

Kyôiku Shuppan

Middle School Social Studies: History

Looking Toward the Future

Chapter 7 Contemporary Japan and the World

1. JAPAN AND THE WORLD AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

1. From the Empire of Great Japan to Japan (The Allied Occupation and Japan's democratization)

Democratization under the Occupation

After the war, Japan was occupied by the Allied Forces led by the United States. Japan's territories were limited to Honshû, Hokkaidô, Shikoku, Kyûshû, and nearby islands, while Okinawa, Amami, and the Ogasawara Islands were placed under direct US military administration. In addition, southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands¹ were occupied by the Soviet military.

The **General Headquarters of the Allied Forces (GHQ)**, with MacArthur as its supreme commander, issued orders to the Japanese government and carried out policies to remove militarism and promote democracy. First, the military was disbanded and those responsible for the war were tried in the International Military Tribunal of the Far East and punished. Those who held important posts during the war were purged from public office. The emperor issued a "renunciation of divinity," denying that he was a descendant of the gods.

Second, the GHQ abolished the Maintenance of the Peace Preservation Law of 1925, permitted the freedom of political activity, and gave voting rights to all men and women over 20 years of age. Furthermore, the GHQ enacted Labor Union Law, which protected the right to form unions and go on strike, as well as the Labor Standards Law, which determined minimum standards for labor conditions.

In addition, the movement to abolish discrimination against the *buraku* minority, which had started with the national "levelizers movement,"

¹ The four islands of the Northern Territories are uniquely Japan's territories (part of Hokkaidô) and are not part of Russia. They are still under illegal occupation by Russia to this day.

accelerated. In Hokkaidô, the Hokkaidô Ainu Association, which aimed to liberate the Ainu people, was re-established.

The Japanese Constitution

One of the main pillars of democratization was the reform of the old constitution. GHQ instructed the Japanese government to reform the constitution, but the Japanese government responded with only a partial revision to the Constitution of the Empire of Japan. GHQ therefore prepared a draft with input from the proposals of a Japanese civilian constitution study group. The Japanese government created a new proposal from this draft, which was further revised after debate in the National Diet. The **Constitution of Japan** was finally promulgated on November 3, 1946 (Shôwa 21) and made effective from May 3, 1947.

The Constitution of Japan championed three principles: the **sovereignty of the people**, **respect for basic human rights**, and the **renunciation of war (pacifism)**. The emperor was established as a symbol of Japan and the unity of the people. Local autonomy was emphasized and prefectural governors, which until then had been selected by the central government, were to be chosen by direct public elections.

2. The start of a new society (The various postwar reforms)

GUIDE TEXT: What reforms were undertaken to build a new society?

The dismantling of the *zaibatsu* and land reforms

GHQ also advanced the democratization of the economy. The *zaibatsu* that had controlled the Japanese economy and supported militarism, such as Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, and Yasuda, were dismantled, and the companies under them became independent firms (***zaibatsu* dissolution**).

In farming villages, the **Land Reforms of 1946** were undertaken to fundamentally change the relationship between landowners and tenant farmers. All farmland belonging to absentee landlords and that over 1 hectare (4 hectares in Hokkaidô) belonging to those who lived on the land were purchased by the state and resold cheaply to the tenants. As a result, the number of landed farmers increased substantially, and the ability of large landowners to control

rural villages diminished.²

GUIDE TEXT: Why are certain passages in the textbook covered with ink?

PHOTO: An outdoor classroom, left, and a textbook covered with ink, right.

PHOTO: Stock certificates being hauled from Mitsui's head office as part of zaibatsu dissolution.

PHOTO: A poster (left) and bulletin board (right) announcing the liberalization of farmland (1947). The Land Reforms of 1946 fundamentally dismantled the system under which farmland was possessed by landowners.

The democratization of education

In the field of education, an emphasis on militarism and an approach centered on the emperor were amended. In 1947 (Shôwa 22) the **Fundamental Law of Education** calling for the teaching of democratic principles was enacted, and the Imperial Rescript on Education was abolished. As for the schooling system, compulsory education was extended to nine years spanning elementary and middle schools, and a 6-3-3-4 coeducational system was adopted calling for three years of high school and four years of college.

The new civil law

The Civil Code that was drafted during the Meiji era was amended; the old household system was reformed, the equality of men and women was recognized, and a new family system was established. A patriarchal system was abolished, marriages were recognized only when both parties gave their consent,³ and equality of the sexes in inheriting property was established, instead of males being given priority.⁴

FIGURE: Changes resulting from land reforms.

