

UNIT 3

From Isolation to Adaptation

IN THIS UNIT

This unit helps you investigate these questions.

- ◆ How did Japan's geography shape people's beliefs and values?
- ◆ In what ways did the isolation policy of the Edo period and contact with other cultures during the Meiji period affect the Japanese identity?
- ◆ What impact did contact with Western cultures have on the Japanese worldview?
- ◆ What tensions can occur when a society must adapt to rapidly changing circumstances?
- ◆ How can different cultures learn to appreciate and benefit from each other?

In 1888, Japanese artist Yoshitoshi created this image called *Enjoying a Stroll*. This lady of the Meiji period (1868–1912) is wearing Western dress.





These Japanese teens are shopping in the Harajuku area in Tokyo.



The “Black Ships” arrived in a harbour near Edo (Tokyo) in 1853. This is how an unknown Japanese artist viewed the foreign ships at the time.



Kamuy, Spirit of the AINU was created by Ainu textile artist Noriko Kawamura in 1998. The Ainu are the Indigenous people of Japan.



Japan consists of a series of islands. More than 127 million people live in an area that is about 60 percent the size of Alberta.

12

Shaping a Unique Worldview



FIGURE 12-1 This scroll called *Surrender* was painted by Tosa Nagataka around 1293. It depicts one of the Mongol attacks in the 1200s. What impression of the Mongols does the painter convey?

WORLDVIEW INQUIRY

In what ways does physical geography contribute to shaping a worldview?

1281. For the second time in less than a decade, Mongols from northern China had sent a fleet of ships to invade Japan.

According to Japanese mythology, two divine beings, the male Izanagi (Ee-zuh-nuh-ghee) and the female Izanami (Ee-zuh-nuh-mee), stood on the bridge of heaven and churned the ocean with a spear to make a small island of curdled salt. From that mystical beginning grew a string of islands—Japan. Izanagi and Izanami looked at their creation and said, “Why should we not produce someone who shall be lord of what is below Heaven?” So they went on to bear the deities called *kami* (kuh-mee) who inhabited the land from that time forward.

For most of their long history, the Japanese have believed that their country is favoured and protected by those gods. In 1274, Mongol rulers sent a large fleet from Asia that landed on Kyushu, the southern island of Japan. However, a typhoon forced the invaders to retreat. In 1281, the Mongols returned with thousands of ships and more than 100 000 men. The Japanese in their smaller, swifter boats defended their island well, but again a ferocious storm destroyed most of the Mongol fleet. The Japanese called the storm *kamikaze* (kuh-mee-kuh-zay), a divine wind sent by the gods to defend their islands.

By 1281, Japan had twice been saved from invasion by a typhoon. How might this repeated experience influence the worldview of the Japanese people? How might it influence their view of people from other places?



In This Chapter

As you have seen in the earlier units, invasion and war were a constant part of the history of Europe and, later of the Americas. The ocean waters around the islands that make up the country of Japan provided protection from outsiders. To what extent did the ocean isolate Japan from its neighbours? What other geographic aspects of Japan influenced the way of life and worldview of its people? How did geography affect the behaviour, beliefs and values of the Japanese people?

The Land of the Rising Sun

How did Japan's geography influence the Japanese sense of identity?

What origin stories can you think of? In many societies, origin stories include important clues to how the people identify themselves and their culture. Origin stories often have connections to the geography of the place where a society lives.

For centuries, the Japanese have described their country as the land of the rising sun. According to legend, Izanagi, whom you read about in the opening story, had a daughter named Amaterasu (Uh-muh-tay-ra-soo). She is known as the sun goddess. At one point Amaterasu went into a cave, closed the entrance with a boulder, and refused to come out. The world was plunged into darkness. The other gods eventually tricked her into coming out, thus bringing back light and hope to the Japanese people.



FIGURE 12-2 The image on the Japanese flag reflects the unity of the Japanese people. What do the images on Alberta's provincial flag suggest to you about the identity of Albertans?



FIGURE 12-3 This image done by Kunisada Utagawa in the 19th century shows Amaterasu emerging from the cave. How does the artist emphasize her role as a bringer of light?

The rulers or emperors of Japan were considered the descendants of Amaterasu. The emperor was believed to be divine, that is, godlike. He was the representative of the gods on Earth.

In the early 1800s, the Japanese thinker Aizawa Seishisai (Eye-zuh-wuh Saysh-sigh) described the relationship between the sun goddess, the emperors, and Japan this way:

Our Divine Land is where the sun rises and where the primordial [very beginning] energy originates. The heirs of the Great Sun [the Emperors] have occupied the Imperial Throne from generation to generation without change from time immemorial. Japan's position at the vertex [highest point] of the earth makes it the standard [model] for the nations of the world. Indeed, it casts its light over the world, and the distance which the resplendent [glorious] imperial influence reaches knows no limit.



Think IT THROUGH

How does the author show his pride in his country in this quotation? How does the connection between Japan and the Sun contribute to his pride?

FYI...

Japanese names are written with the surname first. For example, Aizawa Seishisai's surname is Aizawa. How would your name be written in Japan?

FIGURE 12-4 People waving flags in honour of the emperor's birthday

EXPLORING SOURCES

Maps and Identity

This Japanese map from 1850 shows Japan in yellow in the upper left centre with the Pacific Ocean below.

- What does the position of Japan say about how the Japanese viewed the importance of their country relative to the rest of the world?
- What might this map indicate about Japanese knowledge of the rest of the world?



