

MISSION ATLAS PROJECT

ASIA

Japan

Basic Facts

Name:

Japan has no long name. The Japanese name for their country is *Ni Hon*. (Also transliterated *Nippon*, or *Nihon*). Ni Hon means land of the rising sun. The English short name is *Japan*.

Population:

Japan's population was estimated at 126,771,662 in July 2001. Population predictions indicate a population of 127,315,474 by 2010 and 121,150,001 by 2025. Note: The latter figures include a negative population growth figure of -.02% to -.045%

Density

Overall population density reaches 335 persons per sq. km. Smaller islands are less densely populated than the main five island groups.

Distribution

0-14 years: 14.64% (male 9,510,296; female 9,043,074)

15-64 years: 67.83% (male 43,202,513; female 42,790,187)

65 years and over: 17.53% (male 9,351,340; female 12,874,252) (2001 est.)

Birth/Death Rate

10.04 births/1,000 population (2001 est.) 8.34 deaths/1,000

Population (2001 est.) (CIA Factbook 1)

People

Japanese society is considered the most homogenous nation in the world.

Approximately, two percent of the population is of non-Japanese origin. The Japanese do, however, have sub-groups within their ethnic makeup.

Japanese 98% (124,000,000)

Subgroups include:

Okinawan 0.8% (981,000)

South American Returnees 0.17% (233,000)

Ryukyuan 0.1 % (148,000)

Buraku 2%

Ainu 0.015% (20,000)

Foreign Populations

Koreans 693,000

Chinese 252,000

Filipinos 75,000

Expatriates 140,000

Illegal Immigrants 500,000

Area

Islands of Japan

Japan is an island nation of approximately 7,000 islands centered around 5 main islands. Some smaller islands are sparsely populated. The main island groups (north to south) are *Hokkaido* (32,000 sq mi), *Honshu* (89,000 sq mi), *Shikoku* (7,000 sq mi), *Kyushu* 16,000 sq mi) and the *Okinawa* (870 sq mi) island group have most of the population.

Productive Areas

While Japan has many plains (less than 30% of the area is considered plain), the largest plain is only 2,500 sq miles (about 50 miles by 50 miles square). Rivers are short, steep, and swift.

Japanese terrain is very rugged. The mountainous regions are more sparsely populated than the coastal plains.

Unique Environmental Conditions

Earthquakes are a concern in Japan. The *Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake* (On January 17, 1995), which struck the *Ke-Hanshin* region of the country, was a magnitude of seven on the Japanese scale. This region centers in the southeast, where Kobe is located. The earthquake took the lives of about 6,500 people and injured about 44,000 more. Half a million buildings were damaged and over a quarter of a million people were refugees from this disaster.

The *Great Kanto Earthquake* (magnitude 7.9) centered in Tokyo (1923) and took the lives of approximately 100,000 people and destroyed around 450,000 homes. No major earthquake has been experienced in Tokyo since. If and when an earthquake does occur again in Tokyo, it is expected to cause great damage because of the overcrowded nature of this mega-city.

Tidal Waves (Tsunami) that are caused by underwater earthquakes have long been deadly phenomena in the Pacific region. While the threat of earthquakes comes from debris and falling buildings, tsunamis are a traveling flood. These tidal waves can travel across the Pacific (an earthquake in *Alaska* has caused tidal waves in *Hilo, Hawaii*).

Volcanic action also threatens the islands of Japan. Lava flows can move down a mountain at more than 60 miles an hour. Like earthquakes and tsunamis volcanic eruptions often are “unexpected” and result in fatalities. Lava can flow uphill as well as down.

Cold weather is also dangerous in Japan. Temperatures in Japan vary greatly. The southern islands are temperate and more like the weather to be found in the lower Midwest and upper South of the USA. The northern island (*Honshu*) has a climate closer to that of Alaska or Montana.

<http://www.city.sumida.tokyo.jp/english/guide/earth/>

Economy

Since the *Occupation*, the Japanese economy has been considered a miracle economy. Japan ranks 2^d in the world for Gross National Product produced per Capita (Person) at \$41,000 ahead of the United States at 8th place at 28,000 GNP per Capita. Switzerland is 1st at \$44,350.

<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/psd/compete.nsf/7349593d593389e88525648f00641829?OpenView>

In spite of Japan being in a recession since 1990, Japan has a strong economy. Overall, Japan is the second largest industrial economy in the world. China has a slightly larger overall economy (\$4.5 trillion to Japan's \$3.5 trillion.) For comparison, The United Kingdom is fourth at \$1.36 trillion. (CIA Factbook)

Japan is a maritime country. Japan is one of the top fishing and shipbuilding nations. Japan imports significant amounts of agricultural products from the US. The nation does, however, produce most of the rice that it needs. Japan is the USA's third largest trading partner.

Dependence upon foreign sources for many materials is a strategic concern for Japan. Japan's dependence upon foreign oil makes the economy sensitive to oil price fluctuations. Because of this, Japan works on reducing their economy's dependence upon world trade. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4142.htm>

Approximately 40% of Japan's workers are women. Starting in 2000, the unemployment rate has been at its highest level since the recovery after World War II. 5% percent of the Japanese work force is unemployed.

Government

Japan is a parliamentary democracy with the oldest hereditary monarchy. Emperor *Akihito* (r 1989 – present) continues the imperial line of succession. Japan's government enforces freedom of religion.

Demographics

Dating from *Edo Era*, society was structured in a caste system. At the top of the caste system were *samurai*, next came farmers, and then the *Buraku* (*hisabetsu buraku*) at the bottom. There is still a remnant of bias towards people from Buraku areas of the country. In the Buraku (western) prefectures, the social Gospel is popular.

A revival within the "expat" community of 140,000 would change Japan and the world. Most foreign employees are from Central and South America (60.9 percent of the total). They were followed by 18.1 percent who come from East Asia and 7.1 percent from North America. Foreign multi-nationals employ foreign workers, and Japanese companies employ Japanese employees. Over half of the foreign employees and an equal share of foreign workers are in the prefectures of *Tokyo*, *Aichi*, *Osaka*, *Kanagawa* and *Shizuoka*.

<http://www.jil.go.jp/bulletin/year/1996/vol35-02/02.htm>.

The Population Density of Japan is at about 335 people per Sq Kilometer. Compare this with the density of Indonesia at 242 people per Sq Kilometer

(<http://www.indonesianembassy.org.uk/transmigration-8.htm>).

In terms of population Japan now ranks seventh in the world after the People's Republic of China, India, the United States, Indonesia, Brazil, and Russia, in that order.

Bangladesh competes with Japan for the 7th place and will soon pass Japan.

Urbanization

One fourth of Japan's population lives in the Tokyo metropolitan area, a land area slightly larger than Los Angeles [40 by 40 miles]. The Tokyo area boasts an average density greater than 12,500 people per square Kilometer. Tokyo is the single largest concentration of lost people in the world. Tokyo's population is slightly larger than the

combined population of Los Angeles and New York City. The population of Tokyo is more than the population of the state Texas *plus* the state of Pennsylvania. Tokyo proper has a density of more than 28,000 people per square mile. This urban area, the size of Dallas-Fort Worth, has more lost people than the United States has either African-Americans *OR* Hispanic-Americans (US Census estimate for 2000). 32 million Japanese live in an area 40 miles by 40 miles square (65 km by 65 km). This population is also larger than the countries of Canada or Afghanistan.

Half of the Japanese live in 4 urban areas. These areas are *Tokyo* 34 million, *Osaka* 17.5 million, *Nagoya* 5.1 million, and *Sapporo* 2.2 million. Other large urban areas are *Fukuoka* 1.95 million, *Hiroshima* 1.7 million, *Kitakyushu* 1.53 million, *Sendai* 1.3 million, and *Okayama* 1.1 million.

<http://www.demographia.com/db-intl-sprawl.htm>. : <http://www.demographia.com/db-jp-denk.htm>.
<http://www.megacitiesproject.org/network/tokyo.asp>; Johnstone

Education

Japan has a very educated society. More than 25% of the Japanese have gone on to college. Japan has one of the lowest illiteracy rates in the world. Since 1980 Japan has maintained a 5% dropout rate for high school. Because of the high literacy rate, printed media is widely read. There is a phenomenon of “*mangajines*” – magazines that use cartoons in a very glossy format. Most Japanese adults read *Mangajines* on a regular basis. The majority of the population reads cartoon, newspapers, and magazines. Over half of the Japanese people presently use some form of Internet communication.

http://www.usatoday.com/tech/webguide/internetlife/2002-08-01-japan-net_x.htm

The essential characteristic of the present transformation of the Japanese urban system is that the system is reorganizing from a *hierarchical urban system* to a *uni-centred urban network* in which the *Capital Tokyo Metropolitan Area* is emerging as the center for inter-urban and inter-regional transactions and communication.

<http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu11ee/uu11ee0e.htm>

The Japanese have a very strong sense of family. Their culture is based upon the family unit “*Ie*.” It is still common for parents to live with their children in an extended family structure. Families are proud of their children. There is moral shame when one disappoints the family. The family moral structure is taken from Confucian thought. The work ethic is extreme. It is common for men to commute 2 hours by rail and then work 10 hours a day for six days a week. After work, men often expect that they will go out for drinks with co-workers. Businessmen are called “salarymen” and women are called “office ladies.”

Because of the recession during the 1990’s, unemployment has shot up from 2.5% to a fifty year high of 5.5%. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1952314.stm>

Culture

Japan is a rice-based culture. Rice growing requires flooding fields. After the rice is harvested, the fields are allowed to dry. Rice field terracing has changed the ecology of Japan and in some ways the heart of the people. For example, the catfish of *Lake Biwa* swim up irrigation canals and spawn in the rice terraces. Small catfish and frog tadpoles feed upon the leftover rice stalks and then fertilize the terraces. Even though many centuries old, this arrangement is essentially a man made ecosystem that has become part of the Japanese ecosystem. The Japanese people consider this ecosystem to be natural.

Language

Japanese is the main language. Japanese is sometimes broken down into two main dialects. A Japanese dialect is, however, more like an American accent than a true dialect. Small groups, such as the Okinawan and Ainu, do speak true dialects. Many Koreans, Chinese, Latin Americans, and English-speaking foreigners use their native languages still.

History

Periods in Japanese History

Japan has a rich history. The early centuries of Japan's history are only vaguely known. Japan dates its history from 660 BC. Two early, semi mythical accounts, the *Koji-ki* and the *Nihon shoki* (or *Nihongi*) (AD 712 and AD 720), chronicle events from about the 7th century BC to the 7th century AD. These writings and other collections of legends provide traditional accounts of the history of Japan. The *Nihon shoki* gives 660 BC as the year in which *Jimmu*, the first emperor of Japan, ascended the throne and founded the Japanese Empire.

