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Insight into the Subject
主題の背景
しゅだいはいけい

The Emperor — A Special Place in Japanese History

天皇は 歴史とともにある 特別な 存在
てんのう れきし とくべつ そんざい
heaven/royal family (the) Emperor | passage of time/chronicle in Japanese History | special | exist/located in (a) place

1. The Emperor is the sovereign of Japan, a title that has been held by the same family for over 1,500 years – the longest in the world.

天皇は 日本の 元首で、
てんのう にほん げんしゅ
(the) Emperor | sun/origin Japan | of | origin/top (the) sovereign | [and]

その地位は 1500年 以上前から
ちい せんごひゃくねん いじょうまえ
ground/rank (a) title <the position> | fifty hundred years | with this/above for over

一つのファミリーで 続いており、
ひと ふぁみりー つづ
the same <one> family | by | (that) has been held

世界 最長です。
せかい さいちょう
society/world in the world | most/long the longest | is

2. When a regime change takes place, in most countries the victor usually becomes king or emperor, wielding absolute power.

政変が 起きると、ほとんどの国
せいへん お くに
politics/change (a) regime change | takes place | when | most countries

では 通常、勝利者が 王や
つうじょう しょうりしゃ おう
in | through/always usually | win/advantage/person (the) victor | king | or

皇帝と なり 最高権力者と
こうてい さいこうけんりょくしゃ
emperor/sovereign emperor | becomes | most/high/authority/power/person absolute power

なります。
wielding

Explanation／説明
せつめい

3. However, in Japan, even when the *shogun* became the de facto leader, he never attempted to dethrone the Emperor.

しかし、 日本では
にほん
however | Japan | in

事実上の権力者 であった
じじつじょう けんりょくしゃ
matter/fact/above (the) de facto leader | became

将軍 でさえも、 天皇に
しょうぐん てんのう
warrior/military (the) shogun | even (when) | (the) Emperor

とってかわることは ありませんでした。
to dethrone | (he) never attempted

4. The reasons for this were said to lie in a struggle for imperial succession that took place in ancient times.

この背景には 古代日本に
はいけい こだい にほん
back/scene (the) reasons for this | old/age ancient times | in

起きた 皇位継承を めぐる
お こういけいしょう
(that) took place | succeed/receive imperial succession | for

大きな争いが ある といわれます。
おお あらそ
(a) struggle | to lie in | were said

5. After this, in order to avoid anarchy, the current system was designed so that succession passed to the next legitimate child in line.

その後 争いを 避ける ために
ご あらそ さ
this after | anarchy | to avoid | in order

正統性のある 次の 子に 継承する
せいとうせい つぎ こ けいしょう
correct/ruling/nature (the) legitimate in line | next | child | (succession) passed to

仕組みが つくられました。
しく
(the current) system | was designed (so that)

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6. The Emperor's position has been handed down through successive emperors who are regarded as being descendants of the Sun God.

天皇の地位は、太陽神の子孫
てんのうちい たいようしん しそん
thick/sunshine/god child/grandchild
(the) Emperor's position (the) Sun God of being descendants

と みなされる 継承天皇 により
けいしょう てんのう
as (who) are regarded successive emperors through

引き継がれて きました。
ひつ
has been handed down

---

7. Whoever has been in power at the time has still recognized the Emperor as having ultimate authority and never tried to usurp him.

時の どの権力者も 天皇を
とき けんりょくしゃ てんのう
at the time whoever has been in power (the) Emperor

絶対的権威 として 認め、
ぜったいてき けんい みと
beyond/versus/[adjective ending] as has still recognized *and*
having ultimate authority

その地位を奪うことは
ちい うば
tried to usurp (him)

決して ありません でした。
けっ
never

---

8. Even the modern constitution's first chapter starts with the Emperor.

近代憲法の 第1条 でさえも
きんだいけんぽう だいいちじょう
near/age/law/rule first chapter even
(the) modern constitution's

天皇 について 始まって います。
てんのう はじ
(the) Emperor with starts

---

9. However, the Emperor is not involved in politics, instead taking a symbolic role for the Japanese people.

しかし 天皇は 政治には 関与せず、
てんのう せいじ かんよ
politics/govern relation/give
however (the) Emperor politics in is not involved instead

日本国民の 象徴としての
にほんこくみん しょうちょう
country/people image/sign
(the) Japanese people for symbolic

役割を 果たされています。
やくわり は
role/portion taking
(a) role

10. The position of Emperor is traditionally inherited by men, however, in the past there have occasionally been women – such as the Empress who took over when a young Emperor died.