² Rents came to be paid in cash, rather than in kind. The reforms covered only farmland, however, and forests were unaffected.

³ To marry, the new law required that males be at least 18 years old and females 16 years old.

⁴ Under the old Civil Code, all property was inherited, in principle, by the eldest son.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try. Research the education and schooling system during the immediate postwar years.

BOX: The war's aftermath—The issue of war indemnities

The position of the Japanese government is that “the issue of war indemnities between states has been completely settled” with the San Francisco Peace Treaty and bilateral reparations agreements with each country. Individuals in Asian countries who were victims of the wartime actions of the Japanese army, though, continue even now to claim indemnities for the injuries inflicted by Japan.

PHOTO: The Korean War cease-fire line, located along the 38th Parallel in Panmunjom. Border security police from the Republic of Korea (South Korea), in the foreground, and a soldier from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), in the background, stand guard.

GUIDE TEXT: What did the Korean War mean for Japan?

3. Fighting across the 38th parallel (The Cold War and the shift of Occupation policy)

GUIDE TEXT: What impact did the Cold War have on the world?

The United Nations and the US-Soviet confrontation

In October 1945 (Shōwa 20), having reflected on the disastrous war, 51 Allied nations signed an agreement establishing the **United Nations**. A conflict arose between the United States and the Soviet Union, however, over the question of how to deal with Germany, and the latter was ultimately divided into West Germany and East Germany. The US and Soviet camps built up their respective military organizations and remained opposed to one another. This led to a state of growing tension in Europe known as the **Cold War**.

PHOTO: The Berlin Wall (1973). On the right side is West Berlin, on the left, East Berlin; the Brandenburg Gate can be seen in the background. After the wall was erected, many people managed to escape from East Berlin to West Berlin, while many others died trying.

The independence of Asia and China and Korea

In Asia, one colony after another gained independence following the war.⁵ In China, the Nationalist government and the Communist Party continued to wage a civil war. The Communists, however, gained the support of the public through land reforms, among other policies. In 1949, the **People's Republic of China** was established with Mao Zedong as chairman. The Nationalist government was driven to Taiwan.⁶ Korea, which had gained independence from Japan, was occupied by the US military in the south and the Soviet Union in the north. The country was split at the 38th northern parallel, and the south later became the Republic of Korea, while the north became the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The two sides fell into severe confrontation thereafter.

With the emergence of the cold war, the GHQ switched the focus of its Occupation policy to transforming and nurturing Japan into a "bulwark against communism in Asia."⁷ The GHQ restricted activities of the Communist Party, and at the same time removed a ban on individuals who held important posts during the war.

The Korean War

The Cold War grew hot on the Korean Peninsula. In June 1950, North Korea sought to unify the peninsula through force with the aid of the Soviet Union and advanced southwards, starting the **Korean War**. The United Nations decided to impose sanctions on North Korea and mobilized an Allied force led by the United States. The People's Republic of China later entered the war on the side of North Korea. The war continued until a cease-fire agreement was reached in 1953.

The United States used its bases on the Japanese mainland and on Okinawa to dispatch troops during the Korean War. GHQ also directed the establishment of the National Police Reserve⁸, which formed the basis for the

⁵ Indonesia gained independence in 1945, the Philippines in 1946, and India in 1947.

⁶ The Nationalist government that fled to Taiwan clashed with the People's Republic of China in the mainland. Japan normalized ties with the People's Republic of China in 1972 and cut off diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Nevertheless, the exchange of people and goods continues.

⁷ Referring mainly to the People's Republic of China.

⁸ The National Police Reserve, created in 1950, later became the National Safety Forces, which in turn became the Self-Defense Forces in 1954, the same year the Defense Agency was established.

current Japanese **Self-Defense Forces**.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try: Find out which countries were in the respective US and Soviet camps.

PHOTO: A National Police Reserve training exercise (1950).

MAP: The Korean War.

4. The peace treaty and the security treaty (Independence and rejoining the international community)

Rejoining the international community

The United States scrambled to conclude a peace treaty with Japan as soon as the Korean War broke out. Japan regained its independence after signing the **San Francisco Peace Treaty** with 48 nations, including the United States, at a peace conference held in San Francisco in 1951 (Shôwa 26).⁹ Okinawa, Amami, and the Ogasawara Islands, however, remained under US occupation.¹⁰ At the same time, Japan signed the **Japan-US Security Treaty**, in which Japan permitted the continued existence of US military bases in the country for the purposes of protecting Japan and maintaining peace in East Asia. In 1956, Japan also signed the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration and reestablished bilateral ties. In the same year, Japan was admitted to the United Nations and rejoined the international community.

