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SENGOKU

DICELESS

CHANBARA ROLEPLAYING
IN FEUDAL JAPAN

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CHANBARA ROLEPLAYING IN FEUDAL JAPAN

Active
EXPL  **ITS**
diceless roleplaying 

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

A samurai in service must always be careful not to indulge in underhanded censure of any faults of his comrades that he happens to hear of or see. For a man can't calculate how far he may not have unwittingly mistaken or misunderstood these things.

DAIDOJI YUZAN

Sengoku is a word meaning *Warring States*, and refers to a period of Japanese history marked by nearly incessant civil warfare, jockeying for position by rival warlords and samurai clans, and a near total breakdown of the social order. When you see the word in italicized, small capital letters, like this [*SENGOKU*] we are referring to this setting. When you see it written in normal type, capitalized or not, we are referring to that period in history, or something related to it. We may speak of sengoku politics, sengoku history, the Sengoku Period—or we may speak of the *SENGOKU* setting.

Japan's Sengoku Period encompassed roughly the latter half of the sixteenth century. Some historians consider it to have begun as early as 1467, with the beginning of the Onin War (1467–1477), although most ascribe it to some nebulous date in the 1550s. Its close is generally marked to be the Battle of Sekigahara (Oct. 21, 1600), in which the Western Army of Tokugawa Ieyasu overcame the Toyotomi Loyalists of the Eastern Army, led by Ishida Mitsunari. It was this battle that secured Tokugawa rule over Japan, although it wasn't finally ensured until the twin Osaka Campaigns of 1615, in which the Toyotomi cause was finally crushed. For this reason, some put the end of the Sengoku Period at 1615.

For the purposes of this game, the Sengoku Period is given to be 1542 to 1600, inclusive. In 1542, Japan encountered Europeans for the first time, when a ship wrecked off the coast of a tiny island called Tanegashima and Fernan Mendez Pinto stepped ashore, bearing the first firearm

the Japanese had ever seen. This was to prove to be a pivotal event for the future of Japanese politics, to say nothing of the concept of warfare and bushido. 1600, of course, marks the establishment of the Tokugawa as supreme in Japan, virtually putting an end to war and strife.

This *end of warfare* was only virtual, however; uprisings and occasional rebellions would still occur, but they were no longer the rule. Now, they were the exception.

Unfortunately for many would-be gamers, most of the television series and films with which we are familiar are actually set in the Tokugawa Period. The *Seven Samurai*, for example, takes place a few years after the Osaka Campaign. Things such as yakuza (*the Japanese Mafia*) gangs did not come into being until the Tokugawa were in charge, so certain elements of society one might expect to find do not appear here.

CHANBARA ROLEPLAYING

The Sengoku Japan of your game bears no more nor less reality than you wish it to. Whatever milieu you choose to play in—whether you prefer the gritty realism of a true historical campaign, the more elaborate whirling blades and fantastic elements of a *magic is real* adventure of a chanbara epic, or the anything-goes anime genre—the *SENGOKU* setting has what you want. Your game is what you make it, and what you let it become.

You may be familiar with the different levels of these gaming environments, but take a quick look at the options and gaming style represented

by each. That way, you can more easily choose the style of play suited to your interests. You may even find that you will want to play different levels of reality, occasionally using the more fantastic and occasionally dropping into the *real world* of feudal Japan.

It might be better if you do not mix the elements too broadly, although there is no reason you cannot set limitations on how much magic or how *unreal* you are willing to let the game become. As with all roleplaying games, the world in which you play is what you choose it to be. Before beginning a story, the director should sit down with his players and discuss the issue, to avoid unpleasant surprises later.

Since *SENGOKU* is a setting which primarily simulates the chanbara action cinema, it is recommended that the heroic-level rules are used to create characters. Directors can easily run stories with a more historical level of *realism* simply by stepping down to the dramatic rules.

HISTORICAL

Stories that are strictly Historical may take two tracks: they can be ultra-realistic, utilizing actual historical backdrops and personalities (e.g., the assassination of Oda Nobunaga, intrigues in Hideyoshi's court, the Battle of Okehazama, etc.); or they can be realistic but apply to a parallel Japan, one in which a player character can raise his own clan and perhaps some day even become shogun.

Whichever option you prefer, you will need to have an understanding of the culture of the period. This sourcebook will tell you how to play the game, and will give you a fundamental grounding in the society and world of late sixteenth-century Japan; but you will probably want to refer to some of the books in the bibliography to more fully round out aspects of play.

Films that give a good idea of this realistic form of play are *Kagemusha*, *Throne of Blood*, *Seven Samurai*, *Rikyu*, *The Hidden Fortress*, *Heaven and Earth*, *Ran*, *Yojimbo*, *Sanjuro*, and *Shogun*. Films emphasizing a little more incredible action than most reality-based games are good for ideas of where you can take your story. This is perhaps the broadest field of samurai film (called *jidai-geki*, or *period plays*, in Japanese). While not entirely realistic, they are not beyond the ken of

imagination, and there is no magical or fantastic element per se which enters into them.

CHANBARA

SENGOKU adventures that include more of a fantasy aspect and more spectacular characters are called *Chanbara* stories. In these games, player characters may have abilities and skills that would place them beyond the realm of most normal people. Magic and other elements of the fantastic will also be a regular part of the game. Characters will interact with not only other humans, but they might encounter tengu, kappa, or even fierce oni. Priests and monks can use magic; it may even be possible for many characters to have a certain latent magical capability. To put it in western terms, it is the difference between *Blood and Roses* or *The Longships* (epic historical adventures, but not fantasy) and *Ladyhawk* or *Conan*.

This is the level of play that will allow you to bring in whirling blades of death, armies of ninja materializing on castle walls, ancient family curses that really *are* curses, etc. As an example of an external element appropriate to a Chanbara Level game, there have been films suggesting giant kites (hang-gliders, in essence) used to approach an impregnable castle. Even within the realm of the fantastical, however, the laws of nature should be followed. If bypassed, it should be with appropriate explanations.

Films that give a good idea of the fantastic are *Daimajin*, *Satomi Hakkenden* (*Legend of the Eight Samurai*), etc. *The Lone Wolf and Cub* and the *Zatoichi* series are two such entries in this genre, for although there is no overtly



supernatural element in them, there can be little doubt that neither one is exactly *normal* in terms of what can be done and what takes place.

Some common chanbara genre conventions include:

One Against Dozens

One hero (or several) stands against many times their own number. The majority of their opponents are killed with relative ease and en masse. Mifune Toshiro demonstrates this quite well in many of his films.

Magic is Rare

While there is a place for *magic*, it is typically shrouded in religious mysticism. Magic is typically felt but not actually seen. Those with mystic powers are few and held as *masters* of their esoteric disciplines. Ironically, religious *magic* permeates the culture to its roots and is relied upon for many things, from the seemingly mundane (healing the sick, curing the insane, blessing a voyage or new house) to the fantastic (divination, communing with the dead, etc.).

Heroic Deeds

Chanbara heroes, while regularly facing impossible odds and moral dilemma, are nonetheless heroes, above the masses in skill and resolve. Some heroes are thus created by their struggles. Others, who begin as heroes, are destroyed by them.

Duty vs. Obligation

The core of almost every chanbara story or adventure is centered on the idea that the hero faces an impossible choice: fulfill his duty or fulfill an obligation. To do one neglects the other. On all but the rarest occasion, the hero's death is the only thing that allows him to successfully do both. What are seen as tragedies to the Western observer are held as idealistic examples of true virtue by the Japanese. These concepts are covered in more detail later.

The Group Above the Individual

Japanese society stresses the value of the group. One's self-worth is derived not from his individual accomplishments but rather by those of the group. The lone figure is seen as suspect and tragic, and his struggles are amplified (which partly explains why most chanbara stories feature lone heroes).

ANIME

In an Anime style (*epic-level rules*) story, anything goes. That is about all you can say. The kind of abilities and actions that take place in anime games are most often indicated by animated Japanese films and television series, hence the application of the title *anime* (which literally means *animation*) for this genre.

It is in this game form in which magic and the supernatural are more common than not. The various kami and Buddhas may play an active part in the life of humans. The Anime level will be only lightly covered in this setting, however.

CHANBARA INSPIRATION

For a thorough list of chanbara films and videos, see the filmography at the back of this book. Many of the films listed are now available for rent and purchase, thanks to several companies which have begun new efforts to bring these films to the American video market.

LINGUISTIC CONVENTIONS

Japanese history can be divided into *eras* and *periods*. While the terms may in many contexts be interchangeable, for the sake of *SENGOKU* we will use the latter term to indicate sometimes overlapping historical time frames as defined by historians (e.g., the Sengoku Period, the Tokugawa Period, the Fujiwara Period, etc.) and the former to indicate *era names* as given by emperors and other worthies (e.g., Bunka Era, Genki Era, etc.). It is only since the Imperial Restoration in 1868 that the era and period names have been the same (i.e., Meiji Era, Taisho Era, Showa Era, and Heisei Era). What this means is that during the time of the Sengoku Period, Japan saw many eras come and go.

For personal names, the order is surname first, given name last. Tokugawa Ieyasu was Ieyasu of the Tokugawa family. This rendering of names is used throughout this rule book. Almost invariably when someone is referred to by only one name, it is a given name. In modern history books, even in Japan, Tokugawa Ieyasu is referred to initially with his full name, and thereafter as *Ieyasu*, unlike Western history books who never talk about *George* crossing the Delaware River.

Geographical and proper place names in Japanese usually (but not universally) include in

their name the element they are. Thus we will not speak of the Arakawa River; rather, we will say Arakawa (*Rough River*). Likewise, we will say Enryaku-ji, rather than Enryakuji Temple (nor will we say Enryaku Temple). To those who speak Spanish and have long chafed at references such as *Rio Grande River* and *Sierra Madre Mountains*, this idea should be clear. An appendix at the back of this book gives common geographical terms in Japanese for directors wanting to more accurately flavor their story, or to understand words that may appear on a map or in a conversation between player and non-player characters.



PRONUNCIATION

Japanese is a syllabic, generally uninflected, language. When letters are doubled, they are given a double duration (e.g. the T sound in *hit tune* or the O in *Go over!*). In general, letters are pronounced the same as in English, with a few necessary cautions.

Within words, the vowels *u* and *i* are weak, and often not pronounced; at the end of words, *u* sometimes disappears. English has a tendency to put the stress on penultimate syllables; for example, to pronounce the name Yamashita as *Yama-SHEE-ta*. In fact, Japanese pronunciation is more accurately *Yamash'ta*.

One thing that must be remembered is the linguistic strictures of the language. There are a few consonant-vowel combinations that are impossible in Japanese.

LETTER USAGE

G	always hard, as in gold
J	always soft, as in jet
R	always trilled, similar to some British usage
S	always soft, never hard as in his
CH	always hard, as in church
TCH	a lengthened ch, similar to chance
A	as in father
E	between bed and hay; pronounced when a final vowel
I	as in machine
O	as in boat
U	as in chute
EI	as in bait
AI	as in rite

COMBINATIONS AND SOUNDS

V does not exist
 no letter can follow F except for U
 N is the only consonant to end a word or syllable
 S does not make a word plural; there are no plurals
 the following are impossible sounds: JE, SI, TI, TU, YE, YI, ZI

A BRIEF HISTORY OF JAPAN

When we throw off our own bias, follow the teachings of the ancients and confer with other people, matters should go well and without mishap.

YAMAMOTO TSUNETOMO

This chapter is not intended to be a serious historical study of Japan. Rather, it provides an overview of the basic knowledge that a normal well-educated character is likely to know. For more specific historical information, consult the reading list in the appendix.

Remember that you are the master of your game: if certain historical elements do not fit with your game, feel free to change them to suit your needs. For example, if you want to play *SENGOKU* in a type of *what-if* scenario in which the Minamoto shogunate never fell, you can; but you'll need to do some research into what government under the Minamoto was like.

MYTHICAL ORIGINS OF JAPAN

Japan's mythological origins are recorded in the *Kojiki* (*A Record of Ancient Things*), a book written in 711 by the historian O-no-Yasumaro. The *Kojiki* is also a history book about Japan's earliest days, although its history is no more reliable than its myth.

The first emperor, according to the *Kojiki*, was Jinmu Tenno, son of Amaterasu Omikami, goddess of the sun. Jinmu ruled, according to the legends, from 660–585 BC. In point of fact, if such a person ever existed at all, he would have had to have reigned sometime in the fourth century, as it was not until that time that the Yamato state began to unify the nation. Be that as it may, no one living in Japan in the sixteenth century would have any qualms about accepting the Imperial House's claims of antiquity, nor the ahistorical dates indicated by the *Kojiki*. It was simply taken as a matter of faith that Japan was

the Land of the Gods, and the emperor in Miyako was the Son of Heaven, latest in an unbroken line from the goddess herself.

For a detailed look at the cosmology and mythical origins of Japan, see *Religion*, page 37.

CAPSULE HISTORY, ERA TO ERA

Most of the periods of Japanese history are taken from the location of the center of the government of the time. It is interesting to note that although after 794 the imperial capital was in Kyoto (then called Heian-kyo), once the military aristocracy rose to power, the de facto seat of Japan's government was wherever the ruling house established it—the town of Kamakura was the seat of Minamoto (and later Hojo) power; Muromachi was a Kyoto district chosen by the Ashikaga for their headquarters; Azuchi was Nobunaga's castle; and Momoyama was the site of one of Hideyoshi's castles. Note that the so-called Sengoku Period is comprised of the entire Azuchi and Momoyama Periods, and part of the Muromachi Period.

PREHISTORY (TO 592)

In c. 200 AD, Empress Jingo leads an invasion of Korea and subjugates it to Japanese rule. Her son, the emperor Ojin, will be deified as Hachiman, the god of war.

Among the gifts from Korea are writing and the Buddhist religion. In 538, Buddhism reaches Japan. Emperor Yomei proposes that it become the state religion in 587. Soga no Umako supports this proposal, but is opposed by Katsumi no Nakatomi and Katsumi no Moriya,

who favor Shinto. In the ensuing conflict, the Soga emerge victorious.

ASUKA PERIOD (592-710)

The imperial court moves to Asuka, in Yamato, near Nara. The Asuka Period sees the imperial house solidify control over the land. During this period, Buddhism strengthens as the official state religion, the imperial court of Japan adopts the Chinese model, and refugee artisans from Korea come to Japan. The first Japanese coins are minted in 708. The old order falls apart, and a new order based on Sino-Buddhist concepts rises to power under the eyes of the Fujiwara Clan.

Regent Prince Shotoku institutes social reforms based on Sino-Buddhist concepts in 604. The ancient Soga clan, continuing to gain power and influence, annihilates the family of Prince Shotoku in 643. Prince Naka no Oe and Nakatomi no Kamatari join forces and assassinate Soga no Iruka and bring down the Soga, banishing many of the clan. Naka no Oe and Kamatari become Crown Prince and Minister of the Center respectively. They issue the Taika Reforms, a series of social reforms based on Chinese models, which establishes era names (the first being Taika, or *Great Change*), in 645. Naka no Oe becomes emperor as Tenji Tenno in 668 and Kamatari takes the name Fujiwara no Kamatari. His family will *run* Japan for the next several centuries.

In 672, a dispute over imperial succession leads to the short but bloody Jinshin Revolt; Prince Oama defeats prince Otomo, and becomes the next emperor. In 701, the Taiho Code, covering civil and penal matters, is established.

NARA PERIOD (710-794)

Empress Genmei moves the capital to Nara. The cultivation of rice is first encouraged. Chinese becomes the language of learning, culture, science, and literature. Chinese knowledge grows as scholars from Japan go to T'ang China to study, and Buddhist priests come from China to establish temples. The Great Buddha at Todai-ji is completed in 752. The priest Ganjin arrives from China in 754. The Shoso-in, a national treasury-house, is built at Todai-ji.

Jealous of the influence of a Buddhist monk over a retired empress, Fujiwara no Nakamaro seizes power in 757, and in an attempt to gain

further power and arrest the priest in 764, he leads an uprising but is defeated and executed.

HEIAN PERIOD (794-1192)

The capital is moved to Heian-kyo (the *Capital of Peace and Calm*). The power of the emperors wanes as the court officials and bureaucrats gain more influence. For the first time, families not descended from imperial lines hold the highest offices in the land, including the regency. Literature flourishes as *The Tale of Genji* and other books are written.

Retired emperors begin to establish puppet master governments from their villas in Buddhist temples. Often, several generations of retired emperors struggle to pull the same strings in various directions, leading to political maneuverings by the courtiers. This is begun by retired emperor Shirakawa in 1086, who also first gives bushi direct access to court officials by establishing a guard of samurai to defend his palace.

Kobo-daishi (Kofuku) returns from China and establishes Shingon Buddhism in 805. In 806, Saicho introduces Tendai Buddhism. The Nenbutsu sect of Buddhism is promulgated by Kuya in 938. Jodo (*Pure Land*) Buddhism begins to flourish after Honen begins to preach in 1175. Rinzai-zen Buddhism begins in 1191, taught by Yosai. Not all relations with the monks of various sects are peaceful—conflict breaks between Enjo-ji and Enryaku-ji monks in 1035. In 1037, Kofuku-ji monks destroy part of Todai-ji. Bands of warrior monks will periodically appear in the capital to press demands on the government.

The most illustrious branches of the Minamoto clan, the Saga Genji and the Seiwa Genji, are created when Emperors Saga and Seiwa give that surname (meaning *origin*) to cadet branches of the imperial house. The surname Taira (*Peace or Level*) is given to another line of imperial descendants.

In 866, the Oten-mon (a gate at the imperial palace) is burned; the resulting investigation into the plot leads to the fall of two clans, allowing the Fujiwara to monopolize government posts thereafter. In 887, Fujiwara no Mototsune becomes imperial regent.

The rise of the military class is marked by disturbances in the provinces, where the real rulers of the land, the samurai, test their might

against the aristocratic governors ensconced far in the capital. In 935, Taira no Masakado raises an army in the provinces and declares himself *the new emperor* in the Ten'gyo Revolt. The conflict lasts until 940, when Masakado is killed.

Fujiwara no Michizane maneuvers behind the scenes to seize power in 995, and becomes regent in 1015. The Fujiwara, once a military house, soften and become effete; the Taira and Minamoto alternately attempt to wrest control of the government from them and support them in putting down other insurrections, while occasionally battling each other for position. Abe no Yoritoki of Mutsu rebels in 1051, starting the Zen-kunen War, and is put down by Minamoto no Yoriyoshi and others. Kiyohara no Iehira (also of Mutsu) revolts in 1083, beginning the Go-sannen War; he is put down by Minamoto no Yoshiie. When Minamoto no Yoshichika (a son of Yoshiie) plunders Kyushu in 1101, he is put down several years later by Taira no Masanori.

The Hogen and Heiji Insurrections lay waste to large parts of Heian-kyo. In the former, one branch of the Fujiwara and a retired emperor try to oppose the reigning emperor and another branch of the Fujiwara, aided by the Taira. Go-Shirakawa emerges victoriously, and Taira no Kiyomori's fortune is made. In the Heiji Insurrection, a Minamoto-Fujiwara alliance is formed to oppose Taira no Kiyomori and his Fujiwara supporters. The insurrection fails, and Yoritomo is exiled to Izu.

Kiyomori becomes regent and his daughter becomes Emperor Takakura's empress. After a failed conspiracy to overthrow the Taira, Kiyomori has the retired emperor Go-Shirakawa confined.

In 1180, the Genpei War begins as Prince Mochihito and Minamoto no Yorimasa rebel against the Taira and are defeated. Minamoto no Yoritomo and Yoshinaka raise the flag of revolt. Taira no Shigehira burns Todai-ji and Kofuku-ji to put down rebellious monks. Yoshinaka enters Kyoto in 1183, but his country bumpkin ways and excessive behavior get him recalled by Yoritomo. In 1185, Minamoto no Yoshitsune annihilates the Taira army in a sea battle at Dan-no-Ura. Yoshitsune is falsely denounced by jealous rivals, and he is ordered hunted down and killed by his brother Yoritomo.

Yoritomo becomes shogun in 1192.

KAMAKURA PERIOD (1192-1333)

Yoritomo establishes his bakufu (*tent government* or the shogunate) in Kamakura to keep it away from court influences. His house only lasts briefly, as through intrigues from his wife's family, the Hojo, the third Minamoto shogun, Sanetomo, is assassinated in 1219. Emperor Go-Toba tries to regain control, but a huge army under Hojo Yasutoki easily defeats Go-Toba's forces. In 1226, the first puppet shogun is set up by the Hojo regents: nine-year-old Fujiwara no Yoritune. Henceforth, the true power is the Hojo regency. During this period, the shogun will be puppets. Some will be Fujiwara, some even Imperial princes.

Several new Buddhist sects are founded. The Jodo-shin-shu (*Ikko movement*) appear in 1224, led by Shinran. Dogen founds Sodo-zen Buddhism in 1227. In 1253, Nichiren begins Hokke (Nichiren) Buddhism. Ippen promulgates the Ji sect in 1275.

The Kamakura Period begins a feudalistic age that will last for the rest of Japan's history. The emperor is now a figurehead—well-respected and honored, and at times revered, but a figurehead nonetheless. From time to time, emperors will try to gain control of the government, and for a while they may actually succeed; but ultimately the power belongs to the military aristocracy, who have the manpower, swords, and the wealth-producing estates to keep control. The once rustic samurai revel in their new-found authority and remake themselves in an aristocratic, educated image.

When the Mongol navy of Kublai Khan suddenly attacks Kyushu in 1274, no one is prepared. Only good fortune prevents defeat. In 1281, a larger armada from Mongol-ruled China arrives, this time meeting strong resistance. Still, they are only driven off by a phenomenal typhoon—the kamikaze, or spirit wind. The cost of mounting these defenses nearly destroy the bakufu. The government is severely weakened.

Emperor Go-Daigo launches several schemes to overthrow the Kamakura government, and fails each time. He is finally exiled to Oki Island after the Genko Insurrection of 1331.

In 1333, Nitta Yoshisada and Ashikaga Takauji seize both the imperial and bakufu capitals, and end the Kamakura shogunate.

MUROMACHI PERIOD (1333-1573)

This age begins marked by the split of the imperial house into two lines, each vying for the throne. While the split began in the last half of the Kamakura Period, the involvement of bushi in the equation makes it a much more bloody situation. Ashikaga Takauji restores imperial rule in 1334, but he supports Emperor Komyo of the northern line. Go-Daigo, who had struggled with the Kamakura shogunate, claims orthodoxy as rightful emperor of the southern line, thereby beginning what is now called the Nanboku-cho (*Northern and Southern Court*) Period in 1336. Takauji's first action is to defeat erstwhile allies Kusunoki Masashige and Nitta Yoshisada. He is named shogun in 1338, and establishes his government in the Muromachi district of Kyoto. Unlike previous periods, all the shogun of the Muromachi Period will be heads of the Ashikaga clan.

Opulence and splendor are the bywords of this era, as they build temple after temple, they literally cover the walls of one retirement villa with gold leaf, create huge estates with aesthetically perfect gardens, and outdo each other in dress and refinement. During this period (c. 1441), Zeami perfects the No play. The tea ceremony and flower arranging begin to flourish.

The rivalry between the Northern and Southern courts erupts into warfare in Kyoto in 1355. The conflict finally ends when Emperor Go-Kameyama of the Northern court yields the throne to Emperor Go-Komatsu of the Southern court in 1392. When an emperor of the Northern line is installed in 1412, contrary to the agreement whereby the throne would alternate between emperors of the Northern and Southern lines, hostile feelings break out and a rebellion is quickly put down in Ise; the warfare is over as people are just worn out, and peace slowly settles in.

Because of the rivalry between courts, families jockey for position by allying first one way and then the next, with loyalties going to the highest bidder. This can be seen as the beginning of the end for the old loyalty-do-or-die mentality more typical of the Heian and Kamakura Periods. Several rebellions and insurrections occur over the decades, but are put down.

Japan also has trouble with wako, or Japanese pirates. The sea-based raiders, mostly Japanese

but partially Korean, and occasionally led by Chinese, harry fishing and trading industries. The situation is so bad that an envoy from Ming China asks Japan to do something about the pirates. They are largely put down by the middle of the fifteenth century.

The greatest crisis of the Ashikaga Period is the Onin War of 1467–1477. The war's causes are extremely complex—it combines all the worst elements of a succession dispute for the shogunate, a rivalry over a politically powerful office, a dispute over which son would rule a powerful clan, disagreements between in-laws, and old intra- and inter-clan grudges that required settling. When the dust clears, Kyoto is a burnt-out shamble, thousands have died, the Hosokawa and Yamana clans will never be the same, and the power and prestige of the Muromachi shogun is broken.

The long-standing policy that daimyo infighting would be quelled by the bakufu as injurious to society is lost for good, and clans constantly vie with one another for power and influence. Loyalty and other familiar trademarks of bushido are more rhetorical concepts than real ideals. The main fighting is over in 1477, but it will not end until 1600. This marks the rise of the gekokujo daimyo, those who rose to prominence from nowhere. Hojo Soun becomes one of the most famous of their number.

In 1488, the Ikko sect rises up in Kaga, taking control of the whole province. In 1506, they rise again in Kaga. They are not quelled until 1531, when Asakura Norikage of Echizen suppresses them.

THE SENGOKU SETTING

MUROMACHI PERIOD (1542-1573)

- 1542 Towards the end of August, a Portuguese ship lands at Tanegashima and introduces the matchlock arquebus to Japan.
- 1549 St. Francis Xavier arrives in Kagoshima on a mission trip.
- 1555 Rival daimyo Uesugi Kenshin and Takeda Shingen fight to a draw at Kawanakajima.
- 1560 In a reputation-making battle at Okehazama, Oda Nobunaga's two-thousand-man force overwhelms a twenty-five-thousand-man army and kills Imagawa Yoshimoto.

- 1565 Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiteru is assassinated by Miyoshi Yoshitsugu and Matsunaga Hisahide.
- 1568 Nobunaga, in support of Ashikaga Yoshiaki, enters Kyoto and has him installed as shogun.
- 1569 Nobunaga approves Luis Frois's request and allows Christian preaching in Kyoto.
- 1570 Nobunaga defeats the Asai and Asakura at the battle of Anegawa.
- 1570 First Portuguese trading ship arrives in Nagasaki. Tobacco is introduced.
- 1571 Nobunaga burns Enryaku-ji to the ground.
- 1573 Nobunaga purges Yoshiaki, and the Muromachi shogunate falls.

AZUCHI PERIOD (1573-1582)

- 1575 Nobunaga and Ieyasu defeat Takeda Katsuyori at Nagashino; this is the first battle in which large numbers of firearms were used.
- 1576 Nobunaga builds Azuchi Castle. He also almost goes to war with monks from Hongan-ji, but reconciles with chief bozu Kenryo Kosa. Kosa abdicates authority to his son and retires.
- 1582 Otomo, Arima, and Oomura daimyo send a mission to Rome. (It returns eight years later.)
- 1582 Akechi Mitsuhide, one of Nobunaga's generals, turns his coat and attacks Nobunaga at night while the latter is staying at the Honno-ji in Kyoto. Nobunaga is killed. Nobunaga's best generals (Ieyasu and Hideyoshi) both make valiant efforts to catch and punish the traitor, knowing that the one who does will have the moral imperative to become his heir. Ieyasu, far to the north, executes a forced march south, but is too late.

MOMOYAMA PERIOD (1582-1600)

- 1582 Hashiba (later Toyotomi) Hideyoshi catches up with Mitsuhide at the Battle of Yamazaki and kills him.
- 1583 Hideyoshi defeats Shibata Katsuie at Shizugatake.
- 1583 Construction begins on Osaka Castle.

- 1584 Ieyasu and Hideyoshi fight to a draw at Nagakute.
- 1585 Ieyasu recognizes Hideyoshi's position and submits. Hideyoshi defeats the Chosokabe and finalizes conquest of Shikoku, becoming kanpaku, or imperial regent.
- 1586 Hideyoshi becomes Grand Minister and takes surname Toyotomi.
- 1587 Hideyoshi conquers Kyushu and conducts the *sword hunt* to collect swords ostensibly for the iron to construct a large statue of the Buddha. His real reason is to take thousands of swords out of circulation, limiting tools of possible rebellion. Jesuit missionaries ordered expelled from Japan, but the order is never carried out.
- 1588 Tensho Oban, the world's largest coin, is minted for the first time.
- 1589 Printing press imported. Hideyoshi subjugates Odawara and Tohoku, nearly having all of Japan under his control.
- 1591 Hideyoshi orders Sen-no-Rikyu, the great Tea Master, to commit suicide—Rikyu does so. First Christian books appear in Japanese.
- 1592 Hideyoshi sends an army to Korea. His goal is to conquer China.
- 1594 Hideyoshi builds Fushimi Castle.
- 1595 The twenty-one-year career of Ishikawa Goemon, the Japanese Robin Hood, comes to an end with his arrest and execution by being boiled alive.
- 1597 Hideyoshi sends a second army to Korea. Under Hideyoshi's orders, twenty-six missionaries and Christians are killed at Nagasaki.
- 1598 Hideyoshi dies.
- 1600 Der Liefde, a Dutch ship, wanders into Bungo province. On board is the English pilot William Adams, who will become one of Ieyasu's advisers. The Battle of Sekigahara takes place between the Eastern Army of Tokugawa Ieyasu and the Western Army of Toyotomi loyalists led by Ishida Mitsunari. After the largest battle ever fought in Japan, Ieyasu emerges victorious. Ishida is executed a few days later. The Sengoku Period comes to a close.

POST-SENGOKU JAPAN

If you wish, you may place your story in a more structured world of a Japan under the Tokugawa bakufu. Although there are changes in the society that are not specifically covered in this book (notably the rise of the yakuza and the exclusion of foreigners), you should be able to play in this milieu with no difficulties. Just to make things easy, we provide a short look at some of the changes during the early part of the long Tokugawa rule.

EDO PERIOD (1600-1868)

Ieyasu becomes shogun in 1603 and establishes his capital far to the northeast of Kyoto in the town of Edo. Kabuki dances are recorded for the first time in that same year. Although originally performed by women, female kabuki is formally banned in 1629 as dangerous to morals. In 1605, Ieyasu resigns in favor of his son, Hidetada, remaining the power behind the throne.

The Dutch arrive in Japan, and establish a trading house in Hirado in 1609. In 1610, a Japanese boat built from William Adams' design travels to Mexico to trade.

The Christian church is formally banned in 1612, and churches are burned in Kyoto and elsewhere. In 1622, fifty-five Christians are executed in Nagasaki.

In 1614, Ieyasu begins the completion of the destruction of the Toyotomi family. Fabricating an *insult* against himself from Hideyori, Ieyasu launches the Winter Campaign which destroys much of Osaka Castle's defenses. Many disaffected samurai rally to the Toyotomi banner. The summer of the next year he launches the final campaign which burns the castle to the ground. Hideyori commits suicide. Ieyasu orders that there be only one castle per province, resulting in the destruction and dismantling of many older, less strategically sound fortifications. Ieyasu dies in 1616.

The term *daimyo*, which used to refer to any feudal lord or provincial military governor, is now restricted to those with domains producing an income of 10,000 koku or greater, and are obligated to serve the shogun. There are some two-hundred and sixty-five daimyo families during the Edo Period.

Japanese ports are declared off-limits for Spanish ships in 1624, and Japanese ships without government license to trade internationally are banned in 1633; this is the first step in closing off the country to outsiders, although a small Dutch colony will remain, first in Hirado and later in its island ghetto of Dejima in Nagasaki, throughout the Edo Period. Two years later, Japanese are banned from leaving for or returning from foreign countries. Portuguese ships are banned in 1639, completing the isolation process.

The sankin kotai, a system of alternate residences, which requires a daimyo to alternate spending one year in Edo and one year in his home province, is established in 1635. This serves the multiple purposes of forcing daimyo to have two expensive residences which they must upkeep all year round, leaving hostages in Edo within the shogun's reach, and requiring the expenditure of vast sums regularly to make the trek in and out of the capital with all their family and staff and goods. This is one way the shogunate keeps daimyo from being able to cause trouble. It also helps spread wealth throughout the nation as the large entourages moves back and forth across the countryside.

A rebellion in Shimabara against the privations of a cruel daimyo breaks out in 1637. Disaffected samurai and large numbers of ronin rally to the cause of the oppressed clans. Many of the thirty-seven thousand slain in the castle's defense are Christian samurai, leading to the popular conclusion that the Shimabara Revolt is Christian-instigated. This failed insurrection, and the policies of the government restricting daimyo houses, increases the number of ronin roaming the land.

In 1643, Miyamoto Musashi, Japan's most famous swordsman, writes his treatise, *The Book of Five Rings*.

In 1701, Asano Naganori, the daimyo of Ako, is forced to commit seppuku after drawing his sword in the shogun's palace to attack an official who had embarrassed him. Forty-seven of his retainers plot their revenge for a whole year. They strike in the dead of winter and behead Kira Yoshinaka, the official who had brought about the fall of their house. Although they are ordered to commit seppuku for this act, many commoners and not a few bakufu officials view it

as the sine qua non of bushido and loyalty; the forty-seven ronin of Aka are enshrined in Japanese legend, and their leader, Oishi Kuranosuke, becomes a popular hero.

Japan's government continues to grow more bureaucratic and byzantine.

WHAT-IF SCENARIOS

In addition to the powerful *what-if* provided by the existence of magic and supernatural beings, there are aspects of Japan's history that you may want to ignore or alter slightly to make a much more personalized version of Japan for your game.

We'll give you a few possibilities, but leave it up to you. Let your imagination go. The possibilities are endless.

WHAT IF...?

The rivalry between the Northern and Southern imperial courts had never gone away, and there are still two rival claimants to the throne, each with full bureaucracies, courts, palaces, and political supporters, but neither with enough power to tip the final balance.

Throw into this pot the political chaos of the latter half of the sixteenth century, where there may or may not be a central military authority, and you can have no end of campaign possibilities. Different factions could court characters and their clans or groups, hostile factions could try to constantly thwart their efforts, and so on.

WHAT IF...?

The Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281 had resulted in a Japan that was half Chinese-occupied and half Japanese.

Would your characters be interested in being part of a Fifth Column, joining the Resistance in Kyushu and Shikoku? Have the Mongols gotten a foothold in Honshu? Your player characters could

play the part of patriots, trying to liberate their land from a foreign oppressor, or they could work for the Mongolians for filthy lucre. They might even lead the army that liberates their ancestral home. Would there be constant warfare, an uneasy peace, or an acceptance of the status quo?

How about the Japanese living under the Mongols—after several centuries, are they likely to support or betray characters loyal to the emperor of Japan?

WHAT IF...?

The Soga clan lost their great fight in the fourth century to make Buddhism the state religion, and succeeding generations reviled the faith for the bloodshed caused over it, and persecuted those who espoused or proselytized it.

Would it only now be making inroads into Japan? Would it be banned entirely? Is it possible that it could be in the same position as the Christian religion (tolerated, but held with suspicion) only a couple of centuries farther along in terms of numbers and social effects? Think of a Japan devoid of Buddhist influences, in which Shinto is *The One Faith* and its beliefs and taboos govern daily life. Would Japan have accepted anything Chinese or otherwise continental?

WHAT IF...?

Nobunaga had defeated Akechi Mitsuhide at Honno-ji, and not been slain.

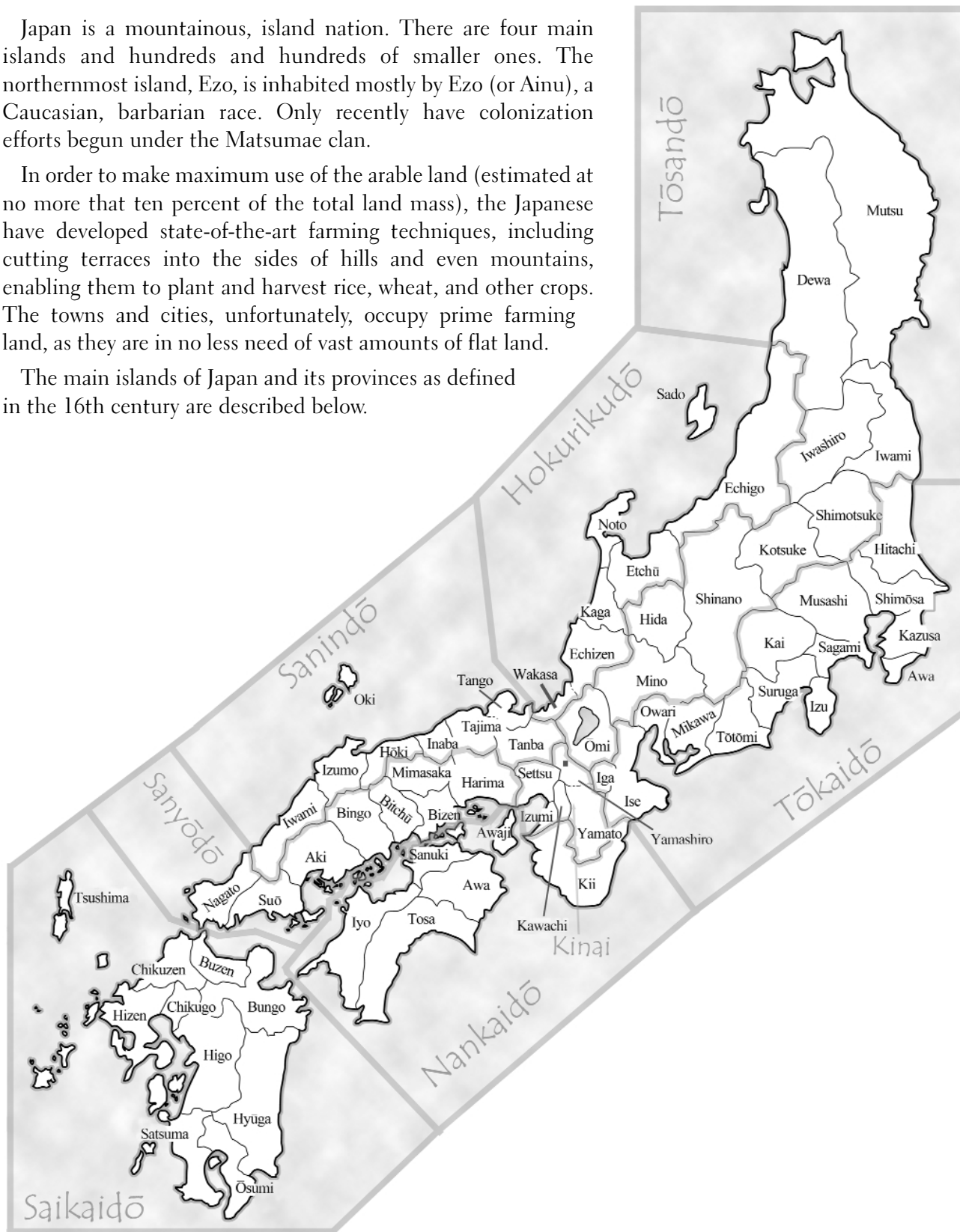
Nobunaga was still young, and had more of Japan left to conquer. If Mitsuhide had escaped, would he try to rally the anti-Oda forces to his flag? Would the characters support Nobunaga or Mitsuhide? Or would they try to remain neutral to be in the position to pick up the pieces, and perhaps take control of the country themselves? Would they even be able to remain neutral in a Japan charged with the electricity of a major revolt?

JAPAN

Japan is a mountainous, island nation. There are four main islands and hundreds and hundreds of smaller ones. The northernmost island, Ezo, is inhabited mostly by Ezo (or Ainu), a Caucasian, barbarian race. Only recently have colonization efforts begun under the Matsumae clan.

In order to make maximum use of the arable land (estimated at no more that ten percent of the total land mass), the Japanese have developed state-of-the-art farming techniques, including cutting terraces into the sides of hills and even mountains, enabling them to plant and harvest rice, wheat, and other crops. The towns and cities, unfortunately, occupy prime farming land, as they are in no less need of vast amounts of flat land.

The main islands of Japan and its provinces as defined in the 16th century are described below.



GEOGRAPHY

There are three islands of import in the archipelago—Honshu, Kyushu, and Shikoku. While all of Japan is mountainous, some areas are worse than others. There are so many islands that some are not even populated, and many are ignored.

HONSHU

Honshu, also called Hondo, is the center of the government, and the largest and most populated island. If it really matters, it happens here, or at least that is what most people think. Shikoku and Kyushu are the boondocks, and people on those islands are considered more provincial and less sophisticated.

KYUSHU

Kyushu is the site of Ningi-no-Mikoto's arrival on earth when he was sent by his ancestor, Amaterasu, to subdue the land. As the southernmost island, it was the launching point for Empress Jingu's assault and Hideyoshi's attacks on Korea. When the Mongols attacked in the twelfth century, they landed in Kyushu, near Hakata. The bay between Satsuma and Osumi provinces is protected by the island of Sakurajima, which sits in the middle of the water way like a large traffic control booth. Samurai from Kyushu have a reputation for being no-nonsense types who do not give in readily to outside domination (meaning the Honshu).

SHIKOKU

Shikoku is so called because it is comprised of four (shi) provinces (koku). Shikoku is not very populous, but what there is is very densely populated. One mountain on Shikoku, Tengumoriyama, is rumored to be the home of the tengu, a mystic race of flying beings. Shikoku, especially the province of Iyo, where it reaches toward Honshu and the chain of islands between the Shikoku and Honshu, has been known as a hotbed of pirate activity since the ninth century.

SADO

Sado is a large island off Echigo, near Niigata. It is traditionally used as a place of exile for persons of importance who have offended the imperial court, or even interfering ex-emperors. Nichiren was exiled here for a while. A gold mine

near the town of Aikawa, which is worked almost exclusively by exiles, and a few fishing communities are on the island, and little else. Its main communities are the towns of Minato, Aikawa, and Ogi.

AWAJI

Awaji is a roughly triangular island that nearly links Shikoku to the province of Harima in Honshu. There is a single mountain peak on the island. There are three small towns—Fukura, Sumoto, and Iwaya. Awaji was the first solid land created by Izanami and Izanagi, according to Japanese historical myth.

REGIONS AND PROVINCES

The nation is divided into several *circuits*, once used by the imperial court to define regions for tax and administrative purposes. Two of these regions are the islands of Kyushu and Shikoku. The others are divisions of the main island of Honshu. The circuits are further divided into provinces. Major daimyo may rule one or more provinces, while several lesser daimyo may rule fiefs within one province.

HOKURIKUO

Comprised of seven provinces, including one island—Echigo, Echizen, Etchu, Kaga, Noto, Sado, and Wakasa.

KINAI

The Kinai (also called Kinki) is frequently referred to as *the home provinces* due to the imperial capital having always been seated therein. It is comprised of five provinces—Izumi, Kawachi, Settsu, Yamashiro, and Yamato.

NANKAIDO

The Nankaido is the island of Shikoku, the island of Awaji, and one province on the mainland. All together, it contains six provinces—Awa, Awaji, Iyo, Kii, Sanuki, and Tosa.

SAIKAIDO

Saikaido is the region of the island of Kyushu and two nearby islands, Iki and Tsushima. It is comprised of eleven provinces—Bungo, Buzen, Chikugo, Chikuzen, Higo, Hizen, Hyuga, Iki, Osumi, Satsuma, and Tsushima.

SANINDO

With the Sanyodo, it is part of the area called Chugoku. The Sanindo has eight provinces—Hoki, Inaba, Iwami, Izumo, Oki, Tajima, Tanba, and Tango.

SANYODO

With the Sanindo, it forms the area called Chugoku. It comprises eight provinces—Aki, Bingo, Bitchu, Bizen, Harima, Mimasaka, Nagato, and Suo.

TOKAIDO

One of the largest divisions of Japan, the Tokaido is comprised of fifteen provinces—Awa, Hitachi, Iga, Ise, Izu, Kai, Kazusa, Mikawa, Musashi, Owari, Sagami, Shima, Shimosa, Suruga, and Totomi.

TOSANDO

Comprised of thirteen provinces—Hida, Iwaki, Iwashiro, Kozuke, Mino, Mutsu (divided into Oshu, Rikuchu, and Rikuzen), Omi, Shimotsuke, Shinano, and Dewa

WEATHER

Since we have to have a basis somewhere, we are using Edo as the Japanese standard. It is geographically near the middle of the country, so you can assume a higher temperature in the south and lower temperature in the north. The rainfall is fairly consistent. The rainfall in September and October in Edo is phenomenal—four or five inches a day. Kagoshima, farther to the south, is hit by monsoons earlier, and June and July are wetter than in Edo.

The hottest month of the year is August, where the temperature in Edo averages 85°F (29.5°C). In Kagoshima, it is around 88°. In January, Edo temperatures drop to 48° (8.9°C), and in Kagoshima to 54° (12.2°C).

Despite the seeming warmth, it snows in Miyako during the winter, and in Edo as well. There are usually at least two good snowfalls that really slow down life in the cities, and often quite a few more. Those cities and monasteries at higher altitudes, such as Kofu, the principal city in Kai, and Hiezan, suffer much more snowfall.



DAILY LIFE IN JAPAN

One should not think he can hire others and have them do everything, but rather he should be of the mind to rely on himself and to know the condition of things. Only then should he delegate to others.

HOJO NAGAUJI

JAPAN

ECONOMY

Japan's economy is based on the rice crop. One's wealth, one's finances, and the value of an estate are all counted in terms of the *koku*, a measure of rice sufficient to feed one man for a year. This is equal to approximately five bushels or one-hundred and eighty liters. An estate is valued at the amount of rice it can produce, so a small fief worth one-hundred koku means the village can support one-hundred people for a year. In point of fact, this is only rice output; it does not take into account millet, other vegetables, and fish, so more people can survive there.

CURRENCY

Currency comes in copper, silver, and gold. Paper currency is not in use in Sengoku Japan. All coins are produced on a monopoly basis by daimyo during the Sengoku Period (later, in the Edo Period, by shogunate mints coin). Gold coins are used more widely in the Kanto region, near Edo, while silver prevails in the Kansai (Kyoto and Osaka areas). Gold is rarely seen outside of the coffers of daimyo and large merchant houses, and even they usually conduct their business in silver. Values of this coinage have shifted over the centuries, and there is no fixed way to set up a precise, *historical* currency in the game. The following system is a simplified model designed for speed of play.

The most basic unit of money is a copper coin called a *zeni*. The value of a zeni is one *mon*, in the same sense that the value of a penny is a cent. A zeni theoretically represents the cost of the

barest minimum needed to feed a man for one day. In practice, a zeni can buy such things as a cup of tea or a rest at a wayside stall. One-thousand zeni equals one *bu* of gold (or one *bu-shoban* coin), the value of one koku of rice. Also in use is silver, which is measured in *monme* (about four grams); approximately twelve *monme* of silver equals one *bu* of gold.

The monetary system in *SENGOKU* is thus based on the calendar, with each coin roughly corresponding to the amount of rice necessary to survive for a given period of time. A zeni, or copper coin, is a *day*, a *monme*, or silver coin, is a *month*, and a *bu-shoban*, or gold coin is a *year*.

ZENI

This is a round copper coin, about one inch in diameter, with a small, square hole in its center. The zeni equals one day's worth of food for one man, or in real terms, one barely decent meal. Zeni are commonly strung together with a strand of hemp through the central holes to make a *string of cash*, usually of one-hundred or one-thousand coins. During the Sengoku Period, most zeni are produced in China, with some also made in Korea; in the later Edo (or Tokugawa) Period zeni are minted in Japan proper beginning in 1636.

MONME-ITA

The Monme-ita is a small rectangular block of silver. Historically the weight and value of this *coin* varied greatly. In *SENGOKU*, the monme-ita weighs one *monme*, corresponding to one month's worth of barely decent meals.

戦国

BU-SHOBAN

The bu-shoban, also known as the *ichibu kin* or simply *bu*, is a small, square gold coin. One bu-shoban equals twelve monme-ita or one year's worth of barely decent meals. Four bu-shoban equal a little more than eighteen grams of gold, or one ryo, the common form of expression of value, as opposed to currency, in Sengoku Japan.

NI-BU

The ni-bu (meaning *two bu*) is a rectangular gold coin. One ni-bu equals twenty-four monme-ita or two year's worth of barely decent meals.

RYO

A ryo is a measurement of weight, specifically used when referring to gold. It is approximately eighteen grams of gold. One ryo is equivalent in value to four koku of rice, or four bu-shoban in coin. The koban, a coin rarely found outside the hands of the wealthiest, has a value of one ryo. The koban is an oblong coin about two and a half inches long.

NON-STANDARD COINS

There are two types of coinage produced by local samurai clans—the chogin and mame-ita.

Chogin can either be of gold or silver, but always takes the shape of a rough, flattened cigar-shaped ingot with stamp marks to indicate the quality of the metal and the clan issuing it. The chogin is the largest silver coin, and is imported from China. The chogin equals one bu-shoban, and similarly corresponds to one year, although there have been especially large chogin worth a ryo minted.

Mameita are small, pea-sized lumps of silver or gold stamped with the imprint of the issuing clan and occasionally a rough value indication. Mame-ita are valued by weight, typically, although they are commonly issued in values equal to a monme-ita, bu-shoban, or ni-bu.

COIN	MATERIAL	VALUE IN FOOD
zeni	copper	1 day
monme-ita	silver	1 month
bu-shoban	gold	1 year
ni-bu	gold	2 years
chogin	gold or silver	1 year
mameita	gold or silver	variable
ryo	measurement only	4 years

TRADE AND COMMERCE

MONEY-LENDERS

One growing profession is that of the money-lender. Part of the merchant class, money-lenders provide loans to everyone from farmers trying to raise the money to pay their taxes, to daimyo who must equip and maintain their armies. Loan interest rates vary, with an average being ten percent per year.

Money-lenders also exchange currencies for customers. This is an important function, as most merchants and daimyo in the Kanto region pay for transactions in gold coin, while those in the Kansai region use silver.

The typical commission for such transactions is one percent. This fee may seem trivial until one realizes that literally thousands of bu-shoban and chogin are exchanged in this manner every week. It is easy to see why money-lenders, while considered the lowest strata of the *bonge*, are some of the most affluent.

MARKETS

Most towns have a weekly or bi-weekly market. These markets are usually held on days ending with the same number, and are named after this number. For example, so-called *two day* markets are not two days long, but rather they are held on the 2nd, 12th and 22nd day of each month.

On market days, vendors pushing carts full of their wares become portable merchant stands, and small shops abound. Items of nearly every category can be found, including vegetables, fowl, fish, tools, woodenware, lacquerware, tatami, painted screens, ceramic bowls and cups, and much, much more. In fact, some towns have grown up around such markets.

Merchants desiring to participate in a local market typically need only be there. Official permits, issued by the local ruling daimyo, are officially required, though seldom enforced.

The function of the market is much more than simply providing a place to buy food and supplies. Many merchants also specialize in spreading rumors and news, especially the traveling merchants, who make their living as much by telling entertaining stories and repeating the latest gossip from towns near and far.

DIET

Rice is the staple of the diet, forming the core of each of the three daily meals. Popular ways to eat rice include straight, with green tea poured over it, or with a raw egg broken over the rice and mixed in. Rice is eaten hot in bowls, pounded into paste and molded into gummy squares for soups, pounded into flour for rice cakes, and even made into crackers. A watery rice-gruel is the food of the elderly, infirm, and ill. Then there is sake, or rice wine.

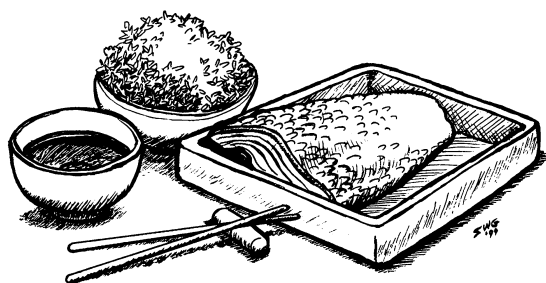
Meat is seldom consumed in Japan, but fish and shellfish are eaten wherever they can be taken. Despite the virtual ban on meat due to Buddhist taboos, many buke love boar meat and fowl, and will hunt when the opportunity presents itself. Beef, however, is out of the question. Oxen are for pulling imperial carriages or helping on a farm, and not for food.

Soba, or buckwheat noodles, is a dish adopted from the continent, and is a popular lunch for people on the go. Soba, udon, don—there are about as many different kinds of noodle dishes as there are stars in the sky. In the evening, when the cool is descending, stalls appear in the streets of larger towns where a bowl of hot noodles in soup can be had for a copper coin or two. Of course, sake may also be available.

A popular snack is dango, or sweet rice-flour dumplings. Conservatively speaking, there are, perhaps, seven million different kinds of dango. Each locality may have its own specialty. Some varieties are filled with a sweet red bean paste, others with roasted nuts.

WHAT THERE IS NOT

Forget about sushi. What we know today as sushi did not come into being until the middle of the Edo Period. The older form was fish that had been cleaned and gutted, then stuffed with rice to preserve them. At some point, someone tried eating that rice, and found that it was good.



Tenpura is also virtually unknown, as it develops only during the latter part of the Sengoku Period as some Japanese become familiar with the eating habits of the Europeans and start to adapt it to local tastes.

A typical meal is a large bowl of rice, pickled vegetables, miso or seaweed soup, and another dish, which is typically fish.

CALENDAR AND TIME

Unlike the West, which uses computations based on the birth of Jesus Christ from which to date events, the Japanese have no single date to use. They could have used the mythical foundation of the empire in 660 BC, but they never did so formally.

From the seventh century down to the present, Japan has used a series of era names called *nengo* (literally *year number*), assigning events to a year within that era. Usually due to some great auspicious event or to end a bad era after a particular bad calamity, an emperor occasionally proclaims a new *nengo*. Some *nengo* span several reigns—some saw several *nengo* come and go.

The longer one's history gets, the harder it is to put things into historical context without having recourse to a list of era names and their volume of years. Even historically, people found it difficult to keep track of era names and when things happened. In the nine-hundred and fifty-five years between the institution of the *nengo* system in 645 and the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, there were one-hundred and ninety-four *nengo*, for an average of one *nengo* every 4.92 years.

THE CALENDAR

The Japanese adopted the complex sexagesimal system of year identification from the Chinese in 604. Traditionally, great mystics called *onmyoshi* calculate the calendar for the imperial court, using secret knowledge and mathematical formulae. These secrets are guarded closely, and only members of the group may learn them.

In the Japanese calendar system, there are ten *trunks* and twelve *twigs* which combine to form sixty terms for counting the years. These sixty years cycle over and over, so that since 1500 was *Mizu-no-to U* (or *Year of the Hare, Younger Brother of Water*), then 1561 and 1622 were also.

Although it may at first seem cumbersome, it would be good to remember the basics of this system, for with it one can also identify hours of the day, days of the week, and so on.

Of the ten trunks, or *jikkan*, five represent the *elder brother* of the five elements and the other five represent the *younger brother* of the five elements (see table below).

ki-no-e	elder brother of wood
ki-no-to	younger brother of wood
hi-no-e	elder brother of fire
hi-no-to	younger brother of fire
tsuchi-no-e	elder brother of earth
tsuchi-no-to	younger brother of earth
ka-no-e	elder brother of metal
ka-no-to	younger brother of metal
mizu-no-e	elder brother of water
mizu-no-to	younger brother of water

The twelve twigs are the animals of the Chinese zodiac, or *juni-shi* (see table below).

ne	rat
ushi	ox
tora	tiger
u	hare
tatsu	dragon
mi	serpent
ma	horse
hitsuji	goat
saru	monkey
tori	cock
inu	dog
i	boar

These two units combine to form compounds such as *Ka-no-e Inu* (*Year of the Dog, Elder Brother of Metal*).

Japan and China still use a simplified form of this system, where the zodiac animals cycle in twelve-year periods and the additional element of the trunks is eliminated. There is no reason you cannot just do the same to simplify your saga.

MONTHS, WEEKS, AND DAYS

In Europe, the equinoxes and solstices mark the beginning of the four seasons; in China and Japan, they are dead in the center of them.

Generally speaking, the Japanese calendar follows the lunar cycle. The first lunar month of the year is when the Sun enters the sign of the fish (between January 20 and February 19).

One year, or *toshi*, consists of twelve months, so each year has three-hundred and sixty days. On years in which the sun still has not entered the Fish by February 19, a thirteenth, intercalary month is added, bringing the year to three-hundred and ninety days. It is not a very efficient system.

Each month has thirty days, and is made up of three ten-day weeks, or *shu*. The three weeks are referred to as the upper, the middle, and lower week. The last day in each week is taken to be a general day of rest.

The first day of each month is called *Tsuitachi*, and the last day *Misoka*. The last day of the year is called *O-Misoka*, or *Great Misoka*.

EDUCATION

GENERAL EDUCATION

For the lower classes, there is no proper schooling. Local temples often hold school sessions to teach rudimentary reading and writing, but these are skills of survival. Given the great complexity of the Japanese written language, many *bonge* (mostly farmers and such), and virtually all *hinin*, are functionally illiterate; they can speak Japanese quite well, but are, at best, able to read and write hiragana (the most basic set of Japanese characters) but not katakana or kanji. Merchants and workers in villages are generally better educated than those in the fields. They can read the syllabaries, but not the Chinese characters that make up the lion's share of Japanese texts.

Buke attend clan schools, where clan officials teach the children more than just the basics; they are given education in the classics, tactics, and even introduced to schools of combat. Lords are always on the lookout for bright children, and instructors are watchful of their charges.

Education on most basic matters, like etiquette, is done at home.

MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING

One usually trains with a single person through his entire career in a particular discipline. A player character should start with a teacher and work with him when not actively engaged in a story.

In small towns and villages, finding a sensei, or teacher, of a martial art will not be easy. The best

chances of finding a sensei are in larger towns and cities, especially castle towns. It will be difficult to convince someone to teach a military skill to someone not of his clan or not otherwise associated with him, however. It is up to the player and the director to work out the details of any cooperation (or lack thereof) between potential teachers and their would-be students.

GAMES, SPORTS, AND RECREATION

In a land of near-constant warfare, sports, as we know them today, are not really practiced. Every physical *sport* has a military application, even swimming. Occasionally, clans will get together and hold a horse race or archery competition between champions, but there is still a recognizable military application here. Most popular recreational pastimes are indoor pursuits.

SHOGI

Shogi began in India, and was introduced to Japan via China in the Nara Period. There were many early variations, primarily identifiable by the number of spaces on the board and the number and type of playing pieces used.

The shogi-ban, or shogi board, is a nine-by-nine grid on a large, heavy piece of wood resembling a butcher's block. Each player has twenty wooden, pentagon-shaped pieces which lie flat on the board, pointed at the other player. The pieces are uniform in shape, and are distinguished by the characters painted on them. The pawns are the only characters of different size, being smaller than the rest.

Instead of each player having a king, one has a *king*, or *osho*, and the other a *jewel*, or *gyokusho*.

The characters for *king* and *jewel* differ by only the addition of a single, tiny stroke. Originally there were two kings on the board, one on either side, but a sovereign in distant antiquity reasoned that, since there was but one sovereign under heaven, there should only be one king on the board; hence the jewel.

