

The JTW Trip to Dazaifu

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I. History of Kyushu

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Outline

- Mythology
- Jomon (10000BC-300BC)
- Yayoi (300BC-300AD)
- Kofun (300-592)
- Asuka (592-710)
- Nara (710-794)
- Heian (794-1185): Here is Sugawara no Michizane.

Japanese Mythology

- According to the Japanese Myth, *Ninigi*, god of Rice and Plenty, was sent by *Amaterasu*, ruler of the Plain of Heaven, to the earth to govern Japan.
- Japanese imperial family is believed to be the descendants of Ninigi.
- Takachiho-no-mine at Miyazaki prefecture is the place where Ninigi marked his first step.

高千穂峰 (Takachiho-no-mine)



Jomon Period (10000BC-300BC)

- People of Japan followed a hunting and gathering way of life.
- The period is distinguished from the Paleolithic Period by the presence of the *Jomon Pottery*.
- The introduction of rice farming to Kyushu and its rapid spread brought an end to the Jomon life style.



Yayoi Period (300BC-300AD)

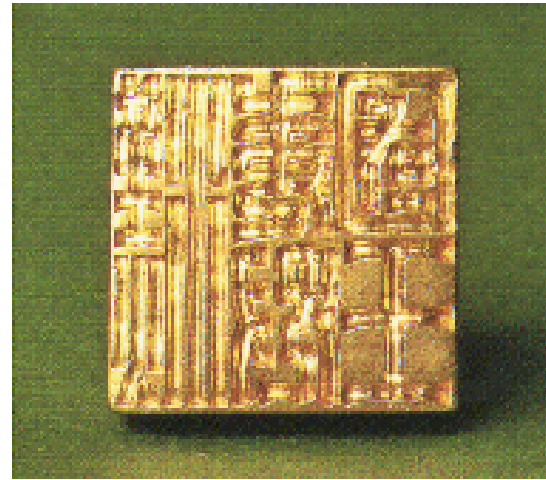
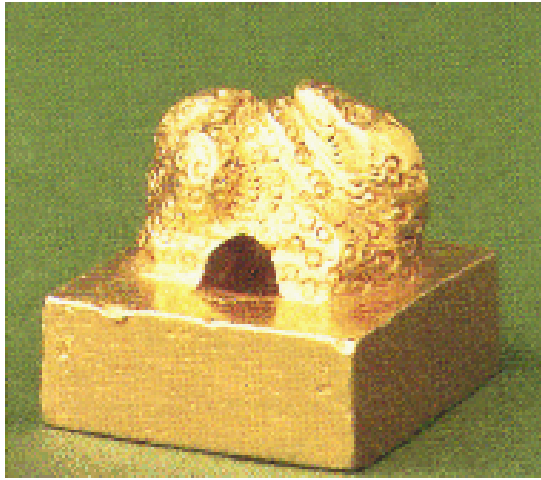
- Yayoi period was considered to be peaceful agricultural society.
- But the period is increasingly seen as one of warfare, social stratification, and political conflicts.
- People used *Yayoi pottery* with smooth shapes, and bronze mirrors, bells, and weapons.



International Relations

- A gold seal of the “King of the state of Na of Wa of Han” was discovered in 1784 on Shikanoshima in Fukuoka Prefecture.
- The gold seal is believed to be presented in AD57, from the emperor of Later Han, a Chinese dynasty, to a “King of a small northern Kyushu country”.

Gold Seal at Shikanoshima



Yamatai-koku

- It is known from Chinese chronicles that Japan housed many small political units called *kuni*.
- Among kuni, *Yamatai-koku*, was described in detail by the Chinese chronicles.
- Yamatai was ruled by Queen *Himiko*.
- There is a dispute on where Yamatai-koku was located: Kyushu or Kansai?



