Religion in Japanese History

552 C.E.  
**Introduction of Buddhism from Korea**

574-621  
**Prince Shōtoku**
- “Seventeen-Article ‘Constitution’” (Confucian and Buddhist principles)
- Patron of Buddhism
- Shinto as root, Confucianism as trunk, Buddhism as branch of Japanese culture

710-784  
**NARA PERIOD**
- Capital: Nara (south of Kyōtō)
- Emperor Shōmu: built Tōdaiji (Great Eastern Temple) in 728; all ordinations took place here; center of network of temples in each province
- Six schools of Buddhism (1-3 Mahayana, 4-6 Theravada):
  1. Kegon (Skt. Avatamsaka; declared authoritative by Emperor Shōmu in 749)
  2. Hossō (Skt. Yogacara)
  3. Sanron (Skt. Madhyamika)
  4. Ritsu (Skt. Vinaya)
  5. Jōjitsu (Skt. Satyasiddhi)
  6. Kusha (Skt. Kosha)

794-1185  
**HEIAN PERIOD**
- Capital: Heian-kyō (Kyōtō)

762-822  
**Saichō (Dengyō Daishi): Tendai Buddhism** (includes some esoteric practices)
- Traveled to China in 804
- Established Enryakuji temple on Mt. Hiei (Hieizan), just outside Kyōtō

774-835  
**Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi): Shingon Buddhism** (esoteric, tantric)
- Traveled to China in 805
- Established monastery on Mt. Kōya (Kōyasan), far south of Kyōtō
- Later given Tōji (Eastern Temple) in Kyōtō
- Invented kana, founded school open to all classes, patron saint of pilgrims

978-1026  
(Lady) Murasaki Shikibu: author of *Tale of Genji*, world’s first novel
1185-1333 **KAMAKURA PERIOD**
- Military government (*bakufu*) separate from Imperial (civil) government
- Military capital established at Kamakura

1147-1199
- Minamoto Yoritomo given title “Sei-i tai shōgun” (Great Barbarian-quelling General)
- New Buddhist schools/sects: Pure Land
  (see separate handouts) Nichiren
  Zen

1333-1573 **ASHIKAGA PERIOD**
- Ashikaga Shogunate never ruled over a unified Japan
- Development of Daimyō system:
  Shōgun (general, military ruler)
  Daimyō (feudal lord)
  Samurai (retainers, knights)

1534-1582 **Oda Nobunaga**
- ended Ashikaga shogunate
- destroyed Enryakuji (Mt. Hiei)
- failed to gain control over western Japan

1536-1598 **Toyotomi Hideyoshi**
- originally a commoner
- inherited Nobunaga’s domain and conquered remaining daimyō
- gave Edo domain to Tokugawa Ieyasu
- began custom of keeping families of daimyō at his headquarters as “hostages”
- instituted rigid division between samurai and commoners
- invaded Korea, but army turned back after his death

*Daimyō family and retainers traveling to Edo on Tokaido Road.*
1600-1868 **EDO (TOKUGAWA) PERIOD**

- Capital: Edo (later called Tokyo)
- Neo-Confucianism adopted as governing ideology
- Christianity prohibited
- every Japanese family required to register with a Buddhist temple (danka system)
- national isolation

**1542-1616** **Tokugawa Ieyasu**

- named one of five regents for Hideyoshi’s infant son

1600 • subjugated other regents

1603 • named Shogun by Imperial court

1616 • European traders limited to two ports (Nagasaki and Hirado)

1624 • Spanish traders expelled

1635 • Japanese prohibited from going abroad or returning home (death penalty)

1637-1638 • Shimabara Revolt (near Nagasaki), blamed on Christians; beginning of persecution of Christians

1639 • Portugese traders expelled

1641 • Dutch (only foreigners left) moved to Deshima Island in Nagasaki harbor

1853 **“Pax Tokugawa” (Tokugawa Peace) and Isolation**

1853 • Commodore **Matthew C. Perry** sent by U.S. with 8 ships to negotiate trade

1854 • treaties signed with U.S., Britain, Russia, Netherlands

1860-1868 • anti-Shogunate revolts

1868-1911 **MEIJI PERIOD (RESTORATION)**

- modernization, industrialization, Westernization

1870 • Shinto declared guiding ideology:

  - *saisei ichi*: “unity of religion and government”
  - Department of Shinto as branch of government – later Department of Shrines (Shinto) and Temples (Buddhism)
1882  • Shrine/State Shinto differentiated from Sect Shinto
       • Shrine Shinto declared part of government, not religion
1890  • Imperial Rescript on Education
1895  • Sino-Japanese War (Japan wins, Taiwan becomes part of Japan)
1905  • Russo-Japanese War (Japan wins)

1912-1925  **TAISHŌ PERIOD**
           • increasing industrialization and militarization

1926-1988  **SHŪWA PERIOD**
1931  • Japan invades Manchuria
1941  • Pearl Harbor
1945  • Hiroshima, Nagasaki, defeat
1945-1952 • Occupation by U.S.
           • Shrine Shinto separated from government; Association of Shinto Shrines established
1945-    • Increasing population shifts to cities; accelerated growth of New Religions
           • Perennial disputes over Yasukuni Shrine

1989-    **HEISEI PERIOD**
1995  • Aum Shinrikyo releases sarin gas in Tokyo subway