Conflicting Forces in Japan

Terms, People, and Places
Hirohito
ultranationalist
Manchuria

Reading Skill: Understand Effects As you read this section, fill in the effects of two opposing outlooks in Japan in the 1920s and 1930s in a table like the one below.

Conflicting Forces in Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liberation in the 1920s</th>
<th>Militation in the 1930s</th>
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Solemn ceremonies marked the start of Emperor Hirohito’s reign. In the Secret Purple Hall, the new emperor sat on the ancient throne of Japan. Beside him was his wife, the empress Nagako. Calling on the spirits of his ancestors, he pledged “to preserve world peace and benefit the welfare of the human race.”

In fact, Hirohito reigned from 1926 to 1989—an astonishing 63 years. During those decades, Japan experienced remarkable successes and appalling tragedies. In this section, we will focus on the 1920s and 1930s, when the pressures of extreme nationalism and economic upheaval set Japan on a militaristic and expansionist path that would engulf all of Asia.

Japan on the Rise in the 1920s
In the 1920s, Japan moved toward greater prosperity and democracy. To strengthen its relationship with other countries, Japan drew back from some of its imperial goals in the 1920s. The country grew in international prestige. However, conflicts lurked beneath the surface. The economic crisis of the Great Depression in the 1930s would bring them to light.

Growth and Expansion After World War I During World War I, the Japanese economy enjoyed remarkable growth. Its exports to Allied nations soared. Heavy industrial production grew, making Japan a true industrial power.

Vocabulary Builder
Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.

High-Use Word | Definition and Sample Sentence
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manipulate, p. 689 | vt. to influence skillfully, often unfairly He manipulated his sister into agreeing to do his chores for the next week.

NGSSS
• SS.912.W.6.4 Describe the 19th and early 20th century reform movements and their effects

Prepare to Read
Build Background Knowledge
Ask students to list what they know about Japan from the previous section and write each response on the board. Tell them that in this section, they will learn about these events from the Japanese perspective.

Set a Purpose
WITNESS HISTORY Read the selection. Ask According to the speaker, what are Japan’s problems? (corrupt political parties and businesses that exploit the common people; weak diplomacy; corrupt education) What is the speaker’s solution to these problems? (drastic change, revolution)

Focus Point out the Section Focus Question and write it on the board. Tell students to refer to this question as they read. (Answer appears with Section 5 Assessment answers.)

Preview Have students preview the Section Objectives and the list of Terms, People, and Places.

Note Taking Have students read this section using the Guided Questioning strategy (TE, p. T20). As they read, have students fill in the table categorizing the events in Japan.
During the 1920s, Japan faced some grave problems. Rural peasants did not share in the well-being, Japan did not already annexed Korea as a colony in 1910. During the war, Japan also sought further rights in China with the Twenty-One Demands. After the war, Japan took over former German possessions in East Asia, including the Shandong province in China.

Liberal Changes in the 1920s During the 1920s, Japan moved toward more widespread democracy. Political parties grew stronger. Elected members of the Diet—the Japanese parliament—exercised their power. In 1925, all adult men, regardless of class, won the right to vote. In addition, Western ideas about women’s rights brought some changes. Overall, however, the status of Japanese women remained below that of men. They would not win suffrage, or the right to vote, until 1945.

Problems Below the Surface Behind this well-being, Japan faced some grave problems. Rural peasants did not share in the nation’s prosperity. They were still very poor. In the cities, factory workers earned low wages. Their poverty drew them to the socialist ideas of Marx and Lenin.

In the cities, members of the younger generation were also in revolt against tradition. They adopted Western fads and fashions. Also, they rejected family authority for the Western ideal of individual freedom, shocking their elders.

During the 1920s, tensions between the government and the military simmered not far below the surface. Conservatives, especially military officers, blasted government corruption, including payoffs by powerful zaibatsu. They also condemned Western influences for undermining basic Japanese values of obedience and respect for authority.

Although the economy grew throughout the 1920s, it experienced many highs and lows. One low point occurred when a devastating earthquake, one of the most destructive quakes in history, struck the Tokyo area in 1923. The earthquake and the widespread fires it caused resulted in the deaths of over 100,000 people and damaged more than 650,000 buildings. As many as 45 percent of surviving workers lost their jobs because so many businesses were destroyed. With help from the government, the Tokyo area gradually recovered—just as Japan faced a worldwide economic crisis.

Checkpoints
1. How did democratic participation in Japan both grow and stagnate in the 1920s?
2. What were some sources of unrest in Japan in the 1920s? (Rural peasants and factory workers were very poor; young people revolted against tradition in favor of Western ideas; military leaders condemned political and business corruption and Western influence; the economy fluctuated quite a bit.)

Teach

Japan on the Rise in the 1920s

Instruct

■ Introduce Display Color Transparencies 166: Kobe, Japan in the 1880s. Ask students to point out the evidence of Western influence in Japan. Ask students to predict how these new ideas will influence a country filled with old traditions.

■ Teach Ask students to add events to the list they created on the board in the Build Background Knowledge activity. Ask How did Japanese foreign policy change during the 1920s? (Japan cut back on its expansionism in order to improve business relationships with the Western powers.) What were some sources of unrest in Japan in the 1920s? (Rural peasants and factory workers were very poor; young people revolted against tradition in favor of Western ideas; military leaders condemned political and business corruption and Western influence; the economy fluctuated quite a bit.)

Independent Practice

Primary Source To help students learn more about the 1923 earthquake, have them read the selection An Account of the 1923 Tokyo Earthquake and complete the worksheet.