PHOTO: The Northern Territories. In front is the Nosappu Cape (the eastern edge of Hokkaidô). The closest of the Habomai Islands that can be seen from this point is only 4 kilometers away.

⁹ Since the Soviet Union refused to sign this peace treaty, the ownership of the Kuril Islands could not be determined. The Habomai Islands, Shikotan, Kunashiri, and Etorofu are intrinsically Japanese territories. Japan had been demanding the return of these islands from the Soviet Union and is continuing these negotiations with the Russian Federation following the breakup of the Soviet Union.

¹⁰ In Okinawa, associations calling for the reversion to the homeland were created, as the prefecture did not revert to Japan in the peace treaty. While under US administration the Okinawan people continued to demand to revert to Japan. Amami reverted to Japan in 1953, the Ogasawara Islands in 1968, and Okinawa in 1972.

The movement to abolish atomic bombs

Entering the 1950s, the United States and Soviet Union started competing with each other in hydrogen bomb testing.¹¹ Humanity faced a grave crisis. In 1954, a Japanese fishing vessel, the *Daigo Fukuryû maru*, was exposed to the radioactive fallout from a US hydrogen bomb test in the Bikini Atoll of the Pacific Ocean. Consequently the **anti-nuclear-bomb movement** escalated and the world's first anti-nuclear-bomb meeting was held in Hiroshima.¹²

PHOTO: *Lucky Dragon V* on display (Kôtô Ward, Tokyo Metropolis).

PHOTO: People gather in front of the National Diet to protest the new Security Treaty. Crowds surrounded the National Diet on a daily basis in May and June 1960.

The revision of the Security Treaty and the protest movement

In 1960 the Japanese government concluded a new Japan-US Security Treaty and sought to strengthen its relations with the United States. It was decided that the two countries would take joint action in the event of an attack occurring on Japanese soil against either country and that they would strengthen their mutual defense capabilities.

This met with opposition from members of the public wary of Japan becoming entangled in the military activities of the United States. When the government and the ruling party forced a vote approving the treaty in the House of Representatives without permitting adequate discussion, the issue shifted from opposition to the new Security Treaty to protecting parliamentary democracy, a rallying cry that spread throughout the country.

The new treaty was automatically approved, without being submitted to the House of Councillors, after which the cabinet resigned en masse.

PHOTO: People line up in front of a bank waiting to exchange dollars for yen upon the restoration of Okinawa to Japan (Okinawa, 1972).

¹¹ A hydrogen bomb is a nuclear bomb more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

¹² The three anti-nuclear principles of "not possessing, not making, and not bringing in" became government policy in 1967. This resolution was adopted by the diet in 1971.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try: Find out about the lives and hopes of people in Okinawa before its restoration to Japan.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND JAPAN

PHOTO: A peace demonstration protesting the Vietnam War (Washington, DC, United States; 1967).

1. Resistance against the superpowers (Developments during the Cold War)

GUIDE TEXT: How did other countries demonstrate their autonomy in an international community centered on the United States and the Soviet Union?

PHOTO: Soviet tanks surge through the streets of Prague (1968).

The European Community

As the 1960s began, a movement seeking greater economic cooperation and a greater voice in the international community, centered on the United States and the Soviet Union, became active in the countries of Western Europe. In 1967 (Shōwa 42) the **European Community (EC)** was formed in an effort to liberalize the movements of people and goods and integrate markets.

Movements among developing and socialist nations

There was resistance to the two major powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, among socialist countries as well. Democratic movements seeking freedom from Soviet dominance emerged in Eastern Europe and elsewhere shortly after World War II. In 1968 a movement demanding democracy and freedom arose in Czechoslovakia (Czech crisis). The Soviet Union sent troops to Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, to suppress this movement, eliciting worldwide condemnation.

Independent movements also arose in developing countries; the **Asian-African Conference** signified the beginning of these.¹³ The year 1960, when 17 African nations attained independence, was known as the “Year of

¹³ Countries in Asia and Africa that were allied with neither the United States nor the Soviet Union and assumed an unaffiliated, neutral position were called Third World countries, to distinguish them from countries in the East or West camp.

