The Human and Physical Geography of Japan
Reports from the Field

United States Department of Education
Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad
with additional funding from the
Freeman Foundation

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In the summer of 2012, twelve educators from across the United States embarked on a four-week journey to Japan with the goal of enriching their classroom curriculum content by learning first-hand about the country. Prior to applying for the study tour, each participant completed a 30-hour National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA) seminar. Once selected, they all completed an additional 20 hours of pre-departure orientation, including FCCEAS webinars (funded by the US-Japan Foundation; archived webinars are available at www.smith.edu/fcceas), readings, and language podcasts.

Under the overarching theme of “Human and Physical Geography of Japan,” the participants’ experience began in Tokyo, then continued in Sapporo, Yokohama, Kamakura, Kyoto, Osaka, Nara, Hiroshima, Miyajima, and finally ended in Naha. Along the way they heard from experts on Ainu culture and burakumin, visited the Tokyo National Museum of History, heard the moving testimony of an A-bomb survivor, toured the restored seat of the Ryukyu Kingdom, and dined on regional delicacies.

Each study tour participant was asked to prepare a report on an assigned geography-related topic to be delivered to the group in country and then revised upon their return to the U.S. for dissemination to educators. Some of these documents can be used in the classroom, while others will be more useful as background information for classroom instructors. We hope that these materials will be useful and will contribute to greater understanding of the geographical diversity—both human and physical—in Japan.

Anne Prescott
FCCEAS Director and Study Tour Leader

Greg Diehl
Study Tour Co-leader

On behalf of the study tour members:
Laura Copeland
Karen Doolittle
Veronica Gelormino
Erika Guckenberger
Beth Maiorani
Susan Murphy
Matthew Sudnik
Paul Swanson
Benayshe Titus
Sarah Wilson
Anne Zachary
Sally Zuñiga

[Cover photo: Japan Study Tour 2012 at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima, Japan.]
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Local Geography – Tokyo

**Essential Question:** to what extent have living, working, and cultural patterns of Edo low city and high city endured through the centuries to present day Tokyo?

**Objectives:** By the end of this lesson you should be able to:
- identify the differences between the low city and the high city – and where they are on a map
- describe the evolution of living, working, and cultural patterns within Tokyo
- analyze the extent to which the living, working, and cultural patterns of Edo low city and high city have survived

60-Second Question/Warm Up
Think about the living, working, and cultural patterns in your city. Why is your city organized in this fashion?
Think – pair - share

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low City</th>
<th>High City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shitamachi (downtown)</td>
<td>Yamanote (uptown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants (bustling), artisans – cultural center of Japan</td>
<td>aristocratic dwellings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytellers, street peddlers, festivals</td>
<td>“solid” hilly region was granted to the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nihombashi was the heart of the Low City</td>
<td>aristocracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temples, shrines, and academics</td>
<td>temples, shrines, and academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certain resentment towards the rigid Tokugawa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class structure b/c merchants were placed below everyone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoshiwara – pleasure centers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginza – place of artisans and small shops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A precise boundary is difficult to draw, according to Seidensticker, “[the low city] sometimes seems as much an idea as a geographic entity” (8).

(Map source: Low City, High City: Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake by Edward Seidensticker)
Evolution of living, working, and cultural patterns - notes and woodblock prints
Where people lived, what they did, and the culture present in different parts of the city

**Edo (1603-1867)**
- Center of Edo – shogun’s castle
- Tokugawa regime granted most of the solid, hilly region to the military aristocracy – high city
- Merchant Edo – the Low City – shops on ground level with residential quarters above
- Kabuki – treasure of the low city, performances were central to Edo culture
- Many *ukiyo-e* woodcuts were produced in the low city and depicted the *edokko* culture
- Much low City entertainment was found “hanging out” in the streets
- Spirit of resistance emerged due to the dynamics between the low city and the high city – low city felt opposed by the warriors and provincials (there was little solidarity between lord and commoners) – this resistance appeared in Kabuki (”Edo: The City and Its Culture” 41-51).

What do you notice in this woodblock print?? *(Source: Getty Images, RM# 72125465)*

**Meiji (1868-1912)**
- ”Restoration” (renovation, revitalization)
- ”double life” presented a mixture of imported and domestic
- Edo – which was already a large city with a proud history - becomes Tokyo
- Ginza fire of 1872 – the low city lived with the threat of fire (much of Low City built out of wood) – after this fire much of Ginza was rebuilt of red brick to protect against fires
- Baseball arrived early in the Meiji – first games aristocratic
- Yoshiwara fire 1911 – 200 brothels and teahouses were lost – although rebuilt, never recovered its earlier, decadent glory
- Geisha quarters – Yanagibashi, Shimbashi – licensed or not – became scattered

- Nihombashi and Ginza represent two sides of Meiji – conservative and innovative

Last years of Meiji = death of Edo? flood of 1910 and fire of 1911
Upper classes had left the Low City – Nihombashi solidly plebeian – center of mercantile city

*Tokyo Rising*, by Edward Seidensticker
- Decline of the low city
- Kanto earthquake followed by fires – sped along the shift to the high city

**Essential Question:**
What living, working, and cultural patterns can you find as we explore the Tokyo of today?
Ginza, Akasaka, Yoshiwara, Yangibashi, Nihombashi
What entertainment will a stroll down a street in the Low City provide?

*Because they fall we love them – the cherry blossoms. In this floating world, does anything endure?* Ariwara no Narihira (823-880) Japanese Waka Poet
Hiroshige’s *Night View of Saruwaka-machi* from 120 Hiroshige Woodblock Prints CD-ROM; Dover Pub. © 2010.

(Image source: *Low City, High City: Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake* by Edward Seidensticker)
## Tourism Geography
### Four Japanese Places and their Dishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Ingredients</th>
<th>Regional Dishes and Cuisines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An important part of Japanese cuisine is the use of fresh ingredients.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sapporo, Hokkaido</strong></td>
<td>1) <strong>Jingisukan</strong> – “Genghis Khan dish”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) seafood from cold waters:</td>
<td>Meat (usually mutton) and vegetables are cooked on a grill in the middle of the table in a helmet-shaped pot. Sheep farming became popular in Hokkaido for its wool, and this dish soon followed in popularity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• uni (sea urchin)</td>
<td>2) <strong>Ramen Noodle Soup</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ika (squid)</td>
<td>Hokkaido produces 10 times more wheat than other region of Japan. The soup originated in China, but was imported to Japan during the Meiji era. Sapporo’s fast food soup has a miso based broth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ikura (salmon roe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• hotate (scallops)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• kani (crab)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kyoto, Kansai</strong></td>
<td>Kyoto’s cuisine is referred to as Kyo-ryori. Dishes are a reflection of the season, and thus change with the seasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>fu</strong> (wheat gluten)</td>
<td>Types of Kyo-ryori:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>namafu</em> – solid gluten mixed with rice flour and steamed. May be colored and shaped, such as in shojin-ryori cuisine and in some Japanese confectionaries. <em>yaki-fu</em> – baked namafu found in soups and pot dishes.</td>
<td>1) <strong>Kaiseki Ryori</strong> – “food of the aristocrats”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A multi-course banquet (from 7 -12 courses) originally intended to be enjoyed by aristocrats before a tea ceremony. Dishes are artfully prepared with a balance of taste, texture, appearance, and colors of food. Aesthetics are emphasized and consideration is given to the room, flower arrangements and other décor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hiroshima</strong></td>
<td>2) <strong>Shojin Ryori</strong> – “temple food”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) oysters</td>
<td>Vegetarian dishes that were created for the Buddhist monks and pilgrims that went temple hopping in Kyoto. Tofu is a common ingredient in the dishes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% of Japan’s oysters come from the six rivers that run through the city and drain in the Hiroshima bay.</td>
<td>3) <strong>Obanzai</strong> – “home style food”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Though casual cooking, seasonal ingredients are presented in a simple, natural way. It is made up of many small dishes with local produce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Okonomiyaki</strong> – “anything you like pancake”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>This dish style starts with a crepe-like thin pancake that is topped with shredded cabbage, bean sprouts and other toppings such as bacon, tempura bits or seafood. The pancake is assembled and served in layers with noodles and a fried egg.</td>
<td>2) <strong>Kaki no dote nabe</strong> – “oyster hot pot with miso”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This is a popular winter dish that is served in a hot pot. A thin layer of miso is spread around the inside of the casserole. The oysters are cooked with tofu and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Dishes</td>
<td>Regional Ingredients and Cuisines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Naha, Okinawa</strong></td>
<td><strong>1) Goya Champuru</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <em>goya</em> (bittermelon)</td>
<td>In the Okinawan dialect, <em>champuru</em> means “to mix together” and this stir-fry like dish features Okinawa’s summer vegetable, the bittermelon. The vitamins and minerals found in <em>goya</em> help the body overcome the intense summer heat. This stir fry is a mixture of <em>goya</em>, egg, pork, and tofu with a soy sauce base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) <em>ucchin</em> (turmeric)</td>
<td><strong>2) Taco Rice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) <em>mozuku</em> (seaweed)</td>
<td>An icon of Okinawa’s mixed culture; taco rice is Okinawa’s version of the Mexican taco that was introduced by the American military. Taco rice is all the taco fillings served on steamed rice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) <em>kokutou</em> (brown sugar)</td>
<td><strong>3) Chinsuko</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Chinsuko</em> is an Okinawan cookie made with flour, lard and sugar. It is a very popular tourist souvenir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4) Okinawan Soba</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This dish is made from 100% white flour, unlike mainland soba. The most popular variation is called <em>soki</em> soba, which includes cuts of pork rib.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sources of Information: Frommer’s Guides; Japan National Tourist Organization and Japan-Guide.com)

**Tourism Geography Lesson Ideas**

Analyzing a country’s tourist attractions can help students learn more about a region and/or nation’s geography and culture. This list of suggested questions and activities are meant to enhance a student’s awareness on the complexity of a country’s geography by examining its popular tourist sites. An important part of travel for many Japanese is to try the local dishes. Attached is a handout on local cuisines that could be used to help bridge the connection between tourism and geography.

