

# Buddhas And Kami In Japan

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## CAMACHO HANCOCK

*Japanese New Religions in the West* Brill Archive  
 Helen Hardacre offers a sweeping, comprehensive history of Shinto, the tradition that is practiced by some 80 percent of the Japanese people and underlies the institution of the Emperor.

**Shinto in History** Read Books Ltd  
 Written by one of the leading scholars of Japanese religion, *Rage and Ravage* is the third installment of a milestone project in our understanding of the mythico-ritual system of esoteric Buddhism—specifically the nature and roles of deities in the religious world of medieval Japan and beyond. Bernard Faure introduces readers to medieval Japanese religiosity and shows the centrality of the gods in religious discourse and ritual; in doing so he moves away from the usual textual, historical, and sociological approaches that constitute the “method” of current religious studies. Throughout, he engages theoretical insights drawn from structuralism, post-structuralism, and Actor-Network Theory to retrieve the “implicit pantheon” (as opposed to the “explicit orthodox pantheon”) of esoteric Japanese Buddhism (Mikkyō). In volumes one and two, *The Fluid Pantheon and Protectors and Predators*, Faure argued against a polarity or dichotomy between buddhas and kami by emphasizing the existence of deities that did not belong to either category, and he rejected the retrospective notion of “hybridity.” The present work makes a similar case about the reified distinction between gods and demons to show that, due to the fluid nature of the Japanese pantheon, these terms do not represent stable identities: Gods can become demons, and demons are sometimes deified. Divine protectors were often former predators, and in some instances they retained their predatory features even after being converted. After emphasizing the demonic aspects of devas as “gods or spirits of obstacles” in the earlier volumes, Faure now focuses on the deva-like or “divine” aspects of deities that have been described as “demonic.” *Rage and Ravage* and its companion volumes persuade readers that the gods constituted a central part of medieval Japanese religion and that the latter cannot be reduced to a simplistic confrontation, parallelism, or complementarity between some monolithic teachings known as “Buddhism” and “Shinto.” Once these reductionist labels and categories are discarded, a new and fascinating religious landscape begins to unfold.

**Buddhism and Buddhists in Japan** Springer  
 Originally published in 1934, this book contains a wealth of information on Shintoism, the indigenous religion of Japan, and is highly recommended for inclusion on the bookshelf of any with an

interest in Japanese culture and religion.

[Religions of Japan](#) University of Hawaii Press

"Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) was one of the first Westerners to find that Eastern thought and religion satisfied both his emotions and his intellect where Western religions had failed. He remains among the few most important interpreters to the West of all aspects of Japanese life and thought. Hearn came to America at 19 and, despite poverty and hardship, nevertheless gained a reputation as an able journalist. He had published three books and was well on the road to achieving lasting fame as a writer in the West but found a new and happier existence when he went to Japan. There he married a Japanese lady who bore him three children, and was able to gain a livelihood by teaching at the universities. He labored persistently, until his premature death in 1904, to understand all the facets of the country and the nation. His descriptions of his travels and contacts with the Japanese people, together with his profound study of Shintoism and Buddhism, established him as one of the great writers of his time. Hearn came to live in Japan permanently at the moment when the government and the upper classes began quite frenziedly to transform Japan into a Westernized, industrial society. Hearn had little faith in this process and foresaw the evils it would bring. He and a few like-minded friends played an extraordinarily significant role in persuading Japanese officials to preserve parts of Japan's priceless artistic and religious heritage which, under the new dispensation, had been left to rot in abandoned temples and monasteries. The chapters of this book are taken from several of the sixteen volumes of Hearn's collected works. They provide perhaps his most enduring writings on Shinto and Buddhism. When Hearn deals with Buddhism he does not concern himself with the different sects but dwells, instead, upon the broad teaching common to all varieties of Buddhism and explains how the Culture of Japan has absorbed it and recreated it in a form native to the land. Hearn was a bold pioneer in his explanation of the historical evolution of Shintoism at a time when Japanese scholars hesitated to treat the subject objectively. It was the national religion and its myths established the divine origin and rise of the Japanese Empire. It was therefore an act of intellectual courage for Hearn to show that Shintoism was a primitive religious development; he also broke new ground when he explained the way in which primitive Shinto had developed and fused with Buddhism in the Middle Ages. Nor did his love for Japan obscure his clear vision of the uses of Shinto mythology for the preparation of totalitarianism and militarism. Hearn's writings, translated into Japanese, remain a vital and important part of Japanese culture. Numerous books and a great deal of newspaper and periodical literature about him were published recently in Japan on the occasion of the centennial. For Hearn's writings

succeeded in saving for future Japanese generations much of its cultural and religious heritage. Perhaps the most difficult and complex aspect of Japanese culture are its religions; in this sphere, Hearn achieves the signal feat of being able to explain their religions successfully both to the West and to the Japanese who came after him."--Dust jacket.

