



Historical Development of Japan

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The beginning of Japan

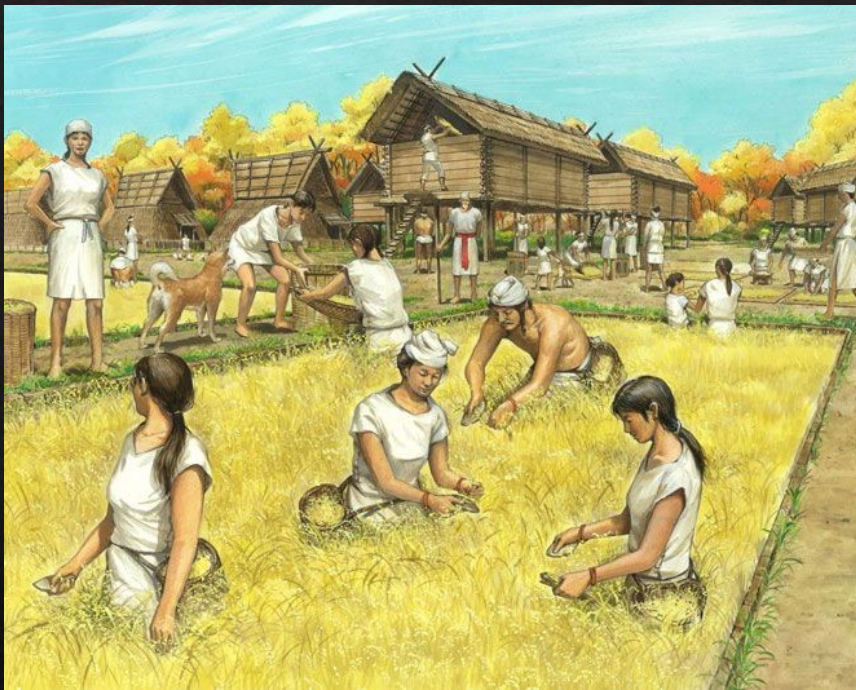
Since the dawn of mankind, it is said that the first species of humans resided in the nation of Africa, some time later they migrated to the continent of Asia, so one can assume that a good amount of these species occupied the area known as Japan. The paleolithic period of Japan dates back to 30,000 to 10,000 years ago, hardly anything is known about the traditions or culture of the inhabitants but what is known is that due to findings there, the people there used to have a nomadic lifestyle, by hunting and gathering. These inhabitants apparently had no knowledge of ceramics or pottery, this would also be called the pre-ceramic era. Climatic changes led the place into its mesolithic stage, which led to the depletion of much of the earlier fauna due to human expansion on the archipelago. The introduction of the bow and arrow improved hunting.

The Eras of Japan

The Jōmon period: This period is the earliest historical era of Japanese history, which began around 14500 BCE. This period got its name due to the introduction and use pottery and ceramics during this time of Japan, in which ornaments were made. Starting around 5000 BCE, the Jomon developed a more sedentary lifestyle settling into villages. This period was especially known for its work of pottery for many uses. (To the right is an artwork of pottery that was used in this period.)



The Yayoi Period



The Yayoi Period marked a break from the Neolithic culture of the Jōmon, and a shift toward a new culture in Japan. During this era wet-rice production began, advanced use of pottery emerged, and the use of bronze and iron and first seen, and also social structures such as class systems, and discrete farming villages were formed. However, political power remained on a village level, as in, there would be a head of the village, with no central authority in place.

(The painting on the left depicts the agricultural lifestyle in the Yayoi period.)

Tumulus (or Tomb) Period

During this time of Japan, The Japanese state known as Yamato was formed. This government body would later evolve in following years.

Another significance of this period were the burials of people when they died, decoration were used to honor the dead and tombs were works of art made in various sizes. The tombs also contained riches and other artifacts.

