AIM: HOW DID THE JAPANESE CIVILIZATION SOCIALEY, CULTURELEY, POLITICALEY, & ECONOMICALEY EMERGE?

MOTIVATION: DESCRIBE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF JAPAN OBSERVING THE MAP - WHICH NATIONS BORDER JAPAN?

HOW DO YOU THINK THESE NATIONS INFLUENCED THE INTERNAL & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OF JAPAN, HISTORICALLY & PRESENTLY?
Timeline of significant events in Japan’s history

- c. 400: Japan has contact with China
- 500: Buddhism, Confucianism and Chinese writing are adopted
- 600: 710 - The imperial court is established at Nara
- 700: 794 - The Helan period begins — a time of cultural and artistic development
- 800: 1192 - Yoritomo becomes shogun; Japan is ruled by a military style government; the Mongols under Kublai Khan invade Japan
- 900: 1333 - Japan is under imperial rule for a brief time
- 1000: 1336 - Japan has its first contact with Europeans; Christianity arrives in Japan
- 1100: 1576 - The shogunless period begins
- 1200: 1603 - Portuguese traders arrive in Japan
- 1300: 1603 - Japan closes its door to the West; the country is under military rule
I. **JAPANESE GEOGRAPHY**

a) **Location**: East Asia, is an archipelago - A country that consists of a group of islands (Japan is made up of 4 main islands). Japan has a long and irregular (unsmooth/rough) coastline.

b) Japan is made up mostly of mountains.

1) **Terrace Farming** - In order to farm in the mountains, the Japanese had to dig and carve flat areas (called terraces) into the sides of mountains.
II. YAMATO PERIOD-300-710 C.E.

a. Aspects of China were adopted, such as: Confucianism, Buddhism, Art & Architecture, Government structure and Language.

b. Yamato Emperors were the first emperors to rule Japan.
c. PRINCE SHOTOKU (573-621 CE)
1. Spread **Chinese culture** and **Confucianism**, allowed **Buddhist** sects to grow and develop.
2. Created a new governmental structure, including a **17 Article Constitution in 604 CE**. By the end of the Yamato period, Japan was divided into 5000 **shoen** (grant of land) and the government had almost no land.
d. SHINTOISM
1. Japan’s isolation gave rise to the Shinto religion.
2. Shinto is a polytheistic religion based on the respect of nature & ancestor worship.
3. Shinto worshipers believed in divine spirits called kami that live in nature.
Komainu: the stone dogs which face each other at the entrance to shrines, guarding the precincts. One dog always has its mouth open and is called A, while the other has its mouth closed and is called Un.

Inari style - torii

The symbol of a shrine is its gate, or Torii. It represents the division between the everyday world and the divine world.

Chōzuya: the small pavilion near the main hall with water and ladles. People come here to wash their hands and rinse out their mouths before going to the main hall to pray.

The main sanctuary of Tōshōgū Shrine
III. HEIAN PERIOD: 764-1156 C.E.

a. Characteristics of the period:

1. Growth of large land estates, *Chinese art and literature spread*—“golden age of poetry emerged”, such as personal diaries and novels—*The Tale of Genji*, etiquette and highly refined court life, segregation from *Chinese models of religion and government*, were not influenced by the *Chinese civil service system*, Buddhism evolved into *Zen Buddhism*: Japanese form of Buddhism that focused on mental and self-discipline.
Murasaki Shikibu was the author of Japan's first novel, *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji-monogatari*), considered one of the greatest contributions to Japanese and world literature. In a relatively short life, she produced a work that has entertained people throughout the following centuries.

Murasaki Shikibu was born into a minor branch of the aristocratic and very influential Fujiwara family in Heian-Kyo (now Kyoto) somewhere between AD 973 and AD 978. She died there somewhere between AD 1014 and AD 1025. No-one knows her real name — historians think it might have been Takako. She used the name Murasaki (pronounced *moo-rah-sah-kee*), meaning ‘purple’, or Lady Murasaki after the heroine of her book. The name ‘Shikibu’ is a word describing the work her father did as a court official.

