

Koshiō Shrine

Koshiō Shrine is dedicated to two Shinto deities, Takemikazuchi no Mikoto and Ōhiko no Mikoto. These deities are associated with ancient tales of military campaigns to expand the emperor's control across the Japanese archipelago. The shrine was built facing the north, possibly as a symbolic gesture of the northward expansion of the Japanese imperial court. It is thought to share a close historical relationship with Akita Fort, a nearby imperial outpost established in 733 to strengthen control over the area.

Centuries ago, residents of the area around Koshiō Shrine made a vow to never consume meat, eggs, or milk. Although the origins of this vow are unclear, it is believed that it began as a devotional practice. During the first seven days of the New Year, villagers also abstained from drinking alcohol and even eating food that had been cooked outside the village. The taboo against eating meat, eggs, and milk continued well into the mid-twentieth century.