Archaeological and historical research indicates that the first modern inhabitants of Japan were the *Jōmon people*, who inhabited the area from about 10,000 to 3000 BC. Distinctive pottery artifacts found from this era give the name to this people. The descendants of the *Jōmons*, the *Ainu*, are a tribal people who populated all the Japanese islands in the millennia before Christ.

WorldMark p 235, Encarta

Eventually, invading peoples from nearby areas in Asia began expeditions of conquest to these islands, forcing the *Ainu* to the northern and eastern portions of *Honshū*. According to the traditions, Emperor *Jimmu*, having established his rule on *Kyūshū*, led his forces northward and extended his domains to *Yamato*, on the Island of *Honshū*, which gave its name to the imperial house and eventually to all ancient Japan.

The ruling *Yamato* chieftain consolidated his power by making a primitive form of *Shinto* the general religion and, thus, a political instrument. The rule of the imperial clan was more nominal than actual although its principal deity, the sun goddess, was worshiped nationally. During the *Yayoi* period there were migrations from the mainland to *Kyushu*. The new immigrants brought a rice-based economy with them. Thereafter, Rice played an important role in Japan's development. Rice was significant in the *Kofun Period* (300 – 710) when development in the fertile *Kinai* plane area (modern *Kansai*) led the country to a unified period called *Yamato* Japan.

During the early period of the *Yamato* court, Korea made significant cultural contributions to Japan. Korean culture, greatly influenced by adjacent China, had already advanced to a comparatively high level and up until the middle of the 6th century intercourse between Japan and Korea, including Korean immigration to Japan and import of iron from Korea, considerably stimulated the developing civilization of the Japanese islands. The kingdom of *Paekche*, in southwestern Korea, which was an ally of the *Yamato* court, helped greatly in the importation of Chinese writing, literature, and philosophy.

At the beginning of the 5th century the Chinese script came into use in the *Yamato* court from Korean monks. About 430 the imperial court appointed its first historiographers, resulting in more dependable records. The most important event of the period was the importation of Buddhism. This is usually dated to 552, when the king of *Paekche* sent

Buddhist priests to Japan, together with religious images, Buddhist scriptures, calendars, and methods of keeping time. The imported culture soon became strongly rooted in the archipelago, and while contacts between the two countries weakened, it made little difference; by the early 7th century Buddhism had become the official religion of Japan. The first Japanese constitution, comprising a simple set of maxims for good government, was drafted around 640. It was strongly influenced by the centralized government of China. A council, the *Dajokan*, ruled the realm through local governors sent out from the capital. *Nara* in Yamato became the fixed capital in 710 but in 794 *Kyôto* was made the imperial residence and basically remained the capital until 1868. By the 9th century the *Yamato* court had come to rule all the main islands of Japan except *Hokkaido*.

Fujiwara Period 858-1160

During the 9th century the emperors began to withdraw from public life and delegated the affairs of government to subordinates. The retirement of the emperors allowed for the rise to power of the *Fujiwara* family.

By 858 the *Fujiwara* had become virtual masters of Japan and maintained their power for the next three centuries. The period of *Fujiwara* supremacy saw a great flowering of Japanese culture and by the growth of a civilization greatly influenced but no longer dominated by the Chinese. The dictatorship of *Michinaga* is regarded as the classical age of Japanese literature. The character of the government also changed under the *Fujiwara* ascendancy. Because the centralized administration became corrupt and weak, the country was divided into large, hereditary estates, owned by the nobles as tax-free holdings as a result of their official positions. These great private estates became characteristic of landownership throughout the empire.

In the provinces, local groups of warriors banded together for protection, eventually becoming the *Taira* and the *Minamoto* clans. In the 12th century both great military clans began extending their powers to the court itself. A struggle with the *Fujiwara* for control of Japan ensued. After a succession of wars the *Taira* crushed the *Minamoto* and seized control of Japan from the *Fujiwara*. Later, the *Minamoto* leader, *Minamoto Yoritomo*, drove the *Taira* from the capital. *Yoritomo* became the leader of Japan, ending the era of imperial administration and inaugurating a military dictatorship that ruled Japan for the next seven centuries.

The Beginnings of the Shoguns 1185-1600

Yoritomo established a separate military capital at *Kamakura*, near *Tokyo*, in 1185. During the *Kamakura* period, which lasted from 1185 to 1333, Japanese art flourished. Also, from that time forward, Japanese feudalism developed until it was stronger than the imperial administration had ever been. In 1192 *Yoritomo* was appointed to the office of *Seiitaishogun* ("barbarian-subduing great general"), usually shortened to *shogun*, the military commander in chief. Through his military network, *Yoritomo* was already the virtual ruler of Japan, and his shogunate made him titular leader as well. The emperor and court were largely powerless before the shogun. *Kamakura* became the true court and government, while *Kyôto* remained a titular court, without power.

The Hojo Rule 1219-1320

In 1219 the *Hôjô* family eliminated *Minamoto* heirs and their supporters and became the military rulers of Japan. The *Hôjô* never became shogun. The family forced the emperor to appoint figurehead shoguns while a *Hôjô* leader governed as the *shikken*, or regent, with the actual power. For more than 100 years the *Hôjô* maintained their rule.

The Mongol Attempted Invasions 1274-1333

In 1274 and again in 1281 the Mongols, who were in control of China and Korea, attempted to invade Japan, each time unsuccessfully. The *Chinese Emperor Kublai Khan* tried to invade Japan twice and was stopped by 2 different storms. These winds are called *Kami-Kaze* (Divine Wind). This term *Kamikaze* was used later, during World War II, to describe Japanese suicide pilots. Since *Kublai Khan's* army of 140,000 troops had conquered Asia, this Divine Wind is seen as miraculous. The invasions were, however, a serious drain on *Hôjô* resources. The *Hôjôs* were unable to reward their vassals for support during the invasions. An able emperor, *Go-Daigo*, led a rebellion that was climaxed in 1333 with the capture of *Kamakura* and the downfall of the *Hôjô*. For the next two years *Go-Daigo* tried to restore the imperial administration.

The Ashikaga Period

A vassal of *Go-Daigo*, *Ashikaga*, revolted, drove *Go-Daigo* from *Kyoto* and established his own emperor in 1336. *Go-Daigo* and his supporters established a rival court. For the next 56 years civil war between *Go-Daigo* and his successors and the emperors controlled by the *Ashikaga*, who became shoguns, ravaged Japan. At length, in 1392, an *Ashikaga* envoy persuaded the true emperor at *Yoshino* to abdicate and relinquish the sacred imperial regalia. With this development, the *Ashikaga* shoguns were able to establish their own feudal control over all Japan.

The Rise of Daimyo and Buddhist Power

By this time, however, a class of hereditary, feudal lords, called *daimyo*, had developed in all parts of Japan. The *Ashikaga* shoguns were never able to exercise absolute control over the powerful *daimyo*. In general, the period of *Ashikaga* ascendancy was one of great refinement of manners, of great art and literary endeavor, and, notably, of the development of *Buddhism* as a political force. For some centuries Buddhist monasteries had been so wealthy and powerful that they were great forces in the country. Buddhist monks, clad in armor and bearing weapons, often turned the tide of medieval battles with their strong organizations and fortified monasteries. Local wars among feudal lords became common by the 16th century, which is still known in Japanese history as the *Epoch of a Warring Country*.

Three great contemporary warlords arose in this period and restored order. *Oda Nobunaga*, a general of *Taira* descent, broke the power of the monasteries between 1570 and 1580, destroying Buddhism as a political force. *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*, a follower of *Oda*, united all Japan under his rule by 1590. Using his power to its greatest extent, the dictator marked out the boundaries of all feudal fiefs. Finally, in 1603, the successor to *Hideyoshi*, *Ieyasu*, became the first of the *Tokugawa shoguns* who ruled Japan for the succeeding two and a half centuries.

The Tokugawa Shoguns

Tokugawa Ieyasu made *Edo* (later named *Tokyo*) his capital and this city soon became the greatest in the empire. *Tokugawa* achieved the feudal organization that *Hideyoshi* had planned. Control passed to the *shogunate*. Social stratification was established. This form of feudalism endured until the end of the feudal period in the late 19th century. *Tokugawan* domination also imposed isolation of Japan from the Western world. The first Europeans to visit Japan were Portuguese traders who had landed on an island near *Kyûshû* about 1543. *Saint Francis Xavier*, the Jesuit missionary, had brought Christianity to Japan in 1549. By the end of the century about 300,000 Japanese were converted to Roman Catholicism, despite government disapproval and persecution. As European

traffic increased, the shoguns became convinced that the introduction of Christianity was simply a beginning of European conquest.

In 1612 Christians became subject to Official persecution, and various massacres occurred. The Spanish were refused permission to land in Japan after 1624, and a series of edicts in the next decade forbade travel abroad, prohibiting even the building of large ships. During the next two centuries, Japanese feudalism remained static. *Bushido*, the code of the feudal warriors, became the standard of conduct for the great lords, the lesser nobility, and the professional warriors called *samurai*. Japanese culture, closed to outside influence, grew inward and received intensive development resulting in extreme nationalism.

New social and economic conditions in Japan in the 18th century began to challenge the rigid control of feudalism. A large, wealthy merchant class rose in great strength. At that time, too, peasant disturbances became more frequent because of the impoverishment of the landless peasantry. Japan's awakening consciousness of the outside world was formally acknowledged in 1720, when the *Tokugawa shogun Yoshimune* repealed the proscription on European books and study.

By the early 19th century, visits from Europeans became comparatively frequent, although the ban was still officially in force. The United States was particularly interested in a treaty of friendship and, if possible, of commerce with Japan. In 1853 the American government sent a formal mission headed by *Commodore Matthew Perry*, to the emperor of Japan. After extended negotiations, Perry and representatives of the emperor signed a treaty on March 31, 1854, establishing trade relations between the United States and Japan. In 1860 a Japanese embassy was sent to the United States, and two years later Japanese trade missions visited European capitals to negotiate formal agreements.

The opening of Japan was achieved more through the show of superior force by Western nations than by any Japanese desire for foreign relations. The opening of Japan did not end the militant anti-foreign sentiments. Attacks on foreign traders became common in the 1860s. Leaders who resented the rule from *Edo*, rallied around the emperor at *Kyôto* and, with imperial support, initiated military and naval attacks on foreign ships in Japanese harbors. While the anti-foreign movement was short-lived, it did result in the decline of the *shogunate* and the restoration of imperial administration.

The Return of Imperial Rule 1867

In 1867 the last shogun, *Tokugawa Yoshinobu*, resigned, and the emperor, *Mutsuhito*, became the actual head of the government. *Mutsuhito* took the name *Meiji* ("enlightened government") to designate his reign. He transferred the royal capital to *Edo*, renamed *Tokyo* ("eastern capital"). An imperial decree abolished all fiefs and created centrally administered prefecture in 1871.

