



JAPAN AND IMPERIALISM, 1853-1945

BY JAMES L. HUFFMAN — KEY ISSUES IN ASIAN STUDIES BOOK SERIES

SUGGESTED COURSES:

- Japanese History
- Anthropology
- Politics
- Imperialism - East Asia

KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS:

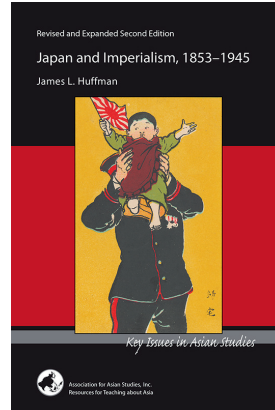
- Imperialism: one nation's assertion of control over another people, either by direct acquisition or by more informal means, usually economic, military, or political.
- Historical contingencies: gave rise to Japanese imperialism and shaped its nature.
- Japanese imperialism was both distinctive and universal--i.e., it shared many features of Western imperialist experiences but differed from those in many ways.
- Japan's imperialist policies and actions changed and evolved across the modern decades.
- The worldwide response to the Great Depression prompted Japan to seek autarky (economic self-sufficiency), which in turn intensified its focus on strengthening its colonial empire.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What role did the actions of the Western powers play in the early growth of Japanese imperialism?
2. Which aspects of Japanese imperialism were universal? Which were distinctive--typical of Japan alone?
3. This book suggested that the Japanese public mood changed from seeking survival to desiring expansion late in the 19th century. Why and with what effect?
4. Was imperialism essentially good or bad for Korea? Taiwan? Manchuria? Explain with examples.
5. What role did the "three crises" of 1929-1931 play in the growth of Japanese imperialism?
6. Could Japan have modernized without imperialist or militarist policies?
7. What lessons does the Japanese experience offer for policy-makers in contemporary America and Europe?

EXTERNAL LINKS & RESOURCES:

- "Facing History & Ourselves" <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/japanese-imperialism-and-road-war>
- The Japan Society, "About Japan: A Teacher's Resource" https://aboutjapan.japansociety.org/page/footer/search_1?theme=history
- MIT, "Visualizing Cultures" https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/home/vis_menu.html



Paperback (\$17.00):
9780924304828

E-Book (\$16.99):
9781952636066

108 pages

For desk and examination copies, visit:
<https://cup.columbia.edu/for-instructors>

Purchase copies at:
<https://www.asianstudies.org/store/huffman/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. THREATENED BY IMPERIALISM (1853–1868)

2. THE MEIJI ORDER: ESTABLISHING BORDERS (1868–1890)

3. THE IMPERIALIST TURN (1890–1905)

4. PURSUING THE LOGIC OF EMPIRE (1905–1919)

5. QUIETER EXPANSION (1919–1929)

6. THREE CRISES (1929–1932)

7. SELF-SUFFICIENCY: THE ELUSIVE GOAL (1932–1937)

8. THE END OF EMPIRE (1937–1945)

“James Huffman offers a lucid chronological account of Japan’s experience first as a target and then as an increasingly committed practitioner of imperialism. He provides an eminently accessible and richly illustrated narrative, with due attention to key interpretive issues, that is wonderfully suited for classroom use. An especially attractive feature of the work is the way each chapter opens with a personal vignette of a victim, a critic, or an agent of imperialism and its effects—giving a tangible, human form to one of the defining forces that shaped modern Japan and its international relations through World War II.”

— STEVEN J. ERICSON, Dartmouth College

“This concise and readable introduction to a complex subject—the rise and fall of Japan as an imperialist power—will be a splendid addition to the reading list of any course on modern Japanese history. Teachers will appreciate Huffman’s ability to raise key issues of analysis and interpretation, and students will appreciate his ability to discuss them with clear and lively prose.”

— WILLIAM H. BONSALL, University of Pennsylvania

**EXPLORE THE WHOLE RANGE
OF AAS PUBLICATIONS AT:**



www.asianstudies.org/store/

