
UNIT 8 MEIJI JAPAN: SEEKING INTERNATIONAL EQUALITY

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8.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will understand:

- How Japan was able to end the Unequal Treaties after Meiji restoration,
- The reform of criminal laws and prisons in Japan,
- Importance of colonies for Japan, and
- Japan's war with its neighbouring countries and its impact on Japan.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Japanese policies after the Meiji restoration of 1868 were driven by the need to preserve their independence and establish equal relations with the Western powers. In this Unit we will examine some of the main elements of this policy. The idea that a non-Western country would become equal seemed an impossible dream. It meant Japan had to transform its institutions, ideas and practices, and even change its dress.

Japan, historically had to contend with a great power, China, as its neighbour so it had a history of thinking about foreign relations and how to negotiate and

work towards a favourable settlement. It paid close attention to international norms to find a way to be included in the modern international system.

The drive to equality was aimed at both changing legal and political institutions, reforming society as well as with re-writing the unequal treaties that Japan was forced to sign which gave extra-territorial privileges to foreigners. To end them Japanese policy makers began to study the situation in other countries, negotiate with each nation, and gradually win concessions until equal relations were established.

These changes were backed by building military strength, through modernizing the armed forces, and building an empire. Control over territories and resources would balance Japan's place in a world dominated by empires.

8.2 UNEQUAL TREATIES AND REFORM OF CRIMINAL LAW AND PRISONS

Public opinion was vehemently opposed to the treaties that Japan had been forced to sign. There were press campaigns and debates among intellectuals and officials on how best to right this wrong. One of the arguments by foreign governments for not allowing Japanese legal jurisdiction over their citizens was that the Japanese used torture, which they considered outdated and barbaric. How the question of physical torture was addressed shows the way Japan changed its legal system.

The reform of criminal law and prison management was also, in part, carried out to strengthen the demand to end unequal treaties. Prison reform had been a matter of debate before but now it became an urgent necessity. The government sent Ohara Shigechika (1834-1902) to Hong Kong in 1871 to study how prisons were managed there. The question the Japanese faced was how to bring in European ideas into their system. As Ohara wrote they needed to build prisons for rice eaters and meat eaters so that they could achieve their national goals. (Traditionally the Japanese didn't eat much meat.)

Tsuda Masamichi (1829-1903), wrote in the leading magazine of the times, the *Mei-roku*, calling for legal reform and to buttress his argument, said that even the 'Mongol and black races' are now abolishing torture so Japan must start legal reforms. By this he meant that if 'barbarians' were doing this Japan could not lag behind. Tokugawa prisons were communal rooms with the inmates managing the running. Some prisoners were even confined in cages. Now the prison was transformed onto what the English philosopher called the 'panopticon'. The panopticon is a metaphor for modern disciplinary societies.

8.2.1 Bentham and the Panopticon

In 1798 Bentham had proposed the design of a prison where all prisoners could be observed from one station, this he wrote would be a "a new mode of obtaining power of mind over mind, in a quantity hitherto without example".

Inflicting punishment on the body, flogging, confinement were no longer desirable. Now surveillance and changing the mind of the prisoner, reforming him was the main objective. A new Japanese word for prison, replacing the earlier word, was introduced — *kangoku*, meaning surveillance jail. Flogging was

replaced by hard labour, to “transform wild animals into productive workers”. Prisoners were sometimes exiled to Hokkaido, newly opened to mainland Japanese, to work in developing new areas for settlement. Prisons were now modern buildings made of stone where skills such as carpentry and masonry were taught. Prisons became ‘industrial schools’. There were changes to reform the death penalty as well.

8.2.2 Finding Similarities between Japan and Europe

The penologist Ogawa Shigejiro (1862-1925) turned the argument to show Japan in a better light than Western countries by looking at how they treated minorities in their country and prisoners in the colonies. He argued that flogging was mindless, and criticized the U.S for lynching blacks, or the practice of convict leasing. He also said the French and Dutch used flogging and other cruel measures in their colonies. Japan became modern not with the coming of the West in 1868, he argued, but because of its medieval roots. There was a long practice of reforming prisoners through work that dated back to the late 18th century. Japan feudal heritage, and the development of law, was held up to show how similar and comparable the history of Japan was with Europe. Japanese legal ideas and Germanic law developed in similar ways.

