

Japan

Tokugawa to Meiji



Early Japan



- Samurai were powerful warriors who seized control of feudal states in the Sengoku period between 1467 -1586
- These warrior chieftains called *daimyo* offered peasants and others their protection for their loyalty in a feudalistic state
- Resembled European feudalism in many ways with fortified castles and small armies of mounted samurai horsemen
- Daimyo frequently fought each other over territorial disputes
- Tokugawa Ieyasu, a powerful daimyo, united Japan in 1600
- He became the sole ruler or shogun of Japan
- Tokugawa "tamed" the daimyo through various measures to curb their power and restore the rule of law
- Tokugawa founded the Tokugawa Shogunate that ruled Japan until 1868



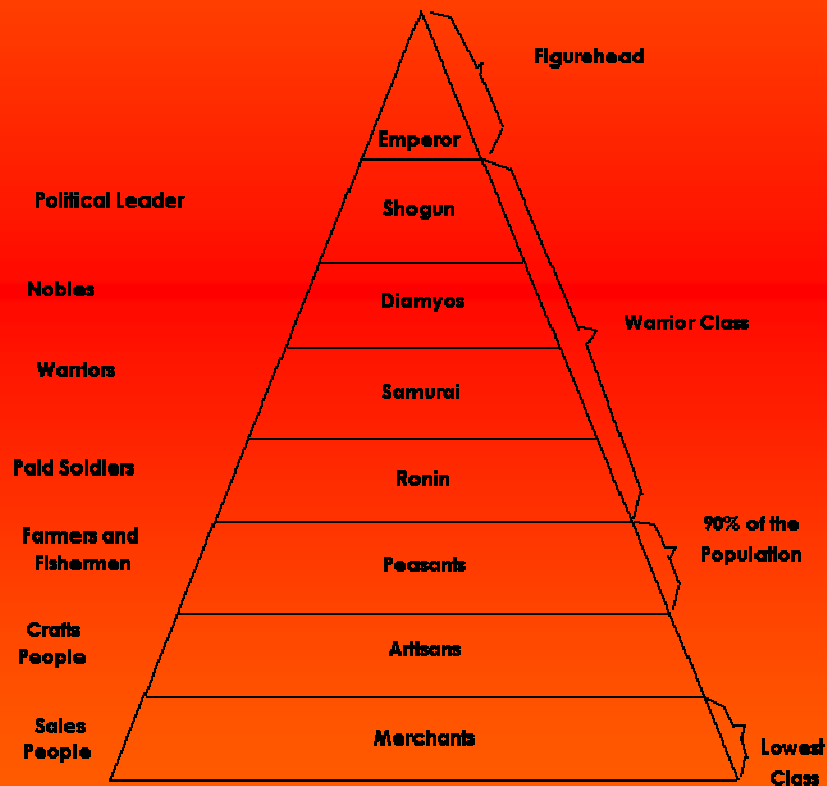
Life in Japan Under the Tokugawa



- Two and a half centuries of stability, prosperity, and isolationism under the Tokugawa shoguns
- Merchant class and wealthy prospered the most; all of Japan benefited from the flowering of Japanese culture during this era



Society in Tokugawa Japan



- Highly structured society
- The emperor was a figurehead, the shogun was the actual ruler and supreme military commander
- Daimyo were powerful land-holding samurai
- Samurai were warriors
- Peasants and artisans followed next
- Merchants were at the bottom but gradually became more influential and important
- Society was strongly influenced by Confucian values that held farmers in the highest esteem
- By the mid 1700s, Japan shifted from a rural to an urban society

Tokugawa Culture



- Noh dramas were based on tragic themes
- People read haiku, a three-line verse of poetry
- Townspeople attended Kabuki theatre, where actors wore elaborate costumes and make-up