Murasaki’s father was a well-educated man, a poet and also governor of his province. When her mother died, her father took charge of Murasaki’s upbringing. She received a good education and her father even allowed her to undertake study of Chinese and the classics of Chinese literature — part of the traditional education of the upper class Japanese male and something generally considered unsuitable for a female. She wrote in the hiragana script, which was included in the education of upper-class girls. It was a simpler script and more easily read than the Chinese characters that men used.

Murasaki married young, gave birth to a daughter in AD 999 and was widowed in AD 1001. Her friends enjoyed her story-telling abilities and over the next few years her stories became more and more in demand at the Japanese court. Court officials encouraged Murasaki to accept a position there. She served as lady-in-waiting to the Empress Shoshi and was known not only for her entertaining stories but also for her ability as a writer and especially for the beauty of her poetry.

Murasaki wrote her novel over a ten-year period from AD 1001 to AD 1010. It tells the story of the imaginary prince, Genji, nicknamed ‘the Shining Prince’. Women admire him greatly for his charm and the story tells of his success in attracting them. *The Tale of Genji* also provides an insight into the life of the aristocracy during the Heian era (AD 794–1191) and the grandeur and luxury of life at court.

It was late in the Third Month. Murasaki’s spring garden was coming ever more to life with blossoms and singing birds. Elsewhere spring had departed, said the other ladies, and why did it remain here? Genji thought it a pity that the young women should have only distant glimpses of the moss on the island, a deeper green each day. He had carpenters at work on Chinese pleasure boats, and on the day they were launched he summoned palace musicians for water music. Princes and high courtiers came crowding to hear.

An extract from the novel *The Tale of Genji* written by the Lady Murasaki in the early eleventh century. The book gives an insight into the lives of the Japanese nobility during the Heian period.
While at court, the Lady Murasaki kept a diary in which she recorded her observations of the events of court life in the years 1008 to 1010 and her feelings of frustration at what she saw as the trivial interests and lifestyle of many of the courtiers. The second section of the diary is interesting for the comments she makes about the characters of some of the other ladies at court. For example, she described her fellow writer, Sei Shonagon, author of The Pillow Book, as ‘dreadfully conceited’ and also expressed her concern that women did not live up to her expectations of what a lady-in-waiting should be (see source 3.7.3).

Source 3.7.3

We all have our quirks and no-one is ever all bad. Then again, it is not possible for everyone to be all things all of the time: attractive, restrained, intelligent, tasteful and trustworthy.

An extract from The Diary of Lady Murasaki

Source 3.7.4

It is hateful when a well-bred young man who is visiting a woman of lower rank calls out her name in such a way as to make everyone realize that he is on familiar terms with her. However well he may know her name, he should slur it slightly as though he had forgotten it.

[Sei Shonagon disliked:]

Ugly handwriting on red paper.

Snow on the houses of common people. This is especially regrettable when the moonlight shines down on it.

[She liked:]

A letter written on fine green paper ... attached to a budding willow branch.

A slim, handsome young nobleman in a Court cloak.

A pretty girl casually dressed in a trouser-skirt, over which she wears only a loosely sewn coat.


Source 3.7.5

Chapter 23 — The First Warbler, from a series of 54 works by the Japanese artist Kunisada II Utagawa (1823–1880). The works were designed and published c.1857 and depict and give tribute to Murasaki’s The Tale of Genji.