Like chess, if an enemy piece is within the sphere of a piece's movement, it may be captured. Pieces which have been captured are put on the right side of the capturing player's board. Unlike chess, a player may use pieces he has captured in his game, by placing them on the

board as his move. His pieces also can be *promoted* by turning them over, upon which action they take on new names and new movement capabilities. Whether to take the advancement or not is purely optional, although the advantages are many and the detriments virtually nonexistent. Promoted pieces that have been captured can only be returned to the board in their lowly state.

Go

Go is also known as *igo*. It has been said that go takes only a few minutes to learn but a lifetime to master.

It likely arrived in Japan from India via China around 400 AD, perhaps as late as 700. It was very popular in the court during the Heian Period, but seems to have been claimed at some point by samurai who considered it the strategy game of all time. Buke are inordinately fond of it, although there are a few clans who look at all games, no matter how military or strategic in nature, as unfitting for warriors to play.

The go board, or go-ban, resembles a shogi board in design, and has a grid with nineteen lines by nineteen. Unlike shogi, chess, or checkers, it is the intersections that matter (all three-hundred and sixty-one of them), rather than the open squares which the lines encompass. Black has one-hundred and eight-one stones, while white has one-hundred and eighty. Each player has a small bowl from which he draws his stones.

There are only three rules in the game:

- Two players, black and white, alternate in placing a single stone on any intersecting point of their choice (black moving first).
- If a stone is completely surrounded by enemy stones and there is no open area in the enclosure, the surrounded stone or stones are taken from the board and retained by the captor. Captured stones count as one point each.
- No move that would cause the reversal of the previous move may be permitted.

The game ends when all the stones have been placed or there is no longer any potential for capturing the opponent's stones or gaining territory. Then, all the captured stones are placed in the opponent's vacant spots. The player with the most vacant area under his control wins.

A variant called *gomoku narabe*, or *five-eye line-up*, is played on a standard go board. It is similar to tic-tac-toe—the object is to be the first one to get five stones of one color lined up horizontally, diagonally, or vertically. Players alternate, black placing the first stone. The entire board is open for placement.

CARDS

Most of the amusements of the aristocracy can be grouped under the heading of *awase*, or *joinings*. There are games like *kai-awase*, or *shell-joining*, utilizing both halves of clamshells with scenes painted on them, which are turned upside down and mixed up. Players have to match two halves together, choosing only two cards per turn.

Such joining games led to the creation in the Heian Period of a card game called *hyakunin isshu*. There are one-hundred cards showing the last half of poems and an illustration, and another one-hundred cards with the first half of the poems.

These poems are ancient, and all of the aristocracy knows them, or should. The illustrated cards are laid out, and one person, the caller, takes the other one-hundred and at random reads aloud a poem. The players try to find and pluck out the corresponding card. The winner is the one who has the most cards at the end.

The game has become incredibly popular in Sengoku Japan and spread to the buke and even to the more well-educated bonge.

Cards are usually made of sturdy paper, which is painted and then lacquered. Some cards are made of thin strips of painted wood. Cards, like most relatively fragile items, are stored in a small wooden box coated with lacquer.

DICE

The single most popular method of gambling is with dice, known as *Han-Cho*. Each game has a banker who takes money, and occasionally personal possessions and even clothing, in return for wooden chips. The bankers are guarded by one or several strong-arm men, often including some ronin hired-swords or an out of work sumotori or two.

The *dealer* is a man or woman stripped to the waist but for a *haramaki*, or belly-wrap, cloth to keep the stomach warm; for a woman *dealer*, it is

extended to cover her breasts. This person sits on the far side of a low platform like a *tatami*, draped with a plain white sheet. On the near side kneels the gamblers, who have small wooden pallets about the size of dominoes, which they use as wagering chips.

The dealer holds his hands out and up, the two dice held between the index and middle finger and middle and ring finger of the left hand, and a small cup in the right hand. This is to show that there is nothing like a hidden third die, or some other cheating device. With a fluid motion, the dealer slams the dice into the cup and slaps the cup face down on the table.

The gamblers now lay their bets on their end of the platform, calling *han* (odd) or *cho* (even), also setting their *chips* horizontally or vertically to indicate which way they are betting. A variant of the game has the dealer leave one die outside the cup—this requires a bit of skill on the part of the dealer, and is more commonly used by professional gamblers than amateurs.

The dealer takes the cup away and calls the roll as odd or even. A croupier, dressed similarly to the dealer, takes away the losing bets with a rake and awards chips to the winning bettors.

These are illegal games, and are often run by gangsters. Cheating is not unknown, although it is hard to prove. Those making such accusations at the scene are often hustled off by the watching strongmen, and beaten up.

HANETSUKI

This game, like many others, originated in the Heian courts. It is very similar to battledore or badminton. Two players, each using a wooden paddle called a *hagoita*, attempt to keep a shuttlecock aloft. The *hagoita* are often decorated with very bright colors and designs. It is generally considered a children's game, and players dropping the shuttlecock often have an X painted on their face in ink. It is very popular around the new year.

EQUESTRIAN PASTIMES

The horse, or *uma*, has long been associated with the warrior class, dating back to the Heian era when the military crossed great distances to engage the Ebisu (Ainu) in combat. Horses in Japan are of a slightly smaller, sturdier stock than those in the West. In Japan, only samurai and

kuge are permitted to ride horses. And even then, only high-ranking samurai may ride them in peace time; those of lower rank may only ride horses in time of war, with rare exceptions—scouts, messengers and equestrian contests.

Horse Racing

Horse racing is popular in some areas. The Soma clan, in northern Honshu, are famous for their annual festival of a *katchu keiba*, where warriors, clad in armor and bearing their crests on gaudy, oversized banners on their backs, race around a course. The winners get a small monetary prize or alcohol, and are invited to a banquet honoring their achievement. While it is all in good fun, there can be no misunderstanding—this is training for war.

Inu Omono

A similar pastime, not as in favor as it once was, is the *inu omono*. In this *sport*, a large arena is set up and a some wild dogs are released. A few samurai on horseback, armed with bows and arrows, enter the pen. Their object is to run down the dogs and shoot them with the arrows. The winner is the one with the most *kills*. One version plays with blunt arrows, but the original and still preferred method in most circles, is to use sharp arrows.

Shinki-Sodatsusen

Another popular equestrian pastime is *shinki-sodatsusen*, a form of mock battle, in which the participants ride about a field attempting to gather red, blue, and yellow holy flags, fired into the air by cannon. The goal is to gather as many flags as possible before they strike the ground.

Yabusame

The last major equestrian sport is *yabusame*, or horseback archery. *Yabusame* is often encountered as part of Shinto religious festivals. Competitors wear traditional Heian Period hunting togs and ride pell-mell down a marked course. On the side of this course are three evenly-spaced targets. The targets are thin one-square-foot, wooden panels, mounted on six-poles. The riders have three arrows, and must try to shoot at each target with blunts. A squarely hit target will split in half. Any other hit will split the target, but not evenly. The winner is the one to have most on-target hits in the day.

Sumo

Sumo has been popular since ancient times and the traditions of sumo are linked with many Shinto rites. From the ritual purification of the sumo ring to the throwing of salt, and to the huge Shinto rope amulet belt worn by grand champions, the sport is steeped in Shinto lore.

Sumo Matches

Official sumo tournaments are called *basho*, meaning *place* or *site*, a word which is also used as a suffix to seasons or locations to form the name of the tournament or event. The object is to get your opponent to touch the ground with any part of his body other than the soles of his feet, or to force him outside the rope circle. Forbidden tactics include poking eyes, striking with a closed fist, kicking the stomach, pulling hair, choking, bending fingers back, or grabbing the belt near the groin.

A formal *dohyo*, or ring, is a two-foot tall square platform of packed earth, with a raised ring straw rope marking off the actual combat zone. A step is cut into each side. Two lines mark the starting positions of the wrestlers on the East and West sides of the circle. For formal *basho*, the *dohyo* will undergo a ritual purification ceremony, the *dohyo-matsuri*, which takes place the day before the scheduled bout. Once purified, no one may step in the ring except the participants or others with business there. No shoes are allowed and certainly no women.

In each wrestler's corner is a bucket of salt. The *sumotori* will rinse their mouths then get a handful of salt, and fling it onto the surface in a ritual act of purification. They may casually wipe sweat from their bodies with a rag proffered by their helper. They then take their positions, squatting near the center of the ring facing each other, where they glare at one another, pound the *dohyo*, stand, slap themselves, and generally try to intimidate the other. This ritual, known as *shikiri*, may be repeated a number of times, until they are sufficiently *psyched* to fight.

Once the preparation is over, the *gyoji*, or referee, steps up, holding a fan against his forearm, and signaling that the match must begin. It is the *sumotori* themselves who decide when to begin however. At a naturally and spontaneously-determined instant, the two charge, slamming into each other, pummeling,

pushing, pulling, and twisting. During the bout the gyoji will often yell “*nokotta, nokotta*,” roughly translated as “*you’re still in there!*” When two combatants are locked in this awesome combat, fans may yell encouragement such as “*ganbatte*,” or “*go for it*,” while hecklers may yell “*makeru zo*,” or “*you’ll lose!*” It is usually over within a minute. The shikiri may have taken five or more minutes.

The gyoji determines the winner and no one questions his decision—to do so incurs a loss of honor for an offending sumotori. Gloating and sulking are considered very poor form also causing a loss of honor—very little emotion is shown by either participant. Fans sometimes signal their enjoyment or approval of the gyoji’s decision by tossing items into the ring for the winner, such as money or kimono, though most consider this unsightly.

The referee approaches the winner with his prize money inside a folded piece of paper which is placed on the flat side of the fan. He then squats and holds the fan out for the sumotori, who waves his hand over the fan three times, as if to say, “*no, no, I’m not in it for the money, I just love wrestling*.” He takes it anyway, however, and swaggers or limps off.

Training

The training center of a group of sumotori is called a heya, usually translated as *stable*. The life of a wrestler is very hierarchical—there are several levels of wrestler, from the newest apprentice to the grand champions, or yokozuna. As one gains more victories, he ascends the sumo ladder and life becomes easier. The beginners, having sworn fealty to their new lord, are little more than personal manservants to the senior members and greater champions of the stable, performing menial chores for them in exchange for learning the sport.

Though the newer and younger sumotori are considered officially part of their heya, their initial matches are not technically official and their names are not listed on any official lists or rankings. Novices must win three such matches before they can *graduate* to an official capacity.

KEMARI

The Heian aristocrats started an outdoors game that is strikingly similar to a twentieth-century

soccer exercise. The game, kemari, is played with a skin-covered ball about seven or eight inches in diameter. There is even a special costume worn for formal games.

The playing area is a square, traditionally marked off by four trees in the corners. As few as two or as many as a dozen players form a circle, and one person tosses up the ball and kicks it back in the air with his foot. He can kick it back up as many times as he wishes before kicking upward toward another player, who must keep the ball from striking the ground. The only part of the body that may touch the ball is the foot.

The person kicking the ball will say “*ariyaaa*” each time he kicks it back up, and “*ari*” when he kicks it over to some one—this resulting “*ariyaaa, ariyaaa, ariyaaa, ari*” is the equivalent of saying something like “*here we go, here we go, here we go, here it comes!*”

Except for the fact that it seems so modern, this is actually a game that was phenomenally popular during the tenth to sixteenth centuries and beyond. While primarily a kuge pastime, some buke, especially those living in the Miyako area, have become inordinately fond of it as well.

KYOKUSUI

This leisurely pastime is practiced almost exclusively by kuge. It involves two or more people sitting on the bank of a stream. Small lacquer sake cups are set into the water to float downstream. The participants compose improvisational poems as the sake cups drift by.

GROUP IDENTITY & STATUS

Japan is a very group-oriented society. The group consciousness is one reason why the clan structure is so important to the buke. Samurai, however, are not the only ones who rely on this.

Membership in an organization, large or small, is vital to self-worth. It is for this reason that ronin are both looked down on and often ashamed. The organization may be as small as a family unit in a tiny farming community or even employment as a maid in a wayside inn. Those not otherwise involved in such an obvious group entity may still, in fact, be involved in a group. The town blacksmith, for example, plays a vital role in his community, so his community is his group.

CRIME

ORGANIZATIONS

One of the dark sides of Japan's group society is the existence of the crime syndicate. Though the formation of yakuza organizations and their elaborate membership rituals is still decades away, the roots are being planted in the more lawless regions of Sengoku Japan. These crime syndicates may be very small, just a few people running a closed operation, or they may be large and operate over several villages.

Oftentimes, these criminal organizations are made up of bonge or hinin, but more than one such body has been headed by a local samurai or kuge official. Avarice or a desire for power are not the domain only of the lower classes.

Such criminal syndicates may operate with the open collusion of the local police, or they may bribe officials from time to time. They may even be so bold as to operate in broad daylight. Some police cannot be bribed, however, and in such instances, the syndicates must do their work in the shadows and at night.

The larger and more structured organizations have a head, or oyabun, and all the others are kobun.

Typical activities for criminal organizations are smuggling and gambling. Prostitution, being legal, is not a concern, although they may run some of the houses of prostitution as money-making operations. The larger organizations seldom involve themselves with anything so crass as simple robbery, unless there is a real killing to be made.

LONE ROGUES

Few criminals operate alone. Robbers usually steal money, so their targets tend to be wealthy merchants. Robbing a samurai house is a very dangerous prospect, and severely ups the ante on the risk factor.

The typical *uniform* of the burglar (or anyone out at night with some nefarious purpose in mind) is a black kimono and tight hakama, with a kerchief tied about the head and knotted under the nose so that only the eyes, mouth, and chin show. To keep as low a profile as possible, the burglar seldom carries anything but a simple dirk.

THE ARTS

Japan has a finely developed sense of the aesthetic. Two concepts that run throughout Japanese art are wabi and sabi. Both concepts are hard to define, even in Japanese. In the West, artistic appreciation has factors related to beauty in the aesthetics, while wabi and sabi speak more to the emotional levels. Wabi implies a sense of the ephemeral, that to all things come oblivion, and hence is a bittersweet appreciation of a transitory beauty. Sabi evokes a certain melancholy, a patina of age, timelessness, a shopworn feeling of familiarity. Wabi and sabi, and another concept called shibui, stress the simple, the natural, even the rustic, over the baroque and rococo.

THEATER

Kabuki does not appear until the early days of the seventeenth century, so has no place in a Sengoku Period game. The preeminent form of theatrical entertainment is No. Many daimyo even learn parts of particularly famous plays and perform them for the amusement of their vassals and family. Before setting out to battle against Imagawa Yoshimoto at Okehazama, Oda Nobunaga sings an *aria* from the play Atsumori.

In No, the actors, who are all male, pantomime the actions of the play in very stylized motions while singers recite the lines and musicians punctuate their actions. The costumes of the actors are incredibly elaborate and costly. Over their faces, they wear carved and painted wooden masks which are themselves works of art that may be centuries old. These masks are stylized, standardized representations. There is the jealous woman, the old warrior, and the devil, for example.

The No stage is a raised square platform six meters to the side, bare, and open on three sides. Extending like a verandah along stage left, and *fenced off* visually separating the two areas, is the singers' area. The back is always solidly paneled, the wood painted with the image of a gnarled pine tree. This pine is said to harken back to when No was performed originally before sacred trees at shrines and in the open. Extending diagonally off the back stage right corner is a *causeway* some nine feet wide and thirty-six to sixty feet in length. The entire construction is roofed, and the audience sits in a nearby

structure or in seats on the ground facing the stage. There are few props or set decorations. A small open basketwork box, for example, indicates a ship. No dramas are also commonly staged outside at night to the light of bonfires. Such a No performance is called *takigi No*, and it hearkens back to No's roots.

MUSIC

There are many kinds of music in Japan. Some music is very formal and performance oriented, while other music is more personal and played for self-amusement.

Gagaku

Gagaku, or court music, is extremely esoteric and only performed for the kuge. To the untrained ear, most gagaku compositions sound exactly alike. To the trained ear, only a few sound alike. Gagaku is played in a formal setting on a stage or cleared and defined space in a room.

There are a few unusual instruments encountered mostly in gagaku. One of them is the sho, a mouth organ with several long, narrow pipes. Another, which is used in other music as well, is the hichiriki, a tiny, shrill flute. There is a story about a nobleman whose home was burgled of all his goods; the thief left only a hichiriki. The noble, disheartened, sat down on the floor and began playing a plaintive tune. The thief, hearing it in the distance, was so moved that he immediately returned all that he had stolen. Some, however, suggest that he returned the things in order to stop the man playing the hichiriki.

General Music

The standard stringed instrument is the biwa, a heavy, lute-like instrument. It is plucked with a broad plectrum rather than with the nails. Biwa are often played by itinerant musicians who recite classic poetry to its soulful sound. Both men and women play the biwa in about equal numbers. Biwa players are often blind, and make their living playing.

The koto is a five-foot long zither that lies flat on the floor and is plucked by three *nails* worn on one hand. Large bridges hold the strings up, and enable the koto to be tuned to several different keys. Women are more likely to learn to play the koto than men are, although there is nothing

effete about playing the koto, at least not in kuge circles. Buke consider the koto a woman's instrument.

The shakuhachi, the vertical bamboo flute, is one of the most recognizable of Japanese instruments. It is made from a section of bamboo near the root, and is about two feet in length. There are longer and shorter shakuhachi as well, allowing for bass, tenor, and alto instruments, but the standard is the midrange model. The shakuhachi can be used as a weapon if necessary, in which instance it functions as a club. More than one shakuhachi has actually been a case for a concealed blade and unplayable. The mournful sound of the shakuhachi is frequently heard around Zen temples, and it is particularly favored by priests of the Fuke sect, who use it in their meditations. Few women play the shakuhachi.

The fue, or flute, is higher-pitched and more shrill. It is also popular among the older buke families, who remember the good old days when they were more aristocratic. Kuge families enjoy them, too.

There are several varieties of Japanese drum. The kotsusumi is hourglass-shaped, about one foot long, with two heads held tightly by a series of cords. The kotsutsumi is held over one shoulder and the head popped by the other hand. Squeezing on the cords tightens the heads, and produces a higher pitch. The kotsutsumi is frequently encountered as an instrument in a No play.



Taiko are the large, two-headed drums seen at festivals. The taiko proper actually comes in several sizes, up to six feet in diameter. They may also be double-headed, with the body of the drum being a section of a tree. Taiko are struck by bachi, which are large drumsticks, and playing them takes both energy and skill. Taiko are often used for signaling in armies, as their booming, sonorous voice travels great distances clearly.

PAINTING

Contrary to popular opinion, the Japanese art of painting is not limited to black and white. To be sure, sumi-e, or painting with ink, is popular, but it has more of a Zen quality to it. Black-and-white painting is linked in many minds with Zen practitioners.

Anyone who has seen the elaborately decorated interior of a noble's estate, a daimyo's castle, or a samurai villa, has seen the works of art that are the walls themselves. Most of the full-color paintings are actually done on the paper used to cover walls and screens.

Smaller scale paintings are often mounted on scrolls, and hung on walls or rolled up and put into storage. Since some scenes are deemed more suitable for different seasons, these kakemono, or hanging scrolls are changed depending on the season or for a particular visitor.

POTTERY

Potters make both the average quality, day-to-day eating utensils and the beyond-belief works of art used in the Tea Ceremony. Potters work for weeks and put all of their material into a huge kiln, firing it all at once. Some of the more picky masters deliberately break over half of them for not being up to their standards. Bowls, plates, and cups are made in a variety of ways, including freehand and wheel-thrown.

In keeping with the concept of wabi-sabi, most of the highest-regarded pieces actually have a rough or lopsided appearance.

Depending on the potter's skill level, he will either be making utensils or works of art, and his regard in the community and his position with the cognoscenti will vary.

TEA

Sado is the Way of Tea. The Tea Ceremony is called *Cha no Yu*. Tea was introduced from China in the seventh century. A form of tea ceremony was in evidence in the fifteenth century, introduced by the priest Shuko, but it was not until the middle of the sixteenth that the Tea Ceremony as we now know it came into vogue. This we owe to the inveterate tea master, Sen no Rikyu.

Rikyu studied Zen at Daitoku-ji under the abbot, Kokei. He also studied Tea. His designs for the teahouse and the path leading to it are intended to break down barriers of social distinction and stress the equality of all men—a rather radical concept. The entrance to a formal teahouse is a half-height door that one entering or exiting must crawl through. Regardless of rank, all must stoop and crawl.

The proper teahouse is designed for two people (or three or so in the *larger* room) only, though Tea Ceremonies have been conducted out of doors for many more people by Hideyoshi and others.

In the full Tea Ceremony, a light, special meal is served first. In a more compacted ceremony, sweets are presented instead. The sweets form a pleasant contrast to the thick, bitter tea. The tea used in *Sado*, called *matcha*, is powdered rather than in leaf form, and very bitter. The host places a small amount of it into a special tea bowl (the form and decoration of which alters by the season) by means of a special small bamboo spoon, and then ladles a small quantity of very hot water into the bowl. He then whips the powder and water into a deep froth with a bamboo whisk. The host places the bowl before the guest, and bows, offering the tea. The guest picks up the bowl, rotates it in his hand so that the bowl's *face* is in the right direction, and sips the tea up. He wipes the tip of the bowl with his fingers, re-rotates the bowl, places it on the floor, and bows in thanks. The host retrieves and rinses out the bowl. If there is a second guest, the host will now make a second bowl for that guest; if not, he will make himself a bowl.

The exact motions, down to the number of times the bowl is wiped, the ladle is tapped on the side of the pot, or the cleaning napkin is snapped, are all specified by tradition. A master

will do them all with perfect precision and poise, with no lapse of self-control or concentration.

Conversation is either kept to a minimum or disallowed entirely during the actual preparation and drinking of the tea. Weapons are also not allowed, as no hostility is permitted during the ceremony. It is a moment of calm in the world, an island of Zen peace and quiet. It also affords a chance for clandestine conversations *afterwards*, and many plots have been hatched over, or rather, after, tea. There is a story telling that Hideyoshi once went to a Tea Ceremony planning to assassinate the host, but the service was so splendid and the host so composed and refined in his execution of his hostly duties that Hideyoshi recanted and did not act. Some say he even admitted the fact to his host later and apologized.

Because of the closeness of the *samurai* to the Tea Ceremony, the best utensils have become more and more expensive, some requiring a virtual king's ransom to acquire. *Daimyo* have been known to reward a favored retainer with a particularly valuable tea bowl or tea container.

FAMILIES AND CLANS

Family ties are important. Among the lower classes, extended families (usually the paternal line) living in the same area or building are not uncommon.

Filial piety is the rule of the day, and it pervades every level of society. Each child is meant to respect his father and his father's father. Even adult children are respectful of their parents, and will try to avoid crossing them.

CLAN INTERRELATIONSHIPS

Clans are larger than families. There may, in fact, be several families under one clan. These families may be related or not. One family is, of course, the titular clan head. The interrelationships of clans within clans can get confusing. As an example, let us look at the Takeda clan in the year 1574.

The Takeda family itself is the head family in the clan. There are actually several branches of the Takeda family—the family of Takeda Shingen is the main line, and those of his uncles and brothers are the supporting family. In addition to this, there are vassal families (which are actually

clans themselves) such as the Asakura, Baba, Yamagata, etc.

The Tokugawa clan is also made up of several main family divisions (which will be formalized after Sekigahara, forming the *go-sanke*, or *three honorable families*—the Kii Tokugawa, Mito Tokugawa, and Owari Tokugawa) and a number of hereditary vassal clans, such as the Hosokawa and Honda, and *their* related families.

MARRIAGE

Marriage is a contract between families as much as a liaison between two people. Noble houses are constantly arranging marriages for their daughters with the sons of allied or potential allies houses. These marriages did not always bring the hoped-for peace—Oda Nobunaga married his beloved younger sister off to Shibata Katsuie, and in 1583 sent Hashiba Hideyoshi at the head of a large army to besiege the castle and kill Katsuie. The wife refused an offer of safe conduct and committed suicide with her husband.

For the common folk, marriage is more simple. While arranged matches are still the norm, it is more common for bonge to have a love match than it is for the *kuge* or the *buke*. Even priests are expected to marry; there is no celibate rule for clergy in Japan. Indeed, *rule* over shrines and temples is often inherited by the son of the head priest or abbot.

Go-Betweens

Marriage go-betweens, called *baishakunin*, are common. Using a go-between spares both families from the possibility of personal failure and shame should the arrangement not work out, or the young couple find each other anything but acceptable.

The parents of a marriageable daughter (around sixteen or eighteen) or son (eighteen to twenty-two) might contact a friend or someone they know who has a track record in finding suitable matches, and ask this person to look for a mate for their child. If the parents are looking into a particular person as a prospective spouse for their child, they might go to an older person who knows the intended, and ask for introductions. Such introductions are commonplace, and usually occur at the gardens of a temple or shrine. The go-between is an

honored position, and even has a place in the wedding party.

Weddings

There are Buddhist marriage services and Shinto services which differ in many respects. Most weddings are conducted in the Shinto model. In this wedding, the prospective bride and groom enter, and sit down before a low table. Behind them are lines of people representing their respective families. As a Shinto priest intones prayers, they each take three ritual sips from a proffered ladleful of sake.

Weddings are gay occasions, and are followed by long, boisterous parties attended by the friends (and occasionally the family) of the new couple. At these parties, where sake flows freely and there is food for all, the couple may sit at the high place in honor; but more often the new bride herself is doing much of the entertaining.

Polygamy

Samurai lords often have more than one wife. One was the official wife-of-record, and the others are what are usually called concubines. A true wife is almost always of the same caste, but concubines can be from the *buke* or *bonge* caste. Children born from a Lord's concubine are considered *legitimate*, and of buke caste, even though the mother might not be.

Divorce

In Japan, a man may divorce his wife for practically any reason he feels is justified. Some of the more common reasons for divorce are a woman's inability to bear children or her failure to bear a male child. When a man divorces his wife, he merely says "*I divorce you*," and sends the dejected woman back to her family with her personal belongings. Regardless of the reason, a divorce causes a woman dishonor, as she must face the shame of *failing* in her role as a wife.

As a rule, women are not permitted to divorce their husbands, for any reason. Like any rule, however, there is an exception. A woman who flees her husband and enters a Buddhist temple is considered safe. The man may not enter after her, else he face the wrath of the Buddhas who have taken pity on the poor woman. If the woman remains in the temple for three years, she is considered legally divorced from her husband, regardless of his feelings on the matter. Most

women in this situation simply shave their heads and become Buddhist nuns, or *Ama*, completing the *break* from their past lives entirely.

MISTRESSES

The upper-class male in feudal Japan who does not have at least one mistress is the exception rather than the rule. While some men may truly love their wives, ultimately Sengoku Japan is a men's society—wives are for keeping the home and bearing children, and mistresses are for good times.

This is not a reference to prostitutes, rather real, honest-to-goodness kept women. The woman might be an entertainer, a farmer's daughter, a shrine maiden, a geisha, a prostitute at a local house of ill-repute, or even the wife of another man.

Sometimes the wives know about the mistresses, sometimes they do not, and sometimes they are in denial about it. Generally, they regard their husbands keeping lovers as something to be expected, and as such, seldom make a fuss over the issue.

If a married woman is caught with another man, it can mean death for both. If a married man is caught with another woman, it is merely embarrassing.

CHILDREN, CHILDHOOD, AND COMING OF AGE

As the child grows up, he is taught at home the things he needs to know about life and society. Since schools are unavailable for most children, this *home schooling* is all the education they may ever get. Nearby Buddhist temples may teach children to read, and hold similar basic education classes, but they are few and far between.

Any children exhibiting signs of left-handedness are trained out of it. Everyone in Japan must be right-handed; the society is geared for right-handed people. In Sengoku Japan, there is literally no one adult who is left-handed.

Due to the enormous strictures placed on the Japanese adult, children are allowed a certain social leeway that adults are not. In fact, they often seem spoiled. This freedom is all too short, however, for as soon as a child is able, he must join in the family occupation, be it out in the field planting rice, in the inn serving dishes, helping father clean his writing utensils, etc.

Children of clerics are taught to read and write at a much more critical level than the peasantry, as it is part of their future lives. Children of the *buke* and *kuge* are tutored by the finest teachers their families can find—usually scholars and clerics. Some clans even have established schools for the sons of their retainers.

Not much education is afforded daughters. Typically, they learn from their mothers what a wife is supposed to know. If they are of the upper classes, however, their lives are more serene and they learn instead how to read and write, and the arts. Cleaning and cooking are for the maidservants' daughters to learn.

Hakamagi

At an age between three and seven, a *buke* or *kuge* son goes through the *hakamagi* (hakama-wearing) ceremony, in which he is made to stand on a go board, with his feet clad in tabi, and to pick up a go stone using his toes. This ceremony marks his entry into society, in a way. It is also the first time the lad is dressed in men's clothing, hence the name. The ceremony is also called *chakugo*, which is written with the same two kanji, only they are reversed.

Genbuku

The *genbuku* ceremony marks the official coming-of-age for the sons of the *kuge* and *buke*. Here his hair is cut and dressed for the first time in the adult fashion, he is presented with his first real sword and he is given his new, adult, name. If *kuge*, this will also be his first wearing of his *kanmuri*, or cap of rank. *Buke* use the occasion to first wear an *ori-eboshi*, an elaborate warrior's headdress. For daughters of the *kuge* (and the very highest levels of the aristocratically-tied *buke*), the eyebrows are shaved, and their teeth blackened. The *genbuku* occurs generally at age thirteen.

Inheritance

There is no rule that says that the oldest son inherits. Although there is preference for the older child, the oldest son(s) may be passed up in favor of a younger son, or even a grandson. In at least one famous instance, an adopted son inherited the lordship of the clan over the natural sons of the *daimyo*. That adopted son was Uesugi Kenshin, rival to the great Takeda Shingen, and he was an adult at the time of his adoption.

Many times, poorer samurai families will find themselves in debt to merchant families, and to wipe the debt out will adopt a son of the merchant, making the lad a samurai, and giving the merchant family connections. Poorer *bonge* families may commit infanticide rather than bring into the family yet another mouth to feed.

DEATH AND BURIAL

When someone dies, and is in the vicinity of his home, he is taken there to lie for a day, where family, friends, and neighbors may come and pay their respects. The deceased lies on his futon, with a comforter drawn up to his chin, and a handkerchief over his face. The handkerchief may be removed to view the departed.

CLERGY

A Buddhist priest comes and chant prayers for the soul of the departed, shaves the head, and takes the body away to be cremated. His ashes are interred in the family plot (if there is one).

Most Buddhist temples have cemeteries attached, and each cemetery has at least one grave site for those who have no such familial ties. Since it is the duty of the living to care for the deceased (cleaning up their grave and visiting, for example) those who have no one to care for them are interred in this common grave, which everyone cares for as a social duty.

The Shinto priesthood will not come in contact with a dead body, as it would pollute them. Even Shinto dead must be cared for and handled by the Buddhist clergy.

UNIDENTIFIED BODIES

Bodies found in the streets or in town and which are obviously the result of foul play are taken to the local *doshin* headquarters, where an investigation is performed. If they cannot identify the deceased, descriptions of the body and the nature of its discovery are posted at various sites near where it was found and on general posting signs in town. If no one comes forward to claim the body, after the investigation it is turned over to the nearest Buddhist temple to be prepared for cremation and burial.

COFFINS

Japanese coffins are made of wood and look like large tubs or barrels. The body is placed inside

the coffin in a sitting position, and then sits upright. If the body is claimed, the family takes it home, washes it, and lays it out (if it is presentable) as described above. Otherwise, they quietly call a priest in to make the proper services.

Typically, mourners will offer a pinch of incense at the Buddhist altar, say a prayer for the departed, and give the bereaved an envelope containing a small amount of money as a sign of respect. This money will go towards paying for the funeral and the priest's service.

FUNERALS

Depending on the social class of the deceased, the funeral can be sparse or elaborate, and the immediate family, as well as retainers, will be treated to a wake before the funeral proper.

AFTER THE FUNERAL

Upon returning from a funeral, before one can enter a house, he must have salt sprinkled on him. This is a Shinto tradition. As death is a pollutant, the man has now come into contact with it and is unclean, and must be purified by salt. Otherwise, he brings the death pollution and the resultant bad luck into his house.

MOURNING

The death of a family member calls for the survivors to observe a period of mourning, according to tradition. During this time, the person in mourning wears white clothing (if they can afford it) and offers prayers for the deceased at the family's in-home shrine. These prayers help guide the deceased's spirit to Paradise and, if Buddhist, to aid them when it comes time for their judgment.

Contact with others except family members is avoided, so as not to cause them pollution—no visitors outside the family are allowed to enter the home. Those in mourning are considered in a state of pollution due to their proximity to death. In addition, mourners must not visit a shrine for like reasons (although they may visit a Buddhist temple, where such strictures do not exist) and most cover their heads whenever out of doors, even if only with paper, so as not to defile the sun. During the period of mourning there can be no weddings, no division of property, no drinking of *sake* or eating of meat, and no shaving or hair cutting.

The period of mourning varies, depending on the relationship of the deceased to the survivor. The death of a parent calls for a mourning period of fifty days, that of a husband thirty, and a wife twenty. The death of a son requires fifteen days mourning, the death of a daughter ten, a nephew five, and a niece three. With the passing of a more distant relative a mourning period of one day is usually sufficient.

LAW AND PUNISHMENT

In the Edo Period, civic law enforcement really comes into its bureaucratic own. In the Sengoku Period, the local ruling clans usually supply the local police force, or supplement them.

Doshin are *bonge* or low-ranked *samurai*. Their overseers and higher-ups, the *yoriki*, are more important *samurai*. The *badge* of the *doshin* is a *jitte*, an iron truncheon that is useful for breaking both swords and heads.

There is no police uniform per se, though they tend to wear something like a black *haori* (a loose, buttock-length coat) with the clan crest on the back for ease of identification. When carrying out raids, a *doshin* might wear *kote* (armored sleeves) and a *jingasa* (conical iron hat), and perhaps even a *kendo*-style *do* (chest protector).

INVESTIGATIONS

Prisoners are taken to the police headquarters/jail, where they are interrogated. Interrogation usually amounts to torture, as the police have always stressed confession over trial.

Prisoners are kept in a jail cell where the *bars* are a lattice of thick wooden planks running horizontally and vertically. The door is typically only half-height, requiring the prisoners to crouch low upon entering and leaving the cell.

Jail

Jail itself is only a temporary thing, as few will remain there indefinitely. Those who have been convicted will almost invariably be sent to the mines or some other labor, or for execution. Food consists of one bowl of rice gruel a day; prisoners are usually sorely weakened by a few weeks' incarceration, and that alone is likely to make them more docile, less resistant to the investigators' methods, and more ready to confess. Incarceration effectively increases a character's fatigue by one grade for every week



spent in jail. This may not be restored until the character can eat normally again.

During an outbreak of fire, prisoners are temporarily *paroled* to aid the local community and authorities. This lasts until the fire is under control, at which time the prisoners return to the prison. Very rarely does a prisoner flee or refuse to return, and those that do are subject to immediate execution by any *samurai*.

Forms of Interrogation

One common method of interrogation calls for the accused to kneel formally on a stone platform. A flat stone about three feet wide, two feet long, six inches thick, and weighing about one hundred and eight pounds is then placed on his lap. If the accused fails to confess, another stone is placed on top of the first; then a third, and so on. Records report that it seldom takes more than two or three to get the required confession.

Beatings are far more common. The accused might be tied and suspended from the ceiling, and one or two interrogators then beat on him with lengths of bamboo until the ends are literally frizzes. Another beating style has the accused held down on the floor, arms and legs out, by four men, while a fifth beats his bare back with a bamboo rod.

Shirasu

A *hearing* takes place in the local magistrate's courtyard. The magistrate sits on the veranda, in a recessed area designed for these hearings, while two recorders nearby write down the account of the transpirings. On the ground, front and center, is the accused, who kneels, trussed up like a common criminal. Attached to his bindings is a long leash-like rope which is held by one *doshin*. Two more *doshin* stand at guard, on either side, their backs to the veranda and facing the accused. Behind the accused on the left and right, kneeling on the ground, are witnesses and accusers.

The hearing is usually very quick, especially if the accused has already confessed. Indeed, some magistrates will not even hold a hearing without a confession.

The typical penalty for most crimes is death. If the accused is a samurai, he will be invited to commit *seppuku*. If a commoner, it is off to the execution grounds.

EXECUTION

Those convicted of serious crimes, such as murder, robbery, and arson, are led back to jail, and at some time in the near future, they are taken to the local place of execution.

Several people may be executed at once, as *doshin* believe in conservation of energy, and unless a crime has been particularly heinous, they wait until they have four or five to perform. All are to be paraded to the execution ground, tied up, often blindfolded, with low-ranking *doshin* walking before them carrying signs detailing their crimes.

The executions are public, although the public is kept at arm's length from the actual execution by a bamboo palisade, plus a large detachment of armed samurai from the local daimyo there to insure peace.

There are two methods of execution—beheading and crucifixion. There are other methods of killing, but those are generally used as a form of torture. Executions are performed in one of the following ways.

Beheading

The convict is made to kneel blindfolded in front of a pit, trussed if necessary (although criminals in Japan are known for resigning to

their fate rather than fighting once caught), and supported on either side by a *doshin*. He leans forward, and awaits the stroke of the executioner's sword. This executioner, in all respects, functions like a *kaishaku* in a *seppuku*, complete with the bucket of water for his blade. The reason for the blindfold is *not* so the criminal will show no fear; it is so he does not know when the stroke is going to come, and it could be several minutes. In a way, it is a last dig at someone who has offended society and the law. The head is then posted somewhere, like the execution grounds or at the entrance to a town, as a warning to other miscreants.

Crucifixion

In the case of crucifixion, the criminal is tied spread-eagle to a cross lying on the ground, which has a second, shorter crossbar for the legs. The cross is then raised up by ropes. Unlike the old Roman crucifixion in which the victim was left to die a slow and excruciating death, the Japanese criminal gets off easy. Two *doshin* armed with lances approach. They cross the lance blades in front of the face of the condemned man, and then each one thrusts the lance into one side of the man's ribcage. Death is fairly instantaneous. He may be left on the cross for a while, or taken down immediately. The body may then be beheaded, and the head posted as a warning.

Testing Blades (Tameshi)

A samurai might have a new sword he wants to test, and may be granted permission to test it at the execution ground. Because some special blades are tested officially, and the results recorded (and often carved into the tang of the blade, marking it as a particularly well-made weapon), this is an excellent opportunity to see what the sword is actually capable of doing.

These tests are to determine cutting potential, and call for more than a simple beheading; a professional sword tester, or at least a master swordsman, will wield the sword for the samurai. Sometimes two or even three criminals are tied together, standing, so a swordsman can make a multiple-body cut.

OTHER FORMS OF PUNISHMENT

On the offhand chance that the penalty is *not* death, the criminal will often be tattooed to mark him permanently as an offender of society. A



single black ring or line around the upper arm near the armpit or on the upper forearm itself for one offense, a second such tattoo for a second, and so on are typical. Facial markings, like a triangle on the forehead, are also used.

Other punishments for *lower* crimes vary, and may include the following in order of severity: shaving one's hair (typically reserved for female criminals), house arrest, banishment to a certain distance, or banishment to a remote island.

CITIES, TOWNS, AND VILLAGES

Even smaller towns and villages will have at least one brothel. Many inns have maids who may offer their charms to paying customers, and quite a few innkeepers make a good side-living as operators of *houses of ill-repute*. A real brothel, however, run by a *mama-san*, with two prostitutes or more will be common in almost every community. Naturally, the *quality* of the services and cost for the night will vary with the size of the community. The larger the community, the more there is available to choose.

There will be one temple in any town of at least one hundred people, with one head priest and a few monks or supporting priests, and one shrine (including the smaller, unmanned variety) for every fifteen people. Smaller villages will have only one local shrine of importance enough to warrant a priest, and that shrine will be the center of local festivals.

There will always be at least one inn, with more in the larger towns. *Restaurants* and other eating establishments are typically attached to inns, although there are tea houses serving noodles and light meals as well.

Most towns are farming communities, unless they have grown around other structures. Examples of this are *jokamachi* (castle towns), *daimyo* capitals, and cities like Miyako (the capital) which grew around the imperial court. Castle towns have a high percentage of service businesses such as inns and teahouses catering to the large number of transient people in town. Castle towns also have larger populations which support more merchant shops and temples.

TRAVEL

Roads in Japan are packed dirt, and often marked with rows of trees (tall cedars or pines). Few roads are well maintained. The central trunk road from Edo to Osaka, the Tokaido, is the most famous and strategic road in the nation.

At several points on the Tokaido, when there is a strong shogunal government, there will be official checkpoints manned by samurai of the bakufu rather than local daimyo, who will investigate and detain any suspicious travelers.

There are no carriages or wagons used on the road. In the cities, people may use handcarts to move things around, but on the road one walks or rides. The only one who gets to ride in a carriage is the emperor, or highly placed members of his court, who travel in specially-designed vehicles pulled by a single ox, called horen.

Those who do not want to walk have the option of riding a horse, or in a palanquin. Those of rank ride in elaborate, enclosed palanquins called *norimono*, which are usually carried by personal retainers. The enclosed *norimono* is supported by a long central pole running along its roof. The interior can get stifling hot in the summer, but such is life.

The other form of palanquin is a *kago*, a privately-rented basket or hammock arrangement slung from a long pole, sometimes with a scant roof, and carried by two *kago* bearers, or *kagoya*, who may or may not be licensed. *Kago* bearers can often be found hanging around at way stations and rest stops, and at inns along the way. They are relieved by fresh *kagoya* at way stations.

In town, *kago* bearers can almost act like a taxi service. Not all *kago* bearers are honest; some are notorious bandits, who beat and rob their fares after they got out of earshot or around the corner from the way station.

ROAD COURTESY

Roads, even the major trunk ones, are narrow and there are few roads in Sengoku Japan that are wider than a modern two-lane highway for any stretch of the way. They may widen briefly before a way station, to allow for the extra activity, but the road itself is narrow all the way. This makes for rather complex traffic dynamics. The general rules of the road are walk on the left and make way for someone bigger and more important than you are.

There is a general camaraderie on the road, and all who travel on it, high or low, are sharing the hardships of the way. For this reason, a nod of the head from a commoner to a samurai is typical on the road—the commoner always nods first, of course. If addressed by the samurai, the commoner will have to stop and bow, but in passing a simple nod suffices.

If an official retinue is approaching with people on horseback and perhaps someone in an elaborate palanquin, etiquette, and the laws of self-preservation, require that everyone who does not know he outranks the party approaching should step off the road and either bow or prostrate himself facing the party until it passes.

People may walk abreast for the entire width of the road, but when encountering another group or individual coming from the opposite direction, the group of visibly less rank should break up and drop back to allow the other to pass.

If two bushi pass each other and their scabbards should happen to connect, the one *offended* may demand instant satisfaction. It is up to the other whether he should mollify the offended party or fight. Whether the contact was accidental or deliberate, and regardless of who actually hit whose scabbard, such encounters could make for interesting road-side entertainment, as travelers scatter to the shoulder, watching the fight but trying to stay out of the way. One way to avoid this unpleasantness, of course, is to walk on the left side of the road.

If anyone is cut down on the road, commoner or samurai, it is bad form to be caught or seen

rifling the body for money or other valuables. Samurai who cut down another will leave the body there as it fell, perhaps even knowing that the other has a more valuable sword than he. Eventually a detachment of *doshin* or samurai will come from the nearest town to take the body away. It will be placed on a tatami or board covered with a thin straw mat, and carted off to town, where all the valuables will somehow disappear unless quickly locked up by the *yoriki* or they are claimed.

STOPPING ALONG THE WAY

Major roads have way stations at regulated intervals. Many of these stations are marked by an inn of some sort, where travelers can rest. Inns invariably have a number of people staying there, from samurai to peasants. They will be a cross of all walks of life in Japan, but groups will in general keep to themselves. Despite the natural reticence Japanese have in dealing with strangers, the discomforts of the road, mutually shared, may make for occasional lapses in shyness and class barriers will drop for a time.

The inns will be typically of lower class than a town inn, but may charge as much as the better inns in town, given that they have a virtual monopoly on the road. The option is sleeping somewhere on the side of the road, which the poorer folk often do, taking the resultant risks.

These official inns are supposed to be safe and are checked regularly by whatever official patrols run through the area. There may be graft, however, and just because the establishment is more or less honest, it does not mean that their patrons are.

One of the signs that you are near a town when on the road is the sudden appearance of tea stands and what can only be called *snack bars*. These little stalls, often no larger than a couple of twentieth-century phone booths, provide a few narrow benches and an opportunity to sit for a moment to enjoy a cup of tea, dumplings or maybe a bowl of noodles for a few *zeni*. The common-folk proprietors of these establishments are often well-versed in local gossip, and love to collect and pass along tales they have overheard, especially to important-looking *o-samurai-sama*.

Another common site at roadside inns are *shukuba-joro*, or *post station trollops*—cheap prostitutes who cater to male travelers with a few

coins to spend for an evening of fun before hitting the road again the next day.

POLICE AND PATROLS

There is little in the way of *police* patrols on the road, as *doshin* typically operate only in towns and cities. The closest thing to a police force on the road may be an occasionally passing samurai or body of samurai in the service of the local daimyo checking up to make sure the road is safe and clear. If such an official body is met, they will be unarmored, but will be wearing *jingasa* (camp hats) bearing the daimyo's mon, and likely they will be wearing armored sleeves. Obviously, factors such as the importance of the road, the current attitude of peace or war, and the strength of the daimyo will have a bearing on the size of the force.

Any official on the road may have the right to stop and investigate individuals he encounters.

ARMOR ON THE ROAD

Travelers on the road do not as a habit wear armor. Only during wartime or otherwise on campaign do bushi wear their armor on the march—armor is carried in a special chest called a *gusoku-bitsu*, which, depending on the style and size of the armor inside, can be worn as a bulky backpack or carried hanging from a pole thrown over the shoulder. If one is carrying a *gusoku-bitsu*, it prevents him from carrying any other gear. The more wealthy and higher-rank bushi will have two retainers carry their armor, usually in a larger chest suspended from a pole.

In times of necessity, one may travel in armor, but clothing is worn over it to disguise its appearance. This is, of course, only a halfway successful concealment, as the armored sleeves and part of the breastplate will show, but people dressed this way are usually lords or samurai on official business, so people rarely look twice. Either way, a full helmet will not be worn—only a simple cloth cap or a *jingasa* (a low, broad conical armored hat) will be worn.

If one is on the road in armor, he can expect to be looked upon with scorn by other bushi, avoided by all commoners, who will probably assume him to be a bandit and will draw to the far side of the road or the other side of the tavern or inn. Any official police or security detachment will surely stop such a person, and investigate and interrogate him thoroughly.

WEAPONS ON THE ROAD

Weapons may be borne on the road, but must be sheathed. This includes polearms of all types, which have lacquered wooden sheaths to protect the blades from inclement weather and dust while on the road. Sword hilts are often covered with a cone of fabric which extends a bit beyond the tsuba (hand guard). This serves to keep out the road dust, but it also subtly shows that the wearer is peaceful, as the swords cannot be easily drawn and controlled with this cloth sleeve in place.

Bows are usually carried unstrung and in their cases, but people are not as stressed when seeing a strung bow—they would likely assume the bearer is going hunting if his garb is suitable to that activity. Arrows are carried in a lacquered chest or quiver.

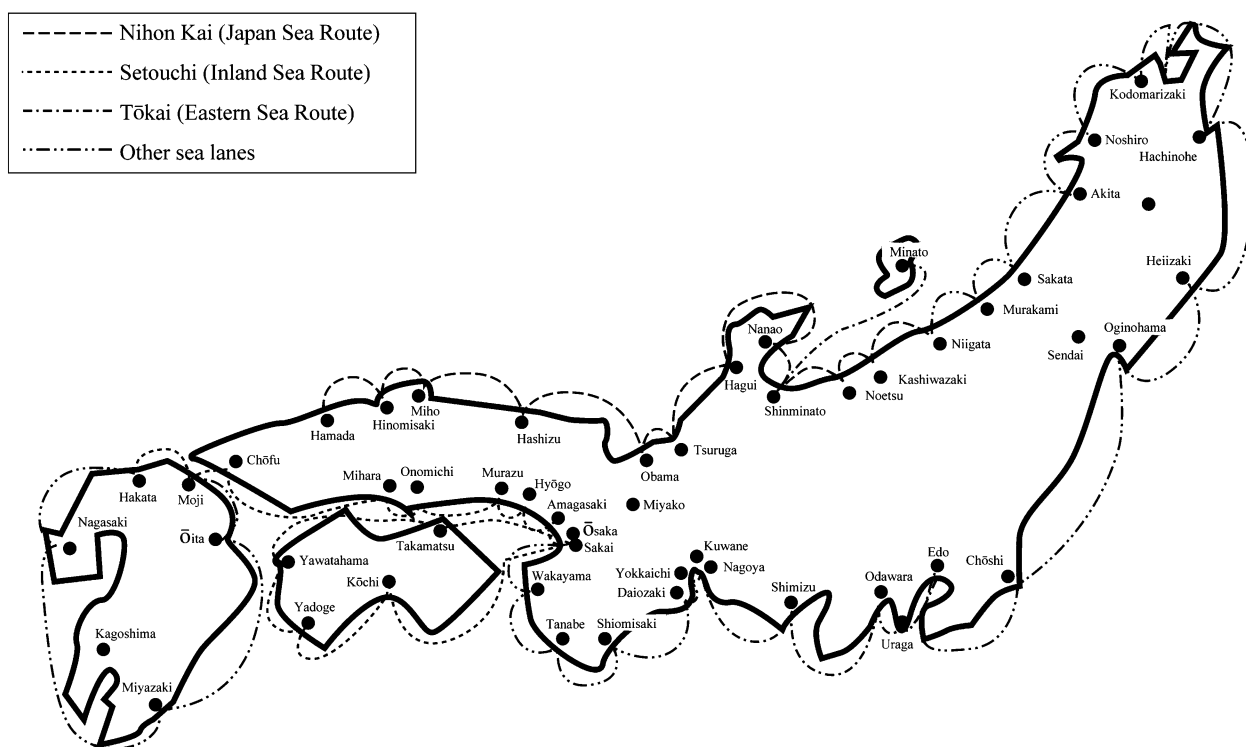
Even matchlocks, when carried on the road, have cases. Considering how rare such weapons are, possessing them, especially doing so openly, could be taken as a threatening sign—they should be sheathed or otherwise concealed.

RIDING

Traveling by horse can make things difficult, as putting up a horse for the night and providing fodder can cost more than putting oneself up. When mounting a horse, Japanese always do so from the right side, not the left, which is the rule in Western riding.

Japanese saddles structurally have more in common with camel saddles than the Western concept of horse saddles. In the West, saddles sit firmly on the horse's back, and the rider sits in the saddle. In Japan, the saddle is perched on the horse's back, and the rider sits on it. Japanese saddles are made of wood and lacquered black or crimson. Saddles of the social elite are often very ornately decorated, using mother-of-pearl or metal inlay, painted designs, and the like. The stirrups are also very different from their western versions—the stirrup is a sideless box, shaped similar to a capital letter J on its side, onto which the foot is placed.

Only samurai of moderate rank may ride horses during peacetime. During times of war, any samurai may ride a horse. If commoners travel with a horse, they must walk beside it.



RELIGION IN JAPAN

A fight is something that goes to the finish. A man who forgets Bushido and does not use his sword will be forsaken by the kami and Buddhas.

TAKEDA SHINGEN

Japan is the land of eight million kami. This does not count the number of Buddhist deities added to the mix. The two main faiths are *Shinto* and *Buddhism*, but in the 1540s, Christianity was introduced to the country and has started to make slow headway in some areas.

The Japanese do not worship a single particular deity. One will not find a Japanese who only worships *Hachiman*, or who only worships *Amaterasu*. The Japanese revere all the gods, holding them in equal esteem. Even priests at a particular shrine dedicated to a particular kami will pray to all the kami (and even, likely, the Buddhas). Only the staunchest of Buddhist and Shinto adherents, and these are few and far between, even among the ranks of the clergy, will worship only the deities of their particular faith.

The only exception, if it may be called one, is that some individuals and families may hold a particular deity in special reverence. For example, *Hachiman*, the god of war, is the tutelary deity of the Minamoto clan. Nevertheless, they do not worship this one deity to the exclusion of others.

SHINTO

Shinto is the native religion of Japan, indigenous to and extant on the islands before the arrival of Buddhism from the continent.

Shinto has no holy scripture, no moral precepts, no saints per se, no dogma, no concept of sin, no need for redemption or justification. It concerns itself more with man's harmony with his universe and his fellow man. Part of this idea of harmony is the avoidance of pollution and the need for ritual purity. The various forces of nature

themselves are deified. It is an agricultural religion, stressing fertility.

In Shinto, there are many things which cause pollution—any disease, contact with death, menstruation, and in some instances even sexual congress. Shinto promotes cleanliness and purity.

Before the introduction of Buddhism, Shinto was inextricably linked with the Imperial family. The greatest shrines, such as Ise and Heian shrine in Miyako, were governed by children of the emperor. After the introduction of Buddhism, Shinto became more structured and organized, and the imperial family became more linked with Buddhism, although they still supplied the clergy for the key imperial shrines.

Although the introduction of Buddhism in 552 caused years of strife between adherents of Shinto and the new faith, it was not long before the two religions were living side by side in a kind of synchronistic existence.

Shinto is the worship of kami, or gods. Not all gods are personified deities like *Amaterasu* or *Susano-o*, however. An ancient tree might be a kami, as might be a raging river, or even a phenomenal typhoon.

COSMOLOGY

The first god was *Ame no Minakanushi*, who remained motionless in the center of all creation. He was followed by:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| • Takamimusubi | • Kamimusubi |
| • Umashiashikabihiko | • Kunitokotachi |
| • Kunisatsuchi | • Toyokunnu |
| • Uichini | • Suichini |
| • Tsunukui | • Ikukui |

- Otonochi
- Otomabe
- Omotaru
- Izanagi
- Izanami

Japan was created by the gods *Izanagi* and *Izanami*, who were husband and wife. They descended from heaven on a bridge called *Ukibashi*. *Izanagi* dipped his spear into the primordial ooze that was the Earth, and withdrew it. The drops that fell formed the island called *Onokorojima*, which became the home of the two gods.

At first, the result of their union was not more gods—it was islands. The first eight island-children were *Awaji*, *Shikoku*, *Kyushu*, *Oki*, *Sado*, *Ikishima*, *Tsushima*, and *Honshu*. Next to come were *Kibikojima*, *Azukishima*, *Oshima*, *Himeshima*, *Chikashima*, and *Futagoshima*.

The next children were indeed gods, and a nearly infinite number of them—the gods of water, winds, trees, mountains, thunder, food, rain, rivers, roads, fires, and so on. The god of fires was the last child to be born. His birth caused the death of *Izanami*. *Izanagi*, distraught, beheaded the child-god in revenge, and repaired to *Yomotsu no Kuni* (the Land of Shadow) to beg *Izanami* to return. The horror of *Izanami*'s decomposed body sent him back to the world of light. To purify himself from the pollution of death, *Izanagi* washed his garments, and from the washings came a further twenty-six gods. *Amaterasu Omikami*, the goddess of the sun and ancestor of the imperial line, was born from his left eye. *Tsukiyomi no Kami*, god of the moon, was born from his right eye. From his nose was born *Takehaya Susano-o no Mikoto*, or simply *Susano-o*, god of the earth.

The earthly domain of *Amaterasu*, called *Takamagahara*, is the *Yamato/Izumi* region. *Tsukiyomi*'s realm of *Unabara* is identified as the *Ryukyu Islands* (Okinawa) or *Korea*. *Susano-o*'s *Amegashita* is the *Bizen/Bitchu* area of *Honshu*.

After this, *Izanagi* retired to *Hi no Waka no Miya*.

Amaterasu sent her grandson *Ninigi no Mikoto* to rule Japan, and *Jinmu Tenno*, the mythical first emperor, was *Ninigi*'s great-grandson.

Susano-o went to visit *Amaterasu* in her domain, but his behavior so offended her that she retreated to a cave and vowed never to come out, plunging the world into dark. The gods held

a conference to see what to do. One made a mirror, another fashioned jewels, and one made a rope; a goddess sang and danced at the cave entrance, enticing *Amaterasu* to the cave mouth to see what was going on. She saw her reflection in the mirror, stepped out of the cave, and the mouth was blocked by the rope so she could not go back in. *Susano-o* was banished to *Izumo* for his naughty behavior.

THE PRIESTHOOD

Priests in general are called *kannushi* or *shinkan*. The head priest of a shrine is a *guji*, while his assistants (also priests) are called *gon-guji*. Lower level priests are called *negi*, and their assistants are called *gon-negi*. If there is only one priest at a shrine, he is still the *guji*.

Shinto clergy are strict vegetarians.

Before any structure is built, the ground must be consecrated by a Shinto priest. Not to do so is believed to invoke the wrath of the gods, and guarantees bad luck for the new structure and those who dwell in it or use it. The service has been described in some sources as introducing the structure to the local deities.

Priests of smaller shrines may be only part-time clergy, living in the local area and even having an occupation as an artisan or craftsman, and officiating or serving in the shrine as required.



Clergy will celebrate births (but not until ritual purity has been re-established), weddings, building consecrations, etc. They will not celebrate a funeral, as that is beyond the pale of their purity-based, pollution-avoiding faith.

Priesthood is hereditary, although there is nothing to stop someone from a non-priestly family from becoming a priest.

SHRINES

Shrines (called *jinja* or *jingu*) range from huge and important installations such as the Ise Grand Shrine to the very small and almost unnoticed shrines on random street corners.

These small shrines, taking up less space than a twentieth-century mailbox, dot the land (although they are more frequent in towns) and can often be encountered in the mountains and in the woods. Structurally, these tiny shrines look like full-sized buildings, with roofs and doors, and even a small torii (gateway) in front. Offerings, such as an orange, rice balls, or small jar of sake, are often left in front of them. More than one starving traveler has survived by taking the food offered at such a shrine, although this is frowned upon. If one were to open the doors, the shrine might be found to contain a small mirror or a bead necklace, in homage of two of the great imperial treasures; a very rare shrine might contain a small sword in homage of the third treasure. Mirrors are the most common item.

In addition to the small model shrines and the larger shrine complexes, a *shrine* might be an ancient tree, an oddly shaped rock, or even a mountain stream.

The most singularly recognizable aspect of Shinto architecture is the torii, a gateway to a shrine or other sacred Shinto precincts. A torii is made of two vertical uprights holding up a long lintel that extends beyond the vertical supporters on both sides. Some are painted red, while others left their natural wood tone. Other signs of sacred territory are a thickly braided rope stretched around or across something being honored, such as the natural *shrines* mentioned above or the work area of a swordsmith. Several of the smaller shrines may often be found inside shrine precincts, as well as an ancient tree identified as sacred with its rope marker.

Shinto architecture lines up on an east-west axis. Buildings in Shinto complexes are regularly

torn down and rebuilt (usually in a twenty-year cycle), and the rebuilding of some of the more famous shrines becomes almost a national festival.

