



Manchester
Metropolitan
University

Shintoism

Disclaimer

This resource has been prepared to help staff and students in raising awareness, increasing knowledge and to assist their work at MMU.

The resource has been prepared according to the 'Faith Communities Navigator' published in 2007 by the Faith Regen Foundation and guidance from

MMU Chaplains. The interpretation of the faith, observances and representation of standards etc. are part of this professional judgement and should not be construed as an authorised or official interpretation. MMU has sought to acknowledge the use of any published material in the text of this resource. Any inadvertent omissions deemed necessary will be corrected upon notification of this error.

Key beliefs

Often referred to as the 'Japanese Religion' and is based around rituals rather than concrete beliefs. Shinto is the 'way of Gods' these can be spiritual being rather than Gods in the traditional sense, they can also be symbols of nature.

Worship elements

Worshippers honour the Kami by putting a small offering in a collection box and then bowing and reciting a short prayer at the shrine of Kami; this is said to bring good fortune. Hands and mouth are washed when entering sacred place.

Places of worship

Community worship takes place at a shrine in the village/town.

Festivals and days of worship

Matsuri - refers to any occasion for offering thanks and praise to a deity at a shrine

Oshogatsu - (New Year) festival marked on 1 January. It's traditional at New Year to visit a shrine. People go to thank the kami, ask the kami to give them good fortune in the coming year, and make their New Year resolutions in the presence of the kami.

Seijin Shiki - (Adults' Day) takes place on 15 January, on this day those Japanese who have had their 20th birthday in the previous year attend a shrine to give thanks.

Haru Matsuri - (Spring festivals) January to May is a time for many festivals, haru matsuri, often centred on the planting of crops. Different shrines countrywide hold their own celebrations on varying dates.

Aki Matsuri - (Autumn festivals) Late summer and autumn feature many aki matsuri, autumn festivals, often thanking the kami for a good harvest. Different shrines countrywide hold their own celebrations on varying dates.

Shichigosan - (7-5-3 festival) celebrated on 15 November, or the nearest Sunday. On this day parents take boys of three and five years old and girls of three and seven to give thanks to the Gods for a healthy life so far and pray for a safe and successful future.

Rei-sai - (Annual Festival) this is a yearly festival on a day particular relevant to the shrine where it takes place. During this festival the local kami are carried in effigy round the town or village in an ornate litter (like a sedan-chair) called a mikoshi. The procession is often accompanied by musicians and dancers, and the whole occasion is celebratory. More serious ceremonies also take place within the shrine.

Text

Holy books for Shinto are the Kojiki; collections of ancient myths and traditional learning passed down orally.

The diversity calendar can be found at www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/equalities

This fact sheet has been produced using information found in the 'Faith Communities Navigator' published in 2007 by the Faith Regen Foundation and www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian with guidance from MMU Chaplains.