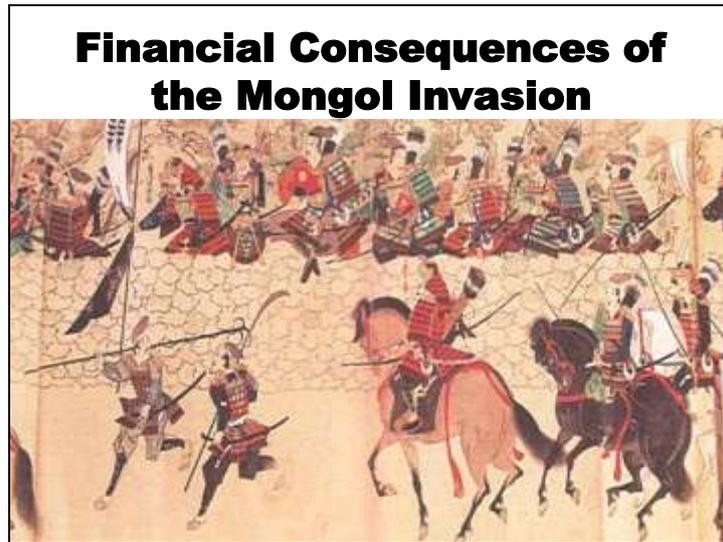


Slide 1

Japan's Warring States Period

1467 > 1603

Slide 2



Notes

Remember back to the seven years interim period between the first and second Mongol invasions, when the Minamoto Shogunate had funded the construction of a two metres high defensive wall along the coastline of Kyushu.

After the Mongol invasion had been defeated the Minamoto Shogunate bakufu at Kamakura now found that it lacked the finances to reward the thousands of samurai who had fought to fend off the Mongols.

In addition, this time the Shinto priests who had prayed for divine protection added their own payment demands, citing the typhoons as evidence of the effectiveness of their prayers.

The bakufu had few funds to dispense, and what they had they gave to the priests, who held more influence in the capital than the samurai.

Dissatisfaction with the Kamakura bakufu festered among the ranks of the warlords samurai during the decades that followed.

After a bloody civil war lasting 15 years, the Minamoto Samurai armies were defeated and the position of Shogun was assumed by the then most dominant Ashikaga clan who took control of Japan from 1338 AD.

While this second Shogunate, the Ashikaga clan, would rule for a further 235 years, it never provided a strong unifying government, and because of its perceived financial and military weakness, it oversaw a period of unparalleled violence and disruption within the Japanese nation – the Warring States Period (Sengoku).

Slide 3



Notes

The Warring States Period was more than a century-long period of political upheaval and conflict which saw the breakdown of central authority in Japan during the period from 1467 AD right through to the re-unification of the country around 1603 AD.

It was a lawless era of civil war, in which the feudal lords all over Japan fought their neighbours endlessly in an attempt by each to increase his land and power.

A shogunal succession dispute within the Ashikaga Shogunate provided the excuse for the Onin War as aspirants to national power fought for that trophy while nearly everyone else tried to settle local disputes and increase their land and power.

For the next century and a half, local daimyo or warlords vied for control throughout the different regions of Japan.

Slide 4



Notes

Despite the widespread warfare of the Warring States Period, economic growth also occurred because the feudal lords discovered they had to encourage strong economies which could support their large armies. The castles of the great war lords developed into castle towns in which industry and commerce flourished with the encouragement of the daimyo.

Stores and shops proliferated in large and small towns alike, especially along the highways. Large cities devoted specifically to commerce emerged, such as Sakai which is now part of Osaka.

Agriculture was expanded through land reclamation and large irrigation projects, while new mining ventures were undertaken.

Cotton and jute were encouraged and commerce began to flourish along Japan's major highways between growing towns and cities.

Slide 5



Notes

As the warring daimyo endlessly fought each other and carved out their territories, neither emperor nor shogun was able to govern the domestic scene, let alone control trade with foreign nations.

It was at this point in Japanese history that the Spanish and Portuguese made their appearance.

In 1543 several Portuguese were shipwrecked on an island off southern Kyushu, and these were the first Europeans to arrive in Japan.

Their advanced art of musket construction was passed on to the Japanese and this new technology was eagerly sought and adopted by the Daimyo, thereby revolutionizing warfare in Japan.

In 1549 the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier arrived in Kagoshima. After missionary work for more than two years, he left Japan; but thereafter Jesuit missionaries arrived continuously. The missionaries utilized trade in goods from the Portuguese ships to propagate Christianity, and there were cases in which merchant ships would not enter the ports of daimyo who did not show good will toward missionary activity.

Thus, the daimyo of the Sengoku era, seeking profits of foreign trade and the acquisition of military equipment and supplies, protected Christianity, and some southern Daimyo became Christian converts.

Shortly we will shortly learn more about the role that Christianity played in the history of early modern Japan.

First however we will see how Japan came out of its warring period and was able to re-unify.

Now would be a good time to begin watching the twelve episodes of the DVD 'Shogun'.