Most shrines have a stall selling small wooden plaques with pictures on one side. These plaques are called *ema*, and worshippers buy one, write a *petition* (essentially a prayer) on the reverse, and hang it on a frame or tree. Unlike in Western cultures, it is perfectly acceptable, and even expected, to share your wish with other people.

Worshippers at a shrine will approach the main building, throw some coins into the offering box, tug on a large rope attached to a bell, clap twice, pray, then bow, and leave.

Small pieces of paper (*omikuji*) that predict your future are also available. These papers are tied around a tree branch after reading, to make the good fortune come true or to avoid the predicted bad fortune—some crafty people also use these as a covert way of exchanging messages to people who they do not wish or are unable to meet face to face.

Atsuta Jingu

Atsuta Jingu is one of the most important shrines in all Japan. One of the three sacred treasures, the Kusanagi no Tsurugi, resides here.

Ise Jingu

Ise is the most important shrine in all of Japan, and consists of an outer and inner shrine. The outer shrine honors the goddess of the harvest, the inner one honors Amaterasu. Two of the imperial treasures, the jewels and the mirror, are housed in Ise.

Izumo Taisha

Okuninushi is enshrined here. During the tenth month (*Kaminazuki*), all the kami repair to Izumo Taisha to visit him, making Izumo the only place where kami can be found that month.

Kasuga Taisha

Three-thousand stone lanterns (all are lighted only once in February and in August) line the pathway to the main building.

Kirishima Jingu

This shrine on Kyushu is dedicated to Ninigi no Mikoto.

Kotohira-gu

Also called Konpirasan, this shrine, halfway up a mountain on Shikoku, is particularly revered by seafarers and other travelers. The deity enshrined is viewed as Okuninushi (under the name of Onamuji), Shinatsuhime, or Susano-o.

Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gu

Built at the order of Minamoto no Yoritomo, the Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gu enshrines the war god Hachiman, the tutelary deity of the Minamoto. Its relationship to the Minamoto, and the tragedy of Yoshitsune, is the reason for its great popularity.

BUDDHISM

The Buddhist faith, which is called Bukkyo or Butsudo in Japanese, was introduced to the empire from Korean contacts in the sixth century when a Korean king sent statuary and sutras as a gift to the emperor Kinmei. Doshin and Tonei came shortly after and began preaching the new faith under the protection of Soga no Iname, who built the first temple in Nara. The Mononobe and Nakatomi, staunch supporters of Shinto, opposed the new faith. A virtual civil war began and finally ended in 587 with the imperial recognition of Buddhism.

There are dozens of sects and sub-sects running the gamut of political and religious views.

Devout Buddhists believe in reincarnation and karma—the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth is man's fate unless he can be freed from his karmic prison. The goal of the Buddhist is to lead a good life and be released from his woes and enter into Nirvana. To do this, one must reach satori, or enlightenment. The way in which one reaches enlightenment varies from sect to sect.

The sacred scriptures, or sutras, reveal the teachings of Buddha. One of the primary duties of the Buddhist priest is to spread the teachings of Buddha through both preaching to lay people and setting a good example by living according to Buddha's law.

THE PRIESTHOOD

Despite the terminology often used in the West, not all Buddhist clergy are monks, and not all temples are monasteries. What Westerners sometimes call monasteries are in fact temples

with many, many resident priests (many Zen temples fall into this category). Some sects strongly encourage marriage for their clergy.

Buddhist priests are called so or soryo. The head priest in a temple, what Westerners mistakenly usually call abbots, are sojo. Celibates, or monks, are called bozu. Nuns are called ama or bikuni. Warrior clerics are sohei, although there are fewer of them in Sengoku Japan than there were in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when just about every major temple had its own standing army. Shugenja are Buddhist clerics adhering to a sect called shugendo. They are the masters of Buddhist magic and mysticism.

Buddhist clerics, both male and female, are required to shave their heads, which they usually do once ever several weeks. Officially, they are supposed to be vegetarians, although if the only food available is meat, they will eat it. As many itinerant clerics subsist from begging, if they are given food containing meat, it is a lesser sin to eat the meat than it would be to refuse the charity or waste the food. Only the shugenja will avoid meat at all cost.

TEMPLES

Unlike Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples are large complexes. There may be a dozen or more priests in residence, who may or may not be married. Temples live tax free, often from their farming land which is worked for them by bonge much as larger European monasteries in the



middle ages had serfs on their land. Temples may be complex structures with subsidiary temple compounds within the walls of the main temple. Each temple sanctum contains a worship area and Buddhist statuary. While shrines have torii marking their entrance, a great gate guarded by statues of warrior divas or shishi will open to a temple.

Of course, the founding temples of the various sects will be very important to those particular sects. In addition, there are several temples which are well known all across the land and of great importance to Japan. The city of Nara, and much of the environs of Miyako, are virtually one huge complex of temples, so only the most critical of those will be mentioned.

Byodo-in

Also called the Phoenix Temple, this picturesque Tendai sect temple was originally a Fujiwara villa. It sits out by a pond like a phoenix spreading its wings.

Chion-in

This seat of Jodo Sect Buddhism is one of the largest and most famous temples in Japan.

Engaku-ji

Engaku-ji was built to honor those who fell repelling the Mongols in the thirteenth century. In the Kamakura Period, this Rinzaizen temple was of major importance.

Enryaku-ji

The vast temple complex of Enryaku-ji is often referred to simply as Hieizan, or Mt. Hiei, the mountain on which it sits. It is the center of the Tendai sect, and for centuries has maintained a large standing army of sohei. At its height, there were twenty-five-hundred or more temples on the mountain. Nobunaga goes to war on them for siding with Asakura Yoshikage, and burns the entire complex to the ground and kills every man, woman, and child on the mountain in 1571.

Hasedera

Houses a thirty-foot tall statue of an eleven-faced Kannon, the tallest wooden statue in Japan.

Hongan-ji

Headquarters of the Jodo Shinshu sect. In 1591, to curry favor with the sect, Toyotomi Hideyoshi greatly expands the main complex.

Kencho-ji

This was the most important temple in Kamakura, and a center for training Zen priests.

Kinkaku-ji

Called the Golden Pavilion, it was originally a retirement villa for Shogun Yoshimitsu, but it is now part of the Rokuon-ji.

Kiyomizu-dera

This picturesque temple hangs partially over the edge of a cliff on the outskirts of Miyako. It is dedicated to the eleven-headed Kannon.

Kotoku-in

Famous as the site of the Daibutsu primarily, kotoku-in houses the thirty-six-foot tall, bronze-cast statue of Buddha. It is second in height to the one in To-daiji. In 1495, the wooden building housing the statue was destroyed by a tidal wave.

Koyasan

Like Hieizan, Koyasan is a mountain full of Buddhist priests and monks, with occasional problems caused by their sohei. Unlike Hieizan, Koyasan in Kii retains the solemnity of a Shingon temple complex. Some have considered it the *capital* of Japan's Buddhism. Two *eternal flames* have been burning in a support building since the eleventh century. Koyasan is frequently the site of exile for persons of import, be they kuge or buke nobles.

Nanzen-ji

The buildings of Miyako's most important Zen temple were all destroyed in the Onin War, and are being rebuilt during the last half of the sixteenth century. It was originally a villa belonging to Emperor Kameyama.

Ryoan-ji

Site of the most famous sand/rock garden in the world. This Zen temple was designed for contemplation; from no angle can a viewer see all fifteen of the stones, which look like small islands in a sandy ocean.

Sanjusangen-do

The popular name of the Rengeo-in—it is so named for the long hall of thirty-three pillar spaces. Archers used to have competitions to shoot an arrow the length of the hall without

striking walls, ceiling, or floor. A wooden, one-thousand-headed Kannon statue is the main item of reverence.

Senso-ji

Also called Asakusa Kannon, it is Edo's oldest and most famous temple. A statue of Kannon appeared near the spot in a fisherman's net in 628, and this was taken as the sign to erect a temple to her. The shop-lined street leading up to the temple is famous in Edo. The main entrance, Kaminari Mon (Thunder Gate), is guarded by fierce images of the gods of thunder and wind.

Shinsho-ji

This Shingon temple is dedicated to Fudo, a statue of whom is the object of veneration. When Taira no Masakado revolted, the intervention of Fudo is given credit for his defeat. The statue originally had been at another site, but in a dream, Fudo told the abbot that he wanted to stay in the area, so Emperor Shujaku had the complex expanded. A sword said to cure insanity and possession by touch is in the temple treasury.

Shoren-in

Also called Awata Palace, this is the residence of the head of the Tendai sect. The position is so important, the head of the sect is almost invariably a member of the imperial family. The garden, by Soami, is one of the most famous in Japan.

To-daiji

The main hall of To-daiji is one of the most famous buildings in the world. The Daibutsu-den holds the fifty-four-foot tall statue of the Buddha. In 1567, the Daibutsu-den is burned down in a battle (the statue is undamaged) and will not be rebuilt for centuries. The temple is held by the Kego sect. One support building, the Kaidan-in, is one of the most important ceremonial sites in Japan, and is the site of ordination of new priests. The Shoso-in, the world's most famous store and treasure house, is on the To-daiji grounds.

Tosho-daiji

This temple, virtually unique among the ancient temples of Japan, has never encountered fire or earthquake, and the original buildings still

stand. The Ko-do was formerly part of the Imperial palace in Nara, and is the only surviving relic of Nara palace architecture.

Yakushi-ji

This temple is dedicated to Yakushi Nyorai. Yakushi-ji is a close neighbor of Tosho-daiji. The temple is also called the Heavenly Palace, and has enjoyed the patronage of several emperors.

Zuigan-ji

Zuigan-ji is the most important Zen temple in northern Japan. Many images of the Buddha are carved on the rocky cliff face; it is part of the training of novices to carve the reliefs. It is important to the Date family, who rule the area.

THE PANTHEON

Japanese Buddhism recognizes the Buddha as the *major deity* in their faith, but there is also a large number of other deities who also play a part—some are borrowed from Shinto, while others from the continent. There are actually several Buddhas (Nyorai) in the Japanese pantheon.

Groups

Bosatsu: Those who were once human and are one step away from achieving Buddha-hood, but refuse to enter paradise in favor of remaining here to help man are called bosatsu (bodhisattvas). Particularly important ones are called daibosatsu.

Go Chi: The Five Buddhas of Contemplation—Taho, Yakushi, Dainichi, Askuku, and Shaka.

Myo-o: The Buddhas are not allowed to undertake any actions of violence. When violence is necessary to maintain order in the universe, it is undertaken by the Myo-o, who are deities of great power and incredible stature. They can level buildings, uproot trees, and carve trenches in the ground. When they appear, they are huge, muscled, armored warriors with fierce visages, and wielding two-edged swords.

Nyorai: A Buddha, one who has achieved enlightenment.

San Senjin: The Three Gods of War are Marishiten, Daikokuten, and Bishamonten. They are depicted as huge warriors clad in Chinese armor, or as a single warrior with three heads and six arms, riding on a wild boar.

Shi Daitenno: The Four Heavenly Kings protect the four corners of the world from evil demons. They are depicted as warriors clad in Chinese armor. They are Jikoku, Komoku, Tamon (Bishamon), and Zocho.

Buddhist Deities

Amida: Buddha as master of paradise in the Pure Earth of the West. He is revered especially in Jodo Sect Buddhism.

Dainichi Nyorai: One of the persons of the Buddhist trinity, Dainichi represents wisdom and purity. He is the cosmic Buddha, and is often identified with Amaterasu. He is one of the Five Buddhas of Contemplation.

Enma O: As the judge of the dead and overseer of the Buddhist hells, King Enma's job is to determine the fate of a dead soul. There are three options—returning to the world as some form of ghost (to pay off a karmic debt or fulfill some unfinished action); spending a certain time in one or several of the various torments of hell to burn off bad karma; or being reborn (those who've earned paradise do not stop off in hell).

Fudo Myo-o: Fudo is a deity empowered to combat devils. His representation is that of being surrounded by flames, holding a sword in his right hand and a rope to snare evildoers in his left. He always has a fierce expression on his face.

Hachiman Daibosatsu: Hachiman was originally the emperor Ojin, son of Empress Jingu. He was deified as a great bodhisattva (daibosatsu) as the god of war, and is the tutelary deity of the Minamoto.

Jikoku: As one of the Great Heavenly Kings, he watches over the east.

Jizo: Jizo is the patron deity of travelers. Small stone statues of him, also called jizo, can be seen at the sides of roads everywhere. Sometimes they are very crude. He is depicted as a bozu with a gem in one hand, and a pilgrim's staff (a long staff with rings at the head) in his other hand. He is also a patron of children and pregnant women. Sometimes, jizo are erected at the sites of the death of a child. He is especially popular with bonge.

Kannon Daibosatsu: The Buddhist goddess of mercy is the assistant of Amida. Various *forms* of her are worshipped, and there are statues of eleven-headed or thousand-headed Kannon, etc.

Komoku: One of the Great Heavenly Kings, he watches over the west.

Marishiten: The *Queen of Heaven*, she is depicted as having eight arms.

Taho Nyorai: A Buddha; he is one of the five Buddhas of Contemplation.

Tamon: Tamon is another name for Bishamon. As one of the Great Heavenly Kings, he protects the north.

Yakushi Nyorai: One of the Buddhas; goddess of wisdom. She is one of the five Buddhas of Contemplation.

Zocho: One of the Great Heavenly Kings, he watches over the south.

BUDDHIST SECTS

Most sects have subsets, or branches of the main sect, which may or may not have differences from the umbrella sect. The different sects, while all Buddhist, are not necessarily in agreement over dogma and articles of faith. It may be compared to the Western Christian churches. What is known in the West as the Eastern Orthodox Church has branches like the Serbian Orthodox Church, Russian Orthodox Church, Greek Orthodox Church, Bulgarian Orthodox Church, and Orthodox Church in America. All of these are branches of the same tree, and are unified in their faith. They are different, however, from the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church and the Baptist Church.

Many of the divisions are identified by their seats. For example, the Hongan-ji branch of the Jodo Shinshu sect has, as its point of foundation and seat, the Hongan Temple in Miyako, and the Myoman-ji branch of Hokke Sect Buddhism is seated at the Myoman Temple in Yamashiro.

Hokke (or Nichiren)

Hokke, or Lotus Sect, was founded in the thirteenth century by Nichiren. There are nine divisions of the Hokke sect—Itchi, Shoretsu, Honsei-ji, Myoman-ji, Hachihon, Honryu-ji, Fuju-Fuse, Fuju-Fuse-Komon, and Komon. The original seat was in Ikegami in Musashi.

The followers of the Hokke sect are often the most fanatical of all Buddhists. They stress the Three Great Secrets—adoration, law, and morals. The phrase *Namu myoho renge kyo, I take my*

refuge in the Lotus Sutra, is the mantra of this sect, replacing the Nenbutsu of Amida Buddhism. The doctrine they follow is the sutra containing the last instructions of the Buddha; the Lotus Sutra is their supreme scripture. Faith in the Lotus Sutra is shown by aggressively refuting other beliefs, even those of other Buddhist sects. The founder, Nichiren, said, “*The Nenbutsu is hell; Zen are devils; Shingon is a national ruin; and Risshu are traitors to the country.*”

Persecution for this vigorous refutation is welcomed as expiatory of one's sins, and is called *reading the Lotus Sutra with one's body*. A follower of this sect is not supposed to even seek or accept help, such as that of monetary or food, from *heretics*, for such tolerance of heresy implies complicity in its teachings. In 1489, Hokke had half of Miyako as adherents, and Hokke was constantly being attacked by the sohei of Hieizan. After a series of attacks, Hokke lost its control over the capital, and persecutions by Oda Nobunaga have done much damage to the sect. The hard-liners are the Fujū-Fuse branch.

Hosso

Hosso was founded in 657 by Chitsu. There are two divisions of Hosso—Nanji-den and Hokuji-den. The original seat was Genko-ji in Settsu.

Hosso came from China. It emphasizes workings of consciousness and its interrelationship with the environment around oneself.

Ikkō

Later to be called Jodo Shinshu, or True Pure Land, the Ikkōshū was founded in 1224 by Shinran. There are nine divisions—Hongān-ji, Takada, Bukko-ji, Kosho-ji, Kibe, Sensho-ji, Chosei-ji, Josho-ji, and Gosho-ji. The original seat was Hongān-ji in Miyako.

Ikkōshū has definite political goals as well as spiritual ones, so it was often the object of hostility from various daimyō over the years. Adherents were even able to create an autonomous theocratic region in Kanazawa for about one-hundred years after defeating the local daimyō. They waged an eleven-year-long battle against Nobunaga in Osaka.

Ikkōshū teaches that nothing a man does, including good deeds, prayer, or becoming a

monk, can gain him salvation. Rather, salvation is a gift of the mercy of Amida Buddha.

Ikkōshū is one of the most prosperous and populous sects, preaching the importance of families and de-emphasizing monasticism. Its hierarchs are all married. The faith was a revision of the Pure Land Sect Buddhism, and so stresses the importance of repeating the Nenbutsu mantra. The Nenbutsu *Namu Amida Butsu*, or *I take my refuge in Amida Buddha* is a mantra that is repeated over and over, and it is believed that if one says it correctly just once, his salvation is guaranteed. The main difference is that this faith teaches that the urge to recite the Nenbutsu comes from Amida's compassion active in man's inner self, awakening him to his own karmic evil, which is the root and nature of all suffering. No self-aware, deliberate act can gain salvation; the Nenbutsu is the only meaningful act. This realization is *shinjin*, or faith which is neither a belief in a higher power nor hope for a miraculous redemption. When this unconscious realization dawns, the person is born to the True Pure Land within himself, attaining it here and now. This goes against the traditional Pure Land view of Jodo as an afterlife, an unearthly paradise. Rather, upon death, one becomes an active participant in helping others attain salvation.

Ji

Ji was founded in 1275 by Ippen. It is divided into twelve subsets—Honzan, Yuko, Ikko, Okudani, Taima, Shijo, Rokujo, Kaii, Reizan, Kokua, Ichiya, Tendo, and Mikagedo. The original seat was Shojoko-ji in Sagami.

Ji is a mendicant Pure Land order. In Ji, faith is not even necessary, as belief is a product of a corrupt human mind, so merely the sound of the Nenbutsu has salutatory effects, whether the one repeating the mantra truly believes or not.

Male members of the sect often take names using either characters for Ami or Da, and women add *Ichibo* (*One Buddha*) to their names. Ji found support among the warrior class, for they offered ordinary funerals as well as services for battlefield deaths. Ji is unique among Pure Land sects for worship of Shinto deities, as it identifies them as manifestations of Amida Buddha. Jishu retainers of daimyō became models for guilds of artists and esthetes—many members are prominent in the arts and literature. Jishu may

have been the leading Pure Land sect, but the chaos of the late sixteenth century is causing it to fall, as it is too closely tied to the old order, and adherents are shifting their alliance to the rising Ikkoshu.

Jodo

Jodo was founded in 1175 by Honen. Jodo, or Pure Land, concepts originated in China, but never really caught on there. It became popular in Japan during the thirteenth century and under men like Honen and Jakuei, where it attained independent status. There are five main branches, some of which have their own divisions—Chinzei (Shirahata, Fujita, Nagoshi, Obata, Sanjo, and Ichijo), Seizan (Nishidani, Fukakusa, Higashiyama, and Saga), Choraku-ji, Kuhon-ji, and Ichinengi.

Jodo is an Amidist faith; the adherents all seek rebirth into the Amida Buddha's Western Paradise (the *True Land* of their name). In this world view, there have been many great savior Buddhas, each of whom rules a separate Buddha-land, and some of them are better than others, with Amida as the most pure of all. His paradise is called Gokuraku, or *Blissful*. The founders stressed the importance of repeating the Nenbutsu mantra, and it is believed that if one says it correctly just once, his salvation is guaranteed. Pure Land teaches that Amida especially wants to save those who have no other means of salvation—the poor, sinful, and downtrodden. In Jodo, a simple faith in Amida is all one needs. This faith quickly gained adherents at the imperial court, and even among the samurai.

Kegon

Kegon was founded in 735 by Dosen. Its seat is To-daiji in Yamato.

The Kegon sect is ancient as one of the six Nara sects, but has grown less and less active, and their numbers are few. There are less than one-hundred Kegon temples in Japan. Their scholarship, however, is still highly regarded.

Ritsu

Ritsu was founded in 754 by Ganjin. Its seat is the Toshodaiji in Yamato.

By the Sengoku Period, Ritsu is on a serious decline. It stresses the ascetic disciplines. A

variation of Ritsu manages to merge Ritsu's studies with Shingon's esoteric Buddhist doctrine.

Shingon

Shingon was founded in 806 by Kukai. There are two divisions—Kogi and Shingi. The original seat is To-ji in Yamashiro.

Shingon is a major Buddhist sect, and one emphasizing esoteric Buddhist doctrines. No innovations of any significance have emerged in Shingon since Kukai established the doctrines. Key elements are mandala-drawing and mantras—Shingon seeks to sanctify the world via magic. Faith in Shingon is based on wisdom and reason, to help man find out the origin of his soul. He has to purify his actions and achieve Buddhahood. Shingon venerates Amida as one of the Five Wisdom Buddhas, but the center of the faith is Dainichi Buddha, the center of the esoteric Buddhist mandalas. Kukai saw Dainichi as the Six Great Elements (earth, water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness) combined with the three constituents (essence, attributes, and functions), and the four mandalas. Postures, mantras, and hand gestures are integral to Shingon meditation—*entering self into self so that the self enters into self*. This is a popular faith.

The headquarters of Shugendo is the Shingon temple Miyako's Daigo-ji.

Tendai

Tendai was founded in 805 by Saicho. There are three branches—Sanmon, Jimon, and Shinjo. The seat is Enryaku-ji in Omi.

By following the three precepts of shunning evil, doing good works, and being kind to all beings, all men are able to attain perfection. This is a popular faith. It teaches the *Lotus Sutra*. Their stronghold on Hieizan is the target of Nobunaga's rage.

Yuzu Nenbutsu

Yuzu Nenbutsu was founded in 1123 by Ryonin. Its seat is Sumiyoshi in Settsu.

Its popularity is fading fast, but it was the first of the great Amida-worshipping sects. Yuzu began the Nenbutsu mantra.

Zen

Zen was founded in 1202 by Eisai. There are three divisions of Zen, some with their own branches—Rinzai (Kennin-ji, Rofuku-ji, Kencho-ji, Engaku-ji, Nanzen-ji, Eigen-ji, Daitoku-ji, Tenryu-ji, Myoshi-ji, and Shokoku-ji), Fuke (Kinsen, Kasso, Kichiku, Kogiku, Kozasa, and Umeji), and Soto. Its original seat was in Heiankyo.

Zen is not the most popular Buddhist sect, but it has an inordinate percentage of followers among the buke. Zen stresses *contemplation*, and considering and knowing the self as a means of achieving Buddhahood. There is a saying that *Rinzai is for a general, Soto is for farmers*.

SHUGENDO

Adherents are called shugenja or yamabushi. The founder is considered to be En no Gyoja, or En the Miracleman, a quasi-legendary figure from the eighth century.

If your *SENGOKU* game includes magic, there is no doubt that En created Shugendo, and there is no doubt that they can do what they hope to do. In a chanbara or anime Japan, shugenja are masters of otherworldly magic, as well as exorcists and healers.

Shugendo combines elements of Shinto, such as the worship of certain locales, especially mountains, as sacred (if not divine), with the doctrine, symbolism, and ritual of esoteric Buddhism like Shingon or Tendai, from which most shugenja come. The Shingon branch (Tozan-ha) is based in Daigo-ji in Miyako, and the Tendai branch (Honzan-ha) is based in the Shogo-in, also in Miyako. The difference between the branches is inconsequential.

The forerunners of the shugenja were the mountain hermits, or hijiri, who took to the mountains for solitary asceticism, fasting, immersion in icy waterfalls and streams, and recitation of holy texts. They sought power to vanquish disease-bringing spiritual beings, and hoped to make themselves impervious to heat or cold and enable their souls to travel between heaven and hell by way of astral projection. During the Heian Period, they organized into groups with prescribed rules of asceticism.

The rituals are strict secrets, and are not written down. All education and knowledge is



transmitted orally only to disciples who have been initiated into the order. In game terms, only characters with a membership in a yamabushi sect may study their mystic arts, without exception.

The principal ritual exercise is *entering the mountain*, an ascent of a particular holy mountain at each of the four seasons. The climb is symbolic as leaving the profane real world and climbing to the spiritual, and purposeful to imbue oneself with power. The power gained enables the shugenja to subdue spiritual enemies, supernatural animals, and battle vengeful or discontented ghosts. The key mountains are Omimesan (Kinbusen-ji, founded by En himself, is on the mountain, in Yamato), Koyasan (Katsuragi Shrine is on the peak, in Yamato), Ushiroyama (Bitchu), Daisen (Hoki), and those around the triple-shrines of Kumano (Kii) and Dewa (Uzen).

Yamabushi temples are called yamadera and are located exclusively on sacred mountains.

RYOBU-SHINTO

Ryobu-shinto is the doctrine that Shinto and Bukkyo are in fact the same religion.

In the early days of Buddhism in Japan, the greatest difficulty was getting the populace at large to worship any but their familiar Shinto deities and anywhere but shrines and other Shinto sites. In the ninth century, some in the Shingon sect, following the concept of ryobu, suggested that the kami of Japan were actually localized manifestations of Buddhist deities originally from India. This belief led to more or

less of a merger between the two. Only Ise and Izumo, primarily due to their relationship with the imperial family, maintained a pure Shinto outlook, while the rest of the Shinto establishment sought Buddhist synchronicity. Much of the shrine properties were turned over to Buddhist clergy. Therefore, many temples have any number of small shrines in their complex.

It is partly because of Ryobu Shinto and the domination of Buddhism that Shinto priests, while respected, do not have the same social considerations that are given to Buddhist clergy.

It is also for this reason that some deities cross the line. The so-called Seven Lucky Gods, for example, whose origins are partly Chinese Buddhist, Indian Buddhist, and Japanese Shinto. They appear under Ryobu Shinto because they, more than anything else, bear witness to the synchronization.

Note that there is no Ryobu Shinto priesthood. While lay people may claim a belief of base religions (as may the priests themselves), clergy must choose one faith or the other to which they dedicate their lives and gain the use of faith-based *magic*.

SHICHIFUKUJIN: THE SEVEN LUCKY GODS

They arrive on Ganjitsu, or New Years Day, bringing happiness and good fortune for the year. Because of this, they are often depicted on New Year's objects.

Benten: This goddess is Indian in origin. She is depicted riding on a dragon and playing a biwa. She is particularly venerated on Enoshima. Benten, sometimes called Benzaiten, is the goddess of love. She is also considered the goddess of eloquence, music, and wisdom.

Bishamon: This god of luck is also one of the three gods of war. He is depicted in Chinese armor and holding a spear or a small pagoda or both. He is also called Tamon, and is one of the four great kings of heaven who protect the world.

Daikoku: This is the god of riches and wealth, as well as farmers. He is depicted as a short, portly man sitting on bales of rice. He carries a large sack over his shoulder laden with riches, and carries a small magical mallet that either creates gold when it strikes or grants wishes, depending on who describes him.

Ebisu: The third son of Izanagi and Izanami, Ebisu is the god of good food, as well as the patron deity of tradesmen and fishermen. He is depicted with a fishing line and a fish.

Fukurokuju: This god of popularity (although he is generally considered also a god of longevity like Jurojin) is depicted as a bearded old man with his bald head rising like a shining dome. He often appears with a crane and is the god of good health.

Hotei: This god of joviality and good times has a large, rounded belly. Originally, he was a monk in China in the tenth century, and thus the only human of the seven. He is considered by some the god of luck and chance.

Jurojin: The god of longevity is depicted as an old man with either a stag, tortoise, or crane beside him. He carries a staff with a scroll of worldly wisdom tied to it.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is the religion of the Europeans, the nanbanjin who first came to Japan in the middle of the sixteenth century. Christianity teaches that there is one God with three persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Son, Jesus the Christ, took on the body of a man and came to the world almost sixteen centuries ago. He was executed by the authorities for sedition and blasphemy, but rose from the dead and followers spread the new faith of salvation by faith and deeds. That faith is now the dominant, and virtually only, one in Europe and parts of Asia. In Europe, the largest sect is that of the Roman Catholics, with their seat at the Vatican in Rome. The Pope is the head of the church.

The Christian Church in Japan is Roman Catholic. Some larger cities, like Miyako, Osaka, and Nagoya, have churches, built with the permission and sometimes even the help of the local daimyo. There is a consideration that the daimyo are more interested in trading with the nanban than accepting and helping their religion grow, but that is not an issue with the missionaries, who only see opportunities to advance the faith.

JESUITS AND FRANCISCANS

The missionary work in Japan is in the hands of the Jesuits and Franciscans, although there is

considerable rivalry. The Society of Jesus (or the Jesuit Order, The Order, or the Jesuits), a well-trained and elite corps of scholar-priests, are at the heart of the mission, and are concentrating their evangelism on the upper classes in the hope of spreading the faith from the top down. The Franciscans, on the other hand, are humbler, less well-educated, and more interested in working with the peasantry. The Jesuits view the Franciscans as interfering with their work, and often try to have the Franciscans exiled or removed to other provinces.

Most Jesuits in the country speak some Japanese and a few are even fluent. Jesuits wear saffron-colored habits to enable them to *fit in* better with the Japanese society (saffron is regarded as a clerical color). The Franciscans scorn this idea, and continue to wear their humble hair-shirt robes.

PROTESTANTS

A sect in Europe has arisen in the past few centuries that is hostile to Rome's one-man rule of the Christian church. They call themselves Protestants and generally stress the concept of salvation by grace, considering the Roman requirements for good works and confession to be man-made additions to the faith. Not surprisingly, when members of the Protestant sect meet members of the Roman Catholic sect, arguments and hostility can break out.

Since Protestants are in the majority in Holland and England, it is not likely to become a problem in Japan unless an English or Dutch ship, perhaps one piloted by an Englishman, were to accidentally find itself in Japanese waters.

CHRISTIAN CONVERTS

The Christian missionaries have done some effective work. Many Japanese and even a small number of daimyo, including one of the sons of Oda Nobunaga, have converted to Christianity. While not all view the new, foreign faith with hostility, some view it with suspicion and are likewise dubious of the motives and loyalties of those who have accepted baptism. Some daimyo are hostile to those in their clan who have expressed an interest in conversion, while others are unconcerned. More than one daimyo has ordered an important retainer or two to convert in order to gain favor with the missionaries in the

interest of trade and commerce. The missionaries may suspect this, but hope that any conversion can still affect positive results for their work.

Japanese who are baptized are given Christian names, which the missionaries use in referring to them and they use amongst themselves. The other Japanese still refer to them by their Japanese names.

Most of the converts are centered in Kyushu and the southern half of Honshu. There are several converts studying the faith with an interest in the priesthood, but there is not yet any sign that the church plans to ordain any to clerical office.

One of the things that makes life difficult for converts is the on-again-off-again hostility expressed by the Japanese authorities. Permission to proselytize has been given and retracted with monotonous regularity at all levels. Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Oda Nobunaga, when in charge, vacillated between support and repression of the foreign religion. If they could figure out a way to press foreign trade while prohibiting the religion, they probably would do so.

PILGRIMAGES

Devout adherents to both Shinto and Buddhism undertake pilgrimages from time to time. Pilgrims are supposed to walk or take a boat when necessary, rather than ride horses or in palanquins. Pilgrims wear special garb and are readily identifiable regardless of rank or station. Part of the object of a pilgrimage is that all become equal in the efforts they exert.

A pilgrimage requires some effort, and usually is a linked event. Rather than go to a single temple, for example, one might make a circuit of all the temples ringing Kyushu, or the thirty-three temples of Kannon. Pilgrimages can be undertaken as a sort of expiatory quest, just as a simple act of devotion, or even to obtain something from the gods. Undertaking a pilgrimage to the thirty-three temples of Kannon, all in Miyako and the neighboring provinces, for example, is believed to preserve one from condemnation to hell.

If someone has purely religious motivations, he may gain the attention of one or more deities, or gain honor. It is up to the director and the player whose character is undertaking a pilgrimage to

agree on the actual goals and ultimate ends and results of the pilgrimage. A suggested reward for pilgrimages is a reduction of dishonor or one or two points of luck.

FESTIVALS

Festivals, or *matsuri*, are largely Shinto in origin, although owing to Ryobu Shinto the distinction may often be unclear, and they may even be celebrated at temples (which are related to or connected to shrines). Only a few are Buddhist in origin.

During festival times, stalls are set up near temples and shrines that sell small charms and amulets, inexpensive children's toys, and festival *fast foods* like grilled noodles and rice cakes. Bonge really come into their own during festivals, for while the buke and kuge play their roles, it is really the bonge who dance about and sing and play, and it is largely they who pull the floats and carry the o-mikoshi, or *sacred cars*—large, ornate, lacquered and gilded cabinets borne on poles. Festival music is also common, performed mostly by amateur musicians from amongst the revelers.

There are basically two types of *matsuri*—the strictly local and the national. There are three parts to a typical *matsuri*. The *kami mukae* is a ceremony held in a shrine or other sacred place to welcome the *kami* to earth. The *shinko* is the *main event* of the festival, and is the part of the festival when mikoshi are paraded through the streets and the crowds celebrate. The *kami okuri* is a closing ceremony performed to respectfully see the *kami* off to return to where he lives.

POPULAR MATSURI

A common sight at *matsuri*, especially Shinto ones, is processions of teams of people carrying o-mikoshi through the streets by teams of laborers chanting *wasshoi-wasshoi*. These o-mikoshi can weigh a great deal, and there is often rivalry between groups and shrines, and competitions to get through the streets can get rowdy.

Gion Matsuri (Myako)

Although a month-long festival, the highlight is Yamahoko-junko, on the 17th, when huge floats are pulled through the streets by teams of sweating celebrants. The festival began in the ninth century and has resulted in many others throughout Japan bearing the same name.

Hina Matsuri (national)

Hina Matsuri is also called *Girl's Festival*. In houses with little girls, families set up displays of dolls representing an ancient imperial court. This is not a true *matsuri* in the sense that there is no great celebration.

Izumo Taisha Jinzaisai (Izumo)

During the tenth month, which is called Kaminazuki (the month without gods) in the rest of Japan, all the Shinto *kami* go to the Izumo Grand Shrine and visit with each other. During that month, and only in Izumo, the month is called Kamiarizuki (the month with gods). Several solemn events are held to honor and propitiate the assembled deities.

Namahage (regional; snow country)

Men called *toshindon* dress as goblins, wearing full-body straw rain capes, wigs, and fierce masks. The men carry pails and large kitchen knives, and go around from house to house threatening the children with the knives and admonishing them to be diligent, good children.

Nebuta Matsuri (national)

This pre-harvest festival is held throughout Japan during the first week of August. The festival is to ward off sleepiness, so that the work cannot be disrupted. Most local variations, like the Aomori, Hirosaki, and Kuroishi Nebuta, feature huge, lighted floats pulled through the streets at night.

O-Bon (national)

O-Bon is the Buddhist Festival of the Dead. In Miyako, large characters are burned like giant bonfires on the side of Nyoigatakeyama and other mountains to direct the souls of deceased ancestors after having returned to earth for O-Bon. Dances, called Bon *odori*, are common during the evening hours, with large crowds circling the beating drums in a great seemingly choreographed Oriental line dance.

Omisoka (national)

Omisoka is also called Ganjitsu. On the last night of the year, it is customary to visit the neighborhood temple and shrine. At the temple, the bell tolls one-hundred and eight times, each bong wiping away one of the one-hundred and eight sins to which people are heir. Bonfires on

the temple grounds keep visitors warm. They are offered warmed amazake, a sweet sake thick with lees, to keep out the chill. The year's first visit to the shrine is called hatsumode.

Setsubun (national)

As winter begins to give way to spring, people go to shrines where local celebrities such as honored samurai or local sumo champions who were born in the same cyclic year cast beans from the shrine shouting *oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi*, or *demons out, good luck in*. People repeat this ceremony at their homes, casting beans into dark corners.

Soma Nomaoui (Soma in Mutsu)

The Soma clan have developed a tradition of using military exercises as a festival. They hold horse races with armor-clad riders, and the highlight of the three-day festival is when mounted warriors attempt to capture and cajole a wild horse along a narrow course to a local shrine. Colored streamers are fired into the air, and riders compete to be the ones to catch them. The lucky rider gets the blessing of the kami, who watches the events from his o-mikoshi at the top of the hill.

Tanabata Matsuri (national)

According to a Chinese legend, the daughter of the emperor of heaven was betrothed to the ruler of the far side of the Milky Way, called the herdsman. They spent so much time on their honeymoon that they neglected their duties, so were condemned to be separated and allowed to meet only one night a year—the seventh day of the seventh month. Young girls hope the weaver will make them skilled at sewing, and help them find faithful husbands like the herdsman. It is believed that petitions to the deities made on this day will be granted inside three years. The festival is celebrated with drumming, dancing, drinking, and general festivities.

Tango no Sekku (national)

Tango no Sekku is also called *Boy's Festival*. Families having male children fly windsock pennants shaped like carp from poles. They can be quite ostentatious, and are flown from peasant houses as well as the houses of great lords. Like the Hina Matsuri, it is not a true matsuri in the sense of community activity.

Taue Matsuri (national)

These festivals, celebrating the planting of rice and the invocation of the gods for a good harvest, are held throughout the fifth and sixth months. Different locales have their own traditions, but dancing, drumming, and elaborate costumes are common features.

Tenjin Matsuri (Osaka Tenman-gu)

This is one of Japan's three biggest festivals. Parades of o-mikoshi are carried down the street, following which they are placed in boats and there is a parade of these boats along the Dojima-gawa.



SOCIETAL STRUCTURES

It is a fact that fish will not live where the water is too clear. But if there is duckweed or something, the fish will hide under its shadow and thrive. Thus, the lower classes will live in tranquility if certain matters are a bit overlooked or left unheard.

YAMAMOTO TSUNETOMO

Status is everything in Japan. The measure of a man is his station in life, from the lowliest eta to the divine Son of Heaven, the emperor himself. In Japanese society, every person is born into a certain *caste*, which more or less defines their entire life. Cultural acceptance (and samurai enforcement) have kept the caste system in place for over a thousand years.

THE IMPERIAL COURT

The imperial court consists of the emperor, his wives, concubines, and immediate children, as well as their wives, if his children are male; daughters are married off to kuge families and are out of the circle of the imperial court. A narrow circle of the highest officials, courtiers, ladies-in-waiting, and guardsmen also make up an extended body of the imperial court.

THE EMPEROR

The emperor of Japan, the Son of Heaven, is a direct descendent of the goddess of the sun, Amaterasu Omikami. At least, that's what everyone believes. Although he may even be a Buddhist to all outward appearances, the emperor's divine ancestry cannot be doubted. This does not make him inviolate; just highly respected. After all, if an emperor is a descendent of the goddess, his brother and son are too.

The emperor's name is never used by any of his subjects. Rather, he is referred to as *His Majesty the Emperor*, or *Tenno Heika*, and addressed as *Heika* or *Ue-Sama*, both meaning *sire*. Even members of his family will usually use his title.

If he chooses, he may take the tonsure and *retire* to a remote palace estate that is about five miles from the imperial palace. If he is strong enough, he can continue to govern anyway as a retired emperor, pulling the strings of his successor (or even his successor's successor).

The emperor will likely never make an overt appearance in a game. If he does, it is a monumental occasion. He should be more like a person in the background—his presence is acknowledged, and people know about and talk about him, and some people with which the characters interact may have even met him in the past. For him to show up in person would be so rare as to be a noteworthy event.

THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

Emperors are not limited to a single wife. While they will have a *chief wife*, they may have four or five consorts and concubines. These other women are usually taken from the best families of the kuge, and given the frequent intermarriage among these clans, one can readily deduce that the gene pool is narrow and shallow. It is perhaps a good thing that the emperor can also take any pretty maid who happens to attract his eye into his bedchamber. These women are not counted as wives, although their children are considered princely. With the large number of women coming and going, it should come as no surprise that there are a lot of princely offspring.

Because of this, there is a tradition that the myriad descendants of the emperors are only *imperial* and princely for three generations. Beyond this, they become *commoners*.

Commoners though they be, they are still kuge, and very highly placed kuge, at that. The various *branches* of the Minamoto clan, for example, are named by the imperial ancestor from whom they descended—the Seiwa Genji were sons of Emperor Seiwa, the Saga Genji were from Emperor Saga. Many of the great houses of the Sengoku Period, kuge and buke alike, can trace their roots to at least one imperial ancestor.

Wives live in their own apartments in the imperial palace. The first wife, the official empress, might have her own mini-palace in the compound. The emperor either summons one of his ladies when he wishes her presence, or bestows the honor of going to visit her personally, and usually trailing an entourage in the process.

In *SENGOKU*, only those in the immediate family are counted and treated as imperial. Some sons of emperors became great poets and scholars; others took religious vows and entered monasteries, devoting their lives to prayer; and still others spent their whole lives scheming with various daimyo kuge houses to get themselves placed on the throne.

Sometimes it was not the son scheming for power; it just as easily could be a jealous brother, or even an uncle. More than one imperial father has come out of retirement to reassert control over an uncooperative son he has put on the throne.

The concept of primogeniture, in which the oldest son inherits, is not in force in the imperial house, or anywhere else in Japan for that matter. While the eldest may inherit due to the fact that he has been around the longest, the emperor can designate whichever of his sons he wants to follow him, as can any family head.

Imperial children, sons and daughters alike, are well educated, and speak in a stilted, rarefied form of Japanese. They might also read and write Chinese, and have considerable familiarity with the Classics. Most are likely to be considered *soft*, although more than a few had character and personal strength that surprised their contemporaries.

Imperial daughters are given to powerful kuge and buke families with marriage. Such a marriage is considered to be quite a coup, and the imperial princesses are considered prizes. Although their imperial status ceases the moment they marry,

they still are family, and these connections can be more important than an imperial title.

COURTIERS

No royal court anywhere in the world has ever been able to function without the presence of sycophants, flatterers, officials, and supernumeraries. The court of the Son of Heaven is no different.

Most of the courtiers are mid-level kuge nobles. The truly high-ranking and powerful kuge are only likely to be in attendance if there is something they specifically need. By themselves they have more power than they could gain from fawning on the emperor. The lower-level kuge hope for assignments within the imperial palace which could bring them to the attention, and they hope, into the favor of the emperor.

Among the people at court are a few true friends of the emperor, but such friendship sparks jealousy, and that can be a dangerous thing, even in the rarefied atmosphere of the imperial palace compound. Even when the emperor is not present, the yards and buildings will be full of people milling about, having conversations, and hatching plots. The emperor's presence is not required for his entourage to continue to function.

LADIES-IN-WAITING

Given the great number of women in the imperial family, is to be expected that there is also a great number of professional companions for them. The ladies-in-waiting, like the imperial guard, all come from some of the finest kuge families in the capital. Many of them are married, and spend alternate weeks (or months) living in the palace, attending to their duties and at their own homes, seeing to their husbands and families. It is a popular pastime for the various concubines and wives of the imperial house to try to match their single (and even their married) ladies-in-waiting with some of the handsome young guardsmen. Love affairs and broken hearts are a common occurrence in the inner palace.

THE PALACE GUARD

The imperial court, like the palace itself, is guarded by two different armed bodies:

- the imperial guard, a largely ceremonial body made up of kuge sons who proudly wear the antiquated Heian Period garb of their office, and bear the rather ineffectual dress swords and bows of a bygone day
- a detachment of samurai under the direct command of either the bakufu or whatever daimyo is trying to gain most control over the capital

At times, their motives and methodologies coincide. At other times, their goals and ideologies might be different.

Each gate is guarded by a squad of warriors, and the halls are regularly patrolled by guardsmen marching about in pairs. Although their position is ceremonial, imperial guards are armed and well trained. Their morale is not unusually high, but they are willing to die to protect the emperor if necessary.

If the emperor (or a particularly important imperial prince or wife) is holding an audience, imperial guards will be somewhere nearby, out of sight but not out of earshot. They may actually attend an audience as a guard of honor if it is deemed necessary.



THE CASTES

There were traditionally four levels of Japanese society—samurai, merchant, artisan, and farmer. Or at least, such is the historical distinction in Japan. Note that this leaves out the clergy, the court nobles, the untouchables, and the shinobi.

Roughly, Japan's society during the Sengoku Period can be divided into four categories, but they are different ones from the list above. The categories are:

- **kuge**, the court aristocracy
- **buke**, the military aristocracy
- **bonge**, the commoners, with their broad range of vocations and positions
- **hinin**, or non-persons, such as eta and shinobi

Clergy, being as they are devoted to a higher calling, are not included. It is for that reason that a peasant who has become a monk may interact with an imperial prince while as a simple peasant he would not have been able to do so.

A person was born into his caste, and would not ordinarily be able to move up or down the social ladder, but this is the Sengoku Period, where anything is possible. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who ruled all of Japan for years until his death in 1598, was born a peasant and had been Oda Nobunaga's sandal-bearer. Though his low birth did not allow him the office of shogun, he was still able to become the undisputed master of the buke. In a wonderful twist of irony, he was the one who declared that people would remain in the social classes to which they had been born.

Any member of a given caste automatically is superior to the highest ranking person in a lower caste. For example, even the lowliest samurai foot soldier outranks the headman of a large peasant village on the social ladder or any buke, regardless of his status score, automatically outranks every bongé.

KUGE

Most of the kuge reside in or near the capital. By the sixteenth century, most have grown rather soft and effete, although some may still dream of past glories when kuge families, like the Fujiwara, ruled Japan. Although to a typical samurai there may be little difference between the lowest-ranked member of the aristocracy and the

highest, the kuge can tell the difference and to them such things matter.

If a member of the kuge has an estate or domain he governs which is outside the narrow region of Miyako, he will invariably have someone assigned to manage it for him; usually a buke relation, or even a poorer kuge relation. Kuge living outside Miyako are considered to be sad cases, and depending on their reason are pitied or dismissed out of hand.

Even kuge who join the ranks of the clergy generally stay in Miyako, building their pavilions or temples and settling there. Wanderlust is not a common trait among the kuge. Class-consciousness is, however.

Kuge rank is determined by the color of their clothing, which gates they can use upon entering and leaving the imperial palace compound (if, indeed, they may enter), and what duties they may have. Members of the imperial guard are culled from the ranks of the kuge, and they consider it an honor to be Guard of the Eastern Gate, or some similar title, even though buke may in fact support their security.

Due to the constant state of warfare, the social order in Miyako is not as secure as it once was. Kuge, while highly respected, are often nearly impoverished, having to live off the good will of buke families who support them in return for favors at court.

The extended imperial family, with all its myriad webs of inter-related kinship, is at the top of the kuge pecking order, with the emperor himself at the pinnacle.

BUKE

Buke are to be found all over Japan. Many buke are descended from kuge, and as has been said, the noblest houses, among them the Tokugawa, Takeda, and the Hojo, are actually distant descendants of an emperor or two. The buke were originally soldiers—warriors whose job it was to maintain the social order, especially by fighting wars in the hinterlands against *barbarians*. They governed and guarded estates and domains belonging to the kuge absentee-landlords until the tenth century. Now, buke are the de facto masters of Japan. There is still, however, an emperor in Miyako, and only he can assign the office of shogun. Of course, many buke want that

office, so control of the capital is an important thing.

The irony is that with military rank comes civil rank. Even the shogun has a court ranking. Otherwise, he could not approach the emperor.

All buke need not be samurai. A member of a warrior house may take the tonsure and enter a monastery. Many did. Some even became high-ranking members of their clerical calling while retaining control of their clans and even living in their own castles or estates. It was also a common trait among buke to *resign from the world* in their old age, but some would still come out of monastic retirement to fight for their clan.

This is the common thread of the buke—no matter what other calling the buke member has, whether it is a scholar, priest, or artist of great repute, he is first and last a warrior. His skill with sword or bow may be at the level of a peasant farmer, but if he feels his clan is threatened or duty calls, he will rush to war. On the other hand, the venerable, retired monastic may have been one of the best swordsmen in all Japan; he just chooses another path.

Buke who have lost their clans or declared their independence may do what they will, but the world will always consider them warriors, regardless of what they do or where they go.

BONGE

Commoners are merchants, artisans, farmers, and craftsmen. The large majority of the population of any village or city is made up of bonge. Contrary to popular opinion, not all the peasantry are tied to the land like serfs. Entertainers, doctors, courtesans, sailors, fishermen, and the large majority of the Buddhist clergy all come from the ranks of the bonge.

Craftsmen and farmers are actually rather highly regarded as commoners go. Merchants, however, are viewed with some disdain, as they do not themselves produce; rather, they function as middlemen, living off the labor of others. Of course, this view is not necessarily in keeping with reality, but it serves to show how the buke and the kuge view them. It is ironic that the merchants eventually became powerful and wealthy, as did the bourgeoisie in Europe during the latter part of the middle ages. Some merchants have lent money to buke, and in lieu



of repayment of the money, the samurai is encouraged to adopt one of the children of the merchant, making him buke and thus getting the family a foot up the social ladder.

Commoners must be polite to buke and kuge, at times even subservient. If they are not, buke have the legal right to cut them down on the spot for insolence and just walk away with total impunity.

HININ

The vast unwashed make up the hinin, or *non-person* caste. They are racially Japanese and are indistinguishable from their betters. The only way to tell a hinin from a poor peasant is either by what he does for a living (if anything) or where he lives. In feudal Japan, many towns and most cities have a small hamlet or two somewhere on the outskirts of town in which the hinin live.

Hinin work with leather, tanning the hides or butchering cattle. By traditional Japanese (Shinto) standards of purity and pollution, the hinin are polluted. Another term for them is *eta*, a pejorative meaning *much filth*. Note that in twentieth century Japan, the word *eta* still does not appear in most dictionaries, and is considered **very** insulting. It is provided here for historical reference only.

Some hinin try to break out of their socially enforced prisons by pretending to be simple peasants. For some, it works. Others are perpetually living in fear that one day someone may find out who they really are.

Many hinin live in or near dried-out riverbeds on the outskirts of town in little ghettos, and these people are known as kawaramono, or *riverbed people*. Kawaramono are members of the lowest social strata.

Kawaramono are primarily scavengers, who barely manage to eke out their living. They are typically employed for removal of *night soil*, which they process and sell to farmers to use as fertilizer for a few zeni. Kawaramono are sometimes employed by inns and local shrines to deal with the removal of any dead or blood on the premises. Since the kawaramono are so poor, they must do anything they can to survive. Some have turned to acting or putting on public entertainment displays, such as acrobatics, where they live in the hopes of drawing a generous crowd. For this reason, the word *kawaramono* is often used as a synonym, albeit a slightly pejorative one, for *actor*. Some of the most famous and affluent actors were from this caste.

In an odd twist of fate, some of the most famous landscape architects and gardeners in Japan are also Kawaramono. Called *sensui kawaramono*, they find jobs as artisans, designing, laying out, and working on the gardens of the rich and powerful. These people, though they are outcasts, work among the highest strata of society, but are not fully accepted by them no matter how much their work is respected and appreciated. They are tolerated and respected within the limits of what they do, but are still social inferiors.

THE BAKUFU

The bakufu is the military government; literally, the power behind the throne. At the top of this pyramid is the shogun, ruling from his palatial estate in the Muromachi district of the imperial city of Miyako. Surrounding him is an army of retainers, officials, and guards.

The last shogun of the Ashikaga house, Yoshiaki, was deposed by Oda Nobunaga in 1573, and Tokugawa Ieyasu was not granted that title until 1602.

THE SAMURAI CLANS

This is where the power really lies throughout most of the Sengoku Period.

The lord of the clan is typically a daimyo, although daimyo are technically titles of feudal landholders, and not all clans held land under their own name. Still, during the Sengoku Period, the concept of daimyo is in flux; no one is certain how much land one must have to deserve the title. Under the tradition of subinfeudation, the head of the Honda clan, under the Tokugawa, are daimyo as is the head of the Tokugawa clan. For simplicity, *SENGOKU* refers to the head of a clan as its lord or its daimyo, assuming the terms to be interchangeable.

Daimyo rule a fief that they hold from the emperor through the bakufu. When there is no bakufu in charge, they rule their fief by right of tradition, heredity, or force. In Japanese, a fief is called a han, and it is usually referred to by who rules it, rather than where it is. Therefore, the Takeda han is the province of Kai, the Date han is Mutsu in the north.

STRUCTURE

The lord is, of course, the head of the clan. Below him, he has a number of clan officials, called bugyo, tairo, or karo depending on the term a given clan chooses to use. They may be family members, such as cousins or brothers, or trusted retainers who are the heads of their own sub clans. These offices are all *councilors*. One of these officials is the metsuke, the clan's chief internal affairs officer. It is his job to see to it that nothing is amiss in the clan.

Below this level, but directly attached to the daimyo, rather than answering to the officials, are the koshogumi and the hatamoto. Koshogumi are special individuals attached to a lord's entourage. They include physicians, clerics, special advisors, spymasters, strategists, and the like. The hatamoto are specially exalted samurai retainers, who have general access to their daimyo and the right to come and go as they please. Hatamoto are also a sort of personal guard, if needed. Their very title means *foot of the banner* and reflects their position in camp when on campaign—at the lord's side in the main headquarters.

Below the officials are the clan officers. Below them are the simple samurai, of varying levels—

lesser officials, overseers, captains, and the rank-and-file. Below these are ashigaru, who may or may not actually be buke.

JOINING A CLAN

Becoming a member of a samurai clan is a great honor. It not only involves joining a family, but also confers samurai status to a buke, and elevates any bonge who is accepted into the clan to buke caste.

SHINOBI (NINJA) RYU AND CLANS

In Sengoku Japan, shinobi are considered an unspeakable non-truth. That is, the average citizen, regardless of caste, believes that they exist but they have never seen a shinobi and certainly would never speak about them in public. Those who do speak about them do not call them ninja. Instead, they are called *shinobi*, a pronunciation of the first kanji character making up the word *ninja*. *SENGOKU* refers to the members of this profession as shinobi, in keeping with the *traditions* of the period. Coincidentally, shinobi also roughly translates as *stealth*.

Another terms used to refer to ninja is *kusa*, which means grass. They are so called because of their ability to disappear in tall grass a short distance away from a target or adversary, and are nearly undetectable when so hidden.

Shinobi clans are modeled after the samurai clans. Some clans hold widely diverging views—some seek to maintain a constant balance of power, some work for a single lord and will do anything to advance him and him alone, while still others sell their services to whomever will pay their prices. Some clans have strong rivalries against others, some are totally neutral and do not bother another clan unless first bothered, and others view clans as compatriots and potential allies.

The two regions most famous for the *production* of shinobi are the province of Iga and Koga, in Omi. Note that residents of the latter pronounce the name Koka, so that if a stranger is around, everyone will know it.

STRUCTURE

The head of a shinobi clan is called the jonin. Below him are two broad levels—the chunin and

the genin. The chunin are the administrators, clan elders, teachers, various masters, and officials. The genin are the clansmen, shinobi who undertake the day-to-day activities and assignments.

In some cases, the jonin is a public figure, sitting in judgment like a feudal lord, while in others only a few of the chunin may know the identity of the jonin.

RELIGIOUS SECTS

See Buddhist Sects one page 43.

Ryu

Ryu, or schools, play an important role in Japanese society. Schools are very formalized in Sengoku Japan, and typically specialize in a single art or group of arts within a field. Martial ryu, for example, may teach all major bugei, or martial skills, but specialize in so-jutsu (spearmanship) or ken-jutsu (swordsmanship). There exist some ryu that specialize in the classical arts, but most ryu are of the martial variety. While not *ryu* in the strict sense of the word, many Buddhist temples teach many arts to anyone with a desire to learn, including tea ceremony, Chinese and Japanese classical literature, calligraphy, and so on. Other ryu were restricted to members of a particular clan or group, such as ryu operated by a samurai or shinobi clan, local police, or even a merchant guild or corporation.

Each ryu has a founder who established his unique style of a particular art. The founder's style or *tradition* (which can also be called a ryu) may be completely original or based on a slight modification of an existing ryu. But no matter what its origin, each ryu maintains a strong sense of identity and students generally carry a great sense of pride in their ryu. Rivalries between ryu can be as strong and violent as those between any samurai clan or religious sects. Indeed, some inter-ryu rivalries last many years. This is the equivalent of personal or familial blood feuds.

JOINING A RYU

Joining a ryu, like joining any formal group in Japan, requires a serious commitment on the part of the prospective student, as well as formal application to join the group. Generally, a letter of introduction is presented to the sensei

(teacher or master) of the ryu. This letter must be written by someone of influence, such as a lord or daimyo, an old friend of the sensei to whom it is written, or another well-respected sensei.

Once accepted, it is not uncommon for the student to submit a kishomon or seishi, a written pledge to become a student.

Some ryu were not as formal in their approach to taking in new students. Ryu operated by samurai clans or covert ryu of the various shinobi clans, for instance, were open to practically all members of its clan. Commercial schools were also often less selective, as they received their primary income from taking students. Other ryu, still, operated under a philosophy of transmitting their teachings to as many people as possible, and would take in as many students as they could accommodate.

Once accepted into the ryu, the new student must swear loyalty to his new master, the soke of the school. This vow of loyalty, formally requested and willingly given, extends into all aspects of his life and may only be discounted if it conflicts with his loyalty to a liege lord in the case of samurai. The soke or sensei, in essence, becomes the student's new *master*. Most ryu also require a pledge of absolute secrecy from the student as part of the vow of loyalty.

STRUCTURE

At the head of a ryu is the soke, or headmaster. The soke is addressed as *sensei* and may be the founder of the ryu, especially if the ryu is relatively new. In more established ryu, the founder is often deceased or retired, with the ryu having been entrusted to his best pupil, who becomes the new soke. The soke is the absolute master of the ryu. Like a minor daimyo, nothing happens in the ryu without the soke's consent. To act without authority is tantamount to hamon (formal expulsion) or, in some cases, death. The soke is the only individual within a ryu who may possess the norimono and inkajo, or scrolls of instruction; indeed, it is the soke's responsibility to maintain these scrolls.

Below the soke is the shihanke, or master teacher. Shihanke are those students who have obtained the inkajo, a special certification allowing the shihanke to pass on the traditions and teachings of the ryu to others. The shihanke

acts as the representative of the soke in all matters in which the soke is not present. Disobeying the shihanke is to disobey the soke—it is unthinkable. The shihanke is a position of incredible honor, requiring not only great skill but trust on the part of the soke. As bearers of the inkajo, shihanke may start their own dojo or training center under the soke's ryu. Some shihanke even go on to found their own ryu. The successor to a soke is always chosen from among the shihanke in the ryu.

Below the shihanke are one or more shihan, or senior instructors. The shihan assist the soke and shihanke with instruction, and may in fact assume nearly all teaching duties at the ryu, depending on the whims of the soke. The shihan are often responsible for training new students, bringing them up to a basic level of understanding of the ryu and techniques it teaches before introducing them to study with the shihanke or the soke himself. Students attaining this level of membership are awarded the menkyo-kaiden, or *license of complete transmission*, signifying that they have learned all that can be taught to them by the soke of the school. While not entirely accurate, it signifies a mastery of the basics of the art. Refinement only comes to the student through additional practice and study. Only students who have received the menkyo-kaiden are eligible to learn any okuden, or secret arts, associated with the ryu.