Teaching Resources, Unit 6, p. 34

Monitor Progress

As students fill in their charts, circulate to make sure they understand the effects of the conflicting forces in Japan. For a completed version of the chart, see Note Taking Transparencies, 178.

Answer

All men were allowed to vote in 1925. However, rich zaibatsu had an undue influence on party politicians.

Chapter 27 Section 5 689
Economic disaster fed the controversy in Japan. In 1931, a group of militarists in power advocated for Japan to expand its territory in Asia between 1918 and 1934. From their conquered lands, the Japanese acquired natural resources to fuel their industries. Japanese nationalists were further outraged by public opinion siding with the military. When the League of Nations condemned Japanese aggression against China, Japan simply withdrew itself from the League. Soon, the Japanese government nullified the agreements limiting naval armament that it had signed with the Western democracies in the 1920s. The League’s member states failed to take military action against Japanese aggression. The Nationalist Reaction

In 1929, the Great Depression rippled across the Pacific, striking Japan with devastating force. Trade suffered as foreign buyers could no longer afford to purchase Japanese silks and other exports. Unemployment in the cities soared, while rural peasants were only a mouthful from starvation.

Unrest Grew Economic disaster fed the discontent of the leading military officials and extreme nationalists, or ultranationalists. They condemned politicians for agreeing to Western demands to stop overseas expansion. Western industrial powers, they pointed out, had long ago grabbed huge empires. By comparison, Japan’s empire was tiny. Japanese nationalists were further outraged by racial policies in the United States, Canada, and Australia that shut out Japanese immigrants. The Japanese took great pride in their industrial achievements. They bitterly resented being treated as second-class citizens in other parts of the world.

As the economic crisis worsened, nationalists demanded renewed expansion. An empire in Asia, they argued, would provide much-needed raw materials as well as an outlet for Japan’s rapidly growing population. They set their sights on the northern Chinese province of Manchuria. This region was rich in natural resources, and Japanese businesses had already invested heavily there.

The Manchurian Incident

In 1931, a group of Japanese army officers provoked an incident that provided an excuse to seize Manchuria. They set explosives and blew up tracks on a Japanese-owned railroad line. Then, they claimed that the Chinese had committed the act. Claiming self-defense, the army attacked Chinese forces. Without consulting their own government, the Japanese military forces conquered all of Manchuria and set up a puppet state there that they called Manzhouguo (man chou guo). They brought in Puyi, the last Chinese emperor, to head the puppet state. When politicians in Tokyo objected to the army’s highhanded actions, public opinion sided with the military.

When the League of Nations condemned Japanese aggression against China, Japan simply withdrew itself from the League. Soon, the Japanese government nullified the agreements limiting naval armament that it had signed with the Western democracies in the 1920s. The League’s member states failed to take military action against Japanese aggression.
Militarists in Power

In the early 1930s, ultranationalists were winning support from the people for foreign conquests and a tough stand against the Western powers. Members of extreme nationalist societies assassinated a number of politicians and business leaders who opposed expansion. Military leaders plotted to overthrow the government and, in 1936, briefly occupied the center of Tokyo.

Traditional Values Revived

Civil government survived, but the unrest forced the government to accept military domination in 1937. To please the ultranationalists, the government cracked down on socialists and suppressed most democratic freedoms. It revived ancient warrior values and built a cult around Emperor Hirohito, whom many believed was descended from the sun goddess. To spread its nationalist message, the government used schools to teach students absolute obedience to the emperor and service to the state.

More Expansion in China

During the 1930s, Japan took advantage of China’s civil war to increase its influence there. Japan expected to complete its conquest of China within a few years. But in 1939, while the two nations were locked in deadly combat, World War II broke out in Europe. That conflict swiftly spread to Asia.

In 1936, Japan allied with two aggressive European powers, Germany and Italy. These three powers signed the Tripartite Pact in September 1940, cementing the alliance known as the Axis Powers. That alliance, combined with renewed Japanese conquests, would turn World War II into a brutal, wide-ranging conflict waged not only across the continent of Europe but across Asia and the islands of the Pacific as well.

Checkpoint

What changes did militarists make when they came to power?

Terms, People, and Places

1. For each term, person, or place listed at the beginning of the section, write a sentence explaining its significance.

Note Taking

2. Reading Skill: Understand Effects

Use your completed chart to answer the Focus Question: How did Japan change in the 1920s and 1930s?

3. Summarize What changes occurred in Japan in the 1920s?

4. Recognize Effects How did nationalists respond to the Great Depression?

5. Geography and History What role did geography play in Japan’s desire to expand its empire?

6. Predict Consequences Why might a nation turn to military leaders and extreme nationalists during a crisis?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

3. What changes occurred in Japan in the 1920s?

4. How did nationalists respond to the Great Depression?

5. What role did geography play in Japan’s desire to expand its empire?

6. Why might a nation turn to military leaders and extreme nationalists during a crisis?

Writing About History

Quick Write: Decide on an Organizational Strategy

Most persuasive essays follow this organization:

I. Introduction, including thesis statement
II. Second-strongest argument
III. Answer to opposing arguments
IV. Strongest argument
V. Conclusion

Write a thesis statement based on the content of this section, and write an outline showing how you would organize your arguments.

Assess and Reteach

Assess Progress

Have students complete the Section Assessment.

Administer the Section Quiz.

Adapted Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 252

Spanish Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 252

Reteach

If students need more instruction, have them read the section summary.

Extend

Have students look up the dictionary definition of nationalism. Then ask them to find examples from this section to illustrate each of the definitions listed in the dictionary. Students may include examples from the rest of the chapter as well.