

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Shintô

shin | jin (kami)

tô | dô | michi (way)

The indigenous spirituality of Japan and the Japanese people

Kami-no-michi

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, awe, gratitude, fear/terror)

no (possessive particle | of)

michi (way)

Way of the Kami

Minzoku

min (people)

zoku (customs, manners)

"Minzoku" means 'folk customs' and refers to the practices and beliefs of the commons – the common people of a region considered as representatives of a traditional way of life and especially as the originators or carriers of the customs, beliefs, and arts that make up a distinctive culture. Folk customs are based on the **Five "E"s**: Existential, Experiential, Experimental, Empirical, and Event Oriented.

The 5 Es

Existential, Experiential, Experimental, Empirical, and Event Oriented

Here are the relevant definitions of the Five Es, as they apply to a Folk Religion. While none of these are unique to folk religion, if a religion's praxis is based on all of these and control of that praxis is local, that religion may be considered to be "folk".

Existential

Relating to or dealing with existence. Based on experience; empirical.

Existence

The fact or state of existing; being. All that exists. A thing that exists; an entity. Specific presence; occurrence.

Existentialist

Based on the idea that you are what you say you are, because you engage in some of all the practices that make it up. The folk, the commons, are usually existentialists, as opposed to essentialists.

Essentialist

Based on the idea that because of what you say you are, you must engage in all the practices that make it up. Academicians, priests, and theologians are usually essentialists.

Experiential

Relating to or derived from experience.

Experience

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The apprehension of an object, a thought, or an emotion through the senses or mind. Active participation in events or activities, leading to the accumulation of knowledge or skill. An event or a series of events participated in or lived through. The totality of such events in the past.

Experimental

Relating to or based on experiment. Founded on experience; empirical.

Experiment

To try something new, especially in order to gain experience.

Empirical

Relying on or derived from observation. Guided by practical experience and not theory.

Empiric

Guided by practical experience rather than precepts or theory.

Event Oriented

To focus on something that takes place, a significant occurrence, or happening.

Neo-Shintô

Neo-Shintô has several meanings: it can refer to one of the many Japanese, Shintô-based new-religions; or as in the case of Minzoku Neo-Shintô, it can refer to a **mixture of Japanese Minzoku Shintô, Heathenry, and Neo-Pagan practices**. As Minzoku Neo-Shintô is **existentialist**, which particular mixture is up to each local community

Compatability

On the issue of Neo-Shintô, just how compatible are contemporary Paganism, Heathenry, and Shintô? What follows is a comparison of the values within the "Parametric Analysis* for identity as a contemporary Pagan" with the values for identity as a contemporary Heathen and identity as a Shintôist.

* Note: "The Parametric Analysis depends on the competence and judgment of the user; thus, it is important to remember a PA is normative rather than definitive: it looks for what a competent user of the concept at hand would normally say about an instance of the concept (what distinctions a user with good judgment would usually make about the distinctions being made)."

Contact with Participating Spirits

"Intellectual or spiritual power in hetero-human phenomena (including objects and places)."

Pagan

Yes -- Mandatory (Gods, Goddesses, Spirits of Place, Elementals, the Dead)

Heathen

Yes -- Mandatory (Aesir, Vanir, Alfar, Jotnar, Dvergar, Land Wights, Trolls, the Dead)

Shintô

Yes -- Mandatory (Butsu, Bosatsu, Kami, Yokai, the Dead)

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State of Participating Spirits

"State of Participating Spirits with regard to time and space." Possible values are Immanent, Dwelling, Transcendent.

Pagan

Immanent -- "Indwelling, inherent; actually present or abiding in; remaining within" with specific reference to Participating Spirits

Heathen

Dwelling -- "Appear within a particular space and remain for a limited time."

Shintô

Dwelling -- "Appear within a particular space and remain for a limited time."

Status of Participating Spirits

"How Participating Spirits are to be treated." Possible values include Designated, Dynamic, and Pantheistic

Pagan

Pantheistic -- "Tolerant of all participating spirits"

Heathen

Dynamic -- "A group is designated, but new Participating Spirits can be accredited and enter the group"

Shintô

Pantheistic -- "Tolerant of all participating spirits"

Register of Experience

"The domain from which metaphorical explanation of life happenings is drawn."

Pagan

Nature -- Mandatory (Environmental, Acknowledgement of Dependence)

Self -- Mandatory (Personal Experiences)

Others -- Optional (Art, Tradition, Elders, Outsiders)

Heathen

Stories and Myth -- Mandatory (Folklore, Culture)

The Social Group -- Mandatory (Kindred, Family)

Nature -- Mandatory (Environmental, Acknowledgement of Dependence)

Academia -- Optional (History, Archeology, Linguistics)

Shintô

Dai Shizen (Great Nature) -- Mandatory

The Social Group -- Mandatory (Village, Family, School, Employer)

Practices

"The practices through which the group expresses its identity."

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Pagan

Yes -- Worship, Participation (i.e., Offering), Magic, Divination, Prayer, Meditation

No -- Non-practice (proper practice is undiscovered) or Primal Life (life is not separate from practice)

Heathen

Mandatory -- Participation (i.e., Gifting & Offering), Cultural, Study

Optional -- Worship, Magic, Divination, Prayer

Shintô

Worship, Participation (i.e., Offering), Magic, Divination, Prayer, Meditation, Cultural

Psychic Phenomena

"The general acceptance of, and explanation for Psychic Phenomena. (ESP)"

Pagan

Accepted -- No comment

Participating Spirit helper

Gift from Participating Spirit

Natural capacity

Heathen

Accepted -- No comment

Participating Spirit helper

Gift from Participating Spirit

Natural capacity

Shintô

Accepted -- Possession by Participating Spirit

Gift from Participating Spirit

Natural capacity

Conclusion

After examining the values for each of the parameters, a case can be made -- from the viewpoint of the practitioners of these three groups -- that while distinct these groups are much more similar than dissimilar. In fact, none of the values of any group in any particular parameter are mutually exclusive with those of the other two groups.

Minzoku Neo-Shintô

Minzoku Neo-shintô is mainly concerned with **Folk Religion** and its **Little Traditions**, and borrows from the **Great Traditions** only those elements that fit in with those Little Traditions.

Folk Religion

A religion as practiced by the commons — the everyday people — and on a local basis; part of what are referred to as the "Little Traditions". It's not a religion as taught in the seminaries,

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universities, or on a national or international basis; these are part of what are called the "Great Traditions".

Great Traditions

The practices and beliefs of the ruling elite; focused on the state, how it came to be, and why it should be maintained. They tend to be formal, dogmatic, slow changing – except when the ruling elite are deposed, and are made explicit in the forms of scripture and document; the mythology of the state.

Little Traditions

The practices and beliefs of the commons; focused on the local concerns of family, social responsibilities, occupation, and health. They are informal, flexible, changeable and usually implicit; the mythology of the commons.

Characteristics of Shintô

Characteristics that identify Shintô; bearing in mind that, from the viewpoint of a practitioner of Minzoku Neo-Shintô, these are normative, not definitive.

Praxis

Shintô folklore is transmitted primarily by actions -- by what the common people do and how they go about doing it. The practices focus on issues of: Family structure, status within the family and within the community / Maintaining cultural integrity in the presence of new or foreign ideas and practices / The transmission of traditional folklore and practices to the next generation / Offerings to the Kami and the ancestors / Concerns of purity, taboos to maintain purity, acts and ideas that engender contamination, and the practices to re-establish purity.

Five Criteria of Folklore:

There are five criteria against which a practice or idea can be judged to determine if it falls into the category of folklore. Generally, the practice or idea should satisfy all five criteria to qualify.

Anonymous

Originator unknown / Collaborative effort

Exists In Variants

Folk artifacts are alike & different / Folktales are not repeated exactly, different at each telling

Transmitted Orally or By Custom and Practice

Oral as transmitted thru stories / Told or shown how to do / Do what looks & feels right / Use what's on hand

Tends To Be Formularized

Structured, patterned / Symmetry means it's formularized

Traditional

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Goes back in time / Shared throughout culture

What Shintô Doesn't Have

Like many folk religions, Minzoku Neo-Shintô tends to dispense with the trappings normally associated with organized religions; because of this many people dismiss it as not being a "real" religion.

No founder

Shintô can not be traced back to a single founding figure

No organization

There is no central organization that has authority

No doctrine

There is no single book that determines doctrine

Shinten

shin (kami)

ten (code, ceremony, law, rule)

The main texts of Shintô:

Fudoki

Circa 713; other works with same name appeared in Tokugawa era

Kogo Shûi

807 AD

Kojiki

712 AD, Record of Ancient Matters

Man'yô-shû

8th century, Japan's oldest volume of verse

Nihon Shoki

Compiled around 720 AD, The Chronicles of Japan

Also called **Nihongi**

No precepts or commandments

There isn't a single set of beliefs that a practitioner is expected to follow or act upon

No need for a building

Sacred space is created where and when it is needed

(See **Himorogi**)

No idols

Kami temporarily reside in a Shintai or Mitamashiro. These act more as an antenna where Kami manifest, than as a dwelling place for Kami.

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Influences on Shinto

Shintô has been influenced by ideas and practices that originated elsewhere and were subsequently imported in to the Japanese islands. Shintô has been more successful than many other religions at incorporating these influences and transforming them into uniquely Japanese expressions.

Ancient Chinese Thought

Much of the Japanese political structure, philosophies, ethics, and religious thought were imported from China both directly and through Korea, and then uniquely incorporated into existing ways.

Kanji

kan (Sino-, China)

ji (character, letter, word)

While aware of the concept of writing, the early Japanese ruling class had not yet developed a system capable of expressing the new ideas being imported from China and Korea. As a result, they adopted the Chinese system of kanji (Chinese characters) for writing*. Because the Chinese ideas that were embedded in the kanji were not readily separable from the kanji, the Japanese wound up adopting many of these ideas.

* Note: The Japanese language is structured differently from Chinese, so this was not an ideal solution. It was only with creation of the hiragana and katakana syllabaries and their subsequent addition to kanji that a truly Japanese writing system was created.

Sankyô

san (three)

kyô (teach, faith, doctrine)

(Literally: three religions)

Sankyô (Three Patriarchs)

A theme in Chinese and Japanese art depicting the Three Patriarchs of Chinese thought: Confucius, Shakyamuni (Buddha), and Lao Tzu.

Butsu

butsu (Buddha, Buddhism)

Buddhism originated in India. It was soon syncretized, by the common people, with many elements from the pre-existing Hindu mythology. From India it travelled to China and then to Korea. At each stop, it was further syncretized, again by the common people, with local mythic elements. So the Buddhism that first reached Japan, was significantly different from the original teachings of Buddha. Later, various Japanese monks travelled to China and India, in an attempt to learn a "purer" form of Buddhism. When Buddhism first reached Japan, it was mainly adopted by the ruling elite and only later was spread to the common people by itinerate monks.

Amida butsu

a (shadow, shade, corner, nook, recess)

mi (all the more, increasingly)

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da (steep)

Amida (Amitabha)

Butsu (Buddha)

Whoever calls his name with faith shall be reborn in a paradise called the Pure Land"

A Mahayana philosophy that represents the "quick path" to enlightenment

For the coming life in paradise

nyo (likeness, like, such as, as if, better, best, equal)

rai (come, due, next, cause, become)

Also called **Amida**, **Amida Nyorai**

Daruma

daru (accomplished, reach, arrive, attain)

ma (grind, polish, scour, improve)

Daruma (Bodhidharma)

The founder of the Zen sect of Buddhism

The primary aim is personal enlightenment

According to Daruma, enlightenment cannot be found in books or sutras or in performing rituals; it is to be found within the self through meditation

Also called **Bodhidharma**, **Dharma**

Funerals

Buddhist temples usually perform funeral rites / However, there are also Shintô funeral rites

(See **Shinsô sai**)

Jizô bosatsu

ji (ground, earth)

zô (storehouse, hide, own, have, possess)

Jizô (Ksitigarbha)

bo (sacred tree)

satsu (Buddha)

bosatsu (bodhisattva)

A friend to all, never frightening even to children

For salvation from hell. Especially helps children trying to escape from Jigoku (a Buddhist hell)

Kannon bosatsu

kan (outlook, look, appearance, condition, view)

non (sound, noise)

Kannon (Buddhist deity of mercy; Goddess of Mercy; Guan Yin)

bo (sacred tree)

satsu (Buddha)

bosatsu (bodhisattva)

She personifies compassion

Symbol of the divine feminine, the divine mother

For salvation in earthly life

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Obon matsuri

(See **Bon matsuri**)

Jukyô

ju (Confucian)

kyô (teach, faith, doctrine)

ka (house, home)

Also called **Juka**

Ethical and political philosophies

Norms that emphasized filial piety, respect for elders, social obligations, and rules of courtesy that promised humanistic, rational, and benevolent governance, harmonious family relationships, and clear-cut standards for governing the interaction among rulers, lords, vassals, and common folk, between old and young, father and son, husband and wife

Neo-Confucianism

Emphasized attention to man and secular society, to social responsibility in secular contexts

Sei-zen-setsu

sei (sex, gender, nature)

zen (virtuous, good, goodness)

setsu (rumor, opinion, theory)

Doctrine of inherent goodness of human nature

Dôkyô

dô (course, moral, teachings)

kyô (teach, faith, doctrine)

Daoism | Taoism

Lao-tzu

Lao Tsu is traditionally regarded as the author of the Tao Te Ching / He is sometimes considered to be the founder of Daoism; however, Daoistic ideas and practices had been in existence for well over a thousand years by the time of his birth

Onmyôdô

on (yin)

myô (yang)

dô (way)

A unique Japanese adaptation based on the Chinese theory of YinYang-Wuxing (Yin-Yang and the "five phases of matter")

Also called **In'yôdô**

Shichi-fuku-jin

shichi (seven)

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fuku (blessing, fortune, luck, wealth)

jin (kami)

The Seven Luck Kami derived from the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove"

Sansan-zu

san (three)

san (acid, bitterness, sour, tart)

zu (unexpected, accidentally)

(Three Sages Tasting Vinegar) This is a popular theme in Chinese and Japanese art. One variation on this theme was to show each of the three patriarchs with different facial expressions. After tasting the vat's content, Confucius is shown with a sour face, Shakyamuni (Buddha) with a bitter expression, and Lao tsu with a smiling face. To Confucius, the father of Confucianism, life was sour and chaotic because rules and regulations were not strictly obeyed. To Shakyamuni, the Historical Buddha and the patriarch of Buddhism, life was bitter, filled with suffering, sickness, old age, and death. To Lao Tsu, the father of Taoism, life is sweet, not sour or bitter, if one flows like water, without trying to dam, redirect, or interfere with the natural path of the water.

Kokei sanshō

ko (tiger)

kei (valley)

san (three)

shō (laugh)

(Three Laughters of Tiger Ravine) The name usually given to a Chinese story, frequently illustrated in pictures, showing two old men taking leave of a third one at the end of a bridge, the three laughing heartily. There are several versions of it. One says, that an old philosopher retired to an island and swore never to leave it. Two of his friends used to visit him, and tried every time to make him break his vow, but in vain. Once, however, that they had whiled away the time with a more copious series of libations, the two beguiled the old man over the small bridge connecting his island with the rest of the world, and then the three made fun of it. Another says, in the time of Hsiao Wu there lived a Chinese priest named Hui Yuan, who had a thousand pupils in the temple Tung Lin Ssu, on the mountain Lu Shan. This worthy never left the mountain for thirty years, but used to descend to Hu Hsi, halfway down, and then take leave of his visitors. Two friendly literati, Tao Yuan Ming and Liu Hsiu Ching, often visited him, and one day, in the ardour of conversation, he walked with them further than usual. They stopped and laughed when they became aware of it.

Yet another refers to the monk Eon (334-416 a.d.) of the Eastern Chin dynasty. He created the foundational texts for Chinese Buddhism. He later formed the White Lotus Society on Mt. Lu that was engaged in prayers (nenbutsu) to the Buddha of the Western Paradise. Eon spent some 30 years on Mt. Lu without ever leaving the precinct of his temple. Eon had taken a vow to stay in a cave on Mt. Lu, never to leave, never to cross the rope bridge over a chasm in front of his cave. But, when two literary giants, the greatest poets of their day, paid him a

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visit, he inadvertently bid them farewell by seeing them across the chasm bridge. Realizing his mistake, Eon burst into laughter.

Shugendô

shu (discipline, conduct oneself well, study, master)

gen (verification, effect, testing)

dô (way, journey, course, moral, teachings)

A form of Japanese folk religion, based on primitive mountain worship, and formed under the influence of **Buddhism**, **Daoism**, **Onmyôdô**, and other religions / The name Shugen is derived from the term Genriki, which refers to special powers acquired as the result of **Shugyo** performed within the mountains

Shugenja

shu (discipline, conduct oneself well, study, master)

gen (verification, effect, testing)

ja | sha (someone, person)

A practitioner of **Shugendô**

Shugyô

shu (discipline, conduct oneself well, study, master)

gyô (vocation, performance)

Religious practices

Religious Norms

The explicit or implicit rules specifying what behaviours are acceptable within a religious group.

