

Slide 1

Early Tokugawa Era

1603 > circa 1700

Slide 2

Early Era Tokugawa Shogunate

Stage One: The Early Tokugawa Shogunate (1603 > around 1700)

Overview of Early Tokugawa:

To ensure the success of the Tokugawa Shogunate Ieyasu and his immediate successors aimed to achieve two key objectives:

1. To remove any potential threats to their future successors in the Tokugawa dynasty that might be posed from any strong neighbouring rival clans;
2. To implement laws that more strictly maintained the social hierarchy and functions and rights of the privileged Daimyo and Samurai classes as well as defining those of the non-privileged farmer / peasant and the despised merchant classes.

Slide 3

This required special policies to be applied to each of these four pillars of Japanese society to ensure social stability.

In our study of this first stage of the Tokugawa Shogunate we will see how they implemented some very innovative policies that were quite successful in achieving these objectives.

Slide 4

How the Tokugawa Protected their Family Dynasty



Notes

To avoid the 'leadership succession problem' recently experienced by Yoyotama Hideyoshi, where upon his death, he was succeeded by his very young son Toyotomi, thus causing a power vacuum that Ieyasu eventually won in the bloody Battle of Sekigahara.

To avoid a repeat situation, in **1605**, just two years after becoming Shogun, Ieyasu made the astute move of stepping down from the position of Shogun and appointed his 26 year old son, **Hidetada** in his place.

Ieyasu nevertheless continued to be the brains that controlled the young Shogun and the Tokugawa Bakufu until his death in 1616.

Slide 5

Hideyori Toyotomi – A Potential Threat



Notes

In **1615**, just a year before his death Ieyasu initiated an action that was brutal, but unsurprising and perhaps even necessary in Japanese terms.

Ieyasu decided to eliminate any potential future threat that might be posed to his family shogunate from his strongest potential rival clan.

He did this by killing the Toyotama family's only son and heir Hideyori, who was one of the few with the necessary blood lines to possibly have claimed the title of Shogun.

Slide 6

How the Tokugawa's Controlled the Daimyo



Notes

The first Shogun of the Tokugawa's (**Ieyasu**) was very much aware of and concerned at the disruption created during the 'Warring States period' and determined to enact policies that would enable Japan to avoid a repeat of that era of conflict.

Tokugawa Ieyasu had won power through military strength, but he realized that the next challenge was to hold onto it. His aim was to create a long-lasting and stable Tokugawa clan government which would be so strong a Shogunate that no Daimyo would be in a position to challenge him or his descendants.

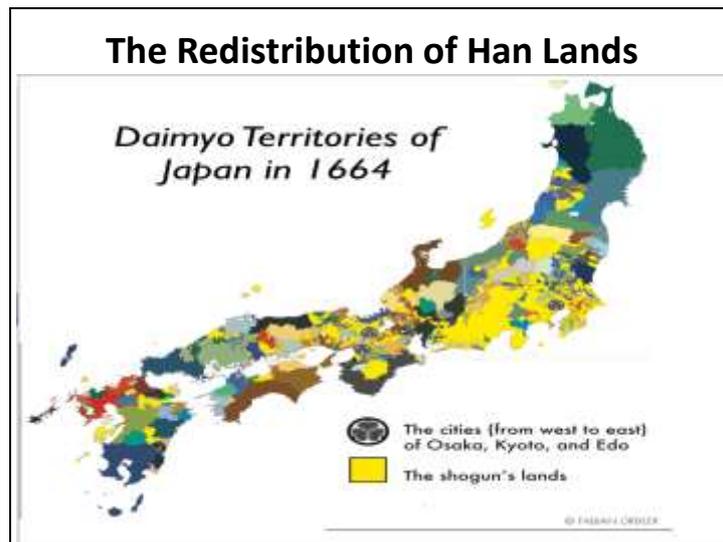
Ieyasu (and his immediate successors) realized that in Japan there were some *350 Daimyo* spread throughout the country, each with his own Samurai army, and a number of them with the ambition to be Shogun.

His primary challenge therefore was to control those daimyo, some of whom had fought against him before he became Shogun, and whom he therefore did not trust.

Ieyasu recognised that special policies would be needed to subdue the aspirations and capabilities of any potential challengers over a long period of time. This would require something that had never been accomplished in Japan before.