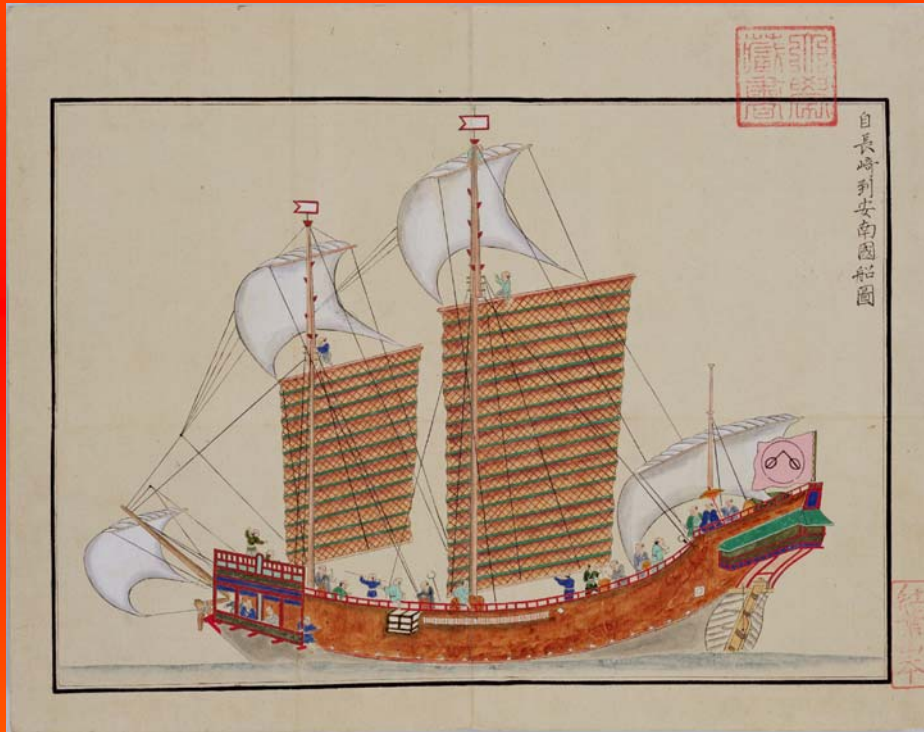


European Contact with Japan



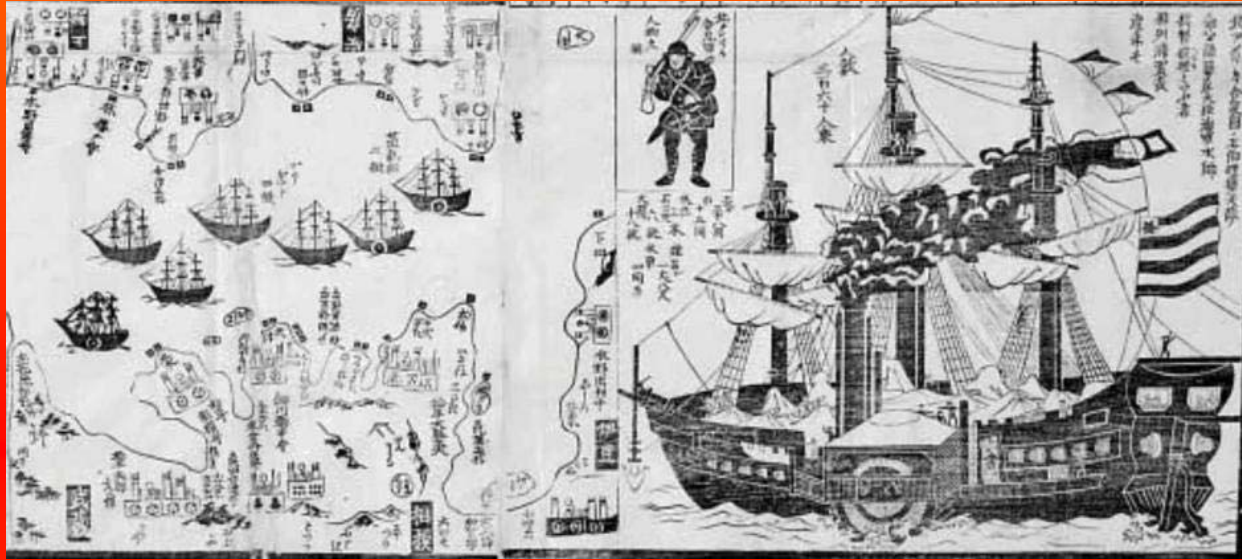
- Early in Japanese history traders and missionaries were welcome
- Europeans brought new ideas and technologies such as clocks, eyeglasses, tobacco, and firearms
- The Portuguese were the first to trade in Japan
- The daimyo were most interested in firearms and cannons to promote their positions
- Christian missionaries also came in 1549 and began their work
- Tokugawa Iyasu feared the missionaries influence and turned his attention to banning Christianity and ridding the country of Christians

