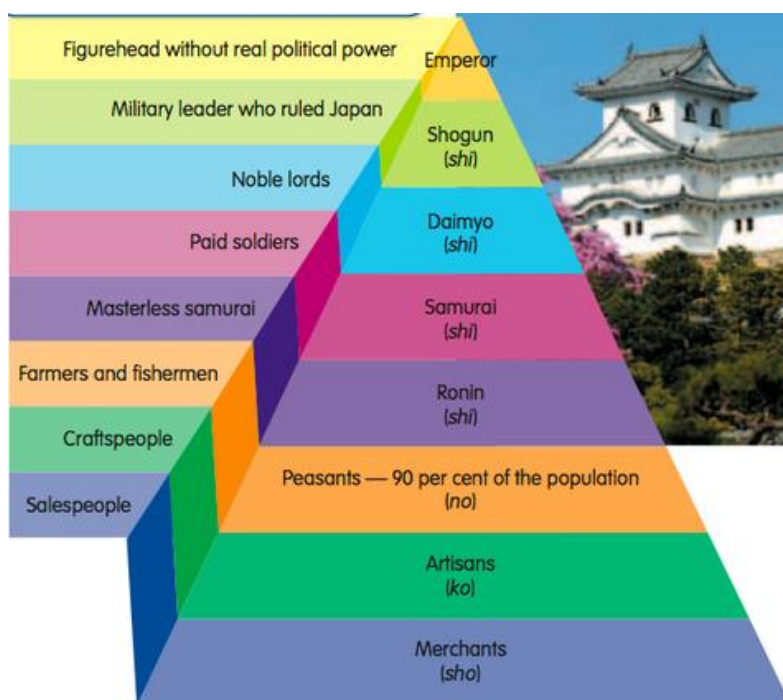


# JAPAN – SHORT BACKGROUND

**1192-1867** – Japan was a **SHOGUNATE** (a feudal military dictatorship). In this period, the shoguns were the de facto rulers of the country; although nominally they were appointed by the Emperor as a ceremonial formality (the Emperor was the official ruler but just as mentioned he did not rule in practice). Tokugawa Ieyasu seized power and established a government at Edo (Tokyo) in 1600. The Tokugawa Shogunate would last to 1867.

Subordinate only to the Shogun, **daimyōs** were the most powerful feudal rulers from the 10th century to the middle 19th century in Japan. **Samurai** were the military nobility and officer caste of medieval and early-modern Japan. The samurai, usually associated with a clan and their lord (**daimyō**), were trained as officers in military tactics and grand strategy. Here is a picture of the feudal hierarchy of Japan:



**ASIAN ISOLATIONISM:** In the beginning of the 1800's both China and Japan were closed from Western influence. Meanwhile the Western world experienced an increasing industrial development (sometimes referred to as the "*Industrial Revolution*"), an *economic expansion*, *European nationalism* and connected to that a growing interest of the world outside Europe (*Imperialism*).

Japan was completely closed while China had welcomed certain foreign trade. The western merchants had no privileges in China and they were confined to Canton. There they could only deal with the "*Cohong*" – a group of Chinese traders.

**CHINA FORCED TO OPEN:** Great Britain started to put pressure on China to open up for more trade at the beginning of the 19th century. They especially tried to establish an Opium Market in China – against the Chinese ban of Opium. In **1839** these different opinions led to an armed conflict – the **First Opium War**. The Chinese were defeated (with heavy military losses) and we now could see the establishment of a system of unequal treaties between the West and China (especially with Great Britain).

**JAPAN FORCED TO OPEN: 1853 – Commodore Matthew Perry + 4 US Steam Ships (*the Black Ships*)** arrived in Japan. On the way to Edo Commodore Perry had claimed the Bonin Islands for the US and he had forced the Ryukyus kingdom to promise to sign a friendship treaty with the US (signed in 1854). The US and Commodore Perry were determined to open up Japan for trade with the Western (US) world. **WHY?**

- **Whaling Industry:** Lots of capital had been invested in the US Whaling industry in Japanese and Chinese waters. Sailors from previous shipwrecks had not been treated very friendly in Japan so the US had two reasons connected to the Whaling industry: They needed harbors (for the economy) and they needed protection...
- **Growing economy of the US West Coast:** The new industries and commercial centers of the US West Coast wanted expanded markets in East Asia. Japan's location made it necessary for these commercial interests to use...

- **Steam ships – fuel and protection:** The new US Steam Ships needed coaling stations and ports for protection in the Orient
- **Opening of China:** The forced opening of China (Great Britain and the Opium Wars) made East Asia a new commercial center. The US wanted to be part of these new trading areas – that’s why the opening of Japan became important. At the same time the Japanese learned from the forced experience of the Chinese opening and they wanted to be able to have some saying in the relation with the West – that’s why they did not meet the US Ships with violence but certain friendship...
- **Christianity:** Several missionaries wanted to spread Christianity to China and Japan...
- **Political will of some Japanese:** Some Japanese people were curious about the west and therefore wanted to open up some contacts with this fairly unknown world. Among them was also a will to get rid of the old backward Japanese feudalism and maybe even restore the power to the official leader of the country – the Emperor.

**TREATY OF KANAGAWA 1854:** Signed under threat of force, it effectively meant the end of Japan’s 220-year-old policy of national seclusion by opening the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to American vessels. It also ensured the safety of American castaways and established the position of an American consul in Japan. The treaty also precipitated the signing of similar treaties establishing diplomatic relations with other western powers.

1. *Mutual peace between the United States and the Empire of Japan*
2. *Opening of the ports of Shimoda & Hakodate*
3. *Assistance to be provided to shipwrecked American sailors*
4. *Shipwrecked sailors not to be imprisoned or mistreated*
5. *Freedom of movement for temporary foreign residents in treaty ports (with limitations)*
6. *Trade transactions to be permitted*
7. *Currency exchange to facilitate any trade transactions to be allowed*
8. *Provisioning of American ships to be a Japanese government monopoly*
9. *Japan to also give the United States any favorable advantages which might be negotiated by Japan with any other foreign government in the future*
10. *Forbids the United States from using any other ports aside from Shimoda and Hakodate.*
11. *Opening of an American consulate at Shimoda*
12. *Treaty to be ratified within 18 months of signing*

The final article, Article Twelve, stipulated that the terms of the treaty were to be ratified by the President of the United States and the “*August Sovereign of Japan*” within 18 months. At the time, Shogun Tokugawa Iesada was the de facto ruler of Japan; for the Emperor to interact in any way with foreigners was out of the question. Perry concluded the treaty with representatives of the shogun, led by plenipotentiary Hayashi Akira and the text was endorsed subsequently, albeit reluctantly, by Emperor Kōmei. The treaty was ratified on 21 February 1855.

**RESULTS:** In the short-term, both sides were satisfied with the agreement. Perry had achieved his primary objective of breaking Japan’s isolation policy and setting the grounds for protection of American citizens and an eventual commercial agreement. The Tokugawa shogunate had at least temporarily averted the possibility of immediate military confrontation.

**FORCED WESTERN TREATIES:** The Japanese chafed under the “**unequal treaty system**” which characterized Asian and western relations during this period. The Kanagawa treaty was also followed by similar agreements with the United Kingdom (*Anglo-Japanese Friendship Treaty, October 1854*), the Russians (*Treaty of Shimoda, 7 February 1855*), another more commercial treaty with the US (*Treaty of Amity and Commerce, the “Harris Treaty” of 1858*) and the French (*Treaty of Amity and Commerce between France and Japan, 9 October 1858*).

These Unequal Treaties curtailed Japanese sovereignty for the first time in its history; more importantly, it revealed *Japan’s growing weakness*, and was seen by the West as a pretext for possible colonization of Japan. **The recovery of national status and strength became an overarching priority for the Japanese.**

**US ADVANTAGE: Harris treaty 1858 (The Treaty of Amity and Commerce)** between the United States and Japan was signed on the deck of the USS Powhatan in Edo (now Tokyo) Bay on July 29, 1858. In a major diplomatic coup, Harris had abundantly pointed out the aggressive colonialism of France and Great Britain

against China in the current Second Opium War (1856–1860), suggesting that these countries would not hesitate to go to war against Japan as well, and that the United States offered a peaceful alternative. It opened the ports of Kanagawa and four other Japanese cities to trade and granted extraterritoriality to foreigners, among several trading stipulations. Among the most important points were:

- *exchange of diplomatic agent*
- *in addition to the existing ports of Shimoda and Hakodate, the ports of Kanagawa and Nagasaki to be open to foreign trade effective 4 July 1859 and thereafter Niigata (1 January 1860), Hyōgo (Kobe) and Osaka (both at 1 January 1863)*
- *in all the treaty ports listed, United States citizens may permanently reside, have the right to lease ground and purchase the buildings thereon, and may erect dwellings and warehouses*
- *a system of extraterritoriality that provided for the subjugation of foreign residents to the laws of their own consular courts instead of the Japanese law system*
- *fixed low import-export duties, subject to international control*
- *right of freedom of religious expression and church construction to serve the needs of United States nationals within the confines of the designated foreign settlements at the treaty ports.*
- *ability for Japan to purchase American shipping and weapons (three American steamships were delivered to Japan in 1862)*



After reluctantly accepting the Harris Treaty, Japan quickly signed similar treaties, called *the Ansei Treaties*, with Russia, France, Great Britain, and the Netherlands. In 1861 the Prussian Eulenberg expedition concluded a diplomatic and commercial relation between Japan and Prussia and the German Customs Union. At this time the US lost some of its advantage in Japan due to domestic problems - The US Civil War!

**DOMESTIC JAPANESE CRISIS:** The opening of Japan to uncontrolled foreign trade brought economic instability. While some entrepreneurs prospered, many others went bankrupt. Unemployment rose, as well as inflation. Coincidentally, major famines also increased the price of food drastically. Most problems that the Tokugawa Shogunate faced though came from the division within the country between those who favored opening to the West immediately and advocates of jōi (“*expel the barbarian*”) who favored a preservation of Japanese culture and influence until Japan could face the military threat posed by the West. Both camps did agree that trade should be handled by Japanese going overseas instead of foreigners coming into Japan and violating the country’s seclusion laws. The result was a deepening domestic crisis and the Shogunate was trapped between the demands of the West and its powerful domestic enemies.

**CIVIL WAR:** The Tokugawa Shogunate came to its official end on November 9, 1867, when Tokugawa Yoshinobu, the 15th Tokugawa Shogun, “*put his prerogatives at the Emperor's disposal*” and resigned 10 days later. This was effectively the restoration of imperial rule – although Yoshinobu still had significant influence and it was not until January 3, the following year, with the young emperor's edict that the restoration fully occurred:

*"The Emperor of Japan announces to the sovereigns of all foreign countries and to their subjects that permission has been granted to the Shogun Tokugawa Yoshinobu to return the governing power in accordance with his own request. We shall henceforward exercise supreme authority in all the internal and external affairs of the country. Consequently, the title of Emperor must be substituted for that of Taikun, in which the treaties have been made. Officers are being appointed by us to the conduct of foreign affairs. It is desirable that the representatives of the treaty powers recognize this announcement."*

Shortly thereafter in January 1868, the Boshin War (Civil War) started with the Battle of Toba–Fushimi. The defeat of the Shogun allowed the Emperor to strip Tokugawa Yoshinobu of all power, setting the stage for an official restoration.

