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# JAPAN

159

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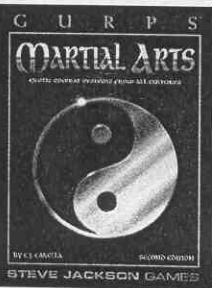
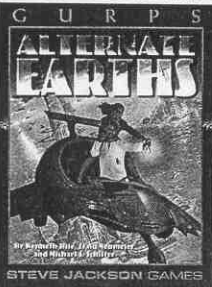
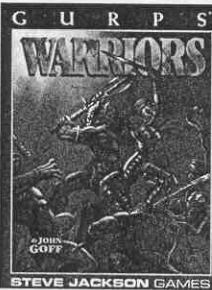
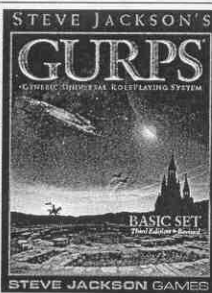


SECOND EDITION

By LEE GOLD and HUNTER JOHNSON

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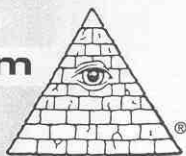
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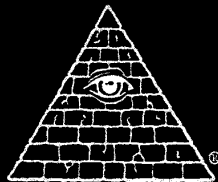


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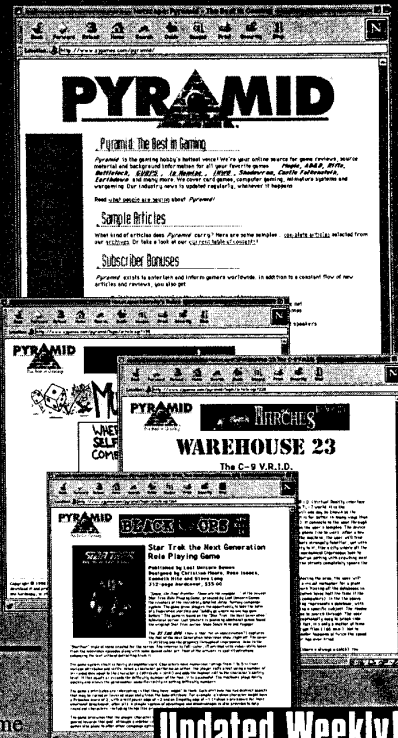
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## About GURPS

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The *GURPS Japan* web page is at [www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/japan](http://www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/japan).

## Page References

See *GURPS Compendium I*, p. 181, for a full list of abbreviations for *GURPS* titles. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition Revised*; e.g., p. B144 refers to page 144 of *Basic Set*. BE refers to *Bestiary*, BT refers to *Blood Types*, CH refers to *China*, CI refers to *Compendium I*, CII refers to *Compendium II*, G refers to *Grimoire*, M refers to *Magic*, MA refers to *Martial Arts, 2nd Ed.*, UN refers to *Undead*, WI refers to *Wizards*, and WWI refers to *Who's Who I*.

# Introduction

In 1192, Minamoto Yoritomo established the Shogunate, which endured until the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and covered nearly 700 years of Japanese history. *GURPS Japan* focuses on two periods within this age. The first is the Warring Provinces Era (*sengokujidai*, 1467-1568) and the subsequent Period of Unification (the *Azuchi-Momoyama* Era, 1568-1600), the setting familiar to many Westerners from Akira Kurosawa's movie *Kagemusha*. This is a time of social upheaval, as powerful factions within the ruling Ashikaga clan battle for the Shogunate. Vast armies sweep across Japan. Peasants are taxed to ruin, but have the opportunity to rise in status as soldiers. (One climbs from peasant foot soldier to virtual dictator of the nation.) The peculiar, ugly people called Europeans visit Japan for the first time, and Japan first learns of the strange religion called Christianity.

The second period is the last half of the Tokugawa era. From the naming of the fifth Tokugawa Shōgun, Tsunayoshi, in 1680, to the Shogunate's end in 1868, this is an age of uneasy stability. The Tokugawa Shogunate tries to close Japan to all changes, whether foreign-inspired or locally invented. The commoners are disarmed, the nobility leashed, and the foreigners strictly controlled. This is the society depicted in Kurosawa's movie *Yōjimbō*. A very thin façade of control covers a reality of riots, petty rebellions, intellectual dissatisfaction, and increasing pressure from the West. This world ends forever when Commodore Perry of the United States Navy sails his black ships into Japanese waters in 1853.

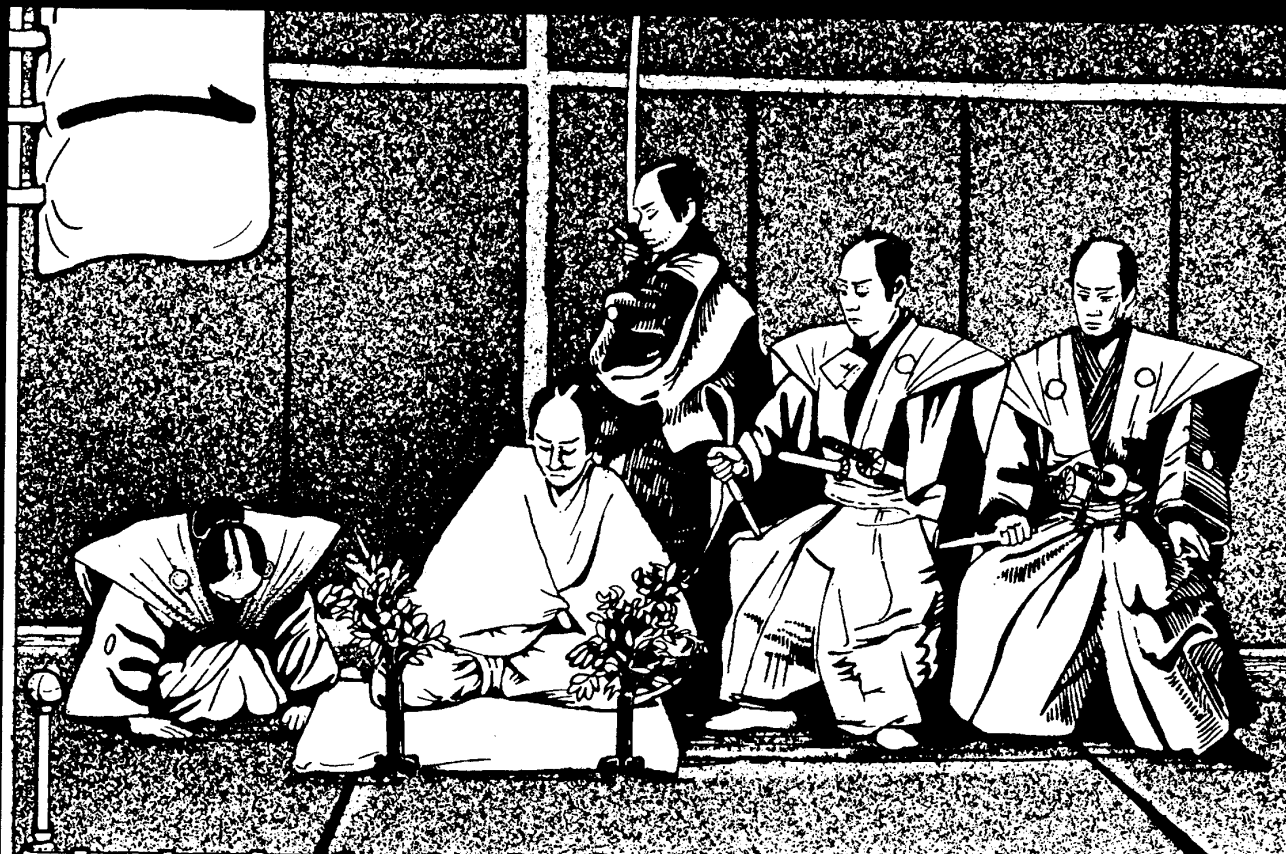


## About the Authors

Lee Gold's previous Japanese game, *Land of the Rising Sun*, is now out of print but has been revised for compatibility with the latest version of *Chivalry & Sorcery* and may be reprinted any year now. Feel free to write Lee Gold with questions or comments, either care of SJ Games or at 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066; be sure to include a SASE. Unless you request otherwise, interesting questions and their answers may be reprinted in her fan magazine, *Alarums and Excursions*, \$2 plus postage (currently \$3.13 in the US, \$3.56 overseas for an issue mailed Book Rate).

Hunter Johnson is a software engineer in Dayton, OH, where he lives with his wife Lori and their son Forrest. Revising and expanding *GURPS Japan* for its second edition is the biggest gaming gig he's had; previous works have consisted of overseeing the *Knightmare Chess 2* playtest and writing *Pyramid* articles and a few paragraphs for sourcebooks here and there. His other interests include Bible studies, World War II history, and whiz-bang movies. He used to watch "genre" television, but nowadays Disney videos monopolize the set – which he doesn't mind at all.





## C H A P T E R O N E

# Feudal Japan



### *Geography*

Japan is an island country with four main islands. It stretches along the coast of Asia for over a thousand miles. The sea has fulfilled its ancient twin roles, road and wall, for all of Japan's history. Japan draws from the rest of the world when it wishes, but (until modern times) is also able to withdraw into itself.

### *The Japanese Islands*

Japan's main island is Honshū. Its concave western side faces Korea, about 300 miles away across the Sea of Japan.

The small island of Shikoku is  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of Honshū and lies under its southwest curve. The Inland Sea, only 35 miles wide, separates Honshū and Shikoku.



## The Japanese Landscape

Japan has many ports, mostly on the mouths of rivers. None of the rivers are deep enough to be navigable. In the time of the Shōgun, few bridges span the rivers. Most have to be crossed at fords.

One hundred and fifty major volcanoes, about a third of which are active, occupy a quarter of the Japanese land zone. There are hundreds of hot springs on mountain peaks, in valleys, and even at the edge of the sea. Only about a sixth of the land is flat or moderately sloping; the rest is mountainous, cut by deep valleys and dotted with lakes. The plains along the coast or at the foot of mountain chains are home to the cities, ports, and all of the farmland except for tiny plots on mountain slopes.

In Shōgunate times, Japan's population is 30-35 million. About two million are warrior class (samurai and nobles), four million artisans, and another million merchants. Most of the rest are farmers.

## Geographic Divisions

In addition to the islands and the provinces (see map on facing page), the larger island of Honshū comprises several "multi-province" areas (suitable for Area Knowledge specializations). *Tōhoku* (the northeastern area) includes Mutsu, Dewa, Iwashiro, and Iwaki. *Kantō* (the central eastern area): Hitachi, Shimotsuke, Kōzuke, Musashi, Sagami, Shimofusa, Kazusa, and Awa. *Chūbu* (the central area): Echigo, Sado Island, Etchū, Kaga, Noto, Echizen, Wakasa, Suruga, Izu, Kai, Shinano, Mikawa, Owari, Mino, and Hida. *Kinki* (the capital area): Ōmi, Yamashiro, Tamba, Tango, Izumi, Kawachi, Yamato, Kii, Ise, Iga, Tajima, Settsu, Harima, and Awaji. *Chūgoku* (the middle area): Bizen, Bitchū, Mimasaka, Bingo, Aki, Nagato, Suō, Inaba, Hōki, Izumo, Iwami, and Ōki Island.

The islands of Ezo, Shikoku, and Kyūshū, as well as Ryūkyū, do not have such intermediary groupings. Ezo and Ryūkyū have only a single province each, sharing the name of the island.

## Tech Level

Shogunate Japan is mostly TL3 – pre-gunpowder medieval. Anyone venturing to the northern wilderness of Ezo will find Ainu still at TL1. In Japan proper, transportation by land and sea is still barely at TL2. The best of Japanese technology is in its metallurgy; its blades are at least equal to the best TL4 work.

Westerners bring many TL4 and 5 items for trade, but the Japanese duplicate few of them. A notable exception is gunpowder weapons, which some daimyō eagerly adopt.

The island of Kyūshū is 1/3 the size of Honshū. It lies southwest of Honshū and Shikokū, southeast of the tip of Korea and north of the Ryūkyū Islands (including Okinawa). Korea is about 100 miles away from Kyūshū across the Korean Strait. Old trade routes lead to Kyūshū ports; Western traders and missionaries follow these same routes.

North of Honshū lies a fourth island, Ezo (now called Hokkaidō). It is about 1/3 the size of Honshū. Russians and Japanese trade with Ezo's primitive *ainu* (the Ainu, the aboriginal inhabitants of the Japanese islands) for timber and dried fish. Japanese have colonized the southern tip of Ezo; it is a frontier province and place of exile. North on Ezo are the last hunting and fishing grounds of the Ainu.

Around Japan are uncounted small islands. They have been places of exile, hermitages, and bandit nests throughout Japanese history.



## Society

In its classic era, Japan absorbed from China the belief in an ordered society with a single head. "There cannot be two suns in the heaven or two rulers on the earth." Japan already had a supreme clan, the Yamato, the descendants of the goddess Amaterasu. The head of this clan was the high priest of Shintō. The Japanese word for government means "Shintō ceremony." This loose theocratic primacy became a claim of Imperial rule.

The Emperor rules through a bureaucracy of appointed officials. He makes all the laws and all the appointments, since Heaven has mandated him to rule. All the land is Imperial property, and the Emperor divides it among his subjects. Justice, defense, and administration are the exclusive business of the Emperor and his representatives.

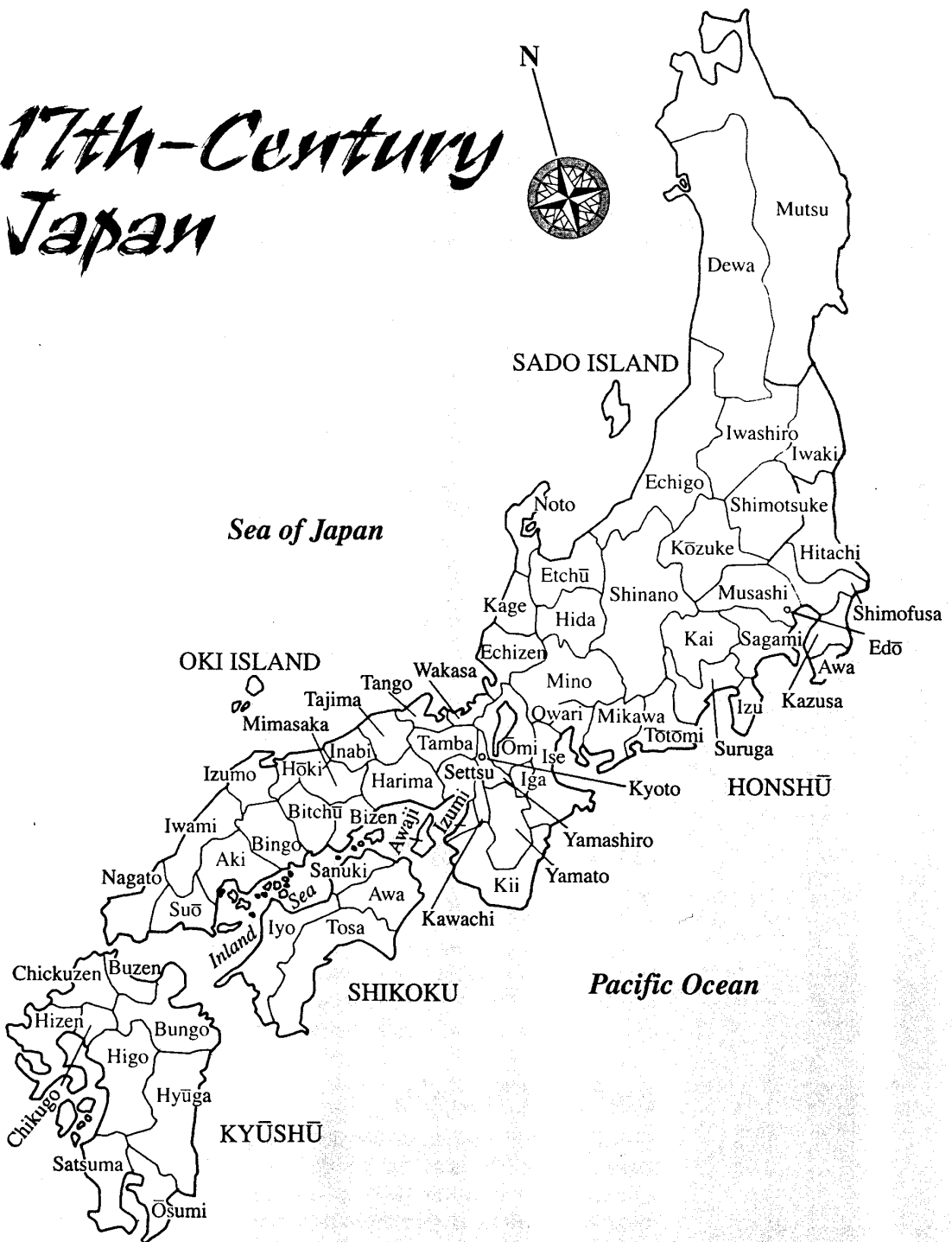
## Clan and Shōgun

Clans vie for political power throughout the country. The true rulers of the country are the *daimyō* (clan lords) with the most power. For most of Japanese history, the Emperor is the puppet of some powerful noble. He is a vital puppet; his official consent is necessary to every law and every major government appointment. Several energetic Emperors have tried to assert a genuine Imperial rule, but power has always returned to the daimyō.





# 17th-Century Japan



## Clan and Families

A clan is a group of related families. Japan has many clans and two "mega-clans," the Minamoto and the Taira. Some sons of the Emperor's lesser wives were not Imperial princes. Instead, to save Imperial expense, they received new family names and a province to govern as hereditary administrator. One Emperor's lesser son received the family name of Taira (or Heike). Another Emperor's lesser son received the family name of Minamoto (or Genji).

Eventually, every clan and family in Japan was in some sort of alliance with either the Minamoto or the Taira. The Minamoto acquired a monopoly on the office of Shōgun, but a Taira was frequently the power behind the scenes. Oda Nobunaga, of a Taira family, was the real ruler of the country in his time, though the Shōgun was of the Ashikaga family, part of the Minamoto clan.

## Chinese Influence

From the sixth through the ninth centuries A.D., Japan's culture was greatly influenced by that of Sui and T'ang Dynasty China. From China, Japan drew its system of ideographic writing. This was soon supplemented by Japanese syllabaries for those unable to learn the thousands of ideographs necessary for full literacy. From China, Japan drew the religion of Buddhism. However, Japan retained its native religion of Shintō so as not to neglect the powerful spirits of the land. From China, Japan drew its philosophy of society, but this, too, Japan adapted to its own ways.

China's T'ang administration was based on a meritocracy of learned scholars who passed examinations in the Classics (history and literature) to qualify for their posts. Japanese government paid lip service to scholarship, but political and social power was based chiefly on family and personal relationships.

When the T'ang Dynasty fell apart, followed by the chaos of the Five Dynasties Period (907-960), Japan broke off diplomatic relations with China. The Imperial Court (dominated by the Fujiwara) turned its attention to politics and aesthetics. The provinces gradually ceased to be administered by Imperial governors and fell to the protection of the rival warrior families of the Taira and Minamoto. For generations, Taira and Minamoto clan lords fought against their relatives and against one another, played off by the scheming Fujiwara.

In the period from 1192 to 1868, the Emperor is the puppet of the Shōgun (great general). The Emperor appoints the Shōgun, who must be from the Minamoto clan (see sidebar). Three families from that clan, the Minamoto, the Ashikaga, and the Tokugawa, founded hereditary dynasties of Shōgun. In each case, the successors themselves become the front for mighty nobles.

During the Warring Provinces Era, even the Shōgun's authority is minimal. The heads of individual clans act with autonomy and resolve their disputes themselves on the battlefield.

## The Imperial Court

The Imperial Court is the ceremonial center of Japan. The court is the center of fashion and art, and Imperial nobles have enormous status, including precedence over the provincial nobility in ceremonial affairs. However, they are frequently poverty-stricken – the Shogunate controls their incomes.

## Lower Government

Supposedly, a bureaucratic administration appointed by the Emperor governs Japan. In fact, the daimyō run Japan through their *samurai* (retainers). The samurai are the warriors; they are also tax collectors, administrators, and advisors. Each daimyō has a *karō* (chief retainer) who is in charge of all a clan's samurai. Sometimes the daimyō is merely a hereditary figurehead, and the clan *karō* is responsible for administering clan territory. The *karō* is like the president of a company whose founder died many generations ago, whose heirs are not interested in the business beyond its reputation and profits.

Every village has a magistrate responsible for everything that happens in his area. He has the incontestable power of life and death. Theoretically, the Emperor appoints local magistrates, but they normally inherit their position and serve as long as they satisfy the daimyō (see p. 6).

Advancement is possible in two ways. A subordinate can gain favor with his lord, but this common way is risky since it is easier to lose favor than to gain it. The second way is to supplant the lord by secret murder or open rebellion. This tends to unite all of the higher class against the subordinate, to discourage that type of behavior.

# Major Political Factions

## The Imperial Court

The major political power of the Imperial Court is sometimes the Emperor himself. Usually, however, it is either the retired Emperor (nominally a Buddhist priest), or the Emperor's father-in-law. The Emperor and court are so busy with ceremonies that they have little time for government.

## Buddhist Temples

Other-worldly ascetics make up a few Buddhist sects. Many other sects are martial orders. The head temples of most of these sects are on Hieizan, a few miles northeast of the Imperial capital of Kyōto. They take a keen interest in politics, sometimes sending their priests swarming into Kyōto to challenge the government. The Shōgun tends to distrust them, since they have an independent income from donations and since many have their own troops. Once Christianity appears, the Shōgun distrusts the new religion even more strongly!



## The Clans

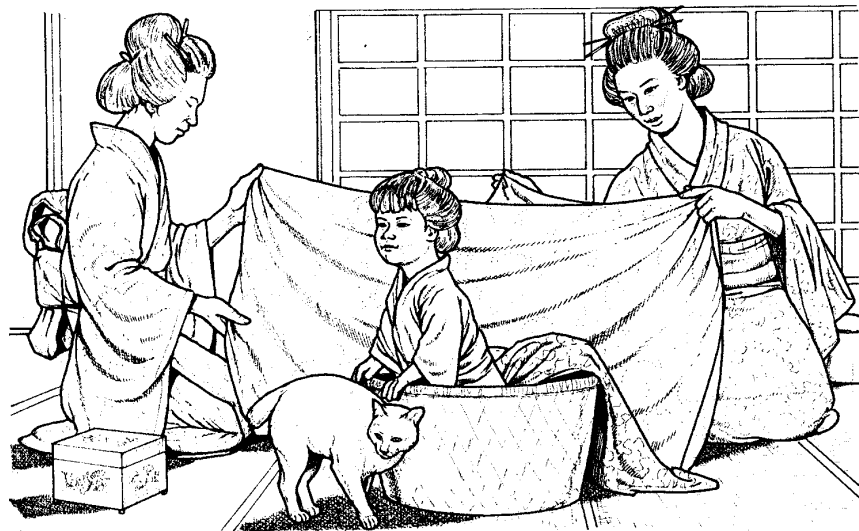
Each major clan governs a province. Lesser clans serve the great clans while intriguing to improve their own positions. Each clan has its own samurai. Some samurai live on their own estates. The daimyō supports others from his estates. Each major clan also has the services of a family of ninja.

The Shōgun prefers that the daimyō be servitors of the central government, dependent on the Shōgun for income and power. The daimyō prefer independence. Each powerful founding Shōgun reduces the power of the daimyō; each weaker successor allows more power to slip back.

## The Merchants

Merchants have a low status, but they have what the daimyō and samurai frequently need: cash. Merchants of the great ports, such as Ōsaka, have political force. Many nobles and samurai get deeply into debt and can then be persuaded to do favors for their merchant friends.

Being a merchant has its risks. One way for the government to get favor from disgruntled nobles is to cancel all debts. The first targets in a peasant riot are usually the merchants, especially rice dealers, sake sellers, and moneylenders.



## Social Classes

The highest social class in Japan is the *bushi*, or warriors. These include the Imperial Court and the daimyō as well as their retainers, the *samurai*. Only these men have the right to carry *katana*, the Japanese long swords. Even a samurai without a daimyō, a *rōnin* (“wave-man”), still ranks as a warrior.

Next come the *heimin* (“base people”), the commoners. The social system holds that the highest of these is the farmer; without him no one can eat. Second is the artisan; he creates things people need. Last, but richest, is the merchant; he merely buys and sells the things that others make. Warriors have the legal right to kill rude *heimin*.

## The Taira and Minamoto Rivalry

Minamoto no Yoshiie (1039-1106) was a precocious youngster who had his *gempuku* ceremony (p. 12) at age seven, at the shrine of Hachiman (the kami of war). He was nicknamed Hachiman Tarō (Hachiman’s heir). He became a great general, and Hachiman became the patron kami of the Minamoto family.

Half a century after Yoshiie’s death was *Hōgen no Ran* (The Hōgen War), 1156-1158. Retired Emperor Sutoku fought his young half-brother, Emperor Go-Shirakawa (newly enthroned by their father, Retired Emperor Toba). The Fujiwara, Taira, and Minamoto clans were divided even among themselves. Yoshiie’s grandson Tameyoshi fought for Sutoku. His son, Minamoto no Yoshitomo, allied with Taira no Kiyomori and fought for Go-Shirakawa. Go-Shirakawa’s forces won out, and Yoshitomo’s father, the Minamoto clan lord, was put to death despite Yoshitomo’s pleas. Yoshitomo then offered his daughter to the Fujiwara clan lord, who rejected her in favor of Taira Kiyomori’s daughter. This drove Yoshitomo to oppose Kiyomori in *Heiji no Ran* (The Heiji War), 1159-1160. He lost and was killed by one of his own vassals.

Taira no Kiyomori now dominated the Imperial Court. He took Yoshitomo’s wife as his mistress, and spared the lives of Yoshitomo’s children. One of these sons, Yoritomo, was exiled to Izu on the east coast. The other three sons were forced to become Buddhist priests. In 1167, Kiyomori became the first Imperial Prime Minister who was not an Imperial noble. Four years later he married off a younger daughter to the 11-year-old Emperor. Her son became the Emperor Antoku.

Meanwhile, Minamoto no Yoritomo, the new head of the Minamoto clan, allied with the Hōjō, a Taira clan based on the Izu peninsula of eastern Honshū. He married the Hōjō clan lord’s daughter, and led the combined Hōjō and Minamoto forces to seize the eastern half of Japan.

When Taira no Kiyomori died, Yoritomo’s younger brother, Minamoto no Yoshitsune, escaped from the Buddhist temple and joined his brother’s forces. He proved to be a great general. He drove the Taira out of Kyōto and gave them their final defeat at *Dan-no-Ura no Tatakai* (the Battle of Dan-no-Ura), in 1185. That naval conflict ended *Gempei no Soran* (the Taira-Minamoto War), and Emperor Antoku and his grandmother, Kiyomori’s widow, drowned themselves rather than surrender to the Minamoto conquerors. Yoshitsune returned to Kyōto. There he made the mistake of accepting Emperor Go-Shirakawa’s thanks and an appointment to an Imperial Court rank without the permission of his elder brother. Yoritomo ordered the death of his younger brother.



## The Kamakura Era (1192-1333)

Minamoto no Yoritomo became Shōgun in 1192, ruling Japan from his capital at Kamakura on the east coast. He was the first ruler of Japan to call himself Shōgun, though the title had been used earlier for army commanders. He died seven years later, after falling off his horse. His wife's clan, the Hōjō, ruled as regents in the name of the Minamoto Shōgun, and for nearly a century Japan was at peace. The 12th-century wars had given the Kamakura Shogunate a large number of samurai to support. They methodically placed samurai loyal to the Shogunate all around Japan. This was expensive, and the Shogunate budget was balanced by decreasing the allowance of the Imperial Court.