doutaku

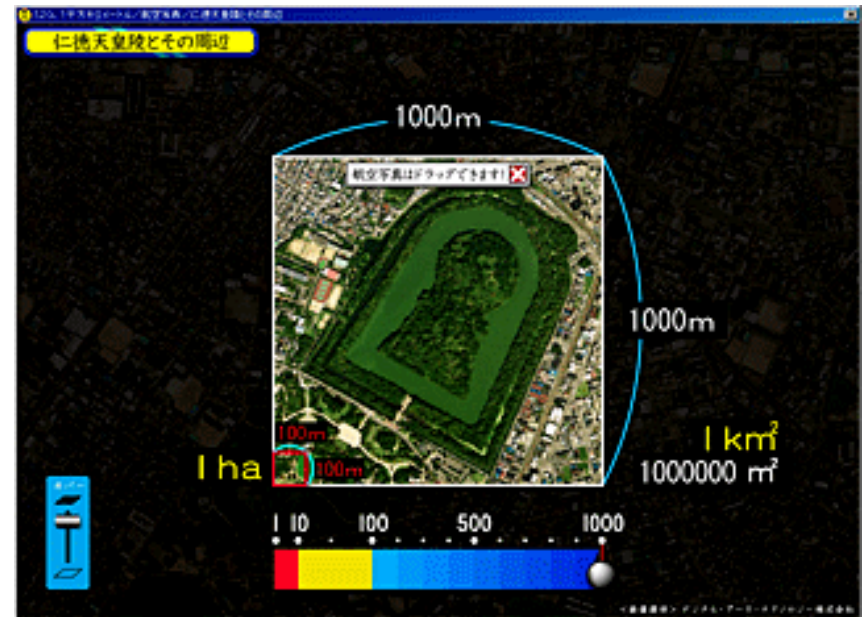


haniwa

Kofun Period (300-600)

- The first state in Japan, *Yamato*, emerged in Kansai, and established diplomatic relations with Korea and China.
- Kyushu lost its political leadership.
- During this period, various tomb mounds (*kofun* in Japanese) were raised in the Western area of Japan.

仁徳(Nintoku)天皇陵



高松塚(Takamatsuzuka)古墳



Embassies to Tang China

- The government started to send official envoys to Tang Dynasty in 702.
- Between 702 and 777, seven missions were dispatched, each consisting of as many as 500 or 600 men.



遣唐使 Embassy to Tang

- Knowledge and culture were brought to Japan by the missions and the foreign visitors.



大宰府 Dazaifu

- The imperial court settled down a local government, which ruled the Kyushu island and managed its international affairs.
- Many aristocrat-bureaucrats were sent from Kyoto and spent a few years at Dazaifu as local officials.
- Some of the bureaucrats were outstanding poets, and their poems are collected in the 万葉集 *Manyo-shu* collection.

令和 Reiwa

- Japan's government chose 令和 *Reiwa* as the new era title, which started on May 1, 2019.
- *Reiwa* was taken from the foreword to the section of poems on Spring of the 万葉集 collection.
- One day, 大伴旅人 Otomo-no Tabito held a banquet to admire the beautiful blossom of plum trees here at Dazaifu

Admiring plum blossom

- 初春の令月にして、気淑（よ）く風和（やわら）ぐ。梅は鏡前の粉（ふん）を披（ひら）き、蘭は珮後（ばいご）の香（かう）を薰（かを）らす。
- The foreword to the section is based on the words of some ancient Chinese classical poems.
- January of the lunar calendar is February of the solar calendar.
- The birthday of the new emperor 徳仁 Naruhito is February 23.

II. Sugawara Michizane

- The Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine is dedicated to Michizane Sugawara (845-903), who has been enrolled among the gods in the name of *Tenjin* (heavenly-god).



The Scholar

- Sugawara was famous as the family of Chinese scholars.
- In his childhood, he was trained in Chinese classics and poetry under a private tutor, and soon became famous as a genius and a born poet. Later he was praised by a Chinese ambassador as Po-Chu-i (白居易) of Japan.

His Official Career

- Michizane easily obtained the position of *Monjohakase* (Doctor of Literature), who taught Chinese classics to the Nobles in the court.
- The *Fujiwara* family (clan) was the most powerful in the court at that time. Michizane was always subject to its pressure.

Udaijin

- However, Michizane enjoyed the confidence of The Emperor Uda.
- In 899 when he was 54, he was promoted to the rank of *Udaijin*, the second highest rank of the court officials.
- This was an exceptional promotion for a Chinese classic scholar.

Stop the Embassy to China

- In 899, he made a proposal to stop sending the embassy to China (the Tang dynasty at that time), which was accepted by the court.
- This is considered to be a great contribution to the history of Japan
- The florescence of the great Heian Literature such as the *Pillow Book* and the *Tale of Genji*, is an outcome of the temporary isolation of Japanese culture from the Chinese influence.

源氏物語 Tale of Genji



Exile to Dazaifu

- The head of the Fujiwara family, Tokihira, claimed that Michizane conspired to dethrone Emperor Daigo.
- The Emperor believed the false charge to be true, and sentenced Michizane to a lifelong exile to Dazaifu, as vice-governor in name, in 901.

The East Wind

- On the day he left Kyoto for Kyushu, he composed a well-known poem impromptu.

*When the east wind blows,
Forget not to emit thy perfume,
Because thy master is far way,
Oh, my beloved plum tree!*

- He died at Dazaifu at age 58 in 903. The funeral took place at *Anrakuji*.

東風吹かば 匂いおこせよ
梅の花

あるじなしとて

春な忘れそ



The Tenjin

- After Michizane's death, the nobles in the imperial court were scared by the Michizane's grudge, because many Fujiwara members suddenly died shortly.
- The Emperor ordered to build a shrine for Michizane in Dazaifu and Kyoto.
- Even today, people worship Michizane as the god of liberal arts and sciences.