**Critical Questions**

1. **Prior Knowledge Activation:** (a) What are the top tourist attractions of the United States (or your state or your hometown)? Why do you think they are popular? What conclusions can you make about American culture (or your region) considering the top tourist attractions? (b) How do you think traveling to the American west would be different than traveling to the northeast of the United States? Why do these differences exist?

2. What do you imagine you will see on a trip to Japan? Do you think Japan will appear more like a Western nation or more like an Asian nation? Why?

3. The Japan National Tourist Organization lists the following as alluring charms of Japan: (1) shrines, temples and gardens of Japanese culture (2) nature and rural landscapes (3) outdoor markets and gourmet pleasures (4) festivals and events (5) museums and art galleries (6) traditional performing arts (7) architecture (8) and high technology. Rank the above alluring charms of Japan in the order that you think would attract the most visitors. Be ready to explain your rankings.

**Suggested Lesson Activities**

1. **Create a travel brochure on one of the regions of Japan:** Possible topics to include in the brochure would be the region’s local cuisine, local geography and climate, major attractions and/or an overview of the region.
(2) **Organize pictures of various attractions in Japan**: Collect pictures, brochures and/or postcards of main attractions and have students classify the sites using self-generated categories. Class discussions should evolve to include notable similarities and differences between regions.

(3) **Write a postcard to a friend describing impressions of a region in Japan**: The postcard should include a simple sketch of a place that you would visit and a description of that *place*.

(4) **Create analogies**: This region (replace the underlined words with a region), reminds me of _______ because _______.

Useful Resources on Tourism in Japan

3. Guidebooks on Japan
Disputed Geography of Japan

The country of Japan has 377,915 square kilometers of islands located in Northeast Asia. It is roughly the size of the state of California; perhaps a wee bit smaller. “As of the most recent census (October 2010), Japan’s population is 128,057,352; for March 2012 the estimated population is 127,650,000, making it the world’s tenth most populated country.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Japan). The population density average is 336 people per square kilometer. The terrain is mountainous and arable land and natural resources are scarce and precious. Faced with its physical geography and large population, it is no wonder that Japan is involved in many territorial disputes with neighboring countries.

The Kuril Islands are a volcanic archipelago between the island of Hokkaido and Kamchatka, Russia. In 1855, Japan and Russia signed a treaty that gave Japan control of the four southernmost islands and Russia the remaining islands in the chain. The Japanese settled on three of the islands (about 17,000 people) and these people were deported back to the main islands after Russia took possession of the islands in 1949. “Under the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed between the Allies and Japan, Japan renounced ‘all right, title and claim to the Kuril Islands,’ as well as over other possessions.” (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11664434) But this treaty resolved nothing, because Russia did not sign the treaty and “the Japanese government has never recognized the four islands as part of the Kuril chain.” A partial compromise (returning two of the islands to Japan) was not accepted, and to this day, there is no signed peace treaty between the two countries.

Why is ownership of four volcanic islands a problem today in 2012? “Because the islands' natural resources are part of the reason” (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11664434) “The islands are surrounded by rich fishing grounds and are thought to have offshore reserves of oil and gas. Rare rhenium deposits have been found on the Kudriavy volcano on Iturup. Tourism is also a potential source of income, as the islands have several volcanoes and a variety of birdlife.” (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11664434)

In 2010 President Dmitri Medvedev visited the islands. In Kunashir, known in Japan as Kunashiri, he visited a kindergarten, a power station and a fishery, and promised greater investment in the region. "We have an interest in people remaining here. It is important that there be development here, we will invest money here without fail," Interfax news agency quoted him as saying. In Tokyo, Prime Minister Kan reiterated Japan's stance on the islands. "Those four northern islands are part of our country's territory, so the president's visit is very regrettable," he said. (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11663241)

On June 20, 2012 a 4.5 magnitude earthquake was recorded in the Kuril Island chain. Analysts predict no end in sight for this territorial dispute. An expert from the Pacific Forum, Ralph Cossa, is quoted as saying, “Part of the dispute is history and national pride—the Japanese feel that this has traditionally been their territory.”

The Japanese are also involved in a territorial dispute with two other powerful neighboring countries over the Senkaku islands. Both China and Taiwan argue that the Senkaku islands belong to them. In September 2010, a Chinese fishing trawler had a “run-in” with the Japanese Coast Guard.
The Governor of Tokyo has proposed purchasing land on three of the major islands in the Senkaku island chain from a private citizen. This plan for a metropolitan government to purchase privately owned land has raised tensions. Officials in Beijing are quoted as calling the Senkaku Islands a “core interest” of the Chinese government. The Senkaku Islands are located in a militarily strategic location.

The last territorial dispute is between Japan and its neighbor, Korea, and is over what the Japanese call Takeshima, the South Koreans call Dokdo, and what are also known as the Liancourt Rocks, named after a French whaling ship in 1849 (http://www.japantimes.co.jp/print/fd201104925bj.html). Pictures of these islands show what appears to be, well, rocks. A map of Korea from 1531 shows the Liancourt Rocks as Korean territory. Japanese maps from 1877 and 1929 make no mention of the Liancourt Rocks even though Japan officially incorporated them into Shimane Prefecture in 1905. Besides the rich fishing grounds surrounding the rocks, it appears that this dispute is aggravated by the history between the two countries (despite their commonalities—both supporting democracy, human rights issues, and capitalistic economic policies).

Japan’s method for dealing with the disputed territories has been “to stand its ground on historical claims” (http://www.japantimes.co.jp/print/fd20120295bj.html) and history does appear to be an influencing factor in negotiations and dealing with these disputed territories. As natural resources become scarcer (especially energy and fishing), the disputes are likely to become more intense and rise to the front of foreign policy in all involved countries. Another area of concern for the Japanese is national security. The strategic location of all the disputed territories has made it possible for others to subject Japan to cyber attacks—especially at the Mitsubishi Corporation.
The Literary Geography of Japan

“All human beings spend every moment of their lives traveling.” – Matsuo Basho

“The first poetic venture I came across--/ the rice planting songs/ of the far north” – Matsuo Basho

“We kept walking all over Tokyo in the same meandering way, climbing hills, crossing rivers and railway lines, just walking and walking with no destination in mind” – Haruki Murakami, Norwegian Wood

The concept of “place” in Japanese literature:

• Japan’s geographic characteristics (archipelago, mountainous terrain) have caused distinct regional differences to arise— in customs, dialects, literary styles, and many other areas of life. There are fond rivalries which have arisen between Tokyo and Kyoto, the east and west of Japan, etc. Cities are known (correctly or incorrectly) through their reputations: Tokyo is purportedly unfriendly, Osaka is more materialistic, and so on. Add to this the existence of minority groups within Japan, especially in Hokkaido and the Ryukyu islands, and there is much more variety than might first be apparent.

• The Japanese term furusato can literally be defined as “hometown.” However, it is also much more. “This is the place from which we reluctantly came and to which we ache to return…it is warm, secure, safe—all those things which the outside world is so notoriously not.” According to Jeffrey Angles, a professor of Japanese literature and language, the act of writing is an effort by Japanese authors to “embrace the furusato, helping to construct those internal homelands that form the cognitive map of Japan.” Implicit in the concept of furusato is a sense of nostalgia for the “old” Japan, paired with a certain level of discomfort with the urbanization and technological advancement which are characteristic of the “new” Japan.

• Japan’s temperate climate causes it to experience four distinct seasons throughout the year, and traditional literature has always focused on describing and celebrating the characteristics of those seasons, and the transitions between them. Seasonal images are especially prominent in haiku, which traditionally must contain kigo—words evocative or symbolic of a particular season. Kigo can range from flowers (sakura or cherry blossoms for spring, ume or plum blossoms for winter) to concepts like tsuchifuru, a yellow dust which is blown in from China during the springtime.

