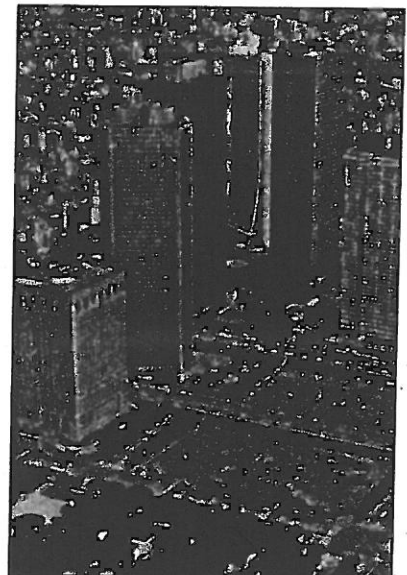
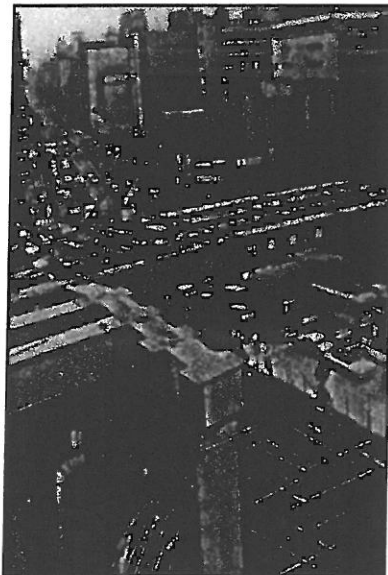


Japan 1945 - 1989

Re-creating a Modern Nation



A Humanities Approach to Japanese History, Part IV

**Social Science Education Consortium
Boulder, Colorado**

Japan 1945-1989: Re-creating a Modern Nation

**A Humanities Approach to Japanese History,
Part IV**

**by
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**Social Science Education Consortium
Boulder, Colorado
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ORDERING INFORMATION

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Meiji Japan: The Dynamics of National Change
Imperial Japan: Expansion and War

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Embracing Democracy: Popularizing of Democratic Values

Introduction: Arguably, the most significant legacy of the Occupation for both Japan and the United States was the issuing of a new Japanese constitution—the Constitution of 1947, also known as the Showa Constitution (after the emperor) or the MacArthur Constitution. The United States set a new constitution as a major goal of the Occupation. MacArthur assigned the Japanese Diet to write a new constitution, but their draft was unsatisfactory to him because it did not make fundamental changes to the political system. SCAP, the U.S. political-military administration of the Occupation in Japan, assembled a committee of SCAP staff, all Americans, to write a totally new constitution for Japan. Among the landmark provisions of this document were (1) the redefinition of the emperor from sacred leader of the country to symbolic (but powerless) head of state, (2) universal suffrage, (3) a progressive delineation of the rights of citizens, and (4) Article 9, the prohibition of war as a national policy.

Over the years, Japanese and Americans alike have criticized this constitution as a document that imposed foreign political and legal concepts on an occupied people in the name of democracy. John Dower, in *Embracing Defeat*, has given the process of promulgating this constitution the oxymoronic title “democracy from above.” Many in Japan and the United States assumed that the constitution would be dismantled as soon as the Occupation ended and Japanese had the freedom to write their own document. Although the constitution is continuously debated, however, it has never been amended (as of January 2002).

How did Japanese people make this constitution and its underlying principles their own? This complicated question is the subject of much scholarly and political discussion. Students explore the Japanese people’s adoption, or embrace, of the constitution in this lesson and Lesson 4. We recommend that teachers use these two lessons together.

Objectives: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss changes in the Japanese political and social systems brought about by the Constitution of 1947.
2. Consider processes through which Japanese were encouraged to identify with and value a constitution imposed by a foreign occupying nation.
3. Analyze the role of public campaigns, propaganda, and formal and informal education in socializing and politicizing citizens.
4. Apply knowledge to create a persuasive poster.

Time Required: 2-3 class periods, plus homework

Materials: Enough copies of Handout 3A for one-eighth of the class to have each poster—all students will need the first page of the handout and the Handout Answer Key; copies of Handouts 3B through 3D for all students; Transparency 3A (on unit CD-ROM); computer and projector; butcher or poster paper; markers

Procedure:

Part I: Educating for a Democracy

1. Review with students the American objectives for the Occupation as discussed in Lesson 2—the demilitarization and democratization of Japan. Inform students that the most significant legacy of the Occupation was arguably the new constitution of 1947. Using **Background Notes 1**, give an overview of the process by which the 1947 constitution was written. Key points to include are:

- MacArthur’s directive to the Japanese government to revise the constitution of 1889.
- MacArthur’s dissatisfaction with the minor changes Japanese politicians made.
- MacArthur’s directive to a SCAP committee to write a new constitution in six days.
- The social and political philosophies of the New Deal that motivated the constitution’s American authors, as well as key provisions of the new constitution.

Explain to students that, in the remainder of this lesson, they will look at the constitution devised by the American occupiers for Japan and begin to consider processes by which the Japanese people came to understand, accept, and identify with this new constitution.

2. Tell the class that the constitution written by SCAP was such a radical departure from Japan’s political tradition that a massive campaign was necessary to inform and educate people throughout the country as to what was expected of them as “citizens” in a democracy, rather than subjects in an absolute monarchy. One technique that SCAP used was dropping leaflets throughout the Japanese countryside to alert rural citizens to the new constitution. Another effort, undertaken with assistance from the Japanese government, was a political poster campaign to educate Japanese adults about the changes in their political lives—both rights and responsibilities. Eight posters on the constitution were developed and displayed widely in Japan between 1947 and 1949.

3. Divide the class into eight groups, giving each group one poster reproduction from Handout 3A. Explain that the top section of each poster depicts pre-surrender Japanese society, as interpreted by SCAP, and the bottom illustrates specific changes brought about by the new constitution. In this activity, each group will simulate the process of learning about the constitution much as ordinary Japanese did in the late 1940s. Each group’s assignment is to infer the specific political changes from prewar to post-surrender Japan that the poster is addressing. The analysis guide (page 1 of the handout) will help.

Allow students 10 minutes to discuss the posters in their groups. Next, distribute the Handout 3A Answer Key to students. Explain that the answer key provides the SCAP explanation of each poster, written at the time. Allow time for students to consider the language and tone of the messages and to compare their understanding of their poster with the official explanation.

4. Distribute Handout 3B. Working with Handouts 3A and 3B, each group should identify the articles and chapters in the 1947 constitution their poster addresses. Alert students that more than one section of the constitution may be incorporated into a poster. What additional information from the constitution helps clarify the poster? Allow 10 minutes for this task.

5. Ask each group to pick a spokesperson to present group findings to the entire class. Check correct answers with the **Handout 3B Answer Key**. In class discussion of all eight posters, ask students to consider the following:

- How do these posters compare with public literacy campaigns or other public awareness campaigns in this country, both now and through history? Give examples.
- How significant were changes from Japan's old society to the new society to be governed by the 1947 constitution?
- Based on your work with previous lessons in this unit, how do you think Japanese people reacted to such political and social changes, and why?

6. (Optional) Return to Handout 3B and direct students' attention to Chapter I, "The Emperor," and Chapter II, "Renunciation of War." Instruct the students that, as a group, they should read these two sections, choose one, and construct a "before and after" poster using text and pictures to educate the rest of the class on their interpretation of this part of the constitution. Each group should present its poster to the class.

7. Explain that, throughout the postwar years, Japanese people made this 1947 constitution, and the democratic principles underlying it, their own. How did they interpret and act on their new democratic rights? Ask students to keep this question in mind as you continue with this unit.

Part II: Embracing Democracy

1. Explain that for Japan—a country undergoing a radical shift in national political and social structure—a vital component in ensuring the constitution and democracy was to educate Japan's next generations, the children who would govern Japan after the Occupation ended. Ask students to comment on how young people are taught to embrace the U.S. political system and U.S. political values. What do they think is the most fundamental tool in this process? Lead students to a recognition of the critical role of education in helping them understand their rights and responsibilities in the United States and respect U.S. political processes, including the system's avenues for dissent and protest. Ask if students can name specific practices in elementary and secondary schools that promote this process. *Students may note courses in civics, government, and history; school, state, and national competitions; education about and observation of national holidays—particularly in elementary school—as well as songs and the Pledge of Allegiance.*

Explain that political education had been an important tool of the Japanese government in mobilizing Japanese before and during the war. Through a variety of mechanisms, the government had inspired reverence for the emperor, loyalty, and sacrifice from its people. The effectiveness of prewar and wartime Japanese political education efforts was a key concern for the Occupation forces, and political education was equally important in the immediate postwar years, but with the opposite goals of achieving democratization and demilitarization.

2. To get a glimpse of prewar political education, introduce Japan's Imperial Rescript on Education, written during the Meiji period, as Japan modernized and the Japanese government undertook campaigns to build a feeling of nationhood and national pride among the Japanese people. The Imperial Rescript was written within a year of our Pledge of Allegiance, which was created to serve a comparable purpose in the United States. Using **Background Notes 2**, explain the background of the Imperial Rescript. Next, distribute Handout 3C, focusing students' attention on the Imperial Rescript. Ask students to analyze the document as outlined in the directions. Discuss findings with students, using the **Handout 3C Answer Key** as a guide.

3. Ask for a volunteer to identify what was going on in Japan and Asia in the 1930s, when Japan was engaged in territorial takeover in Asia. By 1938, Japan had invaded and occupied China and other Asian countries. As Japan moved further into war, instilling patriotism

and support for the war effort throughout society was critical. It may have been most important among young men, who would provide the fighting forces for the war effort.