天皇の 地位は 伝統的に 男子が
てんのう ちい でんとうてき だんし
relay/governing/[adjective ending] male/child
Emperor of (the) position traditionally by men

継承します が、 過去には
けいしょう かこ
past/leave
is inherited however (the) past in

天皇が若くして 亡くなられた ときに
てんのう わか な
(a) young Emperor died when

皇后が 即位する など
こうごう そくい
royal family/queen adapt/rank
(the) Empress (who) took over such as

女性の天皇も おられました。
じょせい てんのう
female/gender
women [emperor] there have occasionally been

---

11. Imperial regulations in recent years have stipulated that the first son of the current Emperor is next in line to the throne, if he has no sons, the eldest son of the Emperor's younger brother is next.

近年の 皇室規則では 天皇
きんねん こうしつきそく てんのう
near/year royal family/room/standard/rule
recent years in imperial regulations (have stipulated that) (the current) Emperor

の 長男が 引き継ぎ、 男子が
ちょうなん ひつ だんし
head/man
of the first son is next in line to the throne sons

いない 場合には 次男の
ばあい じなん
place/fit following/man
(he) has no if (the) Emperor's younger brother of

長男が 継承します。
ちょうなん けいしょう
the eldest son is next

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12. The very day the new Emperor ascends to the throne, a new era begins with a new name. For example, Showa x year, or Heisei x year. This system is used together with the Western calendar.

新たな 天皇が 即位した その日から、
あら てんのう そくい ひ
new (the) Emperor ascends to the throne the very day

「昭和〇年」 「平成〇年」 のように
しょうわ まるねん へいせい まるねん
shining/harmony *equal/achievement*
(the) Showa x year (or) Heisei x year for example

新しい 名前の 時代が 始まります。
あたら なまえ じだい はじ
new *name /front* *time/age* begins with
(a new) name (a[n]) era

同時に、 西暦 も 使われます。
どうじ せいれき つか
same/time *west/calendar*
together with (the) Western calendar [also] (this system) is used

---

13. That era name will last until the Emperor retires or dies.

年号は 退位 または 崩御される
ねんごう たいい ほうぎょ
year/title *retreat/rank* *crumble/honorable*
that era name (the Emperor) retires or dies

まで 続きます。
つづ
until will last

14. The Emperor's birthday is a national holiday, and on this day and the second day of the New Year, people can visit and see the Emperor at the Imperial Palace.

天皇誕生日は 祝日と なり、
てんのうたんじょうび しゅくじつ
be born/life/day *celebrate/day*
(The) Emperor's birthday (a) national holiday is *and*

その日 および 新年の 2日には、
ひ しんねん ふつか
new/year
this day and (the) New Year of the second day on

国民は 皇居に 参賀できます。
こくみん こうきょ さんが
royal family/reside *visiting/congratulation*
people (the) Imperial Palace at can visit and see (the) Emperor

15. The lyrics of the Japanese national anthem "Kimigayo" are said to show respect for the Emperor.

日本の 国歌の 歌詞 「君が代」は
にほん こっか かし きみ よ
country/song *song/words*
Japanese (the) national anthem of (the) lyrics Kimigayo

天皇への 尊重を 示すものと
てんのう そんちょう しめ
respect/heavy
(the) Emperor for respect to show

いわれます。
are said

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16. Since the Emperor holds a special place in Japanese history, he has no surname, but simply a single name.

天皇は 日本の 歴史と ともにある
てんのう にほん れきし
(the) Emperor Japanese history in

特別な 存在 なので 名字が
とくべつ そんざい みょうじ
name/character
special holds (a) place since surname

ありません。 名前だけです。
なまえ
(he) has no (but a) simply single name

---

17. Criticism of the Emperor or the royal family is a taboo subject for the media.

天皇 および 皇族を 批判することは
てんのう こうぞく ひはん
royal family/tribe *strike/stamp*
(the) Emperor or (the) royal family criticism (of)

メディアの タブーと されています。
めでぃあ たぶー
(the) media for (a) taboo (subject) is

---

18. Special terms are used to refer to them in articles, such as *hougyo* instead of *shibou* (die).

記事には、 「死亡」を 「崩御」と
きじ しぼう ほうぎょ
scribe/matter *die/lost*
articles in shibou (die) hougyo

置き換える など 特別な 表現が
おか とくべつ ひょうげん
surface/appear
instead of such as special terms

用いられます。
もち
are used (to refer to them)