Below the shihan are the students themselves, who are in a constant process of learning and experience. Senior students are those who have mastered all of the basic elements of the art. Upon reaching this level of proficiency, they are awarded the menkyo, or *license of completion*, from the soke, indicating the student has achieved proficiency with the art. Intermediate students are those who have achieved a minimum level of proficiency in the art and can perform all of the basic techniques without assistance. Initiates make up the lowest strata of students and, as discussed above, are those tasked with most of the work necessary to keep the ryu running.

For game purposes, the ryu's teachings are required at proficient level for menkyo and expert for menkyo-kaiden.

LIFE IN THE RYU

Life for the new student can be harsh. Menial chores, such as cleaning the dojo and its grounds, and looking after the more senior students, like cooking their meals and drawing their baths, are typical duties of the new student which must be accomplished when they are not in training. This accounts for the majority of the daylight hours.

More senior students dedicate much time to training, like their inferiors, but down time is their own. Some students may head into town to seek entertainment, write letters, engage in prayer, or anything else they desire as long as it does not reflect poorly on the ryu.

Senior students assist the sensei in conditioning of students, and the best students aspire to become assistant teachers. In some ryu, assistant teachers train low-level students in the basic skills of the art before allowing them to begin training with the sensei.

OKUDEN

Each ryu maintains one or more secret, advanced techniques, which are only taught to the most senior, and thus the most trustworthy, students within the ryu. These secret techniques are called okuden (hidden teachings) or okugi (secret teachings). We shall refer to them throughout the rest of this book as okuden.

Okuden are advanced techniques that build on the basic principles established for the particular art, which allow the character performing them to achieve incredible results beyond the reach of lesser-trained characters.

A number of sample okuden are listed in the next chapter. Both the director and players are encouraged to develop additional okuden for their stories.

IKKI

In the 1400s, tax revolt groups, especially under the influence of militant Buddhism, formed Ikki (Leagues) to oppose the bakufu and other government authorities. Adherents to the Jodo Shinshu (True Pure Land Sect) created communities that were so fanatical they were called Ikko Ikki (Single-Directed League). In 1488 the Ikki assassinated the lord of Kaga and set up their own government, which ruled Kaga, Noto, and Echizen for nearly a century. This is

the Ikki to which Nobunaga is so hostile. Other prominent Ikki groups appeared in Kii, Ise, and Settsu, all directed by the temple headquarters.

The Ikko Ikki have been more than just recalcitrant in the Sengoku Period. They are able to field impressive armies of fanatical adherents, most poorly armed and equipped. What they lack in material, however, they more than make up for in enthusiasm and determination. They do not recognize the authority of the central government, and do not tolerate the interference of clans in governing their territories. The Ikko Ikki view themselves as sovereign to themselves, subject only to their master in Hongan-ji.

In 1575, Nobunaga finally goes head-to-head against the *Ikki rabble*. Forced to retreat to their mountain headquarters in Hiezan, they expect to wait out the hegemon, but they cannot. Nobunaga has other ideas. He orders the mountain fired; every wall and building on the mountain is put to the torch. Monks, priests, warriors, men, women, and children—all are killed. Those who try to escape are gunned down. Tens of thousands perish, and the back of the Ikki is broken for ever. Nobunaga even brings along a Jesuit observer, Luis Frois, who writes of the glory of God with effusive praise for the general's elimination of the rebellious heathen rabble.

EUROPEANS IN JAPAN

Europeans have been in Japan since Fernão Mendez Pinto was carried by a storm from Macao to the port of Nishimura on Tanegashima in 1543. Most of the Europeans in Japan now are involved with the Roman Catholic mission, although a handful of men are diplomats from the Portuguese colony of Macao, or rather, representatives from Portugal.

Not all is calm among the foreigners. The majority of clerics are Jesuit trained, although quite a few Franciscans have come from Spain. In addition to the political rivalries between Spain and Portugal, now united as they are under the Portuguese king, the Jesuits and Franciscans have their own ideas as to how the nation should be evangelized. The Jesuits work from the top down, gaining confidence and support from the daimyo and government authorities, while the Franciscans work in the fields and hamlets, gaining converts among the peasantry.

Merchants from Macao carry a trade in Chinese silks for Japanese silver and gold. They are seldom seen outside the major cities and port towns like Nagasaki, however. Sailors are the least likely to be accepting of Japanese values or culture, and they are the greatest cause of the low opinion Japanese have of the foreigners. Sailors prefer the lower class entertainments, and will drink and brawl until the police or other authorities have to come. For this reason, they are often restricted to certain areas of town where they can cause little disturbance—the neighborhoods of the eta.

Europeans in Japan are called Nanbanjin, or Southern Barbarians, by the Japanese. The Japanese consider them loud, crude, smelly, and uncultured. On the whole, at least in Japanese terms, they're right. While the Japanese bathe frequently, the Europeans seldom do, though those who have been *in country* long enough to go *native* are far more accepting of the Japanese concept of cleanliness.

Europeans, no matter how native, mostly still prefer the European diet and lifestyle, and while they will accept Japanese traditional life and eat Japanese food when presented, they prefer furniture, meat, wine, butter, and cheese.

ETIQUETTE

It has been said that an armed society is a polite society. Feudal Japan is very well armed.

As important as status and position are to the Japanese, etiquette is the grease that allows the wheels of society to turn. The lower-ranked one is, the more fawning his manners will appear as higher and higher ranks are being addressed.

Virtually all forms of social interactions will take one of three clear patterns—to one's superiors, equals, or inferiors. If a low-ranking samurai deals with an equal, he will function on an equal level unless he is hoping for a favor, in which case he would behave in the inferior-to-superior manner. Were he to behave in the superior-to-inferior manner, it would be either insulting or humorous, depending on situation and intent.

If the same low-ranking samurai were to use equal-to-equal manners and speech to his lord, it would be a shocking example of *lèse majesté*, the servant would be declaring his equality with the

master, and could get him severely reprimanded or even killed.

BOWING

Bowing is the standard greeting and farewell, and depending on the depth of the bow and its duration, one can immediately tell who is the superior and who is the inferior. Equals and friends may bow with little more than an inclination of the head informally, but as with all things, a formal situation requires formal behavior.

The most reverential form of bowing is a prostration, with one's forehead touching the ground. Usually this would only be used at court, or when summoned by one's lord, although a peasant being addressed by someone of very high rank, such as a well-placed samurai, or daimyo, may do this, and then carry on his conversation with the lord from a kneeling position.

If one has committed some error, he will apologize by bowing in this manner to the one he has offended—it is a sort of *get out of jail free* card if done sincerely, as a proper bow and apology always gets a higher reaction from the one being apologized to than if the person just stands there and says *sorry*.

SPEECH

The language itself is a barometer of social standing. Japanese has several different *politeness levels* with which one can speak. There are even certain verbs that are only used for different people. For example, when common people (or equals) eat, they will *taberu*, but when someone more important than you eats, he will *meshiagaru*. To these specialized vocabulary elements can be attached myriad forms of verbal endings, and to these can be married the various forms of simple pronouns. The result is a wonderful patchwork that can in a few words tell you everything you need to know about everyone.

In the English vernacular, such subtle nuances are literally impossible to get across. There are a few ways to somewhat convey the idea, however. When addressing a superior, a character should use as polite a speech pattern as possible. Refer to superiors in the third person, not the second.

Players are free, of course, to forego this level of detail entirely, but it does help to simulate the *feel* of the culture in which they will be playing.

INDOORS

When going indoors, one removes his footwear before stepping up to the wooden or tatami-clad flooring. Failing to do so is insulting, to say nothing of just plain unclean. There are usually servants at side entrances with *zori* or *geta*, so if you are to take a walk in the garden, to an outhouse, or off to the tea pavilion, you need not be concerned about having left your footwear on the other side of the building. Even inns will have pairs of *zori* or *geta* at various entrances for the convenience of their guests.

Given the nature of the interior walls, usually paper on wooden lattice, sound travels. It is thus rude to be loud or boisterous. It is also poor taste to be seen to be listening in on a conversation in another room, although it would be hard not to hear it.

AUDIENCES

When having an audience with a lord or other important personage, there will be guards present, although they may be hiding behind wall partitions. One should always bow formally to the lord at such a meeting, and sit on the floor several feet away. There may or may not be a cushion to sit on.

When indoors, the lord holding the audience will invariably sit on a dais at one end of the room, and anyone else will be on the floor. If a formal audience is being conducted outdoors, there will be a tatami platform or a camp chair on which the lord will sit, in front of a semi-circle of camp-curtains bearing the lord's crest.

Sometimes, the person holding court will sit on his veranda, and the people in attendance will sit below on the ground. This is more typical for a larger group, when a single room might not hold everyone who needs to be there.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

The weaving loom is in widespread use by clothiers, and has been in use since as far back as the Yayoi period (c. 300BC to 300AD). By the Nara period (eighth century), refined weaving techniques, introduced from China and Korea, were in widespread use. Woven cotton was introduced in the fifteenth century and became popular with the lower classes.

For common people of Sengoku Japan, clothing is usually of cotton, hemp, or even nettle fibers;

upper classes wear silk as well. Silk is made in Japan as well as imported from China.

Dyeing of material is accomplished using natural dyes from plants and minerals. The three methods are the batique technique, stencils, and tie-dyeing. Colors run the gamut from various earth-tones to bright jewel colors and pastels. Brocades and printed patterns are also commonly found. Older people wear darker, more subdued colors, while younger people wear brighter, more gaudy clothing. White is the color of death—people on their way to die will wear white, and people being prepared for funerals will be dressed in white as well.

Clothing is tied on or belted in place. There are very few instances in clothing of buttons being used (one is to hold the collar closed on a kimono worn under armor).

In rainy weather, upper-classes will make use of oiled paper umbrellas. The lower classes and samurai on the march wear raincoats of straw. All classes wear tall geta, if they can afford them, to keep their feet out of the mud and puddles.

Foundation

The universal male undergarment is the fundoshi, or loincloth, a long, narrow cloth which wraps up between the legs and around the lower torso. Men undergoing arduous work such as farming, woodcutting, or construction might wear nothing but a loincloth and a headband, especially if the weather is oppressively hot and humid. The fundoshi also serves as a garment for swimming.

Many men also wrap a long cloth, called a haramaki, around their abdomens. It serves to keep the belly warm, and is often worn even in the summer under the rest of the man's clothing. The belief is that if the belly is kept warm and secure, the person will be healthy.

Women of the upper-classes wear a red apron called a mo instead of any more binding undergarment.

Kimono

The word kimono means *thing to wear* and can, in a sense, refer to any item of clothing. Kimono are also a specific garment, however, and are always worn with the left side wrapped over right—wrapping the kimono right over left is how the dead were dressed.

The briefest and lightest kimono is called a juban, and functions like a t-shirt. It is usually plain, undyed hemp or cotton (or silk for the upper classes). Both men and women wear them, only the cut is slightly different.

Beyond this, most garments worn by women are variants of the kimono proper; sleeve size, fullness, and length—all these vary, but the general cut is the same. For men, only the under-classes generally stopped with the kimono—a variety of vests, over-robos, and coats were worn over the kimono. The cut, fabric, and decoration serve to set the ranks apart when it comes to kimono. The upper classes had silk and hemp and cotton, while the lower classes did not have access to the silk.

Men

Men of the upper classes will invariably wear hakama, or culottes-like trousers, with their kimono, even when lounging at home. Over this hakama and kimono combination, a buke who is lounging may add a dobuku, which is a large, broad-sleeved coat similar to a happi.



Standard wear for middle and lower-rank buke is the kamishimo, a garment consisting of a matching hakama and a sleeveless, sideless vest called a kataginu, worn over a kimono. A more formal outfit is the suo or hitatare, which is a kamishimo to whose kataginu huge, free-flowing sleeves have been attached. An eboshi, or cloth cap, of some sort is typically worn by those of rank. The armor under-robe is essentially a hitatare with closer-fitted sleeves. These large sleeves have ties at the wrists to enable the wearer to tie them closed so they will not get in his way.

Any of these garments may be decorated simply or elaborately with the owner's or wearer's clan crest.

When wearing armor, one may wear a hitatare over the armor. In this case, the sleeves are tied closed at the elbow so that they balloon out slightly, and the hakama is worn over the cuirass skirtplates. This outfit presents a very martial appearance.

Kuge wear a kariginu instead. A kariginu is a high and round-collared over-robe with large sleeves. It is worn over the hakama. The kanmuri, or cap of rank, is usually worn with a kariginu, especially in formal occasions. In the most formal of settings, kuge will wear a sokutai, a heavy, black court-robe. In less formal conditions, a kuge man will wear a garment called a suikan, which is almost identical in cut to a kariginu, but it is worn inside the hakama, and with the collar open and tied back.

Bonge and hinin might wear short kimono with no pants if the weather is warm. They may also wear cloth leggings around their shins. In cold weather, they will add trousers of similar cut to the hakama, but tighter and less wasteful of fabric. The outfit is similar to a twentieth-century judo gi.

Buddhist priests typically wear a simple kimono with a saffron kesa, a long cloth wrap worn over one shoulder.

Not all buke shave their heads and wear the topknot. There are two varieties of topknot. One is the tea-whisk style (usually worn with a full head of hair), which just gathers the hair up straight and tight in a ribbon and lets the end splay out like a tea-whisk. The other calls for a small knot of ribbon at the top of the back of the head and lets the hair fall forward slightly. There is, as yet, nothing like the later Edo hairstyle which has a shaven pate and a long queue of oiled hair folded forward over it. When donning armor for battle, bushi let their hair down, and leave it loose under the helmet.

Men of the upper classes wear tabi (split-toed socks) of either deerskin or cotton, and waraji (straw sandals). Those of the lower-classes make do without the tabi except during winter. Geta are not worn except at home in the garden during inclement weather. Zori are the more common alternative footwear.

Since Japanese clothing has no pockets, anything that needs to be carried is carried in the front flap of the kimono, or in the hanging sleeves. In the flap, a man will usually carry a fan, several sheets of paper and possibly a wallet.

Women

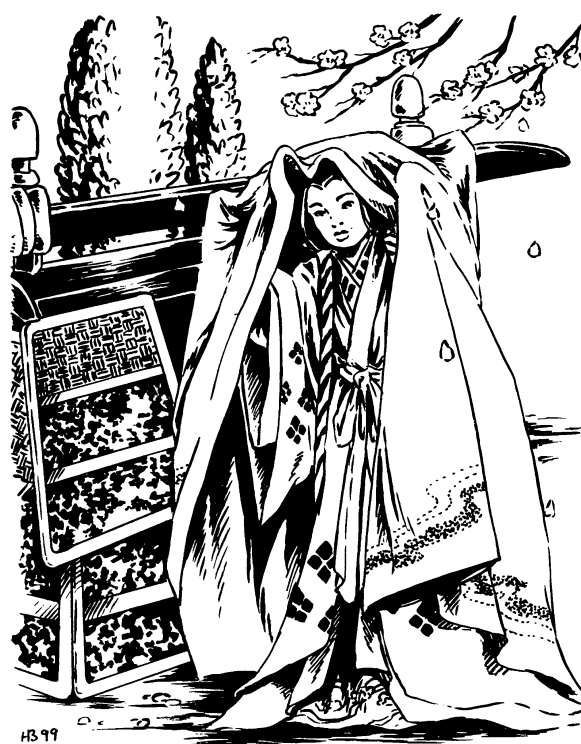
Women of the kuge have had their teeth blackened and eyebrows shaved, and a tiny black

dot of fake eyebrow was painted high on their foreheads—this is a mark of refined, quiet living. The women of the highest ranking buke have adopted this practice to an extent, although most buke considered it an affectation. Some men among the kuge even blacken their teeth to appear elegant, but in this case there is also a sense of the effete about the practice, and to most buke it just seems odd.

Upper-class women, both buke and kuge, wear their hair long, and tie it once at the base of the skull with a ribbon and let it hang loose.

Court dress for kuge and buke women is an ancient garment called a juni-hitoe. The term means *twelve-layered garment*, and although that may be a slight exaggeration, there are indeed eight to ten layers of robes worn one on top of the other. The colors and patterns coordinate as to season, and it is a mark of a woman's esthetic abilities that she makes no gaffes in choosing her apparel for the day. The juni-hitoe is bulky and hot, and women wearing it are severely restricted in their range of motion. While they look stunning, they are prisoners of their own clothing.

They will commonly wear one or two layered and belted kimono with an unbelted over-kimono as a sort of jacket. When they go outside, they will use this unbelted kimono as a sort of



hat, holding it above their heads. This serves to keep the sun out of their eyes, and keeps their skin pale. It also keeps prying eyes from seeing who is stepping out. An alternative is a low, broad conical hat of woven straw, from which hangs a curtain of gauze.

Common women wear but one kimono and an undergarment, unless their occupational requirements call for something else. Like upper-class women, they wear their hair long, but not as long, and often they have caught it up on their heads with a comb.

The huge bows and ornately decorated obi commonly seen in the twentieth century do not appear in Sengoku Japan.

DRINKING AND DINING

Dining is done in whatever room serves the purpose—there are no set dining rooms or banquet halls in Japanese homes or estates. Each place setting is prepared on an individual table slightly larger than one shaku square.

Rather than a single large plate, each item of food gets its own plate. Often, the plates have specialized functions. A bowl of rice accompanies every meal. This bowl may be refilled as many times as necessary from a large tub. One should never stick his ohashi (chopsticks) into the rice bowl so that they are standing up. That is how one offers rice to the dead and is an omen of very bad luck.

Dining is done with ohashi. Bowls and plates of food are brought close to the mouth and food is delivered with the ohashi. While spoons exist, soups are drunk from the bowl rather than ladled out a mouthful at a time.

Sake

Sake dates back to the third century, originating from a type of sake called kuchikami no sake, or *chewing-in-the-mouth sake*. Kuchikami no sake was made the way you might imagine—chestnuts and millet would be chewed by the whole village and then spat out into a tub to ferment. In Sengoku Japan, sake is the omnipresent beverage, and there is a bewildering variety of types. There is sweet sake, ceremonial sake, thick sake full of lees, dry sake, and so on. Contrary to popular opinion, not all sake is meant to be drunk warm; some sake are actually better chilled.

Sake is drunk out of low, broad cups called sakazuki, although more than one serious drinker of sake, when he has finished his soup, has converted the soup bowl into a sake cup. It is considered very poor taste to drink directly from the sake flask or jar.

A servant or a neighboring companion pours the drinks. One should never pour his own. It is not that it is rude to do so—it is just not done. Only those who are crude and crass, drunk, or truly at ease with each other, will dispense with the pouring rituals.

Sake is brewed in the winter. Many large farms brew their own sake as an off-season occupation. Smaller farms may brew their own sake for personal use and for offering to guests. The quality is generally not as good as that of large, professional brewers, but on a cold winter day or evening, a warm cup of sake can taste very good and warm the belly regardless of its origin.

Sake merchants in towns are also known to be moneylenders, and have the reputation of usurers.

Tea

Tea, or cha, is a common beverage as well, and is served in larger cups, piping hot. Note that this is different from the tea used in the Cha-no-yu, or Tea Ceremony. Common tea is just a warm beverage.

SWORD AND WEAPON ÉTIQUETTE

It is frequently said that the sign of a samurai is his two swords, but during the Sengoku Period this tradition is only starting to get off the ground. Most bushi wear or carry a long sword, and the short sword is often little more than a dirk. Since all but the warrior class are repeatedly forbidden weapons entirely, the wearing of swords by the bushi becomes a de facto sign of rank. During the Sengoku Period, people carry what they can get away with.

Katana (and the usually matching wakizashi) are worn thrust through the sash, edge up, at the left side (no one is left-handed in Japan). One way to get an idea of someone's rank is to observe how he wears his sword. One with rank and authority wears his katana thrust through his obi almost horizontally, sticking far out in front and

behind; this establishes his *personal space*. A more humble or lower ranking man wears his closer to his body, so the scabbard is almost parallel to his leg. Part of the reason for this is that to touch the scabbard of another is an insult, and a virtual challenge to an immediate duel.

POSTURING

Threatening gestures with swords include grasping the scabbard just behind the guard and pushing the guard forward with the thumb; deliberately reaching across the body and grasping the hilt with one's right hand but not actually drawing the blade; removing the cloth *sleeve* that travelers sometimes put over the hilt and guard to keep dust away; and pulling the scabbard forward but not quite out of the sash, so that the hilt is more accessible for a draw. You need not actually draw or strike if performing one of these actions, for such is the intent being telegraphed, but if the person is bluffing and has no intent to fight and then backs down in the face of someone calling his bluff, he suffers a loss of face. Backing down from such a situation causes the character to gain dishonor (director's discretion; see next chapter).

ENTERING BUILDINGS

When inside a private home or noble's estate, one must surrender the katana. In an estate, castle, or even the home of anyone with rank, there is a servant whose job it is to receive these swords, and keep track of them. There is a closet or sword rack near the door where swords are kept until the owner of the weapon is preparing to leave.



When sitting or kneeling indoors, especially as a guest, one should remove the sword from his sash and place it along his right side, edge in. This makes the sword inconvenient to get to and draw, and shows the proper respect. A great way to deliver a not-so-subtle insult is to remove the sword from your obi but lie it on the floor on your left side, edge out. This is positioned for an easy draw. The key to a respectful attitude with swords is to indicate that it would be difficult to draw, cut, or otherwise defend oneself, while the other person would find it easy to attack.

WEAPONS ON THE ROAD

When carrying polearms on the road, they are held point down, pointing at a spot on the ground about three feet in front. They can also be carried along the body in an attitude similar to *shoulder arms*. On the march, the blades are usually protected by lacquered covers. In addition to bringing the weapon into a guard position, the most threatening thing one can do is to jerk the haft and send the *sheath* flying—it implies you're ready to use your weapon.

KIRISUTE-GOMEN

Kirisute-gomen is the right of a samurai to cut down any member of the common or untouchable class and walk off with impunity. The family may not seek financial or legal redress, for the killer was samurai. That does not mean that the family cannot try to find someone who will avenge the death for them, however.

Most samurai would be unwilling to take on such a request, although ronin are likely to be more open to it. If the peasant was rude to the samurai, society would consider his death deserved. There have been cases, however, where samurai just wanted to test a new sword. Such cases, while legally unprosecutable under *kirisute-gomen*, should provoke common outrage.

SEPPUKU

Seppuku is the ritual suicide of the samurai. Strictly defined, it consists of one to three deep cuts in the abdomen (the full pattern forms the letter *H* on its side), which is followed by a final cut removing the victim's head with a sword stroke. This final cut is called a *kaishaku*, and it is a position of honor; asking someone to be your

kaishaku implies trust and respect for him, even if he is the enemy. Given the excruciating pain that seppuku entails, many kaishaku would strike after the first cut was made.

In the most formal of settings, seppuku takes place in front of white curtains (if outside) or in a simple, plain room inside. There is a tatami platform on the ground (if outside), on which is a cushion. Before the cushion is a small, plain wooden table, and on that table is a short-sword blade. The table may also contain an inkwell and brush, and a board of hard paper, if the one committing seppuku is intending to write a death poem. The blade will usually have been removed from the hilt, and the back half wrapped several times in white paper to provide a better grip. Beside and behind the cushion is a bucket of water and a ladle.

The one committing seppuku enters the scene wearing a white kimono, kneels on the cushion, and may remove the top half of his kimono and tuck it under his legs to help steady his body and keep him from flopping over. If he is writing a death poem, he will do so, then hand the writing materials off to a witness.

The kaishaku enters with a bared blade, his right arm free of the right half of his kimono to allow him greater freedom of movement. He dips the ladle in the bucket and runs a stream of water along both sides of his sword blade to lubricate it and enable a cleaner cut. This act also *purifies* the blade, in the Shinto tradition. The person committing seppuku picks up the blade in his right hand, and with his left moves the tiny table behind and under him for more support. The kaishaku assumes a ready position, sword held high in both hands. The subject positions the blade at his lower left abdomen, thrusts it in, drags it horizontally across his abdomen, and then an upward cut from the center of the first. If he is capable, he makes the third cut parallel to the first. Then the kaishaku lets fall with a single sweeping blow, striking off the head.

Women of the buke perform a form of suicide called ojigai, in which they thrust a dirk blade into their throats. They, too, may have a second if they wish, and in the full formal setting little changes.

Sometimes, when the person committing suicide had been ordered to do so, the kaishaku would strike even as the victim reached for the

blade. In some instances this was a mercy, as not all could bear the pain.

Reasons for committing seppuku.

- **Preserving honor;** perhaps a character is about to be captured by the enemy or is surrounded by hostile forces; suicide is preferable to ignominy
- **Atoning for dishonor;** a character who has committed some deed so heinous that he cannot live with the internal shame, or one who has lost so much face that he cannot bear the scorn of others, may prefer suicide to such a life
- **Resolving inner conflict;** a character who is instructed by his daimyo to do something he knows is wrong or shameful has only one way out; he cannot disobey his lord and he cannot do that deed
- **Kanshi (remonstrating his lord);** if a character's lord is behaving in a way that is shameful or injurious and fails to see it, he can write a letter to his lord and commit seppuku; such acts are held in high esteem, as they show great loyalty
- **Sentence of death;** samurai convicted of crimes were not executed like commoners; rather, they were *invited* to commit seppuku; such cases usually were the most formal, complete with official witnesses

ON, NINJO, GIMU, AND GIRI

These are inter-related concepts that are nearly impossible to translate succinctly. Gimu is obligation to repay others for what they have done for you. Giri is a sense of duty, or obligation. Ninjo is a consideration for others. On is indebtedness, or an unpaid *debt of honor*. These four aspects of life are integral to the whys and wherefores that govern the behavior of *good* people in Japan. Good people have a sense of giri and ninjo, while bad people do not.

ON

On (pronounced *own*) is, in its basic meaning, indebtedness, from the least to the greatest. When someone does something for another, a favor, loan, compliment, or gift, for example, he *gives an on* to the recipient. The giver is called the *on man*. The recipient carries the on, as a burden, and is said to *wear an on*. The concept of receiving a gift with no strings attached is irreconcilable to the Japanese mind; there is always a string attached. The requirement to repay an on is the string.

One may wear an on from his parents, lord, from a friend, or a total stranger. Receiving an on from someone not your superior, or at least your equal, leaves a disturbing sense of inferiority.

One bears an on to his mother, for everything she has provided for him, sacrifices made for him, and, simply for having given birth to him. One makes a partial payment of on to their parents by providing equally good (or better) rearing to their own children.

An on is also carried to the shogun, one's daimyo or other master, such as a teacher. All leader types help *show the way* for their charges, and an on worn for them may at some time make it necessary to answer a request for help, to show preference for their children after death, and so on.

Japanese do not like to shoulder the debt of gratitude that an on implies. Honor demands that an on be repaid in kind. One should go to great lengths to repay an on, and the sooner the better. An on does not shrink over time; quite the opposite. The more time goes by, the more significant the on becomes.

Even simple compliments made when greeting someone are a form of on that, unless returned, are *carried* by the recipient. Thus, the ever present courtesies, which are so important to the Japanese, are maintained by *manners* (and reinforced by *giri*).

If a person is presented with a gift (or any other on) which is of such value that the recipient cannot repay it, then the recipient suffers a great loss of face. To unknowingly give a gift that is too rich for the recipient to repay is a huge social gaffe. To knowingly do so is a tremendous insult. In either case, the on-giver may become the object of incredible bitterness, scorn and even violence.

As you can see, on is a deadly serious matter to the Japanese. On should be taken as an opportunity for role-play; characters who receive an on should do their utmost to repay the on. Failure to do so when the opportunity presents itself results in a loss of face.

NINJO

Ninjo is compassion for others and is similar to what Westerners call empathy. When one knows ninjo, he has consideration for the feelings of

another. It also encompasses one's own desires and *feelings*, such as love and kindness.

A samurai may practice *kirisute-gomen*, and cut down a peasant on the spot for some assumed insult. This is perfectly legal, but constitutes a willing disregard for ninjo; he has no feeling for the other fellow. It may also incur a loss of Honor for the samurai.

Bandits may form cooperatives to protect those who have no one else to do it for them, and they will operate out of a combined sense of *giri* and *ninjo*. They have the ability to protect the people, so they must exercise that ability (*giri*), and they do it because they care and empathize with the underdog (*ninjo*). Such bandit groups are the forerunners of the Tokugawa Period (and even present-day) *yakuza*, who like to think of themselves as Robin Hoods and the defenders of the common man.

Whether or not a character *knows ninjo* is up to his player. There is no societal requirement for it. Rather than providing rules for *ninjo*, we leave it up to you to define your character's viewpoints and motivations for his actions; *ninjo* is best reflected by taking the appropriate convictions and gimmicks, and through roleplaying.

GIMU

Gimu is the obligation to repay an on to those to whom one can never fully repay. The on received from these people is immeasurable and eternal. The fullest repayment of these obligations is still no more than partial, and the debt is timeless. Any failure to meet *gimu* results in dishonor. Gimu includes:

- **Chu**; duty to one's lord, the Emperor, and the Shogun
- **Ko**; duty to parents and ancestors and, by implication, to one's descendants
- **Ninmu**; duty to one's work

GIRI

Giri is, in simplistic terms, duty. It requires the repayment of debts (on) with mathematical equivalence; there is also a time limit, *per se*. Giri encompasses both *giri* to the world and *giri* to one's name.

Another form of *giri* is *giri* to one's in-laws. In-laws are a *contractual family*, and repayment of on to them is *giri*, whereas repayment of on to one's birth parents is *gimu*.

To say that someone *does not know giri* is an insult. It implies, in essence, that the person has no sense of loyalty, filial piety, or honor. Wild dogs do not know giri; a man must.

Giri to the world is repayment of on to one's fellows, and includes such things as:

- duties to your liege lord
- duties to your affinal family
- duties to non-relatives due to on received
- duties to distant relatives due to on received from common ancestors

Giri to one's name is the duty of keeping one's good name and reputation. This includes:

- duty to clear one's name of insult or accusation of failure
- duty to admit no (professional) failure or ignorance; protecting one's professional reputation
- duty to fulfill society's proprieties, such as behaving respectfully, accepting and living within one's station in life, and curbing inappropriate displays of emotion
- remaining stoic when in pain

As you can see, giri to the world and giri to one's name are two sides of the same coin. Any failure to meet giri results in a loss of face.

CONFLICTING OBLIGATIONS

In cases in which one's obligations are in conflict (such as a conflict between giri and ninjo, or giri and gimu), the character must choose one to fulfill and forego the other. The only other option is seppuku.

In cases of such conflicts, the character may have to decide which obligation he will fulfill and which he will forego. He resolves himself to suffer the consequences for failing to meet one or the other. Unless he can find a solution to his dilemma, seppuku may be his only recourse. Such is the stuff of Japanese legends.

HERALDRY

The vast majority of mon (crests) are by definition "assumed arms." They were chosen by the bearers with little restrictive control exercised, as there is no overseeing organization. In each samurai clan, there needs to be one officer with a wide knowledge of which family uses what crests, as it can often be a lifesaver, especially during a battle when an armored

division is approaching and all that can be discerned is the crest on their banners—are they friend or foe?

The first official "roll of arms," or compilation of family crests was completed under the auspices of the Muromachi bakufu around 1515. The Tokugawa bakufu compiled very detailed records, creating what was called a bukan, listing the "armorial bearings," standards, and residences and incomes of all the daimyo. Lesser books were also kept for individual clans and other, lesser families.

The pawlonia and the chrysanthemum are essentially imperial emblems, and their use implies imperial favor or connections at some point in the past. There are dozens upon dozens of designs incorporating these elements, many of which were bestowed by emperors upon houses they wished to honor or whose help they needed. Others are borne by institutions, notably shrines and temples, to display their erstwhile imperial connections.

Mon are more than heraldic crests; they are a major part of Japan's graphic arts history. The Takeda clan crest can also be seen as a fairly common fabric motif. The only difference is that in areas where the Takeda are exercising their influence, or in areas where the Takeda are especially disliked, it would be more than a little disrespectful to wear something with their crest emblazoned all over it in their presence.

In fact, many designs now considered crests were first fabric patterns. It is not really clear when they first began to be used, but during the latter part of the Heian Period there are indications that certain designs had come to be favored by certain families, which used them to the near exclusion of others, making these the first recognized kamon (family crests).

During the Edo Period, designs became excessively rococo, as their primary purpose of identification ceases to be an issue. Also, many wealthy merchants began to assume airs of gentility, and began adopting mon. Actors and courtesans followed suit.

CATEGORIES OF MON

There are six commonly recognized divisions of mon: plants, animals, natural phenomena, man-made objects, abstract designs, and ji (characters). Estimates of the number of actual

different designs hover between four and five thousand, representing over two-hundred and fifty different subjects.

The plant category is by far the numerical leader, though the man-made implements category has some one-hundred and twenty different subjects represented, compared to seventy-five for plants. The animals category (including birds and insects) is third, with about thirty different subjects. Martial motifs and those with otherwise auspicious meanings are particularly popular among samurai houses.

ENCLOSURES

Contrary to popular opinion, all mon are not enclosed in a circle. A great number are, but there are also a great many different kinds of enclosures. The simplest way mon are changed is with a slight alteration of the design—changing the number of veins on a leaf, making the lines slightly thicker, reducing the number of petals on a flower, and so on. A design could also be doubled or trebled, or it could be put in an enclosure that is narrow, fat, medium sized, or derived from an abstract design.

Rings are the most common form of enclosure. Some, however, are narrow, hair-line rings, while some are huge, monstrous circles that nearly overwhelm the designs inside them. Enclosures actually have a large degree of variation. The melon enclosure, for example, can have three, four, five, or even six lobes; and each of these variations can have any number of shapes—round, square, diamond, etc.

BANNERS

Not all banners and flags are truly heraldic. Many actually have no real designs, being merely geometric with a background color and a stripe or two, or divided or patterned fields.

Those bearing designs can bear the mon of the owner, a slogan, or even just a picture. Sometimes the mon appears alone and very large, while other times it is repeated two or three times vertically, or in a triangular or other geometric pattern. Other forms of decoration include mixing a geometric color shift, such as a broad strip of color across the top, with the mon somewhere displayed.

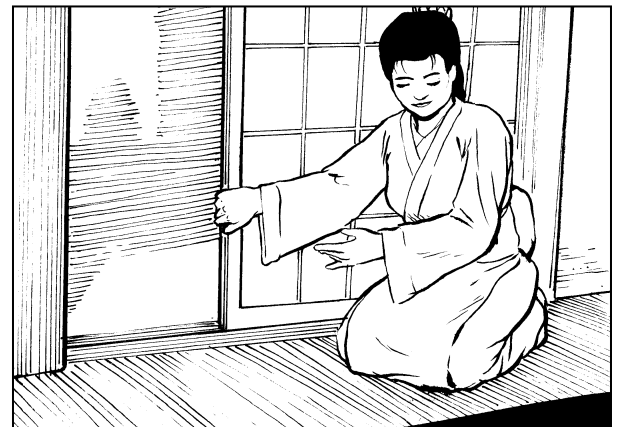
Daimyo on campaign have a personal standard marking their presence and their main base. Such standards are not always true flags, per se. Tokugawa Ieyasu has a huge golden fan, for example, and Hideyoshi has a huge golden gourd with several other pendant gourds. Nobunaga has a huge red European hat. The operative word here is “huge.” The term for such unique creations is *uma jirushi*, or “horse signs.”

Armored bushi, especially the lower ranks, and ashigaru, wear a *sashimono* (a type of banner) on their backs. This banner serves to identify their clan, commander, or unit.

CAMP CURTAINS

Camp curtains (*jinmaku*, or *tobari*) are used to ring areas to keep out wind or prying eyes. On campaign, generals hold councils and lay plots from within a ring of *jinmaku*.

Like banners, *jinmaku* have no single rule of appearance. They may be of one single color, may have a top strip and possibly a bottom strip in a different color, or even be striped. They may also be single colored, with the owner's crest as a design. There can be a random repetition of the mon over the surface of the curtain, a regular single large crest centered to be directly between support poles, or a regularly repeating smaller crest forming a sort of high equator-line on the *jinmaku*.



CHARACTERS

If one does not understand from the very beginning that the world is full of unseemly situations, for the most part his demeanor will be poor and he will not be believed by others.

YAMAMOTO TSUNETOMO

Characters in the *SENGOKU* setting are created using the same guidelines presented in the Active Exploits core rules with a few additions as noted on page 95. The following new abilities, gimmicks, and skills are added to those already provided in the core rules (for fantasy settings). Some are required by *SENGOKU* characters and are noted in their descriptions. A list of all the recommended skills and gimmicks can be found at the end of this section.

☑ NEW ABILITIES

PIETY

Piety is not only a measure of a character's religious conviction, but also the connection with the spirits he worships. Whereas everyone in Japan believes in the existence of the kami and Buddhas, piety allows one to call upon the spirits to intervene on behalf of a mortal and to allow a character to take advantage of divine magic (like heavenly-created magic items and some spells). Piety also plays a role in the mystical abilities of Shinto and Buddhist priests in *SENGOKU*. A character's piety ability rating reflects how strong his beliefs are for his chosen religion. The character's primary faith or religion must be specified: Bukkyo (Buddhism), Onmyodo, Shinto, or Shugendo.

KI

The chi ability from the Active Exploits core rules should be referred to as *ki* when playing *SENGOKU*—*chi* is a Chinese term, while *ki* is the Japanese equivalent. Simply allocate a number of points determined by the focus ki skill (see table below) among any combination of chi flairs. Double this for heroic and triple it for epic games. In this manner, ki is identical to chi as presented in the Active Exploits core rules, except that the use of martial arts styles listed in the core rules is irrelevant for the scope of this setting.

FOCUS KI SKILL RATING	KI RATING
unskilled	0
novice	2
proficient	4
expert	6

☑ NEW ASPECTS

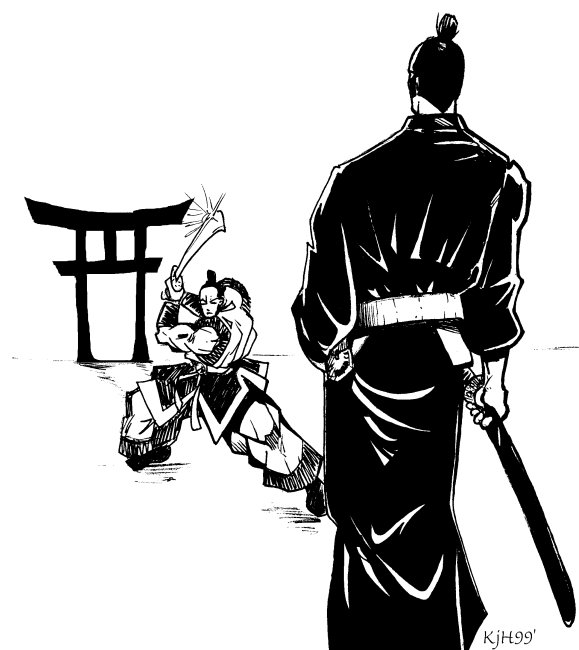
KAO

Kao represents the character's long-term honor and glory, as perceived and recognized by others. A character with a high kao rating has many achievements, a good reputation, and much *face*. A character may gain or lose kao during play to reflect the effect that his actions have on his reputation and in the way others perceive him. Kao is used in social situations where the character's reputation or social status come into play, rather than relying on his direct influence. In such cases, influence-based tasks that are contested gain a bonus in effort equal to the character's current kao rating.

Kao is gained by acts of recognition and goodwill by others. If someone publicly recognizes your good deed, they honor you; they give you face. If someone gives you a gift of moderate value, they honor you; again you gain face. If someone makes it possible for you to fulfill an obligation without incurring a debt to them, they honor you in a big way; you gain much face. Only large gains of face will increase a character's kao rating. The director should only award an increase as a result of the character's appropriate behavior, however.

KI (OPTIONAL VERSION)

This is an optional version of ki and may be used as a single aspect. The rating for this version of ki is also determined by the character's focus ki skill (see the table associated with the ki ability).



KJH99

This is the total number of ki points a character may expend during a single episode for dramatic games (double this for heroic and triple it for epic).

Ki must be focused in order for it to be expended. This requires a focus ki task (which takes one turn) when using the dramatic rules only—skip this task for the other reality levels. The difficulty should be adjusted according to the situation. For example, focusing ki during combat may be challenging, while attempting the same during a typhoon may be improbable.

Ki may be expended in order to benefit from one of the following effects:

- *increases the amount of effort used in any fitness-based task by two for each point expended*
- *increases the amount of damage inflicted from any brawling or melee attack by two grades for each point expended*
- *increases the character's armor rating against fatigue or injury for one turn by two for each point expended*
- *reduces the character's current level of fatigue or injury by one grade for each point expended*

☑ NEW FORMS OF HEALTH DISHONOR

Dishonor represents loss of dignity, pride, and honor. A person *wears a face* in public when they have honor. If they are dishonored in some way, it is said that they *lose face*—that is, they cannot show their face in public without great disgrace because they are shamed.

Dishonor is the measure of a character's loss of face. The amount of effort that the character can exert on an influence-based task may be reduced when he loses *face* (see the table below). When a character has sustained five grades of dishonor, he also may not expend kao to increase an influence-based task AND he loses one point of kao as a result of his disgrace. Dishonor may be represented by the abbreviation DIS.

DISHONOR GRADE	PENALTY
1 embarrassed	-
2 abashed	-1 / +1 DIFF*
3 humiliated	-2 / +2 DIFF*
4 besmirched	-3 / +3 DIFF*
5 disgraced	-4 / +4 DIFF*

* basic/advanced task resolution

Dishonor can only come from actions that are publicly known; those that are observed by or known to two or more people other than the character committing the act. Acts known only to the character himself do not qualify. While the secret commission of a wrongful act may gnaw at the character's soul and torment him, it will not be something that will cause him to lose face.

Even if one is publicly accused of a bad act they did not commit, the accused character will gain dishonor unless steps are immediately taken to avenge or correct the insult or otherwise change the public perception of him—inaction is typically associated with guilt.

A person without honor and kao is the lowest kind of person. Dishonor may be reduced by even the smallest gains of face, such as by receiving on or somehow restoring his reputation. This is totally up to the director's discretion to maintain flexibility for different styles of play.

ACTION	DISHONOR
minor social gaffe	1 DIS
few witnesses	1 DIS
serious breach of etiquette	2 DIS
dozens of witnesses	2 DIS
severe breach of protocol	3 DIS
hundreds of witnesses	3 DIS
extreme insult	4 DIS
very influential witnesses	4 DIS

VIOLATION

Each faith has certain religious tenets that must be adhered to by its followers in order for them to maintain their piety ability. Violation is the measure of a character's transgressions (Buddhism), pollutions (Shinto), and sins (Kirishitendo).

Any of these result in a reduction in ability and remain in effect until the character satisfies his religion's requirements. The amount of effort the character can exert on a piety-based task may be reduced when he has violations. When a character has sustained five grades of violation, he may not attempt any piety-based tasks. Violation may be represented by the abbreviation VIO.

There are two types of violations—minor and major. Minor violations often inflict one grade, while major ones inflict three or more grades (director's discretion).

VIOLATION GRADE		PENALTY
1	degraded	-
2	defiled	-1 / +1 DIFF*
3	sullied	-2 / +2 DIFF*
4	debased	-3 / +3 DIFF*
5	corrupted	—

* basic/advanced task resolution

Another way to reduce penalties due to violation is to change faiths. To accomplish this, a character must have the appropriate faith skill at apprentice level or greater and choose the new religion as their faith. From that point on, the character is subject to the tenets of this new faith, and is no longer required to adhere to the tenets of his previous faith. This removes all previous violations.

Leaving the priesthood is a serious decision—characters automatically lose the ability to cast spells of the religion they left. They still have the knowledge, and can even teach the spells to others, but cannot themselves cast them. Former priests traditionally change their name to reflect their leaving the priesthood behind.

Transgressions (Buddhism)

Violations of Buddhist law are called transgressions. In order to remove violations due to transgressions, the character must be blessed by a Buddhist priest or yamabushi.

TRANSGRESSIONS	
MINOR TRANSGRESSIONS (1vio)	
causing harm to any life	
stealing	
committing adultery	
lying or exaggerating	
speaking abusively	
equivocating (speaking evasively or vaguely)	
succumbing to greed	
to be hateful	
wasting food	
eating meat (this is a major transgression for yamabushi)	
MAJOR TRANSGRESSIONS (3vio+)	
to kill a living thing	
refusing charity	
curse or otherwise dishonor the Buddhas	
incurring a calamity on a prayer-casting task	

Pollutions (Shinto)

Violations of Shinto rules cause the character to gain pollution. In order to remove violations due to pollutions, the character must be purified by a Shinto priest.

POLLUTIONS	
MINOR POLLUTIONS (1vio)	
attending a funeral	
eating meat	
speaking ill of or otherwise offending any kami	
being present at any birth	
close proximity to death, blood, or disease	
any interference with agriculture/crops	
MAJOR POLLUTIONS (3vio+)	
defiling a shrine	
contact with death, blood, or disease	
menstruation	
contracting a disease	
incurring a calamity on a prayer-casting task	

Sins (Kirishitendo)

Violations of Kirishitan law are called sins. Both the Catholics and Protestant sects recognize the same sins. The only exception is that the Catholics consider the Pope's word as the word of God, so that anyone defying or disrespecting the Pope commits a major sin.

戦国

In order for Jesuits and Catholics to remove violations due to sin, characters must confess their sins to a Catholic or Jesuit priest, be forgiven by the priest (in the name of God) and receive absolution.

Protestant characters remove violations due to sin far easier than their Catholic counterparts. Protestant characters automatically remove one grade of violation by praying for forgiveness and gaining one grade of fatigue. This may be done once per week. Protestant characters with more than two grades of violation, however, must attend a Protestant religious service and receive the Word of God in order for forgiveness. If the service is held on a Sunday or any holy day, fatigue is not gained.



SINS**MINOR SINS (1vio)**

stealing
 committing adultery
 coveting other people's property
 dishonoring or disrespecting one's parents
 succumbing to greed
 bearing false witness against someone

MAJOR SINS (3vio+)

murder
 praying to other gods or their images/idols
 blaspheming (taking the Lord's name in vain)
 heresy (speak against the Church; Catholics/Jesuits only)

☑ NEW SKILLS

The following new skills should be made available to *SENGOKU* characters. The possession of any skill by a character is dependent on his background (caste and vocation). The templates on page 97 should assist in matching sets of skills to types of characters.

FITNESS-BASED**BLOWGUN**

This skill was rarely, if ever, used by those of the buke or kuge castes. It is a favorite method of delivering poison for assassins, however. Blowguns, or fukiburi, can be disguised as a number of innocuous items, like a flute, staff, scroll tube, wind chime, and so forth.

FIREARMS

This skill was primarily used by ashigaru in battle, and covers the use of matchlock weapons and small cannons.

FOCUS KI

Focusing one's ki, or inner power, allows a character to use the ki aspect.

RIDING (BA-JUTSU)

This is the same as the normal riding skill. It is included here for the sake of providing its Japanese term (ba-jutsu).

STEALTH

Stealth is the art of moving quietly and unseen, and surreptitiously following others unnoticed. It is common among samurai scouts, but more so among shinobi, bandits, and thieves. Using stealth typically involves a resisted task using awareness and investigation.

AWARENESS-BASED**MEDITATION**

The art of meditation, or Meiso or Za-zen, allows a character to gain near to full rest with little time lost. Characters may increase the amount of fatigue recovered each day by one grade for every two points of overkill achieved. In addition, a successful task may be used to decrease the penalty due to injury or dementia by one (for example, a wounded character would receive +1DIFF instead of +2DIFF).

CREATIVITY-BASED**CEREMONY**

This skill includes the art of preparing for and performing the famed tea ceremony, as well as the incense ceremony.

Both ceremonies are refined art forms in Japan, and symbolize the best qualities of human grace and spiritual purity. Important criteria for a properly conducted ceremony include maintenance of inner and outer purity, reverence for all life, harmony, and tranquillity. The ceremony brings much honor to both the guest and the host, if performed properly (director's discretion). Tea ceremonies are often performed to cement the bonds of friendship or to reaffirm a vow or promise.

DESIGN

As with the Active Exploits core rules, design is a wide-ranging artistic skill, covering forgery, calligraphy, and flower arrangement.

DISGUISE

Disguise is the skill of changing a character's appearance through makeup, costumes, body language and facial expression. While a perfectly proper skill for No actors, it was otherwise considered inappropriate for people to use (in fact, dressing as someone from other than your caste is a crime in some regions). Shinobi put this skill to special use, having developed a repertoire of disguises that they could use to move about unnoticed. Favorite shinobi disguises include the farmer, Buddhist priest or nun, komuso, actor or entertainer, shugenja, merchant, ronin, and others.

INSTRUMENT

If the director prefers, the following specific instruments may be considered separate skills. Otherwise, characters can just choose the *instrument* skill.

INSTRUMENT SPECIALTIES

Drums (Taiko)

Includes the double-headed folk drum (okedo), large stick drum (o-daiko), and medium stick drum (taiko).

Flutes (Fue)

Includes the bamboo flute (shakuhachi), mouth organ (sho), No flute (nokan), and small flute (shinobue).

Strings (Gengakki)

Includes the biwa, a pear-shaped lute.

Koto

The large Japanese zither.

MIMICRY

Being able to imitate other voices will greatly enhance a good disguise, especially if used in conjunction with performance. It can also be used by hidden shinobi to lure their prey into the open or to distract guards.

No

This is the skill of dramatic No theater performances, popular among aristocrats and cultured persons in Japan. (*Note: Kabuki does not appear on the scene until the Edo Period.*) There are four main schools, or traditions, of No in Japan— Kanze, Hosho, Konparu, and Kongo. Rivalries between No traditions can run as strong as those of any organized groups, though they tend to be more philosophical and intellectual, seldom (if ever) becoming violent. This skill replaces the performance skill.

REASONING-BASED

ANIMAL HANDLING

The skill of animal handling, or Bakuro-jutsu, is the training and basic care of animals. This skill can be helpful in calming an angered predator or frightened horse, as well as in hunting or trapping game. This skill is ineffective when dealing with intelligent animals, such as the mystical Kitsune, Tengu, Kappa and the like.

BUDDHISM

Bukkyo, the study of the teachings of Buddha. Characters with this skill are familiar with the

BUDDHIST SECTS

Hokke (The Lotus Sect; also called Nichiren)

Its followers are often the most fanatical of all Buddhists. Their supreme scripture is the Lotus Sutra, containing the last instructions of the Buddha.

Hosso

This sect emphasizes workings of consciousness and its interrelationship with the environment.

Ikko

Later called Jodo Shinshu, or *True Pure Land*. One of the most prosperous and populous sects, a revision of the Pure Land Sect stressing the importance of repeating the Nenbutsu mantra.

Ji

A sect following a variation of the *Pure Land doctrine*.

Jodo

The *Pure Land* sect.

Kegon

An ancient sect, whose scholarship is highly regarded.

Ritsu

This sect stresses the ascetic disciplines.

Shingon

This is a major sect emphasizing esoteric doctrines.

Tendai

This is another sect emphasizing esoteric doctrines.

Yuzu Nebutsu

The first of the great Amida-worshipping sects.

Zen

Any of the three branches of Zen—Rinzai, Fuke, and Soto.

concepts of Buddhism as well as basic Buddhist doctrine, including the three precepts—shun evil, do good works, and be kind to all beings (man and animal). Japan's culture is very much influenced by both Buddhism and Shinto, making this available to everyone. Buddhism is also used with the piety ability to invoke the Buddhist spirits and cause magical effects. Even laymen have the potential to call upon the Buddhas, although their chances of success are much less than that of a pious, studied priest. This skill covers only a single Buddhist Sect which must be chosen during character creation. Further explanation of the sects can be found on page 43.

CHRISTIANITY

This is the study of the Holy Bible and the teachings of God. Most nanbanjin are of the Roman Catholic faith, although a few (English

and Dutch) claim to be of a rebellious Christian sect known as *Protestants*. This skill confers knowledge equally applicable to both. A number of Japan's inhabitants have been converted to Christianity by the Jesuit missionaries, although they are still very much a minority, and mostly reside on Kyushu. Christianity is tolerated by the ruling daimyo for now.

CONFUCIANISM

This skill encompasses the knowledge of the philosophical teachings of Confucius, (Kong Fu Zi), who lived in China from 551 to 479BC. This skill also confers an understanding of the social conscience and values of Japanese society, as well as its *common laws*. According to early Japanese writings, it was introduced to Japan from Korea in the year 285AD. Some of the most important Confucian principles are humanity, loyalty, morality, and consideration on both individual and political levels. This skill also allows characters to formulate legal arguments as well as philosophical debates.

ESPIONAGE

Also called Onmitsu, espionage is the art of infiltrating social groups or populated areas (like towns or provinces) without attracting attention, and then gathering information. It also covers solving simple ciphers and encrypting or decoding messages. This skill is often used by female buke when married into an enemy clan, as well as government spies and shinobi. Note that to infiltrate an area unseen requires Stealth. This skill replaces *subterfuge*.

FALCONRY

This is the skill of hunting with a trained falcon. Characters with this skill are trained in the social ritual of the hunt, popular among buke aristocrats. Falconry is accomplished on horseback with a falcon perched initially on a padded sleeve. This is a popular pastime among the wealthier buke courtiers and the kuge.

HIGH SOCIETY

This is the knowledge of upper-class culture—what clothes to wear, what are considered sophisticated foods, and how to mingle with royalty and other important people. This skill also covers buke and kuge court etiquette. This is a popular skill among affluent merchants and a

necessary one among buke and kuge courtiers. Failure to present oneself properly in court can doom one's political career before it begins or ruin any chance of a favor being granted before it is requested.

SHINTO

This is the knowledge of Japan's indigenous religion—*Shinten, the Way of the Kami*. Characters with this skill are familiar with the concepts of Shinto and the myriad of spirits that make up its pantheon. Japan's culture is very influenced by both Buddhism and Shinto, making this skill available to everyone.

Shinto is also one of the five forms of *magic* in Japan. The shinto skill is also used with the piety ability to perform Shinto rites for mystical effects.

INFLUENCE-BASED

FLATTERY

Making others feel good about themselves through carefully crafted compliments and flowery speech is a very important aspect of society in Japan, where proper respect and courtesy are expected. To greet someone politely is basic manners; to compliment them at the same time is the mark of a civilized person. While flattery does not necessarily change someone's opinion about an issue, it can influence their reaction when dealing with you. Caution is advised, however, as insincere flattery can be as risky as insulting someone. Flattery is considered an art form among the Kuge.

PIETY-BASED

BUDDHISM

See Buddhism under reasoning-based skills.

ONMYODO

Onmyodo is the ancient Japanese form of magic, or sorcery. It involves the concepts of Chinese elemental magic (gogyo) and Taoist mystic principles of yin/yang, or *light and dark* (known in Japan as in-yo). Onmyodo is a required skill for practitioners of the sorcerous art, called onmyoji. Onmyodo is used with the piety ability for casting various spells, while reasoning is used for tasks involving knowledge and lore of the art.

SHINTO

See Shinto under reasoning-based skills.

SHUGENDO

Shugendo is the mystic knowledge and theory of esoteric Buddhism practiced by priests of the yamabushi mountain cult of shugendo. A derivation of the Shingon and Tendai sects of Buddhism, Shugendo is a required skill for yamabushi. It is used with the piety ability for casting various spells, while reasoning is used for tasks involving knowledge and lore of the art.

MARTIAL ARTS SKILLS

The martial arts of Japan are very specialized, and as such, each type of weapon requires its own specialized training. However, characters may also use their training in one weapon with another, similar weapon, but at a penalty of +1DIFF to +2DIFF. The director is the final authority in determining whether a weapon is similar enough to allow the use of a skill with a weapon it does not specifically cover. All martial arts skills rely on the fitness ability. If you prefer a simpler game, ignore the martial arts skills listed below and just use the standard combat skills provided in the Active Exploits core rules (*archery, athletics, brawling, and melee*).

ARCHERY**KYU-JUTSU**

The skill of using the full-sized yumi (daikyu) and short bow (hankyu).

ATHLETICS**SHURIKEN-JUTSU****(THROWING)**

The skill of throwing knives, shuriken, uchi-ne, and improvised weapons, such as rocks and coins. Shinobi are able to put this skill to particularly effective use, being able to spit small needles and darts at their foes.

Darts**+3DIFF**

Spitting small objects, such as darts and needles.

YADOME-JUTSU**(ARROW DEFENSE)**

The skill of intercepting muscle-powered projectiles, typically arrows, using a specific melee weapon. This is handled as a dodge (or parry), using this skill in place of athletics to dodge, deflect, destroy, or catch the projectile. Yadome-Jutsu requires the melee martial art with which it is to be used to be at proficient level or greater.



BRAWLING

ATEMI-WAZA

An unarmed combat style originating from a variant of Chinese Shao-lin Kung Fu on the Ryukyu islands (Okinawa). Incorporating various blocks and strikes, characters with this skill may opt to inflict one grade of injury in addition to normal damage for each strike. Characters using atemi-waza may block or parry wooden weapons with a reduction in risk by two grades. This skill may be used in place of athletics or melee when defending against a melee attack.

Ju-Jutsu

An unarmed combat style originating in Japan, ju-jutsu incorporates various rolls, throws, and grappling maneuvers (reduce the penalty on the evade, roll, unbalance, pin, and disarm stunts by -1DIFF). Characters using ju-jutsu may block or parry wooden weapons with a reduction in risk by two grades. This skill may be used in place of athletics or melee when defending against a melee attack.

NINPO TAIJUTSU

This unarmed combat style is used exclusively by shinobi. Ninpo taijutsu stresses fluidity of movement and adaptability. The art incorporates quick, devastating punches and nerve strikes designed to quickly incapacitate an opponent, as well as leg sweeps and evasion techniques (reduce the penalty on the precision, sweep, disarm, and roll stunts by -1DIFF). Characters using Ninpo taijutsu may block or parry wooden weapons with a reduction in risk by two grades, and metal weapons with a reduction in risk by one grade. This skill may be used in place of athletics or melee when defending against a melee attack.

SUMAI

This unarmed combat style used by sumotori incorporates various slaps, trips, throws and shoves designed to send the opponent out of the ring or to the ground (reduce the penalty on the unbalance, pin, and constrict stunts by -1DIFF). Character using sumai may block or parry wooden weapons with a reduction in risk by two grades. This skill may be used in place of athletics or melee when defending against a melee attack.

MELEE

MASAKARI-JUTSU

(AXES)

The skill of using the fuetsu, masakari, and ono in melee combat.

KUSARI-JUTSU

(CHAINS)

The skill of using the kawa-naga, kusari-fundo, kusari-gama, kyogetsu-shoge, and manrikigusari in melee combat.

TESSEN-JUTSU

(FAN)

The skill of using the war fan or steel fan in combat.

NUNCHAKU-TE

(FLAIL)

The skill of using the nunchaku, sanbon nunchaku, and related weapons in melee combat.