Ieyasu's Tokugawa Shogunate therefore proceeded to implement a number of astute and effective political, economic, social and military policies that resulted in a period of peace and stability in Japan that lasted for more than 250 years.

Slide 7



Notes

All of the land in 16th century Japan in theory belonged to the **Shogun**, who gifted it among the country's Daimyo lords as a special favour (**GO ON**).

After Ieyasu took power and was declared Shogun, one of his first actions was to classify the country's Daimyo into different categories: Those of family / relatives, those of clans who supported him as an ally in the Battle of Sekigahara, and those of clans that opposed him.

He next conducted a re-distribution of Hans / provinces among the Daimyo, where some were confiscated and others were given.

In this process the militarily strategic districts of Kantō, Kinki, and Tokaido were distributed among the daimyo who were relatives and supporters of his *bakufu government*.

Those Daimyo classified as a potential enemy Daimyo were located in han long distances away from his capital at Edo. Surprisingly (**not**), the Hans of lords whose loyalty he doubted, found they had a neighbour designated as loyal to the bakufu.

The lands under the direct control of the *bakufu* were increased at key points throughout the country, shown in the above slide as the areas in bright yellow.

The most important cities—Kyōto, Ōsaka, and Nagasaki—and the nation's mines also were also placed under direct *bakufu* administration and where they were used to control commerce, industry, and trade.

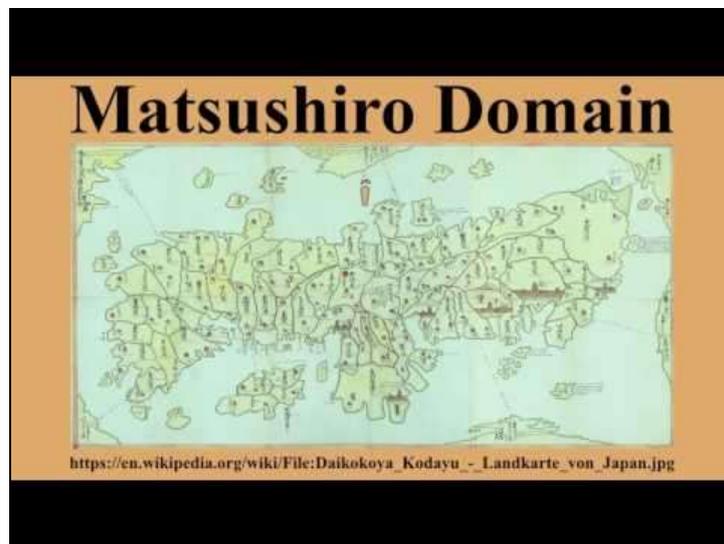
As a consequence of this restructure rice production in the Tokugawa *bakufu* hans now amounted to more than seven million *koku*—about one quarter of the whole country.

Of these lands, more than four million *koku* were under its direct control, and three million *koku* were distributed among the *hatamoto* and *gokenin*, supporters of the *bakufu*.

In addition, because the *bakufu* declared a monopoly over foreign trade and alone had the right to issue currency, it therefore had considerably greater financial resources than any individual Daimyo.

In military strength as well, it was also far larger and more powerful than any individual Daimyo.

Slide 8



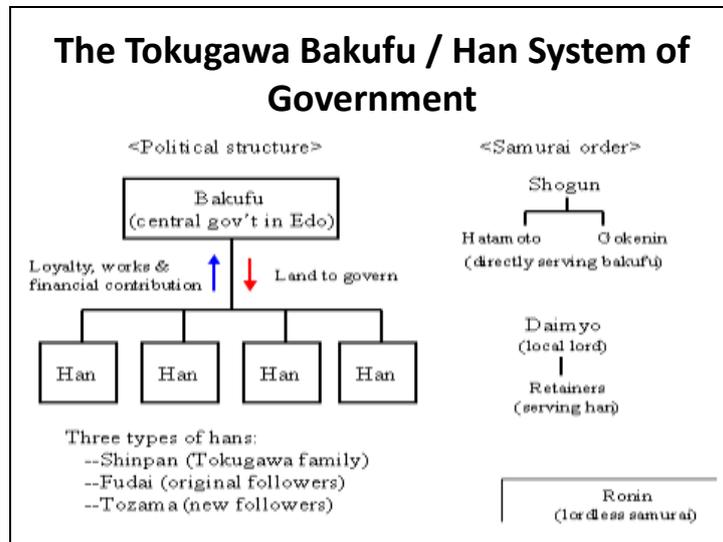
Notes

In order to rank as a Daimyo in the new Tokugawa order, a lord was required to control lands producing at least 10,000 *koku of rice*.