Under the leadership of statesmen such as *Prince Iwakura Tomomi* and *Marquis Okubo Toshimichi*, the Japanese remained free of European imperialism that was growing in other Asian countries. These leaders sought to make Japan itself a world power. Changes in the Japanese political system were imposed from the top rather than by political demands from the people. The new constitution, drafted by *Marquis Ito* was established in 1889. A bicameral Diet was also developed. The emperor's powers were carefully safeguarded. He was permitted to issue decrees as laws, he alone could decide on war or the cessation of war, and could dissolve diet. Rapid industrialization, under government direction, accompanied this political growth.

The empire also embarked on an aggressive foreign policy. In 1879 Japan took control of the *Ryūkyū* Islands, a Japanese protectorate since 1609, and changed the name to the prefecture of *Okinawa*. The struggle for control of Korea led to conflict with China in Korea and eventuated in the *Sino-Japanese War* of 1894 and 1895, in which the Japanese forces defeated the Chinese army and navy. By the terms of the *Treaty of Shimonoseki* in April 1895, China gave *Taiwan*, the *P'enghu Islands*, and a large monetary indemnity to Japan. While the treaty had given Japan the *Liaodong Peninsula* in southern Manchuria intervention by Russia, France, and Germany forced Japan to accept an additional indemnity instead.

The decisive Japanese triumph indicated to the world that a new, strong power was rising in the East. By 1899 all the great powers had signed treaties abandoning extraterritoriality in Japan. In 1894 the United States and Britain were the first nations given the freedom of the entire empire for trade.

The Period of Expansion 1895-1914

Japan's interest in Korea brought the Empire into repeated conflict with Russia. Japan resisted Russian occupation of Manchuria after the Boxer Uprising in China (1900). In 1904, Japan broke off diplomatic relations with Russia and attacked Russian-leased *Port Arthur* (in southern Manchuria). Thus began the *Russo-Japanese War* in which Japan swiftly won its second modern war in less than 18 months.

United States President Theodore Roosevelt mediated the treaty that was signed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on September 5, 1905. Japan received the lease (1923, later extended to 1997) of the *Liaodong Peninsula* (*Kwangtung*), and the southern half of *Sakhalin* (*Karafuto*). In 1910, Korea was formally annexed to Japan and named *Chosen*. Japanese-American relations had for some years been strained by difficulties over Japanese immigration to the United States. Several agreements were made. The problem, however, was never fully resolved, and it contributed to anti-American feeling in Japan, which increased in the following three decades.

World War I (1914-1918)

In August 1914, following the outbreak of World War I, Japan demanded the Germans evacuate territory of *Jiaozhou* (*Kiaochow*) in northeastern China. When Germany refused, Japan entered the war on the side of the Allies and soon occupied the German-held *Marshall*, *Caroline*, and *Mariana* islands. In 1915 in the *Twenty-One Demands* called on China to grant industrial, railroad, and mining privileges and to promise not to ease or give any coastal territory opposite Taiwan to a nation other than Japan. These demands indicated the Japanese policy of domination over China and East Asia. A year later, in 1916, China ceded commercial rights in *Inner Mongolia* and *southern Manchuria* to Japan.

World War I peace settlements granted Japan the Pacific Islands that it had occupied as mandates from the League of Nations. The empire became a charter member of that organization. A series of agreements (such as the *Shandong--Shantung Treaty*, the *Nine-Power Treaty*, the *Four Power Treaty*) strengthened Japan's hold on the Pacific Islands and assured sovereignty of China. Japan maintained commercial interests in China. Russo-Japanese relations became more amicable after Japan recognized the Soviet regime in 1925. This less aggressive attitude on the part of Japan was due partly to a surge of political liberalism stimulated by the victory of the democratic nations in World War I.

Beginning in 1919 the government was assailed with increasing demands for universal male suffrage, an issue that occasioned rioting in the cities. In answer to these demands the government passed in 1919 a reform act doubling the electorate (to 3 million). The protests became even more intense, however, and universal male suffrage was granted in 1925. The electorate increased sharply, to 14 million. Reflecting the rising interest in popular government, the political trend during the 1920s was toward party cabinets and away from oligarchic rule by the nobility, the military leaders, and the so-called elder statesmen. This movement was short-lived, however.

Showa Dynasty

Japan had a feudal system for many centuries. This system immortalized the Samurai warrior. This imagery is kept alive in books and many modern movies (*Shogun* by James Clavell, and *Ran* directed by *Akira Kurasowa*, for example). The advent of the *Showa* dynasty in 1926 began what most people recognize as Japan. Under *Emperor Hirohito* (r 1926-1989), now known as *Emperor Showa*, Japan fought and lost World War II and then became an economic powerhouse. His son, *Emperor Akihito*, began the *Heisei Era* in 1989. Worldmark <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2131.html>

In the *Showa Period* (1926-1989), *Emperor Hirohito* (r 1926-1989) led Japan out of the depression, into the Pacific War, and then through the occupation and the economic recovery. The economic growth continued till the end of the period. *Emperor Hirohito's* leading his nation out of the worldwide depression was a remarkable feat.

World War II 1939-1945

The second feature of the *Showa Period* was the World War. The beginning of World War II in Europe, in September 1939, opened opportunities for Japan to enlarge its holdings in Southeast Asia. A series of diplomatic arrangements prepared the way for these invasions and political "take-overs" in Asia. Japan cast eyes on much of Southeast Asia including the Netherlands East Indies (modern Indonesia).

Gaining Territory in Asia

Within a few months, Japanese power demonstrated an obsession with British *Singapore* and Dutch *Indonesia*. These acts in Indochina and the East Indies contributed to increasing hostility between Japan and the United States. The protection of American property in eastern Asia had been a source of friction since the Japanese invasion of China in 1937. In 1940 and 1941, *General Tojo Hideki*, who was militantly anti-American, became first the Japanese minister of war and then prime minister. Negotiations aimed at settling the differences between the two countries continued in Washington throughout November, even after the decision for war had been made in Tokyo.

Attack on Pearl Harbor

On December 7, 1941, while negotiations between American and Japanese diplomats were still in progress, Japanese carrier-based airplanes attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Simultaneous attacks were launched against the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, Midway Island, Hong Kong, British Malaya, and Thailand. On December 8 the Congress of the United States declared war on Japan, as did all Allied powers except the USSR. For about a year following the successful surprise attacks, Japan maintained the offensive in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. Japan gained power in Thailand, Burma (now known as Myanmar), British Malaya (now Malaysia and Singapore), Borneo, Hong Kong, and the Netherlands Indies (now Indonesia). By May 1942 the Philippines were in Japanese control and the Japanese forces were moving toward Australia, New Zealand,

New Guinea, New Britain (now part of Papua New Guinea), and the Solomon Islands. A Japanese task force also invaded and occupied *Attu*, *Agattu*, and *Kiska* in the *Aleutian Islands*. Ultimately, however, the war became a naval struggle for control of the vast expanses of the Pacific Ocean and Japan was not to succeed in this struggle.

War Efforts Turn Against Japan

After the fall of *Saipan*, in 1944, the Japanese leaders realized that Japan had lost the war. *Tojo* was forced to resign, weakening the hold of the military oligarchy. In November 1944 the United States began a series of major air raids over Japan. In early 1945, the United States gained an air base at *Iwo Jima* about 1200 km (about 750 mi) from Japan. During the same period Allied forces under the British admiral Louis Mountbatten defeated the Japanese armies in Southeast Asia. In the next four months, from May through August, bombing attacks devastated Japanese communications, industry, and what was left of the navy.

These attacks were climaxed on August 6, 1945, by the dropping of the first atomic bomb on the city of *Hiroshima*. Two days later, on August 8, the USSR declared war on Japan, and on August 9 a second atomic bomb was dropped on *Nagasaki*. Soviet forces invaded *Manchuria*, *northern Korea*, and *Karafuto*. The Allied powers had agreed during the *Potsdam Conference* that only unconditional surrender would be acceptable from the Japanese government. On August 14 Japan accepted the Allied terms, signing the formal surrender aboard the American battleship USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay on September 2.

American Occupation

The American occupation of the Japanese islands, which was not resisted, had the objectives of the democratization of the Japanese government and the reestablishment of a peacetime industrial economy sufficient for the Japanese population. General Douglas MacArthur was directed to exercise his authority through the emperor and existing government machinery as far as possible. A program of land reform, designed to give the tenant farmers an opportunity to purchase the land they worked, was in operation by 1947. An education program along democratic lines was organized. Women were given the right to vote in the first postwar Japanese general election in April 1946. The Diet completed the draft of a new constitution, which became effective in May 1947.

Post-War Recovery 1945-1958

A third feature of the *Showa Period* was the post-war Recovery (1945-1958). From 1948 to 1950 Japan went from a nation unable to feed its people to one that doubled its industrial production and quadrupled its total exports. The economic success of Japan has been a continuing source of astonishment to the rest of the world since 1950. <http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/2upa/Ijs/OccupationJapan2.htm>.

Rehabilitation of the Japanese economy was more difficult than the reorganization of the government. Food had to be imported. Severe bombings during the war had almost nullified Japanese industrial capacity. By the beginning of 1949 aid to Japan was costing the United States more than \$1 million a day.

Beginning in May 1949 work stoppages took place in various Japanese industries, notably coal mining. The government accused the Communist Party, which had polled 3 million votes in a recent national election, of instigating the strike movement for political purposes. The government launched an investigation of Communist activities. Allied negotiations during 1950 relative to a Japanese peace treaty were marked by basic differences between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In May the American statesman *John Foster Dulles* was named to prepare the terms of the treaty. The draft of the treaty was passed on July 12, 1951. Some 55 countries attended the peace conference. Nationalist China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China were not invited. Forty-nine countries, including Japan, signed the treaty; the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Poland refused to do so.

By the terms of the treaty Japan renounced all claims to *Korea, Taiwan, the Kurils, Sakhalin*, and former *mandated islands* and relinquished any special rights and interests in China and Korea. The right of Japan to defend itself and enter into collective security arrangements was recognized.

Japan accepted in principle the validity of reparations claims, to be paid in goods and services in view of the country's insufficient financial resources. Also the United States and Japan signed a bilateral agreement providing for the maintenance of U.S. military bases and armed forces in and around Japan to protect the disarmed country from aggression or from large-scale internal disturbances.

On April 28, 1952, the Japanese peace treaty became effective, and full sovereignty was restored to Japan. By the terms of the *Japanese-American Treaty of 1951*, U.S. troops remained in Japan as security forces. The Japanese government concluded treaties of peace or renewed diplomatic relations during 1952 with Taiwan, Burma, India, and Yugoslavia.