IAI-JUTSU

(SWORD)

Iai-jutsu is a series of techniques for rapidly drawing a sword and striking in one swift motion. It is a special skill, and is treated differently from conventional ken-jutsu. Character may draw and strike in the same turn without penalty and strike as if the target is surprised (director's discretion). Iai techniques can be performed from either a standing or seated position.

JITTE-JUTSU

(JITTE/SAI)

The skill of using the jitte and sai in combat. Characters with this skill can use the jitte or sai to perform a disarm stunt against opponents with swords.

KAMA-JUTSU

(FARMER'S TOOLS)

Kama-Jutsu, the skill of using the kama, ogama and kusari-gama in melee combat. The kama is commonly perceived as a farmer's tool, though it is becoming increasingly popular as a weapon among the bonge, who are often prohibited from carrying *real* weapons.

TANTO-JUTSU

(KNIFE)

The skill of using the aiguchi and tanto in melee combat.

TOAMI-JUTSU

(NETS/ENTANGLEMENT)

The skill of using nets of various types to entangle an opponent, especially at a distance. The most common type of nets encountered are fishing nets, which are strong, circular-shaped nets made of durable silk with iron weights

attached at various points along the outer edge of the net. When entangled, only melee weapons may be used by the ensnared victim, and with a penalty of -2DIFF.

NAGINATA-JUTSU (STAFF)

The skill of wielding the bisento and naginata weapons.

SODEGARAMI-JUTSU (STAFF)

The skill of wielding the sasumata and sodegarami.

SO-JUTSU (STAFF)

The skill of wielding the yari and hoko weapons.

JO-JUTSU (STAFF)

The skill of wielding the bo, jo, and similar weapons. Although other variations, such as bo-jutsu, exist, jo-jutsu is used as a general skill for staff training.

TETSUBO (STAFF)

The skill of wielding the tetsubo and any other large, heavy, club-like weapons.

KEN-JUTSU (SWORD)

The skill of wielding the bokken, katana, tachi, ninjato (shinobigatana), wakizashi, nodachi, and kodachi in combat.

Ni-to Ken-Jutsu +2DIFF
This stunt allows a character to attack with two complementary bladed weapons at a time. Only one attack task is made, but damage from both weapons is applied if successful.

OKUDEN

Okuden, or the *inner art*, are a special category of skills. They are the secret martial skills taught only to prized students. Okuden may only be used by characters who possess the appropriate skill at proficient level or greater and are members of a ryu. All okuden are fitness-based.

Only one okuden may be used by a character in a given turn; characters may not use multiple okuden at the same time. Okuden cover more specific ranges of actions than their related skills, typically more advanced feats. When attempting such actions, the okuden is used as the skill in the task. If the action is not covered by the okuden, but a part of the skill related to the okuden, the latter is used for the task.

For example: *Launching an arrow in the normal fashion is an archery task. Loading and launching an arrow in the same turn is covered by the The Archer's Path, so that okuden is used as the skill for the task.*

Different martial schools and traditions (ryu) have different names for various okuden, but the effects in game terms are the same.

For example: *While two ryu may have the Furious Wind okuden for ken-jutsu, one may call it Butterfly Alighting on the Rock while the other ryu may call it Splitting Your Foe in Two.*

THE ARCHER'S PATH

The character is able to load, draw a bow, and let loose an arrow as a single action. Requires the archery/kyu-jutsu skill.

BLADE TRAPPING

The character has the ability to trap an opponent's blade between his bare hands with a successful resisted task using an appropriate brawling skill (atemi-waza, ju-jutsu, etc.). The character must have empty hands and receive the attack when using this okuden. A character who successfully traps a blade takes no damage from the attack and the opponent is unable to move or use his weapon (he has the choice to drop it or try to pull back). The character with the skill may also attempt to throw his opponent. Requires the brawling skill or brawling martial art.

CHAKUZEN-JUTSU

The character may perform the *ceiling walking technique* by pressing his limbs and torso snugly against a wall or ceiling and manipulating the slightest handholds or crevasses to keep his body in position. The character may perform attacks, lift objects, or crawl while in this position. Requires the athletics skill.

DOGAKURE

The character may hurl up to five shuriken (or other small objects) in a single action. If the character's fitness rating is +4 or greater, he may throw up to ten shuriken in a single action. The director must use his best discretion to determine how many strike their target based on the amount of overkill achieved. Requires the shuriken-jutsu martial art (or athletics if not using martial arts skills).

FURIOUS WIND

The character may attempt to strike multiple opponents with a single action. The task is modified by +2DIFF. Requires the melee skill or any melee martial art.

HIDDEN BLADE

The character conceals his blade (under water, in a thick fog, in a billowy sleeve, etc.), thus concealing its true position from his opponent. When the character makes his attack, his opponent is surprised for the first action with the blade. Subsequent actions are unaffected. To receive the bonus, the sword must be hidden again. Requires the tessen-jutsu, jitte-jutsu, tanto-jutsu, or ken-jutsu skill.

KARUMI-JUTSU

The character can leap great distances—up to an additional twenty meters. Each use of this inflicts one grade of fatigue. Requires the athletics skill.

LIGHTNING STRIKE

The character may attack a target twice in one turn, using the same degree of exertion (fitness-based effort from the first attack may be used again in the second, as can points from luck or experience). Both attacks receive +1DIFF. Requires any melee skill or melee martial art.

PIERCING THRUST

The character's strike is powerful enough to penetrate armor, reducing its effectiveness by half for this attack. Requires the masakari-jutsu, iai-jutsu, jitte-jutsu, tanto-jutsu, naginata-jutsu, or ken-jutsu skill.

REVERSE CUT

The character may strike at opponents to the side or even behind him with no penalty. Requires a melee skill or melee martial art.

SEEING WITH THE EARS

The character is able to attack a target that he hears, but does not see. This is used in the case of someone crawling about in a ceiling, behind walls, or in the bushes; it has no other use. Requires any weapon skill.

SEEKING ARROWS

The character is able to fire an arrow to strike an opponent's vulnerable points, effectively

reducing the target's armor rating by half. Each successive attempt receives +1DIFF. Requires the archery/kyu-jutsu skill.

SMASHING BLOW

FITNESS-BASED

The character inflicts an additional grade of fatigue when striking. Requires the nunchaku-te, jo-jutsu, or tetsubo skill (or melee if not using martial arts skills).

☑ NEW GIMMICKS

BLIND FIGHTING

When blindfolded or otherwise blinded, the character can also use his awareness ability (and hearing or instinct flair) to add effort to combat-based tasks. A severe penalty should still be applied to the task—up to +4DIFF. This gimmick can turn a seemingly helpless blind man into a serious threat.

DEBT OWED

Someone owes the character a debt (on) which has yet to be repaid. A man cannot refuse to repay a debt without losing face. If a character refuses to repay a debt when called upon to do so, he gains one (1) grade of dishonor.

FEIGN DEATH

The character is able to slow his heart rate and breathing to appear as that of a dead man. The duration is dependent on the character's discipline rating as indicated on the table at right.

DURATION	
0	5 turns
1	10 turns
2	5 minutes
3	30 minutes
4	1 hour
5	3 hours
6	6 hours

LICENSE

The character has a legally sanctioned right to do things that would normally be considered illegal (license to collect taxes, hunt criminals, etc.). Licenses are individual cases, granting the character authority rather than loaning him use of the authority of a group—he gets no resources, but he also does not have too many responsibilities. Note that some licenses are more difficult to acquire than others—there should be a good reason for the character to possess the license. The following licenses (menkyo) exist in their order of importance:

LICENSES

sail or own merchant ships
 travel outside your home province
 run a business or shop
 use a Japanese port and conduct trade (nanbanjin only)
 preach a foreign religion
 start your own sub-ryu or school
 marry someone from outside your caste
 start your own crime gang
 carry the two swords of the samurai (daisho)
 start your own samurai clan

MEMBERSHIP

The character can call upon the resources of an organization, person, government, or group, but he also has responsibilities. The following organizations/groups exist in *SENGOKU* in their order of importance.

Hinin and Inferior Groups

This includes the Franciscan order, small criminal gangs, and hinin villages.

Bonge and Commoner Groups

This includes the Society of Jesus, merchant houses/guilds, Shinto shrines, shinobi clans, large criminal gangs.

Buke and Major Groups

This includes Samurai clans and Buddhist sects.

The Imperial Court

This is the actual *imperial court* and its membership should be limited by the director unless focusing on a court-based story.

OUTSIDER

The character is not a local and stands out like a sore thumb, attracting attention both unwelcome and possibly dangerous. The character is obviously a foreigner to Japan—a non-Japanese Asian or a European.

PERSEVERANCE

The character has a high pain threshold and can halve all penalties due to fatigue or injury (rounding up). For example, a penalty of +3DIFF would be reduced to +2DIFF.

RAPID HEALING

The character heals fatigue and injury faster than normal; one extra grade is restored per day for fatigue and one extra grade is restored per week for injury.

RENOWN

The character has a reputation, usually in a favorable light. People go out of their way to curry favor with the character, or to at least avoid getting on his bad side. The director should set a limit on the character's renown to either:

- *most local people know him*
- *his name is known far and wide*
- *he is a national figure*

Its importance should be limited to one of the following as well:

Politics

This includes major daimyo, imperial court officials, daimyo of a small clan, famous generals, and town police captains.

Entertainment

This includes national sumo champions, famous No actors, imperial court poets, local sumo champions, and high-ranking courtesans.

Underworld

This includes leaders of large criminal organizations, Ninja boss (jonin), infamous criminals, and leaders of small criminal gangs.

Miscellaneous

This includes master swordsmiths, mystics, wealthy merchants, Nanbanjin, founders of a school, master artisans, founders of Temple, Chinese or Korean foreigners, and doctors.



☑ KARMA

While luck points are normally gained by good roleplaying, they may also be used as a form of karma, gained when a character suffers a serious injustice or performs a particularly good, exemplary deed. Luck points may also be forfeited by performing *evil* deeds, such as inflicting needless suffering on others. The exact number of points changed is up to the director, but no more than one or two at a time is recommended.

☑ STATUS

Status is important to everyone, but especially to the Japanese, for whom membership in a group might define their personality and attitudes.

Membership in a fire-fighting crew or with a local builder's gang, for example, define how others view the character. Is the group highly respected? Is it known to be a hotbed of illegal activity? Within this group or organization, what is the position, and hence the accountability, of the person in question?

The same holds with samurai, of course. A low-ranking samurai of a powerful, wealthy clan is going to get a lot more respect than if he had the same rank in a no-name clan.

These factors should play an important part of social interaction. The director need not require influence-based tasks for all conflicts, although some sample difficulty modifiers are included in the table at right. In addition, the director may adjust influence-based tasks on the basis of social rank—lower ranking characters would find it more difficult when competing against higher ranking ones. Note that while Buddhist clergy are generally considered outside of this hierarchy, status within the clergy is extremely important. Nanbanjin (European foreigners) are also outside of this hierarchy, but they are often treated as if they are above hinin in rank.

ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY
same clan	-2DIFF
strange clan	+ 1DIFF
rival clan	+ 2DIFF
hostile clan	+ 4DIFF
nanbanjin	+ 6DIFF
non-human	+ 6DIFF
from same town	-2DIFF
old friend	-2DIFF
old rival	+ 2DIFF
invoke name of superior	-1 to -4DIFF

SOCIAL HIERARCHY
imperial kuge
emperor
imperial family
kuge
relatives of the imperial family
court nobles
court officials
buke
shogun
daimyo
hatamoto
samurai
ashigaru
jizamurai
ronin
bonge
farmers
artisans
entertainers
merchants
nanbanjin
hinin
criminals
kawaramono
eta



MASTER SKILL LIST**FITNESS-BASED**

archery/kyu-jutsu
 athletics
 shuriken-jutsu
 yadome-jutsu
 blade trapping (okuden)
 blowgun
 brawling
 atemi-waza
 ju-jutsu
 ninpo-taijutsu
 sumai
 chakuzen-jutsu (okuden)
 dogakure (okuden)
 firearms
 focus ki
 furious wind (okuden)
 hidden blade (okuden)
 karumi-jutsu (okuden)
 lightning strike (okuden)
 melee
 masakari-jutsu (axes)
 kusari-jutsu (chains)
 tessen-jutsu (fans)
 nunchaku-te (flails)
 iai-jutsu (swords)
 jitte-jutsu (jitte/sai)
 kama-jutsu (tools)
 tanto-jutsu (knives)
 toami-jutsu (nets)
 naginata-jutsu (staves)
 sodegarami-jutsu (staves)
 so-jutsu (staves)
 jo-jutsu (staves)
 tetsubo (staves)
 ken-jutsu (swords)
 piercing thrust (okuden)
 reverse cut
 riding (ba-jutsu)
 sailing
 seeing with the ears (okuden)
 seeking arrows (okuden)
 smashing blow (okuden)
 stealth
 the archer's path (okuden)

AWARENESS-BASED

criminal
 gambling
 meditation

CREATIVITY-BASED

ceremony
 crafts
 design
 disguise
 instrument
 literacy
 mimicry
 no

MASTER SKILL LIST (CONTINUED)**REASONING-BASED**

animal handling
 buddhism
 christianity
 confucianism
 espionage
 falconry
 herbal medicine
 high society
 investigation
 legends
 masonry
 shinto
 survival
 warfare

INFLUENCE-BASED

flattery
 leadership
 performance

PIETY-BASED

buddhism
 onmyodo
 shinto
 shugendo

MASTER GIMMICK LIST

blind fighting
 connections
 debt owed
 dependent
 enemies
 feign death
 fugitive
 internal compass
 internal clock
 jack of all trades
 lackies
 license
 membership
 hinin and inferior groups
 bonge and commoner groups
 buke and major groups
 the imperial court
 multilingual
 outsider
 peripheral vision
 perseverance
 rapid healing
 renown
 politics
 entertainment
 underworld
 miscellaneous
 servitude
 wealth

MAGIC

Smoke and mist are like looking at a spring mountain. After the rain is like viewing a clear day. There is weakness in perfect clarity.

JAPANESE PROVERB

Magic, like nothing else, has the potential to totally unbalance a game. If everyone had a latent ability for such simple cantrips as starting fire, it would negate the need for flaming arrows, incendiary devices, and the like. To use another idiom, in a land where flying carpets and teleportation spells are plentiful, why bother with animals and provisions, and the difficulties of a long trip?

Regardless of the reality level at which the game is played, the director must decide how much magic is available to characters. Does everyone have some tendency or gift for latent magic use and begin play with the piety ability?

Clerics have a tradition of using *magic*, as deities can be worshipped for miracles or other intervention. Those beyond the *ordained* clergy who have such gifts is up to the director; he can permit the laity to study the schools of magic as well, without having characters become priests. The term *mystic* refers to anyone who can use magic, regardless of occupation, caste, or any other element of identity.

USING MAGIC

If your game takes a more structured approach to magic (that is, only those who have actually studied magic can use it) then there are a few schools which can be selected for a character—Shinto, Bukkyo, Onmyodo, and Shugendo. Note that each of these is also a religious philosophy. In *SENGOKU*, magic does not exist in a vacuum—it must be tied to something. There is nothing corresponding to the magician or wizard who studies magic for its own sake.

Because the people of Japan have embraced Ryobu Shinto, the belief that Shinto and Buddhist spirits are in fact one and the same, the effects of magic are able to cross over between faiths. Specifically, the effects of a spell from one faith affects the spirits of all other faiths; a Shinto exorcism affects Shinto spirits and Buddhist spirits all the same.

Likewise, the effects of spells on mortals are the same, regardless of their chosen primary religion (or lack of religion). Shugendo blessings affect a Shinto character the same as a Buddhist character (with the exception of removing violations).



All characters in the game are skilled in one faith or another—everyone knows how to pray and bow at the local shrine or temple, and who the primary entities are in each pantheon, for example. This same skill serves as a focus for characters adept in magic.

Not everyone who is an adherent to a religion or a devotee of a particular sect is able to use magic, however. In the same way that one must study to gain skill, only those at least proficient in their religion skill(s) and who have the piety special ability may use magic. This simulates the amount of effort put into learning the doctrines and dogmas, as well as the deeper elements of the faith and thereupon the beginnings of the deeper aspects of the religion—the magical aspects.

CASTING SPELLS

As noted above, mystics do not manipulate arcane power as with traditional Western magic. Instead, most Japanese mystics perform rituals and chant prayers which gain the attention of the gods, who themselves cause the *magic* to occur. All magic in Japan is thus theologically/deity-based (with the possible exception of Onmyodo).

The caster must spend the requisite time performing the rituals, chanting the prayer, and/or making the proper gestures and movements. This is essentially a sustained task, using the character's piety ability and appropriate religion skill—the minimum and incremental times are listed for each spell and the base difficulty level is challenging (*see Sustained Tasks*



in the *Active Exploits* core rules). Longer times may prove crucial to casting spells over great distances or with powerful effects. If the task results in a *calamity*, the caster has offended the spirits, and suffers a major violation.

The table below provides the duration of a spell's effect based on the amount of overkill achieved. Values listed with the description of a spell supercede these.

OVERKILL	DURATIONS
0	1 turn
1	2 turns
2	1 minute
3	5 minutes
4	30 minutes
5	1 hour
6	6 hours
7	1 day
8	5 days
9	1 month
10	1 season (≈ 3 months)
11	1 year

All spells, unless otherwise noted, may be cast at a target within the character's field of vision—as long as the caster can visually see his target, he incurs no penalty for range. A few spells have very far-reaching effects, without the target even being seen, although the mystic must be able to identify the target in his prayer (he must know who the intended target is). Simply stating the *target's name* or "*the one who stole my tea cup*," or "*Lord Torinaga's longbow*" is sufficient, just as long as the mystic and the spirits know who or what is the intended target of the spell.

Those spells having an area of effect are targeted against a specific location or person. This focus may be any point within the caster's range. The spell's area of effect is then determined from this point. Unless otherwise noted, range penalties apply to cast the spell.

SCHOOLS OF MAGIC

There is an exclusivity about magic use. While characters can study and learn about many religions and be skilled in any of them, they can only follow ordination in one, and can only cast spells for one. What this means is that a Shinto mystic cannot also use Bukkyo spells. Each faith has its own taboos and specialties, and this is something that a player must keep in mind when choosing a *school* for his character.

BUKKYO

Not all sects of Buddhism are magic-friendly. For game purposes, the only ones that truly emphasize magical traditions are Tendai and Shingon (whose magic is called *Mikkyo*). Relatively few Buddhist clergy will have magical capabilities; most are simply clergy. Even so, all Buddhist priests may purchase and perform the various blessing and exorcism spells—blessings and exorcism are not limited to the Tendai and Shingon sects. The director is free to ignore this historically-based rule and allow all Buddhist priests to purchase any of the Bukkyo spells.

Clergy wishing to learn how to use Mikkyo must travel to one of the major temples of their sect and be accepted as a student by the head abbot or chief priest of the sect.

As with Shinto, spells cast by Buddhist clergy are more properly prayers—recitations of the sutras, or sacred writings. Buddhist mystics need not be in ceremonial garb and they may either chant memorized spells or use scroll books. Unlike Shinto, however, there is no need to be in a particularly sacred space as *the Buddha is everywhere*; spells cast in a temple of the mystic's sect receive a bonus.

ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY
using priest's staff or rosary	-1DIFF
performing ritual in sect's temple	-2DIFF
acting on behalf of Buddhist	-1DIFF
adherent with a piety rating of +3 or greater	



ONMYODO

Onmyodo (practitioners are called onmyoji) is an ancient form of magic which has no direct connections to Shinto or Buddhism. Unlike other schools, onmyoji are not priests and there are no ordinations or orders. It may be considered *pure* magic and its practitioners could even be called true wizards.

Onmyoji are diviners, sorcerers, conjurers, and masters of the occult. They are seldom met, and greatly feared. They may memorize spells, use spell books, and carry magical scrolls—there are no set rules for the onmyoji.

Onmyoji often sport beards and wild, disheveled hair. They may wear any kind of clothing. Some live in caves, some in isolated farm houses, some in abandoned shrines. From appearance to ways of living, no one can really get a grasp on what onmyoji are, what they want, and what their agenda may be.

An onmyoji may appear out of nowhere to help someone who does not even know he needs help. He may also staunchly refuse to get involved in even life-or-death issues.

Despite its clouded origins and practices, Onmyodo seems to derive from some ancient Chinese magical practice. There are Taoist aspects focusing on dark-light, or positive-negative (in-yo) as well as traces of elemental magic (gogyo) in Onmyodo.

ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY
cast at night, under an open sky	-1DIFF
using taoist charm or talisman	-1DIFF
acting on behalf of Onmyodo	-1DIFF
adherent with a piety rating of +3 or greater	

SHINTO

Shinto is a religion deeply concerned with questions of purity and pollution. Due to the large number of taboos, there are several things the Shinto mystic is incapable of doing. The Shinto mystic is forbidden to learn healing-type skills as blood and disease represent pollution. He also has no ability to raise the dead or preserve bodies since corpses are also pollutants.

Shinto spells are actually more akin to specially created prayers, called *norito*. The Shinto mystic must be in ceremonial garb (robes, hat, various accouterments, etc.) and must use a small branch

of the sacred sakaki tree, or a tapered, wooden Shinto prayer stick (shaku). When performing any of the various Purification spells, the mystic must use a sakaki branch or, more commonly, a purification wand (haraigushi), which looks like a thin wooden rod with a number of paper and flax streamers or strips attached to one end.

The spells are not cast on the spur of the moment. Every tone, voice inflection, and utterance of a syllable must be performed in strict accordance with ritual. Even the ritualized gestures of Shinto ceremonies play an important role in the casting of Shinto magic. Because of the nature of the magic, all spells increase in effectiveness when cast either in a shrine precinct or in the presence of a kami (or similarly sacred-to-Shinto space).

One of their specialties is the ability to function as a medium. Although a mystic cannot come near a dead body, he can still function as its voice. Note that he does not speak to the dead person—he becomes the dead person, and speaks as if he were the deceased. He can also speak the voice of a deity, or greater kami. Purifying and blessing places and things are also Shinto strong points.

ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY
using one of the following: sakaki branch shaku (prayer stick) haraigushi (purification wand)	-1DIFF
performing ritual at shrine or sacred place	-2DIFF
acting on behalf of Shinto adherent with a piety rating of +3 or greater	-1DIFF

SHUGENDO

Adherents of Shugendo are mountain ascetics called yamabushi. Practitioners of Yamabushi mysticism are called shugenja. Historically the terms shugenja and yamabushi are nearly synonymous. In *SENGOKU*, however, we use the term shugenja to mean specifically those yamabushi capable of casting Shugendo magic spells.

Shugendo is more or less a Buddhist school, but it has ancient ties to Shinto. Shugenja are known as skilled healers, and they may specialize in such magic. They are also sought after as mediums and seers, and as exorcists of mischievous spirits.

Fire plays an important part in Shugendo, as the god of fire is one of the major deities. Shugenja cast many of their spells kneeling in front of a roaring fire as they chant their incantations. Unlike Shinto, there are no scrolls used by the shugenja—they memorize all their spells. They are taught spells by their masters, and they develop them themselves after long study, meditation, and prayer. One shugenja's Oracle spell may be totally different from another shugenja's Oracle spell in what is spoken, how it is intoned, and what gestures are performed (if any), but the effects are the same.

ACTIVITY	DIFFICULTY
performing ritual near bonfire/camp fire	-1DIFF
performing on sacred mountain	-2DIFF
acting on behalf of Shugendo or Buddhist follower with a piety rating of +3 or greater	-1DIFF

NINJUTSU

Is Ninjutsu really a school of magic? Do shinobi have access to deep, dark, arcane powers that no one else does? Or are their skills all simply works of legerdemain, slight of hand, and incredible physical control? Ultimately you will have to decide whether to allow mystic shinobi in your game.

Because of the close ties between shinobi and Buddhist and Yamabushi sects, it is suggested that directors or players wishing to include mystic shinobi in their game simply have the shinobi also be practitioners of Bukkyo or Shugendo, as this reflects the most likely *historical* approach.

KIRISTUOKYO

The new faith of the Nanbanjin (Christianity) is a mystery to most people in Japan. They are unaware of the potential for magic and sorcery the foreign religion has, and may therefore be wary of any who seem to be clergy for that reason.

Kiristuokyo as a way of mysticism is beyond the scope of this book. Feel free to utilize the arcane setting rules from the Active Exploits core rules to bring Western magics to *SENGOKU*.

MAGICAL SPELLS

Certain spells are limited by the type and school of mysticism. Remember also that the word *spell* is a euphemism for *prayer* in the case of Buddhist (Bukkyo), Shinto, and Shugendo (yamabushi) priests.

ATONEMENT

Minimum Time: 6 hours

Incremental Time: 1 hour

Available to: *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

This special incantation is performed by (or upon) priests who have fallen out of favor with the spirits of their pantheon (including those who have achieved calamities when casting any other spell). Atonement involves an exacting ceremony designed to honor the deities and to ask forgiveness for transgressions or sin, or to remove pollution. It often involves offerings to the spirits of food, drink, and sometimes material gifts of the highest quality.

A successful casting of the Atonement spell removes one grade of violation caused by transgressions, sins, or pollutions, plus an additional grade for each point of overkill achieved. Atonement may be cast only once per month. Any attempt to cast Atonement more than once in a one month (three week) period is treated as a calamity. If cast on another, any failure reflects on the recipient, rather than the caster.

Atonements may be required for any grievous incident in which the priest gains *dishonor* for acts contrary to the tenets of his faith. Unlike the samurai, who may commit seppuku, priests answer not to a feudal lord but to a higher spiritual power. Whenever a priest is in a situation in which he loses honor for acts considered *bad* by his religion, the director may require the priest to perform an Atonement. They may also be ordered as *lessons* for subordinate priests by their superiors, as a reprimand for talking out of turn, acting without permission, or otherwise defying the wishes of their senior or sect.

For example: *Takuan, a Buddhist priest, strikes a parishioner for eating red meat. Physical violence is forbidden in Takuan's sect, so his superior orders him to perform an Atonement.*

BIND SPIRIT

Minimum Time: 5 minutes

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

This spell enables the caster to bind a kami or other spiritual entity (including ghosts) with *ropes* of mystic energy. The spirit or kami may break out of these bonds by physical or magical means, but the bonds are impervious to physical harm from weapons, fire, and other attacks by mortals. They can be affected by magic from other mystics, however—a resisted/contested magical task can negate the bonds.

BLESS LAND

Minimum Time: 1 hour

Incremental Time: 1 hour

Available to: *Shinto*

With this *norito*, a Shinto priest consecrates ground for a good purpose. This may be the planting or harvesting of crops, or even the building of a house, temple, or castle. Indeed, it is bad not to have land blessed before beginning such constructions.

The practical effect of the spell is to increase crop production of the coming harvest and to decrease any harm to those building or living on that plot for the first two years (this is left up to the director's discretion). In addition, any tasks made involving the blessed land or buildings on that land receive +1 effort (and +1 for every two points of overkill achieved) for the first two years.

BLESS WEAPON

Minimum Time: 5 minute

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

This spell enables the mystic to enchant any weapon, by chanting the proper sutras and making the proper *mudra* (hand signs) over the weapon. A successful casting adds +1 effort (and +1 for every two points of overkill achieved) when using the weapon to strike an opponent. The weapon's damage rating is also increased by one grade (two grades if the task is a triumph). The spell lasts one full day. It also effectively makes the weapon *magical* for the duration of the spell, should the target of the spell be subject only to magical attacks.

BLESSING**Minimum Time:** 1 hour**Incremental Time:** 1 hour**Available to:** *Bukkyo*

This spell removes any physical and spiritual impurities, including Buddhist transgressions, from one or more subjects. Successful completion of this prayer causes any and all impurities (poison, alcohol, disease, and so on) to be removed from the target. Any damage already caused by the impurities or toxins must be healed normally, but the spell does halt any further effects. Blessing removes only transgressions of the Buddhist variety; it does not remove transgressions of other religions. The priest may so bless one person. This number is doubled for each point of overkill achieved.

BREATHE LIFE**Minimum Time:** 6 hours**Incremental Time:** 1 hour**Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shugendo*

This is a dangerous and arcane spell that can restore life to one slain. A long ceremony is performed over the body, which is cleaned and prepared with incense and other trappings. The body must be present and whole, or the resurrected body will lack whatever part is missing. Scars from wounds will remain—someone decapitated can be resurrected, but there will be a scar running around his neck, for example. While the deceased awakens with no injury, he does retain two grades of fatigue.

Forcing a departed spirit back into a dead body is considered taboo. Each time this spell is cast the mystic gains one grade of dishonor.

The length of time that has passed since the spirit's departure also has an effect on the mystic's ability to call it back. The difficulty is modified by the length of time which has passed since the spirit left its body (see table below).

LENGTH OF TIME	DIFFICULTY MODIFIER
less than 6 hours	-1DIFF
1 day	+1DIFF
5 days	+2DIFF
1 month	+3DIFF
1 season (≈ 3 months)	+4DIFF
1 year	+5DIFF

CHANT**Minimum Time:** 1 hour**Incremental Time:** 10 minutes**Available to:** *Bukkyo and Shinto*

With this spell, the priest stands off to one side of a battle chanting specific prayers, either by memory or from sacred writings. The chant calls the attention of the gods to his cause, and everyone on his side will receive +1 effort (plus an additional +1 for every two points of overkill achieved) on all tasks, and inflict one extra grade of damage with each blow. This spell can be performed anywhere, not just at a religious institution or sacred site. Acts of cowardice cancel the effects of this spell upon the coward.

CURSE**Minimum Time:** 1 minute**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

This spell calls upon the spirits to inflict some ailment or other malady on another person or thing. There are several possible curses for which the mystic can call, which must be specified beforehand. Seldom does a cleric cast the curse on his own behalf; usually, he is asked (and paid) to curse a third party. The difficulty is modified by +1DIFF for every four people or items targeted beyond the first. The same curse must be applied to all targets of one casting; the caster cannot call for multiple types of curse with one casting of the spell.



Simple Curse

Simple curses result in *bad luck*—luck points expended to aid a task against the target gain double the normal effect, while the target may not expend luck until the curse has expired.

Physical Curse

Physical curses result in lameness, blindness, clumsiness, body odor, deafness, or whatever the caster specifies. This may be contested/resisted with the piety ability and associated religion skill.

In general, the director inflicts a penalty of one point of effort on a single ability flair for each point of overkill achieved. The effects of the curse cannot be healed or cured by normal means until its effects expire; this fact is usually what reveals the effects to be a curse and not a *normal* affliction.

Ailment

The target becomes sick (the caster chooses the disease) or perpetually inebriated. In general, inflict one grade of fatigue or injury (director's discretion) for each point of overkill achieved. Or, remove one point of discipline. The ailment cannot be cured or healed by normal means until the curse's effects expire.

Specified Curse

This affects one single aspect of the target, whatever the caster specifies. The effect of the curse on play must be determined by the director. In general, inflict one grade of fatigue or injury (director's discretion), reduces a skill level, or increases a grade of a conviction for each point of overkill achieved.

Some sample specified curses include:

- target can not keep food down (inflicts fatigue)
- target fails anytime he tries to gamble (affects gambling skill)
- all animals are hostile to the target (affects animal handling and riding skills)
- target's clan disowns him (removes the membership gimmick for his clan)
- target loses all his wealth
- target completely forgets how to do something (reduces appropriate skill level)

DETECT ENCHANTMENT

Minimum Time: 1 minute

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

With this spell, the mystic can determine whether an object is enchanted. Upon successful completion of this spell, the item, if enchanted by any means, gives off a faint glow that can be seen only by the caster. The color of the glow indicates the school of magic used to enchant the item. Items enchanted by spiritual beings radiate a glow of the color appropriate to the religion with which the being is associated.

MAGIC/RELIGION	COLOR
Shinto	white
Bukkyo	gold
Shugendo	red
Onmyodo	blue

The effects of the spell last for one minute, after which time the glow dissipates. Note that while the color of the glow indicates the school of the enchantment, it does not indicate whether the enchantment is *good* or *bad*; it could just as easily be a curse as a blessing.

EMPATHY FOR THE DEAD

Minimum Time: 5 minutes

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

Upon successful invocation of this spell, the mystic can sense the remnant emotions of a dead person's spirit. A spirit's emotions are eternally trapped in the same state at the instant of their death. The emotions will be general in nature—anger, surprise, betrayal, or love, for example.

The length of time that has passed since the spirit's departure also has an affect on the mystic's ability to call it back. The difficulty is modified by the length of time which has passed since the spirit left its body (see table below).

LENGTH OF TIME	DIFFICULTY MODIFIER
less than 6 hours	-1 DIFF
1 day	+1 DIFF
5 days	+2 DIFF
1 month	+3 DIFF
1 season (≈ 3 months)	+4 DIFF
1 year	+5 DIFF

EXORCISM**Minimum Time:** 5 *minute***Incremental Time:** 1 *minute***Available to:** *Bukkyo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

By chanting the sacred norito or sutras, the priest causes a spirit to be removed from this world, and forced back to the netherworld. The difficulty should be modified by the director depending on the circumstances—a more powerful entity would be tougher to exorcise and the process would be more complex in active environments. If successfully cast on a spirit being (kami, bosatsu, yurei, or gaki, for example) in our world, the being is forced to return to the otherworldly realm from which it came. In the case of spirits who are stuck in this world, such as by a hunger for revenge, this spell frees them from their supernatural bonds and allows them to move on. If successfully cast on someone who is possessed, the spirit is immediately forced to flee the victim's body, leaving the victim in complete exhaustion (five grades of fatigue).

FEET OF THE SPIDER**Minimum Time:** 5 *minutes***Incremental Time:** 1 *minute***Available to:** *Onmyodo*

This spell allows the target (the mystic or another character) to magically cling to any surface, as if his feet were like those of a spider. The target can climb walls and ceilings at the same speeds/distances as if he were walking. At the end of the spell's duration, the target loses the ability to cling to surfaces, and may fall if in an unnatural position.

FIRE ARMOR**Minimum Time:** 5 *minutes***Incremental Time:** 1 *minute***Available to:** *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, and Shugendo*

This prayer calls upon the spirits to protect the target (the mystic or another character) from fire-based attacks, whether from natural flames or magical fires. A mystic field of orange-hued energy surrounds the target, and reduces the damage caused by flames by one grade (plus another for every two points of overkill achieved). The damage is reduced by the indicated amount after all armor values are subtracted, but it may not be reduced to less than one. At the end of the spell's duration, the fire armor disappears.

FORM OF SMOKE**Minimum Time:** 1 *hour***Incremental Time:** 10 *minutes***Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shugendo*

Upon successful casting of this spell, the mystic's body and immediate possessions turn into smoke. This smoke form is vaguely humanoid in shape, but not recognizable as the caster. The mystic can float along at normal walking speeds/distances, but he is still affected by gravity and cannot fly or change his elevation. The mystic can pass through any barriers that normal smoke can penetrate, such as holes in a cloth, netting, cracks in stone, or space between a door and wall, but he cannot pass through solid objects. While in this smoke form, the mystic is still vulnerable to magical attacks, but normal physical attacks will pass harmlessly through him. At the end of the spell's duration, the mystic returns to his normal human form. The mystic may suffer damage from the shock to his body during the transformation (at the director's discretion) if he is in a place too small for his normal form to fit when the spell ends.

FULL CURSE**Minimum Time:** 5 *minutes***Incremental Time:** 1 *minute***Available to:** *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

This spell is similar to curse (*see above*), except that its effects are semi-permanent, but may only affect one person at a time. The curse lasts until a set situation occurs, as defined by the mystic at the time of casting. For example, a curse on an enemy samurai is lifted only when the enemy's army surrenders. In general, curses inflict a penalty of one point of effort on a single ability flair for every two points of overkill achieved.

HEAL WOUNDS**Minimum Time:** 1 *hour***Incremental Time:** 30 *minutes***Available to:** *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, and Shugendo*

This spell allows the mystic to restore a number of grades of fatigue or injury (but not both at the same time) equal to one plus the amount of overkill achieved. The restored health may be applied to a single target or distributed among several people within close proximity throughout the casting of the spell.

KNOW LANGUAGE**Minimum Time:** 5 minutes**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

The target of this spell is able to understand, speak, read, and write in the foreign language for the duration of the spell. The caster need not know the name or derivation of the language. The mystic need only be able to state in the prayer the desire to communicate with a certain person or read a certain document in order to receive the benefits. Each point of overkill achieved doubles the number of people that may benefit from the spell. After the spell's effects expire, the recipient of the spell loses all knowledge and understanding of the language gained by the spell.

KNOW THE FLOW OF TIME**Minimum Time:** 1 minute**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Bukkyo, Shinto, and Shugendo*

By casting this spell, the mystic receives insight from the deities of his pantheon as to the positioning of the stars and sun in the sky, and therefore the precise time of day, down to the second. The mystic is able to gain this insight at will for the duration of the spell.

LIGHT FROM HEAVEN**Minimum Time:** 20 minutes**Incremental Time:** 5 minutes**Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shugendo*

With this prayer, the mystic calls for light (as bright as normal sunlight) to shine down from the heavens. The affected radius is thirty-six feet. This amount is doubled for each point of overkill achieved. At the end of the spell's duration, the light disappears, returning the area to its former state of illumination.

METAL ARMOR**Minimum Time:** 5 minutes**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Bukkyo and Onmyodo*

This spell is similar to the Fire Armor spell. This prayer calls upon the spirits to protect the mystic or another target from metal-based attacks, whether from natural metal or magical. A mystic field of bluish-white-hued energy

surrounds the target, which reduces the damage caused by metal items and weapons by one grade (plus another for every two points of overkill achieved). The damage is reduced by the indicated amount after all armor values are subtracted, but it may not be reduced to less than one. At the end of the spell's duration, the Metal Armor disappears.

MISTS FROM HEAVEN**Minimum Time:** 20 minutes**Incremental Time:** 5 minutes**Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shinto*

With this prayer, the mystic calls for foggy mists from the heavens to come down and fill an area. The affected radius is thirty-six feet. This amount is doubled for each point of overkill achieved.

MUSIC FROM HEAVEN**Minimum Time:** 20 minutes**Incremental Time:** 5 minutes**Available to:** *Bukkyo, Onmyodo, and Shinto*

With this prayer, the mystic causes an area to fill with music, as if an invisible orchestra were playing over the heads of everyone within the area of effect. The music can be of any sort the caster desires: court music (*gagaku*), No theater music, Buddhist meditation gongs, and so on. The affected radius is thirty-six feet. This amount is doubled for each point of overkill achieved. At the end of the spell's duration, the music ceases.

PROTECTION FROM POISONS**Minimum Time:** 5 minutes**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Bukkyo and Shugendo*

The mystic appeals to the spirits for protection from the *evil* spirits inhabiting venomous creatures. Upon successfully casting this spell, the target becomes immune to the venoms and toxins of all poisonous plants and creatures, be they mammals, reptiles, fish, or even mythical creatures such as the *mukade*. This spell does not affect any toxins already in the target's body. It only prevents new poisons introduced into the victim's system from taking effect for the duration of the spell.

PURIFICATION**Minimum Time:** 1 hour**Incremental Time:** 10 minutes**Available to:** *Shinto*

Successful completion of this prayer causes any and all impurities, such as poison, alcohol, and disease, to be removed from the target. Any damage already caused by the impurities or toxins must be healed normally, but the spell does halt any further effects. The mystic may purify one person. This number is doubled for each point of overkill achieved.

The spell also removes four grades of violation due to Shinto pollutions as a result of contact with pollutions, such as blood, death, decay, and people in mourning. It does not remove the transgressions or sins of other religions.

PURIFY WATER**Minimum Time:** 1 hour**Incremental Time:** 20 minutes**Available to:** *Shinto*

With this prayer, a Shinto priest can transform the most polluted water into pure, clean, fresh-tasting drinking water. It also can be used to make dirty water clean for washing. One common use of this spell by Shinto priests is to purify the water at the entrance of shrines. The director should use his best judgement to determine how much water is purified; ponds and streams may be possible with triumphs.

RAIN FROM HEAVEN**Minimum Time:** 20 minutes**Incremental Time:** 10 minutes**Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shinto*

With this prayer, the mystic calls for rain from the heavens. The affected radius is thirty-six feet. This amount is doubled for each point of overkill achieved. At the end of the spell's duration, the rain ceases. Any rain that has already fallen remains, however.

RECEDING WATERS**Minimum Time:** 20 minutes**Incremental Time:** 20 minutes**Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shinto*

With this prayer, the mystic causes all free-standing water within the area of effect to *ascend* to the clouds, to be reclaimed by the heavens. Any uncovered water rises up into the air in

droplets until the once wet area is completely dry. The affected radius is thirty-six feet. This amount is doubled for each point of overkill achieved. At the end of the spell's duration, the water falls again to reclaim its original place, making the area wet again.

SENSE DISRUPTIONS OF WA**Minimum Time:** 5 minutes**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Bukkyo and Shugendo*

Casting this spell allows the mystic himself or another target to sense disruptions in the *wa* (harmony) of one's surroundings. The character may expend luck or revelation to act in haste rather than just relying on effort from the fitness and awareness abilities to do so.

SMOKES OF NAI**Minimum Time:** 5 minutes**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Onmyodo and Shugendo*

This spell causes smoke to issue forth from an incendiary source, such as a candle, lamp, or tobacco pipe. The smoke fills a four-meter radius from the center of the spell's effect. The smoke is so thick that it completely obscures normal sight, rendering anyone within the area of effect effectively blind, with the exception of the caster, who is immune to the effects of the spell. At the end of the spell's duration, the smoke quickly dissipates, leaving behind no trace of its previous existence.

SPEAK FOR KAMI**Minimum Time:** 5 minutes**Incremental Time:** 1 minute**Available to:** *Shinto*

This prayer brings the local kami of a shrine or other Shinto sacred site into possession of the body of the priest casting the spell, or a specified alternate vessel. Usually, if not the priest herself, it is a miko, or Shinto shrine maiden. For some reason, kami only speak through women, so if a male priest casts the spell, a miko must be present to be possessed. The person whose body the kami possesses need not be a *willing* participant; if the spell task is successful, the possession is immediate. Communication is possible with the kami for the duration of the spell. The only ways for the kami to be displaced

from the host body before the spell's effects expire is for the kami to be exorcised (by the summoning priest or another priest), or for the possessed body to be slain.

SPEAK FOR THE DEAD

Minimum Time: 5 minutes

Incremental Time: 1 minute

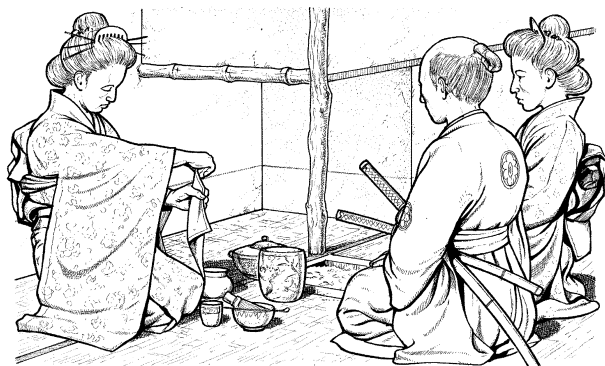
Available to: *Shinto and Shugendo*

With this spell, the mystic effectively becomes the mouthpiece for a deceased person. The mystic is possessed by the spirit and is incapable of performing any action; he is merely a stationary voicebox. Questions can be asked of the deceased and the mystic responds in the first person, for he actually is the deceased.

If the deceased has a reason to be angry or violent, such as in the presence of his slayer, the mystic must expend one point of discipline or revelation. Otherwise, the deceased will totally take over the mystic's body and may strike out at the object of his rage.

The spell lasts for two hours, plus an additional hour for each point of overkill achieved. It can be disrupted by any violence against the mystic, such as striking or shaking him. When the spirit departs, the mystic gains five levels of fatigue and collapses to the floor, exhausted and drained. The length of time that the spirit has been *dead* affects the difficulty.

LENGTH OF TIME	DIFFICULTY MODIFIER
less than 6 hours	-1DIFF
1 day	+1DIFF
5 days	+2DIFF
1 month	+3DIFF
1 season (≈ 3 months)	+4DIFF
1 year	+5DIFF



STOP POISON

Minimum Time: 1 minute

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Bukkyo and Shugendo*

This spell is a form of exorcism. All maladies, including poisons and disease, are the work of mischievous spirits. A successful incantation forces the mischievous spirits to vacate the victim's body, thus neutralizing the effects of any poison. No further damage or effect from the poison is incurred, although any existing effects must be healed normally. The spell heals one grade of fatigue or injury (but not both at the same time) for every two points of overkill achieved.

SUMMON KAMI

Minimum Time: 1 hour

Incremental Time: 30 minutes

Available to: *Shinto*

This special prayer enables the Shinto priest to bring a kami to the our world. The priest must be at a shrine or the site of the kami that he is trying to call. Once there, the priest lights incense and begins the chanting prayer. If the patron kami of the shrine is extremely powerful, like Kanda Myojin or Susano-o, it may send a different kami to appear in its place unless the caster is specifically calling on the patron.

Summoned kami come of their own free will, in response to the prayers of the faithful—a failed task indicates the kami was unconvinced of the priest's sincerity and does not come to his aid. More importantly, they can leave of their own free will. A particular kami cannot be summoned more than once per week unless the kami explicitly invites the priest to call on him again within that time, or it is a matter of extreme emergency (director's discretion). When a kami is summoned, it may manifest in any number of ways, such as as a gust of wind, animal, plant, or beautiful young lady. The kami might not make itself visible to anyone at first, even the caster, preferring to remain invisible until the priest's intent or desire can be ascertained.

Many Japanese folk stories involve kami who appeared in disguise, and did not reveal themselves to their *callers* for quite some time—days, months or even years. If the kami does, indeed, make its presence known, the priest may converse with the kami and make a request.

There is no guarantee that the kami will respond favorably, however. The priest's past actions, his piety ability, and his specific needs are factors in the kami's response. The way in which the kami responds to the summoner's requests is strictly up to the director. Summoned kami can be a wonderful roleplaying and story-enhancing tool, but the director should also take care not to allow its use to unbalance the game.

WINDS FROM HEAVEN

Minimum Time: 5 minutes

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Onmyodo and Shinto*

With this prayer, the mystic calls for winds to blow down from the heavens and throughout the area of effect. The winds are strong enough to cause trees to bend, loose paper and leaves to blow about, and ships to travel by sail, but the winds do not cause damage to anything. The affected radius is thirty-six feet. This amount is doubled for each point of overkill achieved. At the end of the spell's duration, the winds quickly die down and return to normal.

WRITE SCROLL

Minimum Time: 5 minutes

Incremental Time: 1 minute

Available to: *Bukkyo and Onmyodo*

This is a simple spell. It enables the caster to write down any spell that he knows on specially prepared paper, called a *mahomono*. In the process of writing the mahomono, the mystic actually casts the spell, but upon the scroll, so that reading it aloud triggers the spell's effects. The paper is then usable by any priest of the same faith (or school).

The mahomono is a one-time thing. Once the prayer or spell on the mahomono is cast, the ink fades, leaving the paper blank. The paper used is water-proof, but any other damage to the paper, such as burning or having ink spilled on it, ruins it, making the spell useless and unable to be cast, even if it is still legible.



CREATING CHARACTERS

Just as water will conform to the shape of the vessel that contains it, so will a man follow the good and evil of his companions.

IMAGAWA SADAYO

In this chapter, we will provide an overview of the most commonly occurring professions that might be met in feudal Japan, and how they may affect game play. Every character has a caste to which he belongs, and a suitable vocation may be chosen for him from the list below. Directors may even allow players to mix and match—a magic-using kuge bushi is not unplayable in the context of *SENGOKU*.

Each vocational listing indicates which castes are suitable. Although creating characters should be handled as described in the Active Exploits core rules, the process is largely governed by the director, permitting whatever combination of characters (and their associated abilities, skills, gimmicks, etc.) he sees fit in order to maximize enjoyment of the game.

There is no reason why a person of one caste and vocation may not attempt to pass himself off as one of another calling. The character's abilities and training, however, will reflect his true nature, vocation, and lineage—only his actions are those of another profession (assuming he has the knowledge to make a show of it).

Players should provide the director with a list of their characters' goals for the coming year. The director should then use these goals as jumping-off points for roleplaying scenes, providing a *spotlight* for each character, or even as ideas for full-fledged stories, involving the other characters in a variety of exploits.

☑ RULES ADDENDUM

PIETY

Only characters whose vocations specifically use the piety ability (priests and mystics) may allocate points to it, unless the director decides otherwise. While characters may be pious, only the most dedicated possess the piety ability.

KI

Only buke characters may possess the ki ability/aspect. Characters from other castes are simply not trained in the ways of ki, and therefore do not typically develop it. Exceptions do apply, however, and the director may permit characters from other castes to possess the ki ability/aspect at his discretion.

KAO

All characters possess the kao aspect just as all possess the discipline aspect—they begin play with a kao rating of 2, but it may also be adjusted during the character creation process in the same manner as the discipline aspect (points may be moved to and from abilities). While many characters may not gain kao points, the possibility does exist.

SHINTO AND BUDDHISM

All characters in *Sengoku*, except for foreigners, are novices at the Shinto and Buddhism skills by default. These skill levels may be increased as part of the process of creating characters.

CASTE VS. VOCATION

The buke are the military aristocracy, or warrior caste, while the kuge are the civil aristocracy. The bonge are commoners. As one can surmise from the fact that some members of the kuge serve military roles, with some imperial princes even doing stints as shogun, and the fact that many samurai are famous men of letters, caste and vocation are two totally different matters. Put another way, not all buke are bushi, and not all bushi are buke.

An aristocratic scion may learn to fight and develop a taste for battle. A samurai may choose to cloister himself and devote his life to the arts. The only exception is that unless a character takes the tonsure, a samurai is always expected to perform his duty for his clan, no matter what his *main* vocation may be.

A NOTE ON WARRIORS

By the Edo Period the term *bushi* was synonymous with the word *samurai*. Since the caste system had been locked into place, this was a natural development. Since all samurai are by default buke, bushi would then refer to any member of the buke caste.

Be that as it may, the Sengoku Period was an age of social upheaval, and not all who donned armor or took up a sword were members of a warrior caste. Some, like Hideyoshi, were peasants who proved unusually skilled. Some kuge, like Prince Morinaga, found their destiny on the field, as well. It is a world for the taking.

For this reason and the sake of simplicity, the term *samurai* is used to refer to any buke in the service of a daimyo, while *bushi* refers to any warrior, regardless of caste.

CHARACTER TEMPLATES

The next several pages detail typical skills, gimmicks, and convictions for each of the major vocations. In addition, a description and required caste(s) are provided. These templates should be used as frameworks for characters, but do not represent the sole vocations available in this setting. The director is free to permit players to create any type of character that fits within the structure of *SENGOKU*.

EXPANDED FUNCTIONS BY GENERAL VOCATION

SHINTO CLERICS

Guji (Shrine Head Priest)
Itako (Mediums; Miko)
Kannushi (Shinto Priests)
Miko (Shrine Maidens)
Pilgrims (Laymen)

BUDDHIST CLERICS

Ama (Nuns)
Bozu (Monks/Bonzes)
Komuso (Traveling Monks)
Niso (Buddhist Priestess)
Pilgrims (Laymen)
Risshi (Senior Buddhist Priests)
Shugenja (Yamabushi Mystic Monks)
So (Buddhist Priests)
Sohei (Warrior Monks)
Sojo (Abbots)
Sozu (Temple Overseer)

WARRIORS

Ashigaru (Low-ranked Bushi in a clan)
Budoka (Martial Artists)
Bushi (Warriors; any caste)
Hatamoto (Samurai; direct retainer to lord)
Jizamurai (Farmer Samurai)
Kensei (Weapon Masters)
Ronin (Masterless Buke)
Samurai (Buke Warriors in service)
Sohei (Buddhist Warrior Monks)
Wako (Pirates)

MYSTICS

Yamabushi or Shugenja (Buddhist Mystic Monks)
Itako (Shinto Mediums)

COMMONERS

Akindo (Merchants)
Baishun (Prostitutes)
Ichi (Masseur)
Eta (Untouchables)
Hikyaku (Couriers)
Hizoku (Brigands)
Hyakusho (Farmers)
Isha (Physicians)
Kantaimono (Entertainers)
Nusubito (Thief)
Sensui Kawaramono (Riverbed Folk Gardeners)
Shokunin (Artisans and craftsmen)
Sumotori (Sumo wrestlers)
Wako (Pirates)

OUTSIDERS

Chinese Artists and Scholars
Chinese Diplomats
Korean Artists and Scholars
Korean Prisoners of War
Nanban Clergy (Jesuit or Franciscan)
Nanban Sailors and Traders
Shinobi
Genin (Clan Functionary)
Chunin (Clan Official)
Jonin (Clan Head)

ABBOT (SOJO)

CASTES: *buke, kuge*
SKILLS: *buddhism, confucianism, design, literacy, meditation, leadership, performance*
GIMMICKS: *membership (Buddhist sect), renown (miscellaneous)*
CONVICTIONS: *values (Buddhist vows), values (duty to temple)*

Abbots are the head priests of a Buddhist temple or monastery. As clergy, they are outside the normal caste system, but it is still rare for an abbot to come from any but the highest ranks of society. Many abbots of major temples are actually related in some distant way to the emperor, while others are related to powerful daimyo. On the road, abbots are accompanied by priests or monks from their temple or sect. A sojo may possess the piety ability. Sojo from the buke caste retain their daisho (katana and wakizashi) but also keep the swords stored away, rather than carried on their persons. Common equipment includes *Buddhist garb*, *Buddhist rosary*, and *calligraphy set*.



ASHIGARU

CASTES: *bonge, buke*
SKILLS: *so-jitsu, ken-jitsu, gambling, warfare, firearms*
GIMMICKS: *membership (samurai clan)*
CONVICTIONS: *values (fealty to daimyo)*

An ashigaru may either be from the lowest ranks of the buke or a bongue who enlists in the local daimyo's army. Their social standing will likewise be uneven. To other samurai or bushi, they are the mudfeet. To peasants, they are still warriors, awe-inspiring at times, fear-inspiring at others. Most of the ranks of samurai armies are made of ashigaru. Common equipment includes *katana or wakizashi, yari, ashigaru armor* (see page 118), and *sword cleaning kit*.

BANDIT (HIZOKU/AKUTO)

CASTES: *hinin, bongue, renegade buke or kuge*
SKILLS: *athletics, disguise, tanto-jutsu, so-jutsu, ken-jutso, criminal*
GIMMICKS: *fugitive*
CONVICTIONS: *temptations (greed or lechery)*

Bandits are brazenly open thieves, rapists, and killers. They may have been trained as ashigaru who have deserted their erstwhile lords, or they may be self-taught. Bandits do whatever it takes to achieve their ends, often pretending to be laborers or kaga bearers, or hiring themselves out as strongmen to criminal syndicates. Subtlety is not their strongpoint, and what they lack in finesse in combat, they make up for in ferocity and determination. A bandit may work alone, but they are most often encountered with others of their kind, and sometime led by a ronin. Common equipment includes *yari or katana, and a few days worth of food and water*.

BUDDHIST PRIEST (SO)

CASTES: any
SKILLS: buddhism, design, literacy, meditation, performance
GIMMICKS: membership (Buddhist sect), multilingual (Chinese, Japanese), renown (miscellaneous, local)
CONVICTIONS: values (Buddhist vows)

Buddhist priests are usually attached to a single temple or monastery. Priests wear simple kimono in solid, somber colors (or saffron) and over this, a kesa (a large, rectangular piece of fabric hung from a band of fabric around the neck). A priest knows many sutras and may also possess the piety ability. Common equipment includes *Buddhist garb*, *buddhist priest's staff*, and *Buddhist rosary*.



COURT OFFICIAL, KUGE

CASTES: kuge
SKILLS: crime, high society, flattery, literacy, design, confucianism, shinto
GIMMICKS: membership (Imperial Court), renown (politics), debt owed
CONVICTIONS: values (loyalty to the emperor)

Court officials are typically high-ranking members of their castes, although even lower-ranking men can be functionaries. Kuge officials rarely, if ever, walk; they are typically carried in a kago (nobleman's palanquin) borne by two kagoya. Kuge officials have a personal retinue consisting of several bodyguards (samurai), up to four attendants, and several porters. If traveling outside the Imperial palace, triple the number of guards; in addition, there is a chance that an escort of up to fifteen samurai from the local daimyo's clan may also join the kuge's retinue. Common equipment includes: *tachi* and *tanto*.



COURT OFFICIAL, SAMURAI

CASTES: buke
SKILLS: ken-jitsu, kyu-jitsu, focus ki, legends, riding, survival, various okuden, confucianism, crime, flattery, high society, performance
GIMMICKS: membership (samurai clan), renown (politics)
CONVICTIONS: values (fealty to daimyo), values (code of bushido), renown (politics)

Samurai officials of sufficient rank may travel in a kago or on horseback. They seldom walk any significant distance, and are never alone. Samurai officials traveling in public always have an escort of up to eight personal samurai retainers. Common equipment includes *tachi*, *kataginu*, *samurai armor* (see page 118).





DAIMYO

CASTES: *buke*

SKILLS: *ken-jitsu, kyu-jitsu, focus ki, legends, riding, survival, various okuden, leadership*

GIMMICKS: *membership (samurai clan), renown (politics)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (code of bushido), values (duty to clan)*

Daimyo are the heads of buke clans and, by definition, samurai. The lives of everyone in the clan (and fief) rest in the hands of the daimyo. Daimyo in their own castle or estate have up to six personal samurai bodyguards with them at all times—they may be hidden behind sliding walls or around corners, but are never more than a shout away from their master. Daimyo travel either by kago or by horse. When traveling in public within his own fief, a daimyo procession includes up to two dozen samurai retainers, up to three dozen ashigaru, up to eight attendants (including a doctor, priest, and possibly a shinobi or three) and one dozen porters. If outside their fief, double the number of samurai retainers and ashigaru. Common equipment includes *kataginu*, *samurai armor* (see page 118), and *horse*.

DOCTOR (ISHA)

CASTES: *bonge*

SKILLS: *buddhism, herbal medicine, survival*

GIMMICKS: *renown (miscellaneous)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (duty to heal patients)*

Doctors are well educated and highly respected, but still *bonge*. They are addressed as *sensei* out of respect for their status as learned healers. Physicians are able to diagnose and treat most common diseases and ailments and are familiar with the types of injuries common to a warrior society. Many daimyo have personal physicians, who are high in rank in the daimyo's clan and enjoy the benefits of samurai status. Physicians serving local communities live in larger than average homes. The front half serves as a clinic and office, while the back is the home of the physician and his family. In villages, a physician's social esteem is no less than the village chief's. Physicians do not as a rule carry weapons, but those in samurai clans may carry a mock sword, the blade of which is actually like a long shelf containing a dozen or more pockets for medications. Common equipment includes *physician's kit*.

