fundamentally ethnic, based on their common Asian identity. While Hatoyama agreed to continue the deepening of security ties, his joint statement with Singh does not lay out specifics for cooperation between security cooperation, instead opting for more detailed mentions of global issues like terrorism, environment and energy. The shift away from military to transnational issues under Hatoyama matches his vision for Japan's regional identity as a member of the world community rather than a normal nation.

Both statements include an extensive list of economic projects, demonstrating the importance that both types of nationalists attach to the economic dimension of the relationship. This also explains the pre-eminence of government efforts over those of the private sector within the partnership; the Japanese government's efforts are important as a symbol of the new roles that Aso and Hatoyama each see for Japan. To Hatoyama, the Japan-India partnership was part of a broader Japanese outreach to the region in the form of an ethnicity-based East Asian Community. His efforts de-emphasized the military dimension, and were not aimed at countering China, and he emphasized mutual cooperation in solving global issues as part of the

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<sup>33</sup> "Joint Statement by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Prime Minister Dr. Yukio Hatoyama: New Stage of India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*. December 29, 2009. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/pmv0912/joint.html>.

<sup>34</sup> "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*. October 22, 2008. [http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/pmv0810/joint\\_d.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/pmv0810/joint_d.html).

wider international community. Conservatives like Abe and Aso view the partnership as a way for Japan to demonstrate its willingness and ability to handle security burdens as a normal nation would, and show support for civic nationalist values in cooperation with democratic India. Both pursue the relationship, but with radically divergent visions for its outcome, a classic case of “same bed, different dreams,” as the Japanese aphorism goes.

## CONCLUSION

Viewing the progress in the Japan-India partnership through the lens of Japanese nationalism provides a unifying foundation that makes sense of the various political and economic motivations for the partnership. It explains the larger strategic rationale for Hatoyama’s encouragement of the alliance, as a way of changing Japan’s role in the region. The best explanation for Hatoyama’s actions among those who support the China thesis is put forth by Michael Green, who cites “momentum in the relationship” and Hatoyama’s desire to move closer to Asia.<sup>35</sup> While there had been previous efforts to improve the relationship, a closer examination of Hatoyama’s agreements reveals a markedly different emphasis for the India-Japan relationship consistent with the tenets of liberal nationalism. Nationalism also better explains why Hatoyama wanted to move closer to Asia, not only to lessen U.S. influence but also to reorient Japan’s activities abroad away from security activities that could undermine his middle power internationalist goals. Putting the usefulness of the India relationship to Japan in constructivist terms, where the chief contest is for influence over norms and institutions rather than hard power explains the weakness and inconsistency of the economic and security hedging by the two partners against China.

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<sup>35</sup> Michael J. Green. "Japan, India and the Strategic Triangle with China." 142-143

The Japan-India partnership is important because it represents a first step in expanding Japanese influence outside of traditional regional boundaries, and points to a way in which Japan could remain relevant even as China rises. Realists who look at China often see an aspiring regional hegemon,<sup>36</sup> but if Japan looked outside of East Asia where historical animosities and security challenges are plentiful, Japan could become a more global player. From a theoretical standpoint, the nationalism argument is also interesting because it suggests that changes in ideals about national identity and purpose can influence policy decisions. Constructivism generally examines how pre-established norms and practices affect behavior, but the India-Japan relationship demonstrates that changes and contestations in an actor's view of itself can effect changes in behavior. In the Japan-India case, conservative nationalists have pursued a relationship despite India's nuclear violations to help make Japan the normal nation that they believe post-Cold War realities require, while Hatoyama attempted to define it in a way that would reinvigorate the peaceful and internationalist ideological status quo. Partnership with India fit into the visions of Japan's future articulated by politicians of both the Japanese left and right, and therefore continued forward despite the 2009 transfer of power from the Liberal Democratic Party to the Democratic Party of Japan.

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<sup>36</sup> For example John J. Mearshimer. "China's Unpeaceful Rise." *Current History* 105, no. 690, 2006. 160-162.

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