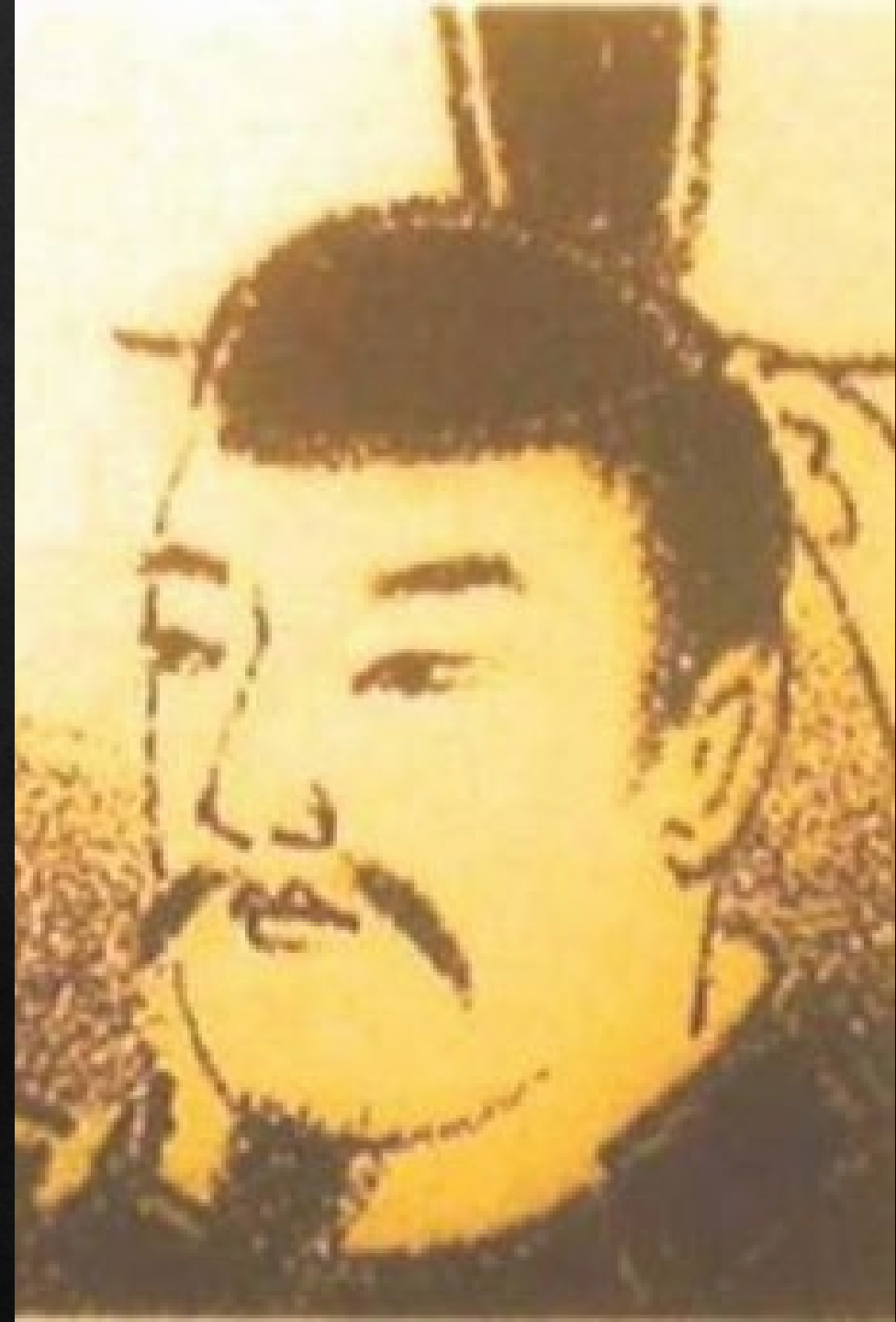
(The image to the right is the tomb of Emperor Nintoku, built during the Tumulus period.)



The Taika Reform

The Taika Reforms were a set of doctrines established by Emperor Kōtoku in the year 645. They were written shortly after the death of Prince Shōtoku, and the defeat of the Soga clan, uniting Japan.

(To the right is a painting of Emperor Kotoku.



The Nara Period



This period was when Buddhism was permanently established there. This was also where a place known as 'Nara' was established as the capital before being moved. Nara artisans produced refined Buddhist sculpture and erected grand Buddhist temples. A network of roads connected the capital with remote provinces.