This larger production requirement was successful in reducing Japan's initial 350 Daimyo by some 100, - a more manageable number for the Tokugawas to administer and control.

In return, the daimyo incurred the obligation to provide military and other services to the shogun, and promised not to construct ships or build a navy

Slide 9



Notes

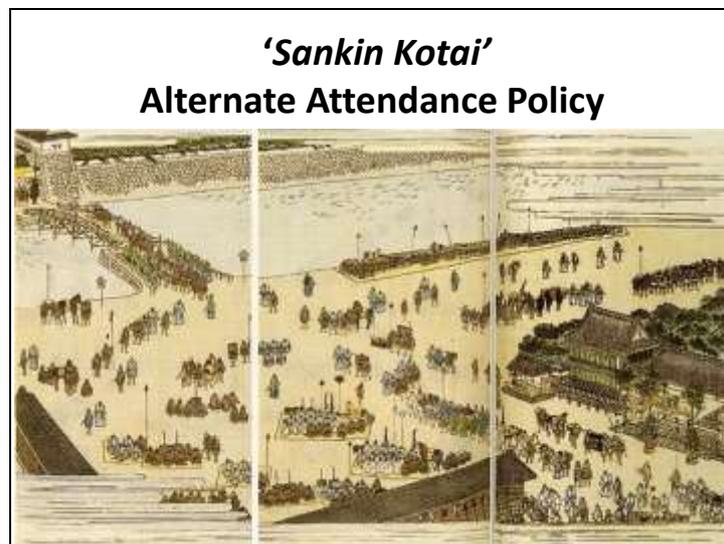
In terms of government, the Tokugawa shared power with the Daimyo by establishing the 'bakuhan' system with **two levels** of government.

The Shogunate bakufu in Edo was the equivalent to our federal government in Canberra.

The Edo bakufu had possessed nearly 25% of Japan's arable land and rice production, and also had control over important national matters such as foreign trade and foreign relations.

The Daimyo on the other hand were free to control their local Han economies pretty much as they saw fit. Each Han could decide its own rice tax rates and make other economic regulations, or encourage certain industries (so long as it was an activity not explicitly prohibited by Bakufu policy, such a shipbuilding and developing a navy).

Slide 10



Notes

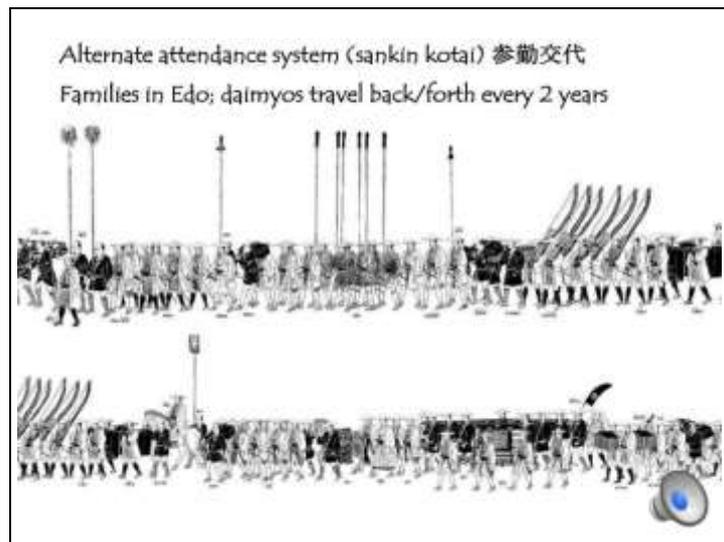
One of the cleverest and most effective policies employed by the Tokugawa Shogunate was the establishment of a system called sankin kotai (**alternative attendance**).

Under this arrangement every Daimyo in Japan was required to own and maintain a residence within the walls of Edo, the Tokugawa capital.

