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Is Japan Really Back? The “Abe Doctrine” and Global Governance

Hugo Dobson 

School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK

ABSTRACT

Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo has emerged as the “comeback kid” of Japanese politics and in his second term of office is now widely regarded as a rare example of strong leadership as he seeks to arrest and reverse his country’s perceived decline. The strategy to achieve these objectives has come to be known as the “Abe Doctrine,” which represents a radical but risky shift in foreign policy. This article outlines the tenets of the evolving Abe Doctrine and then applies them to the Abe administration’s behaviour in the mechanisms of global governance, a highly pertinent but overlooked example. It argues that although a more strategic and coherent approach to global governance has emerged under Abe than had been previously evident, this has been at the expense of the norm of internationalism that has traditionally shaped Japan’s role.

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Since December 26, 2012 when he became the first post-Occupation politician to return to the position of prime minister, Abe Shinzo has emerged not only as the “comeback kid” of Japanese politics but also something of a success story. On May 18, 2013, *The Economist* newspaper depicted the body of Superman on its front cover, fist-first in flight as one might expect. What was unexpected was Abe’s photoshopped head set against the headline “Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No...It’s Japan!” Similar optimism was evident a couple of months later in a *Foreign Affairs* interview with Abe entitled “Japan is Back” that focused on the revival of Japan’s fortunes and Abe’s political leadership (Abe 2013). In June 2014, a commentary by Noah Smith (2014) entitled “Abe might be the world’s best leader” was carried in *The Japan Times* and boldly argued that the prime minister was “the most effective national leader in the world right now...an example that the rest of the world should be following.” Before the end of that year, Abe won a second consecutive landslide election and secured his position. Abe now appears destined to join the select club of Japanese prime ministers regarded as a “rare strong leader” (Moritsugu and Yamaguchi 2014).

Such confident assertions of Japan’s revived fortunes and emphasis on the leadership role of the Japanese prime minister therein stand in stark contrast to the previously received wisdom that Japan was in some kind of absolute or relative decline, as well as

CONTACT Hugo Dobson  h.dobson@sheffield.ac.uk  School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK.

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suffering from an associated leadership vacuum (Jain and Williams 2011). Breaking with the previous revolving door of short-lived prime ministers, and particularly in contrast to the perceived failure and compromised leadership of his short-lived first term in office (September 2006 to September 2007), the rebooted Abe 2.0 appears to be a more robust and positively proactive leader. His leadership is seen to have manifested itself in a number of issue-areas. These include *inter alia* reviving Japan's economy through the "three arrows" of "Abenomics" (monetary easing, fiscal stimulus and the promotion of growth strategies through structural reform); championing historical revisionism and challenging established post-war interpretations of Japan's experience of the Pacific War; and attempting to turn Japan into a more "normal" country in security terms through a "proactive contribution to peace," constitutional revision and reinterpretation of Japan's self-imposed ban on the right to collective self-defence. Hughes (2015, 1) has brought together most of these various strands and associated literatures under what is known as the "Abe Doctrine" and what he regards as a "dynamic but also high risk" approach to foreign and security policy.

When exploring the questions of whether Japan's decline has been halted and reversed, as well as the role of Abe and the adoption of any eponymous doctrine in such a revival, directing our attention towards the Abe administration's behaviour in the mechanisms and institutions of global governance is a worthwhile undertaking for three reasons.¹

First, Japan's domestic economic and security policies have so far tended to receive the lion's share of attention. This is entirely understandable and yet at the same time presents a narrow focus. Even when attention has been placed on the international sphere, this has been limited to Japan-US and Japan-East Asia relations. The extant literature has largely overlooked the Abe administration's behaviour in the mechanisms of global governance, especially in response to recent shifts in the global balance of power and their impact on the global governance architecture (for exceptions see Dobson 2012a; Rathus 2013).

Second, these recent developments in the global order and architecture of global governance are both a cause and a symptom of Japan's perceived decline. Particularly since the Great Recession of 2008–09, the central mechanisms of global governance, mostly established by the US in the Cold War period, have come to be regarded as either irrelevant or in need of dramatic reform; the Groups of 7 (G7) and 8 (G8) represent an example of the former irrelevance and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) an example of the latter attempted reform. As a member of the pre-crisis world order centred on the G7/8, Japan's reaction to these shifts in the global balance of power was to continue aligning itself with these now seemingly defunct groupings, tending towards the reactive, reactionary and sometimes contradictory, especially under the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and compounding perceptions of Japan's overall irrelevance (Iwashita 2009; Dobson 2012a). This begs the question of whether, as many have argued to be the case in other areas of activity, the Abe administration has fostered a contrasting strategic revival of Japan's fortunes through the promotion and application of a coherent doctrine in the mechanisms of global governance.

Third, several of these mechanisms of global governance, especially the more informal, ad hoc ones such as the G7, G8, Group of 20 (G20) and World Economic Forum (WEF), place a much greater emphasis on the role of individual leaders and the

interpersonal relationships that they construct between and amongst each other. In this context, the mechanisms of global governance provide both a clear opportunity by which an individual leader can assert him/herself, especially at a time of reform and reordering, as well as an area of activity that allows us to gauge the contribution of an individual leader, in this case Abe and the impact of an eponymous doctrine aimed at addressing Japan's decline.

With the objectives of interrogating the narrative of Japan's (and by association Abe's) recent "revival" through the architecture of global governance, and exploring whether an Abe Doctrine has emerged and what its impact has been, this article is structured as follows. It begins by discussing Japan's perceived decline before Abe's return to power in December 2012, explores his leadership role and resulting signs of Japan's apparent revival across a range of issue areas, then outlines the tenets of the Abe Doctrine. It then shifts focus to the recent global redistribution of power and its impact on the architecture and mechanisms of global governance before outlining the specific challenges for Japan and its previous responses to this changing global order. After setting the scene prior to Abe's return to power, the bulk of the article then reviews Abe and his administration's participation in a number of summits and meetings of the institutions and mechanisms of global governance from 2013 to the end of 2015 through the lens of the Abe Doctrine. This review is focused on but not confined to the G7, G8, G20, the Tokyo International Conference on Aid and Development (TICAD), the United Nations (UN) system, and WEF. It is based on interviews with leading Japanese policymakers, Japan watchers and observers of global summitry (often at the media centres of some of the summits in question), as well as media reportage, summit declarations and press conferences in both English and Japanese. The article argues that under Abe the application of the Abe Doctrine is certainly in evidence and has resulted in a more coherent and strategic approach to global governance than that seen in recent years and under various administrations. However, although this may constitute a strategic revival in Japan's multilateral foreign policy, it is narrowly focused, falls some distance short of Japan's more traditional and successful leadership role in the mechanisms of global governance informed by the norm of internationalism, and is likely to fail.

A Tale of Two Abes and an Evolving Abe Doctrine

The topic of Japan's decline – absolute or relative – is a well-worn topic in the popular and scholarly imagination. Since the end of the Cold War, Japan is seen to have suffered at least one (unfortunate) and possibly two (careless) "lost decades" as a result of economic stagnation, political inertia and social malaise at home, and at the same time has struggled to find a role in the world. For some, this decline was compounded by a sense of frustration at the opportunities that were lost at the end of the Cold War as captured by Michael Green (2003, 239): "[w]hat a decade [the 1990s] might have been...Japan might have emerged as a new kind of superpower." Despite the proactive blip of the Koizumi administration, Japan's decline was seen to continue throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century only to gather pace in the second decade with the rise of China. The nature and reality of this decline has been traced across a range of issues and areas of activity (Jain and Williams 2011).