After 1200, trade was resumed with China and Korea. In addition, many western clans sent out pirate fleets, which raided the Chinese and Korean coasts.

In 1272, retired Emperor Go-Saga died. His will decreed that the throne should go alternately to descendants of his two sons, the junior and the senior Imperial Lines.

The Buddhist priest Nichiren founded a sect which paid homage to the Lotus Sutra (see p. 22) and attacked the other Buddhist sects as liars, traitors, and demons. He warned of invasion by China's new rulers, the Mongols, unless Japan turned to the Lotus Sutra. The Kamakura government decided to rely on its samurai instead. Nichiren retired into a mountain hermitage.

The Mongols did invade, sweeping across the Korean Straits with a huge fleet in 1274 and again in 1281. Both times the Mongols landed, and both times their fleet was wrecked by unseasonable taifū. Various Buddhist sects claimed credit for the *kamikaze* (divine winds) and sent bands of *yamabushi* to mob the streets of Kyōto and demand Imperial thanks (in the form of payment).

Unlike all the previous wars, these battles with the Mongols left the Kamakura government with many samurai who expected rewards for their valor, but no captured enemy lands to grant them. Many clan lords had gone into debt to merchants, some to send their armies to fight the Mongols, some to keep up a fashionable lifestyle. The next two generations saw increasing dissatisfaction with the Kamakura regime. Imperial nobles plotted against the Shogunate to restore their own power, and they found allies among disaffected clan lords.

Ascetic Buddhist priests, healers, and exorcists rank as samurai. The warrior-priests (*yamabushi*), Shintō priests, diviners, and mediums rank as farmers.

Lowest of all are the *hinin* ("non-persons"), the outcasts. These include the Eta – hereditary outcasts who eat butchered animals and whose jobs involve contact with the dead or injured bodies of humans or animals. Non-persons have their own living areas on the outskirts of a village or town and are governed by their own magistrate. Ninja are also non-persons.

Beggars, gamblers, entertainers, sorcerers, exiled criminals, and survivors of suicide pacts (men who killed their sweethearts but were not brave or skillful enough to kill themselves) are also non-persons. Anyone can become a non-person, but it means giving up all claim to humanity. Killing a non-person is not murder; it is punishable only by a fine.

Japanese belief in shapeshifters (p. 116) reinforces their suspicion of strangers. Japanese women often call a pretty new bride from a different neighborhood "old horse bone," since a *kitsune hengeyōkai* (fox spirit) finds it easier to shapeshift into a woman's form while holding an old horse bone in its mouth. Geisha are sometimes called *kitsune* or *neko* (cats), while male entertainers are sometimes called *tanuki* (raccoon dogs).

## Social Ideals

Japanese are less concerned with abstract questions of morality and legality than with social acceptance. Japanese respect people who show the six cardinal virtues of wisdom, loyalty, sincerity, friendship, charity, and contemplation. Merchants openly value financial success; others (particularly bushi) regard them as miserly and greedy. Honesty is less valued than loyalty. People are expected to lie to protect their relatives and clan. The testimony of relatives is not counted as evidence in a law case.



## Filial Piety

Society expects all people to show piety to their parents (and adoptive parents). It is a duty which can never be completely fulfilled. There is no way for a man to repay those who gave him life. A married woman is expected to show piety to her husband's family.

Students owe this same devotion to their teachers, who treat them as part of their extended family. Often a teacher will adopt the best pupil as an heir. Servants and employees owe it to their masters. The law classifies killing a teacher or employer as patricide, the same as killing a father.

## Feudal Loyalty

Society expects samurai to be loyal to their daimyō. Samurai learn how Minamoto no Yoshitsune's retainers protected their lord from a famous archer by forming a human shield around him. When one of his samurai died, Yoshitsune gave his own horse to a priest to say prayers for him. The others said, "For the sake of a lord like this, who would consider his life more than dust or dew?"



The cherry blossom is honored because it does not wither but falls while still whole. Thus it is emblematic of the samurai, who is willing to throw his life away in youth for his daimyō.

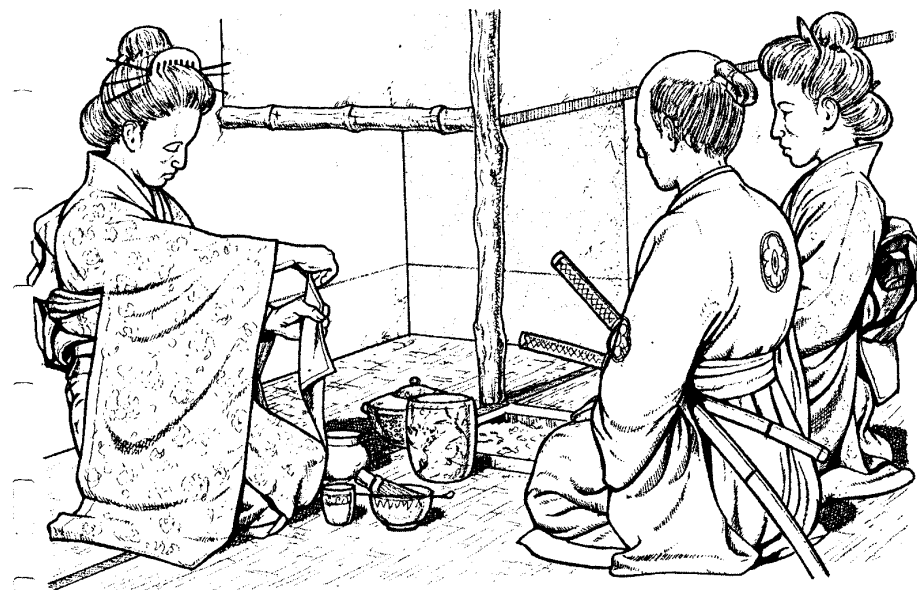
Japan's feudal system subordinates some clans to others. These relationships are based on considerations of fighting strength rather than on bonds of loyalty. It is common for allied clans to turn on one another in battle, or for a subordinate clan to attack its suzerain's castle to enlarge its own territory. In a fight between rival major clans, the lesser clans often divide their forces. The daimyō fights on one side, his son or brother on the other side. Whoever wins, the clan survives. The family leader who backs the winner becomes the clan head.

## Life Stages and Events

### Marriage

Marriage is a legal and financial arrangement, not a romantic one. The parents of the prospective couple arrange the marriage through a middleman, and hold this matchmaker responsible for the marriage. He is responsible not just for the terms of the dowry, but for any problems that might later occur. He may even have to arrange for the divorce! Once the parents have agreed on the marriage terms, the two young people are formally introduced. This takes place not at home, but at the middleman's house, or at a public place such as a shrine or temple. Gifts are exchanged and a lucky day selected (see *Divination*, p. 105).

On the wedding day, the bride wears white, as a sign that she is dying to her own family. A procession bearing her dowry and trousseau follows her to her new home. There she removes her white kimono, revealing a red one as a sign that she is reborn into a new family. The wedding ceremony consists of the couple sharing sake. Afterwards, they file a legal form with the authorities, transferring the girl from one family to another. There is no honeymoon. Sometimes the groom's parents send him off on a pilgrimage to celebrate his new status. While he is gone, his mother trains the new wife in the family's ways.



### Japanese Proverbs

Here are some Japanese sayings characters might quote. They also help illuminate just how different the Japanese point of view can be.

#### Love and Marriage

A man who loves his wife is spoiling his mother's servant.

Even a goblin is beautiful at 18.

Women have no home of their own in any of the states of Existence.

#### Friendship and Trust

Assume that all men are thieves and it will rain tomorrow.

Caress your dog and he'll spoil your clothes.

To receive a favor is to sell one's freedom.

Giving gifts is for the purpose of receiving them.

No journey is long when a friend is by your side.

#### Bravery and Anger

A courageous man never wants weapons.

Hit even the face of a Buddha three times, and he will become angry.

We can endure the pain of others even three years.

If you eat poison, don't forget to lick the dish.

To be patient when all patience seems gone is patience indeed.

#### Fame and Individuality

The nail that sticks out is the one that gets pounded.

Big trees are hated by the wind.

The frog in the well knows nothing of the great ocean.

#### Karma

Karma and shadows follow one everywhere.

Even resting together beneath a tree or drinking from the same river is due to the karma relations of a former life.

The bird crying in the rice-fields may once have been my father; may once have been my mother.

The fortune-teller can't tell his own fortune.

#### The Major Cities

Kyōto people ruin themselves by luxurious dress and Ōsaka people by luxurious eating.

A noon-time nap in Kyōto is as educational as a university in the country.

The Edoite can't keep his money overnight.

Edo people are quick tempered.

Edo people are windbags, like the May carp streamers.

Edo is a rubbish heap for people.

## Japanese Manners

Polite people do not breathe upon people of a higher rank, or upon their possessions. Japanese carry paper in their kimono sleeves, and put it in their mouth when handling something important, to symbolize that they aren't exhaling. Thus a Shintō priest would put paper in his mouth when handling a sacred object. A samurai would put paper in his mouth when reading a letter from his clan lord.

Polite people bow to near equals; they kneel to superiors. Rude people are told, "Your head is too high." The depth and number of bows when people meet or part depends on the relative social rank of the people involved. Women *always* bow deeper than men. (Japanese usually bow slightly to the right, so as to avoid bumping noses.)

Commoners are expected to kneel to the procession of a clan lord or Imperial noble. Those who do not are usually killed by indignant samurai. When Japanese kneel, they go to both knees and touch the forehead to the floor. People also kneel when the *mikoshi* (portable Shintō shrine) is carried through the streets on religious holidays. Anyone who does not might find his building battered down by the *mikoshi*'s carriers. Commoners usually shutter their homes and shops during processions, so that their children won't impulsively look out.

Sometimes these processions block the roads for some minutes. In 1861, the procession of the clan lord of Satsuma province passed the foreign settlement at Yokohama. Four British traders tried to ride through the procession. The Satsuma samurai drew their swords, killing one man and wounding two others. The British responded by having their fleet bombard the town of Kagoshima, where the Satsuma clan's castle lay. Eventually a large indemnity was paid to Britain. The Satsuma clan's indignation at the Shōgun's failure to protect them from the British fleet was one of the factors that precipitated the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

For notes on proper samurai sword etiquette, see p. 86.



A Japanese family must have sons. They not only run the business and pass on the family name; they are necessary to pay proper respect to the ancestral spirits. If a couple has no sons, they may adopt a boy or young man. Usually they marry him to the oldest daughter. Such an adopted son is as little regarded as a bride or stepchild. Girls are also adopted, usually from relatives or business associates who have too many to care for properly.

## Divorce

A marriage's success depends on the desires of the head of the family. Parents-in-law can order a daughter-in-law out of the house, divorcing her in the name of their son, even in the son's absence and even against the son's expressed desire. The children of such a disowned wife are left behind. They are still part of the husband's family. A daimyō can order a samurai to divorce a woman (and then perhaps marry her himself). The legal document for a divorce is named *mikudari-han* for its minimum length, three and a half lines. A woman has no right to divorce her husband. She *might* persuade a Buddhist temple to take her in and let her become a priestess. The only other alternative is giving up social respectability to become a companion to an outlaw, gambler, or other outcast.

## Gempuku

A child legally becomes an adult at age 16. Samurai and nobles formally mark this with the gempuku ceremony. A young man may put on *hakama* (a divided skirt laced over the kimono for a trousers-like appearance) and *haori* (an upper garment that exaggerates the shoulders) for the first time. The top of the head is shaved and the rest of the hair braided into a queue, which is doubled forward over the crown and trimmed off at the forehead. The young man takes a new name to mark the occasion.

## Inkyo

The Japanese reckon youth as lasting till 20, and middle age till 40. Old age begins at 41. It is proper for a man of such advanced years to prepare his soul for the next world by becoming a Buddhist priest. This step is called *inkyō* ("dwelling in retirement").

When an Emperor thus becomes a priest and leaves the throne, he *ascends* to the rank of *inkyō*. Such a former Emperor usually keeps his own court, with his wives and attendants. Similarly a Shōgun or daimyō who becomes *inkyō* still maintains his own court.

Becoming *inkyō* might signal a powerful man's decision to turn over the routine duties and ceremonial rituals of his position to his successor. This could leave him the reality of power without the formal burdens. It might mean that the power behind the throne (official regent or powerful clan official) had decided to switch to a new puppet ruler.

Businessmen and craftsmen also can become *inkyō*. Such an *inkyō* turns over his business to his heir, usually the eldest son. Now he has leisure for poetry or the theater or making pilgrimages to the nation's beauty spots.



# Criminal Justice

## Arrest and Punishment

A samurai magistrate administers the justice system. Under him are many town ward heads or village headmen. The magistrate's assistants are lesser samurai (roughly corresponding to police detectives) and heimin ward guards (roughly police patrolmen). Some ward guards inherit their position, others are former criminals who have been pardoned by the magistrate. There is also a staff of non-persons who serve the police as torturers and executioners.

The key legal principle of Japanese justice is that no one can be convicted without a confession. Therefore, every attempt is made to take a criminal alive. If a suspect is killed by the police or commits suicide, neither he nor his family can be punished.

A commoner criminal is detained in jail or at the local police station. The ward guards try to extract a confession with interrogation, beatings, and torture. If a confession is obtained, the magistrate is notified and a trial date is set.

Samurai who commit capital crimes are not usually formally sentenced. They are allowed to commit seppuku to preserve their honor. Notice of their crimes is sent to their daimyō. Similarly, notice of a priest's crimes is sent to his temple's head priest. Notice of a daimyō's or noble's crimes is sent to the Shōgun or Emperor.

If the suspect dies without confessing, he is legally innocent. His family is awarded compensation equal to a year of his earnings. If the suspect proves himself innocent, he is given an official apology and the compensation of one month's earnings.

At the trial, the suspect and witnesses kneel before the magistrate. Only the magistrate is allowed to question anyone, although others can humbly request the magistrate to ask particular questions. At the end of the trial, the judge pronounces sentence on the guilty, and orders monetary awards to the virtuous.

## Capital Punishment

Capital crimes include patricide, arson, poisoning, forgery, robbery, and adultery. They also include what Westerners might consider lesser offenses. For instance, death is the penalty for sneaking past a provincial border inspection point. It is also the sentence for going out of channels, that is, embarrassing your daimyō by submitting a petition directly to the Shōgun. A death sentence includes not just the criminal but his wife and children as well. It excepts daughters who have married into other families and sons who have renounced their family ties by becoming Buddhist priests.

Treason against the Emperor or Shōgun means not only the death of the criminal and his family. It also means the death of his parents and servants, the banishment of his grandparents, grandchildren, and brothers, and the confiscation of all family property.

The dry, hot summers often see terrible fires rage through Japanese villages and town wards. The flames leap from the paper walls of one house to the next. Burning alive is the punishment for arson.

Other capital crimes are punished by crucifixion. The criminal's hands are lashed to one crosspiece, his feet to another. Then he is run through with spears by non-persons. Afterwards, the criminal's head is exposed for three days as a warning. The body is kept at the jail, for samurai to test their swords or swordsmanship. It is usually returned to his family in very small pieces. Anyone who dies or commits suicide after being sentenced is still crucified.

## Friendship

Friendship is a pragmatic relationship. Friends owe each other favors and must repay them appropriately. Giving a friend too great a present is as much an insult as giving too little. A present too great to repay implies that the recipient is an inferior.

## Love

Romantic love is different from the ties that bind a husband and wife. Love is an overpowering and destructive emotion – felt not for a respectable woman but for a geisha or courtesan. A few such romances end happily: The lover acquires enough wealth to buy the woman's contract from its owner (see below). Most end tragically: The couple commits *shinju* (lovers' double suicide), hoping to meet in happier circumstances in their next lives.

## Geisha and Courtesans

Teahouses have to be in a licensed quarter of the city. To prevent fights over the women, samurai entering the district must leave their swords with the guards. Attractive girls are sold to teahouses, where they are trained to become courtesans and waitresses. The women may not leave the quarter without passes from their contract holder. A bright and talented girl might persuade her employer to let her learn the artistic skills necessary to become a geisha ("art person").

Some of these girls are peasants, sold in times of famine. Others are the children or young wives of poor gamblers who staked them at dice games. Sometimes a samurai woman might sell herself to raise money to preserve the family honor. This is considered a very honorable action, usually taken over the protests of the woman's male relatives.

A commoner child's contract brings the seller \$50, a commoner woman \$80, and a samurai woman \$200. Courtesan contracts expire when the woman reaches 35; geisha contracts are for 25 years.

Contracts are sometimes bought by one of the woman's lovers so they can be married. It is very hard for the woman to save up the money to buy her own contract; the contract holder takes 90% of her earnings to pay for room, board, lessons, and clothes. The rest she mostly spends for her jewelry and perfume.

The contract of a commoner courtesan costs \$200, that of a commoner geisha \$400, and that of a samurai geisha \$500. The contract of a fashionable courtesan or geisha might cost 10 times as much, depending on her reputation. This is about the same as a bride's dowry.



## Traveling

Most people travel on foot; only nobles or samurai on official business are permitted to ride horses on the roads. A faster method of travel is by *kago* (palanquin), carried by relays of runners from post house to post house. Couriers also carry letters from post house to post house.

When a daimyō's procession goes by, commoners kneel by the roadside, their heads in the dirt. Samurai have to pay similar deference to an Imperial noble's procession. In fact, even daimyō rank lower than Imperial nobles, and have to get out of their *kago* and kneel down when an Imperial noble's procession goes by. (Imperial nobles are usually much poorer than a clan lord. A noble may extort money from a clan lord by threatening to take a trip at the same time and place, thus humiliating and slowing the daimyō on his journey.)

Travelers may carry a *wakizashi* (short-sword) while traveling between one town and another. In town, a commoner traveler leaves his sword at his inn, or ties it so it cannot be drawn. All travelers are issued a wooden travel pass in their home village or town ward, and must show it to innkeepers and to officials at the province boundaries.

Armor is worn only by Imperial or clan armies, or by *sanzoku* (bandits).

All major cities are enclosed by walls; gates are locked at night and only opened if the guards are convinced it is a major emergency – to the city, not to the traveler.

It is illegal to travel at night without a lit lantern; a ward guard could legally kill you on the assumption that you are a criminal.

## Illness

Japanese have several options when dealing with illness. They can call in a physician. They might also call an exorcist, to see if the disease is caused by possession. A check of the home's *mamorigami* (see *Repel Spirits*, p. 102), to be sure none have been broken or defaced, may well be in order. A diviner can determine if the person's health would improve by moving to a different location.

A pilgrimage to a famous shrine or temple (or to a set of them) is a frequent attempt at a cure. Often such a pilgrimage involves a lengthy stay at a hot spring. Different springs were held to affect different ailments, such as rheumatism or infertility. If even this failed, the sufferer might become a shaven-headed Buddhist priest, hoping for a divine intervention.

## Lesser Sentences

Lesser crimes bring lesser penalties. The least is public censure by the magistrate. Heimin may be fined 10 days' or a month's pay. They might also receive 50 or 100 lashes on the back (treat as 2d hits per 50 lashes). Bribes to the court or the torturer may reduced damage by ½ or even ¾.

Offenders might also be handcuffed for one to three months. (It is up to the magistrate whether the hands are cuffed in front or behind!) Cuffing is sometimes inflicted on witnesses who seem reluctant to testify against their own self-interest.

Samurai are sometimes punished by house arrest for 50 or 100 days. Visitors may be forbidden, or perhaps only received in the company of an official agent. A samurai might be disowned by his daimyō and forced to become a *rōnin*. Worst of all, a samurai can be deprived of his revenue and his swords and degraded to the status of heimin. Under similar circumstances, a samurai woman's head is shaved and she is sentenced to become a servant.

Priests are usually punished by the magistrate's public censure, or by expulsion from the temple. Such a priest might seek acceptance from some other temple, or perhaps retreat to the wilderness to live as a solitary hermit.

Daimyō and Imperial nobles are usually punished by exile. This may be just exile from their home province. It can be to some distant place, such as the northern wastes. Worst, perhaps, is to some tiny island, far from any of their supporters. A number of Emperors who attempted to seize power from the Shogunate ended as Buddhist priests "retired" to lonely islands.

## Civil Justice

The magistrate also presides over disputes between individuals. These are usually about financial matters. The legal system emphasizes compromise rather than confrontation. A plaintiff has to wait 10 days after filing a complaint before the official investigation begins. During this time, his family and neighbors try to settle the problem informally, since appearing in court is an embarrassment.

If neighborhood pressure fails, a police investigator will look into the matter. He will recommend an informal solution, based on what he has learned. If both parties remain at odds, he will make a formal report to the magistrate. The magistrate will make a final ruling on the matter. The families involved usually give gifts to the police and magistrate to compensate them for their trouble. This may influence the decision.





## Killing

The instinctive reaction of an embarrassed Japanese is to kill – to kill the person who has shamed him or to kill himself. Anything that shows a Japanese as less than perfect involves some loss of face and could provoke violence. This is true for all social classes, not just the samurai.

However, a samurai has the legal right to kill a heimin who behaves rudely. Rude behavior includes touching the samurai's sword and speaking without what the samurai considers proper deference. Similarly, a heimin can kill a non-person. The only penalty is a fee to the non-person who has to take the body away to a graveyard.

The law accepts that samurai have hot tempers that can only be cooled with blood. Samurai are asked to leave their swords behind on entering a theater or the geisha quarter. The usual punishment for unauthorized killing is merely a year as a rōnin. The saying is that a samurai is not a real man unless he has been a rōnin at least three times.

Duels and blood feuds are another matter. Confucianism (*Jukyō* in Japanese) teaches that a man cannot live content under the same sky as the killer of his father. For a Japanese, that also includes his teacher, employer, and daimyō. Even so, a samurai has to file a formal declaration of feud with his daimyō before challenging another samurai to a duel. A samurai outside clan territory has to receive permission from the local daimyō or the magistrate in a city.

A samurai who cold-bloodedly draws his sword without permission against another samurai, particularly in the castle of his own daimyō, is guilty of a capital crime. A daimyō who does so in the palace of the Shōgun usually must commit seppuku. His clan is abolished, and its lands are handed over to another clan. A noble or daimyō who draws his sword in the palace of the Emperor is guilty of treason and punished accordingly (see *Capital Punishment*, p. 13).

## Death

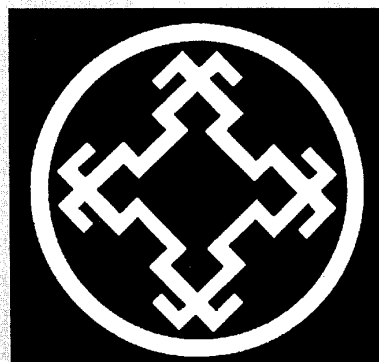
Cowardice is despised, particularly by samurai. Man or woman, adult or child, a Japanese is expected to be brave enough to face death. Westerners have been unable to understand the philosophy behind this attitude. Basil Hall Chamberlain wrote, in 1904, "The Japanese have less highly strung nerves than we Europeans. Hence they endure pain more calmly, and meet death with comparative indifference."

Suicide is common and considered an honorable, even noble act. Of course, Japanese are afraid of being killed, robbed, or haunted, but they are too embarrassed to admit it. They usually react to a frightening situation with pretended amusement. They laugh loudly and make a show of courage (often followed by a hasty retreat).

## Honorable Suicide

In Japan, suicide is an honorable way to apologize for failure. It is considered neither shameful nor frightening; when the offender goes to his ancestors, his willingness to end his own life is held to atone in full for whatever crime or embarrassment he may have committed. Suicide is the accepted solution to an unendurable problem. People commit suicide not just when deeply embarrassed or depressed but also to follow a clan lord who has just died or to protest the actions of a superior who has refused to listen to other warnings.

Samurai men kill themselves by *seppuku*. Samurai women cut their throats. Commoners usually hang themselves, or fill their kimono sleeves with stones and jump into a river.



## Apprentices

An artisan or merchant regards his young employees as apprentices who are his Dependents. They live in his shop or home; he supplies their meals, clothing, and other necessities, plus a few silvers a month spending money (this is essentially a tip). Apprentices are never beaten or harshly criticized for mistakes; if they can't learn from experience they may be assigned a new job, more suited to their abilities.

Some apprentices never leave the shop, night or day, for months at a time. They sleep on the same mats where they sit while the business is open. Other apprentices go off at night in small groups, all from the same shop or from the same street of small shops, to see the delights of the city.

A few apprentices are entrapped by expensive pleasures, such as gambling or courtesans, and steal money from their employers. Most of these come to their senses the next morning, and return to confess their sins. A contrite youth's first or second escapade is usually pardoned, after a long lecture on honor and duty. Repeated offenses are punished by dismissal (disownment). A dismissed employee is virtually unemployable.

After a 10-year apprenticeship, the employee is recognized as an independent workman. He might stay on at his master's as a salaried worker, or his master might help him set up his own shop. This means not only giving him enough money for a shop and raw materials, but also giving him a share of his master's customers as a foundation for his own business.

It is a common saying that the relation of romance lasts only one lifetime, the relation of parent and child lasts two lifetimes, but the relation of master and worker lasts three lifetimes. A former employee is expected to have a Sense of Duty to the master who taught him his trade. A merchant or artisan who is having financial or other difficulties will appeal for help to his former apprentices, just as a father would look to his sons for help in time of crisis.



## Diseases

Beriberi (p. CII167) is caused by Vitamin B deficiency, but the Shogunate Japanese believe it is contagious. It usually afflicts men rather than women and townfolk rather than peasants. Smallpox (p. CII172) is untreatable in Japan until the introduction of inoculation from the West in the 19th century. Leprosy (p. CII169) has no social stigma to Japanese. It is about as rare in Shogunate Japan as it is in 20th-century America, but it does figure into both myth and history.

## Spirits of the Dead

The spirits of the dead are free to reincarnate 49 days after death, if the funeral services have been performed. Those who have not received a funeral, or who are bound to the living by ties of duty or passion, can not reincarnate. They remain in *Meido*, the dark underworld, remembering all those they have loved or hated.

Some spirits reincarnate as newborn humans or animals. They cannot remember their past lives, but they are still bound by the karmic ties woven in them. Some go up to one of the many heavens; some go down to one of the many hells (to be tortured or to be torturers). Some go to the world of fighting spirits, to kill and be killed in centuries of combat. Some become *gaki*, the hungry dead (see p. 62), wandering the earth in an agony of pain that can only be eased by one special food. Others who still have obligations may return as *shiryō* (see p. 120).

Fighting a spirit is not like normal combat. A spirit's "body" is not flesh and blood; it is a phantasm woven of magic. A successful attack always hits, but its only effect is to disperse the spirit for 1d hours. Spirits can be affected by social skills such as Fast-Talk and Savoir-Faire at a -4 penalty, Exorcism at no penalty, or by magic spells such as Summon Ghost, Turn Spirit, and Repel Spirits.

## The Prison

Prisons are guarded by samurai and mostly hold prisoners awaiting sentencing or execution. The Shogunate does not punish people by housing and feeding them! The usual prison is a walled compound. It has a well, a guard house, a building for interrogation, and a building to house the prisoners. It may be urgent to rescue a comrade from jail. Remember that all criminal investigation includes torture. Beating and pressing under heavy weights are the most common tortures, but the torturer's ingenuity is the only limitation; nothing is forbidden. On the other hand, if the victim dies without confessing, the magistrate will apologize . . . and this is serious. It means a huge loss of face for the magistrate!

Samurai and nobles often write a poem before committing suicide or on the eve of a battle. People signal friends and lovers that they have resigned themselves to death by pouring farewell drinks not of *sake* (rice wine) but of water.

## Contemplating Suicide

When a campaign event embarrasses a character (e.g., a loss of status, a failure in battle, or a snub by a clan lord or a romantic interest), that character should contemplate suicide. The character will drop out of action (even if there's a war on) for a day or two to meditate on nature.