*The Religions of Japan* Routledge

A quick review of Japanese history and a detailed account of the country's religions.

*Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition* University of Hawaii Press

This accessible guide to the development of Japan's indigenous religion from ancient times to the present day offers an illuminating introduction to the myths, sites and rituals of kami worship, and their role in Shinto's enduring religious identity. Offers a unique new approach to Shinto history that combines critical analysis with original research Examines key evolutionary moments in the long history of Shinto, including the Meiji Revolution of 1868, and provides the first critical history in English or Japanese of the Hie shrine, one of the most important in all Japan Traces the development of various shrines, myths, and rituals through history as uniquely diverse phenomena, exploring how and when they merged into the modern notion of Shinto that exists in Japan today Challenges the historic stereotype of Shinto as the unchanging, all-defining core of Japanese culture

*Religious History of Japan* Oxford University Press on Demand  
 The philosophy of Buddhism, originating in India, has undergone considerable changes in its adoption in the Far East. It has, in Japan, assumed a more practical aspect, and has come to play an important role in the everyday life of action. But in this process Japanese Buddhism has split itself into many sects with greatly differing doctrines, though all profess a method destined to elevate the soul and a method of action. The understanding of this spiritual movement is an important key to the understanding of the contemporary Japanese state of mind, and *The Buddhist Sects of Japan* gives the first complete account of it in the English language.

**Buddhism, Japan's Cultural Identity** Cambridge University Press  
*Shinto - A Short History* provides an introductory outline of the historical development of Shinto from the ancient period of Japanese history until the present day. Shinto does not offer a readily identifiable set of teachings, rituals or beliefs; individual shrines and kami deities have led their own lives, not within the confines of a narrowly defined Shinto, but rather as participants in a religious field that included Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian and folk elements. Thus, this book approaches Shinto as a series of historical 'religious systems' rather than attempting to identify a

timeless 'Shinto essence'. This history focuses on three aspects of Shinto practice: the people involved in shrine worship, the institutional networks that ensured continuity, and teachings and rituals. By following the interplay between these aspects in different periods, a pattern of continuity and discontinuity is revealed that challenges received understandings of the history of Shinto. This book does not presuppose prior knowledge of Japanese religion, and is easily accessible for those new to the subject.

*Buddhism and the Transformation of Old Age in Medieval Japan* University of Hawaii Press

When we read about the profundity and complexity of the Buddhist tradition, we are hard pressed to imagine how the earliest Japanese priests propagated this tradition and how the common people accepted it. Kyokai's collection of 'miraculous stories throw much light on this.

*A New History of Shinto* IndyPublish.com

Nine out of ten Japanese claim some affiliation with Shinto, but in the West the religion remains the least studied of the major Asian spiritual traditions. It is so interlaced with Japanese cultural values and practices that scholarly studies usually focus on only one of its dimensions: Shinto as a "nature religion," an "imperial state religion," a "primal religion," or a "folk amalgam of practices and beliefs." Thomas Kasulis' fresh approach to Shinto explains with clarity and economy how these different aspects interrelate. As a philosopher of religion, he first analyzes the experiential aspect of Shinto spirituality underlying its various ideas and practices. Second, as a historian of Japanese thought, he sketches several major developments in Shinto doctrines and institutions from prehistory to the present, showing how its interactions with Buddhism, Confucianism, and nationalism influenced its expression in different times and contexts. In Shinto's idiosyncratic history, Kasulis finds the explicit interplay between two forms of spirituality: the "existential" and the "essentialist." Although the dynamic between the two is particularly striking and accessible in the study of Shinto, he concludes that a similar dynamic may be found in the history of other religions as well. Two decades ago, Kasulis' Zen Action/Zen Person brought an innovative understanding to the ideas and practices of Zen Buddhism, an understanding influential in the ensuing decades of philosophical Zen studies. Shinto: The Way Home promises to do the same for future Shinto studies.

