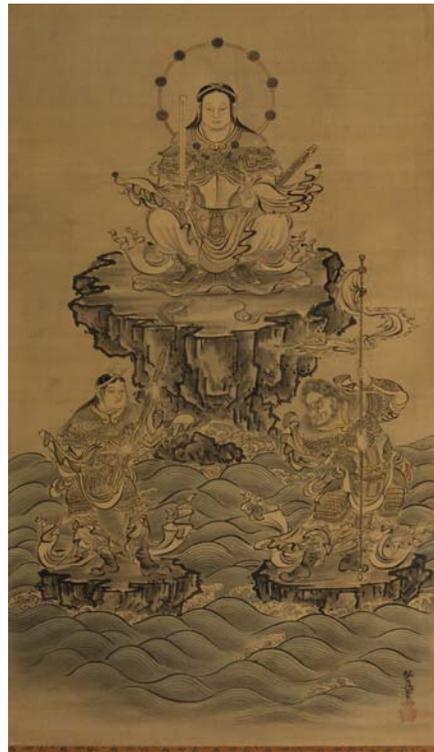


ISSN 1368-6534

# *The Worship of Stars in Japanese Religious Practice*

**Ed. Lucia Dolce**



*Special Double Issue of CULTURE AND COSMOS: A Journal  
of the History of Astrology and Cultural Astronomy*  
**Vol. 10 no 1 and 2,  
Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter 2006**

**Published in association with the Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology in  
Culture, University of Wales, Lampeter, and the Centre for the Study of Japanese  
Religions, The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.**

## CONTENTS

- Lucia Dolce:** *Introduction: The worship of celestial bodies in Japan: politics, rituals and icons;*  
**Lucia Dolce:** *The State of the Field: A basic bibliography on astrological cultic practices in Japan;*  
**Hayashi Makoto:** *The Tokugawa Shoguns and Yin-yang knowledge (onmyōdō);*  
**John Breen:** *Inside Tokugawa religion: stars, planets and the calendar-as-method;*  
**Mark Teeuwen:** *The imperial shrines of Ise: An ancient star cult?;*  
**Lilla Russell-Smith:** *Stars and Planets in Chinese and Central Asian Buddhist Art from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Centuries;*  
**Matsumoto Ikuyo:** *Two Mediaeval Manuscripts on the Worship of the Stars from the Fujii Eikan Collection;*  
**Tsuda Tetsuei:** *The Images of Stars and Their Significance in Japanese Esoteric Buddhist Art;*  
**Meri Arichi:** *Seven Stars of Heaven and Seven Shrines on Earth: The Big Dipper and the Hie Shrine in the Medieval Period;*  
**Gaynor Sekimori:** *Star Rituals and Nikko Shugendō.*

### TO ORDER THE WORSHIP OF THE STARS IN JAPANESE RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

The cover price of this special edition is £20, or £7.50 through the CSJR

To order a copy mail the form below to Dr Nicholas Campion, Editor *Culture and Cosmos*, 51 Bellevue Crescent, Bristol BS8 4TF

OR

Email your mailing address, visa/mastercard number (in successive e mails for security, if you wish), name on card and expiry date to [subs@caol.demon.co.uk](mailto:subs@caol.demon.co.uk)

**\*\*NB. Credit card subscriptions will be billed to NCE-Bristol\*\***

Details of back issues are on the web at [www.CultureAndCosmos.com](http://www.CultureAndCosmos.com)

I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER THE SPECIAL ISSUE *CULTURE AND COSMOS* ON THE WORSHIP OF THE STARS IN JAPANESE RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque/sterling money order for £\_\_\_ payable to Culture and Cosmos.

Payment by visa/mastercard: card number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_/\_\_\_

Issue number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Credit cards will be charges to NCE Bristol)

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode/zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

E Mail \_\_\_\_\_

The Worship of Stars in Japanese Religious Practice. (Special double issue of Culture and Cosmos: A Journal of the History of Astrology and Cultural Astronomy Vol. 10, nos. 1 & 2, Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter 2006.) Omamori, which has been known since the Tokugawa period, still exist in modern Japanese society as a talisman. There are some questions about what and how the shape of this Japanese charm is. By using literature study approach this article will describe the existence of omamori in Japanese beliefs which includes [Show full abstract] the definition, form and type of omamori. Omamori is spiritual charms, talismans and amulets in the Japanese religious tradition that possess the power to ward off misfortune and procure good luck. Star Mandala Modern Japanese Reproduction Ichijikinrin Butch! at center. Seven Stars of Big Dipper, plus the Nine Planets, appear in inner section. A to z index. Twelve Zodiac Animals appear in middle section. Source: Lucia Dolce, pp. 16-17, The Worship of Stars in Japanese Religious Practice. > As a deification of the North Pole Star, Myken is closely associated with the Little Dipper (where the north star is located). But because of confusion between the Little Dipper and Big Dipper, she is also known as Hokushin Bosatsu (Pole Star Myken), Hokuto Myken Bosatsu (Big Dipper Myken), or Hokuto-ten (Deva of the Big Dipper). In Japan, worship of the northern Pole Star along with the seven stars of the Big Dipper (Hokuto Shichisei 北極七宿) is a syncretic blend of Buddhism, Taoism, Onmyōdō (Yin-Yang Divination), and local kami cults, but it is especially important within Esoteric Buddhism, and from the Heian period (794-1180) onward, Myken was venerated under various guises as the central star controlling all other celestial bodies, one believed to control the life and fortunes of the people, one who protected not only the emperor and country, but also warded off diseases, prevented calamities of fire and other disasters, increased life spans, and healed eye diseases. Source: Lucia Dolce, pp. 16-17, The Worship of Stars in Japanese Religious Practice.> Religion in Japan manifests primarily in Shintoism and in Buddhism, the two main faiths, which Japanese people often practice simultaneously. According to estimates, as many as 80% of the populace follow Shinto rituals to some degree, worshiping ancestors and spirits at domestic altars and public shrines. An almost equally high number is reported as Buddhist. Syncretic combinations of both, known generally as shinbutsu-shūgō, are common; they represented Japan's dominant religious practice before the... 54 The Worship of Celestial Bodies in Japan: Politics, Rituals and Icons Lucia Dolce Interest in the movements of stars and other celestial bodies, as well as belief in their relevance in human affairs, characterized traditional cultures worldwide, and Japan was no exception. In pre-modern Japan astronomy and astrology were equally regarded as science and required specialists able to identify the course of the stars and to decode its consequences in the life of the state and of individuals. Religious places devoted to astral deities are found throughout the city, testifying to the variety of practices related to the stars that characterized Japanese culture. Here I will present a few of these representative cultic sites and their deities.