Then make a Will roll at +2 (or less, for extremely shameful circumstances). On a successful roll, the Japanese PC believes that his Sense of Duty to clan, family, and so on requires that he remain alive.

On a failed roll, the PC earnestly desires to join his ancestors. At this point, the *player* must choose. It is perfectly authentic roleplaying, and a fitting end, for a Japanese character (especially a noble one) to commit suicide. On the other hand, a player who does not want to roleplay a suicide need not do so. An acceptable alternative is a *pilgrimage*. The character retires from the campaign and sets out on a journey to the shrines of Japan. He may re-enter the campaign after 2d months. If other PCs wish to join the pilgrimage, this may become the new focus of the campaign.



## Seppuku

The traditional form of suicide for samurai is *seppuku* ("stomach cutting"). The most common type of seppuku is a form of ceremonial execution. It allows a samurai or clan lord the honor of taking his own life instead of the disgrace of being crucified. It also spares his family from legal punishment; his wife usually becomes a Buddhist priestess to pray for his soul.

Prior to the act, a seppuku victim often spends some days under house arrest, usually in the home of a trustworthy clan lord. In this time he may write farewell letters or poems. The seppuku ceremony is usually performed inside the lord's mansion. A leather carpet will be spread over the spotless tatami. If it is outside in the garden, an area will be curtained off in white. The victim kneels on a tatami mat to protect the soil from blood. If a samurai is ordered to commit seppuku immediately, the ceremony is usually performed at a Buddhist temple. A seppuku ceremony always has official witnesses sent by the government; the victim's friends and family are not officially allowed to be present.

The man about to die dresses in white, the color of death. He is presented with a wakizashi on a small table. He leans over and picks it up and then stabs himself in the stomach. As he does so, his head is cut off by his *kaishakunin* (second), usually a trusted acquaintance. If there is any likelihood that he might



try to attack the official witnesses or disgrace his standing as a samurai by crying out in pain, he is given a wooden wakizashi and his head is cut off as he reaches forward to touch the weapon.

*Harakiri* is another Japanese word for ritual disembowelment. It reverses the order of the same characters in *seppuku* (and uses different pronunciations of those characters, obviously).

Should a character in the campaign wish to commit *seppuku*, the GM may require a Will or DX roll (whichever is more favorable) to determine whether the ceremony is completed properly. On a failure, the departed noble is not spoken well of by those who witnessed the deed. On a critical failure, he botches the job and remains alive. If it is an execution, the official executioner will finish the job. Otherwise, he remains alive, permanently shamed and reduced to the rank of non-person.

## Religion

The two prominent religions of Japan are Buddhism (*Bukkyō* in Japanese), introduced from China, and Shintō, indigenous to the islands. During the periods covered here, the introduction of Christianity also plays a major role.

Tokugawa Ieyasu, the great 17th-century Shōgun, writes in a message to the King of Spain that the Spanish religion does not have a karmic affinity with Japan. Japan, he writes, is a “divine country” and has always “reverenced the gods and respected the Buddhas” which are “in reality one and the same, being but original form and extraneous manifestation.” Early Buddhist missionaries devised the theory that the Shintō *kami* (see below) are avatars of various *hotoke* (Buddhas), fusing the two religions. The Japanese see no conflict when their Emperor, revered as a *kami*, retires and becomes a *bussō* (Buddhist priest), for instance.

Most Japanese believe in both Buddhism and Shintoism. A common Japanese oath is “By all the *kami* and *hotoke*.” Couples marry and name their children by Shintō rites, bury and mourn their dead by Buddhist rites. People pray for continued health to the *kami*, but turn to the *hotoke* for healing or exorcism in time of sickness. Unhappy lovers pray to the Buddhist deity Kannon the Merciful and to Benten, the Kami of Love. Land travelers pray to the *kami* Dōsojin and to the Buddha Jizō to protect them on their journey. But the same Shintō *kami* reign supreme over the forces of nature: the weather, the ocean, and the crops.

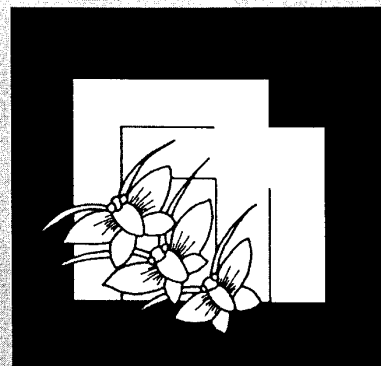
## Setting the Campaign's Religious Level

The GM should decide whether any or all of the *kami* and *hotoke* exist and how active a role they take in human affairs. One major factor to consider is the ability to roleplay them properly. A *kami* should be at least as awe-inspiring as a saint. A *hotoke* should be enlightened – free from all trace of ignorance, greed, or passion.

Some possibilities for the campaign's religious level:

**Inactive Deities:** The campaign world may have no evidence of the existence of *kami* or *hotoke*. There will be no response to religious rituals and prayers, no matter how pious the priests and worshippers. A *reibai's* (medium's) claim to contact the dead is just a deception.

**Unobtrusive Deities:** The campaign world may have *kami* and *hotoke* who sometimes interfere in human affairs. It's impossible to be sure, since there's always a natural explanation for seeming *kamiwaza* (miracles).



## Mitigating Circumstances

Although medieval Japanese justice was harsh, it was not heartless. Even severe crimes might be excused under certain circumstances.

### Youth

O-Shichi was the daughter of a small shopkeeper. When she was 15, a city fire burned down her home and she took refuge in a nearby temple. There she met a handsome young man – but she forgot to tell him the name of her father's shop.

After returning home, O-Shichi looked for her beloved but never saw him pass her father's shop. So one night she set fire to her home, then led her parents back to the temple. But the young man didn't come back there either.

“If I had known he would jilt me like this,” she told her mother, “I wouldn't have set fire to our home.”

An eavesdropper denounced her to the police, who asked her how old she was. Was she still a minor and too young to be responsible for her actions? “No,” she lied to him, “I am an adult of 16.” O-Shichi was burned alive for her love, and the street singers were still singing ballads of her a century later.

A young boy who set fire to his family home out of carelessness was sentenced to be burned alive and led to the execution grounds. There he received treatment with burning moxa (see *Yin-Yang Healing*, p. CII45).

### Other Circumstances

In addition to youth, magistrates also took other mitigating circumstances into account. A criminal might excuse his actions because he was insane, possessed, or drunk. Such pleas were, of course, particularly convincing if accompanied by appropriate presents to the judge and police. This calls for a *Savoir-Faire* roll. A success means the criminal still receives some lesser punishment. A Critical Success will mean no punishment whatsoever; but the criminal owes a debt of gratitude to the man who saved his life.



## Legendary Japan's Religious Level

Most Japanese writings, even the ones presented as factual history, depict a world in which the kami and hotoke occasionally intervene on behalf of the devout, often without a clear natural explanation. Of course, all these tales can be explained away by magic spells. For instance, there's the common superstition that one attacking a pious Buddhist at his prayers might be intercepted by the statue. However, whether due to magic or divine intervention, these inexplicable events usually happen only to the pious or the good-hearted.

But being pious or good-hearted is no guarantee against being deceived. There's one folktale about a pious bussō who took in a visiting samurai one cold rainy autumn night and told him of how his life-long austerities had recently been rewarded by being allowed to see the Buddha riding a white elephant atop a nearby hill at moonrise. That night the samurai kept vigil along with him – and he also saw the Buddha appear at moonrise. So he drew his daikyū and shot an arrow. There was a scream and the Buddha disappeared. The priest was shocked; the samurai explained that he himself was not particularly pious. Any vision he could see must be merely an illusion. The next day they investigated the hilltop and found a large tanuki with an arrow through it.

Perhaps it was this tale that inspired an old Japanese saying: "If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him! If you meet a kami on the road, kill him! Only in that way can you learn their innermost nature."

## Kami Messengers

Kami often use animals to carry gifts or warnings to people. These animals are usually marked as special by their white fur. They are like *hengeyōkai* (p. 116), but with less mischievous personalities. A kami messenger may use magic to travel unseen through both wilderness and city but becomes visible if caught in a trap or otherwise injured. Traditional messengers include Inari's fox, Hachiman's dove, Kōmpira's turtle, Ebisu's tai-fish, Daikoku's rat, Benten's serpent, Bishamon's centipede, Fukorokuju's crane and Jurōjin's stag. Wilderness *nushi* often use *tengu* (p. 121) as messengers.

For a kami messenger, a shrine to his patron kami serves as a very high mana area. Other shrines are high mana areas.

*Active Deities:* The campaign world has very obvious kami and hotoke who can work powerful *kamiwaza*. Sometimes they may even choose to do so for the characters (PCs or NPCs) in the campaign, based on such factors as piety and good roleplaying. The GM should use judgment on how to game the great kami, hotoke, and *bosatsu* (bodhisattvas); if built on character points, they should be built with at least 1,000 points.

*GURPS Religion* can also be used to add more detail.

Whichever sort of campaign the GM chooses, the players should remember that the characters' world is one where most people believe just as sincerely in the existence of the kami and hotoke as modern Westerners believe in the existence of electrons and genes.

## Shintō

Shintō means "The Way of the Kami." The kami are not precisely gods, although that is the usual translation. They are anything powerful or awe-inspiring, including mountains, Emperors, storms, ancestors, animals, ghosts, echoes, and heroes. They must be thanked for the favors they have done when in a good mood and coaxed out of their wrath when in a bad mood.

The Shintō priest is called the *kannushi* ("kami master"). Shintō has no scriptures, only rituals of music, song, and dance for pleasing the kami. It has no code of moral behavior, only a code of traditional practices.

There are many minor Shintō kami. A village prays to its common ancestors as kami; students of an art pray to the founder of their school as a kami. Such kami are much like ghosts, but can appear by both day and night, with magic skills unaffected by an area's mana level.

The major kami form a pantheon similar to those of the ancient Greeks or Romans. There are also kami *nushi* (masters) for every wilderness location. These *nushi* are powerful versions (+5 to stats, as a rule of thumb) of local creatures, such as a *tengu* in a forest or an *orochi* in a lake.

Finally there are the great kami who are worshipped throughout Japan: the kami of the crops, trades, and forces of nature. People also pray to the Emperor, who is the descendant of the great kami and who intercedes with them at times of national crisis. It is against Shintō tradition to depict the great kami in pictures or sculptures. Each shrine has a symbol of its patron kami (usually a sword for a male and a mirror for a female), which is kept in a sacred, locked room, entered only by the *kannushi*.

## Shintō Mythology

Japan's greatest kami is Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, who long ago nearly doomed the world by running away to hide in a cave, angered by an insult from her mischievous brother. The other kami banished her brother from the heavens and then set about trying to lure Amaterasu to come back to them again.

One made her a mirror, another made a jewel, and a third fetched a sasaki tree and hung the gifts on it. Two of the male kami held a wrestling contest. One of the female kami danced and sang. Another wove strips of hemp into a rope. Finally Amaterasu emerged from the cave and the kami stretched the rope across its mouth so she could never return inside.

Amaterasu's brother went to Japan, where he slew many monsters and married an Izumo kami. Later, Amaterasu sent her human child, Jimmu, to Japan. He took three gifts: a sword, a mirror, and a jewel. He found that his mother's brother had been slain by a monster but had left an heir, *Ōkuninushi* ("nation master").

The two reached a compromise; Jimmu became Emperor over the visible world of humans, while *Ōkuninushi* remained master of the invisible world of



ghosts and goblins. Amaterasu's three gifts became the Sacred Regalia of the Emperor. They were originally kept at the great Shrine of Ise, whose high priestess was always an Imperial Princess. Later the sword and the jewel were moved to a Buddhist temple.

### The Shintō Shrine

Almost every village will have a shrine marked by three *torii* (gateways), which are supposed to purify the worshipper's soul. They also serve to warn off any person defiled by blood, illness, or mourning. The entry of such a person defiles the shrine and angers the kami.

Outside the shrine is a stone vat of water. Worshipers wash their hands and rinse their mouths before praying. It is customary for a traveler to purify himself at the Shinto shrine before re-entering the village or ward. It is also customary to purify oneself at the shrine before visiting the mountain wilderness, to avoid offending the spirits who live there.

The shrine is built of undressed timbers, topped by a thatched roof. There may be statues of guardian animals or heroes at its entrance, but inside there is only a naked altar. Worshipers stand in front of it and clasp their hands in prayer, then toss an offering into a nearby wooden box. Behind it a door leads to a locked room where the symbol of the kami is kept. The *kannushi* visits this room once or twice a year. There is usually a garden near the shrine; there is always at least one *sasaki* tree.

Many shrines house not only *kannushi*, but a *bussō* who worshipped the kami as a *gongen* (manifestation of a Buddha or Bosatsu). The only shrines that remained pure of all Buddhist influence were the Ise shrine to Amaterasu and the Izumo shrine to Okuninushi.

### Ancestral Kami

Each family pays honor to its long-dead ancestors as kami. Ancestral kami might show their power if a descendant threatens the family welfare; for instance, if the heir refuses to marry or wants to marry someone from an enemy clan. Ancestor spirits have the same powers as *shiryō* (p. 120) and often afflict disobedient descendants with bad dreams (see *Nightmares*, p. C192) or a wasting illness. These can only be cured by exorcism and propitiation of the offended ancestral kami.

### Living Kami

Some awe-inspiring people become kami while still alive. The Emperor is considered a kami during his reign (but not after he retires and becomes a Buddhist priest). There's a story that an Emperor stubbed his toe on a boulder while walking in a garden; the stone immediately rolled away in embarrassment.

Then there's the story of a wealthy old farmer with fields on a high mountain plateau who one day notices the villagers below are all playing on the beach as the ocean draws steadily farther and farther away. He sets his rice field afire. The villagers run up and help him put out the fire. Everybody is safely off the beach when the tsunami comes crashing into the village. The villagers rebuild their village and then build a shrine to the man who saved their lives.

### Holy Creatures

Some creatures are sent by the kami as a sign that the times are propitious, due to the wisdom and piety of the Emperor or local clan lord.

The *kirin* (p. 118) is a staglike animal from Chinese legend that ancient Japanese chronicles claim was seen at the start of the reigns of certain Emperors.

The *shōjō* looks like a plump 10-year-old with long crimson hair (from which a wonderful red dye can be extracted). He is very fond of sake and will drink an entire barrel of it before returning to his home under the water.



## Mikoshi Procession

A *mikoshi* is a portable Shintō shrine, a miniature bamboo model of the actual shrine, covered with gold foil. It is set on a massive, ornate wooden platform that is carried on the shoulders of the young men of a village or town ward as part of the celebration of a major shrine festival. The young men chant loudly in honor of the kami they carry as the mikoshi bounces up and down.

The mikoshi takes its own path through the neighborhood to bless the homes and businesses of the faithful. Householders are expected to set out offerings (which are collected by the men taking a brief rest from carrying the heavy weight). Sometimes the mikoshi "accidentally" bumps into and damages the home or business of someone who has not paid the proper respect to the kami. In an extreme case, if a householder's action has greatly offended the kami (and the neighborhood) but has not resulted in arrest because it is not technically illegal, the mikoshi may knock down the corner supports and collapse the house.

## Major Kami

*Amaterasu*, kami of the sun, is the greatest and most beautiful of the kami. People pray to her for good weather and for the stability of the nation. Every Japanese should make a pilgrimage to Amaterasu's shrine at Ise at least once during his lifetime, either personally or by proxy. Each village and town ward has an Ise fund which holds a lottery when it has accumulated enough money to send someone on an Ise pilgrimage. Sometimes a wealthy commoner will send his son on an Ise pilgrimage as a wedding present. The Ise shrine is torn down every 20 years and rebuilt with new timbers. The wood from the old shrine is cut into tiny pieces that are sold to pilgrims as lucky souvenirs. The GM may wish to treat these as *mamori* (p. 99).

*Ōkuninushi*, ruler of *Meido*, the invisible world of spirits, offers good harvests and protection from *shiryō* (see p. 120) to his supplicants. He is also Amaterasu's nephew. All the kami of Japan gather in his shrine during the tenth month to pay homage to him and arrange the next year's marriages.

People pray to *Inari*, kami of grains and patron of foxes, for worldly success (measured in rice). Images of her foxes often depict them holding jewels or strongbox keys in their mouths.

*Hachiman*, kami of war, is the deified Emperor Ōjin (c. 400 A.D.), son of Empress Jingo. Jingo conquered *Chōsen* (Korea) while pregnant with him and ruled Japan for the rest of her long life as his regent. Her success was attributed to her son. He is the protector of Japan from barbarians. The Shōgun consider him their patron kami.



*Suitengu*, kami of the sea, had his first temple built by the Empress Jingo to honor him for helping her fleet reach Chōsen. Every port has a shrine to him where sailors and merchants pray for calm seas.

*Kompira*, kami of seafarers, is the nuchi of a high mountain. Sailors and other seafarers pray to him at sea to keep their ships as steady as his mountain peak.

*Tenjin* is the kami of literature and calligraphy. Sugawara Michizane (845-903 A.D.) was a noteworthy poet and a powerful political figure. He angered the Fujiwara family by trying to diminish their power and re-establish Imperial authority. Eventually the Fujiwara charged him with treason and had him exiled from the Imperial Court. After his death in exile, his Fujiwara enemies began to die, one by one. He was posthumously welcomed back to the Imperial Court and promoted in rank; all the documents relating to his trial were burned. After a series of earthquakes and other natural disasters, the Emperor decreed that he be enshrined as a kami. There are shrines to him throughout the nation, usually surrounded by groves of plum trees in memory of one of his poems.

Every town ward has a shrine to *Atago*, kami of fire, where people pray for protection from the frequent city fires.

*Dōsojin* is the kami of roads. Travelers pray to him for protection from danger, especially from bandits and wild animals.

Farmers pray to *Raijin*, kami of thunder, for rain and protection from lightning. He is also known as *Raiden* (thunder and lightning) and *Ikazuchi* (another pronunciation of the ideograph *rai*).

The *Shichi Fukujin* (Seven Kami of Good Luck) sail on a treasure ship that people pray will come their way. Pictures of them sailing in their ship are a popular New Year's present. There are symbols of them on most families' kami shelf. They are *Daikoku*, kami of wealth and patron of merchants, who carries bags of rice and a mallet that gives wealth by multiplying the rice it pounds; *Ebisu*, kami of honest work and patron of artisans, who carries a fishing pole and holds a huge *tai* (red snapper) under one arm; *Benten*, kami of romantic love and patron of geisha and courtesans, who carries a key that unlocks the hearts of lovers; *Bishamon*, kami of strength and patron of fighters, who holds a spear in one hand and a small pagoda in the other; *Fukurokuju*, kami of wisdom, and *Jurōjin*, kami of longevity, who both are drawn as old men, usually accompanied by *tsuru* (crane), a symbol of long life; and *Hotei*, kami of contentment, who is usually drawn as a fat, merry old man.

## Buddhism

Buddhism began in India as the teachings of the historical figure Gautama, who died in 480 B.C. During the following centuries, the philosophy he preached became a religion and spread to China and Korea. It was introduced to Japan in the sixth century A.D. Buddhism views the life of each living being as entangled in the five passions of anger, joy, hatred, desire, and grief. Its aim is to free the spirit from the three great sins of ignorance, greed, and passion, bringing enlightenment and entry into Nirvana, a state of freedom from passion and the illusions of the material world.

An unenlightened spirit is doomed to one reincarnation after another, never able to escape the life-death cycle. Each new form is determined by accumulated merit of the previous lifetimes. Each life is conditioned by the accumulated karma. Karmic ties (see p. C139) last for generations. Often lovers and samurai swear loyalty for more than one lifetime, and it is common for an angry superior to disown a disloyal person for more than one lifetime.

## Baku

The *baku* is a legendary animal that appears in many different shapes and has power over the realm of dreams. One scholar describes it as having the body of a horse, the face of a lion, the trunk and tusks of an elephant, the tail of a cow, and the feet of a tiger. Some artists draw it like a goat with three eyes on each flank. Others depict it as a horned elephant.

Pictures of the *baku* are hung in Japanese homes and its name is written on wooden pillows, since the *baku* eats bad dreams. Calling on it dispels the fear and unluckiness of a nightmare.

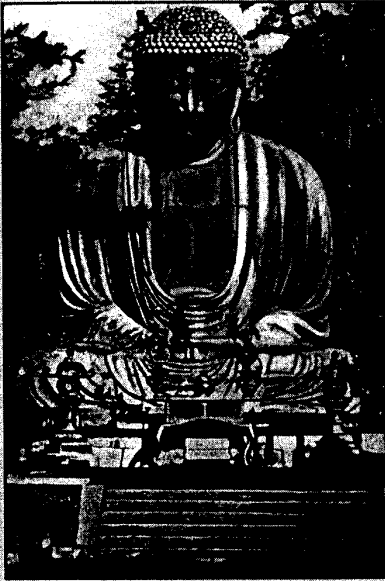
The GM should decide whether the *baku* is just a superstition. Perhaps a devout Buddhist's prayer to the *baku* will cause it to appear and alleviate nightmares or eat magical illusions.



## Becoming a Bussō

Anyone struck by the impermanence and sorrow of the world might shave his head and call himself a Buddhist priest, but to become a priest legally requires the *kanjō* ceremony in which a temple priest pours purified water on the initiate's newly shaven head and gives him a new name (see p. 54). Afterwards, the new *bussō* must be accepted in person by the high priest of the sect's head temple.





## Buddhist Sects

There are several Buddhist sects in Japan, and each sect has a head priest accountable to the Shogunate for the actions of all its priests. Most major Buddhist sects concentrate not on theology or piety but on political, military, and financial power. There are, however, two major Buddhist sects that are theologically distinct.

### Nichiren

Nichiren was a 13th-century priest who was exiled as a political agitator when he warned against Mongol invasion. The invasion did indeed occur in 1272 and 1281, but was thwarted by unseasonal taifu that the Japanese hailed as *kamikaze* (divine winds) sent by the kami. Nichiren found the essence of Buddhism in the Lotus Sutra and taught that chanting its name would ensure happiness. Nichiren priests are usually neither healers nor fighters, but preachers.

### Zen

Zen Buddhism traces its roots to Bodhidharma (see *Daruma*, p. 23). Zen priests strive to achieve enlightenment, partly through devout self-discipline and meditation, partly through focusing on a spontaneous, non-introspective approach to all aspects of life from combat to cooking.

Enlightened Zen priests are revered by their followers much as saints are revered in medieval Europe. Would-be priests take a blood oath to study Zen even if their teacher kills them. Since the teacher often slaps or beats students who break discipline or begin introspecting, this sometimes occurs. Zen students spend at least 10 years with their masters before presuming to teach others.

## The Buddhist Temple

*Tera* (Buddhist temples) are made of dressed lumber with tiled roofs. Their graveyards lie nearby, inside bamboo or stone enclosures. Towering statues of the Two Kings (guardian spirits) stand at the gates to the *tera*. Paper lanterns (or perhaps a single huge paper lantern) hang above the gates. These lanterns often bear a stylized emblem of the number 10,000 as a sign that enlightenment once attained will be everlasting.

A vat of purifying water waits in the courtyard, as in the Shintō shrine. To the side of the *tera* are beautiful gardens, sometimes centered on a *hasu no ike* (lotus pond). The *hasu* (lotus) is a symbol of enlightenment because its flower grows out of wet slime just as a soul can achieve enlightenment in a world of greed, ignorance, and passion. Inside the *tera* are statues of the *tera's* *hotoke*, *bosatsu*, and their attendants. Worshipers ring a ceiling bell before and after praying and burn incense (sold at the temple) while praying. (Incense is never found in a Shintō shrine; its smell angers the kami.)

The temple is usually the local school as well. Commoner children learn to read and write the syllabary using the *iroha* (a Buddhist poem about the impermanence of the world; it uses each syllabary symbol once). They may perhaps be taught some of the common ideographs (see p. 70). The temple also keeps a list of local births, marriages, and deaths.

## Major Hotoke and Bosatsu

A *hotoke* (Buddha) is a person who has become enlightened and left the life-death cycle to enter Nirvana. A *bosatsu* (Bodhisattva) is a person who has attained enlightenment but refuses to enter Nirvana and instead chooses to remain in the life-death cycle to help others reach enlightenment.

The *Rushana Hotoke*, personification of purity and wisdom, vows to save all mortal souls so that "there is no patch of ground in 10 billion worlds on which he has not died for the enlightenment of others." *Rushana* is pictured as sitting on a *hasu no hana* (lotus flower). He is sometimes called *Dainichi* ("Great Sun") to indicate the greatness of the enlightenment he offers to the universe. A number of *tera* of ascetic priests are dedicated to him. Statues of the *Shaka Hotoke* (Gautama) as a child, crowned king, or ascetic hermit frequently appear in *tera* to *Rushana*.

The *Amida Hotoke*, boundless light, has vowed that all who call sincerely on his name even once will be reborn on *hasu no hana* in his paradise. *Amida* is pictured as glowing with gold light and his statue is often covered with gold foil. He is the most popular *hotoke* among commoners and a number of *yamabushi tera* are dedicated to him. People who commit *shinjū* (double suicide) often pray to be reborn on the same *hasu no hana*.

*Yakushi Nyorai*, the *hotoke* of healing, vows to cure physical illness and dispel spiritual confusion. He is pictured as carrying a jar of cure-all medicine. A number of *tera* are dedicated to him. Many exorcists and physicians invoke *Yakushi* while treating the sick.

*Emmaō*, Judge of the Dead, is pictured with the cap and robes of a Chinese magistrate, his face set in a scowl. There are no *tera* dedicated to him.

*Jizō*, the protector of travelers, children, and pregnant women, is pictured as a kindly *bussō*. He carries a *bō* topped by metal rings with which he frightens away demons. There are no temples dedicated to him, but his statue is often found in *tera* dedicated to *hotoke* or other *bosatsu*.

*Miroku* has vowed not to enter Nirvana until the last living spirit has found enlightenment. (Buddhist theology sets this date at 56,076,000,000 years after the death of *Shaka*.) *Miroku* is pictured wearing the tattered robes of a hermit,





his face troubled by the errors of men. There are no temples dedicated to him, but his statue is sometimes found in a grouping with Jizō and Rushana.

*Kannon the Merciful* is sometimes pictured as a beautiful and kindly woman aiding the pious. Other times she is shown as a figure of terrible wrath, attacking the sinful. In this aspect her face is as ugly as a horse's; her hands grasp a net and trident to capture the souls of people who flee enlightenment. Sometimes she is pictured with 11 faces, symbolizing all her different aspects. She is a popular bosatsu with her own tera. Persecuted Christians secretly pray to the Virgin Mary, pictured as Kannon.

*Kishi*, a demoness who killed and devoured her own children, was enlightened by Rushana and became the special patroness of children. She is pictured carrying a child in her right hand and a pomegranate in her left. There are no tera dedicated to her, but her statue is often found with Rushana or Yakushi.

*Daruma*, the 6th-century Indian philosopher who founded the Zen sect of Buddhism, wished to spend a night in prayer and meditation but fell asleep. The next morning he cut off his eyelids; they sprouted into tea shrubs whose leaves would help keep the pious awake. Years later, he finally achieved enlightenment – and then noticed that his legs had fallen off. His statue is often found in tera to Rushana. It is also a popular children's toy – a bearded head atop a weighted ball that always returns to the upright position no matter how far you push it over.

## Christianity

Christianity plays quite a different role in feudal Japan. It is not part of the culture as are Shintō and Buddhism, but it does herald some of the early contact between Westerners and the Japanese, and as some *daimyō* convert, it also makes a mark on the political scene. The Jesuit missionary Francisco Javier (sainted as Francis Xavier by the Catholic Church in 1622) makes his first trip to Japan in 1549, near the end of the Warring States Period. The growth of Christianity is curtailed by the Tokugawa Shogunate, which declares it illegal in 1606. The ban lasts throughout the Late Tokugawa Era.