Kyôku kangeki

kyô (fear, dread, awe)

ku (fear, overawed)

kan (emotion, feeling, sensation)

geki (violent, get excited, enraged, chafe, incite)

Being struck with awe, deeply moved with awe / An awareness of the sublime

Kansha

kan (emotion, feeling, sensation)

sha (thank)

Gratitude for the **Megumi** of the Kami and the beneficence of Ancestors

Kinen

ki (pray, wish)

nen (idea, thought, feeling, attention)

Expressions of gratitude for **Mi-megumi** or **Mitama-no-fuyu**, blessings from the Kami

Megumi

megumi (favor, blessing, grace, kindness)

Grace bestowed on a person by a Kami

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megumi (blessings from the Kami)

Also called **Mi-megumi**

mi (honorable)

megumi (favor, blessing, grace, kindness)

Mitama-no-fuyu

mi (honorable)

tama (spirit, soul)

no (possesive particle)

fu.yu (to touch, shake)

mitama-no-fuyu (blessings from the Kami)

Kigan

ki (pray)

gan (petition, request, vow, wish, hope)

A prayer or supplication / To ask for humbly or earnestly / It refers to personal prayers (not necessarily for personal benefit -- they may be for the community, nation, etc.) rather than to ritual forms such as Norito / Prayers or petitions for specific benefits are called **Kito** or **Gan-gake** / On Ema the prayers or wish is written under the heading of **O-negai** (wish or request)

Gangake

gan (petition, request, vow, wish, hope)

ga.ke (hang, suspend, depend, arrive at)

Petition for a specific benefit

Kitô

ki (pray, wish)

tô (pray)

Prayer for a specific benefit

O-negai

o (honorable)

nega.i (petition, request, vow, wish, hope)

Heading on an ema

Also called **Gan'i**

gan (petition, request, vow, wish, hope)

i (idea, mind, heart, taste, thought, desire, care, liking)

Shintô Virtues

gratitude

sincerity

cooperation

harmony with others and nature

sincerity

honesty

purity -- clean, bright, pure heart

respect for ancestors

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attentiveness

Makoto

makoto (truth, reality, sincerity, honesty, fidelity, integrity)
Sincerity

Myôjô

myô (bright, light)
jô (pure, clean, unspoiled)
Brightness -- cheerfulness

Seichoku

sei (correct, righteous)
choku (straight, honest, frank)
Integrity -- right and straight
shô (correct, righteous)
jiki (straight, honest, frank)
Also called **Shôjiki**

Nao.

nao (straight, honest, frank)

Ma.gari

ma.gari (curvature, warp, bend, injustice, fault, curve, crooked, perverse)

Jiki

jiki (direct)

Iki

iki (style, purity, essence, pith)
Iki Aesthetic - An expression of simplicity, sophistication, spontaneity, and originality / It is ephemeral, romantic, straight forward, measured, audacious, smart, and unselfconscious / It is not overly refined, pretentious, complicated, showy, slick, coquettish, or, generally, cute / At the same time, Iki may exhibit any of those traits in a smart, direct, and unabashed manner

Wabi-sabi

wabi (proud, lonely)
sabi (loneliness, quietly, mellow, mature)
Wabi-sabi aesthetic - Centered on the acceptance of transience / It is sometimes described as beauty that is "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete" / Characteristics of wabi-sabi include asymmetry, asperity, simplicity, modesty, intimacy, and the suggestion of natural processes

Sei-me

sei (pure, purify, cleanse, exorcise)
mei (bright, light)
Purity and brightness

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Cheerfulness of kokoro (heart)
Also called **Sei-me-shin**
sei (pure, purify, cleanse, exorcise)
mei (bright, light)
shin (heart, mind, spirit)

Shintô and Sin

No idea of absolute or permanent sin
(See **Kegare & Tsumi**)

Not sin

Shintô is concerned with pollution

No need for salvation

Because pollution is not absolute or permanent, people do not need salvation from it

Inherent evil

People are not inherently evil

Descendants of Kami

People are the descendants of Kami

The Kami within

Connection with Kami as internal, not external / Like recognizing like

Sense of rightness and wrongness

Because of their Kami nature people possess an inherent sense of rightness and wrongness

Shintô and Sex

Shinto is quite open in its treatment of fertility and sexuality

Fertility Festivals

There are a number of local festivals that either celebrate the bounty of fields, forest, seas, etc. / There are also festivals that seek to increase the fertility of the same or of people or animals.

Hônen matsuri

hou (bountiful, excellent, rich)
nen (year)
matsuri (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, worship)
(Fruitful Year Festival)

Kanamara matsuri

kana (metal, gold)
ma (witch, demon, evil spirit)
ra (gauze, thin silk)
mara (obstacle to Buddhist practice, penis)

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matsuri (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, worship)
(Metal Penis Festival)

Hadaka matsuri

hadaka (naked, nude, uncovered, partially clothed)
matsuri (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, worship)
(Naked Festival)

A type of Japanese matsuri, in which participants wear a minimum amount of clothing; usually just a Japanese loincloth (called fundoshi), sometimes with a short happi coat, and rarely completely naked / Hadaka matsuri held in summer tend to involve participants in loincloths carrying mikoshi / Hadaka matsuri held in winter tend to involve ritual purification by water followed by a mass fight for a holy object (such as a stick, jewel, etc)

Uchû-gaku

u (roof, heaven)
chû (space, sky)
gaku (study, learning, science)
Cosmology

Uchû-kan

uchû (universe)
kan (look, see)
Concept of the universe
(See **Sekai-kan**)

Kakuriyo

kaku.ri (conceal, hide, cover)
yo (generation, world, society, public)
Hidden world of the Kami

Ningen-kan

nin (person)
gen (interval, space)
kan (look, see)
Concept of humankind

Reikon-kan

rei (spirits)
kon (soul)
kan (look, see)
Concept of Kami

Rekishi-kan

reki (passage of time)
shi (chronicle)
kan (look, see)
Concept of history

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Takai-kan

ta (other, the others)
kai (world)
kan (look, see)
Concept of the Otherworld

Tokoyo-no-kuni

toko (regular)
yo (world, society)
tokoyo (eternal, unchanging)
no (possessive particle)
kuni (country)
World in which the purified spirits of the dead reside
Not to be confused with **Yomi-no-kuni**

Utsushiyo

utsu.shi (present, existing, actual)
yo (world, society)
(present world; present age; transient world; life)
Visible world of ordinary life
(Buddhist term)

Yomi-no-kuni

yo (night, evening)
mi (see, hopes, chances)
no (possessive particle)
kuni (country)
Realm of the dead; the next world, the underworld, the netherworld
(See Yomi)

Kami

Kami are sublime mysteries, spirit(s), or natural powers / Kami can be impressive forces or objects in nature, plants, animals, living people, or ancestors

Mysterious, sublime power

So what exactly is a Kami? / Joseph Campbell's concept of the sublime, in *The Power of Myth* with Bill Moyers, is probably the best English translation for the term Kami / That which inspires feelings of:

Reverence

A feeling of profound awe and respect and often love; veneration

Awe

A mixed emotion of reverence, respect, dread, and wonder inspired by genius, great beauty, sublimity, or might

Gratitude

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For the megumi (blessings) of the Kami and the beneficence of Ancestors

Fear / terror

A feeling of agitation and anxiety caused by the presence or imminence of danger /
Intense, overpowering fear

Not god

The term Kami does not mean God -- at least, not in the Western monotheistic sense

No value judgement

Like most Japanese words Kami makes no evaluation about:

Gender

Male, or female, or other

Morality

Good or bad

Number

Singular or plural

Kashikomu

kashiko.mu (fear, majestic, graciously, be apprehensive)
An attitude of respect towards Kami

Mi-itsu

mi (power, majesty)
itsu (dignity, majesty)
The august dignity of Kami

Shintoku

shin (kami)
toku (benevolence, virtue, goodness, commanding respect)
shintoku (divine virtues)
The virtue of Kami

Relationship with Kami

The respect we show to Kami should be based on our relationship and
interdependence with them

Types of Kami

There are a number of different ways to organize the various types of Kami / This is the
one I find most useful when I talk about Kami with other people

Culture Kami

Kami related to humans, human relationships, and tasks within society

Community Kami

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Kami associated with social and kinship groups

Buraku-kami

bu (section, class, portion)
raku (fall, drop, come down)
buraku (hamlet, sub-unit of a village)
Kami of geographical communities

Chimata-no-kami

chi | ji (roadway, street)
mata (crotch, fork)
chimata (fork in the road)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of crossroads or forking paths

Chinju-no-kami

chin (tranquilize, ancient peace-preservation centers)
ju | shu (guard, protect, defend)
no (possesive particle)
Kami worshipped by a group living in a specific geographical area. Chiefly a kami protecting a clan, village, or region
chi (earth, ground)
en (affinity, relation, connection, edge, border, verge, brink)
shin (kami)
chin (tranquilize, ancient peace-preservation centers)
ju | shu (guard, protect, defend)
gami (kami)
Also called **Chien-shin, Chinjugami**

Dôsojin

dô (roadway, street, district)
so (ancestor, founder)
jin (kami)
Kami of roads and borders -- protects villages from pestilent spirits coming from outside, travelers on the road, and others in "transitional" stages
dô (roadway, street, district)
roku (land)
jin (kami)
sai (close, shut, cover, block, obstruct)
no (possesive particle)
Also called **Dôrokujin, Sai-no-kami**
(See **Sojin**)

Dôzoku-shin

dô (same, equal)
zoku (tribe, family)
dôzoku-shin (family group)
shin (kami)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Kami of a family group possessing a common paternal ancestry

Jinushigami

ji | chi (ground, earth)

nushi (lord, chief, master)

gami (kami)

jinushigami (Land-master-Kami)

A tutelary of an area of land

ji (ground, earth)

gami (kami)

to (soil, earth, ground)

chi (ground, earth)

gami (kami)

ji | chi (ground, earth)

no (possessive particle)

Also called **Jigami**, **Tochigami**, **Chi-no-kami**, **Ji-no-kami**

Sakai-no-kami

sakai (boundry, border, region)

no (possessive particle)

Kami enshrined at the boundaries of settlements, and meant to prevent the ingress of evil spirits and kami of pestilence believed responsible for bringing plagues or other disasters to the community

Sojin

so (ancestor, pioneer, founder)

jin (kami)

Ancestral Kami

oya (parent, intimacy, relative)

gami (kami)

oyagami (parental kami)

Also called **Oyagami**

(See **Dosojin**)

Ubusuna-no-kami

ubu (give birth, yield, native)

suna | tsuchi (earth, soil, ground)

no (possessive particle)

Tutelary kami of a person's birthplace, who protects the person throughout life

ubu (give birth, yield, native)

suna | tsuchi (earth, soil, ground)

gami (kami)

Also called **Ubusunagami**

Uji-no-kami

uji (family name, surname, clan)

no (possessive particle)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Ancient ancestral or tutelary kami of a clan or family; more recently of a village of closely related people
uji (family name, surname, clan)
gami (kami)
Also called **Ujigami**

Functional Kami

Kami associated with occupations, tasks, or functions

Daiku-no-kami

dai (large, big)
ku | kô (craft, construction)
diaku (carpenter)
no (possesive particle)
Kami worshiped by woodworkers and carpenters
seku* (carpenter)
(* Okinawan dialect word - kanji not known at this time)
Also called **Seku-no-kami**

Funadama

funa | fune (ship, boat)
dama | rei (spirit)
Female kami worshiped by fishermen and seafarers as a protector of ships and who grants abundant catches
Also called **Funerei**

Gunshin

gun (army, force, troops, war, battle)
shin (kami)
War Kami

Gyogyôshin

gyo (fishing)
gyô (business, vocation)
shin (kami)
Fishing Kami

Ichi-no-kami

ichi (market, town, city)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of commercial activities

Ido-no-kami

i (well, well crib)
do | ko (door)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of the well

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Inari

ina (rice paddy)
ri (shoulder-pole load, load)
Protective kami of rice cultivation
Foxes are his messengers and appear instead of **Koma-inu** (Korean dog)
statues at the entrance to the **Hiaden** (worship hall)

Ie-no-kami

ie (house, home)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of the home
(See also **Kamidana**)

Benjogami

ben (convenience)
jo | sho (place)
gami (kami)
Toilet Kami

Doma-no-kami

do (earth, soil, ground)
ma (space, interval).
doma (dirt-floor entryway)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of the doma

Kamado-no-kami

kamado (hearth, kitchen stove)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of the hearth
Also called **Kamadogami**

Kô-jin

kô (rough, wild)
jin (kami)
Fire Kami (of the hearth, and the kitchen)
san (three)
bô | hô (treasure, wealth, valuables)
(three (Buddhist) treasures)
kô (rough, wild)
jin (kami)
Also called **Sanbô-kôjin**
(Sometimes called **Kamadogami**)

Kura-no-kami

kura (storehouse)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of the storehouse

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Also with different kanji (chief curator of the palace)

Nando-gami

nan (supply, store)
do | to (door, counter for houses)
gami (kami)
Storeroom Kami

Yashiki-gami

ya (roof, house, shop)
shiki (sit, spread)
yashiki (mansion, residence)
gami (kami)
House Kami, the worship of which is closely connected with ancestor worship

Zashiki-no-kami

za (seat, cushion, gathering, sit)
shiki (sit, spread)
zashiki (a tatami floored room, formal meeting room)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of the zashiki

Zashiki-warashi

za (seat, cushion, gathering, sit)
shiki (sit, spread)
zashiki (a tatami floored room)
warashi | warabe (an archaic regional term for a child)
Child of the house
Brings good luck while it stays, misfortune befalls the house if it leaves.
(See also entry under **Yurei**)

Kajishin

ka (forge)
ji (melting, smelting)
kaji (blacksmith)
shin (kami)
Smithing Kami (and kami of metal forging)
Worshipped by kaji, tatarashi (bellows-makers) and imoji (metal casters)

Konjin

kon (gold)
jin (kami)
Metal Kami
Kami originating within Onmyôdô, associated with varying compass directions and believed to change position in accordance with the year, lunar month, and season / Konjin's current location in space at any given time was

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

considered an unlucky or taboo direction, since the kami was thought to be violent and to delight in bloodshed and curses

Kitano tenjin

kita (north)

no (plains, field)

ten (heavens, sky)

jin (kami)

Kami of learning and scholarship / Was the goryô of Sugawara Michizane until "calmed"

Koyasugami

ko (child)

yasu (relax, quiet, rested, contented, peaceful)

gami (kami)

Kami of pregnancy, safe childbirth, and the healthy growth and development of children

Mikumari-no-kami

mi (short for mizu - water)

kumari (share, allocate, distribute)

no (possesive particle)

Kami of water-dividing. Kami of the allocation of running water

Musubi-no-kami

musubi (combine, produce)

no (possesive particle)

Kami of birth, becoming, production

Enmusubi-no-kami

en (affinity, relation, connection)

musubi (ending, conclusion, union)

enmusubi (marriage)

no (possesive particle)

Matchmaking kami

Musubi

musu. (tie, bind, join, end)

musubi (ending, conclusion, union)

Kami of birth and becoming

Ubugami

ubu (give birth, childbirth)

gami (kami)

Birth Kami

Raihôshin

rai (come)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

hō (call on, visit)

shin (kami)

Visiting Kami

A being which periodically visits a community from the other world to bring blessings / Beliefs in this type of kami are based on the view of kami as transient beings that do not dwell permanently in a single place

Shichi-fuku-jin

shichi (seven)

fuku (blessing, fortune, luck, wealth)

jin (kami)

Seven kami of good fortune

(Buddhist)

Benzai-ten

ben (speech)

zai | sai (genius)

ten (heavens, sky)

Buddhist. Kami of eloquence, knowledge, art, beauty, and especially music.

ben (speech)

ten (heavens, sky)

Also called **Ben-ten**

Bishamon-ten

bi (help, assist)

sha | sa (sand)

mon (gate)

ten (heavens, sky)

Buddhist guardian. Kami of warriors

Daikoku-ten

dai (large, big)

kokū | kuro (black)

ten (heavens, sky)

(Buddhist) Kami of wealth, commerce and trade. Most commonly seen carrying a "wealth-pounding" wooden mallet in his right hand, holding a treasure sack over his left shoulder, and standing upon rice bales

dai (large, big)

kokū | kuro (black)

Also called **Daikoku**

Ebisu

ebisu (provincial - one who lives far from a city)

Kami of fishers or merchants

Often seen holding a fishing pole or a sea bream

Fukuroku-ju

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

fuku (blessing, fortune, luck, wealth)
roku (allowance, pension, grant, happiness)
ju (longevity, one's natural life)
Kami of happiness, wealth and longevity

Ho-tei

ho (linen, cloth)
tei (sack, bag, pouch)
The fat and happy kami of abundance and good health

Jurô-jin

ju (longevity, one's natural life)
rou (old man, old age, grow old)
jin | nin (person)
Kami of longevity

Kichijo-ten

kichi (good luck, joy, congratulations)
jou | shou (auspicious, happiness, good omen)
ten (heavens, sky)
Buddhist
Kami of happiness
Sometimes replaces **Jurô-jin**

Takarabune

takara (treasure, wealth, valuables)
bune | fune (boat, ship)
The ship the **Shichifukujin** ride on
They arrive in town on the new year

Sôzen-sama

sô (pale, blue)
zen (in front, before)
sama (polite suffix)
Guardian kami of horses

Ta-no-kami

ta (rice paddy)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of the rice fields
Descends from the heavens (or in some cases, from the mountains -- See **Yama-no-kami**) in the spring and leaves in the autumn

Human Kami

Kami that are embodied in a living human

Akitsumi-kami

akitsu (present, existing, actual)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mi- (honorable)
Manifest kami

Arahitō-gami

ara (present, existing, actual)
hito (person)
gami (kami)
Kami that manifests in human form

Iki-kami

iki (life)
Living kami
gami (kami)
Also called **Ikigami**

Ningen-shin

nin (person)
gen (interval, space)
ningen (human being)
shin (kami)
Human beings whose spirit are worshipped as kami

Nature Kami

Kami related to unusual features or powers in natural objects or phenomena

Zōka-no-sanshin

zō (create, make)
ka (change, take the form of)
zōka (creation)
no (possessive particle)
san (three)
shin (kami)
Three kami that appeared at the beginning of the creation of heaven and earth and were the basis for the birth and growth of all things
Also called **Zōkasanshin**

Ame-no-minaka-nushi-no-kami

ame (heaven)
no (possessive particle)
mi- (honorable)
naka (center)
nushi (master, lord)
no (possessive particle)
Literally: Kami ruling the center of heaven

Takamimusubi-no-kami

taka (tall, high)
mi- (honorable)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mu. (bear, give birth, yield)
su (nest)
bi | hi (sun)
musubi (the power of becoming, creation)
no (possessive particle)
Literally: exalted musubi Kami
Related to the Kami of heaven

Kamimusubi-no-kami

kami (divinity, sacred)
mu. (bear, give birth, yield)
su (nest)
bi | hi (sun)
musubi (the power of becoming, creation)
no (possessive particle)
Literally: sacred musubi Kami
Related to the Kami of earth
Also called **Kamimusubi**

Ame-Tsuchi

ame (heaven, sky)
tsuchi (ground, earth)
(the Heavens and the Earth)
At the time of creation, the light and pure elements separated from the heavy, turbid elements
The former became the heavens, and the latter became the earth

Amatsu-Kami

ama (heaven, sky)
tsu (genitive post-particle)
Kami of the Heavens
Heavenly bodies and meteorological phenomena

Amaterasu-ômikami

ama (sky, heaven)
te.rasu (illuminate, shine)
ô (great, large, big)
mi- (honorable)
Head of the Amatsu-kami
Great kami of the sun
Sister of **Tsukuyomi-no-mikoto** and **Susano-o-no-mikoto**
hi (sun)
no (possessive particle)
Also called **Hi-no-kami**

Tsukuyomi-no-mikoto

tsuku | tsuki (moon)
yo (night, evening)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mi. (see, look at)
no (possesive particle)
mikoto (revered, noble, exalted)
Kami of the moon
Brother of **Amaterasu-ômikami** and **Susano-o-no-mikoto**
yomi | yumi (bow)
yomi (read)
yo.mi (read, study)
yo.mi (read, study)
yo (night, evening)
mi. (see, look at)
yo (night, evening)
mi | tama? (spirit)
Also called **Tsukuyomi**, **Tsuki-no-kami**

Hakusan

haku (white)
san (mountain)
The collective name given to the three mountains: Gozenpo, Onanjinime, and Bessan
The three kami enshrined there: **Izanagi-no-mikoto**, **Izanami-no-mikoto**, and **Kukurihime-no-kami**

Izanagi-no-mikoto

i (that one)
za | ya (question mark)
na (what)
gi (branch off, forked)
[inochi (fate, command, decree, destiny, life)]
no (possesive particle)
mikoto (revered, noble, exalted)
Brother to **Izanami-no-mikoto**
"He that invites"
Also called **Izanagi-no-ôkami**, **Izanagi**
ô (great, large, big)

Izanami-no-mikoto

i (that one)
za | ya (question mark)
na (what)
mi | bi (beauty, beautiful)
[inochi (fate, command, decree, destiny, life)]
no (possesive particle)
mikoto (revered, noble, exalted)
"She that invites"
Sister to **Izanagi-no-mikoto**
Also called **Izanami-no-ôkami**, **Izanami**, **Izanami-no-kami**
ô (great, large, big)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Kukurihime-no-kami

kiku (chrysanthemum)

ri (logic, arrangement, reason, justice, truth)

hime (beautiful woman, princess)

no (possesive particle)

Kami of mediation and negotiation

She arbitrated between **Izanagi** and **Izanami** when they quarreled at Yomotsuhirasaka (even pass of the underworld)

Kaze-no-kami

kaze (wind)

no (possessive particle)

Kami of wind

Raijin

rai (lightning, thunder)

jin (kami)

Thunder Kami

kaminari (thunder, lightening bolt)

Also called Kaminari-no-kami

Kunitsu-kami

kuni (land, earth, country)

tsu (genitive post-particle)

Kami of the Earth

Geological forms, physical processes, and plants and animals

Susano-o-no-mikoto

su (ought, by all means, necessarily)

sa (assistant, help)

no (ability, talent, skill, capacity)

o (male)

[inochi (fate, command, decree, destiny, life)]

no (possesive particle)

mikoto (revered, noble, exalted)

Kami of the sea and storms

Brother of **Amaterasu-ômikami** and **Tsukiyomi-no-mikoto**

Also called **Susano-o**

Sarutahiko-ôkami

saru (monkey)

ta (rice field, rice paddy)

hi | bi (help, assist)

ko (old)

ô (large, big)

Head of the **Kunitsu-kami**

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Hi-no-kami

hi (fire)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of fire

Ishigami

ishi (stone)
gami (kami)
Stone Kami
(See **Iwakura & Iwasaka**)

Jinushigami

(See **Jinushigami** in Community Kami)

Kawa-no-kami

kawa (river)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of rivers and streams
ka (river)
haku (chief, count, earl)
Also called **Kahaku**

Nai-no-kami

nai (eathquake / literally: ground-shake)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of earthquakes

Suijin

sui (water)
jin (kami)
Water Kami
mizu (water)
no (possesive particle)
Also called **Mizu-no-kami**

Umi-no-kami

umi (sea, ocean)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of the sea

Yama-no-kami

yama (mountain)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of the mountain

Plant Spirits

Many plants also have have Kami associated with them. Especially striking individual plants are seen as embodying Kami.

