

Chinese religions and

Religion



Chinese and Japanese Religions Both Japanese and Chinese religions are polytheists. This paper will put more light on what Japanese and Chinese religions entails.

Chinese Religion

Most religions demand their faithfuls to be in their religion and not in the other. That is, a faithful cannot be a Muslim and at the same time a Christian. However, this is possible in Chinese religion where a member of can be in Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian at the same time. There exist some basic concepts of Chinese religions that differentiate it from other religions. First, Chinese religion recognise multiple god and spirits. They sacrifice to the god of heaven and earth especially during spring to achieve a bountiful harvest. Other local deities included beneficial spirits known as Shen and evil spirits known as Kuei. Secondly, Chinese used the concept of Yin and Yang to explain the way the universe works. That is Yan describes the negative forces of nature while Yang the positive forces. Thirdly, Chinese people stand out for their filial piety and ancestral worship. Every Chinese home has a small shrine or altars to offer sacrifices to old generation and ancestors.

Fourthly, divination is common in Chinese religion and they believe that unity of the universe allowed future events to be predicted. For instance, heating of a shell and divining the future through the cracks that occurred. In the eleventh century B. C. E political unrest through rebellion of Chou affected the Chinese religion. Chou rulers suggested existence of one god called Shang Ti who they asserted to be more than an ancestor. A great confusion after this rebellion resulted to three main Chinese religions the Confucians, the Legalists, and the Mohists.

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Japanese religion

Shinto is the oldest native Japanese religion that describes formation of Japan as a land superior to other lands with its shrines commemorating its great heroes. The word Shinto comes from Chinese words Shen and Tao, which mean the way of the gods. Shinto was developed to distinguish native Japanese from other emerging religions from China like Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. In the sixth century C. E, Buddhism introduced by the Chinese and the Koreans made Japanese collect their myths and rituals in the name of kami-no-michi. This created a distinction between the native religions with the foreign. The myths allowed for a limited number of gods, goddesses, spirits, ancestral worship, and forms of animism.

Although Chinese religions had a great influence on Japanese religion, Japanese used Shinto to depict their own revelation of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. They developed their own Buddhism, distinctive from other Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism is one of these religions that included a family of religions and was elastic in nature. It emphasized meditation (Dhyana) as the gate to religious truths. Japanese helped in the invention of other forms of Buddhism including Pure Land and Nichiren. In 1889, things changes with the wave of industrialisation, the constitution allowed development of other Shinto with only one of them receiving support from the government. At this point, Christianity found its way in this country. Three types of Shinto that received support from the government includes State Shinto, Sectarian Shinto, and Domestic Shinto and each Japanese was needed to visit them at least once in their life time. In conclusion, Shinto relates to faith healing, ascetic practices, and purification of the body and it

is a daily worship of every home known as Kami-dana. It includes flower offering, lanterns, incense, food, and drink to the gods.