## Tennin

Tennin ("heaven people") are beautiful feminine spirits. They wear feather cloaks that allow them to fly. Sometimes a peasant finds a Tennin's cloak and hides it, forcing the spirit to live with him. When she finds her cloak, she flies away, leaving behind any children she has borne. The children are normal humans.





## Hours of the Day

Japanese "hours" are about two hours long. Japanese midwinter daylight is 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; midsummer daylight is 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The six daytime hours from sunrise to sunset are Hare, Dragon, Serpent, Horse (noon), Goat, and Monkey.

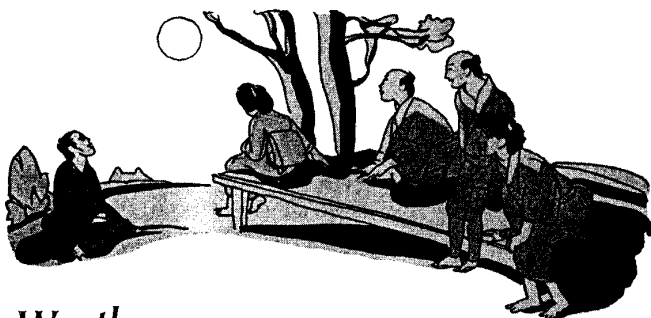
The six nighttime hours from sunset to sunrise are Cock, Dog, Boar, Rat (midnight), Ox, and Tiger.

## Calendar

The Japanese use the Chinese lunar calendar. Odd months have 29 days, even months 30 days. The full moon always comes on the 15th night of the month; the new moon on the last night. Each month has two "seasons"; one before the full moon and the second after.

The year begins with the first new moon after the sun enters Pisces. An extra month is inserted in the 3rd, 6th, 9th, 12th, 15th, 17th, and 19th years to make sure the sun will enter a new sign on each of the standard months.

Devout Shintō worshipers try to attend their local shrine not only on major festivals; but on the 1st, 15th, and 28th day of each month. Devout Buddhists try to attend their local temple on major festivals and on the 8th, 18th, and 28th of each month.



## Weather

The night low is about 20° cooler than the daytime high temperature. Mountain peaks are 30-50° cooler than the lowlands temperature. *Taifu* (typhoons) are fierce, hot, fall rainstorms with winds of at least 38 mph with gusts up to 100 mph. (The term covers both what Westerners call tropical storms and hurricanes.) They typically last less than a week.

## Holidays

*First month, first seven days, Matsunouchi.* The New Year. New Year's Day is called Shinnen; Matsunouchi refers to the entire seven-day period. The front door is decorated with pine and bamboo. Gifts, feasting, and visiting among relatives, friends, and business acquaintances. Dreams the first night are carefully remembered as omens for the coming year. Good dreams may be "bought" by someone who wants

to acquire their good luck. A traditional time for pilgrimage to a Shintō shrine.

*Second month, first seven days, Higan.* Rites for the dead are held at Buddhist temples.

*Second month, third night, Setsubun.* The first day of Spring. Roasted peas or red beans are scattered in homes, shops, and Shintō shrines, then swept out (while firecrackers are thrown) to expel evil spirits and bad luck.

*Second month, last half.* Cherry trees flower, and many people make outings to see them.

*Third month, third day, Hinamatsuri.* The Dolls' Festival. A set of 15 dolls showing an Imperial Court is set up by girls. A set typically costs \$5 (\$1 for poor quality, up to \$100 if it has a special history or artistic merit). Many people make outings to see flowering peach trees.

*Fourth month, eighth day, Buddha's Birthday.* Images of the infant Buddha are displayed at all Buddhist temples.

*Fifth month, first seven days, Rice Festival.* Villages celebrate the rice planting with Shintō *mikoshi* processions.

*Fifth month, fifth day, Boys' Day.* A carp kite is flown from a tall pole for each living son. Kite fighting is common.

*Sixth month, last day.* All debts must be paid off or the debtor is considered a deadbeat.

*Seventh month, first day, Mid-Year.* Gifts and visiting (though less emphasized than Shinnen).

*Seventh month, seventh night, Tanabata.* Festival celebrating the uniting of the Celestial Herd Boy and Weaver Girl, the two stars separated by the Milky Way who can only cross it this one day - if it doesn't rain. Buildings decorated with poems written in finest calligraphy. Poets and artists may stay up all night watching the stars.

*Seventh month, 13th-15th nights, Ō-Bon.* The Feast of Lanterns for the Dead. Families visit graves and hang a lantern at the front door. On the 16th, the lanterns are taken to the graves. Lantern-ships are sent out for the drowned. That night there are Shintō *mikoshi* processions (see p. 20).

*Eighth month, first seven days, Higan.* Rites for the dead held at Buddhist temples. On the first day, servants send presents to their masters, who sometimes give food or time off in return.

*Eighth month, 15th night, The Autumn Moon.* Traditionally considered the most beautiful of the year. Poets and artists may stay up all night watching the moon.

*Ninth month, 15th day, Rice Harvest Festival.* This is usually combined with a Shintō festival dedicated to Okuninushi (see p. 20), whose shrine in the Izumo province this month hosts all but one of the other kami of Japan. Shintō *mikoshi* processions.

*Ninth month, 20th day, Ebisu Festival to the Kami of Honest Work* (see p. 21), who is too deaf to hear Okuninushi's summons to Izumo. Tradesmen sell off surplus stock and entertain regular customers.

*Twelfth month, last day.* All debts must be paid off or the debtor is considered a deadbeat. Homes and shops are cleaned.



## Imperial Holidays



The Imperial Court also observes the following occasions:

*First month, first three days, Teeth Hardening.* The Emperor is ceremoniously presented at each meal with radishes, mirror-shaped rice cakes, melons, and spiced wine, to harden his teeth and ensure his good health and long life.

*First month, seventh day, Viewing of the Blue Horses.* The Emperor and his ladies view a parade of 21 white horses through a great courtyard, each led by a court noble. (Centuries before, when this ceremony was first copied from that of the Chinese court, the Emperor viewed steel-gray horses. Later, the Japanese decided that gray was too rare a color for horses and not as pure as white anyway. Even so, they kept the original name.)

Later that day, there is the *Festival of the Young Herbs*. Nobles present the Emperor with a dish of seven lucky plants that they had plucked that afternoon. He mixes them into a bowl of rice-gruel and eats.

*First month, First Day of the Rat.* The Emperor and his nobles picnic in the nearby countryside and break off pine branches, which symbolize long life (because pines never shed their leaves and because they bend over in the wind like arthritic old people).

*First month, 15th day, Full Moon Gruel.* The Emperor and nobles eat a rice gruel that has been stirred with sticks of peeled elderwood. Afterwards, the noblemen run through the palace, hitting noblewomen with their gruel sticks in order to help them conceive sons.

*First month, 16th day, Poetry Dances.* New Year's poems and songs are recited in the palace gardens. Afterwards, the noblewomen in their turn take up the gruel sticks, sometimes chasing each other, sometimes chasing noblemen.

*First month, 18th day, Bowmen's Wager.* Officers of the Inner and Middle Palace Guards compete in an archery contest, followed by a banquet with court dances.

The rest of the year was similarly crowded.

## Farmers' Schedule



Knowing what the farm fields look like at a certain season is useful for local color as the characters walk down the road. And of course the farmers' schedule is important to a scenario set in a village, like Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*.

*Second month, last half.* First plucking of tea plants; leaves are sun-dried. Lacquer trees are tapped in the mountains.

*Third month, last 10 days.* The rice nursery beds are plowed.

*Third month, last day.* The sprouted rice is sown in the nursery beds.

*Fourth month.* Silkworm eggs are hatched, and the silkworms then fed mulberry leaves. Second plucking of tea plants; leaves are sun-dried.

*Fourth month, last 10 days.* The main fields are plowed, then terraced and dammed, then flooded from irrigation ditches.

*Fifth month, first seven days.* The rice seedlings are transplanted to the main fields. Singers and musicians perform work songs. Young girls bring the workers food and drink.

*Fifth month, 15th day.* Silk cocoons are unreeled, yielding about 500 yards of thread each.

*Fifth through seventh months.* Frogs breed in the fields and croak all day and night. Weeds are hoed. A drought now would kill the rice. The rice is sprayed with oil to keep off locusts.

*Eighth month, first half.* The rice begins to flower; the water in the fields is drained away. A taifū would kill the rice.

*Ninth month, first half.* The rice is harvested with sickles, then tied into sheaves and hung on racks to dry.

*Ninth month, second half.* The rice is flailed, then baled

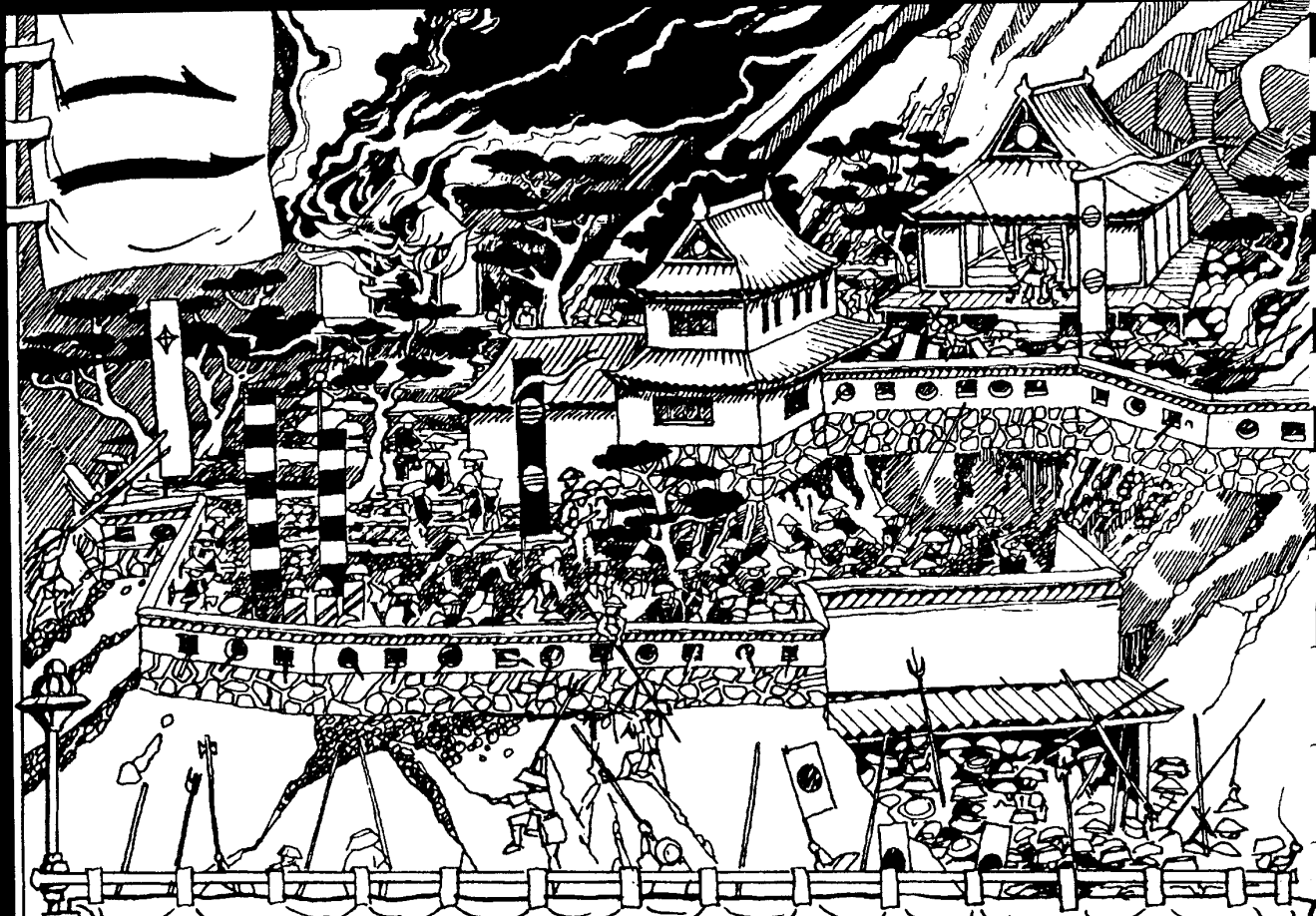
(covered by rice-straw), and given to government tax collectors. Barley, wheat, and millet are planted.

*Eleventh month, first half.* Winter crops are harvested.

## Weather Calendar

Month	Season	High Temp (°F)	Probability in % Precipitation	Taifū
First	Spring begins	40	10	0
	Rain water	45	20	0
Second	Insects awaken	50	35	0
	Spring equinox	55	50	0
Third	Clear weather	60	25	0
	Rain for the rice	60	60	0
Fourth	Summer begins	65	60	0
	Small pride	65	60	0
Fifth	Sowing	70	60	0
	Summer solstice	70	55	0
Sixth	Small heat	75	50	0
	Great heat	80	40	0
Seventh	Fall begins	85	35	0
	Heat ends	80	35	0
Eighth	White dew	75	40	10
	Autumn equinox	70	40	10
Ninth	Cold dew	60	40	10
	Frost	55	25	5
Tenth	Winter begins	50	10	2
	Small snow	45	15	0
Eleventh	Great snow	40	20	0
	Winter solstice	40	5	0
Twelfth	Small cold	40	5	0
	Great cold	35	5	0





C H A P T E R T W O

# *The Warring Provinces Era*

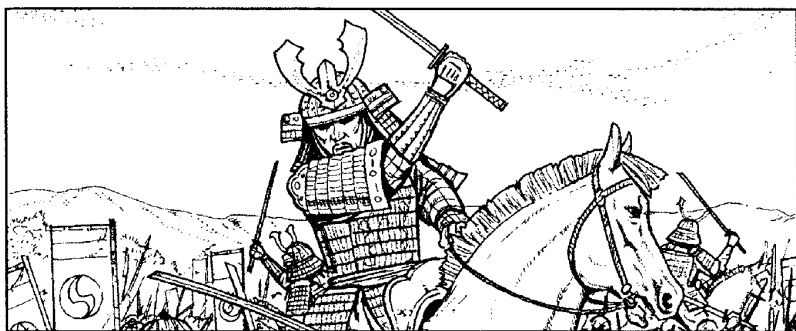


In the 16th century, Japan was a land with no strong central authority. The Ashikaga Shogunate family had two factions, each supported by major clans. Warring armies periodically devastated Kyōto. Only the eastern region of Honshū remained calm under the Hōjō clan. Elsewhere, taxes rose steadily to finance the cost of the clan armies.



# The Ashikaga Wars of Succession (1467-1568)

Customarily, all of a Shōgun's sons but his heir became Buddhist priests, renouncing any claims to the title. The heir took a name beginning with Yoshi as a tribute to Minamoto Yoshiie. The Ashikaga's own succession war began in 1456. Shōgun Yoshimasa adopted his younger brother as heir, removing him from the temple. The next year, Yoshimasa had a son and dismissed his brother back to the priesthood.



Two great factions of daimyō went to war, using the Shogunate candidates as a pretext for increasing their own power. By 1477, the Kyōto area was in ashes and the daimyō could not get supplies for their armies. They returned to their provinces and continued their wars there.

Yoshimasa built a new mansion, the Silver Pavilion. There he established an elegant court, exhausting the Shogunate treasury with gifts to priests, poets, actors, geisha, and other entertainers. When his son died at only 25, he adopted his brother's son Yoshitane as his heir, then died the next year (1490). Such convenient deaths occurred frequently in Japanese history. They *may* have been due to mere chance.

The Hosokawa clan was one of the most powerful in the Kyōto region, and its lord was the Shogunate Prime Minister. The clan also held lands on the island of Shikoku. Two minor clans, the Miyoshi and the Kōsai, administered these lands.

In 1493, daimyō Hosokawa Masamoto put Yoshitane to flight, and replaced him with Yoshizume, a son of the previous Shōgun. Masamoto's only children were his three adopted sons Sumimoto, Sumiyuki, and Takakuni. At first he named Sumiyuki as his heir. He later changed his mind and named Sumimoto. When Masamoto died in 1507, the Kōsai clan attacked young Sumimoto's lands in support of the claims of the disinherited Sumiyuki. Other daimyō were drawn into the wars. Sumimoto and his allies defeated the forces of the Kōsai, and Sumiyuki died in the battle. The next year, Yoshitane returned to power in Kyōto. Sumimoto fled to the protection of the Miyoshi clan in Shikoku. This left the third son, Takakuni, in control of the Hosokawa domains. Takakuni became the new Shogunate Prime Minister.

The daimyō supporting Sumimoto and Takakuni fought one another for eight years. Takakuni won and then rebelled against Yoshitane, whom he previously supported. Takakuni drove Yoshitane out of Kyōto and made Yoshiharu Shōgun. The Miyoshi clan continued to support Sumimoto's son. They repeatedly drove Yoshiharu from Kyōto. In 1545, he fled for the last time. With him went his son Yoshiteru, the nominal Shōgun.

## Background: The Go-Daigo Revolt and the Early Ashikaga Era

Go-Daigo, of the junior Imperial Line, became Emperor at the age of 31 and resolved to restore the Imperial Court to power. The Hōjō Regents had him deposed and exiled to an island in 1331. He escaped two years later, raised an army and marched with them toward Kyōto. Ashikaga Takauji (lord of a Minamoto clan) led the Kamakura forces there. He turned against the Hōjō (who were a Taira clan) and welcomed Go-Daigo back to the capital. Meanwhile, Nitta Yoshisada (lord of another Minamoto clan) led his forces to capture Kamakura from the Hōjō.

Kyōto was overrun with daimyō and samurai, coming to claim their reward for helping Go-Daigo overthrow his enemies. Go-Daigo, instead, rewarded his supporters in the Imperial Court, attempting to reinstate actual Imperial rule. Ashikaga Takauji, who had expected to be made Shōgun, rebelled against Go-Daigo, whose forces were led by Nitta Yoshisada. Takauji was the victor and had Go-Daigo deposed once more, this time in favor of Emperor Kōmyō, from the senior Imperial Line. Emperor Go-Daigo retreated to the mountains. He and his successors continued to claim, and fight for, the throne until 1392.

The new Emperor appointed Ashikaga Takauji as Shōgun. Takauji's grandson Yoshimitsu, the third Ashikaga Shōgun, left Kamakura and ruled Japan from Kyōto, from a mansion he built there called The Golden Pavilion. Many other major daimyō also established secondary residences in Kyōto.

The second half of the 14th century saw a series of small wars, with daimyō nominally fighting on behalf of the junior or senior Imperial Line but actually to increase their territory and revenues. The succession dispute finally ended in 1392, with the country settling into an unstable equilibrium. The later Shōguns aped the elegance of the Imperial Court, and gradually left more and more of the business of administering the country to the daimyō. Like the Kamakura Shogunate, the Ashikaga depended on the support of allied daimyō and their own clan samurai. Each daimyō was supreme in his own territory, as long as he did not defy the Shōgun. Europeans called the daimyō kings, and they indeed had royal power of life and death in their own domains.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Background: The Go-Daigo Revolt and the Early Ashikaga Era (Continued)

Zen temples renewed trade with China, particularly after the Ming dynasty came to power in 1368. Japan sent cargoes of copper, sulfur, fans, lacquerware, and weapons, paid for with Chinese copper coins (the chief Japanese coins used in this era). The merchant class became increasingly prosperous and politically important. Trade guilds arose, each associated with a patron shrine or temple, to whom they paid tribute and from whom they received political protection.

The Ashikaga College (in the town of Ashikaga, former base of the Shogunate family) grew in size and prestige. It specialized in Chinese classical learning and Confucianism, and scholars visited from China. The five Kyōto Zen Temples were devoted first to Chinese poetry and art, then to historical research.

Farmers found themselves paying higher and higher taxes, to support the increasing luxury of the daimyō at Kyōto. Years of famine or pestilence gave rise to rice riots, with farmers attacking and looting offensively wealthy merchants, particularly moneylenders and sake brewers. Sometimes the commoners turned their anger against the government toll-barriers that dotted the roads every four or five miles, each charging a toll on passengers and goods. Many of these rioting farmers were poor samurai who had turned to farming when their daimyō could no longer support them. The Shogunate could not control them militarily, so instead it attempted to placate them by repeatedly canceling debts, thus angering the wealthy merchants.



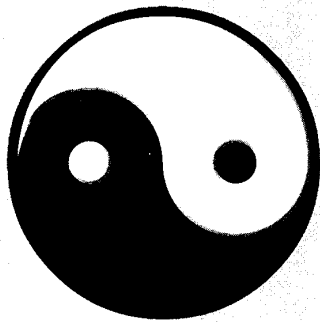
Hosokawa Harumoto was 12 years old when the Miyoshi killed his uncle Takakuni in 1531. He then became the new Hosokawa daimyō and the Shogunate Prime Minister. In 1548, the Miyoshi clan turned on him and seized his lands. Harumoto allied with Shōgun Yoshiteru. After 10 years of war with the Miyoshi, Yoshiteru returned to Kyōto after making peace by giving Harumoto the Miyoshi as a prisoner. Harumoto died in prison in 1563, leaving no heir.

In 1565, under siege by Matsunaga Hisahide, Yoshiteru committed seppuku. Matsunaga also killed Yoshiteru's next oldest brother, but a third brother escaped and took the name Yoshiaki as a sign of his claim to the Shogunate.

The Miyoshi clan proclaimed Yoshihide, Yoshiteru's third cousin, Shōgun the year he was born. The Emperor refused to declare him officially. When Od Nobunaga marched on Kyōto to support Yoshiaki, Yoshihide's family fled. The child Shōgun died at age 4 – perhaps of illness, perhaps by assassination.

About 1543, the first Europeans reached Japan. They introduced Christian missionaries, guns, and the idea of cannon-proof fortifications. All three are important, but the guns and fortifications proved to be the most popular.

In 1568, Nobunaga defeated all of Yoshiaki's enemies and made his Shōgun. Five years later, Yoshiaki asked Takeda Shingen to attack Nobunaga. Nobunaga learned of the plot and had Yoshiaki imprisoned. In 1575, Yoshiaki became a priest, and he died of old age in 1597. He was the last Ashikaga Shōgun.



## The Culture

### Social Mobility

During these generations of war, many clans' younger members challenged their daimyō. Minor clans rebelled against their suzerains and enlarged their territories; some once-major clans disappeared.

The number of rōnin steadily increased. Some became Buddhist priests while others farmed their lands themselves or rented their lands to poor peasants and became townfolk. A few became wandering adventurers, while still others went into the service of another daimyō. Clan armies grew larger and larger.

Some commoners joined the clan armies to fight for their lord. Farmers and artisans fought side by side with samurai. Some of these commoners advanced to samurai rank themselves. The greatest example of this era's social mobility is Hideyoshi, who rose from peasant to castle commander to ruler of all Japan. There were many more like him. (See *Saito Toshimasa*, sidebar, p. 30.)

### Personal Loyalty

In such a chaotic age, clan retainers and servants were personally loyal to their daimyō, not to the clan. When their daimyō died, even of sickness or old age, a number of the older samurai often committed *junshi* ("martyr death").

Most clan retainers remained loyal to their clan even after the daimyō died, if he left an heir. Sometimes a devoted samurai or nurse sheltered a young clan heir until he grew old enough to lead an army and win back his father's lands. The guardian may even have displayed his loyalty by substituting his own child for the heir to preserve the heir from danger. The usurper's troops would search the villages for a child whose birth was not listed in the temple records. They would not stop until they had found and killed a child. Kabuki plays told of young children who proudly claimed to be the young daimyō, knowing it meant their own deaths but the survival of the true lord.

## The Temples

Some of the Buddhist temples allied themselves with a particular clan. Their yamabushi troops might have marched against an invading daimyō, or attacked a neighboring clan or temple, in order to enlarge their own domains. Commoners gathered around the temples of Amida Buddha (see p. 22) just as they did around the castles of daimyō. Many Amida temples built during this era resemble clan fortresses.

Later, Oda Nobunaga broke the power of the Amida yamabushi. The most notable of his actions against the yamabushi culminated in the massacre of the monks of Hieizan and the burning of its 3,000 temples.

Followers of Nichiren established strongholds throughout the provinces. Peasants, tradesmen, and rōnin flocked to these self-governing communities, which were strong enough to withstand attacks from nearby clans or rival temples. The Nichiren troops usually fought only to defend their territory. Apart from that, the chief difference most people could tell between the armies of the two sects was that the Amida yamabushi chanted praise to Amida, and the Nichiren forces chanted praise to the Lotus Sutra.

## Who's in Charge Here?

Reigns end with the officials' deaths, unless separate dates of death are given.

### Ashikaga Shōgun

Yoshimasa (r. 1449-1473, d. 1490)  
Yoshihisa (r. 1474-1489)  
Yoshitane (r. 1490-1493, d. 1523)  
Yoshizumi (r. 1495-1508, d. 1511)  
Yoshitane again (r. 1508-1521, d. 1523)  
Yoshiharu (r. 1522-1547, d. 1550)  
Yoshiteru (r. 1547-1565)  
Yoshihide (r. 1568)  
Yoshiaki (r. 1568-1573, d. 1597)

### Warring States and Unification Era Emperors

Go-Tsuchimikado (r. 1464-1500)  
Go-Kashiwabara (r. 1500-1526)  
Go-Nara (r. 1526-1557)  
Ōgimachi (r. 1557-1586, d. 1593)  
Go-Yōzei (r. 1586-1611, d. 1617)

Actual enthronements may come a year or more later in some cases. Go-Kashiwabara was enthroned in 1521, for instance.

## The Emperors

During this period, the Imperial Court had no political power; the Shōguns kept it on a tight budget, lowering its prestige. Emperors no longer abdicated; there was not enough money for the courts of both a reigning and a retired Emperor. When Emperor Go-Tsuchimikado died in 1500, there was no money for a funeral. A daimyō eventually paid for the funeral 40 days later. It was 20 years before his son, Emperor Go-Kashiwabara, was ritually enthroned. He reigned for only seven years. His son, Emperor Go-Nara, reigned from 1527 to 1557. Then there was another four-year hiatus. Emperor Go-Nara's son, Emperor Ōgimachi, was not enthroned until 1561. Emperor Ōgimachi abdicated in 1586 in favor of his grandson. By this time, Japan had come under the administration of Oda Nobunaga, and Imperial revenue was again increased enough to maintain two courts.



## Saito Toshimasa

Toshimasa began as a Buddhist priest in Kyōto. He grew tired of the ascetic life, let his hair grow, and became first an oil merchant then a samurai for the Nagai clan. Later, he murdered his clan lord and took over the Nagai lands, changing his name to Nagai Toshimasa. He led the Nagai clan to defeat their suzerain, the Toki clan, and adopted the family name of Saito. He first made war against the Oda clan, then married his daughter to the young Oda Nobunaga.

Toshimasa adopted Yoshitatsu, the son of the Toki clan lord. Later he had two sons of his own and decided to disinherit Yoshitatsu. His adopted son enlisted the aid of the son of the Nagai clan lord. Their forces killed Toshimasa and his two young sons. Yoshitatsu died five years later and left his lands to his son, who was defeated by Oda Nobunaga.

## Rennyō, Priest of Amida Buddha

Rennyō (1415-1499) was the high priest of the Honganji temple of Kyoto. His eloquent sermons and reputation for holiness had impressed the Emperor, who repaired the temple at his own expense. The jealous priests of Hieizan stormed into the city and set fire to the Honganji temple.

Rennyō escaped and became a wanderer, raising funds to build temples in the provinces. Jealous neighboring priests also burned at least one of these temples.

## Craft Guilds and Trade Secrets

Each clan area had its own craft guilds, each with a local shrine or temple as its patron. A guild regulated prices and wages and the number of apprentices a craftsman could hire. Artisans needed to get the guild's permission to practice their craft. These guilds did not make common cause across province lines; instead each jealously guarded its own craft secrets.