The Japanese economy continued to lead the world in its growth rate for 1964. In its drive to expand trade, the Japanese government made an agreement with China that each would establish unofficial trade liaison offices in the other's capital city. Japan in the 1960s surpassed every nation of Western Europe in terms of gross national product and ranked next to the United States as a world industrial power. The Japan World Exposition, staged at *Ôsaka* in 1970, demonstrated the nation's restored position in world affairs. By 1971 Japan was the third largest exporter in the world, next to the United States and West Germany (now part of the united Federal Republic of Germany), and the fifth largest importer.

The question of rearmament was widely debated throughout 1952. The government was reluctant to commit itself in favor of rebuilding the country's defenses, mainly because of economic difficulties and legal obstacles (in the Japanese constitution of 1947 war is renounced "forever"). The Diet in July 1952 approved a bill to suppress subversive activities of organized groups, including the Communists. In general elections on October 1, the first since the end of the occupation, *Yoshida Shigeru*, leader of the Liberal Party, who had headed the cabinet since 1949, was again named prime minister.

Postwar Foreign Relations

During 1953 the U.S. government, seeking further to safeguard the country against possible Communist aggression, actively encouraged Japan to rearm. In August the two countries signed a military-aid treaty that contained provision for the manufacture of Japanese arms according to American specifications. In a joint statement in September, Prime Minister *Yoshida* and *Shigemitsu Mamoru*, Progressive Party leader, officially recommended that Japan rearm for self-defense. Negotiations with the U.S. government led to the signing of a mutual-defense pact by the two nations in March 1954.

Dissidents within the Liberal Party subjected Prime Minister *Yoshida's* policy of close collaboration with the United States to strong criticism during the second half of 1954. Upon *Yoshida's* stepping down, Socialist leader *Hatoyama Ichiro* was elected prime

minister. He promised, in exchange for Socialist support, to dissolve the Diet in January 1955 and hold national elections.

In October 1956 the USSR and Japan agreed to end the technical state of war that had existed between the two countries since August 1945. On December 18 the UN General Assembly voted unanimously to admit Japan to the United Nations. Two days later *Ishibashi Tanzan*, the minister of international trade and industry, succeeded *Hatoyama* as prime minister. While maintaining close relations with the United States, *Ishibashi* sought to expand trade with the USSR and China as a means of reducing unemployment. In February 1957, Prime Minister *Ishibashi* resigned from his post because of poor health. The Diet elected his former foreign minister, *Kishi Nobusuke*, to succeed him. In the same month agreements were signed ending the state of war with Czechoslovakia and Poland. Japan agreed in November to pay \$230 million to Indonesia as World War II reparations. Japan became a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council in January 1958. Prime Minister *Kishi* dissolved the House of Representatives in April, and elections were held the following month.

Recent Historical Events

The tremendously challenging *Heisei period* has experienced *economic downturn*, *Hanshin Earthquakes*, and the *Aum Shinriko* terrorist attacks. Japan in the early 1980s faced urban overcrowding, environmental pollution, and unproductive agriculture, but had the highest rate of economic growth and the lowest inflation rate among leading industrial nations. Economic growth began to slow in the mid-1980s, in part because the yen's strength against the U.S. dollar had a dampening effect on exports.

Emperor Hirohito died in January 1989, and his son *Akihito* succeeded him as emperor, inaugurating what was officially called the *reign of Heisei* ("achieving peace"). A series of scandals and difficulties resulted in changes in Japanese political power. The Tokyo stock market had begun a decline that would last until mid-1992 and see the *Nikkei* average lose almost two-thirds of its value.

Confidence in the government continued to decline and various changes in leadership hardly improved the situation. During the early and mid-1990s Japan and Russia continued their territorial dispute over the four southernmost *Kuril Islands*. In April 1996, however, *Prime Minister Hashimoto* and *Russian president Boris Yeltsin* agreed to revive efforts to settle the dispute.

At a summit meeting in April 1996, the leaders of the United States and Japan signed a military-cooperation agreement calling for Japan to provide logistical support for U.S. forces in UN peacekeeping operations. At the same time, the United States agreed to return about 20 percent of the land it occupies on Okinawa, where anti-American protests over United States military presence continued.

In 1997 an economic downturn in Southeast Asia undermined the strength of Japan's economy that was still trying to recover from the recession of the 1990s. Japanese banks faced the problems that many companies were experiencing difficulties making payments. Some Japanese banks faced failure. The value of many stocks fell and a record number of Japanese companies declared bankruptcy. In November 1997 the Japanese government was forced to use public funds to aid the worst-hit financial institutions. Unhappy with the country's lingering economic problems, Japanese voters called for change. Accepting responsibility for the defeat, *Hashimoto* resigned as prime minister.

Related information can be found in Nicholas Bornoff's *The National Geographic Traveler: Japan* (pp 24-41); Worldmark (329); & <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2131.html>, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/academic/2upa/ljs/OccupationJapan.htm>, http://www.rekihaku.ac.jp/e_table/index.html *Encarta Encyclopedi*a

People Groups

As indicated earlier, the population of Japan is more homogeneous than the populations of most nations. Some stratification is, however, present in Japanese culture. The primary people groups are:

Ainu

Of the 15,206 *Ainu*, there are 15 active speakers of the indigenous dialect. As of 2000 AD there were no known Christians among the *Ainu*. They are believed to have migrated from Asia and southern islands. As immigrants came from the mainland they drove the resident aboriginal peoples to the northern island of *Hokkaido*.

Americans

Of the 70,000 American expatriates in Japan there are no statistics on the number of Christians within the community. This community speaks English well and has a varying degree of Japanese language capability.

British

Approximately 13,000 British expatriates live in Japan. The Christian statistics, like those for Americans, are unavailable.

Filipino

With approximately 36,000 *Tagalog* speaking Filipinos, Filipinos are the 2d largest foreign population minority in Japan.

Chinese

The Chinese community in Japan is composed of three main ethnic groups. These are the: *Wu* (population 12,500) with 1,356 Christians accounting for 2% of their population; the *Yue* (population 12,342) with 150 Christians and 1.215% of their population; and the *Min Nan* (population 24,684) with 560 Christians (2.268% of their population).

Japanese

121,325,786 ethnic Japanese with 1,012,344 believers or 0.834% of the Japanese population residing in Japan.

Japanese Sign Language (JSL)

456,789 Japanese communicate using JSL. Within this subgroup there are very few Christians—perhaps 168.

Korean

693,051 ethnically Korean Japanese live in Japan. Of these, there are an estimated 2,145 believers.

Smaller Dialects

Most of these dialects are to be found in the islands that foreigners would associate with the Okinawan islands. *It is likely that the most pressing evangelistic opportunity in Japan exists among these smaller dialect peoples.*

Around 981,326 people in the Central *Ryukyuan* group speak Central *Okinawan* and report about 1,356 Christians.

31,000 *Irabu-Jima* speaking the *Miyako* dialect live in Japan and report around 100 Christians.

The *Kikai* have 67 believers among a population of 13,026.

The *Kunigami* have 765 believers among 123,673 people.

The 75,813 Northern *Amami-Oshima* have 48 Christians.

The 16,587 Southern *Amami-Oshima* have 54 Christians
The *Oki-no-erabu* subgroup has a population of 18,310 and speaks the *Oki-no-erabu* dialect. There are no known Christians in this group.
Of the 67,450 Southern *Ryukyuan* there are 478 Christians.
Within the 38,394 *Toku-no-shima* there are 118 believers.
There are 47,492 within the *Yayeyama* subgroup with no known Christians.
There are 2,281 *Yonaguni* with no known Christians.
There are 7,565 *Yoron* with no known Christians.
The total number of people in Japan for this comparison is 123,965,946 with 1,018,403 believers: 0.821% of the total population.
Statistics from Global Research – IMB - CPPI and Johnstone
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=Japan.hmt

Religion in Japan

Religion (*SHUKYO*) in Japan follows three major religious traditions: *Shinto*, *Confucianism*, and *Buddhism*. In different periods of history, each has occupied the predominant religious influence. These traditions, which are interwoven throughout Japanese history, provide the basic framework of Japanese society. These religious patterns determined the rites of passage conducted at each stage of the life cycle and dictate the forms for most personal and communal relationships in Japanese society today.

Religious freedom is guaranteed in Japan but recent events related to nationalistic tendencies have strengthened *Shintoism*. While up to 80% of the Japanese claim no personal religion, a majority follow the religious teachings of Buddhism (with its idolatry and veneration of ancestors) and the rituals of Shintoism (with its polytheism and magic). Growing numbers of Japanese are turning to the many newer religious movements that have spun off the major religions.

Japanese religious thought differs from Western religious thought. Western religious thought grew out of a Judeo-Christian heritage, and it is based on belief in a transcendent Deity separated from mankind by human sin. In Christianity, God's saving act overcomes sin to reconcile mankind to God. This view requires a human response of commitment to the Deity. This Christian thought contrasts sharply with the Japanese views.

Japanese religious traditions have adapted to include mutual interaction among religious traditions with minimal conflict and mutual influence. Japanese religions incorporate an intimate relationship between human beings and the many *kami* (gods or spirits). *Kami* are to be found: in nature; in the lives of certain human beings (such as the emperor and shamans); and in the dead as revered family ancestors. *Kami* inspire feelings of awe, beauty, mystery and power.

Protestants now use the same word, *Kami*, to denote God. Early Roman Catholic missionaries used the Latin word *Deiis* for God. Today both Catholics and Protestants use *Kami*. Often *Sama* is added to *Kami* as a title of respect, becoming *Kamisama*. Japanese religion also involves an emphasis on family, family lineage, and ancestors above individual religious preference. The home occupies the center of daily religious practice, and temples and shrines represent the places for annual and occasional religious

ceremonies. Annual festivals serve as the major communal religious celebrations, including rice-planting and harvesting festivals, New Year's and summer festivals. Japanese do not see evil as rebellion against a personal God. The Japanese see evil as human impurity that separates humans from one another and from *kami*. This separation can be overcome by rites of purification.

In Japanese religion there is a concept of religion as an integral part of daily life, including economic and social spheres. Religion is not limited to special buildings and times. In some ways, this concept of religion as an integral part of daily life gives rise to a close relationship between religion and state. Religious authority is usually subservient to political power.

The extensive difference between basic Japanese views of religion and Judeo-Christian concepts may explain in part the slow growth of Christianity in Japan. Christians sharing the Message with Japanese people should remember the difference in basic religious views and proclaim the Message in ways that engage the Japanese thought processes.

Shinto

Shintoism was the first indigenous religion in Japan and probably grew out of Japanese animism. When other religions were introduced into Japan in the sixth century, the indigenous religious traditions were formalized and named *Shinto* (*way of the deities*). *Shinto* has been both the set of indigenous, loosely organized religious practices, creeds, and attitudes at the community level and also official state religion of Japan during different periods of history. *Shinto* centers on the worship of innumerable spirits. These spirits (deities) manifest themselves in: natural objects; places; forces of nature; spirits from the dead; and in some animals. Ancient traditions, rituals, and rights of passage such as the marriage ceremony, rituals of purification, and many festivals have been the mainstay of *Shinto*. *Shinto* was undeveloped as a formal religion until the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century. Because of reaction to Buddhism and through coexistence with Buddhism, Shinto has become what it is today.