European Contact with Japan



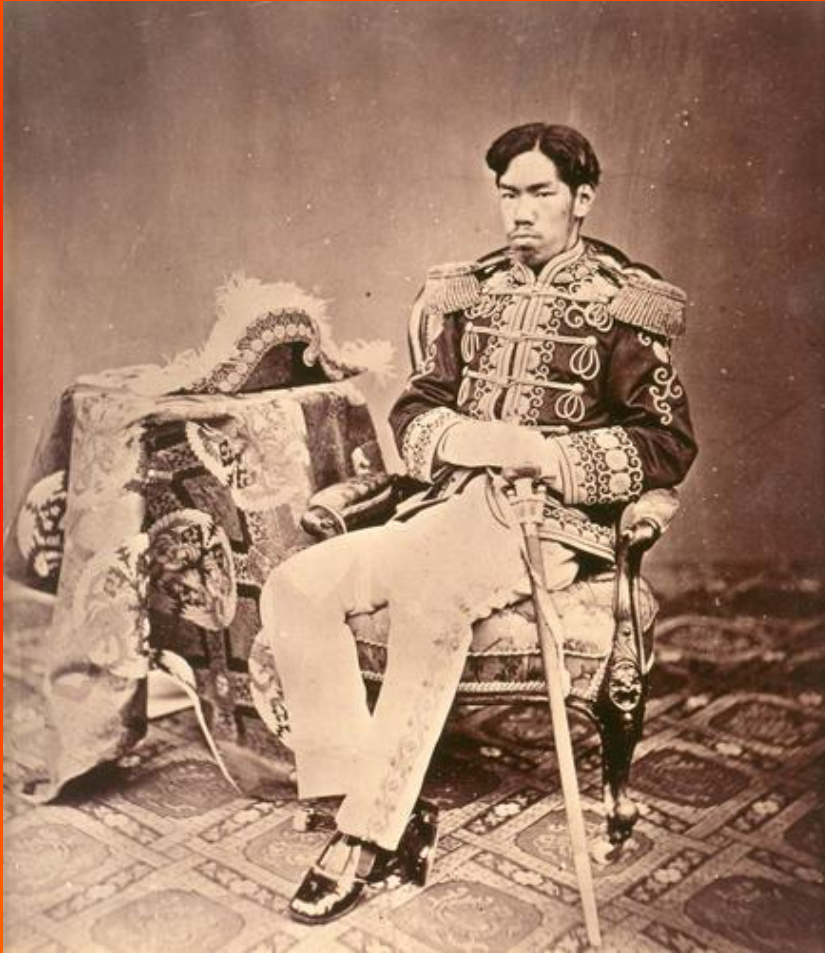
- Finally in 1637 shoguns began to persecute Christians and forced them back into Buddhism
- The ban on Christians and Christianity was part of an attempt to control foreign ideas
- By 1639 Japan had a “closed country policy”
- Only one port in Nagasaki remained open to foreign traders
- The port was only open to Dutch and Chinese traders on an island in Nagasaki
- This gave the shoguns a monopoly on trade and flow of ideas into Japan
- Japan remained closed to Europeans for 200 years

Japan Ends its Isolation



- Many European nations attempted to break down the door of Japan's isolationism but failed
- President Millard Fillmore of the United States sent U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry to Japan in 1853
- Perry arrived in Tokyo harbor with four well-armed ships
- The Tokugawa shogun felt forced to receive Perry
- Perry's request was to open two ports to U.S. ships; however, the threat was he would return in a year with more war ships
- Other Western powers followed the U.S. lead into Japan
- By 1860 Japan had granted permission to trade with them all

Japan's Reaction to the End of Isolationism



- Japanese were angry with the shoguns for giving in to foreign demands
- In response they turned to their young emperor, Mutsuhito
- In 1867 the shogun stepped down, ending military dictatorship that lasted since the 12th century
- Mutsuhito took control of the government and chose the name Meiji for his reign which means “enlightened rule”
- Mutsuhito’s rule, which lasted 45 years, is know as the Meiji Era

The Meiji Era



- Meiji set Japan on a rapid course of modernization
- He cherry-picked the best parts of every Western government to bring to Japan
- Japan emulated or copied the German constitution, the German army command, and the British navy
- They adopted the American system of universal free public education; requiring all Japanese children to attend
- They sent educators and students abroad to study
- By the 20th century the Japanese economy had become as modernized as any in the world
- They embarked on railroad construction in 1872 and by 1914 had 7,000 miles of track
- They developed traditional industries for trade goods and expanded their industrial base

Imperial Japan

- Japan was the most powerful nation in Asia
- Japan grew more imperialistic with its strength
- By 1890 Japan had several dozen warships and a standing army of ½ million
- The Sino-Japanese War drove the Chinese out of the Korean peninsula, destroyed the Chinese navy; and Japan gained a foothold in Manchuria
- Japan and China signed a peace treaty, and Japan gained its first colonies





Russo-Japanese War



- Japan's victory over China changed the world's balance of power
- Russia and Japan were major powers and enemies
- Japan launched a surprise attack on Russian ships anchored off Manchuria
- The Russo-Japanese War was the result
- Japan drove Russian troops out of Korea, captured or destroyed Russia's Pacific fleet and destroyed Russia's Baltic fleet that arrived late on the scene

• Russo-Japanese War

- Theodore Roosevelt, the U.S. president, helped negotiate a peace treaty between Russia and Japan on a ship off Portsmouth, New Hampshire, USA
- Japan attacked Korea with vengeance and made it a protectorate
- Japan had become an imperialist world power to be reckoned with in Asia

