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Japan's alliance diversification: a comparative analysis of the Indian and Australian strategic partnerships

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Abstract

As part of its movement toward 'normal country' status, Japan has begun to engage in a policy of alliance/alignment restructuring and diversification. This is a twin-track policy – the reconfiguration of existing allied relationships and the creation of new cooperative bilateral links. In recent years, Tokyo has deepened its ties with the United States and Australia on the one hand, while cultivating new partners such as India, as well as several Southeast Asian states. This article examines the nature and dynamics of two of the most important new strategic partnerships: India and Australia. Through a comparative analysis, it seeks to account for their formation, structure, and prospects using a specifically designed model of 'strategic partnership' drawn from Organizational Theories literature. It concludes that these strategic partnerships represent a major platform of a more robust and

comprehensive security policy on the part of Japan, forged in response to a shifting international environment in the Asia-Pacific region.

1 Introduction

Faced with an uncertain strategic landscape abroad and serious economic and political constraints at home, Japan is undergoing a protracted process of 'adaptation' in order to pursue its foreign policy objectives effectively (Berger *et al.*, 2007). This adaptation has involved a more comprehensive approach toward security and defense relationships throughout the region. In order to 'shape' the regional security environment in a way that is congenial to its own national interests, Tokyo has begun to enunciate a more 'active' or assertive foreign policy agenda, as discussed below.

There are three major planks to Japan's resultant alignment policy. First is a reinforcement and restructuring of its traditional bilateral alliance relationship with the United States (Ikenberry and Kupchan, 2010). Second are efforts to engage in the regional security architecture of the Asia-Pacific, such as APEC, ARF, ASEAN + 3, and EAS, by participating in dialog and confidence-building measures (not specifically discussed here). Third, and the main focus of this article, is a marked 'diversification' in Japan's allied policy, which now focusses on the forging of 'strategic partnerships' with countries as varied as Vietnam, Indonesia, Australia, and India. The creation of such privileged bilateral connections is designed to decrease Japan's diplomatic isolation in Asia and to increase its foreign policy maneuverability. In other words, Tokyo does not wish to become too closely tied to either Washington or Beijing at the expense of its own national interests, including 'entrapment' in any potential conflict between these two leading powers. Though Japan has become an exemplar of the strategic partnership phenomenon, the use of this mechanism for security cooperation is part of a regional trend. Russia, China, India, the United States, and others, all testify to the increasing salience of strategic partnerships as components of the broader Asia-Pacific security architecture.[1] Indeed, Nadkarni, in *Strategic Partnerships in Asia* (2010, p. 44), notes that 'the security

1 See, for example: Anderson (1997) and Wilson (2004).

landscape in Asia illustrate[s] the importance of exploring the reasons why strategic partnerships have become the preferred vehicle for ordering relations between dyads of secondary powers and between major powers and pivotal states'.

This article examines the two most significant strategic partnerships in Tokyo's newly expanded allied portfolio: Australia and India. It offers a basic conceptual model of the strategic partnership mechanism of alignment, derived from existing literature in the disciplines of Business and Organizational Studies and adapted to examine these case studies in an international relations (IR) context. The model defines strategic partnerships and provides an analytical framework to track the process of their development along a 'collaboration continuum' – from their formation, through implementation, to their ongoing evaluation. It reveals a striking symmetry between the structure and activities of the two strategic partnership dyads under study, thus demonstrating the efficacy of the model. Before concluding, it briefly returns to the wider milieu of these bilateral relations to investigate the prospects for the creation of a *trilateral* (United States–Japan–Australia) or *quadrilateral* (with the addition of India) alignment formation between these powers (so-called mini-laterals).

1.1 Japan's 'proactive' foreign policy agenda

Changes in Japan's overall alignment policy – both the recalibration of its US-alliance relationship and its diversified strategic partnerships – cannot be separated from the larger question of foreign and security policy adaptation which has occurred since the end of the Cold War (Berger *et al*., 2007). While analysts are divided over whether to characterize this shift in Japan's international posture as 'normalizing' (Oros, 2008), or 'remilitarizing' (Tanter, 2009), what unites the debate is the recognition of a concrete revolution in the ideational and material dimensions of Tokyo's new national image. It is important to briefly outline the basic contours of Japan's international agenda, since Tokyo's activist foreign policy is tightly interwoven both as a function of, and as a reflection of, its allied relationships. Briefly stated, there are three main pillars to this security reformation, or 'normalization' process: *legislation*, *capabilities*, and *domestic politics*.

First, assiduous legislating by the Diet has both loosened the constraints of the renowned 'Peace Constitution' and enabled a more activist foreign policy presence beyond Japan's shores. At the center of this has been the issue of constitutional reinterpretation (*kaishaku kaiken*), with continued 'salami-slicing' of the Article 9 restrictions on the wielding of military power overseas. Clearly illustrating that alliance impulses drive this process, in 2004 Richard Armitage, then US Deputy Secretary of State, claimed that 'Article 9 is becoming an obstacle to strengthening the Japan-US alliance, and Japan must revise the constitution and play a greater role for international peace if it wants to gain a permanent seat on the UN Security Council' (See quote from the Asashi Shinbun in Takao, 2008, p. 3). Pressure from Washington to remove barriers to 'collective defense' has continued unabated. This is added to a raft of new security-related laws enacted between 1991 and the present. Catalyzed by the historic watershed events of 1989–91 and 2001, 'an avalanche of new security policies were enacted' (Oros, 2008, p. 71). Chief among these have been the 1992 Peace Cooperation Law and 2001 Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, permitting limited deployment of military force overseas in aid of the UN or its allies, and the 2003 wartime preparedness legislation (*yūji hōsei*). This legislation was crowned by the creation of Ministry of Defense in 2007, at the same time that provision was put in place to permit for a referendum on constitutional revision (*kenpō kaisei*).

The second prop of Japan's security transformation has been the steady development of potent military capabilities. The country now has one of the largest military budgets in the world at $52.6 billion in 2009 [International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS, 2010)]. It has augmented its force projection capabilities with the acquisition of in-flight refueling aircraft, attention to space and surveillance assets, and the production of light 'aircraft carriers' of the *Hyūga* class (designated as 'helicopter destroyers'). Tokyo's future desiderata also include a latest-generation F-X warplane and Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles (IISS, 2010). This is twinned with a loosening of restraints on the export of domestically produced weapons systems. Cooperation on ballistic missile defense (BMD) with the United States is also a notable, if controversial, aspect of this military expansion. As a result of the new legislation described above and the political attitudes described below, the Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) has seen numerous overseas deployments and gained practical experience in a (circumscribed) combat environment. It has been

dispatched to 14 countries since the promulgation of the Peace Cooperation Law, beginning in Cambodia, up to the controversial missions to Iraq, and in the Indian Ocean, where the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) has been operating in support of the US and UK navies. Thus, Dupont (2004, p. vii) points toward 'a greater willingness to use the SDF in support of its foreign policy and defence interests'.

The third major pillar concerns a changing domestic political landscape. While scholars disagree on the extent to which 'Pacifist Japan' is disappearing, there is strong evidence that points to a more confident and self-assertive political stance (Oros, 2008; Tanter, 2009). According to Pyle (2007, p. 358) 'the greater assertiveness was most evident in a new generation of Japanese political leaders with a view less constrained than that of their elders by memories of defeat and occupation'. While Dupont (2004, p. 13) argues that 'pacifism is being replaced by pragmatic realism, propelled by generational change and the widespread perception that the country confronts a more challenging security environment', conceptions of a more 'nationalist' Japan (*kokka shugi*) are generated by the contested remembrance of the Greater East Asia War (*Dai Tōa Sensō*, 1931–45). Disputes over the objectivity of government-proscribed school textbooks, visits by successive prime ministers to the Yasukuni shrine of the war-dead, and the restoration/rehabilitation of wartime symbols such as the *hinomaru* flag and national anthem (*kimigayo*), along with a spate of sympathetic wartime movies (*Men of the Yamato*, *Battle under Orion*), testify to this. Efforts to reconfigure Japan as a 'normal country' (*futsū no kuni*) are evident in forceful statements in support of the United States over Taiwan; the broaching of the issue of nuclear weapons (the 'three nuclear "No's"' debate), a robust stance on territorial disputes (Takeshima and Senkaku islands), and talk of pre-emptive strikes on the DPRK are the corollary of this changing national mood. In sum, 'the Heisei generation do not feel guilt or remorse for Japan's imperial past; nor are they defensive about Japan's traditional political values' (Pyle, 2007, p. 358).

