



筥崎宮



The Hakozaeki Hachiman Shrine

One of the three great shrines dedicated to Hachiman, famous for warding off evil influences and bringing good fortune.

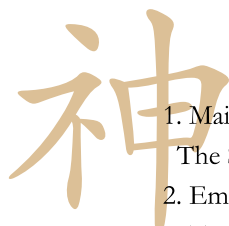
筥崎宮の御鎮座

The Origin of the Hakozaeki Shrine

The Hakozaeki Shrine is one of Japan's three great shrines dedicated to the kami Hachiman, the spirit of the Japanese Emperor Ōjin (AD 200-310). Various explanations exist as to how the shrine was founded, but it has been problematic to establish which of these accounts is the most reliable. In 921, having received an oracle from the gods, Emperor Daigo (885-930) in his own hand wrote the calligraphy - the four characters carved on a plaque seen on the shrine's tower gate - "May the enemy nations prostrate themselves [in defeat]" and he also erected a grand shrine here facing the mainland of Asia. In 923, Hachiman, the deity of the shrine in Usa (in the modern Oita prefecture), was transferred and enshrined here at Hakozaeki. Given the proximity of Fukuoka to the continent, from early times it was not only a gateway of foreign culture into Japan but also a strategic location for national defense. The precinct of this shrine resonates with a profound sense of both history and the divine.

御祭神

The Enshrined Kami



1. Main Kami: the Emperor Ōjin, fifteenth Emperor of Japan, also called Hachiman. The Shinto patron kami of war and of the Minamoto clan.
2. Empress Jingū (169-269), Emperor Ōjin's mother, famous for her martial arts' exploits.
3. Tamayori-hime, a female sea kami from ancient Shinto myth and mother of Japan's first emperor, Emperor Jimmu (712-585 BC).

Note: Kami bear little resemblance to the God in the Judeo-Christian spiritual tradition; they are more similar in character to the gods of Greek mythology. Kami are the ancestral spirits of deceased human beings who are believed to inhabit the features of the natural world and which make both nature and human beings fruitful. In Japan, kami are believed to be either helpful or harmful. Rituals in the kami tradition of belief are performed to drive away disease and bad luck and to summon good fortune. Beneficial kami are the spirits of the locality that are petitioned for the blessings of health, wealth and happiness. This tradition of kami veneration has a decidedly "this world", rather than "other worldly" emphasis. Prior to and during the Second World War, the Emperor of Japan was considered to be a kami, but this does not mean he was considered to be God. The Emperor of Japan has, however, been revered as arahitogami, or an ancestral spirit manifest in human form, since very ancient times.



御祭神と御神徳

The Enshrined Kami and Their Divine Virtues

The Hakozaki Shrine is dedicated to the main kami, the Emperor Ōjin; his mother, the Empress Jingū; and the female kami Tamayori-hime. Ōjin, the fourth son of the Emperor Chūai (149-200), was born in the local village of Kata (now the town of Umi, Kasuya district, Fukuoka prefecture). Ōjin was the fifteenth Emperor of Japan.

During his reign, Emperor Ōjin encouraged both farming and the building of irrigation facilities. He also summoned craftsmen from the ancient Korean kingdom of Kudara and the ancient Chinese kingdom of Wu, who brought with them advanced techniques of spinning, sewing and weaving. Furthermore, he invited mainland scholars who brought with them books and Chinese language, which served to establish a foundation for the further development of Japanese culture. Ōjin left behind many other worthy accomplishments and after his demise, given the proximity of this location to his birthplace, a shrine was founded here at Hakozaki.

Given Ōjin's accomplishments in life, he is considered the patron deity of (1) commerce and industry; (2) scholarship and the arts; and (3) martial arts' pursuits. Also, the fact that Ōjin's umbilical cord is buried here at Hakozaki, this shrine is also revered as the kami of safe childbirth. Since this location has been important for foreign travel since early times, Hachiman is also popularly considered to be the guardian deity of travel. Ōjin is also petitioned to grant general safety of the household and for prosperity in business ventures.

