Early Japanese Economic History

20,000 Years Ago
- Proto-Caucasoid Stock
  - Ainu of Hokkaido, Northern Japan
  - Bushmen of Australia
  - Ezu of Northeast Honshu

10,000 – 7,000 Years Ago
- Jomon Pottery Culture
- Hunting and fishing society
- Accession of Jimmu (first emperor)
  great-great grandson of the sun-goddess Amaterasu

250 BC
- People migrate from China to Japan
- Yayoi culture is introduced (Mongoloid)
- Chinese influence
- Rice is introduced
- Primitive tribal society
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>300 AD</th>
<th>650-1150 AD</th>
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| • Large scale irrigation  
• Labor intensive technology  
• Family farming on 2-3 acres  
• More calories/acre with rice than wheat | • Imperial structure thru history, but power came and went  
• Centralization of power  
• Aristocratic bureaucrats  
• Institutionalization of privilege to newly emerging aristocrats  
• Gradual spread of iron tools |

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<tr>
<th>1150-1600 AD</th>
<th>Kagemusha</th>
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| • Feudal Period  
• Many petty daimyo  
• Land of contending feudal powers  
• Samurai – Warrior – Aristocrat  
• Peasant population supports upper 10%  
• Patriarchal  
• Primogeniture (but often want to pass on estate to most able son) | • Set in the late 16th century, Kagemusha centers on the Takeda clan, one of three warlord clans battling for control of Japan at the end of the feudal period. When Lord Shingen (Tatsuya Nakadai), head of the Takeda clan, is mortally wounded in battle and near death, he orders that his death be kept secret and that his "kagemusha"—or "shadow warrior"—take his place for a period of three years to prevent clan disruption and enemy takeover. The identical double is a petty thief (also played by Nakadai) spared from execution due to his uncanny resemblance to Lord Shingen—but his true identity cannot prevent the tides of fate from rising over the Takeda clan in a climactic scene of battlefield devastation. |
Oda Nobunaga
1534-1582

• 1568 – Occupies Kyoto
• 1576 – Launches campaign to unify nation
• Welcomed Christianity
• Crushed Buddhist temple forces
• Eliminated Guilds which monopolized commerce
• 1582 – Assassinated by vassal

Toyotomi Hideyoshi
1536-1598

• Follower of Nobunaga
• Kills vassal who assassinated Nobunaga
• 1590 – Unifies Japan
• Conducts nationwide cadastral survey (public record of land ownership for taxation)
• Used a uniform unit of measure
Toyotomi Hideyoshi

- Koku ≈ 5 bushels
- Bushel = 32 quarts
- 1 koku feeds one person for 1 year
- Launches 2 reckless attacks on Korea
- Dies in 1598
- Son Hideyori is too young to rule
- Council of Regents

Ieyasu Tokugawa

1543-1616

- 1600 - Defeats Ishida (main rival) in Battle of Sekigahara
- 1603 – Designated Shogun by Imperial Court
- Establishes headquarters (bakufu) in Edo
- Makes Shogunate hereditary
- 1606 – Appoints son Hidetada Shogun (but runs affairs from the background)

Tokugawa

- 1611 – First son Iemitsu made Shogun (established primogeniture)
- Shogun put Daimyo under his absolute authority
- Daimyo would pass to first son. If there was no first son, the Bakufu would take over
- Lead to many ronin (masterless samurai)
Shogun

- In his award-winning performance, Chamberlain stars as John Blackthorne, the late 16th-century English navigator on a Dutch trading ship. A storm runs the ship aground off the coast of Japan, a "torn and cruelly divided country" locked in a power struggle between Toranaga (the venerable Toshiro Mifune) and Ishido, two warlords who would be Shogun. Blackthorne gets over his initial culture shock ("I piss on you and your country," he defiantly proclaims to his samurai captors, which to his humiliation turns out to be an unfortunate choice of words) to become a trusted ally of Toranaga and the lover of the beautiful interpreter Lady Mariko (Yoko Shimada). Their forbidden, ill-fated romance—and Blackthorne's total assimilation into Japanese culture—is set against political intrigue as Toranaga prepares for the inevitable showdown with Ishido, and Blackthorne's growing influence threatens the local Jesuits who had built up a lucrative trade monopoly.