Have a student volunteer read aloud the second document in Handout 3C, which presents ideas about patriotism promulgated by a Japanese textbook in the 1930s. Conduct a class discussion comparing the tone and messages of the Imperial Rescript and the 1930s text, asking:

- Do you see change or continuity in the messages across time?
- How are students taught to feel about the emperor? What is the connection between emperor and country in these two documents?
- What effect on students would constant repetition of the Imperial Rescript over 10 years of elementary and secondary school have?
- How do you think the American occupying forces reacted to the Imperial Rescript and some Japanese textbooks? *Students should be able to draw from Lesson 1 to talk about U.S. censorship of Japanese textbooks during the Occupation.*

4. Next, move to a consideration of how the Occupation forces and Japanese government used similar educational vehicles for political *re-education* following Japan's surrender. Show students Transparency 3A, explaining that, according to historian John Dower, the most popular slogan among Japanese in the post-surrender days was "Heiwa Kokka Kensetsu: Construct a Nation of Peace." Schools used this phrase as practice for student calligraphy lessons. The sample below, which received a circle of approval from the teacher, is the calligraphy of this phrase done by 12-year-old Crown Prince Akihito shortly after the war ended. Akihito succeeded his father as emperor of Japan in 1989. Briefly discuss the focus questions:



- What effect would the use of this phrase in calligraphy classes have on children?
- What would be the effect for Japanese children of seeing the Crown Prince's calligraphy of this phrase?
- How is this persuasion technique similar to and different from techniques used in the Imperial Rescript or the 1930s textbook?

5. Distribute Handout 3D, explaining that it contains excerpts from a famous Japanese children's book published in 1949, two years after the constitution was adopted. Inform students that the book was written by Kanamori Tokujiro, a leading member of Japan's government in the immediate postwar years. Kanamori had been an author of the Japanese constitutional revision that MacArthur rejected. He had fought for maintaining the sacred power of the emperor in the final negotiations on the constitution in 1947. In other words, he was a conservative opponent of the constitution or democracy in the early postwar years. By 1949, however, his children's book tells a different story.

As a class, look at the Introduction and Table of Contents. Discuss the author's intent. What is the tone of the author's message? Discuss the Table of Contents—which chapters look typical for a book on government? Which chapter names seem unusual?

For homework, have students read all selections from *A Story About the Constitution* provided in Handout 3D. Ask students to consider how the illustrations, which the author felt were essential to the story he was telling, help support the text's message. Ask students to make notes from their reading on techniques used to create a bond between readers and the new

constitution and how these techniques and the tone and information in the book compare to the constitution posters that students analyzed at the beginning of this lesson.

6. Following the homework assignment, spend 10 to 15 minutes in class discussing the children's book, paying special attention to the topics above. Some points to address might include: the emphasis on feelings about country, emperor, and national symbols; the discussion of the emperor in the story; emphasis on and warnings about the future; the use of terms such as *gift* to describe the constitution. The affective tone of the story contrasts to the more straightforward presentation of the constitution posters for adults, which emphasized changes and benefits of the new system; the story addressed a broader concept of "citizen."

7. Ask students to form small groups for a culminating or assessment task, creating a poster of "An Ideal Citizen in Postwar Japan." Distribute poster paper and markers. Ask students to use what they have learned about persuasive posters and public awareness campaigns, as well as their knowledge of democratic and constitutional change in Japan under the Occupation, to brainstorm the attributes of a good Japanese citizen during the Occupation years. Students should then link these attributes with parts of the body. For example, hands would be necessary to complete a ballot on election day, eyes to read the news and be a well-informed citizen, and so on. In groups, students are to draw a figure of a person, then label body parts and how they would be used by a good citizen. Have students share posters and discuss at the end of class.

Recommended Films: *No Regrets for Our Youth*, a 1946 film by Kurosawa Akira, is considered by some critics to be the best example of the Occupation's democratization films. Based on actual cases—the 1933 persecution of a Kyoto University professor for his liberal views and the 1941 Ozaki-Sorge Spy Ring case, which resulted in the execution of two men as Russian spies—the film becomes a postwar rejection of the national policies that had led Japan to war and ultimately to defeat. The focus is on dissenters who stood for intellectual and political freedom in the struggle against Japan's aggressive militarism. The main character is Yukie, the professor's intelligent and cultured but sheltered daughter. When she falls in love with and follows Noge, one of the professor's more radical students, her secure university world changes. She is transformed from a traditional, submissive, apolitical daughter to a strong-willed idealistic woman ready to work and sacrifice for her beliefs. The film's last 38 minutes dramatically show her transformation to a person who represents the new spirit and future of the Japanese people.

Also applicable to this lesson is the documentary *Occupied Japan: An Experiment in Democracy* (PBS Video, 1996), which challenges the established view that the changes in Japan were due primarily to American Occupation policy. The video presents excellent interviews of both Japanese and Americans who played important roles during the Occupation.

Japan's 1947 Constitution

Political scientists generally concur that, for a constitution to work, it must be in accord with the nation's history, traditions, and sociopolitical values. Given this rule of thumb, the experiences of the United States and contemporary Japan make an intriguing comparative study of two very different countries functioning effectively under constitutions created by Americans.

The Showa or MacArthur Constitution of 1947, imposed upon Japan by SCAP under Douglas MacArthur, effected a radical break with Japan's past—its national history, philosophy, and political values.

In the Occupation of Japan, MacArthur sought to eliminate the authoritarianism and militarism that had made Japan's role in World War II possible and to provide in its stead a basis for stable, peaceful, and democratic government. Toward this end, MacArthur instructed the Japanese government to substantially revise the Meiji Constitution that had been in place since 1889. Japanese politicians, essentially satisfied with the existing document, made only minor and, to MacArthur, wholly unsatisfactory revisions. MacArthur then assigned to his American staff the task of drafting a completely new document to govern Japan. Not surprisingly, the document that was finally produced responded to American experience and ideals, often in complete contradiction of Japan's history, traditions, and value system.

The document, written in English and translated into Japanese, superimposed political concepts such as popular sovereignty, equality before the law, balance of powers, and individual rights on a society that had operated under quite different, even contradictory, political and social structures for hundreds of years. The significant gap between Japanese political and social reality on the one hand, and the provisions of the new constitution on the other hand, made that document a truly alien blueprint for Japanese government when it was adopted in 1947.

The 1947 Constitution established a government based on popular sovereignty in a nation firmly rooted in the principle of the sovereignty and divinity of its emperor. It mandated the separation of church and state to a nation in which Shinto—a religion very different in form and substance from Western religions—had come to be acknowledged as a state religion. In its chapter on rights and duties, the 1947 document detailed and guaranteed a broad spectrum of individual rights—a cornerstone of the U.S. political philosophy—to a society that de-emphasized the individual and had no indigenous tradition of individual entitlement as distinct from societal welfare.

Given the benchmarks of a viable constitution, Japan's 1947 Constitution should not have lasted long past the conclusion of the Allied Occupation in 1952. In observing the very obvious gaps between the new constitution and Japanese tradition, informed observers widely predicted that the 1947 Constitution and the government it created would steadily be dismantled by Japanese politicians throughout the 1950s. Instead, the evidence indicates that, over the past five decades, the Japanese people and government have increasingly embraced the constitution and made it their own.

Source: Adapted from Lynn S. Parisi, *The Constitution and Individual Rights in Japan: Lessons for Middle and High School Students* (Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education and National Clearinghouse for United States-Japan Studies, 1992), pp. 2-5. Reproduced by kind permission of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education and the National Clearinghouse for United States-Japan Studies.

As of early 2002, the document is still in place with no major modifications. While aspects of the document are currently under debate, such debate reflects the seriousness with which the Japanese consider the document. Why and how did a document articulating a philosophy and structure of government and society so alien to the Japanese become established in that country? There are several theses to explain the relative longevity and effectiveness of Japan's current constitution.

According to political scientist John Maki, a key to understanding the durability of this foreign-designed and -imposed constitution lies in understanding the Japanese psyche during a unique period in the nation's history. In the period following World War II, the Japanese were traumatized and humiliated by their military defeat. Disillusioned with the government that had led them into a disastrous war, the Japanese people rejected the traditional order and sought to distance themselves from their past. Rather than reject the 1947 Constitution as alien, the Japanese responded by using it as a blueprint and tool for reforming and redefining their society.¹

Analyzing the 1947 Constitution from a cultural and linguistic perspective, Kyoko Inoue presents a contrasting explanation for the endurance of the 1947 Constitution. According to Inoue's analysis, Japanese translators of the 1947 document, written originally in English, encountered political concepts of which they had no knowledge. They translated these concepts in ways consistent with their own knowledge base and Japanese political experience, often with the result that the translation had a different meaning than the American authors had intended. For example, the English version of Article 24 of "The Rights and Duties of the People" established equality of the sexes, a radical break from fundamental Japanese values and social organization. Yet, when translated into Japanese, this article took on the substantially different meaning of fulfillment of each sex within proper roles—a meaning compatible with Japanese tradition.

Inoue concludes that if the Japanese had really understood the democratic ideas of the U.S. version of the constitution, it would have been very difficult for them to accept the document. And, if MacArthur had understood the Japanese translations, he would not have approved the final version. The ultimate acceptance of the document was a reflection of mutual misunderstanding and misinterpretation by the Japanese and Americans.

¹Maki, John, "The Japanese Constitutional Style" in Dan Henderson, ed., *The Constitution of Japan: Its First Twenty Years, 1947-67* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968).