Furthermore, Fukuoka is the site of the attempted Mongol invasions that took place in 1274 and again in 1281, when the "Divine Wind" or "Kamikaze" completely overwhelmed the invading forces, saving Japan from foreign conquest on both occasions. As such, it is also widely believed that Hachiman is a kami that wards off evil and brings good fortune.

Ever since the time of the attempted Mongol invasions, the kami Hachiman has been considered to be the guardian of the nation of Japan, and at times is also called the preeminent kami of Fukuoka prefecture (chikuzen ichi-no-miya). Over the centuries, even though change has come to the Hakozaki Shrine, the devout belief in the kami Hachiman has not diminished. Even at the present, worshippers make pilgrimages here from the length and breadth of Japan.





御本殿・拜殿（重要文化財）

The Main Hall and Worship Hall of the Hakozaki Shrine have been designated Important Cultural Treasures by the National Government of Japan

In June of the year 921, having received an oracle from the kami, the important government official Fujiwara Makiason had a Main Hall (honden) built here at Hakozaki. In October of 995, another member of the powerful Fujiwara clan, Fujiwara Arikuni, arrived in Kyushu from Kyoto to also serve as a government official. Arikuni is said to have constructed a covered breezeway around the Main Hall. In the Heian period, the brilliant, red-lacquered Main Hall of the Hakozaki Hachiman Shrine must have been a wonderful sight, constructed as it was in a pine grove on the white sands of Hakata Bay (Hakata is the old name of Fukuoka).

However, in the intervening centuries, Hakozaki shrine was repeatedly razed to the ground, first by the marauding Mongols, and later during the many civil wars that raged in Japan. The present Main Hall and Worship Hall were rebuilt by the warlord Ōuchi Yoshitaka (1507-1551) in 1546. The Main Hall is divided into nine rooms and is an example of the “flowing” (nagare) style of shrine architecture. The Main Hall is embellished with lacquer, covered with a roof of Japanese cedar bark, and excellently exhibits the architectural characteristics of the age in which it was constructed. The Worship Hall, directly before the Main Hall, has a stage that is used for offerings of kagura dance for the kami. Its roof is an example of kirizuma construction that also utilizes thatch made from many layers of Japanese cedar bark. The plain, wood detail of the Worship Hall is solemn and impressive.



楼門（重要文化財）

The Tower Gate has also been designated an Important Cultural Treasure

The shrine's Tower Gate (romon) was built by the warlord Kobayakawa Takakage (1533-1597). The huge roof of this structure occupies almost twice the area that is enclosed within the Main Hall. The roof of the Tower Gate is an example of the irimoya style and is also covered with Japanese cedar bark. On the upper portion of the two doors of the Tower Gate, one can see the three-leafed, paulownia tree crest of one of the three great unifiers of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598). These relief carvings of the paulownia crest are said to have been carved by the famous artist Hidari Jingorō (1584-1644).

The Tower Gate is also called “The Gate of Prostrating Enemies” because above the entrance there is a plaque that bears the inscription: “May the enemy nations prostrate themselves [in defeat].” According to some accounts, this inscription is thought to have been written by the hand of Emperor Kameyama (1249-1305) and was a petition to the kami Hachiman to defeat the Mongol invaders.





千利休奉納の石灯籠（重要文化財）

The Votive Lantern, offered by the famous Tea Master Sen no Rikyū, has also been designated an Important Cultural Treasure

Within the precincts of the Hakozaki Shrine, there are many stone lanterns that have been offered by the faithful to the kami Hachiman. But only one is inscribed low on the fire box, “The first year of the Kano reign,” or 1350 according to the Western calendar. In 1587, the eminent tea master Sen no Rikyū (1522-1591) accompanied Toyotomi Hideyoshi on the great general’s victorious campaign to subdue the island of Kyushu. It is said that it was on this occasion that Sen no Rikyū offered this old lantern to the kami at Hakozaki. The lantern itself displays the classic characteristics that date from the Kamakura period. The craftsmanship of the lantern is superb.



