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【靖国参拝】戦勝国の歴史認識だけが「正しい」のか？ 戦争に敗れても矜持を失わない日本に拍手を … アルゼンチン [12/27]

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■ JAPANESE WAR CRIMES: I'M SORRY?

—— Adrian Salbuchi (政治評論家・コメンテーター / アルゼンチン)

日本の安倍首相の靖国神社参拝に、中国と韓国が激怒している。靖国神社は250万人の戦没者を祀る東京の神社だ。多くの人が怒っているのは、この19世紀創建の神社に祀られている人々の中に、米国の占領軍によって「戦争犯罪人」という烙印を押された第二次大戦時のヒーローらが含まれているためだ。その中には、米国によって1948年に処刑された戦時指導者東條英機大將など、「戦争計画」に関わったとされる14人の「A級戦犯」も含まれている。

戦勝国が敗戦国に対して当然に獲得する権利は、領土要求に関するものだけではない。敗戦国の都市や土地、国民、資源、工場、特許権、軍事装備、そして国際法上の諸権利に対しても、完全かつ欲しいままに支配する権利を、戦勝国は獲得する …… 悲しむべきことだがこれが現実だ。

そして戦勝国は、戦争の端緒となった対立に関する歴史記述を書く（あるいは書き直す）「権利」をも獲得する。自国の見解・論理を「真実」とする権利を獲得し、敗戦国を「間違った国・邪悪な国・戦犯国・侵略国」だと非難するのである。「俺たちは善人、相手は悪者だ。」「私たちの息子らは英雄。向こうは殺されて当然の悪魔だ、2歳の幼児までも」という考えは人類の歴史を同じほど古い。第二次大戦後の70年間のプロパガンダが明瞭に示しているとおりに、20世紀と21世紀も例外ではない。

だが日本は今なお屈しようとしなない。これは賞賛すべきことだ。平身低頭して世界に再三再四赦しを請うているドイツの姿とは対照的だ。だがドイツ自身も良く了解しているとおりに、たとえ何度謝罪しようと、世界のメディア・出版・教育を支配する人々は決してドイツに赦しを与えることはあるまい。

歴史認識についてハラキリしたドイツとは違って日本は顔を伏せず、敢然として軍事的敗北の結果に耐え続けている。倫理面で屈服してはいないのだ。

なるほど確かに、連合国による極東国際軍事裁判、いわゆる「東京裁判」の結果、日本の多くの軍事・政治指導者らが「A級戦犯」だとされた。だが安倍首相は、2006年にJapanTimesで報じられたとおりに、「靖国神社に祀られた14人のA級戦犯は国内法上の犯罪者ではなく、東京裁判の結果を日本が受け入れたのは独立を回復するためのものだった。＜中略＞A級戦犯の起訴理由となった『平和と人道に対する罪』は連合国によって戦後に作られた概念で、法律に定められたものではない」と考えている。

日本よ、良くぞ言ってくれた。もし我々が、戦勝国・敗戦国を問わず全ての
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国の戦争犯罪を真摯に罰しようとするなら、とんでもない規模の国際軍事裁判所が必要だろう。そしてその裁判所は、ダブルスタンダードと検閲から自由でなければならない。そう、ダブルスタンダードから、だ。＜後略。ドレスデン空襲や原爆投下で連合国が多数の民間人を殺傷しているが戦争犯罪とはされていない点など。＞

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Japanese war crimes: I' m sorry?

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: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits the controversial Yasukuni war shrine in Tokyo on December 26, 2013, in a move Beijing condemned as "absolutely unacceptable". (AFP Photo/Toru Yamanaka) : Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits the controversial Yasukuni war shrine in Tokyo on December 26, 2013, in a move Beijing condemned as "absolutely unacceptable". (AFP Photo/Toru Yamanaka)

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China and South Korea are very angry with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe because he visited the Yosukuni Shrine in Tokyo honoring some 2.5 million Japanese - both military and civilian - who died in war.

Many are irate with Mr Abe because, amongst those honored in the 19th Century Yosukuni Shrine, are Japanese World War II heroes, branded as "war criminals" by US occupation forces. The list numbers fourteen "Class-A criminals" involved in "planning the war", including war-time leader General Hideki Tojo executed by the US in 1948.

Official history

Sad but true: when a country wins a war, not only does it automatically acquire full territorial rights over the vanquished nation, but also full and arbitrary control over cities, land, population, resources, plants, patents, military gear, international rights, etc.

It also acquires the "right" to (re)write the history of the conflict that led them to war in the first place. It acquires the right to impose its own views and reasons as "the truth", accusing the vanquished country of being "false, evil, wrong, criminal, ambitious," etc.

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It's as old as mankind: "we're the good guys; the others are the bad guys." "Our boys are heroes; the others are devils that deserve to be killed, right down to the last 2-year old toddler." As 70 years of post-World War Two propaganda has clearly shown, the 20th and 21st centuries are no different.

