# India's Ambivalent Anglosphere Identity and the Politics of International Uranium Sales
## Alexander E. Davis

The University of Adelaide, Adelaide, AUSTRALIA[1]

## Abstract

The concept of the 'Anglosphere' has grown in political discourse in the past decade, though exactly what defines this space is contested. James Bennett has defined it as a group of states who are tied together on the basis of shared tradition, laws, liberty and language, yet does not discuss India and places it firmly on the outside of his hierarchy. Srdjan Vucetic has critiqued such approaches, arguing that the Anglosphere is based on a racialized identity, accounting for why India has largely been excluded. This paper uses the issue of uranium sales to investigate the extent to which India identifies with the Anglosphere, how it is perceived within this space, and how this ideational issue has shaped India's postcolonial relationships with actors more comfortable with an Anglosphere identity. Whether or not to trust India with nuclear material has been mulled over by the UK, the US, Australia and Canada since India first showed interest in developing nuclear power plants, whilst refusing to sign NPT. All have now begun engaging with India as legitimate nuclear power. It is argued that India holds an ambivalent Anglosphere identity which has been emphasized on matters of nuclear cooperation and that this has enabled the recent growth in India-Anglosphere relations.

## Introduction

In the past 10 years, the term 'Anglosphere' has become increasingly common in international political discourse, used amongst scholars and politicians alike. Within this discourse, India has been defined as both on the inside and the outside of the Anglosphere. Since India's independence in 1947, it has had convoluted relationships with the states that have been defined as the 'core' of the 'Anglosphere'.[2] This paper investigates India's relationship with the Anglosphere through examination of the issue and trade in uranium and nuclear technologies. It is argued that India holds an ambivalent Anglosphere identity, in which it can be regarded as both inside and outside of this space depending on emphasis within the definitions in the perceptions of itself and other Anglosphere agents, and that this has been particularly emphasized by India *and* Anglosphere states when engaging over nuclear issues. Using the 2005 India-US civil nuclear deal as the primary case study, I argue that the emphasis on this Anglosphere identity as a pre-existing element of

---

[1] Alexander Davis is a PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide. This work is an element of his ongoing doctoral research into India's relationship with the 'Anglosphere'. My thanks to my supervisors Priya Chacko, Kanishka Jayasuriya and Carol Johnson: their influence can be seen throughout the work.

[2] J. C. Bennett, *The Anglosphere Challenge: Why the English-Speaking Nations Will Lead the Way in the Twenty-First Century* (Lanham, 2004), p. 80. I frequently refer to the US, the UK, Canada and Australia as 'the Anglosphere' and India-Anglosphere relations, and thus construct India as outside of the group. I do so solely for the ease and simplicity of language, rather than a judgment on India's position inside and/or outside of this group.

Indian identity has made trade in nuclear materials and technology possible, despite India's non-signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Epistemic realist accounts of the Anglosphere fail to adequately show why the US and UK, were able to so comfortably transcend their differences in the early 20th century, despite both being 'great powers'. While this may be accounted for by a neoliberal institutionalist approach emphasizing trade and democracy, this fails to account for broader Indo-Anglosphere relations, as scholars with a liberal reading of identity or strategic focus have argued that the relationships are weaker than they 'should' be, or have been 'neglected', without necessarily examining why this has been the case.[3] This leads me to a constructivist approach emphasizing the construction of state identity over material factors, and, following from David Campbell, I employ a discursive analysis focused on the interpretation of the consequences and causes of political actors emphasizing 'one mode of representation over another' when negotiating international relationships.[4]

### India's Postcolonial Identity-Logic and the Anglosphere

A small group of IR scholars, in the context of a far broader body of work on India's postcoloniality, have argued that India's historically constituted identity must be treated as postcolonial in order to be properly understood and examined.[5] Within this scholarship, India's ideational Other was/is the British Empire. India's nationalist movement can been seen to some extent as a rejection of the Anglo-Saxon claim to cultural superiority that animates contemporary discourse on Anglosphere, hence my terming of the identity 'ambivalent'. The nationalist movement was also, however, an effort to 'be modern', engaging with Western education, the judicial system,

---

[3] On this point with regards to Indo-Australian relations, see: For examples of this thread in scholarship on Indo-Australian relations, see: M. Gurry, *India: Australia's Neglected Neighbor, 1947-1996* (Brisbane, 1996), M. Vicziany, 'Australia-India Security Dialogues: Academic Leadership in the Diplomatic Vacuum', *South Asia*, 23, Special Issue (2000), pp. 159-178 and M. Vicziany (ed.), *Australia-India: The Economic Links: Past, Present and Future* (Nedlands, 1993). M. Gurry, 'Leadership and Bilateral Relations: Menzies and Nehru, Australia and India, 1949-1964', *Pacific Affairs*, 65, 4 (1993), pp. 501-526; N. H. Kurrupu, *Non-Alignment and Peace Versus Military and War* (New Delhi, 2004) and R. Medcalf, 'Australia and India: How to Advance', at *www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/australia-and-india-how-advance,* date accessed: 21 June, 2012. Similar arguments of 'neglect' or 'disappointment' are echoed frequently in discussion of Indo-US relations. See, for example, A. Manuel, 'A Rising Brand: India's Rising Power, implications for South Asia and U.S Policy', in N. Burns and J. Price, *American Interests in South Asia: Building a Grand Strategy in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India* (Washington, 2011), pp. 159-178 ; and A. Rubinoff, 'Incompatible Objectives and Shortsighted Policies: US Strategies toward India', in S. Ganguly, B. Shoup and A. Scobell (eds), *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century: More than Words* (Abingdon, 2006), pp. 38-60.
[4] D. Campbell, *Writing Security: US Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Manchester, 1992), p. 4.
[5] P. Darby and A. J. Paolini, 'Bridging Postcolonialism and International Relations', *Alternatives: Global, Local and Political* 19, 3 (1994), pp. 371-295; S. Krishna, 'The Importance of Being Ironic: A Postcolonial View on Critical International Relations Theory', *Alternatives, Global, Local, Political,* 18 (1993), pp. 385-417; L. H. M. Ling, *Postcolonial International Relations: Conquest and Desire between Asia and the West* (New York, 2002); H. Muppidi, *The Politics of the Global* (London, 2004) and H. Muppidi, *The Colonial Signs of International Relations* (New York, 2012).