筥崎鳥居 一の鳥居（重要文化財）

The Hakozaki-Style torii has been designated an Important Cultural Treasure



The main torii gateway into the shrine precinct is inscribed with the name of its donor and the year - the reigning feudal lord of the Fukuoka area, Kuroda Nagamasa (1568-1623), presented in 1609. This style of torii is unique to the Hakozaki Shrine. Each pillar is composed of three sections of rock. The top crossbar is a continuous piece of stone that curves upward at each end. Because this particular style of torii is only found here at Hakozaki, it’s been dubbed “The Hakozaki-style of torii”.

縁起絵巻

The Picture Scrolls that detail the origin of the Hakozaki Shrine

Among the shrine treasures housed at Hakozaki, there are two illustrated scrolls that depict the beginning of the Hakozaki Hachiman Shrine. At the end of this scroll there is a depiction of the Hakozaki Shrine as it appeared during the late Momoyama period (1568-1600). Note the Buddhist stupa towers, temple buildings and bell tower that were a part of the shine during this period.





唐船塔

A Buddhist Stupa Brought from T'ang China

According to shrine legend, during the rule of the great T'ang dynasty in China(618-906)a Chinese citizen by the name of T'zu-ching had been captured and was working as the servant of the high priest of the Hakozaki Shrine. T'zu-ching had left behind two children in his native country, and these children having not seen their father for several years began to think that he had died. The children, in order to mourn the passing of their father,landed at Hakata Bay bringing with them a stone stupa to set up in his memory. When they arrived however, to their surprise they found their parent alive and well; together the reunited family set sail for T'ang China. It is said that this Buddhist stupa here at Hakozaki is the very one the dutiful children brought with them.



湧出石

The Flowing-Forth Rock

In a corner of the precincts of the shrine there is a small rock that is surrounded by a small, red fence. There is a local belief that touching this rock will serve to make good fortune flow forth into one's life. There is an old folk belief which says when an momentous occasion is about to take place in Japan that this rock, will emerge from the ground as a sign,as a result,this rock is known as the “flowing-forth rock”.

The fact that this rock, surrounded by a red fence, appears in the Muromachi period painting of the Hakozaki Shrine seems to indicate that the belief surrounding this rock is very old indeed.



敵国降伏の御宸筆

The Imperial Inscription: "May the enemy nations prostrate themselves (in defeat)"

One of the Hakozaki Shrine's important treasures is the several of famous imperial calligraphy that bear the inscription "May the enemy nations prostrate themselves (in defeat)".The original specimens of this calligraphy are written in gold ink on dark, indigo-colored paper.

According to shrine records, the calligraphy is said to be the work of Emperor Daigo, but other records claim that the calligraphy was dedicated to the shrine by other emperors, including Emperor Kameyama and Emperor Go-Tsuchimikado, among others. Most importantly, however, is the plaque that hangs over the entrance of the shrine's Tower Gate, it appears that each successive emperor in turn offered calligraphy to be carved on just such a hanging plaque. Particularly in 1274, with the rebuilding of the main hall at Hakozaki that had been razed during the first Mongol attack,it is well-documented that Emperor Kameyama dedicated his calligraphy for the Tower Gate plaque. The plaque that hangs at the present from the Tower Gate contains characters which were chosen from among the specimens of imperial calligraphy at Hakozaki, enlarged, and carved during the Bunroku era(1592-1595) at the time when Kobayakawa Takakane had the structure rebuilt.

平和





豊臣秀吉の遺芳

Remembrances of Toyotomi Hideyoshi

In 1587, when the unifying statesman Toyotomi Hideyoshi made the Hakozaki Shrine his military headquarters, he held a waka poem composition gathering for his generals, from which seven poems in the original handwriting are housed at Hakozaki. Hideyoshi's poem speaks of the pines at the shrine, from records from that period, the shrine precincts boasted beautiful scenery similar to the Momoyama period picture scroll that is preserved at Hakozaki. Also in 1537, the warlord Ouchi Yoshitaka also held a waka poem composition party of which ten of the original poems are kept at the Hakozaki shrine.

