

**Abolishment of the Edo Feudal Hierarchy:
The Successes and Consequences for Japan**

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Growing up, my family always highlighted the significance of my ancestors' stories. One story that continuously came up pertained to my great-great-great-great-grandfather, a former samurai for the current-day-prefecture of Fukui. When the Meiji reformers decided to eradicate feudalism from the Japanese government, violent dissent arose amongst the samurai class, and multiple insurgencies soon ensued. My family quickly became destitute as we could no longer rely on the previously granted stipends. Consequently, my ancestors became strong advocates for the samurai revolts. Their involvement in these events sparked a prominent interest in me to research how the Japanese government's transition from aggressive to diplomatic agreements impacted society.

During my research process, I had the privilege to interview my grandmother, who shared extensive information about my great-great-great-great-grandfather while simultaneously presenting her perspective. I also discovered a significant piece of evidence through the Library of Congress which perpetuated my research: the Black Ship Scrolls from 1854. These scrolls—ancient drawings by the Japanese—depicted how Japanese culture perceived American foreigners during Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan in the 19th century. Since the affiliate contest, I implemented perspectives of foreign nations like America by using newspaper articles and political cartoons to portray how foreign media addressed these events.

With this information in mind, I began creating my website. I have previous experience using website builders, which helped me understand most of the fundamentals. Additionally, I have also used code such as HTML and CSS to create informative websites from scratch. For the planning, I started by separating the information I had collected from my research into each of its respective sections and gathering other evidence such as images and quotes to support my reasoning. I utilized these skills when choosing the website's red color scheme to symbolize the Japanese meaning of evil spirits being scared away (war) and to connect some of the images via a common color palette.

The abolishment of Edo feudalism allowed the Japanese government to establish a new approach to dissent while also demonstrating pivotal diplomacy throughout the nation. Their reanalysis of the warfare that occurred during the overthrowing of the *bakufu* government paved the way to compromise through the Meiji Constitution. Hence, the abolishment of Edo feudalism is a crucial example of debate and diplomacy that exemplifies the development of the Japanese government throughout the Edo and Meiji periods.

The eradication of the feudal system has had a substantial influence on history. After the abolishment, a newly reformed imperial Japan sought to strengthen its international connections to become more powerful within the region. This resulted in events such as wars with China and Russia, the annexation of Korea by Japan, and World War II. Furthermore, all individuals restricted to an agricultural occupation in the past were now free to pursue any field of work—demonstrating the evolution of occupational liberty in Japan. Ultimately, the Edo feudal system's abrogation stood as the prime example of governance that the Japanese government utilized in its approach to conflict not only during these events—but today as well.