• There is a longstanding tradition of literary pursuits being woven into Japanese customs and celebrations. During the Heian period, it was customary for nobles to gather and compose literature at parties which celebrated the changes of the seasons—for example, spring hanami (blossom watching) parties or September moon watching parties. If a party were held by a river, a poem might be floated downstream in a winecup; on other occasions, party-goers would set their empty cups afloat and challenge themselves to compose a poem in the time it took their cup to sink. These seasonal celebrations, and the social situations which arise at these parties, form the setting for important scenes in some of the greatest classical Japanese literature, including Sei Shonagon’s Pillow Book and Lady Murasaki’s The Tale of Genji.

Touring Japan through Literature:

Northern Honshu—The Narrow Road to Oku by Matsuo Basho (1689)

Basho is the undisputed master of haiku in Japan; although he was born into a samurai family, he was greatly inspired by Zen Buddhism, and many critics have observed similarities between his best poetry and the layers of meaning within Zen koans. The Narrow Road to Oku is Basho’s most celebrated travel diary, which recounts the 150 days he spent traveling by foot throughout northern Honshu. It is written in the form of a haibun—diary entries interspersed with haiku. The prose and poetry complement each other in capturing the essence of each place Basho visits. In Iga-Ueno, a provincial castle town near Nara, travelers can visit Basho’s birthplace and a Basho museum. Note: National Geographic has an excellent website called “On the Poet’s Trail,” which includes the haibun diary of a modern-day author, Howard Norman, who re-traced Basho’s famous journey. There is also an interactive map of northern Honshu which features Norman’s commentary along with Basho’s poetry written at each location.
Matsue and the San-in coast (western Honshu)—*Tales of Ghostly Japan* and *Kwaidan* by Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904)

Lafcadio Hearn was born in Greece, grew up in Ireland, and lived for many years in America, but he found his true home after immigrating to Japan in 1890. He married a Japanese woman, became a Japanese citizen, changed his name to Yakumo Koizumi, and wrote numerous books from the perspective of a foreigner trying to understand Japanese culture. His most famous works, *Tales if Ghostly Japan* and *Kwaidan*, are collections of traditional ghost stories told throughout the San-in region of Honshu, where he resided. Hearn also wrote *Kokoro*, a series of essays about what he called “Japanese inner life.” In Matsue, travelers can tour Hearn’s former home as well as a museum dedicated to his memory.

Kyoto:

*The Tale of Genji* by Lady Murasaki Shikibu (approx. 1004 AD)

*The Tale of Genji* has the reputation of being the first real novel known to history. Lady Murasaki (which is actually the name of a character in *Genji*—the author’s real name is unknown) started writing *The Tale of Genji* as a series of short stories that she sent to friends in other noble families around Heian-era Kyoto. Eventually Murasaki was called to service as a lady-in-waiting for the empress. According to legend, however, Lady Murasaki wrote *The Tale of Genji* in a single night, while contemplating the moon from the windows of her chambers at Ishiyama-dera temple. The temple complex is about half an hour by train from Kyoto, at the southern end of Lake Biwa. The temple displays a life-size Murasaki doll sitting behind her writing desk, and, for a fee, visitors can be dressed in Heian-era court costumes. Other *Genji* and Murasaki-related tourist attractions:

- The *Tale of Genji* Museum in Uji (20 minutes by train from Kyoto), where visitors can view exhibits about Heian court life, and use computers to superimpose their own faces onto images of Murasaki characters.
- The Rozan-ji Temple in Kyoto, which was built on the site of Murasaki’s ancestral home, after it was destroyed by fire.
- The Museum of Kyoto, which contains illustrated scrolls and painted screens depicting the adventures of Genji. Those interested in learning more about Murasaki and Heian period lifestyles are encouraged to read Liza Dalby’s *The Tale of Murasaki*. While it is historical fiction, Dalby based the book on extensive research, including Lady Murasaki’s surviving diary entries. The book also includes most of Murasaki’s own poetry.

*The Pillow Book* by Sei Shonagon (approx. 990 AD)

Sei Shonagon was also a lady-in-waiting at the imperial palace in Kyoto, although she served a different empress than Murasaki. *The Pillow Book* records Sei Shonagon’s (sometimes gossipy) reflections on court life, as well as her personal observations about a variety of topics. The current Imperial Palace was built in 1855 after the predecessors burnt down numerous times. Visitors can walk through the gardens, but are not allowed to enter the buildings.

*The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* by Mishima Yukio (1959)

This novel is based on a true incident: in 1950, a mentally imbalanced monk set the Golden Pavillion on fire, destroying it. (The present pavilion was rebuilt in 1955.) Mishima Yukio was an interesting character in his own right; most famous for his four novel series called *The Sea of Fertility*, Yukio frequently said he would die when the last of the novels was finally completed. The day after finishing the final novel in the series, Yukio committed seppuku (ritual suicide) at age 45.

Tokyo and elsewhere—Haruki Murakami (1949-present)

Murakami’s novels, while frequently surreal and fantastical, are sprinkled with mentions of real locations, mostly in Tokyo. Among them:

- Waseda University, where Murakami studied, as did the narrator of *Norwegian Wood* (1987)
- Metropolitan Expressway 3, the location of the traffic jam in the opening scene of *1Q84* (2011)
- Nakamura Café in Shinjuku: a meeting place for characters in *1Q84*
- Kinokuniya Bookstore in Shinjuku: characters in several Murakami novels will stop here to buy books.
Interestingly, the Kinokuniya Bookstore and Jingu Stadium also feature prominently in Murakami’s personal development as an author: while watching a game at Jingu in 1978, Murakami (formerly a jazz club owner) had the sudden inspiration to write his first novel; he then took a trip to Kinokuniya to buy a fountain pen and a sheaf of paper. In an article in the London *Independent*, author Susie Rushton comments: “In Murakami’s world, characters either try to escape Tokyo—leaving it for rural Hokkaido to the north, or Shikoku to the south—or are drawn to it.”

- Takamatsu, a port town in Shikoku, is the location for *Kafka on the Shore* (2002). The Shikoku specialty, udon noodles, feature prominently in the novel.
- The snowy rural areas of Hokkaido are the setting of much of *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982). Murakami’s work, therefore, reflects the tension which exists in contemporary Japan, between the extremes of rural and urban, old and new.

One final book which might be of interest to high school teachers:

*March Was Made of Yarn: Reflections on the Japanese Earthquake, Tsunami and Nuclear Meltdown*

Published in March 2012, edited by Elmer Luke and David Karashima

This is a collection of short fiction by various Japanese and Japanese American authors (writing in English); all of the writing is connected in some way to the disasters of March 2011.
Festival Geography of Japan

