There are many religions that the people of Japan take on, but one religion that stood the test of time is Shinto. Shinto is the native religion of Japan and even in today, through both active practice and media, it still has a place. Through the many festivals, rituals, and dances performed, Shinto is also famous both in and outside Japan.

Known in Japanese as “*kami-no-michi*”, the basis of Shinto is the creation of Japan. The bible for Shinto is known as Kojiki. In the Kojiki it states that together, the god Izanagi and the goddess Izanami began creating the land. They were given a spear to stir the ocean with and from the water that dripped from it, an island was formed. Izanagi and Izanami lived on this island and performed a ritual create Amaterasu, goddess of the sun, Susanoo, god the sea and wind, and Tsukuyomi, goddess of the moon. Together they ruled over the island Nippon (Japan).

Susanoo eventually wanted more power and decided to try and control the land of Nippon. He challenged Amaterasu to a god/goddess creation contest. They both took an object belonging to the other and made gods and goddesses from it. Amaterasu made three goddesses from Susanoo’s sword and he made five gods from her necklace. Susanoo thought he had won the challenge, but Amaterasu stated that the five gods belong to her since it was her necklace and the three goddesses were his since they were made from his sword. At first, Susanoo accepted his lost but later became impatient and rampaged, destroying Amaterasu’s rice fields and skinning a pony alive, leaving it at her doorstep and finally killed one of her attendants. This caused Amaterasu to go into a period of grief and she hide in the heavenly rock cave “Ama-no-Iwato”, the sun hiding for a long period of time with her. It took two gods tricking her to get her out and Susanoo was banished from Nippon.

From the story of Amaterasu and her life, there have been many inspirations in Japanese media. In the Capcom game *Okami*, Amaterasu (in the form of a white wolf) must save the world from an awakened evil known as Yamata no Orochi (a giant eight headed snake). Many of the creatures and characters from the Ghibli Studio movies *Spirited Away* and *Princess Mononoke* are based on the ones mentioned with the Kojiki. The unlockable forms in the Atlus game series *Shin Megami Tensei* also feature characters such as Izanagi, Susanoo, and Amaterasu. There are also many mentions of them in live action Japanese films and many of their animations.

Japan thrives to keep the methods and teachings of the Kojiki and Shinto alive through their everyday lifestyles. They honor the gods and goddesses with festivals, such as Matsuri. The teachings are apparent through both the culture and pop culture of the Japanese people and will most likely continue much in the future.