FIGURE 12-5 Sugiura Ryuen created this woodblock print of a world map. What other land masses can you identify on this map?

Drawing Conclusions

Each time you respond to an inquiry question, part of your process is to gather facts from a variety of sources. From each of those sources—maps, images, text—you draw conclusions. How do you know if your conclusions are valid? Here is a five-step process to help you make valid conclusions:

1. **Find the Facts.** What facts does the source you are using contain? Remember to include facts about the creator of the source as well as its purpose.
2. **Look for Patterns.** See if the facts fit together to suggest a conclusion.
3. **Draw a Conclusion.**
4. **Test Your Conclusion.** Is your conclusion specific enough? Words such as *often*, *sometimes*, or *frequently* might be needed. Words such as *all*, *always*, and *every* can make a conclusion too broad, and thus invalid.
5. **Revise Your Conclusion if Necessary.**

Try It!

Let's see what might happen if one of those steps is omitted. Examine the map below. What conclusions might you draw if you had no facts about the creator or the purpose of the map? Consider, for example, the size of Canada relative to that of India, or the size of Brazil relative to that of Greenland.

Now read these facts about the map.

- ◆ The map is two-dimensional (flat). Since Earth is a three-dimensional form, flat maps (known as map **projections**) always contain some **distortion**, or error.
- ◆ The map was created in 1568 by Gerhardus Mercator, a Flemish geographer, mathematician, and **cartographer**, or map-maker.
- ◆ The map allowed navigators to plot a straight line between two points without changing compass direction, but it distorted the size of some land masses relative to each other.

How do these facts affect your conclusion?



FIGURE 12-6 Mercator's map was the first to take into account the fact that the world was round.

With a land area of nearly 380 000 square kilometres, Japan is about 60 percent the size of Alberta. Japan has always had a larger population than Alberta. In 1600, Japan's population numbered around 12 million.

Forested mountains and steep valleys cover about 80 percent of Japan. About 18 percent of the country is level enough to permit agriculture or settlement. The largest flat area in Japan is less than 200 kilometres across. The habitable areas of Japan with high population density are mainly along the coast.



FIGURE 12-7 The city of Tokyo today. How do you think living in areas of such dense population might affect the way people interact with each other? How do you think it might affect people's sense of identity?

SKILL POWER

Most school atlases contain thematic maps. Thematic maps give information about one particular geographic aspect of an area, for example, climate, vegetation, or population.

1. Locate a thematic map of Canada's population distribution, using the Table of Contents or the Index.
2. Check the legend to see what symbols are used.
3. What areas of Canada are most densely populated?

A Land Apart

If you were planning a visit to Japan how would you travel? How long do you think the trip would take? Because Japan is an island country, it is geographically **isolated** from its nearest neighbours Korea, China, and Russia.

What's in a **WORD**?

"Isolated" comes from the Latin word *insula*, which means island.

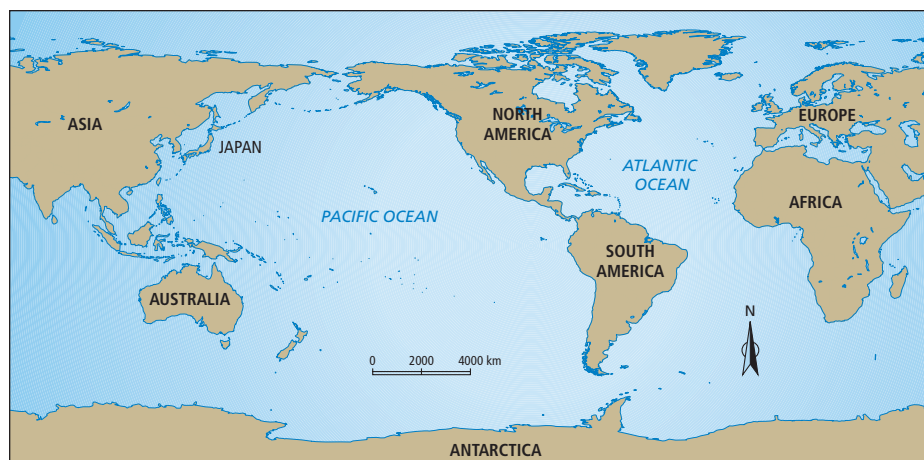


FIGURE 12-8 Notice how the Pacific Ocean separates Japan from the Americas and other lands to the east. What other places in the world are similarly isolated?



FIGURE 12-9 Japan is an **archipelago**, consisting of four main islands and more than 3000 smaller islands. It stretches 2500 kilometres. What connection can you make between the shoreline and the location of major Japanese cities?

The 185 kilometres of ocean between Japan and Asia is very rough, making travel difficult. The western coast of Japan has fewer bays and inlets—logical places for harbours—than the eastern side. However, archaeological evidence suggests that there was contact between peoples living in present-day Japan and China as early as the mid-200s, and between Japan and Korea between the 400s and 800s. From the 500s on, there was some immigration to Japan from China and Korea.

Before the 1500s, Europeans did not have the means to reach Japan by sailing either across the Pacific or around the southern tip of Africa and across the Indian Ocean. When they did develop the necessary navigational technology, it still took several months and was extremely dangerous.