There is a legend about Tamikichi, son of an Owari family of potters. A potter family in Arita adopted him and he married their eldest daughter. Some years later, he asked permission to pay a brief visit to his own family. Tamikichi never returned to Arita; instead, he taught the Arita trade secrets to the Owari potters. The furious people of Arita crucified his wife and children.

The Shintō shrines and the temples of ascetic Buddhist sects had no territorial claims and remained relatively undisturbed by the wars. Many artists and poets became Buddhist priests during this era. Some such priests stayed within the safe confines of their temples; others joined the retinues of daimyō who wished to be thought patrons of the arts.

## The Merchants

Roads and shipping improved because commanders needed them to move troops and supplies. Merchants grew rich, at least on paper, as they sold supplies to the fighting daimyō. Cities were granted the right to govern themselves in exchange for loans to daimyō or the Shōgun. In the second half of the century, merchants eagerly traded with the Portuguese, who brought goods from China and Indonesia as well as European-made muskets and cannon.





# The Warring Daimyo

## The Hōjō Clan of Odawara

The Hōjō clan of Odawara claimed distant relation to the Hōjō Regents of the Kamakura Era. With no rival clans to fight, they kept the region a place of peace and prosperity. Rōnin came from western Honshū and even Shikoku to settle in their domains.

## Matsunaga Hisahide

In 1529, at age 19, Matsunaga Hisahide and his daimyō Miyoshi Chōkei (age 17) led their first army. Hisahide eventually controlled two provinces of his own. In 1563 he poisoned his daimyō's heir and had another son declared heir. The following year, Chōkei's brother died and then Chōkei himself (very conveniently).

The next year, Hisahide asked Shōgun Yoshiteru to name him Shogunate Prime Minister. Yoshiteru refused, and Hisahide attacked the Shogunate palace. Yoshiteru killed himself; Hisahide named a child (Ashikaga Yoshihide) Shōgun and ruled the Kyōto region. In 1568, he submitted to Nobunaga. Four years later he rebelled along with the Miyoshi. He betrayed the Miyoshi to Nobunaga and kept his own power, but in 1577 he again rebelled against Nobunaga and was killed.

## Mōri Motonari

Mōri Motonari led his own clan and that of his overlords, the Ōuchi clan, to rebel against *their* overlords, the Amako clan. After the defeat of the Amako, Ōuchi Yoshitaka made his castle a refuge for Imperial nobles who had fled Kyōto. His vassal Sue Harukata killed Yoshitaka in 1551. Four years later, Motonari killed Sue and occupied the Ōuchi domains. He financed Emperor Ōgimachi's coronation in 1560, and was named Minister of the Imperial Household in thanks. He was eventually master of 10 provinces.

## Uesugi Kenshin

Nagao Kagetora was the third son of a minor daimyō of a Uesugi vassal clan. When his father died and his elder brother became daimyō, he became a priest and went on pilgrimage. He returned home at age 13, overthrew his brother, and became the Nagao daimyō. Four years later, he began his wars with the neighboring Takeda clan.

In 1551, he sheltered the Uesugi daimyō, who had been driven out of his home province by the Hōjō forces. He had a condition, however: the daimyō had to adopt him as his heir. In 1552, he became a priest again, adopting the name Uesugi Kenshin. He was now at war with both the Hōjō and the Takeda clans. In 1558, Kenshin became Eastern Shogunate Prime Minister and renamed himself Terutora. He finally made peace with the Hōjō in 1564, adopting one of Ujiyasu's younger sons as his heir and renaming him Kagetora.

## Takeda Shingen

Takeda Harunobu, at the age of 19, learned that his father planned to disinherit him and name his younger brother as heir. He arranged to have his father kidnapped by the forces of his father-in-law, the lord of the Imagawa clan. Eventually, the old daimyō became a priest. Harunobu's war with Uesugi Kenshin began in 1547 and lasted 20 years. In 1551 he became a Buddhist priest and adopted the name of Shingen, but continued the war.

## First Contact with Westerners

The first contact between Japanese and Westerners took place in 1543 (or perhaps 1542) when a taifū caught a Chinese junk with three Portuguese passengers aboard. It landed on a small island south of Kyūshū. Although no one on board spoke Japanese, the Chinese communicated by writing ideographs on the sand. They told the Japanese that the strangers were southern barbarians with few manners. "When they drink, they do not exchange cups. When they eat, they use their hands, not chopsticks."

The strangers then demonstrated something new, a heavy metal cylinder about a yard long with an opening in the side.

"To use it, fill it with powder and lead pellets, close one eye and apply fire to the opening," they explained.

There was thunder and lightning and a blow that can kill a man.

The Japanese were surprised, then said in unison, "We should like to learn!"

The clan lord purchased two muskets, and within a year the clan had made dozens of them.

By 1545, Portuguese traders had sailed their ships first to Kyūshū, then up the Inland Sea to Kyōto. This city, with its half a million people, was larger than any in Europe. Besides muskets, the principal Portuguese cargoes were Chinese luxury wares such as silk yarn, artworks, spices, and perfumes. Later they brought tobacco, potatoes, and European-bred Arabian horses much larger than the native Japanese steed, the Mongolian pony.

Next, Jesuit priests came from the missions at Macao and Goa. In 1549, Francisco Javier (St. Francis Xavier) began preaching at Kyūshū. At first people believed the Jesuits were a sect of Buddhists, since both groups wore black robes, shaved their heads, and carried rosaries. A translation problem fueled the confusion. Xavier thought that "Dai-Nichi" was the Japanese word for God, so his audience assumed he was preaching about the worship of Dai-Nichi Buddha (see *Rushana*, p. 22).

At first, the clan lords of Kyūshū competed to host the foreign traders, tolerating the missionaries and sometimes even ordering their people to become Christians. But if trading ships did not return on time, they drove the missionaries away and ordered their subjects to revert to their former faiths.

Francisco Javier sailed up the Inland Sea to the city of Yamaguchi, near the castle of Ōuchi Yoshitaka, but was banished for insisting that all dead Japanese who had not been Christians will burn forever in hell. This was horrifying to people who revere the memory of their ancestors.



## Westerners' Reaction to Japanese

Many Westerners thought of Japan as a "topsy-turvy country." This was partly due to the many minor differences between the two cultures. The pages in Japanese books were read right to left, not left to right. They began at what Westerners thought of as the end, and ended at the beginning. Reversing European custom, the best rooms in a Japanese house were at the back and the servants slept in the front.

The Japanese time system had six hours from sunrise to sunset, and six more from sunset to sunrise. The length of an hour also varied through the year. What's more, the temple bells rang the hours backward — from nine strokes for the first hour to four strokes for the last hour.

Japanese reckoned time inclusively. From the third month to the sixth month was not three months but four. During all of a child's first year, he was one year old. One year from his birth he became two years old. Also, a Japanese child's "birthday" was always New Year's. This meant that a child born in the twelfth month was a year old when born and two years old on New Year's Day, less than a month later.

Other more basic cultural differences bothered Westerners. They could not understand why Japanese smiled broadly, or sometimes even giggled, when telling unpleasant news. They did not realize that it was good Japanese manners to smile when you disappointed or annoyed someone. Westerners considered it impudence if a servant, who realized he had misunderstood an order and annoyed his master, smiled. The Japanese was simply being courteous. He accepted the responsibility for his faults and was not angry.

Westerners also did not understand what it meant when Japanese *stop* smiling. Townsend Harris, who negotiated the U.S.-Japan Treaty of 1858, at one point was told that unless he was willing to compromise, the negotiator could not continue to meet with him under such pleasant circumstances. He thought this was a threat to arrest or kill him. He did not realize that the Japanese official was thinking of committing seppuku.

Westerners were also irritated by the Japanese desire to learn as much as possible about these strange foreigners. They were pestered with ceaseless questions about their homes, families, and customs. Japanese were not accustomed to privacy when they slept or bathed. They did not understand that a Westerner might resent having sightseers ushered into his room to stare at him.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## The Unification (1568-1600)

After generations, Japan's warring provinces began to stabilize again under the domination of a central power. Oda Nobunaga (the Oda were a Taira clan) was the first daimyō to train his troops in the use of Western firearms. By 1573, all the clans had submitted to him, either voluntarily or by conquest.

Betrayed by one of his generals and defeated in a surprise attack, Nobunaga committed suicide in 1582. After his death, some of the clans rose in rebellion. Toyotomi Hideyoshi suppressed the rebellion. Hideyoshi, a former peasant soldier without even a family name, was an ally of the Taira clans and particularly to Nobunaga. Hideyoshi then raised an army to invade Korea. He married his sister to Tokugawa Ieyasu (the Tokugawa are a Minamoto clan), formerly his greatest rival. Hideyoshi named Ieyasu as one of the regents who will govern the land until his five-year-old son comes of age. Hideyoshi died in 1598, in the middle of a stalemated war in Korea.

After Hideyoshi's death, Tokugawa Ieyasu became supreme in Japan. He subdued all opposing daimyō at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, became Shōgun in 1603, then went inkyō in 1605. Toyotomi Hideyori, Hideyoshi's son, had taken refuge in Ōsaka castle since the battle of Sekigahara. In 1614, Tokugawa forces stormed the castle and killed Hideyori and his supporters.

## The Great Unifiers

The Japanese summarize the tactics and characters of the heroes of unification in the following story. Nobunaga says, "If the bird does not sing, I shall wring its neck." Hideyoshi says, "I shall try to teach the bird to sing." Ieyasu says, "I shall wait for the bird to sing."

### Oda Nobunaga

Oda Nobunaga had little interest in administering his clan's domains until one of his samurai committed suicide in protest. Nobunaga took the reproof to heart and began to conquer province after province. His seal bore the motto, "to bring the whole country under one sword." He was the first daimyō to train his troops with Western firearms.

By 1560, he controlled a significant part of Japan and other daimyō arranged family marriages to ally with him. After fighting the Asai clan for several years, he ordered his sister to divorce her husband so she could marry the Asai daimyō. In 1568, Nobunaga made Ashikaga Yoshiaki the new Shōgun, built him a palace, and repaired the Imperial Palace.

In 1569, Nobunaga's brother-in-law, daimyō Asai Nagamasa, aided by the Yamabushi of Hieizan, rebelled against him. After two years, Nobunaga succeeded in besieging his castle. Nagamasa sent out his wife and their three daughters to Nobunaga, who promptly set the castle on fire. He then returned to Kyōto to attack his other enemies, the Hieizan Yamabushi. He burned the mountain's 3,000 temples and massacred its 20,000 priests. Horrified at the sacrilege, the Shōgun summoned Takeda Shingen to Kyōto, but Nobunaga had the Shōgun imprisoned in a castle. Takeda Shingen led his armies to free the Shōgun, but was struck by a bullet and died a few days later. By the end of 1573, all the clans of Japan had formally submitted to Oda Nobunaga. For 10 years Japan was virtually at peace, until Nobunaga committed suicide to avoid capture by a rebellious daimyō, Akechi Mitsuhide.





## Westerners' Reaction to Japanese (Continued)

Western traders wanted to deal with Japanese merchants only on a business basis. They could not understand why the Japanese wanted to spend hours in small talk. Japanese merchants did not feel safe doing business with strangers unless some sort of friendly relationship could be established.

Western traders who hired Japanese employees expected that orders will be obeyed to the letter. Japanese attempted to reason out what the Westerner really wanted when he gave the order, and to accomplish that desire. Western traders told one another, "Japanese never think, and when they do they're wrong."

Westerners also did not understand the position of the geisha. They seemed to be prostitutes, until it came time to accept money and go to bed. Then they indignantly refused. If pressed they could give a painful lesson, using martial arts undreamed of by the average Western woman (and they added insult to injury by giggling the whole time!)



### Toyotomi Hideyoshi

Hideyoshi began as a peasant foot soldier but drew Oda Nobunaga's notice with his fighting ability. Nobunaga made him the lord first of Nagahama castle, then of Himeji castle. These positions carried revenue of over 200,000 *koku*.

Akechi Mitsuhide, a Minamoto daimyō who had served him for 15 years, rebelled in 1582. Five years earlier, Nobunaga crucified a daimyō who had surrendered to Mitsuhide after Mitsuhide took the daimyō's mother hostage. The dead daimyō's angry samurai captured Mitsuhide's own mother and killed her. Mitsuhide destroyed them and their castle, but vowed vengeance on Nobunaga.

During the rebellion, Mitsuhide's forces besieged Nobunaga in a Kyōto temple. The wounded Nobunaga committed suicide to avoid capture. The Emperor promptly named Mitsuhide as the new Shōgun. Hideyoshi made peace with the castle he had been besieging and led his armies east to drive Mitsuhide from Kyōto and killed him. Mitsuhide is remembered as the "13-day Shōgun."

Hideyoshi's rule was challenged by one after another of Nobunaga's relatives: his brothers, his brother-in-law, and his sons. By 1584, Hideyoshi had defeated all their forces with the aid of his new ally, Tokugawa Ieyasu. He cemented their alliance by giving Ieyasu his sister in marriage, after having her divorce her husband. He also married one of Nobunaga's nieces and gave another one in marriage to Ieyasu's heir, Hidetada.



## The Japanese and the Missionaries

When Oda Nobunaga received the Jesuit missionaries in 1568, he befriended them, probably hoping to use them to further break the power of the Buddhist yamabushi sects. He allowed the Jesuits to build a church in Kyōto called Nambanji (the Temple of the Southern Barbarians).

Twenty years later, the Jesuits had converted 11 minor daimyō in provinces in Kyūshū or bordering the Inland Sea. The converted clan lords typically gave their people one day's notice to convert to Christianity. They banished from the clan domain those who refused. Buddhist temples were set on fire and their statues hacked to pieces with axes.

Hideyoshi ordered the destruction of the mission churches in Kyōto and Ōsaka in 1587. He ordered the priests to leave the country the next year. The priests ceased to preach publicly; the order went unenforced.

In 1596, the Spanish galleon *San Felipe* became stranded in the port of Urado. When its cargo was confiscated by the local clan lord, the angered pilot threatened reprisals and boasted of Spain's size and might. He went on to explain how it had grown so large – first priests came to convert the people, then soldiers helped the converts conquer the country. Such conversations added to Japanese unease about these strange barbarians.

Spanish traders, accompanied by Franciscan priests, came to Japan in 1597. They promised not to preach in Japan, but they did anyway. Hideyoshi had them crucified in Kyūshū, along with three Jesuits and 17 Japanese converts. He continued to tolerate Portuguese Jesuits as long as they remained nominally in hiding and did not preach their religion.

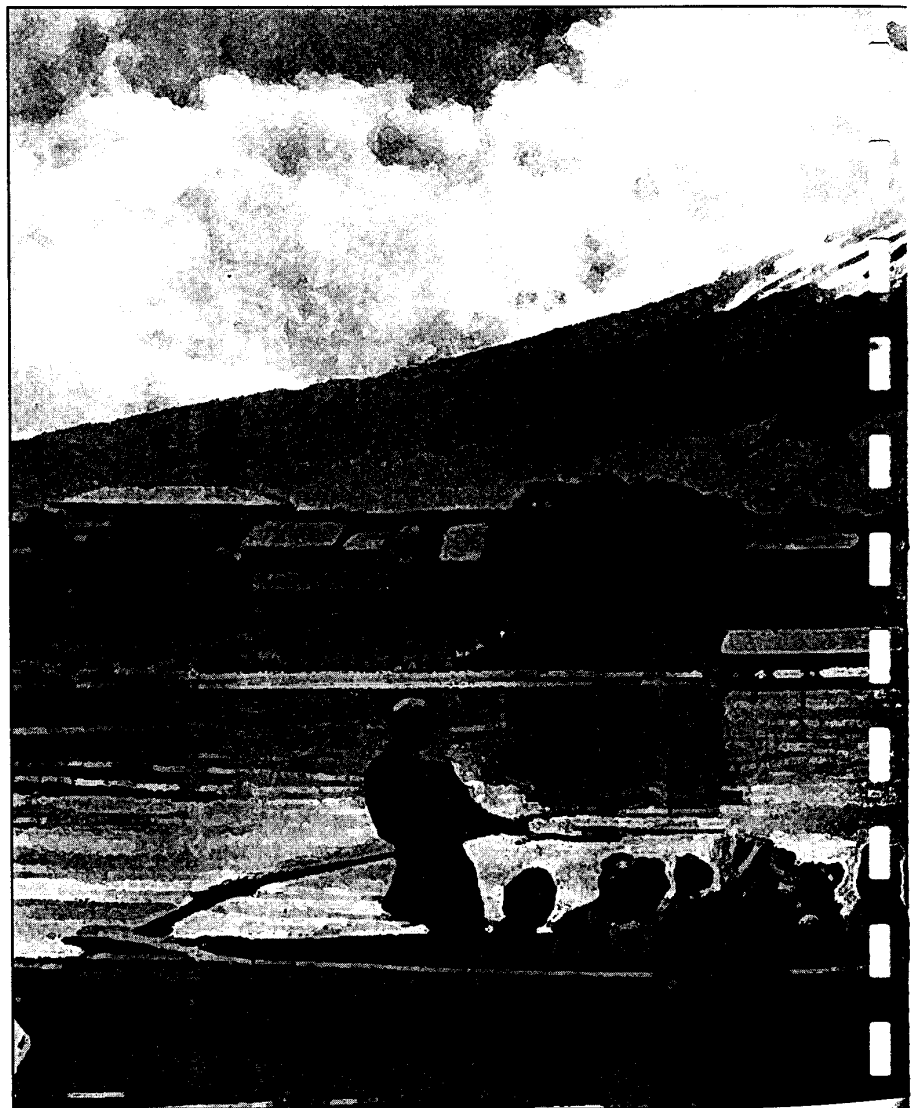
In 1600, Ieyasu became the patron of Will Adams, the English pilot whose story inspired James Clavell's novel *Shōgun*. The story is accurately told in Richard Blaker's novel *The Needle Watcher*. The Dutch and English were at odds with Spain, both militarily and religiously. Each group warned Ieyasu against the other. The Shōgun favored the Protestants since they brought only trade goods, not priests. Christianity ceased to be popular among the clan lords and samurai.

Ieyasu's son Hidetada banned Christianity in 1616. Japanese converts were crucified if they refused to recant, and priests were deported or imprisoned. Foreign traders and suspected Christians were tested by having them step on a cross or picture of the crucifixion to prove they were not Catholic.

Hideyoshi could not become Shōgun because of his birth, but he did become Imperial Prime Minister. His peasant looks earned him the nickname of "the crowned monkey." He rebuilt the Imperial Palace and increased the Imperial revenue. In 1586, Hideyoshi, escorted by an army of 100,000, visited each province of Japan to receive the formal submission of each daimyō.

In 1590, the Hōjō clan of Odawara rebelled and Hideyoshi invited all the daimyō to help him conquer the Hōjō. Afterwards, he offered the Hōjō clan's eight provinces to Tokugawa Ieyasu. In exchange, he took the Tokugawa home province and the other provinces Ieyasu had conquered and distributed them to other daimyō who had supported him in the battle.

In 1591, Hideyoshi invited the king of Korea to become his vassal. The Korean refused and appealed to the Emperor of China. Hideyoshi ordered the clans to prepare for an expedition to Korea the following year. The Japanese conquered Korea, then followed its fleeing king toward China. The Chinese army soon drove the Japanese back again. The Korean War dragged on until 1598 when Hideyoshi fell ill and ordered the army recalled. He named five great daimyō (including Tokugawa Ieyasu) as regents for his young son, and died at the age of 62.



### *Hideyoshi and the Tea Ceremony*

One of the artists Hideyoshi patronized was Sen no Rikyu (1522-1591), a connoisseur of the tea ceremony. Rikyu's writings stressed the simplicity of the tea ceremony, which is held in a room of only 4 ½ mats to show the host's humility.

In October, 1587, Hideyoshi proclaimed that he would hold a great tea ceremony in a month. Everyone who wished to attend was invited. They needed bring only a kettle, a cup, and a mat to sit upon.

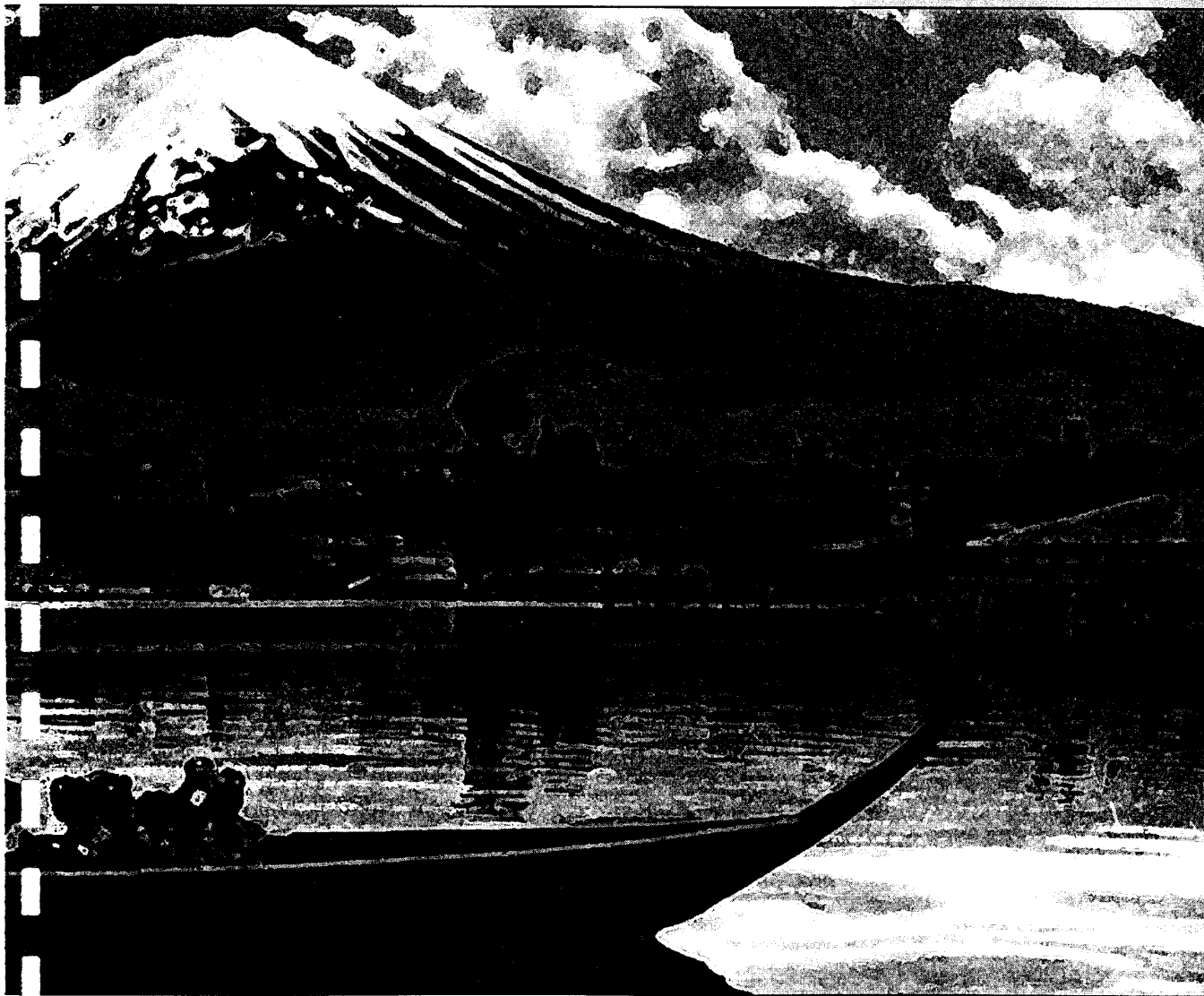
The festival took place in the great Kitano shrine near Kyoto, dedicated to Tenjin, patron of literature and calligraphy (see p. 21). For 10 days, there were plays, music, and dancing. Gilded screens divided the shrine into small rooms, each of 4 ½ mats. Hideyoshi exhibited his art treasures, including golden kettles and teacups. One poem written about the event asked, "Who's that, holding over four hundred provinces in the palm of his hand and entertaining at a tea party? It's his Highness. So mighty, so impressive."

In 1590, Hideyoshi met Sen no Rikyu's beautiful daughter and asked her father to give her to him as a concubine. Rikyu refused. A year later he was accused of bribery and allowed to commit seppuku.

### **Hosokawa Gracia**

Hosokawa Tadaoki was the son-in-law of Akechi Mitsuhide, but the loyal vassal first of Nobunaga and then of Ieyasu. His wife was a Christian who adopted the baptismal name of Gracia. She could speak both Portuguese and Latin, and was the inspiration for the character Mariko in James Clavell's novel *Shōgun*.

After the death of Hideyoshi, the Hosokawa mansion in Ōsaka was surrounded by the samurai of Ishida Mitsunari, who demanded Gracia as a hostage. Stories differ as to whether Gracia killed herself or was killed by the mansion's karō on her husband's written instructions.



## Parallel European History

The kingdoms of Castile and Aragon united in 1479 with the marriage of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. The next year they established the Inquisition. Spain also financed several voyages of exploration, beginning with Columbus in 1492. A generation later, Spain's generals began to add new overseas territories to the Spanish crown. Cortez conquered Mexico in 1521; Pizarro conquered Peru in 1535; Juan de Salcedo conquered the Philippines in the late 16th century.

Portugal also sent out explorers. Manoel I assumed the title of "Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of India, Ethiopia, Arabia, and Persia" in 1495. In 1529, Spain and Portugal agreed to divide the world between them. Spain got all of South America except for Brazil, which Portugal conquered in 1530. Portugal also got Africa, India, and the Orient.

Martin Luther was excommunicated in 1520, as the German Protestant movement became a separate church. In 1534, Henry VIII decreed the Anglican Reformation by which the British Church declared itself no longer under the dominion of the Pope. Protestantism spread throughout Northern Europe.

In 1542, Portuguese merchants were allowed to settle in China, and in 1557, they founded the colony of Macao. The Portuguese spice trade spanned Africa, India, and China, under a governor based at Goa, in India. The traders were accompanied by missionaries from the Society of Jesus, founded in 1534 by Ignatius Loyola. In 1580, Spain annexed Portugal.

At that time, King Philip ruled Spain. He was the former husband of Queen Mary of England, the Catholic daughter of Henry VIII by his first wife, a Spanish princess. Queen Mary died without children, and her successor was Queen Elizabeth, an Anglican (who reigns 1558-1603).

In 1568, the Netherlands rebelled against Spain, partly driven by fear of the Inquisition. The northern provinces united to become Holland under the leadership of William the Silent, who was killed by a Catholic assassin in 1584. Elizabeth sent aid to the Dutch rebels against Spain beginning in 1585. In 1588, Spain sent an armada against England but it was defeated. In 1595-98, the first Dutch voyage went to the East Indies. By 1602, the Dutch East India Company was trading everywhere, endangering the Spanish colonial empire.

## Hideyoshi's Sword Hunt

In 1588, Hideyoshi decreed that all farmers were to turn in their weapons. They were to be melted down to build the great Kyoto temple of Hokoji, with a huge bronze statue of the Buddha over 65 feet tall. (Later, a mound was raised near the great statue for the trophies of Hideyoshi's Korean Wars, the severed noses and ears of Chinese and Korean soldiers.)

The Tokugawa Shōgun relaxed this decree slightly. Townsfolk and traveling farmers could wear wakizashi. The katana became a badge of social rank; any commoner wearing one was subject to the death penalty for usurping the privilege of a samurai.



## Tokugawa Ieyasu

Tokugawa Ieyasu started out as a minor Minamoto daimyō. His father appealed to the Imagawa clan for help against the Oda clan and sent his five-year-old son to the Imagawa as a hostage. The Oda kidnapped the boy and kept him for over 10 years. Eventually the Oda and Imagawa made peace and Ieyasu went home at age 16. He gradually enlarged his clan's territory. In 1567, he allied with Takeda Shingen against the Imagawa, with the two victors splitting the territory. Later, Shingen tried to seize Ieyasu's new territory. Ieyasu allied with Oda Nobunaga and held off first Shingen, then his son. He paid a formal visit of thanks to Nobunaga, then visited Kyōto and Ōsaka, returning home on news of Nobunaga's death.