The Imperial Rescript on Education, 1890

The Rescript on Education was issued by Emperor Meiji in October 1890, about a year after the issuance of Japan's first constitution. The document was drafted by three Meiji statesmen, all of whom shared a commitment to creating a national identity that emphasized and idealized conservative Confucian values such as reverence for ancestors, reverence for tradition, filial piety (respect for parents and family), and respect for authority.

According to the Rescript on Education, the goal of education was to instill among young Japanese a sense of Confucian moral duty and respect for the emperor, society, and the family while promoting a sense of national tradition and heritage, national identity, and patriotism. The document was very conservative in tone, reflecting a reaction against the rapid modernization and Westernization of the early Meiji period and a desire to return to traditional Japanese values and customs.

Within months of the issuance of the Rescript on Education, the Meiji government sent copies of the oath to all schools in the country. From the 1890s through World War II, Japanese schoolchildren memorized and recited the Rescript on Education. Schoolchildren began their day by bowing to a picture of the emperor and reciting the rescript with their teachers. The rescript was also an important part of school ceremonies. Standing beside a portrait of the emperor, school principals would conduct a formal reading of the rescript to begin important school functions and assemblies. After Japan's defeat in World War II, the Rescript on Education was repudiated by the government as an ultranationalistic doctrine.

Answer Key for Lesson 3

Handout 3A:

Descriptions of the democracy posters are reprinted below from a publication of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, War Department, Washington, D.C. This publication was released prior to the promulgation of the constitution, to alert U.S. military personnel and other Occupation forces to the content of the posters, which were written in Japanese.

Poster 1

Decentralization of government is stressed in one poster, part of a series prepared by SCAP's government section and the civil information and education section to acquaint the Japanese people of their new rights and responsibilities under the constitution, which will be promulgated May 3. "Then," all appointments, official and unofficial, were made by the central government heads, who also controlled almost all affairs. The central government control reached into all regions and political levels. "Now," the people, represented by a man and woman, elect governors, prefectural officials, and village headmen, and these elected officials take charge of local affairs.

Poster 2

Changes the new constitution makes in the Japanese Diet are shown in this poster, part of a series being shown through Japan in preparation for the constitution's promulgation May 3. SCAP's Civil Information and Education Section and Government Section executed the posters, which are entitled "What the Constitution Means to You as an Individual," to aid the Japanese government in educating the people of their new rights and responsibilities. Before, executive control over the Diet was absolute. Now, control is decentralized.

Poster 3

To aid in campaigns to acquaint the people of Japan with their rights and responsibilities under the new constitution, SCAP's government section and the Civil Information and Education Section have prepared posters contrasting the old wartime society with the new democratic way of life. In a "Then and Now," the emperor on the top pedestal, the nobility, a smaller pedestal next to the emperor, ordinary man on the smallest pedestal, and woman on no pedestal at all. The man and woman comprise "the people." "Now," all the pedestals, loaded on a truck labeled "the constitution," are about to be hauled away. The emperor, the former nobility, man and woman all are on the same level, and all of them are classed as "the people."

Poster 4

Posters explaining the Japanese people's new rights and responsibilities under the constitution which will be promulgated May 3 have been prepared by SCAP's Government Section and the Civil Information and Education Section. Under the old regime, army and naval departments of the cabinet controlled the body. Under the new constitution, cabinet members (including one woman) are all on the same level. All are civilians. On the elevated desk where the military had presided stands a vase of flowers.

Poster 5

Japanese people are learning of their new rights and responsibilities under the constitution, to be promulgated May 3, through posters prepared by SCAP's Government Section and the Civil Information and Education Section. The "Then and Now" series contrasts former supremacy of officials, who were approached in humility bearing gifts, with officials under the new constitution. Now they are the people's employees and all are on the same level.

Poster 6

"What the constitution means to you as an individual," a collection of posters being distributed throughout Japan to acquaint the Japanese people with their new rights and responsibilities under the constitution, features one depicting the "Then and Now" of household life. Before, the husband controlled his wife, arranged his children's marriages, supervised the household and conducted all business affairs. Now, man and wife share equally the household responsibilities and "their marriage is by mutual agreement."

Poster 7

Japanese are learning of their new religious freedom and other rights and privileges which will be theirs when the constitution is promulgated May 3. In a series of posters prepared by SCAP's Government Section and the Civil Information and Education Section, they are shown that under the old setup their religion had been foisted up on them in the form of state controlled Shinto. Now the constitution allows them to worship as they please—in Christian churches, Buddhist Temples, or Shinto Shrines.

Poster 8

Uncontrolled spending of pre-surrender days is contrasted with the regulated expenditures under the new constitution in a poster which is part of a series entitled "What the Constitution Means to You as an Individual," which was prepared by SCAP's Civil Information and Education Section and Government Section. The posters are being circulated throughout Japan to acquaint the people with their new rights and responsibilities under the new constitution. Formerly, taxes paid by the people were funneled into an open box where executives controlled all the cash. Now, taxes are deposited in sealed boxes controlled by the Diet, and expenditures are allotted for schools, roads, public health, and other items for the public good.

Answer Key for Lesson 3

Handout 3B:

- Poster 1:** *Decentralization of government; popular vote: Chapters IV and VII of the Constitution; Chapter III, Article 15.*
- Poster 2:** *Decentralization of power, limits on executive branch; powers of the Diet: Chapter IV of the Constitution.*
- Poster 3:** *Changes in the role of the emperor and in hereditary status: Preamble and Chapter I of the Constitution; Chapter III, Article 14 of the Constitution.*
- Poster 4:** *Elimination of military rule, establishment of civilian government and cabinet: Chapter IV of the Constitution.*
- Poster 5:** *Hierarchical government changed to government of and by the people: Preamble and Chapter I of the Constitution.*
- Poster 6:** *Equal rights for men and women, equal inheritance, mutual consent marriages, equality in household and business affairs: Chapter III, Article 24 of the Constitution.*
- Poster 7:** *Shinto no longer state religion; freedom of religion: Preamble and Chapter III, Article 20 of the Constitution.*
- Poster 8:** *Reform of finances and taxes: Chapter VII of the Constitution.*

Answer Key for Lesson 3

Handout 3C:

Know ye, Our subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting, and have deeply and firmly implanted *virtue**; Our subjects ever *united in loyalty and filial piety* have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the *glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire*, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be *filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters*; as husbands and wives be *harmonious*, as friends true; bear yourselves in *modesty and moderation*; extend your *benevolence* to all; *pursue learning and cultivate arts*, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and *perfect moral* powers; furthermore *advance public good* and promote common interests; always *respect the Constitution and observe the laws*; should emergency arise, *offer yourselves courageously to the State*; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the *best traditions of your forefathers*.

The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may all attain to the same virtue.

*Italicized words and phrases indicate words students should underline.

Posters on the Constitution of 1947

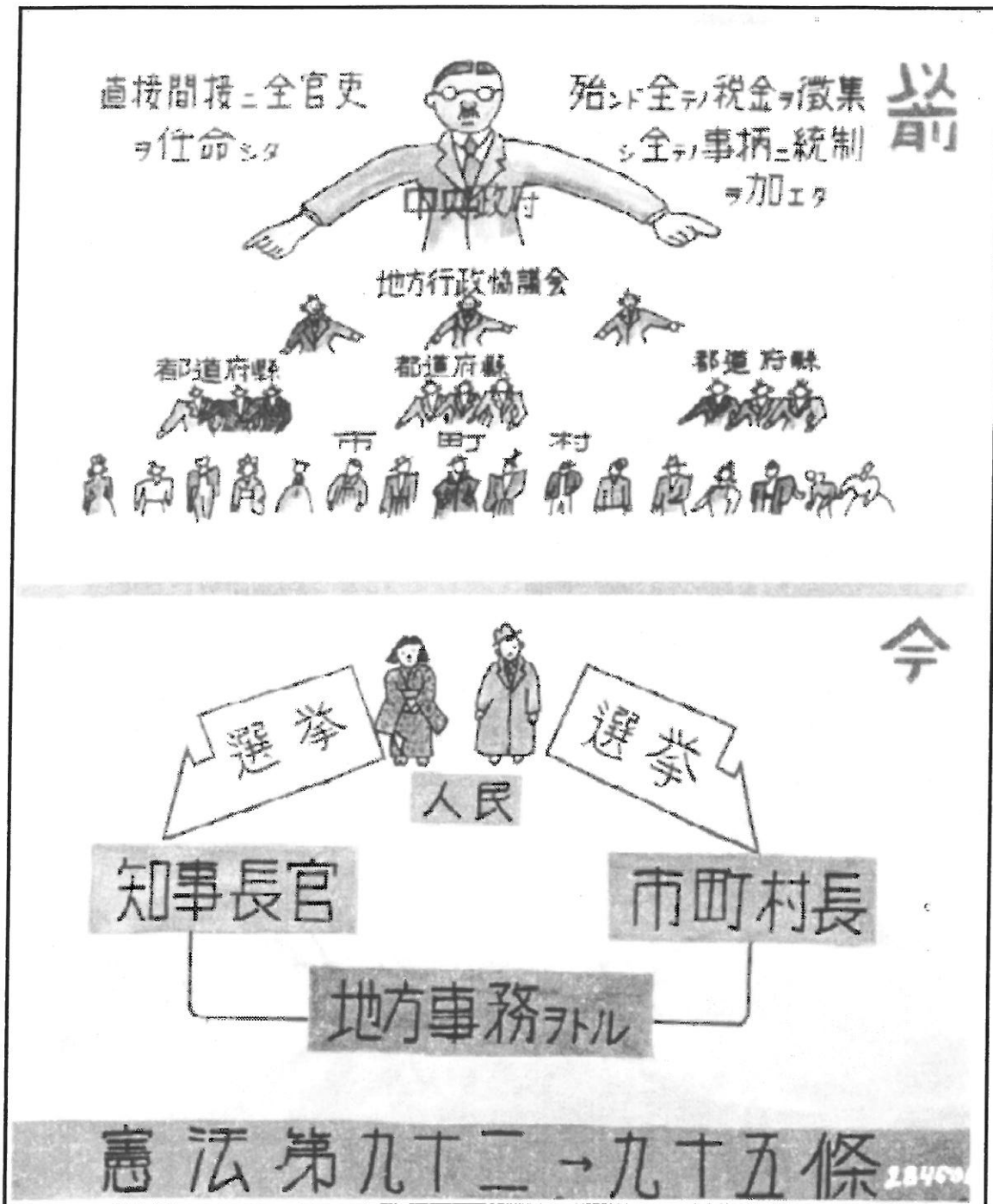
Analysis Guide

Carefully examine the poster assigned to your group. Remember that the top picture shows pre-surrender Japanese society, as interpreted by SCAP. The bottom section illustrates changes brought about by the new constitution. Look for clues to the specific political and social changes your poster addresses.