Hardly a day goes by in Japan without a festival occurring somewhere in the country. Festivals, called *matsuri,* include lively processions, competitions, games, and music. Some festivals celebrate the seasons, some celebrate children. Many have been around for hundreds of years. An important element of many of Japanese festivals is the procession, in which a shrine’s *kami* (Shinto deity) is carried through the town. It is the only time of the year when the kami leaves the shrine. Many festivals also feature decorated floats (*dashi*), which are pulled through the town, accompanied by drum and flute music by the people sitting on the floats. Every festival has its own characteristics. While some festivals are calm and meditative, others are energetic and noisy. Listed below is a list of some of Japan’s most famous festivals and celebrations, listed regionally from north to south.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yuki Matsuri</strong> (<strong>Sapporo Snow Festival</strong>)</td>
<td>2nd Thursday of Feb. Sapporo: Making snow and ice sculptures for the enjoyment of ice skaters has become a winter tradition in Hokkaido since 1950. Weeks before the festival, snow is hauled in from the mountains and piled in Odori Park – almost 40,000 tons. Volunteers form the snow into huge blocks and spray them with water to make frozen blocks for sculptors to carve. It is beautiful to view the translucent carvings at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nebuta Festival</strong></td>
<td>August 2-7 Aomori: Used to be part of the Tanabata festival. Features a parade of huge lanterns in the shape of Samurai warriors. The festival began as a way of waking up sleeping souls for the fall harvest coming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kanto Festival</strong></td>
<td>August 4-7 Akita: This festival has become a symbol of Akita, a leading rice growing area. Lanterns hoisted by bamboo poles 12 meters long, symbolize golden ears of rice for prayers of good harvest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Namahage</strong></td>
<td>December 31 Oga Peninsula, Akita: Men wearing ogre masks, traditional straw capes, &amp; carrying kitchen or wooden knives impersonate demons &amp; march in pairs or threes. They go door-to-door admonishing children who may be guilty of being lazy or behaving badly. They yell phrases like “Any children crying?” “Any children disobeying their parents?” The namahage oni (ogres) are received by the head of the family in formal dress, who offers sake and mocha rice cakes. Appeased by the hospitality, the oni leave the home &amp; promise the family will be blessed with good health &amp; a rich crop in the new year. (image source: wikipedia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kamakura</strong> (Snow hut) <strong>Yokote, Akita:</strong> Festival in Northern Japan honoring the God of water. Young girls and their parents dig into huge snowdrifts to form igloos. They cover the floor with tatami mats and place candles on a carved shelf. The girls wear heavy kimonos and quilts. They heat rice cakes over charcoal stoves and give neighbors and family rice cakes and sips of tea or rice wine.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mibu Ohana Taue</strong> (<strong>The Rice God Festival</strong>)</td>
<td>First Sunday in June Chiyoda: Celebrated the first Sunday in June after the rainy season ends. Chiyoda farmers believe the Rice God comes down from his mountain to bless their crops. They burn heaps of rice straw so the flames can carry their message to him. In 1578, a warlord decided to trick his enemy. He ordered his toughest soldiers to disguise themselves as dancers wearing silk robes and flower-decorated hats. When the “dancers” entered their enemy’s castle, off came the clothes that hid their armor. Swords flashed in the sun and the battle was won. To mark this victory, the warlord held this festival for rice planting farmers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soma-Nomaoi</strong> (<strong>Wild Horse Racing</strong>)</td>
<td>July 23-25 Soma City &amp; Minami-Soma City, Fukushima: Recreates a battle scene from more than 1,000 years ago. 600 mounted samurai in traditional Japanese armor, with long swords at their side and ancestral flagstaffs streaming from their backs, ride across open fields.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aoi Matsuri</strong> (<strong>Hollyhock Festival</strong>)</td>
<td>May 15 Kyoto: Large parade with over 500 people dressed in the aristocratic style of the Heian Period walk from the Imperial Palace to the Kamo Shrine. Aoi is Japanese for hollyhock, and the festival is named after the hollyhock leaves that are worn by the members of the parade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Daimonji Gozan Okuribi (Daimonji Bonfire Festival)</strong>&lt;br&gt;August 16</td>
<td>Kyoto</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gion Matsuri</strong>&lt;br&gt;July</td>
<td>Kyoto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kurama Fire Festival (Fire on the Mountain)</strong>&lt;br&gt;October 22</td>
<td>Kurama, Kyoto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peace Festival</strong>&lt;br&gt;August 6</td>
<td>Hiroshima</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Eisa</strong>&lt;br&gt;Late August at the end of the Obon festival</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shi-mi</strong>&lt;br&gt;April</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hina Matsuri (Girl’s Day or Dolls’ Festival)</strong>&lt;br&gt;March 3rd</td>
<td>All across Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hanamatsuri (Flower Festival)</strong>&lt;br&gt;April 8</td>
<td>All across Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kodomo no Hi Festival (Boy’s Day or Children’s Day or Iris Festival)  
May 5th (5th day of 5th month)  
**All across Japan:** National Holiday celebrates the healthy growth of all children. Families wish for their children to grow up to be brave and strong. In the morning, the whole family takes a special bath, *Shobu-ya*, which is supposed to wash away bad luck. If Iris leaves (*shobu*) are put in the water, the boy will become strong and brave. Cloth carp are hung on bamboo poles outside the house as a sign of strength and courage. There is a carp windsock for each son in the family. The special alcove in the Japanese home is decorated with toy weapons and famous warriors wearing traditional armor, i.e. Golden Boy, Momotaro, Peach Boy.

Nanakusa-no-sekku (Festival of 7 Herbs)  
January 7  
**All across Japan:** Japanese custom of eating seven-herb rice porridge to bring longevity and health. Since there is little green in winter, the young green herbs bring color to the table and eating them suits the spirit of the new year.

Obon Festival (Festival of Souls)  
August 13 - 16  
**All across Japan:** Honoring the spirits of their ancestors who return for a short visit to the world of the living. Many businesses close and people go on summer vacation. Employers hand out bonuses to workers. On the first night, families return to the cemetery carrying a white lantern with a candle inside to show the spirits the way home. On the last night, families will guide the spirits back to the cemetery, to the Celestial World of Darkness. If people live near a river, lake or sea, they send the spirits away on tiny boats.

O-Shogatsu (New Year Festival)  
January 1  
**All across Japan:** Biggest celebration of all, most important holiday of the year. People pay debts, clean houses, put up decorations to welcome back the Gods, buy new clothes, and buy gifts for family and friends. Everyone adds another year to age. If you want to keep away evil spirits, place bamboo and pine on each side of the entrance to your house. For a long and healthy life and a good marriage, hang rice straw ropes and fern above the door and tuck in an orange, persimmon, a paper lobster and seaweed. At midnight the temple bells ring 108 times (the number of “passions and delusions” that we must rid ourselves of).

O-Tsukimi (Moon Viewing Festival)  
October  
**All across Japan:** Enjoy the full harvest moon. Traditions include displaying decorations made from Japanese pampas grass and eating rice dumplings to celebrate the beauty of the moon.

Sakura Matsuri (Cherry Blossom Festival)  
Mostly March - May  
**All across Japan:** Everyone tries to make time for *hanami*, cherry blossom viewing. Everyone enjoys picnics under the blooming cherry trees, honoring spring and nature. The origin of *hanami* dates back over 1,000 years ago when aristocrats enjoyed looking at beautiful cherry blossoms and wrote poems.

Setsubun (Bean Throwing Ceremony)  
February 3rd  
**All across Japan:** Drive out evil spirits by joining in the bean throwing festival! They throw beans inside home and out of every window and door, to frighten away winter spirits and invite the good fortune of spring back in.

Shichi-Go-San (Seven-Five-Three)  
November 15  
**All across Japan:** Boys who are three or five and girls who are three or seven. As it is not a national holiday, it is usually celebrated on the nearest weekend. The children are dressed in a kimono, many for the first time. They visit a shrine to pray for a long healthy life. Vendors outside the shrine sell candy wrapped in a long, brightly colored bag. The candy is believed to bring good luck and a long life. (Image from Wikipedia.)

Tanabata (Star Festival)  
July 7 (7th day of 7th month)  
**All across Japan:** Celebrates the love between two celestial stars, the Weaver Princess and the Shepherd. They fell in love and were punished for neglecting their duties. They were separated by the Milky Way and were only allowed to come together once a year. People generally celebrate this day by writing wishes, sometimes in the form of poetry, on *tanzaku*, small pieces of paper, and hanging them on bamboo. The bamboo and decorations are often set afloat on a river or burned after the festival. This resembles the custom of floating paper ships and candles on rivers during Obon. Many areas have their own Tanabata customs, including fireworks.
Agricultural Geography of Japan

Topography dictates to a large extent where and how people earn their livings (image source afe.easia.columbia.edu):

Climate influences agriculture and styles of living (image source afe.easia.columbia.edu):
Climate
- Japanese islands mostly in the temperate zone
- Ocean currents warm the Pacific side of the islands and those near the Korean straits while the cold Kurile current brings nourishment coastal waters and improves fishing
- There is marked contrast between winters on the coast facing the Sea of Japan called “snow country” and clear, crisp winters on the eastern shore leaving dry winters
- Japan has abundant rainfall including about a month long rainy season in June—important for the cultivation of rice, Japan’s traditional staple food.

Main Crops
- Paddy rice-planted in April-May and harvested in Sept.-November
- Average paddy production for 2006-2010 is 10.7 million tons. About 600,000 to 700,000 tons is imported annually.
- Wheat crop-sown in Sept-November and harvested in June to August
- Average annual production is 830,000 tons with over 5 million tons imported each year
- Japan does not produce maize but imports about 16.5 million tons
- ½ of the farmland is planted in rice
- Barley, wheat and several other cereals are grown but in small quantities.
- Other crops include potatoes, sweet potatoes, soybeans, tea, tobacco
- Oranges, apples, peaches, pears and most fruits are produced in large quantities
- Silkworms is a specialty of some Japanese farmers
- Livestock industry, low but increasing due to the growing demand for meat and daily products, is mainly limited by the low amount of farmland and the need to produce crops for human consumption.

History of Agriculture in Japan
Meiji Period 1867-1912
Two lines of thought:
To promote large scale farming or
Maintain the status quo of small scale farming

Winning line of thought
Maintain the status quo of small scale farming

1868 Japanese farming was dominated by tenant farming system
- 1885 Over 60% of peasant families were driven into tenancy
- Landowners collected a high rate of rent in kind, rather than cash. As a result, they played a major role in the development of agriculture.
- By 1900 with the growth of capitalism, agricultural cooperatives and the government took over the role by providing farm subsidies, loans and education in new agricultural techniques.

Taisho Period 1912- 1930
- 1910 Imperial Agricultural Association established. This central organization for agricultural cooperatives
  1. provided assistance to individual cooperatives
  2. transmitted agricultural research
  3. facilitated the sale of farm products
- 1918 Rice Riots and 1920 economic crisis led to peasants involvement with urban labor movement
- 1922 Japan’s Farmers Union was formed for collective bargaining for cultivator rights and reduced rents

Source: Foreign Affairs Journal, July 1, 1930
Agriculture and the Japanese National Economy

“Despite her recent remarkable progress in industry and commerce, Japan is still predominantly an agricultural country. The major part of her national net production is drawn from agriculture, and more than one-half of her population is sustained by tillage of the land. Hence any change which takes place in the villages is felt keenly in all spheres of social and political activity. Those who are interested in Japan’s destiny should study not only the big cities, but also the country districts. For to know village life is to know the foundation of the nation.” –Shiroshi Nasu

History of Agriculture in Japan

Showa Period 1930-1943

- 1930’s growth of urban economy and flight of farmers to cities weakened hold of the landlords
- Interwar years saw introduction of mechanized agriculture, use of natural and chemical fertilizers and imported phosphates
- 1943 with growth of wartime economy government recognized that landlordism was impediment to increased agricultural productivity
- 1943 Central Agricultural Association established, to increase control over the rural sector and force the implementation of government farming policies.
- CAA also secured food supply to local markets and the military. Dissolved after WWII.