social reforms and the English language, coupled with a critique of India's initial colonization occurring due to its own failure to modernize.[6] As shown by Gyan Prakash, the emphasis on science in independent India was a crucial plank of India's post-independence domestic policy.[7] Independence was also emphasised, as India's nuclear tests were hailed as being based on 'indigenous' technology as a particular point of pride.[8]

The Anglosphere, then, is problematic for India because as a political project of the past decade and its longer history as long-term international political alliance, it is an expression of the same display of cultural superiority that underpinned Britain's imperialism. It was particularly surprising, then, for Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2005 to engage with the concept, when stating in acceptance of a honorary doctorate '...if there is one phenomenon on which the sun cannot set, it is the world of the English-speaking peoples, in which the people of the Indian origin are the single largest component.'[9] Ultimately, India has an historical connection to these states, and elements of its legal, political and bureaucratic systems are derived from the British system, which Anglospherist scholars have argued is a defining characteristic of the space. However, India's postcolonial identity has seen it emphasize its independence through its non-aligned foreign policy and rejected claims to Anglo-Saxon 'superiority'.

### 'Where' is India in the Anglosphere?

'Anglosphere' is relatively new as a term, having come to more considerable prominence since 2000. The idea, however, of a global community of English speaking peoples has a far longer history. In international politics, it can be seen in the US-UK 'special relationship', the ANZUS treaty and the remarkable serenity of US-Canadian relations over the past century. The problem lies then in definition: what makes the Anglosphere? The Oxford English dictionary defines Anglosphere as 'the group of countries where English is the main native language'.[10] Merriam-Webster defines it as 'the countries of the world in which the English language and cultural values predominate'.[11] At the core of this debate, then, is the extent to which language, culture and/or values constitute the Anglosphere: a debate which is further reflected in the mixed usages of the term and the invocation of the concept in academic and political discourse. The debate is made more

---

[6] P. Mishra, *Temptations of the West: How to be Modern in India, Pakistan and Beyond* (London, 2006), pp. 107-151.
[7] G. Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton, 1999).
[8] L. Varadarajan, 'Constructivism, Identity and neoliberal (in)security', *Review of International Studies* 30, 03 (2004), pp. 319-341 and I. Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic Bomb: Science, Secrecy and the Postcolonial State* (London, 1998).
[9] Manmohan Singh, http://www.hindu.com/nic/0046/pmspeech.htm, date accessed: 30 October, 2012.
[10] 'Anglosphere', *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.
[11] 'Anglosphere', *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*.

complicated by some of the racialized elements of Anglosphere identity, as examined by Srdjan Vucetic, and made even more important when attempting to 'locate' India within this political space.

My goal here is not to look at whether or not India is really 'in' the Anglosphere, but to examine how academic and political discourse has shaped India's relations within this group. Most importantly, I emphasize the pure subjectivity of the concept. The Anglosphere has no material existence; no government, no offices, not even a secretariat. I treat it as an identity narrative open to multiple interpretations that have changed over its history. It is a narrative also that has shaped the material world, through its place in the foreign policy of those states that identify with it. In this sense, 'Anglosphere' is whatever we want it to be, as it is subject to wildly different interpretations and definitions. The idea of an 'Anglosphere', however, is empirically reflected through the shared relationships between the US, the UK, Canada and Australia have had a remarkable stability and continuity since the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ Century. The US and Canada share the largest unprotected border in the world. The US and the UK have a long-running 'special relationship'. Australia has only ever considered the US and the UK for 'great and powerful friends'. India has not had nearly as serene relations with these states, as will be examine further below. Only in the past decade have US-Indian relations, along with broader Indo-Anglosphere relations, improved.

The concept of the 'English-speaking peoples' as a unified grouping has a long history whilst the term 'Anglosphere' does not. It has been used to refer to two periods: a historical pattern of engagement and shared culture between a vaguely-defined set of states, peoples or cultures. Robert Conquest has argued for it to have a material existence: more than an alliance and less than a federation, combined with a call for these states to withdraw from regional organizations (such as the EU and NAFTA), because they have more shared history and heritage with the Anglosphere than those states geographically close to them. The genealogy of the concept goes back a lot further, from Alfred Taylor's 1913 'English-speaking races', to Winston Churchill's (and later Andrew Roberts) 'English speaking-peoples' to today's seemingly benign, peaceful vision of a successful and prosperous 'Anglosphere'.[12]

In arguing for the likely continued superiority of the Anglosphere over the immediate future, James Bennett provides a tiered definition, writing that the 'densest nodes of the Anglosphere are

---

[12] A. J. Taylor, *Empire Building: Unity of the English Speaking Races of the World* (Hobart, 1913) and A. Roberts, A *History of the English-Speaking People's Since 1900* (London, 2006).