*Shinto* New York : C. Scribner's Sons, 1912 [c1895]

Anna Andreeva challenges the twentieth-century narrative of Shinto as an unbroken, monolithic tradition. By studying how and why religious practitioners affiliated with different religious institutions responded to esoteric Buddhism's teachings, this book demonstrates that kami worship in medieval Japan was a result of complex negotiations.

**Kami-no-michi** ABDO

Rennyō Shōnin (1415-1499) is considered the 'second founder' of Shin Buddhism. This book deals with the major questions surrounding the phenomenal growth of Hongōji under Rennyō's leadership, such as the source of charisma, the soteriological implications of his thought against the background of other movements in Pure Land Buddhism, and more.

**Rennyō and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism**

University of Hawaii Press

In Japan, two religions predominate--Buddhism and Shintoism--and the Japanese people see no contradiction in practicing both: worshipping Buddha even as they revere the kami, the divine beings that populate the country and define the indigenous faith of Shintoism. In Shintoism and the Religions of Japan, C. Scott Littleton illuminates this unusual spiritual pluralism and shows how it has fertilized a vast and varied religious landscape. Littleton describes the origins and development of Shinto (or Kami no Michi, "Way of the Gods"), the introduction of Buddhism a millennium and a half ago, the rise of various sects of Buddhism (some indigenous to Japan), and the role of the imperial court and the shogunate in the nation's religious life. Here too is a clear and succinct summary of Shintoism's teeming pantheon of spiritual figures, the holy writings of Shintoism, and the islands' landscape of holy sanctuaries. Littleton explains how Buddhism has been

reinterpreted in light of Japan's indigenous traditions (some monumental statues of the Buddha are worshipped as manifestations of kami), and describes the "new religions" that flourished during the Meiji period of the late nineteenth century, after Japan once again opened up to the outside world. Writing with grace and clarity, he captures the essential features of Japanese religious life, including the countless local festivals and rituals, the importance of harmony and enlightenment, and concepts of death and salvation. Lavishly illustrated with some thirty color photographs, sprinkled with boxed features that focus on fascinating issues, this volume offers a marvelous tour of Japan's distinctive spiritual experience.

**Shinto** Routledge

The first English-language overview of the interaction of Buddhism and Shintō in Japanese culture.

**Buddhas and Kami in Japan** University of Hawaii Press

Scholars have long remarked on the frequency with which Japanese myths portrayed gods (kami) as old men or okina. Many of these "sacred elders" came to be featured in premodern theater, most prominently in Noh. In the closing decades of the twentieth-century, as the number of Japan's senior citizens climbed steadily, the sacred elder of premodern myth became a subject of renewed interest and was seen by some as evidence that the elderly in Japan had once been accorded a level of respect unknown in recent times. In *Buddhism and the Transformation of Old Age in Medieval Japan*, Edward Drott charts the shifting sets of meanings ascribed to old age in medieval Japan, tracing the processes by which the aged body was transformed into a symbol of otherworldly power and the cultural, political, and religious circumstances that inspired its reimagination. Drott examines how the aged body was used to conceptualize forms of difference and to convey religious meanings in a variety of texts: official chronicles, literary works, Buddhist legends and didactic tales. In early Japan, old age was most commonly seen as a mark of negative distinction, one that represented the ugliness, barrenness, and pollution against which the imperial court sought to define itself. From the late-Heian period, however, certain Buddhist authors seized upon the aged body as a symbolic medium through which to challenge traditional dichotomies between center and margin, high and low, and purity and defilement, crafting narratives that associated aged saints and avatars with the cults, lineages, sacred sites, or religious practices these authors sought to promote. Contributing to a burgeoning literature on religion and the body, *Buddhism and the Transformation of Old Age in Medieval Japan* applies approaches developed in gender studies to "denaturalize" old age as a matter of representation, identity, and performance. By tracking the ideological uses of old age in premodern Japan, this work breaks new ground, revealing the role of religion in the construction of generational categories and the ways in which religious ideas and practices can serve not only to naturalize, but also challenge "common sense" about the body.

*Encounter Or Syncretism* Tuttle Publishing

The hero Momotaro, the sun goddess Amaterasu, and the Buddha are important subjects of Japanese mythology. *Japanese Gods, Heroes, and Mythology* explores the gods, heroes, creatures, and stories of Japanese mythology, in addition to examining their influence today. Aligned to Common Core Standards and correlated to state standards. Core Library is an imprint of Abdo Publishing, a division of ABDO.

