

Brief History of Japanese Religions

Jomon (11,000?-300 B.C.E.)

Animism, belief in all sorts of spirits

Yayoi (c. 300 B.C.E.-c. 200 C.E.)

Belief in kami spirits established

Ancestor worship spreads

Yamato (c. 200-c. 500)

Queen Himiko

Confucianism and Taoism introduced
by Korean and Chinese immigrants

Asuka (c. 500-710)

538 Introduction of Buddhism from Paekche

Prince Shotoku patronizes Buddhism

Nara (710-784)

Nara Buddhist schools flourish

752 Dedication of the Great Buddha at Todaiji temple

Heian (794-1192)

Founding of Tendai sect at Mt. Hiei and Shingon sect at Mt. Koya

Faith in Amida's Paradise and the practice of nenbutsu spreads

Kamakura (1192-1333)

Period of great religious leaders: Honen (Jodo), Shinran (Jodo-shinshu), Eisai,
Dogen (Zen), Nichiren

Muromachi (1336-1573)

Development of "Kamakura Buddhism"

Zen Buddhism pervades the arts

[Sengoku] Warring States Period (c. 1460-1573)

1549 Francis Xavier introduces Christianity

1571 Oda Nobunaga attacks Mt. Hiei

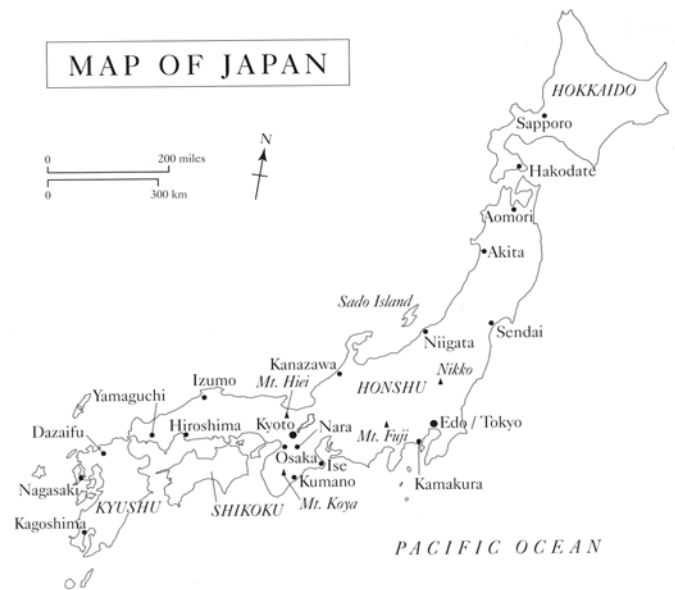
Azuchi-Momoyama (1573-1603)

1589 Toyotomi Hideyoshi prohibits Christianity and burns a Catholic church in
Kyoto

Edo (1603-1867)

Persecution of Christians

Blooming of Confucian and other ethical schools



Meiji (1868-1912)

1868 Separation of Shinto and Buddhism

Shinto chosen as national faith

1873 Ban on Christianity lifted

1875 Doshisa founded in Kyoto

Taisho (1912-1926)

Marxist ideology becomes popular; suppressed by government

Showa (1926-1989)

State Shinto elevated to national faith

Soka Gakkai, Rissho Koseikai and popular sects emerge

1945 Postwar dismantling of State Shinto

Heisei (1989-present)

1995 Sarin gas attack on Tokyo subway by Aum Shinrikyo members