Buddhism and Shinto have gone through a process of synchronization. The two were combined to the point that Shinto deities were assigned their corollary Buddhist deities. The two developed until in the later half of the nineteenth century there was little more than a functional difference for the common person.

Shinto has blended with *Buddhism* and with *Confucianism*. *Shinto* ethics are really Confucian ethics. The views of *Shintoism* concerning sin are very different from Christianity. Worship of nature has always permeated the culture. Ancestor Worship has also played an important part in Japanese society and religion. In *Shintoism*, spirits cause evil. Spirits are also objects to be worshiped. Because death is considered evil in Shinto, funerals are Buddhist. Weddings are often Shinto.

Some evidence indicates that the ruling classes developed *Shinto* into a more coherent system for the purpose of strengthening their hold on the people. The emperor serves as the chief *Shinto* priest in all court rituals, which include the annual rice planting and harvesting ceremonies. From the tenth century, Shinto increasingly became a coherent religious system of myths, rituals, priests and shrines.

Toward the end of the *Tokugawa Shogunate* (1603-1868), a nationalistic movement emerged that called for a strengthening of the Japanese identity. This called for a return to the source of Japanese identity: imperial rule with Shinto as the sole religion of Japan. This movement laid the foundation for the *Meiji Restoration* in 1868, by which the military *shogunate* was toppled from power and the emperor reinstated. Under Meiji

imperial rule, *Shinto* was declared the state religion. Shinto shrines received support from the government. Shinto concepts were taught in schools throughout Japan up until the end of World War II.

Most *Shinto* ceremonies take place at a Shinto shrine. A shrine site is chosen for natural beauty or strategic location—in a grove of trees or near the source of a river. The entrance to each shrine or sacred area is marked by a *torii* (gateway). Shinto rituals include symbolic offerings of food and rice wine. One of the rituals central to Shinto involves the rite of purification, which includes purification from such unclean elements as disease and death, with offerings to restore relationships after wrongdoing.

<http://www.acts.edu.htm>

Buddhism (Amidism)

Many Japanese follow the teachings of Buddhism. Buddhism may reach as many as 90% of the Japanese. Often, these concepts are blended with those of Shintoism. Buddhism sprang from the teachings of *Siddhartha Gautama*. *Siddhartha* was born the first son of a king in a part of India that is now Nepal in the year 446 B.C. Growing up as royalty, he was wealthy until he was 29. He was not allowed to see suffering and death. In fact, legend says that streets were cleared of unpleasant things before he left the home. Around 534 BC, The 29 year old *Gautama* ventured out before the streets had been properly cleared. He saw “Four Passing Sights”—a corpse, a sick man, an old man, and a recluse. These visions brought great distress into the mind of *Gautama*. He sought answers in Hindu philosophy and extreme asceticism. He wandered for the next six years seeking answers to human misery.

In 527 BC, the 35 year old *Gautama* decided to meditate under a *Bodhi Tree (the Tree of Wisdom)* until he had found an answer or until he died. He claimed that after 40 days he received an illumination (Enlightenment) that solved the riddle of life. He there upon became the *Buddha, "the Enlightened One."*

Until his death he traveled through central India sharing his wisdom. *Buddha* concluded that humans are helpless in the face of life's suffering and that the root of all suffering is desire. He taught that denying self through spiritual discipline and practicing meditation could lead to understanding (enlightenment) and freedom from illusion and desire.

His teaching also stressed compassion for all living creatures.

In 552, a mission from a king of Korea carried Buddhist images, religious objects, and sutras (written precepts) to the Japanese Emperor. The emperor welcomed the new religion, as did some court officials. Others declared that the Japanese gods would be displeased by the importation of a new religion. When those who supported Buddhism achieved power in the *Nara period (710-794)*, Buddhism was made the state religion.

Monasteries were established in each province of Japan and Buddhist studies begun.

Thus, Japanese Buddhism first found favor with the ruling aristocrats and scholars.

Today most Buddhist rites are conducted at temples, except for some death-related services conducted in the home. Priests and monks conduct daily rites to deepen personal devotion through offerings and reciting sutras and mantras. Other rituals, conducted on behalf of the laity, seek the protection of Buddhas and heavenly beings for the country, groups, and individuals. In addition, priests also conduct funeral rites and memorial services on anniversaries of death for the deceased person's family and friends. Buddhism undertook ceremonies related to death when Shinto priests were reluctant to conduct them.

Mahayana Buddhism has a savior concept. The Buddhist savior concept is mis-applied to Jesus.

<http://www.acts.edu.htm>

Confucianism

Confucianism was introduced from China around 285 B.C. Confucianism is more of a social ethic than it is a religion. Confucianism gives Japanese society some of the ethical values that would normally come from a religion. Confucianism in Japan supplies a basic philosophy that guides much of Japanese education and government.

Kong Qui, known in English as *Confucius*, was a teacher-philosopher in China during the *Zhou Dynasty* (1027-256 B.C.) The Philosopher developed a philosophical, ethical and political teaching that also contained religious elements. He believed that the ideal harmonious, hierarchical society could be achieved not through law but through the moral example of leaders, by the performance of proper rituals, and by individual behavior appropriate to a person's status in society. Confucius maintained that rulers should choose public officials not on the basis of birth but according to their moral and intellectual qualities.

Confucian thinking spread from China to Korea, where it exerted great influence. Two Korean scholars brought Confucian thought to Japan at least by 404 A.D and perhaps as early as 285 BC. Japanese leaders, who felt Confucian concepts of a harmonious political system could help them unify their country, received the new system with interest. Japanese leaders never adopted Confucian thinking in its entirety. However, Confucian thought dominated most areas of Japanese life during the seventh to the ninth centuries and then again from 1603 to 1945. Japan's early historical chronicle, *Nihon shoki*, contains the Confucian view of state and emperor.

Confucian thinking influenced Japan most in the realm of education and government. This influence intensified after the rise of what is called *Neo-Confucianism*. Neo-Confucianism developed out of a revival during the *Song (Sung) Dynasty* (970-1279). In the thirteenth century, this Neo-Confucianism came to Japan, where it emphasized spiritual and ethical concerns. Neo-Confucianism first took root in Japan among the *Zen Buddhist* community, which saw it as a useful complement to Zen religious teachings. Loyalty as a virtue developed in Japan from Confucian teaching. A fourteenth-century heroic tale elevated the virtue of a warrior's loyalty to his lord above the virtue of filial piety. Loyalty was adopted into the value system of the Japanese samurai (warrior). When Japan entered a period of relative peace under the *Tokugawa Shogunate*, Confucianism once again played a major role in government and education. By 1868, 43 percent of boys and 10 percent of girls attended some form of schooling where they were taught Confucian concepts of loyalty and filial piety.

The Confucian virtue of *samurai loyalty* to lord was adapted to be a subject's loyalty to the emperor. This was instrumental during the *Meiji Restoration* in 1868. This same concept of loyalty contributed to nationalistic unity achieved through a synthesis of Confucianism, Shinto, and the imperial ideology, which remained in place until the end of World War II.

An expression of this synthesis was the *Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890*, which stressed the Shinto tradition of the imperial lineage and the Confucian concept of the subject's loyalty to the emperor. The *Rescript* was implemented in Japan's Asian colonies of Taiwan, Korea, Manchuria, and China as well.

A few Japanese scholars pursue Confucian studies today. However, Confucian concepts continue to exert an important influence in language, education, government, family, and society. To speculate on numbers of followers of Confucianism in Japan today is as impossible as it is impractical. Confucian teaching and philosophy underlies much of Japanese religion, education, and government thinking.

<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/TOKJAPAN/NEO.HTM>, [Http://www.acts.edu.htm](http://www.acts.edu.htm)

Islam

Islam was introduced to the Japanese people in 1877 as “Western thought”. Around this time the life of Muhammad was translated into Japanese. The first Japanese Muslim was probably *Mitsutaro Takaoka* who converted to Islam in 1909 and took the name *Omar Yamaoka*.

Some small Muslim communities developed after the arrival of several hundred Muslim refugees from Asia and Russia around 1917. Some Japanese converted to Islam through contact with these Muslims. After the formation of these communities, several mosques were built. The *Kobe Mosque* built in 1935 is the only remaining mosque. No Japanese *Imams* serve at any of the mosques. While Johnstone reports 152,057 adherents of Islam in Japan, and Islamic websites report upwards of 100,000 Muslims in Japan, the same website reports that there are 1,000 Japanese Muslims. The website goes into further detail and reports that the thousands of Asian and other Muslims living in Japan are perceived to be at great risk to conversion to other faiths.

<http://islam.org.au/articles/older/JAPAN.HTM>, Johnstone.

Japanese New Religions

Many religious groups have been born, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These groups are classified as “newly arisen religions” (*shinko shukyo* - abbreviated *shin shukyo* for new religions). Group members consider themselves part of lay movements and try to avoid these titles. As lay movements, they seek to recover and emphasize traditional Japanese religions.

The New Religions include beliefs and practices of Japanese folk religions. Some of these practices include repeated speaking of sutras and belief in shamans. Some modern Japanese believe that the emergence of these new religious traditions is in reaction to the formalized religions that have become out of touch with people's lives. They also believe that the shift from stable rural-agricultural community life to a mobile urban-industrial society weakened traditional ties to the Buddhist temple and Shinto shrine. This mobility led to the gradual breakdown of a stratified society. Some Japanese hold that the emergence of the new traditions is a reaction to the breakdown.

H. Neill McFarland in *The Rush Hour of the Gods: A Study of New Religious Movements in Japan* (Macmillan, 1967) listed seven characteristics of the new religions. He notes that these religions have: (1) a charismatic founder; (2) clear goals such as happiness, healing and prosperity; (3) a strong sense of community (4) centralized organization (5) large headquarter complexes (6) mass activities such as pilgrimages and training programs; and (7) elements of varied religious traditions wrapped in a sense of mystery. Many of the earlier new religions, while attracting popular support, were persecuted by the government when they were seen as a threat to social harmony and the state.