Activities

Use sources

1. Use source 3.7.2 to describe the picture of the nobility’s way of life revealed by Lady Murasaki in The Tale of Genji.
2. What does source 3.7.3 tell us about Lady Murasaki’s attitudes?
3. What evidence is there in source 3.7.4 to indicate that Sei Shonagon has different values?
4. What similarities can you observe between the content of source 3.7.5 and the content of The Tale of Genji?
b. DECLINE OF CENTRAL POWER

1. During most of the Heian period (794–1185) wealthy Fujiwara family ruled.
2. In mid-1000s, large landowners build private armies, become warlords, small landowners traded land to warlords in exchange for protection.
3. Feudal system of local rule developed; Fujiwara family lost power.
Based on these images, how were Japanese & European feudal systems similar?
III. KAMAKURA PERIOD 1185-1333 C.E.
a. Minamoto Yoritomo, was the founder, and it was considered the beginning of the Medieval Japan. Chinese influence declined, increased influence of court system, and the development of Feudalism emerged in Japan.
IV. JAPANESE FEUDALISM

a. Political, economic, and social system based on loyalty, land holdings, & military serve/protection.

b. Samurai warriors lived by a CODE OF BUSHIDO which demanded courage, loyalty, deity, fairness, & honor. Code also stressed self-discipline and death over life, and loyalty to shogun and emperor.

c. The Samurai also performed Seppuku: Ritual suicide that allowed death with honor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>Social, Political and Economic Context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emperor</strong></td>
<td>The <em>Emperor</em> and the imperial family had the highest social status. He was a figurehead, a leader in name only. He was the religious leader, but had little political power, and in reality was under control of the shogun's clan. Economically, the people of all other classes of society provided for the Emperor and his court.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shogun</strong></td>
<td>The <em>shogun</em> was the military leader of the most powerful of the Emperor's clans. The clans often fought to acquire this high social status. The shogun was the actual political ruler. He had a high social status and those of the other classes provided for his economic needs in return for protection and privileges (e.g., a small portion of land, some of the produce of the land).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Daimyos</strong></td>
<td>The <em>daimyos</em> were the shogun's representatives. They ran the estates according to the shogun's rules. Their swords were their most valuable possessions because they were required to use them often to demonstrate their loyalty to the shogun. They had high social status as members of the warrior class. They lived in huge castles surrounded by moats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Samurai</strong></td>
<td>The <em>samurai</em> were professional warriors of the military aristocracy. They were loyal to the shogun and daimyos, in whose castles they resided. Their position gave them fairly high social status, but little political power. Their economic needs were met by lower classes similar to the arrangement with the daimyos and the shogun.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ronin</strong></td>
<td>The <em>ronin</em> were wandering samurai who had no daimyos. They worked as body guards for rich merchants or as paid soldiers during civil war. They had low social status, no political power and depended on others for their economic well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peasants</strong></td>
<td>The peasants included farmers and fishermen. They had very low social status, no political power and were very poor. They were valued because they produced the food for all other classes, and often made the material for clothing. The peasants paid taxes to the daimyos and shogun in the form of rice and work. Often peasants starved when they had to give up more than two-thirds of the year's crops to the upper classes in return for being able to remain on the land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artisans</strong></td>
<td>The artisan crafted a variety of products including art, cooking pots, fish hooks, farm tools, utensils, ship anchors and swords. The artisans, who were well-known for their exceptional swords, were highly respected. However, on the whole, this class was not as respected as peasants because they did not produce food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Merchants</strong></td>
<td>The merchants were of very low social status and seen as unimportant because they produced nothing of value and lived off the efforts of others' work. So low was the respect for these sellers that, often, they were made to live in separate locations and not allowed to mix with other classes except to do business.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
BUSHIDO: THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR

The samurai had an unwritten code of behavior that became known as bushido or "the way of the warrior." The samurai code emphasized loyalty and family values. It placed great value on courage, honor, self-discipline, and samurais put the needs of others in front of their own. Capture or surrender were dishonorable.

Seppuku

Rather than fall into enemy hands, samurai commonly committed suicide. This act was performed by stabbing a knife into the left side of the abdomen, drawing across to the right and giving a final upward twist to the chest. Samurai committed suicide in this fashion not only to avoid capture, but to make up for any unworthy behavior.