History of Agriculture in Japan

Post World War II

- Most farms are small, most totaling 2 ½ acres or less
- Privately owned, partly because of postwar land reforms that allowed farmers to purchase the land they worked.
- After WWII most landowners were forced to sell most or all of their holdings to farm workers at extremely low prices
- Overnight Japanese farming villages became communities of farmers, owners whose land would increase remarkably in value as real estate prices soared
- Japan still has about 4.6 million households representing 12.8% of the population farming but only about 580,000 of the farm families derive their entire incomes from farming. Large majority of farmers supplement their income by working part time in another profession.
- Most farms are small and include scattered small parcels, totaling 2.5 acres
- Almost all are privately owned.

Change from Farming as Sole Family Income Source

- Before 1945, 16% of the land was farmed and 45% of households made a living from farming.
- In 2000, 15% of the land is farmed although 12.8% of the households make some of their living from farming and less than 10% make all of their living from farming

Land Farmed in Japan

- 1887    11.8%
- 1902    13.7%
- 1912    14.4%
- 1919    15.7%
- 1929    15.4%
- 1937    15.8%           45% of labor force

Increase in land farmed resulted from intense culture, fertilization and scientific development

- 2012    12%              5% of labor force

Increase in productivity by improved irrigation, improved seed varieties, fertilizers and modern machinery
Effects of 11 March 2011 Earthquake
1. Subsequent nuclear crisis with significant radioactivity has affected food, agriculture, livestock and fisheries.
2. Government continues to carry out damage assessment but there are no concrete estimates on the impact of this natural disaster for agricultural production and food trade.
3. Many countries and international organizations are concerned about the safety of food produced in Japan.

Figure 1. Map of Affected Areas, Japan (Source: fopnews.wordpress.com/2011/09/16/evacuation-zones-elusive-borders-in-motion/)

Agriculture in Japan 2012
- Agriculture accounts for 4% of Japan’s GNP
- 5% of the population engaged in agriculture
- About 12% of land is farmed
- Japanese farmers produce about 70% of the food needed for nation’s people and Japan imports the rest

Source: AP May 28, 2012
“Japan Farmers Plant, Pray for Radiation-Free Rice”
- Rice planting has been banned in the most contaminated areas, but the government allowed it at some farms in areas that produces contaminated rice last year.
• After the October harvest, the rice will be run through special machines that can detect the tiniest speck of radiation.
• The Japanese government set up a system to buy and destroy last year’s crop but there are no assurances that the government will do that again this year.
• The region that suffered the most is well known for paddy cultivation, dairy and other livestock production.

Problems Separate from 2011 Tsunami
• Agricultural sector highly subsidized and protected
• Crop yields among the highest in the world
• Before tsunami, Japan was self-sufficient in rice
• Imported 50% of its requirements of grain and other fodder crops
• 5% of labor force involved in agriculture

Japanese Agricultural Outlook 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Productivity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Japan is a net food importer. Imports of agricultural and fisheries products totaled $59.3 billion in 2010.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Nearly half of the value of Japan’s food imports consisted of fish and meat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Produce almost all the eggs, potatoes, rice and fresh vegetables eaten in Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Produce half of the fruit and meat needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Produce tiny share of animal fees, beans and wheat Japan needs so they must import it</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Food and Agricultural Problems for Japan in the 21st Century
• Japan had declined in food self-sufficiency from 79% in 1960’s to 40% in 2000
• Agricultural output as a proportion of the GNP was 9% in 1960, 1% in 2006

Why is so much food imported?

**CAUSE**
- Government policies have kept crop prices high, especially for rice.

**RESULT**
- Policies ensure that Japan has adequate supply of food
- Protect rural communities from sudden loss of income

**SOLUTION**
- Reduce government subsidies so that food becomes less expensive
- Foreign countries can sell rice and other farm products to Japan
• Imports of agricultural products stem from
  (1) limitations of available land and
  (2) Japan cannot achieve even its limited agricultural potential because of failed policies.
• Even with large scale mechanization, the scale of agricultural productivity must increase
• Land is being used for development rather than agriculture
• Japan is susceptible to natural disasters, especially those caused by heavy rainfall

Trade Agreement
Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)
• How will this affect agriculture in Japan?
• Many feel that agriculture in Japan is already collapsing
• One opinion is “the larger the better” referring to farm size, prevalent attitude that large size is the most cost competitive and profitable size
Another opinion is that Japan has a superabundance of labor (3-5 million unemployed) and a superabundance of capital. "We need to increase productivity on our scarce land using scarce energy rather than to increase productivity of our superabundant labor and capital."

Should Japan enter into the TPP?
- It will essentially be a bilateral agreement with the US since US GDP is 88% of current TPP members (USA, Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Chile, and Peru).
- With the US with 88% GDP, US will dictate terms and conditions which may harm Japan’s growing trade with China, their primary trading partner.

What does Japan need to solve its agricultural productivity problems?
- Small scale labor intensive, organic farming that minimizes damage to and maximizes productivity of our soil and water.

**Recommendation by a Japanese Agriculture Minister**
- Japanese government should hire all of the 3 to 5 million unemployed and put them to work farming organically.
- Hiring them at minimum wage would cost less than half of the current consumption tax which is used for the welfare of Japanese citizens.

Agricultural Outlook for the Future
- Need to change government policy on size of farms.
- Need to change government policy on supporting farmers.
- Need to improve productivity of land using modern agricultural products and procedures such as insecticides.
- Need to change attitudes toward different food products.
Religious Geography

For many in the West, especially those familiar with the Abrahamic faiths, the concept of religion is defined by a particular set of characteristics. Among a code of ethics and orthodox canon of literature, religions in the West typically promote the concept of doctrinal orthodoxy and its link to a defined soteriology. However, a study of the religions and religious geography of Japan requires us to think differently. What is the concept of religion in the Japanese context? What is syncretism, and why has it been central to Japan’s practice of religion? How did various religions emerge in Japan? What is the connection between Japanese religion and geography?¹

Syncretism is the combining of different (often contradictory) beliefs, often while melding practices of various schools of thought. For example, Buddhism absorbed Shinto for a time when kami were seen as emanations of bodhisattvas and lesser divine beings.

In recent Japanese history, Shinto and Buddhism were each dominant during various periods. For example, the Tokugawa favored Buddhism in order to offset the authority of the emperor, revered as a living god in the religion of Shinto (31).² During the Meiji Restoration, Shinto became the official religion and, with the Yasukuni Shrine as its main structure, once again came to represent the legitimacy of the emperor (45). After the war, General MacArthur disestablished Shinto and forced Emperor Hirohito to renounce his divinity (93).

Today Shinto and Buddhism coexist. This syncretism is best demonstrated in the events of the Japanese life cycle. The Japanese embrace Shinto at weddings and Buddhism at funerals. Shinto is less adaptable to deal with funerals since death is considered an impurity in the Shinto tradition. The Japanese wish to avoid the contamination of death. For this reason, Buddhism introduced the practice of cremation to Japan from India (204).³ In short, the Japanese have successfully learned to live with diverse religious traditions.

Shinto would not be considered a religion in the western sense. Shinto has no founder, no code of ethics, and no orthodox canon of literature.⁴ Rather, it is a way of honoring spirits, the kami. In fact, the term “Shinto” is a late 19th century term used to describe this set of beliefs, and many scholars prefer to call this religion “the way of the kami.” The goal of Shinto is kannagara, the same word used to describe the movements of celestial bodies, which means in a religious sense to bring life into harmony with nature, which is defined by the kami (Fischer 212). In fact, everything is kami. Kami are also always worshipped in the basic aspects of life, e.g., mountain cults of fertility, Inari-no-o-kami is always worshipped for the sake of a good harvest, and kami still play an important part in large festivals.

Geography has played a significant role in the evolution of Shinto. Central to this religion is the concept of living in harmony with the environment. For example, O-kuni-nushi, the primary earth kami, is considered to be the land itself. Before the start of a construction project, a Shinto priest conducts a ceremony to bless the land and ask for the support of O-kuni-nushi in the endeavor. Geography is also a medium for approaching the sacred. For example, Japanese sacred spaces are often demarcated by streams with bridges or by walls or tall gates called torii. Shinto practitioners engage in purification rituals by water, waterfalls, or the sea, called misogi. A Shito priest can also purify by oharai, which involves waving a piece of wood from a sacred tree to which are attached white streamers (Fischer 214). In fact, geography is the source of all salient aspects of this religion.