Africa.” By the 1970s virtually all the former colonies had ceased to exist. Peace, along with stable governments and economies, has been difficult to achieve, however; even now, many people suffer amid hunger and armed conflict.

MAP: Countries attaining independence in Africa in various eras.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try: Which countries in Africa gained independence in 1960? Find out about the histories of those countries.

PHOTO: A base in Okinawa for bombers bound for Vietnam (1968). B-52 bombers take off from Kadena Air Base, a US military installation in Okinawa.

MAP: US military bases in Okinawa (as of March 2005).

The Vietnam War

In 1954 Vietnam, which had remained at war with France after achieving independence, was divided into two sections, North and South, under the terms of the Geneva Accords, which also included a pledge that the North and South would be reunited in the future. The United States, however, ignored the Geneva Accords and backed South Vietnam, while the Soviet Union and China opposed the Americans by supporting North Vietnam.

In 1965 the United States began sending a large military force to South Vietnam. It also began bombing North Vietnam, unleashing a bloody war (**Vietnam War**). The United States was roundly criticized, both domestically and abroad, but the government of Japan supported the US position; large numbers of bombers took off from US military bases in Okinawa on bombing runs over North Vietnam. The war was one factor contributing to the growth of Japan’s economy, but the United States, struggling with rising military expenditures, withdrew its forces from Vietnam in 1973. In 1976 North and South Vietnam were reunited, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established.

GUIDE TEXT: How did this mountain of garbage get here?

PHOTO: Large household appliances discarded at a waste-treatment site (Yumenoshima, Kôtô Ward, Tokyo; 1970).

2. The appearance of giant industrial complexes (The light and dark sides of the era of rapid economic growth)

GUIDE TEXT: What new problems arose in the era of rapid economic growth?

PHOTO: Senri New Town (1970). This large-scale community straddling the cities of Suita and Toyonaka in northern Osaka Prefecture was developed in the 1960s. Later, to eliminate a housing shortage, “new towns” of this type were vigorously developed in urban areas all over Japan. These include Tama New Town and Kôhoku New Town in the Tokyo metropolitan area and Senboku New Town in the Osaka metropolitan area.

Rapid growth of the Japanese economy

As the 1960s began Japan’s economy continued to expand. The government coined catchphrases promoting the doubling of per-capita income; and businesses stepped up investments for technological innovations and for the development of heavy and chemical industries. Giant industrial combines were constructed in various areas. There was a boom in exports following the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 (Shôwa 39), and by 1968 Japan’s gross national product¹⁴ had become the second largest in the capitalist world, after that of the United States.

Changes in the life of the people

The **era of rapid economic growth** was accompanied by rising incomes and the popularization of television sets, electric washing machines, and other consumer durables, making daily life more comfortable and convenient. People also began to have the freedom to enjoy leisure time.

At the same time, increasing numbers of people were giving up farming and moving into the cities to find work, so there were fewer farmers. This gave rise to new social problems: **overcrowding**, due to the concentration of the population in the cities, and **depopulation**, caused by the exodus from rural areas.

PHOTO: The Tokyo Olympic Games. The event was held in October 1964. The

¹⁴ The gross national product (GNP) is the total value of all goods and services produced by a nation over a one-year period. Nowadays the gross domestic product (GDP) is used as the indicator.

date of the opening ceremony, October 10, became a national holiday called Sports Day (now observed on the second Monday of October).

PHOTO: The inauguration ceremony for the Tōkaidō Shinkansen (bullet train). The high-speed railway line linking Tokyo and Osaka was opened the year of the Tokyo Olympics. At that time, traveling at top speed, the train covered the distance between the two cities in 4 hours and 10 minutes.

The problem of pollution

While the economy was growing, **pollution** problems were occurring as well. Businesses and the government, which placed a priority on business earnings, were unconcerned about the disposal of waste, and the air, rivers, sea, and soil became polluted with harmful substances, endangering people's lives and health. The suffering caused by Minamata disease, Yokkaichi asthma, *itai-itai* disease, and Niigata Minamata disease was especially serious.

As problems developed due to pollution from detergents, foodstuffs, pharmaceutical products, and automobile exhaust, an anti-pollution movement among citizens spread throughout the country. The government enacted the Pollution Countermeasures Basic Law¹⁵ in 1967 and established the Environment Agency in 1971, seeking to prevent pollution and protect the environment.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try: Make a chronological table showing events occurring in Japan from the 1960s through the first half of the 1970s.