## C H A P T E R   T H R E E

# *The Late Tokugawa Era*

Tsunayoshi, the fifth Tokugawa Shōgun, was the last to determine his own administrative policy. He extravagantly spent much of the Shogunate treasury – some of it on the arts and charities, some on his court favorites. The Shōgun who followed him turned over administration of the country to the Shogunate council.





## Background: The Early Tokugawa Shōguns

Hidetada became Shōgun in 1605, during his father Ieyasu's lifetime. Both tried to root out Japanese Christianity. Japanese were forbidden to sail out of sight of land. From this point on, Japanese characters would have a great deal of difficulty attempting to leave Japan. At one point, a taifu blew a Japanese fishing boat out to sea for some days; it returned to have all its men executed. In 1620, Hidetada married his daughter to Emperor Go-Mizunoo. He went inkyo in 1622, six years after his father's death.

Iemitsu was Hidetada's eldest son and became Shōgun in 1622 at age 19. He became Japan's real ruler in 1632 upon his father's death. In 1624, English traders were banished from Japan when the heir to the British throne (Charles I) became engaged to a French Catholic princess. In 1636, Iemitsu ordered the destruction of all ships capable of more than coastline sailing and forbid building any more such ships. In 1638, the Dutch ship *de Ryp* helped to put down the Shimabara rebellion of Japanese Christians. In 1641, the Dutch traders were confined to Dejima. Iemitsu had the Emperor (his nephew) proclaim that an Imperial prince must be high priest of the Nikkō shrine, giving the Shogunate a hostage from the Imperial Court. He died, still Shōgun, in 1651.

Ietsuna was Iemitsu's eldest son. He became Shōgun at age 12, upon his father's death. He prohibited any translation of European works and any writing concerning the government or recent history. Historical plays could still be presented, but the names had to be changed. A tradition grew up of what fictitious names to use. For instance, Hideyoshi was called Hisayoshi, and Nobunaga was called Harunaga. Ietsuna had no sons, but named his younger brother Tsunayoshi as his heir. He died in 1680 at age 41.

# The Shōguns of the Late Tokugawa Era

Tokugawa Tsunayoshi became Shōgun in 1680, after the death of his elder brother Ietsuna. Neither of them had any children. Buddhist priests told Tsunayoshi that his bad karma was due to his having injured animals in an earlier life. He therefore forbid his subjects to kill animals and had places of refuge erected for disabled or aged dogs and horses. A daimyō's procession waited for a dog who lay sleeping in the road until it awakened. A samurai who killed a swallow had to commit seppuku, and his children were sent into exile. Tsunayoshi gained the nickname "the dog Shōgun."

Tsunayoshi also lavished funds on artists and writers. When the Shogunate treasury began to run low, he raised money by inflating the currency. He granted more and more land out of the Shogunate domains to his chief adviser Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu. He encouraged his *hatamoto* to attack the *otokodate* (see p. 42), until finally most of the bands left Edo. In 1709, Tsunayoshi's wife stabbed the Shōgun to death and then killed herself.

Tsunayoshi's nephew Tokugawa Ienobu repealed Tsunayoshi's laws against animal killing and reformed the coinage. He died three years after becoming Shōgun, possibly due to ill health, possibly due to skillful poisoners. Ienobu's four-year-old son succeeded him, but died three years later in 1716. This left no heir descended from Ieyasu's eldest son.

The Shogunate council chose as Shōgun the daimyō of Kii, Tokugawa Yoshimune, descended from Ieyasu's eighth son. Yoshimune's son Ieshige became Shōgun in 1745, followed in 1760 by his son Ieharu. Like Ienobu and his son, Yoshimune and his descendants left affairs of state to their ministers.

The most remarkable of these ministers was Yoshimune's adviser, Magistrate Ōka Tadasuke. He increased Japan's prosperity by allowing trade between provinces, giving Yoshimune the nickname of "the rice Shōgun." During Yoshimune's reign, beginning in 1720, the Dutch were allowed to sell imported and even translated copies of European books, as long as the books did not mention Christianity.

In 1786, Shōgun Ieharu died without a son. The Shogunate council chose as his heir the 15-year-old Ienari, descended from Yoshimune's third son. Again, Ienari and his descendants left affairs of state to their ministers. Ienari reigned from 1786 to 1837, and sired 51 children, 31 of whom died in their youth.

In 1808, the British ship *Phaeton* entered Nagasaki harbor. She was boarded by two Dutchmen from Dejima, who explained that the English were not permitted to trade. Her captain held the Dutchmen for two days, then released them and sailed away. The commander of Nagasaki harbor committed seppuku for not destroying the *Phaeton*. Five years later, an English fleet from Batavia attempted to conquer Dejima, but was driven away.

Ienari's son Ieyoshi succeeded him, followed in 1853 by his brother Iesada, who died without a son in 1858. The Shogunate council chose as Iesada's heir the 12-year-old Iemochi, a member of the Kii branch of the Tokugawa. He died at age 21 in 1866, during the Satsuma, Chōshū, and Tosa rebellion.

The Shogunate council then chose one of its own members, Tokugawa Keiō, who took the name Yoshinobu. The next year, Emperor Kōmei died and was succeeded by Emperor Meiji. Yoshinobu resigned his office on October 14, 1867, restoring power nominally to the Emperor.





## The Culture

During this period, the government attempted to keep the country from changing in any significant way and strictly regulated all contact with Westerners. Laws were passed ordering daimyō to burn any Western vessel that landed on their shores and to kill the crew. Eventually, the government's fear of Western thought lessened. In 1720, the Shogunate again permitted the Dutch to import Western books and to print editions translated into Japanese.

Occasional rice riots, when village headmen led their people in protest, marked this era. These minor rebellions did not attempt to overthrow the local clan, but merely begged for lowered taxes during years of crop failure. The "riot" might have consisted of anything from submitting a petition to a Shogunate official in Edo to attacking the samurai tax collectors. In an average year, taxes were 40-60% of the rice harvest; in a bad year, they might have been the whole harvest or even more. The usual official response to such a riot was to lower taxes, severely punish the officials whose negligence led to the disturbance, and crucify the leaders of the riot as conspirators. An average of six rice riots per year occurred over the whole of Japan during this period. Some involved only one village, while others involved up to 200 villages.

There were also occasional city riots, along similar lines. Casual laborers, vagrants, unemployed artisans, and small shopkeepers joined in looting the houses and warehouses of rich merchants, particularly sake dealers, rice merchants, and moneylenders. Despite laws forbidding peasants to leave their farms, many of these poor townfolk were of peasant birth. They left their villages dreaming of a life of wealth and ease in the big city. Again, the ringleaders (and often their families too) were punished by crucifixion.

Beginning in the late 18th century, the Western powers sent repeated delegations petitioning for a chance to trade with Japan. These petitions were addressed to the Shōgun, whom the Westerners had been told was the Emperor of Japan, and whom they were taught to call *taikun* ("great lord"). Westerners called the Emperor in Kyōto the Japanese Pope.

The Shogunate refused to receive the Western delegations. Instead it ordered that the coastline be fortified. It also cut off what little communication it had with the Spanish-ruled Philippines and with French-ruled Indochina. It was not able to prevent Catholic missionaries from settling on the island of Okinawa in the Ryūkyūs.

## Social Controls

The Tokugawa Shōguns kept a tight rein on the power of all major factions, to ensure their rule would not be challenged and civil war would not break out again. There were also strict sumptuary laws, mandating that commoners have a lifestyle appropriate to their social class. During the later Tokugawa Era, enforcement of these controls could sometimes be relaxed by suitable gifts to the appropriate officials.

### General Controls – The *Metsuke*

The Shogunate maintained a department of *metsuke* (overseers). They were official agents who observed the conduct of the court, daimyō, temples, and major merchants. They were ever alert for any sign of conspiracy or Christian activity. In addition, the Shogunate unofficially used ninja to keep the daimyō under surveillance.

## Who's in Charge Here? (Part Two)

As before, reigns end with the officials' deaths, unless separate dates of death are given.

### Tokugawa Shōguns

Tsunayoshi (r. 1680-1709)  
Ienobu (r. 1709-1712)  
Ietsugu (r. 1713-1716)  
Yoshimune (r. 1716-1745, d. 1751)  
Ieshige (r. 1745-1760, d. 1761)  
Ieharu (r. 1760-1786)  
Ienari (r. 1787-1837, d. 1841)  
Ieyoshi (r. 1837-1853)  
Iesada (r. 1853-1858)  
Iemochi (r. 1858-1866)  
Yoshinobu (r. 1867, d. 1913)

### Late Tokugawa Era Emperors

Reigen (r. 1663-1687, d. 1732)  
Higashiyama (r. 1687-1709)  
Nakamikado (r. 1709-1735, d. 1737)  
Sakuramachi (r. 1735-1747, d. 1750)  
Momozono (r. 1747-1762)  
Go-Sakuramachi (Empress, r. 1762-1771, d. 1813)  
Go-Momozono (r. 1771-1779)  
Kōkaku (r. 1780-1817, d. 1840)  
Ninkō (r. 1817-1846)  
Kōmei (r. 1846-1867)  
Meiji (r. 1867-1912)

Actual enthronements may come a year later in some cases.



## The Tokugawa Shogunate and the West

By 1605, Hidetada was Shōgun and things were beginning to change. Hidetada was suspicious of all Europeans and especially intolerant toward missionaries. He had already expelled all Europeans but the Dutch. Hidetada expelled all Western traders except the Dutch, who were confined to the small islands of Hirado and Dejima, near the port of Nagasaki on Kyūshū. The English and Spanish were driven out in 1624 and the Portuguese in 1638. Any non-Dutch Europeans were in constant danger. Western characters during this era would not have been able to travel openly.

Iemitsu became Shōgun in 1636 and ordered the destruction of all ships capable of more than coastline sailing. This would make travel to and from Japan extremely hazardous for European characters.

The Shimabara rebellion lasted from 1637 to 1638. During this period Westerners were often ruthlessly hunted down and executed. All Catholics, whether Japanese or Western, were also targeted.

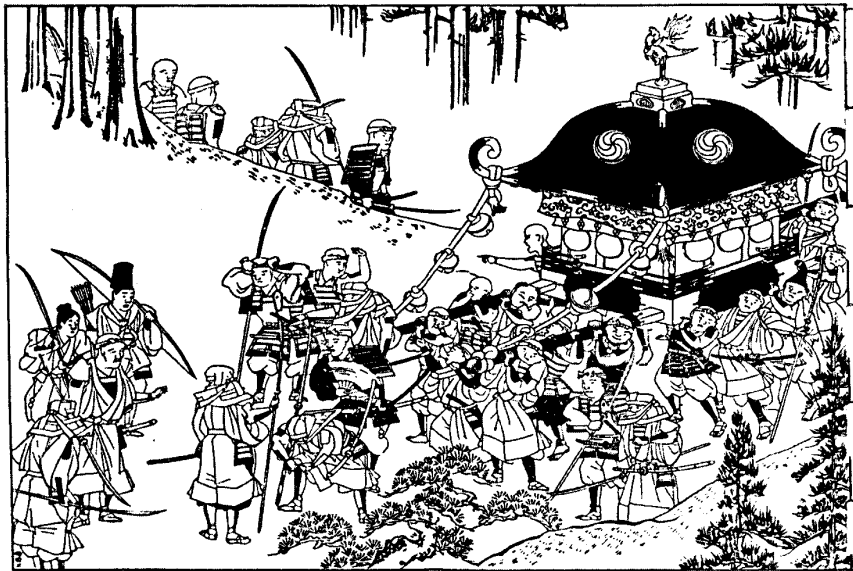
By 1641, the Dutch had been confined even further. They were only allowed to Dejima, a tiny island in the Nagasaki harbor. It might have been possible for Dutch characters to enter other parts of Japan during this period, but it would have been extremely risky.

By 1651, Ietsuna had banned translations of any European works in Japan. Ownership of such a translation was a capital offense. Many Japanese intellectuals were imprisoned or executed during this period because they refused to abandon their interest in the West.



## Controls on Temples

Each Buddhist sect had a central temple whose head priest was legal responsible for the doings of all the priests of the branch temples. The Shoguna officially designated one temple in each province to receive and transmit messages to and from the head temple. Temples were not allowed to own farmland but received a yearly allotment of income from the Shogunate. This allotment could be cut off if a particular temple or chain of temples displeased the government.



## The Imperial Court

The Emperor and his court nobles were isolated in Kyōto, their time filled with religious and artistic rituals. Virtually every day marked some important occasion that must be appropriately observed. The Shogunate kept the court under surveillance. Shogunate officials administered the expenditures of the court – neither the Emperor nor his nobles had independent funds.

## The Shōgun

The Shōgun lived in the great palace at Edo, with its elaborate gardens and courtyards. He left it on only two occasions a year. He made one ceremonial hunting trip and one ceremonial visit to the Nikkō shrine to Tokugawa Ieyasu. He usually remained in the inner chambers of his palace, inaccessible to anyone not approved by the Shogunate council.

## The Daimyō

There were three groups of provincial daimyō: *shimpan* (collateral daimyō), Tokugawa family clans (descended from Ieyasu's sons); *fudai* (house daimyō), Tokugawa vassal clans raised to daimyō status; and *tozama* (outside daimyō), other clans, allied with Tokugawa but not truly subordinate.



The *shimpan* were members of the Shogunate council. They could provide an heir if the succession fails. There were seven of these clans: the Tokugawa of Owari, Kii, and Mito provinces and the Shimizu, Tayasu, Hitotsubashi, and Matsudaira.

The *fudai* also held important government positions. They had provinces surrounding the vast Tokugawa domains and bordering such strategic positions as the major roads and the Imperial capital. There were 176 of these clans.

The *tozama* provinces were some distance north or south of Edo and Kyōto. There were 86 of these clans. At home or in Edo, they were under the surveillance of metsuke. The daimyō heirs had to have been approved by the government or the clan might have been abolished. Government controls on clan marriages and castle maintenance were strictly enforced (see below).

The Shogunate's policies deliberately fostered rivalries and jealousies between the various daimyō. All daimyō knew that the only way for their clan to expand was to have the Shogunate award it land confiscated from some other clan. Every few years, the Shogunate abolished a clan that had drifted out of favor with the council for some infraction of the law, and awards its castles and domains to other clans. Sometimes such a clan was later reinstated, although its samurai usually remained rōnin.

## Controls on Daimyō

Back in 1634, two years after Shōgun Hidetada's death, Shōgun Iemitsu issued an edict requiring daimyō to stay in Edo at least one year in two. Their wives and young children were not allowed to leave Edo at all. This hostage system made Edo the social center of Japan, and as a result it was even larger than Kyōto.

Daimyō could have their revenues decreased or be moved to a new province at the Shogunate's will. They were no longer the independent landholders that the Europeans knew as kings. They needed Shogunate permission to build or repair a castle, name an heir, or arrange an inter-clan marriage. If a daimyō died without an heir, his clan was abolished. Sometimes a lord would remain "alive" some months after his actual death, to allow an heir to be named.

## Samurai

The highest-ranking samurai were those who served the Shōgun. The Tokugawa clan had 5,000 *hatamoto* (household guards), who ranked almost as high as the daimyō, plus 15,000 common samurai. The provincial clan samurai were headed by the *karō*, often a hereditary position.

Like the daimyō, a samurai's social status depended on how much income he received, ranging from 5 to 8,000 *koku*. A high-ranking samurai may have owned about two acres; the lowest ranking samurai could own only about 280 square yards, and usually lived in barrack-like long houses, divided into small apartments.

Shogunate law regulated samurai blood feuds by requiring formal notification of the authorities: "For an injury done to master or father, you and the injurer cannot live together under the heaven. A person harboring such vengeance shall give notice in writing to the criminal court. No official hindrance may be offered to his vengeance, but he may not create a riot. Fellows who do not give notice are hypocritical wolves and may be punished or pardoned, depending on circumstances."

Samurai were strictly forbidden to commit *junshi* (suicide to accompany a master) at the death of their daimyō. Many of the older ones, however, became Buddhist priests, letting a new generation of samurai serve the young lord.

## Banzuin no Chōbei

Chōbei was the porter of the Banzuin temple and the "father" of a band of Edo otokodate (see p. 42) which at its height during the last decade of the 17th century numbered over 2,000 men. He took in poor newcomers who seemed brave and trustworthy (sometimes runaway peasants, sometimes men disowned by their parents or employers). He rented out their services as porters to the daimyō or helped them set themselves up as teachers of combat skills, taking 10% of their earnings.

A kabuki play told how Chōbei put to flight a drunken servant who jumped onto a kabuki stage and yelled at the actors, angering the man's master, the powerful hatamoto Mizuno Jurozaemon. The next day the aristocrat invited Chōbei to dinner. Chōbei accepted, knowing it will end in his death.

When he arrived, a servant spilled sake on him. Jurozaemon offered him a bath and new clothes. When Chōbei took off his wakizashi upon entering the bathroom, 10 servants attacked him with spears, and one with a sword finally killed him from behind.

## Mito Komon

Tokugawa Mitsukuni (1628-1700),\* popularly known as "the Mito Adviser," was the heir of Ieyasu's ninth son, who ruled the Mito domains. He was greatly respected by the rest of the Tokugawa family, including the Shōgun. After his retirement, he traveled in disguise as a cloth merchant with two assistants (his samurai). When corrupt officials or criminal town bosses challenged him, he revealed his true name and status and pronounced sentence on the guilty, who quailed in terror.

Mitsukuni promoted the study of the national religion, literature, and history. He surveyed the Buddhist temples in his domain and ordered that all but the most ancient ones be turned into Shintō shrines. When he retired in 1675 at age 47, he did not become a Buddhist priest. Instead he commanded all the artists and scholars in his court to let their hair grow again and rewarded them with the rank of samurai.

Toward the end of the century, Mitsukuni sponsored his great work, *Dainnihonshi* (The Great History of Japan), although it was not completed until the 20th century. Its presentation of history glorified the Imperial dynasty, and later anti-*bakufu* groups used its Emperor-centered views to further their movement, implying that the Shōgun, including the Tokugawa, were usurpers of Imperial rights.



## The 47 Rōnin of Lord Asano

In 1700, daimyō Asano Naganori (1667-1700) was appointed to receive an Imperial delegation sent to present the Shōgun with a gift from the Emperor. The Asano clan was a wealthy one, with a prosperous salt-making industry. However, Asano was too unsophisticated or too idealistic to realize that his appointment meant he should make a generous present to the Shogunate's Master of Etiquette, Lord Kira Yoshinaka (1641-1703).

Kira reacted to Asano's apparent miserliness by refusing to instruct him in proper procedure, embarrassing him at every turn by criticizing his ignorance. Finally, Asano drew his sword in the Shogunate palace and attacked Kira, wounding him in the forehead. Of course, Asano was condemned to commit seppuku and his clan was abolished.

The Asano *karō*, Ōishi Yoshio, petitioned the government to reestablish the clan. When that effort failed, he told his fellow samurai that they could not legally attack Kira; his wealth and political power allowed him to hire too many men for them to overcome. Most of the samurai agreed and drifted away. 125 of them sent Ōishi their pledge to seek vengeance, signing their names in blood.

Ōishi spent the next year in the geisha quarter of Edo, frequently drunk, apparently having forgotten all about his master. He divorced his wife and had her take away all the children but his oldest son. He returned the pledges to the samurai; about 50 sent them back to him.

Finally, in the last month of the same year, Ōishi summoned the loyal rōnin. There were 47 of them, including Ōishi and his son. They dressed in new clothes of formal black. They broke into Kira's new mansion, killing all the samurai there until they found Kira. They cut off his head and took it to Lord Asano's grave and Sengakuji temple, like a battlefield trophy (see p. 83).

The valor and loyalty of the rōnin impressed the Shogunate council, but they worried about maintaining law and order. The council did the rōnin the honor of permitting them to commit seppuku. Their bodies lie in the graveyard of Sengakuji, and are visited every day by reverent sightseers.

Traditionally, all 47 rōnin faced the council together. Historically, only 46 turned themselves in upon Kira's death. Much speculation surrounded the actual fate of the last, Terasaka Kichiemon. Also note that the traditional accounts often referred to Asano and Kira by just their titles, *Kōzukenosuke* (Lieutenant Governor of Kōzuke) and *Takuminokami* (Chief of the Bureau of Carpentry), respectively.

## Rōnin

Each time the government abolished a clan it created more rōnin. Unlike the rōnin of the Ashikaga era, the Tokugawa era's clanless samurai seldom took service with new daimyō. A few who had small farms made formal submission to the new daimyō and continued to live on their small estates, owing neither harvest taxes nor feudal duties to anyone. Such rōnin farmers were a sort of yeoman class, distrusted by both the clan samurai and the peasants.

Some rōnin planned vengeance against those who helped destroy their clans. Most just became wandering fighters. Many rōnin fought one another casually, sometimes to win a prize at a local festival, sometimes just to display their skills and weapons. Some of these rōnin master fighters eventually started their own schools. They taught combat skills or the newly popular combat arts. Others became bandits or gamblers. Some joined Edo's gangs of *otokodate*, men who protected commoners from arrogant samurai (see below).

Some rōnin became Buddhist priests; many joined the Fuke sect, whose priests wore large straw hats that covered their faces. The Fuke priests traveled through the countryside, begging for meals and shelter and playing the flute to the glory of Buddha. Ninja often disguised themselves as Fuke priests, since the costume prevented them from being easily recognized. The Fuke temple chain tried to unmask such fake priests, to avoid having its income reduced by the government.

Finally, some rōnin were adopted by wealthy merchants, eager to have grandsons of samurai rank. Their descendants wore the two swords only on formal family occasions such as marriages and funerals. By the start of the 19th century, many successful town artisans and merchants were of samurai descent, though the only sign of it was their samurai hairdo (see p. 12). Western merchants were sometimes quite surprised at the proud manner and fierce temper of people they thought of as servant class.



## The Otokodate and Gamblers

Newcomers to Edo increasingly turned to criminal activity, since they could find no legal jobs. The authorities attempted to control the increasing numbers of petty criminals by occasionally rounding up vagrants and beggars and imprisoning them for three years. In prison, they learned handicrafts; afterwards they received a small amount of money and were set free. While in prison, they wore red kimonos for ease of identification.

After the great riot of 1732, the commoners of Edo were forbidden to carry even wakizashi. Instead, they armed themselves with *tetsubō* (iron staffs) and *tessen* (iron fans). These were banned after the great riots of the 1780s, and the people of Edo armed themselves with *bō* staffs.



Outside of Edo, the daimyō no longer paid much attention to their town ward heads. The Shogunate's only concern was that the metsuke watch for signs of rebellion. The petty officials became more preoccupied with their own pleasures and less concerned with the needs of the people. The head of the local gambling gang often took their place.

Many of these gambler bosses became quite popular with the commoners, much like Robin Hood and his band of outlaws, and for much the same reasons. Some of them ended up appointed officials and taking legal responsibility for their towns.



## The Farmers

The Shogunate encouraged daimyō to live beyond their means to ensure that they were too poor to rebel. The daimyō and their samurai sold their rice (often before the harvest) to merchants for silver and gold, which they spent on luxury goods (often on credit). Harvest taxes were about 60%, and the daimyō were reluctant to make exceptions for bad harvests. Sometimes the daimyō even imposed special taxes, in order to meet the cost of special ceremonies. Peasants were often compared to sesame seeds that were pressed for their oil: "the harder you press, the more you squeeze out."

After a poor harvest, some of the poorer farmers were only able to meet their taxes by selling a daughter's contract as a courtesan (see p. 13). Younger sons who saw no hope of owning their own land often ran away to the local castle-town or even to the big cities of Edo or Ōsaka, hoping to become rich. Most of them ended up becoming casual laborers or criminals.

Sometimes, in years of crop failures, the village headman decided that the situation was too much to bear. He summoned the farmers to gather at night out in the fields or by the riverbank and talk over their grievances. Sometimes they addressed a petition for lowered taxes directly to the daimyō, a criminal offense since it meant bypassing the clan treasurer.

A mob of peasants would sometimes storm into the clan castle town, looting the houses and warehouses of rich merchants. The poor townsfolk (casual laborers, vagrants, unemployed artisans, and small shopkeepers) soon joined them. The town police and the clan samurai sometimes did nothing to protect the merchants' goods, so the merchants relied on their own guards, usually rōnin whose upbringing gave them little sympathy for mere peasants.

## Ōoka the Magistrate

Ōoka was the magistrate of Edo from 1717 to 1736, after which he served the Shogunate in various other important offices. One story told that soon after he became magistrate, his enemies attempted to embarrass him into resigning by challenging him to find a solution to Edo's cutpurse problem. The crime was too trivial to be worth a death sentence, but fines and beatings did not seem to deter the criminals.

Ōoka responded by announcing that beginning in one month all cutpurses had to carry an official government license, which cost \$1. Cutting a purse without carrying an official license would then mean defying government regulations, and would be punished by execution.

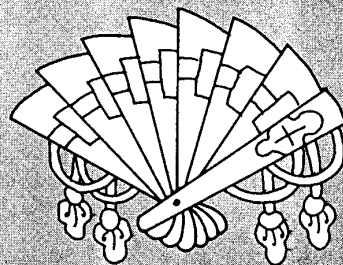
The licenses were man-sized lacquered boards painted red with big black *kanji*. The cutpurses took one look at them and decided to take up new ways of gaining a living.

## Western Influences

Western books represented the only chance for the adventurous to glimpse a world outside Japan. They were passed from scholar to scholar, often laboriously copied by hand. One poet wrote, "Dutch letters running sideways are like a line of wild geese flying in the sky."

A few Japanese painters began to experiment with perspective as seen in Western illustrations. In the early 18th century, Shiba Kokan traveled to Nagasaki and got a job on Dejima as a servant in order to talk to the Dutch about art. He later wrote several works about astronomy, geography, and art, using what he learned.

The greatest influence was on Japanese medicine. Doctors studied a Dutch book on anatomy, then dissected the corpse of a criminal, following its illustrations. Doctors began experimenting with vaccines against smallpox and other diseases. A number of doctors became political dissidents after studying translated books. They wanted to open up Japan to Westerners so they could learn more of the West's rapidly developing sciences and technology.



## The Sumptuary Laws

The sumptuary laws of the Tokugawa covered almost every imaginable type of expenditure. Samurai were not permitted to wear purple silk without their daimyō's permission; commoners were not permitted to wear silk at all. *Kago* (palanquins) could only be used by nobles, daimyō and their relatives, physicians, diviners and priests, and the aged or ill. If a samurai rode in a *kago*, his daimyō was held responsible. Even the amount of money a man could spend on the dowry of his daughter or the wedding of his son was strictly regulated, based on the family's social class and income.

In practice, people with money still found ways to spend it, frequently in ways that did not draw the attention of the government police. An *otokodate* might have worn a lime green cotton kimono with a lining of cherry red silk. During hard times, the government used the sumptuary laws to direct the anger of the people against the rich merchants, particularly the money lenders, confiscating their wealth as a punishment for their ostentatious extravagance, and canceling the debts of people to whom they have sold on credit.

## Pawnbrokers

A pawnbroker gave you half the item's value and a pawn ticket good until New Year's. After that, he could sell the item unless you redeemed it or paid him a tenth of the value. (For example, a katana is worth \$650. You could pawn it for \$325, but you had to pay the pawnbroker \$65 every New Year's after that if you wanted the katana back someday.) A starting character's pawn tickets are worth half the item's value.

## The Forged Travel Pass

A Buddhist priest traveling back to his head temple was approached by a man who offers to be his servant on the trip in exchange for his prayers. The priest agreed and altered his travel pass to include the words "and a servant."