1.2 Restructuring and diversification in Japanese alignment policy

This overall metamorphosis in Japanese security posture sets the stage for an examination of the commensurate shift in Tokyo's alignment

policy – the main focus of this article. Before proceeding, a brief definitional clarification is required. 'Alignment' is not a synonym for 'alliance' (Wilkins, forthcoming). According to Snyder (1997, p. 6), alignment is 'a broader and more fundamental term . . . defined as expectations of states about whether they will be supported or opposed by other states in future interactions'. Thus, the US–Japan 'alliance' and the 'strategic partnership' dyads discussed below are both forms of *alignment*, but the latter should not be mistaken for formal military defense pacts, such as those represented by the US–Japan Mutual Security Treaty.

The development of these strategic partnerships, particularly the Japan–Australia Strategic Partnership (JASP), Terada (2010, p. 24) argues, cannot be understood in isolation from the US–Japan alliance relationship. He attests that 'the US alliance has catalysed the recent upsurge of mutual interests in the establishment of the Australia-Japan security and defence partnership'. Certainly, the US–Japan Mutual Security Treaty alliance (1951/60) has been the linchpin of Japanese alignment policy since the early part of the Cold War. Though the relationship was deliberately kept bilateral and exclusive, Tokyo nevertheless always benefitted from its affiliation with the greater 'San Francisco system' comprehending the other 'spokes' of the US alliance network in the Asia-Pacific, such as Australia and the ROK, among others. This served Japan well in its politico-economic development and rise to power until the 1990s, under the 'Yoshida doctrine' (*Yoshida rosen*).

Japanese confidence in this arrangement was greatly weakened by the collapse of the Soviet threat in 1991, the supposed *raison d'être* for American protection. Washington's subsequent retrenchment from Asia in the post-Cold War period alarmed Japan, making Tokyo feel a real danger of 'abandonment' for the first time. Faced with missile tests from a bellicose North Korea, a rising China nurturing historic grievances, and exacerbated at home by a general feeling of economic and social malaise, and 'according to the SAGE survey, over 90 percent of Japanese considered the world a more dangerous place in 2004, compared to twenty-five years ago' (Oros, 2008, p. 174).

To counter this fear, Japan was only too willing to increase its contribution to the bilateral alliance at Washington's behest, following the commencement of the 'war on terror' in 2001. Strong efforts have been made to reconfigure it for new challenges, as evidenced in the *Japan–US Alliance for the New Century* [Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA,

2006a)]. In 2009, the recently elected DPJ promised to take a tougher line with Washington with regard to creating a more 'equal' alliance relationship. Unfortunately, this initiative foundered on the resolution of the Okinawa bases relocation controversy, thus forestalling any major disruption or changes to its previous trajectory. Thus, Japan and the United States have since become steadily more 'enmeshed' in the security sphere (Oros, 2008, p. 80). But 'enmeshing' cuts both ways. As Samuels (2007, p. 5) describes it, Tokyo 'has responded to the possibility of abandonment by the United States by "hugging it close" – thereby enhancing the danger of entanglement'. This abandonment/entrapment dynamic is a constant feature of the alliance relationship. For example, Tokyo must now balance fears of 'entrapment' in a conflict between the United States and China over the Taiwan Strait and in American adventures in the Middle East, but at the same time finds itself appreciative of Washington's continued support against North Korea. The continued need for American protection was also highlighted as a result of a maritime incident near the disputed Senkaku islands in which Chinese fishing trawlers clashed with the Japanese Coast Guard. Tokyo was grateful and relieved by American declarations of support for Japan's territorial rights in this matter.

As ballast to this seemingly inescapable 'enmeshment' with the United States, Japan has sought to diversify its alignment portfolio. Samuels (2007, p. 9) states that this 'is not only a way for Japan to reduce risk but also a way to create options'. In addition to supporting and sometimes spearheading multilateral security engagement, Japan has sought new allied partners. This has occurred through the mechanism of strategic partnership with Indonesia, India (both 2006), Australia (2007), Vietnam, and the Philippines (both 2009). Though such 'strategic partnerships' have *de facto* existed in the past, in the post-Cold War period, it was Moscow and Beijing that formally instigated this new paradigm for security cooperation with an official declaration in 1996 (Rozman, 1998, pp. 396–415; Kuchins, 2001, pp. 259–275; Anderson, 1997). For Japan, as with other Asia-Pacific states seeking broad security collaboration, Nadkarni argues (2010, p. 46), 'strategic partnerships have become the instrument of choice'. It is important to study this new phenomenon from a Japanese perspective as they not only represent a crucial element of Tokyo's alignment policy, but also constitute a fundamental aspect of the regional security architecture of the Asia-Pacific (Sato, 2008, p. 159).

Though policy-analysis studies have been conducted on various strategic partnership dyads before, the author is the only party to propose an analytical model, drawn from Organizational Theories, to conduct a systematized study that codifies our conceptual understanding of strategic partnerships (Wilkins, 2008). Such theories have now been firmly established in the multi-disciplinary repertoire of IR, as the well-known works of Allison and Zelikow, and Sagan testifies (Sagan, 1995; Allison and Zelikow, 1999). The exercise here is further enhanced by the provision of a comparative analysis, employing this model, investigating Japan's two most important strategic partners as case studies. The article thus seeks to demonstrate the efficacy of the Organizational Theories framework, reveal many of the dynamics of Japan's key strategic partnerships, and create a better awareness and understanding of the role and functions of such new security mechanisms as tools of statecraft.

This will be accomplished in two stages. First, the article elaborates a basic model of 'strategic partnership' as a form of security alignment, based upon Organizational Theories. Second, it applies the framework incorporated in this model to examine consecutively the Japan–India and Japan–Australia dyads as case studies, before offering concluding observations.

2 Part I: The strategic partnership model of alignment

2.1 Definition

'Strategic partnerships' have firmly entered into the security lexicon to describe privileged bilateral relationships and have proliferated widely since the mid-1990s. Both in the Asia-Pacific region and globally, we have seen something of a 'scramble' for states seeking close alignment to upgrade their relations in this manner. We now hear talk of the desire for a US–China 'strategic partnership' in addition to the well-established Russo-Chinese and EU–Russia examples (Solana, 1999; Garrett, 2009). But what exactly do policy-makers mean when they apply the imprimatur of a 'strategic partnership' to describe a relationship (Kay, 2000, pp. 15–24)?

I define a strategic partnership as 'structured collaboration between states (or other "actors") to take joint advantage of economic

opportunities, or to respond to security challenges more effectively than could be achieved in isolation' (Wilkins, 2008, p. 363). It is very important to distinguish the 'valued-added' of strategic partnerships from 'normal' bilateral relations between states. As Nadkarni (2010, p. 48) attests, 'strategic partnerships call for greater engagement between the parties than mere ad hoc bilateral relationships that ensue as a result of normal diplomatic intercourse between states'. To expand on this with reference to Organizational Studies literature which examines the phenomenon in the business world, one can elaborate the following general characteristics of strategic partnership in the security sphere.[2]

First, it will be built around a general (security) purpose known as a 'system principle', rather than one specific task, such as deterring or combating a hostile state, as with a conventional military alliance. Second, strategic partnerships, unlike alliances, are primarily 'goal-driven' (positive) rather than 'threat-driven' (negative) alignments. Following from this, no enemy *state* is identified by the partnership as a 'threat', though the partnership may be concerned with joint security 'issue areas', such as proliferation or terrorism, for example. Third, strategic partnerships tend to be informal in nature and entail low commitment costs, rather than being enshrined in a formal alliance treaty that binds the participants to rigid courses of action, such as a mutual defense pact. This permits partners to retain a greater degree of autonomy and flexibility, thus alleviating the 'entrapment' dynamic common to orthodox alliances (Snyder, 1997). This in no way precludes issue-specific bilateral/multilateral declarations and other confidence-building measures (CBMs) though. A good example of this is the way that the Sino-Russian strategic partnership, established in 1996, nests within the multilateral framework of the SCO. Fourth, perhaps due to the term's inception in the business world, economic exchange appears most striking among their 'functional areas' of cooperation and acts as one of the key drivers behind the partnership, alongside security concerns. It is the additional security dimension, however, that distinguishes strategic partnerships from economic partnership agreements (EPAs). Strategic partnerships are therefore security alignments well-fitted to challenging

2 For example, see: Silver (1993), Bergquist *et al.* (1995), Mytelka (1991), Alter and Hage (1993), and Steward (1999).

non-traditional security threats, not provoking great power rivalry, whilst retaining an ability to 'hedge' against it (Weitsman, 2003).