EUROPEAN PRIEST (NANBAN NO BATEREN)

CASTES: *not applicable*

SKILLS: *christianity, literacy, performance*

GIMMICKS: *membership (Franciscans or Jesuits), multilingual (one European language, Latin, Japanese), outsider, connections*

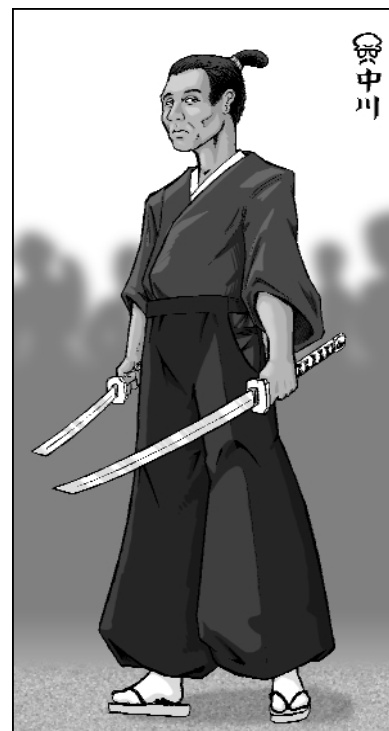
CONVICTIONS: *beliefs (must save pagan souls), values (poverty—Franciscans only)*

Jesuits are Portuguese, and are interested in converting Japan from the top down, by concentrating their efforts with the samurai and daimyo. Franciscans, however, are Spanish, and work with the commoners. This conflicting methodology has led to confrontations and open hostility. The Japanese do not fully understand the nature of this rivalry, but are familiar with inter-sect strife between Buddhist sects. Common equipment includes *Jesuit or Franciscan garb*, *crucifix*, and *rosary*.



KENSEI (SWORD-MASTER)**CASTES:** *buke***SKILLS:** *ken-jutsu, iai-jutsu, meditation, various sword-related okuden, focus ki***GIMMICKS:** *renown (politics or miscellaneous)***CONVICTIONS:** *values (code of bushido), values (dedication to mastery)*

Only a buke has the background to be a kensei. They are masters of a single weapon or weapon form. Although they may be familiar with (and able to use) other weapons, they prefer and specialize in only one. Their craft is their life, and they define their worthiness by their skill. Kensei strive to perfect their craft daily, spending hours practicing moves and kata over and over. Kensei never shy away from a challenge that is worthy of honor, but they disdain those they feel are below them. Some kensei wander the country, seeking worthy opponents and teachers, while others open schools to train a very select few. They may be ronin or actually clansmen allowed to perfect their art so that they may come back and teach others in the clan. Common equipment includes *sword cleaning kit, paper, and tasuki*.

**KOMUSO (WANDERING FUKE SECT PRIEST)****CASTES:** *all***SKILLS:** *buddhism, design, herbal medicine, meditation, literacy, performance, instrument (flutes)***GIMMICKS:** *membership (Fuke sect), multilingual (Chinese, Japanese)***CONVICTIONS:** *values (Buddhist vows)*

The wandering mendicant clergy of the Fuke sect wear the familiar black robes and basket headgear masks beloved by shinobi everywhere. Their masks are designed to impart unrecognizability, and make wonderful disguises for shinobi. Because of this, some people react negatively upon seeing komuso, certain that they are shinobi instead of clergy. Komuso playing the shakuhachi travel the land begging for alms and preaching the truth of the Fuke sect. They stop and stay in local temples and resume their travels the next day. They perform services as do any other member of the Buddhist clergy. Common equipment includes *straw basket hat and bamboo flute*.

KUGE (NOBLEMAN)**CASTES:** *kuge***SKILLS:** *crime, high society, flattery, literacy, design, performance, confucianism, shinto***GIMMICKS:** *membership (Imperial Court), renown (politics)***CONVICTIONS:** *values (fealty to the emperor)*

Using flattery, gifts, and their names as methods of court access, kuge can create and subvert policy, bring about sudden losses and raises of favor, and even the fall of whole houses. They usually require the help of a bushi or clan to support them, but are powerful patrons in the capital. Some are wonderful scholars, academics, poets, and artisans. Many kuge are devoutly religious, and while maintaining their kuge station and rank, are also high-ranking members of a Buddhist sect. Kuge are nearly powerless outside the environs of the capital, however. Common equipment includes *tanto and kariginu*.

MARTIAL ARTIST (BUDOKA)

CASTES: *buke, hinin, bonge*
SKILLS: *various brawling and melee skills, focus ki, meditation*
GIMMICKS: *membership (ryu), renown (miscellaneous)*
CONVICTIONS: *values (loyalty to ryu grandmaster)*

There are no *professional* martial artists. If they are the masters of a particular style, they also have another job and teach on the side. It is not unknown for a member of the buke to learn a particular form, but by and large only the bonge and hinin are particularly inclined to learn a *commoner's* martial art, and that for self-defense. Budoka specialize in weaponless or *non-lethal* weapon forms. They are indistinguishable from their fellows, as there is no *belt system* or uniform common to students of budo. Common equipment includes *one weapon for each martial art skill*.



MEDIUM (ITAKO)

CASTES: *buke, bonge, kuge*
SKILLS: *literacy, meditation, performance, shinto*
GIMMICKS: *membership (Shinto shrine), renown (miscellaneous)*
CONVICTIONS: *values (Shinto Miko vows)*

Mediums are universally female in Shinto, and are specially gifted miko. When channeling voice of the dead or a kami, her body becomes rigid, and the kami or dead person *takes over*. The trance may produce a gentle swaying of the body or violent physical spasms. Rarely is a medium taken over against her will, however. If there is an itako in a town or village gifted by the kami, people know of it, and she may be held in awe and possibly even feared. A medium must possess the piety ability, but when she marries, takes a lover, or reaches the age of twenty-five, the piety ability is reduced to 0, and she must leave the service of the shrine. Common equipment includes *white kimono and red hakama*.

RONIN

CASTES: *buke (disenfranchised)*
SKILLS: *ken-jitsu, kyu-jitsu, focus ki, legends, riding, survival, various okuden, crime*
GIMMICKS: *renown (miscellaneous)*
CONVICTIONS: *none central to vocation*

Ronin are lordless samurai, and often make a living selling their services for various causes. Many become bandits, and others just turn into wandering souls, perfecting their arts or leading a dissolute life. Ronin are of no recognized position, but even ashigaru are usually considered their social superiors, owing to the fact that the ashigaru at least has a clan. For this reason, ronin may try to ingratiate themselves with local daimyo in the hopes that the lord may take them into his clan and put his mark on them. Common equipment includes *katana or other swords*.



SAMURAI

CASTES: *buke*

SKILLS: *ken-jutsu, kyu-jutsu, focus ki, legends, riding, survival, warfare, various okuden*

GIMMICKS: *membership (samurai clan)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (fealty to daimyo), beliefs (code of bushido)*

A samurai is a buke (usually a bushi) who is in the service of a daimyo or other ranking samurai. The root of the word samurai is the word *saburau* (*to serve*). The samurai may be an officer or just a simple retainer. Honor is all to the samurai. They generally prefer death to failure or defeat. Samurai who are ordered to fight do so, even if it means that they will die. It is the rare samurai who has a sense of destiny and his place in history who is able to grasp his own fate and control it. Wives might have to commit suicide if their husbands are shamed or forced to kill themselves; and if the mothers go, so will any young children. Whole families may be put to the sword for the transgressions of one member. Common equipment includes *yari* or *naginata*, *yumi*, *calligraphy set*, *horse*, and *samurai armor* (see page 118).



MONASTIC WARRIOR (SOHEI)

CASTES: *all*

SKILLS: *buddhism, ken-jutsu, so-jutsu, meditation, survival, subterfuge.*

GIMMICKS: *membership (Buddhist temple)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (Buddhist vows), values (loyalty to temple)*

Sohei are tonsured monastics who have not abandoned or newly take up the sword. The typical sohei has no access to magic, due to his choice of the sword over the peaceful Way of the Buddha. Given their more earthy natures, sohei ascribe to the Buddhist restrictions on eating flesh as a rule, but do not pass up a juicy piece of fowl or a nice rabbit if one is available. Their primary loyalty is to their home temples and then their sects. Sohei dress like normal monks in black or dark clothing and wear a cowl; when in armor they often wear their robes over their armor and wear the cowl over their face in lieu of a helmet. Their favored weapon is the naginata. Common equipment includes *Buddhist garb*, *Buddhist rosary*, *katana* or *naginata*, and *samurai armor* (see page 188).

SHINOBI (NINJA)

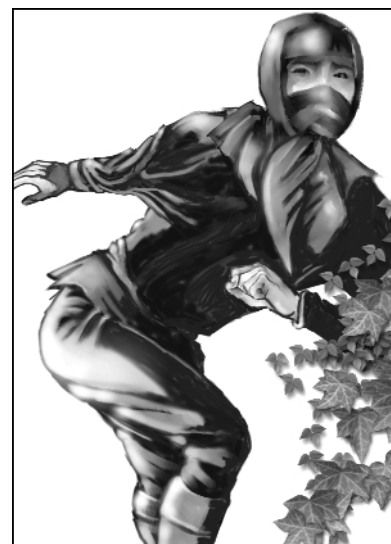
CASTES: *hinin, bongé*

SKILLS: *athletics, ninpo taijutsu, disguise, espionage, meditation, ken-jutsu, stealth, subterfuge, various martial arts*

GIMMICKS: *connections, membership (ninja clan), multilingual (Japanese, ninja clan dialect)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (code of honor)*

Shinobi (or ninja) are indistinguishable from the people around them if they are doing their job correctly. A shinobi traveling down a road may be dressed as a religious pilgrim, merchant, peasant, samurai, or even a cleric. Even when disguised, shinobi carry an amazing array of tricks and concealed weapons. Common equipment includes *nine shuriken*, *shinobigatana*, and *shinobi shojoku*.



WARRIOR (BUSHI)

CASTES: *bonge, buke, kuge*

SKILLS: *kyu-jutsu, athletics, ju-jutsu or sumai, focus ki, ken-jutsu), various melee martial arts, riding, warfare*

GIMMICKS: *membership (samurai clan)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (fealty to daimyo or employer)*

A warrior, in service to a lord or not, is called a bushi. A peasant carrying a hoe and wearing a helmet he found on a battlefield may consider himself a bushi. A member of a kuge family who takes up the sword would also be a bushi, but he would likely be able to afford, or at least obtain through the return of favors, adequate instruction and the best armor and weapons. Since peasants who attach themselves to clans become ashigaru, the only castes whose members can technically be considered bushi are bonges and kuge. Common equipment includes *yumi*, *yari* or *naginata*, *katana* (kuge only), and *ashigaru* or *samurai armor* (see page 118).



YAMABUSHI (SHUGENJA)

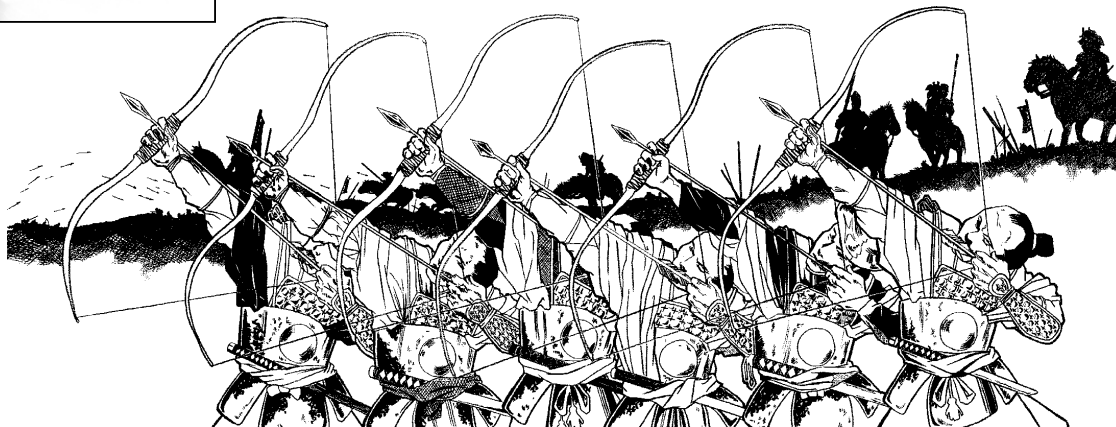
CASTES: *bonge, buke, kuge*

SKILLS: *meditation, masakari-jutsu or jo-jutsu, ken-jutsu, performance, shugendo, survival*

GIMMICKS: *connections, membership (Shugenja sect), renown (miscellaneous)*

CONVICTIONS: *values (Yamabushi vows)*

Yamabushi follow shugendo. They are wandering ascetics, living in the mountains, who carry their important worldly goods on their backs. Yamabushi wear a phylactery strapped onto their foreheads, a long ribbon of cloth around their neck (wagesa), and their robes are trimmed with large pompoms. Shugenja never cut their hair, though they may shave, and frequently carry conch shell horns. Shugenja do not drink alcohol, and are strict vegetarians even if starving (fish and shellfish are acceptable if necessary). They are strictly celibate and, without exception, male. Shugenja are both feared and respected, and possess the piety ability. They are famous for healing powers and as mediums—if a medium is male, he is a shugenja. Common equipment includes *bo*, *katana* or *masakari* or *ono*, and *yamabushi garb*.



OTHER CHARACTER IDEAS

CHINESE ARTIST OR SCHOLAR

The character is from China, so is probably a member of a daimyo or imperial court, or visiting a monastery or temple. It is highly unlikely that he is in Japan entirely on his own. He specializes in the arts, crafts, or knowledge of the Middle Kingdom, rather than Japan.

ETA

CASTES : *hinin*

Although a class rather than an occupation, their identity and treatment warrant consideration as an occupation. Eta are those who work with raw leather, skinning and tanning, or dispose of refuse. Even though they perform a vital service, they are treated with disdain. There is no way to tell an eta from another member of society—one must know his family tree. Eta are forced to live in *ghettos* on the outskirts of towns rather than in the cities.

EUROPEAN FOREIGNER (NANBANJIN)

Through most of the Sengoku Period, nanbanjin is synonymous with Portuguese or Spaniard. While most nanbanjin encountered are clergy, sailors and merchants may also be found in Japan. The priests understand at least a bit of the Japanese language, but few sailors know more than simple phrases.

GEISHA

CASTES : *bonge*

Geisha means *art person* and that is what they are—professional entertainers. They sing, dance, play musical instruments, tell jokes, and are gifted conversationalists. Their function is to grease the social wheels of a party or to provide relaxing entertainment. *Note: Geisha did not actually appear as a profession until the Tokugawa era.*

KOREAN ARTIST OR SCHOLAR

Most famous Korean artists are known for their pottery or painting. There are few Koreans in Japan who are identified as Koreans. Those who are known as artists are the patrons of buke or kuge clans. As foreigners, they are outside the caste system, but are considered the equivalent of native bongé artisans.

PILGRIM

CASTES : *any*

A pilgrim, or more commonly, a group of pilgrims, is likely to be encountered at or near a religious site. They may be Buddhist or Shinto, and within a group, they are usually of similar social level and standing. No one is a professional pilgrim, but the *typical* pilgrim usually has something in common with most others—religious devotion. They often make the pilgrimage to obtain a favor from the gods or to expiate a sin or crime.

MORE CHARACTER IDEAS

	KUGE	BUKE	BONGE	HININ
ARTISAN/CRAFTSMAN	painter, poet, calligrapher	swordsmith, poet, calligrapher	carpenter, brewer, stonemason, potter, screen maker, armorer, entertainer	entertainer
CRIMINAL	smuggler, assassin,	gang-member	thief, prostitute	thief, prostitute
GOVERNMENT	imperial minister	daimyo retainer, clan official, tax collector	samurai's assistant, village councilor, court attendant, courtesan	spy, executioner, eta councilor
LAW	imperial guard officer	clan inspector, town magistrate, prison guard	constable, executioner	constable's assistant, jailer, spy
MERCHANT	imperial treasurer	ryu instructor, clan's merchant liason	merchant, money-lender, shopkeeper, innkeeper	troupe manager, landscape artist
MILITARY	palace guard	mercenary, scout, weapons instructor, spy	spy, samurai's attendant	grave-digger

ARMS & ARMOR

...it is the custom in buke families for even the very least of the servants of the samurai never to be without a short sword for a moment. Much more must the higher samurai always wear their daisho. And some very punctilious ones wear a blunt sword or a wooden one even when they go to the bath.

DAIDOJI YUZAN

ARMS

ABOUT SWORDS

The familiar shape of the katana is well known. It is virtually the same as the tachi, no-dachi, wakizashi, tanto, and aiguchi. In terms of blade, the only difference with any of them is the length; even the width and thickness of the blades are identical. The fittings are quite similar, as well, but the aiguchi is alone when it comes to having no tsuba, or guard.

Katana and wakizashi make up the daisho, the pair of swords, which many consider the badge of the samurai, and as such, are decorated the same. The tanto, the unofficial third member of this pair, often matches as well.

Samurai of any rank wear tachi with armor, while only ashigaru and lower-class bushi wear a katana with their armor. These may use a device called a koshiate, which looks like a leather sleeve, into which the katana scabbard is fitted and then hung from the waist sash.

Kuge wear tachi exclusively; they do not wear katana. The tachi worn by kuge are often very expensively furnished, but the blades may be virtually useless. Kuge also are alone in having tachi that they wear for court purposes.

The gentle curve of Japanese swords make them perfect for cutting. There are two types of sword construction. The less expensive has a

blade edge of hard, brittle steel encased top and sides by a softer steel folded over it almost to the edge. The more expensive are made by repeated foldings of metal onto itself dozens of times to produce a perfectly tempered blade. The blade is coated in a heat-resistant clay and heated red-hot, then quenched. The clay causes the blade to temper differently at different points, making for a more solid edge and more “flexibility” on the back. This clay is what causes the often ornate hamon (temper lines) on the blades.

In ancient Japan, swords were shorter, straight, and double-edged. Called tsurugi, these swords can sometimes be found in shrine and temple storehouses. Many of them were gifts from powerful warriors seeking favors from the gods.

The shinobigatana (also known as a ninja-to, using a different reading of the same kanji characters) is considered the badge of the shinobi, which is why it is hardly ever seen outside of twentieth-century films. A shinobi's job is deception and stealth; it would do him no good to look like a common bushi walking down the street and carrying the unique weapon of the shinobi. The shinobigatana, if used at all, would only be used at night when the shinobi is dressed for duty and in need of weapon.

SWORDS (FOR KEN-JUTSU)

Bokken

The bokken is a wooden practice sword. It is made of hard cherry wood, and replicates the weight and balance of a true blade.

Katana

The katana is the traditional sword of Sengoku Japan. They vary in quality, but even average quality blades are razor sharp and can cut through bamboo in a single strike.

Nodachi

Nodachi are the great, two-handed swords. The saya (scabbard) is generally worn strung across the back or discarded before combat.

Shinobigatana

This infamous sword of the shinobi are of average quality, though they often feature a number of special tools built into them.

Tachi

The tachi is the traditional sword of the kuge and high-ranking buke. It is typically more



decorative and elaborate than the katana, and is worn suspended (instead of tucked into the belt). It is otherwise identical in function to the katana.

Wakizashi

This Japanese short sword is part of the daisho and a mark of the samurai. The saya (scabbard) and handle are designed the same as a katana. Wakizashi are popular among bonge, especially travelers on the nation's highways. This weapon may also be thrown using shuriken-jutsu.

KNIVES (FOR TANTO-JUTSU)

Aiguchi

The handle is typically made of wood and the weapon has no hand guard. It is otherwise identical to the tanto. Aiguchi are popular among women. This weapon may also be thrown using shuriken-jutsu.

Tanto

The handle and scabbard of a tanto are designed the same as a katana and wakizashi. This weapon may also be thrown using shuriken-jutsu.

BLUDGEONS (FOR TETSUBO-JUTSU)

Tetsubo

The tetsubo is octagonal in section rather than round like the smaller bo, and the broad end is often clad in metal splints and large metal studs. It is a slow weapon, but causes severe damage.

LANCES (FOR SO-JUTSU)

Yari

The yari, or lance, is the primary weapon of the foot soldier, although many samurai of rank are also proficient in its use. Although the blade is triangular, the concavities allow for the edges to be made quite sharp. The yari is often called a spear, but as spears can be thrown and the yari never is, the word lance is actually a better translation.

Fumata-yari

A variant of the yari, the fumata-yari has a forked head, which can deliver a devastating attack to limbs and necks. It is often used by foot soldiers to dismount cavalry.

Kama-yari

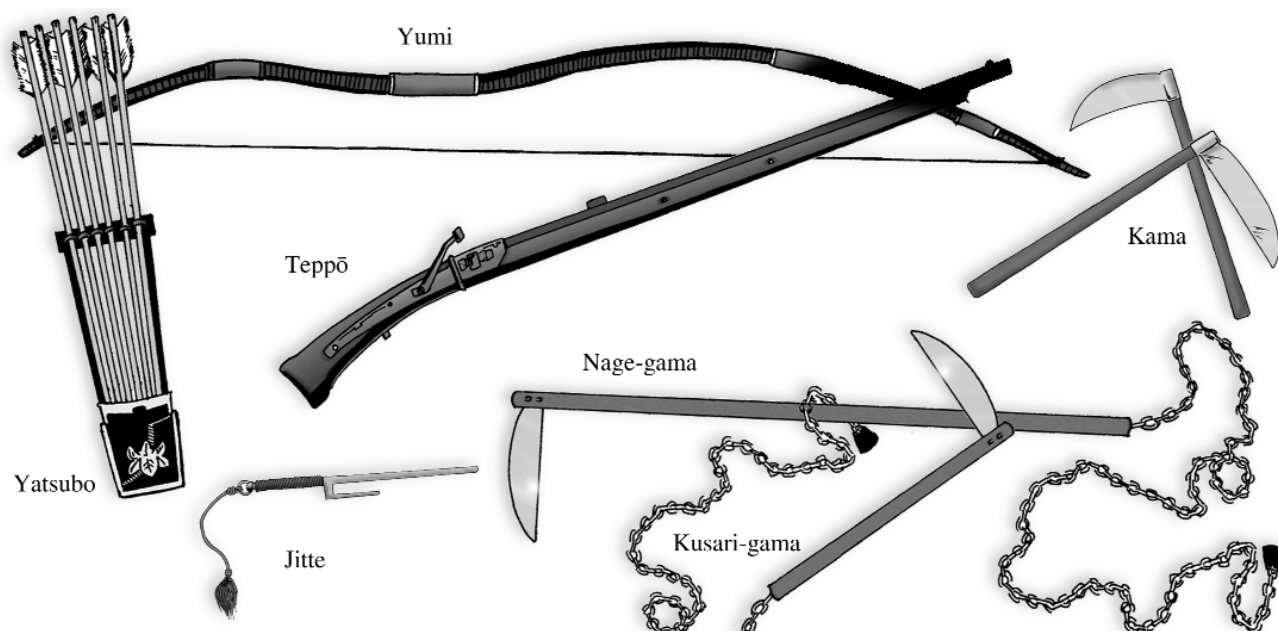
A form of yari in which a curved, sickle-like attachment is part of the blade. This weapon is the trademark of the Hozoin ryu and is also popular with sohei.

Tanpo-yari

The tanpo-yari is a practice spear with a round wooden or padded head. It is seldom found outside so-jutsu dojos.

Hoko

Another variant of the yari, the hoko has a hooked blade at the base of the main blade. The hoko is primarily used by ashigaru as an effective weapon to dismount samurai cavalry.



STAVES (FOR JO-JUTSU)**Bo**

The bo is a commonly used quartstaff wielded by priests and pilgrims. It resembles a priest's walking staff.

Jo

The jo was developed in response to the need for a non-bladed defensive art for use against samurai. It is shorter than the bo.

BLADED STAVES (FOR NAGINATA-JUTSU)**Naginata**

The naginata, or halberd, consists of a shaft of wood to which is mounted a blade about the length of a wakizashi blade, but slightly broader and heavier. Unlike the yari, which has a round shaft, the naginata shaft is oval, shaped more like a sword hilt, to enable the user to keep better control over the blade. It is a favored weapon of the sohei, and the sole weapon taught to most buke women. Many daimyo have roving patrols of women in their estates and castles who wear normal kimono and carry naginata to defend the lord.

Bisento

The bisento is a large weapon of Chinese origin. It is similar to the naginata, but larger and heavier.

BARBED STAVES (FOR SODEGARAMI-JUTSU)**Sasumata**

A weapon used primarily by doshin, the sasumata features a large, forked blade on one end and several rows of sharp metal barbs around the shaft near the blade that could be used to cut and pierce. The weapon is used to control an opponent's movement more so than to inflict damage.

Sodegarami

The "sleeve tangler" is a device for unhorsing opponents. It takes the form of a long pole with several short spikes or barbs facing in all different

directions. The idea is to catch the opponent's sleeves or dangling cords and drag him from a horse. It can only cause minor damage to unarmored opponents with the barbs, but can cause considerable blunt damage.

JITTE (FOR JITTE-JUTSU)**Jitte**

The jitte is a steel truncheon as big around as a man's thumb. A length of braid wrapped about the base forms a handgrip, and immediately above the grip is a single, short blade-catching extension that juts out. This is the principle weapon of the doshin, who use it to defend themselves against sword blows and to knock their opponents senseless. Although it is intended to be a disabling weapon, as with any blunt object its use can be fatal.

Sai

The sai is similar in design and function to the jitte, except that it has two curved tines. The sai originated in Ryukyu.

TOOLS (FOR KAMA-JUTSU)**Kama**

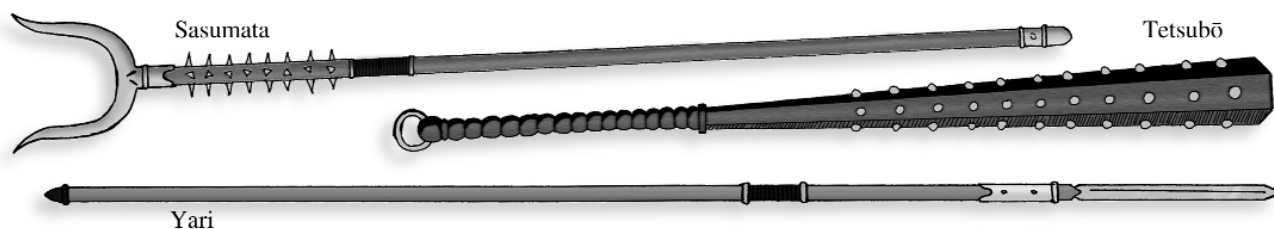
The kama is a weapon based on an agricultural implement. It consists of a shaft with a scythe-shaped blade emerging from its head. The kama is a typical weapon of the peasantry.

Ogama

The ogama is a huge, two-handed battle version of the kama. The weapon consists of a large blade affixed to the end of a shaft.

Kusari-gama

The kusari-gama is a kama joined to a length of thin chain that is attached to the butt of the handle. The chain is about ten feet in length and has a small weight attached to the end. No self-respecting samurai would be caught dead with one. The nage-gama is essentially the same, but with a shaft as long as a staff.



AXES (FOR MASAKARI-JUTSU)

Fuetsu

A fuetsu is a simple hand axe. While not intended as a combat weapon, it is quite effective against armored and unarmored foes, and is lighter and quicker than a masakari, due to its smaller size.

Masakari

This battle-axe with a short, narrow blade is occasionally augmented with a head spike. This is the common war axe.

Ono

The ono is a large, heavy-bladed axe with a long handle. It is much heavier than the masakari, and because of its mass causes impressive damage. Due to its size, however, it is a slow weapon. The ono is sometimes seen in use by samurai on the battlefield. It is also a favored weapon of many shugenja.

CHAINS (FOR KUSARI-JUTSU)

Kawa-naga

The kawa-naga is a rope, usually made of hemp, silk, or hair, weighted on one end by a piece of iron. It is often used by shinobi to aid them in climbing trees and walls. The weighted end can also be used to strike an opponent or grab objects like a whip.

Kyotetsu-shoge

No one but shinobi use these strange weapons, which consist of a short dagger blade fused to a downward-curving hook, the hilt of which is attached to a long, thin rope or cord made of hair, and ending in a small ring. It can be used like the kusari-gama, and the ring may be used to aid a shinobi in climbing. It should be noted that the mere possession of one of these weapons is very suspect, as the weapon is used exclusively by shinobi.

FLAILS (FOR NUNCHAKE-TE)

Nunchaku

A weapon of Ryukyu origin, the nunchaku consists of two pieces of wood connected by a short rope or length of chain. In the hands of a skilled user, nunchaku can be spun at incredible speeds and cause serious damage to an opponent. Nunchaku can also be used to block attacks from bladed weapons.

Sanbon Nunchaku

A three-section staff of Ryukyu origin, the sanbon nunchaku consists of three separate staves connected with rope or chain. This weapon was originally introduced to Ryukyu from China.

NETS (FOR TOAMI-JUTSU)

Toami

A toami is essentially a weighted fishing net. It does no damage, but can be used to ensnare an enemy or objects.

FANS (FOR TESSEN-JUTSU)

Tessen

The fighting fan is made of stiff, painted paper like all other Japanese fans, but instead of wood, the spines are metal. It is primarily a defensive weapon, but can cause bludgeoning damage.

RANGED WEAPONS (FOR KYU-JUTSU)

Yumi

The Japanese longbow (yumi or daikyu) is unique in its asymmetry. Two-thirds of the bow is above the hand-grip, and one-third is below. The bow is a composite of different types of wood, lacquered and sometimes wrapped decoratively with cord. Bows are identified as three-man, four-man, or five-man bows; ostensibly, this is the number of men needed to bend the bow to string it. The heaviest bow of history and legend was that of the giant Minamoto no Tametomo, a twelfth-century warrior, who used a seven-man bow with which he is said to have sunk a small ship. Arrows (ya) are made of the straightest bamboo, fletched with hawk feathers. There are dozens of different types of arrowheads, each with a different function. A wooden bulb with strategically placed holes whistled loudly when fired, and could be used for signaling or for



intimidating an enemy. Broad-bladed heads are used to rip flesh; narrow, long heads are used to pierce armor; forked, razor-edged blades are used to cut cords. The quiver is worn low on the right hip. Arrows are drawn out by the heads, as the archer pulls the arrow up and then down and out.

Han-kyu

A second form of bow, called a han-kyu, is often carried in the palanquin of a lord as a defensive weapon. Shinobi also make frequent use of the hankyu. With the advent of the matchlock, the yumi has become a bit of an anachronism on the battlefield. Hundreds still use them, but the training to make them effective is nothing compared to the simplicity with which ranks of peasants can be trained to use the matchlock.

RANGED WEAPONS (FOR FIREARMS)

Odeppo

The odeppo (also called hinawa ozutsu) is a large matchlock hand-cannon, resembling a mortar. It is made of strong but light wood, and the barrel is wound with iron rings to add strength. They are more effective as wall guns than conventional infantry pieces. Odeppo can fire shot, explosive charges (tedan) of varying size, incendiary rockets, or arrows. Odeppo are less common than teppo, and are seldom, if ever, used in sieges against castles, where, ironically, they would do the most good.

Teppo

The teppo (matchlock) is a recent arrival on the military scene in Japan. The first one was introduced in 1542, and they were soon in domestic production. The teppo is also called tanegashima, after the island where the Portuguese first brought them ashore to Japan. Unlike the bow, the matchlock is weather-sensitive. For this reason, gunsmiths created a box-like device which covers the lock area to keep out precipitation. In addition to the full-sized models, however, extremely rare pistols may also be found.

RANGED WEAPONS (FOR SHURIKEN-JUTSU)

Shuriken

The classic *throwing star* actually comes in a variety of shapes, but four, six, and eight-pointed shuriken are most common. Small throwing blades (long, slender triangles) are also defined as

shuriken. They are easily concealed, but not the kind of weapons with which a samurai would like to be found. There are various types of shuriken.

Bo shuriken: A slim, straight, single-bladed shuriken. It resembles a short, pointed iron hashi (chopstick).

Shanko shuriken: A three-pointed shuriken, usually with diamond or leaf-shaped blades.

Jyuji shuriken: A four-pointed, cross-shaped shuriken. This weapon is the trademark of the Iga and Koga shinobi clans.

Shiho shuriken: A four-pointed shuriken which looks like four arrows pointing out from the center.

Goho shuriken: A five-pointed shuriken.

Happo shuriken: An eight-pointed shuriken. This form of shuriken is also used by the Iga and Koga shinobi clans.

Manji shuriken: A swastika-shaped shuriken.

Tanto-gata: A short, sword or knife-shaped shuriken. This form of shuriken is used by the Shosho-ryu.

ACCESSORIES

Arrow Stand

This wooden stand for holding arrows can also be used to hold a full quiver. It is most often found in military camps.

Clove Oil

Choji, a special oil is used for the maintenance of blades, but primarily swords. The oil prevents the blade from rusting.

Paper

Rice paper is used to wipe away grime and dirt from blades, as well as excess powder after cleaning and oiling the blade.

Polishing Chalk

Nagura toishi, a special chalk powder is used to absorb excess oil (choji) when cleaning blades. It is applied with a small stick to which is attached a cloth sack containing the chalk.

Polishing Stone

Awase toishi, a smooth block of stone is used with chalk to polish sword and knife blades. Sword polishing, a refined art form, can be accomplished by anyone, but the results are mediocre, at best. For a highly polished blade, one must go to a professional sword polisher.

Quivers

Japanese quivers, or yatsubo, are open unlike the enclosed, European style. Decorative quivers, used primarily by buke, look like small chairs. Used by bushi, standard quivers hold twelve arrows, and are worn low on the back and at a slight angle.

Sword Cleaning Kit

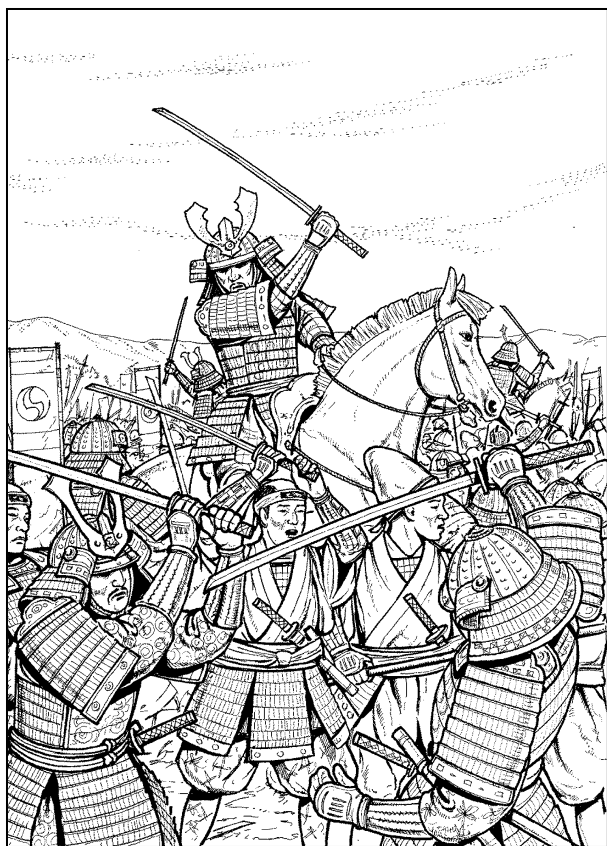
Care and maintenance of swords is critical if they are to retain their condition. The sword kit consists of a small wooden box, which holds a small container of clove oil (choji), five sheets of paper, polishing chalk and applicator, and a small iron hammer.

Sword Rack

Katanakake is a wooden display and storage rack for a dai-sho (katana and wakizashi). The weapons rest horizontally on the rack. Some versions also provide space for a matching tanto. A variant called the tachikake is designed to hold a tachi vertically.

Targets

Targets are used for archery practice. They are made of bound straw, with circles painted on one side. Both round targets and deer target versions can be found.



ARMOR

Japanese armor has undergone a process of simplification and improvement so that by the middle of the sixteenth century, it is both extremely functional and protective. Some armors are even bulletproof, and armors bearing the deep pockmarks of actual test firing are quite expensive. Due to the expense, most armors are not made en-suite except for lords and wealthier samurai.

A full suit of armor in the *modern* Sengoku style is called tosei gusoku, or *modern armor*. Working from the head down, let us take a look at the typical items in a full gusoku.

JINGASA

Jingasa (camp-hats) are worn in camp and on the road by upper-class bushi, while they are the standard battle-wear of the average foot soldier and ashigaru. Most jingasa are simple low, broad cones, although the jingasa of the commanders can exhibit more personality and flair. A jingasa is typically lacquered black or to match the armor, with the crest of the lord or owner on the front. Ashigaru are known to use their jingasa for cooking rice, as well as watering their horses.

KABUTO

The full helmet is called a kabuto. The most common form is a hemispherical bowl shape with a visor and a pendant lamellar nape-guard. The helmet bowl can be of as few as three and as many as one hundred and twenty narrowly overlapping plates. Kabuto of larger numbers of plates, such as sixty four, seventy two, and one hundred and twenty, are suitable only for generals and very wealthy samurai, as no one else can afford them. They are no more protective than a good three-plater, and oftentimes are even less protective. The three-plate helmets are the most common in the field due to their ease of construction; they are also often made bullet proof.

Helmets for samurai of any rank usually have a crest of some sort. It might be as simple as a disc at the front on which is painted or carved the owner's mon, or as bold as huge deer antlers or water buffalo horns worn on either side. The variety of crests is amazing.

DO

The torso is protected by a cuirass called do. All but the cheapest armors fully encircle the torso. The cheapest armors consist of just a breastplate, with no back. Many lords have elaborately designed and constructed breastplates that they wear for ceremony only—these are functional armor, but should not be considered in the same category as the inexpensive, mass-produced breastplates worn by the ashigaru.

Do typically wrap around the body and fasten under the right arm. The solid metal shoulder straps fasten to the top of the breast plate by two frogs. The sides are held together by a cord loop on the front and two cords on the back which tie closed. The placement is slightly below the armpit and a waist sash holds the waist closed. There are no buckles in Japanese armor.

A common feature of do is an arrangement for the back to which the sashimono (armor banner) is attached. This is a required feature on munitions-grade armors, as the sashimono is a standard feature for the field troops. Munitions armors also often have the mon of the clan lord painted boldly on the front.

SODE

The shoulders and upper arms are protected by sode. Each sode is very similar to one set of kusazuri. Sode are the only unattached piece of

armor that is invariably made en suite with any given do. Samurai officers wearing jinbaori (camp coats) usually do not wear sode with the garment.

KOTE

Bushi protect their arms with armored sleeves called kote. Although there are many different designs, the universal constant is that they involve metal plates on a fabric foundation, and a guard for the back of the hand. Typically, they take the form of a number of metal splints on the forearm, a small plate over the elbow, and a few rows of shorter splints on the upper arm. Mail is used to close up the open spaces on all but the cheapest kote. The hand guard is made up of two or four plates, covering the back of the thumb and the top of the hand, with cords securing it to the middle finger and thumb.

HAIDATE

The thighs are protected by a sort of armored split apron called haidate. These are very useful for mounted bushi, but those on the ground find them cumbersome and often discard them. All but the cheapest models have a strap that runs behind the leg to at least keep them in place. Those lacking this feature are soon modified by soldiers with the aid of scrap cloth and needle and thread.

SUNEATE

The final piece of armor is the suneate, or greave. These are more important to mounted bushi, whose shins would be exposed to unmounted warriors, but even the foot soldiers wear them. They are typically made en suite with the kote, as splints on fabric. Three standing portions made of brigantine rise to cover the knee. The inside of each suneate is only plated or splinted half-way down, as the bottom is covered with soft leather. This is to prevent the metal plates from rubbing and damaging stirrup straps.

MASKS

Armorers selling armor try to sell a matching armor mask with the helmet. While some bushi like the masks, as they keep the cords that secure the helmet from digging into the chin, most do not use them as they are hot and constricting. Field grade armors do not come so equipped as a rule. The full face mask, or somen, has fallen into disuse. The menpo is now preferred, and covers the nose, chin, and cheeks. A more abbreviated



version of the menpo is the hanbo or hoate, which leaves the nose exposed. Many menpo are made with the nose section removable. Face masks are decorated to represent a ferocious, grimacing face, complete with a mustache of applied horse hair.

DECORATIONS AND MOTIFS

Armor lacing (odoshi), whether silk braid or tanned leather, comes in a bewildering array of colors and patterns. The most common color is dark blue, which is widely used in munitions grade and ashigaru armors. Other colors are orange, red, white, pale green, and dark green.

The crest of the owner or the owner's lord can be worked into the armor in many places. Various large, ornamental rivets can bear the crest, as can metal decorative plaques applied in various places. Common locations are the back of the hand, the blowbacks on the kabuto, the helmet crest itself, and the front of the do.

BARDING

There is no horse armor, save for the occasional mask placed over the horse's head. The masks are of lacquered leather or metal, and typically decorated to resemble a dragon's head. The rest of the horse's tack for battle is the same as the horse's tack for day-to-day use, only perhaps a bit more ornate.

ANIMALS

BIRDS

Birds are a favorite pet among the cultured people of Japan. The two most common types of birds owned are falcons and songbirds. Falcons are trained for hunting and are popular among buke, who use them in a ritualistic hunting pastime, called tori-oi. It takes about six months to properly train a falcon, and requires proficiency in the animal handling skill. Songbirds are kept in small cages and valued for their beautiful songs and the luck they are believed to bring to their owners. Songbirds can be found in homes of affluent bonge, especially scholars and merchants.

CARP

Carp (koi) come in a variety of sizes and some varieties of carp, such as those that are golden orange in color, are kept in decorative ponds. Koi

are the subject of many pieces of art, as well as tattoos among lower-class gamblers.

DOGS

The Japanese dogs (inu) comes in several varieties. The two most common are the domestic akita and the shizu. Akitas are most often found as pets among the bonge, due to their excellent temperament and loyalty to their masters. Akitas are more common in the North, and the northern island of Hokkaido. Shizu are commonly trained as guard dogs. They are also extremely loyal to their masters, and have been known to pine for their masters when they die. Trained guard dogs obey a limited number of commands, including but not limited to *attack*, *watch*, *seek*, *sit*, and *down*. It takes four to six months to adequately train a guard dog, and requires proficiency in the animal handling skill.

HORSES

The Japanese horse (uma) differs from its European cousin in that it is shorter and stockier. Japanese horses are also very hearty and valued for their hard-working natures. Farmers and merchants may own and use work horses, but only as pack or draft animals; they may not be ridden. Riding horses are used by the buke as mounts for cavalry, scouts, and officers including daimyo. Horses are trained for basic riding and use; highly-trained horses, which can attack, are rare.

LIVESTOCK

Livestock, including cows and water buffalo, are used as draft animals in Japan. They are seldom, if ever, raised for slaughter, because of the Buddhist teachings against eating meat which are prevalent in Japanese society. Livestock are expensive to maintain, and are therefore owned mainly by farmers who can grow their own feed or allow the animals to graze in their fields.

FEED

Feed for horses and other livestock consists primarily of straw and grasses, and may include various grains. Feed is very expensive for the average person, making it next to impossible for someone to maintain a horse or ox even if they could afford to buy one. Most bonge owners of livestock grow their own feed. Buke may purchase feed from the farmers or, during wartime, simply

take what they need from the commoners in whatever area they happen to be passing through or encamped.

INSECTS

Insects are a curiosity and plaything to many. They may be kept as pets, used in fighting contests in which people wager on the outcome, or for other, more creative uses. Beetles, fireflies, crickets, and even praying mantises can be purchased or found in the wild.

CLOTHING

DEONBURI

A deonburi is a cloth apron used by some craftsmen and artisans to keep the kimono from getting soiled while working.

FUNDOSKI

Fundoshi are long white cloths that are wrapped around the groin and waist, and worn as a loincloth.

GETA

Geta are a type of wooden *platform* shoe, consisting of a wooden sole, with two wooden blocks attached to the bottom, and a straw thong to secure the foot. Geta are typically worn only by kuge, buke, and more affluent bongé, although they are becoming more fashionable and popular of late. Geta are worn with tabi (socks), and only during inclement weather, as a rule; they are never worn indoors. Men and women have distinctive styles of geta, and they are not interchangeable.

HAORI

A haori is a loose-fitting jacket or coat, with a small pair of tassled cords to secure the front. The haori is worn over the kimono, but not over armor. Haori are worn by people of every station, although the quality of the item usually belies the wearer's caste. Bongé wear simple haori, made of cloth or silk of a single color, while samurai wear a silk haori of brighter colors and bearing the crest of their clan.

HATS

Hats are commonly worn by all castes. They provide shade from the sun, and cover from rain and snow. Like all forms of clothing, a hat can denote rank or social standing. Headgear comes

in a variety of shapes and sizes, including paper hats (eboshi), straw hats (kasa), and headbands (hachimaki).

Eboshi are worn by the aristocracy, as well as by Shinto priests. Eboshi are made from black lacquered paper and secured to the head with a white cord.

Kasa are worn by all castes. The most common style of straw hat is the wide, bowl-shaped hat. This is a style is worn by farmers, Buddhist priests, bongé, and samurai alike; only the kuge are unlikely to be seen wearing them. Kasa may be worn tipped forward or with a cloth suspended from the brim of the hat to prevent the wearer's face from being seen.

Another style of kasa is the *basket* hat, worn most often by wandering priests of the Fuke sect. These are tall, cylindrical hats that cover the entire head, with small spaces between the weaves in the front allowing the wearer to see out but preventing others from seeing the wearer's face.

The hachimaki is a simple cloth worn tied around the forehead. It is worn by anyone performing strenuous work, including kagoya, bushi, ashigaru, farmers, and other laborers. It is not unusual to see common laborers wearing nothing but a loincloth and a hachimaki in public while they work.



JINBAORI

The jinbaori is a long silk vest with starched shoulders, similar to the kataginu, but is not tucked into the obi. Instead, it is worn over other clothing, like a coat. The jinbaori is a mark of rank for samurai. It is made of silk and can be worn over armor, with the katana or tachi protruding from under the jinbaori behind the wearer. It is not worn for formal occasions, like the kataginu, unless the samurai is already in armor.

KARI-SHOZOKA

The kari-shozoku is a special set of clothing worn by buke during the formal falcon hunt, or other hunts, including those involving deer and wild boar. It consists of a special kimono and hakama. An eboshi, or formal lacquered paper cap, completes the outfit.

KATAGINU

The kataginu is a silk or cloth vest with tall, heavily starched shoulders, worn tucked into the waistband of a hakama (trousers). It is part of the traditional court garb of the samurai, and functions as their *formal dress*. As a general rule, only high-ranking samurai may wear a kataginu. They may be worn in public while attending to official business or social gatherings with one's peers.

KEGETSU

Fur boots, or kegetsu, are not a common form of footwear in Japan. Kegetsu are generally worn only by those living in the northernmost regions of Japan, including Hokkaido, where snow is plentiful and deep, and the temperatures sometimes dip below freezing.

KIMONO

The kimono is the traditional garb of Japan. Japanese women wear the kimono almost exclusively as their daily attire, with the exception of females working in the fields and female bushi when in armor. Men also wear the kimono, although bonge and hinin tend to wear short kimono, with or without trousers, and male samurai typically wear the long kimono with hakama. In addition, samurai may wear their clan's crest on the kimono, over each breast, on both sleeves, and the upper center of the back of the kimono.

Normal kimono may be long, reaching to the top of the feet, or short, thigh or knee-length. Normal kimono may be made of cloth, but most are made of fine silks. The normal kimono is the typical attire for all Japanese people. The summer kimono is made of a thinner material with larger sleeves to allow better air circulation during the hot and humid summer months. The under-kimono is a long kimono worn indoors, as a sort of pajama. It may be worn under a normal kimono during the colder winter months. The over-kimono is a large, heavy flowing kimono that covers the feet entirely. It is worn by women of the aristocracy, and by brides during weddings. The over-kimono also includes a sheer white veil, or shawl, which is usually held over the woman's head with both hands.

NO COSTUME

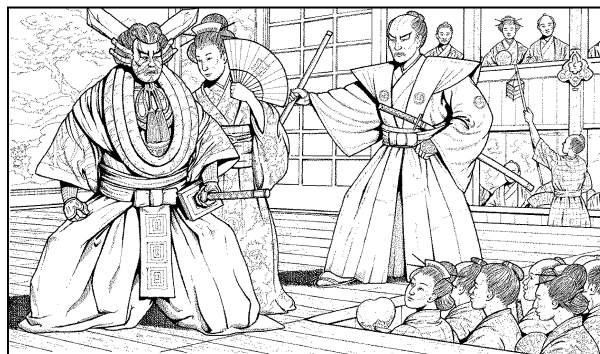
No costumes vary in appearance, but all of them are made with several layers of expensive silk kimono of bright patterns and expensive, decorative motifs. The costume also include props, such as a tachi, folding fan, and the like. No costumes are heavy and take some time to don. Professional actors often use one or more assistants to don their garb before a performance.

OBI

The obi is the traditional belt, or sash, worn by men and women alike. Men's obi are thinner and simpler in design than women's obi, and they are not interchangeable. Samurai carry their dai-sho tucked into their obi, and most everyone wears their fan tucked into the front folds of their obi, as well.

PRIESTLY GARB

Priestly garb varies by religion. Buddhist garb consists of a simple white kimono with an additional overgarment. Priests of some sects wear saffron kesa or cloth hung over one shoulder.



Others, like the sohei, wear sheer, almost gauze-like, black overgarments; this garment can even be worn over armor. Jesuit priests wear saffron, European-style clerical robes. Shinto priests wear large ceremonial kimono, similar to the Heian style robes worn by the kuge, and a peaked cap made of lacquered paper and secured by white cord. Yamabushi wear white kimono, white trousers, and yellow overgarments, similar in design to a kataginu.

SHINOBI SHOJOKU

Shinobi shojoku is the traditional garb of the ninja. It consists of a wrap-around hood, tunic with several secret inner pockets, cloth kote that protect the forearms and back of the hands, loose-fitting trousers, and cloth. All of the clothing is relatively loose, with ties around the waist, wrists and ankles.

The clothing is traditionally dyed one of several colors, depending on the environment in which the shinobi is working—black for night, brown for fields and forests, gray for stone and urban settings, and white for snow. True black is not available, the closest being a nearly black, dark red, or dark indigo, due to the available dyes.

Reversible forms of shinobi shojoku may be made, with a second color or even a complete set of faux garb that can be used as a disguise when the garb is turned inside out.

TABI

Tabi are cotton socks that cover the feet. They have separate big toes, with the rest of the sock being a single piece. Tabi are common to all castes, though those worn by buke and kuge tend to be of brighter colors and generally better quality.

TASUKE

The tasuke is a long silk cord used by bushi to tie back the long sleeves of the kimono before entering battle. This keeps the sleeves from getting in the way and gives the bushi greater freedom of movement of his arms.

TROUSERS

Trousers in Japan are made of cloth or silk. They are pulled up and secured by a belt. Buke wear a loose-fitting form of split-skirt-style trouser, called a hakama. The hakama is pulled up over the bottom of the kimono and the front

and back of the hakama are secured with a belt wrapped several times around the waist. Large, deep openings on both sides of the hakama, at the waist, reveal the kimono beneath. Bonge and hinin wear more snug trousers, called kobakama, secured by a belt and often having the lower leg portion secured with cloth or silk strips.

YUGAKE

Yugake, or mitsugake, are three-fingered, tanned skin gloves. They are uncommon and worn primarily by professional archers in order to prevent injuries to the hands when firing the massive Japanese great bow.

WARAJI

Waraji are straw thong sandals, and are the most common form of outdoor footwear in Japan. They consist of a straw mat-like sole with a straw cord that ties around the heel and ankle. They are usually worn with tabi, and always removed before entering a building or home, except in the most dire of emergencies.

OTHER ITEMS

BOOKS

Books are uncommon and very valuable in Sengoku Japan, as there is yet no moveable type press. Books are created from wood block printing plates or, more commonly, hand written. The most common books available are the Chinese and Japanese classics. Japanese books consist of paper pages sewn into a leather or stiff, lacquered paper binding or simply one large, accordion-style sheet of paper between leather or wood covers. Some daimyo, and many temples and scholars maintain impressive libraries, which contain religious, historical or esoteric texts, possibly including some written by the owner himself.

BRUSHES

Japanese brushes are made of wood or bamboo, with bristles made from wolf, sheep, and/or horse hair. Brushes come in a variety of sizes for different uses. Brushes are used most often for painting and calligraphy. Brushes used specifically for calligraphy are called fude.

BUDDHIST PRIEST'S STAFF

Called a shakujo, this staff looks like a standard bo, except for a brass end-cap at the top, to which

is fastened a large brass ring. Looped within this central ring are six smaller brass rings. Thus, it is sometimes called a *seven ring staff*. It is believed that the sound made by the rings when carrying the staff while walking helps ward off evil or mischievous spirits. While some pious laymen carry one on pilgrimages, it is usually carried only by Buddhist priests.

CALLIGRAPHY SET

The calligraphy set, or *suzuri bako*, is a complete, portable set of sumi painting and drawing materials ready for use, contained in a small lacquered wooden case. The calligraphy set contains two brushes, ink stone, one ink stick, small water dropper, signature stone, and small ink pot containing red ink.

DIVINER'S SCROLLS

The Chinese book, *I Ching*, in complete form is commonly written on rice-paper scrolls, though it may also rarely be found in book form. The *I Ching* is used by diviners, mystics, and lay people alike to predict the future and predetermine the outcome of events.

GONGS AND BELLS

Gongs are an important part of many religious rituals and meditative exercises. All gongs come with a wooden mallet for striking. The *dotaku* is a large bronze bell, commonly found at Buddhist temples. It is suspended vertically from a cross beam, and struck with a large suspended wooden striker that looks like a pole. The round gong is made of brass and similar in shape to a cymbal. It is generally suspended. When struck it provides the classic *gong* tone. The meditation gong is a hammered brass, bowl-shaped gong and generally rests on a small pillow. When struck, this gong issues a long, pure mellow tone which facilitates the calming of mind and spirit (+1 effort on meditation tasks). Temple gongs are found in the numerous Shinto shrines throughout Japan. All gongs come with a wooden mallet for striking.

INCENSE

Incense has many uses in Japan. It is used in sachets or burned under clothing as a perfume, kept in drawers or a chest to keep clothes smelling fresh, burned to provide a fresh fragrance to a room and to help repel insects, and used in the ancient *kodo*, or incense ceremony.

There are several varieties of incense, the cost of which also varies.

MAKEUP KIT

This lacquered wooden box contains several colors of makeup, a brush, pencil for accent lines, several small hair pins, and other miscellaneous items for preparing professional makeup, such as used by No actors. The colors may be skillfully mixed to recreate flesh tones. Use of this kit provides +2 effort on disguise tasks. Note that mere possession of a makeup kit by anyone other than a kuge invokes the presumption that one is an actor or other entertainer.

MEDICINE AND DRUGS

Various medicines and drugs are available in Sengoku Japan. Common medicines are available for purchase. Most physicians can create their own drugs using the herbal medicine skill, assuming they also have their own herb garden or purchase the necessary herbs at market. The use of healing herbs can increase the restoration of health at the discretion of the director.

PAPER

Japanese paper is made from rice or wood pulp by professional paper-makers. The pulp is pressed onto large screens, over which extremely cold water is run. The paper is then spread onto racks to dry before being sold. The cold water is crucial to the creation of smooth, high-quality paper, thus most paper is made in mountainous regions and during the winter months. More than two hundred varieties of paper are available. The more common varieties are plain, poem, and Shinto papers. Plain paper is used for personal correspondence, painting, and cleaning blades. Poem paper is a special, high-grade paper used for scribing poetry and other works of art using calligraphy. Shinto paper is a special sacred paper folded into a zig-zag shape and suspended from sacred Shinto ropes used to mark holy sites.

PHYSICIAN'S KIT

The physician's kit includes a number of items to assist the *ishi* with his healing tasks. Herbal remedies, bandages, cloths, tweasers, and a knife are often part of this kit, and stored in a lacquer wooden box.

TEA CEREMONY COMPONENTS

The cha-no-yu is a highly ritualized ceremony involving the making and serving of tea. It was popularized during the Sengoku period by famed tea master and connoisseur Rikyu. The ingredients used in the tea ceremony include a special form of tea powder, finely ground tea, which is mixed directly with steaming hot water and served unstrained. The utensils include a small bamboo ladle for scooping the powdered tea into the cup, small bamboo whisk for stirring the tea, and small silk napkin.

VOTIVE PLAQUE

These plaques, or ema, are made of wood and contain a prayer, which can be for good fortune, health, luck, or just about anything else that the purchaser desires. Ema may be custom made for the buyer, or they may be purchased ready-made. Hanging an ema in one's home or at a Shinto shrine is believed to help make the prayer or wish come true (the director may opt to add +1 effort to Shinto-related magic tasks).

ARMOR PROTECTION		
COMPONENT	PROTECTION	RATING
Full Samurai Armor	A	2
	B	1
do (torso armor)	A	2
	B	1
kabuto* (helmet)	A	1
	B	1
sode* (shoulder guards)	A	2
	B	2
kote* (armored sleeves)	A	1
haideate* (armored skirt)	A	1
suneate* (shin guards)	A	2
	B	1
Full Ashigaru Armor	A	2
do (torso armor)	A	2
jingasa* (camp-hat)	A	2
	B	2
sode* (shoulder guards)	A	2
kote* (armored sleeves)	A	1
suneate* (shin guards)	A	2

* when specifically targeted.

WEAPON DAMAGE		
WEAPON	DAMAGE CLASS	DAMAGE
Swords	B2	2INJ
bokken	A1	1FAT
katana	B2	2INJ
nodachi	B3	3INJ
shinobigatana	B2	2INJ
tachi	B2	2INJ
wakizashi	B2	2INJ
Knives	B1	1INJ
Bludgeons	A1	1FAT
tetsubo	A2	2FAT
Lances	B3	3INJ
yari	B3	3INJ
fumata-yari	B3	3INJ
kama-yari	B3	3INJ
tanpo-yari	A2	2FAT
hoko	B3	3INJ
Staves	A1	1FAT
bo/jo	A1	1FAT
Bladed Staves	B3	3INJ
naginata	B3	3INJ
bisento	B3	3INJ
Barbed Staves	A2	2FAT
sasumata	B2	2INJ
sodegarami	A2 or B1	2FAT or 1INJ
Jitte/Sai	B1	1INJ
Tools	varies	varies
kama	B1	1INJ
ogama	B3	3INJ
kusari-gama	B2	2INJ
Axes	B2	2INJ
fuetsu	B2	2INJ
masakari	B2	2INJ
ono	B3	3INJ
Chains	A2	2FAT
kawa-naga	A2	2FAT
kyotetsu-shoge	B1	1INJ
Flails	A3	3FAT
nunchaku	A3	3FAT
sanbon nunchaku	A3	3FAT
Nets/Toami	—	—
Tessen	A1	1FAT
Bows/Arrows	C1	2INJ
yumi	C2 to C3	2INJ to 3INJ
han-kyu	C1	2INJ
Firearms	C2	3INJ
odeppo	C2-C3	3INJ to 4INJ
teppo	C2	3INJ
Shuriken	B1	1INJ

SUPERNATURAL ENTITIES

If a man who serves indolently and a man who serves well are treated in the same way, the man who serves well may begin to wonder why he does so.

ASAKURA TOSHIKAGE

There are two distinct types of supernatural entities that exist in the legends of Japan—supernatural beings and ghosts. These can be used as a backbone for stories in anime or chanbara games.