8.2.3 Learning from Foreign Teachers

The government invited legal scholars from Europe to advise them on how to change their legal system. This was a common practice for other areas- education, industry and in the modernization of the armed forces. The foreign employees (oyatoi as they were known) were paid generously, far above what a Japanese received for the same work. Usually they had a number of Japanese assigned to observe and learn and be able to take over the work soon. Tokyo Imperial University employed a number of foreign teachers and classes were held in English, or the language of the instructor. Gustave Boissonade (1825-1907) helped to write legal regulations loosely based on the Napoleonic Code. A commercial code was designed with the aid of the German legal expert Herman Roesler. The government sent officials to other countries, such as Egypt to see how extra-territoriality worked, and how they dealt with Western countries.

8.2.4 Using Law to End the Unequal Treaties

The Japanese government used law to gradually build up its case for the recognition of its rights. In 1872 a ship carrying Chinese labour bound for Peru docked in Japan. The Japanese freed the labourers and declared their contract null and void. The Maria Luz incident, as it was called by the name of the ship, set a legal precedent that the Japanese government had sole jurisdiction over unrepresented foreigners. Japan had no treaty with Peru. This showed that the Japanese government saw the importance of international law, used it for its advantage, to reach the objective of revising the unequal treaties.

This was also the reason behind enacting the law, in 1871, that emancipated the discriminated outcasts (hisabetsu burakumin) prostitutes and other forms of labour bondage.

It took further negotiations with the foreign powers before the unequal treaty system was abolished in 1899.

8.2.5 Life in the Treaty Ports

The unequal treaties were agreements that granted extra-territorial rights and special commercial privileges to the Western powers. All privileges given to one Western power were extended to the others as well. Treaty ports, so called because foreigners were allowed residence there, were exempt from Japanese laws. Foreign nationals were tried by their own courts for crimes committed in Japan. Japan's freedom to determine her own tariffs on imports and exports was limited. Import tariffs were fixed at 5 per cent making imported goods very competitive.

The treaty ports, like Yokohama, became enclaves of foreign culture attracting officials, merchants, adventurers and tourists. Japanese also came to work and do business. These enclaves were cosmopolitan centres. The foreigners were confined to city limits and not allowed beyond 30 km from the treaty ports without special permission. Often there were clashes when they ventured out as anti-foreign feelings were running high. The sight of foreigners on horse back angered local elites. Riding horses was a sign of high status in Japan then, as in Europe.

The growing population of the treaty ports led to an increase in businesses that provided everything for daily necessities to English newspapers. There was a steady inflow of tourists who bought souvenirs and photos of their trips. Photo studios and the work of photographers reveals this world. Current research has been studying the interactions that were taking place in the foreign enclaves between foreigners and Japanese at all levels of society and speeding the process of change. The treaty ports were not just enclaves of foreign domination but can be seen as agents of change.

Yokohama became a major silk trading port for British, French and U.S. merchants. In 1870 the first daily newspaper was published for there, and in 1872 the first railway line was laid connecting Yokohama to Shinagawa, and the first power plant built in 1887 by a British merchant. These enclaves brought in the first signs of modern technology and industrial development.

8.2.6 The Iwakura Mission and Treaty Revision

The Japanese government sent official delegations to Europe to study its institutions and culture and get to understand this new world. The largest and most important mission was named after its leader, Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883). A court official who played an important role in the Meiji period, drafting the Five Article Charter Oath of 1868. The Iwakura Mission (1871-1873) was sent to Europe and the U.S to end the unequal treaties and study how to modernize the country. There were 48 members and each studied different areas in close detail.