The essence of strategic partnership arrangements is neatly summarized by Goldstein (2003, p. 75), when he writes that:

> the essential elements are a commitment to promoting stable relationships and extensive economic intercourse, muting disagreements about domestic politics in the interest of working together on matters of shared concern in international diplomacy, and routinizing the frequent exchange of official visits, especially those by representatives of each country's military and regular summit meetings between top government leaders.

One important caveat to this general definition should be posited. 'Strategic partnership' has also been the moniker of choice for some very asymmetrical, potentially exploitative relationships. Examples of these might include the Sino–Zimbabwean 'strategic partnership', or the France–Kazakhstan version (Embassy of the PRC to the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2006; McDermott, 2009). Though they could theoretically be designated 'strategic partnerships' in a narrow sense, they are qualitatively apart from the more equitable and broad-based security partnerships defined and described here and probably do not merit such a grandiose descriptor.

2.2 Analytical framework

The framework for investigating strategic partnerships is predicated on three analytical modules.[3] It tracks the association between strategic partners across a 'collaboration continuum': from its *formation*, through its *implementation*, to its *evaluation*. Through this process, it is possible to expose the different spheres in which the partners interact and ascertain the partnership's durability and prospects for growth.

(i) The *formation* of strategic partnerships can be reduced to three main factors: environmental uncertainty, strategic fit, and system principle. First, actors in a competitive ('anarchic') international environment are confronted by uncertainty and act to reduce this by searching for partners to share risks (Mytelka, 1991). Joining forces

3 For a fuller elaboration of the strategic partnership analytical framework, see (Wilkins, 2009).

for this purpose is an effort to mitigate the uncertainties of a potentially hostile international system. Second, suitable partners are identified and assessed in relation to their 'strategic fit', that is, their degree of mutual interests, perhaps shared values/ideology, and the resources and other benefits they might contribute to a partnership.[4] Third, once suitable partners have been selected, the parties concerned will promulgate their joint purpose into an overarching framework for cooperation and collaboration known as a 'system principle' ('a reason for being') (Roberts, 2004). The system principle embodies the joint organizational identity and emblematizes its goals. However, it should be noted that individual partners are perfectly capable of deviating from these official goals, through their pursuit of covert (or 'unofficial') national objectives. The political leadership, often supported by business and military interests, typically plays a key role in initiating and presiding over the formation process (Austin, 2000).

(ii) The next phase, *implementation*, concerns the building and maintenance of the partnership and involves differing degrees of formalization and institutionalization in each instance (Bergquist *et al.*, 1995). First, any strategic partnership incorporating national polities and their immense state apparatus will be a 'meta-organization' of tremendous complexity. This complexity will rise exponentially if other partners are added and thus necessitate further institutionalization in order to govern it effectively. Second, a form of organizational structure will emerge by mutual effort and consensus that serves to operationalize the partnership as an organizational entity. This structure defines the respective roles and responsibilities of the partners and the joint rules and policies to be observed. It establishes, on a vertical hierarchy, the various bureaucratic components of the partner states to be interconnected – executive, ministerial, financial, military, and public, for example. A typical strategic partnership can be characterized by its (officially) non-hierarchical, collaboration-based culture, and a nominally equal distribution of authority between the participants (Bergquist *et al.*, 1995). Third, the scope of the partnership's operations will be

4 See Bergquist *et al.* (1995, pp. 69–70) and Austin (2000, p. xii), and for further examination of these issues, see (Wilkins, 2007).

horizontally demarcated across designated 'functional areas' of cooperation – diplomatic/security, defense/military, economic, societal and cultural, for example. It is likely that the partnership will be built around a core of economic interaction, given the origin of strategic partnering in the business world. Depending on the degree of cooperation present on these two axes, we can determine how tightly the partners are 'coupled'. It should be stressed, however, that though the state partners pool their identity in a joint agreement, they do not merge or subsume their individual national sovereignty (as in the EU, for example).

(iii) *Evaluation* is the last phase of partnering and remains an ongoing process until the strategic partnership itself disbands. This phase provides metrics by which the organization's efficiency, success, and future prospects may be gauged. These factors determine whether the organization will decline and disintegrate, or whether it will build its capacity and perhaps expand its membership. First, the partnership can be measured against its efficacy in achieving its stated goals, those embodied in its system principle. If it is failing to attain these, it must be restructured or disbanded; an 'exit stage' has been reached. A good example of this would be the dissolution of the fragile and short-lived US–Russia 'strategic partnership' of the early 1990s (Nation and McFaul, 1997). The partnership can be expected to endure as long as it achieves its shared goals and still serves as a useful vehicle for attaining the individual goals of its member states. Second, the durability of the partnership will be reflected in its adherence to the common interests and values of its members. The more closely these align, the more durable the relationship (Wilkins, 2007). Moreover, the very existence of the partnership may shape the values and interests (even the goals) of the participant states by generating new interests or socializing them into new values or norms over time (as in security communities) (Adler and Barnett, 1998). Third, positive mutual perceptions by the constituent states are important. These stem from current and past behavior, ideology, and cultural affinities or clashes. The creation of a 'climate of trust' between partners through their demonstrated commitment to the organization is integral to its

successful performance and continued survival (Kegley and Raymond, 1990).

3 Part II: Case studies

3.1 Case study 1: Japan–Australia

(i) The *formation* of the JASP was a long time in the making. Having fought each other as fierce opponents during the Greater East Asia/Pacific War, Australia was cajoled by the United States into subscribing to the lenient 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty. Notwithstanding the 1957 Agreement on Commerce, it was not until the 1970s that Tokyo and Canberra started engaging in substantive bilateral relations (with the NARA Treaty of 1976) (Drysdale, 2006). During the comparatively stable Cold War, strategic environment linkages between the two countries remained largely limited to the economic sphere (Oba, 2004). It was the collapse of the bipolar Cold War system and the seismic shock of the 9/11 attacks on the United States, coupled with unmistakable shifts in global power dynamics brought about by the rise of China, that tore down such certainties. Faced with an unpredictable and potentially hostile international and regional environment, Japan conducted a serious re-evaluation of its foreign and security policy. According to Pyle (2007, p. 299), 'Japan confronted a radically transformed regional environment in an area that as yet offered no clear sense of what the future structure would be'. As alluded to above, Tokyo began to reconsider its relationship with its traditional ally, the United States, but also to search for new partners that shared the same interests, values, and security concerns. Canberra too felt this pressure: Chanlett-Avery and Vaughn (2008, p. 6) note that 'this uncertainty was a driver in Australia's pursuit of a security agreement with Japan'. Therefore Australia was quickly identified as good 'strategic fit' with Japanese objectives.