Some shogunate forces escaped to Hokkaidō, where they attempted to set up a breakaway Republic of Ezo; however, forces loyal to the Emperor ended this attempt in May 1869 with the Battle of Hakodate in Hokkaidō. The defeat of the armies of the former shogun marked the final end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, with the Emperor's power fully restored.

**MEIJI RESTORATION:** The Meiji Restoration (Restoration of the Emperor) accelerated the modernization of Japan, dismantling the feudal system and establishing a limited form of democracy. Major reforms took place in all areas: industry, education, fashion and, perhaps most significantly, the military. The Meiji government promoted national unity and patriotism under the slogan of “*Enrich the country, strengthen the military*”.

**INDUSTRIALIZATION:** The rapid industrialization and modernization of Japan both allowed and required a massive increase in production and infrastructure. Japan built industries such as shipyards, iron smelters, and spinning mills, which were then sold to well-connected entrepreneurs. Consequently, domestic companies became consumers of Western technology and applied it to produce items that would be sold cheaply in the international market. With this, industrial zones grew enormously, and there was massive migration to industrializing centers from the countryside. Industrialization additionally went hand in hand with the development of a national railway system and modern communications

**MILITARY REFORMS:** To reform the military, the government instituted nationwide conscription in 1873, mandating that every male would serve for four years in the armed forces upon turning 21, followed by three more years in the reserves. This ended the old feudal system of the Samurai...

In the 1850's Japan had started a modernization of the army and navy through contacts with the Netherlands and France. During the Meiji restoration, the Japanese Army adapted the modern German military tactics and the Japanese Navy was established with the help of the leading Naval nation in the world - Great Britain.

**LANGUAGE:** Besides drastic changes to the social structure of Japan, in an attempt to create a strong centralized state defining its national identity, the government established a dominant national dialect, called “*standard language*” that replaced local and regional dialects and was based on the patterns of Tokyo's samurai classes. This dialect eventually became the norm in the realms of education, media, government and business.

**JAPANESE LEADERSHIP IN EAST ASIA:** The Meiji Restoration, and the resultant modernization of Japan, also influenced Japanese self-identity with respect to its Asian neighbors, as Japan became the first

Asian state to modernize based on the European model, replacing the traditional Confucian hierarchical order that had persisted previously under a dominant China with one based on modernity.

**THE ORIGINS OF JAPANESE NATIONALISM AND MILITARISM:** The events described led to the growth of Japanese nationalism. Some of the factors were:

- *The actions of the Western Powers*
- *The determination to transform Japan into a Western-style power - linked to the desire for equality with Western Powers*
- *Japan's belief in its destiny as the leader of Asia*
- *The need to obtain raw materials and secure markets in East Asia (+ stop other countries from doing this)*
- *The need for strategic security*
- *Growing domestic popular support for militarism and expansionism*

Japanese industrialization demanded more raw material and new markets. The radical changes within the army and navy also demanded some kind of test of its new strength. Patriotism mixed with these imperialistic ambitions brought Japan into the same situation they had experienced a few years before – but now at the opposite side. On February 27, 1876, after several confrontations between Korean isolationists and Japanese, Japan imposed the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1876, forcing Korea to open for Japanese trade. This would lead to a confrontation with China...

## EFFECTS OF THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR

Japan won the **First Sino-Japanese War 1894-95** (modern army - German military tactics and the British inspired Navy). Japan was now an important power – world power...

**Treaty of Shimonoseki:** Japan gained:

- Pescadores Islands
- Formosa
- Liaodong Peninsula
- War indemnity to Japan
- China should open additional ports to Japan
- China should sign a commercial treaty that favored Japan.
- Korea became independent...

The conditions imposed by Japan on China led to the **Triple Intervention** of Russia, France, and Germany, western powers all active in China, with established enclaves and ports, just six days after the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki:

- Russia took the Liaodong Peninsula
- Germany secured control over the Shandong Province
- Great Britain and France took advantage of weaken China and forced the country to open more ports for their business.

The treatment of Japan by the Western Powers (and Russia) encouraged the growth of Japanese nationalism and militarism.

- *Japan realized that the Western Powers were never going to treat Japan as an equal Imperial Power*
- *Japan realized it needed a strong military force to protect itself from the Western Powers (and Russia)*

Between 1895 and 1905 Japan increased the military expenses a lot (“*endure through hardship*”). In the government several Ministers were picked from the upper military ranks – this meant that the military got direct influence over the politics of Japan. The industrial production increased a lot as well which made Japan less dependent on imports (certain self-sufficiency – especially in iron and steel). A patriotic society, the Amur River Society, was established. They wanted Japan to expand on the Asian mainland.

## JAPAN AFTER 1900

In 1902 – Japan and Great Britain signed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (first time a military alliance had been signed by a Western and non-Western nation). This broke the Japanese diplomatic isolation. Great Britain was worried about the German Naval expansion. Japan could now “control” the Asian oceans for Britain...

## RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904-1905

**Russo-Japanese War 1904-05!** Japan tried to negotiate with Russia about the influence over Korea and Manchuria. Russia refused to negotiate (certain arrogance). In 1904 Japan attacked the naval base of Port Arthur. After sinking the Russian Baltic Fleet in the Tsushima Strait Japan won this war.

- **Treaty of Portsmouth 1905:** Japan gained control over Korea and South Manchuria (including Port Arthur) + the railroad rights in Manchuria and the southern part of the Sakhalin Island.

Japanese disappointment. Russia did not have to pay any war indemnity and Japan did not gain all of Manchuria (a region that was four times the size of Japan, agriculture rich, lots of mineral resources and a “*buffert zone*” against Russia. Japan needed some living space for the rapid growing Japanese population)

- **Japan gained respect.** Japan gained respect from several other Asian countries which indirectly led Japan to believe in its destiny as leader of Asia.
- **Economic strain.** The new Japanese areas needed protection – this could only be done with more military investments...

## RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904-1905

The **Russo-Japanese War**, February 10, 1904 – September 5, 1905) was a conflict that grew out of the rival **imperialist ambitions of the Russian Empire and the Japanese Empire over Manchuria and Korea**. The major theatres of operations were Southern Manchuria, specifically the area around the Liaodong Peninsula and Mukden, and the seas around Korea, Japan, and the Yellow Sea.

**CAUSES:** One of the basic reasons for the clash between "*two sets of imperialist ambitions*" was the **declining and collapsing Chinese Empire**. Suddenly there was a power vacuum that both Japan and Russia wanted to fill...

- **Russia had expanded towards the east** during the 19th century. During the reign of Nicholas I (1825-1854) and Alexander II (1854-1881) we see the Russian influence over Dagestan and the Caucasus become permanent as well as the control over the Uzbeks and the Kazakhs. The establishment of influence in the Far East was typified by the foundation of the town aptly named **Vladivostok** ("*Lord of the East*") in 1861. In the end of the century the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad started (tied European Russia together with Vladivostok). It was completed 1904. Russia now wanted to continue their expansion in the east. The Chinese districts of **Manchuria and Korea were their next targets**.
- Russia needed a **warm water port** for their navy (military reasons) as well as the merchant marine (economical reasons). The new Russian town of Vladivostok could only be used during the summer. **Port Arthur (Lüshunkou)** at the **Liaodong Peninsula** was such a port but it formally belonged to China.
- Russia had started **several economic ventures in the far east**, like the "*Russian Timber Company of the Far East*". Sergei Witte (Minister of Economy) and other very influential persons had invested in these ventures...
- Japan had been forced to open for Western trade and influence in the middle of the 1800's. By the end of the 19th century Japan had transformed into a modernized industrial state with advanced technology mixing its old customs with new Western ideas. **Japan wanted to be recognized as an equal to the Western powers** who colonized parts of the China. Beginning in the 1870s, Japan had moved into the previous Chinese sphere of influence over Korea (Korea was a relatively independent part of the Chinese Empire). In the Treaty of Ganghwa (1876) Japan forced Korea to engage in foreign trade. This started a period of Japanese domination which ended in 1910 when the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty was signed. Then Korea became part of Japan.
- After the **Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895** a Peace Treaty was signed (Treaty of Shimonoseki / Treaty of Maguan 1895) which granted Japan Formosa (Taiwan) and the bay of Liaodong together with all fortifications, arsenals and public property. It also forced China to open several cities to Japan as well as granting Korea complete independence and autonomy. China should thereafter treat Japan as the "*most-favored-nation*". This **treaty was challenged by Russia, France and Germany** just three days after signing (the **Triple Intervention**). They forced Japan to withdraw its claim on the Liaodong peninsula. Port Arthur (Lüshunkou) was too important for them – especially Russia.
- **In 1897 a Russian fleet appeared off Port Arthur**. They put some pressure on China who signed permission for Russia to lease the area (early 1898 - for 25 years). Russia now started fortifications and other constructions on the peninsula as well as a railroad to Harbin from Port Arthur. These constructions contributed to the Boxer Rebellion. The Russian reaction to that was mobilization and an occupation of Manchuria... The success against the Boxer rebels also built up a false confidence among the Russian troops - that they would be able to defeat any "oriental foe".
- The **new independent Korea** signed a **pact of protection with Russia and China** at the beginning of the 20th century. This was an attempt to hinder further Japanese influence in Korea.
- Great Britain was worried of the Russian advances in the east. Therefore she signed a pact with Japan, the **Anglo-Japanese Alliance**, in 1902. The alliance meant that both countries would respect neutrality in case they became involved in war and promise of support in case they became involved in war with more than one state. Britain thought this would restrict naval competition by keeping the Russian Pacific seaports of Vladivostok and Port Arthur from their full use. The further benefit of the alliance to Britain was the establishment of an ally in East Asia who could help contain Russia in general and protect British commercial interests in China. It helped Britain's navy by providing coaling stations and repair facilities. For Japan, it was a necessary step in achieving further recognition as a Power (if not a Great Power) and gave her the confidence to challenge Russia's occupation of Manchuria and designs on Korea.

- For **two years (1901-1903) Japan tried to reach an understanding with Russia** about spheres of influence in Manchuria and Korea. They failed due to Russian "apathy".
- In **1903 Russia failed to remove a temporary garrison from Manchuria** (they were there formally as a protection for the construction and work on the Chinese Eastern Railroad). The delay made it look like Russia was trying to take more control over this region (both Manchuria and Korea)...
- **Domestic tension within Russia** (strikes, political unrest, etc...) made a "foreign distraction" welcome. The Minister of Interior Plehve said "*to stem the tide of revolution, we need a successful little war*"...
- In **January (13th) 1904 Japan proposed a formula** of Manchuria being outside her sphere of influence if Russia accepted Japanese sphere of influence in Korea. This proposal was met with - silence. When Japan hadn't received an answer in **February (6th)** the Ambassador, Kurino, called on the Russian Foreign Minister to take his leave. **Japan now severed their diplomatic relation with Russia**. Two days later the war started...
- Kaiser Wilhelm II sent a personal encouragement to his cousin Tsar Nicholas II about his "*crusade against the Yellow Peril*".

**COURSE OF WAR:** Japan issued a declaration of war on February 8, 1904. However, three hours before Japan's declaration of war was received by the Russian Government, Japan attacked the Russian Far East Fleet at Port Arthur. Tsar Nicholas II was stunned by news of the attack. He could not believe that Japan could initiate a warlike act without a formal declaration of war, and had been assured by his ministers that the Japanese would not fight. Russia declared war on Japan eight days later.