神木「筥松」

Divine Tree : The "Box Pine"

When facing the shrine compound, on one's right near the Tower Gate there is a pine that is surrounded by a red fence. This pine tree is called the hakomatsu, or Box Pine, it is also known as the Marking Pine (shirushi-no-matsu). This pine tree is a divine tree that has a special relationship to the kami of this shrine, the Emperor Ojin, who is now known as Hachiman. When Emperor Ojin was born at the village of Kata, his umbilical cord was placed in a box and buried here at Hakozaki, it is said that this pine was planted here to mark the location where the imperial umbilical cord was buried. Hence, this pine is known as the Box Pine, that is the pine planted at the place where the box was buried. Incidentally, the place name Hakozaki literally means the Cape of the Box; in other words, the cape at which the imperial umbilical cord was buried. Before the birth of Emperor Ojin, this locality was originally known as Ashizu-ga-ura, but it is said that following the placement of the imperial box here, the name was changed to Hakozaki.



龜山上皇尊像（福岡県指定文化財）

Kameyama Emperor statues

Wood carving Height 6m Weight one tons 1902 production (Fukuoka Prefecture designated cultural property) Emperor Kameyama, the emperor 90th generation of the Kamakura period the Japan of peace and public safety. I will continue to pray forever.





箱崎宮の三大祭

The Three Major Festivals of the Hakozaki Shrine

社日祭とお潮井

The Shrine Day Festival and Gathering Sacred Sand

社
日
祭

In Hakata, the sand on the beach in front of the Hakozaki Shrine is considered to be sacred and is called “o-shioi”. This sacred sand is not just sprinkled on the body for purification prior to worshipping the kami, there is a custom for the faithful to place some of this sand at the entrance to their home, and when exiting the home, to sprinkle a small amount of the sand on the body in order to avoid accidents and misfortune and attract good fortune.

This sacred sand is also sprinkled on the land - (a) prior to building a home, so as to exorcise bad influences from the area; (b) to drive away insect pests from the fields; and (c) in order to bless the fields, so that they will produce an abundant harvest.

The sacred sand is also sprinkled by believers on themselves prior to going out to perform dangerous work, before starting an important project, or at any other time when an added measure of divine assistance and protection is needed.

Two occasions when this sand is popularly considered to be especially powerful are on days called the “Shrine Day Festival” (shanichi-sai). The dates of the Shrine Day Festivals are determined according to the lunar calendar – one falling as close as possible to the spring equinox, while the second is observed at the autumn equinox. On these special days, believers from all over the region come to gather some of the sacred sand to place at the entrance of their home for ritual purposes. Vendors line the approach to the beach, selling small, woven baskets (tebo) to hold the sand, plants, foods and other goods.





放生会

宮崎宮放生会（毎年9月12日～18日）
The Hojoya Festival (September 12-18)

Known as one of the three major festivals on the island of Kyushu, the Hojoya Festival is held for a week every year in September. Originally, this festival was held precisely at the time when Japanese pears (nashi) and persimmons began to ripen.

Now, all along the one-kilometre approach to the shrine, 700 vendors sell all sorts of food, ceramics, tools and a variety of other goods. The precincts of the shrine itself are packed with great throngs of people coming to offer their petitions for the blessings of the kami. For the seven nights and days during the festival, the atmosphere of the shrine is very lively, with an average of one-and-a-half million people coming to visit.

The origin of this festival is said to have been an oracle from the kami that said, “Since so much life is taken during wars, it is imperative that a freeing of life festival should be observed.” Since it was the divine will of the kami that the lives of all living beings be benevolently protected, the Hojoya Festival began. Every other year, a grand procession is observed in which the three kami of Hakozaki are paraded through the local neighborhood in huge palanquins. It is said that before the Meiji period, the Hojoya Festival was one of the most beloved festivals, and people would take a week’s vacation to visit Hakozaki Shrine.