Adopting and Adapting Elements of Culture

The Japanese chose freely the elements of other cultures that they wanted to include in their own. For example, they borrowed the Chinese system of writing in characters; they called the Chinese characters *kanji*. At first, the Japanese wrote in Chinese, but over time they started using the Chinese characters to write in the Japanese language. Later, a new system was developed that combined *kanji* with Japanese characters called *kana*.

FYI...

Modern Japanese uses three main scripts: Kanji, Hiragana, and Katakana. There are still over 1000 Chinese characters used in written Japanese.

Protecting the Canadian Identity

Who are your favourite bands? Your favourite actors, Your favourite writers? What are your favourite TV shows? Your favourite movies? How many of them are Canadians? How many are Americans? What other countries or cultures were represented in your list?

Most of Canada's population lives very close to the US. Just as Japanese leaders were concerned about too much influence from China, the Canadian government became concerned about the influence of American culture on Canadians. In 1955, it imposed a quota system on Canadian radio and TV programming.

Today, all radio stations must air 35 percent Canadian music each week and French-language stations must have at least 65 percent in the French language. Air time for Canadian television programming varies by time of day and type of station. The idea is to promote Canadian talent and the production of programs.

Think IT THROUGH

1. How have satellite and cable TV changed the number of cultures that Canadians are exposed to?



FIGURE 12-10 Melissa O'Neil from Calgary was the first ever female *Canadian Idol* winner. Viewers chose the winner by phone votes. Do you think this method for selecting a winner is appropriate? Explain.

2. To what extent do you think media such as music, TV, and movies influence your sense of identity as a Canadian?

Over to YOU

- Following the steps outlined in the Building Your Skills box on page 332, work in a group to prepare a presentation on one of the following topics:
 - Why the Japanese consider their nation the land of the rising sun
 - How isolation affected Japanese worldview
- How might the distortions of the Mercator map have influenced worldview in the past?
- Choose the two provinces in Canada that you think are geographically the most similar to Japan. Create a Venn diagram to show your thinking about the geography of these three areas.
- Canada's national anthem contains the phrase "the true North, strong and free." What does this suggest about how Canadians see themselves? What other aspects of physical or political geography—landforms, water bodies, neighbours—do you think influence our sense of identity? Why?

Nature Shaping a Worldview

In what ways can the natural environment influence religious practices and values?

Think of a time when you were aware of the beauty of nature around you. Were you skiing down a mountain? Hiking in the woods? Watching a sunset over the prairie? Whitewater rafting down a rushing river? How do experiences like these affect your attitude toward nature?

The Beauties of Nature

The beauties of the natural landscape of Japan have always been a great source of pride to the Japanese people. Most of Japan experiences distinct, predictable seasons. Celebrations and **rituals**, or special ceremonies, mark the change in seasons, and have traditionally played an important part in all Japanese life.

Cherry blossoms are the most beloved flowers among the Japanese and the spring blooming of the cherry trees is a time of celebration. In March every year, the official weather bureau of Japan reports on the date that the cherry blossoms are predicted to bloom in different parts of the country. This helps people to plan their outings to view the blossoms. Many cherry blossom festivals are held across the country.

Japanese writers have written many poems about the cherry blossoms. Here is a *haiku* (high-koo)—a form of Japanese poetry—by the poet Basho who lived in the 1600s.

*Temple bells die out.
The fragrant blossoms remain.
A perfect evening!*

FIGURE 12-11 *Picnic Scene* was painted in the late 17th century by Hishikawa Moronobu. Family picnic parties are a ritual at cherry blossom time. How do you think sharing in yearly festivals like these might create a sense of identity and community? What values do they reinforce?



Cherry blossoms represent many things to the Japanese. Among them are

- ◆ new beginnings
- ◆ beauty
- ◆ the shortness of beauty and life.

Think IT THROUGH

What seasonal items or events have symbolic value for you? Explain.

Nature and the Ainu

Nature has a dominant role in the culture of the **Ainu** (Eye-noo), Japan's Indigenous people. The Ainu regard things like fire, water, wind, thunder, animals, and plants as gods called **kamuy** (kuh-moo-ee) who visit the Earthly world. The brown bear is one of the most important *kamuy* and the Ainu hold an elaborate annual ceremony to send it to its own world.

Many First Nations peoples have belief systems and rituals that are similar to those of the Ainu. For example, the four elements—earth, air, fire, and water—which are honoured by the Ainu, are considered the four key elements of life by the Oglala Lakota Nation of South Dakota. Land is the place where life comes from, water is the liquid that sustains life, fire gives heat and energy that sustains life, and air is essential for the life of all living things.

VOICES

Nature and Culture

For many Indigenous peoples, identity is rooted in the natural world.

Two Views of Nature

The Ainu not only revere nature, but see it as the source of many elements of their culture.

Our culture and language are inspired by nature and so is our art.

Kayano Shigeru, Member of the Diet (Parliament) of Japan.

The Dene people of Canada also see a close link between the environment and human beings. They believe that the land is so powerful that it can affect the identity of the people who live on it. Here is how Roy Fabian of Hay River in the Northwest Territories explains this idea:

One of my Elders told me a situation. He said we can get rid of all the Dene people in Denendeh, we can all die off for some reason, but if there was another human being that came stumbling along and came to Denendeh, the environment would turn him into a Dene person. It's the environment and the land that makes us Dene people.

Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Think IT THROUGH

1. What effect do you think the Dene way of thinking would have on how they behaved toward people new to their land?
2. How can you extend this idea to people who come from other countries to make Canada their home?

