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Abe Days Are Here Again: Japan in the World

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The Second Coming

On 26 December 26, 2012 Abe Shinzo is to resume the position of Prime Minister of Japan, following the resounding victory of the Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP) under his presidency in the elections two weeks earlier. He came to power with an explicit agenda: seeing the US alliance as central to Japan and therefore attaching priority to carrying out Japan's obligations under it, revising the constitution so as to convert the current Self Defense Forces into a *Kokubogun* or National Army and adopting a stance of authorizing participation of Japan's forces in "collective security" operations (i.e., fighting wars shoulder-to-shoulder with American forces), establishing a national "Takeshima Day," (to reinforce the Japanese claim to the island that South Korea knows as Tokdo and refuses to consider yielding),[1] and adopting a hardline stance towards China, insisting there was "no room for negotiation" on the matter of conflicting claims to the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. "What is called for in and around the Senkaku Islands," he wrote, "is not negotiation but physical force incapable of being misunderstood."[2]

Abe politics has long been stamped by the contradiction between his fidelity to the US on the one hand and his commitment to a particular, and incompatible, view of Japanese history and identity on the other. This short essay addresses exclusively questions of history, identity, and international relations, setting aside questions about Abe's social, economic, and energy/nuclear power policies.

Abe – the Radical

Nominally "conservative," Abe in 2006-7 was in fact the most radical of all Japanese post-1945 leaders. He declared his The mission as Prime Minister to be nothing less than the "recovery of independence" (*dokuritsu no kaifuku*).[3] His term was marked by denialism (of war responsibility, notably for the comfort women and the Nanjing massacre) and ultra-nationalism (the insistence on the need to rewrite Japan's history and its textbooks so as to make people proud and fill them with patriotic spirit). The agenda for his government included simultaneous revision of all three of the country's basic charters: Ampo (the security treaty with the United States), the 1946 Constitution, and the Fundamental Law of Education.

The first of these was carried out under the US design for "reorganization of US forces" (*Beigun saihen*) negotiated when Abe was Chief Cabinet Secretary and then promoted under his government as it strived to turn the bilateral relationship into a "mature" alliance, reinforcing Japanese military subordination and integration under US command and taking preliminary steps towards revising the constitution to facilitate that process. However, major components of that vision, especially concerning Okinawa and a more expansive Japanese role in the US-led military alliance, remained then (and since) unimplemented.

The second, revision of the Fundamental Law of Education, Abe accomplished in December 2006, deleting expressions of universal rights and substituting a provision that love of country, patriotism, must be inculcated in Japanese students.[4]

On the third, revision of the constitution, Abe accomplished the first step towards this with passage into law in May 2007 of a bill spelling out the procedures for revision. He has made clear his intention to move forwards with the actual revision as a core agenda in 2013. The Liberal-Democratic Party's revision draft unveiled in November 2005 had two core objectives: "normalizing" the Japanese military (by revision of Article 9) and legitimating the Prime Minister's visits to Yasukuni (by revision of Article 20). The former was required to meet a longstanding US demand, so that Japan would be able to offer not just "boots on the ground" and financial subsidies for future wars but to actually fight shoulder-to-shoulder with US forces in the manner of the British, and the latter was necessary so that ritual celebration of those who died serving the Japanese state would help provide an emotionally satisfying national story while also generating volunteers for future wars.

Other pointers to Abe's thinking as part of his ambition to re-design the state included his adoption of key terms such as "beautiful country" (also the title of his book published as he came into office)[5] and "love." He insisted that the state be loved. Japan's top business leader, Keidanren chief Mitarai Fujio, agreed, adding that Japanese workers should also love *both* their country *and* their corporations.[6] It is hard to think of any other 21st century state, save perhaps North Korea, whose citizens and workers are exhorted to love their state and their employers.

When Abe suddenly resigned in September 2007, illness was given as the principal reason. Two months later, however, a frustrated Ministry of Foreign Affairs official in Tokyo lamented that the US-Japan relationship had reached the point where "absolutely nothing is going well" ("*ii hanashi wa hitotsu mo nai*").[7] During his year in office, despite approval of an expansive Japanese military role in the alliance, the radical Abe politics alienated not only his neighbours but also the United States.