絵馬 (Ema)



Before college entrance examinations, people visit Tenmangu and its branches all over Japan, praying for passing the examinations.

Adaptation of Sugawara's Life to Kabuki and Bunraku



竈門神社 Kamado-shrine



- A “sacred place” for the admirers of the blockbuster animation “the Demon Slayer”.
- The author was born in Fukuoka.
- The hero of the anime, 竈炭治郎 (Kamado Tanjiro) is said to be taken after the name of the shrine.
- The mountain behind the shrine, Mt. Homan, is steep and reminds the mountain where Tanjiro trained.

宝満山

Houman-zan



III. Beginner's Guide to Sumo

- This note is based partly on the information provided by the official homepage of *Japan Sumo Association*.
 - <http://www.sumo.or.jp/eng/index.html>



History of Sumo

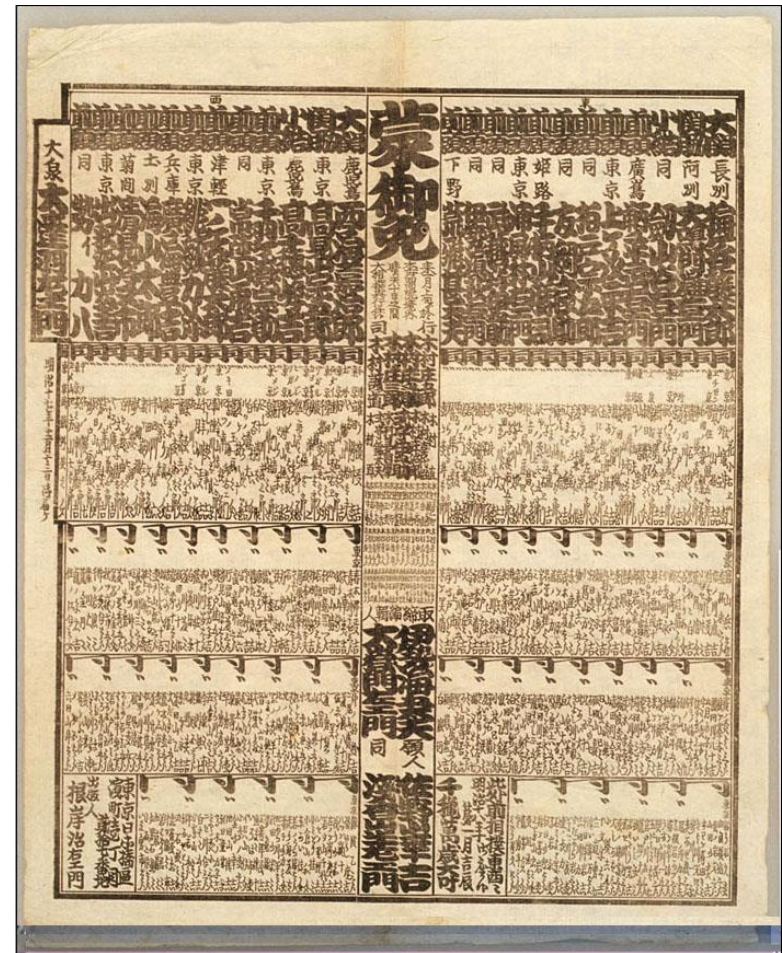
- In legends, the supremacy of the Japanese people over other tribes was determined by a sumo bout result between Gods.
- Sumo dated back to some 1500 years ago.
- Sumo was introduced into the ceremonies of the Imperial Court in the 8th century.
- The present Japan Sumo Association has its origins in the Edo Period.

Rules of Sumo

- *Rikishi* (sumo wrestlers) fight in the *dohyo* (sumo ring).
- A bout is won by forcing the opponent out of the inner circle or throwing him in the *dohyo*.
- There are six *basho* (grand tournaments) a year, three are held in Tokyo, one in Osaka, Nagoya and Kyushu (Fukuoka).
- A tournament lasts for fifteen days, each rikishi fighting once every day with a different opponent.

Sumo Ranking 1

- The ranking of more than 800 rikishi is listed on *banzuke*.
- After each basho, the *banzuke* is revised depending on the performance during the 15 days.
- <http://www.sumo.or.jp/honbasho/banzuke/index>



Sumo Ranking 2

- In the ranking, the top group is called *maku-uchi*, which includes the five top ranks, *Yokozuna*, *Oseki*, *Sekiwake*, *Komusubi*, and *Maegashira*.
- On the *banzuke*, the lower ranks, *Juryo*, *Makushita*, *Sandanme*, *Jonidan*, *Jonokuchi*, are listed in progressively smaller characters.
- The rank determines the style in which the long hair is dressed. *O-icho-mage* is allowed only to the *rikishi* in *Maku-uchi* and *Juryo*.