Religious geography can also be studied by considering its sacred sites:

- Ise Grand Shrine (Honshu): home of the spirits of past emperors, most venerated in Japan.
- Izumo-Taisha Shrine (Honshu): dedicated to Okununushi-no-Mikoto, deity of agriculture, medicine, and marriage. This shrine is very popular for Japanese wedding ceremonies.

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⁴ Three documents show that Shinto is intertwined with both the land and with the people and their legacy: Manyoshu (a collection of 1,000 poems), the Kojiki and Nihon-shiki (tell of the mythical beginnings of Japan).
• Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gū (Kamakura): the geographic and cultural center of Kamakura
• Meiji Shrine (Tokyo): Imperial Shrine. Emperor Meiji and his wife are enshrined here.
• Yasukuni Shrine (Tokyo): 2.5 million war dead since the Meiji Restoration are enshrined here. Since some war criminals are buried here, visits by government ministers are very controversial
• Inari shrines: surrounded by stone foxes called kitsune, dedicated to an enormously popular rice and cereal kami that is associated with many other daily functions.
• Tenjin shrines: the kami of scholarship. Students usually go and ask for his help during exam times. Dedicated to Heian period court official Sugawara Michizane
• Senja Mairi: Shinto pilgrimage to one thousand shrines, based on the notion that this won more merit than visiting the same shrine many time. Arose in the late-medieval period.

Buddhism went through many evolutions as it entered Japan from Central Asia. In The Japanese Mind Davies and Ikeno write, “When Buddhism was introduced into Japan, it flourished under the protection of the nation’s rulers in the Nara period, and today it is one of the nation’s most widely followed religions” (Davies 203). Buddhism, originating in India, came to China around 50 CE where it absorbed elements of Taoism. Ch’an Buddhism, or "meditation Buddhism" arose in China. According to myth, the monk Bodhidharma spent nine years facing a wall in silent meditation. This practice of zazen, sitting in meditation while facing a wall, is central to the practice of Zen, which was transmitted to Japan.

Zen practice aims to facilitate the awareness of one's Buddha-nature. What is the nature of one's own mind beyond the distractions, judgments, and concepts that are produced in the mind (an interesting question for both Zen Buddhists and contemporary neuroscientists)? While zazen is primarily practiced in the Soto-sect, the Rinzai-sect often meditate on a koan, a question that forces the mind to move beyond the mind, beyond rationality, philosophy, concepts, judgments, etc. Famous koans include: "what is the sound of one hand clapping?" and "what did your face look like before your ancestors were born?" The ultimate goal of Zen Buddhism is satori, or enlightenment.5

As Zen evolved in Japan, it took on new forms and schools of thought. The most widespread school of Buddhism in East Asia is Pure Land Buddhism. Pure Land centers on prayer to the Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Boundless Light. The Amida Buddha also originates in India, a mythical prince Amitabha prepared a pure land for followers after he attained enlightenment. Devotees need only to chant “Namo Amida Butsu,” which means "total reliance upon the compassion of Amida Buddha."

Geography is also on display in Buddhist art. While the Indian concept of Pure Land was abstract, the Japanese combined the concept with their worship of nature, especially mountains. The Japanese Buddhists represented the Amida Buddha in works of art positioned on cloud surrounding the sacred mountains.

While earlier forms of Buddhism, like Tendai, were rather esoteric and aristocratic cults that claimed only the powerful could become enlightened, Zen was more accessible to the masses. Nichiren was a 13th century Japanese fisherman’s son, who set out to reform Buddhism in Japan. Nichiren was rather pessimistic about the capacity for lay people to achieve enlightenment in this life. He developed the mantra “Namo Myoho Renge Kyo,” which means “Cosmic Law of Cause and Effect through Sound.” He thought that by setting one’s mind on this mantra, one increased the chance of a great rebirth. He also believed that Buddhism should transform both oneself as well as society. The Buddhists movements that grew out of Nichiren’s teaching advocate for human rights and social justice. Nichidatsu Fujii, a follower of Nichiren, even influenced the philosophy of Gandhi.

Famous Buddhist temples include:
• Eihe-ji (Honshu): Final temple of Japanese Soto founder Dogen and headquarters of Soto school
• Myoshin-ji (Kyoto): A renowned Rinzai-sect monastery. Many Zen ink paintings are on display.
• Enryaku-ji (Kyoto): The Tendai monastery at which Dogen first studied. It is an important site because many renowned Zen Masters and Buddhist monks trained here.

5 The Japanese monk Dogen Kigen taught that zazen itself was enlightenment. He was not saying that we are fully awakened Buddhas but that the practice is an expression of our original nature when freed from illusive distractions.
• Daitoku-ji (Kyoto): This temple can lay claim to be the home of Sen no Rikyu (1522-91), who was the founder of the Japanese tea ceremony.
• Ryōan-ji (Kyoto), a Rinzai-sect temple featuring a dry, rock garden.
• Engaku-ji (Kamakura): head temple of the Five Mountain System, which was a system of state sponsored monasteries often built in mountains. This Indian practice was adopted by Song Dynasty China (1127–1279) and the Kamakura period Japan (1185-1333).
• Kōtoku-in (Kamakura): a Pure Land temple. The Daibutsu of Kamakura, an outdoor statue of Amida, is the second largest bronze Buddha statue in Japan.
• Tōdai-ji (Nara): The Great Buddha Hall is home to the world's largest bronze statue of the Buddha.
**Mingei: Folk Crafts of Japan**

- Includes ceramics, textiles, lacquer, wood and stone sculpture, painting, furniture, toys

**Japanese aesthetics**

- Range from gaudy and ostentatious (*hade*) to the simple and understated (*shibui*)
- *Wabi* – rustic simplicity, freshness, quietness, how things are in nature
- *Sabi* – a beauty that comes with age, impermanence evident in patina and wear
- *Kawaii* – cute factor (think Hello Kitty)
- *Ma* – empty space that is set apart or delineated, the sun shining through a gate

**Japanese Iconography – Influences from India, China, Korea, Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto**
- Jizo, Daruma, Tenjin, Ebisu, and Daikoku are some of the most common figures

**Yanagi Soetsu (1889-1961)**

- Born in Tokyo during Meiji restoration – a time of great westernization
  - From a distinguished upper-class family, Japanese elite trying to find cultural identity
- As a youth, studied Western Philosophy
  - Anti-rationalism of Henri Bergson and William James
  - Mysticism of Christianity, Sufism, Zen, Taoism, Hinduism
- Began to apply his Western knowledge to Eastern art
  - Studied Korean art, thought that it had a ‘beauty of sadness’ that reflected history
  - This interpretation was vigorously contested by the Koreans as ‘colonial aesthetics’
  - Developed interest in crafts of Okinawa and of the Ainu in Hokkaido
- Most influential period of Yanagi –
  - 1925 – coined the term *mingei*: abbreviation of *Minshuteki Kogei* (crafts of the people)
  - 1927 – Wrote *Kogei no Michi* (The Way of Crafts) – the bible of Mingei theory
  - 1929 – lectured in Harvard for a year about Japanese art
  - 1936 – established the Japan Folk-Crafts Museum in Tokyo
- Tried to convert his Mingei theory to a Buddhist framework
- Yanagi’s Four Categories of crafts
  - Folkcrafts – hand-made, unsigned, for the people, by the people, large quantities. “*Getemono* clearly reveal the identity of our race with their beauty rising from nature and the blood of our homeland, not following foreign technique or imitating foreign countries. Probably these works show the most remarkable originality of Japan.”
  - Also include Artist Crafts, Industrial Crafts, and Aristocratic Crafts
  - Yanagi’s theory focuses on ‘Criterion of Beauty’, elevation of status of folkcrafts.
    - Beauty of handicrafts, intimacy, functionality, health, naturalness, simplicity, tradition, sincerity, selflessness, inexpensiveness, plurality, irregularity
### Resources and Materials

Also see *Japanese Folk Art: a Triumph of Simplicity*, by the Japan Society, New York, and c. 1993.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Palace Doll – boy wearing hat of a sambaso dancer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edo Period, 1800s, made in Kyoto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given by the Imperial court to feudal lords (daimyo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daimyo spent half their time in Tokyo, families lived there year round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolls were made for children of daimyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolls were polished to a white, lustrous skin, clothed in silk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambaso dance is used as a prelude to Noh theater</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kettle Hook Hanger (<em>jizai gake</em>)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850s-1870s, Zelkova wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most kettle hooks named for Ebisu (god of Daily Food, or Daikoku (god of Wealth))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebisu hooks – made from naturally forking tree branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daikoku (like this one) cut from a large piece of wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealthy farmers or merchants competed to have the nicest hanger in the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zelkova wood was the most expensive wood used for hangers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sake Keg with ‘Horns’ (<em>tsuno-daru</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The horns serve no purpose besides looks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keg coated with maroon-colored lacquer on lower half, red on the upper half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a man proposed to a woman in old times, they would send a friend to make it:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Would bring gifts like silk dresses, fish, sake in a keg like this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the family accepted the gifts, then the marriage would go forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today, more and more marriages are made from ‘love’, not arranged by families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival Mask (<em>konoha-tengu</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Made of lacquer in Edo period, 1800s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tengu</em> – playful demons that live in Japan’s remote mountains and forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masks like this are worn by dancers at shrines throughout Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals were meant to entertain, insure good crops, eat and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music was by 3 drummers and a flutist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historical Geography of Japan: Immigration & Emigration

by Benayshe-Ba-Equay Titus ベネシー・タイタス
Mariner High School, Everett, Washington

Essential questions:
When did foreigners first immigrate to Japan, where did they come from, and why?
What historical factors have influenced Japanese people to emigrate and where did they relocate?
What is Japan’s immigration policy and how might it change?
What kind of discrimination do minorities or foreigners that immigrate to Japan face?
What are terms used by Japanese to describe non-Japanese people, immigrants, and emigrants?
Are there negative/positive connotations?