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

These beings are intelligent, and can reason and carry on conversations. Some of them might not be too bright, but others are frighteningly smart, crafty, or wise. Not all are evil. In fact, some are actually good, and others just want to be left alone.

SUPERNATURAL GIMMICKS

The following new gimmicks are for use by the supernatural entities described below.

Amphibious

The creature lives in the water, but can breathe equally well above it for short periods of time.

Flight

The creature is able to fly at the same rate as if it were running.

Invisibility

The creature can become invisible to the mortal eye. While it cannot be seen, it may still be heard, smelled, or otherwise detected, including by magical means.

Form-fitting

The creature may don the skin of another being. It is almost indistinguishable from the original in appearance as its true form adjusts to fit the body to which it is wearing. If cut while wearing such a disguise, the creature's own skin shows through the cut.

Regenerative Spirit

The creature restores one grade of injury and fatigue every twelve turns.

Telepathy

The creature communicates telepathically as if it was speaking. Anyone within fifty feet of the creature can *hear* it. The creature may not communicate privately one-on-one.

AMA-NO-JAKU

From a distance, ama-no-jaku appear to be children or dwarves. Their lack of a neck is often unnoticeable. They delight in torturing and playing evil tricks on people. Stealing, being sarcastic, and lying are only the start. Ama-no-jaku can mimic words spoken by others perfectly in the same tone and inflection, but they usually speak the exact opposite in meaning. These beings love contraband and all manner of forbidden things, from information to artifacts.

Ama-no-jaku are solitary, preferring no company other than those chosen to be their targets. They live in abandoned temples or shrines in mountains or deep in the forests. Their lairs are often littered with the refuse of their victims. Not only do Ama-no-jaku eat any people they kill, they also catch and kill small animals if necessary.

Ama-no-jaku fight with whatever weapon is at hand. They may appear strong, but are no more powerful than a child and can easily be defeated, so trickery is their preferred way. When an ama-no-jaku does kill someone, it may flay the body and don the skin like clothing.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+2	+1	-1	+3	0
FLAIRS				PIETY
muscle -3, dexterity +1, emulate +2				-1
LUCK	□□□□■	DISCIPLINE	□□□□■	
CONVICTIONS				
temptations (cruelty: habit)				
GIMMICKS				
form-fitting				
SKILLS				
any one weapon skill (expert), espionage (expert), flattery (expert), mimicry (expert), stealth (proficient), lightning strike (okuden; proficient)				
TYPICAL POSSESSIONS				
none				



BAKEMONO-SHO

Bakemono-sho are about half the height of a normal man, and can be mistaken for a child or dwarf from a distance. Up close, their tough skin gives away their true nature, as it is often an off-pastel shade of a natural human complexion. Bakemono-sho are distant cousins of the dai-bakemono, whom they resemble but on a smaller scale.

Bakemono-sho are typically found in small groups of up to one dozen or war bands of up to thirty. Their chief joy is fighting humans, something they seldom do one-on-one, preferring to outnumber humans. Bakemono-sho are crude, rude, and socially unacceptable, in addition to not being very bright. They steal what they cannot make, since their own gear is notoriously poorly made.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+1	0	0	-1	-1

FLAIRS

muscle -1, *agility* +1

LUCK

□□□□■

DISCIPLINE

□□□□■

CONVICTIONS

fears (general cowardice: habit)

GIMMICKS

membership (goblin clan), *natural weapon* (claws: 1IN), *natural armor* (tough hide)

SKILLS

gambling (proficient), *any one melee skill* (proficient), *stealth* (novice), *espionage* (novice)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

melee weapon

BURUBURU

Buruburu typically appear as old women with long hair, but that is where the resemblance to mortals ends. They have no legs, and float about freely. Their long kimonos may disguise this from anyone not looking directly for feet, however. Some regions also refer to them as *goddesses of fear*.

There are thousands of tiny, pinprick-sized holes in the hands of a buruburu. From her right hand, she can emit a gas in a conical stream that causes abject terror to those who breathe it—this requires the expenditure of one point of discipline to overcome the terror (at the director's discretion). Succumbing to this terror usually results in a victim falling into a fetal position and babbling defenselessly, or running away in a random direction. A similar gas may be emitted from the buruburu's left hand, which renders anyone with whom it comes in contact to

become temporarily paralyzed yet aware (this can vary from a few turns to thirty minutes at the director's discretion).

Buruburu eat only one thing—the hearts of their victims. They prefer only the hearts of those who died while terrified. If one gets an opponent alone, it immobilizes him, and in his last moments of life, explains to him of the degree of pain he is about to experience before death. If the buruburu kills someone in a melee, it attempts to pick up the body and flee, eating at its leisure.

When a buruburu strikes, the victim suffers a fall in body temperature as his life energy is drained, and is subject to the same effects as if he had inhaled a cloud of gas from the entity's right hand. Body temperature continues to drop. Even if the victim huddles for warmth by a fire, relief does not come while the buruburu lives, suffering one grade of fatigue each hour, unless a cleric can perform a suitable healing ritual.

Buruburu can also become invisible twice per day, and are especially susceptible to heat. They dwell near graveyards or abandoned mountain shrines. Buruburu are solitary and not known to associate with others of their kind.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	+1	-1	+2	0

FLAIRS

none

LUCK

□□□□■

DISCIPLINE

□□□□■

CONVICTIONS

none

GIMMICKS

vulnerability (heat), *natural weapon* (terror fumes), *natural weapon* (paralytic fumes), *invisibility*, *natural weapon* (terror touch)

SKILLS

ju-jitsu (proficient), *stealth* (novice)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

none



DAI-BAKEMONO (GREATER GOBLIN)

Dai-bakemono are the larger cousins of the bakemono-sho. They range in height from six to nine feet. Dai-bakemono are generally encountered in groups of up to twenty, though occasional lone scouts, travelers, and the like may be encountered.

Dai-bakemono are much brighter than their smaller cousins, and even have a sense of the aesthetic. They dress better, and even have their own society and *courts* that are parodies of buke culture. They consider themselves the equal of samurai and get violent if someone says otherwise. Each *clan* of dai-bakemono have a kunshu, or lord. Part of the kunshu's retinue includes dai-bakemono and bakemono-sho.

The preferred weapons of dai-bakemono are no-dachi and tetsubo; some have become quite accomplished archers, as well. Half of all dai-bakemono can use onmyodo* magic. Unlike their lesser cousins, dai-bakemono are not by definition evil and mischievous—although they may be inordinately avaricious.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+2	+1	0	+1	-1
				PIETY
				+1

FLAIRS

muscle +1, quickness -1

LUCK □□□□■ DISCIPLINE □□□□■

CONVICTIONS

values (code of bushido: commitment)

GIMMICKS

membership (goblin clan)

SKILLS

gambling (proficient), ken-jutsu or tetsubo (proficient), stealth (novice), literacy (novice), onmyodo* (proficient), survival or high society (novice)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

sword or tetsubo, bow, some form of armor



GANGIKOZO

Gangikozo are distant cousins of the kappa. Their bodies are covered by a fine coat of quills like those of a porcupine. These quills can cause irritation, but cause no real damage. Because of this, striking a gangikozo bare-handed is a foolish thing to do. Their chest is like a carapace that can function as armor; it is prized by armorers.



Their favorite food is fish, and especially blowfish, out of which the poison can be sucked and stored for their own painful bites. If they successfully bite an opponent, their stored blowfish poison enters the victims's bloodstream inflicting 2INJ per turn. Their only other weapons are sharp talons, which are also poisonous, inflicting 2FAT per turn, but neither plentiful nor produced in great quantities—after the first three successful strikes, it takes a full day before an effective amount of poison is restored.

Gangikozo live in small caves within rivers and lakes, and can maneuver and breathe with equal ease in water or on land. They are hardly ever found with others of their kind, as gangikozo are typically solitary creatures. They may, however, associate with other kappa.

Gangikozo are harmless creatures, but are sometimes considered threats by fishermen worried about their livelihoods. Such conflicts have been known to lead to wars between fishing communities and kappa kin. This is the only time when other gangikozo come to the aid of their kind, and they may even band together in defensive ikki. As many as ten gangikozo may be in a single lair during conflicts.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	+1	0	0	0
				PIETY
				0

FLAIRS

none

LUCK □□□□■ DISCIPLINE □□□□■

CONVICTIONS

none

GIMMICKS

amphibious, natural armor (tough hide), natural weapon (fangs: 1FAT + poison), natural weapon (claws: 1INJ + poison)

SKILLS

bawling (proficient), stealth (proficient)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

none

GOTOKU NEKO

In their natural form, gotoku neko are short, anthropoid felines with long tails, the tip of which constantly burns with a cold, non-consuming flame. They can also change shape to resemble common house cats or extremely attractive and seductive youths of either sex. They can do this at will, but the process takes one full turn for the metamorphosis, during which time they are completely vulnerable.

In their natural form, gotoku neko can spew forth a flame twice per day that can ignite any flammable material it touches. An attack with the creature's tail requires concentration and a full turn for its use. A gotoku neko can also attack using the three horns on its head, but this also requires a full turn.

Given a chance, gotoku neko eat their victims. They especially love to target people who are cruel to cats. The usual lair of a gotoku neko is a typical home, where they disguise themselves as common cats, although they are also fond of making their own lairs near abandoned kilns, charcoal-burners, and houses.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	+1	0	0	0

FLAIRS
none

LUCK □□□□■ **DISCIPLINE** □□□□■

CONVICTIONS
none

GIMMICKS
natural weapon (claws: 1IN), natural weapon (horns: 3IN),
natural weapon (flaming tail: 2IN),
natural weapon (mystic flame: 4IN)

SKILLS
bawling (proficient), stealth (expert)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS
none



HAKUZOSU

Hakuzosu dress like and are very often mistaken for venerable shugenja (or yamabushi). If one wishes to test a hakuzosu by way of questioning, it is able to respond with complete calm and rationality. Not only do hakuzosu look like shugenja, they can also cast spells as them. While a hakuzosu looks rather harmless, it can be extremely dangerous. They carry priest's staves and occasionally katanas. When pressed, a hakuzosu can also strike from behind with its tail, which has porcupine-like spikes.

Hakuzosu wander about and occasionally take up residence in abandoned temples. They are not creatures who need the company of their kind, preferring to associate with humans. Hakuzosu have even been asked to write blessed sutras for people, and many gladly comply, although because hakuzosu are not mortals, the sutras soon fade away. Hakuzosu enjoy fooling people, but it is out of a love for practical jokes rather than spite or evil intent. They live off the donations of money and food that people leave them at the temple, or what they can earn begging as itinerant priests.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	+1	-1	+1	0

FLAIRS
none

LUCK □□□□■ **DISCIPLINE** □□□□■

CONVICTIONS
temptations (practical jokes: habit)

GIMMICKS
immunity (poisons), natural weapon (tail spikes: 1IN)

SKILLS
buddhism (proficient), espionage (proficient),
bo-jutsu (proficient), ken-jutsu (novice), shugendo (novice),
stealth (novice)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS
bo, katana



HYOSUBE

Hyosube are kin to the kappa. Their skin is tough and resilient, and their limbs are triple-jointed—when they walk they appear to be drunk, though they are actually in perfect control of themselves. Because of their resilient hides, hyosube are sometimes hunted, and their skin harvested as leather armor.

By day, hyosube live in caves at the bottom of lakes or rivers. They usually only come out on land at night to search for fallen or unharvested grains to eat. They do not eat meat of any kind—not even fish. They have a small pouch in their stomachs that allows them to store food so they can go up to a week without eating if necessary. Hyosube are not terribly social creatures, but there may be another adult and up to six young in their lairs. If two hyosube are encountered, they are a mated pair.

The timid hyosube are intimidated by people, and generally do not go near them. Hyosube are also terrified of monkeys, and do their best to flee when confronted by them. When threatened, they shake their arms, releasing a fungal spore cloud into the air. Anyone caught within this cloud immediately begins retching, and becomes ill and unable to eat or drink for up to six days unless *Purified* or *Blessed* by a priest. Hyosube can only release this cloud once per day.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+1	+1	-1	0	0
				PIETY
				-1
FLAIRS				
<i>muscle -2, quickness +2</i>				
LUCK □□□□■ DISCIPLINE □□□□■				
CONVICTIONS				
<i>fears (monkeys: compulsion), fears (people: inclination)</i>				
GIMMICKS				
<i>amphibious, natural armor (tough hide), natural weapon (spore cloud: 1FAT)</i>				
SKILLS				
<i>athletics (proficient), ju-jutsu (proficient), any one melee skill (novice), stealth (proficient)</i>				
TYPICAL POSSESSIONS				
<i>any one melee weapon</i>				

KAPPA

There are several varieties of kappa. The most common are man-sized bipeds, vaguely resembling turtles. Their heads contain a slight, bowl-like depression containing water. Kappa dwell in ponds, lakes, and rivers. They can survive on both air and water equally well. They eat meat of all sorts, especially fish, but enjoy human meat as well. Kappa often lie in wait for lone travelers,

horses, or small children, and drag them into their lairs under the water for dinner, sucking out the victim's blood. They are also inordinately fond of cucumbers, and may be placated by buckets full of the vegetable.

Kappa can survive outside of water so long as their is water in the bowl on their heads. If the fluid tips out, a kappa suffers 1INJ for each hour they spend out of water. If they are unable to get back to the water they eventually die. Kappa have developed a high level of dexterity to allow them to keep that bowl full. They can even wrestle without tipping it. Unfortunately, they are also very polite, and one may be able to trick a kappa into tipping it by bowing to him—an act he returns automatically. The kappa do not fall for this trick twice in the same day, however.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+2	+1	-1	0	0
				PIETY
				-1
FLAIRS				
<i>agility +1</i>				
LUCK □□□□■ DISCIPLINE □□□□■				
CONVICTIONS				
<i>values (politeness: habit), temptations (cucumbers: compulsion)</i>				
GIMMICKS				
<i>amphibious, natural armor (tough hide), natural weapon (claws: 1INJ)</i>				
SKILLS				
<i>athletics (proficient), ju-jutsu (expert), atemi-waza (proficient), sumai (proficient), any one melee skill (novice), stealth (proficient)</i>				
TYPICAL POSSESSIONS				
<i>any one melee weapon</i>				

KEUEGEN

These odd creatures have no arms or legs, only a great number of hair-like tubes, on which they move about like celia, swaying back and forth. Keukegen enjoy being harmful to mankind—their greatest pleasure is causing mischief and sickness. The keukegen has no mouth, but is able to communicate telepathically. It is said that keukegen can bring the dead back to life, even if the deceased is no more than a pile of dust. The trick is getting the keukegen to want to do this—this can make an excellent story idea, with players seeking to restore the glory of a former samurai who has been slain in battle.

Lacking extremities, keukegen can do little physical damage. Rather, they latch onto their opponents with their tubes and try to swallow their victim's hara, or soul. This should be limited to working on extras and non-player

characters, however. The body of the victim becomes an empty shell, still breathing and standing, but incapable of sentience or action. Attacks of this nature are not always completely effective and merely leave the victim temporarily stunned.

Keukegen usually live under the floors of homes or shrines. If a house is full of sick people, there is a chance that a keukegen has taken up residence. The husks of villages that keukegen have visited are known for being ghost towns and are dreaded—no one approaches them for fear the keukegen still dwells there.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	+1	-1	+1	0

FLAIRS

none

LUCK

■■■■■

DISCIPLINE

■■■■■

CONVICTIONS

fears (fire: compulsion)

GIMMICKS

natural weapon (soul drain), telepathy, vulnerability (fire)

SKILLS

athletics (novice), brawling (proficient), stealth (novice)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

none

MUSHIN

Mushin are normally encountered alone or in small groups of up to three). They appear as normal people of either sex. But this appearance is a false one, as their true faces are featureless, and can inspire irrevocable insanity. When exorcised by priests, mushin vanish, never to reappear.

Mushin are evil, pure and simple, and delight in driving people insane. They draw strength from causing insanity in others. While appearing human to all, they can show their true face to a human for an instant in order to inflict dementia.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+1	+1	-1	+2	0

FLAIRS

improvisation +1

LUCK

■■■■■

DISCIPLINE

■■■■■

CONVICTIONS

none

GIMMICKS

natural weapon (true face: 2DEM)

SKILLS

athletics (novice), disguise (proficient), any one melee skill (proficient), stealth (novice), other skills according to its persona

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

any one melee weapon, clothing to fit its persona



NURARIHYON

Nurarihyon appear as short, wise old men. They are bald with a slight growth of beard. Occasionally, nurarihyon dress like wandering priests or monks, but most often appear to be wealthy merchants. The only thing odd in their appearance is that their heads are slightly large for their bodies. Their head alone weighs as much as a mortal. Nurarihyon generally rely on guile and wit, although they can fight rather well.

Nurarihyon are wandering creatures. They are seldom found at their own dwellings. A nurarihyon dwelling appears as a hermitage or simple retreat, but it is often used as a meeting place for bakemono-sho and other creatures, who are led by the nurarihyon’s wisdom and intelligence. Nurarihyon are consummate freeloaders, and consume other people’s tobacco, wine, tea, or food without compensation. They are local nuisances. An area occupied by a nurarihyon is typically also joined by up to ten other entities within a year’s time.

Nurarihyon value magical objects, but prefer gold, gems, and art objects. Inside the nurarihyon, where a heart would be, is a gemstone called a nurarihyon ishi. It is said that this gem grants anyone in possession of it the ability to fly and travel to other worlds. This stone is harder than a diamond and beyond measure in worth. Acquiring such a gem would make an excellent story idea—whether or not it actually grants these powers is up to the director.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	+2	0	+5	0
FLAIRS				PIETY
improvisation +1				0
LUCK □□□□■		DISCIPLINE □□□□■		
CONVICTIONS				
temptations (greed: inclination)				
GIMMICKS				
none				
SKILLS				
gambling (proficient), leadership (proficient), bo-jutsu (expert), ken-jutsu (expert), ceremony (novice), stealth (novice), espionage (proficient)				
TYPICAL POSSESSIONS				
bo or sword, expensive clothing and other goods				

ONI

Oni are about nine feet in height. Their skin color varies greatly. Some oni have one eye, while others can have three or four. Oni typically have one or two horns on their heads. They wear hides and animal skins, often patched, and invariably smelly. Female oni have two long horns and a long, white face, and are called hannya.



If an oni's limb is severed, it can rejoin the body. No matter how hacked to pieces an oni becomes, it always returns to its original form. because of this, oni cannot be destroyed by simply *killing* their physical form. They must also be exorcised or otherwise have their souls destroyed . If an oni's body is slain but their spirit remains, they eventually return to Yomi to regenerate a new body, and may return to harass their *killer* again. Oni that are exorcised but whose bodies remain intact simply return to Yomi to reclaim their spirits.

Crafty oni hide their spirit in a container within their lair. If someone discovers the oni's spirit, they can ransom it to the oni. An oni grants one request in return for his spirit, including returning to Yomi or promising not to harm a particular person or place.

Oni are carnivores, and their favorite of all meats is people. They are also inordinately fond of sake, and this weakness has been their downfall on more than one occasion. Oni serve in the underworld as tormentors of the damned, under the command of powerful demons and other dark powers. Many have found their way to the world of the living and delight in using people as playthings for their dark delights.

Oni typically live in abandoned castles or villages or huts, avoiding religious institutions. Oni may be encountered alone or in groups of up to twenty. Oni are greedy, lusty, and totally uncouth. They are quintessential barbarians.

FITNESS		AWARENESS		CREATIVITY		REASONING		INFLUENCE	
+4		0		-1		-1		0	
FLAIRS								PIETY	
muscle +2, agility -1, quickness -1								+1	
LUCK		□□□□■		DISCIPLINE		□□■□□■			
CONVICTIONS									
temptations (sake: commitment)									
GIMMICKS									
membership (yomi), regenerative spirit, vulnerability (fire)									
SKILLS									
athletics (proficient), legends (proficient), tetsubo (expert), any one melee skill (proficient), stealth (novice)									
TYPICAL POSSESSIONS									
tetsubo, any one melee weapon									

ROKURO-KUBI

Rokuro-kubi are goblin heads of legend. Accounts of rokuro-kubi are mentioned in several books, including the Buddhist texts *Nan-ho-i-butsu-shi* and *Soshinki*, from which characters may learn some of the information given below.



Rokuro-kubi primarily inhabit desolate mountain regions, such as the province of Kai. During the day, they appear and are just as capable as normal folk. At night, however, their heads detach from their bodies and float about in search of food. Their necks do not bleed or show any signs of having been cut with a tool or weapon in this state. All true rokuro-kubi have several red Kanji characters of mystic origin on their neck, which are neither painted nor tattooed. The heads may fly about*, as gracefully and silently as a bat. If necessary, they can also roll and bounce about on the ground, but they sustain 1FAT for each turn doing so.

Upon returning to their bodies, their heads mystically reattach themselves. If for any reason, a rokuro-kubi's body is moved without its knowledge, the goblin head becomes extremely agitated, gnashing its teeth and yelling, and then searching for the body. Those failing to find their body before sunrise die.

Rokuro-kubi eat insects, grubs and worms from the forest, but they much prefer to feast upon people and may offer shelter to a lone traveler with the intent of devouring him at night after he has fallen asleep.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+2	0	-1	0	+1
				PIETY
				-1

FLAIRS
none

LUCK □□□□■ **DISCIPLINE** □□□□■

CONVICTIONS
none

GIMMICKS
natural weapon (fangs: 3INJ), flight

SKILLS
brawling (proficient)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS
none

TATSU

Japanese dragons range from fifteen to sixty feet in length. Unlike its Western cousins, the tatsu has no wings, yet it, too, can fly. The long, serpentine body is covered with armored scales, and the tatsu has four long legs terminating in four-fingered claws.

Tatsu are brilliant, inscrutable creatures. Most of the time, they appear to be honorable and follow Confucian and bushido codes, but as their purposes are their own, few can understand their actions and motivations. Most are exalted, noble creatures, although a few are ignoble and base.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+4	+3	+3	+5	+3
				PIETY
				+3

FLAIRS
muscle +1

LUCK □□□□■ **DISCIPLINE** □□□□■

CONVICTIONS
values (code of honor: commitment)

GIMMICKS
flight, natural armor (scales), natural weapon (fangs: 1INJ),
natural weapon (claws: 2INJ),
natural weapon (fiery breath: 5INJ) or
natural weapon (poison breath: 1INJ per turn for 5 turns)

SKILLS
athletics (expert), brawling (expert), buddhism (expert),
confucianism (expert), flattery (expert), gambling (novice),
leadership (expert), legends (proficient), literacy (proficient),
shinto (expert), stealth (expert)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS
none



TENGU

There are actually several different kinds of tengu. These are the most common variety; the so-called dai-tengu, or *great tengu*, and are most commonly found in groups of up to twenty.



A dai-tengu resembles a tall, slender man, with a bright red face featuring a long nose that looks more like a red cucumber than an olfactory organ. Many of these tengu dress like shugenja. Although they lack wings, they can fly.

Tengu carry fans made from bird feathers that, in dire times, can cause incredible winds to manifest, which are powerful enough to topple a small child. Tengu are also famous for their swordsmanship, and some have even consented to teach mortals. They are likely to know at least one okuden for the sword.

Tengu usually live deep in the mountains and they protect their domains. Tengu are chaotic by nature, but are not evil. It is said by some that much of Japan's history has been manipulated by the tengu, who encourage people to struggle against their lords. It is also rumored that tengu can neither refuse a challenge nor resist the temptation to collect shiny objects. Whether either of these is true is up to the director.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
+2	+2	+2	+3	+1
				PIETY
				0

FLAIRS

manipulation +1

LUCK □□□□■ DISCIPLINE □□□□■

CONVICTIONS

temptations (challenges: commitment; optional),
temptations (shiny objects: commitment; optional)

GIMMICKS

flight

SKILLS

athletics (expert), design (proficient), espionage (expert),
gambling (expert), herbal medicine (novice), legends (expert),
ken-jutsu (expert), any one okuden for ken-jutsu (expert),
stealth (proficient)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

katana, wakazashi, fan of winds

TORIMONO

Torimono resemble middle-aged men, and are often bald, wearing white kimonos that shine like a lantern at night. Inside their skulls is a continuously burning flame instead of a brain. This flame is concentrated evil, and evil mystics are rumored to use these flames to power spells.

They always carry walking staves that can transform into yari when they fight. Torimono can also mount the staff and fly. The staff retains these properties even in the hands of others, as it responds to the will of its possessor. When flying, a torimono appears as an apple-sized ball of flame shooting through the sky. When pressed, they try to mount the staff and fly away. It takes a full turn to transform from staff to yari or vice-versa.

Torimono are said to consume the sanity of humans, so they are widely feared and detested. Torimono can also, once per day, spit a *spirit-flame*, inflicting dementia. If an opponent gains five grades of dementia, the torimono reduces a number of grades of his own injury equal to the victim's discipline rating, and it restores one point of discipline.

One weakness of the torimono is that its obi is inscribed with sutras, so if a Buddhist cleric or shugenja begins chanting, it begins to constrict, inflicting 1FAT to the torimono per turn.

Torimono kill for pleasure, and have no greater joy than causing the fall, dishonor, and destruction of mortals. They are especially fond of luring virgins and ravishing them.

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE
0	0	0	0	0

FLAIRS

charm +3

LUCK □□□□■ DISCIPLINE □□□□■

CONVICTIONS

temptations (lust: habit)

GIMMICKS

natural weapon (spirit flame: 2DEM), flight

SKILLS

athletics (proficient), bo-jutsu (expert), so-jutsu (expert),
performance (proficient), stealth (novice)

TYPICAL POSSESSIONS

white kimono, obi inscribed with sutras, mystic staff (bo)

GHOSTS

Ghosts include the undead and non-living creatures of Japan. All of these are the stuff of nightmares, and the living have a certain dread of them. Other than the gimmicks below, no game information is provided, since ghosts are very abstract beings. The director is encouraged to use them as a means to drive the story rather than for direct character interaction.

GHOSTLY GIMMICKS

All ghosts have the following common gimmicks. The *activation* or *deactivation* of any of these gimmicks is considered an action. Note that these do not apply to *higher* spirit beings, such as kami and bosatsu.

Immaterial

Ghosts are insubstantial in their normal form. They may pass through solid objects, including the ground, at will. In addition, they cannot be harmed by any normal physical means, such as weapons, fire, and the like. They are susceptible, however, to magic and enchanted weapons. This ability may be *turned off*, allowing the spirit to manifest itself in the physical world. When they physically manifest, they are subject to the effects of normal attacks.

Flight

Ghosts can float about over the ground or water, or even into the air. This ability is only usable while they are immaterial.

Invisibility

Ghosts can become invisible to the five senses at will. While invisible, they cannot be sensed by any normal means—they cannot be seen, heard, smelled, or otherwise detected, except by magical means. This gimmick can be used in whole or in part. For example, while invisible, a ghost may allow itself to be heard; while visible, it may be utterly silent.

Sutra Aversion

Ghosts are negatively affected by Buddhist sutras. Any item with sutras written on it is either invisible to ghosts or makes the item unapproachable by ghosts of any kind (author's choice). If the latter is the chosen effect, the ghost cannot approach within twelve feet of the item—any ghost forced to stay within the affected area for one full turn is automatically

exercised. Furthermore, weapons with sutras written on them affect ghosts normally, as if they were magical. Sutras are a very effective ward against spirits.

Single-Minded

As a general rule, ghosts are driven by a single hunger or desire, which motivates their actions to an extreme degree, often ignoring those around them trying to achieve some unattainable goal. Ghosts may still function and interact normally with people if their attention is grabbed. This is left up to the director's discretion.

GAKI

Gaki appear to be normal humans, but are all skin and bones. Their hollow eyes, sunken cheeks, and distended bellies give the impression of starvation.

Japanese Buddhist cosmology speaks of gaki in the hell of Gakido. Gaki are suffering for having wasted precious food in this world. There is nothing to eat in Gakido, and no one can die from starvation; they eat anything they can find, even their own children, and are never satisfied. Sometimes gaki find their way to our world. While any food can help them, they have become carnivorous, and prefer the flesh of the living.

SARA-KAZEO

These are the ghosts of young serving women or apprentices who were beaten to death or coerced into committing suicide for breaking any number of expensive dishes or plates. A splinter of one of those dishes is in the sara-kazoe's heart, causing her to be what she is. While they are evil



beyond measure, this stems from their post-death torment. If a medium attempts to speak with one, the sara-kazoe responds as a quiet, though sad, young girl using its pre-death demeanor.

Sara-kazoe take on the appearance of young women of average age and build, but like other ghosts, have no legs to support them. This fact may be concealed by their full-length robes. A distant look on their faces is common. Before a sara-kazoe appears, the plaintive sound of a woman crying can be heard. Sometimes they appear in a more ghostly guise, all in white with the body and robes misting to nothingness about the hips. No one knows what provides their life-force. No one knows if they eat their victims, or if they eat the riceballs sometimes left as offerings for them. Sara-kazoe are solitary and sad creatures. They do not associate with others of their kind, but might associate with other creatures.

A sara-kazoe can breathe a cone of fire, inflicting up to 41N1 to anyone within its reach. Only magical or otherwise sacred objects can inflict any damage on one, whether they are immaterial or physically manifested.

If slain, the body fades away into mist after about five turns, and its soul is lost to the netherworld of eternal torment. If, however, the dish splinter is removed before the body mists away, their spirit is released—this is considered an act of kindness.

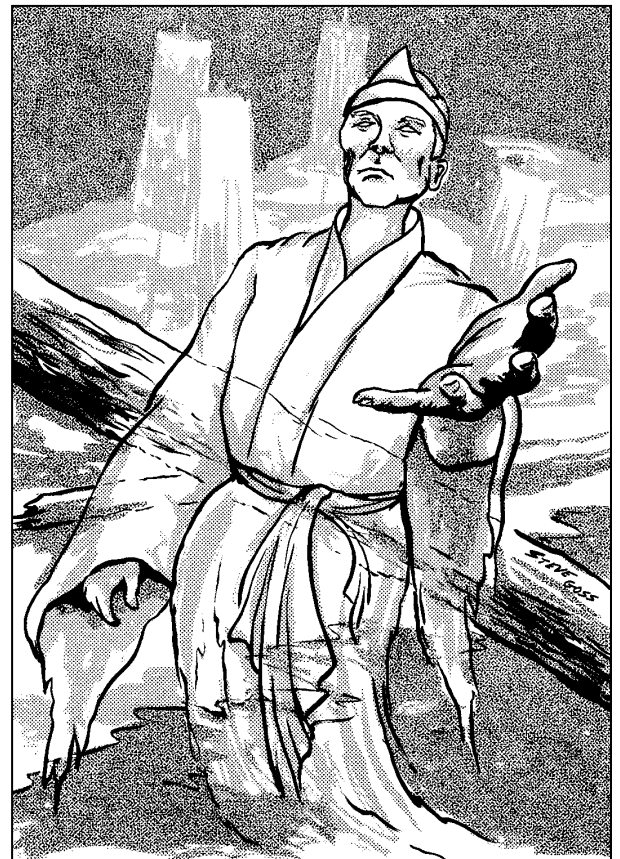
YUREI

The typical ghost is dressed in a white funerary kimono and the triangular funerary headband. The body and kimono appear as mist from the waist down, so yurei float rather than walk. Other than that, they appear as normal humans with a pale complexion. Yurei have different motives. Some hope to expiate a sin from their past life which has resulted in their post life existence, while others enjoy their new powers and seek to torment mankind.

Yurei often latch on to one particular mortal from whom to provide their energy. During the night, as the target sleeps, the yurei drains his life energy so that it can stay on this plane of existence. As a result, the victim sustains 1FAT. For every five grades of fatigue that the yurei inflicts in this manner, the victim's discipline

rating is permanently reduced by one point and his physical age is increased by five years. Each morning, the victim awakens feeling older and more tired. Only an exorcism can stop the process, as it severs the link with the yurei, although any aging effects are permanent. If the victim's discipline rating is reduced to zero, he dies.

A yurei can only be banished from this plane by direct exorcism. No amount of weapon damage is lasting; it can be *killed* but will simply vanish, reappearing the next night. Another method of banishing a yurei is to discover what has caused its existence and rectifying the problem.



LEXICON

Abukuma-gawa: Japan's seventh longest river, at 149 miles

abumi: stirrups

Adams: William Adams; an English pilot whose ship was wrecked off the coast of Japan and was the first Westerner to become samurai

Agagawa: a river on Honshu

Aganogawa: Japan's ninth longest river, at 130 miles

Akechi Mitsuhide: one of Nobunaga's generals, turned coat and attacked Nobunaga at night, in 1582, killing him; Hideyoshi punishes the traitor and becomes Nobunaga's heir

aiguchi: knife without a handguard

Aikawa: a town on Sado island, near an active gold mine worked almost exclusively by exiles

Ainu: Japanese aboriginal people, also known as the Ezo or Ebisu

Aisu-Kuge Ryu: a kenjutsu ryo

Aki: one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu

akindo: merchant

ama: Buddhist nun; also called bikuni

amado: rain shutters

ama-no-jaku: imp of heaven

Amaterasu Omikami: the Shinto goddess (kami) of the sun and ancestor of the imperial line; child of Izanagi and Izanami; the Grand Shrine at Ise, Japan's most important Shinto site, is dedicated to her

amazaki: a sweetened, low-alcohol form of sake, used primarily during religious festivals

Amegashita: Susano-o's domain; the Bizen/Bitchu area of Honshu

Ame no Minakanushi: the first kami (Shinto); Creator of the universe

Amida: Buddha as master of paradise in the Pure Earth of the West, revered especially in the Jodo sect

Anamizu: town in Noto province

Anegawa: site of battle in 1570 at which Nobunaga defeats the Asai and Asakura clans

anko: sweet bean paste

Araki Ryu: a) Ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu, founded by Araki Mujin sai Minamoto no Hidetsuna; b) a kusari-jutsu ryu

Asama-yama: a Japanese mountain 8,340 ft tall, the eighth tallest in Japan

Asano Naganori: the daimyo of Ako province; he was forced to commit seppuku in 1701 after drawing his sword in the shogun's palace to attack an official who had embarrassed him, resulting in forty-seven of his retainers plotting for a year to avenge his death

Asayama Ichiden Ryu: martial ryu founded in the Tensho Era (1573–1593) by Asayama Ichidensai Shigetatsu; associated with the goshi or jizamurai

ashigaru: rank-and-file spearman, usually bonge, though they may be low-ranking buke, as well

Ashikaga Yoshiteru: Former Shogun, who was assassinated by Miyoshi Yoshitsugu and Matsunaga Hisahide in 1565

Ashikaga Yoshiaki: Shogun (1568–1573)

Aso-san: a Japanese mountain on Kyushu, 5,223 ft tall

Asuka: a) historical era (592–710) in which the imperial court moves to Asuka, in Yamato; b) A city in Yamato province, near the city of Nara, former seat of imperial court

atemi-waza: unarmed combat style, originating in Ryu-kyu islands (Okinawa)

Atsuta Jingu: one of the most important shrines in all Japan. Kusanagi no Tsurugi, one of the three sacred treasures, resides here

Awa: a) one of the six provinces making up the Nankaido region; b) a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu

awabi: abalone

Awaji: An island that nearly links Shikoku to the province of Harima in Honshu, and one of the six provinces making up the Nankaido region. Awaji was the first solid land created by Izanami and Izanagi, according to Japanese historical myth

awase: amusements and games of the aristocracy

awase toishi: polishing stone (for blades)

azana: given names read in more formal-sounding Chinese fashion (with Japanese pronunciation)

azuchi: a) a historical era (1573–1582); b) Oda Nobunaga's castle, built in 1576

bachi: large wooden drumsticks, used for playing taiko and o-daiko

ba-jutsu: riding

bai: plum

baishakunin: marriage go-between

baishu: bribery

baishun: prostitute (*see also joro*)

bakemono: generic term for monster; goblin

bakemono-sho: goblin

bakuchi: gambling

bakudan: explosive charge fired from a teppo

- bakufu:** The shogunate
- bakuro-jutsu:** animal handling; animal training
- bangaku:** barbarian customs
- banken:** trained guard dog
- basho:** an official sumo match; also used as a suffix to seasons and locations to form the name of the tournament or even
- Batenen Ryu:** a yadome-jutsu ryu
- Benten:** one of the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto; Benten (also called Benzaiten) is the goddess of love, eloquence, music, and wisdom
- bikuni:** Buddhist nun; also called ama
- Bingo:** one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu
- Bishamon:** Bishamon (also called Taon) is one of the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto; he is the god of luck, one of the four kings of heaven, and one of the three gods of war
- Bitchu:** one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu
- biwa:** a heavy, lute-like instrument
- Biwa-ko:** Japan's largest lake, at 260 square miles, located in central Honshu
- Bizen:** one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu, one of the best known production centers (known as the *Six Old Kilns*) of fine ceramic-ware (yaki); Bizen-yaki later became very popular with tea masters, and much used in the tea ceremony (cha-no-yu)
- bo:** six-foot-long hickory wood staff
- bo shuriken:** slim, straight, single-bladed shuriken
- boke:** slow learner
- bokken:** wooden practice sword
- bo-naginata:** wooden practice naginata
- bonge:** a commoner; also called heinin
- Bon odori:** dances common during the evening hours of the O-Bon festival
- bonsen:** miniature landscaping
- bonze:** itinerant Buddhist priest
- Bosatsu:** beings who were once human but now are one step away from achieving Buddhahood, but refuse to enter paradise in favor of remaining here to help man
- Boshu:** the first fifteen days of the fifth month (Satsuki)
- bozu:** Buddhist celibate; monk
- bu:** measure of weight of gold
- Buddhism:** a religion imported to Japan in the 6th century from India, by way of China and Korea
- budoka:** practitioner of martial artists
- bugei:** martial arts
- bugyo:** magistrate
- buke:** a) the military caste; b) a member of the buke caste
- Bukko-ji:** division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism
- Bukkyo:** Buddhism
- Bun-bu-ichi:** the military-arts controversy
- Bungo:** a province in the Saikaido region (Kyushu)
- buruburu:** supernatural hag that emits fear-causing gas from its hands
- bushi:** warrior
- Bushido:** the buke's code of ethics and philosophy
- busho:** lazy
- bu-shoban:** a small square gold coin, worth one koku
- Butsido:** Buddhism
- buyo:** court dance
- Buzen:** a province in the Saikaido region (Kyushu)
- byo:** measurement of time, half a second
- Byodo-in:** Tendai sect temple at Uji (f. 1211), also known as the Phoenix Temple
- cha:** tea
- Cha-no-yu:** tea ceremony
- chawan:** tea cup
- Chiba:** a town in Shimosa province
- Chigusagawa:** a river on Honshu
- chiho gakusha:** local expertise
- Chikugo:** a province in the Saikaidoo region (Kyushu)
- Chikugogawa:** river on Kyushu
- Chikuzen:** a province in the Saikaido region (Kyushu)
- chin-doku:** a hallucinogenic drug made from the feathers of the rare mountain bird, chin tori (or chindori)
- Chinzei:** a branch of the Jodo sect of Buddhism, with six subsets—Shirahata, Fujita, Nagoshi, Obata, Sanjo and Ichijo
- Chion-in:** seat of the Jodo Sect of Buddhism, this temple in Miyako (f. 1211) is one of the largest and most famous in Japan
- chochin:** portable, paper lantern
- chochin abura:** lantern oil
- chodaigamae:** large, ornate doors
- chogin:** gold or silver ingot coin produced by samurai clans; worth one koku (or bu-shoban)
- chomiryo:** spices
- chonin:** townspeople
- Choraku-ji:** a branch of the Jodo sect of Buddhism
- Chosei-ji:** division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism
- Chosengo:** Korean language
- Chosokabe:** samurai clan in Shikoku; defeated in 1585 by Hideyoshi, securing his conquest of Shikoku
- chugen:** samurai attendant
- Chugokugo:** Chinese language
- chugokushi:** Chinese history
- choji:** clove oil, for blades
- chunin:** administrators, clan elders, teachers, and the various masters and officials of a ninjutsu-ryu
- dai-bakemono:** greater goblin
- Daibosatsu:** major or important bosatsu
- Daibutsu:** the 36-foot tall, bronze-cast statue of Buddha; it is second in height to the one in To-daiji
- Daikoku:** one of the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto; Daikoku is the god of riches and wealth (and farmers)
- daikon:** large, white radish
- daimyo:** a feudal lord or provincial military governor; there were some 265 daimyo families during the Edo Period
- Dainichi Nyorai:** one of the Buddhist trinity and the Five Buddhas of Contemplation, Dainichi is the cosmic Buddha and represents wisdom and purity
- Dai-sen:** sacred shugendo mountain, in Hoki; it is 5,614 ft tall
- Daisetsu-zan:** a Japanese mountain 7,513 ft tall, the tenth tallest in Japan
- daisho:** pair of swords; symbol of the samurai
- Daito Ryu:** a ken-jutsu, ju-jutsu, and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Sekiguchi Hachiroemon Ujikiyo
- Daitoku-ji:** a subset of the Rinza branch of Zen Buddhism
- dango:** sweet rice-flour dumplings

- Dan-no-Ura:** Location of a sea battle in 1185, in which Minamoto no Yoshitsune annihilates the Taira army. The subject of poetry and songs for centuries after.
- Dantokuzan:** A mountain in Sado province
- danwa:** Conversation
- Dazaifu:** city on Kyushu and site of the landing of the Mongol invasion force in the 12th century
- Dejima:** island ghetto in Nagasaki and home of many Dutch traders, merchants, and sailors
- dengaku:** popular dance
- densetsu:** folklore
- deonburi:** cloth apron
- Der Liefde:** this Dutch ship, piloted by Englishman William Adams, wandered into Bungo province in 1600; Adams later becomes one of Ieyasu's advisers
- dobuku:** a large, broad-sleeved coat worn by buke over the hakama and kimono combination
- dogakure:** hurling multiple shuriken (or other small objects) in swift succession
- dogu:** tools
- dohyo:** Sumo ring
- dohyo-matsuri:** ritual purification ceremony before formal sumo matches
- dojo:** training center, usually for bugei
- don:** noodles
- donburi:** rice with toppings
- donjon:** central building in the main compound of a castle
- doshin:** policeman; usually bonge or low-ranked samurai
- dotaku:** large bronze bell
- e:** a) branch; b) bay; c) grace, blessing; d) a great amount of...
- ebi:** shrimp
- Ebisu:** a) one of the Seven Lucky Gods, Ebisu is the god of good food and the patron deity of tradesmen and fishermen; b) See Ainu
- eboshi:** cloth or lacquered paper hat worn by those of rank
- eboshi-nari kabuto:** Helmet shaped like a court cap
- Echigo:** province in Honshu; one of the seven provinces making up the region of Hokurikudo
- Echizen:** province in Honshu; one of the best known production centers (known as the *Six Old Kilns*) of fine ceramic-ware; one of the seven provinces making up the region of Hokurikudo
- Edo:** a) capital city of Musashi province; the seat of the Shogunate and one of the major centers of the dyeing and paper-making industries; b) historical era (1600–1868), also known as the Tokugawa Period
- e-gaku:** painting (v.)
- Eigen-ji:** a subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism
- ema:** small, wooden votive plaques
- Emperor Yomei:** emperor who proposed that Buddhism become Japan's state religion in 587
- Empress Genmei:** Japanese empress who moves the capital to Nara in the 8th century
- Empress Jingo:** empress of Japan who leads an invasion of Korea in 200 and subjugates it to Japanese rule. Her son, the emperor Ojin, will be deified as Hachiman, the god of war
- Engaku-ji:** a) Rinzaï-zen sect temple in Kamakura, built in 1282 to honor those who fell repelling the Mongols in the 13th century; b) subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism
- engawa:** verandah, covered porch, surrounding most upper-class homes
- Enma O:** the judge of the dead and overseer of the Buddhist hells
- Enmei Ryu:** a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Shibuki Shinjuro in the Edo period
- En no Gyoja:** founder of the Shugendo sect of Buddhism
- Enryaku-ji:** the major temple on Hieizan and seat of the Tendai sect; it was burned to the ground in 1571 by Oda Nobunaga
- eta:** a) a pejorative reference to the pariah caste; b) member of the eta caste
- Etchu:** province in Honshu; one of the seven provinces making up the region of Hokurikudo
- Ezo:** a) northern island of Japan (Hokkaido); b) Japanese aboriginal people, also known as the Ainu
- Fernão Mendez Pinto:** Portuguese man who landed at the port of Nishimura on Tanegashima in 1543
- fude:** writing brush
- fudemaki:** brush case
- fudeoki:** brush rest
- fudo Myo-o:** a deity empowered to combat devils (Buddhism)
- fue:** flute
- fugu:** blowfish
- fugu-no-doku:** blowfish poison
- fuji:** wisteria
- Fuji-san:** a Japanese mountain 12,389 ft tall, the tallest in Japan
- Fujita:** a subset of the Chinzei branch of Jodoshu
- Fujiwara:** great samurai clan, descended from Imperial lines
- Fujiyama:** a mountain in Japan (not the same mountain as Fuji-san)
- Fuju-Fuse:** division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism
- Fuju-Fuse-Komon:** division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism
- Fukakusa:** a subset of the Seizan branch of Jodoshu
- Fuke:** A branch of the Zen sect of Buddhism, with six subsets—Kinsen, Kasso, Kichiku, Kogiku, Kozasa, and Umeji
- Fukuoka:** a city in Chikuzen province, known as one of the main centers of textile and paper production
- Fukurokuju:** one of the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto; the god of popularity, longevity, and good health
- fukusa:** fancy, decorative fan
- Fukushima:** a town in Shinano province
- fumesei:** bad reputation
- fumin:** insomnia
- Fumizuki:** the seventh month of the year, and the first month of autumn
- fun:** measurement of time, about thirty seconds
- funagoto:** boating
- fundoshi:** loin cloth; a long, narrow cloth which wraps up between the legs and around the lower torso
- funshi:** ritual suicide when the performer blames another for the actions leading to his death
- furibo:** large, heavy club
- fumata-yari:** forked lance
- furin:** wind chimes
- furo:** public bathhouse
- furoshiki:** wrapping cloth
- furu:** old
- Fushima Castle:** constructed by Hideyoshi in 1594
- fusuma:** opaque, wooden walls, usually painted very artistically or brightly

futon: bedroll

gagaku: imperial court music

gago: languages

gaiko: diplomacy

gaki: hungry ghost; hungry ghoul

gamyō: a painter's adopted name

gangikozō: short goblins covered with quills

ganko: stubborn

Ganjitsu: New Year's Day

Ganritsu Ryu: Ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Iishino Choisai Ienao

gedan: Floor of a room containing a jōdan

geigo: flattery

gei-jutsu: classical arts

geimyo: an entertainer's adopted name

gekido: bad tempered

gekokujo daimyo: daimyo who rose to prominence from nowhere

genbuku: coming of age ceremony

genin: shinobi who undertakes the day-to-day activities and assignments

Genko-ji: temple in Settsu; the original seat of the Hosso sect

Genpei War: *Minamoto-Taira* war, began in 1180 as Prince Mochihito and Minamoto no Yōrimasa rebel against the Taira and are defeated; in 1185, Minamoto no Yoshitsune annihilates the Taira army in a sea battle at Dan-no-Ura

geta: wooden clogs

Gifu: a town in Mino province

gijutsu: craft

gimu: obligation to repay others for what they have done for you

giri: a sense of duty, or obligation

Gion Matsuri: A month-long festival in Miyako. The highlight is Yamahoko-junko, on the 17th, when huge floats are pulled through the streets by teams of sweating celebrants.

gishōgiin-jutsu: forgery

gissha: wagon

go: a) A strategic board game imported from China, very popular among the buke; also called igo; b) five; c) a unit of volume equal to a half pint*; d) nom de guerre; warrior's adopted name* (* different character)

go-ban: a go board; it resembles a shogi board in design, with a grid of 19 x 19 lines

Go Chi: the Five Buddhas of Contemplation—Taho, Yakushi, Dainichi, Askuku, and Shaka

Gogawa: a river on Honshu

gohan: white, hulled rice

gokoku: multi-grain gruel

Gokuraku: Aida Buddha's Western Paradise

goma abura: sesame oil

gomoku narabe: a variant of go similar to tic-tac-toe, played on a standard go board; the object is to be the first one to get five stones of one color lined up horizontally, diagonally, or vertically

gomon-jutsu: interrogation

gongen: manifestations

gon-guji: assistant head priest of a shrine (Shinto)

gon-negi: assistant junior priest of a shrine (Shinto)

go-sanke: the three families making up the Tokugawa clan—Kii Tokugawa, Mito Tokugawa, and Owari Tokugawa

Goshō-ji: division of the Ikko (Jōdo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism

gosoku-tsukuri: armoring; armor maintenance and repair

gotoku neko: cat goblin

Gozaishomoriyama: a mountain in Japan

guji: head Shinto priest of a shrine

gunbai: flat war fan; signaling fan

gusoku-bitsu: armor box

gyōji: a bashō (sumo match) referee

gyokai rui: seafood

gyokushō: The *jewel* piece in the game Shogi

hachi: eight

hachigane: small, metal plate or plates sewn to a head cloth

Hachihon: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism

hachi-maki: headband

Hachiman: style of shrine architecture style

Hachiman Daibosatsu: originally the emperor Ōjin, son of Empress Jingū, Hachiman was deified as a great Bodhisattva (daibosatsu) as the god of war, and is the tutelary deity of the Minamoto

hachimitsu: wild honey

Hachiro-gata: Japan's eleventh largest lake, at 19 square miles

hadajuban: under-kimono

hagoita: colorful paddle used in the game Hanetsuki

haideate: armored skirt; hip and thigh protection

haiden: small worship hall in a shrine

haimyo: a poet's adopted name

ha-jutsu: demolitions

hakama: buke-style trousers

Hakamagi: a ceremony in which a boy 3 to 7 years old is made to stand on a go board, with his feet clad in tabi, and to pick up a go stone using his toes; this ceremony, also called chakugo, marks his entry into society

Hakutsu Ryu: a ju-jutsu and atemi-waza ryu

hakuzosū: shapeshifter being resembling a shugenja (yamabushi)

Hamana-ko: Japan's ninth largest lake, at 27 square miles

hamon: formal expulsion from a ryu

han: fief

hana-fuda: a memory game developed in the Edo period utilizing pictures painted on cards

hanbo: metal half mask; face mask which leaves the nose exposed

hanburi: half-bowl helmet worn on the forehead

Han-Cho: a dice game

handai: dining table

hane: shuttlecock

Hanetsuki: a game originated in the Heian courts similar to badminton or battledore

hanko: seal stone

hankyu: shortbow

han-myo: poison extracted from the toxic tiger beetle

hansō-jutsu: sailing

haori: a loose, buttock-length coat

hara: field; plain

haragei: concentration

haramaki: belly wrap cloth, designed to keep the belly warmer

hanten: jacket; firefighter's jacket

happō shuriken: eight-pointed shuriken; also used by the Iga and Koga shinobi clans

happuri: metal headband

Harima: one of the provinces in the Sanyōdo region of Honshu

haru: spring

Hasedera: Temple in Kamakura (f. 733) that houses a thirty-foot statue of an eleven-faced Kannon, the tallest wooden statue in Japan

Hasegawa Ryu: a ken-jutsu ryu
hashi: chopsticks
hatamoto: direct personal retainer of the daimyo
Hatsumode: the year's first visit to the shrine
Heian: historical era (794–1192) in which the capital is moved to Heian-kyo
Heika: form of address for the Emperor
heikoroku: decorative arrow quiver
Heian-kyo: original name of Kyoto, a city in Yamashiro province
hensu-jutsu: disguise
heya: sumotori training stable
Hie: style of shrine architecture style
Hie Jinja: a Shinto shrine in Hie
Hiezan: a monastery in Japan
Hida: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu
Hidagawa: a river on Honshu
Hideyoshi: a) Famous samurai clan; b) See Toyotomi Hideyoshi
Hideyoshi's Sword Hunt: edict in 1587 to collect swords ostensibly for the iron to construct a large statue of the Buddha; the real reason is to take thousands of swords out of circulation, limiting tools of possible rebellion
Higashiyama: a subset of the Seizan branch of Jodoshu
Higo: a province in the Saikaido region
Hijigawa: a river on Honshu
Hijiri: mountain hermits; forerunners of the shugenja
hikime: whistling/signalling arrow
hikyaku: courier; message runner
Himeji-jo: Himeji Castle
himitsu: a secret
Hina Matsuri: also called *Girl's Festival*, during this matsuri, families with young girls set up displays of dolls representing an ancient imperial court
hinin: lowest caste in Japanese society; pariah
hinkon: poverty
Hinmei: style of shrine architecture, in which wood is left in its natural colors
Hioki Ryu: A kyu-jutsu ryu
Hirado : city in southern Honshu containing a Dutch colony and trading house, established in 1609
hiragana: basic form of Japanese writing
hirajiro: plains castles

hirasanjo: mountain-in-a-plain castles
hiren: love trouble; a tragic romance
hitachi: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
hitogaka: personality
Hizen: a province in the Saikaido region
hizoku: brigand
hoden: treasure hall of a shrine
Hojo: famous buke house, descended from an Imperial family
hojo: abbot's quarters
hojo-nawa: binding cord
ho-jutsu: firearms skill
Hoki Ryu: a ken-jutsu ryu
Hoki: a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu
Hokke: Hokke, or Lotus Sect of Buddhism, founded in 1253 by Nichiren; there are nine divisions of the Hokke sect; also known as the Nichiren sect
Hokuji-den: division of the Hosso sect of Buddhism
Hokurikudo: region of Japan, comprised of the provinces of Echigo, Echizen, Etchu, Kaga, Noto, Sado (island) and Wakasa
Homusubi: the kami of fire
homyo: a name pronounced in the Sino-Japanese mode related to Buddhist doctrine or teaching
hon: original
honden: the main hall in a shrine
Honen: Buddhist priest and advocate of the Jodo sect, which increases in popularity after he begins to preach it in 1175.
Hongan-ji: a) Ikko sect temple in Miyako; the original seat of the Ikko sect (f. 1272); b) division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism
honmaru: main compound of a castle
honryu-ji: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism
Honsei-ji: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism
Honshu: the largest of the three main islands of Japan; also called Hondo
Honzan: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
Honzan-ha: the Tendai branch of the Shugendo sect of Buddhism, based in the Shogo-in, in Miyako
horen: imperial vehicle (wagon) pulled by an ox
hoshina: dried radish leaves

Hosso: Hosso Sect of Buddhism, founded in 657 by Chitsu; the original seat was Genko-ji in Settsu; there are two divisions of the Hosso sect
Hotaka-dake: a Japanese mountain 10,466 ft tall, the third tallest in Japan
hotate: clams
Hotei: One of the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto; originally a monk in 10th century China (and thus the only human of the seven), Hotei is the god of joviality, luck, and chance
Hozo-in Ryu: a so-jutsu ryu
hyakunin isshu: a card game created in the Heian Period, on which half of an ancient poem is written on each card; players must match the poem cards
hyakusho: Farmer
hyoshigi: wooden clappers; used to signal an alarm or get attention
hyosube: short goblins with multi-jointed limbs
Hyuga: a province in the Saikaido region

i: boar
iai-jutsu: fast draw technique (with katana)
ichi: a) One; b) First; c) Masseur
Ichibo: often added after the names of female members of the Ji sect of Buddhism
Ichiji : a subset of the Chinzei branch of Jodoshu
Ichikawa: a river on Honshu
Ichinengi: a branch of the Jodo sect of Buddhism
I-Ching: Book of Changes; divining text
Ichiya : a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
Iga: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
Iida: a town in Noto province
Itoyoyama: a mountain in Sado province
ika: squid
ikebana: flower arranging
Ikegami: the original seat of the Hokke Sect
Iki: an island near Kyushu and a province in the Saikaido region
Ikkan Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Katono Izu Hirohide
Ikki: tax revolt group

Ikko: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism (later called Jodo Shinshu, or True Pure Land), founded in 1224 by Shinran; there are nine divisions

Ikko Ikki: fanatical community created by adherents to the Jodo Shinshu (True Pure Land Sect)

Ikukui: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

ikusa: battle

imo rui: potato

Inaba: a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu

Inari: Goddess (kami) of rice and wealth

Inawashiro-ko: Japan's fourth largest lake, at 40 square miles, on Honshu

Ingo: secret (language)

inkajo: a special certification allowing the shihanke to pass on the traditions and teachings of a ryu to others

inro: first aid pouch

inro tenugui: bandages

inu: dog

Inu Omono: dog hunt, popular among some samurai clans

irori: raised hearth

irui: clothing

isamiashi: impulsiveness

Ise: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu

Ise Dai-jingu: Shinto shrine in Ise

ise-ebi: lobster

Ise Jingu: Ise is the most important shrine in all of Japan; the outer shrine honors the goddess of the harvest, the inner honors Amaterasu; two of the imperial treasures, the jewels and the mirror, are housed in Ise

ishi: doctor

Ishikari-gawa: Japan's third longest river, at 163 miles

Ishikawa Goemon: Japanese *Robin Hood*, who began operating in 1574. His twenty-one-year career comes to an end when he is arrested in 1595 and executed by being boiled alive

ishizumi: masonry

Isshin Ryu: a kusari-jutsu ryu

itako: medium (mystic)

Itchi: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism

Itto Ryu: a ken-jutsu and iai-jutsu ryu founded by Itto Kageshisa (1562–1653)

Iwaki: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu

Iwami: a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu

iwami-ginzan: mercury used as a poison

Iwashiro: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu

Iyo: one of the six provinces making up the Nankaido region

Izanagi: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon. He was married to Izanami, with whom he created and populated the islands of Japan.