**Campaign of 1904:** Port Arthur, on the Liaodong Peninsula in the south of Manchuria, had been fortified into a major naval base by the Russians. Since it needed to control the sea in order to fight a war on the Asian mainland, **Japan's first military objective was to neutralize the Russian fleet at Port Arthur**. On the night of February 8, 1904, the Japanese fleet under Admiral Heihachiro Togo opened the war with a surprise torpedo boat attack on the Russian ships at Port Arthur. The attack badly damaged two battleships. These attacks developed into **the Battle of Port Arthur** the next morning. A series of indecisive naval engagements followed, in which Admiral Togo was unable to attack the Russian fleet successfully as it was protected by the shore batteries of the harbor, and the Russians were reluctant to leave the harbor for the open seas, especially after the death of Admiral Stepan Osipovich Makarov on April 13, 1904.

However, these engagements provided cover for a Japanese landing near Incheon in Korea. From Incheon the Japanese occupied Seoul and then the rest of Korea. By the end of April, the Japanese army under Kuroki Itei was ready to cross the Yalu river into Russian-occupied Manchuria.

In contrast to the Japanese strategy of rapidly gaining ground to control Manchuria, Russian strategy focused on fighting delaying actions to gain time for reinforcements to arrive via the long Trans-Siberian railway which was at the time incomplete near Irkutsk. On May 1, 1904, **the Battle of the Yalu River** became the first major land battle of the war, when Japanese troops stormed a Russian position after an unopposed crossing of the river. Japanese troops proceeded to land at several points on the Manchurian coast, and, in a series of engagements, drove the Russians back towards Port Arthur. These battles, including **the Battle of Nanshan** on May 25, 1904, were marked by heavy Japanese losses from attacking entrenched Russian positions, but the Russians maintained their focus on defending, and did not counterattack.

The Japanese next attempted to deny the Russians use of Port Arthur. During the night of February 13-14, the Japanese attempted to block the entrance to Port Arthur by sinking several cement-filled steamers in the deep water channel to the port, but they sank too deep to be effective. Another similar attempt to block the harbor entrance during the night of 3-4 May also failed. In March, the charismatic Vice Admiral Makarov had taken command of the First Russian Pacific Squadron with the intention of breaking out of the Port Arthur blockade. On April 12, 1904 two Russian pre-dreadnought battleships, the flagship *Petropavlovsk* and the *Pobeda* slipped out of port but struck Japanese mines off Port Arthur. The *Petropavlovsk* sank almost immediately, while the *Pobeda* had to be towed back to port for extensive repairs. Admiral Makarov, the single most effective Russian naval strategist of the war, had perished on the battleship *Petropavlovsk*.

On April 15, 1904 the Russian government made overtures threatening to seize the British war correspondents who were taking the ship *Haimun* into warzones to report for the London-based *The Times* newspaper, citing concerns about the possibility of the British giving away Russian positions to the Japanese fleet.

The Russians learned quickly, and soon employed the Japanese tactic of offensive minelaying. On 14 May 1904, two Japanese battleships, the *Yashima* and the *Hatsuse*, were lured into a recently laid Russian minefield

off Port Arthur, each striking at least two mines. The *Yashima* sank within minutes, taking 450 sailors with her, while the *Hatsuse* sank under tow a few hours later. On June 23, 1904, a breakout attempt by the Russian squadron, now under the command of Admiral Wilhelm Vitgeft failed. By the end of the month, Japanese artillery were firing shells into the harbor.

Japan began a **long siege of Port Arthur**. On August 10, 1904, the Russian fleet again attempted to break out and proceed to Vladivostok, but upon reaching the open sea were confronted by Admiral Togo's battleship squadron. Known to the Russians as the Battle of August 10, but more commonly referred to as **the Battle of the Yellow Sea**, battleships from both sides exchanged gunfire. The battle had the elements of a decisive battle, though Admiral Togo knew that another Russian battleship fleet would soon be sent to the Pacific. The Japanese had only one battleship fleet, and Togo had already lost two battleships to Russian mines. The Russian and Japanese battleships continued to exchange gunfire, until the Russian flagship, the battleship *Tsesarevich*, received a direct hit on the bridge, killing the fleet commander, Admiral Vitgeft. At this, the Russian fleet turned around and headed back into Port Arthur. Though no warships were sunk by either side in the battle, the Russians were now back in port and the Japanese navy still had battleships to meet the new Russian fleet when it arrived. Eventually, the Russian warships at Port Arthur were sunk by the artillery of the besieging army. Attempts to relieve the besieged city by land also failed, and, after the Battle of Liaoyang in late August, the Russians retreated to Mukden (Shenyang). Port Arthur finally fell on 2 January 1905 when the garrison's commanding officer ceded the port to the Japanese without consulting his high command.

Meanwhile, at sea, the Russians were preparing to reinforce their fleet by sending the Baltic Sea fleet, under Admiral Zinovy Rozhdestvensky, around the world via the Cape of Good Hope to Asia. On October 21, 1904, while passing by the United Kingdom (an ally of Japan but neutral in this war), they nearly provoked a war in the Dogger Bank incident by firing on British fishing boats that they mistook for enemy torpedo boats.

### **Campaign of 1905:**

**Harsh winter and final battles:** With the fall of Port Arthur, the Japanese 3rd army was now able to continue northward and reinforce positions south of Russian-held Mukden. With the onset of the severe Manchurian winter, there had been no major land engagements since the Battle of Shaho the previous year. Both sides camped opposite each other along 60 to 70 miles (110 km) of front lines, south of Mukden.

The Russian Second Army under General Oskar Gripenberg, between January 25–29, attacked the Japanese left flank near the town of **Sandepu (Battle of Sandepu)**, almost breaking through. This caught the Japanese by surprise. However, without support from other Russian units the attack was stalled, Gripenberg was ordered to halt by Kuropatkin and the battle was inconclusive. The Japanese knew that they needed to destroy the Russian army in Manchuria before Russian reinforcements arrived via the Trans-Siberian railroad.

The **Battle of Mukden** commenced on February 20, 1905. In the following days Japanese forces proceeded to assault the right and left flanks of Russian forces surrounding Mukden, along a 50 mile (80 km) front. Both sides were well entrenched and were backed with hundreds of artillery pieces. After days of harsh fighting, added pressure from both flanks forced both ends of the Russian defensive line to curve backwards. Seeing they were about to be encircled, the Russians began a general retreat, fighting a series of fierce rearguard actions, which soon deteriorated in the confusion and collapse of Russian forces. On March 10, 1905 after three weeks of fighting, General Kuropatkin decided to withdraw to the north of Mukden.

The retreating Russian Manchurian Army formations disintegrated as fighting units, but the Japanese failed to destroy them completely. The Japanese themselves had suffered large casualties and were in no condition to pursue. Although the battle of Mukden was a major defeat for the Russians it had not been decisive, and the final victory would depend on the navy.

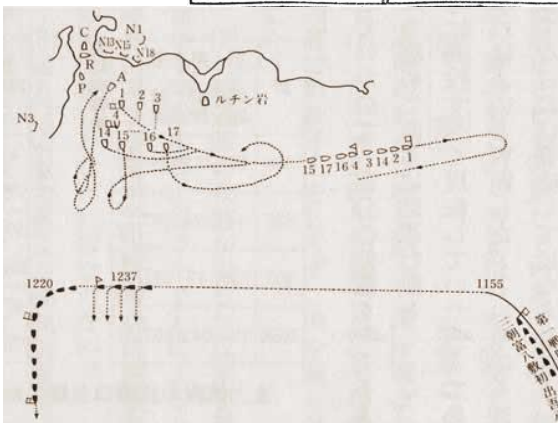
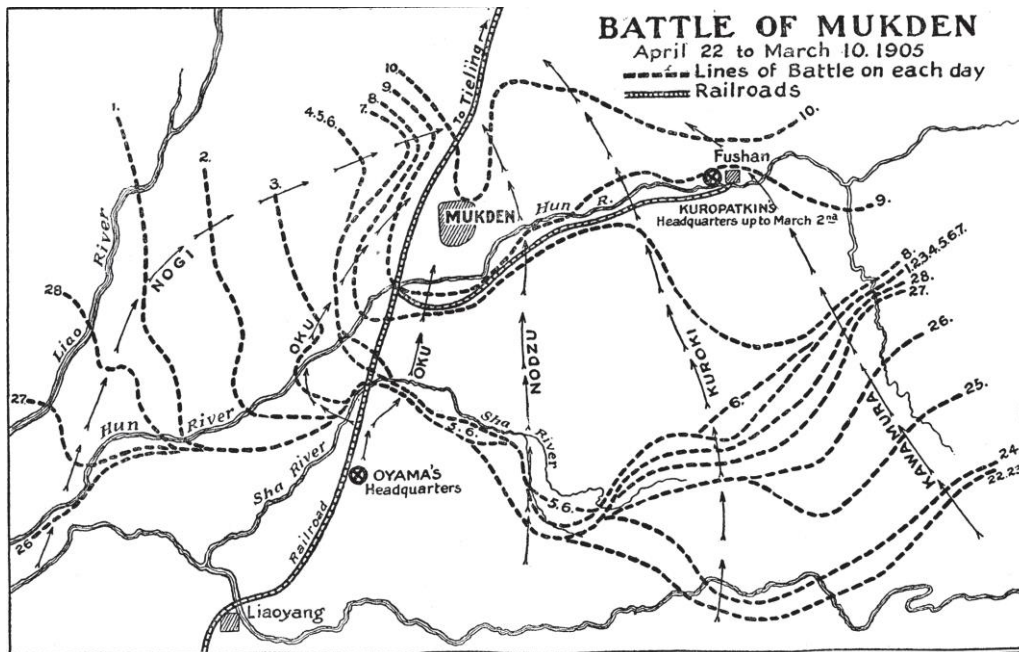
**Japanese victory at Tsushima:** The Russian *Second Pacific Squadron* (the renamed Baltic Fleet) had journeyed 18,000 miles (29,000 km) to relieve Port Arthur. However, Port Arthur had fallen and the demoralizing news reached the fleet while at Madagascar. Admiral Rozhdestvensky's only hope now was to reach the port of Vladivostok. There were three routes that existed to Vladivostok, but the Tsushima Straits between Korea and Japan was the shortest and most direct route, however, it was also the most dangerous as it was very close to the Japanese home islands.

Admiral Togo was aware of the Russian progress and understood that with the fall of Port Arthur, the Second and Third Pacific Squadrons would try to reach the only other Russian port in the Far East, Vladivostok. Battle plans were laid down and ships were repaired and refitted to intercept the Russian fleet.

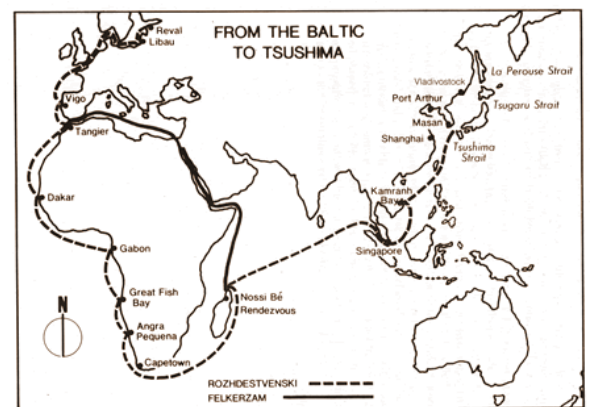
The Japanese **Combined Fleet**, which had originally consisted of six battleships, was now down to four (two had been lost to mines), but still retained its cruisers, destroyers, and torpedo boats. The *Second Pacific*

*Squadron* contained eight battleships, including four new battleships of the *Borodino* class, as well as cruisers, destroyers and other auxiliaries for a total of 38 ships.