However, for many, this narrative of decline was too simplistic and actually masked signs of Japan's possible and actual revival (see Dobson 2005; Pilling 2014). Especially since December 2012 and the return to power of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), attention has once again been paid to Japan's re-emergence. This has been closely tied to Abe, whose previous term in office was regarded, even by Abe (2013) himself, as a failure. He resigned citing health reasons, seemingly written off as another short-lived prime minister symptomatic of Japan's ongoing decline. In contrast, six years and several prime ministers later, Abe returned, apparently rejuvenated and hoping that history does not repeat itself first as tragedy and second as farce.

Some observers believe that Abe has returned as a different leader and that this is not a simple continuation of his previously failed agenda (Smith 2014; Moritsugu and Yamaguchi 2014). Whilst acknowledging certain continuities that persist, particularly in Abe's worldview, there are clear differences that demonstrate learning on the part of Abe as an individual and the LDP as a political party. One example is that although Abe and the LDP may have technically won the Lower House Election of December 16, 2012 (in fact, its greatest electoral victory in its history), it was widely acknowledged that it did not win the hearts and minds of the electorate and there was hardly the jubilation seen in previous landslide victories. In fact, the number of people voting for the LDP in 2012 was lower than in 2009 when the DPJ recorded its own historic landslide victory. Rather, the Japanese electorate sought to express its dissatisfaction with three years of DPJ rule or did not bother to turn out at all. Abe appeared to be well aware of this and to have learned from the misplaced emphasis of his first and failed administration on nationalism at the expense of the economy and welfare. In his "Japan is Back" interview in *Foreign Affairs*, Abe (2013) explained his first administration's failure through his inability to prioritise and desire to do everything at once. Thereafter, he claims to have conducted a "listening exercise," utilising social rather than traditional media, and as a result chose to focus on the economic revival of Japan. The fact that he placed the emphasis on Abenomics, consisting of monetary easing to target inflation, fiscal stimulus including a ¥10 trillion package and the promotion of growth strategies through structural reform, presents a stark example of learning and a pragmatic priority rather than pursuing an ideological foreign policy.

In terms of concrete results, the initial narrative was one of "so far, so good" and Abe was able to claim a series of quick wins (see Kantei 2013a; Amari 2013). The LDP rapidly appointed its preferred candidates to the Governorship and Deputy Governorship of the Bank of Japan and signs of economic recovery soon emerged: the value of the yen fell from ¥83 to the dollar in December 2012 to ¥100 to the dollar six months later, the Nikkei stock market index exceeded 15,000 in mid-May 2013, the first time in five years, representing a rise of almost 60% from ¥9,895 over the same period since Abe came to power. Japan began to return stronger growth figures. Opinion polls proved to be relatively resilient, demonstrating high approval ratings of at least 60% six months after the LDP's return to power. Upper House electoral victory in summer 2013 and a second landslide victory in the Lower House election of December 2014 confirmed Abe's position until 2018 and resolved to an extent the legislative logjam of a divided Diet. Although more sobering economic results followed and opinion polls reflected this, Abe was able in the short term to burnish Japan's

international standing in terms of economic recovery and the role of his political leadership.

However, in some quarters the reaction to Abe's immediate return was to warn that he would seek to pursue the nationalist agenda of his previous short-lived administration. Hosaka (2013) argued that "[t]he first Abe administration, including the cabinet, largely resembles the present one, and accordingly, the first Abe administration provides important clues for how the second one will develop." Pekkanen (2013) acknowledged change in that the LDP learned how to be an effective opposition party in holding the DPJ to account whilst not obstructing its policies simply for the sake of it, but agreed with the sense of continuity and argued that the LDP had not changed radically in terms of party organisation nor Abe in terms of vision whilst in opposition.

This increasingly appeared to be the case as Abe returned in time to aspects of his policy platform that echoed the same nationalistic, hawkish foreign policy that was developed in his 2006 book *Utsukushii Kuni he (Towards a Beautiful Country)*. In this book, and over time, Abe has discussed his objective of making Japan a truly sovereign nation in line with its great power status. To this end, he has outlined a more proactive role for Japan in the world by which it would pursue "values-oriented" diplomacy that stresses democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law and the market economy, fulfill its responsibilities under the US-Japan Security Treaty, undertake an expanded security role supported by increased military spending, and adopt a robust position in relation to China by, for example, refusing to acknowledge any issue of sovereignty over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. This has inevitably led him to highlight a number of unsettled post-war accounts and his desire to break free of constraints on Japan's security role by revising the constitution and exercising the right of collective self-defence. At the same time, Abe has outlined a historical revisionist agenda that questions the victor's justice metered out by the Tokyo Tribunal that established the post-war narrative of Japan as the aggressor, sanctions the veneration of Japan's war dead at Yasukuni Shrine, and confronts the issue of the coercion of sexual slaves euphemistically called "comfort women" in the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces. All of these aspects have emerged in a number of Abe's statements and speeches since December 2012 (Abe 2013; Kantei 2013a, 2013b; MOFA 2013a, 2013b, 2014a; Kantei 2015a, 2015b). Although never officially referred to explicitly as such, taken collectively, these various elements have been dubbed an evolving Abe Doctrine by Japanese and non-Japanese commentators alike (for the former, see *Chuo Koron* February 2013; Yachi 2013; Fukuda 2015; Mori 2015; for the latter, see Hughes 2015; Singh 2014).

This evolving doctrine can be summarised in four tenets. The starting point is Abe's desire to arrest Japan's decline, whether it be real or perceived, and assert its credentials as a contemporary great power. Whether related to Japan's security posture, economic status or view of history, the other tenets of the doctrine are essentially the means to this overarching end (Hughes 2015, 9–12). Abe's desire to staunch Japan's perceived decline and assert its great power status was neatly encapsulated in his 2015 New Year address:

Our predecessors accomplished rapid economic growth, making Japan one of the greatest powers in the world. There is no reason whatsoever that the Japanese of that era could achieve this but the Japanese of today cannot. Now, as we mark the new year, I have

renewed my determination to, together with the Japanese people, make Japan a country that once again shines on the world's center stage (cited in Kantei 2015a).

In foreign policy, Abe has pursued this goal by adopting the approach of “values-oriented diplomacy” that characterised his short-lived first period in power and was by and large pursued by subsequent LDP and DPJ prime ministers (Dobson 2012a). “Values-oriented diplomacy” originates in a speech given by Aso Taro, then Foreign Minister under Abe, on November 30, 2006. In this speech, given to the Japan Institute of International Affairs and entitled “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons,” Aso defined this approach as “...placing emphasis on the ‘universal values’ such as democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law, and the market economy as we advance our diplomatic endeavors” (MOFA 2006). Aso also defined the geographical remit of this “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity” and Japan's role therein. To this end, he stressed his belief that within:

this sweeping arc stretching from Northeast Asia to Central Asia and the Caucasus, Turkey, Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states, Japan will serve as an “escort runner” to support these countries that have just started into this truly never-ending marathon...

Japan must make its ties even firmer with friendly nations that share the common views and interests, namely of course the United States as well as Australia, India, and the member states of the EU and NATO, and at the same time work with these friends towards the expansion of this “arc of freedom and prosperity” (MOFA 2006).

Both in terms of the articulated values and the geographical remit, the unspoken concern at the heart of this approach is managing China's rise through exclusion and isolation (Laurence 2007; Taniguchi 2010).