The following questions should be useful in guiding your analysis of the poster:

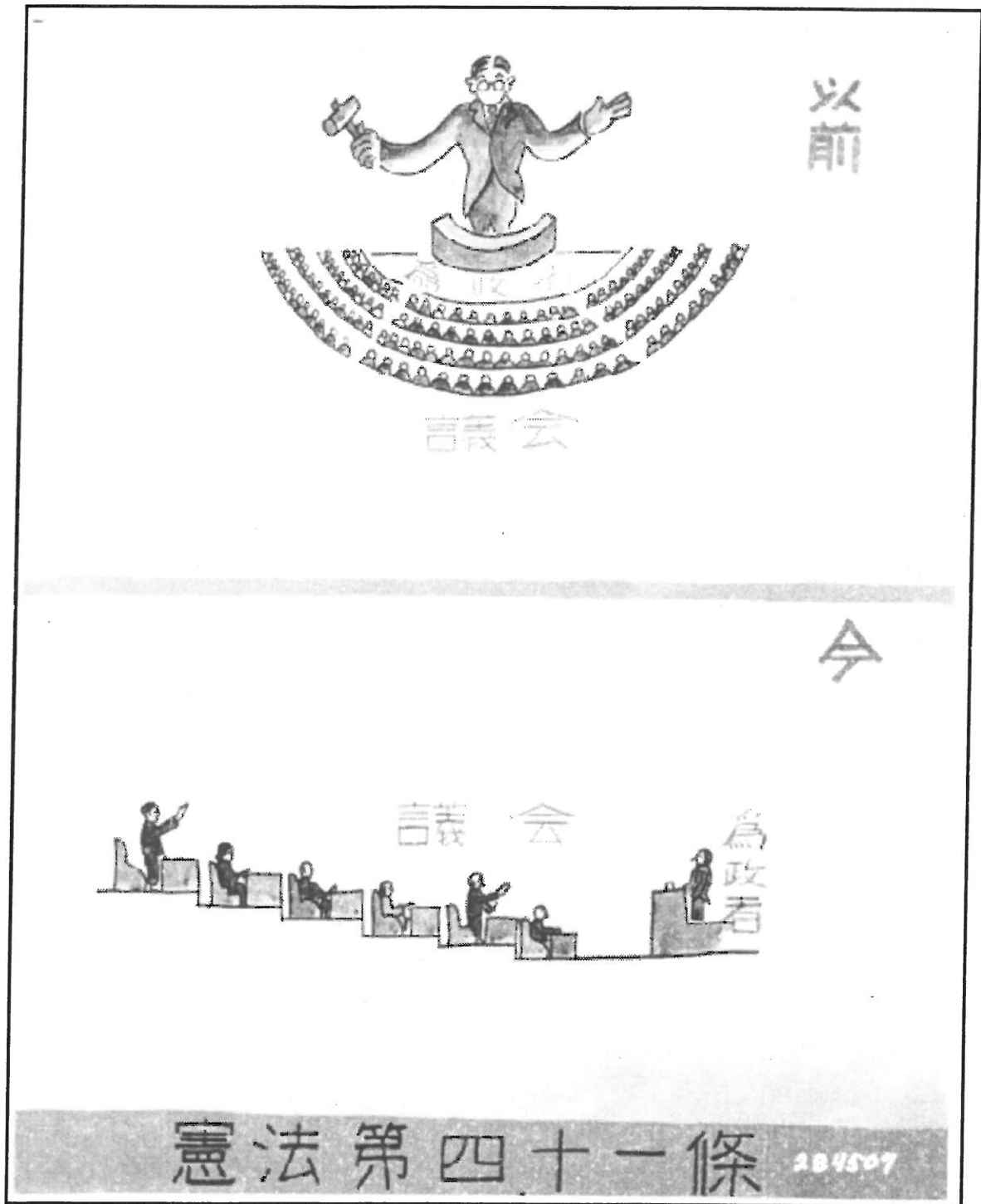
1. What political situations do you think the top picture predicts? Who is in charge? What is the relationship of “the people” to those in charge? What do their facial expressions indicate about this process?
2. What changes in the political situation are conveyed by the bottom picture?
3. How are political relationships and interactions depicted in the sizes and placements of the figures in the top and bottom pictures?
4. Why do you think the poster is presented in pictures, as well as written narrative?
5. A number of the posters depict a man in glasses and mustache. Do you think he represents a particular political figure or a political idea?
6. *If applicable*, what changes in gender roles and responsibilities are reflected in your group’s poster?

Poster 1

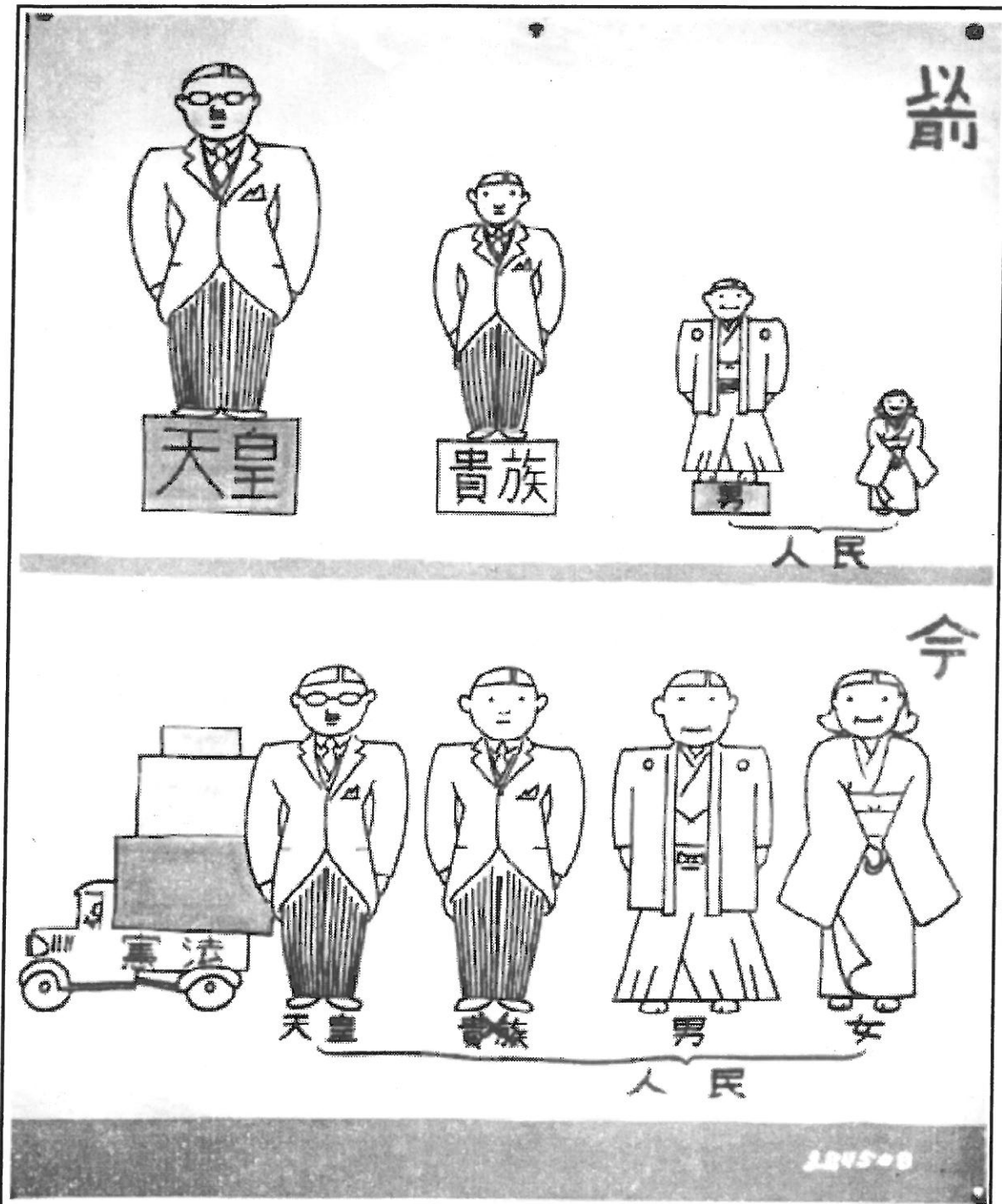


Source: National Archives and Records Administration.

