

Religions in Japan

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Religion in Japan

Shinto and **Buddhism** are Japan's two major religions. Shinto is as old as the Japanese culture, while Buddhism was imported from the mainland in the 6th century. Since then, the two religions have been co-existing relatively harmoniously and have even complimented each other to a certain degree. Most Japanese consider themselves Buddhist, Shintoist or both.

Religion does not play a big role in the everyday life of most Japanese people today. The average person typically follows the religious rituals at ceremonies like birth, weddings and funerals, may visit a shrine or temple on New Year and participates at local festivals (matsuri), most of which have a religious background.



Some prominent rocks are worshiped as kami.

Shinto

The introduction of Buddhism in the 6th century was followed by a few initial conflicts, however, the two religions were soon able to coexist and even complement each other. Many Buddhists viewed the kami as manifestations of Buddha.

People seek support from Shinto by praying at a home altar or by visiting shrines. A whole range of talismans are available at shrines for traffic safety, good health, success in business, safe childbirth, good exam performance and more.

A large number of wedding ceremonies are held in Shinto style. Death, however, is considered a source of impurity, and is left to Buddhism to deal with. Consequently, there are virtually no Shinto cemeteries, and most funerals are held in Buddhist style.



sacred shrine.

Shinto

- Chinto is a polytheistic religion, meaning that there are multiple gods that represent different aspects of worship by its followers

*Chinto is the “way of the gods” and shinto gods and goddesses are called kami.

* Kami- refers to anything that is above, high, special, unusual or suspicious in any way.

*There are 3 categories or types of kami in Shinto religion

1. **Abstract powers-** associated with nature. Certain weather events nature rocks or landscape formations, bodies of water, forests, ect.
2. **Family ancestors-** deceased ancestors whose essence lives on in the family as a revered and honored presence this is especially true of families with aristocratic lineages(rulers, emperor, ect) whose ancestors will be honored by the general population, not just the blood relatives.
3. **Souls of the auspicious dead-** especially soldiers and other war dead there are revered for their bravery commitment and sense. Many of the most prominent shinto shrines in japan are devoted to the worship of the kami of the war dead.



Shinto priest

- Priest can be male or female

Shinto Goddesses



Amaterasu- Goddess of the sun the most prominent and famous of the Shinto gods or kami. The name Amaterasu is derived from Amateru and means "shining in heaven". The meaning of her whole name, Amaterasu-ōmikami, is "the great august kami (deity) who shines in the heaven" is known as the "Land of the Rising Sun." the sun - appears on the Japanese national flag. The mythologies in Shinto describe her as the **divine ancestor of the Emperor of Japan's lineage.**

Shinto Goddesses



izanagi-forefather of the gods, also god of creation and life



izanami-is a goddess of both creation and death, as well as the former wife of the god Izanagi

Izanagi (イザナギ) Izanagi is the first male, forefather of the gods and god of creation and life. He and his wife Izanami were responsible to the birth of many kami and the islands of Japan. When he failed in saving Izanami from the land of the dead, Yomi due to childbirth, he begot Amaterasu from his left eye, Tsukuyomi-no-Mikoto from his right eye and Susanoo-no-Mikoto from his nose after a cleansing ritual after his return from there.

Shinto Goddesses



Fujin-Also known as Kami-no-Kaze, he is the Japanese god of the wind and one of the eldest Shinto gods, said to be present at the creation of the world.



RAIJIN-Also known as Raiden, he is the god of thunder and lightning, and is often paired with Fūjin.

Shinto Goddesses



OMOIKANE-The deity of wisdom and intelligence, who is always called upon to "ponder" and give good counsel in the deliberations of the heavenly deities.



Inari-The god or goddess of rice and fertility. His/her messengers and symbolic animal are foxes.



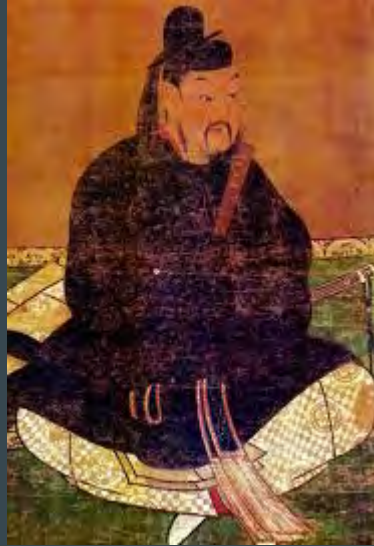
Ame no Uzume
Commonly called Uzume, she is the goddess of dawn and revelry, and is also known as The Great Persuader and The Heavenly Alarming Female.

