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Global Studies: Japan and the Pacific Rim

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UNIT 4 Articles from the World Press 196

Regional

1. **Deep Danger: Competing Claims in the South China Sea**, Marvin C. Ott, *Current History*, September 2011. In 1974, China fought South Vietnam in a naval battle in which China took over and occupied the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea. Since then, the battle for the resources under the sea in the area has heated up with no fewer than seven countries claiming ownership of the hundreds of atolls, reefs, and small islands in the region and with China aggressively declaring sovereignty over much of the area. 197

2. **Does Economic Integration Augur Peace in East Asia?** Scott L. Kastner, *Current History*, September 2011. Considerable uncertainty still surrounds prospects for stability in East Asia. China's military expansion is causing concern region-wide, the Korean peninsula issue remains unresolved, and maritime disputes in the South and East China seas persist. At the same time, the region is integrating more actively than any other world region. Will that integration allow resolution of the area's persistent problems? 203

Australia

3. **Two-speed Australia**, Robert Milliken, *The Economist*, November 22, 2010. Economic dynamism in Australia is shifting from the older, more populous states of New South Wales and Victoria, to the wide open spaces of the frontier states of Queensland and Western Australia. Iron ore, coal, gas, and other resources from these regions are fueling the growth of China and other emerging economies in Asia. 209

Cambodia

4. **Silencing Cambodia's Honest Brokers**, Elizabeth Becker, *The New York Times*, August 17, 2011. Under a new law, independent citizen groups would have to register with the government and win approval to operate. If denied, there would be no appeal. The normally fractious Cambodian civil groups have joined together against the proposed law. 211

China

5. **For Chinese Students, Smoking Isn't All Bad**, Daryl Loo, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, October 3–9, 2011. In China, the government tobacco regulation agency also runs the government's largest cigarette maker. So, while tobacco use continues to decline in most of the world, China promotes smoking, even to children, who are told that 'tobacco helps you become talented.' 213

6. **The Recession's Real Winner**, Fareed Zakaria, *Newsweek*, October 26, 2009. Almost every country in the Western world was unprepared for the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009. China, on the other hand, used the crisis to move forward aggressively, adding new rail lines, roads, and airports. 215

Indonesia

7. **Indonesia's Image and Reality**, Donald E. Weatherbee, *Current History*, September 2011. As the fourth most populous country in the world and the largest economy in Southeast Asia, Indonesia should be able to exercise more clout with its neighbors than it has done in recent years. 217

Japan

8. **Hoikuen or Yochien: Past, Present, and Future of Japanese Early Childhood Education**, Aimi Kono Chesky, *Childhood Education*, Summer 2011. Over 95 percent of Japanese children attend some kind of early childhood education program, but the limited availability of programs for newborns and the very young has been a major hurdle for working mothers and may be contributing to the declining birthrate. Perhaps the new 'accredited children's garden' program or 'nintei kodomo-en' will fill some of the need. 219

9. **In Japan, New Nationalism Takes Hold**, Robert Marquand, *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 28 2006. Is Japan experiencing an awakening nationalism? Can evidence of it be found in magazines, in cartoons, on television, and in the speech content of motivational speakers? Despite the continuation of a strongly pacifist national personality, new voices are emerging that show Japan moving slowly away from its moderate world view of the past 50 years. 223

Laos

10. **A Second Wind from the Golden Triangle**, *The Economist*, July 19, 2011. The new prime minister of Laos, Thongsing Thammavong, has taken the country's drugs problem into his own hands. Wearing a business suit and wielding a giant torch, he helped put fire to an enormous stash of seized opium, heroin, and cannabis. But with acreage of cultivated opium farms on the increase, has the government's efforts made any difference? 226

Macau

11. **Distinct Mix Holds On in a Corner of China**, Andrew Jacobs, *The New York Times*, February 7, 2011. Faced with an overwhelming influx of Chinese since Beijing took back the territory of Macau in 1999, many local Macanese are fighting to keep their endangered language and Portuguese-based culture. 228

Myanmar (Burma)

12. **Myanmar's Young Artists and Activists**, Joshua Hammer, *Smithsonian*, March 2011. The art community in Myanmar (Burma) is putting on secret exhibitions in direct violation of the censorship laws that require every piece of art to be screened for subversive content by a panel of 'experts.' If they are caught, they will go to jail. 230

North and South Korea

13. **The Korean Peninsula on the Verge**, Charles K. Armstrong, *Current History*, September 2011. In 2011, after years of silence, dialogue between North Korea and the United States began once again. But will the alliance of South Korea with the United States and Japan versus the alliance of North Korea with China doom the talks and keep the Korean peninsula on the verge of conflict? 234

Taiwan

14. **Taiwan Jet Deal Aids Ally without Provoking Rival China: View**, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, October 12, 2011. The United States has agreed to upgrade Taiwan's existing fleet of F-16 fighter jets. The deal is worth \$5.85 billion. Taiwan expressed disappointment that they could not buy newer versions of the jet, but the United States, in an apparent attempt to pacify mainland China, settled on the upgrades instead. 240

Thailand

15. **The Thai Rice Bowl May Get a Little Skimpier**, Alan Bjerga and Supunnabul Suwanakij, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, April 11–17, 2011. Thailand has been the world's top exporter of rice since 1965, but that may change. Crop damage by insects, low prices, and low-cost competition from nearby countries is causing the government to consider major changes, including a reduction in production. All this comes at a time when the United Nations is begging countries to increase production to satisfy rising global demand for food. 242

Vietnam

16. **The Vietnam Case**, Angie Ngoc Tran, *Harvard International Review*, Summer 2011. Vietnam is a socialist country attempting to integrate itself into the capitalist economy. For workers, this has meant many challenges. Since 2000, Vietnam has been serving as a 'broker' state, arranging the international migration of some half a million workers to over 40 countries. What is life like for these workers? 244

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