found in the United States and the United Kingdom'[13] He follows, arguing that other 'significant elements' include English-speaking Canada and Australia. For Bennett, to be part of the Anglosphere implies not just English language, but sharing of fundamental customs and values at the core of English-speaking cultures: 'individualism; rule of law; honouring of covenants... and the emphasis on freedom as a political and cultural value'[14] His visualisation of the Anglosphere relates to 'concentric spheres marked by differing degrees of sharing the core Anglosphere characteristics'.[15] He continues:

> The innermost spheres are in the nations populated by native or assimilated-immigrant English speakers speaking the language at home, at work and in government and naturally immersed in English-language media. The nations where all these elements are present are at the heart to the Anglosphere. Where any are present, the people are part of the Anglosphere.[16]

For Bennett, the Anglosphere has a distinct hierarchy. At the top are the US and the UK; below them, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Ireland. Lower down, are *educated* elements of 'Africa' and India, and English speaking parts of the Caribbean and Oceania. India is on the 'outer' of the Anglosphere: among 'English using states of other civilizations'.[17] Bennett's definition is also identical to the British colonial hierarchy: colonizers on the top, settler-colonial societies in the middle, and colonized peoples on the bottom. Although Bennet claims to be writing about culture rather than 'race', the ideational instinct remains the same: his work reconstructs the colonial hierarchy for the 21$^{st}$ century. Thus, while culture and values may be at the core of Bennett's Anglosphere, there is a strong colonial side to his definition that is inescapable.

Bennett's work makes a distinct argument about the importance of English to making the most of the information age, as the internet is dominated by the English language. However, he also argues for the exceptional nature of 'Anglosphere civilization' and the superiority of its culture.[18] This leads to a condescending approach to India: what advantages India has were given to it by the British and are therefore not 'Indian'. This is repeated by Tony Abbott's when writing on India in the Anglosphere, stating that 'Despite its caste system, India has some key advantages – democracy and the rule of law besides the English language – and already looks as though it will become an important member of the anglosphere'.[19] Here, what holds India back is *its* caste system, but its

---

[13] Bennett, *Anglosphere Challenge*, p. 80.
[14] *Ibid.,* pp.79-80.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] *Ibid.,* p. 80.
[18] *Ibid.,* p.181.
[19] T. Abbott, *Battlelines* (Melbourne, 2009), p.160.

advantages are the rule of law and the English language. This is a common orientalist trope in which when India shows economic dynamism, it is necessarily 'acting western': a theme that is notable in political discourse on Anglosphere when commenting on India's 'rise'. Moreover, the idea that India is 'in' the Anglosphere but not important is problematic, given India's population and economic and material power.

Conservative British historian Robert Conquest called for a structured form of Anglosphere, imagining a broad alliance with its headquarters in Bermuda, considering possibilities for a voting system, and penning a possible 'declaration of interdependence'.[20] Despite his defining the space as based on a history, tradition and the culture of 'law-and-liberty countries',[21] India is not discussed as a potential member, indeed the term India does not appear in his brief commentary. Christopher Hitchens responded to the work of Bennett and Conquest, taking up the term 'Anglosphere' to mean 'that historic arc of law, tradition and individual liberty that extends from Scotland to Australia and takes in the two largest multicultural democracies on the planet – the U.S and India', while arguing that 'what we now refer to as Anglosphere has a future as well as a past.'[22] Hitchens defined the space as able to fight Islamic extremism, a fight that India is most certainly engaged with. We can see here, that the Anglosphere is constructed on the Other of Islamic extremism, which has placed India more firmly in the space. After all, if Anglosphere is not constructed *against* Islam, then why are Pakistan and Bangladesh, other countries that fundamentally share India's colonial development and, albeit to a perhaps more limited extent, English language, not even considered as possible inclusions?

Hitchens' attempt to define Anglosphere as a more inclusive space, albeit largely on the basis of fighting another threatening cultural group, are not helped by conservative British academic Andrew Roberts' writings on the English-speaking peoples and the Anglosphere. His *A History of the English Speaking Peoples Since 1900* presents a historical narrative in which the English speaking peoples are 'the last, best hope for Mankind', due to the force of their political values.[23] His narrative focuses solely on the group of the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand only covering India during its colonial subjugation. When he does discuss India, he does so to defend colonial policy and focuses solely on white colonizers, rather than the colonized, thereby leaving English-speaking Indians outside of 'English-speaking peoples'. This is a particularly

---

[20] R. Conquest, *The Dragons of Expectation: Reality and Delusion in the Course of History* (New York, 2005), p. 224.
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] C. Hitchens, http://www.city-journal.org/html/17_4_anglosphere.html, date accessed: 2 July, 2013.
[23] A. Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples since 1900* (London, 2006), p. 8.

dehumanizing definition, particularly problematic as people of Indian origin can be considered (as Manmohan Singh has suggested) as their largest single component.[24]

### The Anglosphere and Neoliberal Economic Discourse

There are also elements of economic ideology attached to the idea of the Anglosphere. Bennett's text is arguing for the primacy of the Anglosphere on the basis of its ability to monopolize international business, as English is the language in which the global financial system has been constructed.[25] Similarly the English language and economic success have been tied together in India, with a study by Azam, Chin and Prakash finding that 'fluency in English increases the hourly wages of men by 34%'.[26] This study used by Baru to suggest that the English language will tie India and Britain together well into the future.[27]