Shinto: The Way of the Spirits

FIGURE 12-12 Prayer for departed relatives and meditation are daily activities that take place in front of the *butsudan*.



Shinto is the ancient religion of Japan. The love of nature is the most important aspect of Shinto. Many traditional Japanese arts, such as flower arranging and garden design, are based on the Shinto ideal of harmony with nature.

Shinto is based on the belief that sacred spirits called *kami* take the form of objects in nature such as mountains, trees, and stones. The sun goddess Amaterasu is considered to be the most important *kami*. Human beings become *kami* when they die and are honoured by their families. To please and celebrate the *kami*, festivals called *matsuri* (muhts-ree) are held throughout the

year; the spring and fall festivals are considered the most important.

Shinto does not have a founder and there are no religious laws. For these aspects of religion, the Japanese turned to faiths from China: Buddhism and Confucianism. Borrowing aspects of these religions resulted in a distinctly Japanese form of worship. Many Japanese households have a Buddhist altar called a *butsudan* (boo-tsoo-dun). They also have a small shrine called a *kamidana* (kuh-mee-duh-nuh). Water and rice are offered in both the *butsudan* and the *kamidana*.

FYI...

Many people in Japan today do not consider Shinto and Buddhism as “religions” as the word is understood in North America. They look at Shinto and Buddhist practices as cultural rather than religious practices.



FIGURE 12-13 *Matsuri* parades are held all over Japan. The biggest ones are even televised. What festivals have you attended? Think about what you saw and did. What ritual significance might the event have had?

The Dark Side of Nature

It is easy to see how the beauty of nature can inspire people with a feeling of spiritual connection. But extremes of dangerous weather or natural disasters can also shape a culture's worldview. What stories can you think of that link natural disasters with the will of a deity?

Japan is located in an area where several continental and oceanic tectonic plates meet. Earthquakes are caused by shifts in these plates. While they are usually minor in nature, every few decades a major earthquake strikes Japan.

Earthquakes and volcanoes that occur on the ocean floor are also common in the Pacific. These may cause devastating waves, known throughout the world by their Japanese name, **tsunami** (tsoo-nuh-mee), which means "harbour wave." In the late summer and fall, parts of Japan may be struck by typhoons. These violent tropical storms develop over the Pacific Ocean—just as hurricanes form over the Atlantic Ocean—and can cause great damage.

As you can see, in Japan nature can be beautiful and calm one moment and frightening and violent the next. How does the constant possibility of a natural disaster affect people?

One answer is that the people become **stoic**. They learn to adjust and to adapt. After each disaster they start over and rebuild. The first Westerners in Japan who experienced the earthquake and fire that hit Yokohama in 1868 were amazed at how rapidly the Japanese rebuilt. In the following chapters you will see that adaptation to sudden change became an important theme in Japanese life.

Think IT THROUGH

What is the worst experience you have had that was caused by the forces of nature? How did it affect your attitudes and behaviour?

What's in a **WORD**?

A "stoic" was a member of an ancient Greek school of philosophy. Today we use stoic to describe a person who controls his or her emotions and endures difficult experiences with patience.



FIGURE 12-14 Mountains have the capacity for destruction when they are active volcanoes. The resulting ash in the atmosphere can cause widespread weather disturbances. If you believed that mountains were sacred places, how would you interpret the eruption of a volcano?

Zoom In > Earthquakes: The Stuff of Legends

For centuries, natural disasters like earthquakes were explained by legends and passed down to later generations through storytelling. The First Nations people of the Pacific coast, for example, tell stories of a huge earthquake and a giant wave that killed thousands of their people 300 years ago. They tell of villages being washed away and of whales and thunderbirds locked in fights. Japanese legends include the story of an orphan tsunami—one not linked to a local earthquake—that destroyed several villages around the same time. Was this a coincidence, or were these legend based on fact? Scientific study of tree rings in British Columbia confirmed the disaster and placed its date at between 1699 and 1700. Further scientific evidence has established the exact date—27th of January, 1700.

According to Japanese legend, there is a giant catfish named Namazu (Nuh-muh-zoo) that lives in the mud underneath the Earth. It is the thrashing of Namazu that causes earthquakes. Namazu was so unpredictable that a god known as Kashima was sent to restrain him. But whenever

Kashima relaxed his grip, Namazu would thrash and the world would experience another major earthquake.

Artists have transformed this legend into images of woodblock prints referred to as *Namazu-e* (Nuh-muh-zoo-ay). These prints were intended to cheer the survivors of past earthquakes. It is said that having one of these prints in your home assures the owner of “ten thousand years of happiness.”

1. Ask older family or community members for stories about natural disasters. Do they have a religious or spiritual component?
2. Research First Nations and Inuit legends that refer to natural disasters or ways of explaining natural phenomena.
3. In Chapter 7, you saw how the Aztecs also attributed natural events to gods. How are Japanese beliefs similar to Aztec explanations of how and why natural disasters occur? How are they different? What do the two cultures believe about nature and human ability to influence it?

