

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

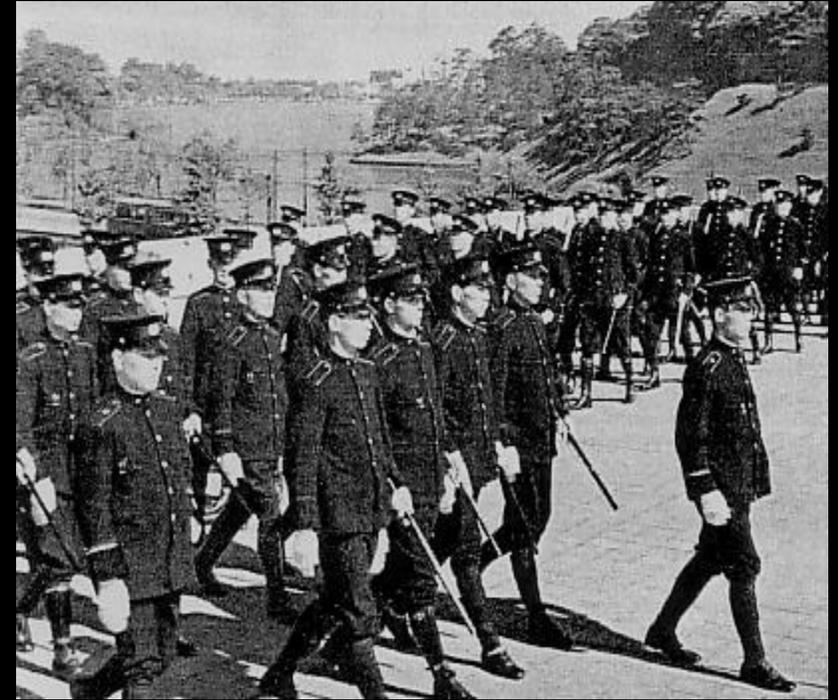


- Tensions/problems resulting from Japan's modernization and industrialization:
- 1918 = “rice riots” = millions protested the rising price of rice
- 1920s = union membership tripled as Japanese workers started to fight more for workers' rights
- Increased disputes between landowners and tenants
- Rising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