The next night, the priest woke up to hear his new servant leaving their inn room. He followed the man outside and heard him talk to a group of men.

"The robbery went off without a hitch," they said; "Here's the gold."

"You're a bandit," the priest exclaimed in horror.

The man just grinned. "If you dare tell anyone about this," he said, "I'll tell them about how you altered your travel pass, and you'll be executed. Keep silent about me, and I'll keep silent about you."

The priest said nothing to the bandit chief or, later on that day, to the officials at the province barrier. The next morning his "servant" had disappeared, leaving him a sizable donation for his temple.

## The Merchants

During this era, the major merchants grew steadily richer and more politically powerful. Their social status increased with their power, despite the teachings of Confucius. By the year 1700, virtually all the silver and gold coins were in the hands of the townsfolk.

In the early 18th century, rice merchants began to speculate in the price of rice. Once it had averaged \$20 a *koku*, but it fluctuated wildly from year to year, varying between \$10 and \$75. Townsfolk were paid in money, not rice like samurai. Sometimes the poorer artisans and casual laborers did not earn enough to be able to buy food. In bad years, pawnbrokers had a lively business, not only in family heirlooms like art, jewelry, and swords but also in clothing. Moneylenders bought mortgages on homes in return for monthly payments.

## Controls on Commoners

Each household had a legal head who was responsible for all family members. His actions sometimes brought about the disgrace and punishment of the entire family. Households were organized into groups of five, with a head family responsible for the other families. These group heads reported all group doings to the village or ward head, who was in turn legally responsible for their actions.

The only remedy to avoid involvement in the embarrassing or criminal actions of a family member was to disown him formally. This resulted in the man's expulsion, not only from the family home, but also from the home district.

Since the ban on Christianity in 1616, each village and town ward had to submit an annual census of its inhabitants, including servants, stating to which local Buddhist temple they belong. Suspected Christians were tested by having them step on a cross or picture of the crucifixion.

## Controls on Travelers

The great roads of Tokugawa Japan linked Edo to the other major cities of the nation, including Kyōto and the great shrine at Nikkō. Once fruit trees lined these roads, but the Shōgun decreed that these trees should be cut down and replaced by fir trees. This made it easier to keep track of travelers because they needed to stop and eat at restaurants.

There were official inspection points at province boundaries. Here all travelers had to show the wooden travel passes issued by their home village or town ward. This internal passport also had to be shown to innkeepers. In the Edo area, special watch was kept for women traveling disguised as men, to prevent daimyō from smuggling out their wives.

## Fighting Arts and Sports

During this relatively peaceful era, many Japanese began to think of weapons in terms of art rather than deadly combat. The combat schools granted their graduates certificates indicating they were qualified to instruct pupils. The combat arts schools ranked students in an elaborate merit system still used today, beginning at ninth (or higher) *kyū* (grade) and going up to first *kyū* for novices, then going on to first *dan* (step) up to ninth *dan* for experts. (A first *dan* in Jūdō is a "black belt.")

The combat arts could easily be told from the combat skills because their Japanese name ends in *dō* (way) rather than *jutsu* (technique). *Kendō* and *jūdō* were (and are) combat arts; *kenjutsu* and *jūjutsu* were combat skills.



Sumō wrestling was no longer a village sport but a town entertainment, with an annual tournament in Kyōto patronized by the Imperial Court. Sumō wrestling academies were founded. They trained their students to put on weight to lower their center of gravity while exercising to develop powerful muscles.

## The Schools

The Tokugawa Shogunate sponsored Confucian schools in Edo and Ōsaka. Confucianism taught that harmony must be maintained in the five human relations: father-son, ruler-subject, husband-wife, older brother-younger brother, and friend-friend. These Confucian schools also taught the classics of Chinese and Japanese literature and history.

The daimyō also established schools in their provinces to teach their young samurai classical studies, combat skills, and etiquette. A few clan schools in Kyūshū or near the Inland Sea also taught Dutch, Russian, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and other European sciences.



## Dutch Traders

The Dutch traders were restricted to the small island of Dejima, near Nagasaki harbor. Each spring they paid a ceremonial visit to Edo, where they presented gifts to the Shōgun. The journey from Dejima to Edo took about a month, and during their travels they were carefully guarded by the samurai of the Shimazu clan, the overlords of Kyūshū island.

While in Japan, the Dutch could not kill animals or carry weapons. They could not bring Western women to Dejima (so that no Westerners would be born there), but they were allowed the company of geisha and courtesans. Each trader had to show he was not a “Christian” (i.e., a Catholic) by stepping on a cross or image of the crucifixion. In addition, the Dutch could not inscribe the Christian era’s year on the front of their homes, own a Christian calendar or observe the Sabbath.

Dutch imports included candles, clocks, glass goblets, mosquito nets, muskets and cannon, spectacles, telescopes, thermometers, velvet, and translated Western books. These books included literary classics such as Aesop’s fables as well as science texts; books mentioning Christianity were forbidden. The Japanese paid with precious metal and refused to allow their farmers and artisans to develop any export trade.

## Kabuki and Bunraku

Kabuki was very popular in the Late Tokugawa Era. Samurai and nobles were legally forbidden to attend such plays (the sober Nō drama was more suited to their class), but they attended anyway, sitting in special curtained boxes so they were not technically visible as part of the audience. Men played women’s parts in kabuki plays; it was considered indecent for real women to appear on the stage. Many kabuki plays revolved around ghosts and other supernatural creatures. These were traditionally presented during the long hot summer afternoons, in the hope that shivering at the eerie special effects would make the spectators feel cooler.

Another popular art form was *bunraku* (puppet theater), with each puppet manipulated by two or three men. Many plays written for puppets were later presented as kabuki.

The most famous play of this era was *Chūshingura*, the story of Lord Asano and the 47 Rōnin (see sidebar, p. 42). The first play based on the subject appeared in 1706, only three years after the actual incident. As usual for plays dramatizing events of recent history, the writers changed the names and historical era involved. The play was nominally set in the Ashikaga Era and Lord Asano became Lord Kono, for instance. One popular bunraku version of the play, *Syllabary Chūshingura*, showed the final fight with each of the rōnin wearing a wooden tag with one of the 47 characters then used in the Japanese syllabary. Some version of *Chūshingura* was performed each year in both Tōkyō and Ōsaka, usually in the last month of the year, the month the actual revenge occurred.

## Hiraga Gennai

Hiraga Gennai (1728-1779) left home in Shikoku to study in Edo. Once there, he decided he must learn all that the West has to offer and sold all his possessions to buy a Dutch book on natural history.

He became a celebrated botanist, studying the medicinal uses of all the plants of Japan. He also studied electricity and built his own apparatus to conduct experiments. He financed his studies by starting a company that produced and sold asbestos cloth, which he read about in Western books. He also wrote popular *jōruri* (ballad dramas, the foundation of bunraku) plays.

In 1779, Hiraga’s publisher died and Hiraga was charged with his murder. He died in prison while awaiting trial.

## Siebold and his Students

Philipp-Franz von Siebold, a physician who had written books on biology in both Latin and German, was appointed head of a Dutch scientific mission to Japan. He arrived in Dejima in August of 1823. He traveled to Edo with the Dutch delegation in 1816 and obtained approval to remain indefinitely to give lessons to Japanese students in medicine and surgery. In 1824, one of his students was Takano Chōei, who soon began teaching Western medical techniques to Japanese physicians himself.

In 1826, Siebold met Shogunate court astronomer Takahashi Sakuzaemon, who spoke Dutch, Manchu, and Russian and had translated a number of Western books. Siebold persuaded Takahashi to give him a map of the interior of Japan in exchange for some Dutch books.

Two years later, in 1828, the metsuke found out about the incident. They arrested Takahashi on a charge of treason and he died in prison that year. Siebold's house was searched, his servants arrested and tortured, and he was sent back to Dejima (along with the map, which the authorities never found). He was expelled from Japan in 1830 and ordered never to return.

In 1838, Siebold's former student Takano published a book called *Stories of Dreams* about European civilization, which included implied criticism of the Shogunate's exclusion policy. He was sent to prison but escaped in 1841 when the prison caught fire. He lived in disguise in Edo under a false name and supported himself by translating Western books. Finally the government located him and sent soldiers to arrest him. He killed two of them, then committed suicide, in 1850.

## The Ōsaka Riot of 1837

The first major city riot occurred in Edo in 1732. After that, there were riots in the great cities of Edo and Ōsaka at least once a decade, with frequent riots in 1782-1787, during a long period of bad harvests. Sometimes the rioters stole food. Other riots were directed against the authorities. The government had to summon army units to crush the dissidents.

In 1837, there was a crop failure in western Japan. The retired magistrate of Ōsaka, Ōshio Heihachiro (1793-1837), asked the government to give rice to the people, but they refused. Ōshio was an adherent of Wang Yang-ming's philosophy of action, and so sold all his books for a thousand gold coins. Most of it he spent on food for the poor. With the rest he bought a cannon, a dozen teppō, and several hundred swords. He had posters printed summoning the people to action. He led his followers to try to seize the castle of Ōsaka, but their attack was beaten off. He fled for his life and committed seppuku when found by the police.

## The Opening of Japan (1854-1868)

On July 8, 1853, an American fleet anchored in Suruga Bay, only a few days' travel from Edo itself. Its commander, Commodore Perry, presented officials with a letter from President Millard Fillmore to the Shōgun and warned that he would return the following year for an answer.

Shōgun Tokugawa Ieyoshi died August 15th and was succeeded by his brother, Iesada. Iesada opened a port on Honshū and another on Kyūshū to American traders. He concluded a formal treaty with the United States in 1854, 17 days before his death.

The Shogunate council named a 12-year-old as the Shōgun and concluded treaties with Holland, Russia, England, and France. It opened Yokohama, just across the bay from Edo, to foreigners. The days of the Tokugawa Shogunate were virtually over. The rebellion of the Satsuma, Chōshū, and Tosa provinces began in 1863, and culminated in the Meiji Restoration of 1868.

## Japan and the West

The reaction of medieval Japanese to Westerners is seldom favorable. Japanese find their appearance repulsive. Westerners resemble the classic descriptions of goblins – tall, hairy, and long-nosed. Japanese find it hard to tell one Westerner from another, and Westerners have the same problem with respect to Japanese. Children cry out in fear on seeing Westerners, and even adults are startled.

Japanese think Westerners are not very bright. They are too ignorant to read ideographs, and seem to have a great deal of difficulty with sensible language. They seem unable to understand good manners. Worst of all, they are *dirty*. They don't bathe even once a day! When they come indoors, they leave their shoes on and get dirt on the tatami mats. Their breath smells of animal fats, just like Eta!

In their favor, Western traders have wonderful things for sale. Weapons such as muskets and small cannon tempt the fighter. Splendid toys, such as the mechanical clock, entertain during lighter moments. Europeans even make special clocks with a sliding mechanism to keep track of the Japanese hour, which varies in length with the season.

One thing about these first Western visitors seems very familiar. Priests often accompany them! Catholicism seemed like just another Buddhist sect to the Japanese – the priests are ascetics with black robes, rosaries, and shaven heads.

## Adventuring When West Meets Japan

The types of adventures possible with Western characters in Japan will vary greatly depending on the year of the campaign. Relatively open exchanges mark the first contacts between Japanese and the Portuguese in 1543. An expansion of trade and moderate success by Jesuit missionaries follows this period. During this period, careful Westerners might gain wealth and stand a reasonable chance of surviving.

During the late Tokugawa period, however, Japan has taken steps to keep Western influence minimal. Japanese ships capable of more than coastline sailing have been destroyed, Christians persecuted, the Dutch confined to Dejima, all other Westerners expelled, and translations of foreign books banned. The metsuke were a major part of life from 1680 to 1853. Their job is to prevent any contamination of Japan by the West.







## C H A P T E R F O U R

# *Timeline of Japanese History*

*Note: Traditional events are in bold italic.*

c. 8000 B.C.: Jōmon culture, named after a rope pattern common to the pottery used by this pre-agricultural (TL 0) society. Lasts until about the 3rd century B.C.

660 B.C.: ***Emperor Jimmu, great-great-grandson of the goddess Amaterasu, unites the Japanese islands.*** From the earliest recorded period, Japan has been a society of clans, groups of families struggling with each other for power within Japan and occasionally uniting against an outside enemy. All the clans accept the suzerainty of the Imperial clan, the Yamato, descendants of Amaterasu. Frequently, that suzerainty will be only nominal – real power resting in the hands of some other clan, the Emperor and his court symbols without real power.

c. 300 B.C.: Yayoi culture, named after a section of Tōkyō where initial archaeological evidence was found.

The Yayoi were TL1 in many areas, such as agriculture and weaponry, but did not develop written language.

23 B.C.: ***First recorded wrestling match is held.***

c. 198: According to some accounts, early Nestorian missionaries reach Japan, where the religion and its followers become known as *keikyō* (the shining religion).

250: The Kofun Era, so named for the *kofun* (tomb mounds) that begin to appear. Horses and armor are used in conflicts, innovations possibly brought by invading Koreans. The Yamato clan, claiming lineage to Amaterasu, achieves dominance. Also called the Yamato Era.

414: The Korean Kwanggaet'o Monument is built. It describes several invasions of Korea by Japan.

427: Emperor Nintoku dies and is interred in the largest of the burial mounds, covering 80 acres.



478: First Shintō shrines are constructed.

534: Koreans introduce Chinese mathematics to Japan.

552: Baek-je, one of three kingdoms on the Korean peninsula, sends Buddhist texts and statues to the Yamato court. The Nakatomi and Mononobe *uji* (families) oppose the acceptance of the religion; the Soga *uji* champions it.

587: The Soga *uji* defeats the Mononobe in war.

588: The first Buddhist temple in Japan is built in Asuka, by craftsmen from Baek-je.

604: Prince Shōtoku, revered regent to Empress Suiko, issues the *Jūshichijō no Kempō* (Seventeen-Article Constitution), a set of Confucian and Buddhist principles to increase both court power and social harmony.

607: Shōtoku sends the first diplomatic mission to China, with the famous letter "from the Land of the Rising Sun to the Land of the Setting Sun" salutation. The Hōryūji temple is founded in Nara. Today, it is the oldest surviving Buddhist temple in Japan and oldest surviving wooden building in the world.

645: The Nakatomi *uji* leads a coup d'état to end the fighting that began after the death of Prince Shōtoku in 642. The head of the Nakatomi takes the surname Fujiwara.

646: The Yamato court introduces the Taika Reform, also based on Chinese philosophies. The reform gives the government even more control over the land.

657: *The Buddhist memorial ceremony Urabon (The Feast of Lanterns) is held in Japan for the first time.*

663: Navies of China and Shilla (another Korean kingdom) end what presence the Japanese fleet had in Korea.

702: The Taihō Code extends the provisions of the Taika Reform.

710: The court establishes a permanent capital at Heijō (modern Nara), marking the end of the Yamato period and the beginning of the Nara period.

712: The first history book of Japan, *Kojiki*, collects tales that had been passed down through the generations. A second volume, *Nihon Shoki*, will follow in 720.

741: The government requires that every province have a Buddhist temple and pagoda.

c. 760: *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves), the earliest surviving collection of *tanka* (Chinese-style poetry), is published

764: Ex-empress Kōken resumes the throne as Empress Shōtoku. Her relationship with a Buddhist priest, Dōkyō, and his later attempt to take the throne himself mark the beginning of the court's shunning of both Buddhist priests and female leaders.

784: The court abandons the Nara capital.

792: Military power and responsibility passes to provincial leaders as the conscription system ends.

794: The court establishes a new capital at Heian (modern Kyōto). Adoption of Chinese philosophies ends with the Nara period, and Japanese adaptation begins with the Heian period.

805: Saichō, a Buddhist monk, establishes the Tendai sect of Buddhism. *The headquarters of Tendai, Enryakuji on Hieizan, protects the new capital from evil spirits who attack from the northeast.*

816: Kūkai, another monk, establishes the Shingon sect of Buddhism (also known as Mikkyō).

858: Grand Minister Fujiwara Yoshifusa serves as *sesshō* (regent for a minor) for his eight-year-old grandson. This marks the beginning of Fujiwara regency, which will last until 1184.

c. 900: The *Kotō* (old sword) Period in samurai sword history begins. The swordsmith Yasutsuna begins making single-edged swords with curvature.

903: Sugawara no Michizane, scholar and opponent of the Fujiwara, dies. *His ghost returns to haunt his enemies, leading to several promotions from the minor office he held in life to, ultimately, the patron kami of letters and calligraphy.*

935: Taira no Masakado proclaims himself the New Emperor, but his revolt ends with his death in 940.

987: *The demon-boy Shutendōji abducts aristocrats' children in and around Kyōto. The samurai Minamoto no Yorimitsu and Fujiwara no Yasumasa will find and kill Shutendōji in 995.*

c. 1010: Murasaki Shikibu completes the world's first novel, a tale of Heian court life entitled *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji). Her contemporary, Sei Shōnagon (pp. WWi40-41) writes the collection of stories *Makura no Sōshi* (The Pillow Book) around this time as well.

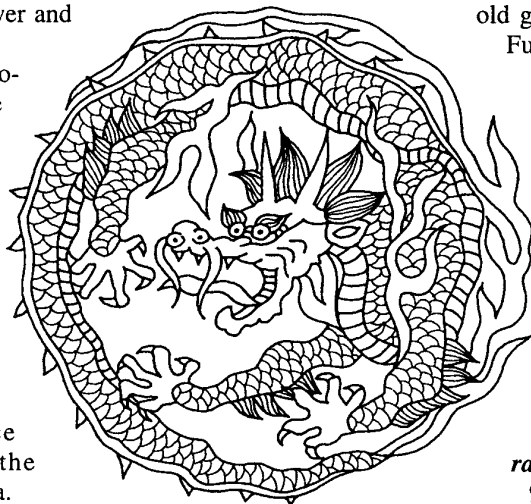
1156: The Hōgen Conflict, a clash between Inkyō Sutoku and Emperor Go-Shirakawa, results in provincial warriors (the early samurai) coming to the capital to support both sides. Go-Shirakawa is victorious with the help of the Taira *uji*, but the samurai remain in the capital.

1159: Minamoto no Yoshitsune, the most famous tragic warrior of Japan, is born. Many legendary exploits are attributed to Yoshitsune and his loyal partner Benkei. They both will die, Yoshitsune by his own hand, fighting with Yoshitsune's brother Yoritomo in 1189.

1160: The Taira *uji* takes control the government after the Heiji War (1159-1160).

1175: The monk Hōnen establishes the Jōdo (Pure Land) sect of Buddhism, emphasizing Amida (Buddha of Boundless Light) worship.

1180: The Gempei War begins, pitting the Taira against the Minamoto.



1185: The Minamoto defeat the Taira at the Battle of Dan-no-Ura, ending the war. *The sacred Imperial magatama (curved jewel) is lost in the sea.*

1191: The monk Eisai establishes the Rinzaï branch of Zen Buddhism.

1192: Minamoto no Yoritomo has himself appointed *Seiï TaiShōgun* (barbarian-subduing generalissimo) by Emperor Go-Toba and sets up his *bakufu* (tent government) in Kamakura, marking the beginning of the Kamakura Shogunate.

1199: Yoritomo dies without a clear successor, initiating a power struggle.

1203: The Hōjō *uji* (Yoritomo's widow's family) assumes regency of the Shogunate.

1221: The Jōkyū Upheaval. Inkyō Go-Toba challenges the Shogunate in an effort to restore ultimate authority to the Imperial Court. The Shogunate army defeats his forces summarily and confiscates 3,000 *shōen* (manor estates) as a result, further solidifying the power of the Shogunate.

1227: The *bakufu* orders the capture and execution of the Japanese pirates plaguing Korea.

1232: The Shogunate issues the Jōei Code, which preserves the rights of the Imperial Court and the Buddhist church and focuses the Shogunate's jurisdiction on the samurai. The code will influence law throughout Japan's feudal era.

1244: The monk Dōgen establishes a temple for the Sōtō branch of Zen Buddhism.

1246: Emperor Go-Fukakusa is enthroned. His younger brother will succeed him as Emperor Kameyama. Descendents of both will alternate succession according to the will of their father, Emperor Go-Saga.

1253: The monk Nichiren denounces Zen and Jōdo Buddhism, and establishes the Nichiren sect of Buddhism.

1266: Kublai Khan sends a messenger to demand Japan's submission to the Mongols.

1274: A Mongol invasion force is rebuffed by a heavy storm. A similar storm (now called *kamikaze*, or divine wind) ends the second invasion attempt in 1281. The samurai develop the use of formations in battle against the Mongols, and the sword becomes their primary weapon.

1325: Emperor Go-Daigo sends a diplomatic mission to China, resuming contact that had been broken for nearly 500 years.

1331: Go-Daigo challenges the Shogunate in an attempt to keep the Imperial succession within the Kameyama lineage and to restore Imperial power. The *bakufu* exiles Go-Daigo to the Oki Islands.

1332: Ashikaga Takauji, commander of a Shogunate army sent to eliminate Go-Daigo, instead returns Go-Daigo to Kyōto as Emperor. Nitta Yoshisada, another commander, captures Kamakura in Go-Daigo's name, leading to the Kemmu Restoration in 1333.

1336: Takauji, disappointed that Go-Daigo named his own son as Shōgun, forces the Emperor to abdicate and enthrones Emperor Kōmyō of the Go-Fukakusa lineage. Kōmyō awards the Shogunate to Takeuji in 1338, marking the beginning of the Ashikaga Shogunate. Meanwhile, Go-Daigo establishes a second, southern court in Yoshino.

1372: Okinawan kingdoms are unified.

1374: Shintō priest Kan'ami and his son Zeami, along with their Kanze troupe, perform Nō plays for the Shogunate. The two actors and playwrights have developed the Nō drama to its symbolic form.

1392: Shogun Ashikaga Yorimitsu reaches an agreement with Go-Kameyama, Emperor of the southern court, to return sole Imperial power to the northern court and resume the alternation of Imperial lineages. The alternation did not occur, however, and the southern lineage ended.

1441: One of the *shugo daimyō* (military protectors) who control the various provinces in central and western Japan assassinates Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshinori.

The following Ashikaga Shōgun will be weak leaders, and contention over provincial lands will grow fierce.

1467: The Ōnin War begins, marking the beginning of *sengokujidai*.

Disgruntled *shugo daimyō* houses, the Hosokawa and the Yamana, fight over who will succeed Ashikaga Yoshimasa. Before retiring, the childless Yoshimasa had named his brother Yoshimi as his successor. Yoshimasa's wife bore him a son, Yoshihisa, the following year. As the war progresses, other *shugo daimyō* take the opportunity to seek improvements in their own at the expense of their neighbors. The war will last until 1477 and leave Kyōto in ruins and the Ashikaga Shogunate virtually powerless. Increased demand for swords during *sengoku-jidai* leads to lesser quality in their manufacture; few are Fine (p. B74).

1488: *Ikkō-ikki* (Jōdoshū Buddhist warriors and their peasant followers) take control of the Kaga province.

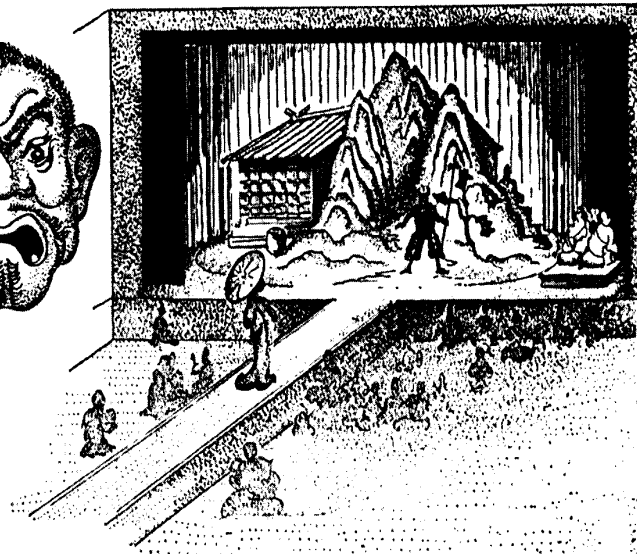
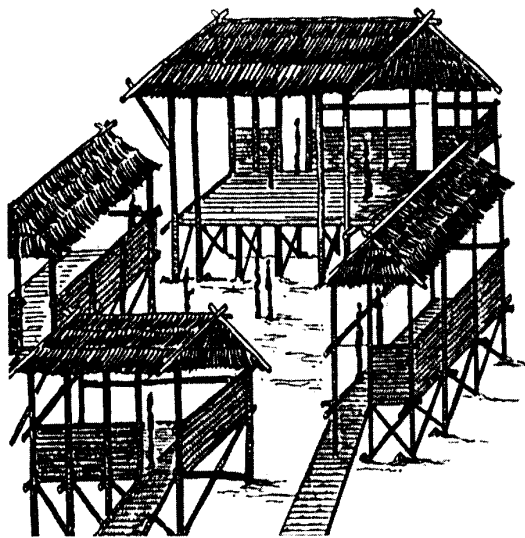
1530: The *Shintō* (new sword) Period of samurai sword history begins. Swords became more decorative and, in particular, shorter, with a cutting edge of about two feet. Swordsmiths gather in the castle towns that dot the country, resulting in less distinctiveness in the different schools.

1543: Shipwrecked Portuguese sailors in Tanegashima introduce firearms to Japan.

1549: Francisco Javier (anglicized as Francis Xavier), a Jesuit missionary, visits Japan and leads a revival which converts nearly 10,000 within a year and 300,000 (including  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the *daimyō*) by the end of the century.

1553: First Battle of Kawanakajima, with Takeda Shingen opposing Uesugi Kenshin. Neither side can claim victory, and they will meet again at the same battlefield four more times through 1564.





1560: At the Battle of Okehazama (which actually took place at Dengakuhazama), Oda Nobunaga leads a much smaller force to victory against Imagawa Yoshimoto when the latter attempts to march on Kyōto. A young Tokugawa Ieyasu fights alongside Nobunaga.

1568: Nobunaga himself captures Kyōto as he begins the process of unification. The last Ashikaga shogun's reign will not end until 1573, but Nobunaga has the actual power.

1570: The Asai and Asakura *uji* unite and separate Nobunaga's forces in Kyōto from the Oda domain. Nobunaga and Ieyasu defeat them in the Battle of Anegawa.

1571: Nobunaga destroys the Tendai temple Enryakuji as part of his effort to eliminate the threat from the Buddhist *yamabushi*.

1572: Japanese Christians first arrive in Lisbon, Portugal. They will meet the king of Spain and Pope Gregory XIII before returning to Japan in 1580.

1573: Takeda Shingen is killed by a *teppō* sniper. The Takeda keep his death a secret for two years.

1575: Nobunaga and Ieyasu defeat Takeda Katsuyori at the Battle of Nagashino, marking the first use of volley fire in Japan.

1580: Shibata Katsuei destroys the *Ikkō-ikki* in the Kaga province.

1582: Akechi Mitsuhide, one of Nobunaga's generals, betrays Nobunaga at Honnōji temple in Kyōto. ***Nobunaga commits seppuku rather than be burned alive in the temple that Mitsuhide's men had set aflame.*** Nobunaga had earlier allowed Mitsuhide's mother to die while she was held hostage by a rival. Mitsuhide is killed by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (or perhaps by peasants as Hideyoshi closes in) 13 days after his treachery.

1583: Hideyoshi leads his army to victory against Shibata Katsuei's forces in the Battle of Shizugatake, cementing his authority over the council of generals now ruling for Nobunaga's infant grandson Hidenobu. This year he

also begins a land survey of every rice field in Japan. The survey will be completed in 1598.

1584: Tokugawa Ieyasu fights Hideyoshi at the Battle of Nagakute, which ends with Ieyasu's acquiescence.

1587: Hideyoshi expels the Jesuit monks. The first Spaniards arrive in Japan.