Second, and building on this, the Abe Doctrine stresses that Japan's great power status can be restored by addressing a number of perceived “shackles” that have hampered Japan's efforts to play a proactive role in the world. To this end, the Abe administration has targeted revision of Japan's post-war constitution, and particularly the peace clause of Article 9, alongside other manifestations of Japan's minimal role in defence and security affairs such as the self-imposed ban on military exports as a key objective. It is argued that this will signify a break with the post-war regime of minimal contributions and a low profile in terms of security, and facilitate a “proactive contribution to peace” (Singh 2014, 2; Hughes 2015, 12–14). At the same time, this objective extends to other aspects of the constitution that are unrelated to its security posture but are regarded as “un-Japanese,” such as the “Western” emphasis on rights over responsibilities. To this end, the Abe administration has pursued contrasting approaches. For example, in April 2012 before its return to power, the LDP approved a draft constitution that *inter alia* rewrote Article 9 to recognise a National Defence Force and contested the basic concept of universal human rights by stressing Japan's historical and cultural context and prioritising “public interest” and “public order” over “fundamental human rights” (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, April 28, 2012). Soon after being elected in December 2012, Abe sought to pursue constitutional revision through revision of Article 96, which outlines the conditions that need to be met when attempting to revise the constitution. However, these attempts were met with popular opposition and soon abandoned. Then, in

July 2014, a cabinet decision was announced to exercise Japan's right to collective self-defence, thereby setting the scene for a tense legislative process during Summer 2015 from which Abe emerged successful.

Third, this desire to overturn the post-war obstacles that constrain Japan's proactive and independent behaviour in foreign and security policy extends beyond concrete manifestations like the constitution to include historical interpretations of the Pacific War that have dominated the post-war period (Hughes 2015, 15–23; Kantei 2013b, 2015b). These range from challenging the post-war narrative of Japan as the aggressor established in the Tokyo Tribunal, to venerating Japan's war dead at Yasukuni Shrine, and questioning the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces' actual use of "comfort women" and the 1993 Kono Statement by which the Japanese government recognised the role of coercion therein.

Finally, and although not explicitly identified as a tenet in Hughes's discussion of the Abe Doctrine, the objectives of securing Japan's great power status and promoting a more proactive and robust Japanese security role by challenging post-war taboos and constraints can only be achieved through an economically strong Japan. The popular narrative is often a tale of two Abes in terms of Abe the pragmatic, economic animal who learned lessons from his first failed administration and was then heralded for his promotion of Abenomics, in contrast to Abe the nationalistic idealist who has recently re-emerged seeking to make Japan "normal," reverse its decline, and respond robustly to China supported by constitutional revision and historical revisionism. However, attempting to separate Abenomics from Abe's nationalist agenda represents something of a false dichotomy and, rather like Schrödinger's cat, Abe the pragmatist and Abe the nationalist exist together at the same time and are mutually reinforcing. In Abe's worldview, Japan cannot provide a strong regional and global presence unless it emerges from its long-running economic malaise. As *The Economist* argued in its May 18, 2013 edition, Abenomics is as much about regional security, Japan's status in the world and the Meiji-period slogan of *fukoku kyohei* (rich country, strong army) as it is about economic growth. Thus, Abenomics should be added to the restoration of Japan's great power status, ending the post-war regime and historical revisionism as the central tenets of the Abe Doctrine.

All this contrasts with the dominant Cold War "Yoshida Doctrine" of prioritising economic growth and engagement with regional neighbours whilst pursuing a low-profile foreign policy and restrained defence policies under the wing of a US security guarantee. Since electoral victories in 2013 and 2014, it appears that Abe is beginning to pursue this doctrine more overtly both in Japan's national security policy and across a range of key bilateral and regional relationships.

The Shifting Global Order and the Challenge for Japan

Having explored both Abe's leadership credentials in arresting Japan's decline and the basic tenets of the Abe Doctrine, and before turning to the recent application of this doctrine in the mechanisms of global governance, this section provides further context by outlining how we have understood Japan's traditional role in these mechanisms, its response to recent shifts in the global order as reflected in the architecture of global governance and the extent to which leaders are able to exercise agency therein.

Japan's traditional role in the mechanisms of global governance has to a considerable extent been shaped by the norm of internationalism, or, in other words, "...the expression of cooperation with and support for the ideals of international society..." (Hook et al. 2012, 66). Inoguchi (2014a, 944) regards liberal internationalism, defined as "working through and enhancing global norms and institutions, strengthening Japan's ability to enhance itself and work with other states under conditions of deep globalization," as one of the core traditions of its foreign policy. Others have described its role as that of an internationalist-minded, middle power exhibiting "quiet" leadership (Soeya 2005, 2012). In concrete terms, the story that emerges is that global governance and its mechanisms have mattered to Japan.

Take, for example, the UN. Japan was a latecomer in 1956 to this central mechanism of global governance. However, it has occupied a special place in Japan's foreign policy both normatively and concretely. Although compromised by Cold War pressures, Japan advocated publicly "UN-centred diplomacy" and "UN-centrism" as one of the three pillars of its foreign policy (alongside cooperation with other major democracies and maintaining a position as a member of Asia). Since then, and considering its position as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Japan has made substantial and prompt contributions to the UN's regular and peacekeeping budgets. It has sought out and served in the role of non-permanent member of the UNSC a record number of times, has responded to calls to reform the UN with concrete proposals, worked to increase its levels of personnel working within the UN, and slowly but steadily contributed more actively to the UN's peacekeeping functions.

The G7/8 provides another illustrative example of how the norm of internationalism has manifested itself (Dobson 2004, 176–182). Historically excluded from, or still constrained within, the official and legal mechanisms of global governance, inclusion in the first of these informal summits of contemporary great powers accorded status and recognition to Japan. In response, Japan sought to demonstrate its credentials as a responsible great power and ensure the success of the process, especially on the five occasions it has hosted the G7/8 summit (1979, 1986, 1993, 2000 and 2008). This can be seen in concrete outcomes like the Japanese-led initiative to place the fight against infectious diseases on the agenda of the 2000 G8 Summit that resulted in the establishment of the Global Health Fund and the saving of seven million lives; or, on the other hand, in the first ever attempt to accommodate civil society groups in the summit process. In addition to its efforts to host consistently successful summits, this normative impulse can also be seen in Japan's high levels of compliance with summit pledges (see G8 Research Group 2015).

Japan's relationship with the IMF represents a final concrete example of the influence of the internationalist norm. Japan's role has developed from one of initial passivity after it joined in 1952 to proactivity by which it has sought to communicate its own experience and vision of economic development (Holroyd and Momani 2012, 205). A recent example of Japan's continued adherence to the norm of internationalism can be seen during the Great Recession. It was Japan that bailed out the IMF rather than the IMF coming to the aid of East Asia, most notably demonstrated by the Japanese government's US\$100 billion loan to the IMF towards the end of 2008 without any accompanying claims for an increase in quotas and influence. Hard-nosed Realist motivations have been highlighted by Grimes (2009) and Holroyd and Momani

(2012) to explain this “unprecedentedly large loan,” including the absence of risk involved because of the low costs associated with making the loan, the “laundering of state preferences” so that Japan could delegate to the IMF with impunity the task of attaching contentious political conditions to any loans, and Japan’s desire to reinforce the IMF, the old world order and its position therein. However, the most notable explanatory variable was responding to the norm of internationalism and its responsibilities as a great power, especially in the absence of contributions from the US, Europe or China. As one MOF official is quoted as saying “Japan can’t be selfish and short-sighted” and it was not felt to be appropriate or immediately helpful to anybody to tie a loan of this magnitude and in these circumstances to a review of quotas to Japan’s benefit (Holroyd and Momani 2012, 209).