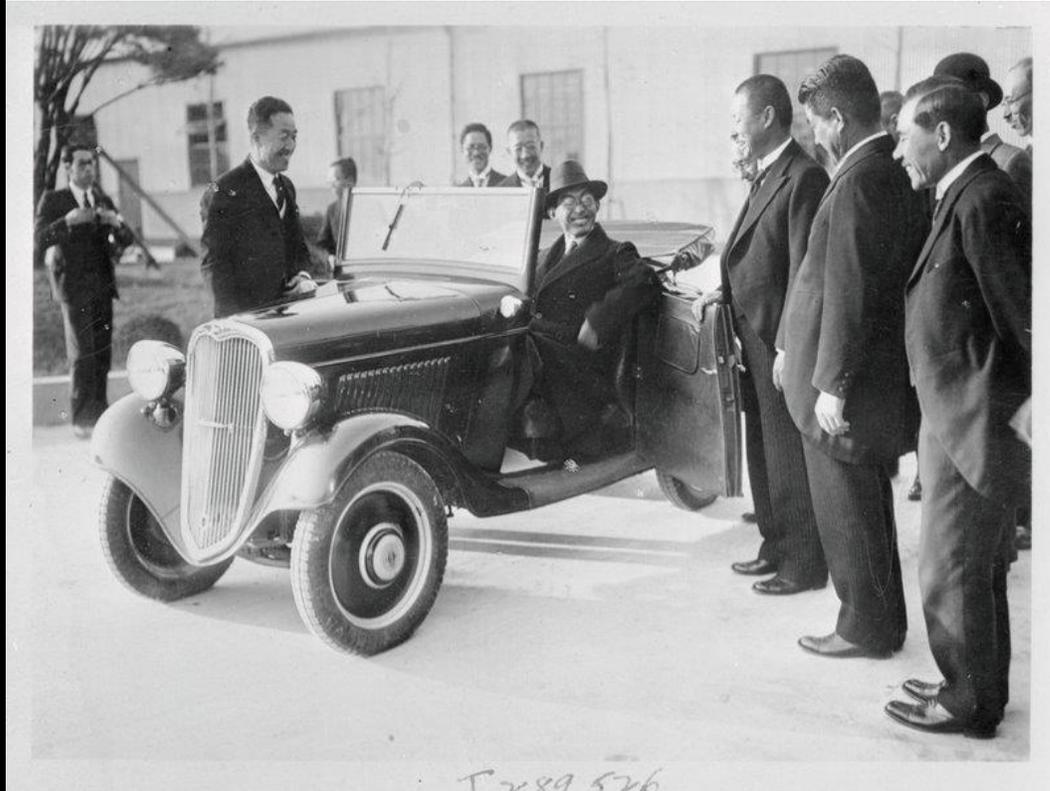
Japanese Authoritarianism

- 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



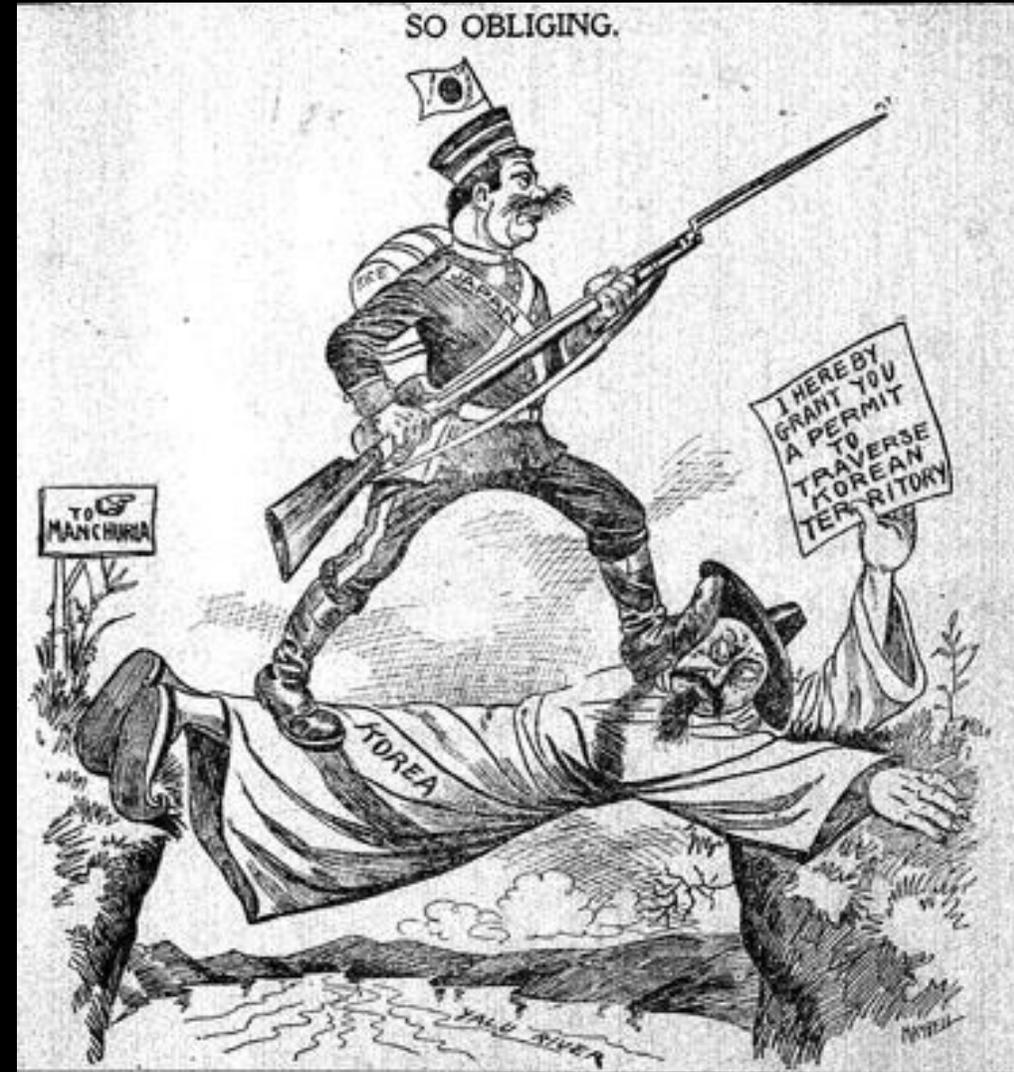
- Authoritarian state in Japan gained a lot of popular support because it was able to pull Japan out of the Great Depression
 - By the end of 1937 = “everyone was working”
 - State-financed credit to businesses
 - Government spending on armaments
 - Public works projects

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