In 2006, Prime Minister Abe specifically pointed to Australia (and India) as key players in his vision for an 'Alliance of Democracies and Security architecture for the Asia Pacific region' (Okamoto, 2007). In this respect, Australia shared with Japan a number of core characteristics and values: a mature liberal political system, a market economy predicated on free trade, and a commitment to democracy and human rights. Moreover, there was a close synergy of strategic interests based upon the

criticality of protecting sea lines of communication (SLOCs), combating international terrorism, WMD proliferation, and maintaining regional stability throughout Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. Also, both countries had well-developed economic linkages evincing distinct complementarities, with Australia a vital source of raw materials and energy for Japan, and Japan a crucial supplier of electronics and manufactures for Australia. Indeed, 'the foundation stone is economic synergy' in the view of Cook and Shearer (2009, p. 3). Lastly, as the two countries shared the same great and powerful ally, the United States, there could have been no better 'strategic fit'.

Thus, once the political will was in place, and with Australia an enthusiastic party to agreement, a 'system principle' began to form at the core of joint Japan–Australia relations. Quite simply, according to the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation (JDSC), 'the strategic partnership between Japan and Australia is based upon democratic values, a commitment to human rights, freedom and rule of law, as well as shared security interests, mutual respect, trust and deep friendship' (MOFA, 2007a). The developing relationship went through a number of semantic evolutions, beginning as a 'partnership' (1995), then a 'creative partnership' (2002), followed by a 'strategic partnership' (2007), to a 'comprehensive strategic partnership' (2008), to its latest descriptor 'comprehensive strategic, security and economic partnership' (2009).

Finally, as the model predicts, leadership played a 'highly visible' role in the formation stage of the JASP (Walton, 2007, p. 76). During the formation phase, Prime Minister Howard and his counterparts met frequently. Walton (2008, p. 82) points out how 'Howard was credited with providing political leadership and strong bureaucratic support within Australia for a series of meaningful government sponsored conferences and declarations that have given the bilateral relationship impetus'. His counterparts for the main period of the formation phase, Prime Ministers Koizumi and Abe, were well known for their pro-Australian and American tendencies. As Walton (2008, p. 82) recounts, 'Abe saw Australia as a logical partner and set out to establish a new partnership based on alignment with the United States, the desire to secure vital Australian resources and to develop a quadrilateral arrangement with Australia, India and the US to block and contain China'. The close collaboration and personal synergies between the Japanese and Australian

leaderships were crucial in providing the impetus for the JASP's formation.

(ii) As the model predicts, the next phase, that of *implementation*, follows. Six months after the JDSC, an Action Plan for Implementation was drawn up (MOFA, 2007d). On this basis, a form of institutional structure to the strategic partnership began to emerge to operationalize the JASP, which can be categorized into vertical and horizontal linkages, through which the two states are 'coupled'.

The vertical hierarchy of the JASP contains both Track-I and Track-II elements. First, at the top of the hierarchy are 'heads-of-government-level visits' (MOFA, 1995). These may be bilateral or within the context of the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD), with its Security and Defence Cooperation Forum (SDCF), or other multilateral fora, each serving as an opportunity for an exchange of views and a continued validation of the JASP. Second, are ministerial linkages, with the implementation plan specifying strategic dialog between foreign and defense ministers on an annual basis (the '2 + 2' formula) (MOFA, 2007a). Third, the (updated) *Memorandum on Defence Cooperation* (2008) facilitates military-to-military level contacts, providing for unit-to-unit personnel exchanges, staff talks, regular strategic policy discussions, and joint exercises (Ministry of Defense, Japan, 2008). This builds upon the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Combating International Terrorism (2003) and the prior assignment of military attachés in 1996. Fourth, in terms of civil cooperation, agreements are in place for law enforcement collaboration, including intelligence sharing. Fifth, an EPA is under negotiation to cover the manifold economic linkages between the two countries. Finally, in order to build grassroots support for the JASP, public linkages have been crucial, with events such as the 2006 Year of Exchange, for example, the aim of which was to 'promote friendship, deeper mutual understanding and cooperation between Australia and Japan, especially at the grass roots level' (DFAT, 2006). The JDSC also highlights 'people to people links, fostered over decades through business, education, tourism and cultural contacts have made a profound contribution to the relationship' (MOFA, 1995).

On the horizontal axis, a spectrum of 'functional areas' for cooperation can be identified. First, one of the core purposes of the JASP is diplomatic and security cooperation, broadly defined. Joint diplomatic support is evident in the JASP, with, for example, Canberra

affirming its support for Japan's entry into the UN Security Council, or the joint commitment to prevent WMD proliferation through upholding of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) plus active participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Indeed, Japan and Australia jointly chair the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), as well as working together in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) (Cook and Shearer, 2009). Both parties are active proponents of multilateral security organizations, having been instrumental in the establishment of APEC and many of its precursors (Oba, 2004). The JDSC affirms the priority of joint cooperation within APEC, ARF, and EAS, 'recognizing that strengthened bilateral security cooperation will make a significant contribution in this context' (MOFA, 2007a). More concretely, 'new security challenges' such as transnational crime, border security, counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, piracy, energy security, pandemic and humanitarian relief are all specified in the JDSC as priority areas for collaborative action.

Second, in the defense or military sector, there are strong linkages. In this respect, both partners have a moderate degree of military interoperability based on their alliance with the United States. The JSDF and ADF conduct regular multilateral military exercises, such as KAKADU (2008), though bilateral exercises have yet to occur (Australian Government Department of Defence, 2008). Both militaries have gained valuable bilateral operational experience as a result of the joint deployment in Iraq (2005–06), plus their joint participation in Tsunami relief efforts (2004) and peacekeeping in Cambodia (1993–94) and United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET, 1999). Third, as the model predicts, economic cooperation forms a major platform of the JASP. Walton (2008, p. 75) argues that 'commercial/economic links have been (and still remain) at the very core of the bilateral relationship'. Japan is the second most important trading partner for Australia, and a feasibility study for a free-trade agreement (FTA) is currently underway to increase bilateral exchanges to unprecedented levels. Joint membership and shared aims in the G20 is also evident. The two countries also loosely coordinate their overseas development assistance (ODA), in particular in the Pacific Islands (PICs), where there is fear of growing Chinese influence (Cook and Shearer, 2009). Finally, societal/cultural cooperation is a key element in the functional areas of

cooperation between Japan and Australia. Dedicated Japan–Australia conferences (now on its fifth iteration, 2008), organizations such as the Australia–Japan Foundation, and other Track-II initiatives play a significant role in broadening the JASP.

(iii) *Evaluation* of the JASP is an incomplete and ongoing process. Judged against the broad goals embedded in the partnership's system principle, as outlined in the JDSC, and elaborated in the subsequent Action Plan, some moderate success has been attained. Certainly, both partners have affirmed their commitment to further capacity building as enunciated in the 2008 *Joint Statement on Comprehensive Strategic, Security and Economic Partnership* (MOFA, 2008a). Despite the instability of domestic politics in Japan, and more recently Australia, the JASP has made steady progress. Australian Foreign Minister Steven Smith declared in May of 2010 that 'strategic cooperation with Japan has never been stronger' (DFAT, 2010).

With regard to diplomatic and security goals, Japan and Australia have worked side-by-side in regional security institutions, both unveiling their own (relatively) congruous visions for 'East Asia Community'/'Asia-Pacific Community'. The current changes in government on both sides, however, raise questions as to whether these initiatives will now be actively pursued under the new leadership. Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans co-chaired the 2009 ICNND meeting in Hiroshima, which produced the draft report 'Eliminating Nuclear Threats: A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers' (*The Japan Times, 2009*). Japan and Australia have worked closely and harmoniously upon maintaining their alliance relationships with the United States, including their participation in Iraq, then Afghanistan/Indian Ocean missions. As a result, Terada (2010, p. 4.) argues, 'the recent development of the Australia-Japan security and defense partnership was a welcome move to the United States'. Their cooperation is given a trilateral context in the form of the TSD, discussed in detail below (p. XX).