By the end of May the Second Pacific Squadron was on the last leg of its journey to Vladivostok. Unfortunately for the Russians, one of their hospital ships exposed a light, which was sighted by the Japanese armed merchant cruiser *Shinano Maru*. Wireless communication was used to inform Togo's headquarters, where the Combined Fleet was immediately ordered to sortie. Still receiving naval intelligence from scouting forces, the Japanese were able to position their fleet so that they would "cross the T" of the Russian fleet. The Japanese engaged the Russian fleet in the Tsushima Straits on 27 May–28 May 1905. The Russian fleet was virtually annihilated, losing eight battleships, numerous smaller vessels, and more than 5,000 men, while the Japanese lost three torpedo boats and 116 men. Only three Russian vessels escaped to Vladivostok. After the Battle of Tsushima, the Japanese army occupied the entire Sakhalin Islands chain to force the Russians to sue for peace.



BATTLE OF PORT ARTHUR



RUSSIAN SECOND PACIFIC FLEET



PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IN PORTSMOUTH 1905

**RESULTS:** The domestic problems in Russia had become a major concern for the Tsar and his government. Under these circumstances he chooses to negotiate for peace. The US President Theodore Roosevelt offered to mediate (which gave him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906).

The **Treaty of Portsmouth** was signed September 5<sup>th</sup> 1905 (Portsmouth, New Hampshire, USA).

- *Russia recognized Korea as Japan's sphere of influence*
  - *Japan took over the 25-year lease of Port Arthur + Hinterland*
  - *Japan also took over the lease of the Railroad in southern Manchuria (and its access to several strategic resources)*
  - *The southern half of the Sakhalin Island was ceded to Japan*
  - *Both Russia and Japan agreed to evacuate Manchuria*
  - *Russia did not have to pay any war indemnity*
- 
- The loss was very embarrassing for Russia (and Europe) who had been convinced about their superiority. Russia lost a lot of prestige...
  - The loss of the war **contributed to the 1905 Revolution in Russia**
  - The lost war in the Far East **made Russia change the focus on her Foreign Policy**. She now **concentrated more on the development in Europe**. Especially in the weak part in the South-East... the declining Ottoman Empire = the “**Eastern Question**”!
  - Japan became a power to count on and started her domination of China as well as other areas in the Far East. She would find a new competitor in the Pacific – USA

**CASUALTIES:** Several different figures exist;

<b>Samuel Dumas:</b>	Japan:	86,100 dead
	Russia:	43,300 dead
<b>Japanese Bureau of Military Statistics</b>		
	Japan:	80,378 dead
<b>Gaedke:</b>	Russia	71,453 dead
<b>Small &amp; Singer:</b>	Japan:	85,000 dead
	Russia:	45,000 dead
<b>Gilbert:</b>	Japan:	58,000 dead
	Russia:	120,000 dead
<b>Eckhardt:</b>	Total:	130,000 dead
<b>Urlanis:</b>	Total:	139,000 dead

**So why did Russia lose the war?**

- Incompetence of officers and administrators! Contrasted by the bravery and sacrifice of the common soldiers
- Japan was closer to the war. Russia had to transport men from Europe. They used the Trans-Siberian Railroad which took a while. The Trans-Siberian Railroad was single-track and about 150 km was missing in the region of Lake Baikal. Around 35,000 men per month was a maximum.
- Japanese army and navy were better equipped and more efficient
- Japan had more men than Russia already at the beginning of the war and could get reinforcements faster.
- The loss of the naval initiative made Japan control her reinforcements as well as the landing along the coast, etc...
- The Japanese soldiers and officers fought with “semi religious fanaticism” – Nationalism!



Map over the main areas in Manchuria and Korea in the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05

## KOREA

**1910 – Korea annexed by Japan:** In May 1910, the Minister of War of Japan, Terauchi Masatake, was given a mission to finalize Japanese control over Korea after the previous treaties (the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1904 and the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1907) had made Korea a protectorate of Japan and had established Japanese hegemony over Korean domestic politics. On 22 August 1910, Japan effectively annexed Korea with the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1910 signed by Ye Wanyong, Prime Minister of Korea, and Terauchi Masatake, who became the first Japanese Governor-General of Korea.

## JAPAN – WWI

At the beginning of WWI Japan demanded German territories in China. Germany did not agree so Japan therefore declared war against Germany and seized the Shandong Peninsula 1914. Japan also occupied some German possessions in the South Pacific. Then the Japanese military put some demands on China – the **21 Demands**. They included:

- Japan should remain in Shandong
- Japan would get another commercial treaty as the “extra favored nation” (esp. in Manchuria)
- No Chinese coastal territory should be leased by other powers
- Japanese advisers should be sent to China...

Great Britain, USA and some civil Ministers in the Japanese government protested against the harsh 21 Demands. They were then modified. WWI meant good business for Japan. They supplied goods to the allies and the Asian markets (these markets had been controlled by the Western Powers but they now had to concentrate on the war). In 1917 two Russian Revolutions broke out. One of the results of these revolutions was a Russian Civil War (1918-1920/22).

- Japan sent over 70 000 men to fight the “Red” (Bolsheviks under Trotsky)
- Japan was defeated by the Red Army in 1922. The stay in Russia made Great Britain and the USA suspicious of Japanese intentions... Why did they stay so long?

## RESULTS OF WWI



← Japan received Germany's Pacific Islands as a League of Nation's "Mandate"

Japan received Germany's economic privileges on the Shandong Peninsula →



- US Immigration Act of 1924: The **Immigration Act of 1924**, or Johnson–Reed Act, including the **National Origins Act**, and **Asian Exclusion Act** was a United States federal law that limited the annual number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to 2% of the number of people from that country who were already living in the United States as of the 1890 census, down from the 3% cap set by the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, which used the Census of 1910. The law was primarily aimed at further restricting immigration of Southern Europeans and Eastern Europeans. In addition, it severely restricted the immigration of Africans and **outright banned the immigration of Arabs and Asians**.

## JAPAN – 1920’S

- Japanese foreign policy changed – “**Internationalism**” (Shidehara Kijuro – Japanese Ambassador in Washington and later the Japanese Foreign Minister)
  - Japanese economy should develop by peaceful means
  - Japan now tried to establish and keep a good relation towards USA (their main trading partner)
  - Japan continued to seek economic advancements in China
- **WASHINGTON CONFERENCE 1921**
  - **Four-Power Treaty** (USA, Great Britain, France and Japan). *Agreed to confer with each other in case there would be a crisis in the Pacific...*
  - **Five-Power Naval Treaty** (USA, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan). *Limitation of the Navies (Ratio 5:5:3:1.75 for USA-Great Britain-Japan-France-Italy).*
  - **Nine-Power Treaty** (USA, Great Britain, France, Italy, China, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands and Japan). Respect China’s integrity and independence + conduct an “**Open Door Policy**” in China. The Open Door Policy is a term in foreign affairs initially used to refer to the United States policy established in the late 19th century and the early 20th century, as enunciated in Secretary of State John Hay’s Open Door Note, dated September 6, 1899 and dispatched to the major European powers. The policy proposed to keep China open to trade with all countries on an equal basis, keeping any one power from total control of the country, and calling upon all powers, within their spheres of influence, to refrain from interfering with any treaty port or any vested interest, to permit Chinese authorities to collect tariffs on an equal basis, and to show no favors to their own nationals in the matter of harbor dues or railroad charges.
- **Domestic development:**
  - More liberal and democratic Japan (Taisho democracy – later period in the Emperor Taisho’s reign)
  - Prime Minister appointed from one of the two dominant parties that controlled the Japanese Diet
  - Electorate extended – In 1925 all adult males in Japan were given the vote
  - Mass media influential
  - Social and economic reforms
  - Military contained (the Japanese Navy was very frustrated with the agreements at the Washington Conference 1921)
  - Japan – one of the main countries (permanent member of the Council) in the League of Nations

## PROBLEMS IN THE 1920’S

1. **Fragile democracy** – several scandals (financial and election law violations), links between the political parties and big business and landlords and fear of left-wing radicalism made the Japanese people suspicious of the political system. The extension of the Japanese franchise and the “*Peace Preservation Law*” limited the Japanese people’s right to engage in open discussions – a kind of censorship.
2. **Opposition to the foreign policy “Internationalism” + growing military influence over the foreign policy** – Many conservatives wanted to see a more aggressive foreign policy towards China and they were very critical towards the Washington Conference and its Treaty system (“an Anglo-Saxon iron-ring preventing Japan from expanding abroad”). This opposition deepened with the US Immigration Act of 1924. In 1926 Emperor Taisho died and Hirohito became the new Emperor. He was more open towards the opinions of the militaries and conservatives...

3. **Growing Economic Crisis** – After the Japanese boom in the economy the European economies kicked back around 1921 which affected the Japanese economy in a negative way. In 1929 following the Wall Street Crash Japan faced serious economic problems. The Japanese government tried to fight the growing criticism with some repressive actions and laws.

## CHINA – INSTABILITY

**CHINA FORCED TO OPEN:** Great Britain started to put pressure on China (Qing dynasty or Manchu dynasty) to open up for more trade at the beginning of the 19th century. They especially tried to establish an Opium Market in China – against the Chinese ban of Opium. In 1839 these different opinions led to an armed conflict – the **First Opium War**. The defeat by the British Empire (1840) led to the **Treaty of Nanking** (1842), under which Hong Kong was ceded to Britain and importation of opium (produced by British Empire territories) was allowed. Subsequent military defeats and unequal treaties (economic, military and legal privileges) with other western powers continued...

**MORE WARS:** China faced several more wars against foreign nations in the 1800's: **The Second Opium War** (1856-1860); the **Sino-French War** (1883-1885); the **Sino-Japanese War** 1894-1895. These wars had one thing in common – China lost them all. This weakened China and made the Empire lose control over areas like Indo-China and Korea.

**FAMINE, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND CIVIL WAR:** Economic problems, famines and plagues led to several revolts. The most serious one was the **Taiping Rebellion** (1850-1864). It's described as the bloodiest civil war of all time with between 20-30 million people dead. Between 1899-1901 the **Boxer Rebellion** was a massive protest the foreign nations and the Christian mission in China.

**WEAK CHINESE EMPIRE:** The problems seriously weakened China. As the book describes it – the Chinese Empire was still an independent power, but in reality, it was at the mercy of other powers and their treaties which were backed up by “gunboat diplomacy”.

**REVOLUTION 1911 AND GUOMINDANG (GMD):** A revolution in 1911 toppled the Qing (Manchu) dynasty. Chinese military leaders, “*warlords* (duan/tuan),” stepped into the political vacuum created by the fall of the Qing dynasty. The warlords (and their armies) controlled different regions of the country and they competed for domination of the nominal central government in Beijing. In 1912 the Chinese Nationalist Party (Guomindang) was founded. They took up the struggle against the independent warlords.