Izanami: One of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon; she was married to Izanagi, with whom she created and populated the islands of Japan

Izu: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu

Izumi: a province in Honshu; one of the five provinces making up the Kinai region

Izumo: A province in the Sanindo region of Honshu

Izumo Taisha: Shinto shrine; Okuninushi is enshrined here; during the tenth month (Kaminazuki), all the kami repair to Izumo Taisha to visit him, making Izumo the only place where kami can be found that month

Izumo Taisha Jinzaisai: during the tenth month in Izumo, called Kamiarizuki, when all the Shinto kami go to the Izumo Grand Shrine and visit with each other, several solemn events are held to honor the assembled kami

Ji: a mendicant Pure Land order, founded in 1275 by Ippen; it is divided into twelve subsets; the original seat was Shojoko-ji in Sagami

ji: written characters (e.g., Kanji)

jidai-geki: a) Lit. *period plays*; b) Japanese period films

Jikoku: one of the Great Heavenly Kings; he watches over the east

jinbaori: officer's vest (buke)

jingu: Shinto shrine

jinja: Shinto shrine

jinnaku: camp curtain; also called tobari

Jinmu Tenno: the first emperor and son of Amaterasu Omikami, goddess of the sun, who ruled from 660–585 (according to the Kojiki)

Jinshin Revolt: a short but bloody revolt in 672, caused by a dispute over imperial succession; Prince Oama defeats prince Otomo, and becomes the next emperor

jitsugyo: business

Jitsuyo Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Yoshiyuki

jitte: single prong metal truncheon; it is a symbol of police authority

jizamurai: a buke who also owns land

Jizo: the patron deity of travelers, children, and pregnant women (Buddhism); small stone statues of him, also called jizo, can be seen at the sides of roads everywhere

jo: a) unit of measurement of length; 10 feet; b) wooden staff; c) city block; town ward

jodan: dais; about six inches high

Jodo: a sect of Buddhism, founded in 1175 by Honen; Jodo is an Amidist faith, with five main branches, some of which have their own subsets—Chinzei, Seizan, Choraku-ji, Kuhon-ji, and Ichinengi

Jodo-shin-shu: the Ikko movement, started in 1224, led by Shinran

jo-jutsu: [short] staff fighting skill

jokamachi: castle town

jonin: head of a ninjutsu-ryu

joro: prostitute

Joshō-ji: division of the Ikko (JodoShin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism

joss: incense sticks

Jozusan: a mountain in Japan

ju: ten

juban: a light kimono; it functions like a 20th-century t-shirt

Jugaku: confucianism

ju-jutsu: unarmed combat, grappling

Jukishin Ryu: a ju-jutsu ryu

juni-hitoe: kuge court dress made up of eight to ten layers of robes worn one on top of the other

Jurujin: one of the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto; he is the god of longevity

jutsu: skill or art

Juzenkai: the Ten Precepts of Buddhism

juuji shuriken: four-pointed, cross-shaped shuriken; the *trademark* of the Iga and Koga shinobi clans

- kabocha:** pumpkin
- kabuki:** *low class* comedic dances by women, first recorded in 1603; it is later banned in 1629 as dangerous to morals
- kabuto:** helmet (samurai style)
- kaede:** oak tree
- Kaga:** province in Honshu; one of the seven provinces making up the region of Hokurikudo
- kago:** a privately rented basket or hammock arrangement slung from a long pole
- Kagogawa:** a river on Honshu
- kagoya:** sedan-chair carrier
- kagura:** Sacred Dance (Shinto)
- Kai:** a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
- kai:** long paddle-like oar
- kai-awase:** a game popular among the aristocracy, utilizing both halves of clamshells with scenes painted on them, and then players have to match two halves together
- Kaii:** a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
- kaiken:** small pin or blade carried in the katana saya
- kaishaku:** a second in the seppuku ritual
- kajitsushu:** fruit liquor
- kakemono:** hanging scroll
- kaki:** shellfish; oysters
- kama:** a) sickle-like blade attached horizontally to a short wooden stick; b) rice-cooking pot
- kama-jutsu:** kama weapon skill
- Kamakura:** a) town that was the seat of Minamoto (and later Hojo) power; b) a historical era (1192–1333), in which the seat of the Minamoto government was located in Kamakura
- Kamatari:** Imperial family head who takes the name Fujiwara no Kamatari; his family will *run* Japan for the next several centuries
- kama-yari:** lance with an added crescent blade
- kame:** ceramic pickling jar
- kami:** an honorific for noble, sacred spirits; a supernatural being; sometimes translated as *god* or *deity*
- kami mukae:** ceremony held in a shrine or other sacred place to welcome the kami to earth
- Kamimushubi:** one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon; one of the three creators of the world
- Kaminazuki:** the tenth month of the year, and the first month of Winter
- kami okuri:** closing ceremony of a matsuri (religious festival)
- Kamuodake:** mountain on Kyushu
- Kanazawa:** city in Kaga province, known as one of the major centers of the dyeing industry
- kanbetsu:** oppressed
- kangaku:** Chinese classical literature
- kanji:** advanced Japanese writing, from Chinese characters
- kanjiki:** snow shoes
- kanjin-zumo:** Sumo contests held to raise money for local temples and shrines
- Kankai Ryu:** a ken-jutsu and tanto-jutsu ryu
- kanmuri:** cap worn by kuge, usually with a kariginu, especially in formal occasions
- Kannon Daibosatsu:** the Buddhist goddess of mercy, and the assistant of Amida
- kannushi:** Shinto priest; also called shinkan
- kanpaku:** Prime Minister; Imperial Regent
- kantaikemono:** entertainer
- Kanto:** great plain in northeastern Honshu
- Kanto:** eastern provinces, known as the *rice-basket* of Japan
- kao:** Face (of honor)
- kappa:** short, turtle-like goblins that live in rivers and lakes
- karashi:** Chinese hot mustard
- kari:** hunting
- kariginu:** a high and round-collared over-robe with large sleeves; it is worn by kuge, over the hakama
- karimata:** forked arrow
- kari-shozoku:** falconry attire (buke)
- karma:** universal causal law
- karo:** councilor, high ranking member of a samurai clan
- karumi-jutsu:** a) the ability to leap great distances and heights; b) acrobatics
- karuta:** a Japanese playing card
- kasa:** straw hat
- Kashima Shinden Ryu:** aken-jutsu ryu founded by Matsumoto Bizen-no-Kami Naokatsu in the early 16th century; later known as Kashima Shinden Jikishikage Ryu; sometimes known as Jikishinkage Ryu
- Kashima Shinto Ryu:** a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu headed by Tsukahara Bokuden
- kashimono:** a garment consisting of a matching hakama and a kataginu, worn over a kimono
- Kashiwazaki:** a town in Echigo province
- Kasso:** a subset of the Fuke branch of Zen Buddhism
- Kasuga:** style of shrine architecture
- Kasuga Jinja:** A Shinto shrine in Kasuga
- Kasuga Matsuri:** spring festival
- Kasuga Taisha:** Shinto shrine in Nara; 3,000 stone lanterns line the pathway to the main building
- Kasumi-ga-ura:** Japan's second largest lake, at 65 square miles, on Honshu
- kataginu:** samurai court vest
- katakana:** intermediate form of Japanese writing
- katame:** nearly blind or missing one eye
- katana:** common longsword
- katanabukukuro:** sword bag
- katanakake:** sword rack
- katana-zutsu:** sword case
- kataribe:** wandering scholar
- katchu keiba:** festival involving a horse race in which the riders wear full armor with banners
- kate-bukuro:** provision bag
- Katori Shinto Ryuu:** a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Katono Izu Hirohide, popular in the northern provinces
- kawa:** river
- kawachi:** a province in Honshu; one of the five provinces making up the Kinai region
- kawanaga:** weighted rope
- Kawanakajima:** site of a battle between rival daimyo Uesugi Kenshin and Takeda Shingen in 1555, which ends in a draw
- kawaramono:** hinin who live in or near dried out riverbeds on the outskirts of town in little ghettos
- kawari kabuto:** A helmet of elaborate design, or *grotesque*
- kaya:** mosquito netting
- kaya abura:** nutmeg oil
- Kazusa:** a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
- Kegon:** one of the six original Nara sects of Buddhism, founded in 735 by Dosen; its seat is To-daiji in Yamato
- kegetsu:** fur boots

kemari: Heian-era soccer-like game played by kuge

ken: a) sword; b) a unit of measurement equal to two yards

kenbo: forgetful

kenbu: Sword Dance

Kencho-ji: a) the most important temple in Kamakura; a Zen sect temple (f. 1253), and center for training Zen priests; b) A subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism

ken-jutsu: swordsmanship; Japanese fencing

kenkyu: research

Kenmu Restoration: struggle in which Ashikaga Takauji restores imperial rule in 1334, and supports Emperor Komyo of the northern line

Kennin-ji: a subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism

kensai: sword master

kesa: a long cloth wrap worn over one shoulder; usually worn by Buddhist priests

kesho: cosmetics

keukegen: creature with no arms or legs, only a great number of hair-like tubes

kezurimono: shaved, dried bonito

Kibe: division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism

kibi: corn

Kichiku: a subset of the Fuke branch of Zen Buddhism

ki-hoko: wooden arrow used in dog hunt

kijishi: carver; sculptor

ki-jutsu: sleight of hand

kikko: Japanese brigantine

Kiku-no-ma: *Chrysanthemum room*

Kikuzuki: the ninth month (*Chrysanthemum month*)

kimono: common robe-like garment worn by all classes

kin: gold

kindan gijutsu: forbidden skill

Kinhokuzan: a mountain in Sado province

Kinkaku-ji: the Golden Pavilion (f. 1397), in Miyako; originally a retirement villa for Shogun Yoshimitsu, it is now part of the Rokuon-ji

kin-no-ma: *Gold room*

Kii: one of the six provinces making up the Nankaido region

Kinai: a region in Honshu (also called Kinki), comprised of five provinces—Izumi, Kawachi, Settsu, Yamashiro, and Yamato; known as *the home provinces* due to the imperial capital having always been seated therein

Kinogawa: a river on Honshu

kinoko: mushrooms

Kinsen: a subset of the Fuke branch of Zen Buddhism

kinshi: poor vision

kinton: mashed sweet potato

kinusaya: snow peas

Kira Yoshinaka: shogunate official responsible for the downfall of the Asano clan in 1701; he is later killed by forty-seven retainers of Lord Asano Naganori, who was forced to commit seppuku

kiri-no-ma: *Pawlonia room*

Kirishtando: Christianity, primarily referring to the Jesuits and Catholicism

Kirishima Jingu: Shinto shrine on Kyushu, dedicated to Ninigi no Mikoto

Kiristuokyo: Christian mysticism, magic

kirisute-gomen: the right of a samurai to cut down any member of the common or untouchable class and walk off with impunity

kisama: insulting name (has connotation of *you bastard!*)

Kisaragi: the second month

kiseru: iron smoking (tobacco) pipe

kishomon: a written pledge from a new student to a ryu sensei

Kisogawa: a river on Honshu

Kitakamigawa: Japan's sixth longest river, at 155 miles, on Honshu

ki-zukai: focus ki

Kiyomizu-dera: temple dedicated to Kannon (f. 780); it hangs partially over the edge of a cliff on the outskirts of Miyako

Kizugawa: a river on Honshu

ko: lake

kobakama: bongie-style trousers

Kobe: a city in Settsu province

Kobo-daishi: founder of Shingon Buddhism in 805; also known as Kukai

Kobori Ryu: A ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Fujiwara no Kamatari

kobun: a) Members of a criminal organization; b) classical literature

kodo: a) incense ceremony; b) a large lecture hall on temple grounds

Kofu: the principal city in Kai province

Koga: a town in Shimosa province, and center (and place of origin) of Koga-ryu ninjutsu

kogai: small knife kept in wakizashi saya

Kogi: a subset of the Shingon sect of Buddhism

Kogiku: a subset of the Fuke branch of Zen Buddhism

koi: carp

Kojiki: book written in 711 by the historian O-no-Yasumaro recording the history of Japan's earliest days (*A Record of Ancient Things*)

Kojima: a town in Suruga province

kojutsu: navigation

koku: a) a unit of volume equal to 40 gallons, or about 5 bushels; b) a province; c) a measurement of time, about one eighth of an hour (7.5 minutes)

Kokua: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism

Kokugo: Japanese language

Komatsu: town in Kaga province

kombu: dried kelp

Komoku: one of the Great Heavenly Kings; he watches over the west

Komon: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism

komuso: traveling monk of the Fuke sect of Buddhism

kondo: great hall in a temple containing the enshrined image of the patron Buddhist spirit

kosaku: farming

koshiate: a leather sleeve hung from the waist sash to carry a katana

kosho: Chinese pepper

koshogumi: individuals attached to a daimyo's entourage

Kosho-ji: division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism

Koshu Kaido: highway running from Edo to Kofu (the capital city of the Kai, or Koshu province)

kote: arm protection

koten bungaku: Japanese classical literature

koto: Japanese zither

Koto-Eiri Ryu: a ken-jutsu ryu

Kotohira-gu: also called Konpirasan; this shrine on Shikoku is particularly revered by seafarers and other travelers

Kotoku-in: temple containing the Daibutsu

kotsusumi: one-foot long, hourglass-shaped, two-headed drum

kouro: incense pot

Koyasan: a) a mountain in Kii and home of a complex (f. 816) of Shingon sect priests, monks, and sohei; two *eternal flames* have been burning in a support building since the eleventh century; frequently the site of exile for kuge or buke nobles; b) sacred shugendo mountain, in Yamato; Katsuragi Shrine is on the peak

Kozasa: a subset of the Fuke branch of Zen Buddhism

kozuka: small steel knife kept in katana saya

Kozuke: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu

ku: nine

kuchikami no sake: early form of sake made from chestnuts and millet chewed by the whole village and then spat out into a tub to ferment

kudamono: fruit

kuge: Imperial noble; member of the aristocracy

Kuhon-ji: a branch of the Jodo sect of Buddhism

kuji-kiri: signing; special words and gestures used by practitioners of mikkyo

Kukishin Ryu: a bo-jutsu ryu

kuma: bear

Kumagawa: river on Kyushu

kumi: gang; criminal organization

kuni: home province

Kunimiyama: mountain on Kyushu

Kunitokotachi no Mikoto: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon; he is revered in Omi

Kunisatsuchi: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

kunoichi: female shinobi (ninja)

kura: a) saddle; made of wood and lacquered black or crimson; b) storehouse

kurage: jellyfish

Kurama Ryu: a ken-jutsu ryu founded in the Tensho Era (1573–1593) by Ono Shokan; it teaches Ochiotoshi (a technique of cutting through the opponent's sword with your own)

kuri: chestnut

kuri-ya: bamboo head arrow

kusa: a) grass; b) term used to refer to shinobi

kusajishi: deer-shaped archery target

Kusaka Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Shorin Sama no suke Eikichi

kusari-jutsu: chain weapon skill

Kutcharo-ko: Japan's seventh largest lake, at 31 square miles

kuwa: broad-bladed hoe

Kuya: founder of Nenbutsu sect of Buddhism in Japan, in 938

kyofusho: phobia

Kyokusui: improvisational poetry composition by a stream, in which sake cups are floated; practiced almost exclusively by kuge

kyogen: comedic dance

kyosoku: armrest

kyotetsu-shoge: metal ring and two-bladed knife connected by a hair rope; only used by shinobi

Kyozukayama: a mountain in Sado province

kyu-jutsu: archery skill

kyuri: cucumber

Kyushin Ryu: a ju-jutsu ryu

Kyushu: the southernmost of the three main islands of Japan; site of a Mongol navy invasion, led by Kublai Khan, in 1274, and again in 1281; conquered by Hideyoshi in 1587; also known as Saikaido

Luis Frois: Jesuit missionary who obtained permission from Oda Nobunaga to preach Christianity (Kirishtando) in Kyoto in 1569

ma: room

machi: town

Machi-bugyo: town magistrate

mae-zumo: early matches of new, young sumotori; novices must win three such matches before they can *graduate* out of mae-zumo

maho-jutsu: magical arts

mai: dance

makagoya: hunting arrow

makizushi: seaweed-wrapped rice

mame: dried beans

mameita: a small pea-sized lump of silver or gold; mame-ita are typically valued by weight, although they are commonly issued in values equal to a monme-ita, a bu-shoban, or a ni-bu

manabu: study

Maniwa Nen Ryu: a ken-jutsu, naginata-jutsu, so-jutsu and yadome-jutsu ryu founded in 1368 by Soma Shiro Yoshimoto; one of the oldest existent traditions in Sengoku Japan, this ryu is known for its practitioners being very strong swordsmen

manji shuriken: swastika-shaped shuriken

manno: bamboo rake

manrikigusari: weighted chain

manzai: comedic dance

Marishiten: The *Queen of Heaven* (Buddhism)

Maruoka: a town in Echizen province

masakari: heavy hand ax

masakari-jutsu: axe fighting technique

Masaki Ryu: A kusari-jutsu ryu

matcha: powdered tea used in sado and cha-no-yu

mato: round archery target

matoya: blunt, wood-tipped arrow

matsu: pine

Matsumoto: a city in Shinano province, known as a major paper production centers in Japan

matsu-no-ma: *Pine room*

matsuri: festivals; usually religious in nature

matsuribayashi: festival music, performed mostly by amateur musicians from amongst the revelers

Matsuyama: a city in Iyo province; known as one of the major production centers of textiles

mawashi: sumotori's belt

meijin: expert

meisai-jutsu: concealment

meiso: meditation

menkyo: a certificate indicating a student has achieved proficiency with an art or bugei

menkyo-kaiden: certificate issued by a ryu, signifying the recipient has learned all that can be taught to them by the soke of a ryu

menpo: face mask, which covers the nose, chin, and cheeks

meshibera: wooden spatula

metsuke: samurai clan censor; internal inspector

Mikagedo: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism

Mikawa: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu

miko: Shinto shrine maiden

Mimasaka: one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu

Minamoto: ancient Imperial family, eventually becoming a great samurai clan; the twin branches, Saga Genji and eiwa Genji, are created when Emperors Saga and Seiwa give that surname to offshoot branches of the imperial house

Minato: a town on Sado island (province)

Minazuki: the sixth month

Mineiri: the principal ritual exercise of shugendo, an ascent of a particular holy mountain at each of the four seasons; it is both symbolic and purposeful

minka: a home; everything from a low-ranked samurai's home to a simple farmhouse

Mino: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu, and one of the best known production centers of fine ceramic-ware and paper

mino: raincoat, made of oiled straw or paper

miso: soybean paste soup

misodama: dried miso ball

Miyako: capital city of Yamashiro province and seat of the imperial court after 794; it is also one of the major centers of the dyeing industry and the center of the fashion world; originally called Heian-kyo

mo: red apron-like garment worn by women of the upper-classes

mochi: rice cake

Mogami-gawa: Japan's eighth longest river, at 140 miles

mokko: carpentry

momoku: blind

Momoyama: a) era name (1582–1600); b) the site of one of Hideyoshi's castles

mon: a) family or house crest; b) value of one zen

Monjuyama: Mountain on Kyushu

monme: measure of weight of silver (about 4 grams)

monme-ita: small rectangular block of silver, weighing 1 monme

monomane: acting

Mononobe: Imperial family traditionally strong supporters of Shinto

moso: delusion

moto: base

mudra: spiritual hand postures used in Mikkyo and Ninpo-mikkyo

mugon: mute

mukade: giant centipede

mukade-no-doku: poison of the giant centipede

mura: village

Murakami: a town in Echigo province

Muromachi: a) a historical era (1333–1573) marked by the split of the imperial house into two lines; b) a Kyoto district (then called Fushimi) chosen by the Ashikaga for their headquarters

Musashi: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu; home of Edo, the Shogunate capital

Musashi Miyamoto: Musashi Takezo; Japan's most famous swordsman, and author of *The Book of Five Rings* (1643)

mushin: Faceless monster

Muso-Jukiden-Eishin Ryu: a ken-jutsu and so-jutsu ryu

Muso-Shinden Ryu: a ken-jutsu ryu

Mutsu: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu

Mutsuki: the first month of the year, and first month of Spring

myo: name

myoji: surname

Myoko-san: a Japanese mountain 8,025 ft tall, the ninth tallest in Japan

Myoman-ji: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism

Myo-o: deities of great power who are charged with committing acts of violence to defeat evil (Buddhist)

Myoshi-ji: a subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism

Nagakure: site of the 1584 battle between Tokugawa Ieyasu and Toyotomi Hideyoshi; ended in a draw

Nagano: a) a city in Kawachi province; b) a city in Shinano province

Nagaoka: a town in Echigo province

Nagare: style of shrine architecture

Nagasaki: Japanese port city in southern Japan, and site of the 1597 execution of twenty-six missionaries and Christians, ordered by Hideyoshi; in 1622, fifty-five Christians are executed in the city

Nagashino: site of a battle in 1575, where Oda Nobunaga and Tokugawa Ieyasu defeat Takeda Katsuyori; it was the first battle in which large numbers of firearms were used

Nagato: one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu

naginata: polearm with a wide, sword-like blade

naginata-jutsu: naginata skill

Nagoshi: a subset of the Chinzei branch of Jodoshu

Nagoya: a city in Owari province

nagura toishi: polishing chalk (for blades)

naka: center

Naka-no-uni: Japan's fifth largest lake, at 38 square miles

Nakasendo: highway connecting Edo and Miyako; it is often called the Kiso-kaido as it skirts the Kiso-gawa for a great length

Nakatomi: Imperial family with court authority in regards to Shinto; the imperial *ritualists*

Namahage: regional festival encouraging children to be good

Namegawa: a town in Etchu province.

Namu Amida Butsu: the Nenbutsu mantra—I take my refuge in Amida Buddha

Namu myoho rengo kyo: the mantra of the Hokke sect—I take my refuge in the Lotus Sutra

Nanao: town in Noto province

nanban do: cuirass adapted to Japanese tastes made from an imported European armor

Nanbanjin: Japanese term for a European

Nanboku-cho: period of the Northern and Southern Court

Nanji-den: division of the Hosso sect of Buddhism

Nankaido: a region of Japan comprised of six provinces—Awa, Awaji, Iyo, Kii, Sanuki, and Tosa

nanori: formal adult name

Nanzen-ji: a) Zen temple complex in Miyako (f. 1264) destroyed in the Onin War; it is being rebuilt during the last half of the 16th century; b) a subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism

Naoetsu: a town in Echigo province

Nara: a) city in Yamato province, known for having a large number of temples; b) Historical era (710–794)

Narita: a town in Shimosa province

nasu: eggplant

nawa: rope

Nebuta Matsuri: this national pre-harvesting festival is held during the first week of August, to ward off sleepiness, so that the work cannot be disrupted

negi: a) junior Shinto priest of a shrine; b) onion

- neko:** cat
- nekode:** Shinobi iron claws
- Nen Ryu:** a ken-jutsu and so-jutsu ryu
- Nenbutsu:** a) a sect of Buddhism promulgated in Japan by Kuya in 938; b) a mantra
- Namu Amida Butsu:** mantra stressed by the Ikko sect of Buddhism
- nengo:** era names, given by emperors and other worthies
- netsuke:** small carved, often decorative, bauble or figurine used to secure one's obi
- ni-bu:** small rectangular gold coin, worth two koku.
- Nichioku Ryu:** a kyu-jutsu and ken-jutsu ryu
- Nichiren:** a) a sect of Buddhism (also known as Hokke), founded in 1253 by Nichiren; b) founder of the Nichiren Buddhist sect
- Niigata:** a city in Echigo province, known as one of the major production centers of textiles and paper
- Nikko Kaido:** highway connecting Edo to Nikko in central Shimotsuke Province
- nimono:** boiled vegetables; stew
- Ninigi no Mikoto:** kami, and grandson of Amaterasu, sent by her to rule Japan; it was to him that the three sacred treasures were entrusted
- ninja:** see *shinobi*
- ninjo:** compassion, empathy or humanity
- ni-no-maru:** second (intermediate) compound of a castle
- ninpo:** ninjutsu
- ninpo taijutsu:** unarmed combat style of ninpo (ninjutsu)
- Nishidani:** a subset of the Seizan branch of Jodoshu
- niso:** Buddhist priestess
- niwa-zukuri:** gardening
- Niyodogawa:** a river in Japan
- no:** plain, field
- No:** form of classical theater, perfected by Zeami ca. 1441; commonly staged outside, and all actors are male
- nobebo:** rolling pin
- Nobi:** great plain in northeastern Honshu
- nobori:** climbing
- nobushi:** a bandit
- nodachi:** heavy, two-handed battle sword
- nokogiri:** small hand saw
- Noneyama:** a mountain in Japan
- noren:** door curtain
- nori:** dried sheets of seaweed
- Norikura-dake:** a Japanese mountain 9,928 ft tall, the sixth tallest in Japan
- norimono:** a) elaborate, enclosed palanquin; b) teaching scroll
- nossori:** plodding; slow
- Noto:** province in Honshu; one of the seven provinces making up the region of Hokurikudo
- nozoku:** small plate
- nunchaku:** Okinawan flail-like weapon
- nunchaku-te:** nunchaku skill
- nura:** rice husks
- nurarihyon:** creature with a heavy head
- nurarihyon ishi:** a gemstone inside a nurarihyon which gives the owner the ability to fly and travel to other worlds
- nuri:** lac; lacquer
- nuri-no-doku:** a poison derived from the sap or bark of the lac tree.
- nusubito:** common thief; cat burglar
- Nyorai:** a Buddha; one who has achieved enlightenment
- Nyudo:** an epithet following a Buddhist name
- Obama:** a town in Wakasa province
- Obata:** a subset of the Chinzei branch of Jodoshu
- obi:** belt; sash
- O-Bon:** the Buddhist Festival of the Dead, celebrated throughout Japan
- o-cha:** green tea
- Oda Nobunaga:** a bong-e-born warrior who rose to become military ruler of Japan; because of his bong-e roots, however, he was unable to be named Shogun
- o-daiko:** huge, two-headed drum made from a single tree trunk
- Odawara:** a city in Sagami province
- odeppo:** matchlock cannon
- odori:** dance
- oga:** two-man saw
- Ogi:** a town on Sado island
- ogi:** folding fan
- ohashi:** chopsticks
- ohitsu:** cedar rice-serving tub
- Oishi Kuranosuke:** leader of the famous forty-seven ronin
- ojigai:** ritual suicide of female buke
- Ôjin:** Emperor of Japan and son of the Empress Jingô; he is deified as Hachiman, the god of war, after his death
- okayu:** a watery rice gruel; a common food of the elderly, infirm and the ill
- oke:** wooden bucket
- Okehazama:** Site of a battle in 1560 between the Oda and Imagawa; Oda Nobunaga's two-thousand-man force overwhelms a twenty-five-thousand-man army and kills Imagawa Yoshimoto
- Oki:** a) a small island in Japan, to which Emperor Go-Daigo is exiled after the Genko Insurrection of 1331; b) a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu
- okubyo:** coward
- Okudani:** a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
- okuden:** secret techniques of an art or bugei
- okugata-sama:** form of address for the lady of a house or wife of a lord
- Okuninushi:** kami of healers and all medicinal arts; he is a descendant of Susano-o
- Omi:** a province in the Tosando region of Honshu
- omiki:** shrine sake
- o-mikoshi:** sacred palanquin; carries the enshrined kami during festivals
- omikuji:** Small *fortunes*, pieces of paper that predict your future; these papers are tied around a tree branch after reading, to make the good fortune come true or to avoid the predicted bad fortune
- Ominesan:** sacred shugendo mountain in Yamato, and home of the Kinbusen-ji, founded by En himself
- O-Misoka:** a) the last day of the year; b) also called Ganjitsu, this national festival is held on the last night of the year, when it is customary to visit the neighborhood temple and shrine
- Omiya:** a city in Suruga province
- Omonogawa:** a river on Honshu
- Omorî Ryu:** a ken-jutsu, so-jutsu, and naginata-jutsu ryu
- Omotaru:** one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon
- omugi:** barley, millet
- on:** a debt (of honor) or obligation
- onagiri:** rice ball
- ongaku:** music skill

oni: demon, supernatural ogre

Ōnin War: a great war (1467–1477) over a succession dispute for the shogunate that left Kyoto destroyed by fire, thousands dead, and the power and prestige of the Muromachi shogun broken

Onko Chishin Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Musashi Miyamoto Shome in the early 17th century

onmitsu: espionage

onmitsushi: government spy or execution grounds attendant

onmyodo: Japanese sorcery

onnogata: male actors who portray female characters

Ono: a town in Echizen province

ono: battle ax

Onogawa: river on Kyushu

Onokorojima: the first island created by Izanagi

onore: insulting name (has connotation of *you bastard!*)

On-take: a Japanese mountain 10,050 ft tall, the fifth tallest in Japan

oroshi: grater

Osaka: a city in Settsu province, in the Kansai region of Honshu

Osaka-jo: castle built by Hideyoshi, located near the city of Osaka; construction begins in 1583; it is burned to the ground by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1615

Oshima Ryu: a so-jutsu ryu

osho: the *king* piece in the game Shogi

Oshu Kaido: highway running from Edo to Aomori to the northeast

Osumi: a province in the Saikaido region

Otomabe: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

Otonochi: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

Otsu: a lake on the island of Honshu

Owari: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu, and one of the major centers of production of ceramic during the Sengoku period

owari: deceased

oyabun: the head of a criminal organization

oyakata-sama: form of address for a lord

Potogaru-go: Portuguese language

rakkasei abura: peanut oil

raiju: thunder beast

Rango: Dutch language

ranma: decorative carved transom that is open to both rooms

Raten-go: Latin language

reishiki: high society; etiquette

Reizan: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism

ri: a unit of measurement equal to 2.4 miles

Rikuchu: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu, best known as the home province of the imperial court, in the city of Miyako

Rikuzen: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu

Rinzai: a branch of the Zen sect of Buddhism (f. 1191), with ten subsets—Kennin-ji, Rofuku-ji, Kencho-ji, Engaku-ji, Nanzen-ji, Eigen-ji, Daitoku-ji, Tenryu-ji, Myoshi-ji, and Shokoku-ji

risshi: senior Buddhist priest

Ritsu: an ascetic sect of Buddhism, founded in 754 by Ganjin; its seat is the Tosho-daiji in Yamato

ro: oar

ro: man

Rofuku-ji: a subset of the Rinzai branch of Zen Buddhism

roku: six

Rokujo: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism

rokuro-kubi: goblin head; flying demon heads

ronin: a disenfranchised samurai; buke not in service to a daimyo

rosoku: pine-resin candle

ryo: a) measurement of weight used when referring to gold, equal to four koku; b) term of value commonly used in commerce; c) good

Ryoan-ji: Zen contemplative temple in Miyako (f. 1473), and site of the most famous sand/rock garden in the world

ryobu: two sides

Ryobu-Shinto: the doctrine that Shinto and Bukkyo are in fact the same religion

ryoko: traveling

ryoshoku: survival

ryu: a) School; b) tradition, family style of bugei or art; c) dragon

Ryukyu: independant island kingdom (Okinawa)

Sabae: a town in Echizen province

sabi: a certain melancholy, timelessness, and a shopworn feeling of familiarity, relating to art

sabu: three

Sado: a large island province off Echigo, near Niigata; it is traditionally used as a place of exile for persons of importance who have offended the imperial court; one of the seven provinces making up the region of Hokurikudo

Sado: the Way of Tea

Saga: a subset of the Seizan branch of Jodoshu

Sagami: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu

sageo: scabbard cord

Saicho: Founder of Tendai Buddhism in Japan, in 806

saihai: signaling baton

St. Francis Xavier: Jesuit priest who arrives in Kagoshima on a mission trip in 1549

Saikaido: a region of eleven provinces, encompassing the islands of Kyushu, Iki and Tsushima

Sakai: a port town in Echizen province

sakazuki: sake cup

sake: Japanese rice wine

sake-masu: sake set storage box

Sakura: a town in Shimosa province

Sakurajima: osland in the center of the bay between Satsuma and Osumi provinces

samurai: member of the warrior caste in service to a daimyo

Sanbomoriyama: a mountain in Japan

Sanindo: with the Sanyodo, it is part of the area called Chugoku; the Sanindo has eight provinces—Hoki, Inaba, Iwami, Izumo, Oki, Tajima, Tanba and Tango

Sanjo: a subset of the Chinzei branch of Jodoshu

sanjo: mountain castle

Sanjusangen-do: the popular name of the Rengeo-in; it is so named for the long hall of thirty-three pillar spaces

sankin kotai: a system, started in 1635, of alternate residences, requiring daimyo to alternate spending one year in Edo and one year in his home province

san-no-maru: third (outer) compound of a castle

- San Senjin:** the Three Gods of War—Marishiten, Daikokuten, and Bishamonten (Buddhism)
- Sanuki:** one of the six provinces making up the Nankaido region
- Sanyodo:** a region of Honshu; with the Sanindo, it forms the area called Chugoku, and comprises eight provinces—Aki, Bingo, Bitchu, Bizen, Harima, Mimasaka, Nagato, and Suo
- sara-kazoe:** plate-counting ghost
- Saroma-ko:** Japan's third largest lake, at 59 square miles
- sasamaki:** rice ball wrapped in leaf
- sashimi:** raw fish
- sashimono:** short banner worn on the back of the armor of samurai and ashigaru in battle
- satori:** enlightenment (Buddhism)
- Satsuki:** the fifth month
- Satsuma:** a province in the Saikaido region
- satsuma:** sweet potato
- saya:** scabbard
- seiro:** steaming basket
- seishi:** a written pledge from a new student to a ryu sensei
- Seizan:** a branch of the Jodo sect of Buddhism, with four subsets—Nishidani, Fukakusa, Higashiyama, and Saga
- Sekigahara:** *a)* a town in Mino province; *b)* the largest battle in Japanese history, fought October 21, 1600, between the Eastern Army of Tokugawa Ieyasu and the Western Army of Toyotomi loyalists led by Ishida Mitsunari; Ieyasu emerges victorious, and Ishida is executed a few days later, bringing the Sengoku Period to a close
- Sendai:** a town in Rikuzen province
- Sendaigawa:** river on Kyushu
- Sengoku:** an era (XXX-1603) comprised of the entire Azuchi and Momoyama Periods, and part of the Muromachi Period; this time is often referred to in history books as *Muromachi-Momoyama*, or *Azuchi-Momoyama*
- senja-fuda:** religious name tape
- Sen-no-Rikyu:** tea master, largely responsible for the cha-no-yu's (tea ceremony) popularity; he commits seppuku in 1591 under orders from Hideyoshi
- senri:** one thousand ri; a unit of measurement equal to 2,400 miles
- sensei:** *a)* a teacher; *b)* an honorific used for doctors or any highly educated person
- Sensho-ji:** division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism
- Senso-ji:** Edo's oldest and most famous temple; also called Asakusa Kannon
- sensui kawaramono:** riverbed folk gardeners
- seppuku:** ritual suicide of the buke caste
- seri:** parsley; drop wort
- Setsubun:** matsuri to bring in good fortune
- Setsukozan:** a mountain in Japan
- Settsu:** a province in Honshu; one of the five provinces making up the Kinai region
- shaken:** bladed throwing weapons
- shaku:** *a)* a unit of measurement equal to about one foot; *b)* unit of volume equal to 18 ml
- shakuhachi:** vertical bamboo flute
- shakujo:** Buddhist priest's staff
- shanko shuriken:** three-pointed shuriken, usually with diamond- or leaf-shaped blades
- shi:** *a)* four; *b)* death
- Shi Daitenno:** the Four Heavenly Kings, protectors of the four corners of the world from evil demons—Jikoku, Komoku, Tamon (Bishamon), and Zocho
- shichi:** seven
- Shichifukujin:** the Seven Lucky Gods of Ryobu-Shinto—Benten, Bishamon, Daikoku, Ebisu, Fukurokuju, Hotei, and Jurojin
- shigaku:** *a)* History; *b)* Japanese history
- shihan:** senior instructor of a ryu
- shihanke:** master teacher of a ryu; those students who have obtained the inkajo
- shiho shuriken:** four-pointed shuriken looking like four arrows pointing out from the center
- shiika:** poetry
- Shiia:** a town in Echigo province
- Shijo:** a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
- Shikiri:** ritual of intimidation performed by sumotori just before a bout begins
- Shikoku:** one of the three major islands of Japan, off the coast of Honshu, which was conquered by Hideyoshi in 1585 after he defeated the Chosokabe clan; the northern portion of Shikoku is one of several production centers of paper.
- Shima:** a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
- shima:** island
- Shimabara:** city in Hizen province (Honshu)
- Shimabara Rebellion:** a failed rebellion in Shimabara against the privations of a cruel daimyo in 1637; thirty-seven-thousand people are slain in the castle's defense, many of which are Christian samurai
- Shimada:** a town in Suruga province
- shimata:** an expletive
- shimenawa:** a thickly braided rope, often with suspended zigzag folded paper streamers, stretched around or across something being honored (Shinto).
- Shimogamo Jinja:** a Shinto shrine in the Nagare style
- Shimosa:** a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
- Shimotsuke:** a province in the Tosando region of Honshu
- Shimotsuki:** the eleventh month
- shin:** new
- Shinano:** a province in the Tosando region of Honshu
- Shinano-gawa:** Japan's longest river, at 228 miles
- Shinatsuhiko:** kami of the winds, along with his sister Shinatsuhime
- Shinatsuhime:** kami of the winds, along with her brother, Shinatsuhiko
- shinda:** dead
- Shingi:** a subset of the Shingon sect of Buddhism
- Shingon:** an esoteric Buddhist sect, founded in 806 by Kukai; there are two divisions—Kogi and Shingi; the original seat is To-ji in Yamashiro
- Shinji-ko:** Japan's sixth largest lake, at 31 square miles, on Honshu
- shinji-zumo:** ancient sumo bouts performed as religious functions before the ruling Emperor or Empress
- Shinkage Ryu:** a ken-jutsu, so-jutsu, and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded in the first half of the sixteenth century by Kamizumi Ise no Kami Fujiwara no Hidetsuna; one of the most influential ryu in all of Sengoku Japan; this ryu is patronized by the powerful Fujiwara clan and has a great many adherents
- shinkan:** Shinto priest; also called kannushi

Shinki-sodatsusen: an equestrian pastime and a mock battle, of sorts, in which riders attempt to gather shinki (holy flags), which are fired into the air by a cannon, before they hit the ground

shinko: a) piety; b) the *main event* of a matsuri (religious festival), when mikoshi are paraded through the streets and the crowds celebrate

Shinminato: a town in Etchu province

Shinmuso Hayashizaki Ryu: founded in the late sixteenth century by Hayashizaki Jinsuke Shigenobu (1542–1621), this is one of the older iai-jutsu ryu of Japan, and was adopted as an official style of the Tsugaru clan

shinobi: member of a ninjutsu-ryu; practitioner of ninjutsu

shinobigatana: shinobi (ninja) sword; also called ninjato

shinobi shojoku: shinobi garb

shinobizue: any staff with a concealable weapon or device

shinshi: bureaucracy

shinten: Shinto traditions and knowledge

Shinto: Japanese shamanistic polytheistic faith

Shinto Ryu: a common ken-jutsu ryu, founded by Iishino Chosai, that is practiced by many swordsmen throughout Japan

Shinto Shobu Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Sodatoyogoro Kagetomo

Shirahata: a subset of the Chinzei branch of Jodoshu

Shirakawa: a river on Honshu and Kyushu

Shirane: a Japanese mountain 10,473 ft tall, the second tallest in Japan

shirasu: a criminal hearing and sentencing before a magistrate

shishi: Chinese *Foo* lion; their image is often used as guardian statue of Buddhist temple gates

Shishin Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Kobori Kankaiyu Nyudoshō Kiyohira

shiso: perilla

Shiwasu: the twelfth month

sho: a unit of measurement equal to four inches

sho: a) a unit of volume equal to 1.5 quarts; b) a gong

shochu: a potent, unstrained form of sake

sho-daiko: small drums

shogaku: calligraphy

Shogi: a board game (like chess); it originated in India and was introduced to Japan via China in the Nara Period

shogi-ban: a shogi board; a nine-by-nine grid on a large, heavy piece of wood resembling a butcher's block

shogun: supreme military ruler of Japan

shogunate: office of the shogun

shoiko: straw shoulder bag

Shoin: a style of architecture developed during the Muromachi Period (1333–1573)

shoji: wooden frame or lattice movable walls with translucent paper glued to the lattice or frame.

shojiki: honesty

Shokoku-ji: a subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism

shokubutsu: foodstuffs

shokunin: artisans and craftsmen

Shoren-in: the residence of the head of the Tendai sect, almost invariably a member of the imperial family; located in Miyako (f. 1263); the garden, by Soami, is one of the most famous in Japan; also called Awata Palace

Shoretsu: division of the Hokke (Lotus) Sect of Buddhism

Shosetsu Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Hirayama Kozosen

Shosho Ryu: a shuriken-jutsu ryu, founded by Masugi Saburozaemon Mitsuoki, known for its use of the tanto-gata (sword-shaped) shuriken

Shoso-in: the world's most famous store and treasure house, located on the To-daiji grounds

shottsuru: pickled fish juice

shoya: soy sauce

shozoku: fashion

shu: a week (ten days)

shu: a sect of Buddhism (e.g., Zen-shu)

Shugendo: esoteric sect of Buddhism, founded by En no Gyoja; followers are called shugenja or yamabushi; the headquarters of Shugendo is a Shingon temple—Miyako's Daigo-ji

shugenja: Buddhist priests of the shugendo sect; also called yamabushi

shugyosha: wandering swordsman; wandering student

shujigaku: rhetoric

shu-jutsu: leadership

shuki: sake pot

Shuko: a fifteenth century priest who introduced a form of tea ceremony to Japan

shukuba-joro: cheap prostitutes who cater to male travelers at post stations

shuriken: one to eight-bladed throwing weapon

shuriken-jutsu: throwing weapons skill

so: Buddhist priest; also called soryo

soba: thick buckwheat noodles

sobo: monks' quarters

Sodo-zen: sub-sect of Zen Buddhism, founded by Dogen in 1227

Soga no Iname: builder of the first Buddhist temple at his residence in Nara

sohei: Buddhist warrior priest; also called yamabushi

sojo: head priest of a temple; abbot (Buddhism)

so-jutsu: lance and spear skill

soke: head or grandmaster of a ryu; addressed as *sensei*

sokutai: a heavy, black formal court-robe worn by kuge

Soma: samurai clan in northern Honshu famous for their annual festival of a katchu keiba

Soma Nomaoui: festival in Soma consisting of military exercises

Soma Shiro Yoshimoto: founder of the Mamiya Nen Ryu (1368)

somen: a) thin wheat noodles; b) metal face mask (different character)

sori: snow sled, sledge

soroban: abacus

soryo: Buddhist priest; also called so

Soyasan: a mountain in Japan

sozu: Buddhist temple overseer

sudare: bamboo blinds

Suichini: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

suifu-jutsu: sailing skill; also known as hanzo-jutsu

suigyū: water buffalo

suiji: cooking

suika: watermelon

suikan: kuge garment, which is almost identical in cut to a kariginu, but it is worn inside the hakama, and with the collar open and tied back

suimono: seafood soup

- sukebe:** lecherous
- suki:** a) tea connoisseur; b) spade; digging tool
- Sukiya:** a style of home architecture, incorporating shoin features with a more relaxed lifestyle
- sumai:** Japanese grappling sport linked with many Shinto rites
- sumai no sechie:** ancient sumo bouts performed as (kuge) court entertainment
- sumi-e:** a) painting with ink; b) a painting in the sumi-e style
- Sumiyoshi:** style of shrine architecture, in which the wood is often a bright red showing against white walls
- Sumiyoshi Jinja:** a Shinto shrine in Sumiyoshi
- sumo:** *see sumai*
- Sumoto:** a small town in Awaji
- sumotori:** a sumo wrestler, usually of the bonge caste
- sun:** a unit of measurement equal to about 1.2 inches
- Suo:** one of the provinces in the Sanyodo region of Honshu
- suribachi:** clay mortar with wood pestle
- Suruga:** a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu
- Susano-o no Mikoto:** he is revered by some as kami of the sea, and others as kami of the moon; brother of Amaterasu.
- susumu:** go forward
- sutra:** sacred Buddhist texts, scriptures
- Suwa-ko:** Japan's twelfth largest lake, at 5 square miles, on Honshu
- suzuri:** ink stone
- ta:** a) big; b) paddy
- Taba:** a town in Shima province.
- tabi:** split-toe socks made of cotton or deerskin; worn by all classes
- tachi:** ceremonial longsword
- tadon:** charcoal
- tagasode:** sachet, perfumed
- Tagata Matsuri:** festival of fertility
- Taho Nyorai:** a Buddha (Nyorai), and one of the five Buddhas of Contemplation
- taido:** athletics
- Taiho Code:** a set of laws written in 701, covering civil and penal matters
- Taika Reforms:** a series of social reforms based on Chinese models, which establishes era names in 645.
- taiko:** large two-headed drum
- Taima:** a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
- taimatsu:** torch
- Taira:** a great samurai clan, descended from Imperial lines
- tairo:** councilor, high ranking member of a samurai clan
- Taisha:** style of shrine architecture, in which the wood is left in its natural colors
- taisho:** troop commander or general
- Tajima:** a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu
- taka:** falcon
- Takada:** division of the Ikko (Jodo Shin, or True Pure Land) sect of Buddhism
- Takahama:** a town in Echigo province
- Takamagahara:** the earthly domain of Amaterasu; the Yamato/Izumi region
- Takamimusubi:** one of the original kami, and one of the three creators of the world
- Takanawayama:** a mountain in Japan
- Takaoka:** a) a town in Etchu province; b) a town in Shimosa province
- Takata:** a town in Echigo province
- take:** bamboo
- Takebu:** a town in Echizen province
- Takehaya Susano-o no Mikoto:** Shinto kami of the earth (usually called Susano-o)
- Takemura Ryu:** a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Mori Kasuminosuke Shigekatsu
- takenoko:** bamboo shoots
- takeshi:** brave
- takigi:** a) bonfire; b) a No play performed at night to the light of bonfires
- Takigi No:** festival at Kofuku-ji, Nara involving bonfire and No theater
- tako:** octopus
- tameshi:** testing a katana blade on a criminal or corpse
- Tamon:** another name for Bishamon; one of the Great Heavenly Kings; he protects the north
- Tanabata Matsuri:** star festival; national matsuri
- Tanba:** a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu, and one of the best known production centers of fine ceramic-ware (yaki), known for its dark brown to red-brown color resulting from long firing and a thick ash glaze
- Tanegashima:** a) island off the southeast coast of Japan; firearms were introduced to Japan by the Portuguese here; b) matchlock rifle
- Tango:** a province in the Sanindo region of Honshu
- tanpo-yari:** padded/wooden practice yari
- tanto:** large knife with hand guard
- tanto-gata shuriken:** short, sword- or knife-shaped shuriken; this form of shuriken is used by the Shosho-ryu
- tanto-jutsu:** knives
- tanzaku:** poem paper
- tasuke:** sleeve-tying cord
- tatami:** straw mat; tatami are the same size throughout Japan—six shaku long, three wide, one and a half sun thick.
- Tate-yama:** a Japanese mountain 9,892 ft tall, the seventh tallest in Japan
- tatsu:** dragon
- Taue Matsuri:** rice-planting festivals
- tazuna:** tack and bridle
- tedan:** exploding charge fired from a teppo
- teisatsu:** scouting
- teki:** enemy
- tekugutsu:** puppeteer
- Ten Ryu:** a ken-jutsu, naginata-jutsu, tanto-jutsu, shuriken-jutsu, and kusari-jutsu ryu founded in 1582 by Saito Hangan Denkibo Katsuhide
- tenaoshi:** massage
- tenmongaku:** astronomy
- Tendai:** a sect of Buddhism that teaches the *Lotus Sutra*, founded in 805 by Saicho; there are three branches—Sanmon, Jimon, and Shinjo; the seat is Enryaku-ji in Omi
- Tendo:** a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
- Tengumoriyama:** a mountain on Shikoku
- tengu:** mountain goblin; half-man, half-crow

Tengyo Revolt: a five year conflict (935-940), in which Taira no Masakado raises an army in the provinces and declares himself *the new emperor*; Masakado is killed in the end

Tenjin Matsuri: Osaka festival, Omikoshi parades

ten-ma: work horse

Tenno Heika: reference to the Emperor

Tenryugawa: Japan's fifth longest river, at 155 miles, on Honshu

Tenryu-ji: a subset of the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism

Tenshin Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Tenshin Kogenta

Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto Ryu: a kenjutsu ryu founded in the early fifteenth century by Izaïa Ienao, instructor to the ninth Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimasa; this is one of the oldest ken-jutsu ryu in Japan

Tenshinden Ryu: a ken-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu ryu founded by Katono izu Hirohide

Tensho oban: Japan's largest gold coin, first minted in 1588

tenshu: main dungeon of a castle

tenugui: towel

ten'yaku: herbalism

Tenzan: mountain on Kyushu

teppo: matchlock rifle; arquebus; also called tanegashima

Teradomari: a town in Echigo province

Terudake: mountain on Kyushu

tesaki: hired policeman's assistant; usually hinin

Teshio-gawa: Japan's fourth longest river, at 162 miles

tessen: iron-ribbed folding fan

tessen-jutsu: fan fighting skill

tetsu-bin: kettle

tetsubo: a) heavy metal-studded war club; b) heavy iron staff

tetsu-nabe: cast-iron pot

to: east

to: a) sword; b) a unit of volume; 4 gallons; c) pagoda, located on temple grounds; pagodas enshrine relics (real or symbolic) of a historic Buddha

tobako: tobacco

tobako-ire: tobacco pouch

To-daiji: Kegon sect temple in Nara, site of the Great Buddha statue (f. 752); the priest Ganjin arrives from China in 754; the Shoso-in, a national treasury-house, is built at Todai-ji

tofu: soybean curd

togari-ya: pointed head arrow

toheki: kleptomania

Tokaido: a) major eastern highway, linking the cities of Edo and Osaka; b) one of the largest regions of Japan, comprised of fifteen provinces—Awa, Hitachi, Iga, Ise, Izu, Kai, Kazusa, Mikawa, Musashi, Owari, Sagami, Shima, Shimosa, Suruga, and Totomi

toki: one Japanese hour (120 minutes)

tokkuri: sake flask

tokonoma: a special alcove in a room, containing a seasonally appropriate hanging scroll, flower arrangement, or a sword rack

tokucho: distinctive features

Tokugawa: a) famous samurai clan; b) historical era (1600–1868), also known as the Edo Period

Tokugawa Hidetada: son of Ieyasu, and the second Tokugawa Shogun

Tokugawa Ieyasu: shogun from 1603-1616

Tone-gawa: Japan's second longest river, at 200 miles

tonfa: side-handle baton

tono: form of address for a lord; may be used as polite form of address among equals.

tora: tiger

torii: a gateway to a shrine or other sacred Shinto precincts

torimono: wayfare beast

toro: stone lantern

Tosa: one of the six provinces making up the Nankaido region

tosani: rice with bamboo & fish

Tosando: a region of Honshu comprised of thirteen provinces—Hida, Iwaki, Iwashiro, Kozuke, Mino, Mutsu, Ōmi, Rikuchu, Rikuzen, Shimotsuke, Shinano, Ugo, and Uzen

toshi: one year

Toshikage Juhachikajo: Injunction of the Seventeen Articles; issued by the Asakura clan, as a means of establishing rules of behavior by clan officials

Tosho-daiji: Buddhist temple in Nara (f. 759); the original buildings are still standing

Totomi: a province in the Tokaido region of Honshu

Totsugawa: a river on Honshu

Towada-ko: Japan's tenth largest lake, at 23 square miles

Toya-ko: Japan's eighth largest lake, at 27 square miles

Toyokunnu: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

Toyotomi: a famous samurai clan and family; loyalists of the Eastern Army

Toyotomi Hideyoshi: successor to Oda Nobunaga; he becomes kanpaku in 1585; formerly Hashiba Hideyoshi, he becomes Grand Minister and takes the surname Toyotomi in 1586, and invades Korea in 1592 and again in 1597 (both failed); he dies in 1598

Toyotomi Hideyori: son of Hideyoshi; he is defeated by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1615 and commits seppuku

Tozan-ha: the Shingon branch of the Shugendo sect of Buddhism, based in Daigo-ji in Miyako

tsuba: hilt; often very artistic

tsugari: ancient Japanese sword

tsuiseki: tracking

Tsuitachi: the first day of each month

tsuka ito: silk cord braided over katana handle; hilt-wrapping cord

tsukebito: a new sumotori trainee

tsukedaru: wood pickling tub

tsukemono: pickled vegetables

Tsukimi: National Moon-viewing festival in August

tsuki mi dango: rice-flour dumpling with bean paste filling

Tsukimizuki: the eighth month

Tsukiyomi no Kami: goddess (kami) of the moon; sister of Susano-o and Amaterasu; she dwells in Unabara

Tsukushi: a plain on Kyushu

Tsunukui: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon

tsura: bowstring

tsuri: fishing

Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gu: this popular Shinto shrine is dedicated to the war god Hachiman, the tutelary deity of the Minamoto

tsuru-maki: bowstring holder

tsuru-no-ma: Crane room

Tsushima: an island near Kyushu and a province in the Saikaido region

tuja: hunting spear

uchi-deshi: initiate in a ryu; new or prospective student
uchikake: woman's over-kimono
uchiki: shy
uchimono: missile weapons
uchi-ne: short, dart-like weapon
udon: thick wheat noodles in broth
Ueda: a town in Shinano province
Ueno: a city in Iga province
Ue-sama: form of address for the Emperor
Ugo: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu
uchi-bukuro: money purse; used by men and women
uchige: rice bag
Uichini: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon
uchiwa: flat fan
uki-bukuro: lifebelt
uji: clan
ujigami: patron kami and protectors of a clan
Ukibashi: bridge descending from heaven
ukiyo-e: wood block print (Edo era)
uma: horse
Umashiashikabihiko: one of the original kami in the Shinto pantheon
Umbe: Imperial family with court authority in regards to Shinto; the imperial *abstainers*
umeboshi: dried, pickled plum
Umeji: a subset of the Fuke branch of Zen Buddhism
umezuke: pickled plum, in juice
Unabara: Tsukiyomi no Kami's realm; it is identified as the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) or Korea
unagi: eel
Urabe: Imperial family with court authority in regards to Shinto; the imperial *diviners*
Usa Jinja: a Shinto shrine in the Hachiman style
ushi: ox
ushi-oni: ox-ogre
Ushiroyama: sacred shugendo mountain, in Bitchu
utai: singing
Utsuki: the fourth month of the year, and the first month of Summer
Uzen: a province in the Tosando region of Honshu

wa: harmony
wabi: bittersweet appreciation of a transitory beauty; relating to art
wagasa: umbrella
wagashi: sweet rice-flour pastry
wakizashi: short sword
waraji: straw sandals
wako: pirates, including Japanese, Chinese, and Korean
wasabi: green horseradish paste
washi: paper
Watarigawa: a river in Japan
wayasai: vegetables

ya: a) Arrow; b) shop or business; c) suffix indicating the name of a shop or business
Yabegawa: river on Kyushu
yabusame: horseback archery
yadate: arrow stand
yado: inn
Yagyū Ryu: founded by the Yagyū at the end of the Sengoku period (late sixteenth century); this ryū teaches ken-jutsu, so-jutsu and shuriken-jutsu
Yahazusan: a mountain in Japan
Yakushi-ji: temple in Nara dedicated to Yakushi Nyorai (f. 718); also called the Heavenly Palace, it has been patronized by several emperors
Yakushi Nyorai: one of the Buddhas; goddess of wisdom; she is one of the Give Buddhas of Contemplation
yakuza: professional gambler or underworld figure
yakuzai: medicine
yama: mountain
yamabudo: mountain grapes
yamadera: a shugendo (yambushi) temple; yamadera are located exclusively on sacred mountains
Yamagata: a city in Uzen province, and one of the major centers of the dyeing industry
yamajiro: mountain castle
yamakago: mountain palanquin; open-air
Yamashiro: a province in Honshu, home province of Miyako (the Imperial capital) and one of the main centers of production of textiles; one of the five provinces making up the Kinai region
Yamato: 1) ancient Japan; b) a famous samurai clan

Yamazaki: site of a battle in 1582 in which Hashiba (later Toyotomi) Hideyoshi catches up with Mitsuhide, the traitor who killed Oda Nobunaga, at the Battle of Yamazaki and kills him
yari: lance; spear
yaseuma: backpack; frame pack
yatsubo: quiver; holds twelve arrows
yawara: Buddhist jujutsu hand weapon
Yayoi: a) An era (c. 300BC to 300AD); b) the third month of the year
yo: age, generation
yo-bukuro: plain fan
Yodo: a river on Honshu
yogen: chemistry
Yoita: a town in Echigo province
yojinbo: bodyguard.
Yokohama: a city in Musashi province, near Edo
Yomi: the Land of Shadow; also known as Yomotsu no Kuni
Yomotsukami: Kami of Yomotsu no Kuni (or Yomi), the Shinto underworld; some identify him as Susano-o
Yomotsu no Kuni: the Land of Shadow; also known as Yomi
yomyo: a name (specifically a child's name) conferred six days after birth
Yori-ga-take: a Japanese mountain 10,434 ft tall, the fourth tallest in Japan
yoriki: police captain, overseers and higher-ups; usually two per city or one per town
yosan: silkworm raising
Yoshinogawa: a river on Honshu
yu: transportation
yugake: tanned skin gloves
yukata: summer kimono
Yukawa: a town in Echigo province
Yuko: a subset of the Ji sect of Buddhism
yumi: longbow
yumi-shi: bowyer
yurei: ghost
yuwaku: seduction
Yuzu Nenbutsu: the first of the great Amida-worshipping sects of Buddhism, founded in 1123 by Ryonin; Yuzu began the Nenbutsu mantra; its seat is Sumiyoshi in Settsu

za: a merchant guild or corporation

zanshin: state of heightened awareness; danger sense

Zao-zan: a Japanese mountain

zaru: vegetable washing basket

Za-zen: form of meditation promoted by the Zen sect of Buddhism

zei: persuasion

Zen: Contemplative sect of Buddhism, founded in 1202 by Eisai; there are three divisions of Zen, some with their own branches—Rinzai, Fuke, and Soto; its original seat was in Heiankyo

zeni: small copper coin; the value of a zeni is one mon

Zocho: one of the Great Heavenly Kings; he watches over the south

zokumyo: name reflecting the numerical order of birth; also called tsusho, kemyo, or yobina

Zuigan-ji: zen temple in northern Japan (Matsushima, f. 827), located near a rocky cliff



戦国 SENGOKU

DICELESS

NAME

CASTE & VOCATION

ABILITIES AND FLAIRS

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	PIETY	KI

HEALTH

BASIC	-	-1 EFFORT	-2 EFFORT	-3 EFFORT	— (-4 EFFORT*)
FATIGUE	<input type="checkbox"/> dazed	<input type="checkbox"/> stressed	<input type="checkbox"/> strained	<input type="checkbox"/> exhausted	<input type="checkbox"/> unconscious
INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> bruised	<input type="checkbox"/> sprained	<input type="checkbox"/> wounded	<input type="checkbox"/> maimed	<input type="checkbox"/> incapacitated
DEMENTIA	<input type="checkbox"/> sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> agitated	<input type="checkbox"/> distracted	<input type="checkbox"/> irrational	<input type="checkbox"/> delirious
DISHONOR	<input type="checkbox"/> embarrassed	<input type="checkbox"/> abashed	<input type="checkbox"/> humiliated	<input type="checkbox"/> besmirched	<input type="checkbox"/> disgraced*
VIOLATION	<input type="checkbox"/> degraded	<input type="checkbox"/> defiled	<input type="checkbox"/> sullied	<input type="checkbox"/> debased	<input type="checkbox"/> corrupted
ADVANCED	-	+1 DIFF	+2 DIFF	+3 DIFF	— (+4 DIFF*)
TOXEMIA	<input type="checkbox"/> exposed	<input type="checkbox"/> tainted	<input type="checkbox"/> infected	<input type="checkbox"/> afflicted	<input type="checkbox"/> diseased

GIMMICKS AND THREADS

BACKGROUND, EQUIPMENT, NOTES, ETC.

Active EXPLOITS

diceless roleplaying

ASPECTS

LUCK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DISCIPLINE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KAO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REVELATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CONVICTIONS OR PRINCIPLES

SKILLS OR FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo
ON	OP	OE	oooo	oooo	oooo	oooo



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