

This special report is first introduced by explaining that present day Japan has entered a new era called Reiwa or “beautiful harmony” defining a turning point for the country. With a new prime minister, new trade relations between China and the US, and a mortality rate increase, Japan is a current example to all leading nations.

On the topic of military, Japan’s Self-Defense Forces (SDF) is center on the world stage. Japan stands between two competitive powerhouses of trade (China and US) and is working to grow their militaristic force. By modelling after the US marines and developing the tools needed to defend the country, Japan is not only the most trusted big power in Southeast Asia, but the world is relying on Japan to figure out their own next moves on how to compete with China without causing disaster.

While climate and environment are hot topics globally, Japan’s focus has little to do with climate change and more to do natural hazard preparation. While the country has endured many hazardous events, predicting preparations can be difficult to undergo; even Japan’s officials look towards more sustainable engineering-based solutions to last multiple tragedies instead of the next foreseeable one.

When it comes to city development, Japan goes to show how it can be achieved on such a large scale. They are not just planning for success but for potential failure as well. This take has allowed Tokyo to become the top in public transportation, safety, cleanliness, and food quality even on a mass scale. Part of this is also due to Japan’s permissive zoning laws that happen to allow for more natural progression as the city developed; allowing for more equality across the city zones rather than stratification.

As a demographic, Japan is an ageing country with some of the oldest towns among the global population. It is a current task that Japan is leading the way in how to overcome their senior population feeling unneeded and a burden to society. Japan is leading the way in how to keep old people working and shifting the perspective from life expectancy to quality of life.

Japan has had an interesting turn when it comes to their economy and as had to figure out ways around its low inflation and growth over the years. Part of what has helped the country is that it only

borrows money in its own currency keeping a rare ability to adjust that other nations do not have. Many Japanese economists question raising taxes on consumption. This is because unions in Japan tend to prefer job stability over raises. As well, due to the nation's rules on tax deductions, more citizens work part-time over full-time, and many young women leave the workforce to become housewives. In turn, these societal priorities are keeping wages low instead of raising them making taxes based on consumption less than ideal.

Immigration is becoming a leading discussion for Japan and more of its citizens are calling for better policies. Japan lacks in immigration policies, and this causes a rift between the government and its people as the government wants to encourage immigration to stay competitive but leaves it to the local governments for how immigrants are socially trained and learning the national language.

The top three takeaways from this special report are: 1.) Japan is reaching a major turning point before many of the leading nations, garnering more attention and leading by example whether they like it or not. Through immigration, demographics, military in trade, and more, Japan is having to make precise decisions that will end up effecting much more than just the island nation. 2.) Japan tends to be criticized for being behind the times or non-progressive while focusing on what is more largely important to their people (disaster prep) over the globe (climate change). This nationalist focus has allowed for the growth and strength behind the nation's sustainability. 3.) Japan has become synonymous with a balancing act between many of the issues it faces and manages to compromise with interesting solutions. It is Japan's ability to adapt within their own structure that surprises many to come. Each of these dynamics can be seen throughout chapters 4 (culture/nationalism) and 5 (ethics/sustainability) within our textbook by looking deeper into collectivism, social culture, and ethics of Japan.

When it comes to applying these takeaways, countries should treat their own actions to that of Japan. Just because Japan is on the center stage now does not mean it will not be another country later leading the way. If each country to as much consideration into their global strategies, this would have a

profound impact on the global stage. As well, countries can learn from Japan's ability to sustain themselves as a country and a culture to better unify their citizens and create a stronger sense of nationalist pride. Due to the global immigration climate, there is decrease in national pride and more of an ethnic pride being seen today. Lastly, naming this era Reiwa is a great summarization of what many countries should be looking to achieve. While many countries move toward less rigid practices to build a better economy (moving from command to mixed markets), they can benefit from implementing the ability to adapt has Japan has. Japan has not given up on what it stands for as a nation to do so; it simply considers solutions that others may not.

Review 1: On the Frontline: Japan  
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