**WWI AND THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY (CCP):** In 1917 China joined WWI. At the Paris Peace Conference China did not receive any advantages – rather the opposite. The countries of the Peace Conference did not vote against the 13 demands (21 from the beginning) that Japan had put on China and China did not get relieved from the Boxer Rebellion reparations. Therefore, China refused to sign the Peace Treaty. When the news about the Paris Peace Treaties got to China on the 4th May 1919, students started huge demonstrations in the streets. This spread to the workers who started boycotting their jobs and soon the country was on its knees. One group inspired by the protests (as well as the Russian revolution) were the Marxists. In Shanghai at July 1st 1921 they formed CCP, the Chinese Communist Party. One of the members was a young assistant librarian at the Beijing University named Mao Zedong.

**TENSION BETWEEN GMD AND CCP – CIVIL WAR:** The leader of the GMD Sun Yixian realized the necessity of reorganizing the party. When the Western Powers rejected his plea for support he turned to the USSR that agreed to help him. The Soviet Union now supported both the GMD and the CCP. They hoped for consolidation but were prepared for either side to emerge as the more powerful one. This is where the struggle between the Nationalists and Communists begins. After the death of its main leader Sun Yixian 1925 the party was taken over by his brother-in-law General Jiang Jieshi. It became more conservative and hostile towards the CCP. At the end of the successful Northern Campaign 1927 two massacres of communists (in Shanghai and Canton) ended the cooperation between GMD and CCP. China now faced a Civil War! China now had three capitals for a period of time; in Beijing was the internationally recognized Warlord regime, in Nanjing was the rightist Guomindang regime and in the Hunan district was the leftist Guomindang and the CCP. Jiang Jieshi's control of China was very weak. He had never managed to seize Manchuria, a region with a warlord backed by an army and backed by the interest of a foreign nation in this region – Japan

# RELATION JAPANESE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT – JAPANESE MILITARY BEFORE THE SECOND SINO-JAPANESE WAR

**1928**

Prime Minister Tanaka – dispute with the Kwantung Army about what to do with the warlord Zhang when he invaded part of North China from Manchuria

CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT	KWANTUNG ARMY
PM Tanaka and the Civilian Government – disarm Zhang and force him to return to Manchuria	Kwantung Army – kill him and take over Manchuria
June 4 <sup>th</sup> 1928 – Zhang was assassinated! The Japanese Emperor told the Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka to enforce discipline in the Kwantung Army and punish the officers responsible for the assassination.	
PM Tanaka and the Civilian Government demanded that the officers should be punished	The Kwantung Generals refused.
Tanaka was therefore forced to resign. The Kwantung Army could obviously get away with ignoring the Japanese government which undermined democracy in Japan.	

**1930**

New Japanese Government (under Prime Minister Hamaguchi Yuko). Program – a manifesto:

- Good relations with China
- End corruption.
- Disarmament

These ideas did not become a reality since the world economic crisis now hit Japan – the Depression.

- Prime Minister Hamaguchi and the Civilian Government tried to cut the civilian and military budgets and limit the Navy.
- In November 1930 Hamaguchi was shot by a right-wing radical.

His injuries forced him to resign (and he died a few months later).

**1931 – Manchuria**

In Manchuria the warlord Zhang Xueliang had succeeded his assassinated father. He allied himself with China (the nationalists under Jiang Jieshi).

CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT	KWANTUNG ARMY
The Japanese government now under Prime Minister Wakatsuki would like to gain further control over Manchuria peacefully	The Kwantung Army wanted to take over Manchuria by force. On the evening of 18 September 1931, a section of the South Manchurian Railroad outside Mukden was destroyed (by an explosion). Within hours the Kwantung Army went into action and forced the Chinese and Manchurian troops back.
The reaction of China (nationalist China under Jiang Jieshi) was “ <i>non-resistance</i> ” which made the conquering of Manchuria easier for the Kwantung Army.	
The Japanese government under Prime Minister Wakatsuki tried to gain control by a “ <i>policy of non-expansion</i> ” and they declared their “ <i>peaceful intent</i> ” in the League of Nations	The Kwantung Army completely ignored the orders from the Tokyo government.
This duality – the Japanese government attempt to solve the crisis peacefully and the aggressiveness of the Kwantung Army weakened Japan, both domestically and internationally.	

**Historian Kenneth Pyle sees the Manchurian crisis as a turning point for Japan.** He brings up that Japan abandoned international cooperation (Washington 1921 – The three different treaties). Other results were:

- The Japanese military showed that they were in control and they gained more prestige and power. In 1932 they created the new state of Manchukuo (under Emperor Pu Yi – officially independent but just a puppet for the leaders of the Japanese Army)
- The Japanese government and military criticized the Lytton Commissions Report on Manchuria and the suggested resolution. They compared it with the Triple Intervention 1895 and left the League of Nations
- Japan experienced deteriorated relations with USA and Great Britain
- Japan saw the USSR as a growing threat (both a territorial and ideological threat plus the fact that the USSR had good relation to China – both the nationalists and the Communists)
- Japan showed growing sympathy for the new German government under Adolf Hitler
- China accepted the Japanese control over Manchuria (+ parts of inner Mongolia) at the Treaty of Tanguu in May 1933. Jiang Jieshi counted on future support from the Western powers against Japan and he wanted to concentrate his military forces against the Chinese Communists. That's why he signed the treaty.
- Weakened government was another result of the Manchurian occupation. They were undermined by the popular support of the Kwantung Army's actions. The criticism from other nations and the resolution from the League of Nations further strengthened the Japanese nationalism and their belief in militarism. The coming years they would lose the political power completely to the more aggressive part of the military.

### 1932 – the descent into “the Dark Valley”

There had been a clear split between the Civilian Government and the Kwantung Army. After 1932 we can also see a split within the military between **Koda-ha – Imperial Way faction** (radical imperialism) and **Tosei-ha – Control faction** (moderate imperialism):

SPLIT WITHIN THE MILITARY FORCES	
RADICAL <b>Koda-ha (Imperial Way faction)</b>	MODERATE <b>Tosei-ha (Control faction)</b>
Military dictatorship with an Emperor	Legal means to get military influence in the government
USSR = enemy	USSR = good relations
Spiritual training of the army	Modernization of the army
Expansion into Russia and China	Expansion in China
NOTE: Both groups were imperialistic – they wanted to continue the expansion of Japan!	

Three major assassination plots destabilized the government in Japan between 1932-1936:

1. May 1932 – Army and Navy officers attacked banks, party officers, police headquarters in Tokyo and killed the Prime Minister Inukai (May 15<sup>th</sup> Incident).
2. Interim Governments run by militaries. Admiral Saito (1932-34) seemed to favor the more radical faction (Kodo-ha) but he took a firm stand against them after an assassination plot against him was discovered.
3. Admiral Okada took over in July 1934. Kodo-ha propaganda asked for more power of the militaries (control over the economy, etc...). A Kodo-ha officer assassinated the leader of the Tosei-ha, General Nagata. When the assassin was trialed and executed 1936 a group of young Kodo-ha officers tried to revolt. They murdered several officials and occupied some main building in Tokyo. 15 of the key conspirators were trialed and executed...

The army and the Tosei-ha faction took a firmer grip over the army and control over the country.

During the next PM, Hirota Koki (1936-37) we saw growing militarism and several concessions to the army:

- *The Ministers for the army and navy had to be serving officers*
- *A seven-point program basically handed over the control of the government to the military*
- *Expansion of arms production*
- *More support to the army in Manchuria*
- *Hirota signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Hitler in November 1936*

He also agreed to the plan to pursue a strong foreign policy! Just some months after his resignation the Marco Polo Bridge incident took place (July 7<sup>th</sup> 1937). This led to a full-scale war with China!

# Japan and the Great Depression

## Japan in the 1920's

Unlike Britain, Japan's economy was doing quite well after WWI. Japan took advantage of Britain's economic slump in the 20's by taking over the markets that had been British-dominated in the pre-war years.

Political parties also became powerful at this time. Previously, the emperor's advisors appointed the Prime Minister, but this changed after the war. During the 20's, the Japanese parliament, called the Diet, was given the privilege of choosing Japan's Prime Minister. This change made the government be more conscious of what the Diet, and voters, wanted. More political changes in the 20's included giving all men over the age of 25 the right to vote, the implementation of a national health insurance plan, and the removal of certain labor union restraints.

## Japan and the Great Depression

Japan's prosperous economy and new government structure did not continue into the next decade. Japan, an island nation with few natural resources, relied on foreign trade. When the Great Depression hit the world in the early 1930's, countries no longer imported Japanese luxuries such as silk. The value of Japanese exports dropped by 50% between 1929 and 1931. Many people blamed the government for Japan's economic crisis. After Japan agreed to keep its navy very small at the London Naval Conference in 1930, the military and nationalists became fed up with the government.

Since Japan lacked natural resources and building space, the military invaded the area of Manchuria in northeastern China in September 1931. After the Prime Minister resigned and army officials assassinated the next, the military organized a Japanese military dictatorship. The military takeover was not a violent one, and was not led by a specific leader. The constitution and Diet remained in place, but throughout the 1930's Japan became much like a totalitarian state, but with a group of leaders instead of a single dictator. Critics of the governments were arrested, and students in school were taught to unconditionally obey the emperor and the government.

The League of Nations did not take action against Japan's invasion of China. In 1933, Japan withdrew from the League.

# Japan

The Great Depression did not strongly affect Japan. The Japanese economy shrank by 8% during 1929–31. Japan's Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo was the first to implement what have come to be identified as Keynesian economic policies: first, by large fiscal stimulus involving deficit spending; and second, by devaluing the currency. Takahashi used the Bank of Japan to sterilize the deficit spending and minimize resulting inflationary pressures. Econometric studies have identified the fiscal stimulus as especially effective.

The devaluation of the currency had an immediate effect. Japanese textiles began to displace British textiles in export markets. The deficit spending proved to be most profound. The deficit spending went into the purchase of munitions for the armed forces. By 1933, Japan was already out of the depression. By 1934, Takahashi realized that the economy was in danger of overheating, and to avoid inflation, moved to reduce the deficit spending that went towards armaments and munitions.

This resulted in a strong and swift negative reaction from nationalists, especially those in the army, culminating in his assassination in the course of the February 26 Incident. This had a chilling effect on all civilian bureaucrats in the Japanese government. From 1934, the military's dominance of the government continued to grow. Instead of reducing deficit spending, the government introduced price controls and rationing schemes that reduced, but did not eliminate inflation, which would remain a problem until the end of World War II.

The deficit spending had a transformative effect on Japan. Japan's industrial production doubled during the 1930s. Further, in 1929 the list of the largest firms in Japan was dominated by light industries, especially textile companies (many of Japan's automakers, like Toyota, have their roots in the textile industry). By 1940 light industry had been displaced by heavy industry as the largest firms inside the Japanese economy.

(Source: Wikipedia)

# JAPAN 1930'S

## Deadlock

Until the late 1920s Japanese leaders generally supported the ideal, if not the practice, of economic liberalism. Their attempts to integrate the Japanese economy into a liberal world order, however, became frustrated in the early 1930s when the depressed western economies placed barriers on Japanese trade to protect their own colonial markets.

Many Japanese believed that the structure of international peace embodied in the League of Nations favoured the western nations that controlled the world's resources. Moreover, the west had acted hypocritically by blocking Japanese emigration through anti-Asian immigration laws in the 1920s.

As a result, the idea began to emerge in Japan of an East Asian federation or cooperative body, based on traditional pan-Asian ideals of universal brotherhood (*hakko ichiu* - eight corners of the world under one roof) and an 'Asia for Asians' liberationist rhetoric.