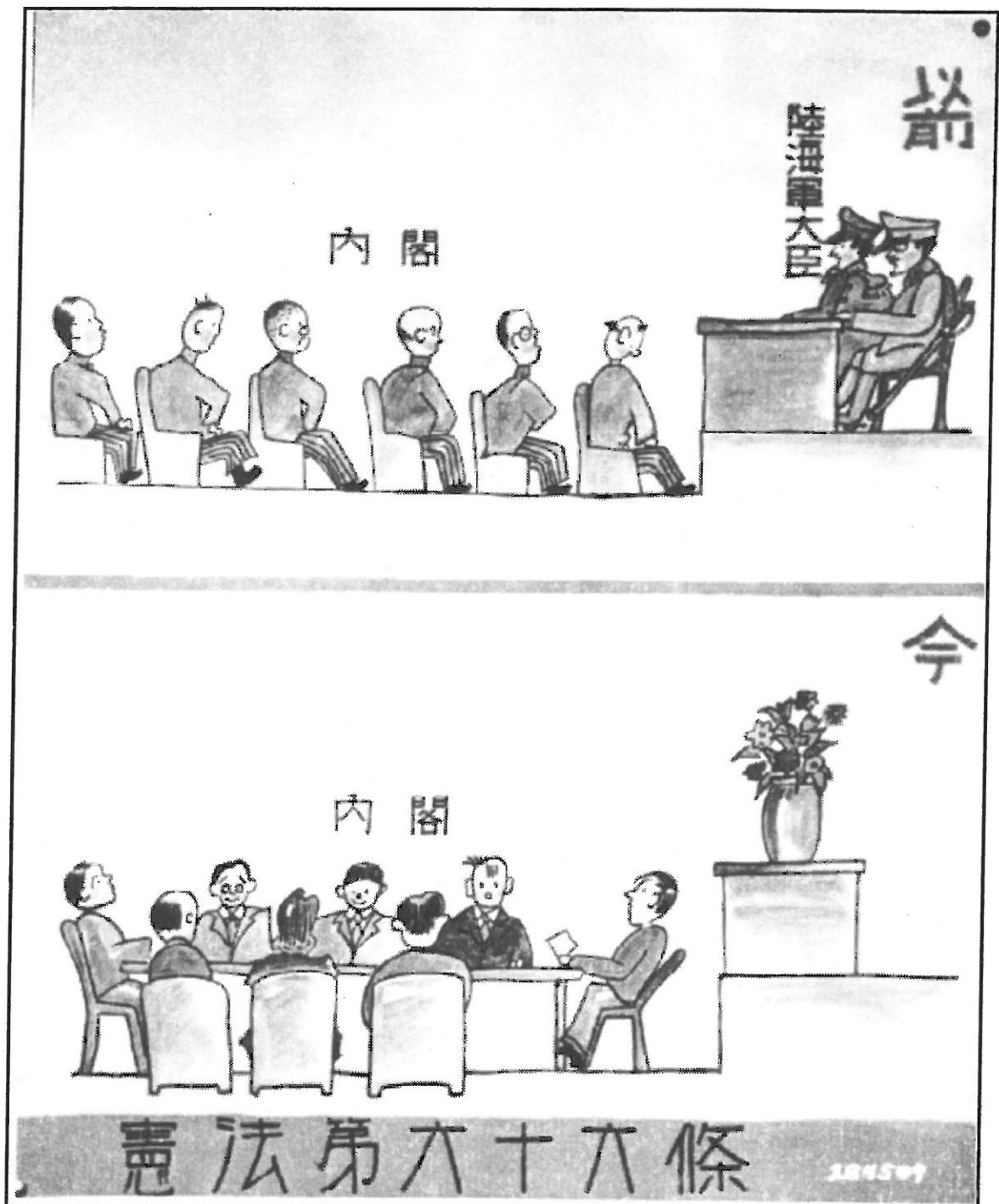
Poster 2



Poster 3



Poster 4



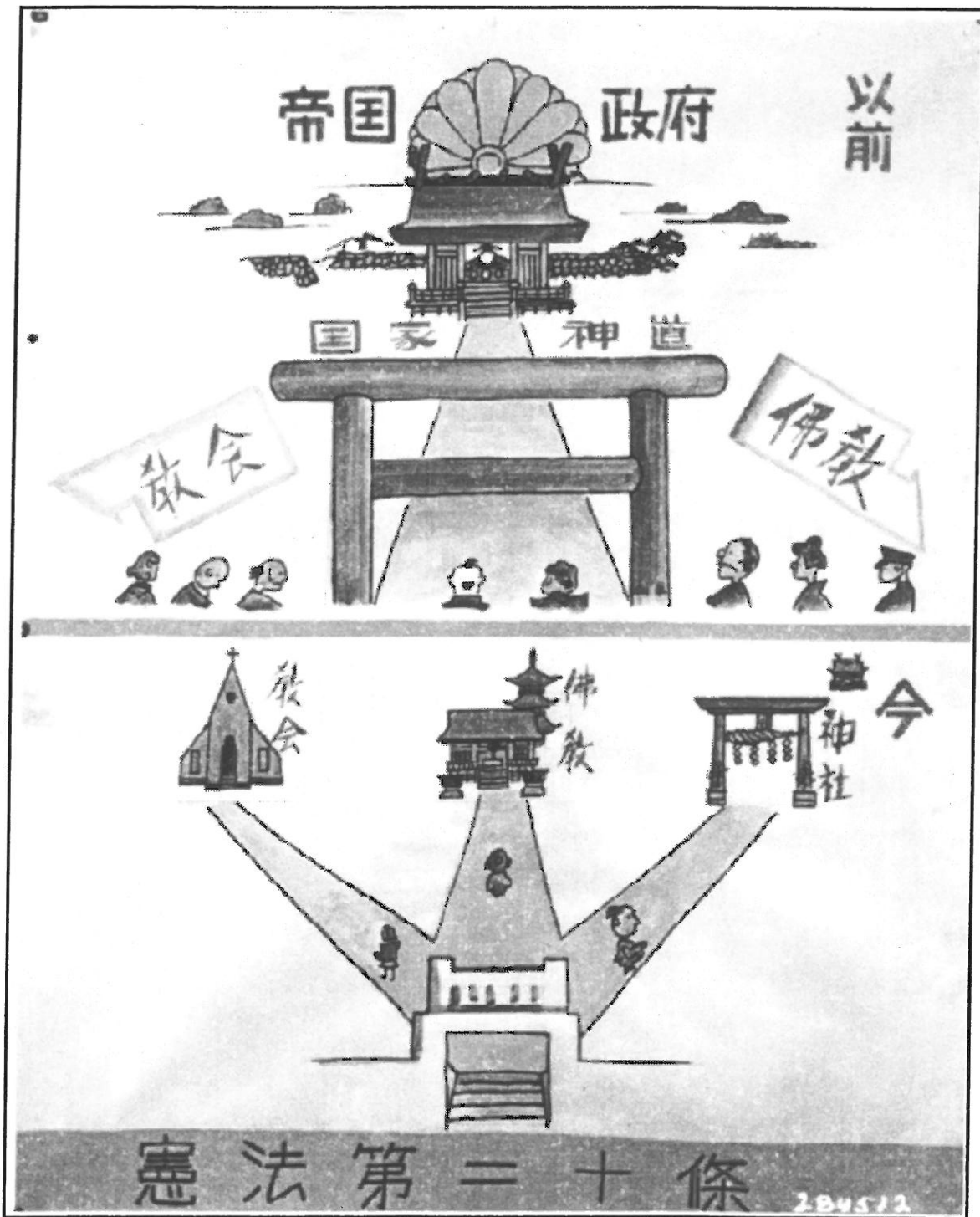
Poster 5



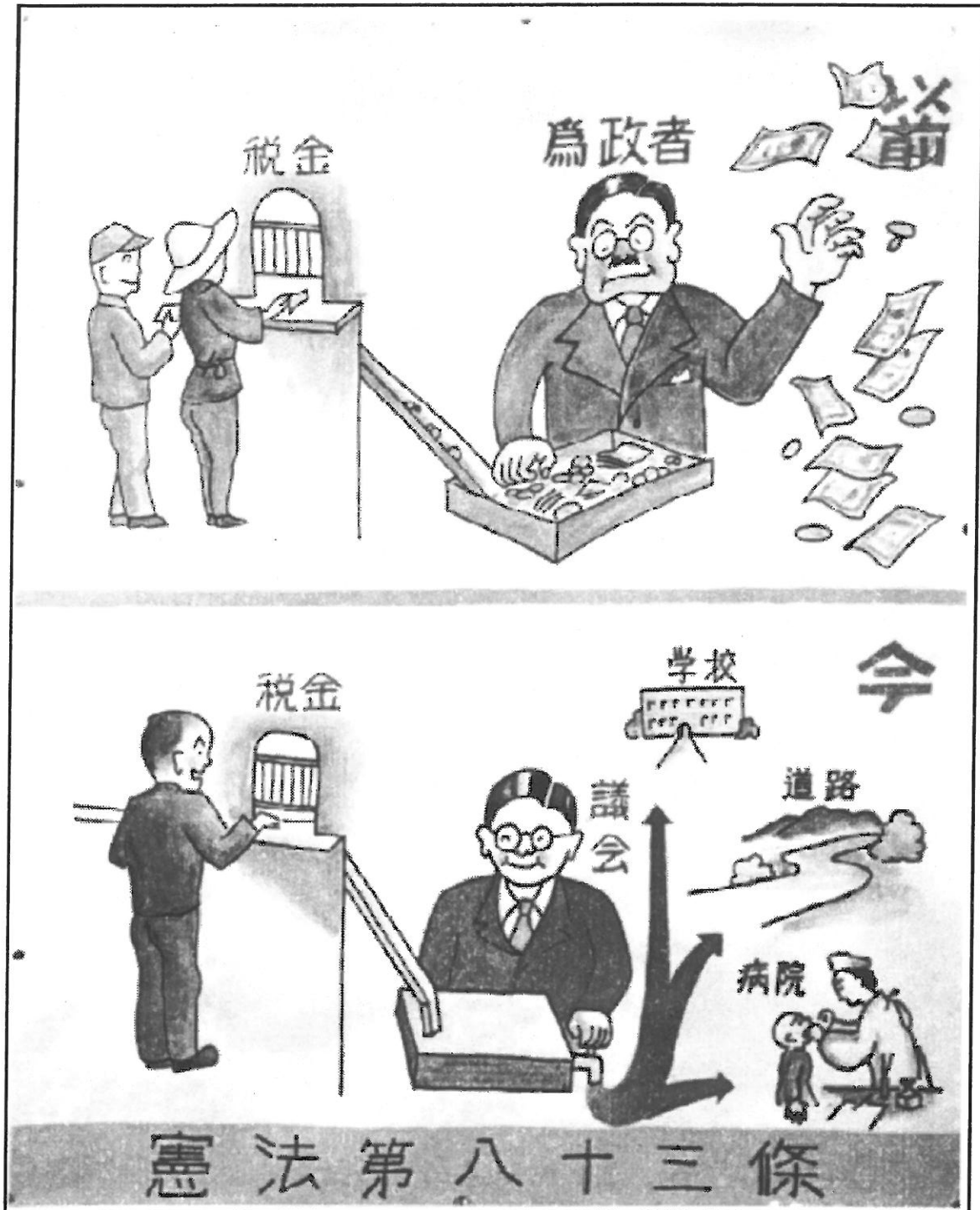
Poster 6



Poster 7



Poster 8



Education and National Identity

As you read the following document, underline the following:

1. Important values and characteristics of a good Japanese subject.
2. Goals each Japanese subject should strive to achieve.
3. Actions and behaviors Japanese people were expected to perform out of loyalty to their nation.

Document 1: Imperial Rescript on Education, 1890

Know ye, Our subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting, and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety¹ have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.

The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may all attain to the same virtue.

Source: Ryusaku Tsunoda et al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. II. © 1958, 1964, Columbia University Press. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

¹filial piety: respect for family and ancestors.

**Document 2: Lesson in Moral Education Textbooks, 1933-1938,
“A Good Japanese”**

1. Respect the national anthem:

Thousands of years of happy reign be thine;
Rule on, my lord, till what are pebbles now
By age united to mighty rocks shall grow
Whose venerable sides the moss doth line.
2. Follow the example of Crown Prince Yoshihisa, who willingly gave his life in Taiwan for his country; the Emperor Meiji, who continually sacrificed his own personal pleasure for the good of the country; and those honored at the Yasukuni Shrine,¹ who had given their lives from loyalty to the emperor.
3. Work diligently at patriotism and loyalty in times of trouble to the country.
4. Work hard at making inventions useful to the country.
5. Be composed.

Source: Harry Wray, “The Lesson of the Textbook,” *Japan Examined: Perspectives on Modern Japanese History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1983).

¹ The Yasukuni Shrine is Japan’s national memorial and a Tokyo Shinto shrine honoring Japan’s war dead by enshrining the spirits of Japanese soldiers killed in domestic and foreign wars. Originally designed as a sanctuary to house the spirits of those who died in overthrowing the Tokugawa regime, Yasukuni was nurtured by the state and then the military into a powerful center to promote Japanese ultranationalism.

Excerpts from the Constitution of Japan, 1947

We, the Japanese people, acting through our duly elected representatives in the National Diet, determined that we shall secure for ourselves and our posterity the fruits of peaceful cooperation with all nations and the blessings of liberty throughout this land, and resolved that never again shall we be visited with the horrors of war through the action of government, do proclaim that sovereign power resides with the people and do firmly establish this Constitution. Government is a sacred trust of the people, the authority for which is derived from the people, the powers of which are exercised by the representatives of the people, and the benefits of which are enjoyed by the people. This is a universal principle of mankind upon which this Constitution is founded. We reject and revoke all constitutions, laws, ordinances and rescripts in conflict herewith.

We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship, and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. We desire to occupy an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth. We recognize that all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want.

We believe that no nation is responsible to itself alone, but that laws of political morality are universal; and that obedience to such laws is incumbent upon all nations who would sustain their own sovereignty and justify their sovereign relationship with other nations.

We, the Japanese people, pledge our national honor to accomplish these high ideals and purposes with all our resources.

Chapter I. The Emperor

- Article 1. The Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power.
- Article 2. The Imperial Throne shall be dynastic and succeeded to in accordance with the Imperial House Law passed by the Diet.
- Article 3. The advice and approval of the Cabinet shall be required for all acts of the Emperor in matters of state, and the Cabinet shall be responsible therefor.
- Article 4. The Emperor shall perform only such acts in matters of state as may be provided for in this Constitution and he shall not have powers related to government. . . .

Chapter II. Renunciation of War

- Article 9. Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.
- In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Chapter III. Rights and Duties of the People

- Article 10. The conditions necessary for being a Japanese national shall be determined by law.
- Article 11. The people shall not be prevented from enjoying any of the fundamental human rights. These fundamental human rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be conferred upon the people of this and future generations as eternal and inviolate rights.
- Article 12. The freedoms and rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be maintained by the constant endeavor of the people, who shall refrain from any abuse of these freedoms and rights and shall always be responsible for utilizing them for the public welfare.
- Article 13. All of the people shall be respected as individuals. Their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness shall, to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare, be the supreme consideration in legislation and in other governmental affairs.