The key part of the policy required Daimyo from all over Japan were to make a ceremonial visit to Edo **every other year**.

The above slide and the two that follow illustrate the constant flow of various Daimyo and their retinues leaving and arriving at Edo.

Slide 11



Notes

Another key aspect of *sankin kotai* (alternate attendance) required that the Daimyos' wives and children *resided permanently* in the Daimyo's property in Edo, where they were 'guests of the shogun'.

But in reality they were hostages - If there were any uprisings or even rumours of a plot that involved an absent Daimyo, his family members were killed.

Slide 12



Notes

This system of alternate attendance forced any potentially troublesome or ambitious Daimyo — particularly those who lived farthest away — to spend large sums of money to support two separate households and to regularly fund expensive journeys to and from Edo.

In addition, the daimyo were forced to assist in funding such public works as the construction of castles in their *bakufu* domains and to build and maintain roads and bridges within their provinces.

This requirement thereby further challenged their abilities to accumulate the wealth necessary to fund an insurrection.

Finally, strict laws established by the Shogunate controlled many aspects of the daimyo's lives, including a requirement for marriage approvals.

Slide 13

How the Tokugawa's Controlled the Samurai



Notes

In Japan's Warring States Period, battles between various Daimyos throughout Japan were continuous and widespread, creating a society in which a warrior class played an essential part, and it was in this era that the Samurai came to play that vital and active noble warrior role.

Early on the Tokugawa era in 1637-8 the Shimabara Rebellion involving Christian peasants had been put down by the bakufu Samurai. Following that insurrection, Japan experienced decade after decade of relative peace and stability.

With the onset of peace, the Daimyo were required by the bakufu to build one significant defensive castle within their han, which was manned by their retainer Samurai.

This meant the Samurai now mainly acted as 'men at arms', performing largely ceremonial roles such as accompanying their lords on their 'alternative attendance' journeys to and from Edo, or performing guard duties in the castles. In the case of the bakufu Samurai, they pretty much resided permanently within the fortresses of Edo.

During this time the Samurai had little opportunity to practice in their traditional warrior role. Within the strict Tokugawa feudal system, Samurai were the only class allowed to bear arms, where they routinely displayed their short and long swords.

As a consequence, by around 1700, the Japanese Tokugawa economy was supporting some 2 million Samurai, their families and servants. In other words about 7% of the population was virtually unproductive, and created a heavy burden on the nation's only productive workers.

How the Tokugawa's Controlled the Farmers



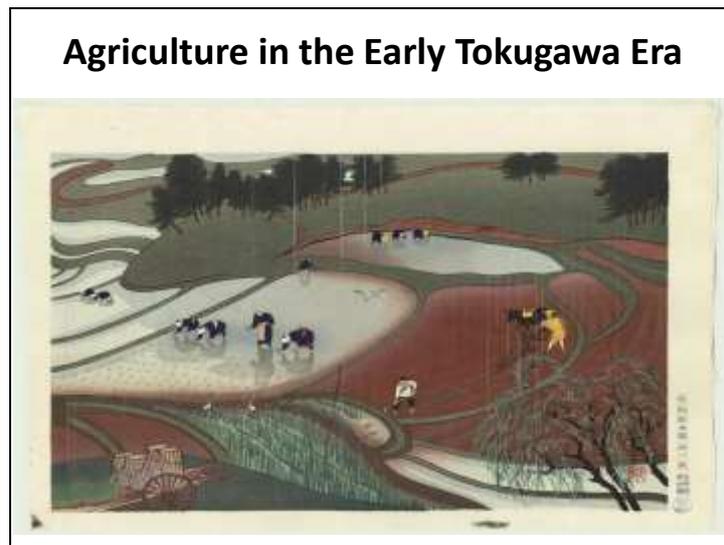
Notes

At the beginning of the Edo era in early 1600, Japanese society was primarily 'agrarian'. The peasant farmer class, which made up more than 80% of the Japanese population in early Tokugawa times, formed the back bone of the Tokugawa feudal hierarchy and were the heavy lifters. Their efforts in the fields and the rice taxes they paid, generated the bulk of the income streams for both the Bakufu and the Daimyo as well as the rice stipends of their Samurai retainers.

Recognising the fundamental part that the peasant farmers played in maintaining their feudal system, the Tokugawa bakufu made rules that further restricted this non-privileged class in an attempt to ensure their agricultural activities.