These studies helped them to change Japanese practices. For instance, the mission studied how European courts functioned, how they were organized, and their ceremonies and even the way they dressed. The Japanese imperial court was then remodeled along European lines. The emperor and his wife, and family appeared in official portraits, the emperor was dressed in military clothes and his wife in European dress. This was very different from earlier practices. The emperor did not, for instance, have a 'wife', there many imperial consorts. The first imperial marriage was of the Taisho emperor, (ruled 1912-1926). The marriage ceremony was specially designed, and the first time an emperor was 'married' formally.

The Iwakura mission also saw the necessity of revising the the civil and criminal codes along European lines. The year 1871 the Iwakura mission returned was the time when there were debates about whether to invade Korea with some officials arguing for concentrating on treaty revision as the most urgent business. Okubo Toshimichi (1830-1878) clearly stated: "The first thing is to revise the treaties, the Korean business after that." If they are not revised, he felt that England and France will send armies on the pretext of an internally insecure situation.

8.2.7 End of Unequal Treaties

Formal negotiations for abolition of unequal treaties were started with the Western powers in 1886 but there were differing opinions about when to begin negotiations and on what terms. For instance, there was opposition to having mixed courts with foreign and Japanese judges, and to the extension of land ownership and mining rights to foreigners. Unrestricted residence of foreigners in any part of Japan and freedom to travel all over Japan was also opposed.

Finally, in 1893 negotiations with Britain on the issue started making some progress. In 1894, Foreign Minister Aoki Shuzo went to London and signed a treaty on 16 July 1894. This treaty abolished extra-territoriality, subject to the implementation of the new codes. Thus, the special rights to foreign settlements came to an end. The changes were to take effect from 1899. The control over tariffs was however, to continue for a further twelve years thereafter meaning that Japan regained full tariff autonomy only in 1911. Similar treaties with other powers also followed. This process helped Japan move one step forward towards her goal of achieving equality with the Western powers.

8.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF COLONIAL TERRITORIES

Kanai En, a professor in Tokyo imperial University writing in 1903 stressed that social and foreign policy were the two most important responses of the modern nation. Foreign policy should promote good relations with the powers, and the government should send migrants abroad to establish an imperialist policy. Social policies, as we have seen were designed to create a patriotic citizenry and also establish that Japan followed the same laws as the Western countries. This was the case with foreign policy also.

As seen in the earlier units the settlement of mainland Japanese in Hokkaido, Okinawa and outlying islands, was a way of providing land and reducing social tensions. It also marked Japan's recognition that its boundaries had to be clearly defined and recognized in international law. It was also felt that those who had gone to settle in Hokkaido were ideally suited to go to Latin America.

Japanese emigration picked up pace to the U.S after the exclusion of Chinese in 1882, and from 1897 they began to go first Mexico, as labour on the coffee estates, and then to other parts of Latin America. The Japanese government encouraged this and established 'emigration companies'. Most Japanese went to the colonies.

By the end of WWII there were some 2 million Japanese in China, 850,000 in Korea, 300,000 in Taiwan, and formed a majority of the population in the South Pacific islands. In the prevailing climate imperialism was regarded as a sign of

civilization. Just as Western countries were advanced so Japan showed its level of civilization by sending emigrants to populate other lands.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Briefly discuss the process of reform of laws and prisons in Japan after Meiji restoration.

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- 2) Describe Japan's efforts to abolish unequal treaties with Western Powers.

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8.4 BECOMING CIVILIZED: THE IDEA OF RACE

One way of underlining the advanced state of Japanese civilization was to show other people under its control as barbarians. In the thinking prevalent at that time the world was divided into a hierarchy of 'races' and these attitudes were starkly evident in all areas of life and the relations between nations. Western colonization was driven by the idea of a civilizing mission. One of the ways these ideas of Western power and superiority were spread was through government sponsored exhibitions held in Europe and the United States. The first was the Paris exposition in 1899 where the fruits of Western civilization were highlighted along with the 'inferior races'. People from the colonies were exhibited, like animals in a zoo, to further underline the achievements of the 'civilized nations'. These exhibitions were quickly emulated by the government in Japan as well.