However, the shifting global order has impacted on the mechanisms of global governance in a number of ways. For example, the shift from the G7/8 of industrialised democracies to the G20, including many developing countries, as the “premium forum for international economic cooperation”; the subsequent 2010 agreement to reform the IMF’s quotas and governance structures to accommodate a number of rising powers, particularly China; and finally China’s announcement in October 2013 of the creation of an Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the BRICS countries’ agreement in July 2014 to establish a New Development Bank. Japan’s reactions to these developments, particularly in the case of GX summitry, have been explored elsewhere (see Dobson 2012a; Rathus 2013). Suffice to say that these shifting sands of global governance have presented a considerable challenge to Japan.

The Japanese government initially sought to respond to the global shift of power and reform of global governance institutions by continuing to respond to this internationalist normative impulse that has shaped its behaviour previously. This can be seen in making substantial financial contributions to the intensive period of G8 and G20 summitry during this time, particularly the largest loan in history at the 2008 G20 Washington Summit as mentioned above. However, Japan experienced setbacks – most clearly demonstrated in its inability to secure the role of G20 chair and in fact losing out to regional rivals South Korea in 2010 and China in 2016. It has felt its identity-defining position as Asia’s representative in the mechanisms of global governance under threat as the G20 now includes China, India, Indonesia, South Korea, and even Australia as Asian members. In reaction, successive Japanese prime ministers and policymakers have reverted to more competitive Realist behaviour by openly questioning China and South Korea’s levels of commitment to the pledges made at G20 summits, and thus, their sense of responsibility to the international community and ability to behave as contemporary great powers. Japanese leaders and policymakers have also praised the role of the G20 and want to see it succeed but not at the expense of the G8 and have at the same time repeatedly stressed the fact that the G8 continues to be important, citing the like-mindedness of its leaders as the justifying factor for its continued existence based on their shared belief in “open, democratic society, dedicated to individual liberty and social advancement” as stated in the original Declaration of the first Rambouillet Summit of the G7. Thus, any initial enthusiasm for the G20 has waned and the result is that Japan’s behaviour has appeared qualified, contradictory and reactionary.

This smorgasbord of responses to the rise of the G20, the decline of the G8 and the changing global order more broadly corresponds with a turbulent time in Japan’s domestic

politics (Ina 2012). Since Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro stepped down in September 2006 having won a landslide election the previous year, two further landslide elections have taken place, removing unequivocally the LDP from power in 2009 and giving the DPJ its chance, before then returning the LDP to power rather more equivocally in 2012 and 2014 but with landslide victories nonetheless. Both alongside and as part of this turbulence we have witnessed a revolving door of Japanese prime ministers each failing to stay in power for more than a year on average and hardly long enough to realise their visions. From when Koizumi stepped down to Abe's first landslide victory in December 2012, six annual G8 summits were attended by six different prime ministers. In the case of the seven G20 summits held during this time, four Japanese prime ministers attended, in comparison to one German chancellor and two US presidents. Clearly Japan has not displayed the same levels of consistency in representation that other countries enjoy. This is unfortunate for Japan because, as mentioned above, individual leaders are crucial to the functioning of the more informal mechanisms of global governance. For example, since its inception, G7/8 summitry has been founded on the potential of political leadership and the personal encounter within a community of like-minded leaders. To this end, bureaucratic input was minimised, formal agendas discarded and the informal atmosphere emphasised (Bayne 2005). Obviously the reality today involves a considerable amount of bureaucracy and preparation; however, the central role is still played by the president, prime minister or chancellor and examples of how they have shaped agendas – successfully or unsuccessfully – can be seen in Tony Blair's promotion of African issues at the 2005 Gleneagles Summit, the collective response and abandonment of beggar-thy-neighbour policies orchestrated by Gordon Brown at the 2009 G20 London Summit, or Angela Merkel's reiterative emphasis on climate change at the G7/8 summits she hosted in 2007 and 2015. However, as mentioned at the outset of this article, the instability in Japanese politics appears to be over; Japan and Abe are now back for the foreseeable future.

So, in summary, if we wish to explore the impact of Abe's eponymous foreign policy doctrine that aims to arrest the decline of Japan, then it should not be forgotten that this decline is starkly evident in the global shift of power and the architecture of global governance where Japan's traditional internationalist approach has faltered and the opportunities for an individual leader to have an impact are amplified. In short, global governance is an area of activity worth exploring.

Pursuing the Abe Doctrine in Global Governance

Turning now to the series of global summits and meetings that form the architecture of global governance from January 2013 just after Abe returned to power through to November 2015 in the aftermath of the G20 Summit in Antalya, Turkey, the following questions are addressed. To what extent, and in what ways, has the Abe Doctrine been promoted? How has this impacted upon Japan's role in global governance? They will be answered by exploring each of the tenets of the doctrine outlined above in turn before the conclusion then evaluates whether, as a result, Abe has addressed Japan's recent confused responses to the shifting global order and what the implications are for Japan's traditional internationalist approach to global governance.

Restoring Japan's great power status

As mentioned above, the central goal of the Abe Doctrine is to arrest Japan's decline and maintain its great power status particularly by responding robustly to the rise of China. However, there have been some attempts to manage the relationship with China and regional neighbours in a more constructive manner through the opportunities afforded by the regular series of global governance meetings and summits throughout the year. For example, at the 2013 G20 St Petersburg Summit, exchanges of courtesies with Xi Jinping and Park Geun-hye took place and in his post-summit press conference, Abe stressed a "mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests." In January 2014 at the WEF meeting in Davos, Abe attended Park's speech and conferred briefly with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se (Inoguchi 2014b, 105). Later that year in the lead up to the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation forum meeting in Beijing from 10 to 11 November 2014, much speculation focused on possible steps towards reconciliation through a bilateral meeting between Abe and Xi. This meeting did indeed take place and, although both leaders appeared ill at ease with each other, resulted in some first steps towards crisis management mechanisms being put in place.

Nevertheless, the dominant approach adopted within the mechanisms of global governance has been to reiterate and embed the values of democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law and the market economy at regular opportunities. Not only do they constitute and resonate with "values-oriented diplomacy," they also serve as the ideological glue that binds an informal elite group with no official membership criteria like the G7/8 together. This, in turn, reinforces Japan's position within this select group and its great power status. In contrast, the logic follows that a more diverse forum like the G20, which includes regional rivals like China and Korea, struggles to identify values that bind it together and legitimise its role.

So, across his attendance at global governance summits and meetings, Abe's efforts to reiterate and embed these universal values are clearly in evidence. For example, at the G20 summit in Brisbane from 15 to 16 November 2014 Abe's feverishly active diplomacy continued unabated as he hosted a dinner with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the eve of the summit and also held a three-way discussion with Obama and Abbott on the sidelines of the first day of the summit. Both meetings can be interpreted as part of Abe's efforts to reinforce key regional allies in an effort to balance against China. In the case of the latter meeting, the three leaders declared in a thinly veiled reference to China that:

this partnership rests on the unshakable foundation of shared interests and values, including a commitment to democracy and open economies, the rule of law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes...The three leaders also underscored ...ensuring freedom of navigation and over-flight and the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes in accordance with international law, including through legal mechanisms such as arbitration (White House 2014).

At the 2015 G7 Summit at Schloss Elmau, in his post-summit press conference, Abe echoed the leaders' declaration and stressed numerous times how it was the shared values of freedom, democracy, basic human rights and the rule of law that bind the G7 leaders together and give it its defining character as a forum (Kantei 2015c). Not only

was this an assertion of the values at the heart of his signature diplomatic approach and an attempt to reinforce the G7 as a great-power grouping, it also allowed him to reinforce the comparison between Russia and China as both flouting these values in the case of Ukraine and the South China Sea respectively and bring the world's attention to the latter.