Yokozuna 1

- The position of the yokozuna is unique.
- In the past three hundred years since the title was created, only less than *sixty* rikishi have been so honored.
- Before a rikishi can even be considered for promotion to yokozuna, he must have won two consecutive tournaments while holding the rank of ozeki.

Yokozuna 2

- The yokozuna can never be demoted even if he makes a poor showing during a tournament.
- Instead should he continue with a bad record, he is expected to retire.

Great Yokozuna in the Past

Futabayama (1937-45):
He won 69
consecutive bouts in
1939. At that time,
there were only 3
basho a year.



Great Yokozuna in the Past

Taiho (1961-71): He won the basho championships for 32 times, the highest record until it was surpassed by *Hakuho*. He was a symbol of Japan's economic recovery after WWII. (*"Kyojin, Taiho, and Tamagoyaki"*)



Great Yokozuna in the Past

Chiyonofuji (1981-91):

Very popular for his handsome looking.

He won the championships for 31 times.



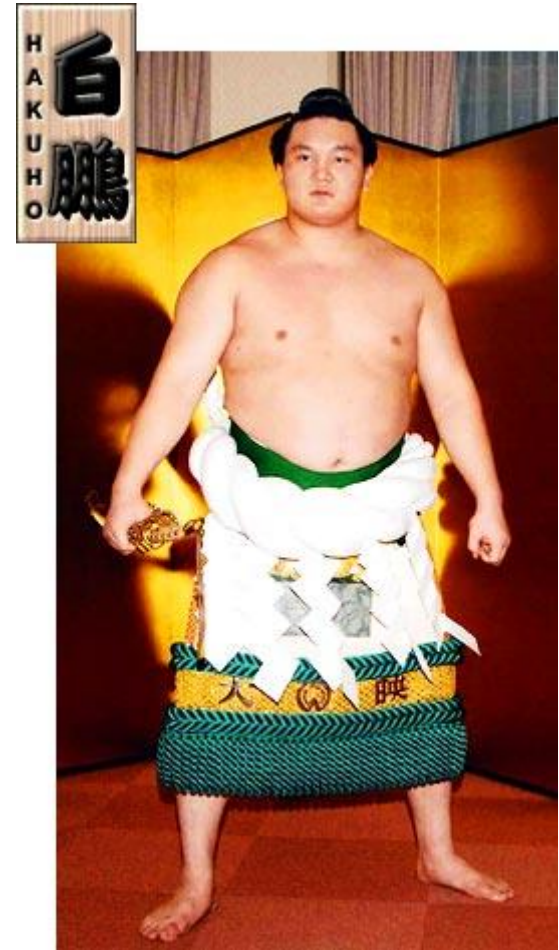
Great Yokozuna in the Past

Asashoryu: He was born in Mongolia in 1980, and won 24 tournaments. He retired in 2009 because of a scandal with violence on his fans. He was very popular as a heel wrestler with many unmannered behaviors.



Great Yokozuna in the Past

- Hakuho: He was born in Mongolia, 1985, and won 45 tournaments.
- He won 63 consecutive bouts in 2010, which is ranked next to Futabayama.



Another Mongolian Yokozuna

Ozeki



Yokozuna



- Harumafuji, born in Mongolia, was promoted to Yokozuna, in 2012.
- He was a member of Isegahama-beya.
- Unfortunately, he retired because he was accused of being involved in a violent crime.
- He welcomed JTW students when he was younger.

Another Mongolian Yokozuna

Ozeki



Yokozuna



- Kakuryu, another Mongolian-born, has been recently promoted to Yokozuna,

Globalization of Sumo

- Today there are more than 10 Sumo wrestlers who were born in foreign countries and are ranked in Makuuchi and Jyuryo.

大砂嵐
(Great Sandstorm)



Egypt

琴欧州
KOTOOSHU



Bulgaria

把瑠都
BARUTO



Estonia

旭天鵬
KYOKUTENHO



Mongolia

逸ノ城



Mongolia

The Japanese Rikishi

KOTOSHOGIKU
後援会



- Kisenosato (R): He was born in Ibaraki, 1986. He was promoted to Yokozuna in 2017 and retired in 2019.
- Kotoshogiku (L): He was born in Fukuoka, 1984. He was promoted to Ozeki in November 2011 and fell to lower ranks in 2016.

KISENOSATO
稀勢の里



Sumo Beya (Stables)

- The sumo wrestlers are recruited by *oyakata* (master) and join *Sumo Beya* (Stables).
- Each *Heya* is hosted by an *oyakata*, who was a sumo wrestler in maku-uchi.
- There are more than 50 sumo stables today, each of which belongs to one of the groups which have the same origins.
- The master of *Isegahama* beya is *Asahifuji*, the 63rd Yokozuna. He has been teaching *Harumafuji* since he came to Japan.