**Japanese Gods, Heroes, and Mythology** Harvard University Press

This volume offers a multidisciplinary approach to the combinatory tradition that dominated premodern and early modern Japanese religion, known as honji suijaku (originals and their traces). It questions received, simplified accounts of the interactions between Shinto and Japanese Buddhism, and presents a more dynamic and variegated religious world, one in which the deities' Buddhist originals and local traces did not constitute one-to-one associations, but complex combinations of multiple deities based on semiotic operations, doctrines, myths, and legends. The book's essays, all based on specific case studies, discuss the honji suijaku paradigm from a number of

different perspectives, always integrating historical and doctrinal analysis with interpretive insights.

**Japanese Religions** University of Hawaii Press

"Shinto is a tradition native to Japan that arose naturally on the eastern fringe of the Eurasian continent and was woven over many years into the fabric of people's everyday lives. When Buddhism entered the country in the sixth century, the two religions--rather than competing with or seeking to marginalize the other--coalesced, embracing many other folk deities as well to create a singular combinatory religious culture that continues to permeate Japan's cultural life today. This English translation of a book originally written in Japanese by one of the country's most knowledgeable, penetrating, and eclectic scholars of Japanese religion and spirituality presents an engaging overview of the country's religious legacy, as well as offering insights into how religion can become a force for peaceful coexistence, rather than violent extremism"--Back cover.

**The Buddhist Sects of Japan** Taylor & Francis

"An excellently rounded introduction by an eminent Shinto scholar."--Library Journal Shinto, the indigenous faith of the Japanese people, continues to fascinate and mystify both the casual visitor to Japan and the long-time resident. Relatively unknown among the religions of the world, Shinto: The Kami Way provides an enlightening window into this Japanese faith. In its general aspects, Shinto is more than a religious faith. It is an amalgam of attitudes, ideas, and ways of doing things that through two millennia and more have become an integral part of the way of the Japanese people. Shinto is both a personal faith in the kami--objects of worship in Shinto and an honorific for noble, sacred spirits--and a communal way of life according to the mind of the kami. This introduction unveils Shinto's spiritual characteristics and discusses the architecture and function of Shinto shrines. Further examination of Shinto's lively festivals, worship, music, and sacred regalia illustrates Shinto's influence on all levels of Japanese life. Fifteen photographs, numerous drawings and Dr. Ono's text introduce the reader to two millennia of indigenous Japanese belief in the kami and in communal life. Chapters include: The Kami Way Shrines Worship and Festivals Political and Social Characteristics Some Spiritual Characteristics

**The Faith of Japan** Oxford University Press

The first broad study of Japanese mandalas to appear in a Western language, this volume interprets mandalas as sanctified realms where identification between the human and the sacred occurs. The author investigates eighth- to seventeenth-century paintings from three traditions: Esoteric Buddhism, Pure Land Buddhism, and the kami-worshipping (Shinto) tradition. It is generally recognized that many of these mandalas are connected with texts and images from India and the Himalayas. A pioneering theme of this study is that, in addition to the South Asian connections, certain paradigmatic Japanese mandalas reflect pre-Buddhist Chinese concepts, including geographical concepts. In convincing and lucid prose, ten Grotenhuis chronicles an intermingling of visual, doctrinal, ritual, and literary elements in these mandalas that has come to be seen as characteristic of the Japanese religious tradition as a whole. This beautifully illustrated work begins in the first millennium B.C.E. in China with an introduction to the Book of Documents and ends in present-day Japan at the sacred site of Kumano. Ten Grotenhuis focuses on the Diamond and Womb World mandalas of Esoteric Buddhist tradition, on the Taima mandala and other related mandalas from the Pure Land Buddhist tradition, and on mandalas associated with the kami-worshipping sites of Kasuga and Kumano. She identifies specific sacred places in Japan with sacred places in India and with Buddhist cosmic diagrams. Through these identifications, the realm of the buddhas is identified with the realms of the kami and of human beings, and Japanese geographical areas are identified with Buddhist sacred geography. Explaining why certain fundamental Japanese mandalas look the way they do and how certain visual forms came to embody the sacred, ten Grotenhuis presents works that show a complex mixture of Indian Buddhist elements, pre-Buddhist Chinese elements, Chinese Buddhist elements, and indigenous Japanese elements.

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