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Ina-dama

ina- (rice plant)
dama | tama (spirit - See Tama)
Spirit that dwells within the rice

Kukunochi-no-kami

ku (long time, old story)
ku (repetition mark / repeat previous kanji)
no (ability, talent, skill, capacity)
chi (wisdom, intellect, reason)
no (possesive particle)
Kami of the trees
ki (tree)
no (possesive particle)
Also called **Ki-no-kami**

Shinboku

shin (kami, divinity, sacred)
boku (tree)
Divine trees
go (honorable)
shin (kami, divinity, sacred)
boku (tree)
shin (divinity, sacred)
ju (timber trees, wood)
Also called **Goshinboku, Shinju**

Dan

Cedar, sandalwood, spindle tree
Japanese spindle tree (euonymus sieboldianus)
ma (true, reality)
yumi (bow, bow (archery))
Also called **Mayumi**

Hinoki

Japanese cypress, hinoki cypress or hinoki / a species of cypress native to central Japan / Used in shrine buildings and ritual furniture (chamaecyparis obtusa)

Matsu

Pine tree

Sakaki

Sacred Shintô tree
A flowering evergreen tree or shrub native to warm areas of Japan (cleyera japonica)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Sugi

A cypress endemic to Japan / commonly planted around temples and shrines (cryptomeria japonica)

Unusual / deformed plants

Bifurcated Chinese radishes, which are sometimes considered to resemble the human form

Animal Sprirts

Many animals are also associated with Kami. Especially striking individual animals are seen as embodying Kami.

Bears

Deer

Doves

Monkeys

Rabbits

Sharks

Snakes

Wild Boars

Wolves

Yatakarasu

ya (eight)
ta (span)
karasu (crow)
A giant black crow
ya (eight)
ta (span)
no (possesive particle)
karasu (crow)
Also called **Yata-no-karasu**

Yaoyorozu-no-kami

ya (8)
o (100)
yorozu (10,000)
(Literally: 800 myriads) or eight million
Both representations of an infinitely large number
no (possesive particle)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

800 myriads of Kami or the eight million Kami

Akujin

aku (bad, false, evil, wrong, unhappiness, disaster, misfortune, or inferiority of nature or value)

jin (kami)

Evil kami

Also called **Aku-kami**

Araburu-kami

ara (rough, rude, wild)

ara.buru (malevolent)

Malignant kami who bring affliction to human beings

Ekigami

eki (epidemic, plague)

gami (kami)

Plague Kami

Hôsôgami

hô (smallpox)

sô (boil)

gami (kami)

Smallpox Kami

Tatarigami

tata.ri (curse)

gami (kami)

Curse Kami

Yakubyôgami

yaku (epidemic)

byô (ill, sick)

gami (kami)

Kami of bad fortune and disease

eki (epidemic, plague)

byô (ill, sick)

gami (kami)

Also called **Ekibyôgami**

Magatsuhi-no-kami

maga (calamity, misfortune, evil, curse)

tsu (haven, port, harbor)

hi (day, sun, Japan)

no (possessive particle)

Kami of disorder

Kami who bring about sin, pollution, and disaster

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Ma.garu

ma.garu (to bend, to curve, to warp, to wind, to twist, to turn, to be awry, to be askew, to be crooked)
Confusion, complication, distortion

Magagoto

maga (calamity, misfortune, evil, curse)
goto (matter, thing, fact)
(ominous word, ill-omened word, misfortune)
koto (matter, thing, fact)
Also called **Magakoto**

Ômagatsuhi-no-kami

ô (large, big, great)
maga (calamity, misfortune, evil, curse)
tsu (haven, port, harbor)
hi (day, sun, Japan)
no (possessive particle)
Great magatsuhi Kami

Yaso-magatsuhi-no-kami

ya (eight)
so (ten)
yaso (eighty)
maga (calamity, misfortune, evil, curse)
tsu (haven, port, harbor)
hi (day, sun, Japan)
no (possessive particle)
Eighty magatsuhi Kami
(eighty is a trope for myriad)

Shi-Yaku-Jin

shi (four)
yaku (misfortune)
jin (kami)
The Four Misfortune (or Bad Luck) Kami

Binbô-no-kami

bin (poverty)
bô (destitution)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of poverty
gami (kami)
Poverty Kami
Also called **Binbôgami**

Ekibyô-no-kami

eki (epidemic, plague)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

byô (ill, sick)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of bad fortune and disease
yaku (epidemic, plague)
gami (kami)
Plague Kami
Also called **Ekibyôgami, Yakubyôgami**

Kyô-no-kami

kyô (bad luck; bad fortune)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of bad luck / disaster
Kami of failed harvests

Shi-no-kami

shi (death)
no (possessive particle)
Kami of death
shi.ni (death, die)
gami (kami)
Death Kami
Also called **Shini-kami, Shinigami**

Yomo-tsu-kami

yo (yellow)
mo | izimi (spring, fountain)
tsu (genitive post-particle)
Kami ruling over the underworld land of death (Yomi)
mi | izumi (spring, fountain)
gami (kami)
Also called **Yomigami**

Yomo-tsu-ôkami

yo (yellow)
mo | izimi (spring, fountain)
tsu (genitive post-particle)
ô (large, big)
Great kami of Yomi -- **Izanami-no-mikoto**

Yomotsuhisame

yo (yellow)
mo | izumi (spring, fountain)
tsu (genitive post-particle)
hi (sun, day)
sa (cramped, narrow, tight)
me (woman, female)
Hags of Yomi
mo | izumi (spring, fountain)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

tsu (genitive post-particle)
shiko (ugly, unclean, shame, bad looking)
me (woman, female)
Also called **Yomotsushikome**

Inpu

in (shade, secret, shadow)
pu | fu (borough)
path to the netherworld (underworld)
(See **Yomi**)

Yomi

yo (yellow)
mi | izumi (spring, fountain)
(Literally: yellow spring)
The underworld
kuni (country, land)
Also called **Yomi-no-kuni, Yomo-tsu-kuni**

Spirit and Soul

The ideas of spirit and soul are complicated by the fact that the terms are frequently used interchangeably in both English and Japanese. Further clouding the issue are the various Shintô interpretations derived from Daoism and Buddhism.

Chi

chi (spirit, soul)
Kami or spirit of things that are of benefit

Ki

ki (spirit, mind, mood, energy)
A spiritual and physical vital force related to breath and electricity
An energy form that can be generated and used by people

Konpaku

kon (soul, spirit)
paku | haku (soul, spirit)
yang and yin
(Daoism)

Kon

kon (yang energy, spirit)
Soul, spirit
(See **Tamashii**)

Haku

haku (yin energy, spirit)
Soul, spirit

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Mitama

mi (honorable)
tama (soul, spirit)
The spirit of a kami

Mono

mono (thing, object)
A thing or animal spirit

Rei

rei (soul; spirit; departed soul; ghost)
Spirit (of a human)
Frequently of the dead

Tamashii

tamashii (soul, spirit)
The human soul, spirit
tama (soul, spirit)
tama.shii (soul, spirit)
tama (spirits, soul)
Also called **Tama**

Kon

kon (yang energy, spirit)
Soul, spirit
tamashii (soul, spirit)
tama.shii (soul, spirit)
Also called **Tamashii**

Ichirei Shikon

ichi (one)
rei (spirit)
shi (four)
kon (soul)
(Literally - one spirit, four souls)

Aramitama

ara (rough, wild, rude)
mi (honorable)
tama (soul, spirit)
Turbulent soul
The ferocious, rough, and violent side of the spirit

Kushimitama

kushi (strange, strangeness, curiosity, mysterious)
mi (honorable)
tama (soul, spirit)
Wondrous, miraculous, or salubrious soul

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Nigimitama

nigi (harmony, peace, soften, gentle)
mi (honorable)
tama (soul, spirit)
Tranquil soul

Sakimitama

saki | sachi (happiness, blessing, fortune)
mi (honorable)
tama (soul, spirit)
Propitious soul
That which produces **Megumi** (blessings)
Also called **Sakitama**

Types of Shintô

Like other religions, Shintô is not monolithic, but composed of a number of different branches. These are just some of the more prominent branches.

Kyûchû Shintô

kyû (shrine, palace)
chû (inside, middle, center)
shin (kami)
tô | dô (way)
kyûchû shintô (imperial shintô)

The religious rites performed exclusively by the Imperial Family at the **Kyûchûsanden**
Also called **Kôshitsu Shintô**

Kyûchûsanden

kyû (shrine, palace)
chû (inside, middle, center)
san (three)
den (hall, mansion, palace, temple)
(the three shrines on the Imperial grounds)

Kashiko-dokoro

kashiko (intelligent, wise, wisdom, cleverness)
dokoro (place)
(place of awe or reverence)
Enshrining Amaterasu

Kôrei-den

kô (emperor)
rei (spirits, soul)
den (hall, mansion, palace, temple)
(pavilion of the imperial ancestral spirits)
Enshrining the Imperial Ancestors

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Shin-den

shin (kami)

den (hall, mansion, palace, temple)

(Kami pavilion)

Enshrining the **Tenjinchigi**

A collective term for the Kami of heaven (tenjin) and Kami of earth (chigi)

Sanshu-no-shinki

san (three)

shu (species, kind, class, variety, seed)

no (possessive particle)

shin (kami)

ki (vessel, receptacle, implement, instrument, container)

The three sacred emblems of the Imperial Regalia

All three were handed down by **Amaterasu ômikami**

Also called **Sanshu-no-jinji**

Yata-no-kagami

ya (eight)

ta (span, short)

no (possessive particle)

kagami (mirror, speculum)

Sacred mirror

Symbolizes the virtue of wisdom or honesty

Yasakani-no-magatama

ya (eight)

saka (shaku, measure)

ni | rei (beautiful jewel)

no (possessive particle)

maga (bend, curve)

tama (jewel, ball)

Sacred jewel or string of jewels

Symbolizes the virtue of benevolence or affection

Kusanagi-no-tsurugi

kusa (grass, weeds, herbs, pasture)

nagi (mow down (the enemy))

no (possessive particle)

tsurugi (sabre, sword, blade)

Sacred sword

Symbolizes the virtue of courage

Also called **Ame-no-murakumo-no-tsurugi**

Fukko Shintô

fuku (restore, return to, revert, resume)

ko (old)

shin (kami) tô | dô | michi (way)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

fukko shintô (restoration shinto)

A reconstructed "Shintô from before the time of Buddhism"

Based on the Restoration movement begun by Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane

Kokka Shintô

ko (land, earth, country)

ka (house, home)

kokka (state; country; nation)

shin (kami)

tô | dô | michi (way)

kokka shintô (state shintô)

State religion

Kokka-Shintô was the de facto state religion of Japan from 1868 to the end of World War II

The End of Kokka Shintô

Kokka-Shintô officially came to an end after the surrender of Japan when the supreme commander of the allied powers issued the Shinto Directive and ordered the separation of the government from religious affairs during the occupation of Japan / Separation of church and state was incorporated into the 1947 constitution of Japan

Koshintô

ko (old)

shin (kami)

tô | dô | michi (way)

(ancient shintô)

The original Shintô tradition of the Jomon people

Still practiced by some Ainu families and communities, and in some Ryukyuan areas

Jinja Shintô

jin (kami)

ja | sha (shrine, place, office)

shin (kami)

tô | dô | michi (way)

jinja shintô (shrine shintô)

The most prevalent form, and has always been a part of Japan's history. Jinja Shinto is associated in the popular imagination with summer festivals, good luck charms, making wishes, holding groundbreaking ceremonies, and showing support for the nation of Japan

General Principles of Shintô Life

The three principles of gratefulness, harmony, and service that are generally espoused by Jinja Shintô.

Gratefulness

Modern Version – By being grateful for the blessings of the kami and the favor of the ancestors, and by devoting ourselves to ritual activities with sincerity, brightness, and a pure heart.

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Gratefulness

1956 Version – By being grateful for the blessings of the kami and the favor of the ancestors, and by devoting ourselves to ritual activities with sincerity, brightness, and a pure heart.

Gratefulness

1950 Version – By being grateful for the blessings of the kami and the favor of the ancestors, and by devoting ourselves to ritual activities with sincerity, brightness, and a pure heart.

Harmony

Modern Version – By embracing the merciful mind of kami, by leading a harmonious life, and by praying for the prosperity of the nation as well as the peaceful coexistence and prosperity of the entire world.

Harmony

1956 Version – By embracing the merciful mind of kami, by leading a harmonious life, and by praying for the prosperity of the nation as well as the peaceful coexistence and prosperity of the entire world.

Harmony

1950 Version – By embracing the merciful mind of kami, by leading a harmonious life, and by praying for the prosperity of the nation as well as the peaceful coexistence and prosperity of the entire world.

Service

Modern Version – By serving the world and other people, and by building and reinforcing the world in the service of kami.

Service

1956 Version – In accordance with the Emperor's will, let us be harmonious and peaceful, and pray for the nation's development as well as the world's coexistence and co-prosperity.

Service

1950 Version – To bind oneself with others in harmonious acknowledgment of the will of the Emperor, praying that the country may flourish and that other peoples may also live in peace and prosperity.

Jinja

jin (kami)
ja | sha (shrine, office, place)
Generic term for Shinto shrine

Jingu

jin (kami)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

gu (shintô shrine, palace)

Generic name for shrines that have imperial connections

Also called **Miya** (temple, palace)

Omairi

o (honorable)

mai.ri (visiting, visit)

Visiting a jinja to perform **Sampai**

Saimotsu

sai (temple visit)

motsu (thing, object)

Offerings made to a kami when visiting a jinja

Sampai (noun)

san (three)

pai | hai (worship, adore, pray to)

Act of worship which is performed three times

Sampai (verb)

san (visiting, visit)

pai | hai (worship, adore, pray to)

Visit to a shrine or temple; paying homage at a shrine or temple

Taisai

tai | dai (large, big)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

(large scale shrine rites)

Shrine rites having to do with major festivals, divided into reisai, kinensai, niinamesai, shikinensai, chinzasai, senzasai, go-shisai, bunshisai, and rites based on special shrine traditions

Bunshisai

bun (part, segment)

shi (small shrine)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Movement of a enshrined Kami to another branch shrine

Chinzasai

chin (tranquilize)

za (seat, cushion)

(enshrinement)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Enshrinement of a Kami

Gôshisai

go.shi (cross over, move to)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Marking the deceased joining with ancestral spirits
Held one year after the funeral rites

Kinensai

ki (pray, wish)

nen (year)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Celebrated annually on the fourth day of the second month to pray for a bountiful harvest

All shrines receiving any form of official patronage, either imperial or provincial were required to perform the Kinensai

Niinamesai

nii (new)

na.me (taste)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Ancient domestic rites are observed annually with the eleventh-month harvest

festival, at which time ancestral tutelaries (**Ujigami** or **Yakatsukami**) were feted together with the deity of foodstuffs: **Uka-no-mitama** and the hearth deity known as **Kamadogami**

Reisai

rei (custom, precedent)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

The principle matsuri of any shrine

Performed once or twice a year

Senzasai

sen (transition, move, change)

za (seat, cushion)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Relocation of a shrine and transfer of an object of worship

A festival held for a building that is to be dismantled and rebuilt, or undergo major repairs

Before construction begins, the deity must be transferred to temporary quarters

(karidono senzasai) and then returned when the permanent structure is completed

(hondon senzasai)

Shikinensai

shiki (ceremony, rite, function)

nen (year)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Rites held annually

Taisai (major rites) & **Shôsai** (minor rites)

Rites of this type are broadly divided between those held regularly at shrines and those held for the Imperial Ancestors at the palace held in prescribed years

Chûsai

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

chû (middle, center)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
(medium scale shrine rites)
Shrine rites having to do with medium-size festivals

Shôsai

shô (little, small)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
(small scale shrine rites)
Shrine rites having to do with small-size festivals

Kyôha Shintô

kyô (teach, faith, doctrine)
ha (faction, group, party, clique, sect, school)
kyôha shintô (sect shintô)
Does not have shrines, but conduct religious activities in meeting halls
Shintô sects include the mountain-worship sects, who focus on worshipping mountains like Mount Fuji, faith-healing sects, purification sects, Confucian sects, and Revival Shintô sects.
The remainder of Sectarian Shintô is New Sect Shintô
Also called **Shûha Shintô**

Minzoku Shintô

min (people)
zoku (customs, manners)
shin | jin (kami)
tô | dô | michi (way)
minzoku shintô (folk shintô)
Shintô as practiced by the commons – the ordinary members of a culture. These folk beliefs and practices are not organized into a coherent system, and vary from one location to another. Practices may include divination, spirit possession, and shamanic healing. Some of practices come from **Daoism**, **Buddhism**, or **Confucianism**, but most come from ancient local traditions.
Also called **Minkan Shintô**

Folk Religion

The totality of all those views and practices of religion that exist among the commons apart from and alongside the strictly theological and liturgical forms of the official religion

Folklore

Folklore consists of praxis, popular beliefs, tales, music and songs, histories, poems, jokes, and sayings that are the traditions of a group

Praxis

Popular practices and ways of doing

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Praxis is "habitual or established practice". These are some of the practices of Minzoku Shintô. This list is by no means complete; it's up to each community to determine which particular set of practices they will follow.