Early Foreign Contact with Japan
Japan’s insular geography has restricted the movement of people to, from, and within the country. Its largest islands are located 120 miles off the Asian mainland. The first foreigners to Japan were from China and Korea. Around 500-600 AD, Prince Shotoku welcomed scholars from China and Korea to Japan. They brought writing, technology, philosophy, and the Buddhist religion.

In 1543, the Portuguese arrived and were the first Europeans to come to Japan. They came to open new trade routes, and also aboard, were Jesuit missionaries. This was a period of civil war in Japan. Amidst violence and social unrest, many Jesuits stayed in Japan and there were over 100,000 converts to Christianity. However, in 1612 Christianity was banned. The Tokugawa shogunate was suspicious that these traders and missionaries were the beginnings of a European conquest.

Isolation/Sakoku
In 1635, the Japanese government attempted to eliminate Western contact. This period of isolationism was called Sakoku. Between 1633 and 1639 laws were passed forbidding the Japanese to travel abroad or to build oceangoing ships. Only the Chinese and the Dutch were allowed to trade with Japan. In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry came to Japan with steam-powered ships and forced them to open up trade. This exchange made the Japanese government realize the importance of modernization and they began to increase contact with the rest of the world after 250 years of being almost completely isolated.

First Waves of Emigration
In 1867, Emperor Meiji began to seek out European and American experts to help Japan modernize and Japanese overseas to become students in universities. Japan’s rush to industrialize caused economic problems, civil disorder, and a surplus of farm workers. There was increased unemployment and poverty for these rural laborers, and Hawaii, Brazil, and Peru had booming plantation industries that needed workers.

Japanese Emigration to Hawaii
Western contact led to the arrival of Japanese immigrants in Hawaii in 1868, but the Japanese government did not officially approve and contract workers until 1884. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 created a void for needed sugar plantation workers. Most Japanese came from southern Japan from the areas of Hiroshima, Yamaguchi and Kumamoto, which were areas that had recent crop failures at that time. The promise of higher wages created an influx of Japanese workers that increased steadily up until 1907. The conditions on Hawaiian sugar plantations were similar to those of African-American slaves, but almost all of the original immigrants stayed to work for the duration of their contracts. As America industrialized, Japanese moved to mainland America. However, in 1924, the Federal Immigration Act prohibited all immigration from Japan and made all immigrants ineligible for US citizenship. Japanese were afraid to leave America for fear they could not return.
Colonization Society

In 1893, politicians and other leaders in Japan founded the Colonization Society that promoted creating small versions of Japan in foreign countries. They believed that this could create a new kind of nationalism where Japanese would focus on western expansionism. The society promoted overseas opportunities that would keep the population from focusing on the internal problems going on during the Meiji Restoration period. In 1897, the society unsuccessfully created an agricultural colony in Mexico. This project influenced Japanese immigration in Latin America.

Japanese in Latin America

The first Japanese to arrive Latin America was in 1899 due to unemployment in Japan. There were opportunities for work on cotton plantations in Peru and coffee plantations in Brazil. After slaves were liberated in 1888, Peru and Brazil began to recruit contracted workers and advertised opportunities to make high wages. Similar to Japanese workers in Hawaii, they soon encountered abuse. Many Japanese migrated to urban areas and established communities and eventually managed successful businesses. Overcoming discrimination and poverty as a Japanese immigrant in Peru, Alberto Fujimori became the president of Peru in 1990. With a severe recession occurring after his presidency, 50,000 Japanese-Peruvians relocated to Japan seeking work.

Chinese and Koreans in Japan

Chinese migrants came to Japan as early as 219 BC and came as traders or merchants to escape political, social, and economic issues. Chinese workers began forming their own communities in Japan’s major port cities. After WWII, the Japanese government helped Chinese immigrants who were Japanese war orphans migrate to Japan with their Chinese families.

Most Koreans came to Japan during the colonization period in 1910 as a result of Korean landowners and workers having their production and land confiscated by the Japanese. Other Koreans emigrated to escape the Jeju Massacre in 1948.

During WWII, many Chinese and Koreans were forced to come to Japan for work. These laborers freed up Japanese to help fight in the war. Afterwards, it was difficult for these immigrants to leave for various reasons. Koreans and Chinese were still considered foreigners in 1952 after the end of the US occupation.

Current Immigration Policy in Japan

Japan is highly restrictive in their immigration policies and has one of the lowest foreign-born populations. Japan also has a guarded naturalization process and work study and study permit policy. Citizenship is based on nationality of the parent rather than on place of birth. In 2000, Japan had practically zero net immigration. The largest immigrant groups are from China/Taiwan, South Korea/North Korea, Brazil, and the Philippines.

In the 1980’s and 1990’s, immigration laws were relaxed to make it easier for foreigners to live and work in Japan because of labor deficits. Japan also began recruiting the over two million Japanese living overseas, especially in Latin America, to return to Japan. But with unemployment on the rise starting in 2009, jobless foreigners of Japanese descent were paid to return to their country of origin. It is difficult to say whether or not they will be allowed back when the economy improves. These changing policies are impacting the lives of foreign workers, who are generally perceived as outsiders even when they have become permanent residents of Japan or are of Japanese descent.
Linguistic Geography

Some Commonly Asked Questions on the Linguistic Geography of Japan

1. For a country small in land area, Japan has many dialects. Why?
Nearly 70% of Japan’s landscape is mountainous. Before the advent of modern transportation and communication, residents of each area had little contact with people even a few miles away. Over time many regions developed their own local variety of a spoken language.

2. What is the difference between Osaka-ben and Kansai-ben?
Native Japanese often use the term “Osaka-ben” to describe the dialect in the Kansai area because Osaka is the largest city in this region.

3. What about the dialects of Kobe and Nara?
The dialects of Kobe and Nara are considered sub-dialects of Kansai-ben. However, because of differences in history and living styles Kobe and Nara have some of their own language variations.

4. Since Kyoto was the capital city for most of Japan’s history why is Tokyo-ben considered the “standard language” and not Kyoto?
It is said that before the Edo period and the establishment of Tokyo as the center of government, the “standard” language of Japan was that of Kyoto. With the creation of a national education system, along with other modern ways of communication and transportation, the national language of the new capital city of Tokyo was enforced across the country.

5. Who uses the local dialect more – the young or old generations?
The answer to this question most likely depends upon the region. However, within the Kansai area an individual person’s speech may be different based on personality, age, sex, or simply the context of the conversation. Outside of the large urban centers where the older residents seldom leave their village, is usually where the true local dialect can be found.

6. Does Okinawa have its own language and/ or dialect?
Japanese is not the native language of Okinawa (see map). During WWII the Japanese government forced the Okinawan people to abandon their language and speak only in Japanese. Even today in schools the language of instruction is standard Japanese. Recently there has been a desire for people to “get back to their roots” and be open about the unique culture and language of the Ryukyu Islands. In Okinawan, the spoken language is called “Uchinaguchi” and the dialect is referred to as “shuri”. The most obvious similarities to mainland spoken Japanese is the vowel change from e to i and o to u. For example, ame (rain) is pronounced ami in Shuri dialect. The word kumo (cloud) is kumu. Because of the influence of mainland Japan, the younger generations are unfamiliar with the Okinawan language. It is said that there are very few locals who can communicate fluently in the language.

7. How can I learn local dialects?
Of course the best way to know more about dialects is to speak with the locals!
Kansai: Often referred to as "Osaka-ben" (ben = dialect) because it includes Osaka. Considered to be rude, noisy, assertive, and expressive by Tokyoites. Through television comedians, it became more popular and it continues to be associated in this way – making it the polar opposite of Tokyo speech.

Hiroshima: Closely related to Kansai dialect with its own local words and phrases.

Kyoto: One of the Kansai dialects but described as softer, melodic, and feminine.

Okinawa: It is said to have originated from the Ryukyuan language rather than from mainland Japanese. Referred to as the "Shuri dialect," there are tones similar to Chinese. Although considered an independent language because of its uniqueness there are a few similarities to the Japanese spoken language.