One other key aspect of Japan's great power status has been its self-appointed role as a representative of Asia, particularly within the mechanisms of global governance. For example, immediately after the end of the Cold War, Japan went out and batted for itself and Asia in global financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF (Rapkin, Elston, and Strand 1997). Building on these previous efforts, Japan's recent position on the restructuring of IMF voting rights promoted through the G20 has been described as positive (Rathus 2013, 229). However, as regards the other reforms of the IMF championed by the G20, the Abe administration's behaviour has recently undermined its rhetoric, as can be seen in relation to the agreed introduction of competition in the appointment of the heads of international institutions. Abe has been ready to promote Japan's great power status more forcefully in Realist terms, for example reinforcing its historic control of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) by installing Nakao Takehiko, another Japanese citizen, as its president to replace Kuroda Haruhiko who was moved to the Bank of Japan and thereby ignoring promises made at the 2009 G20 London Summit and reiterated at the 2010 G20 Pittsburgh Summit that the head of any international institution would be chosen through an "open, transparent and merit-based process" (see G20 Research Group 2016).²

One interpretation of the Abe administration's and the ADB's behaviour has pointed to fear of Chinese domination as a possible motivating factor, although the evidence for this claim is lacking and the ADB was, at least up until the Great Recession, a forum in which a relatively harmonious Sino-Japanese relationship evolved (Rathus 2008). However, this changed in October 2013 when China announced its creation of the AIIB. For some the new bank is to be welcomed, according to Elek (2014):

[t]here is room for a new development bank, specialised in financing large-scale economic infrastructure on commercial terms, working alongside existing multilateral development banks...The World Bank and the ADB are now focusing on concessional lending and knowledge sharing with low-income countries, leaving an important niche to be filled by a new financial institution...The AIIB will create new competition for the World Bank and ADB, but the new bank will also have a strong incentive to cooperate with them.

The Abe administration's response has been to dismiss the AIIB, downplay its capabilities and question its transparency and governance structure in an attempt to protect the influence of the ADB and burnish Japan's status. Despite possible divisions on the issue of the AIIB, Abe took the opportunity of the Schloss Elmau Summit to continue communicating these concerns to his fellow summiteers. In contrast, some have urged the Abe administration to sign up to the AIIB and seek to influence it from within (Kikuchi and Masutomo 2015), an argument that appears to resonate with fellow great power summiteers France, Germany, Italy and the UK, who all ignored Japan's warnings and applied to become founding members in March 2015.

Ending the post-war regime

Efforts at home to carve out a new security role for Japan that breaks the “shackles” of minimal contributions have been replicated in the Abe administration’s behaviour in the mechanisms of global governance. For example, as mentioned below, Abe took the opportunity when addressing the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 26, 2013 to promote Abenomics, a central pillar of the Abe Doctrine. However, woven into this promotion of Abenomics was the other side of the doctrine that stresses ending the post-war regime. This was manifested in his promotion of Japan’s “proactive contribution to peace,” promising that Japan can be “even more actively engaged in UN collective security measures, including peacekeeping operations,” whilst still acknowledging Japan’s adherence to the concept of “human security” (Kantei 2013c). Japan has traditionally upheld “human security” as an example of its intellectual leadership (see Kurusu and Kersten 2011). As Honna (2012) has explained in detail, this has extended to opposition to the new norm of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) despite the UN’s efforts to act as a norm entrepreneur in promoting its adoption. This is not predominantly, as might be expected, a result of fears that R2P justifies unilateral intervention. It is also driven by an ideological turf war in which Japan wishes to preserve human security as its preferred and long-vaunted ideational contribution and avoid association with R2P. However, Abe appears to be supplanting this traditional approach and prioritising Japan’s ability to make a “proactive contribution to peace,” which ultimately includes addressing a number of post-war constraints. In the same speech Abe also promoted other security issues, stressing the strategic nature and success of June’s TICAD-V by emphasising Japan’s position as “an enduring partner weaving dreams side by side with Africa.” Open criticism of North Korea, its nuclear programme and inevitably the abduction issue were clearly articulated, whilst veiled criticism of China was seen in his emphasis of the fact that Japan’s “national interests are firmly connected to the stability of seas that are open, [and] changes to the maritime order through the use of force or coercion cannot be condoned under any circumstances” (Kantei 2013c).

At the WEF meeting in January 2014, Abe once again took the opportunity to promote Japan’s “proactive contribution to peace” by highlighting the Self-Defence Forces’ contributions to relief efforts in the Philippines and combatting piracy in Djibouti (Kantei 2014). Abe deployed the metaphor “a new Japan is now waving a banner for proactive contribution to peace” that for some stands in contrast to Japan’s previously minimalist role, or is redolent to others of the militaristic flag of the rising sun. He also shifted the focus to the threat of territorial disputes in the East Asian region and possible military escalation, calling for respect for the rule of law, promotion of the international law of the sea, and transparency in military budgets in a thinly veiled attack on China.

Although the G8 Lough Erne Summit’s agenda was firmly placed on economic issues, Abe succeeded in having security issues discussed, particularly North Korea. In line with his predecessors, Abe succeeded in including reference in the final communiqué of human rights issues and specifically the abductions of Japanese citizens by North Korean agents – something he was able to achieve at the 2014 Brussels Summit and 2015 Schloss Elmau Summit of the G7 and can be regarded as

a given considering Japan's track record in pursuing this issue with its G7/8 partners since 2003 and especially in light of Abe's personal interest in the issue and participation in the first high-level Japan-North Korea summit in 2002 (Kantei 2015c).

However, Abe has differed from his immediate predecessors in targeting the G7/8 summits to pursue specific policies that challenge the post-war regime. From the beginning of 2013, the G8 Summit was set as the target for the creation of a comprehensive agreement promoting UK-Japan intelligence sharing and the joint development of defence equipment. The agreement endorsed at Lough Erne allows Japan to provide the UK with defence technology despite the fears of some that this contradicts the principles that have historically banned the export of weapons and related technology. The agreement with the UK suggests Abe's willingness to see Japan's role enhanced in the field of security without being overly constrained by what some perceive as post-war taboos. Moreover, it demonstrates his willingness to use the mechanisms of global governance to achieve these goals. As Japan was bidding (ultimately unsuccessfully) to provide Australia with its next generation of submarines, Abe's discussion of shared security concerns in the South China Sea with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull at the G20 Antalya Summit in November 2015 can be seen to represent a similar development.

Continuing to shift the attention from general approaches to more specific issues like weapons exports, Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) policy emerges as another global governance issue that has been reinterpreted in line with the Abe Doctrine. The Abe administration has promoted a review of traditional guidelines to include a more explicitly strategic dimension that serves Japan's national interest and security whilst downplaying the more normative and internationalist dimensions of ODA introduced over recent decades such as the ban on the use of aid for military purposes and its role in the promotion of democracy and human rights (Furuoka 2014). China's rise is seen to be the driver behind these developments (Jain 2014). One of the main vehicles for its provision of ODA in Africa has been TICAD and this serves as a microcosm of changes in Japan's aid policy and guidelines more generally. Abe hosted the fifth TICAD over the weekend of June 1–2, 2013, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the process. As has been the case at previous TICADs, Japan pledged to support African growth over the next five years through public and private funds totalling ¥3.2 trillion, including ODA contributions of around ¥1.4 trillion and other public and private resources of around ¥1.6 trillion. Japan also promised to underwrite a maximum of ¥200 billion in trade insurance. The focus was placed on infrastructure, human resource training, education and peace-building. Ultimately Japan was extending the kind of support it extended to Asia in the past, motivated by resource diplomacy but also with the potential to also lead to rivalry with China on the African continent. As was the case in 2008 when the Japanese sought to create synergy between the Yokohama Declaration of TICAD-IV and the G8 summit in Toyako (Dobson 2012b), Abe came to the G8 the following month in Lough Erne and sought to trumpet the TICAD process and highlight Japan's contributions.