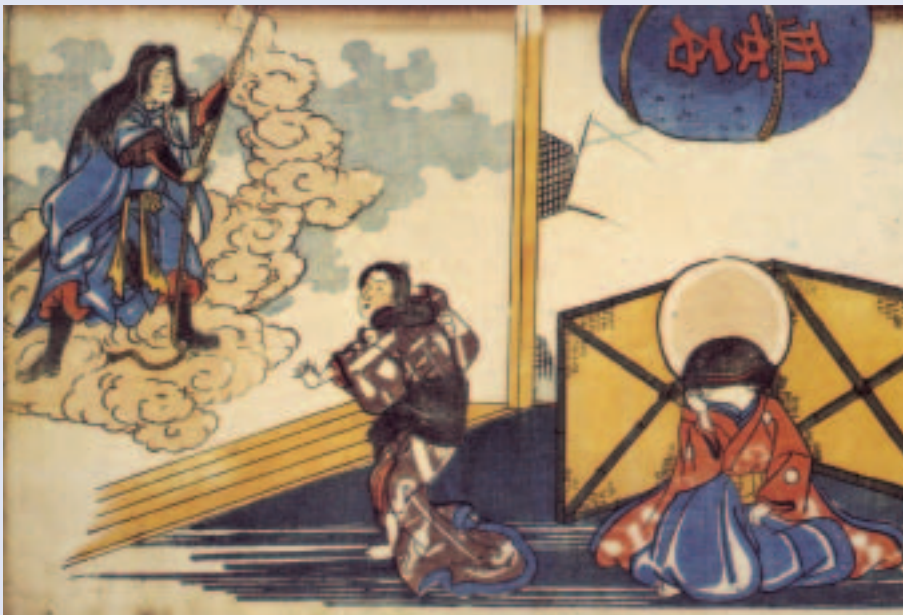


FIGURE 12-15 This image is called *The Kashima deity attempts to set the foundation stone*. It is based on a scene from a famous stage play in which Kashima lowers a stone onto Namazu’s head in an effort to keep him from thrashing about and creating an earthquake.

1640	Tsunami in Komagatake kills 700 people
1741	Tsunami kills 1474 people on Oshima-Oshima, an island off Hokkaido
1792	Volcanic eruption in Unzen kills 14 300 people
1923	Earthquake strikes Tokyo and Yokohama, killing 140 000 people
1933	Tsunami off the northeastern coast kills almost 3000 people
1946	Earthquake off the coast of Honshu floods 72 000 km of coastline, destroying 40 000 homes, and killing 2000 people
1959	Typhoon Vera hits New Guinea and Honshu, killing 5000 people and leaving 4 million people homeless
1995	Earthquake in Kobe kills an estimated 5000 to 6000 people

FIGURE 12-16 Some of the major natural disasters that have occurred in Japan. Choose one of the elements from the worldviews icon and explain how disasters and loss of life might affect it.

Over to YOU

- Each *haiku* poem in Japanese has only 17 syllables arranged in three lines (5 syllables/ 7 syllables/ 5 syllables) and contains a simple image or idea. *Haiku* poems traditionally capture an impressive moment of natural beauty and relate it to the personal feelings or the human condition.
 - Using a two-column graphic organizer like the one below, summarize how elements of nature influenced the beliefs and values of the Japanese people.

Nature	Belief and Values

 - Choose one example and write a *haiku* to express the connection between an image from nature and the Japanese belief or value.
 - Write a *haiku* that focuses on an image or idea that is distinctly Canadian. As a class, collect your poems into a booklet that captures a range of views of Canada.
- To what extent does nature contribute to your sense of identity? Do you think living in a primarily rural or a primarily urban environment might affect your answer? Explain.
- Many countries use symbols as a way of visually portraying elements to describe their national identity.
 - Make a list of some common symbols of Canada. Which of them are drawn from nature?
 - Research the Métis flag and the Franco-Albertan flag. When and how did the flags originate? What symbols are used, and what do they stand for?
 - Research Canada's coat of arms. What do the symbols on the coat of arms suggest to you about Canada's identity? To what degree is Canada's natural environment represented on the coat of arms? Canada's coat of arms is very old. Update the coat of arms by developing a new one that reflects the way Canadians see themselves today.

A Self-Sufficient Country

How did Japan's self-sufficiency contribute to the Japanese worldview?

Do you consider yourself self-sufficient? In the strictest sense that would mean that you wouldn't need anything from anyone else. It would be difficult to live your life that way! When a country is self-sufficient, it means that it doesn't depend on receiving things from other countries.

Resources and Climate

Compared with the countries of Renaissance Europe, Japan had relatively little trade with other countries before 1853. Yet, the country survived and prospered. Japan's farmers and fishers provided sufficient food to feed the people. Wood for building and for fuel came from the abundant forests. Silkworms and cotton plants provided material for clothing. Clever artisans made use of the available metals. As a result, Japan was a self-sufficient country. How was this achieved, considering how little land there was available for agriculture in Japan's mountainous landscape?

Nature compensated for the limited amount of **arable** land, that is, land suitable for farming, by making it very fertile. A temperate climate and dependable rainfall provide a longer growing season than is possible in Canada. Japan's climate includes a brief winter, so people had to grow enough food to last through the colder months.



FIGURE 12-17 Use an atlas to find out what latitudes Japan occupies from the northern tip to the southern tip. What part of North America lies at the same northern and southern latitudes? What would you expect to see in a photograph taken in the south of Japan?

Rice: Symbol of a Country

What climate, food, or activities do you think people in other countries associate with Canada? To what extent do you think your ideas about other countries might be based on ideas that are exaggerated or inaccurate? Too often, people make aspects of a culture such as foods, dress, and dance stand for the culture as a whole. On the other hand, sometimes such ideas do have some truth to them. For example, for many people, Japan and rice are connected.