The Code of Bushido

"The business of the samurai consists in reflecting on his own station in life, in discharging loyal service to his master if he has one, in deepening his fidelity (faithfulness) in association with friends, and with the due consideration of his own position in devoting himself to duty above all."
- Yamaga Soko (1622-1685)

"The way of the warrior (bushido) is to find a way to die. If a choice is given between life and death, the samurai must choose death. There is no more meaning beyond this. Make up your mind and follow the course. Someone may say, ‘You die in vain if you do not accomplish what you set out to do.’

"If the samurai misses his objectives and continues to live, he must be seen as a coward. If he misses his objectives and chooses death ... this must be a noble act. It is of utmost importance for bushido. Day and night, if you make an effort to think of death and at a moment’s notice, you and the bushido will become one. In this way throughout your life you can perform your duties for your master..."
- Hagakure by Yamato Tsunetomo, 1716

The Seven Virtues

These are the seven principles underlying the spirit of Bushido, Bu (martial arts) shi (warrior) do (the way).

1. Gi: Rectitude – the right decision, taken with equanimity, the right attitude, the truth; when we must die, we must die
2. Yu: Courage – bravery tinged with heroism
3. Jin: Benevolence – universal love, compassion toward mankind
4. Rei: Respect – right action—a most essential quality, courtesy
5. Makoto: Honesty – utter sincerity; truthfulness
6. Melyo: Honor and Glory
7. Chugo: Loyalty – devotion
THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR SAMURAI IN FEUDAL JAPAN

Read the following passages from the *Hagakure* by Yamamoto Tsunetomo. The *Hagakure* was used by the samurai in spiritual training.

**From the Hidden Behind Leaves** — The way of the Warrior (bushido) is to find a way to die. If a choice is given between life and death, the samurai must choose death. There is no more meaning beyond this. Make up your mind and follow the predetermined course. Some one may say, “You die in vain, if you do not accomplish what you set out to do.” That represents an insincere approach of the Kyoto people to bushido. When you are forced to choose between life and death, no one knows what the outcome will be. Man always desires life and rationalizes his choice for life. At the very moment, if he misses his objectives and continues to live, as a samurai he must be regarded as a coward. It is difficult to draw an exact line. If he misses his objectives and chooses death, some may say he dies in vain and he is crazy to do so. But this must not be regarded as a shameful act. It is of utmost importance for the bushido. Day and night, if you make a conscious effort to think of death and resolve to pursue it, if you are ready to discard life at a moment’s notice, you and the bushido will become one. In this way throughout your life, you can perform your duties for your master without fail. 

The best way to conduct with regard to speaking is to remain silent. At least of you think you can manage without speaking, do not speak. What must be said should be said as succinctly as possible. A surprising number of people make fools of themselves by talking without thinking, and are looked down upon.

One who penetrates deep into the *Way* of this realm realizes that there is no end to his training... Therefore, a samurai must know his shortcomings well and spend his life in training without ever feeling he has done enough. Of course he must never be over-confident, but neither should he feel inferior to others.

Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure* in Chuo Koronsa, Nihon no Meicho, Vol. 17

1. According to the text, if a samurai must choose between life and death, which should he choose? Why?
2. When is a samurai regarded as a coward?
3. How does this concept of life and death relate to Japanese kamikaze pilots’ behavior in WWII?
4. What are the author’s feelings about talkative people?
5. How does this passage reflect the Japanese view on education? Is this still true today?
Helmets were made from iron plates to repel sword blows.

An iron mask was sometimes worn not only to protect the face, but to frighten the samurai's enemy as well.

Samurai swords were made by skilled artisans. The curvature of the blade makes the weapon more effective when slashing.

Individual iron plates provided protection and freedom of movement when in combat. As you can see, a samurai's armor was often richly decorated.

**Samurai Warrior**

In combat, a samurai's life depended on his skill and his equipment. Here you can see how the samurai's weapons and armor aided him or her in battle.
Steep internal paths led attackers into heavily defended narrow tunnels and gateways.

Huge stone walls around the castle stood as massive barriers, daring enemies to risk their lives.

Within the castle walls, there was a network of moats, like a maze. The interlocking buildings that ran alongside these moats would be filled with archers during an attack.

