

Japan

An Attempt at Interpretation



Lafcadio Hearn

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Lafcadio Hearn

Greece-born Lafcadio Hearn (1850 - 1904) spent decades of his life in Japan, even marrying a Japanese woman, thus becoming a Japanese citizen by the name of Koizumi Yakumo (小泉 八雲). He wrote many books on Japan, especially about its folklore. In this posthumously published book, he takes a closer look at Japan's religious history: How it developed from ancient beliefs into Shintoism, resisted suppression attempts by both Buddhism and Christianity and how – despite efforts to westernise Japan during the era known as Meiji Restoration – it remained the basis for Japanese society. Even today, over 100 years after this book was written, some of the described traditions and fundamental ideas still exist.

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