Rice was the main food in Japan. Although the poorest Japanese could afford rice only occasionally, it was—and remains—the food most associated with Japan and its culture. Even today, the emperor tends a few rice plants, symbolically nurturing the Japanese culture and its people.

Growing rice is labour intensive. This means that it requires a lot of time and person power. Rice also depends on the right amount of moisture, which is brought by the **monsoon** winds and deposited as rain. In the past, when the monsoons failed to appear, rice crops failed and famine followed. This caused disruption and turmoil in the country.

For centuries, rice was also the Japanese money system. For tax purposes, the value of land was determined by the estimated amount of rice that it could produce. A person's worth was determined by rice production. A lord's rank and wealth related to the total rice production of his territory.

LINK UP

In Chapter 7 you saw how important some crops were to the Aztecs. They considered corn a sacred plant. ■

Think IT THROUGH

Suggest one Canadian food that you think symbolizes Canada's history and culture the way that rice symbolizes Japan's. Explain your thinking.



FIGURE 12-18 Farmers increased their productivity by using irrigation and by terracing sloped fields for rice, their most important crop. Compare these rice paddies with the way the Aztecs manipulated the land for agriculture.

A Symbolic Gift

In 1853, Commodore Perry and his ships from America made contact with the Japanese. The two groups, completely new to each other, exchanged gifts. Among other items, the Japanese gave the Americans bales of rice weighing about 70 kilograms each, which were carried aboard the American ships by sumo wrestlers.

- Think about what you read in Chapter 10 about Cortés firing his canons and exercising his horses in front of the Aztec ambassadors. Do you see any similarities between these two moments of contact between different cultures? Explain.



FIGURE 12-19 This woodblock print shows sumo wrestlers loading bales of rice aboard Perry's ships. Why do you think the Japanese chose to have sumo wrestlers load the rice?

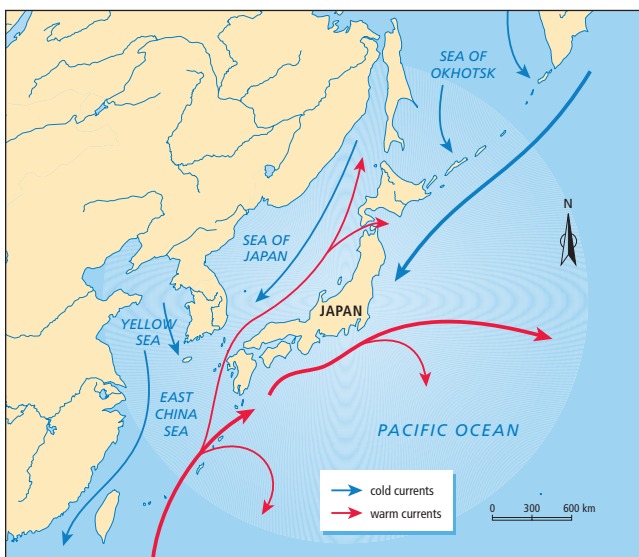


FIGURE 12-20 Warm and cold ocean currents flow around Japan. Fish are particularly plentiful where cold and warm currents meet.

Other Foods

The sea provided fish, which is one of the main sources of protein for the Japanese. Another Japanese staple food harvested from the sea is seaweed, which is high in vitamins and mineral salts. The sea and its food became central to the Japanese way of life.

Soy is another important part of the Japanese diet. People in the Western world have only recently begun eating soybeans and soy products.

Fair Trade?

The Japanese word, *gohan* (go-hun), means both cooked rice and a meal. So when you say “Did you eat?” in Japanese, you are actually saying “Did you eat rice?” This illustrates that rice is considered an essential part of every meal. Rice is also culturally and historically important to the Japanese people. As a result, the Japanese government controls rice production and imports and subsidizes, or financially supports, rice production by Japanese farmers. It would be much cheaper to import rice from other countries, but this would put the Japanese rice farmers out of business.

The Canadian government is also involved in the marketing of wheat in Western Canada. Farmers must by law sell their wheat to the Canadian Wheat Board which is a government agency. The Wheat Board then sells the wheat to other countries. Some farmers want to be able to sell their grain themselves, but defenders of the Wheat Board say that it protects the interests of all farmers by subsidi-



FIGURE 12-21 The Canadian Wheat Board also controls the sale of barley.

dizing them in years when the price of wheat is very low. Still others want the option of selling their crops to the board or on the open market.

Think IT THROUGH

1. What, if any, similarities can you see in the Canadian and Japanese situation?
2. How does the Japanese government prohibiting rice imports fit in with the isolation and self-sufficiency of Japanese society?

A Homogeneous Society

When you look at the physical geography of Japan, you might expect that people living in different areas of the country developed distinct cultures. The rugged mountains that run down the middle of Japan form a natural barrier to travel. Also, the kinds of rivers that encouraged trade and communication in Renaissance Europe do not exist in Japan; the swift-flowing mountain rivers of Japan are generally not navigable. In addition, there are distinct differences between the islands: in the north, winter predominates; the south has a milder climate where rice and other warm weather crops grow well.

However, the people of Japan have long thought of themselves as a **homogenous** society, a great unified family with common values and beliefs. A homogeneous society consists of people who see themselves as having a similar nature and character. The geographic factor that contributed to this aspect of Japanese society was the sea. Most of the population lived along the coast and the sea provided a communication and trading corridor for them. Ideas, beliefs, and values as well as goods were exchanged.

