

## Oomoto

- Religion found in 1892 by Deguchi Nao (1836–1918)
- often categorised as a new Japanese religion
- originated from Shinto
- spiritual leaders have always been women within the Deguchi family
- Deguchi Onisaburō (1871–1948) has been considered an important figure in Oomoto as a *seishi* (spiritual teacher)
- Since 2001, the movement has been guided by its fifth leader, Kurenai Deguchi.
- Oomoto started when Nao Deguchi was writing down what an inner voice told her
- **Difference to Shinto:** Shinto is polytheistic, believing there are many gods/kami. Oomoto teaches that many kami do exist, but they all come from the same Supreme God of the Universe, so in effect there is just one God. When Oomoto followers pray to a particular kami by name they understand this is just one manifestation of the single God. Even the name “Oomoto” emphasises this point. It translates as “Great Source” or “Great Origin.”
- **Basic doctrine:** God is the spirit which pervades the entire universe, and man is the focus of the workings of heaven and earth. When God and man become one, infinite power will become manifest.
- **Essential Beliefs:** God, with the help of humans, is working to purify and reconstruct the world. When this task is accomplished, God, humans, and all of nature will exist peacefully on earth and in the spiritual world. The humans help by living according to four teachings and four principles. These are fundamental to the Divine Plan and applicable to the lives of all humans. Oomoto also teaches that God gives humans freedom of choice; they have freewill to decide whether to follow these teachings and principles.

### Principles:

1. Purity through purification of mind and body.
2. Optimism, specifically believing in the goodness of the Divine Will.
3. Progressivism as a way to social improvement.
4. Unification or reconciliation of all dichotomies (good and evil; rich and poor; humans and nature; humans and God, etc.) The four can be thought of as a code for right living. By practicing them, humans can live in harmony with the universe and lead a heavenly life in spirit and flesh.