Likewise, economic freedom is emphasised across academic and political definition of the space, as seen in Bennet's focus on economic freedom. The US National Security Strategy (NSS) of 2002 stated: 'The concept of "free trade" arose as a moral principle… This is real freedom, the freedom for a person—or a nation—to make a living.'[28] Economic development has likewise become a focus of India's foreign policy, let alone an element of its domestic social policy, though its markets are not necessarily open enough to please the US.[29] As the opening paragraph to the Non-Alignment 2.0 strategy stated 'the success of India's own internal development will depend decisively on how effectively we manage our global opportunities'.[30] India's number one foreign policy priority, perhaps alongside the prevention of terrorism, is its internal economic development. It is no coincidence, then, that India only began to be thought of as part of the Anglosphere once it had liberalized its markets and trade between India and the US, UK, Canada and Australia boomed.[31] Prior to independence, the nationalist movement fought hard to end an exploitative

---

[24] Manmohan Singh, http://www.hindu.com/nic/0046/pmspeech.htm, date accessed: 30 October, 2012.
[25] Bennett, *Anglosphere Challenge*.
[26] The same fluency for women results in only a 22 per cent increase. See:
http://www.uh.edu/~achin/research/azam_chin_prakash.pdf, date accessed: 9 July, 2013.
[27] S. Baru, 'India, Britain and the Language of Partnership', in J. Johnson and R. Kumar (eds), *Reconnecting Britain and India: Ideas for an Enhanced Partnership* (Delhi, 2011), pp. 54-66.
[28] National Security Strategy of the United States of America (Hereafter US NSS), 2002, available at
http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf, date accessed: 22 July, 2013.
[29] Joe Biden complained about India's unwillingness to open itself to US corporations at a visit to India in July 2013.
See: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/24/world/asia/biden-meets-indias-leaders-to-promote-closer-ties.html?_r=0 date, accessed: 27 July, 2013.
[30] Non-Alignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty First Century, at
www.cprindia.org/sites/default/files/NonAlignment%202.0_1.pdf, date accessed: 30 July, 2013.
[31] Indo-Canadian bilateral trade between Canada and India rose by 72 percent between 2004 and 2011 – including a 152 per cent increase in Canadian exports to India. See 'Closer Economic Ties with India Will Create Jobs and Opportunities for Canadians', http://www.international.gc.ca/media_commerce/comm/news-

economic relationship, dressed up as Victorian-era free trade. Latha Varadarajan has argued that this led to an emphasis on state planning and independence, linked to the *Swadeshi* movement, and that this was an aspect of India's postcoloniality which was challenged with the IMF-mandated reforms of 1991.[32] This lead her to argue India's 1998 nuclear test was an effort to reclaim pride, after being forced to go to the international community with a 'begging bowl'.[33] From this analysis, we can see that Anglosphere is not a *geo*political space: it is an *ideational* political space, which is constituted by democratic 'values', British-derived common law, English-language and the *moralized* concept of 'free trade' as an ideational value rather than as a material imperative.[34]

Srdjan Vucetic has provided a critique of the idea of the Anglosphere in IR, arguing that the relationships are based on a shared, racialized identity. This work follows from Vucetic: if the Anglosphere is a racialized space, how does this shape the grouping's relationship with postcolonial, English-speaking states that lie outside of the racialized identity, but ultimately fit within most definitions of the space. Key to Vucetic's argument is that 'Anglosphere' has switched from explicitly racist to explicitly 'anti-racist', though still maintaining a strong sense of cultural superiority.[35] This shift makes possible India's inclusion in the space, though I argue, the belief in cultural superiority has resulted in India's continual neglect. India fits the academic definitions of Anglosphere that have been discussed here, with the exception of Vucetic's, yet has been ignored or undervalued in all such works. In arguing for the superiority of their preferred civilization, they unsurprisingly ignore another civilization. This is even more problematic when India shares to varying degrees the cultural traits that it is argued are 'superior'. The regularity of the omission of India reveals the definition of Vucetic to be the strongest: the Anglosphere is, at present, in terms of academic discourse and the political space it defines, based partially on an exclusionary, racialized identity, which still currently functions, as exemplified by orientalist discourse on India.

---

communiques/2011/156.aspx?lang=eng&view=d, date accessed: 8 May, 2012. Trade between Australia and India grew from \$3.3 billion in 2000 to over \$20 billion in 2011, http://www.dfat.gov.au/fta/aifta/, date accessed: 6 July, 2013.

[32] Varadarajan, 'Neoliberal (in)security', pp., 334-335. Varadarajan emphasises a small element of Himadeep Mupiddi's phd thesis: Himadeep Muppidi, *Competitive Economic Restructuring in the Global Economy: A Critical Constructivist Approach*, Ph.D thesis, University of Minnesota, 1998.

[33] Varadarajan, 'Neoliberal (in)security', p. 337.

[34] I say this partly due to relative failure of India's GDP growth in actually assisting its people out of poverty. See, for example, S. Krishna, 'The Great Numbers Fetish', http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-great-number-fetish/article4345243.ece, date accessed: July 30, 2013.

[35] Vucetic, *Anglosphere*, pp. 1-21.

## India's Nuclear Program: Anglosphere Attempts at Engagement

Before engaging directly with political discourse on India's nuclear program, it is necessary to outline briefly the approaches taken by 'core' Anglosphere agents with regards to India's nuclear program. When India first began pursuing a nuclear program while emphasising their peaceful intentions without signing the NPT, only Canada was willing to engage with them, for fear that it would destabilize the NPT and lead to more proliferation. During this period, even though they disagreed, they still treated one another as defining what policy choices were possible.[36] In 1974, India' 'peaceful' nuclear explosion, drew angry condemnations globally, but also from Australia, Canada, the UK and the US. Canada, in particular, was infuriated and immediately withdrew any support for India's civilian nuclear program. In May 1998, India 'officially' became a nuclear weapon state, this time openly as part of a military operation by the new BJP government, which was again widely condemned in strong terms, and quickly prompted Pakistan to conduct its own nuclear test.