- Article 14. All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic, or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status, or family origin.
- Article 15. The people have the inalienable right to choose their public officials and to dismiss them. All public officials are servants of the whole community and not of any group thereof. Universal adult suffrage is guaranteed with regard to the election of public officials. In all elections, secrecy of the ballot shall not be violated. A voter shall not be answerable, publicly or privately, for the choice he has made.
- Article 16. Every person shall have the right of peaceful petition for the redress of damage, for the removal of public officials, for the enactment, repeal or amendment of laws, ordinances, or regulations and for other matters; nor shall any person be in any way discriminated against for sponsoring such a petition.
- Article 17. Every person may sue for redress as provided by law from the State or a public entity, in case he has suffered damage through illegal act of any public official.
- Article 18. No person shall be held in bondage of any kind. Involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, is prohibited.
- Article 19. Freedom of thought and conscience shall not be violated.
- Article 20. Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the States, nor exercise any political authority. No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious act, celebration, rite or practice. The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity.
- Article 21. Freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed. No censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated.
- Article 22. Every person shall have freedom to choose and change his residence and to choose his occupation to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare. Freedom of all persons to move to a foreign country and to divest themselves of their nationality shall be inviolate.
- Article 23. Academic freedom is guaranteed.
- Article 24. Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife

as a basis. With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.

- Article 25. All people shall have the right to maintain the maximum standards of wholesome and cultured living. In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavors for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security, and of public health.
- Article 26. All people shall have the right to receive an equal education correspondent to their ability, as provided by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free.
- Article 27. All people shall have the right and the obligation to work. Standards for wages, hours, rest, and other working conditions shall be fixed by law. Children shall not be exploited.
- Article 28. The right of workers to organize and to bargain and act collectively is guaranteed. . . .

Chapter IV. The Diet

- Article 41. The Diet shall be the highest organ of state power, and shall be the sole law-making organ of the State.
- Article 42. The Diet shall consist of two Houses, namely the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors.
- Article 43. Both Houses shall consist of elected members, representative of all the people. The number of the members of each House shall be fixed by law.
- Article 44. The qualifications of members of both Houses and their election shall be fixed by law. However, there shall be no discrimination because of race, creed, sex, social status, family origin, education, property or income.
- Article 45. The term of office of members of the House of Representatives shall be four years. However, the term shall be terminated before the full term is up in case the House of Representatives is dissolved.
- Article 46. The term of office of members of the House of Councillors shall be six years, and election for half the members shall take place every three years. . . .

Chapter VII. Finance

- Article 83. The power to administer national finances shall be exercised as the Diet shall determine.
- Article 84. No new taxes shall be imposed or existing ones modified except by law or under such conditions as law may prescribe.
- Article 85. No money shall be expended, nor shall the State obligate itself, except as authorized by the Diet.
- Article 86. The Cabinet shall prepare and submit to the Diet for its consideration and decision a budget for each fiscal year.
- Article 87. In order to provide for unforeseen deficiencies in the budget, a reserve fund may be authorized by the Diet to be expended upon the responsibility of the Cabinet.

The Cabinet must get subsequent approval of the Diet for all payments from the reserve fund.

Article 88. All property of the Imperial Household shall belong to the State. All expenses of the Imperial Household shall be appropriated by the Diet in the budget. . . .

Chapter VIII. Local Self-Government

Article 92. Regulations concerning organization and operations of local public entities shall be fixed by law in accordance with the principle of local autonomy.

Article 93. The local public entities shall establish assemblies as their deliberative organs, in accordance with law.

The chief executive officers of all local public entities, the members of their assemblies, and such other local officials as may be determined by law shall be elected by direct popular vote within their several communities.

Article 94. Local public entities shall have the right to manage their property, affairs and administration and to enact their own regulations within law.

