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# EDUCATE FOR PEACE

LEGAL PERSPECTIVES ON WWII IN ASIA

May a new love for humanity be born  
out of the horrors we have known.

- Bergsen-Belsen's Scroll of Remembrance

To book your visit:



# WongAvery Asia Pacific Peace Museum Educator Guide

Peace, security, and dignity of human life are made fragile by othering, disinformation, oppression, and armed conflict. The choices we make are critical to securing a better world.

The history of WWII in Asia teaches one of the greatest lessons about solidarity of humanity – the choice that we each, individually and as a collective, act or not to act, and the consequences of decisions. What we know, do, and value matters as part of the forces of ideas, people, events, and developments.

EXPERIENCE THE MUSEUM, not as answers, but as critical inquiry ...

Take an inquiry walk of 90 minutes on the LEGAL PERSPECTIVES of WWII Asia, which will not be a chronological experience. Instead, it's a walk that takes you on close encounters with different objects in specific galleries to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of justice system(s) in responding to victims of war atrocities
- Explain the relationship between values, beliefs, and law, both in Japan during the war and in present-day contexts

The walk begins by looking at international law and war atrocities, with biological and chemical warfare as a case study. It then proceeds to examine the relationship between state and citizens in Japan during the war and their broader relevance. It covers sensitive content, including torture and suicide.

## PART I: INTERNATIONAL LAW IN TIMES OF WAR

A. To gain the larger historical context of war atrocities, **start at the Pre-War gallery** and locate object #1: World War II in Asia 1931-1945 and object #2: the accompanying map



Object #1



Object #2

Familiarize yourself with the content. Identify the significance of the following years:

- 1931                      1937                      1941                      1944-45

B. **Proceed to the Biological and Chemical Warfare gallery.**

Find object #3 and #4.

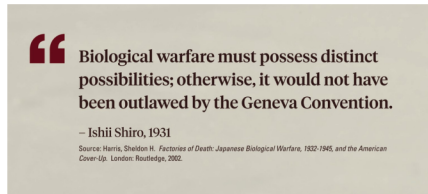
Object #3



Read the whole text.

- Identify what Unit 731 was, what it did, who was affected, and where.
- Name a key international agreement in the prewar years regarding biological and chemical warfare

Object #4

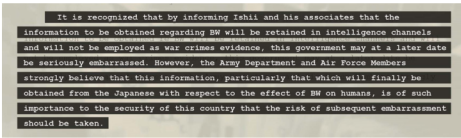


Identify the speaker of this quotation. Read further to understand his life.

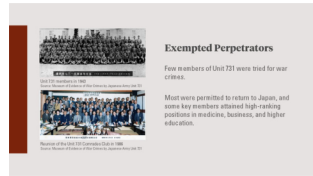
- What values and beliefs are upheld by the Geneva Convention in this quotation?
- What are the speaker's values and beliefs about human life and dignity are implied in this quotation and on this panel?
- How might these values have conflicted with the speaker's professional training?

C. Find this quotation. Read it and the panel accompanying it. Then locate the interactive drawers for object 5 and 6

Object #5



Object #6



- After the war, what happened to leaders of Unit 731 who had committed war crimes?
- What priorities led to this outcome? Use evidence to explain.
- Evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of this political decision and its legal consequences. Consider this question from multiple perspectives (victims, scientists, Ishii, the US government).

D. Return to the introductory panel for this gallery.



Now that you have experienced more of the gallery,

- Given that Japan did not ratify the 1925 Geneva Protocol, were Unit 731's actions acceptable? Why or why not?
- Use evidence from the gallery and critical thinking to support your position.

E. Find and study object #6

Object #6



- What do you think is needed to more effectively enforce the prohibition on biological and chemical warfare (e.g. laws, institutions, enforcement mechanisms, etc.)?
- What might be needed outside of legislation in preventing bio-chemical weapons development?

## PART II: STATE AND CITIZENS - JAPAN DURING WWII IN ASIA

F. Continue in the **Biological and Chemical Warfare gallery**.

Find object #7

Object #7

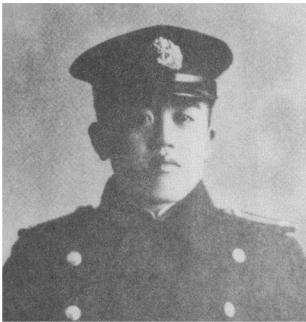


- What place is pictured here?
- Why was its location kept secret from the public?
- What might this secrecy suggest about the relationship between the state, its citizens, and citizens' legal rights?

