

# Japan After World War I

*AP World History*

*Chapter 21*

*“The Collapse and Recovery of Europe”*

*1914 – 1970s*

# Japan After World War I

- Limited participation in WWI
- Result: Economy grew during and after the war
- 1920s = Japan moving toward more democratic politics and Western values
  - 1925 = universal male suffrage
  - Emergence of two-party system
  - Greater gender equality and more freedoms of expression
  - Expansion of education
  - Development of an urban consumer society
  - Middle-class women entered new professions



*A Japanese Woman in the 1920s*

# Japan After World War I

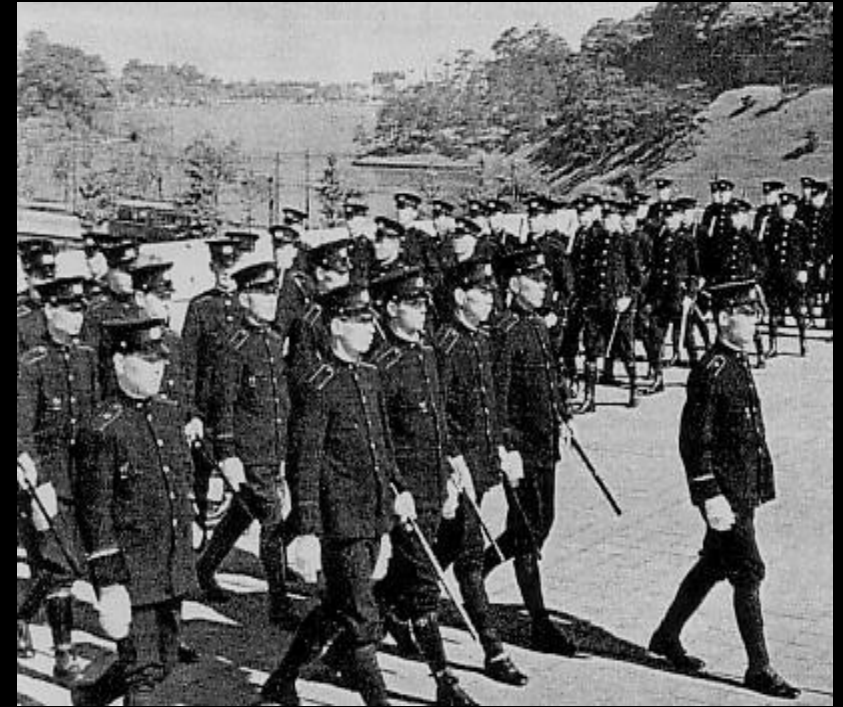


- Tensions/problems resulting from Japan's modernization and industrialization:
- 1918 = “rice riots” = millions protested the rising price of rice
- 1920s = union membership tripled as Japanese workers started to fight more for workers' rights
- Increased disputes between landowners and tenants
- Rising women's movement → wanted the right to vote and the end of legal prostitution



# Japan After World War I

- These tensions and problems = alarming → reminded many of how the Russian Revolution started in 1917
- 1925 = Peace Preservation Law passed = promised long prison sentences, or even the death penalty, to anyone who organized against the existing imperial system of government or against private property



*Special Forces of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police  
Department*

# Japan and the Great Depression



- **Great Depression = what ultimately led to harsher authoritarian rule in Japan**
- **Japan = hit hard by the Great Depression**
  - **Shrinking world demand for silk = millions of silk farmers now impoverished**
  - **Exports fell by 50% between 1929 and 1931**
  - **More than a million urban workers left unemployed**
  - **Food = scarce**
  - **Families forced to sell their daughters to brothels**

# Japan and the Great Depression

- Many began to question whether democracy and capitalism could address Japan's "national emergency"
- Growing movement in Japan = "Radical Nationalism"
  - Extreme nationalism
  - Opposed to parliamentary democracy
  - Commitment to elite leadership focused around an emperor
  - Dedication to foreign expansion
  - Especially appealing to younger army officers



*Japan's Young Women's Patriotic Association*

# Japanese Authoritarianism

- 1930s = right-wing nationalist thinking continued to grow
- Parliament, political parties, and elections continued → but major government positions now held by military or bureaucratic figures, not party leaders
- Military began to have a more dominant role in political life
- Censorship limited free expression
- Only ONE single news agency allowed to distribute national and international news to newspapers and radio stations
- Trade unions banned → replaced with “discussion councils”