PHOTO: The Mizushima coastal industrial area (city of Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture). It became a major source of air pollution and other types of environmental degradation.

PHOTO: Elementary school students playing in a schoolyard (city of Yokkaichi, Mie Prefecture; 1967).

3. Problems arising from wealth (Changes in the international community and the lives of the people)

¹⁵ The Basic Environment Law was enacted in 1993 as an expanded successor to this law.

Normalization of ties with Korea and China

Japan's relationship with Korea and China changed after the 1960s. In 1965, Japan signed the **Korea-Japan Treaty** with South Korea, acknowledging the South Korean government as the only legitimate government on the Korean Peninsula and offering it economic aid. Diplomatic ties with North Korea, however, have not yet been established.

Bilateral ties with China were normalized in 1972 with the signing of the China-Japan Joint Communiqué. The **Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty** was also signed in 1978.

PHOTO: Signing of China-Japan Joint Communiqué (1972, Beijing, China). Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei is on the left and Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai at the center.

Disputes in the Middle East

In the 1970s events in the Middle East began to exert a major influence on international politics. In the aftermath of World War II, a United Nations resolution led to the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel in this region. The Arab nations did not accept this, and armed conflicts have since occurred repeatedly (Arab-Israeli conflict).

The Palestinian people, who were expelled from their land by Israel, formed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and fought back.¹⁶ At the time of the Fourth Arab-Israeli War in 1973 the oil-producing Arab countries took hard-line retaliatory measures against the industrial countries, including Japan, that sided with Israel. This included raising the price of crude oil and halting exports.

PHOTO: People visiting a zoo to see giant pandas (Ueno Zoo, Tokyo; 1972). The pandas were presented to the zoo by the Chinese government in hopes of fostering friendship between the people of Japan and China.

PHOTO: Palestinian children fleeing in panic from an Israeli armored vehicle

¹⁶ Progress was made in Middle East peace talks in the 1990s, and the PLO and Israel signed an agreement providing for provisional Palestinian autonomy. Terrorism and reciprocating military actions, however, continue to occur.

(the Gaza Strip, Palestinian Autonomous Area).

The “oil shock” and economic friction

Japan’s economic growth was sustained by massive volumes of imported crude oil. For this reason, the oil strategy adopted by the Arab countries dealt a major blow to Japan (“oil shock”) and put an end to its rapid economic growth. As a result, the focus of Japan’s economy shifted away from heavy and chemical industries, which require massive quantities of raw materials, and toward industries related to automobiles, precision machinery, and computers, among other areas.

Economic friction¹⁷ with the United States emerged in the 1970s. As the 1980s began, such friction over regulations governing prices and export volumes for products like automobiles and semiconductors became particularly pronounced. Japan also encountered economic friction with the EC countries and with developing nations.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try: Ask family members or neighbors to talk about what happened when the oil shock occurred.

PHOTO: Hoarding of daily goods due to the oil shock. Not only did the price of oil skyrocket, commodity prices soared as well, leading to panic buying.

4. The fluctuating international community (The end of the Cold War and domestic politics)

GUIDE TEXT: How did the Cold War come to an end, and how did international society change thereafter?

The post–Cold War world

From the late 1980s international relations that had been centered on the two superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—for over 40 years began to undergo rapid change. In Germany, the Berlin Wall, which had been a symbol of the Cold War, was torn down, and in 1990 (Heisei 2), East and West

¹⁷ The emergence of an unfavorable balance of trade, caused by increased exports from Japan, became a problem.

Germany were unified. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan¹⁸ and its attempts at political and economic reform failed, and in 1991 the country collapsed, becoming the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** centered on the Russian Federation.¹⁹

The United States, meanwhile, has been trying to play a central role in the new post–Cold War world order.

GUIDE TEXT: Why is the wall being torn down?

PHOTO: Citizens tearing down the Berlin Wall (1989).

PHOTO: Citizens celebrate Germany's reunification in front of the Reichstag building (1990 in Berlin).

Fluctuating internal politics

Following 1955 a political setup marked by rivalry between the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Japan Socialist Party and other opposition parties persisted in Japan, with the LDP holding a virtual monopoly on the reins of government.

Faced with the challenges of fiscal reconstruction and political reforms as well as revelations of political, fiscal, and bureaucratic corruption, however, the LDP ran into difficulties. The party temporarily lost control of the government but later regained power, forming coalitions with various other political parties.