Bokusen

boku (divining, fortune-telling)
sen (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting, hold, have, get, take)
bokusen (augury; fortune-telling; divination)
Also called **Senboku, Uranai, Ura**
sen (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)
boku (divining, fortune-telling)
senboku (divination; fortunetelling; soothsaying)
uranai (fortune-telling; divination)
urana.i (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)
ura (fortune-telling; divination)
ura (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)

Futomani

futo (plump, thick, big around)
mani | sen (archaism: fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)
mani | chô (archaism: portent, sign, omen)
Scapulimancy (divination using the cracks in the heated shoulder blade of a deer); spatulamancy; armomancy

Keiba

kei (compete with, bout, contest, race)
ba (horse)
Horse racing as a form of harvest divination

Kiboku

ki (tortoise, turtle)
boku (divining, fortune-telling)
Heating the shell of a tortoise and interpreting the resulting cracks
Also called **Kame-ura**
kame (tortoise, turtle)
kame (turtle, tortoise)
ura (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)

Kayu'ura

kayu (rice-gruel)
ura (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)
Generally performed on January 15
The objective is to divine the weather, harvest, or other aspects of the year to come
Also called **Mi-kayu'ura**
mi (honorable)
kayu (rice-gruel)
ura (fortune-telling, divining, forecasting)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Matoi

mato (bull's eye, mark, target)
i (shoot, archery)
Archery divination
Done within a shrine at the new year

Omato-shinji

o (honorable)
mato (bull's eye, mark, target)
shin (kami)
ji (matter, business)
Archery divination ritual
Done by firing an arrow, frequently at the end of winter

Omikuji

o (honorable)
mi (kami)
kuji (lottery, raffle)
A paper lot on which a personal fortune is written
A small rounded container filled with bamboo sticks
Pick up the container, give it a shake, and a long stick will pop out of a small hole at the top
The stick will have a number, which corresponds to a fortune
Based on your number you get a tiny slip/roll of paper on which is written your fortune
If you draw a good fortune, keep it; if it's bad, leave it at the shrine
Also called **Mikuji**
mi (kami)
mi (honorable)
kuji (lottery, raffle)
kuji (lottery, lot, raffle)

Yabusame

ya | na (current, flow)
busa | kabura (whistling arrowhead)
me (horse)
Archery divination
Done as a contest on horseback

Chinkon sai

chin (tranquilize)
kon (soul, spirit)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
A ritual to calm a soul or Kami
(See **Goryo-e**)

Ireisai

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

i (comfort, console, consolation)
rei (spirits, souls)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
(memorial service)
Ceremony to calm the souls of dead soldiers

Himachi

hi (sun)
ma.chi (wait)
Waiting for the sun
Believers assemble at a member's home on set days, such as the 15th of the first, fifth, and ninth months of the lunar calendar, to hold a religious ceremony, spend the night in fellowship, and worship the rising sun

Hokora

hokora (small shrine)
A very small Shinto shrine either found on the precincts of a larger shrine and dedicated to folk Kami, or on a street side, enshrining Kami not under the jurisdiction of any large shrine
A shrine without a full-time Jinjashishoku
Also called **Hokura**
ho (treasure, wealth, valuables)
kura (warehouse, storehouse, treasury)
ho | ko (kami)
kura (warehouse, storehouse)

Iwakura

iwa (rock, crag, cliff)
kura | suwa (seat, cushion)
A formation of rocks to which a Kami is invited to descend for worship, and considered to be holy ground
Together with **Ishigami** (stone-kami) and **Iwasaka**, such forms of worship represent a type of rock-worshiping cult

Iwasaka

wa (rock, crag, cliff)
saka (boundary, border, region)
A stone altar or cairn erected in ancient times for the purpose of invoking the presence of a Kami at times of worship

Koto-dama

koto (say)
dama | tama (spirits, soul)
Soul or power of language
A spiritual power residing in words

Mikoto

mi (honorable)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

koto (say)
A message from a Kami

Norito

nori (celebrate, congratulate)
to (part of speech, words, poetry)
Beautiful words or prayers addressed to the Kami
Ritual invocations to the Kami

Miyaza

miya (Shintô shrine)
za (gathering, seat)
Traditional community organization that oversees jinja affairs, planning ceremonies and matsuri in the absence of officiating priests, and naorai
Lay people from leading families rotate as heads of matsuri and events
Also called **Za**
za (gathering, seat)

Naorai

nao (straightaway, honesty, frankness, fix, repair)
rai | kai (meeting, meet, party)
Communing with the Kami
The ritual eating of rice and drinking of **Sake** (rice wine) at a **Matsuri**

Onigawara

oni (ghost, ogre)
gawara | kawara (tile)
Roof tiles shaped like an oni's head
Keeps watch against approaching evil spirits

Saiki

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
ki (utensil, vessel, receptacle, implement, instrument, container, tool, set)
Equipment used in rituals
gu (tool, utensil)
Also called **Saigu**
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
gu (tool, utensil)

Chi-no-wa

chi (miscanthus reed)
wa (ring)
An instrument for casting out sources of misfortune
People are purified by passing through a large sacred ring, made of loosely twisted miscanthus reeds

Heihaku

hei (cash, gift, Shinto offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

haku (cloth)

In its broadest sense a general term for offerings made to the Kami

The type and number of heihaku vary greatly depending on the type of ritual

Items offered include cloth, clothing, weapons, **Miki** (rice wine), and **Shinsen** (food offerings)

Also called **Mitegura**, **Heimotsu**, **Hei**, **Shinpei**, or **Go-hei**

hei (cash, gift, Shintô offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)

motsu (thing, object)

heimotsu (Shintô offerings; present to a guest)

hei (cash, gift, Shintô offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)

go (honorable)

shin (kami)

pei | hei (cash, gift, Shintô offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)

Go-hei

go | o (honorable)

hei (cash, gift, Shinto offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)

Made by attaching zig-zag strips of gold, silver, white or multicolored (five-color) paper to

a staff (called a **Heigushi**) made of bamboo or other wood and offered to Kami

Also called Mitegura

mi (honorable)

te (hand)

gura | kura (warehouse, storehouse, treasury)

Go-shiki-ban

go (five)

shiki (color)

ban (flag)

Five-colored sets of ribbons hung in altar areas

Buddhist colors for the directions

Shiki

shiki (color)

Also called Iro

iro (color)

Aka

aka (red)

Akai (adj ending)

Also called **Seki**

seki (red)

Ao

ao (blue)

Aoi (adj ending)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Also called **Sei**
sei (blue, (green))

Midori

midori (green)
Midorino (adj ending)
Also called **Midoriiro, Ao**
midoriiro (green)
Midoriirono (adj ending)

Kiio

kiio (yellow)
Kiioi (adj ending)
Also called **Ki**
ki (yellow)

Kuro

kuro (black)
Kuroi (adj ending)
Also called **Koku**
koku (black)

Murasaki

murasaki (purple)
Murasakino (adj ending)
Also called **Murasakiiro**
Murasakiiro (purple)
Murasakiirono (adj ending)

Shiro

shiro (white)
Shiroi (adj ending)
Also called **Haku**
haku (white)

Onmyôdô

on | in (negative, secret, female, shade, shadow, yin)
myô | yô (daytime, heaven, male, positive, sunshine, yang)
dô (journey, way, teachings)
A traditional Japanese esoteric cosmology
A mixture of natural science and occultism, it is based on the
Chinese philosophies of Wu Xing and Yin and yang
These practices were further influenced by **Taoism, Buddhism**
and Shintoism
Also called **On'yôdô, In'yôdô**
on (negative, secret, female, shade, shadow, yin)
in (negative, secret, female, shade, shadow, yin)
yô (daytime, heaven, male, positive, sunshine, yang)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

dô (way)

Earth

Kiïro, center

Fire

Aka, south

Metal

Shiro, west

Water

Kuro or **Murasaki**, north

Wood

Ao or **Midori**, east

Onmyô-ji

on (negative, secret, female, shade, shadow, yin)

myô (daytime, heaven, male, positive, sunshine, yang)

ji (exemplar, expert, master, teacher)

Specialists in magic and divination they also exorcise spirits, summon spirits, and control shikigami

Also called **On'yô-ji**

on (negative, secret, female, shade, shadow, yin)

yô (daytime, heaven, male, positive, sunshine, yang)

ji (exemplar, expert, master, teacher)

Hobei

hô (observance, offer, present, dedicate)

bei | hei (cash, gift, Shinto offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)

Presentation of **Go-hei**, or **Heihaku**, or offerings to be used by Kami

Kamidana

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

dana | tana (shelf, ledge, mantle)

(Literally: kami-shelf)

A household shrine placed or hung high on a wall.

(See **Purification of Place**)

Ishidoro

ishi (stone)

dô | tô (lamp)

rô (cage)

Stone lantern.

Also called **Toro**, **Mokusei toro**, and **Kasuga toro**

tô (lamp, a light)

rô (cage)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

rô (basket, cage)
tôrô (lantern)
moku (tree, wood)
sei (made in, made of)
mokusei (wooden, made of wood)
kasu (spring, springtime)
ga (day, sun)
kasuga (spring day)

Kadai

ka | hana (flower)
dai (pedestal, a stand)
Stands for sakaki tate vases

Kagaribi

kagari (beacon basket)
bi | hi (fire)
Brazier, bonfire, watch fire, cresset

Masakaki

ma (true, reality)
sakaki (sacred Shintô tree)
Sakaki with Go-shiki-ban and Sanshu-no-jingi

Ofuda

o (honorable)
fuda (tag, placard, emblem)
A talisman issued by a Shintô shrine, made of paper, wood, or metal,
inscribed
with the name of a Kami and used for protection in the home
Typically placed in the home at a kamidana
Renewed annually
Also called **Fuda**
fuda (tag, placard, emblem)

Osonaemono

o (honorable)
sona.e (submit, offer, present, serve)
mono (thing)
Traditional offerings of **Kome** (rice), **Sake** (rice wine), **Mizu** (water),
Shio (salt) and **Sakaki** (evergreen branches)
(See **Shinsen**)

Ozen

o (honorable)
zen (small low table, tray)
Tray for **Shinki**

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Shinki

shin (kami)

ki (utensil, vessel, receptacle, implement, instrument, container, tool, set)

Offering vessels or ritual tools

Also called **Shingusetto** (usually in sales catalogs)

shin (kami)

gu (tool, utensil)

setto (katakana - Japanese pronunciation of English - set)

Heiji

hei (bottle, vial, jar, jug)

ji | gi (child)

Two lidded bottles containing **O-miki** (ritually purified sake)

Mizutama

mizu (water)

tama (ball, jewel)

Round, pointed-lidded jar containing water

Sakaki tate

sakaki (sacred Shintô tree)

ta.te (stand up)

tate (stand up)

Two tall vases for the sakaki (an evergreen plant)

O-sakaki

Also called **Sakakidate**

sakaki (sacred Shintô tree)

da.te (stand up)

date (stand up)

Sara

sara (dish, plate)

Two plates, dishes for **O-kome** and **O-shio**

Also called **Shiro sara**, **O-sara**

shiro (white)

o (honorable)

sara (disk, plate)

Shinkyô

shin (kami)

kyô (mirror)

Kagami (sacred mirror) with stand

Kagami

Kagami (mirror)

Kamidoko

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)
toko | doko (floor)
(Literally: kami floor)
A household shrine placed at ground-level upon a platform possessing three or four steps

Ô-nusa

ô (large, big)
nusa | hei (Shintô offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)
A ritual purification wand presented when invoking the Kami or when exorcising sins or imperfections (Tsumi)
May be made of linen or paper streamers (Shide) attached to a branch of the Sakaki tree, or the streamers may be attached to a hexagonal or octagonal staff of unfinished wood
(See **Heihaku**)
Also called **Nusa**, **Haraegushi**
nusa (Shintô offerings of cloth, rope, cut paper)
hara.e (exorcise)
gushi | kushi (skewer)

Saikigu

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
ki (utensil, vessel, receptacle, implement, instrument, container, tool, set)
gu (tool, utensil)
Ritual utensils used in **Harai** ceremonies

Hassokuan

ha | hachi (eight)
soku (leg)
an (plan, copy, draft: writing)
Eight-footed table used to bear items such as **Heihaku**, **Shinsen**, and **Tamagushi**.
Also called **An**
an (desk, table, stand)

Oshiki

o. (bend, fold)
shi.ki (spread, sit)
Offering tray placed on top of the **Sanbô**

Sanbô

san (three)
bô | hô (sides, directions)
A stand used to bear the Shinsen or food offerings
Usually made of unpainted **Hinoki** (Japanese cypress)
Also called **Sampô**

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

san (three)
pô | hô (sides, directions)

Takatsuki

taka (high, tall)
tsuki (bowl)
Wooden pedestal table used to bear the Shinsen
Also called **Taka hai**, **Kaku-takatsuki**, **Maru-takatsuki**
taka (high, tall)
hai (bowl)
kaku (angle) – angular top pedestal table
maru (circle) – round top pedestal table

Shide

shi (paper)
de | dare (droop, suspend, hang)
Zigzag folded paper or cloth offerings

Shimenawa

shime | shirube (marker)
nawa (straw rope)
(Literally: enclosing rope)
Rice straw rope used to absorb impurities

Shinboku

shin (kami)
boku (tree, wood)
A sacred tree or grove

Shintai

shin (kami)
tai (body, substance, object, reality)
An object in which a Kami is believed to dwell (See **Dwelling**)
(See **Yorishiro**)
Also called **Go-shintai**, **Mi-tama-shiro**
go (honorable)
shin (kami)
tai (body, substance, object, reality)
mi (honorable)
tama (spirits, soul)
shiro (substitute)

Tamagushi

tama (jewel, ball)
gushi | kushi (skewer, spit)
gushi | kuji (lottery, raffle)
A branch of **Sakaki** with **Shide** attached that is offered to Kami with the

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

appropriate **Hakushu** as the final act of **Sampai**

Also called **Tamakushi**

tama (jewel, ball)

kushi (skewer, spit)

kushi | kuji (lottery, raffle)

Torii

tori (bird)

i (reside, to be, exist)

(Literally: bird perch)

Sacred gateway

Consists of two uprights with either a rope strung between, or one or two crossbeams

Torimono

to.ri (pick, take, fetch, take up)

mono (thing, object, matter)

A prop which is held in the hand of the dancer in sacred dance rituals such as kagura

It can also refer to the thing the dancer holds when performing a dance to purify the implements to be used in a sacred ritual or dance

Some Torimono are Sakaki (sacred leaves), Mitegura (ritual paper object),

Tsue (rod), Sasa (bamboo grass), Yumi (bow), Tsurugi (sword), Hoko

(halberd), Hisago (ladle), Kazura (vines), Suzu (bells), and Goza

(straw/rush mat)

(See Satokagura)

Suzu

suzu (small bell)

A hand-held, bell tree composed of three tiers of jingle bells

The first (top) tier has three bells, the second tier has five and the lowest tier has seven

Sometimes with **Go-shiki-ban** attached to the handle

The emphasis on odd numbers is a Buddhist influence

Yorishiro

yorishiro (reliant, depend on)

shiro (substitute, change, convert, replace)

The temporary dwelling place (or object or person) of a Kami when it descends for a religious ceremony or when possessing a person

Yorishiro may be natural objects such as trees or rocks, or implements prepared for use in rituals, such as pillars, banners, or ritual emblems called **Go-hei**

(See **Shintai**)

Shinsen

shin (kami)

sen (food, offering)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Food offerings presented to a Kami

May include rice, sake, salt, water, rice cakes, fish, fowl, meat, seaweed, vegetables, fruits, and sweets

ken (offering)

sen (food, offering)

Also called **Kensen**

ken (offering)

sen (food, offering)

Ikenie

ike (life)

nie (offering, sacrifice)

An offering of living animal -- usually white

The animals are normally released within the Keidai (shrine precincts) following rituals of dedication

Imibi

i.mi (purification)

bi (fire)

Ritual fire for cooking

Has to be made with a flint stone

Also called **Inbi**

in | i.mi (mourning, abstinence, taboo, religious purification, pure, holy)

bi (fire)

Jukusen

juku (ripen, mature)

sen (food, offering)

An offering of cooked and prepared foods

Kessai

kes | ketsu (undefiled, pure, clean, righteous)

sai (purification)

Periods of abstinence by persons engaging in the preparation of offerings

Mori-no-sachi

mori (forest, woods)

no (possesive particle)

sachi (happiness, blessing, fortune)

Food from the woods

O-mizu

o (honorable)

mizu (water)

Also called **Mizu**

mizu (water)

O-Shio

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

o (honorable)
shio (salt)
Also called **Shio**
shio (salt)

Seisen

sei (life, genuine, birth)
sen (food, offering)
An offering of raw foods

Sosen

so (elementary, principle, naked)
sen (food, offering)
An offering of vegetarian foods

Ta-no-sachi

ta (rice paddy)
no (possessive)
sachi (happiness, blessing, fortune)
Food from the paddy fields

Mochi

mochi (rice cake)
Rice pounded into a paste

O-kome

o (honorable)
kome (rice)
Also called **Kome**
kome (rice)

O-miki

o (honorable)
mi (kami)
ki (sake)
Also called **Miki, Sake**
mi (kami)
ki (sake)
sake (rice wine, alcohol)

Umi-no-sachi

umi (sea, ocean)
no (possesive particle)
sachi (happiness, blessing, fortune)
Foods from the sea

Yama-no-sachi

yama (mountain)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

no (possesive particle)
sachi (happiness, blessings, fortune)
Foods of the mountain

Shinshoku

shin (kami)
shoku (post, employment, work)
Workers involved in the ritual and maintenance of shrines
All those who serve the Kami
General term for a Shintô priest or those performing the functions of a priest
at a **Matsuri**
Also called **Shanin, Shake, Shashi, and Shikan**
sha (shrine)
nin (person)
shanin (shrine priest)
ke (house, home)
shake (family of hereditary Shintô priests serving a shrine)
shi (official, administrator)
shashi (shrine priest)
shi (small shrine)
kan (bureaucrat)
shikan (priest at a small village or hamlet shrine)