The Japanese aggression in Manchuria in 1931 was in this context, and was justified on the basis of the Manchurian-Mongolian *seimeisen* or 'lifeline' argument - the idea that Japan's economy was deadlocked. Three factors creating this deadlock loomed large - the shortage of raw materials in Japan, the rapidly expanding Japanese population, and the division of the world into economic blocs.

## Political crises

Japan's increasing isolation abroad was exacerbated by political crisis at home. The last party prime minister, Inukai Tsuyoshi, was assassinated in May 1932 by right-wing extremists. Political parties survived but were out of power, as 'national unity cabinets' ended the democratic promise of the 1920s.

After an attempted *coup d'etat* on 26 February 1936, 'national unity' was skewed towards greater military power within the state. Then crucially, in May of that year, a rule that only serving officers could become military ministers was reinstated. This gave the military a veto over the cabinet, and the power to topple governments.

After the aristocrat Fumimaro Konoe became prime minister for a second time, in 1940, his brain-child, the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, failed to deliver a popular civilian government capable of checking the military. And when General Hideki Tojo came to power in October 1941 he presided over what was effectively a military-bureaucratic regime.

Although, after 1932, there had been a massive upsurge in fundamentalist nationalism, most of Japan's right-wing groups were not as radical as the European fascist movements to which they are often compared. Many embraced moderate politico-economic reform, as well as restorationist monarchical principles that had no parallel in fascist ideologies.

None of these groups ever seized power. However, the climate of assassination, intimidation and propaganda undoubtedly contributed to the breakdown of party government and the disappearance of international liberalism from public discourse. The mix of international events and domestic politics was to prove a lethal cocktail.

# **JAPAN 1930'S**

## **Deterrent diplomacy: Germany**

The conclusion of the Nazi-Soviet pact in August 1939 was a great shock to pro-German groups in the Japanese government, who regarded the Russians as dangerous. And after German forces overran France and the rest of western Europe in the spring and summer of 1940, the Japanese began to fear that Germany would also seek political control of French Indochina and the Netherlands East Indies.

These territories were part of Japan's vital supply route for men and materials to and from the Chinese mainland, and the Japanese were worried that German influence was thus affecting their interests in south east Asia. Neither were they sanguine about Hitler's long-term intentions.

Foreign Minister Matsuoka, therefore, advocated strengthening political ties with the Axis, and a 'Tripartite Pact' was concluded in September 1940.

At the same time, Japan was faced with an 'ABCD encirclement' of America, Britain, China and the Dutch, all of which threatened Japanese markets and interests in Asia. The Japanese thus felt obliged to strengthen their own position further south, and embarked on a southward advance into French Indochina. This gained in intensity on 22 September 1940, after the German-influenced Vichy government in France gave its agreement to the policy.

The Japanese also began negotiations with the Netherlands East Indies to increase the quota of oil exports to Japan in case oil exports from the US ceased.

## **Awakening the sleeping giant**

The history of Japanese expansionism highlights its basically ad hoc and opportunistic nature, as well as Japan's desire to create an autonomous region under Japanese leadership.

Japan's annexation of territory throughout SE Asia in 1941-2 was the immediate cause of war in the Pacific during World War Two. However, it was Japan's insistence on retaining its Chinese territory - seen as crucial to its existence by moderates as well as by hardliners - and US insistence that Japan relinquish this territory, that created the real tensions between the two. The tripartite pact (between Japan, Germany and Italy) of September 1940 was also a major stumbling block to good relations between the US and Japan.

On the US side, there was prejudice and misconception, but the Japanese government was also misled by military factions, who had learned the wrong lessons from their two short imperial wars with China and Russia. They believed that Allied weakness in south east Asia and American isolationist sentiment would mean another short war.

This, however, was not to be. What the Japanese had done was to awaken the fury of America, and to set in train a war that would end in their total defeat.

# JAPANESE EXPANSION

## **Key questions**

- Assess the impact of nationalism and militarism on Japan's foreign policy in the 1930s
- Examine the impact of economic factors on Japan's foreign policy
- Discuss the impact of political instability within China on Japan's actions in Manchuria and mainland China

**Japan 1931-1941:** Japan's foreign policy could be defined by the growth of *Nationalism* and *Militarism*! This would lead to:

- *Intervention in Manchuria and China*
- *Deterioration of the relationship with the Western Powers*
- *The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor*

Three different views of the reasons for war between Japan and the US:

1. *Japan planned a war from the early 1930's. The aim was to dominate Asia.*
2. *Japan planned to expand its Empire – but war was not inevitable.*
3. *Japan had legitimate aims for the region but USA (especially) and Great Britain were determined to contain Japan.*

**Japan 1930:** In the 1930's Japan was fully modernized. It tried to achieve equality with the Western Powers. Nationalism and Militarism were both very popular. Japan had defeated both China and Russia in two successful wars. This enforced the popular belief that Japan was destined as a leader of this region.

**CHINA:** In 1927 the first *Chinese Civil War* broke out (after the Shanghai and Canton massacres where the nationalists – the Guomindang killed hundreds of Chinese Communists). The communists escaped to Jiangxi in the Hunan province. Jiang Jieshi in control of the cities and head of the government in Nanjing now got ready to conquer the rest of China. The need to overcome the Communists seriously weakened Jiang Jieshi's control of China. His control over several areas therefore also became weaker. He never managed to seize Manchuria, a region with a warlord backed by an army and a strong foreign interest in this region (Japan). Another reason for the failure to conquer Manchuria was the Japanese aid to the Manchurian warlord (Zhang Zuolin). This weakening of China was one reason for the Japanese advance in Manchuria 1931. The other two main reasons were the economic crisis (the Depression) and the independent actions of the Japanese military forces on the Asian mainland (the Kwantung Army).

**CRISIS 1928-1930:** The Manchurian warlord had grown powerful and moved into northern China in 1928. This worried Japan. The Japanese government planned to use the Kwantung Army to disarm Zhang and force him to return to Manchuria. The leaders of the Kwantung Army wanted to go further. June 4<sup>th</sup> 1928 they assassinated Zhang (the Manchurian warlord) and planned to take over Manchuria without the consent of the Japanese government. The Japanese Emperor told the Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka to enforce discipline in the Kwantung Army and punish the officers responsible for the assassination. When Tanaka demanded that the officers should be punished the Kwantung Generals refused. Tanaka was therefore forced to resign. The Kwantung Army could obviously get away with ignoring the Japanese government which undermined democracy in Japan.

The new Japanese Government (under Prime Minister Hamaguchi Yuko) came into power with a manifesto of good relations with China, disarmament and end corruption. These ideas did not become a reality since the world economic crisis now hit Japan – the Depression. Hamaguchi tried by cutting the civilian and military budgets and limit the Navy. In November 1930 Hamaguchi was shot by a right-wing radical. His injuries forced him to resign (and he died a few months later).

**ECONOMIC CRISIS 1930:** Japan depended on world trade and the Western economy. When the Wall Street Crash came 1929 Japan was therefore hit hard which also had other effects:

- *The Japanese export fell drastically as countries put up tariffs to protect their own industries*
- *Unemployment went up (especially among farmers that were involved in the silk industry)*

- *USA and Western democracies were criticized and doubted*
- *The Japanese government was also criticized and doubted*
- *Manchuria could provide Japan with raw material, grain, space...*

**MANCHURIA:** Japan had gained control over the Liaodong Peninsula (with Port Arthur), some mineral rights and the railroad in Manchuria after the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05. With a fast-growing population (about one million people per year), lack of raw material and several harvest failures Japan started to plan for a gradual take-over. Manchuria could offer:

- *Security – a buffer towards the USSR*
- *Raw materials – coal, iron, timber, grain...*
- *Markets for Japan's manufactured goods*
- *Living space for Japan's population*

In Manchuria Zhang Xueliang had succeeded his assassinated father. He allied himself with China (the nationalists under Jiang Jieshi). The Japanese government would like to gain further control peacefully while the Japanese military – Kwantung Army had other plans. On the evening of 18 September 1931, a section of the South Manchurian Railroad outside Mukden was destroyed (by an explosion). Within hours the Kwantung Army went into action and forced the Chinese and Manchurian troops back. The reaction of China (nationalist China under Jiang Jieshi) was “*non-resistance*” which made the conquering of Manchuria easier for the Kwantung Army. The Japanese government under Prime Minister Wakatsuki tried to gain control by a “*policy of non-expansion*” and they declared their “*peaceful intent*” in the League of Nations. The Kwantung Army completely ignored the orders from the Tokyo government. This duality – the Japanese government attempt to solve the crisis peacefully and the aggressiveness of the Kwantung Army weakened Japan, both domestically and internationally.

**RESULTS OF THE MANCHURIAN CRISIS:** Historian Kenneth Pyle sees the Manchurian crisis as a **turning point** for Japan. He brings up that Japan abandoned international cooperation (Washington 1921 – Three different treaties). Other results were:

- *The Japanese military showed that they were in control and they gained more prestige and power. In 1932 they created the new state of Manchukuo (under Emperor Pu Yi – officially independent but just a puppet for the leaders of the Japanese Army)*
- *The Japanese government and military criticized the Lytton Commissions Report on Manchuria and the suggested resolution. They compared it with the Triple Intervention 1895 and left the League of Nations*
- *Japan experienced deteriorated relations with USA and Great Britain*
- *Japan saw the USSR as a growing threat (both a territorial and ideological threat plus the fact that the USSR had good relation to China – both the nationalists and the Communists)*
- *Japan showed growing sympathy for the new German government under Adolf Hitler*

China accepted the Japanese control over Manchuria (+ parts of inner Mongolia) at the ***Treaty of Tanguu*** in May 1933. Jiang Jieshi counted on future support from the Western powers against Japan and he wanted to concentrate his military forces against the Chinese Communists. That's why he signed the treaty.

Japan gained economically from the occupation of Manchuria. Japan at the same time lost economically from the occupation of Manchuria. They needed to pay for a big occupation army and they needed to send even more troops to protect themselves from feared attacks from China or/and the USSR. At sea the USA started to become a threat as well...

- *Increased taxation in Japan was therefore a result of the Manchurian occupation*
- *Weakened government was another result of the Manchurian occupation. They were undermined by the popular support of the Kwantung Army's actions. The criticism from other nations and the resolution from the League of Nations further strengthened the Japanese nationalism and their belief in militarism. The coming years they would lose the political power completely to the more aggressive part of the military.*

# The 1930s and War Economy

## Showa Depression 1930-1932

Japan experienced the deepest economic downturn in modern history during 1930-32.

There were two causes of this depression.

(1) Internally, the Minsei Party government (July 1929-April 1931, with prime minister Osachi Hamaguchi, finance minister Junnosuke Inoue, and foreign minister Kijuro Shidehara) deliberately adopted a deflationary policy in order to eliminate weak banks and firms and to prepare the nation for the return to the prewar gold parity (fixed exchange rate with real appreciation). The policy of deflation and return to gold was strongly advocated and implemented by finance minister Inoue.

(2) Externally, Black Thursday (Wall Street crash) of October 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression in the world economy had a severe negative impact on the Japanese economy.

Its main consequences on the Japanese economy and society were as follows:

--As before, macroeconomic downturn was felt primarily in falling prices and not so much in output contraction (estimated real growth was positive during this period). As prices fell, manufacturers produced even more to maintain earning and keep factories running. But clearly, this behavior would collectively accelerate the oversupply and the deflation. From 1929 to 1931, WPI fell about 30%, agricultural prices fell 40%, and textile prices fell nearly 50%.