It was in this context that economic controls over peasants were further strengthened. They were strictly prohibited from buying, selling, or abandoning their land or from changing their occupation; minute restrictions were also placed on their attire, food, and housing.

Slide 15



Notes

In pre-Tokugawa times the basic unit of agricultural production was the 'communal' farming household, often containing many families plus servants.

In the early Tokugawa era farming villages still maintained that basic 'subsistence' lifestyle, where they produced the bulk of their living needs, with the exception of buying in salt, metals, medicines, and in the case of inland communities, fish.

These farmers and peasants provided the *economic foundation* for the whole feudal system during the Tokugawa Shogunate.

The peasants provided the bulk of the revenue stream received by the Shogun and also by the Daimyo, paid in the form of the annual rice tax, based on the productivity of their village land holdings.

The amount of rice tax varied from Han to Han but usually amounted to between 40% and 50% of the total yield of the paddy-fields, though in some cases it was higher.

In addition, other payments in kind and service were extracted from the peasants, such as contributing to road building and irrigation maintenance.

Japanese historians are in agreement that this arrangement placed peasants in a situation where their lot in life was so hard that they existed solely for the purpose of working hard to pay taxes.

Slide 16

How the Tokugawa's Controlled the Merchants



Notes

The bottom rung of Japanese feudal society was occupied by merchants, that included traveling traders, shop-keepers and money lenders.

Because **merchants** acted as 'middle men' between farmers /artisans and consumers, and did not actually add to the volume of goods produced in the Japanese economy, their efforts and activities were traditionally considered to be unproductive.

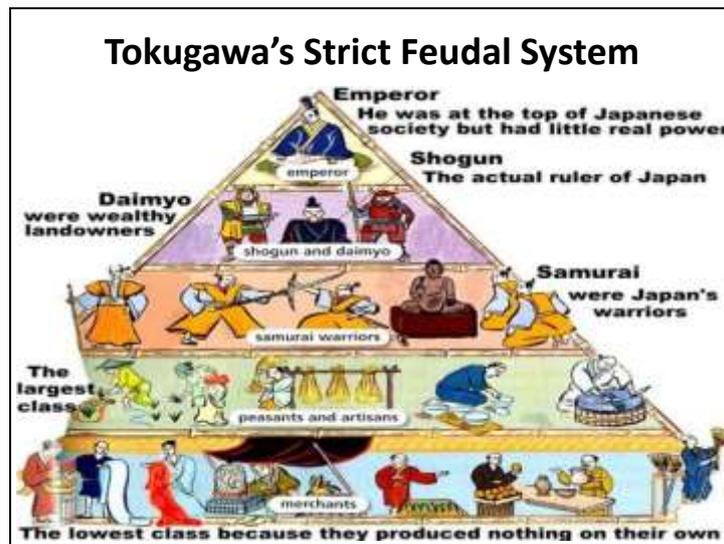
Moreover, because many merchants had necessarily to be astute in their business transactions, and were therefore often financially successful, it was widely assumed that they took unfair advantage of their product suppliers.

For these reasons merchants were ostracised and placed at the bottom of the social pyramid, which in turn required them to live in designated lower-class suburbs on the edges of Japanese towns and villages.

During the later stages of the early Tokugawa era however, merchants (**Chonin**) began to perform an increasing, unrecognised but essential middle man function in the Japanese economy.

Chonin purchased the excess produce of rural farmers and craftsmen and transported them to storage warehouses in growing castle towns and cities to be released in markets where that produce and those products were increasingly in demand from a sedentary and growing urban population, unwittingly generated by the Tokugawa 'sankin kotai' policy.

Slide 17



Notes

All classes of Japanese society were confined much more strictly to their traditional places in Tokugawa society than in previous eras. Distinctions between the statuses of warriors, farmers, artisans, and merchants were strictly enforced.

By about 1700 however changes were beginning to take place, and the demarcations between the classes became increasingly blurred.

Before we leave the early Tokugawa Era and study the 'middle era' we will briefly consider two other significant Tokugawa policies.

Slide 18

Christianity in Early Tokugawa Japan



Notes

When he first came to power in 1603, Ieyasu was strongly attracted by the potential profits that could be gained from trading with the Portuguese Roman Catholics as well as with Protestant Holland and England.