Jinjashishoku

jin (kami)
ja | sha (shrine, office, place)
shi (small shrine)
shoku (post, employment, work)
Shrine ritualists or priests

Guji

gû (Shintô shrine)
ji | shi (director, official, administer)
Chief priest

Gonguji

gon (authority, power, rights)
gû (Shintô shrine)
ji | shi (director, official, administer)
Provisional / assistant chief priest

Negi

ne (ancestral shrine)
gi (best regards, good)
Suppliant priest

Gonnegi

gon (authority, power, rights)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

ne (ancestral shrine)
gi (best regards, good)
Provisional / assistant suppliant priest

Shuten

shu (master, lord, chief)
ten (ceremony, code, law, rule)
Junior priest
Also called **Kujo**
ku (Shintô shrine)
jô | shô (manipulate)

Hafuri

hafuri (ritualist) | shuku (celebrate, congratulate)
Shintô priest of lower rank than **Kannushi** and **Negi**

Shusshi

shus | shutsu (exit, leave)
shi (attend, serve, doing)
Apprentice or novice priest

Kannushi

kan (kami)
nushi (chief, master)
The person responsible for the maintenance of a Shintô shrine, as well as
for leading worship
Shrine keeper | guardian | chief ritualist

Tônin

tô (head)
nin (person)
Lay priest at a shrine or **Matsuri**

Tôya

tô (head)
ya (house, roof, dealer)
Term for those performing the functions of a priest at a **Matsuri**

Shu

shu (guard, protect, defend, obey)
Amulets and protective items
(See **Omamori**)

Dorei

do (soil, earth)
rei (small bell)
Earthenware bells used to pray for good fortune, frequently in the shape of
the animal representative of the astrological calendar

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Ema

e (picture, drawing, painting, sketch)

ma (horse)

Small wooden plaques that wishes or desires are written upon and left at a place in the shrine grounds so that one may have a wish or desire fulfilled

Hamaya

ha (rend, rip, tear, break, destroy, defeat, frustrate)

ma (witch, demon, evil spirit)

ya (dart, arrow)

Demon-breaking arrow

A symbolic arrow for the fight against evil and bad luck

Inori

ino.ri (pray, wish, supplication)

Prayers to the kami written on pieces of paper that help students pass examinations or sick people recover from an illness

Also called **O-inori**

o (honorable)

ino.ri (pray, wish, supplication)

Inuhariko

inu (dog)

ha.ri (lengthen, stretch, spread)

ko (child)

A paper doll of a dog used to bless and provide a good birth

Kadonyûdô

kado (gate)

nyû (enter)

dô (road-way, street, teachings)

nyûdô (priest, monk, shaved head) - Buddhist term

A pair of standing logs with carved faces, that flank an entrance and act as a talisman against evil spirits

Magatama

maga (bent, curve, crooked)

tama (ball, jewel)

Curved beads

An ancient Shintô talisman of good fortune

Omamori

o (honorable)

mamo.ri (guard, protect, defend, obey)

Personal protection amulets, issued with a specific intent in mind -- for warding off bad luck and for better health, more recently there are also ones for good driving, good business, and school success

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Also called **Mamori**

Anzan omamori

an (relax, quiet, rested, contented, peaceful)

zan | san (bear, give birth, childbirth)

anzan (easy delivery)

o (honorable)

mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)

Provides spiritual protection for women during pregnancy and labor

Byôki heiyu omamori

byô (ill, sick)

ki (spirit, mind, mood)

byôki (illness; disease; sickness)

hei (even, peace)

yu (healing, cure)

heiyu (recovery; convalescence)

byôki-heiyu (recovery from illness)

o (honorable)

mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)

Restores lost health due to illness

Chôju omamori

chô (long)

ju (longevity, one's natural life)

chôju (longevity)

o (honorable)

mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)

Provides increased longevity for its holder

En-musubi omamori

en (affinity, relation, connection)

musu.bi (tie, bind, contract, join)

en-musubi (the chance to be brought together for a relationship)

o (honorable)

mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)

Provides aid for individuals looking to find a suitable partner for marriage and family

Hisshô-gôkaku omamori

his | hitsu (invariably, certain, inevitable)

shô (victory, win, prevail, excel)

hisshô (certain victory)

gô (fit, suit, join)

kaku (status, rank, capacity)

gôkaku (success, passing (e.g. exam), eligibility)

hisshô-gôkaku (certain victory in eligibility exams)

o (honorable)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Provides help for students and scholars in passing tests and entrance exams

Jôju-gakugyô omamori

jô (turn into, become, get, grow, reach)
ju (concerning, settle, take position)
jôju (fulfillment, realization)
gaku (study, learning)
gyô (vocation, performance)
gakugyô (studies, schoolwork, classwork)
jôju-gakugyô (academic dream fulfillment)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Provides spiritual aid for students and scholars

Kanai-anzen omamori

ka (house, home)
nai (inside, within, between, among, house, home)
kanai (inside the home, one's family)
an (relax, quiet, rested, contented, peaceful)
zen (whole, entire, all, complete, fulfill)
anzen (safety, security)
kanai-anzen (safety (well-being) of one's family, peace and prosperity in the household)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Protects good health and assists in quick recovery from illness and disease

Kanai-anzen hamaya omamori

ka (house, home)
nai (inside, within, between, among, house, home)
kanai (inside the home, one's family)
an (relax, quiet, rested, contented, peaceful)
zen (whole, entire, all, complete, fulfill)
anzen (safety, security)
kanai-anzen (safety (well-being) of one's family, peace and prosperity in the household)
ha (rend, rip, tear, break, destroy, defeat, frustrate)
ma (oni, evil spirit, witch)
ya (dart, arrow)
hamaya (literally: oni breaking arrow – ceremonial arrow used to drive off evil)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Provides aid in maintaining good health and to speed recovery from illness and disease

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Kodomo omamori

ko (child)
domo (companion, attendant, accompany)
kodomo (child / children)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Protects children

Kôtsû-anzen omamori

kô (coming and going)
tsû (traffic, commute)
kôtsû (traffic, transportation)
an (relax, quiet, rested, contented, peaceful)
zen (whole, entire, all, complete, fulfill)
anzen (safety, security)
kôtsû-anzen (traffic safety)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Provides protection for drivers and travelers of all sorts

Hamaya omamori

ha (rend, rip, tear, break, destroy, defeat, frustrate)
ma (oni, evil spirit, witch)
ya (dart, arrow)
hamaya (literally: oni breaking arrow – ceremonial arrow used to drive off evil)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
General purpose mamori arrow to ward away evil forces and bring good fortune to home or business

Shiawase omamori

shiawa.se (happiness, blessing, fortune)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
For general purpose use and for those seeking happiness or where heavenly favor and good fortune are desired

Shôbai-hanjô omamori

shô (make a deal, selling, dealing in, merchant)
bai (sell)
shôbai (trade, business, commerce, transaction, occupation)
han (luxuriant, thick, frequency, complexity)
jô (boom, prosper)
hanjô (prosperity, flourishing, thriving)
shôbai-hanjô (thriving (prosperous) business, rush of business)
o (honorable)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Helps ensure success in business

Shôbai-hanjô hamaya omamori

shô (make a deal, selling, dealing in, merchant)
bai (sell)
shôbai (trade, business, commerce, transaction, occupation)
han (luxuriant, thick, frequency, complexity)
jô (boom, prosper)
hanjô (prosperity, flourishing, thriving)
shôbai-hanjô (thriving (prosperous) business, rush of business)
ha (rend, rip, tear, break, destroy, defeat, frustrate)
ma (oni, evil spirit, witch)
ya (dart, arrow)
hamaya (literally: oni breaking arrow – ceremonial arrow used to drive off evil)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Helps ensure success in business

Yakudoshi yakuyoke omamori

yaku (unlucky, misfortune, bad luck, disaster)
doshi | toshi (year)
yakudoshi (unlucky year; critical age)
yaku (unlucky, misfortune, bad luck, disaster)
yo.ke (exclude, remove, abolish)
yakuyoke (warding off evil)
o (honorable)
mamo.ri (protection, defense, amulet, charm, talisman)
Provides protection during a person's unlucky years
(See **Yakudoshi**)

Maneki Neko

mane.ki (beckon, invite, summon)
neko (cat)
(Literally "beckoning cat")
One of the most common lucky charms in Japan, designed to attract business and promote prosperity
Found frequently in shop windows, the Maneki Neko sits with its paw raised and bent, beckoning customers to enter
Also called **welcoming cat, lucky cat, money cat, fortune cat**

Okiagari-koboshi

o.ki (to get up)
a.gari (arise)
ko- (little, small)
bo | ho (method, law, rule, principle, model, system)
shi (expert, teacher, master)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Getting up little preist

A papier-mache doll designed so that its weight causes it to return to an upright position if it is knocked over

It is considered a good-luck charm and a symbol of perseverance and resilience

Daruma

An okiagari doll modeled after Bodhidharma

These dolls, though typically red and depicting a bearded man (Dharma), vary greatly in color and design

Daruma has a design that is rich in symbolism and is regarded more as a talisman of good luck to the Japanese

(See Daruma)

Tsuka

tsuka (hillock, mound)

Sacred mounds used for worship or other ritual purposes

Tsukimachi

tsuki (moon)

ma.chi (wait)

Waiting for the moon

Believers assemble on set evenings, such as the fifteenth, seventeenth, nineteenth, and twenty-third days of the first, fifth, and ninth months of the lunar calendar, hold religious ceremonies, present offerings to Kami, and pray

The Others

Preternatural creatures in Japanese folklore / Some of these are regarded as Kami

Dojin

dô (child)

jin (retainer, subject)

Child attendants of the Kami

Hagoromo

ha (feathers)

goromo | koromo (garment, clothes)

(Literally: feather robe)

Female beings who wear a feathered robe of swan feathers and has miraculous powers

Marebito

mare (rare, phenomenal)

bito | hito (person)

Visiting Kami in disguise who fulfill certain community functions

Namahage

nama (life, genuine, birth)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

ha.ge (come off, peel, fade, discolor)

A marebito who comes to a village at the New Year and reprimands errors and encourages effort

Ryû

ryû (dragon, imperial)

A dragon Kami

Kôryû

kô (dragon)

ryû (dragon, imperial)

ryû (dragon, imperial)

Generic name for rain dragons

Also called Kô-ryô

kô (dragon)

ryô (dragon, imperial)

ryô (dragon, imperial)

Mizuchi

mizuchi (dragon)

mizuchi (young dragon)

mizu (water)

chi | chichi (father)

mizuchi (water father)

Generic name for river dragons

Ryûjin

ryû (dragon, imperial)

jin (kami)

A protective dragon kami associated with water, the sea, and fishing

Also called **Ryôjin**, **Watatsumi**, **Ô-watatsumi kami**

wata (sea, ocean)

tsu (genitive participle 'of')

mi (kami)

*wata.tsu.mi (kanji used phonetically for:

wata (sea, ocean) -- tsu (genitive participle 'of') -- mi (kami))

oo (great, large, big)

*wata.tsu.mi (kanji used phonetically for:

wata (sea, ocean) -- tsu (genitive participle 'of') -- mi (kami))

Toyotama-hime

toyo (bountiful, excellent, rich)

tama (jewel)

hime (princess)

hime (beautiful woman, princess)

Daughter of Ryûjin

Also called **Otohime**

oto- (strange, witty)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

hime (princess)

Watatsumi sanjin

wata.tsu.mi (kanji used phonetically for:

wata (sea, ocean) -- tsu (genitive particle 'of') -- mi (kami))

san (three)

jin (kami)

watatsumi sanjin (three watatsumi kami)

Rule the upper, middle, and lower seas

Created through Izanagi's misogi after returning from Yomi

(See **Ryûjin**)

Nakatsu watatsumikami

naka (middle, center)

tsu (genitive particle 'of')

wata.tsu.mi (kanji used phonetically for:

wata (sea, ocean) -- tsu (genitive particle 'of') -- mi (kami))

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

Sokotsu watatsumikami

soko (bottom, underneath)

tsu (genitive particle 'of')

wata.tsu.mi (kanji used phonetically for:

wata (sea, ocean) -- tsu (genitive particle 'of') -- mi (kami))

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

Uwatsu watatsumikami

uwa (above, surface, top)

tsu (genitive particle 'of')

wata.tsu.mi (kanji used phonetically for:

wata (sea, ocean) -- tsu (genitive particle 'of') -- mi (kami))

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

Yôkai

yô (attractive, bewitching, calamity)

kai (suspicious, mystery, apparition)

yôkai (ghost; apparition; phantom; spectre; specter; demon; monster; goblin)

Something strange, suspicious, or mysterious such as a spirit, ghost, demon, or other 'supernatural' creature

Also called **Ayashii**, **Ayakashi**

aya.shii (attractive, bewitching, calamity)

aya.shii (suspicious, mystery, apparition)

ayakashi (ghost that appears at sea during a shipwreck, something strange or suspicious, Nô mask for roles involving dead or ghost characters)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Hitotsume-kozo

hito.tsu (one)

me (eye)

ko- (small, little)

zô | sô (monk, priest)

hitotsume-kozo (one-eyed boys)

Roughly the size of ten-year-old children, their most distinctive feature is a single, giant eye peering from the center of the face, along with a long tongue

They are relatively harmless creatures, content to run about frightening human beings or telling loud people to be quiet (they enjoy silence)

Inugami

inu (dog)

gami | kami (soul, mind, kami)

(Literally: dog kami)

Similar to a familiar spirit, resembling, and usually originating from, a dog

Most commonly carrying out vengeance or acting as guardians on behalf of the **inugami-mochi**, (inugami owner)

Kodama

ko- (tree, wood)

dama | tama (spirit, soul)

A spirit believed to live in certain trees

Cutting down a tree which houses it is thought to bring misfortune, and such trees are often marked with **Shimenawa**

Obake

o (honorable)

ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)

(Literally: a thing that changes)

Yokai in Japanese folklore that transform or shapeshift

Also called **Bakemono**, **Obakemono**

o (honorable)

ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)

mono (thing, object)

Bakeneko

ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)

neko (cat)

(ghost-cat able to appear in disguise)

A cat with supernatural abilities

A cat may become a bakeneko if it: lives over 13 years, is kept for a certain number of years, reaches one kan (75 kilograms) in weight, or is allowed to keep a long tail

Also called **Maneki-neko**

mane.ki (beckon, invite, summon)

neko (cat)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

(Literally: beckoning cat)

Nekomata

neko (cat)
mata (crotch, forked)
Two-tailed monster cat

Hebi

hebi (snake)
Protect against illness, disaster, bad fortune and like the dragon can bring rain / Snakes can transform into human forms, usually that of a vengeful, jealous or wronged woman

Shiro-hebi

shiro (white)
hebi (serpent, snake)
A messenger of a kami

Jorô-gumo

jo (female, woman)
rô (son)
jorô (prostitute, entertainment woman)
gumo | kumo (spider)
The last two kanji both mean spider
(literally: prostitute spider)
A spider that can change its appearance into that of a seductive woman

Kitsune

kitsune (fox)

Kitsune-mochi

kitsune (fox)
mo.chi (hold, keep possession, in charge)
Possession of fox power by a human being

Kitsune-tsukai

kitsune (fox)
tsuka.i (use, usage)
Use of fox power by a human being

Kitsune-tsuki

kitsune (fox)
tsu.ki (haunt, possess)
Possession by a fox

Mujina

mujina (badger)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Tanuki

tanuki (raccoon-dog)

Tengu

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

tengu (heavenly dogs)

Sometimes worshipped as Kami

Take the forms of birds of prey, and they are traditionally depicted with both human and avian characteristics

Appears in art in a large number of shapes, but it usually falls somewhere between a large, monstrous bird and a wholly anthropomorphized being

Often with a red face or an unusually large or long nose

Daitengu

dai (great, big, large)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

daitengu (great tengu)

Also called **Ô-tengu**, **Hanataka-tengu**

Ô (great, big, large)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

hana (nose, snout)

taka (tall, high, quantity, amount)

hanataka (high nose, tall nose, pride)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

Kotengu

ko- (small, little)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

kotengu (small tengu)

Also called Karasu-tengu, Koppa-tengu, Konoha-tengu

karasu (crow, raven)

ko- (tree, wood)

ha (leaf, lobe, needle, blade)

koppa (foliage)

konoha (foliage)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

Kawatengu

kawa (river, stream)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

kawatengu (river tengu)

A water-dwelling tengu

Creates strange fireballs and is a nuisance to fishermen

Shibatengu

shiba (lawn, turf)

ten (heavens, sky, imperial)

gu | ku (dog, puppy)

shibatengu (lawn tengu)

A small child-like being who loves sumo-wrestling and sometimes dwells in the water

Tsuchigumo

tsuchi (earth, ground, soil)

gumo | kumo (spider)

The last two kanji both mean spider

tsuchigumo (ground spider)

A spider that can change its appearance into that of a small boy or a beautiful woman

Okami

ôkami (wolf)

Generally honest and if dealt with properly, benevolent

Also called **Okuri-inu**, **Okuri-ôkami**, **Yama-inu**

oku.ri (see off, send off, escort)

inu (dog)

okuri-inu (escorting dog)

oku.ri (see off, send off, escort)

ôkami (wolf)

okuri-ôkami (escorting wolf)

yama (mountain)

inu (dog)

yama-inu(mountain dog)

Oni

oni (orge, demon, ghost)

A mountain-dwelling ogre, usually depicted with red, blue, brown or black skin, two horns on its head, a wide mouth filled with fangs, and wearing nothing but a tigerskin loincloth

Often carries an iron club or a giant sword

Shikigami

shiki (know, write, discriminating)

gami (mind, soul, kami)

A kind of spirit summoned to serve an **Onmyô-ji** – a practitioner of **Onmyô-dô** (Yin-Yang & Wu Xing)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Although invisible, shikigami supposedly could, at the Onmyo-ji's command, take a variety of human or animal forms, possess or bewitch people, and even cause bodily harm or death

Shôjô

shôjô (orangutan)

A small sea spirit

Monkey like with reddish skin and orange fur

Likes dancing, merrymaking, and especially drinking sake

Tsukumogami

tsu.ku (adhere, append, attach, refer to)

mo (mourning)

gami | kami (soul, mind, kami)

tsukumogami (artifact spirit)

Discarded items or artifacts that have reached their 100th birthday and thus become alive and aware

Abumi-guchi

abumi (stirrup)

guchi | kuchi (mouth)

Small furry creature with a mouth like a stirrup

Also called **Abumi-kuchi**

abumi (stirrup)

kuchi (mouth)

Bakezori

ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)

zô | sô (grass, weeds, herbs)

ri (footgear, shoes, boots)

zôri (straw sandals)

A discarded straw sandal that come alive at night and runs through the house chanting