--Around 1931, rural impoverishment became severe. Moreover in 1934, rural communities were hit by famine. Especially in Tohoku (northeastern) Region of Japan, rural poverty generated many undernourished children and some farmers were forced to sell their daughters for prostitution. This rural disaster caused much anger and popular criticism against the government and big businesses.

--Cartelization and rationalization were promoted under government guidance. Free market seemed to worsen the depression, so agreements on output restriction were adopted. This practice spread to virtually all material industries including cotton yarn, rayon, carbide, paper, cement, sugar, steel, beer, coal and so on.

--Military and right-wing movements emerged. In economic despair, much blame was placed on party governments and their policies. Even ordinary people, who normally hated militarism, were disappointed with the performance of party governments and became more sympathetic to the military and nationalists.



**The famous photo of hungry children eating white radish [however, they do not appear on the verge of starvation to me. I think there were worse situations than this in the world].**

In the 1930s, political and intellectual thinking gradually shifted from economic liberalism toward more economic control under state management. There were many reasons for this, including: (i) influence of Marxism; (ii) apparent success of USSR; (iii) Showa Depression; (iv) the idea that deflation was worsened by excess competition; and (v) disappointment with politicians and political parties. Many considered that the days of the US-style free market economy were over and from now on, state control and industrial monopoly would strengthen the competitiveness of the national economy.

Another aim of the military and right-wing groups was active military expansion. They criticized "Shidehara Diplomacy" which to them seemed too soft on China. Their primary goal was to "defend Japanese interests in Manchuria and Mongolia [more precisely, eastern part of "Inner" Mongolia]).

### Seiyukai versus Minsei Party

*Seiyukai* (full name: Rikken Seiyukai) was established in 1900 by the union of a leading politician (Hirobumi Ito) and a former opposition party who decided to cooperate with the government. Its main policies were (i) fiscal activism with an emphasis on public investment in rural and industrial infrastructure; (ii) acceptance of military buildup and expansion; and (iii) pleasing a narrow voter base (rural landlords and urban rich). It was a party supportive of a big government allocating public money and subsidies. Seiyukai literally means "political friend society."

*Minsei Party* (full name: Rikken Minsei To) was originally called Kenseikai (1916-), later merged with another party to become Minsei Party in 1927. Its main policies were (i) economic austerity and industrial streamlining (free economy and small government); (ii) return to prewar gold parity; and (iii) international cooperation and peaceful diplomacy especially with the US. Its support base consisted of intellectuals and urban population. Minsei means "people's politics."

	Minsei Party	Seiyukai
Main supporters	Intellectuals, urban workers	Big businesses, rural landlords
Economic policy	Small government, free market principle, eliminate inefficient units through macroeconomic austerity	Big government, fiscal activism, public investment for industry and rural development
Foreign policy	Cooperate with US, oppose military invasion of China (protect Japanese interests through diplomacy)	Supporting military expansion, cooperate with military, if necessary, to undermine Minsei Party
Finance minister & economic policy in the 1930s	<Junnosuke Inoue, until Dec. 1931> Intentionally generate deflation Return to prewar gold parity	<Korekiyo Takahashi, Dec. 1931-Feb. 1936> End gold parity and depreciate yen Fiscal expansion (later, tight budget) Easy money

Japanese voters did not always vote for the same party but often switched their support from one party to another depending on the issue and situation. Smaller "proletariat parties" also emerged with farmers and workers as the support base.

As noted earlier, Junnosuke Inoue of Minsei Party (finance minister 1929-31) was deeply committed to the policy of deflation and returning to gold. This policy caused severe depression but he never relented or regretted. People became greatly frustrated with his policy. Finally, the government (second Wakatsuki Cabinet) was removed and succeeded by a Seiyukai government (Inukai Cabinet) in December 13, 1931.

As soon as the new Seiyukai government was sworn in, finance minister Korekiyo Takahashi completely reversed Inoue's policies:

--On the very first day of the new government, Takahashi ended the gold standard and the fixed exchange rate, and floated the yen. It immediately depreciated.

--Fiscal expansion financed by government bond issues (called "Spending Policy"). Monetization of fiscal deficit was tried for the first time in Japanese history (BOJ buys up newly-issued government bonds).

--Monetary expansion and low interest rates.

Thanks to this policy turnaround, the Japanese economy began to recover in 1932 and expanded relatively strongly until 1936 (the last year of non-wartime economy). Among major countries, Japan was the first to overcome the global depression of the 1930s. Fiscal and monetary expansion seemed appropriate. But the yen's large depreciation might be considered as the "beggar-thy-neighbor" policy (i.e., a cheaper yen was beneficial to Japanese industries but it imposed costs on other countries through real appreciation of their currencies).

For these achievements, Korekiyo Takahashi is called "Japanese Keynes." He adopted Keynesian policies even before John Maynard Keynes wrote the famous *General Theory* in 1936 ! Even today, Takahashi's policy is admired while Inoue's policy is generally criticized as stubborn and misguided. But this view is sometimes challenged and continues to be debated. As recently as in 2001, Prof. Junji Banno (Chiba University) wrote that Inoue's deflation policy was pre-requisite for economic expansion of the mid 1930s, because without it efficiency improvement could not have been achieved. His article indirectly criticizes the current Koizumi government's policy of supporting weak firms and banks without painful restructuring.



**Junnosuke Inoue,**  
1869-1932 (Minsei  
Party)



**Osachi Hamaguchi,**  
1870-1931 (Minsei  
Party)



**Tsuyoshi Inukai, 1855-  
1932 (Seiyukai)**



**Korekiyo Takahashi**  
(Japanese Keynes?),  
1854-1936 (Seiyukai)

Around 1934 when the Japanese economy was firmly on a path to recovery, Takahashi shifted to a tighter budget (which seemed an appropriate decision). But the army and navy demanded more military spending despite fiscal pressure. Takahashi resisted and was assassinated by a military group in the February 26 Incident in 1936.

Both Inoue and Takahashi previously served as a Bank of Japan governor before becoming a finance minister, but their personalities differed significantly. Inoue was a slim, intellectual graduate from Tokyo University. Takahashi was fat and extremely popular among people (his nickname was "Daruma," a round doll). He did not have much education and had a rough life when he was young.

### Political terrorism and invasion of China

From 1931 to 1937, Japanese politics was gradually overtaken by the military. Many incidents occurred, each undermining the basis of party government. Within the army and navy (especially the army), a few ultra-nationalist groups formed with the purposes of rejecting a party-based political system, uniting the nation under the emperor, introducing economic planning, saving the rural poor, and so on. They staged many coups and assassinations. Below is the brief history of this dismal period. Underlined incidents were particularly significant.

1931	March Incident (failed military coup attempt).
	<u>Manchurian Incident (Sept. 18 Incident)</u> --a few officers of <i>Kantogun</i> (Japanese army stationed in China), including Kanji Ishihara and Seishiro Itagaki, started military invasion by exploding a railroad track and blaming it on Chinese. Ishihara's idea was that Japan had to take Manchuria (Northeastern China) in order to prepare for a full war against the US. They started the incident without informing the Tokyo government or army headquarters. Foreign minister Shidehara told Kantogun to refrain from further military action but Ishihara's group ignored the order. The Chinese side adopted non-resistance strategy, and Manchuria was soon occupied by the Japanese troops. This incident clearly showed that the party government could no longer restrain the behavior of the military.
	October Incident (failed military coup attempt).
1932	Blood Society Incident--Junnosuke Inoue (former finance minister) and Takuma Dan (Mitsui Group) were assassinated.
	Establishment of the state of Manchuria (Japanese puppet state).
	<u>May 15 Incident</u> --navy officers assassinated prime minister Tsuyoshi Inukai (Seiyukai).
1933	Japan was criticized by the League of Nations over the occupation of Manchuria. In protest, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations.
The period 1933-35 was relatively "quiet" thanks to economic recovery and fewer domestic and international incidents. But this proved to be a temporary calm before the big storm.	

1936	<p><u>February 26 Incident</u>--nationalistic army officers led their troops to stage a military coup on a snowy morning in Tokyo. They wanted to get rid of the current government and start a new regime. Korekiyo Takahashi (finance minister), Makoto Saito (interior minister) and Jotaro Watanabe (education minister) were assassinated. The coup group occupied central Tokyo for four days. The army headquarters first approved their action but later disowned them, because Emperor Showa angrily told the military to put down the rebellion. The coup thus failed, but after this incident the party government was marginalized and the military controlled Japanese politics.</p>
<p>During all these incidents, Seiyukai behaved opportunistically, often supporting the military in order to politically attack its rival, Minsei Party. It was a risky tactic since the goal of the military was to remove all political parties including Seiyukai ! (By contrast, Minsei Party more consistently opposed the military.) Political parties were seriously discredited in the eyes of the public due to (i) inability to oppose the military, (ii) money politics and corruption, and (iii) Seiyukai's self-destructive move to cooperate with the military.</p>	
1937	<p><u>Japan-China War began</u>--on July 7, Japanese and Chinese troops had a skirmish at Marco Polo Bridge near Beijing (Beiping). The incident was minor but Tokyo (Konoe Cabinet) decided to send more troops to China. Thus began a full-scale war with China (until 1945).</p>

After the Japan-China war erupted, political parties were emasculated and later disbanded, the military completely took over Japanese politics, and the entire nation was mobilized to execute the war.

In my view, Japan crossed the point of no return with the Manchurian invasion in 1931. With this incident, Shidehara Diplomacy ended and the military's influence surged. International isolation became unavoidable. Party governments were too weak to stop this trend. While some factions within Seiyukai and Minsei Party tried a few times to merge the two parties to oppose militarism, their attempt did not materialize. Starting with the Manchurian Incident, the period 1931-1945 is sometimes called the "Fifteen-Year War."



**The head office of the South Manchuria Railway controlled by Japan (left) and its poster (below).**



The poster says "Open up the fertile land of Manchuria: Young Volunteer Army for Cultivating Manchuria and Mongolia"



## War economy, 1937-1945

The military leaders thought (hoped) the war with China would be short. But in reality, it lasted for eight years. Without realistic vision or planning, the war front expanded and fighting escalated. Within China, the nationalists and the communists were fighting each other at first but later joined forces to fight the Japanese.

While there were earlier calls for economic planning before the war, the Japanese economy basically remained market-oriented until 1936. But with the outbreak of the Japan-China War in 1937, the economy was completely transformed for war execution. One by one, new measures were introduced to control and mobilize people, enterprises and resources. Most Japanese firms remained privately-owned but were heavily regulated to contribute to the war effort.

Key measures for establishing the war economy included the following:

1937--The Planning Board (*kikakuin*) was created. This board, directly under the prime minister, was responsible for comprehensive policy design for wartime national resource mobilization. The brightest bureaucrats from various ministries were gathered for this purpose. It basically played the same role as the state planning committee in socialist countries.

1938--The Planning Board issued the Resource Mobilization Plan (first economic plan). Separately, the National Mobilization Law was approved.

1940--Konoe Cabinet's *New Regime Movement*. This movement was started in response to Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia and German victories in Europe. A strong one-party system was advocated and adopted. Existing political parties were dismantled.

1943--The Military Needs Company Act was adopted. Designated companies were placed under official control (top management, production plan, penalty for non-compliance, etc) but at the same time they were provided with necessary inputs on a priority basis.

In addition, rationing, forced enterprise mergers, and forced factory labor were adopted in increasing intensity.