Coordination through the foreign and defense ministers' annual meetings – the '2 + 2' dialog – has proceeded smoothly. According to Stephen Smith (2008, p. 2), 'the 2 + 2 highlights the reality that Australia and Japan are firm friends, close partners and key players in addressing regional and global security challenges'. At the military–military level, both countries view the other's expansion of military

capabilities favorably, though projects such as joint JSDF–ADF bilateral exercises on Australian soil have yet to materialize. Provision is in place for unit-to-unit exchanges, and several reciprocal port visits have ensued by naval and air units. At the most recent 2 + 2 meeting (May 2010), Japan and Australia signed an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) to allow for greater logistical compatibility between their military forces (DFAT, 2010). This is a major step in increasing military interoperability in a bilateral (and trilateral, with the United States) context to augment cooperation in peacekeeping, humanitarian, or disaster relief operations. Sources at the MOFA and Ministry of Defense have indicated that information/intelligence sharing may be the next development in harmonized security relations.

In the economic sphere, Japan and Australia are jointly committed to cooperating to overcome the global financial crisis, and work together in the G20 to this effect. In terms of purely bilateral economic interchange, the JASP looks healthy. Tokyo and Canberra are agreed on the desirability of an FTA (estimated to benefit +$39 billion for Australia and +$27 billion for Japan over a 20-year period), as their commercial relations continue to expand. For example, Chevron Australia recently inked major natural gas supply deal with Tokyo (and Seoul) (Williams, 2009). The parties also affirm their desire to stimulate the service and financial sectors of bilateral trade. A report commissioned by the Japan Australia Business Cooperation Committee judges that 'both countries can expect to gain significant benefits from trade liberalisation' (Kimura *et al.*, 2007, p. 4). Other commentators are less sanguine and point to the political rather than economic drivers of the proposed FTA. Terada (2010, p. 14) postulates that 'should the Japan-Australia FTA occur, it might be Japan's first bilateral FTA that is promoted primarily on the basis of political and strategic consideration rather than economic consideration'.

Lastly, cooperation in a new functional area, that of environmental security, is developing rapidly. Both partners have affirmed their commitment to cooperate on climate change, cutting greenhouse emissions and supporting the Asia-Pacific Partnership (APP) on Clean Development and Climate (APPCDC, 2010). They also cooperate through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). To this purpose, Japan and Australia are working together on the Callide Oxy-Fuel project – a prototype greenhouse-gas-capture mechanism for coal-fired power stations (Australian Coal Association, 2010).

Furthermore, the partners are committed to strengthening their scientific and technological linkages 'to take a fresh look at existing science and technology cooperation with a view to identifying new areas of mutual interest' (MOFA, 2008a).

In terms of 'covert' goals, the increasing security and military cooperation between Japan and Australia (within the context of the TSD 'mini-lateral') serves to improve confidence among the allied capital that China, should it become more assertive in the region, can be managed with a united front. Terada (2010, p. 12) argues that 'the rise of China was a new factor that was perceived to reconnect Japan and Australia in more strategic and political arenas'. On this score, Japan likely welcomes the expansion of Australian military, particularly naval power, twinned with reference to rising China, articulated in the *2009 Defence White Paper* (Australian Government Department of Defence, 2009). In addition, joint efforts to cooperate in the PICs are a subtle way of countering a perceived attempt by Beijing to increase its influence in this region.

Mutual perceptions between the two countries appear to be very positive, if not always that deeply embedded. Oba (2004, pp. 15–16) correctly observes that both Japan and Australia can be classified as 'liminal nations', 'outsiders' in Asia, distanced by history and culture from their neighbors. Public perceptions of Japan in Australia are extremely encouraging, with respondents to the Lowy Institute public opinion poll (Hanson, 2009, p. 3), rating their feelings toward to Japan (67) practically equal to the United States (68). A variety of dedicated Track-II initiatives involving increased exchanges of parliamentarians and Diet members, alongside business and tourist connections, continue to maintain amicable relations (MOFA, 2008d). Prime Minister Howard was probably correct when he stipulated that 'Australia has no greater friend in Asia than Japan' (Truss, 2006).

The most noteworthy point of friction between the two countries' friendly relations is the 'whaling issue'. Popular opinion is Australia is generally hostile to Japan's whaling missions in the South Pacific, parts of which are claimed as Australia's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Rathus (2010) argues that 'there appears to be a perception gap between Australia and Japan over the significance of whaling to the overall relationship'. The Japanese seem to be unaware of the popular sentiment among the Australian public for maritime conservation. Takero Aoyama

(cited by Rathus, 2010) of the Oceania Division of MOFA stated that 'the whaling issue is simply not that important a problem in our relationship'. Tensions were exacerbated in 2009, when then Prime Minister Rudd threatened to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice. It remains unclear if Australia's current Prime Minister Gillard will pursue legal action against Japan. Nevertheless, Rathus (2010) concludes that despite the rhetorical *sturm und drang* 'the dispute about Japanese whaling has caused no significant damage' to the JASP efforts at this stage.

Australia's defense white paper *Force 2030* 'describes Japan, and only Japan, as a "critical strategic partner"' (Thomson, 2009, p. 6). According to the Australian Ambassador to Japan (McLean, 2009), 'Prime Minister Aso recently described the Australia-Japan relationship as reaching the most productive time in history. . . . It's the increasing scope and depth of our strategic relationship that really bears out Prime Minister Aso's judgement'. Indeed, this evaluation has provided much evidence of 'deepening' (military, security, economic, areas) and 'widening' (environmental, science and technology areas) (MOFA, 2008a). Firm comment on the prospects for political cooperation between the new Japanese and Australian political leaders is difficult at this time due to questions regarding the survivability of the Kan and Gillard governments. Domestic preoccupations may also draw attention away from any major initiatives in the bilateral realm. Lastly, possible divergences between Tokyo and Canberra may emerge with regard to the severity of a putative 'China threat'. While both Japan and Australia are extremely dependent on Beijing as a trading partner, it is clear that, as a result of Australia's geographical distance from the PRC, security dilemmas are more keenly felt by Tokyo than by Canberra. This was highlighted in a recent dispute between Japan and China over territorial infringement of the disputed Senkaku (Daioyutai) islands, when Chinese fishing trawlers clashed with the Japanese Coast Guard (MOFA, 2010b).

Will the JASP become a fully fledged alliance? This is unlikely at this time since 'domestic difficulties [in Japan] make the concept of an alliance politically untenable' (Walton, 2007, p. 85). However, as mentioned in the introduction, this may not be an altogether negative signal. Few new military-alliance formations have been created in the post-Cold war period. Instead, this article has argued strategic partnerships and coalitions are now becoming the preferred tools of alignment policy. As

Tertrais asks (2004, p. 148), 'Are not bilateral strategic partnerships between some Western-orientated states stronger and more solid than some more formal military alliances?'

3.2 Japan–India

The *formation* of a Japan–India strategic partnership (JISP) is also a very recent occurrence, with little precedent. During the Cold War, Japan paid little attention to India, considering it a developing nation without major geopolitical or economic consequence. This is not to say that Tokyo viewed India unfavorably. The Indians did not shun Japan in the early post-war period as others in Asia did, including Australia (Sisodia and Naidu, 2005). Indeed, New Delhi actually provided support to Japan's reconstruction efforts. During the post-war period 'a vast reservoir of goodwill and respect underlay the relationship' between Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Kishi Nobusuke (Jain, 2007, p. 2). As India subscribed to non-alignment and Japan disappeared into the American security embrace, relations became distant. The Treaty of Peace (1952) and the Agreement of Commerce (1958) were the only two notable bilateral accords between the two countries throughout this period. Japan concentrated more on China as a target for investment (after 1972).

The end of the Cold War and the rise of China, coupled with India's belated but impressive economic 'take-off', caused a drastic reappraisal among Japanese policy-makers. Responding to 'the new surge of change taking place in Asia' and an uncertain and unpredictable strategic environment in the Asia-Pacific, the two states were propelled toward an intensified bilateral relationship (MOFA, 2005). Mohan (Naidu, 2007a, p. 169) notes that 'given the increasingly hostile geostrategic environment that Tokyo perceives in East Asia . . . from a Japanese viewpoint India is increasingly seen as an important option for partnership'. The Japanese Ambassador to India, Yasukuni Enoki, declared that 'Japan will position India as a major power in Asian and international society. . . Japan has a strong desire to strengthen its global partnership with India, which is essential for stability, prosperity and peace of the world' (cited in Kapila, 2005). The partnership also came at a time of change for Delhi.