Fast-forwarding to the 2015 G7 summit at Schloss Elmau, once again Abe came to Germany with a number of strategic objectives that reflected his desire to break from the post-war regime that has constrained Japan's proactive contribution to peace. As

regards managing the rise of China, on the one hand, Abe was keen to have a statement included in the summit declaration related to maritime security and, although not a claimant in the dispute, ideally condemning China's land reclamation and construction of artificial islands in the South China Sea as well as highlighting the implications for territorial disputes in the East China Sea (to which Japan is a claimant). In relation to the issue of maritime security and the South and East China Seas, Abe employed the strategy of likening China's grab for territory in this region to Russia's in Ukraine in order to elicit the support of his fellow G7 leaders. He repeatedly stressed the importance of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and condemned the unilateral use of force by the strong against the weak. Whilst having to be careful not to alienate Putin and jeopardise the positive upturn in Japanese-Russian relations since Abe took office, it paid dividends as the final declaration expressed concerns (without explicitly mentioning China) over "tensions in the East and South China Seas...[and strongly opposed] the use of intimidation, coercion or force, as well as any unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo, such as large scale land reclamation" (G7 2015).

Abe also took the opportunity afforded by his post-summit press conference to emphasise that the legislation his administration had introduced to enable Japan to exercise its right of collective self-defence was in line with accepted interpretations of the Japanese constitution, despite opposition within Japan. He also stressed the safeguards and conditions in place to ensure Japan would only exercise the right of collective self-defence appropriately.

In his post-summit press conferences, Abe has repeatedly recognised the purpose and value of GX summitry – the "frank and spirited exchange of ideas" – and highlighted a number of objectives more focused on defence and security aims including North Korea and territorial disputes with China (Kantei 2013d). Abe's participation in the G7/8 summits, as well as other mechanisms such as the WEF and UN, brings both sides of his personality and policy platform (the pragmatic and the nationalistic) into relief and reflects the wider picture of his evolving foreign policy that seeks to play a more proactive role and address post-war constraints. Ultimately, it is a case of the Abe administration pursuing more clearly defined goals based on immediate national interests as defined in the Abe Doctrine in these fora of global governance.

This trend extended to Japan's position towards human rights when on May 22, 2013, between the G8 foreign ministers' meeting and the leaders' summit, Ueda Hideaki, Japan's Human Rights Envoy to the UN, publicly told members of the committee on the use of torture to "shut up." This breach of protocol was provoked by derisory laughter in reaction to his claim that Japan was an advanced nation in terms of human rights as part of his defence of Japan's criminal justice system. The whole event, which was captured and posted on YouTube, reflected the international community's concerns towards the Abe administration regarding its attempts to revise elements of the constitution related to human rights. It also resulted in diplomatic efforts on the part of Japan to downplay any criticism ahead of that year's G8 summit. For example, Foreign Minister Kishida Fumio declared at a press conference on June 14 that Japan was continuing its diplomatic efforts to make the twenty-first century free of human rights' abuses (*Hokkaido Shinbun*,

June 15, 2013). This whole controversy obviously had the potential to impact negatively upon Abe's "values-oriented diplomacy" and its efficacy as a strategy to maintain Japan's great power status amongst a community of like-minded countries.

Historical revisionism

At first blush, historical revisionism, including the interpretation of war memories surrounding World War II, the comfort women and Yasukuni Shrine might appear to be wholly unrelated and inappropriate issues to pursue within the architecture of global governance. However, this element of the Abe Doctrine has emerged as an explicit goal to be pursued by the Abe administration in a number of the mechanisms of global governance. At the same time, it has coloured the Abe administration's engagement with the agenda items of specific summits.

On the one hand, in October 2014, amidst speculation that the Abe administration would seek to revise the Kono Statement on the issue of coercion of the "comfort women," it emerged that testimony to this effect published by *Asahi Shinbun* was, in fact, fabricated. In response, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide requested that the UN amend a 1996 Special Rapporteur's report on the issue of violence against women as part of a Japanese government campaign to promote "accurate" information surrounding the issue of the "comfort women" (*Asahi Shinbun*, October 14, 2014; *The Japan Times*, October 16, 2014). The request was refused by the author of the report, Radhika Coomaraswamy, with the explanation that as the report was only partially based on the erroneous evidence the conclusions and recommendations still stood, which included referring to the "comfort women" as sexual slaves, and requested that the Japanese government apologise and provide compensation – issues that the Abe administration considers to be concluded.

Within other UN bodies, the Abe administration has sought to defend robustly its understanding of history. In October 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) responded positively to a Chinese application to include disputed documents related to the Nanjing Massacre in its "Memory of the World Register" citing the need in response to Japanese attempts to whitewash the issue. The Abe administration's response, as articulated by Suga, was not only to resist China's application and question the approval process but also to consider suspension of its contributions to UNESCO's budget (*The Japan Times*, October 13, 2015). Thus, the Abe administration appeared to behave in similar fashion to the US in the 1980s when it sought to use the Kassebaum Amendment and the withholding of funds to the UN to leverage reform in voting procedures. The Abe administration's behaviour also stood in contrast to Japan's traditional good citizenship in UNESCO, demonstrated by its status as the largest contributor to its budget in the absence of the US, as well as remaining in the organisation in the 1980s when the US withdrew in protest at UNESCO's policies and lack of reform, promptly followed by some of its closest allies (Hook et al. 2012, 369).

On the other hand, even when historical revisionism is not being actively pursued, interpreting issues of global governance placed on the summit agenda by fellow summiters through its lens has also been evident. As chair in 2013, the UK

government was eager to use the G8 to promote the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative and to this end the G8 foreign ministers met from 10 to 11 April in London prior to the Lough Erne Summit of June 2013. Discussions resulted in a declaration that outlined a number of preventive measures, ongoing monitoring and new funding totaling US\$35.5 million (GOV.UK 2013a). The G8 leaders, including Abe, later endorsed this declaration at Lough Erne and acknowledged that "...rape and serious sexual violence in international armed conflict constitute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions" (GOV.UK 2013b). Abe continued with this theme when he addressed the 68th session of the UNGA in September 2013 and spoke on the topic of women in conflict. He focused on Japan's efforts to develop a national action plan regarding women, peace and security, its work to prevent crimes against women whilst materially and psychologically supporting victims, and intention to submit a draft resolution at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, giving consideration to the vulnerability of women in natural disasters (Kantei 2013c). Abe struck a similar tone when he addressed the 69th and 70th sessions of the UNGA, claiming that "Japan will stand at the fore and lead the international community in eliminating sexual violence during conflicts," emphasising Japan's history of "upholding women's rights," and his own calls "to make the 21st century an era in which women's human rights are not infringed upon" (MOFA 2014b, 2015). So, in this way Japan responded positively to the inclusion of this non-traditional security issue on the agenda of global governance in keeping with its traditional internationalism.

However, Kishida sought to shape the remit of G8 discussions by emphasising that the Japanese government was supportive only from the viewpoint of the human rights of women and that any initiatives should be future-oriented so as to distract attention from and avoid any references to historical cases of sexual violence against women, namely the "comfort women" (*Asahi Shinbun*, June 13, 2013; Shugiin 2013).

