

At the height of their power, the leaders of the Mirokuji-Usa Jingu complex were the rulers of the entire surrounding region. They controlled dozens of satellite shrines and affiliated temples perched atop the mountain ridges and along the coastline of the Kunisaki Peninsula

Mount Omotosan, whose 647-meter-high peak lies directly south of Usa Jingu, is believed to be the dwelling place of the local Shinto deities (*kami*). It was the site of the first ever shrine to Hachiman, which eventually became Usa Jingu. By the eighth century CE, mountain monks known as *yamabushi* worshipped and conducted Shinto-Buddhist rituals on the mountain. Today, you can still find a trail dotted with religious markers and holy sites leading from Usa Jingu to the top of Mount Omoto which was likely made by the *yamabushi*. A small shrine, Omoto Yasaka Jinja, sits at the summit and still hosts various rituals and ceremonies.