It took only seven years from the remarkably strong condemnations in 1998 for the US and India began the process to allow engagement on nuclear technology, a deal which was finalized in the 2007. In 2007, under John Howard, Australia agreed to sell uranium to India, but this was reversed under Kevin Rudd later that year. Under Julia Gillard, however, it was made official Labor Party policy to sell uranium to India in 2011, meaning the sale now has bipartisan support. In 2010, David Cameron lifted a UK ban on the export of nuclear technology to India, against official recommendations.[37] Shortly after this, Canada resumed the sale of nuclear technology to India after 36 years, with Stephen Harper and Manmohan Singh finalizing terms late in November 2012.[38]

Indo-US relations were considered weak prior to 2005, but have become far closer since the nuclear deal discussed here.[39] Mohan asking whether or not the US and India were 'natural' allies, which was a common theme in US discourse on India in mid-2000s.[40] Similarly, the NDA's first External Affairs minister Jaswant Singh's described the relationship as 'fifty wasted years', and

---

[36] National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), A1838: 169/10/21 Part Two: 'India – Relations with Australia – Annual Review', Report on Australia's relations with India: February 1971 to June 1972.

[37] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/7913835/David-Cameron-agrees-nuclear-deal-with-India-against-official-advice.html, date accessed: 26 March, 2013.

[38] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20231759, date accessed: 26 March, 2013.

[39] S. M. D'Souza, 'Indo-US Counter-Terrorism Cooperation: Rhetoric Versus Substance', Strategic *Analysis* 32, 8 (2008), pp. 1067-1084; G. Balachandran, 'Nuclear Realpolitik: The Prospects for Indo-US Relations', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 61, 4 (2007), pp. 554-553.

[40] P. Chacko, 'A New "Special Relationship"?: Power Transitions, Ontological Security and India-US Relations', *International Studies Perspectives* (2013), 1-18.

argued that India and the US were 'on the same side' in the War on Terror.[41] India-Australia relations are often cited as weak, with the main narrative being one of neglect.[42] There have been suggestions that the relationship is 'natural', akin to Mohan's commentary on US-Indian relations.[43] This relationship has perhaps been the rockiest of all, given the 1971 'near miss', in which the US and India nearly destroyed the concept of the 'democratic peace'.[44]

Indo-UK relations are those most directly concerned with colonialism, with Lord Mountbatten remaining Governor General of the Union of India immediately post-independence. Indo-Canadian relations followed a slight different chronology than that of the relationships discussed above, primarily due to Canada's initial willingness to accept India's civilian nuclear program.[45] This cooperation was scorched by India's 1974 nuclear test and Canada's reaction, which Australian diplomats at the time suggested was particularly harsh.[46] Similar to the chronology of Indo-Australian relations, this was followed by a re-embrace post-Cold War, with trade links booming and a nuclear cooperation deal signed off in 2013. What are we to make of these (in)decisions? First of all, we can say that with the exception Canada's decision to engage with India prior to 1974, these states have acted as a bloc: between 2008 and 2012, all states changed their policy with regards to the sale of nuclear technology and material to India, following the lead of the US, though Australia found this decision particularly difficult, switching positions three times, perhaps primarily due to domestic political instability. This strongly implies a commonality within these actors.[47] The *relative* symmetry between these relationships suggests the approach here of using 'Anglosphere' as an analytical tool is justified, though it must be emphasized here that these relationships have all followed slightly different trajectories on operate on their own dynamics.

---

[41] C. R. Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: the Shaping of India's New Foreign Policy* (New Delhi, 2005), pp. 83-115.

[42] For examples of this thread in scholarship on Indo-Australian relations, see: Gurry, *Neglected* Neighbor; M. Vicziany, 'Australia-India Security Dialogues: Vicziany (ed.), *Australia-India: The Economic* Links; Gurry, 'Leadership and Bilateral Relations'; Kurrupu, *Non-Alignment and Peace* and Medcalf, 'How to Advance'.

[43] R. Medcalf, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-05-14/edit-page/28293595_1_australian-cabinet-australian-labour-party-australia-india-relations, date accessed: 1 July, 2013.

[44] W. W. Widmayer, 'The Democratic Peace is What States Make of It: A Constructivist Analysis of the US-Indian 'Near-Miss' in the 1971 South Asian Crisis', *European Journal of International Relations*, 18 (2012), pp. 767-791.

[45] Indo-Canadian relations have not come in for much academic scrutiny, with most work focusing on the destruction of a close relationship post-1974. For some examples, see M. Walton-Roberts, 'Transnational Geographies, Indian Immigration to Canada', p. 236; K. Subrahmanyam, 'Emerging International trends after the Cold War: scope for Indo-Canadian interaction', in J. S. Gewal and H. Johnston (eds), *The India-Canada relationship* (New Delhi, 1994), p. 78 and L. A. Delvoie, 'Canada and India: A New Beginning', *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs,* 87, 345 (1998), p. 61.

[46] NAA: A1838: 169/10/21 Part Two: 'India – Relations with Australia – Annual Review', Report on Australia's relations with India: February 1971 to June 1972.

[47] Vucetic, *The Anglosphere*.