So, even the historical revisionism at the heart of the Abe Doctrine has either been openly in evidence in the Abe administration's actions within the UN's associated bodies or lurking in the background to the international community's efforts to address the role of women in conflict.

An economically strong Japan

This final tenet is to be achieved through the three pillars of Abenomics, as outlined above, and Abe has actively used the mechanisms of global governance to explain, promote and gain endorsement of these policies. For example, "to obtain the understanding and support of the other G8 leaders regarding my economic policies" was Abe's explicit goal at the 2013 Lough Erne Summit (Kantei 2013d). The unpredictable and negative effects of quantitative easing and the weakening of the yen on the global economy were reported to have caused concerns amongst some G8 leaders. So, Abe's strategy at Lough Erne was to look to the international as well as the domestic, in other words pre-empt open criticism of Japan at the summit by pitching Abenomics and claiming endorsement so that the policy could be presented at home as an international commitment in order to secure leverage. Abe was successful in so far as he was presented with the opportunity at the summit to explain Abenomics and thereafter claimed G8 endorsement – "high acclaim" even – in a post-summit press conference

(Kantei 2013d). However, there is a difference between endorsement and not hearing opposition and Abe was pushed in the summit's final communiqué "to address the challenge of a credible medium-term fiscal plan" (GOV.UK 2013b).

A few months later on September 26, 2013, Abe addressed the UNGA in ebullient mood by stressing his "firm conviction that the future course of Japan's diplomacy will begin here, by sparing no pains to get actively engaged in historic challenges facing today's world, with our regained strength and capacity." To this end, he once again took the opportunity to promote Abenomics, declaring that "...my obligation first of all is to rebuild the Japanese economy to be vibrant, and then to make Japan a dependable 'force' that works for good in the world" (Kantei 2013c). Building on this, and addressing the third arrow of his economic plan, he also declared his belief in the idea of "womenomics" that would promote the position of women in society and as a result the growth rate. The following month, Abe used the Indonesian-hosted APEC meeting to again fly the flag for Abenomics by stressing its results and justify his decision to increase the consumption tax from 5% to 8% (Kantei 2013e).

At the WEF gathering in January 2014, Abe took the opportunity of this gathering of world leaders, opinion makers and academics to deliver a speech entitled "A New Vision from a New Japan." In this speech, rather than outline anything approaching a "new vision," Abe first and foremost took the opportunity to tread the now well-worn territory of previous speeches by outlining the policies that constitute Abenomics and make claims for his own success. Abe likened himself to "a drill bit; strong enough to break through the solid rock of vested investments...Over the next two years, no vested interests will remain immune from my drill" (Kantei 2014). In order to lay claim to the success of Abenomics and dispel speculation surrounding Japan's decline, he stated that:

Pundits used to say that Japan was at dusk, or the land of the setting sun. They said that for a country as mature as Japan, growth would be impossible. These arguments were made to sound almost legitimate. You can see what Japan's psyche was like before I took office as Prime Minister. Hardly can you hear such voices now. Our growth rate has changed dramatically, from negative growth to positive...It is not twilight, but a new dawn that is breaking over Japan (Kantei 2014).

So, the WEF appeared to be a re-run of Lough Erne, where Abe employed the same strategy of using an international forum to get approval for his policies with one eye on the domestic audience and securing support back home.

Thereafter, Abe attended the seventh G20 summit in Brisbane from 15 to 16 November 2014 just days before he decided to dissolve the Lower House and call a snap election. Possibly with this in mind, Abe once again used the summit as an opportunity to seek the endorsement of the international community for Abenomics and, despite disappointing growth figures, this support was forthcoming (*The Japan Times*, November 16, 2014). In addition, a section in the G7 Schloss Elmau declaration was dedicated to women's economic empowerment, reflecting the third pillar of Abenomics that stresses structural reform (G7 2015). However, serious questions remain concerning Abe's sincerity and concrete results in the promotion of the position of women (Kano and Mackie 2013). Finally, although dominated by the Paris terror

attacks, Abe still used the opportunity of the G20 summit in Antalya, Turkey to continue his advocacy of Abenomics.

What emerges is a concerted effort to promote and secure endorsement for Abenomics through the mechanisms of global governance. Admittedly this is not specific to the Abe administration. For example, this was the same approach adopted by Abe's predecessor Noda Yoshihiko at the 2011 G20 Cannes Summit as regards the consumption tax. However, it is a key element of the Abe Doctrine that should not be overlooked and is in fact essential to the realisation of the other tenets.

Impact and Implications

As Glosserman (2014, 39) argues, "...Abe Shinzo's goal is simple: end all doubts about his country's status as a first-class nation." Across a range of activities explored elsewhere in the literature, "the Abe administration has focused on creating the conditions which would allow Japan to more forcefully assert and defend its national interest." In essence, this objective and conditions constitute the Abe Doctrine and, as demonstrated above, we can now add the architecture of global governance to the range of activities in which the Abe administration has sought to create these conditions in its pursuit of the doctrine.

This stands in stark contrast to Japan's traditional behaviour across a range of institutions of global governance that has demonstrated a strong sense of internationalism and a corresponding commitment to Asianism. Soeya (2012) discusses middle-power diplomacy as embracing behaviour, status and strategy and in the case of Japan, its "diplomatic behaviour has essentially reflected 'middle-power internationalism,' while its status has been uncertain and its strategy confused or non-existent." This neatly captures its role in the mechanisms of global governance during the post-war period and over recent years. Between 2008 and 2012, when the traditional institutions of global governance were seen to decline in influence and a "messy multilateralism" emerged with the creation of new mechanisms, Japan's reaction was to cling to these normative impulses that had defined its role but under the pressures of a tectonic shift in the global order the result appeared at times to be qualified, contradictory and lacking imagination.

Under Abe, however, Soeya's characterisation has been reversed so that Japan's status is now being clearly articulated and its strategy more coherent, while the "middle-power internationalism" in diplomatic behaviour has been confused or even non-existent. The Abe administration has explicitly and repeatedly used the mechanisms of global governance not for the promotion of global public goods but more as a means to promote the tenets of the Abe Doctrine: secure Japan's great power status, promote a more proactive and robust Japanese security role, engage in historical revisionism to challenge post-war taboos and constraints, and promote Abenomics as the solution to rebuilding an economically strong Japan.

Yet, as Hughes argues, pursuing the Abe Doctrine appears a high-risk approach as the weight of its internal contradictions threaten to jeopardise the very objectives it seeks to realise:

... the Doctrine claims the pursuit of universal values, but its underlying revisionism is illiberal, and thus conflictual; the Doctrine seeks to end the post-war regime through

historical revisionism, but the focus on history creates divisions with the US and East Asia; and the Doctrine seeks autonomy through dependence on the US that only further frustrates Japan's lack of sovereign independence (Hughes 2015, 91).

Glosserman (2014, 50) points to similar tensions:

Indeed, insisting that Japan is a great power, as Abe and others have, only sets Tokyo up for failure by setting unrealistic and unrealizable standards. Accepting its limits and recalibrating its ambitions would permit Japan to be assessed according to its own criteria – what it chooses to be – rather than what it is not.

The Abe administration's behaviour in the various mechanisms of global governance presented here suggests similar risks and contradictions, although it should be noted that the very nature of the more informal and softer mechanisms can serve to obfuscate these tensions. Traditionally G7 and G8 summits in particular and G20 summitry to an extent, are fora in which leaders seek to support each other in the process of reaching a compromise and avoid singling each other out in public for criticism (Sakurada 1988, 102–103; Bayne 2005). In addition, any evaluation of the impact and implications of this shift from middle-power internationalism to the Abe Doctrine will inevitably be tentative as we are only three years into the Abe administration. Nevertheless, three risks are emerging.