Tokyo: What is considered "standard" Japanese; used in the media especially NHK (Japan's National Broadcasting Service).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kansai</th>
<th>Tokyo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very</td>
<td>mettcha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thank you</td>
<td>ookii ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t understand</td>
<td>wakararen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interesting / fun</td>
<td>omoroi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it’s hot</td>
<td>atsuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that’s wrong</td>
<td>chau chau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tokyo-ben and Kansai-ben are the 2 largest spoken dialects in Japan. There is an ongoing battle with the locals on which is considered the best. The differences are not as easy as soda and pop. There are changes and differences in sound (accent), grammar, and vocabulary.
Rice Geography of Japan

The Japanese language itself emphasizes how integral a part of Japanese culture rice is: the Japanese words for “rice” and “meal” are the same (gohan), and the word appears again in the terms for “breakfast” (asagohan), “lunch” (hirugohan) and “dinner” (bangohan). The very act of eating is synonymous with rice! Japanese are reported to consume approximately 50 pounds of rice per year, while Americans consume half that amount.

For centuries, rice has had cultural as well as gastronomic significance in Japan. It has been the longtime duty of the emperor to cultivate and tend to a rice crop. Historically, the amount of rice held by a daimyo was indicative of his wealth, and samurai were financially compensated for their duties with grains of rice. One might even say that rice trade in Japan was a precursor to the Tokyo stock exchange! In modern times, festivals in conjunction with the rice harvest are still celebrated annually.

Today, Niigata Prefecture is said to be the “rice capital of Japan.” Niigata produces the largest rice harvest for a region of its size as well as the highest quality products (including rice wine, sake).

**Koshihikari rice, grown in the city of Uonuma, Niigata, is widely regarded as the best Japanese rice.** It was created in 1956 from a combination of two other kinds of rice. It is grown in other regions of Japan as well as other parts of the world (namely California and Australia); however, primarily due to the ideal growing conditions, the rice form Uonuma is considered to be of the highest quality. Koshihikari rice grown in other locations will inevitably produce rice of different color, texture and taste from that from Uonuma. As a result, demand Uonuma koshihikari rice is high and purchasers are willing to pay a higher (as much as 60%) premium for this best quality rice. It is also said to give the best appearance.

Uonuma Koshihikari’s elite status remains unchanged despite Uonuma’s close proximity to Fukushima. A mountain range divides the regions, which are also located on separate seismic plates, thus ensuring that Uonuma’s the rice crop was virtually unaffected by the March 2011 disaster.

**Akita komachi** rice is another popular variety, was developed in the mid-1980s by blending Koshihikari with another variety. It was intended to be produced exclusively in the Akita prefecture, but is now grown in various others while retaining the Akita name. It is said to be similar in taste, although different in appearance, to Koshihikari.

**Sasanishiki** rice, from Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, was created in 1963 as a hybrid of Hatsunishiki and Sasashigure rice. It is a short grain, broken, soft rice that is ideal for sushi and onigiri; restaurants may advertise use of Sasanishiki rice in their menus.

Other notable Japanese rice varieties include Akebono, Asahi, Domannaka, Haenuki, Hanaechizen, Hinohikari*, Hitomebore*, Hoshinoyume, Kinuhikari, and Nihonbare. Starred items are additional varieties derived from Koshihikari. Note from the picture below that many of the elite rice varieties come from or near the Tohoku region, indicating that the climate/topography of that region may indeed provide prime rice growing conditions.
Koshihikari rice is very white and almost translucent.

Akita komachi rice is more opaque and creamy in color.

Attractive packaging for Akita komachi rice

Some elite Japanese rice by region

- Akita komachi
- Sasanishiki
- Koshihikari
Sports Geography

Brief Dictionary of Japanese Sports*

Sports in Japan are respected and encouraged in all age groups and abilities from community teams to professional teams. An example of Japan’s love for sports is represented in Health-Sports Day or Sports Day, a national holiday held annually on the second Monday in October. The holiday commemorates the opening of the 1964 Summer Olympics held in Tokyo. Schools and communities throughout Japan celebrate the holiday by hosting mini Olympics competitions from races to tug-o-wars. All are encouraged to participate and support the holiday either as spectators, athletes, organizers, entertainers, and volunteers.

Japan has a rich extent of traditional sports specific to the culture. In addition, many Western sports have been adapted and gained popularity in the Japanese culture such as baseball, basketball, and football (soccer). Sports in Japan are highly encouraged because they provide teamwork, goal setting, social skills, and physical fitness.

Traditional Japanese Sports

- **Aikido**: is a Japanese martial arts developed by Morihei Ueshiba. Blending with the motion of the attacker and redirecting the force of the attack rather than opposing it head-on performs aikido.
- **Bo-Taoshi**: two teams of 150 members battle to gain control of the pole, which will allow the team to capture the flag at the other end. Victory is reached when one team is able to lower the pole of the opposing team.
- **Ekiden**: long-distance relay running race, typically on roads. Very important and popular races, which groups, schools, universities, and cities compete for the title.
- **Takagari/Falconry**: is Japanese falconry, a sport of the noble class, and a symbol of their nobility, their status, and their warrior spirit.
- **Hunting**
- **Iaido**: Japanese martial arts in which the smooth controlled movements of drawing the sword from its scabbard, striking or cutting an opponent.
- **Kyudo**: Japanese archery style, which includes ceremonial and combat shooting.
- **Judo**: martial arts in which grappling and subduing of the opponent is the key aspect of combat.
- **Jujutsu**: martial art, which places emphasis on throwing, immobilizing, and pinning, joint locking, chocking and strangling techniques.
- **Karate**: martial arts developed in the Ryukyu Islands. The focus is striking art using punching, kicking, knee, and elbow strikes and open-handed techniques.
- **Kemari**: The object of Kemari is to keep the ball in the air with all players cooperating. Players may use their head, feet, knees, and back to keep the ball in the air. Kemari dates from A.D.644.
- **Kendo**: (The Way of the Sword); sword fighting based on traditional swordsmanship originating from the samurai class.
- **Kenjutsu**: Sword techniques used in combat.
- **Kite Flying**: square or rectangular in shape with a colorful design of a samurai warrior or kabuki character emblazoned on the front. Japanese kites are traditionally flown in spring and at special kite-flying festivals. Japanese kites were first flown for religious purposes and symbolize good luck, fertility, and prosperity. Kites were thought to scare away evil spirits. Sagami Giant Kite Festival is held annually in May in Sagamihara City, Kanagawa Prefecture.
- **Ping-pong**
- **Nandudo**: a form of karate intended as a holistic method of self-defense and training for health and combat purposes.
- **Shurikenjutsu**: martial arts of throwing a shuriken, which are small, hand-held weapons (straight metal spikes, throwing stars) for combat.
- **Sumo**: is a competitive full-contact sport where a wrestler (rikishi) attempts to force another wrestler out of a circular ring (dohyō) or to touch the ground with anything other than the soles of the feet.
- **Yabusame**: is a type of mounted archery in traditional Japanese archery. An archer on a running horse shoots three special “turnip-headed arrows successively at three wooded targets.
Modern Sports

- **Baseball**: introduce to Japan by Horace Wilson in 1872. Baseball is very popular game played in all age groups, schools, and professional teams. Japan has two major baseball leagues the Central League and Pacific League.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central League</th>
<th>Pacific League</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yokohama Bay Stars</td>
<td>Orix Buffaloes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiroshima Toyo Carp</td>
<td>Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chunichi Dragons</td>
<td>Kokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yomiuri Giants</td>
<td>Fukuoka Softball Hawks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yakult Giants</td>
<td>Seibu Lions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanshin Tigers</td>
<td>Chiba Lotte Marines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Boxing**
- **Figure Skating**
- **Football** (soccer): Japan's national team is a member of the FIFA and AFC associations, which includes both a male and female teams. In 2002, Japan and Korea co-hosted the World Cup games.
- **Football** (American style)
- **Golf**
- **Handball**: Japan is currently ranked 4\textsuperscript{th} Asian Championship
- **Horse Racing**
- **Ice Hockey**
- **Keirin**: a track cycling event in which racing cyclists sprint to victory.

**Motorsports**

- **Auto racing**
  - **Sport car racing**: Major competitions include Super GT and Japan Le Mans Challenge
  - **Formula racing** (Formula Nippon)
  - **Drifting**: driving technique first documented in the 1930s by Grand Prix drivers. In the 1970s All Japan Touring Car Championships races popularized the technique. The first drifting competition took place in 1988 as D1 Grand Prix.

- **Motorcycle sports**
  - **Auto Race**: Japanese version of motorcycle speedway but combines gambling and it is held on an asphalt course.
  - **Superbike Racing**: motorcycle racing very popular with manufactures, which helps promote and sell their products.
  - **Endurance Racing**: the famous Suzuka 8 Hours in which two motorcycle riders run an alternating race for eight hours to win the race.

- **Boat Racing**
  - **Kyotei**: hydroplane racing event taking place in man-made lakes where six boats race three laps around the course. Kyotei uses the *flying start* (Warm-up, signal, position, cross line within one second after the clock reaches zero) system to begin each race.

- **Rugby**: relatively new to Japan, many are beginning to adopt the sport. In 2019, Japan will host the Rugby World Cup, which will result in greater exposure of the game.