## India's Postcolonial Identity and the 1998 Nuclear Tests

India's 1998 nuclear tests have been previous examined by other scholar's performances of India's postcolonial identity, though this study does break new ground with regards to its use of the Anglosphere as an analytical tool to examine their effect on Indo-Anglosphere relations. The connection between India's nuclear program and its postcolonial identity has been made previously by Itty Abraham, Priya Chacko, Shampa Biswas and Varadarajan.[48] The tests were also considered as defiant towards the US, as the US had been involved in preventing such tests under the leadership of the Indian National Congress in the years leading up to Pokharan II. The performance of the test can be read in *defiance* of the US and to some extent the international norms of nuclear proliferation advanced by the NPT, which as will be seen, are advanced as part of the 'Anglosphere'.

The connection between India's 1998 nuclear test and its postcolonial identity has been made by Abraham and Varadarajan. Abraham argues that the postcolonial state has treated atomic energy as 'the privileged instrument of development'.[49] Following the 1974 nuclear test, he argues, India's security thinkers began to believe their own performance, and 'accepted fully the anarchic norms of the international system.'[50] Likewise, Chacko has examined the racial and gender coding in India's identity discourse to understand the ambivalences of India's nuclear policy: India has long argued for the unfairness of the NPT and for disarmament, while simultaneously engaging in proliferation.[51] Varadarajan's work on the performance of India's 1998 nuclear test is grounded, as discussed above, as a reaction to the opening of India's markets as part of its postcolonial identity. She identifies arguing that India has shown its ability to 'be modern' on its own terms.[52]

The tests received a 90 per cent approval rating, and the strong backing of Congress leader Sonia Gandhi.[53] Though conducted by the recently elected BJP government, they would not have been possible without India's covert nuclear program, which was continued by successive Indian governments, thus the term bipartisan could comfortably be applied. The tests were in defiance of the IMF's structural reforms in the Indian economy, which had challenged India's *shakti*, rendering impossible its emphasis on state planning and economic independence. As such, India's nuclear

---

[48] Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic* Bomb; Varadarajan, 'Neoliberal (In)security; P. Chacko, 'The Search for a Scientific Temper: Nuclear Technology and the Ambivalence of India's Postcolonial Modernity', *Review of International Studies*, 37 (2011), pp. 185-208 and S. Biswas, '"Nuclear Apartheid" as Political Position: Race as a Postcolonial Resource?', *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political,* 26, 4, (2001), pp. 485-522.
[49] Abraham, 'The Indian Atomic Bomb', p. 157.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 166.
[51] Chacko, 'Scientific Temper', pp. 185-188.
[52] Varadarajan, 'Neoliberal (In)security', p. 341.
[53] *Ibid.*

tests can be read as directed *against* the Anglosphere's advocacy of what the Indian government had coined as 'nuclear apartheid', terminology which strongly suggesting resistance to a lingering postcolonial hierarchy.[54] The US had long urged India to give up on its nuclear program, and it is entirely possible that India would have become a nuclear weapons state earlier that it did had this not been the case.[55] In this sense, we could argue that the nuclear test was conducted as a defiance of the 'norms' of behaviour expected and by Anglosphere states.

### Pokhran II: International Reactions

India's nuclear test in 1998, which was met with severe condemnation a brief analysis of the comments made around this time from foreign policy elites from 'core' Anglosphere states. One of the best known responses to India and Pakistan's nuclear test is that of Bill Clinton, who following a presidential visit through South Asia, stated that '[t]he most dangerous place in the world today, I think you could argue, is the Indian subcontinent and the line of control in Kashmir'.[56] US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright described India's nucelarization as 'a uniquely serious and dangerous situation' because while there 'were thousands of miles of ocean between the' the US and the USSR, India and Pakistan are 'cheek by jowl'.[57] Albright continued, stating that India and Pakistan 'have had difficulty accepting each other's birth' and were involved in a 'long-standing conflict over Kashmir.'[58] This conception is problematic given it constructs India and Pakistan as having a greater propensity towards nuclear war than the US-USSR relationship, this constructs India and Pakistan as less rational actors than the US and the USSR, and falls back on stereotypes of the 'irrational' third world. The suggestion that nuclear deterrence works for the US, but not for India constructs India as an 'irrational', willing to destroy itself for a cause (Kashmir).[59] There are, of course, also strategic arguments *for* deterrence on the basis of their proximity, as any nuclear strike, even a 'winnable' nuclear war would lead to floods of refugees and risk radiation blowing across the border.

Australia's response to Pokhran II has been regarded as particularly savage, with Manmohini Kaul describing it as 'the most abrasive of all',[60] with all defence ties immediately suspended and Indian defence personnel (reportedly) physically hauled out of training sessions at Australian

---

[54] On this label, see Biswas, 'Nuclear Apartheid'.
[55] S. Ganguly, 'Nuclear Stability in South Asia', *International Security*, 33, 2 (2008), p. 53.
[56] Bill Clinton, quoted in J. Marcus, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/687021.stm, date accessed: 1 July, 2013.
[57] Madeleine K. Albright, quoted at http://19972001.state.gov/www/statements/1998/980603.html, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] A similar argument was made by former BJP external affairs minister Jaswant Singh. See J. Singh, 'Against Nuclear Apartheid', *Foreign Affairs*, 77, 5 (1998), pp. 41-52.
[60] M. Kaul, 'Australia-India Relations: Post-Pokhran II Phase', *International Studies,* 35 (2000), p. 365.

defence colleges.[61] Foreign Minister Alexander Downer's press release on the matter likewise did not hold back, while announcing more sanctions on India due to 'the outrageous acts perpetrated by India', reflect 'the Government's condemnation of the wilful disregard for international opinion'.[62] The same statement called on India's neighbours, though not specifically Pakistan, to show restraint in the face of such provocation.[63] Downer later stated in Manila that, '[t]his is the act of a government that has the utmost disregard for accepted international norms of behaviour'.[64] In the context of these statements, it is obvious that neighbours referred to were Pakistan and China. The use of 'norms' in is common, but less common in official statements from policy-makers. In this sense, Downer's comment reflects a belief about how states are 'supposed' to act, with India transgressing. This again constructs India as dangerous, irrational and threatening. It mirrors discourse on India's 1974 nuclear tests, which were regarded as 'tiresome' and outside of 'accepted categories'.[65] Within condemnations of India's action, South Asia is clearly regarded as a volatile and dangerous place, with India another object of instability, engaging in dangerous nuclear brinkmanship.