8.4.1 The Modern Concept of Race

The word race, in its modern usage, first appeared in the magazine, *Nihonjin* in the early 1890's where it was used to stress the purity of the Japanese. The German word *volk* or 'people' was translated as nationality (*minzoku*) but this interpreted in racial terms (*jinshu*). This idea of a different ethnicity was first used with reference to the Ainu. In the premodern period they were seen as barbarians (*iteki* or *ijin*), as different but not necessarily inferior. They were expected to live and dress according to their practices but from the Meiji period they became objects to be improved and civilized.

Kawamura Mineta has argued that the depiction of native (dojin) or savages (yabanjin) of Taiwan or Micronesia or the untamed savages of Taiwan (seiban) in popular literature was a way to confirm that the Japanese had become civilized.

8.4.2 Exhibiting 'Inferior Races'

One of the major scholars who developed ideas of race and played an important role in shaping public debate and policies was Tsuboi Shogoro (1863-1913). He planned an elaborate exhibition to depict the races of the world for the Fifth Japan Industrial Exposition held in April 1903 in Osaka. The exhibition would display Japan's achievements in modern industry as well as the 'inferior races' from its colonies and neighbours. Tsuboi had made a map of racial distribution of and identified fifty races. At the industrial exhibition Tsuboi planned to use dolls to represent these races.

However, for Japan's territories and neighbours, such as the Ainu and Okinawan islanders, and other indigenous people, Tsuboi planned to use real people. He employed students mainly from these areas who were in Japan. The Chinese ambassador protested so the Chinese were not shown. However, he did use Korean women as well as people from Taiwan, Malaya, Java and, it is reported from Madras, and even some from Turkey. These people were dressed in their native costumes and moved around the pavilion, as living exhibits, selling handicrafts and other local products. There were protests from Okinawa. The practice of exhibiting people was then used in exhibitions in the United States and Europe as a display of power. The Japanese also used this to underline their level of civilization, even as Japanese ideologues were arguing for a common Asian or East Asian identity. Modern nationalism in Japan was deeply embedded in exclusion and difference.

8.5 EAST ASIA: CONTENDING IMPERIALISMS

The Meiji restoration was a major event in East Asia because it underlined the emergence of a new power in this region. China had been the 'central kingdom' but now it had to deal on an equal footing with what had been considered a small island kingdom on its periphery. The East Asian region saw Russia expanding across the north from the seventeenth century in search of warm water ports.

The European powers had already established their control over parts of Asia. Great Britain controlled India. It traded in Indian opium, used Indian soldiers and established bases in South-east Asia and East Asia. France was in Indo-China, the Spanish and Portuguese and Dutch were now reduced to minor holdings, and Italy and Germany were trying to gain some territories. Similarly across the Pacific the U.S was establishing an empire, that is largely overlooked. Russia expanded its control over Siberia, but because the port of Vladivostok was closed in the winter it looked further for warm water ports that would be open throughout the year.

The United States, had declared independence only in 1776 and then annexed territories to expand to the Pacific coast. In 1840 it took over half of Mexico, and after the war with Spain in 1898, it went on to control thirteen overseas territories in the Pacific and Caribbean. The majority of the nineteen million colonial people it ruled lived in the Philippines, which only became independent in 1946. Puerto

Rico, (it became a commonwealth in 1952) and Hawaii, incorporated as a state in 1959. Rudyard Kipling wrote his famous poem, 'The White Man's Burden', as advice to the American people. U.S leaders were strong advocates of the colonial idea of 'civilizing' the natives.

China had to contend intellectually, as well with the idea of Japan as an equal power. This was a change that the Chinese did not immediately accept. Japan began the process of modernizing within this imperialist geo-political environment. It had to contend with the traditional dominance of China to gain control over territories in the region, and at the same time content with Russia, the U.S. and Great Britain. In it's search for equality it used a mixture of negotiations and military interventions to gradually establish it's control. Wars with China (1894-95) showed that it had overtaken it's model in becoming a modern nation, and over Russia (1904-1905) that it could defeat a Western power. The victory over Russia was the symbolic moment when Japan became an equal of the Western powers.