> Emboldened by its rapid and sustained economic growth story, and a new strategic partnership with the most powerful country in the

> world, the United States, India has shed its foreign policy shackles of non-alignment and is slowly seeking to develop interests-based friendships and partnerships with the major powers of the world. (Suri, 2007, p. 2)

Faced with an uncertain strategic environment, Tokyo quickly perceived India as a good 'strategic fit'. Mohan (2007) notes that 'unlike much of East Asia, India carries no baggage about Japan's history or a grudge against its nationalism'. The India–Japan Joint Study Group (JSG) was quick to identify that 'The Indian and Japanese economies are highly complementary. Japan is relatively labour-scarce but capital abundant. India's endowments are the reverse' (MOFA, 2006c). Both countries are established democracies cleaving to freedom of speech, human rights, and free-trade principles. The 2005 statement on global partnership proclaims 'shared democratic values and commitment to human rights, pluralism, and the rule of law underpin the global partnership between the two countries' (MOFA, 2005). Though they have pressing localized security concerns, in Japan's case, North Korea, and in India's, Pakistan, they share broader regional concerns with regard to freedom of the seas (SLOCs), non-proliferation (which links the DPRK and Pakistan), and counter-terrorism. Partnership with Japan was seen by Delhi as a serious prop to its 'look East' policy of engagement in the Asia-Pacific. Thus, 'Japan and India share common interests in such fields as maintaining the safety and security of the sea lanes in the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean regions, and fighting against transnational crimes, terrorism, piracy and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction' (MOFA, 2007b). This speaks to 'a broad convergence of their long-term political, economic and strategic interests, aspirations and concerns' (MOFA, 2005). These shared values and interests have coalesced into a 'system principle' that unites the partners. The 2006 joint statement on Japan–India Strategic and Global Partnership encapsulates it thus:

> The current context of Japan-India relations is rooted in their similar perceptions of the evolving environment in the region and the world at large. It is driven by converging long-term political, economic and strategic interests, aspirations and concerns and underpinned by a common commitment to democracy, open society, human rights, rule of law and free market economy. (MOFA, 2006b)

This was reiterated in a latter *Joint Statement on the Advancement of the Strategic and Global Partnership* (MOFA, 2008c) and its accompanying *Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation* (MOFA, 2008b) – documents that closely mirror their Japan–Australian counterparts (MOFA, 2007a, 2008a).

Again, as the model surmises, the executive leadership was instrumental in building the momentum toward strategic partnership. This was initiated with Japanese Prime Minister Toshiro Mori's visit to New Delhi in 2000, where he was given the privilege of making an address from the Red Fort (*Lal Qila*). This resulted in the elevation of bilateral relations to a 'Global Partnership'. Prime Minister Koizumi later followed with a visit to New Delhi in 2005 which produced the *Japan–India Partnership in a New Asian Era: Strategic Orientation of Japan–India Global Partnership and Eight-fold Initiative for Strengthening Japan–India Global Partnership* (MOFA, 2005). By 2005, the partners were committed to cooperation on the bilateral, regional, and global levels. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Tokyo in 2006 was marked by his reciprocal privilege of addressing the Diet and the promulgation of the *Japan–India Strategic and Global Partnership* (henceforth referred to in brief as 'strategic partnership' or JISP). Echoing Prime Minister Abe's declarations (above), Prime Minister Singh spoke to the Diet of the fundamental role that India and Japan could play to bring an 'arc of "advantage" and prosperity' to Asia, reiterating Aso's earlier invocation of an 'arc of freedom and prosperity' (Singh, 2006). In 2007, it was recognized that the 2006 strategic partnership declaration had 'elevated the partnership between the two countries to a new level' (MOFA, 2007c). The new Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama visited New Delhi at the end of 2009 for a summit meeting to continue their annual strategic dialog. Naidu suggests that 'if the eight-point initiative agreed upon during Koizumi's visit laid a solid foundation to realize the strategic partnership, Manmohan Singh's December 2006 visit created the much-needed institutional mechanisms' (Naidu, 2007b).

(ii) The *implementation* of the JISP follows a similar pattern to the JASP version. Building on the 2005 Koizumi–Singh Declarations which set out an *Eightfold Initiative* for implementation outlining the levels and areas of cooperation, a *Roadmap for New Dimensions to the Strategic and Global Partnership* was drawn up in 2007 (MOFA, 2007c). The 2008 Joint Statements committed the parties to work on an Action Plan for

Implementation, as in the Australia–Japan case. These documents are very clear in setting out the goals and functions of the JISP. It

> will involve closer political and diplomatic coordination on bilateral, regional, multilateral and global issues, comprehensive economic engagement, stronger defence relations, greater technological cooperation as well as working towards a quantum increases in cultural ties, educational linkages and people-to-people contacts. (MOFA, 2006b)

The parties are 'coupled' at several levels of the vertical hierarchy, in a similar convention to the JASP. At the top are annual summit-level meetings by the heads of government. Below this are meetings between the foreign (a 'strategic dialog') and defense ministers ('defence policy dialog') of the two powers (emulating the '2 + 2' formula of the JASP). This is supplemented by regular exchanges between the Finance, Trade and Industry, Agriculture, Information and Communications Technology, Science and Technology, Tourism and Civil Aviation, portfolios. It also includes exchanges and consultation between the armed services at the military-to-military level.

On the horizontal axis, 'functional areas' of cooperation span several sectors. First, in the diplomatic/security area, the parties are committed to mutual support and cooperation on a number of issues. Both parties affirm their commitment, along with the other G4 states (Germany, Brazil), to reforming the UN Security Council to allow them permanent membership. 'Human security' and the achievement of UN Millennium Development Goals are also identified key areas of shared responsibility (MOFA, 2007b). According to Sikri (2006, p. 5) 'both countries have a role to play in imparting momentum to the trend towards the emergence of a multipolar, democratic and equitable world order'. In the Asia-Pacific, they seek to 'explore a new architecture for closer regional cooperation in Asia' (MOFA, 2005). In this sphere 'Japan and India should actively cooperate to promote multi-layered frameworks and dialogues for regional cooperation in Asia, including the EAS, SAARC and the ASEAN Regional Forum' (MOFA, 2007b). In terms of cooperation on non-traditional security challenges, the JDSC aims to enhance cooperation on coast guard activities (anti-piracy/terrorism), other transnational criminal activities, peacekeeping, disaster relief and management, disarmament and non-proliferation (MOFA, 2008b). In the

military/defense sector, the strategic partners seek to coordinate more closely their maritime cooperation, against seaborne threats including pirates, terrorists, and possible Chinese incursions in their EEZs.

The economic sector plays a prominent role in this strategic partnership. Prime Minister Singh states that 'economic ties must be the bedrock of our relationship' (Singh, 2006). Indeed, Japan has long been a provider of substantial overseas development assistance (ODA) to India. Building on this, both partners are studying an EPA and in the meantime are determined to increase bilateral trade to $20 billion by 2010. To this purpose, the Japan–India Special Economic Partnership Initiative (SEPI) was announced in 2006. The SEPI promotes Japanese investment and technical assistance to India to improve the country's infrastructure. A good example is the assistance provided by Mitsubishi in the construction of the Delhi Metro. Chief among the projects slated are the 'Delhi–Mumbai Industrial Corridor' including special economic zones (SEZs) and dedicated multi-modal high axle load freight corridors on Mumbai–Delhi and Delhi–Howrah routes. The Japan–India Energy Dialogue has been set up to enhance cooperation in the energy sector. An oil and natural gas cooperation dialog already exists between METI and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India, while a Task Force on the Indian Power Sector has been created by METI to study power supply needs in the country. To manage the projected influx of Japanese investment in India, the ministries of finance are cooperating to facilitate this through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). Lastly, cooperation in science and technology is expedited through the Japan–India Science and Technology Initiative (2006), with MoUs between India (Department of Science and Technology) and Japan (RIKEN). The possibilities of space cooperation are also being explored by JAXA (Japan) and the Indian Space Research Organisation.