Miyamoto Musashi (1584?-1645)

- Miyamoto Musashi defeated his first opponent at the age of 13. After 1600 Musashi drifted to Kyoto and became involved in a well-known battle with the Yoshioka School of swordsmanship, emerging victorious. He wrote that he engaged in sixty duels without suffering defeat once, and was noted in this regard for his skill at handling two swords at once. He was also remembered for employing a simple bamboo sword, which he used to deadly effect. In 1640 Musashi accepted service with the Hosokawa clan, and three years later, in Higo Province, began work on his great book, *Gorin no sho* (*The Book of Five Rings*). He finished this influential work on swordsmanship in May 1645 - the same year he died.

Major Tokugawa Policies

1) Sakoku (National Seclusion)
2) Sankin – Kotai (System of Alternate Residence)
3) Shino – Kosho (Caste System)
Sakoku – National Seclusion
- 1639-1854
- Foreign trade restricted to single port of Nagasaki under Bakufu control
- Prohibits construction of large ships
- Only Dutch and Chinese can trade
- Bakufu monopolizes foreign trade
- Dutch provide annual report on significant world developments

Sakoku – National Seclusion
- Efforts to weaken Christianity and Christian forces
- Prevent Daimyo from getting foreign aid
- Fear direct threat from foreign countries

Sankin-Kotai
- 1635 – System of alternate residence
- Daimyo alternate residence (Edo and home territory)
- Family stays in Edo as hostage
- Daimyo spent money for transportation
- Nationwide road system developed

Shino-Kosho
- Population
  - 1300 – 10 million
  - 1600 – 16-18 million
  - 1750 – 30 million (?)
  - 1872 – 32-34 million
- Every family registered with local Buddhist temple (koseki)
### Shino-Kosho

- **Caste System**
  - **Samurai** – literate, educated, materially poor, 6-7%
  - **Peasants** – freeholders and landless, grew rice, 70-80%
  - **Artisans & Merchants** – accumulate capital, use wealth to educated children
  - **Untouchables** – work with leather

### Samurai

- **2 million**
- Territorial lords, Tokugawa officials, military men
- Peacetime economy
- Managed territorial enterprises (salt mines)
- Worked in government administration
- Many unemployed (major unproductive class of society)

### Samurai

- May have land holdings of their own
- Paid allowance (in rice) by their master
- Many sink into poverty, become heavily in debt to merchants
- Military moved to castle towns

### Peasants

- **24 million**
- Owe allegiance to their lord
- Paid taxes in kind, 30-50% of rice crop, but increasingly in cash
- Frequent peasant uprisings (after bad harvest)
- Not an easy life
- Famine, infanticide, abortion keep population steady
Peasants

- Were not serfs
- Had property rights to their land (though they could mortgage their land, and sink into tenant farmer status)
- Also produced sake, tea, and silk (not just crops)
- Merchants organized them to produce umbrellas, paper lanterns, and cotton yarn

Peasants

- Peasants received cash for these goods, and bought fish, salt, clothing on the market
- But many restrictions
- Can not move, change professions, sell arable land, partition holdings into parcels smaller than a certain minimum, or change crops at will

Peasants

- Ordered not to each much rice, never use silk, never purchase tea or sake, never live in a luxurious house

Merchants

- Gradually become wealthy through finance and trade
- Act as middlemen between peasants and samurai
- Sell goods produced by peasants to samurai
- Market excess rice collected as taxes
- Finance peasant purchases of seeds, samurai purchases of luxury goods with high interest rates
Other Tokugawa Policies

- Seized all precious metal mines
- Reserved right to coin specie
- Forbid construction of bridges across major rivers
- Kept roads too narrow for armies
- Established checkpoints at all major crossroads, towns, and mountain passes