<http://www.acts.edu>

The new religions provide some important social functions. For the believers they provide a community. This community of people can identify with one another and help each other. Many new religions have group therapy sessions in which people can share

their problems and aid one another. The new religions also provide meaning to people's lives on a personal level and a national level. This was true for several of the new religions after WWII when many Japanese were struggling to understand their role in the world. They provide a source of hope in crisis. Many of them began as crisis religions whether this was meeting physical diseases, social problems, or national destiny. Estimates for the numbers of Japanese who follow these "New Religions" are as high as 30,956,000 or some 24.43% of the population with a growth rate of + 0.4%. This estimate compares with a possible 1,976,000 Christians or only 1.56 % of the people and a growth rate of + 0.1%. Among the New Religions in Japan are:

Tenrikyo (aka Tenri)

Tenrikyo is one of the oldest of the new religions, founded in 1838 by *Nakayama Miki* (d 1887). *Nakayama* had a very religious childhood. After a series of crises in 1837-38 she felt a spirit had possessed her. She felt the spirit claimed to be the "True and Original God." On the basis of this experience she founded her religion in the 1850s and eventually saw it established as a recognized Shinto sect.

Nakayama's life is tremendously important to *Tenri* believers. She is worshipped as the manifestation of the ultimate god. Her followers maintain a room for her in their headquarters, because they do not believe she is dead.

Tenrikyo holds a simple understandable doctrine. *Tenrikyo* stresses that religion cannot be separated from daily life. It teaches an optimistic view of human beings and the world and places emphasis on faith healing (although this emphasis is lessening). The group has a magnificent headquarters in *Tenri City* which functions much as a *mecca* for the group.

Sokka Gakkai

Soka Gakkai is currently the largest new religion with over five million adherents. Founded in 1930 by *Nakiguchi Tsunesaburo* this group bloomed in the 1950s and 60s. *Nakiguchi Tsunesaburo* was following the path of the thirteenth century Buddhist monk, *Nichiren*. *Soka Gakkai* finds all truth in the *Lotus Sutra*. Only by following what the *Lotus Sutra* says, as interpreted by *Nichiren* and current SG leaders, can people find happiness.

The group grew very rapidly after WWII because of its ability to provide a positive image of Japan and its ability to comfort people through its group counseling sessions. During the time of rapid growth it used some rather aggressive techniques. *Sokka Gakkai* is not, however, growing at such a fast rate today. The organization has calmed down some as it has matured. It has its own school system from kindergarten to doctorate degrees, mass media institutions, and political affiliations.

Soka Gakkai is a major religion in Japan and considered to be derived from Buddhism. This group claims about 17,000,000 adherents in Japan and several hundred thousand adherents in the United States. They work on university campuses in Japan and the United States—with campus ministries in California. Even though large, this is a new branch of Buddhism. www.soka.edu

Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect)

Aum Shinri Kyo, like many of the New Religions in Japan, stemmed from the personal beliefs, or whims, of a single charismatic leader. *Aum's* spiritual underpinnings are nominally Buddhist. The cult is the personal creation of a bearded Buddhist guru, *Shoko Asahara*. *Shoko Asahara* was an admirer of *Adolf Hitler*. *Asahara's* frequently illogical writings borrow heavily from the occult. *Asahara* even asserted that true faith will permit believers to fly and to meditate underwater for hours without taking a breath.

Asahara, who has styled himself "*Venerated Master*," led thousands of believers to leave their jobs and families. The believers that he called disciples gave their lives and wealth to the cult.

Police estimated the group's membership at 8,000. The cult has figures ranging from 10,000 to 30,000, including membership in Russia, the United States, and other countries. This cult came to the attention of the world following the 1995 Tokyo subway *Sarin* gas attack and the possibility that this group was responsible. A massive police investigation found that the *Aum* cult held vast stores of the chemicals needed to make the nerve gas *Sarin*. *Aum Shinri Kyo* may have assumed the name of *Aleph* to distance itself from the deadly *Sarin* gas attack. The group peaked at between 20,000 and 30,000 followers.

Rissho Kosei Kai

Nikkyo Niwano and *Myoko Naganuma* founded *Rissho Kosei Kai* March 5th, 1938. They combined Buddhist practice and traditional teaching to help a modern world find peace and harmony. *Rissho Kosei Kai* translated means--an organization based on the *Dharma* (Universal Truth). The members grow their character by encouraging each other to lead a better life, contribute to a better society, and a peaceful world. This is called the "*Bodhisattva Way*," (moving from compassion in action).

The basic characteristics of *Rissho Kosei Kai* are:

The *Dharma*, on which the group is based, is in accordance with the essential Buddhist teachings and the *Lotus Sutra*.

Rissho Kosei Kai emphasizes practical application of teaching for the purpose of enriching people's lives.

The practice of "*hoza*" or 'the circle of harmony' where members help each other understand the teachings. All of life's situations are met head-on. Realizing that Buddha-nature is in everything and in every moment can change anything from crisis to opportunity. The change of attitude and experience is proof of the bodhisattva way and its power to transform illusion into reality.

In order for people to live peacefully, we must learn to emphasize our common aspects rather than our differences. It is the belief of *Rissho Kosei Kai* that such a world can be realized through respect for humanity. All great spiritual paths can be bound together by the common desire for human happiness and liberation.

Branches of this group exist in Japan, six branches and nine chapters in other countries. Centers in the United States are located in: Hawaii, Seattle, Pacifica, Los Angeles, San Antonio, Oklahoma, Chicago, and New York. Johnstone estimates as many as 5,500,000 persons follow *Rissho kosei kai*. Johnstone

Seicho no Ie

Seicho no Ie has about 3,700,000 adherents according to Johnstone.

Many turn to cults because of their spiritual need. This group claims to be based upon Buddhist and Christian teachings. However, they consider Nostrodamus to be a Christian scholar. There are many groups like these in Japan.

<http://www.gospelcom.net/apologeticsindex/a06.html> http://www.religioustolerance.org/dc_aumsh.htm

<http://clawwww.lmu.edu/faculty/fjust/Students/AumShinriKyo/main.html>

Ho No Hana Sanpogyo

This Japanese for-profit group is lead by multimillionaire *Hogen Fukunaga*, who established *Ho-no-Hana*, in 1987. The name of the movement is written various ways: *Ho No Hana*, *Sanpogyo*, *Hono Hana Sanpogyo*, *Ho-No-Ha-Na Sanpogyo*, and *sampogyo*. Little consensus exists as to the proper translation. One report translated it as "Flowers of Buddhist Teachings." Another renders it as "Flower of Law and the Three Law Practice",

but most Japanese know it as “Heavenly Energy.” This slogan shines out from huge red and white neon signs in key locations in Japanese cities.

In a twist on palm reading, *Fukunaga* and other leaders read the soles of people's feet. Upon examination, victims are told they have a serious illness or will suffer misfortune. They are then urged to attend expensive training sessions, and to purchase high-priced scrolls, and other ornaments that are said to ward off evil, cure illnesses, deliver from sin, and break family curses. Thousands of people have sued the group to retrieve some of the money that they had paid for “healings.” Police believe that *Fukunaga* and other high-ranking members cheated thousands of people by saying that the guru possessed supernatural healing power.

<http://www.gospelcom.net/apologeticsindex/h10.html>, http://hss.fullerton.edu/comparative/HoNoHana_articles.htm

Reiki

Reiki is another healing religion. Like many new religions in Japan, this group claims that it uses some Christian teachings. Specifically, there are claims that the founder had Christian training. Jesus Christ is represented as being another great healer.

<http://reiki.7gen.com/history.htm> <http://www.reiki.org.htm>

Contemporary Japanese Religious Practices

Modern religion in Japan is a syncretization of many religious strains. Most Japanese participate in both Shinto and Buddhist traditions. Many Japanese also participate in some Christian traditions. Because many Japanese claim multiple religions, the number of adherents for religious bodies is significantly higher than the total population of Japan. Many Japanese: choose a Christian or Shinto wedding ceremony; present their newborn infants at a Shinto shrine; attend a Christian church for a Christmas celebration; visit a Shinto shrine or Buddhist temple at New Year's to pray for good health or success in a school examination; and have a Buddhist funeral ceremony, and are buried in a Buddhist temple cemetery. Traditional Japanese homes often include both a Shinto *Kamidana* (god shelf) in the kitchen, and in the family room a Buddhist *butsudan* (ancestral altar). The Buddhist *butsudan* contains the name tablets of deceased family members who are venerated there.

Daily offerings of food and drink are placed on both the *kamidana* and the *butsudan*. The Shinto observances are associated with life, newness, and productivity. Many companies have a Shinto shrine on their premises to ensure financial success. Buddhism is concerned with maintaining family awareness even beyond death. Regular memorial services are held either at the family Buddhist temple or before the family *butsudan*. The *Obon* (festival of the dead) is a late summer Buddhist festival. The *Obon* becomes a joyous occasion for welcoming deceased family back for a visit. Many Japanese also observe an annual pilgrimage to their birthplace to celebrate with special feasting, music and dance. Contemporary religious practice in Japan is a blend of several traditions.

www.acts.edu

Christianity

In 1990 Christians numbered some 1,976,742 or about 1.56 % of the population. This figure, however, includes many who follow marginal Christian groups such as Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses as well as non-Protestant Catholics. Examination shows less than one million Christians in Japan with a growth rate of less than 0.1% annually.

Johnstone

History of Christianity in Japan

Japanese Christianity has a rich history. Long before our modern era, missionaries witnessed in Japan and saw some people turn to Jesus. Because Christianity was perceived as a threat to the Japanese government, Christianity was made illegal and driven out of Japan. This began the two-century isolation of the Islands ended by Captain Perry. <http://www.baobab.or.jp/~stranger/mypage/chrinjap.htm>

There is a persistent belief among some Japanese Christians and some Japanese cult groups that Christian missionaries arrived in Japan around 198 A.D. Believers from this era are called *Keikyo*. While there is little substantiated history for early believers, artifacts dated from this period have been found. *Keikyo* is a word taken from the description of early Chinese believers, where they were called, "The Church of the Light," or "Shining Religion." Unfortunately, many contemporary cults consider themselves descended from the *Keikyo*.

From today's perspective, the Catholic mission of the 16th century is more relevant. In 1549, *Francis Xavier* arrived in Japan to begin missionary work. Jesuit Francis Xavier became the first European Catholic to enter Japan for the purpose of evangelizing. *Anjiro*, a thirty-six-year-old Japanese fugitive, accompanied Xavier. While on board a Portuguese ship en route to India, he had met Xavier. *Anjiro's* information filled Xavier with the desire to take Christianity into Japan. Accompanied by *Anjiro*, newly baptized and serving as interpreter, *Xavier* arrived in *Kagoshima*, with two other Jesuits. This small group arrived in *Anjiro's* home province, *Kagoshima*, in southern Japan, on August 15, 1549.

Xavier's method of evangelizing was accepted missionary policy at that time, that is, evangelizing individual Japanese while seeking to gain the favor of the *daimyo* and an audience with the emperor. Xavier believed that gaining the leaders' support would result in the conversion of the masses they controlled. He also used his position as a representative of powerful Portugal in his mission endeavors.

Some *daimyo* welcomed the missionaries as Portuguese representatives. *Oda Nobunaga*, the general who unified Japan by 1578, extended favor to the missionaries while trying to control the militant Buddhist forces threatening his political control.