# Japanese Authoritarianism

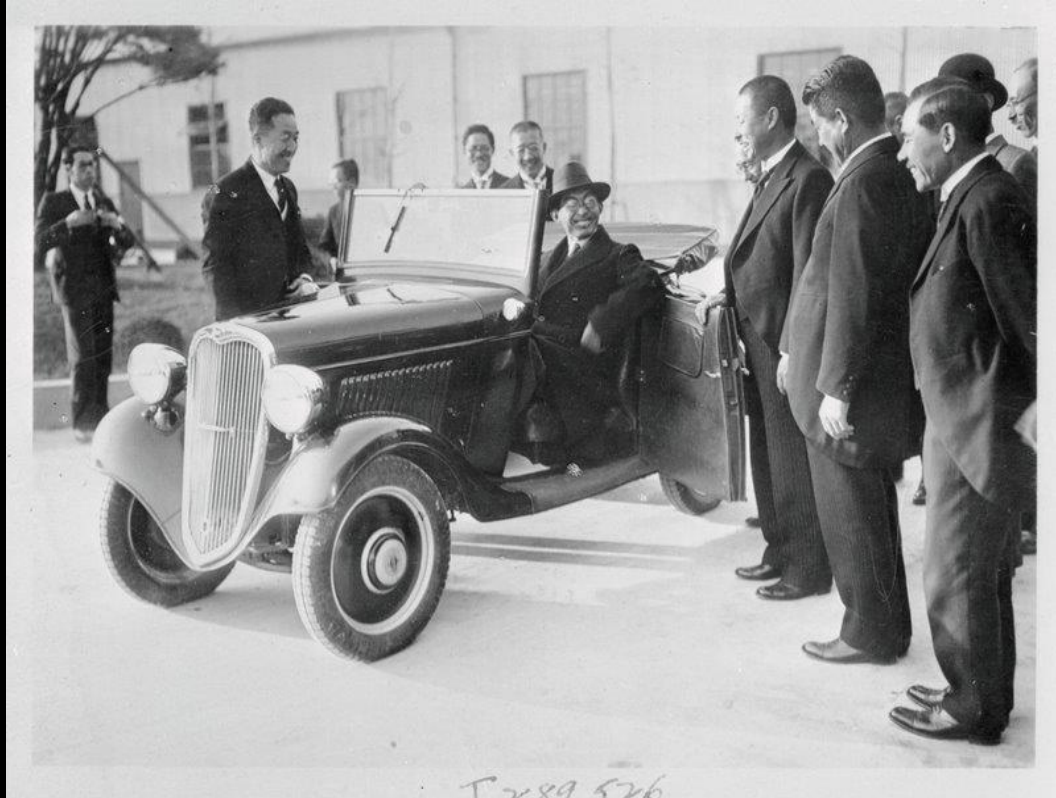
- 1937 = new textbook issued by the Ministry of Education
  - Used in all Japanese schools
  - Stressed the difference between Japan and “the West”
  - Stressed the divinity of the Japanese emperor
- Students required to do more physical training
  - Martial arts replaced baseball in gym classes