The two remaining functional areas of cooperation are environmental and civil. In the first case, supporting the UN Bali Action Plan on climate change, a joint statement on Enhancement of Cooperation on Environmental Protection and Energy Security was issued in 2007, and a ministerial-level Energy Dialogue established. Second, both partners recognized the need to build grass-roots support for the JISP. With Sisodia and Naidu (2006, p. vi) lamenting, as of 2006, that 'intellectual exchange between India and Japan is another area that is conspicuous by its invisibility'. To this effect, there are plans for a much greater Japanese

cultural presence in India and the prioritizing of people-to-people links. This will be achieved through the establishment of Japan Cultural Centre of the Japan Foundation, academic and youth exchanges, and Japanese assistance to develop an Indian Institute of Technology. It is hoped that that there will be 30,000 Japanese language learners in India by 2010, since the 'language barrier' is one of the few major problems confronting the JISP at present (MOFA, 2006c). These efforts were crowned by Festival of Japan in India (2007) and Festival of India in Japan (2008).

(iii) *Evaluating* the JISP is difficult due to its relatively short lifespan. In 2007, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared that Japan and India are 'blessed with the largest potential for development of any bilateral relationship in the world' (cited in Mohan, 2007). Certainly there has been strong momentum since the strategic partnership was officially promulgated in 2005/06. One way of evaluating the JISP's success would be to refer back to the *Eight-fold Initiative* (2005), which, according to Mathur (2009, p. 2), 'provides the overarching paradigm for stronger ties'. By this yardstick, the JISP has registered some notable successes in establishing high-level exchanges, advancing economic cooperation, opening dialog on diplomatic and security issues and multilateralism, plans for 'sci-tech' collaboration, and people-to-people exchanges. To maintain the symmetry of the strategic partnership model's application to the cases, however, this section will evaluate the partnership's accomplishments through the following criteria: functional areas of cooperation, covert goals, mutual perceptions, and concluding prospects.

In the diplomatic/security area, rhetorical commitment has been marked. Both parties are vocal in their advancement of inclusive regional multilateral architecture, such as the EAC. Likewise, mutual support for their respective P5-membership campaigns continues, but has yet to bear fruit. Security dialog between the two has been firmly established, but a level of practical cooperation akin the JASP has yet to materialize. With regard to military/defense cooperation, 'significant progress has been made by both countries in this respect in the form of visits by military dignitaries, naval goodwill cruises and joint anti-piracy exercises by the coast-guards of the two countries. Japanese and Indian military officers are attending each other's training institutions for various courses', according to Kapila (2005). Both the Indian Navy and MSDF participate in the annual Exercise Malabar, with the US Navy, in order to increase joint interoperability (US 7th Fleet Public Affairs, 2009). The

parties also cooperated as a 'core group' (with the United States and Australia) in the 2004 tsunami relief effort, which helped test interoperability and quadrilateral coordination (see below). Mohan [Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS, 2007)] thus indicates an 'enormous potential for the Indian and Japanese navies to broaden the positive impact of their cooperation for the region as a whole'. Naidu (2007a) also speculates that BMD may be a fertile area for cooperation, especially within a trilateral/quadrilateral context (see below).

In the economic area of cooperation, bilateral trade has expanded from $4.1billion in 2001 to $10.2 billion in 2007 (MOFA, 2010a). According to the *Straits Times*, two-way trade reached about $13 billion in 2008 and is expected to reach $20 billion in 2010, easily supposing the target of $20 billion by 2020, envisaged previously. On the debit side, however, serious difficulties have been encountered in this area. Sasaki (MOFA, 2007e) notes that 'Japanese companies advancing into India have problems dealing with its infrastructure, complicated legal and taxation systems, and inefficient regulations for shipments among regional governments'. Thus, 11 rounds (by 2009) of negotiations have been held on creating an EPA to smooth these difficulties, though serious domestic efforts on the part of Delhi will be crucial. On the other hand, however, Japan's FDI in India over the same period has soared from ¥18.4 billion in 2001 to ¥178.2 billion in 2007, an almost 10-fold increase (MOFA, 2010a). The *Straits Times* (Velloor, 2009) records that Japanese investment in India in 2009 soared to $5.2 billion (compared with China's $3.6 billion). This registers as an enormous success for the JISP. Thus, opinion polls conducted in India showed that 94% of those surveyed thought that the presence of Japanese companies was a positive development (Singh, 2006).

With regard to environmental and energy security cooperation, the 2007 heads of government summit meeting confirmed JISP cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UNFCCC, EAS Energy Ministers Meeting and APP, and Five-Party Energy Ministers Meeting (MOFA, 2007b). Much of the investment in India has been aimed at energy production and efficiencies, with Japan sharing its own advanced technologies. Green technology is an area in which Japan is a pioneer. A large section of the budget is allocated to energy efficiencies and renewable energy resources, while Tokyo has made ambitious targets for reducing carbon emissions (Cukier, 2009). This has been facilitated through the

annual Japan–India Energy Dialogue at the Ministerial-level. In the civil sphere the governments held 'Japan–India Exchange Year' in 2007, following through on their promise to nurture people-to-people contacts. This, combined with other interactions between the two parties has fostered warm relations between India and Japan (see mutual perceptions below). Jain (2007, p. 7) determines that 'this fortifies an underlay of linkages and goodwill at the popular level to help sustain the expansion of bilateral relations'.

It is an open secret that Japan seeks to 'hedge' against the rise of China's as a regional hegemony. Jain (2007, p. i) posits that 'Japan is now seeking a strategic alignment with India to balance a rising China'. Thus Suri (2007, p. 1) declares that 'Japan has sought partners in Asia, other than the US, to limit Chinese influence, if not to contain China'. Likewise, 'India is wary of a China that is striking strategic partnerships with its neighbours, including Pakistan and Bangladesh. A strong tie-up with Japan enables India to play China's own game in its back yard' (ibid., p. 2). This also factors-in the India–US strategic partnership, to complete the picture. 'The prospects for the India-Japan strategic partnership are boosted by the fact that Japan's key ally, the United States, has also embarked on a strategic partnership with India' (ibid., p. 1).

The close alignment of Japanese and Indian values and interests bodes well for further reinforcement of the JISP. Naidu (2007b, p. 966) affirms that 'India and Japan recognise that they share not just many common values as Asia's oldest and well-established democracies, but also have commonality of interests and concerns consequent to the rapidly changing economic and geostrategic environment in Asia.' One area where the partners may differ is their nuclear principles. Though all the joint declarations are careful to avoid it, the fact is that India is not an NPT signatory and the domestic Japanese position does not view this kindly [as evidenced by Tokyo's imposition of sanctions after Delhi's 1998 nuclear tests (lifted in 2001)]. As Hiwatari (2006, p. 22) records 'nuclear weapons are a thorny issue between the two counties'. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that Tokyo will obstruct India through the NSG, since Japan is a leader in nuclear-reactor building and thus stand to benefit greatly from Indian energy expansion in this sector (Naidu, 2007b).

Mutual perceptions between the partners are highly encouraging. The political leadership will continue as a key driver behind future relations.

With Japan's change of government, it is too soon to determine whether the Kan government will replicate Abe's earlier Indophilia. Mathur (2009, p. 1) indicates that 'there seems to be some uncertainty clouding bilateral relations given the scant interest shown towards India after the installation of the DPJ government'. At the popular level, however, 2009 Public Opinion Poll carried out in India showed that '76&per; of respondents perceived the current state of Japan-India relations either as being very friendly or friendly, showing that a positive image of Japan has been established in India' (MOFA, 2009). In addition, Japan's generous ODA to date has 'generated goodwill among the Indian people for Japan' (MOFA, 2008c). More recently, Japan's prompt and generous assistance in India's economic crisis in 1991 is also remembered favorably (Singh, 2006). Lastly, an influx of IT engineers and managers into Japan has helped raise India's profile in that country – one already largely perceived favorably as the progenitor of Buddhism (Jain, 2007).