For economic planners, the primary objective was to maximize military production under limited domestic resources and availability of imports. Key military products were ships and

warplanes. Toward the end of the war, airplane production became the only priority. In order to boost heavy industries, consumption was greatly squeezed and light industries were suppressed. The textile industry (previously the leading industry of Japan) was virtually eliminated. The people were forced to live without a new supply of clothes and footwear. Steel products in structures and households were stripped as the metal source for building more airplanes and ships.



**RED (Dec.1941):** Japan's occupied areas immediately after the Pacific War started. **YELLOW (Aug.1942):** Japan's maximum military expansion. After this, Japan began to retreat.

In wartime planning, two variables were crucial: (i) foreign exchange reserves; and (ii) energy and raw materials (and the capability to transport them by sea). Until around 1940, the question was how to maximize military output subject to these two constraints. But after 1940, Japan could no longer trade with other countries and the problem shifted to the physical transportation of natural resources from the Japanese colonies and occupied areas to mainland Japan.

Japan considered that resources from the "Yen Bloc" (Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria and the rest of occupied China) were not enough. In July 1941, in order to secure more resources, Japan began to invade Southeast Asia, starting with French Indochina (Vietnam). This angered the US, which imposed oil embargo and asset freeze on Japan. If oil imports from the US were cut off, Japan's oil reserve would last only two years. At this point, Japan began to prepare a war with the US. Diplomatic efforts to maintain peace were tried but failed. With the Pearl Harbor attack in December 1941, Japan started the Pacific War against the US and its allies.

Japanese leaders did not have any clear idea regarding how to fight a war against the US, let alone how to win it. However, they were encouraged by the brilliant victories of Nazi Germany in Europe. To them, totalitarianism of Japan, Germany and the USSR seemed superior to American capitalism and individualism.

Immediately after the outbreak of the Pacific War, Japan invaded a wide area of Southeast Asia but soon began to retreat under allied counter-attacks. Japanese ships and planes were quickly lost while Americans built more and more of them. From late 1944, US aerial bombing (mainly incendiary bombs) destroyed virtually all cities in Japan (except Kyoto). In 1945, the US troops landed in Okinawa, two atomic bombs were dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the USSR entered a war against Japan. A few days later, Japan surrendered.

Economically, the main reason for Japan's defeat was that its war economy collapsed due to the lack of inputs and energy. Japan lost virtually all ships and could not transport materials from abroad (including colonies).



**Neighborhood groups were organized to put off fire from US bombing. Actually, the bombing was so fierce that this kind of exercise was virtually of no use.**



**As young males were sent to war fronts, women were trained to defend the homeland. Due to the lack of weapons, they were provided with bamboo swords. Women and high school students were also mobilized to work in military factories.**

### **The origin of the Japanese system**

Many of the characteristics of the post-WW2 Japanese economy originated during the war period (1937-1945). They feature long-term relationship and official intervention such as:

- Heavy and chemical industrialization drive
- Administrative guidance (*gyosei shido*)
- Subcontracting system
- Separation of ownership and management
- Lifetime employment system and seniority wage
- Enterprise-based trade unions
- Financial *keiretsu* and mainbank system
- The Bank of Japan's "window guidance" and "convoy system"
- Food control system
- Foreign exchange budget and surrender requirement

All of these policies and systems were deliberately adopted by the government in the late 1930s through the early 1940s in order to effectively execute the war. Before that, the Japanese economy was more *neoclassical*-- characterized by freer entry, short-term contracts and high labor mobility.

These wartime features were largely retained even after WW2 and worked relatively well in the 1950s and 60s when Japan was growing rapidly. However, they are now considered obsolete and to have become barriers to change in the age of IT and globalization. Among

the list above, the last one was abolished long ago but most others still remain in the Japanese economy even today in various degrees.

There is a debate among economists regarding the interpretation of the Japanese system.

The majority of Japanese economists argue that Japan should go back to the free market model, because the relational and interventionist system was originally alien to Japan. These may have played a historical role before, but we do not need them any more (some aspects, like priority on job security, could be partially retained, however). Prof. Masahiro Okuno-Fujiwara and Prof. Tetsuji Okazaki (both at Tokyo University) are leading advocates of this view.

But a minority voice says that Japan needed a system based on long-term relations, with or without war. When an economy graduates from the light industry stage (textile, food processing, etc) and moves to heavy industrialization and machinery production, free markets may not be the best choice. Official support and long-term relationship become indispensable for industries with large initial investments, high technology and intra-firm labor market. As Japan began heavy industrialization in the 1920s and 1930s, the free economic system inherited from Meiji was inappropriate and had to change. The war provided a good excuse for this change. But even without the war, Japan had to adopt a new system anyway. Prof. Yonosuke Hara (Tokyo University) presents such a view. He says that the free economy of Meiji was foreign, and the relational and interventionist system is more normal to Japan, dating back to the Edo period.

According to the latter view, implications for today's developing countries are as follows. Light industries and electronics assembly can be promoted by free trade and FDI, but if the country hopes to absorb technology vigorously and have advanced manufacturing capability, certain industrial promotion measures become necessary; Japan, Taiwan and Korea all adopted this method in the past. By contrast, no ASEAN countries seem to have broken through this "glass ceiling" and internalized the industrial power. If latecomer countries are now banned from taking these measures because of WTO, FTAs, World Bank policy matrix and so on, they may remain at a low level of industrialization (contract manufacturing, simple processing, etc) and not get to a higher level of technology.

---

## <References>

Banno, Junji, *Nihon Seijishi: Meiji, Taisho, Senzen Showa* (History of Japanese Politics: Meiji, Taisho and Prewar Showa), University of the Air Press, revised 1993.

Iwanami Shoten, *Nijukozo, Nihon Keizaishi 6* (The Dual Structure, Japanese Economic History vol. 6), T. Nakamura and K. Odaka, eds, 1989.

Iwanami Shoten, *Keikakuka to Minshuka, Nihon Keizaishi 7* (Planning and Democratization, Japanese Economic History vol. 7), T. Nakamura ed, 1989.

Noguchi, Yukio, *1940 Nen Taisei: Saraba Senji Keizai* (The 1940 Regime: Goodbye to the War Economy), Toyo Keizai Shimposha, 1995.

Okazaki, Tetsuji, and Masahiro Okuno, eds, *Gendai Nihon Keizai System no Genryu* (The Source of the Modern Japanese Economic System), Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1993.

Takafusa Nakamura, *Showa Kyoko to Keizai Seisaku* (Showa Depression and Economic Policy), Kodansha Gakujutsu Bunko, 1994.

Source: [http://www.grips.ac.jp/teacher/oono/hp/lecture\\_J/lec09.htm](http://www.grips.ac.jp/teacher/oono/hp/lecture_J/lec09.htm)

## THE NANKING MASSACRE

The **Nanking Massacre** was an episode of mass murder and mass rape committed by Japanese troops against the residents of Nanjing (then spelled *Nanking*), then the capital of the Republic of China during the Second Sino-Japanese War. The massacre occurred over a period of six weeks starting on December 13, 1937, the day that the Japanese captured Nanjing. During this period, soldiers of the Imperial Japanese Army murdered Chinese civilians and disarmed combatants who numbered an estimated 40,000 to over 300,000, and perpetrated widespread rape and looting.

Since most Japanese military records on the killings were kept secret or destroyed shortly after the surrender of Japan in 1945, historians have not been able to accurately estimate the death toll of the massacre. The International Military Tribunal for the Far East in Tokyo estimated in 1946 that over 200,000 Chinese were killed in the incident. China's official estimate is more than 300,000 dead based on the evaluation of the Nanjing War Crimes Tribunal in 1947. The death toll has been actively contested among scholars since the 1980s.

The event remains a contentious political issue, as aspects of it have been disputed by historical negationists and Japanese nationalists, who assert that the massacre has been either exaggerated or fabricated for propaganda purposes. The controversy surrounding the massacre remains a stumbling block in Sino-Japanese relations and in Japanese relations with other Asia-Pacific nations, such as South Korea and the Philippines.

Although the Japanese government has admitted to the killing of a large number of non-combatants, looting, and other violence committed by the Imperial Japanese Army after the fall of Nanking, and Japanese veterans who served there have confirmed that a massacre took place, a small but vocal minority within both the Japanese government and society have argued that the death toll was military in nature and that no such crimes ever occurred. Denial of the massacre and revisionist accounts of the killings have become a staple of Japanese nationalism. In Japan, public opinion of the massacres varies, but few deny outright that the conflict occurred.

The event is also known as the **Rape of Nanking** or, using current official Pinyin romanization, the **Nanjing Massacre** or **Rape of Nanjing**.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nanking\\_Massacre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nanking_Massacre)

## The Nanjing Incident

**First**, to put it mildly, Nanjing is a controversial topic. Although our understanding of the events of Nanjing do not even begin to approach our understanding of the holocaust, it is certainly possible to demonise anyone who budges from the orthodox position as being a denier on par with a David Irving. The problem is that the orthodox position is completely different in China and Japan, and within Japan itself there are three distinct orthodoxies. Although there is real debate in Japan, no one there now accepts the figure of 300,000 victims as plausible, while in China the figure is set in concrete (in both senses of the word) at the entrance of the Memorial for the Compatriot [Chinese] Victims of the Japanese Massacre in Nanjing. Unless the debate is to continue to run on parallel lines, never to come together to produce a deeper, more complete and transnational understanding of this historical event, this is not a situation to be welcomed. How to overcome it, on the other hand, poses a dilemma. As long as much of the debate is dominated by ideologues, the sensible option for historians may well be to keep their heads low and research other topics. That, however, cannot be a desirable outcome. Historians surely have an obligation to combat the trend to use Nanjing as a weapon in contemporary ideological and international contests.

**Secondly**, too many Japanese researchers in particular are either completely ignorant of, or do not care about, the fact that Nanjing for better or for worse has become a central plank in the construction of the modern self-identity of the Chinese. To discuss Nanjing is to threaten this self-identity. Once aware of this fact, all who participate in the debate need to show some sensitivity to it. I am not arguing that the Chinese orthodoxy needs to be accepted without question because the feelings of so many will be hurt if it is questioned. Indeed, I strongly believe that human beings have to come to terms with the "real" past and accept it, and that it is more dangerous (at least in the long term) to found national identity on a lie than to discover the truth and live with it. However, some effort does need to be made (on both extremes of the debate) to avoid the use of inflammatory language, and to show a much greater awareness of and sensitivity to the moral implications of historical inquiry.

**Thirdly**, as historians, it is our obligation to examine calmly the primary materials and reconstruct the history of Nanjing on the basis of what those materials say. Some clearly want to absolve the Japanese of all blame, while others want to depict the Japanese as a uniquely brutal and ruthless race. Neither position should form the starting point of any discussion of the events in Nanjing - although, of course, either might be the conclusion of any such examination. The publication of as many primary materials as possible is clearly a basic condition for this approach, so we need to encourage the discovery and publication of as much as possible.

**Finally**, a dialogue between historians working on the Nanjing Incident needs to be promoted. Again, I have great hopes for the forum provided by the English language, where researchers from both Japan and China can debate with researchers from third-party countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia. The problem with the Chinese and Japanese language discourses is that they are both so insular and the political environments are so charged. It is in the market of ideas and through constant debate (and perhaps the mediation provided by "neutral", third-party historians), that the truth will be approached.

From a paper by David Askew. Associate Professor at the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Source: <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/Askew.html>