### 2005-2012: Embracing Nuclear India

The acceptance of India to the 'nuclear club' by the US and other Anglosphere states, then, requires further consideration, particularly given how quickly it occurred after such brutal denunciations of India, and over a period in which India's domestic and international politics had not fundamentally changed. The NSS of 2002 revealed a dramatic reversal of discourse on India, despite the 1999 war with Pakistan over Kargil and apparent stability-instability paradox between these two now-nuclear armed states:[66]

> The United States has undertaken a transformation in its bilateral relationship with India… We are the two largest democracies, committed to political freedom protected by representative government. India is moving toward greater economic freedom as well. We have a common interest in the free flow of commerce, including through the

---

[61] http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?205982, date accessed: 2 July, 2013.

[62] Alexander Downer, 'Media Release: Australian Response to Indian Nuclear Tests', at http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/1998/fa059_98.html, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] Alexander Downer, quoted in http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?205982, date accessed: 2 July, 2013.

[65] Bruce Grant summarized the feeling within the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia on India's actions, stating: 'Not untypically for India, what she has done does not fit in to generally accepted categories. There is a feeling of annoyance with India for begin so tiresome. "Why doesn't she simply say she's built a bomb?!"'. See: B. Grant, 'Indian Nuclear Test' (1974), at NAA, A1838, 919/13/9 Part 4, 'United Nations – Nuclear Weapons – Testing - India'.

[66] On this conception of nuclear weapons in South Asia, see: M. Krepon and C. Gagné (eds), 'The Stability–Instability Paradox: Nuclear Weapons and Brinksmanship in South Asia', at http://www.stimson.org/images/uploads/research-pdfs/NRRMTitleEtc.pdf, date accessed: 27 July, 2013.

vital sea lanes of the Indian Ocean. Finally, we share an interest in fighting terrorism and in creating a strategically stable Asia.[67]

In 2002, this commentary may have seemed hollow, and an emphasis a call for closer cooperation one might generally find in any generic bilateral statement between two democracies. However, the near-obsessive rhetorical emphasis on India as a democratic, free-trading, anti-terrorist and status quo power in South Asia has since been repeated in so many statements from across the 'Anglosphere' it surely requires further thought.

This leads me to examine discourse on India surrounding the decisions by the US. As Varun Sahni argues, taking these statements 'at face value', might lead into thinking India and the US was the strongest relationship in the world today.[68] This is not my intention: Indo-US cooperation is not as perfect as it comes across in the discourse examined here. However, it is the repeated emphasis of particular strands in discourse that I argue makes possible the strengthening in this relationship, though it remains, as Sahni terms it, 'limited' cooperation by 'limited' allies.[69] Such overblown rhetoric to justify such limited cooperation is worthy of deeper consideration than a positivist assumption that language does not matter. For Sahni, this discourse appears to be out of step with the 'reality' of Indo-US relations, however, I argue that language is *part of the reality* of international relationships and is therefore crucial in understanding the recent strengthening of both this and the broader India-Anglosphere relationship(s).

When announcing the US-India civil nuclear deal in 2005, Manmohan Singh defined the US in exceptionally kind terms: 'We share a common commitment to democracy, freedom, human rights, pluralism and rule of law. We face common challenges that threaten our way of life and values that both our countries hold dear.'[70] The emphasis on what India and the US have in common occurs here when likewise emphasizing challenges to 'our way of life'. In the context of post-9/11 America, the threat of Islamic terrorism is perhaps the most obvious of these challenges. Similar sentiments were echoed by George Bush, stating that: 'Our people share the bonds of friendship and a commitment to prosperity, peace and *regional stability*. Our nations believe in freedom. And our

---

[67] US NSS, 2002.

[68] V. Sahni, 'Limited Cooperation between Limited Allies: India's Strategic Programs and India-US Strategic Trade', in S. Ganguly and B. Shoup (eds), *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation Into the 21st Century* (London, 2006), pp. 173-192.

[69] *Ibid.,* pp. 173-174.

[70] Manmohan Singh, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2005/49744.htm, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.

nations are confronting global terrorism.'[71] Bush defines India as a partner in regional stability rather than destabilizing, a notable change from 1998.