The situation in Japan and its neighbourhood as Abe resumed office after a five year hiatus at the end of 2012 was of course significantly different, but there is no reason to think that the man has fundamentally changed. His positions mark Abe as an extremist and a reactionary, not a conservative.

North Korea

North Korean policy was central to the Abe government of 2006-7. The abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea in the 1970s and early 1980s was declared "the most important problem our country faces."[8] Though Pyongyang in 2002 had apologized, and in 2004 returned to Japan those it said were the last surviving abductees and the ashes of those who had died, there were obvious lacunae in its explanations and Abe skillfully framed the abductions as a unique North Korean crime. Nothing had so well served his rise to political power as his ability to concentrate national anti-North Korea sentiment over this issue, and in government he set up a special cabinet office to address it.[9] Abe's stance rested on refusal to consider any moral equivalence between North Korean abductions in the 1970s and 1980s and Japanese abductions of tens of thousands of Koreans for forced labor in the 1930s and 1940s. However, intense efforts to mobilize international support bore little fruit and the Japanese stance slowly lost credibility and

was criticized for being driven by political, rather than moral or scientific considerations.[10]

Shinto and Denial

Abe courted trouble by his repeated expressions of denialist history and his determination to sweep away the postwar system, since it was precisely that system that in Washington was seen as a source of great pride. Both Abe and nearly all of his cabinet belong (or belonged) to Dietmember organizations for "passing on of a correct history," for "a Bright Japan," for "reflection on Japan's future and history education," and for "Shinto Politics."[11] The classic statement of their position was offered in 2000 by then Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro, that Japan was "a land of the gods centered on the emperor." Throughout his political career from 1993 Abe has sought to wipe reference to the "Comfort Women" from Japan's history texts and its national memory and national conscience. He was a believer in Japan's pristine identity, its "Shinto-ness," with a strong tendency to propagate new understandings of history, a new past to match the new present and future he would construct. In 2001, Abe as Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary joined in applying pressure on the national broadcaster, NHK, to tone down its coverage of the "people's tribunal" trying crimes against the comfort women.[12] Nothing affronted Abe and his colleagues more than the association of the Imperial Japanese Army with the crime of mass abduction and rape of women throughout Asia in the 1930s and 1940s.

In January 2007, the bipartisan International Relations Committee of the US Congress opened hearings into the comfort women system, describing the mobilization of women across Asia into sexual slavery as "one of the greatest crimes of human trafficking." Outraged, early in March Abe told the Diet that there was no proof the Japanese military had ever forced women into brothels. His answer stirred a storm of indignation, compounded by his subsequent evasive and equivocal responses.

When Abe struggled to quell international anger by saying he was not renouncing the 1993 Kono apology for Japan's treatment of the comfort women, his government flatly contradicted him, denying that there was any proof of Japan having forced women into brothels,[13] and his Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary reiterated that the Imperial Japanese Army had never had anything to do with the running of brothels.[14] The discrepancy between Abe in Washington referring to "common values, especially our commitment to freedom and democracy," while in Tokyo commissioning a new investigation by a group of nationalist LDP members who had long insisted that the comfort women were simply base prostitutes, was noted in Washington.[15] The *Washington Post* wrote scathingly of the "double standard" by which the Abe government treated abductions of a dozen or so Japanese citizens by North Korea in the 1970s and 1980s as an international crime of uniquely huge proportions while denying responsibility for its own abduction of hundreds of thousands of Koreans, Chinese and others, a half century or so earlier. Abe lamely responded that the abduction issue was "a present and continuing problem" while the "Comfort Women" issue was past. His friend and colleague, Nakayama Nariaki, former education minister and in 2007 head of the Dietmembers' group on Japan's Future and History Education, not only denied any military role in procuring women but also said, "it is useful to compare the brothels to college cafeterias run by private companies, who recruit their own staff, procure foodstuffs and set prices."[16]

As the pressure mounted, standing beside President Bush at Camp David Abe declared his "deep-hearted sympathies that the people who had to serve as Comfort Women were placed in extreme hardships" and his "apologies for the fact that they were placed in that sort of circumstance." However, this "apology" excluded reference to any state compulsion – which was the crucial issue. It was bizarre that Abe, who had consistently refused to meet any of the women and who dismissed their testimony as lies, should have thus "apologized" *to President Bush,* and no less so for Bush to have "accepted" the apology, as if on behalf of the Comfort Women.[17] The sense of irony deepened when it became known that Abe had only shifted his position under pressure from President Bush, who had apparently warned that the US could not otherwise maintain its support for Japan on the abduction issue.[18]