First, the Abe administration is pursuing the tenets of the Abe Doctrine regardless of how appropriate they may or may not be to the work of global governance institutions. In the case of the fourth tenet, building an economically strong Japan through Abenomics may sit relatively comfortably within the agendas of global governance. However, as seen above, the Abe administration's attention is focused domestically as it has taken every opportunity to explain, promote and seek international approval with the ultimate objective of translating this international approval into leverage at home in the face of domestic opposition. This waxing of hard national interest and the waning of Japan's traditional internationalist approach to global governance were reflected in a number of interviews conducted in January 2014 with elite MOFA officials during which very little sense emerged of what global governance means generally, to Japan or to them as individuals. For example, one interviewee referred to global governance as a mechanism for creating a better future for Japan and stressed the importance of leaders exerting leadership in achieving this goal, but had little to say beyond this. Another interviewee highlighted Japan's case-by-case approach depending on the issue and the institution in question but admitted he had given it little thought and answered the question with a question by asking if any country had an understanding of global governance or its own particular vision. This is a potentially counterproductive development. As the recent WikiLeaks scandal revealed in the case of North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes, Japan's allies became increasingly exasperated and critical of it privileging narrow domestic interests (the abduction issue) rather than issues of regional and global concern (*Wall Street Journal*, November 29, 2010). By similarly diluting its traditional internationalism in favour of pursuing hard national interest in the mechanisms of global governance, the Abe administration runs the risk of raising similar doubts within the international community as to its commitment and isolating itself further in the process.

Second, the Abe administration's efforts to use the mechanisms of global governance to end the liberal post-war regime, symbolised by the constitutional "shackles" that limit Japan's role and motivated by illiberal historical revisionism, have the potential to foster conflict within the international community. For example, since returning to power, concerns of varying degrees have been voiced within the international community regarding the historical revisionism of Abe himself, his administration and individual Japanese politicians. This was seen when the US government used the uncharacteristically strong language of "disappointment" over Abe's December 2013 visit to Yasukuni Shrine (Press Release 2013). A month later, Chinese and Korean ambassadors took the opportunity in a UNSC debate to criticise their Japanese counterpart over Abe's visit and its impact on regional relations (*BBC News*, January 30, 2014). Japan's response was that it had faced up to its history and expressed regret and apology, as well as arguing that it was inappropriate to raise these issues in a forum like the UNSC – which smacks of hypocrisy considering the way in which it has imported the Abe Doctrine into the mechanisms of global governance.

So, we are also presented with the risk of Japan's neighbours adopting a similar approach to the mechanisms of global governance resulting in conflict rather than cooperation. As mentioned above, China has used the architecture of global governance to promote its understanding of history, as demonstrated by the application to the UNESCO "Memory of the World Register." South Korean President Park has also used the UN to engage in history battles with Japan. Addressing the 70th session of the UNGA in September 2015, she took the opportunity when discussing the issue of sexual violence against women in conflict to refer to the surviving "comfort women," call for a resolution and plead that "[t]he efforts of the UN High Commissioners of Human Rights and Special Rapporteurs on this issue must not be allowed to come to naught." In the same speech, Park also mentioned Abe's security reforms and alluded to the historical legacy of Japan's militarism by warning that:

... new moves that could potentially have profound consequences for Northeast Asia's security order are leading to misgivings among countries in the region. Japan's recently passed defense and security legislation should be implemented transparently and in a way that is conducive to friendly relations among regional countries and to peace and stability in the region (Republic of Korea 2015).

Third, the Abe administration's pursuit of "values-oriented diplomacy" in the mechanisms of global governance is clearly in evidence. However, this has little to do with universal values and is being deployed for narrowly-focused Realist reasons: to build strategic partnerships that exclude rivals, chiefly China, stall necessary reforms to the architecture of global governance and, in the case of the G7, bolster a favoured but increasingly outdated mechanism of global governance that preserves Japan's great power status in *aspic*. Articulating values that seek to exclude important regional and global partners like China and Russia run the risk, as seen in the case of the AIIB, of ironically isolating Japan in the process. Japan's fellow G7 summitters have responded coolly to Abe's "values-oriented diplomacy" by signing up to the AIIB and privileging their own national interests through engagement with China.

So, Japan's behaviour in global governance may be more consistent, strategic even, as a result of pursuing the Abe Doctrine. However, jettisoning any internationalist normative impulse, vision of global governance, or sense of global leadership in favour of a narrow focus on national interest runs the risk of unintended, opposite outcomes. In a different context, Cho (2013) has argued that East Asia's (specifically China, Japan and Korea) desire to adopt a global role and make concrete contributions to activities such as peacekeeping, climate change and nuclear non-proliferation are compromised by domestic and regional considerations. The exploration of the Abe administration's behaviour in the mechanisms of global governance presented here appears to support the claim.

Concluding Remarks

The BBC drama *37 Days* that documented the diplomatic efforts in the run-up to the outbreak of World War I put the following words into the mouth of Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister: "It's what happens to great powers when they shrink; the world shrinks with them and then they cease to think about consequences." In many ways, this captures the recent evolution and future direction of Japan's role in global governance under the Abe administration as it grapples with its decline by focusing on domestic issues and turns away from its responsibilities as a great power.

This matters because Abe appears to be in a relatively strong position that has not been enjoyed by Japanese prime ministers for some time and is likely to remain in power until 2018. In other words, the Abe Doctrine has time to gestate. This also matters because 2016 represents an important year for Asian leadership and global governance as Japan hosts the G7 and China hosts the G20 (Chin and Dobson 2015). Despite the distractions of a US presidential election and UK referendum on Europe, clear opportunities exist for a coordinated response that puts Asian issues firmly on the agenda. However, numerous obstacles remain. The Abe administration's steady shift away from Japan's traditional internationalism towards a more narrowly focused defence of its great power status, a pro-active security role and historical revisionism in response to the rise of China stand out as some of the highest hurdles to overcome.

Notes

1. Global governance is a notoriously vague term. One of the first and most commonly cited definitions was provided by the Commission on Global Governance: "Governance is the sum of many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest" (1995, 4). This is helpful as it clarifies that we are not talking about "global government" and instead places the emphasis on cooperative action taken through formal institutions, regimes and informal arrangements. Nevertheless, it has been widely interpreted in the literature on global governance (Wilkinson 2005). More recently, "global summitry" has been posited as a term that returns the focus to the arrangements, in addition to the behaviour of actors, through which meaningful collective action can be fostered: "Global summitry involves the architecture, institutions and, most critically, the political and policy behavior of the actors

engaged in the influence of outcomes of common concern in the international system. Global summitry includes all actors – international organizations, trans-governmental networks, states and non-state entities whether individuals, corporations or associations – that influence the agenda, the organization and the execution of global politics and policy” (Alexandroff and Brean 2015, 2). The focus of this present article is on this architecture of formal and informal institutions and mechanisms that successfully or unsuccessfully foster cooperative action in the global order. To this end, it recognizes the utility of the latter definition, but for the sake of clarity will adopt the more commonly used term of global governance.

2. This matters in that the decline of any great power can result not just from a decline in material power but also a lack of will. For example, in January 2014, despite President Obama’s lobbying in favour of revised IMF quotas, the US Congress blocked them, resulting in a schizophrenic response and reputational damage that harked back to the League of Nations (Frankel 2014).

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ORCID

Hugo Dobson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3124-8546>

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