*Japanese Students at Rifle Training*



# Japanese Authoritarianism



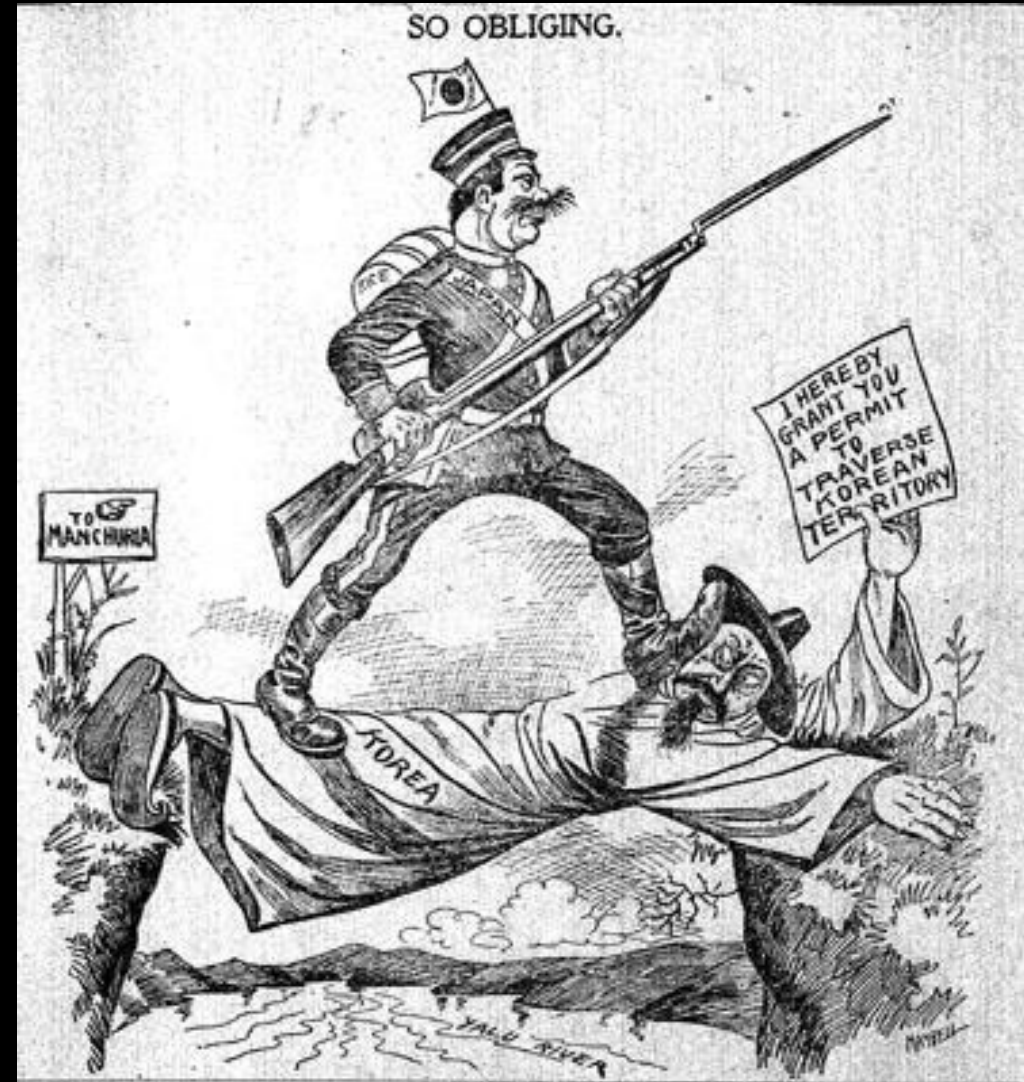
- Authoritarian state in Japan gained a lot of popular support because it was able to pull Japan out of the Great Depression
  - By the end of 1937 = “everyone was working”
  - State-financed credit to businesses
  - Government spending on armaments
  - Public works projects

## Differences between Japanese Authoritarianism and Fascism in Italy and Germany

<u>Japan</u>	<u>Italy and Germany</u>
No right-wing party gained popular support or seized power	Fascist political parties gained support & seized power
No charismatic leader	Mussolini and Hitler
No fascist party	Strong fascist parties
People arrested for political offenses = “resocialized” = renounced their errors and returned to the “Japanese Way”	People arrested for political offenses = institutionalized, deported, or killed
Less repressive than Italy and Germany	

# Japanese Imperialism

- Japan believed it should have been given more land in the Treaty of Versailles
- 1930s = Japanese imperial ambitions began to grow
  - Growing Japanese nationalism
  - Military became more powerful in Japan's political life



# Manchuria



- Japan acquired sphere of influence in Manchuria following victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905
- Japanese fear = growing Chinese nationalism would threaten this sphere of influence
- 1931 = Japanese military seized control of Manchuria
  - Set up a puppet state called Manchukuo
- Western powers = NOT HAPPY
  - Japan = broke with its Western allies and withdrew from the League of Nations
  - 1936 = Japan joined with Germany and Italy in an alliance called the *Axis Powers*



# China

- 1937 = Japan invaded China
- Japanese forces = brutal and violent
- In many Chinese villages → every single person and every single animal were killed
- 1937-1938 = Rape of Nanjing
  - 200,000 to 300,000 Chinese civilians killed or mutilated within a few months
  - Countless women sexually assaulted

