



JAPAN: THE MEIJI RESTORATION, JAPANESE IMPERIALISM, AND THE BUILD-UP TO WORLD WAR II IN ASIA

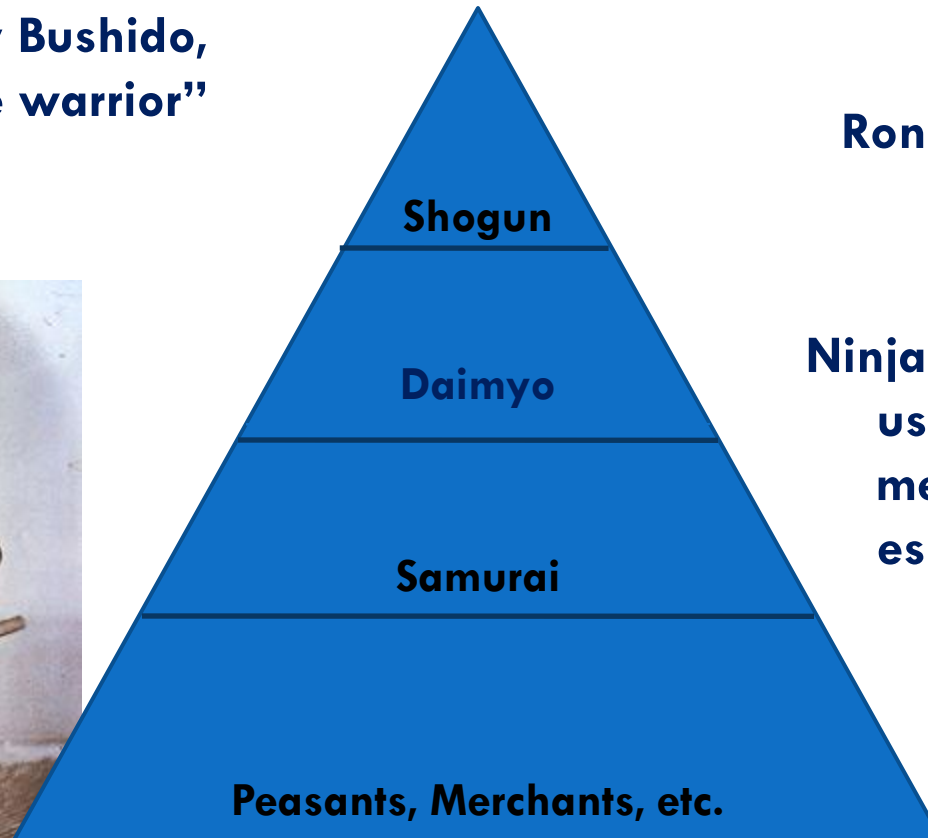
The Tokugawa Shogunate

- Tokugawa family ruled Japan from 1603 until 1868 – also known as the Edo period
- 1635 – foreign trade limited to China, Korea, and Netherlands at Nagasaki a few times per year
- Emperor (mikado) ruled in name only
 - ▣ Actual power held by the shogun



Japanese Feudalism

Samurai – lived by Bushido, the “way of the warrior” (chivalric code)



Ronin – those samurai without masters

Ninja – a warrior trained to use unorthodox fighting methods (assassination, espionage, martial arts)



Japanese Culture and Economy

- Religion
 - Mixture of native Shintoism (living spirits in all things) and Chinese Confucianism (based on the teachings of Confucius)
- Economy
 - Growing internal trade during the Edo period
 - Merchants began to surpass the samurai in wealth
- Rigid social stratification
 - But these limits were being tested by the end of the Tokugawa shogunate



End of Japanese Isolation

- U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry (1794-1858)
 - 1853 – gunboat diplomacy
 - 1854 – trade treaty with the United States
 - Great Britain, Holland (Netherlands), and Russia soon gained similar trading rights
- Townsend Harris (1804-1878)
 - United States Consul General to Japan
 - 1858 – commercial treaty between U.S. and Japan
 - European powers soon gained similar rights in Japan

Japanese Reaction

Pros	Cons
“Dutch Learning” (Western knowledge) became very popular among many doctors, scholars, and scientists	Western knowledge went against many traditional Japanese beliefs
Japanese entrepreneurs, merchants, and budding industrialists stood to profit from increased trade	Traditional holders of prestige and power (daimyos and samurai) did not tend to profit from increased trade

Resentment

- Extraterritorial rights of Americans and Europeans
- Anti-foreign uprisings (1863-1864)
- Japanese ports in turn bombarded by foreign ships

Solution

- “If you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em”
- Japanese could benefit from knowledge of what happened to China
- Japanese felt that they would be in a better position to renegotiate the trade treaties, and be less likely to be imposed upon, if they adopted Western ways (democracy, imperialism, industrialization, militarization, and modernization) – westernization

Meiji Restoration

- Shogun forced to relinquish power
- Power officially in hands of Emperor Mutsuhito
 - ▣ His reign was called the “Meiji”
- Japan westernized
 - ▣ Quickly went to work crafting a constitution



Governmental Reforms

- Diet – Japan’s bicameral legislature
 - ▣ First convened – 1889
- Meiji (Imperial) Constitution
 - ▣ Adopted – 1890
 - ▣ Followed until the end of World War II



