Protests, Rebellion, Mass Hysteria

Images removed due to copyright restrictions.
Woodcut illustrations of peasant riots.
Agrarian Economy and Beyond

- *Kokudaka* (measurement of wealth in rice)
- Importance of merchants in exchange
- Self-sufficiency to cash crops and specialization
- Stratification of countryside
- Peasants work in factories (soy sauce, sake, ceramics)
Agrarian Economy and Beyond

- Proto-industrial economy develops: silk, tea, textiles
- Technological improvements increase productivity of land
- Commercial revolution lays basis for industrial revolution (1850s)
Image removed due to copyright restrictions.
Reality

• Enormous inequalities
  – Peasant protests and riots in cities
  – Infanticide rampant

• Debt system putting pressure from top-down
  – Daimyo cut stipends
  – More taxes demanded of village headmen
Great Peace?

- Internal village disputes: 3,200
- Protests against feudal authorities: 3,212
- Urban disturbances: 488
Types of Rebellion

- Absconding as individuals or en masse
- Disorderly rallies, minor riots
- Appeal to higher authorities
- Mass or mob protest
- Violent demonstrations
- “House wrecking”
- Massive regional insurrection
- World-renewing mass movements
Image removed due to copyright restrictions.

Painting of peasants rioting and dancing as money falls from the sky.
Economic Hardship and Samurai Protest

• IDEALS
  – Sankin kôtai
  – Daimyo instruct samurai and commoners to enrich soil and be diligent in literature and military arts
  – If samurai perform duties correctly, no poverty
Realities

- ALL Daimyo were in debt to merchants
- Daimyo select officials who increase burden
- Some daimyo allow merchants to take over reign
- Daimyo in debt could no longer “protect and nurture” farmers
Famine of 1783

- Many ghost villages with abandoned fields
- Number that starved to death exceeded 2M
- Infanticide: ‘great evil.’ Appalled at this and looking for solution to stop.
- Call for ‘enlightened ruler.’ Dissent towards existing leadership
- Suggestion that daimyo give two bags of rice each year to mother of new child in order to stop infanticide.
- Daimyo blamed for starvation
Image removed due to copyright restrictions.
Illustration of emaciated, ravenous peasants.
Taxes

- Taxes in range of 50, 60, 70 percent
- vacant lots and gardens, buildings, doors, windows, girls who have reached a certain age, cloth, sake, herbs, and sesame seeds
- Fear of tax officials
- Corvee labor