Abe with President George W. Bush, Camp David, 27 April 2007 (White House photo)

Various attempts were made, by an advertisement in the *Washington Post*, by letters to Congressmen, and by direct intervention by Japan's ambassador in the US, to see the House of Representatives' dissuaded from its resolution, but the effect, if any, was negative. On 30 July it adopted Resolution 121 calling on Japan to "formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility" for the coercion of young women into sexual slavery.[19] Abe's response was to call it "regrettable"[20] and to ignore the call for apology and restitution. The Japanese Embassy in the US declared on its web-site that the resolution was erroneous and its adoption "harmful to the friendship between the US and Japan."[21] In the months that followed, similar resolutions were adopted by the European Parliament and by the lower houses of the Dutch and Canadian parliaments.[22] Abe's denialism, hitherto primarily a matter of domestic politics and of friction only with Japan's Asian neighbors, thus became a serious issue at the heart of Japan's posture to the world, especially its most important single relationship, that with the US.

As of 2010, Abe was still president of the Dietmembers Association for Shinto politics (founded in 1969, its preferred English title being "Shinto Association of Spiritual Leadership"), and he appeared to be still holding that office to the time of his assuming the Prime Ministership.

Regional Community

The US-Japan security relationship also involved for Abe the notion of a regional community. However, his was not the East Asian Community such as was envisaged in 2009 by Hatoyama Yukio that would be built on a Japan-China axis, but a community of *value* that would exclude China. As Prime Minister in 2006-7, he and his Foreign Minister, Aso Taro, were fond of the idea of a grand "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity," including not only the US, Japan, and Australia, but also India, that would confront and partially encircle China. A "Dietmembers Association for the Promotion of Values Diplomacy" was set up in 2007,[23] and Abe suggested to George W. Bush the formation of an Asia-Pacific Democratic League or "Strategic Dialogue" linking the arc of four (the US, Japan, Australia, and India). Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice is said to have responded coolly to such a suggestion, saying that it would be better not to provoke China unnecessarily, and that Japan should concentrate on improving its bilateral relationships,[24] but, nothing daunted, Abe pursued essentially the same idea when addressing the Indian parliament in August 2007 before suddenly resigning in September.[25]

The question of values is vexed. For Australia, ever since commercial relations with Japan were reopened under a treaty signed in 1957, governments (and oppositions) have cultivated the relationship. Labour's Prime Minister (Bob) Hawke told members of parliament in Tokyo in 1990 that Japan should become "more forthcoming, more creative, more outspoken than it has been in the

past" and that:

"… the days are gone when Japan's international political influence can or should lag far behind its economic strength and economic interests. The power of your economy, strength of your democracy, the talents of your people, entitle you to a place of leadership as of right."[26]

John Howard, Australian Prime Minister 1996 to 2007, went on record even before he became Prime Minister as favouring a tripartite defense relationship involving Australia, the US, and Japan, with Japan becoming a major regional military force.[27] Vice-President Dick Cheney, on his February 2007 visits to Australia and Japan urged cooperation on both governments, especially the reinforcing of links between Japan's Self-Defence Force and the Australian Defence Force, within the general frame of a geostrategic arc of containment of China, stretching from Japan to Australia and then to India. Australia's 2007 "Defense Outlook" looked forward to enhanced "[t]rilateral cooperation between Australia, Japan and the United States" and sharing the vision of a Japan that would set aside its constitutional inhibitions and adopt a "more active security posture within the US alliance and multinational coalitions."[28] Shortly afterwards, in Tokyo in March 2007 Howard signed with his Japanese counterpart a "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation" that endorsed their shared "democratic values, a commitment to human rights, freedom and the rule of law."[29] Although Howard expressed his willingness to go much further and sign a full-scale alliance treaty,"[30] none has yet eventuated. From 2007, however, during the Abe government, regular "Two Plus Two" (Foreign and Defence Ministerial) meetings have taken place. [31] Australia is the only country other than the US with which Japan has such close engagement. Yet Desmond
Ball's assessment made of the relationship during Abe's first term as Prime Minister in 2006 is probably still apt:

"The security relationshp was spawned in secrecy. It was nurtured and shaped by particular agencies, such as the intelligence organizations and the Navies, and reflects their particular bureaucratic interests and perspectives … It has expanded through a cumulation of essentially ad hoc responses to different global and egional developments. It has never been subject to comprehensive or systematic bureaucratic audit or informed public discussion."[32]

It was from the floor of the Australian parliament in December 2011 that President Obama chose to announce his new Asia-Pacific policy centring on a stepped-up engagement with the Asia-Pacific, including measures for the mobilization of force, especially naval, and the reinforcement of a fabric of China-containing alliances. Former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser observed, as realizaion of the implications of the Obama doctrine sank in, that "America is in charge of our destiny and that fills me with concern."[33]

Australia over the past decade has enthused over cooperation with Japan under an overarching US regional and global strategy, and the two countries have cooperated in US-led "coalition of the willing" operations in the Indian Ocean, Iraq and Afghanistan, and in UN peace-keeping operations in Cambodia and East Timor. It has become common to represent the relationship in terms of shared values, but that means not only the Australian side passing over without mention the bitter memories of the Japan-Australia war of 1941-45 but also the friction over memory, identity and history that complicates relations between Japan and other former combatant countries. Australian leaders seemed unaware that Abe's Japanese government comprised almost entirely ideologues committed to doing away with postwar democracy, revising the constitution, establishing a "proud," and "pure" and "correct" view of Japanese history and insisting that schools teach their students to love their country.[34] When Abe spoke as he not infrequently did during his 2006-7 term of the need for Japan to "set the postwar behind it," by "the postwar" he meant American-style democracy. The embodiment of the values he wanted to restore is Kishi Nobusuke, who is not only Abe's revered grandfather but was a key planner of Japan's empire in the 1930s, member of Tojo's wartime cabinet and for three years an unindicted Class "A" war criminal, before becoming Prime Minister between 1957 and 1960. In other words, while proclaiming democracy, human rights, and rule of law as values supposedly shared with the US, Australia, and India, Abe was simultaneously committed to revision of the basic instruments underpinning these very principles. The adoption of "shared values" was more problematic than it appeared.

The "Community" agenda discussion as of 2013 has been set on the one hand by the Obama administration's declared "pivot" to Asia and on the other by its proposed Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) economic agenda, both designed essentially to prioritize US interests and impose the US hegemony over the region's future even as the rise of China and other Asian countries continued to shake the foundations of US regional and global hegemony. Abe's uncompromising stance towards China on the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue during the campaign suggests that his government will continue to operate on the expectation made much of by his Demoocratic Party predecessors - that the US will defend Japan's claim to the islands and treat any challenge to it as a trigger of full-scale military response, i.e. war.

2013: The Abe Way

Abe's position vis-à-vis the United States is therefore complex. While on the one hand an unconditional supporter of the "alliance" working to transform Japan into the "Great Britain of the Far East,"[35] on the other he was a strong proponent of neo-nationalist posturing and historical revisionism. His goal of "a beautiful Japan" (2006) and a "new" Japan (2012), implied a hostility to the postwar democratic state created and fostered by the US and a positive assessment of the Japanese state that once (under Abe's grandfather and his associates, went to war with the US.

Just months before Abe resumed the Prime Minister-ship in 2012, the Washington group responsible for generating the key principles of US policy towards Japan issued its latest prescription,[36] cautioning Japan to think carefully about what would be required if it wanted to remain a "tier-one" nation.[37] It should look to becoming able to "stand shoulder-to-shoulder" with the US, sending naval groups to the Persian Gulf or the South China Sea, relaxing its restrictions on arms exports, increasing its defence budget and military personnel numbers, resuming its commitment to civil nuclear power, pressing ahead with construction of new base facilities in Okinawa, Guam, and the Mariana Islands, and revising either its constitution or the way it is interpreted so as to facilitate "collective security." This may be taken as an authoritative statement of Washington's required agenda and, as Abe in 2006-7 had done his best to serve, so in 2013 he can be expected to do likewise. It meant performing Japanese nationalism while negating it in service to the US. The right-wing critic, Nishibe Susumu, describes this as the process of trying to "protect Japan's culture by becoming a 51st US state."[38]

As Tokyo University's Fujiwara Kiichi put it just after the election, it seems now that "right-wing, revisionist sentiment demanding 'correct recognition of Japan's wartime history' … can form a mainstream political current in his new government for the first time in history."[39]

The agenda of the Abe government between September 2006 and September 2007 may be summarized under the following heads.