Japan sticks to its guns

Yes, and they should be admired for that. Compare this to ever self-effacing Germany asking for the world's forgiveness again and again and again, even though she knows quite well that no matter how many apologies are made, those who run today's world call the shots in the media, publishing houses and education, will never ever forgive Germany.

Rather than commit historical hara-kiri as the Germans do, Japan prefers to keep a stiff upper lip, stand tall and continue to bear the consequences of military defeat, without descending into moral defeat.

Sure, the Allied Victor's International Military Tribunal for the East - a Nuremberg-like court aka the "Tokyo Trials" - branded many of Japan's top military and political leaders "Class A" criminals. However, as far back as in October 2006, Mr Abe's ideas were voiced in The Japan Times: "[The] 14 Class-A war criminals honored at Yasukuni Shrine are not war criminals under Japanese law, but the country had to accept the outcome of the Tokyo Tribunal to become an independent nation. Abe told the Lower House that because the relatives of the convicted men receive war pensions and one of them - wartime Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu - received a first class award from the post-war government, "they are not war criminals under domestic laws." The International Military Tribunal, which the Allies conducted between May 1946 and November 1948, put 28 political and military leaders on trial as Class-A war criminals, 14 of whom are now enshrined in Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine. Abe said they stood trial for crimes against peace and humanity, which were concepts, created by the allies after the war and not enshrined in law."

Bravo, Japan! If we sincerely wish to punish the war crimes committed by all countries - winners and losers - then we would need a heck of a large International Military and Political Tribunal, free of double-standards and censorship.
Double standards (again!)

Talk about "war crimes" what are we to make, for example, of Britain's World War II Royal Air Force Commander Arthur Harris (aka, "Bomber Harris" and "Butcher Harris") who invented and

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imposed “area bombing” over precision bombing, euphemistically calling it “strategic bombing” ; which was just another way of saying, if “it moves on enemy territory just bomb it out of existence!”

Bomber Harris was very successful in unleashing fire storms over Hamburg, Germany in July 1943 (“Operation Gomorrah”) that were later repeated over all major German cities. In Harris’ s own words, “the aim of the Combined Bomber Offensive... should be unambiguously stated [as] the destruction of German cities, the killing of German workers, and the disruption of civilized life throughout Germany. ... the destruction of houses, public utilities, transport and lives, the creation of a refugee problem on an unprecedented scale, and the breakdown of morale both at home and at the battle fronts by fear of extended and intensified bombing, are accepted and intended aims of our bombing policy. They are not by-products of attempts to hit factories.”

Wow! Was Bomber Harris ever tried and executed for his crimes?

Not quite. Instead, in 1992 Britain’ s Queen Mother personally unveiled a statue honoring him outside St. Clement Danes’ Church in London, whilst many protesters jeered shouting: “Harris was a war criminal!”

South Korean conservative activists burn placards during a protest to lodge a complaint against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visiting the Yasukuni war shrine to mark the first anniversary of his taking office, in Seoul on December 27, 2013. (AFP Photo/Woohae Cho) South Korean conservative activists burn placards during a protest to lodge a complaint against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visiting the Yasukuni war shrine to mark the first anniversary of his taking office, in Seoul on December 27, 2013. (AFP Photo/Woohae Cho)

The historical truth is that hundreds of thousands of German men, women and children - civilian and military - died or were maimed for life thanks to Bomber Harris’ s creative thinking.

And what about “democratic” politicians like US Franklin Roosevelt, Britain’ s Winston Churchill and their military leaders who joined forces to destroy the German open city of Dresden in February 1945, when Germany’ s defeat was only weeks away and that city had become a meeting point for hundreds of thousands of civilian refugees fleeing the fast-advancing Red Army?

On 13th February 1945, the UK sent a first wave of 244 RAF four-engine Lancaster heavy bombers, followed by a second wave of

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529 bombers. The next day, the US dispatched over 300 B17 bombers over Dresden. An estimated 300,000 people - mostly civilians including tens of thousands of children - burned to death.

I know, I know... The US and UK had no choice but to murder millions in Hamburg, Dresden, Berlin, Munich, Hannover, Frankfurt, Cologne, Ulm, Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was the only way to end that ghastly war. They did it all in the name of “peace”, right? So, Germans and Japanese: don’ t complain and say “Thank you” to the allies.

Interestingly, the destruction of Dresden began 24 hours after Roosevelt and Churchill ended their meeting with Soviet leader, Joseph Stalin, in Yalta, where the coming post-war New World Order was beginning to be mapped out. Might the destruction of Dresden have been on the agenda?

OK. But that was back during World War Two.

