
RELEASE EMBARGO DATE: April 22, 2014 at 9:00 AM

Panel: (Post)-Modern Japan? (GB1)

Date/Time: Tuesday, April 22, 2014 / 14:30-15:45

Talking Points for: Brad Glosserman, Pacific Forum CSIS

Caveats

1. Based on book research
2. No one in Japan makes points precisely: Soeya might come close but Japan is more than a "middle power": third economy, 10th largest population, human resources, global interests
3. Current leadership in Tokyo (and maybe DC) would disavow these remarks

Hard realities of Japan

1. Small, vulnerable country, with limited resources
2. Grayest country on Earth and getting grayer: >25% and will exceed 40% by 2060
3. Shrinking population: 127 million and on track to reach 90 million by 2060
4. Total debt 237% - 280%

The importance of attitude

1. Compelling national myths: success of nation building and homogenous Japan
2. Loss national narrative: confusion for two decades
3. Betrayed by modernity: Happiness paradox, myth of safe society, environmental costs (at home and abroad); failures driven home by 3.11
4. Reluctance to compete: aversion to great power politics: weary, wary, skeptical
5. Discomfort with nationalism (love of land, culture: 69%; sports 10%); little inclination to fight
6. Not interested in maximizing efficiency: too comfortable; polls = higher preference for equality and income redistribution (myth of middle class): Northern European social model; two decades of inaction

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7. Religious, social and aesthetic preferences postmodern: orient toward nature – converge with conservatism: Shinto, Mujo, vulnerability; not pseudo-philosophical mumbo jumbo
 8. Economic component as well: anti-consumption, anti-nuclear, Cool Japan. “post-growth”
 9. Disconnect with current administration: majorities against CS revision, CSD reinterpretation, nuclear energy, YS visits
 10. Tighter links to Asia (with US-Japan alliance as starting point)
 11. Engagement by exporting good behavior
 12. Sacrifice comports with Gambaru/Shoganai mentality.

Minimums

1. Status conscious
2. Not militarist, but not indifferent to national security

Opportunity for Asia and Korea in particular

1. Recognize potential trajectory
2. Don’t tar all Japan with same brush
3. Discriminate: encourage and reward “good Japanese”
4. Don’t isolate

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