Shinto Goddesses



HACHIMAN-

Also known as Hachiman-shin or Yawata no Kami, he is the god of war and the divine protector of Japan and its people. His symbolic animal and messenger is the dove.



TENJIN

 The god of scholarship

SUSANOO-

Reportedly called "Futsushi".

He is the god of storms as well as in some cases the god of the sea.

The Torii Gate

The torii gate is a religious symbol that is marked at the entrance to a sacred space. This symbol represents the transition between the finite world and the infinite world of the gods.



citations

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What is Buddhism?

According the dictionary of Buddhism. “The name given by the West to the Teachings of Gautama the Buddha (q.v.), but usually called by his followers the Buddha Dhamma. Buddhism is a way of life, a discipline; not a system of dogmas (not a god) to be accepted by the intellect. It is a way to live Reality, and not ideas concerning the nature of Reality.”(51)

What is Buddhist?

“Nominally, one born into the Buddhist religion, or one who accepts Buddhism as his religion by public recitation of Pansil (q.v0. Actually, one who studies, disseminates and endeavours to live the fundamental principles of the Buddha Dhamma”(51).



According the Hector Garcia, the “Buddhism arrived in Japan in the sixth century via China and Korea. Very fast expanded all over the country and become integrated with Shito. Buddhism seeks enlightenment through sacrifice and indifference. Many Buddhist concepts were introduced in the the Shinto religion”(18).

What is Shinto?

“In Japan known as Kami-no-Michi, the Way of the Gods. Form of ancestor and nature worship which is indigenous religion of Japan. Has its own style of architecture for numerous temples and shrines. The Torii arch is Shinto. The Kami are primarily personifications of the feeling of holiness which some things, as trees and waterfalls, give to the beholder; hence forces of nature”(178).

According to the book Geek, “Japanese culture don't believe in one religion but combine aspects of several religions in their daily lives, often unaware which one they're following” for example, it is absolutely normal to be baptized in the Shinto ritual and celebrate a funeral following Buddhist tradition”(18).

“Shinto is a polytheistic religion (believed in many gods) that originated in Japan. For Japanese culture. Life after death is not one of its concerns. Instead, for them the more important is seeking happiness in this life. There is no dogma, there is no clearly defined way of praying, there is no spiritual leader or revealed founder to emulate. Shinto is more philosophy or a way of life than a religion.

According to Shinto, nature is sacred. When we are in contact with nature. In Japan, many trees are considered sacred and it is said a god lives inside them. Many people under the trees often hang ema-wooden plaques with their wishes written on them for the god to make come true.

Shinto Gods

- Goddess of the sun
- **God of creation and life**
- God of the wind
- God of thunder and lightning
- God of war and the divine protector
- God of scholarship
- God of storms