Other Tokugawa Policies

- Surprise inspections by Tokugawa officials
- Tokugawa spies everywhere

Economic Development

- Despite restrictions and tolls on trade, national markets developed in indigo, sugar, paper, and rice
- Rice futures market established
- National road system is very extensive and well traveled
- Daimyo and retainers forced to live in castle towns, so there is rapid urbanization

Economic Development

- Edo grows to be the biggest city in the world with 1.3 million people
- Substantial growth and commercialization
- Merchants organize large scale production of sake, pottery and sugar
- Economies of scale in large urban areas
- Financial markets develop because peasants and samurai need credit
Economic Development

- Education becomes fairly widespread (respected by all classes)
- 40% of men and 15% of women get some formal schooling
- By late Tokugawa they can read and write

Seven Samurai

- The story is set in the 1600s, when the residents of a small Japanese village are seeking protection against repeated attacks by a band of marauding thieves. Offering mere handfuls of rice as payment, they hire seven unemployed “ronin” (masterless samurai), including a boastful swordsman (Toshiro Mifune) who is actually a farmer’s son desperately seeking glory and acceptance. The samurai get acquainted with but remain distant from the villagers, knowing that their assignment may prove to be fatal. The climactic battle with the raiding thieves remains one of the most breathtaking sequences ever filmed.

Love-Suicides

- A Bunraku Play: Sonezaki shinju (The Love Suicides at Sonezaki)
- This masterpiece of Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725) was the first of the new genre of domestic drama (sewa-mono) plays focusing on the conflicts between human emotions and the severe restrictions and obligations of contemporary society. The great success of this play led to many more dramas on the tragic love affairs of merchants and courtesans, and it is also said to have spawned a string of copycat love suicides.

47 Ronin

- The 47 Ronin is the true story of samurai who plot revenge against the powerful lord who goaded their master into a "crime". Punishment for the crime was the demand that the master commit seppuku. The now-masterless samurai plot their revenge. December 14, 1702
Chushingura

- Loyalty
- A simmering, deliberately paced drama set during the Tokugawa shogunate in 1701, it centers on 47 loyal samurai who seek vengeance against the arrogant elder statesman who caused their master's ritual suicide. The now masterless ronin let seasons pass before executing a climactic raid that is both expertly fierce and lethally efficient.

Values and Beliefs

Traditional Japan was held together by its values and beliefs

West: universal ethic which equates all individuals
East: proper regulation of all social relationships to build the perfect society

Values and Beliefs

- Society vs Individual, Collective vs Person
- Giri – a duty of open ended reciprocal benevolence
- On – benevolence within a relationship between unequal individuals
- Bushido – code of the warrior, absolute loyalty to one's lord, unswerving filial piety, extends to teacher-student, master-apprentice

Values and Beliefs

- Confucianism – helps to make people easy to govern
- No universal ethic. No religious sanctions.
- Shame enforces ethical code, specific rules of conduct
- Personal shame (disapproval of society) and "we-group" shame (dishonor to group)
Cracks
• Cracks appear in the system by mid 1800s
• Peasants have little incentive to be productive (taxes are high, and prohibited from buying luxury goods)
• Merchants are content with monopoly profits and high interest rates, and did not promote productive investment
• Artisans operated in confines of restrictive guilds
• Many samurai borrowed in times of need and stayed in debt

Cracks
• Daimyo treasuries are depleted by natural disasters, construction of public works (ordered by Shogun), and suppression of increasingly frequent peasant uprisings
• House of Tokugawa is in weak financial condition due to top heavy bureaucracy and poor money management

Cracks
• Many samurai critical of Tokugawa
  – Shogun’s growing financial weakness
  – Efforts to keep Daimyo weak and poor
  – Concern that Japan was militarily weak and incapable of resisting the growing strength of Western powers who were carving up Asia

QUESTION
• Was the Tokugawa period good for Japan?
  – Did it merely freeze Japanese society in a rigid hierarchical mold?
  – Or did it allow Japan to slowly and peacefully reach a base from which it could leap into industrialization?