Economic Reforms

- Abolition of feudalism
- Currency (yen) adopted, 1872
- Encouragement of foreign trade
- Expansion and encouragement of industrialization
- Growth of factories
 - ▣ **First large factories manufactured textiles**
 - ▣ **First textile factory workers were girls and women**
- Land reform
- Zaibatsu (large conglomerates) built and expanded



Military Reforms

- Before the Meiji era: Armies were run by local daimyo and thus not subservient to a central government
- Meiji era: Modern army and navy established which were loyal to the Japanese government
- Used Prussia (Germany) as primary model
- Firm belief that if Japan was to be taken seriously by Western powers, and was to avoid China's fate, Japan would have to compete militarily
- Conscription (1873) – all men had to serve for three years after turning twenty-one

Social Reforms

- Universal compulsory elementary education
- Universities established
- Westernization of many laws

Tokyo University



Social Changes

- Adoption of Western architecture, fashions, music, and literary styles (magazines and novels)
- Diversity of intellectual and political thought
- Growing independence and empowerment of women
- Movement of peasants from countryside to factories



Imperialization of Japan

- Why?
 - ▣ Lack of fertile land for agriculture
 - ▣ Markets for finished products
 - ▣ Need for the raw materials of industry
 - ▣ Population growth
 - ▣ Response to Western imperialism



Meiji Japan at War

- First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)
 - Gained:
 - Formosa (Taiwan)
 - Liaotung Peninsula (Manchuria) – soon forced to relinquish it
 - Sphere of influence in Korea
- Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)
 - Destruction of Russian fleet
 - Finally respected as a world power
 - Treaty of Portsmouth, 1905
 - U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt won Noble Peace Prize
 - Japan was granted the southern part of Sakhalin Island and a large sphere of influence in Manchuria
- Annexation of Korea (1910)
- World War I
 - Joined Allies
 - Received Germany's mandates over Asian islands and its leases in the Shantung Peninsula

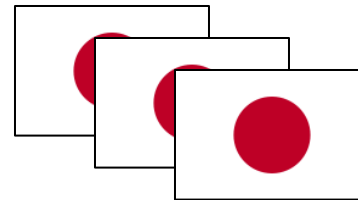
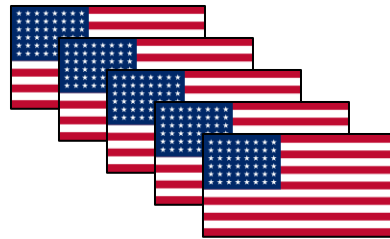
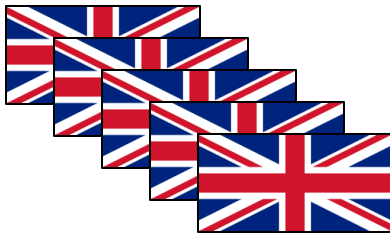


American and European Opposition

□ Washington Conference (1922)

■ Size limits on navies

- 5:5:3 ratio for Great Britain, United States, and Japan



- Japanese resented these limitations

■ Nine Power Treaty

- China's independence and territory guaranteed
- Open Door Policy reaffirmed

■ Four Power Pact

- France, Great Britain, Japan, United States
- One another's colonial possessions would be respected

□ U.S. Japanese Exclusion Act (1924)



Imperial Flag of the Japanese Navy

Conquest of Manchuria (1931)

- Pretense that Chinese bandits were destroying the Southern Manchurian Railway
- League of Nations
 - China asked League for help
 - Lytton Commission sent to China to investigate
 - Noted harshness of Japanese rule in Manchuria
 - Recommended that Japan withdraw from Manchuria
 - Japan instead withdrew from the League of Nations



Japanese propaganda poster: "With the cooperation of Japan, China, and Manchukuo, the world can be at peace."

Japanese Manchuria: Manchukuo

- Japan proclaimed its “independence” in 1931
- Deposed (1912) Manchu emperor of China, Puyi, placed on throne as Manchurian emperor
 - ▣ Really a puppet of Japan
- Stimson Doctrine – United States refused to recognize Japan’s actions



Flag of Manchukuo

Emperor Puyi



Japanese Invasion of China

- Ignored international treaties – built up navy
- Marco Polo Bridge Incident – July, 1937
 - Minor dispute between Chinese and Japanese troops
 - Neither side was ready to fully back down
 - Small spark started the Second Sino-Japanese War
 - 1937-1945 – World War II in Asia
- U.S. reaction
 - Americans boycotted Japanese goods
 - American companies continued to sell Japan cotton, oil, and scrap metal

Japan in World War II

- 1940 – Japan joined Axis with Germany and Italy
- “Asia for Asians” philosophy
 - ▣ “Liberating” Asia from Western imperialism
 - In reality, replacing Western imperialism with Japanese imperialism
 - ▣ Attacked Burma, Dutch East Indies, French Indo-China, Philippines, Thailand, etc.
- Japanese imperialism ended with World War II
 - ▣ Japan’s territory returned to older, traditional islands

Review Questions

- How did the government of Japan change during the Meiji restoration?
- Describe Japan's rationale for its westernization.
- Describe Japan's imperialism and militarization.
- Explain how Japan took control of Manchuria.
- Imagine that you are a Japanese person watching events unfold in the 1850s and 1860s. How might you react? Do you see alternatives to the opening of your country to foreign trade? Do you agree that in order to compete with the Western powers, your nation must begin to behave like the Western powers? Explain.