South Korean conservative activists shout slogans during a protest to lodge a complaint against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visiting the Yasukuni war shrine to mark the first anniversary of his taking office, in Seoul on December 27, 2013. (AFP Photo/Woohae Cho) South Korean conservative activists shout slogans during a protest to lodge a complaint against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visiting the Yasukuni war shrine to mark the first anniversary of his taking office, in Seoul on December 27, 2013. (AFP Photo/Woohae Cho)

Then what about the 1.5 million dead in Iraq since March 2003, after that martyred country was invaded, raped and destroyed by modern history’ s worst liars: Baby Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, Condoleeza Rice and their nice friends at the Project for a New American Century think-tank and AIPAC lobby, all based on the most blatant and obscene political lie ever told: “weapons of mass destruction” that were never there.

And what about, the complacent blood-thirsty “NATO Allies” with the UK’ s poodle prime minister - “Tony BLIAR” as many call him in his own country - tagging along?

And what about the daily murder, humiliation, maiming and house demolitions by the “good” Israelis against the “bad” Palestinians? What, no “International Tribunals” ?

The West’ s logic is really very simple. So simple, that even George W. Bush and Barack Obama can act out their roles as required by the

global power masters.

A guide to war for the modern political Tarzan

For the benefit of millions of Western readers, I'd like to briefly flesh out in "basic Tarzan" how this "logic" works in practice; just to make sure they don't miss the point: when it comes to "good guys" and "bad guys", it's all in the eye of the beholder.

This does not mean that Japan should not be more political and understand the bigger picture of its own interest in closing ranks with China and the region as was mentioned in a recent RT article.

Let's face it, this is a sensitive issue. The Koreans said PM Abe's visit to the shrine was a "deplorable" act; Beijing labeled the visit "absolutely unacceptable" and summoned Japan's ambassador. These two countries see the Yasukuni Shrine as a symbol of Japanese militarism during and before World War Two, and it was they who suffered the full impact of the Japanese onslaught.

Shinzo Abe said, "It is not my intention at all to hurt the feelings of the Chinese and Korean people," claiming his visit was an anti-war gesture. He convinced nobody.

He did, however, make it clear that his visit was in a private capacity, not representing the government. He believes the trials that convicted Japan's wartime leaders were "victors' justice". His own grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi, served in the war cabinet and was arrested by the Americans on suspicion of being a Class-A war criminal, although he was later released without charge. Mr Abe is known to be a nationalist and a historical revisionist.

Which 'history': Yours or mine?

Revisionism: perhaps here lies the key to a better understanding amongst nations, if we can begin doing away with victors'

"official history" that hides, waters-down, justifies, explains and forgives its own horrendous crimes, whilst at the same time it underlines, over-emphasizes and demonizes the actions of its vanquished enemies. And it often adds two, or maybe even three zeroes here and there as part of its historical genocide cosmetic kit.

There's certainly irrationality to it all when you consider that this state of affairs assumes as given, that every time there's war, the good guys (us) always win, whilst the bad guys (them) always lose (otherwise "they" would be in charge, right?): whether

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it' s World War I, World War 2, Vietnam, Korea, the Middle East, Africa, Central Europe, Latin America...

South Korean conservative activists set fire to effigies of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during a protest to lodge a complaint against Abe visiting the Yasukuni war shrine to mark the first anniversary of his taking office, in Seoul on December 27, 2013.

(AFP Photo/Woohae Cho) South Korean conservative activists set fire to effigies of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during a protest to lodge a complaint against Abe visiting the Yasukuni war shrine to mark the first anniversary of his taking office, in Seoul on December 27, 2013. (AFP Photo/Woohae Cho)

A concept almost impossible to sustain and swallow, especially since it' s obvious that all wars are won by the more powerful party in the conflict, which are those nations having the greatest fire-power to kill, maim, destroy, blow-up, murder, terrorize, bomb, shoot, torture, and have the will to do it without wavering.

If wars are won by the stronger, more violent side, where does that leave the victors morally? Do they win every war because they "love peace" ? I don' t think so.

In addition, demonizing the enemy also serves to sooth one' s own conscious, dark fears and guilt. In order for the citizens of the US, UK or France to sleep tight at night, better for them not to grasp the horror their governments and military have unleashed upon millions of Iraqis, Libyans, Syrians, Palestinians, Koreans, Vietnamese, Latin Americans, Africans, Afghanis, Serbians, Pakistanis over the decades.

It' s so much easier to just say, "Oh, they' re all a bunch of Hitlers. The whole defeated lot got what they deserved: Saddam, Gadhafi, the Taliban, Chavez, Milosevic, Ho Chi Minh, Nasser, Peron etc..."

Now do you see why in some countries - Belgium, France, Austria, Germany, Canada - it' s even illegal to dare to utter revisionist views of certain historical events? They call such revisionism "hate literature" .

In my own native land of Argentina, back in 1982 a very good documentary was produced on the life and times of Evita Perón and her violently-ousted husband, President Juan Domingo Perón. He was the only true statesman that ever came to power in modern Argentina.

The lyrics of that film' s theme song repeated the following phrase (sorry, it rhymes in Spanish though not in English): "If history is

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written by those who win wars, that means that there' s another history - TRUE HISTORY - Let those who wish to hear, listen-up..."

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The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.