

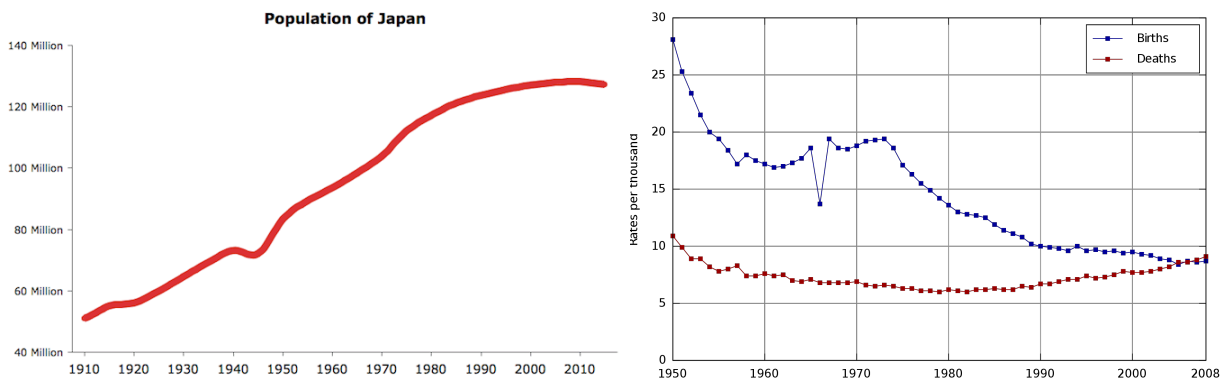
IV. Japan and the World We Live In

A. Insular Island Nation

1. Japan is the *third* most important trading nations (after only the United States and China). Japan makes many famous products like Sony electronics, and Toyota and Honda cars.
2. Japan also had one of the world's most powerful militaries—perhaps the 4th strongest.
3. With such military power and “economic power,” why is Japan not a cardinal culture in the world today?
4. The answer is simple: Japan is an insular culture, which chooses not to have significant cultural contact with the rest of the world. The word “insular” means isolated—by choice.

B. The Shrinking Country!

1. One of the most remarkable features of Japan's insular culture is the fact that it is *shrinking*. Japan has a **million** fewer people already than it did at its highest level of population.
2. As in other advanced countries, people have few babies, and the older population is dying.



Japan's population is shrinking. There are fewer births in Japan than deaths today. In Western countries, there is a similar pattern, however in Japan there is almost no *immigration*.

3. Japan has almost no immigration, because the Japanese people wish to live in their own way, in as isolated a manner as possible. They have laws that strongly limit immigration.
4. As a result, almost everyone in Japan is Japanese and speaks Japanese.

C. A Post-Imperial Culture

1. Apart from being an advanced industrial nation that is especially insular/xenophobic, Japan is also a peaceful partner of the United States (the world police power) — *after having been* a conquering empire that was defeated by the United States as part of the World War II.
2. This is a unique historical situation. It makes Japan a **post-imperial** culture. (“Post,” as “P.S.” or “Post Script” at the end of a written letter or e-mail, means “after.” Since Japan was once an empire, it once had an *imperial* culture. It no longer has an empire or such a culture, so it’s culture is **post-imperial**.)
3. The Japanese constitution says 1) Japan’s emperor is the “symbol of the nation,” but that he has no power, and 2) promises that Japan will never again wage war. *It is a promise Japan has kept for 70 years.*

D: World War II: *The Cardinal Anchor Fact of Japanese History Today*

1. The first and most important anchor fact in all of Japanese history is **World War II in Asia (1937-45)**.
2. In most cases, historians say that World War II was from 1939-45. The war started in 1939 in Europe. Before that, however, Japan had already invaded China.
3. The best term to use to connect this conflict to what soon was happening in Europe is **“World War II in Asia” (⌘1937-45)**.
4. When Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii as part of this war, the United States entered the war.
5. During the war American scientists invented the atomic bomb, the most powerful weapon ever created, and in 1945, it was used twice against Japan—destroying the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and causing Japan’s unconditional surrender.
6. Since **1945**, Japan has been under the control and supervision of the United States, acting as the world police power.

The Japanese empire reached its maximum extent during **World War II in Asia (1937-45)** — (left).

Japan’s surprise attack on the USA at Pearl Harbor, brought America into the war. It was the United States that forced Japan’s surrender in 1945 by two atomic bombings (right), and forced Japan to become “post-imperial.”