In summary, since its nominal establishment in 2001, but especially beginning with the increased activity launched in 2005–06, the partnership has gone from strength to strength. Jain (2007, p. 1) considers that 'Japan's recent interest in India has taken off from a very low base and is set to accelerate'. Now Mathur (2009, p. 1) asserts that 'the trajectory of India-Japan relations is firmly set and demands concerted implementation of the roadmap already drawn out'. The JISP has achieved substantial gains in initiating and codifying cooperation between Japan and India, but the more ambitious (economic, security) activities are still in the study or planning phases. Thus, there is 'still immense untapped potential for the further expansion of bilateral relations' (MOFA, 2008c). Thus, Suri (2007, p. 4) concludes: 'Firm determination to give the relationship a concrete form exists at the highest political level on both sides and, as a result, both countries have worked hard over the past few years to establish a solid foundation for building the relationship into a truly strategic partnership.'

4 The United States and trilateralism; quadrilateralism?

As alluded to in the introduction of this article (p. XX), there is one final context that needs to be considered in analyzing these two cases. Both strategic partnership dyads examined above should be considered

in relation to their connections to the United States. Japan is formally allied to Washington in the form of the Mutual Security Treaty outlined above, as is Australia through the ANZUS Treaty. India has its own strategic partnership with the United States. In all these instances, the United States will bring strong influence to bear on the nature and prospects of bilateral cooperation. As Ball (2006, p. 180) observes, 'US strategic policies and defence decisions will determine the directions, pace and dimensions of Australia-Japan security relations'. Likewise, Soeya argues that 'the viewpoint of the Japan-US alliance must be included when discussing security between Japan and India, and at the same time, Japan and India must discuss the function of the Japan-US alliance' (MOFA, 2007e).

This influence has translated into encouragement for greater interaction between the 'spokes' of Washington's regional allies. This often takes the form of 'mini-lateral' arrangements. Medcalf (2008, p. 25) notes how 'in recent years a growing taste has emerged in Asia, among powers large and small, for what might be termed minilateralism: the self-selection of small subgroups of countries'. Foremost in facilitating the connection of the alliance spokes has been the TSD, firmly linking Canberra and Tokyo together with the US 'hub' (Tow *et al.*, 2007). This trilateral arrangement, upgraded to ministerial level exchanges in 2006, acts as a forum for shaping responses to joint security concerns, especially non-traditional security threats, within the region, though some, including the Chinese themselves, have pointed to its opacity and potential role in the 'containment' of the PRC. Hence Medcalf (2008, p. 27) judges that 'it is fair to say there is a China-balancing element at play' in the TSD. This was brought into stark relief when a short-lived effort to expand the TSD to include India occurred in 2008 (Chellaney, 2008). Beijing raised serious diplomatic protests over this proposal to form a democratic quadrilateral (or QSD). Both Australia and Japan, sensitive to Chinese pressure, allowed the proposal to become 'effectively neutralized', then 'jettisoned' (Tow, 2008, p. 2).

This result does not, however, preclude its future re-instigation, trilateral cooperation between Japan, India, and the United States – or for that matter, trilateral cooperation between Japan, Australia, and India (especially as Canberra forges a strategic partnership of its own with Delhi) (Miller, 1968). Trilateral or quadrilateral cooperation still holds great potential. A US–India–Japan Report by the CSIS (CSIS, 2007)

concludes that 'future trilateral cooperation should address areas such as peacekeeping operations, technology cooperation, and intelligence sharing and should involve coast guards as well'. Suri argues (2007, p. 3) 'US-India-Japan cooperation, with the possible addition of Australia, could create a core arrangement that could evolve into a larger security architecture in Asia'. Though he believes it is inadvisable to formalize this relationship, 'India, Japan, the US and Australia should not seek to enter a formal alliance; rather a quadrilateral security dialogue is the best mechanism to promote cooperation without ruffling the feathers of China' (2007, p. 4). Likewise, Ishigaki (2006, p. 11) also comments that 'it will be in the interest of the . . . countries and the whole region that Japan, Australia and India – three large democracies of the region – cooperate to work together to make an East Asian Community'.

5 Conclusion

In the last half-decade or so, Japan has diversified its portfolio of allies, beyond the traditional Tokyo–Washington bilateral relationship, which itself has been strengthened and expanded. Harris (2010) argues that 'the DPJ is following in the footsteps of [the] Meiji oligarchs and Yoshida Shigeru in trying to maximize Japan's foreign policy options and limit the degree to which it is dependent on others'. As Samuels (2007, p. 7) cautions 'normal nations, like normal firms, overinsure their security because alliances, like contracts, can easily be broken'. This alignment adaptation has thus been spurred by Japanese uncertainty regarding the strategic environment in the Asia-Pacific, and in response to a range of 'new' security threats. As Tertrais (2004, p. 135) attests: 'The threats of terrorism and proliferation have strengthened many old alliances and have fostered the creation of new alignments'. Now we are witnessing a more subtle but complex 'network' of alignment relations throughout the region, in which these new informal and flexible 'strategic partnerships' often supersede the formal military pacts of the Cold War period.

This is indeed the case with Japan's newly cemented strategic partnerships with Australia and India. Apart from the United States, these are the only two countries to have a security agreement with Tokyo. This represents gains to all parties, as (former) Australian Foreign Minister Steven Smith (2008, p. 8) testifies – 'the depth and intensity, in particular, of the modern Australia-Japan relationship is a significant asset for

both countries, and will serve each of us well as we advance into "the Asia-Pacific century".' Furthermore, Mohan (2007) determines that 'after decades of mutual neglect, Japan and India are well set to build a new alliance [sic] that has the potential to transform Asian geopolitics'. This explains why, in the words of Sohn (2009, p. 6), 'Tokyo has worked hard to add Australia and India into its bilateral alliance with the United States.'

This article has shown that the strategic partnership model outlined in Part I is an efficacious analytical tool to understand the formation and dynamics of the Japan–Australia and Japan–India cases. Indeed, the pattern of strategic partnering in both instances demonstrates remarkable symmetry in its formation and implementation. Mulgan (2010) argues that 'the Japan-India Joint Declaration was modelled on the Japan-Australia accord. Despite the changes of government in both Australia and Japan, there are striking similarities between the two action plans.' The strategic partnership model is therefore reinforced by the empirical findings.

In conclusion, the strategic partnership model of alignment is ideally suited to Japan, as a complement to its core alliance with the United States. First, it is part of a global trend away from the formal military alliances of the Cold War. Okawara and Katzenstein (2008, p. 120) thus observe that, 'Japanese security policies thus reflect and shape the Asia-Pacific's emerging security order'. Beijing has served notice that this order will not admit the formation of new military alliances, so less provocative instruments for security cooperation are required. Thus, Nadkarni (2010, p. 48) argues that 'these partnerships have emerged as a safe policy option for secondary powers in a complex and globalizing world'. Second, the Japanese are domestically sensitive to alliance treaties on the basis of their peace constitution and the 1981 Diet judgement that Article 9 precludes collective self-defense (and perhaps due to their experience with the United States). Indeed, Oros (2008) notes that the word *dōmei* (alliance) was deliberately avoided to describe even this relationship until the early 1980s. This accounts for their rejection of such an offer from Canberra and their preference instead for a 'declaration', rather than a (security) 'treaty' at the heart of the JASP. Third, the strategic partnership model is a new, more versatile, and less binding form of security cooperation. Samuels (2007, p. 192) indicates why such strategic partnerships might be preferred: 'loosely integrated networks of

overlapping partnerships – may yet prove more effective than top-heavy and diplomatically expensive formal alliances'. Fourth, an economic-centered style relationship is one that Japan feels entirely comfortable with and adept at managing. Hughes (2004, p. 35) notes that 'Japan's comprehensive security policy traditionally placed great emphasis on economic alongside military power and on economic stabilization and state-building.' Finally, and paradoxically, Tokyo's creation of new strategic partnerships among existing allies/partners of the United States enjoys the dual advantage of creating diversification in its relationships, at the same time as serving the purpose of thickening collaboration between 'spokes' and thus reinforcing the US alliance system upon which Tokyo ultimately depends.

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