This mission began an era referred to as the *Christian Century*. Following Xavier's departure, the growth of Christianity in Japan was uneven. The conversion of *daimyo* and their followers was followed by persecution of Christians by some non-Christian *daimyo* and Buddhist priests who were threatened by Christianity's increasing strength and the political favor shown missionaries.

An annual report to the church in Portugal reported that in 1581, 30 years after Xavier's departure, there were 150,000 Christians and 200 churches in Japan, the majority in *Kyushu*, and the southern island. Japan's total population was then about 16 million. By the end of the century, Christianity was seen as an influential force that had to be eliminated. Within a few decades of this decision, what was left of Japanese Christianity was underground. History (both Japanese and Catholic) indicates that the Japanese Catholics numbered more than 200,000 and suffered at least 50,000 martyrs. For the next 250 years, a small remnant of believers practiced in secrecy. www.acts.edu

Persecution of Christians in the latter 1500s stemmed from Christian mistakes and Japanese fears. *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*, the skillful general who succeeded *Nobunaga*, initially appeared to favor the missionaries. But in 1587, he issued an edict calling for the expulsion of all missionaries within twenty days. While this decree was not enforced, it

signified the end of support for the foreign religion and missionaries by Japanese authorities. The Japanese considered western religion as a means to western control. Even in the face of the lowering of official support for Christianity, individual and mass conversions continued, as did schools and charitable institutions. Missionaries, however, wisely adopted a lower profile—especially in evangelism. Most withdrew to a small island off *Kyushu* where they continued educational and publishing ministries.

In 1593 Franciscan priests from the Philippines arrived in Japan, encouraged by the Spanish government, which sought to establish trade relations with Japan. Their coming angered and threatened the Jesuits, who feared that *Hideyoshi's* wrath would now be directed at all Christians. Distrust and competition between the Portuguese Jesuits and Spanish Franciscans produced increase distrust of the Christians.

In 1596 a Spanish galleon from Manila wrecked off the coast of *Shikoku*. The captain wanted *Hideyoshi's* permission to continue on to Mexico. The captain attempted to impress Japanese officials by pointing to the Spanish king's power. He explained Spain's successful method of extending its empire by first sending out Christian teachers. After those teachers had gained the confidence of the people, troops would be dispatched to unite the new Christians in bringing about the conquest of the desired territory.

Hideyoshi's responded by ordering troops to surround both Jesuit and Franciscan establishments in *Kyoto* and *Osaka*. He also instructed officials to secure the names of churchgoers in those cities. About fifty Priests and other Christians were arrested, marched to Nagasaki, and crucified in February 1597.

Government edicts forbade any *daimyo* to become Christian and ordered all missionaries to Nagasaki for deportation. Some of the 125 Jesuits remaining in Japan went into hiding while others followed *Hideyoshi's* order. In 1598, 137 churches, a college, a seminary, and many Jesuit residences in southern *Kyushu* were destroyed, and Christians there were persecuted. After *Hideyoshi's* death in 1598, his successor, *Tokygawa Ieyasu*, eased the persecution of Christians for a time. Missionaries came out of hiding and new ones arrived, churches and charitable institutions were rebuilt, and 70,000 baptisms were recorded within a two-year period.

In 1602, Spanish Dominicans and Augustinians, from the Philippines, joined Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries in Japan. The rivalry among the four orders rekindled Japanese suspicion and distrust of Christianity and this suspicion led to persecution.

Ieyasu, who declared himself *shogun* in 1603, and his son, *Hidetada*, did not actively persecute Christianity, at first. The arrival of a Dutch ship in 1600 established Japanese trade with Holland. This agreement displeased Roman Catholic missionaries, because Holland was a Protestant country. From 1612 heightened suspicion of Christianity by both *Ieyasu* and many local *daimyo* resulted in increased persecution of Christians.

In 1614, *Ieyasu* issued a decree stating the Christians had come to Japan to teach an evil law, to overthrow correct teaching, change the government, and take the land. He called for the missionaries to be instantly swept out. All *daimyo* were ordered to send missionaries to Nagasaki for deportation, destroy all churches, and force Christians to give up their religion. Six months later, three small ships were loaded with missionaries and Japanese Christians. One ship was sent to Manila and the others to the Portuguese colony of *Macao*. Some Christians escaped offshore and secretly made their way back into Japan while others avoided deportation by going into hiding. Persecution by crucifixion, decapitation, and burning at the stake continued throughout Japan after

Ieyasu's death. Under *Hidetada*, and his son, *Iemitsu* persecution intensified. Some Christians renounced their faith under torture but the majority remained faithful. The number of martyrs is not known, though the total was more than 30,000 and some estimates suggest in 100s of thousands. In 1624 new orders issued in *Iemitsu's* name prohibited entry to all Spaniards, and again commanded Spanish priests to leave. No Japanese were allowed to go abroad. Trade with the Philippines was cut off. Foreign ships were ordered to register all persons on board, and both missionaries and those bringing them to Japan were burned at the stake. Rewards were offered for information on Christians. All remaining missionaries were forced into hiding.

Following a peasant revolt in 1637, the government again sought to eradicate Christianity. Christians were required to give up their faith. The government appointed officials to seek out believers. One method used from 1658 was *efumi* (picture-trampling). Suspected Christians were ordered to trample upon a cross or a picture of Christ and any who shrank back were declared Christian. In 1669 *fumie* (copper tablets with a picture of Christ) were introduced. In the annual *efumi* ceremony in Nagasaki, all residents, including infants, were called upon to tread on the *fumie*. Portuguese were forbidden entry to Japan. Dutch and Chinese ships were to be confiscated if Christian teachers were found on them. Christian books, printed in China and smuggled into Japan by Chinese merchants, were forbidden. Notices were posted in every town prohibiting the "evil sect of Christianity". It seemed that Christianity had been erased from Japan.

In 1867, the 250-year reign of the *Tokugawa* clan collapsed when pressures within Japan combined with pressures from foreign powers to force Japan to end its long, self-imposed isolation. Increasing numbers of British, Russian and U.S. ships tried to enter Japanese ports in the second half of the nineteenth century. These attempts, coupled with news of the carving up of China by the Western powers after the *Opium War in 1842*, made Japanese leaders respond to foreign demands to open Japan's doors to trade and relationships with other nations.

Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in *Uraga, Japan*, after initially landing in Okinawa, in 1853. He carried a letter from U.S. *President Millard Fillmore* asking that Japan treat kindly all Americans shipwrecked in Japan, open one or two ports and establish trade and diplomatic relationships with the U.S. The letter also requested Japan to provide food and fuel to U.S. ships bound for China. Perry returned to Japan the following year to sign the first Japan-U.S. amity treaty. Treaties were made with Great Britain, Russia and the Netherlands by the end of 1855.

While few in Japan favored the trade treaties, the government needed to modernize for self-defense and survival. Many Japanese leaders understood that Japan had much to learn from other nations in the world. The years of isolation quickly came to an end. Although the *Treaty of 1854* established relationships with the U.S. and relationships with European nations were established in following years, foreigners were not permitted to reside in Japan. In the nearby *Ryukyu Islands*, French missionaries awaited the opening of Japan. When Japan concluded a treaty with France, they entered the country as priest-interpreters under the government of France. These missionaries soon constructed churches in *Hakodate* on *Hokkaido*, in *Yokohama*, and in *Nagasaki* to commemorate the canonization of the twenty-six martyrs crucified in 1597.

A month after the Nagasaki church's completion, Father *Petijeau*, a French priest, had an astounding encounter. Fifteen persons from a village confessed their faith in Christ. Believers who had been in hiding, known as "hidden Christians," streamed to the church daily, leading missionaries to warn them lest Japanese authorities discover their existence. Missionaries visited the outlying islands and discovered thousands more hidden Christians. The total was estimated to be between 20,000 and 50,000. About half chose to re-unite with the Roman Catholic Church. The others continued to pass on their faith as "separated ones." Missionaries discovered that the faith had been secretly transmitted for generations in each faith community.

Despite protests by European and American representatives, anti-Christian edicts were reaffirmed, and thousands of Christians were arrested, tortured, and deported to remote areas of Japan. Successive Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant missionary efforts have had to contend with hundreds of years of anti-Christian propaganda and the fear and suspicion that stem from intense persecution. These have colored the thinking of Japanese people, preventing many from becoming Christians.

While religious freedom is assured to Japanese people, the spread of Christianity in Japan has proved remarkably slow. It is possible that historical events cause resistance to the gospel. <http://www.baobab.or.jp/~stranger/mypage/chrinjap.htm>, <http://www.acts.edu.htm>

Protestant Churches

The Church is not keeping up with the increase of Population. The total Christian community numbers only 1,125,654, mainly urban, including Protestant (about 60%), Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches and believers.

Assemblies of God -- [Nippon Assemburiizu Obu Godda Kyodan]

Assemblies of God in Japan have 215 churches with 13,688 members and 19,000 affiliates. The AoG in Japan were originally founded in 1913.

Baptist Bible Fellowship -- [Nippon Baputesuto Baiburu Feroshippu]

Founded in 1950 the Japanese Baptist Bible Fellowship has 78 congregations with 4,000 affiliates.

Church of Christ in Japan (Nikki)

Church of Christ in Japan has 141 churches and 13,824 adherents.

<http://www.sayvestojapan.org/home.htm>

Churches of Christ (Noninstrumental)

Churches of Christ (Noninstrumental) have 135 churches and 4,562 adherents.

Church of Nazarene -- (Nippon Nazaren Kyodan)

Church of Nazarene was founded in 1905 and has 76 churches with 8,500 adherents.

The Evangelical Alliance (Dōmei)

The Evangelical Alliance (*Dōmei*) have 166 churches and 8,228 adherents.

Federation (Renmei)

Federation (*Renmei*) have 63 churches and 4,350 adherents.

Holiness Church -- [Toyo Senkyokai]

Holiness Church has 155 churches and 11,868 adherents.

Holy Church of Jesus

Holy Church of Jesus has 100 churches and 6,431 adherents.

Immanuel (Wesleyan)

Immanuel has 117 churches and 12,288 adherents.

Japan Baptist Union

Japan Baptist Union has 74 churches and 4,799 adherents.

Japan Evangelical Christian Church Association (New)

Japan Evangelical Christian Church Association (New) has 162 churches and 7,275 adherents.

Japan Baptist General Conference -- [Nippon Baputesuto Senkyodan]

This Baptist group began in 1952 and grew from an association with the American Baptist Association. It has reported as many as 15 churches with 336 attenders.

Japan Baptist Convention -- [Nippon Baputesuto Renmei]

Growing out of work connected to the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States, the Japan Baptist Convention, which began in 1889, reports 333 congregations, almost 16,000 members, and 33,100 adherents. <http://www.bgeworld.org/cplantin/japan.htm>

Japan Evangelical Lutheran -- [Nippon Fukuin Ruuteru Kyokai]

Japan Evangelical Lutheran was founded in 1892 and has 154 congregations with 32,267 affiliates.