(The image to the left is a statue of Buddha in the Todaiji Buddhist Temple, built during the Nara era.)

Heian Period

Some may call this a golden age. This period is named after the capital city of Heian-kyō, or modern Kyōto. It is the period in Japanese history when Buddhism, Taoism and other Chinese influences were at their height.

The Fujiwara was one of the great families that dominated Japanese politics during the Heian Period (794–1185).

(To the right is a painting of Fujiwara Kamatari, the founder of the Fujiwara clan.)



The Tokugawa (or Edo) Period



After the Kamakura and Morumachi, there came the Edo period of Japan. This is the period when Japan was under the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate. The period was characterized by economic growth, strict social order, isolationist foreign policies, a stable population, and popular enjoyment of arts and culture. At this time, Japan had a strict rule under the Shogun. This later came to an end with the Meiji Restoration.

(To the left is a painting of Samurai, or Shoguns, that ruled over Japan.)

Meiji Restoration

The Meiji Restoration was an event that restored practical imperial rule to the Empire of Japan in 1868 under Emperor Meiji. This caused Japan to open its ports to trade from other nations and moved over from an imperial government body to an Empire rule. Economic and social changes paralleled the political transformation of the Meiji period. Although the economy still depended on agriculture, industrialization was the primary goal of the government, which directed the development of strategic industries, transportation, and communications.

(To the right is a picture of Emperor Meiji.)



Japanese Movement: The Meiji Restoration

[From the last slide continuing] As stated, the Meiji Restoration brought about great political and social changes that has impacted the other areas of the nation, thanks to Emperror Meiji. By the end of the Restoration after the death of the Emperor in 1912, Japan had a highly centralized, bureaucratic government;

- a constitution establishing an elected parliament
- a well-developed transport and communication system
- a highly educated population free of feudal class restrictions
- an established and rapidly growing industrial sector based on the latest technology
- a powerful army and navy.

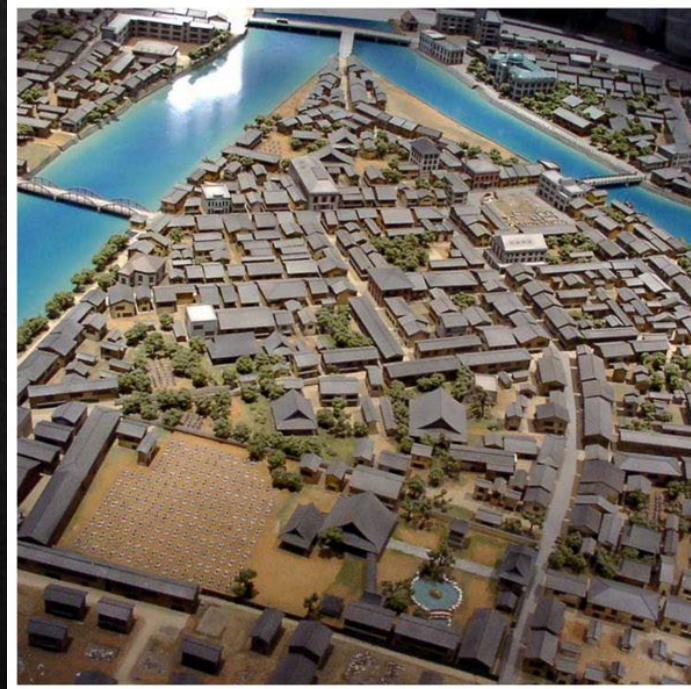
This has impacted Japan in a positive way as it promoted its growth as it had promoted all aspects of the nation and has led to more development in the following years to come.



*Japanese art style:
To the left is the ancient style, and to
the right is the modern art style.*

Japan: Atomic Bombs

The image shows the city of Hiroshima before and after the atomic bomb hit it.



References

- ◇ [Britannica: Japan- History](#)
- ◇ [Japan Guide: History of Japan](#)
- ◇ [Japan-pitt.edu](#)
- ◇ [Ancient.eu](#)
- ◇ [Bookmice.net](#)