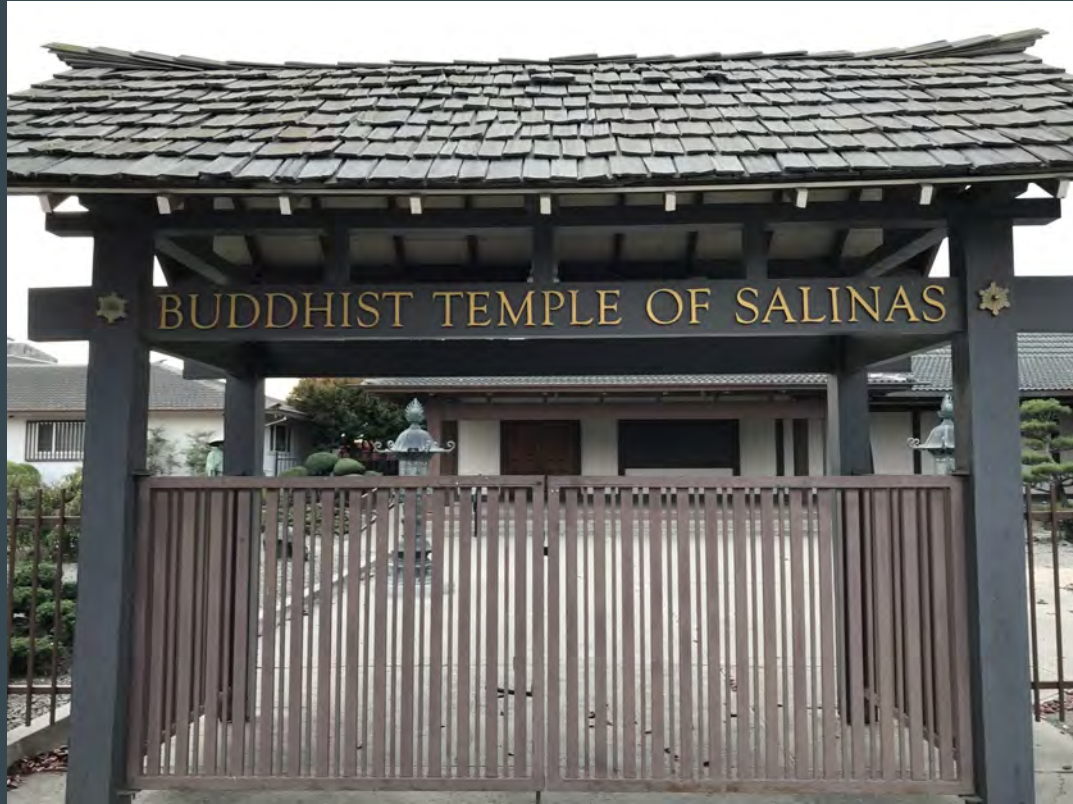
Buddhist Temple of Japanese Town



Buddhist Temple of Japanese Town



Buddhist Temple of Salinas



Buddhist Temple of Salinas



Thoughts of Buddha

In the light of his vision he has
found his freedom:

his thoughts are peace,
his words peace,
his work peace.

Perfect wisdom,
Perfect tranquility,
Perfect compassion
arise from
Our Love,
Our Sincerity,
Our Understanding.

The rule of friendship means
There should be mutual
Sympathy between them,
Each supplying what the other
Lack and trying
To benefit the other
Always using
Friendly and sincere words



Citation

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History

- Buddhism was introduced to Japan by Korean kingdom in 538 A.D.
- Prince Shotoku showed support for Buddhism 576-671 A.D.
- Buddhism was kept to the elitist class
- Six schools of Buddhism emerged in the Nara Period (710-784) A.D.
 - ◆ The schools were kept in one temple at this point
- Buddhism was kept to the elitist class
- The Kamakura Period (1192-1333 A.D.) brought Buddhism in to the common people's' lives and became part of the popular culture as well as the introduction of the various forms of Zen Buddhism
- Through it all, the Shinto religion persisted but finally began to gain dominance again during the Edo Period



Tōdai-ji (Buddhist Temple)

- Constructed in 740 in Nara, Japan
- Considered the most grand construction project on Japanese land
- Featured a bronze Buddha statue made of most of the bronze that Japan had mined
- The temple had the largest Hondo (Main Hall)
- Originally had two Pagodas
- In the 12th century a Sanmon (The Great South Gate) was constructed and is still standing
- Due to Genpei Civil, the temple was burned down and later reconstructed



Fushimi Inari Shrine

- Located in the Southern part of Kyoto
- Dedicated to the Shinto god of rice
- First shrine established in early 800's
- The one that stands today was constructed in 1499
- Feature thousands of torii Gates donated by companies and families
- The temple features a main hall
- There is a two to three hour scenic hike that features statues and an inner shrine
- Along the path and surrounding the shrine are statues of foxes that have rice plants in their mouths



Buddhist Temple Architecture

- **Sanmon** is the main gate that were originally started by zen buddhism and feature three entrances that represent a different form of enlightenment
- **Hondo** : is the main hall
- **Kodo** : ceremony hall
- **Suro**: bell and/or drum tower
- **Pagodas**: tall, tiered buildings that hold valuable objects of the temple
- Some feature housing quarters for priest and princes



Ruriko Temple



Senso-ji Temple

Shinto Temple Architecture

- **Torii gates and Statues** of animals that are used to keep away evil from the shrine
- **Hoden** is the main hall of the shrine where the kami is said to live
- **Haiden** is the prayer hall, which has the shrine for offering
- **Washing station** between Torii Gate Hoden
- Besides these main structures there are halls for:
 - **Food offering**
 - **Sacred waiting**
 - **Dancing**



Miyajima/ Floating Torii Gates



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Shikoku Pilgrimage History



Shakiko Pilgrimage-some facts and details



The goal of the Shikoku pilgrimage



Means of transportation



Pilgrimage clothes and accessories



continued

1. Bow
2. Purification
3. Ring the bell
4. Name slips-sutras
5. Candles-incense-donation
6. Read the sutras



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Thank You