The Japan Lutheran Church -- [Nippon Rutereu Kyodan (NRK)]

This Church has a baptized membership of more than 3,000 in 36 congregations with a pastoral staff of 32. The NRK also has a Lutheran Seminary in *Mikaka*. NRK also has schools and other social ministries as well. <http://mission.lcms.org/wherewework/asia/japan.htm>, <http://www.jlc.or.jp/>

The Japanese Mennonite Christian Church -- [Nippon Menonaito Kirisuto Kyokai Kaigi]

The Japanese Mennonite churches have grown since 1964 to 16 churches and 748 members - Japanese Mennonite Christian Church Conference (1999).

<http://www.mbm.org/resources/packets/japan/japan-story-45yearsderksens.shtml>

Seventh Day Adventists -- [Nippon Adobento Kirisuto Kyodan (SDA)]

75% of Seventh-day Adventist's are over 30 years of age. 17% of recent baptisms come from their schools. An interesting approach to evangelism has been their "Five-Day to Stop Smoking Plan." Adventists have helped reduce the number of smokers by 30 percent. SDA lists 14,000 baptized members in 114 churches with 20,000 adherents.

<http://volunteers.gc.adventist.org/avs/avsdatabase/Pages/Countries/Profiles/SDA%20Presence/presjapan.htm>, Johnstone, Barrett.

United Church of Christ in Japan -- (Kyōdan)

The *Kyōdan* have 1,707 churches with 204,260 affiliates.

Jesus Christ Church

The Jesus Christ Church has 127 preaching points and 12,098 affiliates.

Korean Christian Church

The Korean Christian Church in Japan has 79 and 4,215 practitioners.

Holiness -- (Kyōdaidan)

Kyōdaidan have 160 churches and 11,868 adherents.

Anglican -- (Nippon Seikōkai)

There are 318 Anglican churches with 57,052 members.

Reformed Church -- (Nihon Kirisuto Kaikakuha Kyokai)

The Reformed Churches in Japan have 124 congregations and preaching stations serving 8,692 regular attenders. The Reformed Churches were first founded in 1946 in Japan.

Salvation Army

Salvation Army 70 6,654

<http://www.nanzan->

[u.ac.jp/SHUBUNKEN/publications/miscPublications/Japan%20Christian%20Review/pdf/1993-Stats.pdf](http://www.nanzan-u.ac.jp/SHUBUNKEN/publications/miscPublications/Japan%20Christian%20Review/pdf/1993-Stats.pdf) and Patrick Johnstone ed. *Operation World* Cdrom.

Para Church Organizations:

SEND

An evangelical organization that has had a large impact on church planting in Japan.

They had about 500-career missionaries world wide in 2003. <http://www.send.org/japan/>

Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society (JEMS)

JEMS has been recruiting missionaries for Japan since 1950. In 2002 there were three missionary teams and they were in the process of adding about three more teams.

<http://www.jems.org/japan.htm>

Japan Mission

Is an interdenominational support organization that enables existing churches to better reach the lost in Japan. <http://www.japanmission.org/>

Japanese Christian Fellowship Network (JCFN)

JCFN is an evangelical Christian network, which seeks to serve local churches and their ministries. JCFN does not affiliate with any particular denomination nor does it function as a local church, but rather seeks partnership and cooperation for the building up of God's kingdom. http://www.jcfn.org/Who_is_JCFN/whois.htm.

University and College Evangelism

At present 316 of the 1,243 universities and colleges have Christian ministries. The four larger ministries are: IFES – International Federation of Evangelical Students), CCCI – Campus Crusade, YWAM (Youth With a Mission), and Navigators). Yet, while one in four campuses have evangelistic efforts to reach the 3,080,000 students, these ministries engage only about one in 3,000 Japanese students. Effectual ministry is desperately needed.

International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES)

Kirisutosha Gakusei Ka (KGK) is the Japanese component of the IFES

<http://www.ifesworld.org/prayer/prayerview.asp?Country=Japan>

CCCI – Japan Campus Crusade for Christ

JCCC currently works on 14 different campuses 6 Japan cities, including Sendai, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Okinawa. Planning is under way for Sapporo.

Campus ministries use teams working with committed Christian students in exposing their classmates to the gospel. Those who indicate a decision to receive Christ are disciplined in small groups to share their faith. Sending these committed Christian students to help touch the rest of Japan and Asia and the world is one of their goals.

<http://www.japanccc.org/english/engcampus.html>

Youth With a Mission (YWAM)

This very evangelical organization emphasizes a youthful zeal.

<http://www.ywamjapan.org/>

Marginal Christians, Non-Christian Groups, and Cults

Roman Catholic

The Catholic tradition goes back to 1542 when Francis Xavier began mission work in Japan. In 1990 there were 436,000 Catholics with some 800 parishes in 16 dioceses.

<http://www02.so-net.ne.jp/~catholic/Data/00data.htm>, Johnstone

Orthodox

St. Nikolai began his ministry as a chaplain for the Russian consulate in 1861. Nikolai baptized the first Japanese Orthodox Christians in 1868. His disciples were converting people around *Hakodate*, and *St. Nikolai* moved to Tokyo where he established a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church. He dedicated an Orthodox cathedral in Tokyo, in 1891. The Holy Resurrection Cathedral still stands (Nicolai-do).

<http://www2.gol.com/users/ocj/TheOrthodoxChurchinJapan.htm>

<http://www.baobab.or.jp/~stranger/mypage/chrinjap.htm>

Jehovah Witnesses [Monomi no Toh Seisho Kyokai]

Jehovah's Witnesses claim 200,000 members in Japan. Johnstone says 43 congregations with 12,133 members and 30,000 adherents. The Jehovah's Witnesses group began in Japan in 1911.

http://www.watchtower.org/statistics/worldwide_report.htm, Johnstone

Church of Jesus Christ of Later-Day Saints (Mormons) [Matsujitsu Seito Jesu Krisuto Kyuokai]

The Mormons, who began their mission work in Japan as early as 1901 in Japan, claim 96,000 members in 346 congregations with over 120,000 adherents.

Johnstone

Scientology

They claim to have active work in Japan, but there is little documentation as to their number of adherents or their actual impact in Japan. <http://www.smi.org/address/japan.htm>

Missiological Implications

1. *Evangelical Christians should renew efforts to evangelize Japan.* The past difficulties and resistance must not block present efforts. Since the “New Religions” are growing so rapidly, Evangelicals should seek to understand what they are doing and learn in what ways the methods might be accommodated to Christian witness *without compromising either the teachings or spirit of Christianity.* The growth of the new religions, however, erases any ideas that the Japanese people are anti-religions and opens the possibility that a properly contextualized witness would receive a response in Japan.
2. *Evangelical Christians should learn from the expansion of the “New Religions” in Japan that the Japanese are not basically anti-religion but perhaps more anti-foreign religion. Christianity needs a distinctively Japanese face.* Spiritually, the Japanese are seeking answers that are more relative to them than the Animistic traditions that they have grown up with. There is a way to find the heart of the Japanese. The Holy Spirit longs for these lost people.
3. *Evangelical Christians should resist all temptations to seek Japanese interest by presenting the gospel in terms of secular, materialistic, or advantages.* The gospel, fully proclaimed will be enough to attract the attention of the Japanese people and only such a full and accurate proclamation will be honored by the Holy Spirit.
4. *Evangelical Christianity should encourage increasing church starting.* Of some 672 major cities, nine have no churches. Of 2568 towns (populations 15000 to 30000), 1733 have no churches. Many rural areas are without Christian witness. New emphases on church starting should encourage the starting of churches over Japan.
5. *Evangelical Christianity should seek to stimulate the healthy growth of the many small and somewhat weak churches in Japan.*
6. *Evangelical Christianity should encourage evangelistic efforts among the many expatriates who live in Japan—the Korean Japanese, the Chinese students, and the Filipina and Thai women who have been brought into Japan for immoral purposes.*
7. *Evangelical Christians should promote a balanced and biblical approach to teachings on spiritual warfare in Japan.* The heavy emphasis on occultic practices, idolatry, and fortune telling as well as healing in the New Religions should be countered with a biblical and theologically valid teaching on spiritual warfare.
8. *Evangelical Christians should recognize the Japanese appreciation for unity and order and seek to present a unified front for evangelization in Japan.* In this nation, more than most, the divided nature of Christianity may be a detriment to church advance
9. *Evangelical Christians should recognize that while culturally, the Japanese are considered homogeneous they long for a sense of individualism within their culture.*

A need remains for proclaiming a distinctively Japanese expression of Christianity. There may be as many as three million Japanese who are open to Christianity, but unwilling to align themselves to a foreign church.

10. *Evangelical Christians should extend help to Japanese Churches as these believers attempt to evangelize their own people.*
11. *Evangelical Christians should develop more zeal themselves and help the Japanese Christians develop more zeal toward the persons who are termed, "Smaller dialects."* Several of these people report rather large populations with very few Christians. Four of these smaller dialect groups with a combined population of over 75,000 have no known believers. Among other groups, over 1.3 million people report only 2800 believers. These "dialect" peoples constitute the most extensive people group type ministry in Japan.
12. *Evangelical Christians should offer partnership with Japanese Christians to evangelize the entire population of Japan.* Christians are mainly found in the middle class and among the intellectuals.
13. *Evangelical Christians should move to help evangelize the minority peoples.* These people include persons in the farming and fishing villages, of which 85% still do not have a Protestant witness. The *Buraku-min*, several millions of socially unaccepted laborers, tend to be isolated from Christianity.
14. *Evangelical Christians should make full use of video materials that proclaim the true gospel.* The Jesus film on video is available. Over 70% of homes have a VCR. Pray for an effective video distribution plan of the Jesus video and more evangelistic videos. Video evangelism is proving a key method of outreach.
15. *Evangelical Christians should share a fully evangelical expression of Christianity with the people and churches of Japan.* Some evidence suggests that much of the teaching in Japanese theological training schools has tended toward a liberal expression of the Christian message. No tendency among the Japanese for deeper learning should lead the Evangelical Community away from fully Evangelical Theology.

Secularism is fast growing among the white-collar workers in modern cities. They are proud of their ability to accept and develop Western technology, without being influenced by western religions. Foreign missionaries have done extensive evangelism among the Japanese, but the results are comparatively small.

Openness toward the Christian gospel is most likely found among young people and women in the urban areas. There is a common argument that Christianity is hard to accept because of its exclusive claim, as compared to the tolerant attitude claimed by the Shintoists and the Buddhists. But why has *Soka Gakkai*, which is extremely intolerant and exclusive, won at least 10 million followers in two decades? Evangelical Christians need to seek more creative ways to reach the vast numbers of unreached in Japan.