

# Free japan and germany: foreign policy before world war 2 term paper example

[War](#), [World War 2](#)



## **Japan and Germany**

### Japan and Germany

Before World War 2, Japan and Germany had certain similarities in their foreign relations and domestic policies, which will be discussed in this paper. It is arguable why the two countries found themselves as allies together with Italy in world war two, but there is a great possibility that if the two countries had been neighbors, they would have fought each other because of their similar foreign policies. However, due to their distance between each other and their similar foreign policies, they were allies in the Second World War. This is because they found themselves fighting against the same enemy.

### **Aggressive military**

Both countries had an aggressive military. Traditionally, Japan had a government dominated by the military. This predated the modern world. In the feudal age, the Japanese had warlords who exerted authority on behalf of the emperor. These warlords and their armies were able to establish a military dominated government way before the period before world war two. During world war one; Japan had been an ally of Britain. However, after the war, the peace agreements such as the Washington naval agreement seemed to curtail Japan's military power. For example, Japan was only allowed one ship to Britain's five. This aggrieved the Japanese who had a strong military tradition (Beauchamp, 2013).

Similarly, Germany had a strong and aggressive military dominated government. After world war one again where Germany had been fighting against the other major powers in the world, peace treaties seemed to be

against the Germans. They had lost the war and the peace agreements put pressure on the aggressive military. When Hitler and the Nazi party came to power, they embarked on a plan to create a great army. Hitler was able to commit most of the country's resources towards building the army. Civilian manufacturers were required to stop producing civilian equipment and focus their efforts to manufacturing for the military. This was made possible by the great power the military possessed in this country. This is the reason why these two countries were able to supply the equipment needed to fight the allies for a sustained period during the war. Otherwise, if it was not for the aggressive military regimes in both countries, they would not have been able to sustain the war for the period they did. Civilian industry was taken over to produce equipment such as ships and airplanes for the army before and during the war (Bendersky, 2007).

### **Expansionist to create an empire, after depression**

Before the Second World War, Japan and Germany was both expansionist. In Asia, Japan was the leading power. In the late 1930s, the great depression happened and industry the world over suffered. Japan had for many years relied on the silk trade as an integral part of the economy. During the great depression, demand for silk in Europe and other wealthy western countries declined; the silk trade collapsed. This was a major blow for the Japanese economy. Japan is located on four main islands and numerous other smaller islands. The population explosion in Japan meant that there were fewer and fewer resources available on the islands. This forced the Japanese government to look at the mainland as a possible solution to this problem.

This resulted in Japan conquering the Asian mainland and take over vast amounts of land for settlement of its people. This resulted in Japan taking over Manchuria on the mainland (Beauchamp, 2013). From this invasion, they were able to gain control of the Manchurian railway.

Similarly, Germany was also an expansionist state before the Second World War. Germany is located in the heart of Europe and was also experiencing a population explosion. After the First World War, Germany had suffered from defeat but the First World War was not as destructive as the Second World War. This means that the economy was able to bounce back quite quickly. Due to its strong military, Germany was still seen as a threat by many of its rivals. At first, Germany conquered ear European states before the march on France and Britain during the Second World War proper. After losing the First World War, Germany was humiliated but after Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party came to power, the country was able to embark on industrialization and rearmament. Germany wanted to conquer neighboring countries with significant German populations in order to create a large empire before conquering the rest of Europe. Although the reasons for expansion were different, these two countries had a similarity in terms of their foreign relations at the time because of this factor.

### **Anti-communism**

Before the Second World War, countries were military, democratic, or communist. It so happens that Japan and Germany were anti-communist.

Russia happened to be the great power of the day that practiced communism. Communism had major flaws at the time and Japan saw it as a

serious threat to its government. The ideals of communism went against the Japanese ideals at the time and the Japanese government saw it as a threat to its power. Therefore, the country did all in its power to limit the influence of communism on its population. Communism also had a bad perception at the time. Since nothing belongs to anyone and everything belongs to the state, nobody felt the need for innovation or putting extra hard work since they could not own property. This was the main reasons why Japan invaded Manchuria. This colony ruled by a Chinese emperor who was a puppet of the Japanese provided a buffer zone between communist Russia and Japan (Tōgō, 2010).

Germany on the other hand was similarly anti-communist. Russia had for many years been a dominant power in the region. Russia had managed to export communism to some of the states surrounding it, especially states in Eastern Europe. These happened to be states with significant Germany populations and Germany was interested in bringing these populations under its control. As a result, Germany was anti-communist and this is probably the reasons why these two countries found themselves on the same side of the war because of fighting the same enemy (Bendersky, 2007).

## **Racism**

Although this was not the major reason why these two countries found themselves as allies fighting in the war, it played a major role in their foreign relations and domestic politics at the time. Germany was majorly anti-Semitic at the time. Jews had no country prior to world war two. They were spread out all over Europe at the time. Jews were very enterprising and they

dominated most of the industries they took part in. This did not go well with Germany Nazi which saw them as an inferior race. Germany's anti-Semitism was a major drive for the country during the war. Germany aimed to destroy the Jewish population in its lands and in the areas, it conquered.

Similarly, the Japanese saw themselves as the dominant race in Asia. They believed they were superior to the Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, Mongolians, and the Polynesians with whom they shared the region. This led to problems arising after Japan conquered areas of mainland Asia. The Japanese soldiers behaved badly and the Japanese government was openly discriminative against these other races in the region. Although this was not a reason for World War Two, it is a clear indicator of Japanese foreign policy at the time prior to World War Two.

## **Nationalist**

Japan was a nationalist country before the Second World War. In the early twentieth century, Japan had been in a war with Russia. The main motivation for the Japan-Russia war was the threat that Japan saw of the invasion of Asia by foreigners. As a result, it coined the term Asia for Asians (Tōgō, 2010). This was meant to galvanize the people against people who were seen as foreigners in the region. After the First World War, the powers at the time sought to establish outposts of their militaries all over the world. The Americans, the British, and the Russians sought to establish outposts in Asia as it was seen as an important area for the global power. Foreigners opposed Japan's invasion of Asia. Therefore, set up its foreign relations and domestic policies to counter this, which resulted in a nationalist state. Germany on the

other hand also faced similar problems. After losing world war one, the ego of the country was hurt and in order to regain power, the country forged a strong nationalist movement in order to galvanize its population towards the state (Shore, 2005).

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