(a) Acceptance of a subaltern status for Japan within the American alliance, and priority to policies directed to maintaining and strengthening it;

(b) Rejection of the 1993 and 1995 Kono and Murayama apologies (for the "Comfort Women" system and for colonialism and

aggression);

(c) Antipathy to the constitution and other core elements of the postwar democratic order;

(d) Hostility toward North Korea;

(e) Insistence on a pure, beautiful, unique, and proud Japan that should be loved by its citizens.

Abe's record in the five years since he abandoned his office provides no indication that he has changed. The significant addition to the list above would have to be the sharply deteriorated relationship with China centered on the dispute over the Diaoyutai/Senkaku islands, which in part Abe helped create and which his attitudes seem likely to worsen.

Five years seem to have wrought little change in Abe's position. There was little surprise in November 2012, when a group calling itself "Committee for Historical facts" (*Rekishi jijitsu iinkai*) placed an advertisement outlining their denialist views on the Comfort Women issue in the Star-Ledger (New Jersey), to find that Abe was one of its sponsors.[40] As to Yasukuni, it is true that Abe avoided visiting the shrine while in office in 2006-7, but on 15 August 2012, just before assuming presidency of the LDP, he visited it and made clear that regret over not having done so while Prime Minister. On 17 October, while head of the LDP but before being elected Prime Minister, he visited it again, in his official capacity.[41] In 2013 he must either continue such visits, as Prime Minster, or face charges of succumbing to Korean and Chinese pressure if he does not.

To Abe the Shintoist, proponent of Japan in 2006 as "beautiful" and in 2012 as "new," what is offensive about the postwar Japanese state, seems to be precisely its democratic, citizen-based, and anti-militarist qualities. His radical agenda combines attempted constitutional revision in the teeth of domestic opposition that is bound to be substantial, a security policy that rests on refusal to negotiate any "dispute" with China and the brandishing of a threatened full-scale American war should China not submit, major disputes with all its neighbours (over both territory and history) and with the United States (over history and human rights, as well as over the likely continuing disability on Abe's part, as on that of his predecessors, to solve the "Okinawa problem"). The ship of state, Abe at the helm, sails into rough waters.

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[1] Between the election and the actual assumption of office, he abandoned this, evidently fearing that if he went ahead it might mean his being denied an invitation to the Korean presidential swearing-in ceremonies early in 2013.

[2] Abe Shinzo, "Atarashii kuni e," *Bungei shunju*, January 2013, pp. 124-133, at p. 130.

[3] Quoted in *Nikkan Gendai*, "Becoming an ugly and dangerous Nation! The deterioration of Japan's Fundamental Law of Education," translated by Nobuko Adachi, , posted 18 December 2006.

[4] See Adam Lebowitz and David McNeill, "Hammering Down the Educational Nail," Japan Focus, 9 July 2007 .

[5] Abe Shinzo, *Utsukushii kuni e*, 2007.

[6] Nihon keizai dantai rengokai, *Kibo no kuni, Nihon*, 1 January 2007, discussed in Minoru Nagata (introduced by Gavan McCormack),

"Love your state, Love your boss: Whither Japan?" *Japan Focus*, 9 January 2006.

[7] "Shusho hobei nandai zukushi," *Asahi shimbun*, 9 November 2007.

[8] In the words of the message published in all national newspapers in December 2006.

[9] For detailed analysis: Gavan McCormack and Wada Haruki, "Forever stepping back: the strange record of 15 years of negotiation between Japan and North Korea," in John Feffer, ed, *The Future of US-Korean Relations: The imbalance of power*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, pp. 81-100.

[10] See the interventions from the scientific journal, *Nature*, discussed in Wada and McCormack.