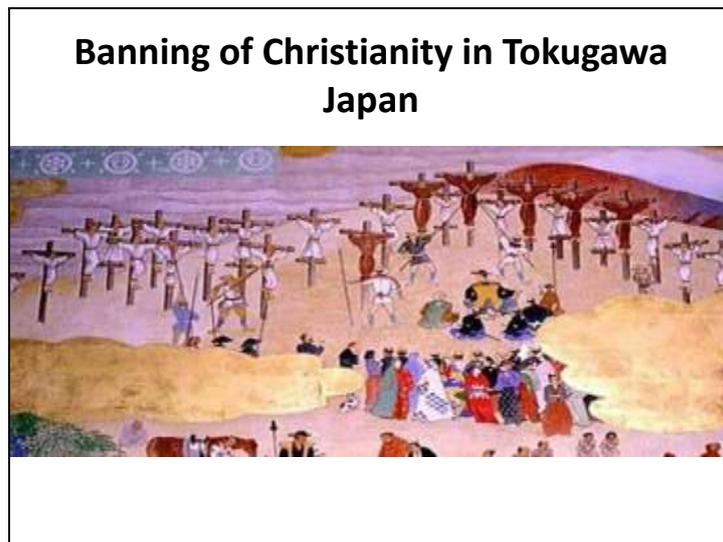
Being aware of the benefits of trade, he was initially tolerant of Christian preaching, and protected trade with these foreigners in Japan's southern regions by granting them special licenses.

Ieyasu's encouragement of trade was primarily aimed at establishing a *bakufu* trade monopoly for the Tokugawa family.

In 1604, for example, a special system for the purchase of silk was established: Chinese silk imported to Japan by Portuguese ships was sold at fixed prices to the powerful merchants of Kyōto, Sakai, and Nagasaki, who formed a guild and then distributed this silk to the domestic retail merchants.

Ieyasu, however, enjoyed a preferential treatment by purchasing part of the imported silk at low prices, and then reaping huge profits on releasing his supplies to the domestic Japanese markets.

Slide 19



Notes

By 1615 however, as he was planning the destruction of his rival Yoyotami clan, Ieyasu became fearful that the Christians would join Hideyoshi's heir Hideyori to resist the *bakufu*, and he therefore took steps to eliminate the possible Christian threat.

As a first step, in 1614, Japan's Christians were banned from practising their religion. To enforce this law, the shogunate required all citizens to register with their local Buddhist temple, with any who refused considered disloyal to the bakafu.

The Shimabara Rebellion, made up mostly of Christian peasants, flared in 1637-38, but was stamped out by the shogunate, with many Christians persecuted, as illustrated in the above slide.

In 1637, in resistance to heavy taxes and the prohibition of Christianity, Amakusa Shiro, a Christian masterless samurai (*rōnin*), led an uprising of peasants and Christians in the Shimabara Peninsula of Kyushu. For five months they put up a fierce fight before their defeat by the *bakufu* army.

The *bakufu* having been hard-pressed to quell the rebellion, thereafter stepped up its strict controls on Christians and attempted to root them out by such means as *fumie*, in which one was made to trample on an image of Christ or the Virgin Mary.

Afterward, Japanese Christians were exiled, executed or driven underground, and Christianity faded from the country.

The system of registration at Buddhist temples was instituted: all Japanese were required to register as parishioners to a 'family' Buddhist temple, which every year had to guarantee that the parishioner was not a Christian.

From 1639 Portuguese ships were forbidden to visit Japan, but the Dutch and the Chinese were allowed to trade as before, although this trade was restricted and confined to the island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbour.

Early Tokugawa's Foreign Exclusion Policy	
To protect Japan from European influences, Tokugawa Shogunate banned all foreign merchants & missionaries	By 1639, Japan adopted a "closed country policy" & Japan entered an era of isolation that lasted for 200 years
	

Notes

The 1630s marked an important dividing line in foreign relations with a series of laws enforcing a policy of national seclusion, later called sakoku (meaning "closed country").

In 1635 Japanese were forbidden to make overseas voyages or to return to Japan from overseas, which was a severe blow to Japan's traders.