Source 3.4.2

Image showing Himeji Castle and its defences

Open spaces within the outer walls and moat were meant to tempt intruders to venture further and be killed.
JAPANESE AND EUROPEAN FEUDALISM

Read the selection below comparing and contrasting feudalism in Japan and Europe, and complete the chart.

Japan's feudal culture was in many basic ways more like that of feudal Europe than China. The warriors, who were known by the generic term of samurai "servitors," placed great emphasis on the military virtues of bravery, honor, self-discipline, and the stoical acceptance of death. Lacking any religious injunctions against suicide, they commonly took their own lives in defeat, rather than accept torture and possible humiliation in capture. Suicide by the gruesome and extremely painful means of cutting open one's own abdomen became a sort of ritual used to demonstrate will power and maintain one's honor. Vulgarly called hara-kiri, or "belly-slitting," but more properly known as seppuku, this form of honorable suicide has survived on occasion into modern times, and suicide by less difficult means is still considered an acceptable and basically honorable way to die.

The prime virtue in the Japanese feudal system, as in that of Europe, was loyalty, because the whole system depended on bonds of personal loyalty. Of course, loyalty was in actuality the weakest link in both systems, and the medieval stories of both Japan and Europe are full of cases of turncoats and traitorous betrayals. In Europe, with its background of Roman law, the lord-vassal relationship was seen as mutual and contractual — in other words, as legalistic. In Japan, the Chinese system has placed less emphasis on law and more on morality — that is, on the subordination of law to the moral sense of the ruler, since his right to rule was theoretically based on his superior wisdom and morality. Hence, the lord-vassal relationship was seen as one of unlimited and absolute loyalty on the part of the vassal, not merely one of legal contract between the two. There was this no room for the development of the concept of political rights, as happened in the West.

Still, family lineage and honor were of great importance in medieval Japanese society, because inheritance determined power and prestige as well as the ownership of property. Family continuity was naturally a matter of vital concern. The Japanese avoided many of the problems of Western hereditary systems, by permitting a man to select among his sons the one most suitable to inherit his position and also by using adoption when there was no male heir by birth. The husband of a daughter, a young relative, or even some entirely unrelated person could be adopted as a completely acceptable heir. While inheritance is no longer a keystone of Japanese society, these types of adoptions are still common.

Japanese feudal society differed from that of Europe in two other revealing ways. In Japan there was no cult of chivalry which put women on a romantic pedestal, as though they were fragile, inferior beings. The Japanese warriors expected their women to be as tough as they were and accept self-destruction out of loyalty or family. Also Japanese warriors, though men of the sword like their Western counterparts, had none of the contempt that the Western feudal aristocracy often showed for learning and the gentler arts. They prided themselves on their fine calligraphy or poetic skills. Perhaps the long coexistence of the culture of the imperial court with the rising warrior society of the provinces had permitted a fuller transfer of the arts and attitudes of the one to the other.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similar</th>
<th>Feudal Japan</th>
<th>Feudal Europe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>Different</td>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>European Political Units</td>
<td>Japanese Political Units</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date Established</strong></td>
<td>By 800s after the division of Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire</td>
<td>Mid 800s in opposition to the power of the Fujiwara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of Main Ruler</strong></td>
<td>King, Queen, Emperor</td>
<td>Emperor as puppet ruler or figurehead</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shogun as real power between 1100s and 1945</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Length of Office of Ruler</strong></td>
<td>Hereditary unless disposed</td>
<td>Hereditary unless disposed</td>
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<td>Shogun, by force or intrigue</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ranks</strong></td>
<td>Ruler</td>
<td>Emperor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Vassal as lord</td>
<td>Provincial aristocrat as lord</td>
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<td>Vassal (lesser noble) as lord</td>
<td>Vassal (warrior chief) as lord</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Knight who had no vassal under him</td>
<td>Samurai</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Base</strong></td>
<td>Large population engaged in agriculture</td>
<td>Small agricultural population</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change over time as trade and cities grew</td>
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