LINK UP

In Chapter 13, you will see that during the Edo period from 1600 to 1868, lords called daimyo built a network of roads in Japan. ■

Hamamatsu, Japan

Hamamatsu is Japan's eighteenth largest city, home to more than 500 000 people. Located half-way between Tokyo and Osaka, the city has a strong economic foundation—Honda, Yamaha, and Suzuki operate factories there. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, city officials realized their economy was in jeopardy: they might not have enough workers to fill jobs at the factories.

Japan's population growth rate of 0.02 percent suggested to them that they needed to find a way to bring workers to their community. To keep the factories in the city, the municipality recruited workers of Japanese descent who lived in Brazil and Peru. The officials thought that the workers' Japanese heritage would keep the country's society homogeneous. However, many of the newly arrived immigrants were descendants of Japanese who had left the home islands up to 100 years earlier—the workers were Brazilian and Peruvian more than they were Japanese.

Today, Hamamatsu continues to thrive economically, and its community is increasingly diverse. Hamamatsu boasts:

- four Portuguese newspapers
- four Brazilian schools and one Peruvian school
- Spanish and Portuguese community centres
- several samba nightclubs

City officials publish local laws and regulations in several languages, and often celebrate Brazilian holidays as their own.

Think IT THROUGH

1. Why did Hamamatsu officials recruit workers of Japanese heritage from Brazil and Peru? Why might they have been willing to settle in Japan?
2. What was the impact of immigration on the city?
3. Examine the line graph of Foreign Nationals Living in Japan, 1980–2004. What trend is indicated?
4. What implications do your answers to questions 1–3 suggest about the future of Japan as a homogenous society?
5. Québec is responsible for the selection, reception, and integration of immigrants to the province. One reason that Québec has this agreement with the Government of Canada is so that the province can maintain its demographic weight within Canada—that is, its share of the Canadian population (by percent). What other reasons make it important for Québec to be in charge of immigration to the province?

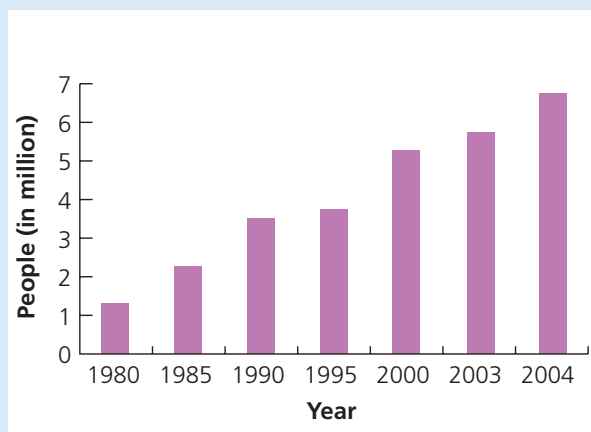


FIGURE 12-22 Foreign Nationals Living in Japan, 1980–2004. Since 1980, increasing numbers of foreign nationals live and work in Japan. As of 2004, 1.55 percent (about 2 million) of the total population (about 127 million) was foreign nationals.

A Distinct People

The Ainu lived in the northern part of Japan for several thousand years in an area the Japanese called Ezochi, Land of the Ezo (Ainu). The word *ainu* means “human” in the Ainu language. The Ainu had their own separate society and territory, but eventually the Japanese began to take over the Ainu lands. The Ainu fought several wars of resistance against Japanese control, but each time they were defeated. Eventually the Ainu territory officially became part of Japan and the island where most of the Ainu lived was renamed Hokkaido.

The Japanese began a program of **assimilation** of the Ainu people. They were forbidden to speak their language or practise many of their customs, and were restricted to living in areas the government provided for them. They were given land to farm, even though they were traditionally a hunting and fishing society.



FIGURE 12-23 This photo of Ainu women was taken in 1950. Compare their appearance and dress with that of Japanese women in this chapter.

What's in a **WORD**?

The word “assimilation” comes from the Latin word *assimilare* which means “to make similar.” A dominant society assimilates a minority society when it tries to make the people in the minority society give up their language and culture and become similar to the dominant society.

Zoom In > The Ainu Today

For many years, the Ainu were denied status as an official minority by the government of Japan. In 1997, however, after a lawsuit was launched by the Ainu, the Congress of Japan passed legislation that acknowledged their existence: the *Act on the Encouragement of Ainu Culture and the Diffusion and Enlightenment of Knowledge on Ainu*. Some members of the Ainu community were disappointed because the Act did not include an apology for past wrongs done to the Ainu or provide enough help for the Ainu to regain their culture.

Many Ainu people today take great pride in their heritage. They have established organizations to promote activities to revive their language and preserve their culture.

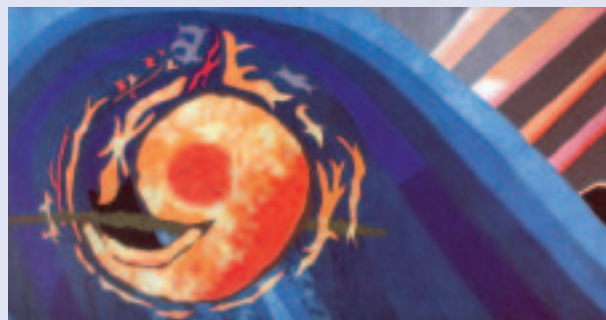
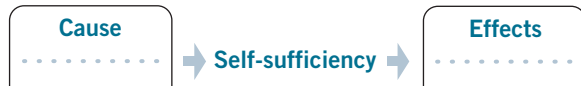


FIGURE 12-24 This work entitled *Kamuy: Spirit of the Ainu* was created by Ainu textile artist Kawamura Noriko in 1998. Remember that *kamuy* is the Ainu word for a god. One viewer described this work as a “wave or an ocean wrapping around a swirling ball of dancing fire.” How would you describe it?