G. Proceed to **Japan Turned Defensive gallery**

Locate object #8 and object #9

Object #8



Object #9



Read and learn the stories / lived experiences of these two soldiers

- How did they feel about having to kill themselves on behalf of the state?
- Would they have volunteered for this role without state directive? Use evidence to explain your response
- Compare and contrast the kamikaze system of being drafted for a suicide mission with military conscription today to serve in an army? Explain your answer with reasoning and evidence.
- Should political-legal considerations determine how war is conducted? What else should be considered?

H. Find object #10. Read about his story with reference to other panels about Okinawa.

### Object #10



- Why did he kill members of his family?
- What are possible consequences when a citizen refuses a state order?
- Characterize the relationship between the state and its citizens in the context of the Battle of Okinawa. How might a state view its citizens if it asks them to kill themselves and their families on the state's behalf?
- What values and attitudes about law and humanity are implied in the state's actions?

In light of what you have experienced in Part II, think about how states view and value the people they govern, citizens and colonized people, and how those views are expressed in laws.

- How did the views and attitudes of the Japanese state toward its citizens and colonized people serve the war agenda?
- How might a state's attitudes toward its citizens and colonized people promote peace?

### Debriefing the Museum Experience

- How would this museum experience, on legal perspectives of WWII in Asia, contribute to meeting student learning in your course?
- What are the interdisciplinary connections?
- What are the connections to contemporary issues addressed in your course?

## Some examples of Ontario secondary courses and curriculum which could include WWII in Asia

**10 Civics (Politics) (CHV2O)** Civic Awareness (Rights and Responsibilities); Civic Engagement and Action (Civic Contributions; Personal Action on Civic Issues)

**11 Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice (HSE3E)** Research and Inquiry Skills (Investigating; Processing Information); Foundations (Power Relations; Social Awareness and Individual Action); Equity, Social Justice, and Change (Social Activism); Promoting Equity and Social Justice (Human Rights, Equity, and Antidiscrimination; Social Action and Personal Engagement)

**11 World History Since 1900: Global and Regional Perspectives (CHT3O)** Communities: Local, National, and Global (Imperialism and Decolonialization; Conflict and Cooperation; the International Community); Change and Continuity (the Process of Change; the Process of Continuity); Citizenship and Heritage (Nationalism and Internationalism; the Rights of Individuals and Groups); Methods of Historical Inquiry and Communication

**11 English (ENG3C/3U), 12 English (ENG4C/4U)** Reading and Literature Studies (Reading for Meaning; Understanding Form and Style); Writing (Developing and Organizing Content; Applying Knowledge of Conventions); Media Studies (Understanding Media Texts; Understanding Media Forms, Conventions, and Techniques)

**12 Canadian and International Law (CLN4U)** Regulation and Dispute Resolution (Principles of International Law; International Treaties and Agreements; Global Conflicts and Resolution)

**12 Canadian and World Politics (CPW4U)** Participation in the International Community (Rights and Responsibilities of International Participation; International Conflict and Cooperation; International Human Rights); Power, Influence, and the Resolution of Differences (State Power); Values, Beliefs, and Ideologies (the International Influence of Ideologies; Nationalist and Internationalist Orientations); Methods of Political Inquiry and Communication (Research; Interpretation and Analysis; Communication)

**12 Equity and Social Justice: From Theory to Practice (HSE4M)** Research and Inquiry Skills (Exploring; Investigating; Processing Information); Addressing Equity and Social Justice Issues (Historical and Contemporary Issues); Personal and Social Action (Promoting Equity and Social Justice; Social Action and Personal Engagement)

**12 Issues in Human Rights (IDC4U/IDP4U/IDC4O/IDP4O)** Theory and Foundations (Ideas and Issues; Structures and Organization; Perspectives and Approaches); Processes and Methods of Research (Accessing Resources; Processing Information)

**12 World History: The West and the World (CHY4U/CHY4C)** Communities: Local, National, and Global (the Nature of Interactions between Communities; Conflict and Cooperation); Change and Continuity (Change in History; Continuity in History; Chronology and Cause and Effect); Citizenship and Heritage (Ideas and Cultures of the non-Western World; Citizenship and Human Rights); Social, Economic, and Political Structures (Social Structures; Political Organization; Methods of Historical Inquiry and Communication)

**12 Genocide and Crimes against Humanity (CHG38)** Investigate the terms genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes and explore them through the lens of historical analysis

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Development of ALPHA Education APPM Guides for Educators  
are informed by OHASSTA - AESHO Concepts of Legal Thinking

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