Slide 21

Japan's Period of Isolation from the World

Terms of the Exclusion Laws:

- All Christian missionaries and foreign traders were forced to leave Japan. Newcomers were no longer allowed to enter.
- The Japanese were not allowed to go abroad.
- Ships large enough to make long voyages could no longer be built and exiting ones were destroyed.
- Japanese who were out of the country were forbidden to return.
- Most foreign objects were forbidden. All foreign books containing a Christian message were banned; scientific books were forbidden.

Notes

In 1637, in resistance to heavy taxes and the prohibition of Christianity, Amakusa Shiro, a Christian masterless samurai (*rōnin*), led an uprising of peasants and Christians in the Shimabara Peninsula of Kyushu.

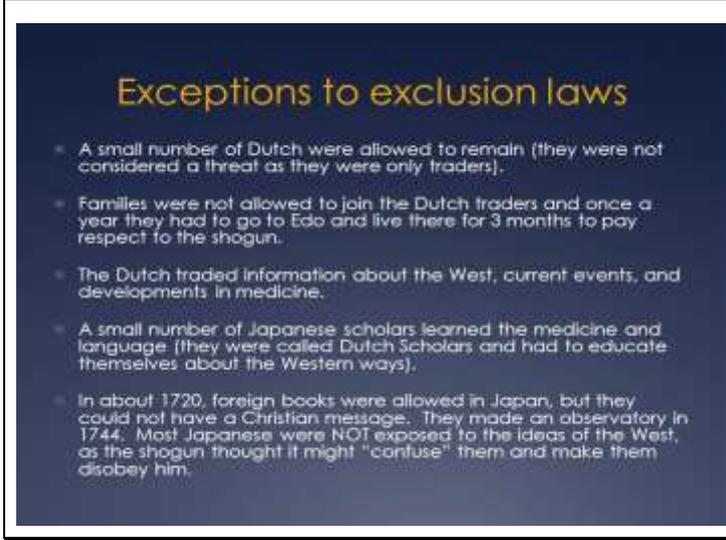
For five months they put up a fierce fight before their defeat by the *bakufu* army.

The *bakufu* having been hard-pressed to quell the rebellion, thereafter stepped up its strict controls on Christians and attempted to root them out by such means as *fumie*, in which one was made to trample on an image of Christ or the Virgin Mary.

The system of registration at Buddhist temples was instituted: all Japanese were required to register as parishioners to a 'family' Buddhist temple, which every year had to guarantee that the parishioner was not a Christian.

From 1639 Portuguese ships were forbidden to visit Japan, but the Dutch and the Chinese were allowed to trade as before, although this trade was restricted and confined to the island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbour.

Slide 22



Exceptions to exclusion laws

- A small number of Dutch were allowed to remain (they were not considered a threat as they were only traders).
- Families were not allowed to join the Dutch traders and once a year they had to go to Edo and live there for 3 months to pay respect to the shogun.
- The Dutch traded information about the West, current events, and developments in medicine.
- A small number of Japanese scholars learned the medicine and language (they were called Dutch Scholars and had to educate themselves about the Western ways).
- In about 1720, foreign books were allowed in Japan, but they could not have a Christian message. They made an observatory in 1744. Most Japanese were NOT exposed to the ideas of the West, as the shogun thought it might "confuse" them and make them disobey him.

Notes

Scholars continue to debate the effects of national seclusion, but its impact on Japan was profound. The Japanese nation was transformed into developing an attitude hostile to foreign trade, if not to foreigners themselves.

On the one hand, the seclusion policy was instrumental in enabling the Tokugawa *bakufu* to establish a prolonged peace of nearly 300 years; But on the other, it has been argued that this simply prolonged a rigid feudal system to an extent unknown elsewhere in the world and produced in the Japanese culture a deep sense of insularity.

Slide 23

Samurai continued to be part of the privileged classes on the Tokugawa feudal hierarchy, but were now without opportunities to show their worth as warriors.

Restrictive rules and policies were introduced to ensure the bulk of the country's population in the peasant farming class remained chained to their land in order to continue to generate the bulk of the nation's income.

The merchant (Chonin) class at the bottom of the heap continued to be despised and were considered largely irrelevant.

The expulsion of Christianity and the 'Exclusion' laws meant that Japan henceforth would become a society closed to the rest of the world for all purposes including trade and technology.