Biwa-bokuboku

bi (glissando on strings, lute)

wa | ha (lute)

boku (breed, care for, shepherd, feed, pasture)

biwa (Japanese short-necked fretted lute)

Also called **Biwa-yanagi**, **Biwa-burabura**

bi (glissando on strings, lute)

wa | ha (lute)

biwa (Japanese short-necked fretted lute)

yanagi (willow, slim)

burabura (Onomatopoeic or mimetic word - strolling, rambling, roaming, wandering)

Chôchin-obake

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

chô (take along, carry in hand)
chin | hi (lamp, a light)
o (honorable)
ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)
chôchin-obake (Japanese paper lantern built on a spiral of bamboo)

Furu-utsubo

furu (old)
utsu (empty, void, vacant)
bo | ho (ear)
furu-utsubo (old quiver of arrows)

Ichiren-bôzu

ichi (one)
ren (join, connect)
ichiren (chain)
bô (priest, boy)
zu (master, chief)
bôzu (Buddhist priest)
Heroic prayer-bead tsukumogami from the Otogizoshi
Also called **Ichiren-bonze**
ichi (one)
ren (join, connect)
ichiren (chain)
bon (mediocre, ordinary)
ze | zô | sô (Buddhist priest, monk)
bonze | bonzô (ordinary Buddhist priest or monk)

Ittan-momen

it (one)
tan (variable measure of fabric - at least 10 meters for kimonos)
ittan (10 meters)
mo (tree, wood)
men (cotton)
momen (cotton)
ittan-momen (roll of cotton)

Jotai

jo (woman, female)
tai (sash, belt, obi)
jotai (cloth draped from folding screen)
* This is a best guess, as I have yet to track down the kanji for the reference

Kasa obake

kasa (umbrella)
o (honorable)
ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Also called **Karakasa obake**

kara (China)

kasa (umbrella)

karakasa (paper umbrella)

o (honorable)

ba.ke (change, take the form of, influence, enchant)

Kyôurinrin

kyô (scroll, sutra)

rin (dignified)

rinrin (commanding, awe inspiring)

kyôurinrin (scroll and paper)

Morinji-no-okama

mo (overgrown, grow thick, be luxuriant)

rin (grove, forest)

ji (Buddhist temple)

no (possessive particle)

o (honorable)

kama (hearth, kitchen stove)

okama (pot, tea kettle)

morinji-no-okama (tea kettle of Morinji)

Shiro-uneri

shiro (white)

u | you (form, looks)

neri | ei (descendant, border)

uneri (wave motion, undulation, winding)

shiro-uneri (literally: white undulation – thrown away, useless mosquito netting; or dust cloth)

Ungaikyo

un (cloud)

gai (outside of, not covered by)

kyô (mirror, speculum)

ungaikyô (unclouded mirror)

Mirror that contains a **Yôkai**

A mirror used to find yôkai, that has reflected so much evil that it becomes a yôkai

Yamaoroshi

yama (mountain)

oroshi (wind from mountains)

A pun on (o.roshi - grater) or (yama-a.rashi - porcupine)

Yûrei

yû (faint, dark, dim)

rei (soul, spirit)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

(ghost)

Spirits kept from a peaceful afterlife

Also called Bôrei, Shiryô

bô (deceased, the late, dying, perish)

rei (soul, spirit)

bôrei (ruined or departed spirit)

shi (death, die)

ryô (soul, spirit)

shiryô (dead spirit)

Exorcism

The easiest way to exorcise a yurei is to help it fulfill its purpose

Accomplished by family members enacting revenge upon the yurei's slayer

Or when the ghost consummates its passion/love with its intended lover

Or when its remains are discovered and given a proper burial with all rites performed

Malicious yûrei are repelled by an **ofuda** (written charm or amulet)

The ofuda must generally be placed on the yûrei's forehead to banish it

Ofuda can be attached to a house's entry ways to prevent the yûrei from entering

Funayûrei

funa (boat, ship)

yû (secluded, obscured)

rei (spirits, soul)

Ghost of a person who died at sea

Gaki

ga (starve, hungry, thirst)

ki (ghost, devil)

gaki (hungry ghost) -- Buddhist

Jealous or greedy people in a previous life

As a result of their karma, they are afflicted with an insatiable hunger for a particular substance or object

Goryô

go (honorable)

ryô (spirits, soul)

Vengeful ghost

Goryô-e

go (honorable)

ryô (spirits, soul)

e (meeting)

Ritual of chinkon to calm an angry soul

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Goryôshin

go (honorable)

ryô (spirits, soul)

shin (kami)

The vengeful spirits of those who have died accidental deaths, or while bearing discontents, regrets or unfulfilled longings

Onryô

on (grudge, show resentment, be jealous)

ryô (spirits, soul)

Vengeful ghost who come back for a wrong done to them during their lifetime

Ikiryô

iki (life, genuine, birth)

ryô (spirits, soul)

Living creatures possessed by extraordinary jealousy or rage release their spirit as a living ghost that enacts its will

Jikininki

jiki (eat, food)

nin (person)

ki (ghost, devil)

jikininki (human eating ghost) -- Buddhist

Greedy, selfish or impious individuals who are cursed after death to seek out and eat human corpses

Also called **Rasetsuten**

ra (gauze)

setsu (temple)

ten (heavens, sky)

Mononoke

mono (thing, object)

no (possessive particle)

ke (suspicious, mystery, apparition)

mononoke (vengeful ghost or spectre)

As in Studio Ghibli's **Mononoke-hime**

mono (thing, object)

no (possessive particle)

ke (suspicious, mystery, apparition)

hime (princess)

mononoke-hime (princess vengeful spectre)(princess vengeful spectre)

Ubume

ubu- (bear, give birth, yield, childbirth)

me (woman, female)

A mother ghost who died in childbirth, or died leaving young children behind

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Zashiki-warashi

za (squat, seat, cushion, gathering, sit)

shiki (spread, pave, sit, promulgate)

zashiki (tatami mat room, formal Japanese room)

warashi | warabe (juvenile, child)

Ghost of a child, often mischievous rather than dangerous

Also called Zashiki-bokko

za (squat, seat, cushion, gathering, sit)

shiki (spread, pave, sit, promulgate)

zashiki (tatami mat room, formal Japanese room)

bo | dô (juvenile)

ko (child)

bokko (young boy or girl)

Meishin

mei (astray, be perplexed, in doubt, lost, err, illusion)

shin (faith, truth, fidelity, trust)

Superstitions

In Japan there are certain things one does not do because they are thought to cause bad luck

Breaking a comb or geta sandal

Considered bad luck

Chopsticks

Superstitions concerning hashi (chopsticks)

Giving food from chopstick to chopstick

Don't! This is only done with the bones of the cremated body at funerals.

Sticking chopsticks into the rice

Do not stick your chopsticks into your food generally, but especially not into rice, because only at funerals are chopsticks stuck into the rice which is put onto the altar

Cutting nails

If you cut your nails at night, you will not be with your parents when they die

First dreams

The first dream of a new year will come true

Funeral Car

If a funeral car passes you should hide your thumb. This is because the Japanese word for thumb, **oya-yubi**, literally translates as "parent-finger" and hiding it is considered protection for your parent. If you don't, your parent will die.

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Hiding your belly when sleeping

If you sleep with your belly button exposed during a thunderous night, you may wake up the next day and realize that that your belly button had been taken by the thunder Kami

Lying down after eating

If you lie down immediately after eating, you will become a cow

Numbers

Superstitions concerning sūji (numbers)

Four

The number four is considered inauspicious because it is homonym for the word for death (shi). Therefore, one should not make presents that consist of four pieces, etc. In some hotels and hospitals the room number four is skipped.

Nine

Nine is also sometimes pronounced ku, which can also mean suffering. In some hotels and hospitals the room number nine is skipped.

Four & nine

Most maternity wards don't have a room 49. Who wants to stay in a room that sounds like death and suffering?

Sleeping towards the North

Do not sleep with your head towards the North because bodies are laid down like that

On seeing a spider

Superstitions concerning a kumo (spider)

In the evening

Go ahead and smack the evening visitor, p.m. spiders are considered bad luck

In the morning

Hold off on killing the morning visitor, a.m. spiders are auspicious

Stepping on the cloth border of a tatami mat

Considered bad luck

Whistling in the night

If you whistle in the night, a snake will come to you

Sekai-kan

se (generation, society, public)

kai (world)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

kan (outlook, look, appearance, view)

Concept of human beings' place in the world -- their worldview

Definition of Terms

Here is a list of some of the terms used when discussing a folk way, folklore or a folk religion.

Values

The standards by which people define what is desirable or undesirable, good or bad, beautiful or ugly

Beliefs

Statements people hold to be true; arise from values

Norms

Expectations or rules of behavior that develop to reflect and enforce values

Internalized

In societal context norms are quite well defined and tend to be part of person's life style

Integrated

System of norms reflects roles & goals of society and tend to be related to person's everyday life and expectations

Proscriptive

What should not be done

Prescriptive

What should be done

Taboo

A norm so strong that it brings revulsion if violated

Folkways

Social, traditional and customary ways of living. Traditional behaviour of a people. Norms that are not strictly enforced. (violation = misdemeanor)

Mores

Norms that are strictly enforced because they are thought to be essential to core values. (violation = felony)

Register of Experience

The domain from which metaphorical explanation of life happenings is drawn

Sanctions

An expression of approval or disapproval given to people for upholding or violating norms

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Negative Sanction

An expression of disapproval for breaking a norm, ranging from a mild, informal reaction such as a frown to severe formal reactions such as a prison sentence, banishment, or death

Positive Sanction

A reward or positive reaction for following norms, ranging from a smile to a prize

Immediate and Certain Sanctions

In traditional folk society a majority of norms are kept at folkway level — sanctioning is often carried out by family or other significant others

When Deviance Occurs

It is seen as only one aspect of an individual's behavior. A person is not defined by group on the basis of that behavior alone

Kafû

ka (house, home)

fû (style, manner)

Family is the foundation for preserving traditions passed from one generation to the next

Sosensûhai

so (ancestor, pioneer, founder)

sen (before, ahead, previous, future, precedence)

sû (adore, respect, revere, worship)

hai (worship, adore, pray to)

Ancestral reverence or worship

Butsudan

butsu (Buddha)

dan (podium, stage, rostrum)

butsudan (household buddhist altar)

With the exception of an immediate family member, objects related to Hotoke are not normally kept on the **Kamidana**, but are instead kept on a Butsudan. Any rituals for the dead are performed before the Butsudan. (See **Obon**, **Higan**)

Hotoke

hotoke (enlightened person, Buddha, the dead or spirits of the dead)

Buddhist term

Used to refer to the spirits of the ancestors

Those who do not become Hotoke, become **Gaki** or "hungry spirits"

Reihô

rei (salute, bow, ceremony, thanks)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

hō (method, law, rule, principle, model, system)
Etiquette, courtesy, manners
Showing proper respect

Sojin

so (founder, ancestor)
jin (kami)
Ancestral Kami
Usually the clan founder
Although it can refer to the ancestors collectively
Also called Oyagami
oya (parent, relative)
gami (kami)

Sorei

so (ancestor, pioneer, founder)
rei (spirits, soul)
Ancestral spirit, collective of ancestral spirits which have lost their individualities
Ancestor deified as a Kami, spirit of a Kami

Shizen

shi (oneself)
zen (sort of thing, so)
shizen (nature)

Dai-shizen

dai (large, big, great)
shi (oneself)
zen (sort of thing, so)
dai-shizen (great nature)
Includes the stars and planets as well as the earth and its natural order

Shizensûhai

shi (oneself)
zen (sort of thing, so)
shizen (nature)
sû (adore, respect, revere, worship)
hai (worship, adore, pray to)
shizensûhai (nature worship)

Seireishinkô

sei (refined, ghost, fairy, energy, vitality, semen, excellence, purity, skill)
rei (spirits, soul)
shin (faith, truth, fidelity, trust)
kô (respect, rever)
seireishinkô (animism)
Sacred energy found in objects, places and animals in nature

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Love of nature

An aesthetic sense

Kannagara-no-michi

kan- (kami)

nagara (as long ago)

no (possessive particle)

michi (way, teaching)

kannagara-no-michi (the way in accordance with the will of the Kami)

Humankind and Kami are subject to the laws that govern the natural order

Nature is sacred

Contact with Kami thru nature

Shinohai

shi (four)

no (possessive particle)

hai (worship, adore, pray to)

Ritual of showing reverence to nature by bowing to the south, north, east, and west

Physical Cleanliness / Ritual purity

One must be clean, spiritually and physically, in the presence of the Kami / Kami will not come where there is **Kegare** or **Tsumi** / At least, not the beneficial sort of Kami we want to attract

Fujô

fu (negative, bad, ugly)

jô (purify, cleanse, exorcise, unspoiled)

Uncleanliness, dirtiness, impurity, filthiness, defilement, menses

Pollution

Pollution obscures our ability to sense Kami – to experience the **Sublime**

Pollution as Contagious

Pollution occurs when people come into contact with pollution

Pollution as Error

Pollution occurs when people make a mistake

Pollution Can Be Purified

Pollution can be removed by performing various purification rites
(See **Harai**)

Kegare

kega.re (dirty)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Spiritual pollution, ritual impurity or injury resulting from naturally occurring phenomena

Ketsu-e

ketsu (blood)
e (dirty, filthy, foul, unclean)
ketsu-e (blood impurity)
Also called **Akafujô**
aka (red)
fu (negative, bad)
jô (pure, clean, unspoiled)
Akafujô (red impurity)

Abortion

Birth

Injury

Marriage consumation

Menstruation

Miscarriage

Shi-e

shi (death, die)
e (dirty, filthy, foul, unclean)
shi-e (death impurity)
Also called **Kurofujô** or **Kokufujô**
kuro (black)
koku (black)
fu (negative, bad)
jô (pure, clean, unspoiled)
kurofujô | kokufujô (black impurity)

Contact with the dead

Abortion / miscarriage

Digging or moving graves

Hi-make

hi (fire)
ma.ke (defeat, negative)
himake (defeated by fire)
Illness resulting from contact with the dead
Also called **Imi-make**

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

i.mi (taboo, mourning, abhor, detestable)
ma.ke (defeat, negative)

Kamisô

kami (sacred)
sô (bury, internment)
Shintô funeral
Also called **Shinsô**
shin (kami)
sô (bury, internment)

Those attending the funeral

Are impure for 3 days after the funeral

Kibuku

ki (mourning)
buku | fuku (clothing)
kibuku (mourning)
From mourning clothes
Also called **Buku, Buk'ki**
buku | fuku (clothing)
ki (mourning)

Kichû

ki (mourning)
chû (in, inside, middle)
Posted warning that place is under taboo

Those immediately related to the dead

Mother, father, child – Are impure for 49 days after the death

Murder

San-e

san (childbirth, give birth, bear)
e (dirty, filthy, foul, unclean)
san-e (child birth impurity)
Also called **Shirofujô**
shiro (white)
fu (negative, bad)
jô (pure, clean, unspoiled)
shirofujô (white impurity)

Pregnancy

Birth

Impure for 32 days after the birth day

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Blood

Involves **Ketsu-e**

Monoimi

mono (thing, object, matter)

i.mi (taboo, mourning, abhor, detestable)

monoimi (fasting; abstinence; confinement to one's house on an unlucky day)

Also, rituals conducted to protect young boys and girls from sources of pollution

Shoku-e

shoku (contact, touch, feel)

e (dirty, filthy, foul, unclean)

Touching kegare

Contact with **Kegare**

San-ten

san (three)

ten (turn, move)

Contagious up to three times removed

Wazawai

wazawa.i (disaster, calamity, woe, curse, evil)

Disaster to be removed by **Harai**

Tsumi

tsumi (guilt, sin, crime, fault, blame, offense)

Imperfect, impurity, pollution, or uncleanness resulting from human actions

Anti-social conduct

Murder

Involves Ketsu-e and Shi-e

Anti-social sexual conduct

Bestiality

Having sex with animals (specifically with horses, cows, chickens and dogs)

Incest

Having sex with a close relation

Men

Having sex with:

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

One's mother

One's sister

The mother of a woman
with whom one has had sex

The daughter of a woman
with whom one has had sex

Women

Having sex with:

One's father

One's brother

The father of a man
with whom one has had sex

The son of a man
with whom one has had sex

Rape

Eating certain foods

Animal meat
Involves **Ketsu-e** and **Shi-e**

Garlic

Green Onions

Leeks

Shinbatsu

shin (kami)

batsu (penalty, punishment)

Divine retribution inflicted on someone who speaks or acts in a disrespectful, unbelieving, or impure way towards a Kami

Tatari

tata.ri (curse, haunt)

Misfortune thru which a Kami warns or punishes

Aku

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

aku (bad, vice, rascal, false, evil, wrong, wickedness)
Evil, unhappiness, disaster, misfortune, or inferiority of nature or value

Magakoto

maga (calamity, misfortune, evil, curse)
koto (matter, thing)
koto (say)
Abnormality
(See **Ma.gari**)

Deformity

Disease & illness

Kiyome

kiyo.me (pure, clean, purify, cleanse, exorcise)
kiyome (purity)

Kotodama

koto (word)
dama | tama (spirits, soul, spirit)
Spiritual power residing in words

Norito

nori (celebrate, congratulate)
to | shi (words, poetry)
Beautiful words or prayers addressed to the Kami

Harai

hara.i (purification, exorcism)
Purification rites
Also called **O-harai, Harae**
o (honorable)
hara.i (purification, exorcism)
hara.e (purification, exorcism)

Ô-harae

ô (great, large, big)
hara.e (purification, exorcism)
Great purification performed on June 30th and December 31th

Hi

hi (fire, flame, blaze)
Harai (purification) with fire

Chinki-shiki

chin (tranquilize)
ki | hi (fire)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

shiki (ceremony, rite)

A fire-calming ritual used for **Harai** (purification)

Fire-walking

Impure fire

Because of contact with **Kegare** or **Tsumi**

Yudate

yu (hot water, hot spring)

da.te (stand up)

Ceremony of **Harai** using boiling water sprinkled on the **Shinsoku** (priest) and worshippers with bamboo leaves

A form of divination

Pure fire

Fire that has not come into contact with **Kegare** or **Tsumi**

Hikaeri

hi (fire, flame, blaze)

kae.ri (return coming back)

Renewing the fire

Relighting a fire to purify it

Frequently using a fire-drill

Miki

mi (honorable)

ki (sake, alcohol)

mi (kami)

ki (sake, alcohol)

Sake or sacred wine offered to the Kami

Also called O-miki, Sake

o (honorable)

mi (kami)

ki (sake, alcohol)

sake (sacred rice wine offered to the Kami)

Mizu

mizu (water)

Also called O-mizu

o (honorable)

mizu (water)

Misogi

mi (somebody, person)

sogi | jô (rinse, wash)

misogi (Shintô purification ceremony)

Self purification thru water

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Kiyome-no-ike

kiyo.me (pure, clean, purify, cleanse, exorcise)

no (possessive particle)

ike (pond, pool)