[11] Shinto Seiji Renmei, to which as of 2006 223 members of the Diet belonged, including Prime Minister, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance, Chief Cabinet Secretary, etc. Details in my *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace,* New York, Verso, 2006).

[12] On his pressure on the national broadcaster to sanitize any reference to the Comfort Women, see, *inter alia*, my "War and Japan's Memory Wars," Japan Focus, posted 13 February 2005; Violence Against Women in War-NET Japan, "Responsibility Denied: Japan's Debate Over the Comfort Women," March 31, 2007.

[13] Larry Niksch, "Japanese military's 'comfort women' system," Wikisource, 3 April 2007 (Congressional Research Service Memorandum)

[14] Shimomura Hirofumi, See "Shimomura hatsugen – shusho no owabi ga dainashi da," editorial, *Asahi shimbun*, 28 March 2007.

[15] "Shinzo Abe's double talk," *Washington Post*, 24 March 2007.

[16] Bryan Walsh, "Japan's Abe reopens an old wound," *Time*, 8 March 2007.

[17] Norimitsu Onishi, "Call by US House for sex slavery apology angers Japan's leader," *New York Times*, 1 August 2007.

[18] "US got Abe to drop denial over sex slaves," (Kyodo News), *Japan Times*, 9 November 2007.

[19] House Resolution 121, submitted 31 January 2007, See here.

[20] Norimitsu Onishi, "Call by US House for sex slavery apology angers Japan's leader," *New York Times*, 1 August 2007.

[21] "Comfort Women Issue," Statement of the Embassy of Japan, quoted in Jeeyoung Choi, "Comfort Women: Japan's unpaid reparations," Revisions - Bologna Center Journal of International Affairs

[22] Jeeyoung Choi, op. cit.

[23] Funabashi Yoichi, "Beikoiku kara no 'jiritsu' to 'jisei'." Asahi shimbun, 28 May 2007.

[24] Funabashi, ibid, also "Nichi-bei-go-in daiwa, Raisu chokan 'shincho ni', Koike Boeisho to kaidan," *Asahi shimbun*, 10 August 2007.

[25] "'Nichi-In wa kihonteki kachi o kyoyu' shusho, Indo kokkai de enzetsu," *Asahi shimbun*, 22 August 2007.

[26] Transcript, speech of 19 September 1990, ANA Hotel, Tokyo, and media reports.

[27] See, for example, reports in *The Age*, 26 March 1988, and the *Weekend Australian*, 26-27 March 1988.

[28] Department of Defence, *Australia's National Security – Defence Update 2007*, Canberra 2007.

[29] "Australia - Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation," Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 13 March 2007.

[30] Hugh White, "An Australia-Japan Alliance?" Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University, December 2012, p.3.

[31] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan-Australia Relations – Basic Data, September 2012. http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/data.html

[32] Desmond Ball, "Whither the Japan-Australia security relationship?" Austral Policy Forum 03-32A, 21 September 2006.

[33] Malcolm Fraser, "Australia-U.S. Relations in the 'Asian century'," Asialink, The University of Melbourne, 25 September 2012.

[34] For details, *Client State*, passim.

[35] Details in Gavan McCormack, *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace*, London and New York, Verso, 2007.

[36] Following the reports issued in 1995 by Joseph Nye and in 2000 and 2007 by Nye, Armitage, and their associates. For further discussion see McCormack and Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States,* Lanham MD, Rowman and Littlefield, 2012, passim.

[37] Richard Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, "The US-Japan Alliance: Anchoring Stability in Asia," CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies), August 2012, (Link).

[38] Nishibe Susumu, "Seiron," *Sankei shimbun*, 5 September 2006.

[39] Hiroshi Matsubara, "Interview//Kiichi Fujiwara: Abe's revisionism may diminish Japan's credibility," *Asahi shimbun*, 20 December 2012.

[40] "Yes, we remember the facts," *Star-Ledger*, 4 November 2012 (New Jersey). Palisades Park in New Jersey is the site of a "Comfort Women" monument to which denialists have taken great exception, and which the Japanese Consul-General has attempted (unsuccessfully) to have removed. ("The Comfort Women monument in New Jersey," japan probe, 24 May 2012.) Link.

[41] "Abe pays Yasukuni visit amid isle rows," *Japan Times*, 17 October 2012.