Article 95. A special law, applicable only to one local public entity, cannot be enacted by the Diet without the consent of the majority of the voters of the local public entity concerned, obtained in accordance with law. . . .

A Story about the Constitution for Boys and Girls

by Kanamori Tokujiro

Introduction

I wrote this book in the hopes that boys and girls could understand the spirit of the Constitution just by looking at the pictures. I thought that maybe just by looking at the pictures the Constitution could be absorbed into your souls. But it became a book that involves viewing and thinking.

This is not a comforting manga book. I wrote seriously about the difficult spirit of the Constitution. I simplified a topic that is difficult for adults hoping to make it understandable for everyone. I hope you will read this book even after you are an adult to grasp deeper meanings as you become older.

This is not a book about laws. It is an explanation of the place for the spirit of citizens. It states the mind-set that each person should hold. I hope that your parents and teachers would read this book too.

I express my gratitude to the artists, Matsuda Fumio, Yoshizawa Renzaburo, Miwa Takashi and others, who have made this book possible.

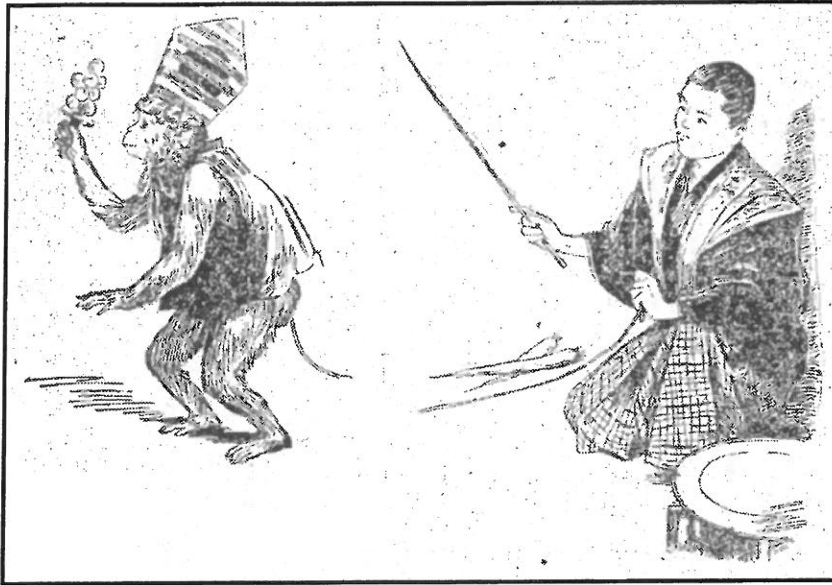
Kanamori Tokujiro

Source: Kanamori Tokujiro, *A Story About the Constitution* (Tokyo: Toda Kozo, 1950). Translated by Janet Hoaglund.

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1. The Monkey's Tricks



A monkey on a string performs tricks with a master who rewards him using carrots and punishes him using a whip. The monkey is not acting of its own will. Are people happy to be treated in this way? Strangely enough, up until now this was considered normal. A horse is pulled along. People walk on their own feet motivated by their own thoughts. This is how people and horses are different. When people act for themselves, it is called *free will*. Horses are pulled by a rope, but people connect with others through their hearts. To live in harmony with others without being controlled by someone else, this is living according to one's own will, or living with a free will.

2. Humanity and Love

a) Cruelty to the weak

People who compose poems and words to songs write that nature is peaceful. In reality, trees and flowers are fighting over sunlight and the earth. The beautiful birds might be about to eat a butterfly enjoying the springtime. Basically, the strong bully the weak.

There is a phrase “the law of the jungle.” It means the strong eat the weak. We can think of what is going on in nature in this way.

b) The joy of human love

What about people’s hearts? Are we like the birds and beasts? Perhaps some people have a desire to bully the weak.

But good people are not like this. Good people respect and care for one another. When people can live in this way, they are the happiest. Proper people should have peace and philanthropy in their hearts. For example, if we look in the hearts of people who give speeches, what would we find? It must be different from what a waterfowl sees when looking at killifish. They must have love for humanity in their hearts. . . .

4. The Need for the Law . . .

b) The reason for national law

The reason people follow the law is not out of fear or blame or punishment. They follow out of a true sense that the law must be obeyed. But people have a habit of being weak of heart. It is necessary for the nation to strengthen the weak of heart through these laws also. It is just like setting your alarm clock to prevent oversleeping in the morning. One must wake oneself up. . . . We must make our own plan and decide on our actions—and live by our decisions even if it is difficult.

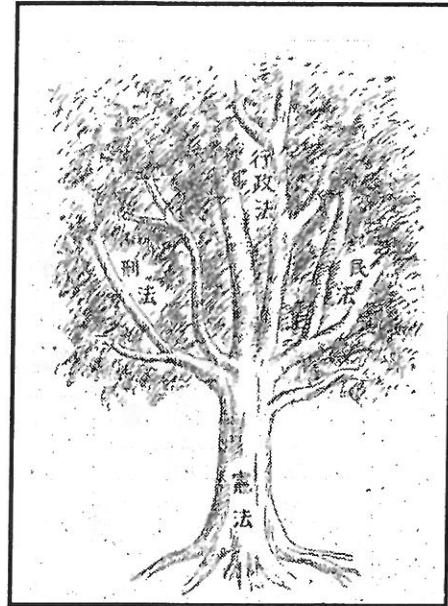
c) Constitutional government

With dogs and cats, we make the rules after they misbehave. We create the rule and scold them. This seems to work.

With humans, we must have the law established first. We are animals endowed with reason so we should live by the law. Ruling by law or a constitutional government becomes important and the political administration of our country must also abide by the law. We must be a constitutional state. It becomes important to establish laws, to conduct politics according to the law, and to enforce the law through the courts.

d) The various kinds of national law

There would probably be no end to the number of rules to keep order among people. And of these rules there are those that make up the root system and those that make up the branches and leaves. Civil laws, criminal laws, and administrative laws are part of the branches and leaves. The constitution makes up the roots.



5. Political Power

a) Why political power is necessary

People need to live together in harmony. Everyone believes this. This is why a country has a variety of regulations. What would we do if the following situation took place? If an unjust power forces its way, do reason and justice pull back?

“I’m hungry, so hand over all your money!
What? You’re hungry too? I don’t care. It’s no problem of mine that you’re hungry.”

A violent criminal such as this cannot be dealt with by a code of ethics. This is when the need for political power in a country arises. We need something that establishes a system for people’s affairs. A political power that looks out for the cooperative lives of citizens becomes necessary.

b) The foundation of political power

In the old days it would seem people thought political power came from the outside. Just as the wind and rain come from heaven, they believed that the demands to pay taxes, build schools, clean roads all came from a high, unreachable place. They carelessly thought that “the Emperor” or political authorities ruled the country. But now we know clearly that just as people build fountains and make fans, our government is created by us. How is it that we can become gods of rain and wind? By establishing a constitution we can gain a national Diet, a cabinet, and a court system accordingly. We the people also create the constitution. And we will do the work of the national Diet, the cabinet, and courts. When the foundation of political power rests with the citizens of a nation, it is called “the sovereignty of the people.” Sovereignty is the most basic power people hold as political power.

6. The Constitution

a) What is a constitution?

You are familiar with the term *nebanaranu* (what must be done). You know the rules to do good, to get along with others, to follow the rules, for example.

The constitution decides foundational rules such as how a country will function and the position of citizens. It is the basis for everything so it is a country’s fundamental law. It is also the most powerful and is therefore the supreme law. Moreover, if I explain that the constitution is also the fundamental law of a nation’s political system, it would make for an accurate explanation.

b) How was it created?

It states in the Japanese constitution, "Japanese citizens have the inalienable right to choose public officials to represent them in the National Diet through the election process . . ." Japanese citizens decide on the constitution.

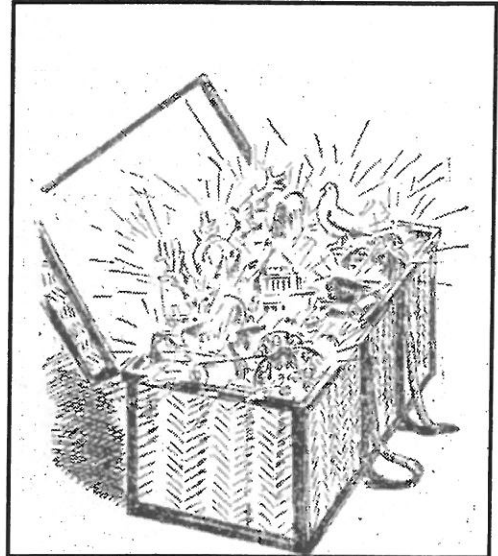
In other words, the constitution combines the sentiments of *nebanaranu*, or what must be done. Of course, it is difficult to roll these *nebanaranu* thoughts into one, but we have done the best we can.

7. The Contents of the Constitution

The following is a list of what is written in the constitution:

- 1) About the constitution itself (its efficacy, and how it can be amended or revised).
- 2) About the larger principles of our political system (pacifism, etc.).
- 3) About the structure of our political system (the emperor, our national Diet, the cabinet, and our courts).
- 4) About our political system (laws, government ordinances, trials, and meetings/sessions).
- 5) Thoughts on how to value each citizen.

A constitution must contain these sorts of treasures. Do you think our constitution has all of the above? Yes, it does. But there are so many of these treasures that every time we look there are new and better treasures that we had not noticed before. Let's take a look.



8. The Foundational Ethics of the Constitution and Its Four Main Points

The world is not a perfect place. It is not set up so that everyone feels satisfied. There are people who suffer from wars. There are people who struggle with a poor political system in their country. But the constitution that we have created is based on democracy and is truly a good thing. If we move forward according to this, we will have a truthful life with purpose.