The Gulf War and regional disputes

In the Middle East, a focal point of international politics, a protracted war between Iraq and Iran was followed by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1991, which ignited the **Gulf War**. Based on a United Nations resolution imposing sanctions on Iraq, a multinational force led by the United States was dispatched, and Iraq was forced to withdraw from Kuwait. Regional conflicts have continued elsewhere as well, including the former Yugoslavia, which was broken up in

¹⁸ The Soviet army intervened militarily in Afghanistan in 1979 (through 1989), resulting in a sudden increase in the flux of refugees.

¹⁹ Russia prior to the Russian Revolution was an empire, so its political system was different from that of the Russian Federation.

1991, and Africa.

MAP: The Middle East.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try: Find out which countries and regions are the sites of regional conflicts.

PHOTO: A cemetery encircling the Olympic Stadium (2001). Sarajevo (in the former Yugoslavia), site of the 1984 Winter Olympics, subsequently became enmeshed in a civil war that produced numerous casualties. A cemetery for the victims of the war, surrounding the Olympic Stadium, was created there.

PHOTO: Burning oil wells and tanks during the Gulf War (Kuwait, 1991). In addition to human casualties, the war caused serious environmental damage.

PHOTO: A terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 (New York, USA). Many people were killed in simultaneous terrorist attacks at multiple locations in the United States on that day.

PHOTO: A memorial ceremony at Ground Zero (2001).

5. The era that we live in (Japan in the contemporary world)

GUIDE TEXT: How have events unfolded in the United States and other countries?

MAP: EU member states and prospective member states (as of March 2005).

PHOTO: The front (above) and back (at right) of Germany's 100-euro bill. The introduction of the euro eliminated the need to exchange currencies in EU member states.

The evolution of the EU

In 1993, in an effort to achieve greater economic integration as well as political integration through common foreign and defense policies, 12 countries in Europe formed the **European Union (EU)**, as a successor to the EC). In 1999, 11

countries introduced a unified currency known as the euro; by 2004 the EU's membership had grown to 25 countries. This represents one effort to resist a post-Cold War scenario in which the power to influence world events is concentrated in the hands of the United States. The advent of an economic recession, however, has given rise to a trend toward ostracizing immigrant workers, who have supported the economies of various nations in the past.

The multipolarization of Asia

The process of multipolarization intensified in Asia. China opened and liberalized its economy under the banner of the "Four Modernizations" (agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defense). Taiwan and Vietnam have also developed and opened up their economies.

South Korea and North Korea simultaneously joined the United Nations in 1991. In 2000, the South Korean president visited North Korea in a North-South Summit Meeting in a move expected to lead to further stability in East Asia. In 2002, a summit meeting was also held between Japan and North Korea and the countries signed the Pyongyang Declaration aiming to normalize ties.²⁰ In the meeting, North Korea admitted to and apologized for kidnapping Japanese nationals, and disclosed the whereabouts of some of kidnapped nationals. Some of these victims were able to return to Japan. Nevertheless, the Japanese government is continuing to tenaciously negotiate for more information about the other kidnapped nationals and demand the return of their family members to Japan.

PHOTO: Victims of the kidnapping incident returning from North Korea. (2002, Tokyo Haneda Airport)

Living in the twenty-first century

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in which the World Trade Center in New York was destroyed, meanwhile, the United States launched a "new war" against terrorism and declared it would prevent, in particular, Iraq, Iran, and North Korea from developing nuclear weapons, including through the use of force. In this context, the United States and Britain launched an attack against Iraq (**Iraq War**)²¹ in March 2003, despite opposition from some

²⁰ Japan and North Korea have not established diplomatic relations yet.

²¹ The Iraq War ended on May 1, 2003, and reconstruction efforts led by the United States

countries. In the midst of these dramatic developments in international relations, great attention is being focused on how Japan will react given the spirit of the Constitution and international law and its UN-centered foreign policy.

PHOTO: Iraq War. People appear disconsolate after their houses were destroyed.

GUIDE TEXT: Something to try. Make a collection of newspaper stories about events in foreign countries that made an impression on you.

After you finish this study of history (As a member of the world)

Thinking about our living environment

Today, the world is becoming an ever more interconnected place as multinational companies step up their activities. Information can now jump across borders instantaneously with the profusion of the Internet, e-mail (electronic mail), and mobile phones.