1. a. Create a cause-and-effect flowchart to show how self-sufficiency might have influenced worldview in Japan.



- b. Technology and changing worldviews have made it nearly impossible for countries to be, or need to be, self-sufficient today. Develop a list of five items you use in your home every day. Determine where these goods were manufactured. Create a web to show how interdependence might influence worldview in Canada.
2. In a Japanese dictionary, there are more than 75 words related to rain. They include the following:
- *ame* (uh-may) means raindrops
 - *akisame* (uh-kee-suh-may) means autumn rain
 - *harusame* (huh-roo-suh-may) means spring rain
 - *amayo* (uh-my-o) means evening rain

In the Inuktitut (e-nook-tea-tut), Aivilik (l-vah-lick), and Iglulik (ick-loo-lick) languages, there are more than 30 words associated with snow. Those starting just with the letter “a” include the following:

- *aluiqqaniq* (ah-leo-qqa-niq) means a snowdrift on a steep hill
- *aniuk* (ah-new-k) means snow for drinking water
- *aniuvak* (au-new-k) means snow remaining in holes
- *aput* (ah-put) means snow on the ground

- *aqilluqqaq* (aqi-looq-qaq) means fresh and soggy snow
- *auviq* (ow-viq) means a snow brick

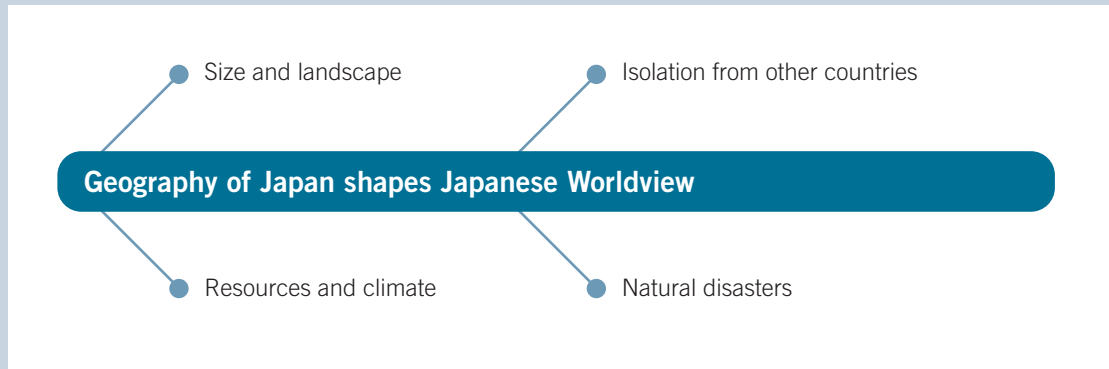
Inuktitut, Aivilik, and Iglulik words are from Julian Bentham, Adelaide Research Center.

- a. Why do you think there are so many variations on these words in each of the cultures? What does it suggest about their significance?
- b. Explain an aspect of climate or weather that has a major impact in the area where you live. Are there many words describing variations of it? Explain why or why not.
- c. The English language contains many words from Aboriginal languages—for example, *moose* is an Algonquin word, and *anorak* comes from the Inuit language. Conduct research to find two or three English words of Aboriginal origin. Create a bumper-sticker-sized poster with the word, its origin, and an illustration.
3. Many people in Prince Edward Island were opposed to the building of the Confederation Bridge linking the island to the mainland. They felt it would destroy their traditional way of life. Others supported it because they wanted to become less isolated. Imagine that you lived on the island.
- a. Research the various points of view on the building of the bridge. Create a placard to express where you would have stood on this issue.
- b. Display your placard to the class and give evidence to support your position. Review the critical thinking checklist on page 9 to prepare for the discussion.

Explore the Big Ideas

Japan's combination of geographic factors contributed to the worldview of its people.

- a.** Using the organizer below, find elements of the Japanese worldview shaped by each of the geographical aspects.



- b.** Choose one aspect and create a visual that compares and contrasts the Japanese geographical feature and aspects of worldview with Canadian geography and your own point of view.

- 2.** Select two regions in Japan with contrasting climates and environments. Find or draw pictures that reflect the greatest differences between the two regions. State three ways the environment may affect the way each region sees the world. Do the same for two regions in Canada.
 - a.** Imagine that the leaders in your community have decided to take over large tracts of nearby land for future economic development.
 - b.** In your groups, develop a list of pros and cons for this action. Write a policy statement about this action. "We believe that"
 - c.** Record three economic reasons and three social reasons that support your policy statement.
- 3.** Work with three other students in your class and discuss attitudes to the land and how land shapes worldview in your community.
- 4.** Work with a partner to research major natural disasters in Canada from the mid-1600s to today. Create a timeline of these disasters. Compare the Canadian timeline with that of Japan's on page 273. What similarities and differences do you note? What impact might this have on the respective worldview in each nation?