8.5.1 Turning Korea into a Colony

Korea occupied a tributary relationship with China. The first step for Japan was to establish the independence of Korea. Along with the Western powers it tried to establish treaty relations with Korea by threatening displays of power. In 1876 it finally signed a treaty which gave it extra-territorial rights, opened ports and recognized that Korea was an independent country. Korea's independence from China was a still a debated question.

The situation in Korea was politically divided. The Korean court was split into opposing groups with one supporting China and the other, around the Queen, in favour of progressive reforms and for establishing relations with the Japanese. Japanese liberals, including Fukuzawa Yukichi, saw the progressive forces as harbingers of progress and civilization. They urged their government to support the progressive group to reform Korea and open it to the world. In this the liberals and the Japanese government were in agreement on the need to civilize Korea.

There was an economic dimension to the problem as well. Korea was becoming an important market for the nascent Japanese textile industry and business was also in favour of getting the backing of the government to increase their business.

The strategic thinking within the defence establishment saw Korea as necessary for the protection of Japan. Famously, it was called 'the dagger pointing at the heart of Japan'. A look at the map will show you why. Security, as argued by Yamagata Aritomo, a former Chief of Staff and prime minister in 1890, said that the main islands were within Japan's sovereignty but territories that lay outside, like Korea, but within what he called the 'line of advantage' were crucial to Japan's security. They could not be under the control of a foreign power and so military planners studied how to bring Korea under their control.

The political situation in Korea was unstable. The progressive group carried out a coup d'etat in 1884, and in response pro-Chinese and conservative groups retaliated. Japanese were killed as they supported the progressive groups. Yuan Shikai, the Chinese Resident gave shelter to the court. Negotiations between the Japanese and Chinese helped to defuse the situation. Japan kept Russia at bay but Korea managed to retain it's independence for a short time.

Internal problems, such as the anti-foreign activities of the Tonghaks, helped by the Chinese led to hostilities and Japan used this opportunity to declare war on China on 1 August 1894, capture Pyongyang in September and establish control. They also crossed into Manchuria and the Liaodong peninsula. China was forced to recognize the full autonomy and independence of Korea by the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895).

8.5.2 Japan's War with China and Nationalism

The war with China (1894-95) further encouraged a virulent nationalism. Writing in 1894 in defence of the war, the Christian thinker Uchimura Kanzo, passionately argued that Japan was fighting a war for a principle. The war he said was not just legally defensible but morally justified. The West has lost its dynamism and passion and it is the East that is now entering a period of growth. China, he stressed, had become the protector of barbarism, and, if its Manchu government continued to rule, it would ruin Asia. It was Japan's victory that would lead to democracy in Asia and give the people freedom to worship, the right to a democratic education, and allow them to enjoy the benefits of free trade. Japan he said was a solidifier of progress in Asia.

Uchimura Kanzo's thinking changed later and he went on to become a defender of democratic principles and a critic of Meiji absolutism. He also became a pacifist against all war and a vocal critic when Japan went to war against Russia.

However, Russia, Germany and France, intervened to prevent Japan from acquiring the Liaodong peninsula, a rich agricultural area, and Japan was forced to accept.

The Triple Intervention as it was called fuelled public anger stirring up nationalism against China. This was further aggravated when Russia acquired the Liaodong peninsula. Britain, Germany and France also acquired more rights in China adding insult to injury.

This opened a debate in Japan around who it should ally with to protect its interests. The former prime minister Ito Hirobumi was in favour of working with Russia but, he lost the political battle to Katsura Taro (1848-1913), who became prime minister. Katsura favoured an alliance with Great Britain, the military and navy also favoured this, as the only way to protect Japan's interests.

8.5.3 Allying With Great Britain

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, favoured by many intellectuals and opinion makers, was signed on 30 January 1902. It established a relationship of equality with the leading Western colonial power and marked a major point a Western power recognized the special interests of Japan in Korea and Britain in China. It was agreed that either of them would take necessary measures to safeguard those interests if threatened by a third power or by disturbances within Korea and China. Both countries agreed to remain neutral if either of them should become involved in a war to protect her interests. It cannot be concluded that by opting for a British alliance Japan showed preference for war with Russia to settle her differences. The British alliance did not prevent Japan from approaching Russia for the settlement of outstanding differences.