In 1971, production of the glass toy called either “chanpon” (an imitation of the sound that the toy makes when blown), or “biidor” was revived, and after an absence of many years, the popping sound of this toy was once again heard at Hojoya. The craftsmen that make Hakata Dolls also produce the plain but charming top-like toy called “Hakata-Hajiki”, which are an extremely popular item at the Festival.

The week-long Hojoya Festival comes to an end with a ritual freeing of birds and fish, in accordance with the will of the kami.





玉取祭（玉せせり）

The Tamaseseri Rite

玉取祭

In the frigid weather on the third of January each year, and with the grounds of the shrine packed with spectators, the Tamaseseri is the very first ritual observed in the new year. Tamaseseri literally means “Ball Seizing”, where a crowd of men compete to take possession of a special ball. Beginning at one o’clock in the afternoon, the festival starts with the Ball Washing Ritual, in which the two balls (one symbolizing yin, the other yang) are placed in warm water and receive a ritual purification by being scrubbed with small brushes that correspond to the number of lunar months in the new year.

After the washing, the balls are anointed with oil and wiped off with white paper. It is said that in times past, people believed this paper had come into contact with the power of the kami and was capable of healing skin diseases and even bringing happiness. As a result, brawls broke out among the spectators over these pieces of paper.

The purified yang ball is then taken to the small Tamatori Ebisu Shrine nearby, and after a ritual is performed there, the ball is given to throngs of men dressed in a shimekomi loincloth, who have purified themselves in cold sea water. In the freezing air, these men fight over possession of the ball, all the while working their way toward the Tower Gate of the Hakozaiki Shrine. A strange wave of excitement sweeps over the crowd of spectators when, at the Tower Gate, the struggling men hand the ball over to a shrine priest who is waiting there.

The yang ball is then carried up the steps to the verandah of the Main Hall, where it is placed on a stand alongside the yin ball. The yin and yang balls are offered to the kami of Hakozaiki, and with that, this auspicious kami ritual is concluded for another year.

Originally, the men in loincloths that fought over the yang ball were divided into two teams: the team of the land and the team of the sea. In times past, Tamaseseri was a rite of divination, and if the team of the land won the struggle, the coming year was believed to bring rich rice harvests for Hakozaiki; if the sea team won, there would be great catches of fish. Since the Industrial Revolution, life has changed a great deal and the original prophetic function of this rite is no longer observed.





祭事歴

The Hakozaiki Shrine's Calendar of Ritual Events

四季祭

Tsukinami-sai (Rite of Monthly Progression)	1st and 15th day of each month	
Sangen-sai (Rite of Three Origins)	January 1	7am
Tamaseseri (Ball Seizing Rite)	January 3	1pm
Kenkoku-kinen-sai (National Memorial Rite)	February 11	10am
Kinen-sai (Bountiful Rice Rite)	February 17	10am
Shunki-shanichi-sai (Spring Shrine Day Festival)	tsuchi-no-e (nearest spring equinox)	
Satsuki Taisai (Great May Rite)	May 27 & 28	
Ikeshimaden-sai (Rite for the Ikeshima Kami)	June 27, or before and after the day	11am
Nagoshi-sai (Summer Passage Rite)	Last Saturday & Sunday in July	
Tanabata-sai (Lover's Festival)	July 7	4pm
Hojoya Taisai (Freeing of Life Festival)	September 12-18	
Shuki-shanichi-sai (Autumn Shrine Day Festival)	tsuchi-no-e (nearest autumn equinox)	
Shichi-go-san-sai (Shichi-go-san Children's Festival)	November 15	
Niiname-sai (First Fruits of Rice Rite)	November 23	10am
Go-tanjo-sai (Celebratory Rite on Emperor's Birthday)	December 14	10am
O-ena-sai (August Placenta Rite)	December 31	9pm

筥崎宮 神苑の花

Hakozaiki Shrine Flowers blooming in the garden of God.



Spring Peony



Winter of Peony



Hydrangea

日本三大八幡・厄よけ開運



筥崎宮

Hakozaiki Shrine



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