Japan grew into one of the world's strongest economies after the Second World War. In an economic slowdown that has continued since the 1990s, however, the number of unemployed people has increased and ties between people in families, schools, and society have weakened. In the meantime, the natural environment is being destroyed. Once again, it has become necessary to defend the natural environment and its resources and form friendships with people who have differing ideas.

Respecting human rights

Through its long history, humanity has sought to reduce discrimination and to establish human rights and democracy. Despite this, discrimination and prejudice still remain in Japan. The abolishment of discrimination against the *burakumin* is the responsibility of the nation and local governments, as well as a problem to be faced by every citizen. We have the same responsibility of abolishing discrimination and prejudice against the Ainu people, foreigners residing in Japan, and foreign workers. It is necessary to work toward a society

have begun.

that respects the human rights of women and children, does not discriminate against the handicapped and elderly, and guarantees a meaningful life for everybody. It is also important to play an active role in defending the rights and culture of people living in various regions of the world, particularly the rights of children.

Building peace

After the Second World War, Japan has taken the path of not fighting any country in a direct war. This does not mean, however, that Japan cannot be embroiled in a nuclear war or other conflict.

Let us work together to defend the Constitution of Japan, which renounces war, to defend the Three Nonnuclear Principles, and to seek for peace and relations based on equality for all the people of the world.

People living in contemporary times

People seeking peace

1.

We visited the Daigo Fukuryu Maru (*Lucky Dragon V*) Exhibition Hall in Tokyo Metropolis (Kôtô Ward) for integrated-learning research. In 1954 the *Lucky Dragon V*, a tuna fishing vessel, was showered with radioactive fallout – the “ash of death” – from a hydrogen-bomb test conducted by the United States. One of the crew members, a man named Kuboyama, died; before dying he said, “I hope I will be the last victim of an atomic or hydrogen bomb.” This incident inspired a petition drive, started by mothers in Hiroshima Prefecture and Tokyo’s Sugunami Ward opposing atomic and hydrogen bombs, and the following year the first Atomic Disasters Anniversary World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima. In 1971 the National Diet adopted the Three Nonnuclear Principles of not making, possessing, or allowing entry into Japan of nuclear weapons. Our town has declared itself a nuclear-free peace city to promote disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons from the planet. More than three-fourths of all local governments in Japan have reportedly adopted such declarations.

2.

We visited Hiroshima on a school excursion. We toured the Atomic Bomb Dome and the Peace Memorial Museum, and we heard about the experiences of atomic-bomb victims. Afterward, one of the survivors who guided us around the monuments in Peace Memorial Park told us that, before the bombing, there used to be a bustling commercial district on the site where the park is now located. At each of the many monuments I felt the desire for peace. We also saw the Monument in Memory of the Korean Victims of the Atomic Bomb and were surprised to learn that Korean people were also victims of the bombing. The monuments that made a big impression on me were the Children's Peace Monument and the Hiroshima Monument for the Atomic Bomb Victims because they were mainly created by young people, mostly junior high school and high school students.

3.

When we got back to school, a friend and I searched the Internet to see if there were peace monuments created by young people in other areas. We found out that there is a monument called *Furisode no shôjo zô* (statue of girls in long-sleeved kimono) at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum. We want to find out more about movements to preserve the *Lucky Dragon V* and to promote peace.

1.

PHOTO: A petition drive against atomic and hydrogen bombs (city of Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture). By August 1955, when the first Atomic Disasters Anniversary World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held, 32 million people had signed the petition.

PHOTO: The movement to preserve the *Lucky Dragon V*. As part of the preservation movement, which began in 1967, children from Kôtô Ward take part in cleaning the ship.

2.

PHOTO: The Atomic Bomb Dome (foreground) and Peace Memorial Park (background).

PHOTO: The Children's Peace Monument. Sasaki Sadako was exposed to

radiation from the bombing when she was only two years old. She continued to make origami cranes, hoping this would enable her to recover, but she died at the age of 12 from illness caused by radiation.

3.

PHOTO: The Hiroshima Monument for the Atomic Bomb Victims. Roof tiles damaged in the bombing and later excavated by high school students from a river that flows alongside the Atomic Bomb Dome are embedded in this monument.

PHOTO: *Furisode no shôjo zô*. Ten days after the bombing of Nagasaki, the bodies of two girls, clad in long-sleeved kimono and wearing light makeup, were cremated in the northern part of the city.

After you finish this study of history