The alliance increased Japan's prestige. It also secured British recognition of Japan's special interests in Korea and ensured that France would not come to

Russia's help in the case of a Russo-Japanese war. Britain had prevented a Japanese-Russian Alliance. Russia took the hint and withdrew her troops from Manchuria, which had been left in Manchuria since the Boxer uprising. China was able to resist Russian plans for special privileges in connection with railways in Manchuria.

8.5.4 Japan's War with Russia

Japan's war with Russia began with the battle of Port Arthur made the commanding admiral Togo Heihachiro (1848-1934) a hero in Japan. A Shinto shrine dedicated to him was built, though in his lifetime he had been opposed to the idea. The Japanese fleet destroyed almost all Russian vessels by the end of 1904. It is often pointed out that the Russians did not receive a declaration of war till after the war had begun but this was not necessary under international law. It was only after the war was over, at the Second Hague Peace Conference of 1904 that countries had to issue a formal declaration of war.

In January 1905 the Russian commanding officer surrendered, and was later condemned to death for his decision. The sentence was not carried out. He was pardoned. The land war carried on with heavy Japanese casualties. The Russian Baltic fleet which had sailed around the world arrived in May 1905. Again Admiral Togo engaged them and decimated the fleet at the battle of Tsushima Straits.

The battles were brutal and the combined death total was over 150,000 and some 20,000 Chinese died. The battles were fought between Russia and Japan but on Chinese soil and civilians suffered. The general in command Nogi Maresuke (1849-1912) became a national hero later honoured with a shrine. Nogi and his wife committed ritual suicide on the death of the Meiji emperor. Nogi had wanted to commit suicide after the capture of Port Arthur as he felt he had lost to many soldiers but was stopped.

8.5.5 China and the War

The Chinese government was in position to act and hoped to preserve control over Manchuria, which was not really considered the core area of China. It was not 'han' and beyond the mountain pass (guanwai). Many Chinese journals saw the dangers faced by the ordinary people living this area and criticized government neutrality.

However, even as it became clear that the Japanese would win and that the Japanese were not really going to help China many still favoured Japan against Russia. Liang Qichao was critical of Japanese intentions but he saw the war as a battle between 'races' and favoured the Japanese. Other liberal Chinese journals also saw this as a battle of races and for them the Japanese victory showed that the 'yellow races' were not inferior.

Some even thought that ultimately Japanese heroes like Admiral Togo drew their strength and inspiration from Chinese classical culture. For the Manchurians caught in the wars their main concern seems to have been to find safety and work when they could. They don't seem to have been as anti-Russian as the rest of China.

SunYatsen (1866-1925) hailed the victory as pointing the way ahead for Asia and Lu Xun (1881-1936), the iconic Chinese writer was a medical student in

Sendai, Japan at the time of the war. The students were shown pictures of the war, one of a Chinese being executed by Japanese soldiers for spying for the Russians. The Japanese student applauded but Lu Xun was shocked by the killing but also by what he saw as the apathetic face of the Chinese being executed. He resolved to give up his medical studies and become a writer to revive the Chinese from their apathy.

8.5.6 The Effects of the War in Japan

Japan's victory over Russia strengthened her drive to control Manchuria and subsequently the infamous 21 Demands of 1915, the Manchurian invasion of 1931, and the second Sino-Japanese war (1937-1945). These aggressive moves fed Chinese nationalism that became increasingly anti-Japanese. Russia emerged as a possible friend with which it could have a 'special relationship', an idea that carried over, after the Russian revolution, to relations with the USSR.

The war was viewed very differently. It was politically divisive with many arguing in favour and others in vehement opposition.

