

Example of essay on history of the edo period

War



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The Edo period (1603-1867) was a time of peace and development in the history of Japan. Edo, now Tokyo, became the central seat of Japanese government, controlled by the Tokugawa family, beginning with Tokugawa Ieyasu. Preceding the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Japan had been ravaged by a long period of conflict. The primary aim of the Tokugawa political system was the unification and stabilization of Japan. After winning the battle, Tokugawa Ieyasu re-established the Shogun (head of the government) and Bakuho (government), unifying Japan under a central government; and brought order to society through feudalism ("Pre-conditions for Industrialization"). Religion also transformed during the Edo period. Buddhism became more of a tradition than a practice, and people felt tied to it out of habit rather than faith. In contrast to this 'formalism', a 'renewal' took place in Shinto and Confucianism. The feudal society Japan had adopted became more drawn to Shinto, and scholars began to study the country's old Confucian texts, reawakening old traditions and beliefs ("Edo Period").

Although the Tokugawa regime internalized and isolated the country from the rest of the world (in 1633 Tokugawa Iemitsu banned traveling abroad and reading foreign books), Japan flourished. Economically, a boom in industrialization and castle-building was coupled with increased trade of handicrafts ("Edo Period"). However, economics was much less centralized than the political system, and daimyo (local governments) imposed different policies, which were created without much consideration to long-term goals ("Pre-conditions for Industrialization"). An increase in the popularity of education led to an interest in literature, a rise in the production of literary

works, and the creation of the Japanese art of storytelling, rakugo (Nobuhiru, Japan Echo). Technological developments of the period were largely based on Western discoveries, although the Japanese were able to adapt these technologies for themselves, such as a clock that was based on the Japanese system of hours of varying lengths (“Edo Period”).

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