A pond or pool used for performing misogi

Te-mizuya

te- (hand)

mizu (water)

ya (roof, house)

A purification font to allow shrine visitors to rinse hands and mouth in symbolic purification – **Misogi**

Also called **Chôzuya**

chô (hand)

zu (water)

ya | sha (hut)

Mitarashi

mi- (honorable)

te- (hand)

ra.shi (wash)

Font of purifying water placed at the entrance of a shrine

Mitarashikawa

mi- (honorable)

te- (hand)

ra.shi (wash)

kawa (stream, river)

River in which worshippers wash their hands and rinse their mouth prior to entering a shrine

Purification of place

First, sweep and clean the four corners of the place, and offer **O-miki** (sacred sake), **O-kome** (rice), **O-shio** (sea salt) and **O-suna** (sacred sand) at the **Kamidana** and pray

Then start purification by spreading them in the order of **Ushi-Tora** (Northeast), **Tatsumi** (Southeast), **Hitsuji-Saru** (Southwest), **Inu-I** (Northwest) and the entryway (for the Sacred Center)

Suna

suna (sand)

Sacred sand

Usually sand from a ocean or sea beach

Also called **O-suna**

o (honorable)

suna (sand)

Mori-suna

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mori (bloom, prosper)

sunā (sand)

Sand is sometimes placed outside homes and businesses in little piles

Shio

shio (salt)

Also called **O-shio**

o (honorable)

shio (salt)

Maki-shio

ma.ki (scatter)

shio (salt)

Scattering salt around the boundaries of a place to stop impurities from entering the area

Mori-shio

mori (bloom, prosper)

shio (salt)

Salt is sometimes placed outside homes and businesses in little piles

Imi

i.mi (taboo, mourning, abhor, detestable)

i.mi (taboo, purification, avoid)

Abstinence, or the avoidance of that which is abnormal (magakoto), imperfect (tsumi) and polluted (kegare), and the removal of those states

Saikai

sai (purification, avoid)

kai (admonition; commandment) – Buddhist term

Observance of abstinence for a certain period of time before and after a religious ceremony by a participant

The person remains secluded in a building called an imiya, uses only sacred fire (bekka), bathes frequently, abstains from partaking of certain foods, avoids contact with death and sickness, and concentrates on religious concerns

Araimi

ara (rough, rude)

i.mi (taboo, mourning, abhor, detestable)

Rough abstinence

Maimi

ma (true, reality)

i.mi (taboo, mourning, abhor, detestable)

True abstinence

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Hiaki

hi (fire, flame , blaze)
a.ki (open, unfold, unseal)
Expiration of the fire — end of a period of imi
Also called **Imiaki**
i.mi (mourning, abhor, detestable)
a.ki (open, unfold, unseal)

Imikotoba

i.mi (mourning, abhor, detestable)
koto (say)
ba | ha (fragment, piece)
kotoba | shi (part of speech, words, poetry)
Avoiding tabu words
(See **Kotodama**)

Kinki

kin (prohibition, ban, forbid)
ki (mourning, abhor, detestable)
kinki (taboo – day, time, direction, words, etc. that must be avoided)
To forbid any contact or proximity with things that should be
abstained from

Ibuki

i | iki (breath, respiration)
i | iki (spirit, mind, air, mood)
buki | fuki (blow, breathe, puff)
Breathing exercises as an ascetic practice
Frequently performed before **Misogi**

Shinjin-ki'itsu

shin (kami)
jin (person)
ki (homecoming, arrive at, lead to, result in)
itsu (one)
shinjin-ki'itsu (Kami and man become as one)
Return of the purified human nature to Kami status from which it has fallen
because of **Kegare** and **Tsumi**

Shubatsu

shu (discipline, conduct oneself well, study, master)
batsu | futsu (exorcise)
Ritual of self-purification by **Shinsoku** (priest) before conducting **Harai**
Composed of 3 purification elements: recitation of the incantation,
waving the **O-nusa** and sprinkling the salt-water to remove impurities

Yakubarai

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

yaku (unlucky, misfortune, bad luck, disaster)
-bara.i (clear out, banish)
Exorcism, ceremonial cleansing from evil influence
Also **Harai** done with a **Shishi-mai** (lion-dance)

Matsuri

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship, sacrifice or make offerings to one's ancestors)

Festivals celebrating and honoring the Kami and ancestral spirits.

Also called **Omatsuri**, **Ômatsuri**, **Saishi**

o (honorable)

oo (great, big, large)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship, sacrifice or make offerings to one's ancestors)

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

shi (enshrine, worship)

Saishi shûzoku

Festival Practices

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

shi (enshrine, worship)

saishi (ritual, religious service, festival)

shû (state, province)

zoku (customs)

shûzoku (local customs)

Traditions, practices, and customs related to festivals and the rituals that form part of them

Basic Format of Matsuri

Matsuri usually has four elements:

- 1) Harai (purification)
- 2) Shinsen (offerings)
- 3) Norito (litany)
- 4) Naorai (a communal feast)

May also include **other events** (procession with the kami, dancing, dramatic performances, physical contests like sumo, archery, keiba)

Harae

hara.e (purification,exorcism)

Purification, exorcism

Also called **Harai**

hara.i (purification,exorcism)

Shinsen

shin (kami)

sen (food, offerings)

Food offerings presented to Kami

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Norito

nori (celebrate, congratulate)
to | shi (part of speech, words, poetry)
Shintô ritual prayer
Also called **Notto**
nori (celebrate, congratulate)
to | shi (part of speech, words, poetry)
norito (celebrate, congratulate) -- archaic
koto (words)
Contraction of norito-koto

Naorai

nao.ra (straightaway, honesty, frankness)
i (meeting, meet, party, association)
A communal feast consisting of the offerings

May also include:

Procession with Kami

Omikoshi

o (honorable)
mi (honorable)
mi (kami)
koshi (palanquin, bier)
Portable shrine (carried in festivals)
Used to carry the Kami in procession to its temporary location
for a matsuri
Also called **Dashi, Mikoshi, Yama-boko**
da | sa (mountain)
da | ? ka (flower) -- may be derived from dai (counter for
vehicles)
shi | sha (car)
mi (honorable)
mi (kami)
koshi (palanquin, bier)
yama (mountain)
boko | hoko (festival float)

Kagura

kagu (kami)
ra (music, comfort, ease)
Ancient Shintô music and dancing
Dances and music performed for the Kami
(See **Satokagura**)

Nô

nô (ability, talent, skill, capacity)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Dramatic performances
(See **Noh**)

Kanwaza

kan (kami)

waza (business, vocation, arts, performance)

Martial displays and artistic activities

Also called **Kamiwaza**, **Kamuwaza**

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, awe, gratitude, fear/terror)

waza | koto (matter, thing, fact, business)

kamu (kami)

waza (business, vocation, arts, performance)

Funakurabe

funa (ship, boat)

kura.be (competition, bout, contest, race) -- archaic

Boat races between villages

Keiba

kei (competition, bout, contest, race)

ba (horse)

Horse racing

Kyûdô

kyû (bow, archery)

dô (way, course, teachings)

Japanese archery

Sumô

su | sô (inter-, mutual, together, each other)

mo | boku (slap, strike, hit, beat)

Japanese wrestling

Yabusame

ya | na (current, flow)

busa | kabura (arrowhead)

me (horse)

Mounted archery while riding past three equal size targets

Matsuri gi

matsuri (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

gi (ceremony, rules)

Rites / rituals

Gagaku

ga (gracious, elegant, graceful, refined)

gaku (music, comfort, ease)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Traditional music of the Japanese Imperial Court
Gagaku is considered a vehicle of communication between the Kami
and worshipers

Standard instruments include:

Biwa

bi (glissando on strings, lute)
wa (lute)
A short-necked lute
The Kami Benzaiten is often shown carrying a biwa

Hichiriki

hichi (fence)
riki (horn, flageolet)
Small double-reed wind instrument
Made of bamboo, with 7 holes on top and 2 below

Shô

shô (traditional Japanese wind instrument resembling panpipes)
A reed mouth organ made of 17 bamboo pipes

Taiko

tai (plump, thick, big around)
ko (drum, beat)
Drums

Hairei

hai (prayer, worship)
rei (ceremony)
The formal manner of paying worship to kami

Kami no mae ni tatsu

Stand in front of the Kami

Nirei

Bow deeply twice

Nihakushu

Clap hands twice

Shinsen

Make an offering

Kigan

Or make a prayer

Norito

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Or make an invocation to the Kami

Ichirei

Then make another deep bow

Hakushu

haku (oak)

shu (hand)

hakushu (clapping one's hands in prayer)

Part of proper etiquette for worshipping a Kami

Chôhakushu

chô (long)

haku (oak)

shu (hand)

chôhakushu (long clapping)

Four claps or more

Hirade

hira (flat, open)

de | te (hands)

hirade (palm, open hand clapping)

Kashiwade

kashiwa (oak)

de | te (hands)

kashiwade (oak hands)

One of the formal manners of performing worship in Shintô

One raises the hands to chest level and claps

The ways of clapping and the number of times vary

Nihakushu

ni (two)

haku (oak)

shu (hands)

nihakushu (two claps)

Raishu

rai (come, next, become) ?

shu (hands)

Performed when presented with a cup of sake or before kyozen

(food served on individual tables at a banquet)

Shinobite

shino.bi (endure, bear, put up with, conceal)

te (hands)

Silent clapping

Performed at **Shinsôsai** (Shintô funeral ceremonies)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Tanhakushu

tan (short, brief)
haku (oak)
shu (hands)
tanhakushu (short clapping)
One to three times

Himorogi

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

ri (rough-woven fence, bamboo hedge)

himorogi (kami fence) -- archaic;

Actual pronunciation appears to be based on the two kanji below

himorogi (offerings to Kami) -- archaic

himorogi (offerings to Kami) -- archaic

A temporarily erected sacred space or "altar" used as a locus of worship

Himorogi are represented by the demarcation of a physical area with branches of green bamboo or **Sakaki** at the four corners, between which are strung sacred border **Shimenawa** (rope)

In the center of the area a large branch of sakaki festooned with **Hei** (sacred emblems) is erected as a **Yorishiro**

Kami-mukae

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

mukae (welcome, meet, greet)

Ritual invitation to Kami to attend

Kôshin-no-gi

kô (descend, fall)

shin (kami)

no (possessive particle)

gi (ceremony)

The descent of Kami on a **Sakaki** branch at the opening of a ritual

Kami-okuri

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

oku.ri (escort, send)

Ritual sending off of Kami after **Harai** (purification ritual)

Shôshin-no-gi

shô (ascend, rise up)

shin (kami)

no (possessive particle)

gi (ceremony)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

The ascent of Kami at the end of a ritual

Noh

nô (ability, talent, skill)

Religious drama evolved from Shintô rituals that expressed themes in Japanese mythology

Also called Nôgaku

nô (ability, talent, skill)

gaku (music)

Shinji-nô

shin (kami)

ji (matter, thing, business)

nô (ability, talent, skill)

Nô plays performed as part of Shintô ceremonies

Saijitsu

sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

jitsu (day, sun)

(Literally: festival day)

The day on which a matsuri is held

Satokagura

sato (village)

kagu (kami)

ra (music)

All kagura not held at the imperial palace

An umbrella term containing folk dances derived from mikagura, and incorporated with other folk traditions

Kagura is considered a vehicle of communication between Kami and worshipers

Kagura uta

kagu (kami)

ra (music)

uta (song, sing)

Songs composed to go with kagura

Miko kagura

miko (female shrine attendants) / onna (woman, female)

miko (female shrine attendants) / ko (child) -- archaic

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror) / ko (child) -- archaic

kagu (kami)

ra (music)

Dances performed by **Miko** (shrine maidens) derived from ritual dances in which the miko channeled Kami, speaking, singing, and dancing as Kami

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Miko-mai

miko (female shrine attendants)

mai (Japanese traditional dance, circle, wheel)

Ritual dances performed at Shintô shrines by one or more

Miko, holding bells, **o-gi** (folding fan), fronds of bamboo, or sakaki as **Torimono**

Urayasu-no-mai

ura (bay, creek, inlet, gulf, beach, seacoast)

yasu (quiet, contented, peaceful)

no (possessive | of)

mai (Japanese traditional dance, circle, wheel)

Based on a poem by emperor Showa:

*To all Kami, Of heaven and earth I pray, For a tranquil world,
Without disturbances, -- like the sea in the morning*

Shishi kagura

shi (lion) | shi (child)

shi (expert, teacher, master) | shi (child)

kagu (kami)

ra (music)

A form of lion dance, in which dancers take on the role of the Shishi lion and parade around the town

Shishi mai

shi (lion) | shi (child)

shi (expert, teacher, master) | shi (child)

shishi (deer)

mai (Japanese traditional dance, circle, wheel)

Ritual dance using the mask of a lion or a deer

Nenchû gyoji

Annual Events

nen (year)

chû (in, inside)

nenchû (whole year; all year round; throughout the year)

gyo (manipulate, govern)

ji (emperor's seal)

gyoji (imperial seal, privy seal)

Ethnographic term meaning: traditional observances repeated as a matter of custom in the same manner and style, and at the same point in the annual calendar

Haru matsuri

haru (springtime, spring)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Spring festivals
February 4 - May 5

Hana matsuri

hana (flower)
matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
Buddha's birthday festival | flower festival
April 8

Hina matsuri

hina (doll)
matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
doll festival / girls' festival
March 3

Ki matsuri

ki (tree, wood)
matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
tree festival
1st Sunday in April

Ki matsuri

ki (strange, strangeness, curiosity)
matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
Strange festival with bizarre or unusual ritual
These can occur throughout the year

Tango no sekku

tan (edge, origin)
go (noon)
sekku (festival)
Boys' festival
The beginning of summer
May 5

Natsu matsuri

natsu (summer)
matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
Summer festivals
May 6 - August 7

Aoi matsuri

aoi (hollyhock)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Hollyhock festival — prayers for a abundant grain harvests

Usually about May 15

Gion matsuri

gi (national or local god, peaceful, great)

on (park, garden, yard, farm)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Originated in Kyôto as part of a purification ritual to appease the Kami thought to cause fire, floods and earthquakes

All of July, especially July 14 - 17

Gion

gi (national or local god, peaceful, great)

on (park, garden)

A term referring to Kami (chiefly Susanoo-no-Mikoto) enshrined in the Yasaka jinja in Kyoto, and worshiped for their abilities to cast out and purify evil

Ôharai matsuri

ô (great, large, big)

hara.e (exorcise, purification)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Great Purification rite, a ceremony performed to cast out the sins and impurities of the entire population, Oharae is performed regularly on the last day of June and December

It may also be performed on special occasions when required, such as at times of pestilence or disaster, or before the advent of a major festival

(See **Chi-no-wa**)

June 30 (Also December 31)

Also called **Oharai matsuri**

o (honorable)

hara.i (exorcise, purification)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Aki matsuri

aki (autumn, fall)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Autumn festivals

August 8 - November 6

Hatsuho

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

hatsu (first time, beginning)

ho (ear, ear (grain), head)

ho (ear (of grain), head)

(first ears of rice or crops or harvest of the season, offering to Kami)

The best ears of grain are removed and presented to Kami as an offering

Hatsuho has come to mean any offering presented to Kami

October

October -- The tenth month in the traditional Japanese lunar calendar — November

With the adoption of the Gregorian calendar it was shifted to October

According to Japanese tradition, all Kami meet in Izumo each year in October

October is known around Izumo as **Kamiarizuki**

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, gratitude, awe, or terror)

ari (exists, located in)

zuki (month, moon)

Kamiarizuki (month with Kami)

October is known everywhere else in Japan as **Kannazuki**

kan- (kami)

na. (none, nothing, not)

zuki (month, moon)

Kannazuki (month without Kami)

Also called **Kaminazuki**, **Kaminashizuki**

kami (that which inspires feelings of reverence, awe, gratitude, fear/terror)

na. (none, nothing, not)

na.shi (without)

zuki (month, moon)

October 15th, 16th, 17th

Harvest thanksgiving -- offering the first fruits to Amaterasu Omikami

October 15th & 16th

At the geku (outer shrine)

October 16th & 17th

At the naiku (inner shrine)

Fuyu matsuri

fuyu (winter)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Winter festivals

November 7 - February 3

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Akutai matsuri

aku (bad, false, evil, wrong)

tai (voice, attitude)

akutai (abusive language)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Cursing festivals

Akko matsuri

a. (bad, false, evil, wrong)

a. (bad, evil)

kô (mouth) -- out-dated kanji

akko (abuse, insult, slander, evil speaking, bad mouth)

Bad-mouthing festival

December 14th

Trade insults with each other and a 'tengu'

January 5th

Trade insults with each other

Niiname sai

nii (new)

na.me (taste)

sai (festival, feast)

Offerings of the first fruits of the year's grain harvest and partaking thereof

November 23 & 24

Okera matsuri

shiro (white)

okera (a type of herb, atractylodes japonica)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

People catch the sacred flame of okera, which is a medical herb, with a little rope; swinging the rope all the way to home

The fire for the first meal of the family is lit with this flame

The flame is used to ward off evil forces and the negative energy of the past year

December 31, New Years Eve

Oharae matsuri

December 31

(See **Oharae matsuri** above)

O-shôgatsu

o (honorable)

shô (correct, justice, righteous)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

gatsu (month, moon)

shôgatsu (New Year, New Year's Day, the first month, January)

Hatsuhinode

hatsu (first time, beginning)

hi (day, sun)

no (possessive particle)

-de (exit, leave)

Celebration of the first sunrise of the new year

Hatsumôde

hatsu (first time, beginning)

mô.de (visit a shrine)

Initial visit to a shrine at the first of the year to pray for happiness and divine protection during the coming year

Kadomatsu

kado (gate)

matsu (pine tree)

A traditional Japanese decoration of the New Year placed in pairs in front of homes supposedly to welcome ancestral spirits or Kami of the harvest

They are placed after Christmas until January 7 and are considered **Shintai** (temporary housing for kami)

Setsubun-sai

setsu (node, period, season)

bun (part, segment, share)

sai (festival, feast)

Last day of winter. Beans are thrown with the words **Oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi.**

(Literally: demons out, good fortune in)

February 3

Ta-asobi

ta (rice field, rice paddy)

aso.bi (play)

Ritual pantomime of the year's rice-cycle

Performed at the first full moon of the new year to divine a good harvest

Yuki matsuri

yuki (snow)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Snow festival

January 14 & 15

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Hi matsuri

hi (fire, flame, blaze)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Fire festivals

Frequently associated with midwinter or new years

Sagichô matsuri

sa (left)

gi (righteousness, justice, morality, honor, loyalty, meaning)

chô (long, leader)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

(sagichô appears to be name whose origin is unknown)

Fire festival involving assembling, stacking, and burning the pine new year's door ornaments of each household at a set location such as the village border, the village square, or a particular field