The Russo-Japanese War was seen by one of its Japanese defenders, Baron Suematsu, as the greatest war recorded and he reflected on "how faithfully Japan has maintained her ambition of deserving the name of a civilized nation". The Baron reached London in March 1905 to defend the war. He wrote extensively and his writings were collected in *The Risen Sun*. He argued that Japan had shown great moral courage in the cause of humanity and civilization.

What were the debates and how were the battle lines drawn? In a large measure the voices against the war were of socialists and Christians who argued that this was a war that would not benefit the people. The Christian-socialist unity to oppose the war was not only based on a moral repugnance but also on the understanding that an expansionist policy was not in the social interests of the common man. Hence their stress also on active measures to reform society.

The split after the Russo-Japanese war arose out of the reluctance of the socialists to take political steps to realise their goal. The Buddhist journalist Mori Saian (1871-1938), who edited the newspaper, *Muro Shinpo*, from 1900 was a supporter of the war, but he believed in toleration and the need to allow other opinions. He published articles against the war written by Christians like Kanno Sugako (1881-1911) or Arhahata Kanson (1887-1981) wrote arguing that this war was driven by the capitalists and the people were paying with their lives.

Okakura Tenshin (1862-1913), the cultural bureaucrat who talked of an Asian unity in *The Awakening of Japan*, (written in 1904, though his notes for it are from 1903). He opens his analysis with the Night of Asia and how Japan has awakened and why this awakening is seen to pose a threat to Western nations. The task, he asserts, is to "struggle for a national reawakening" and to bring an Oriental nation to face the terrible exigencies of a modern nation. How should this be done? His answer in *The Awakening of Japan*, is, "We have wandered among ideals, let us awaken once more to the actual". that is we need to understand the uses of power of the Western countries.

The war was widely reported and journalists and writers, as well as ships from the other powers watched the battles and reported on it. Paintings and woodblock

prints, postcards and photographs circulated widely taking scenes of the battles around the world. Communications technologies allowed events to be reported quickly and across the globe. This was a war watched by the world. Postcards were cheap and easy to circulate or collect and printers began printing postcards. John Dower has shown that the war fuelled a boom in postcards in Japan and around the world.

Japan won the war against Russia but it treated Russian prisoners, who were considered white Europeans, quite well. Ironical, as in Europe the Russians were regarded as barbarians. The Russian writer Dostoevsky wrote in, *A Writer's Diary*, "we are more Asian than European. In Asia we can be European. In Europe we are slaves."

Napoleon was dismissive, "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar". Tartar referred to Mongols, who were considered Asian and uncivilized.

The Japanese asked the U.S to help negotiate a treaty with Russia. The treaty signed in Portsmouth 1905 gave control over Korea and South Manchuria, and southern Sakhalin to the Japanese but no indemnity. The Japanese and the public had expected an indemnity and there was a public outcry. The U.S president Theodore Roosevelt, who played the middleman, was more interested in balancing interests. Public opinion in the U.S largely supported Japan, and saw Russia as the aggressor. These views would change in the coming decades.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Discuss how Japan turned Korea into a colony.

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- 2) What were the impact of Wars on Japanese society?

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8.6 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit we have seen how Japan emerged as a major power in global affairs and ended the unequal treaties it had been forced to sign with a very short period. The Japanese government did this by studying international law and practice, carefully negotiating with individual powers and meeting the objections of Western powers by changing its legal and political institutions.

Japan built the economic basis for growth and military power and carved out an empire to become an imperialist power. It established its hold over Korea and Formosa (Taiwan) and south Manchuria. Korea would become a colony in 1910, and Japan would expand its hold on the Chinese mainland, as well as in the Pacific islands.

The wars it fought exacted a burden from the people, both in terms of the lives lost and the heavy expenditure to finance the wars. The war against Russia was hailed as a victory for Asia but in Japan there was opposition. Japanese policies had industrialized what had been a largely rural economy, and made a country with little foreign contact into a global imperial power within some three decades.

8.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Section 8.2 especially Sub-section 8.2.1
- 2) See Sub-section 8.2.4

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See Sub-section 8.5.1
- 2) See Sub-section 8.5.6