When we consider how this constitution appears, it puts people's independence as its base and provides the following four points: the principle of world peace, a rational emperor system, the accomplishment of a democratic political system, and the establishment of basic human rights. These are all difficult terms but you will come to understand them in time.

If you picture a beautiful and solid hill with a four-pillared tower standing above a tempest-blown world, you will have a clear image of our constitution. Perhaps you could call this

Structure the Tower of Peace. This of course was modeled on the foundation of independence for people and the pillar of the four great points.

9. Can the Constitution Be Changed?

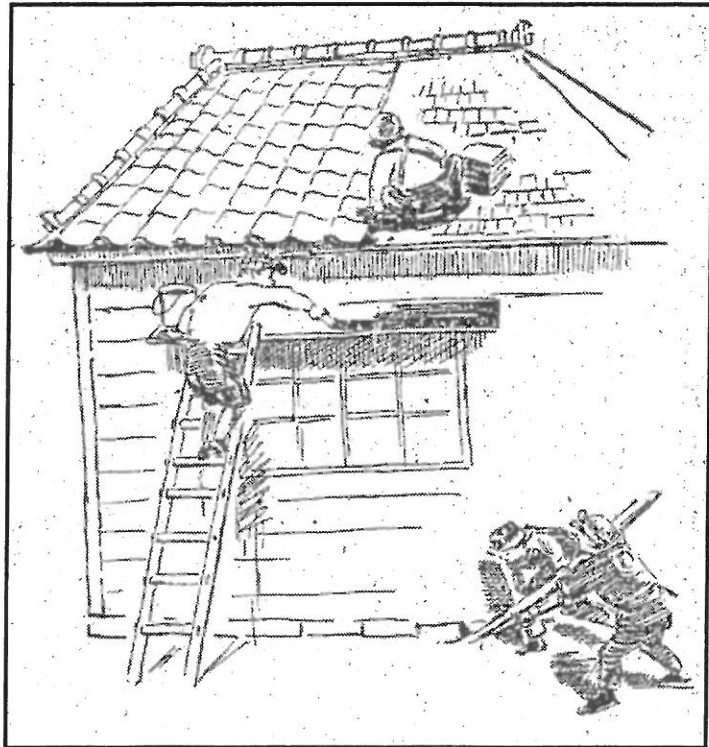
Our original constitution was written in Meiji 22 (1890) and was completely revised in Showa 21 (1947). It was changed entirely so that none of the old rules remain. This is our new constitution.

In the past, people did not like to change the constitution. Changing it a little at a time was one thing but many people felt changing it entirely was an impossibility. But, as I just said, the constitution has been completely changed. Now, no one says that the constitution should not be changed. There is no reason people cannot continually change something that was written by others.

But this does not mean we should consider the constitution lightly. This is the foundation for all our laws after all.

Painting our houses or replacing roof tiles can be done quickly, but rebuilding the foundation of a house is a huge undertaking and affects the entire household. Therefore, in settled countries like the United States and England, they do not amend their constitution hastily.

We need to treat our constitution with care also because it is the basis of our country's political system. Moreover, there are careful procedures to adhere to when revising a constitution. This involves sharing ideas for revision at the national Diet and then having the citizens vote to approve the revision.



10. Sovereignty

The reason we can manage to get along with 80 million people living together in Japan is because we have our government and political power. Determining laws, collecting taxes, and the court system are all part of this political power. Now, political power is the power to give instructions to “do thus and so,” but whose place is it to give these instructions? In the past, people thought it was a very strong person who held this power, but now we say all Japanese citizens together hold this power. So, the originator of political power is the heart of all the citizens of our country. Japanese citizens need to come together and manage their own affairs. This is stated “Sovereignty resides with the people.”

Sovereignty is the heart or will that is the origin of political power. The citizenship of our nation points to all Japanese people. This may be difficult to understand, but it must be held firmly in our hearts. So we must govern ourselves and be governed at the same time. This is not unlike swinging a hose around and spraying oneself with water. . . .

12. A Proper Emperor System

The emperor and common citizens like ourselves are connected by a spirit of deep devotion and respect. This goes back for many generations to the parents of our grandparents as each generation has honored and revered the emperor. People have been so familiar with the emperor that they would be extremely lonely if he were not in Japan.

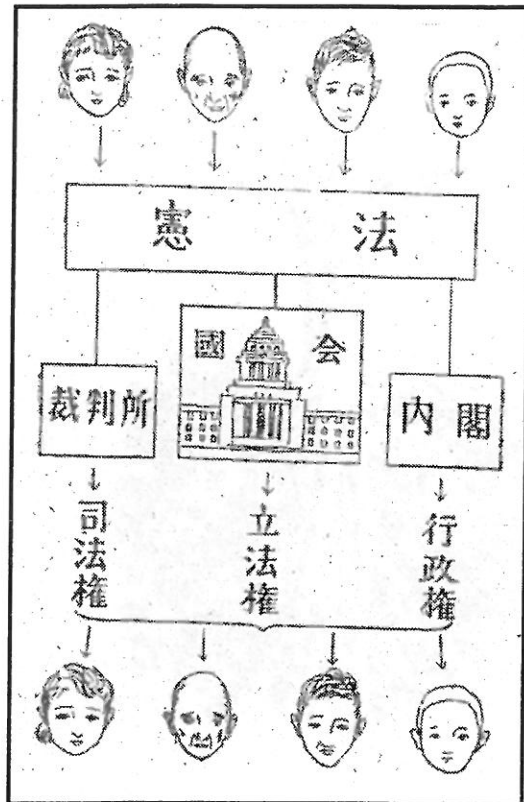
It is similar to feeling sad in the morning upon awakening to find the sun not shining. These feelings are deeply ingrained in our hearts.

Our hearts and the emperor’s heart melt together harmoniously like the buds of flowers and grasses on a glorious spring day. If you look into your excited heart when we greet our emperor, shouting “Banzai” [hooray], you will understand. This is different from governing and being governed. This is a feeling that naturally wells up from inside of us.

13. A Symbol of Our Country

Some children have been to the zoo. After dinner they are laughing and playing. They are drawing pictures and guessing what each has drawn. “It’s a monkey,” “It’s a giraffe; no, a monkey,” they say excitedly. Horns make us think of a bull, Mt. Fuji makes us think of Japan, and our flag makes us think of our country. This is to be expected.

When we respect our emperor, we feel Japan deeply in our hearts. This is the meaning of symbolism. When you look at one thing and think of another, the first is a symbol of the latter. When cherry blossoms bloom, spring has come. When maple leaves are red, autumn is well under way. In these cases, the meaning of symbolism is clear.



In our constitution, it states clearly that the emperor is a symbol of Japan. Thinking of the emperor as our ruler is an old way of thinking and is not correct for today.

14. The Work of the Emperor

In the Meiji Constitution, the emperor was thought to be the “general manager” of Japan.

With our new constitution, this has completely changed. The government has many jobs: laws are made by our national Diet, the cabinet is the general manager of our administration, and trials are performed in our courts.

If we look at a statue of the Kannon, goddess of mercy, there is the ordinary Kannon and the Kannon with 1,000 hands. Whatever Kannon thinks up in her head she can put into practice with these hands. Just as the ordinary Kannon has only one set of hands, Japan used to have the emperor settle affairs by himself. The new constitution has many hands working with matters of our country just like the Kannon of a Thousand Hands. In other words, the national Diet, the courts, and the cabinet become the hands and do the work of our nation.

19. The Courts

The winner or loser of sumo cannot be determined without a referee. Whether punishing a person, or settling an estate or property dispute, or collecting taxes, if there is a difference of opinion, there must be a person who performs the role of a referee to decide the outcome. The courts take on this job. We call this *judicial power*.

1) A person’s punishment must be according to the court. You cannot punish a person without a trial.

2) A person’s punishment must be defined by the law. And a person cannot be punished by a law that was made after the fact. Rules of punishment cannot be retroactive.

3) The courts must be separate from other public offices. In order to pass judgment fairly, the judge must be impartial. This is considered one of the separations in the administration of justice.

In the old days, men fought duels and took revenge but this was because people tried to distinguish right from wrong on their own. In the present, our nation determines this fairly.

Scolding a dog immediately when it barks is how we discipline a dog. With human rules, we first decide “such and such is not allowed.” When the rule is broken or disobeyed, the person is punished. Otherwise human freedom cannot be maintained. This is a difficult fundamental principle. . . .

23. The Outlook for the Future

There are many countries on our earth. The view for a person from the past would be that our world is a war zone with bombs dropping and shells flying. From our view, there are beautiful flowers blooming with lovely celestial beings dancing in paradise.

How did things become this way? Things are the way they are because of our constitution.

We must always hold our constitution in high regard and protect it carefully. The road is long but we must walk steadily step by step toward the light of our ideal world.

For Teachers and Parents

This book is the result of Mr. Kanamori Tokujiro's dedication to the children of Japan, who will inherit our future. He spent two years working closely with the illustrators on appropriate wording and pictures. As you probably have noticed, the simple text and fun pictures convey important meanings. Please explain these to your child as you read along together, keeping in mind your child's age level.

Please keep in mind that this book was written not just for home use but as a social studies textbook for schools. And please allow us to help you contact the writer.

About the author ^② Kanamori Tokujiro sensei [teacher] was born in Aichi prefecture. After graduating from Tokyo University, he became a scholar of politics and law and played an important role in government. When the Japanese constitution was written, he worked hard as chairman of the committee. He now continues his important work as head of the library commission of our national Diet.