During this same visit, Manmohan Singh toasted Indo-US friendship, stating that the two had once been 'divided by a common language', but urged an end to this, stating that, 'I believe, Mr. President, that our two countries must try to ally with a common lexicon and a shared framework of reference in looking at the rest of the world, for I sincerely believe there is truly very much that we have in common.'[72] Here, India and the US need to *see the world in the same way*. Previously, it is implied, the two states had seen the world in very different ways. It is also suggested that this worldview can be defined by the common language of English. Throughout this discourse, Singh emphasizes India's common links with the US to account for the nuclear deal, emphasizing India's connection with the Anglosphere and the English-speaking world. In the previous toast, George Bush had suggested that 'Our trading partnership has grown dramatically in recent years… America and India also understand the danger of global terrorism, which has brought grief to our nations, and united us in our desire to bring peace and security to the world.'[73] This led him to define the relationship again as based in 'common values… As two strong, diverse democracies, we share a commitment to the success of multi-ethnic democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. And we believe that by spreading the blessings of democracy and freedom, we will ensure lasting peace for our own citizens and for the world.'[74] Bush emphasized that both states are diverse democracies, with various 'shared values', committed to liberty and the rule of law, all of which are also a part of discourse on the Anglosphere. Thus, both leaders emphasized India's Anglosphere identity as part of justifying the decision. However, as India had not significantly changed from 1998 to 2005, the choice to emphasize this element of Indian history and identity is particularly telling as an attempt to argue for deeper cooperation.

Though I have only provided a limited selection of evidence above, a larger analysis of discourse during the 2005 visit of Manmohan Singh to the US has been conducted.[75] There is a notable silence within this body of evidence, which is particularly stark in comparison with constructions of South Asia in 1998, is discourses of danger: the terms 'Kashmir' and 'Pakistan', so

---

[71] My emphasis, George W. Bush, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2005/49744.htm, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.
[72] Manmohan Singh, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2005/49766.htm, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.
[73] George Bush, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2005/49766.htm, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.
[74] *Ibid.*
[75] For the full list of documents, see: http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/49765.htm/, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.

common in 1998, do not appear unless specifically brought up by members of the press.[76] Even when this occurred, the response of Undersecretary of Defence Nicholas Burns during a press conference was instructive. Burns was asked to discuss the geopolitics of the decision, whether or not Pakistan or China was implicated in the discussion suggested that was particular telling. He responded: '[the decision] stands on its own. Here, you have the world's largest democracy of a billion people, a country that is interested in promoting democracy worldwide.'[77] Refusing to discuss the geopolitics of US-India nuclear agreement reveals the context in which India was regarded. This reflects a deeper change in the perception of India as an ideational actor rather than a threatening geopolitical one: an ideational source of hope, which reflects the US and Anglosphere sense of Self.

## Conclusion: From the 'most dangerous place in the world' to the 'world's largest democracy'

As Matthew Sparke has argued, fear is expressed though geopolitics and hope through geoeconomics.[78] In the eyes of foreign policy elites in the 'core' Anglosphere, emphasis on India has shifted from a fearful object of unstable geopolitics, to source of ideational and geoeconomic hope. This has been accepted by Indian foreign policy makers as part of India's desires for development and security, to address its domestic inequalities. Essentially, what has occurred is a shift from Anglosphere states perceiving India as an actor solely in its geopolitically dangerous 'South Asian' context, viewed primarily as having a large population and dangerous border disputes with its also nuclear armed and densely-populated neighbours, to a highly notable discursive emphasis on India as liberal-democratic, a trading partner which can be trusted with nuclear technologies without consideration of its geopolitical danger. The repeated emphasis on terms such as 'common values', 'rule of law' and 'multi-ethnic democracy', 'freedom' and 'free trade' are particularly important as these are the same discursive strands that are identified with scholars and politicians arguing for the continued supremacy of the Anglosphere. Thus, rather than danger, now, India is hoped to be the Anglosphere's 'democratic counterweight' to China.[79] This is particularly telling given that India's border conflicts with Pakistan and China had not been resolved, and its nuclear program continued. Rather than suggest that language is meaningless, I argue the opposite:

---

[76] Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, at, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/rls/pr/2005/49763.htm, date accessed: 3 July, 2013.

[77] Nicholas Burns, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/us/rm/2005/49831.htm, date accessed, 2 July: 2013.

[78] M. Sparke, "Geopolitical Fear, Geoeconomic Hope and the Responsibilities of Geography," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 97, 2 (2007), pp. 338–349.

[79] This is a common term in strategic discourse on India-China relations in the US and Australia. For an example, see Rubinoff, 'Incompatible Objectives', p. 43.

this newfound appreciation of India in ideational constructions from Anglosphere actors is a crucial part of the shift of India 'towards' this pre-existing identity. Indo-US, and by extension Indo-Anglosphere, cooperation is animated and made possible by precisely this discursive shift. Moreover, that India has an ambivalent 'Anglosphere' identity and has been willing and able to emphasize it has enabled trade on nuclear materials and technology, even as India remains outside of the NPT.

In an afterword to a second edition of *The Anglosphere Challenge*, Bennett mentions his regret at not having examined India more deeply, realizing its importance to his 'network commonwealth'.[80] The example is instructive: India remains an afterthought for Anglospherist politicians and academics, something seen briefly as a source of hope and opportunity, but not seriously considered or followed up on. It is this perception, I argue, that accounts for the weakness in India's relationships, and the limited, ambivalent strengthening of these relationships since 1998. The ambivalence, however, remains on both sides (albeit in more understated tones than has historically been the case). The difficulties of this discursive 'balancing act' are shown in the limited success since 2005 in the India-US nuclear deal. India's original rejection of Anglo-Saxon cultural superiority on the basis of its postcolonial identity-logic can still be seen its commitment to non-alignment. Moreover, the embrace of India from Anglosphere sources is still constructed through, even animated by, orientalist discourse on India, particularly through its economic dynamism, as 'acting western'. Given this remaining ideational difference, the US-India relationship, and broader India-Anglosphere relationships are unlikely to result in new 'special relationships' or more meaningful 'strategic partnerships'.

---

[80] Bennett, *Anglosphere Challenge,* p. 292.