Usually held on January 15

Bon matsuri

bon (lantern festival, basin, tray)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Festivals for the dead

A Japanese Buddhist custom

Higan

hi (that, the)

gan (beach)

Equinoctial weeks

Occurs twice a year and each lasts one week, with the vernal equinox and autumn equinox occurring in the middle of their respective weeks

A buddhist term, higan means "the other side of the river crossed by the dead"

To comfort the spirits of the ancestors on the other side, people visit graves during higan

Also called **O-higan**

o (honorable)

hi (that, the)

gan (beach)

Ohagi

o (honorable)

hagi (bush clover)

Rice dumpling covered with bean jam

A traditional Japanese pastry made by mixing together and cooking glutinous and nonglutinous rice, lightly squashing and molding this

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

into balls, which are covered with bean jam, or else soybean flour or sesame seeds

Made in the home to offer to the spirits of the ancestors

Shunbun-no-hi

shun (spring)

bun (part, segment, share)

no (possessive particle)

hi (day, sun)

Vernal equinox day

The week in which Shunbun-no-hi is the middle day is called the spring equinoctial week (higan)

Shunbun-no-hi occurs on about march 21

Shûbun-no-hi

shû (autumn, fall)

bun (part, segment, share)

no (possessive particle)

hi (day, sun)

Autumn equinox day

The week in which Shubun-no-hi is the middle day is called the autumn equinoctial week (higan)

Shubun-no-hi occurs around september 23

Obon matsuri

o (honorable)

bon (lantern festival, basin, tray)

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

Festival to console the spirits of the dead

On the 13th, a fire called **Mukae-bi** is burned at the entrance of each house; the spirits of the dead are welcomed into the house and offerings are made to them on the butsudan

On the 15th, another fire called **Okuri-bi** is burned to send off the spirits on their return or lanterns are floated down a river

Bon odori

bon (lantern festival, basin, tray)

odo.ri (jump, dance, leap, skip)

Bon dance

Hachigatsu bon

hachi (eight)

gatsu (moon, month)

bon (lantern festival, basin, tray)

The most commonly celebrated time

August 15 on the solar calendar

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Kyû bon

kyû (old times, old things)

bon (lantern festival, basin, tray)

(old bon)

15th day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar, and so differs each year

Mukae-bi

mukae (meeting, greeting, welcoming)

bi (fire, flame, blaze)

Okuri-bi

oku.ri (sending off)

bi (fire, flame, blaze)

Shichigatsu bon

shichi (seven)

gatsu (moon, month)

bon (lantern festival, basin, tray)

July 15 on the solar calendar

Tsûka girei

Rites of Passage

tsû (traffic, pass through, commute)

ka (overdo, exceed, go beyond)

tsûka (passage)

gi (ceremony, rule, affair, case, a matter)

rei (salute, bow, ceremony, thanks)

girei (etiquette)

tsûka girei (rites of passage)

Conducted when an individual encounters changes in rank, status, or space

Hatsumiyamairi

hatsu (first time, beginning, new)

miya (shintô, shrine, palace)

mai.ri (going, visiting, visit)

The first visit paid by a newborn child to its ujigami

As the mother's period of taboo may not yet be over, the child is generally taken to the shrine by a female relative

On the 32nd day after the birth of a boy, and the 33rd day after the birth of a girl

Also called **Omiyamairi**, **Miyamairi**, **Hatsumiyamôde**

o (honorable)

miya (shintô, shrine, palace)

mai.ri (going, visiting, visit)

hatsu (first time, beginning, new)

miya (shintô, shrine, palace)

môde (visit, pilgrimage)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Shichi-go-san matsuri

shichi (seven)

go (five)

san (three)

matsuri (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)

November 15th

7-5-3 festival

After a ritual (**kamioki**) three year old boys and girls hair is allowed to grow long, five year old boys ritually put on their first hakama (**hakamagi** or **hakamagi no gi**), seven year old girls ritually put on their first wide obi (**obitoki** or **obitoki no gi**)

Kamioki

kami (hair of head)

o.ki (leave behind, keep)

Hakamagi

hakama (men's formal divided skirt)

-gi (don, wear)

Also called **Hakama no gi**

hakama (men's formal divided skirt)

no (possessive particle)

gi (ceremony)

Obitoki

obi (sash, belt)

to.ki (untie, undo)

Also called **Obitokoi no gi**

obi (sash, belt)

to.ki (untie, undo)

no (possessive particle)

gi (ceremony)

Seijin-shiki

sei (turn into, become, grow, reach)

jin (person)

shiki (ceremony, rite, function)

Coming-of-age ceremony (currently at 20 years)

Also called **Genpuku**

gen (beginning, origin)

puku | fuku (to obey, discharge, to serve)

Seijin-no-Hi

sei (turn into, become, grow, reach)

jin (person)

no (possessive particle)

hi (day, sun)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Held in honor of all those who reached their twentieth birthday during the previous year

Coming of age day, celebrated on January 15

Shinzen kekkon

shin (kami)

zen (before, in front of)

kek | ketsu (tie, bind, contract, join)

kon (marriage)

Shintô wedding

Yakudoshi

yaku (unlucky, misfortune, bad luck, disaster)

doshi | toshi (year)

(unlucky year, critical age)

With a big chance of encountering misfortune or injuring one's health; one must be careful

When men turn 25, 42 and 60, and women 19 and 33

One's yakudoshi is measured by adding one to the actual age

42 for men and 33 for women are considered to be particularly bad years, and are called "great calamity"

Lunar Chart of the ages of misfortune for men and women

Great yaku: men 25 - 41 - 42 - 43 - 61

Great yaku: women 19 - 32 - 33 - 34 - 37 - 61

Small yaku: both 1 - 3 - 5 - 7 - 10 - 13 - 24 - 28 - 46 - 49 - 52 - 55

60 - 64 - 70 - 73 - 77 - 82 - 85 - 88 - 91 - 97 - 99 - 100 - 105 - 106

(The ages described here are counted by the lunar calendar, which means a baby at birth is one year old and gains one year of age at each New Year's.

In short, you must add one year to your birthdate calculated by the solar calendar.)

Solar Chart of the ages of misfortune for men and women

Great yaku: men 26- 42- 43- 44- 62

Great yaku: women 20- 33- 34- 35- 38- 62

Small yaku: both 2 - 4 - 6 - 8 - 11 - 14 - 25 - 29 - 47 - 50 - 53 - 56

61- 65 - 71 - 74 - 78 - 83 - 86 - 89 - 92 - 98 - 100 - 102 - 106 - 107

Kanreki

kan (return)

reki (calendar)

One's "sixtieth" birthday, or alternately one's "sixty first" calendar year

Traditionally in Japan, when a person was born they were said to be "one," and at every New Year's day thereafter turn a "year" older

Based on the sixty year cycle of the 12 astrological animals and the 5 Daoist elements

Shinsôesai

shin (kami)

sô (internment, bury)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

sai (ritual, offer prayers)
Funeral rites conducted according to Shintô
Shintô funeral

Rituals comprising the rite:

- gi (ceremony)
- sai (ritual)
- 1) makura-naoshi no gi (pillow-adjustment rite)
- 2) nôkan no gi (coffin rite)
- 3) kyûzen-nikku no gi (rite of providing daily food offerings to the deceased)
- 4) ubusuna-jinja ni kiyû-hôkoku (rite of reporting to the deities the return of the spirit to their natal shrine)
- 5) bosho-jichinsai or batsujo no gi (gravesite ground-breaking or purification rite)
- 6) tsuyasai no gi (a ritual wake)
- 7) senrei no gi (rite for transferring the deceased spirit)
- 8) hakkyûsai no gi (rite to send the coffin off from the room)
- 9) hakkyû-go-batsujo no gi (room purification rite after sending off the coffin)
- 10) sôjôsai no gi (grave-side rites)
- 11) maisôsai or kasosai no gi (interment or crematory rite)
- 12) kikasai no gi (the rite of the family's return home)

Makura-naoshi no gi

makura (pillow, bolster)
nao.shi (correction; rectification)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
makura-naoshi no gi (pillow-adjustment rite)

Nôkan no gi

nô (settlement)
kan (coffin, casket)
nôkan (placing of body in coffin)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
nôkan no gi (coffin rite)

Kyûzen-nikku no gi

kyû (gather)
zen (sort of thing, in that case)
kyûzen (spontaneously; with one accord)
nik | nichî (day, sun)
ku (offer, present, serve meal)
nikku (daily offering)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

kyûzen-nikku no gi (rite of providing daily food offerings to the deceased)

Ubusuna-jinja ni kiyû-hôkoku

ubu (native, childbirth)

sunâ | tsuchi (earth, soil, ground)

ubusuna (birth place)

jin (kami)

ja | sha (shrine, office)

ni (movement and time particle)

ki (homecoming, arrive at, lead to, result in)

yû (seclude, confine to a room)

kiyû (death)

hō (observance, offer, present, dedicate)

kokû (revelation, tell, inform, announce)

hōkoku (report give to Kami)

ubusuna-jinja ni kiyû-hōkoku (rite of reporting to the Kami the return of the spirit to their natal shrine)

Also called **Kiyû-hōkoku no gi**

ki (homecoming, arrive at, lead to, result in)

yû (seclude, confine to a room)

kiyû (death)

hō (observance, offer, present, dedicate)

kokû (revelation, tell, inform, announce)

hōkoku (report give to Kami)

no (possessive particle)

gi (ceremony)

Bosho-jichinsai

bo (grave, tomb)

sho (place)

bosho (graveyard)

ji (ground, earth)

chin (tranquilize)

sai (ritual, offer prayers)

jichinsai (ground breaking ceremony)

bosho-jichinsai (gravesite ground-breaking or purification rite)

Also called **Bosho-batsujo no gi, Batsujo ni gi**

bo (grave, tomb)

sho (place)

bosho (graveyard)

batsu | futsu (exorcise)

jo (exclude, remove, abolish, cancel)

batsujo (purification)

no (possessive particle)

gi (ceremony)

Tsuyasai no gi

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

tsu (pass through)
ya (night, evening)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
tsuyasai no gi (ritual wake)

Senrei no gi

sen (transition, move, change)
rei (spirits, soul)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
senrei no gi (rite for transferring the deceased spirit to the memorial tablet)

Hakkyûsai no gi

hak | hatsu (departure)
kyû (bier, coffin)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
hakkyûsai no gi (rite to send the coffin off from the room)
Also called **Shukkan sai**
shuk | shutsu (exit, leave)
kan (coffin, casket)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)

Hakkyû-go-batsujo no gi

hak | hatsu (departure)
kyû (bier, coffin)
go (after, later)
batsu | futsu (exorcise)
jo (exclude, remove, abolish, cancel)
batsujo (purification)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
hakkyû-go-batsujo no gi (room purification rite after sending off the coffin)
Also called **Ato-barai no gi**
ato (after, later)
bara.i | hara.i (exorcise)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)

Sôjôsai no gi

sô (internment, bury)
jô (location, place)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
sôjôsai no gi (grave-side rites)

Maisôsai

mai (bury)
sô (internment, bury)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)
maisôsai (interment or crematory rite)
Also called **Kasôsai no gi**, **Kasôsai**
ka (fire)
sô (internment, bury)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)

Kikasai no gi

ki (return, homecoming, arrive at)
ka (home, house)
sai (ritual, offer prayers)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)
kikasai no gi (the rite of the family's return home)
Also called **Kika-shûbatsu no gi**
ki (return, homecoming, arrive at)
ka (home, house)
shû (discipline, conduct oneself well, study, master)
batsu | futsu (exorcise)
no (possessive particle)
gi (ceremony)

Shinobigoto

shinobigoto (condolence message)
koto (say)
Words of condolence said to a deceased person
Along with expressing sadness, they also praise the good works performed and merits accrued during that person's lifetime.
Also called **Shinubigoto**, **Shinobikotoba**
shinobigoto (condolence message)
kotoba (words, poetry)

Tomurai

tomurai (condolences, mourning, funeral)
Funeral or burial condolences

Tama matsuri

Festivals for the Dead
tama (soul, spirit)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

matsuri (festival, feast, ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
Festival held to pray to, give thanks to, and appease the souls of the dead

Bon matsuri

(See **Bon matsuri**)

Higan

(See **Higan**, **Shunbun-no-hi**, and **Shûbun-no-hi**)

Soreisai

so (ancestor, founder)
rei (spirit, soul)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, deify, enshrine)
soreisai (ceremonies honouring the spirits of ancestors)

Reisai

rei (spirit, soul)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, deify, enshrine)
This event is held a certain number of years after the funeral to remember the spirit of the deceased
It is usually performed in the 1st, 5th, 10th, and finally 50th year
Also called **Nensai** (Buddhist)
nen (year)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, deify, enshrine)

Ji matsuri

Ground Breaking
ji (ground, earth)
matsuri (ritual, offer prayers, worship)
Rituals performed before and during constructing a building, to worship the Kami of the locality and to pray for safety during the process of construction

Anzen-kigan shiki

an (relax, low, quiet, rested, contented, peaceful)
zen (whole, entire, all, complete, fulfill)
anzen (safety, security)
ki (pray, wish)
gan (petition, request, vow, wish, hope)
kigan (prayer)
shiki (ceremony, rite, function)
Safety ceremony for health and protection of workers at a jobsite

Jichinsai

ji (ground, earth)
chin (tranquilize)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate, deify, enshrine, worship)
Pacification of the grounds

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Ground breaking ceremony

Jôtôshiki

jô (above, up)
tô (ridgepole, ridge)
jôtô (raising the ridgepole)
shiki (ceremony, rite, function)
Ridgebeam-raising ceremony
Also called **Jôtôsai**
jô (above, up)
tô (ridgepole, ridge)
jôtô (raising the ridgepole)
sai (ritual, offer prayers, celebrate)

Shunkô shiki

shun (end, finish)
kô (achievement, success)
kô (craft, construction)
shunko (completion (of work))
shiki (ceremony, rite, function)
Completion ceremony

Shunkô-kiyo-harae shiki

shun (end, finish)
kô (achievement, success)
kô (craft, construction)
shunkô (completion (of work))
kiyo (pure, purify, cleanse, exorcise)
harae (purification, exorcism)
shiki (ceremony, rite, function)
Opening or inauguration ceremony
Also called **Shûnin shiki**
shû (concerning, settle, take position)
nin (responsibility, duty, term, entrust to, appoint)
shûnin (inauguration)
shiki (ceremony, rite, function)

Shamanism

The shaman in Japan overlaps with mediums, in that both communicate with spirits, especially those that afflict people with disease or misfortune. Mediums tend to be more passive, where they are possessed by a kami or spirit of the deceased, or they contacted through dreams. While shamans are more active, in that they seek contact with the kami or spirits of the deceased in order to discover why they have afflicted a particular person, and what it will require for them to cease their actions.

Mukoku

mu (dream, vision, illusion)
koku (revelation, tell, inform, announce)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

mukoku (dream revelation)

A dream in which a Kami appears to communicate its will

Anyone can have a mukoku, but some people are more likely to experience one.

Kamigakari

kami

gaka.ri (haunt, possess)

ga.kari (consult)

Possession of a person by Kami or other spirit

Chigo

chi (young, immature)

go | ko (child)

A young child who acts as a medium

Also called Shindô

shin (kami)

dô (child)

Hyoï

hyô (possess, haunt)

i (due to)

hyoi (possession)

Saniwa

sa | shin (hearing, judge)

ni | mi (kami)

wa | sha (person)

An abbreviation for sayaniwa

One who interprets the words of the possessed person and makes them understandable to other people

Takusen

taku (consign, entrusting with, hint)

sen (proclaim, say, announce)

takusen (oracle)

When a possessed person serves as a "medium" to communicate a message from Kami or spirit

Yorimashi

1 – corpse child (pronounced as yorimashi)

2 & 3 – yo.ri (bring near, gather, collect / possess, haunt)

2 & 3 – mashi (sit)

4 – yo.ri (possess) shi (child)

Child or doll used as a vessel for a spirit invoked by a **Geki** or **Miko**

Person acting as a medium

Miko

1 - miko (sorcerer, diviner, medium, shrine maiden)

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

2 - fu (sorcerer, diviner, medium, shrine maiden) / jo (woman) -- pronounced miko

3 - mi (sorcerer, diviner, medium, shrine maiden) / ko (child)

4 - mi (kami) / ko (child)

Shamaness, sorceress, medium, diviner, shrine maiden, or virgin dedicated to a Kami

Female Shamans

A woman possessing the ability to receive **Takusen** in a state of **Kamigakari**.

A Miko is capable of summoning a divine spirit or the spirit of a deceased person into her body and mind; this process is called **Hyoï** or **Kamigakari**.

Usually called a "shaman," although, as she serves as an intermediary to the world of divine or deceased spirits, she could just as readily be called a **Reibai**.

Also called **Fugeki**, **Onna miko** (female shaman), **Onna fu**, **Kannagi**, **Kannaki**, **Joshuku**, **Jofu**, **Fujo**

fu (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)

geki (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)

1 - Fugeki (shaman, oracle, diviner, medium)

onna (woman, female)

mi (kami)

ko (child)

2 - Onna miko (female child serving to the Kami)

onna (woman, female)

fu (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)

3 - Onna fu (female medium, female diviner, female shaman, female oracle)

4 - Kannagi (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)

5 - Kannaki (invocation, congratulation, celebration)

jo (woman, female)

shuku (invocation, congratulation, celebration)

6 - Joshuku (female medium, female oracle)

jo (woman, female)

fu (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)

7 - Jofu (female medium, female diviner, female shaman, female oracle)

fu (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)

jo (woman, female)

8 - Fujo (female medium, female diviner, female shaman, female oracle)

Reibai

rei (spirits, soul)

bai (mediator)

reibai (medium)

Shrine Maidens

Shrine attendants identified by white kimono and red hakama, usually assigned tasks, such as helping the **Shinshoku**, cleaning the sacred grounds, dancing **Kagura** for Kami, and dispensing Omikuji, **Ofuda** and **Omamori**.

Minzoku Neo-Shintô Outline

Geki

geki (medium, diviner, sorcerer)
Shaman, medium, diviner, sorcerer

Male Shamans

A man possessing the ability to receive **Takusen** in a state of **Kamigakari**. A Geki is capable of summoning a divine spirit or the spirit of a deceased person into his body and mind; this process is called **Hyoï** or Kamigakari. Usually called a "shaman," although, as he serves as an intermediary to the world of divine or deceased spirits, he could just as readily be called a **Reibai**. Also called **Fugeki**, **Otoko miko** (male shaman), **Onoko kannaki**
fu (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)
geki (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)
fugeki (shaman, oracle, diviner, medium)
otoko (man, male)
miko (medium, diviner, shaman, oracle)
otoko miko (male medium, male diviner, male shaman, male oracle)
onoko | otoko (man, male)
kannaki (invocation, congratulation, celebration)
onoko kannaki (male medium, male oracle)

Reibai

rei (spirits, soul)
bai (mediator)
reibai (medium)

Online Links

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