
The history of Christianity in Japan

The history of Christianity in Japan is commonly believed to have begun with the arrival of the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier in 1549. Roman Catholic missionary activities in Japan began in 1549, carried out by Portuguese-sponsored Jesuits and later by Spanish-sponsored mendicant orders, such as the Franciscans and Dominicans. In 1626, missionaries were ordered to leave the country, and Christians were ordered to renounce their faith or suffer a terrible punishment.

Religion is the first sense of community. Where the religious sense of community and with it, real trust and integrity can be destroyed then that society is like a sand castle unable to defend itself against the inexorable sea; the Tokugawa shogunate saw him, and the social structure, cultural beliefs as a sand castle at danger. Furthermore, many of them were Christians and the rebellion took on a religious character. Eventually, the rebellion was crushed, with heavy casualties to government troops, and all the rebels were decapitated. As to making a point that Christianity is firmly prohibited to be practice in Japan. Following the rebellion, Christianity was completely suppressed in Japan, and the Tokugawa shogunate enacted a policy of "sakoku," complete isolation of Japan from foreign influences.

The European States hoping that the Japanese would reopen their borders again; due to the lack of trading- it didn't happen. In the contrary, trade, in fact, prospered during this period, and though relations and trade were restricted to certain ports, the country was far from closed. In fact, even as the shogunate expelled the Portuguese, they simultaneously engaged in discussions with Dutch and Korean representatives to ensure that the overall volume of trade did not suffer. Like I said before, it is more likely that the Tokugawa shogunate imposed and enforced the sakoku policy in order to remove the colonial and religious influence of primarily Spain and Portugal, which were perceived as posing a threat to the stability of the shogunate and to peace in the archipelago.

Something to not forget would be the fear of being infected by the Europeans. Along the New England coast between 1616 and 1618, epidemics claimed the lives of 75 percent of the native people. In the 1630s, half of the Huron and Iroquois people living near the Great Lakes died of smallpox. The very young and the very old were the most vulnerable and had the highest mortality rates. The loss of the older generation meant the loss of knowledge and tradition, while the death of children only compounded the trauma. Japan was against this- wanted to maintain the current culture, and beliefs thus were more cautions regarding Japanese association with the European States.

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