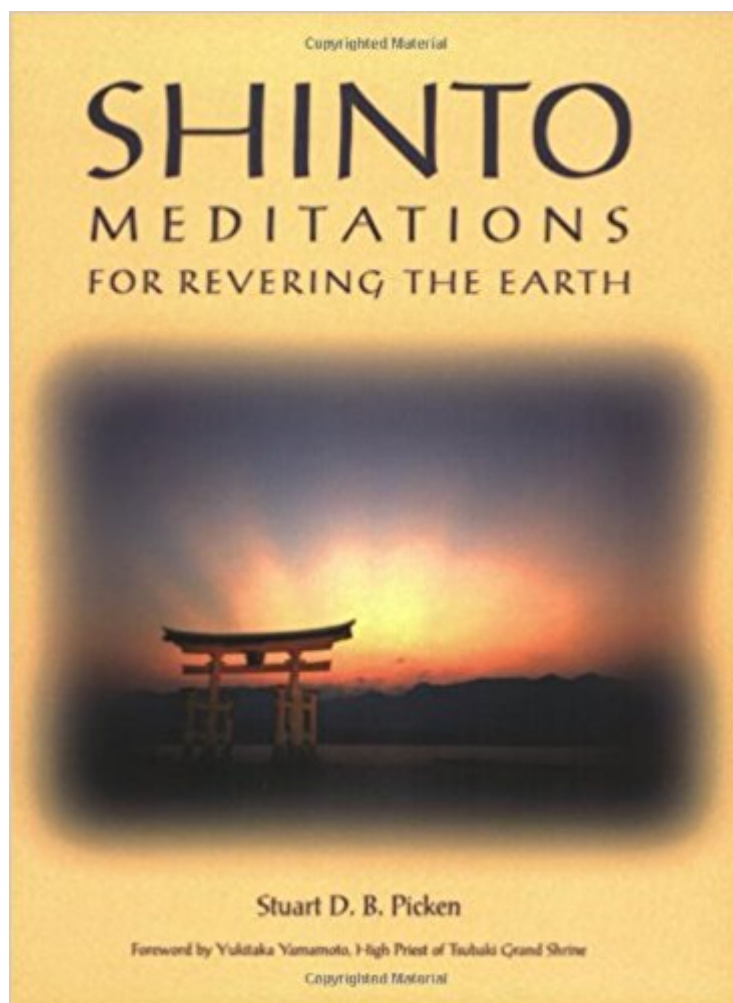


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# Shinto Meditations For Revering The Earth



## Synopsis

These devotions inspired by ancient Shinto rituals are a series of calls-and-response that directly address the awesome power of the natural world to heal and restore the soul. Readers are invited to stand before rivers, stones, and trees, to listen to thunder, and to be touched by the wind and rain in order to cultivate a spirit of reverence for Nature and awaken the cosmic content within the human. Included are steps for conducting misogi (waterfall purification) and resources for learning more about Shinto practice in North America. Stuart Picken, an ordained minister, has taught religion in Japan since 1972 and is international adviser to the High Priest of Tsubaki Grand Shrine. He is author of *Essentials of Shinto*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a small, slim volume you can easily finish in one sitting, even if you're a slow reader like me. The author makes a case for Shinto as a universal religion--not in the sense that it claims universal authority, but in the sense that nature is everywhere, and Shinto is about celebrating, revering, and being integrated within nature. Shinto is non-dogmatic and its practices can be meshed with other religions. Therefore, you can practice Shinto anywhere, and the "meditations" (which is really a misnomer--in the text they are called litanies) are non-specific so can be used by anyone of any faith. The litanies are inspired by various natural elements, grouped by season, such as fire, waterfalls, trees, stones, earth, etc. The book explains basic Shinto concepts that are important to the worldview, such as "celebration" and "observation." These aren't articles of faith but rather ways

of relating to life and nature. There is also a section on how to perform misogi (a waterfall purification ritual), though I found it difficult to picture some of the actions in the instructions. One thing about the book was disappointing: the litanies are mostly identical. Each one has a few lines that are specific to the element under discussion, but most of it is repeated for each litany. For example, the litany on trees is 4 and a half pages long, of which only 12 lines or so are unique to trees. And that litany had more specific lines than most. The rest is sort of a call and response pattern prayer focused on purification. Shinto doesn't have a concept of sin, but it does have a belief in impurity or "pollution."

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