1592: Hideyoshi begins the first attempt to invade Korea as a prelude to an invasion of China. It ends in failure years later. In 1597, he will try again, with even less success. The first Franciscans arrive in Japan.

1596: A devastating earthquake sets the stage for the end of the sengokujidai.

1597: Hideyoshi has 20 Japanese Christians and six missionaries crucified at Nagasaki.

1598: Hideyoshi dies. He had had his adopted son Hidetsugu executed and expected his infant son Hideyori to become the new Shōgun under the guidance of the daimyō who had sworn their allegiance.

1600: Tokugawa Ieyasu defeats the daimyō loyal to the Toyotomi at the Battle of Sekigahara. The first British and Dutch arrive in Japan.

1603: Emperor Go-Yōzei confers the title of Shōgun on Ieyasu.

1605: Miyamoto Musashi begins his *mushashūgyō* (meditative pilgrimage).

1606: Christianity is made illegal.

1609: Shimazu clan takes over Ryūkyū Kingdom (including Okinawa), but this is kept secret from China so that Ryūkyū-Chinese trade would continue.

1614: Shōgun Tokugawa Hidetada begins the persecution of Christians, resulting in over 3,000 recognized martyrs.

1620: The house of Mitsui is founded. It will become the largest commercial and financial empire of Japan.

1633: Japan is closed to foreigners.

1635: Japanese ships forbidden to sail abroad.



1637: Amakusa Shiro and several other *rōnin* lead 37,000 peasants against their daimyō, Matsukura Katsuie, in the Shimabara Rebellion. Many of the rebels are persecuted Jesuit converts, and all are suffering under heavy taxation. All of the rebels are killed when the rebellion is crushed in 1638. The Portuguese and Spanish are expelled as a result, leaving only the Protestant Dutch.

1642: Miyamoto Musashi (see pp. MA88-89) finishes writing *Gorin no Sho* (The Book of Five Rings).

1663: The Shogunate bans following one's master to death by *seppuku*.

1688: The Genroku Era begins, marking a peak in urban culture in Japan. The playwright Chikamatsu, the writer Saikaku, the print artist Moronobu, the painter Korin and the poet Bashō all ply their crafts during this period. It is characterized by the *ukiyo* (floating world), the entertainment that the urban middle class can now enjoy. Strictly speaking, the era ends in 1704.

1703: After biding their time for two years, the *Shijūshichishi* (47 *rōnin*) avenge the death of their master Asano Naganori by killing Kira Yoshinaka, the shogun's chief of protocol. In 1701, Kira so insulted Asano that he drew his sword in Edo Castle, and was ordered to commit *seppuku* for doing so. For beheading Yoshinaka, the *rōnin* are also ordered to commit *seppuku*.

1707: *Fujisan* (Mt. Fuji) erupts for the 18th time on record. The eruption dumps six inches of ash on Edo, 60 miles northeast.

1720: The Shogunate eases the prohibition against foreign books. Many Japanese learn Dutch and begin translating books for *rangaku* (Dutch studies).

c. 1729: Ishida Baigan, a philosopher and merchant, establishes the religion of *Shingaku* (heart learning), fusing elements of Confucianism, Shintō, and Buddhism into *chōnindō* (the way of the merchant).

1749: Russia colonizes the northern Kuril Islands and convert the Ainu there to Orthodox Christianity.

1771: Ainu massacre Russian traders and settlers at Urap in protest of the Russian fur tax.

1778: A Russian request to open trade in Hokkaidō is refused. Requests in 1792 and 1804 will also be refused.

1781: The first of a series of famines sparks riots and peasant uprisings.

1789: Final defeat of Ainu by Japanese samurai.

1811: The Shogunate begins translating Dutch scholarly works itself.

1837: Ōshio Heihachiro leads the Ōsaka Uprising, partly because of the national famine the year before. It is quickly put down.

1841: Mizuno Tadakuni initiates a reform program to help the ailing *bakufu* finances and try to move the peasantry back to the rural areas. Results in more resentment of the Shogunate.

1842: The *bakufu* allows foreign ships to be resupplied if they accidentally reach Japanese waters, reversing a specific 1825 ban.

1853: Commodore Matthew C. Perry pays his first visit to Japan, delivering a letter from the U.S. president seeking

access to Nagasaki. The Shogunate seeks advice from the daimyō, which reveals its weakening power.

1854: Perry returns and signs the Kanagawa Treaty allowing access to Shimoda and Hakodate and granting permission to send a consul. Treaties with Britain (1855), France (1855), Holland (1857), and Russia (1857) follow.

1858: Shōgun Tokugawa Iesada dies with no clear successor, sparking another power struggle. Twelve-year-old Tokugawa Iemochi emerges as the new Shōgun with Ii Naosuke as his *tairō* (grand councilor), but more fissures in the Shogunate are evident. Naosuke will be assassinated in 1860.

1862: A Satsuma samurai kills a British merchant, with no punishment from the *bakufu*. The following year the British will bombard the Satsuma capital Kagoshima. The Chōshū will follow a similar path in 1864.

1868: The Satsuma and Chōshū and their allies capture the Shogunate palace and restore power to the Emperor in the Meiji Restoration. Women are permitted to climb *Fujisan*. Japan opens Hokkaidō to Japanese settlement.

1871: All of the domains of the former daimyō are abolished and the modern prefecture system is put into place.

1872: Conscription is reinstated, eliminating the barrier between commoners and samurai. The Gregorian calendar is adopted.

1872: The Tōkyō-Yokohama Railway opens.

1873: The ban on Christianity is lifted.

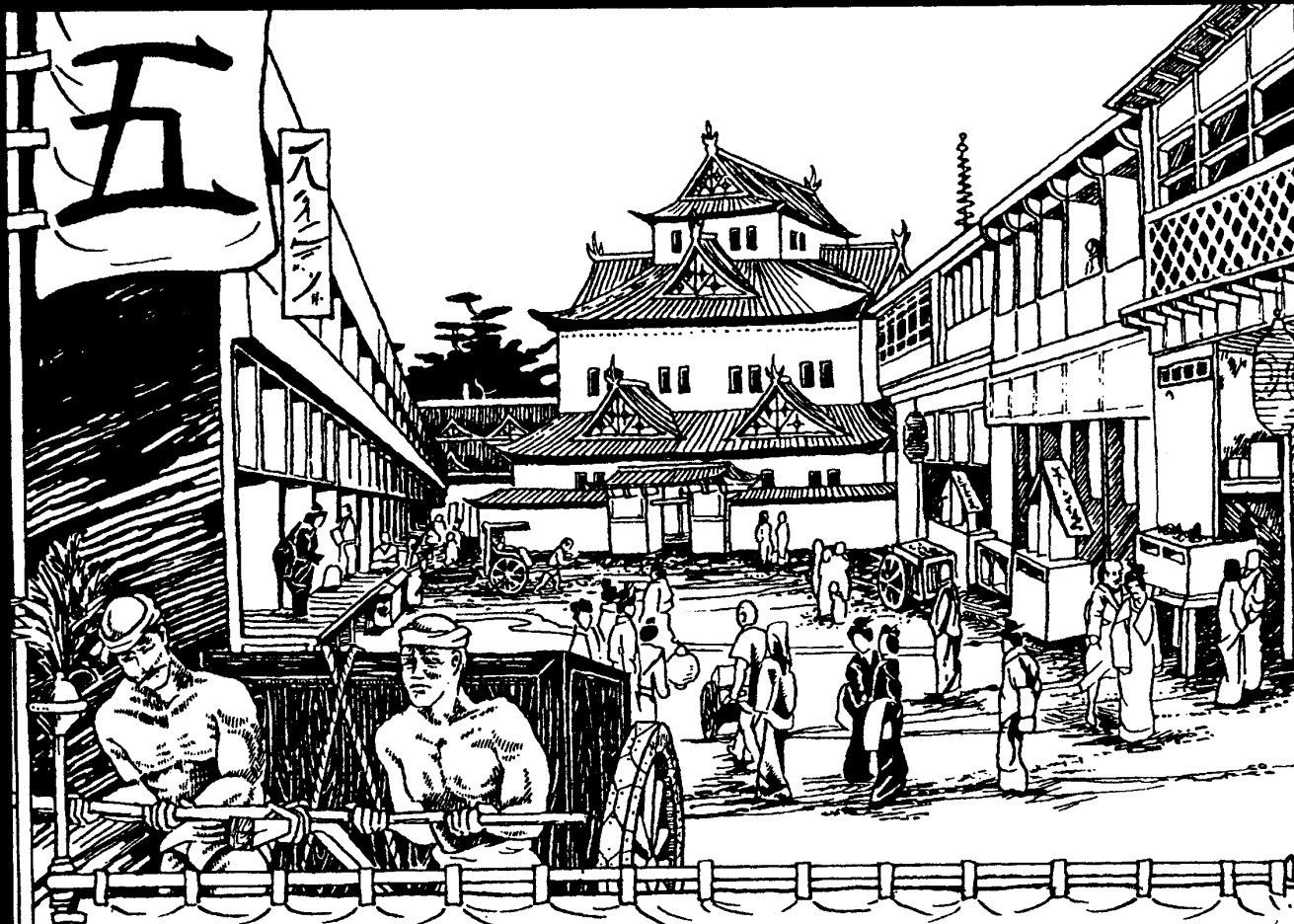
1876: Samurai are prohibited from wearing their swords.

1879: Japan incorporates the Ryūkyū Islands as the Okinawa Prefecture.

1889: Japan adopts the Meiji Constitution, based on the Prussian constitution with some Confucian additions. The *Jiyūtō* (Liberal Party) and *Kaishintō* (Progressive Party) have already been formed in anticipation of the first election the following year.

1894: Japan and China go to war over control of Korea. Japan will claim victory in 1895.





## CHAPTER FIVE

# Characters



### *Character Creation*

Heroes in most historical Japanese campaigns should be built with 100 points, with a limit of 40 points of disadvantages and five quirks. In more cinematic or fantastic campaigns, point totals of 150 to 300 points may be used, if desired. Sense of Duty (see p. 68, below) should be taken as a disadvantage by almost every character.

The type of characters that players create will depend on the background planned for the campaign. The standard roleplaying "wandering adventures" campaign will limit the choices; anyone



with a steady job has little or no time for adventuring. Most tales of Japanese adventurers are about samurai warriors or criminal investigators such as magistrates or ward heads. Itinerant peddlers or tradesmen, wandering priests, amateur artists, casual laborers, and pilgrims all have legitimate reason to travel. In addition, of course, there is the criminal underclass of gamblers, bandits, thieves, and spies.

The life of a would-be adventurer is also complicated by the institution of the *travel pass*. Every traveler has to carry a wooden pass, issued by the authorities of his hometown. This gives his name, home village or city ward, occupation, and purpose of travel. The travel pass is inspected and recorded at inns, and at the government barriers at the clan province boundaries on every major road. Forging a travel pass, or bypassing a barrier, is a capital offense.

The criminal classes can evade the bureaucracy, but are usually under the control of the local gambling-gang boss. The gamblers can provide forged passes, or bypass barriers. But they will only do it for members, or for a price.

## Character Templates

A character template is a list of attributes, advantages, disadvantages, and skills that a player can choose from to build a specific character type quickly, without neglecting important abilities or becoming bogged down in the rules. The point costs of these abilities are listed; their total is the "template cost." The player pays this cost, selects the options desired, writes those abilities down on his character sheet and spends any remaining points to customize his character.

Templates are optional guidelines, not rules. Templates are just a way of speeding up character design; they have no in-play effects and are not discounted package deals. The abilities listed are only suggestions, just like those in the *Character Types* sections of other *GURPS* books. The player can alter any or all items on the template, or just use it for inspiration during ordinary character design.

## Skills

A template's *primary skills* are those fundamental to its concept. *Secondary skills* are helpful skills it's hard to imagine omitting. *Background skills* are chosen for descriptive reasons rather than utility. Skills are listed in this format:

**Skill Name (Difficulty)** Relative Level [**Point Cost**]-Actual Level.

## Customization

Once a template is purchased, the player must customize it by spending any points remaining after subtracting its cost from starting character points. The template does not influence how these points are spent. If the template included fewer disadvantages than the campaign limit, more may be taken, giving extra points to spend. In addition, none of the templates specifies quirks, which can always be added by the player.

## Character Templates vs. Racial Templates

Character templates are *not* the same thing as racial templates (see p. 62), although the two types of templates *can* be combined (e.g., a hengyōkai character could select the "geisha" template) – just double-check that the same ability is not being bought twice.

## Medieval Japanese Height/Weight Table

ST	Height	Weight
3	4' 9"	100 lbs.
4	4' 10"	102
5	4' 11"	104
6	5'	106
7	5' 1"	109
8	5' 2"	112
9	5' 3"	116
10	5' 4"	120
11	5' 5"	124
12	5' 6"	128
13	5' 7"	132
14	5' 8"	136
15	5' 9"	140
16	5' 10"	145
17	5' 11"	150
18	6'	155

For each inch of height over 6', add eight pounds to average weight. For each inch of height less than 4' 9", subtract two pounds from average weight. For a female character, subtract 4" from height and five pounds from weight for that height.

## Names

Only samurai and nobles have family names followed by given names. Only relatives of the daimyō have the same family name as their clan name. Commoners have only a given name, which for men, especially peasants, often indicates the order of their birth. A first-born son is Tarō or Ichirō, a second-born Jirō, then Saburō, Shirō, Gorō, Rokurō, Shichirō, Hachirō, Kurō, and Jūrō. Jūrō (long life) is another common name. There are many other given names, usually one name element (see sidebar) followed by *-bei*, *-ji*, *-o*, *-rō*, *-tarō*, or *-zo*.

A woman's given name indicates her social status. Noble women have names ending in *-hime* (princess). Samurai women have names ending in *-ko*. Other women's name might end in *-no*, *-e*, or *-yo*. Geisha and courtesans have names beginning with *ko-* or *waka-*. Commoners have names beginning with *O-*. Buddhist nuns have names ending in *-in*.

People of the same name can be told apart by their home town, profession, place of employment (ending in *-ya*, meaning shop), or by a nickname. For example, Tarō, the owner of the *takeya* (furniture store), is Takeya no Tarō; while Tarō from the village of Shimizu is Shimizu no Tarō, and Tarō the gambler calls himself Tarō the Tiger.

## Name Changes

A person takes a new name if his status changes. Samurai and noble boys are given childhood names, often ending in *-maru* or *-matsu*, and take adult names at their *gempuku* ceremony. Artists take new names each time they change their style. Emperors take new names on ascending the throne (and sometimes change them to break a streak of bad luck). People take new names on becoming priests. The dead receive a "spirit name" at the funeral service. It is unrelated to any previous names, but does indicate social class and sex. The temple keeps a list, indexed by spirit name, of whom is in its graveyard and what their names were in life.

## Honorifics

Japanese speech emphasizes the relative social class of the speaker, compared to the listener or the people being spoken about. It has many different honorifics indicating the respective status of the speaker and the person being addressed. Using no honorific indicates either that the speaker is an extremely close friend or is being very presumptuous, as when addressing criminals or foreigners.

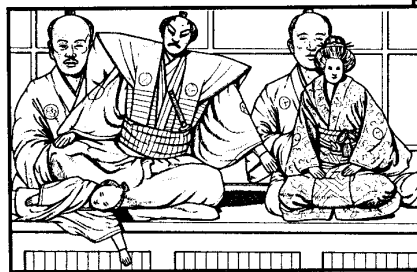
*-San* is the most common honorific. It indicates a roughly equal social level. "San" is also used when a superior is addressing an inferior politely. It is never used with the given name but with the family name, shop name, home town name, etc. Strangers are often called by their profession plus honorific: Blacksmith-san, Cook-san.

*-Sama* ("Honorable") indicates increased deference; it is used by servants or employees to their master, children to their parents, or commoners to a samurai or noble.

*-Dono* ("Lord") is used by samurai to address their daimyō.

*-Sensei* ("Master") is used by a student to his teacher.

*-Chan* ("Darling") is used between lovers, or from a parent to a child.



## Template Descriptions

### *Bijutsuka (Artist) or Geinin (Entertainer)*

40 points

Artists come from all social ranks. Amateur artists wander the roads, drawing scenes or composing poetry – and bartering their work for their stay at an inn if the innkeeper is willing.

Troupes of professional actors, dancers, and singers also wander the country – performing (and residing) at the local theaters.

Lower-class street entertainers beg for money and entertain the public with their songs, stories, and sleight of hand. This is a good cover for a ninja, though few ninja would have time to become good at entertaining.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0], DX 11 [10], IQ 12 [20], HT 10 [0].

**Advantages:** 15 points from Appearance [5 or more], Charisma [5/level], Literacy [5], Musical Ability [1/level], Patron [varies], Reputation [varies], Versatile [5], and Voice [10].

**Disadvantages:** -20 points from Alcoholism [-15], Gregarious [-10], Jealousy [-10], Obsession [-5 to -15], Poverty [-10], Reclusive [-10], Sense of Duty [varies], Status -1 [-5] (for street entertainers), and Workaholic [-5].

**Primary Skills:** 8 points in one Artistic skill (difficulty varies) or Acting or Performance, (both M/A).

**Secondary Skills:** 2 points in each of two more Artistic skills, Acting or Performance.

**Background Skills:** A total of 3 points in Savoir-Faire, Scrounging (both M/E), Merchant, Streetwise (both M/A) or Carousing (P/A; HT).





*Bussō (Buddhist Priest)*  
and *Kannushi (Shintō Priest)*

65/75 points

Becoming a Buddhist priest means renouncing one's inheritance. A political figure might be forced to do so – or choose to do so to stop wasting time at lengthy social and religious rituals. Some temples disown priests who are not devout ascetics; some priests live by themselves or wander the roads, keeping vows of varying degrees of strictness. Buddhist priests shave their heads, wear black robes, and pray using a rosary.

A few devout Buddhist priests live in the wilderness and are rumored to know magic. Some priests claim to cure the sick by exorcising evil spirits. Physicians officially rank as Buddhist priests but they may marry.

Shintō priests claim to be able to win the favor of the *kami* (spirits) by singing, dancing, playing music, and offering sacrifices of food and sake. Contact with blood or sickness requires ritual purification (see p. 19).

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0], DX 10 [0], IQ 14 [45], HT 10 [0].

**Advantages:** Clerical Investment (Rank 1) [5], Literacy [5], Status 1 (for kannushi) or 2 (for bussō) [5 or 10], and 15 points (10 points for bussō) from Clerical Investment (Rank 2+) [5/level], Patron (Temple) [varies], Pious [5], and Status [5/level]. In a campaign where their mystical powers are real, select a total of 25 points (20 for bussō) from the list above and Blessed [10], Divine Favor [varies], Oracle [15], and True Faith [15].

**Disadvantages:** Disciplines of Faith (Devout Buddhist or Shintō Priest) [-5], and -30 points in Charitable [-15], Duty (to Temple, non-hazardous) [-5 or -10], Fanaticism [-15], Honesty [-10], Intolerance (Religious) [-5 or -10], Pacifism [-15 or -30], Poverty [-10 or -15], or Sense of Duty [varies]. *Bussō* must include Pacifism (Self-Defense Only).

**Primary Skills:** Performance/Ritual (M/A) IQ [2]-14, Theology (Shintoism or Buddhism) (M/H) IQ [4]-13/19. *Bussō* add Meditation (M/H) IQ [4]-14; *Kannushi* add Naturalist (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-15.

**Secondary Skills:** A total of 10 points in Occultism or Teaching, both (M/A), Diplomacy, Exorcism, History, Meditation or Psychology, (all M/H). *Bussō* can also select Language (Chinese or Sanskrit) (M/A); *kannushi* can also select Sacrifice (M/H).

**Background Skills:** A total of 5 points in Singing (P/E; HT), First Aid (M/E), Administration, Research or Writing, (all M/A), Law (Religious), Meditation (M/VH), or Combat/Weapon skills (unarmed only for *kannushi*). *Bussō* can also select from Flower Arranging or Gardening, (both M/E), Musical Instrument (Shakuhachi or Taiko), and Tea Ceremony, (both M/H). *Kannushi* can also select from Dancing (P/E), Animal Handling (M/A), and Botany, Musical Instrument (Shō), and Zoology, (all M/H).

**Customization Notes:** In campaigns where magic works, and particularly those which take other historical liberties, *kannushi* may fill the role of typical fantasy druids – add Power Investiture and some spells from the Animal and Plant colleges (or see p. WI44). *Kannushi* are forbidden to use curative spells (see p. 104). *Bussō* can also take Power Investiture and learn spells from the Healing and Protection & Warning colleges, as well as Bless, Create Well, and Dry Well.

**Japanese Name Elements**

Formal Japanese surnames (and place names) usually consist of two parts, an initial element and a final element. These are some of the most common elements. Italicized elements in the first column can be used as less common final elements. Italicized elements in the second column can be used as less common initial elements. Note that in final elements, "k" can become "g," "h" can become "b," and so on (based on the syllabary, p. 122).

aka	<i>hara</i>
ao	<i>hashi</i>
asa	<i>hayashi</i>
<i>fuji</i>	<i>i</i>
furu	<i>ike</i>
<i>hama</i>	<i>kami</i>
hoso	<i>kawa</i>
ino	<i>ki</i>
<i>ishi</i>	<i>kuchi</i>
<i>kane</i>	<i>matsu</i>
kiyo	<i>miya</i>
<i>kuma</i>	<i>mori</i>
kuro	<i>moto</i>
naga	<i>naka</i>
ō	<i>no</i>
sa	<i>numa</i>
<i>saka</i>	<i>o</i>
<i>shio</i>	<i>oka</i>
shira	<i>saka</i>
<i>shiro</i>	<i>saki</i>
suzu	<i>sawa</i>
taka	<i>se</i>
<i>takara</i>	<i>shima</i>
take	<i>shimo</i>
<i>taki</i>	<i>taira</i>
tama	<i>tani</i>
<i>tatsu</i>	<i>tō</i>
tora	<i>tsu</i>
<i>tori</i>	<i>ura</i>
ume	<i>yama</i>



## Japanese Name Elements (Continued)

Male noble and samurai given names can be any combination of two elements from the list below. Male commoner names use one element from below and one of the common suffixes (see p. 55).

aki	mitsu	tada
ari	mochi	taka
chika	mori	take
fusa	moro	tame
haru	moto	tane
hide	mune	teru
hira	na	toki
hiro	naga	tomo
hisa	nao	tora
ie	nari	toshi
kage	naru	toyo
kane	nobu	tsugu
katsu	nori	tsuna
kaze	omi	tsune
kiyo	sada	uji
kore	sane	yasu
kuni	shige	yoru
masa	suke	yoshi
michi	sumi	yuki

The elements below can be combined with the prefixes and suffixes given above to create female names.

ai	kiku	tada
aki	kin	taka
ame	kinu	take
asa	kiyo	tama
atsu	koto	tatsu
chō	kyō	toku
fuji	masa	tomo
fumi	matsu	toshi
fuyu	michi	toyo
gin	midori	tsugi
hagi	misao	tsuki
hana	momo	tsuru
haru	nao	tsuya
hatsu	natsu	ume
hide	nobu	uta
hina	nui	yasu
ine	sachi	yone
jun	setsu	yoshi
kame	shimo	yū
katsu	shin	yuki
kei	sugi	yume
kichi	suzu	yumi



## Dorobo (Thief) or Sanzoku (Bandit)

80 points

Sanzoku and dorobo come from all social ranks. Some end up as war guards or judge's assistants; others are executed for their crimes. Sanzoku can find many opportunities to ply their trade unmolested during the Warring States Period – the authorities are too often occupied with protecting their borders rather than looking after the individual traveler.

During times of peace like the Late Tokugawa Era, the thieves have to be a bit more discreet, but they can still practice their craft. Especially during the two major famines that strike Japan during this time, the thieves may have an opportunity to play Robin Hood and return some of the taxes (taken in rice) to the peasants who are in dire straits.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10], DX 13 [30], IQ 12 [20], HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** 15 points from Alertness [5/level], Ally or Ally Group [varies], Contacts [varies], Danger Sense [15], Luck [15], and Night Vision [10].

**Disadvantages:** Status -2 [-10] and -20 points from Bully [-10], Compulsive Behavior (Gambling or Spending) [-5 to -15], Disowned [-5 or -15], Enemy [varies], Greed [-15], Illiteracy [-5], Loner [-5], Obsession [-5 to -15], Overconfidence [-10], Poverty [-10 or -15], Reputation [-5/level], and Sense of Duty to the peasantry [-10] or to a particular household or village [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Area Knowledge (city or province) (M/E) IQ [1]-12, Streetwise (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14, and one of Intimidation or Lockpicking, both (M/A, IQ+3 [8]-15, Pickpocket (P/H) DX+1 [8]-14, or Stealth (P/A) DX+2 [8]-15.

**Secondary Skills:** Any three of Holdout, Lockpicking, Shadowing, Survival Tracking or Traps, (all M/A) IQ [2]-12, Knife (P/E) DX+1 [2]-14, Climbing, Shortsword or Stealth, (all P/A) DX [2]-13, Escape or Pickpocket, (both P/H) DX-1 [2]-12, or Running (P/H; HT) HT-1 [2]-10.

**Background Skills:** A total of 4 points in Combat/Weapon skills, Gesture (M/E), Fast-Talk, Gambling, or Merchant, (all M/A), or other unchosen skills listed above.

**Customization Notes:** If the character has successfully kept his illicit activities from becoming public knowledge, he can take a Secret instead of the low Status.

## Geisha

61 points

Geisha are literally “art people” – as are the entertainers (*geinin*) above. The geisha is a specialized entertainer, however, and always female. They entertain their influential clients at banquets, and the entertainment consists of dancing, singing, conversation, and playing the *samisen*. They may have many clients, but some favored clients may pay the significant costs for their elaborate kimono and their continuing fine-arts education. Geisha are not prostitutes, but geisha may be hired to entertain for courtesans and their clients. And it is not uncommon for a geisha to be intimate with some of her own patrons.

The geisha occupation originates in the Late Tokugawa Era, when the government begins licensing pleasure quarters in the larger cities (Edo's pleasure quarters are Yoshiwara; Kyōto's is Shimabara).



**Attributes:** ST 9 [-10], DX 11 [10], IQ 12 [20], HT 12 [20].

**Advantages:** Fashion Sense [5] and 20 points from Appearance [5 or more], Charisma [5/level], Cool [1], Empathy [15], Literacy [5], Musical Ability [1/level], Patron [varies], Sensitive [5], and Voice [10].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (to *okiya*, or geisha house, quite often, non-dangerous) [-5], Social Stigma (Valuable Property) [-10], Status -1 [-5] and -10 from Duty (Involuntary) [an extra -5], Gregarious [-10], Illiteracy [-5], Jealousy [-10], and Poverty (Struggling) [-10].

**Primary Skills:** Bard (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14, Savoir-Faire (M/E) IQ+2 [4]-14, and one of Dancing (P/A) DX+1 [4]-12, Musical Instrument (Samisen) (M/H) IQ [4]-12, or Singing (P/E; HT) HT+2 [4]-14.

**Secondary Skills:** Any four of Make-Up or Origami, (both M/E) IQ+1 [2]-13, Professional Skill (Hairdresser) or Performance, (both M/A) IQ [2]-12, Sex Appeal (M/A; HT) HT [2]-12, Carousing (P/A; HT) HT [2]-12, or two points in an unchosen primary skill.

**Background Skills:** A total of 4 points in Flower Arranging (M/E), Poetry (M/A), Artist or Tea Ceremony, both (M/H), or Calligraphy (P/A).

**Customization Notes:** In a campaign with 100-point characters, this template leaves a lot of room for flexibility (taking 10 more points of disadvantages and 5 quirks will leave 54 points still to be spent). Those will be needed to provide a way for the geisha to both be useful in an adventure (not every problem can be solved with clever conversation) and the ability to go on an adventure in the first place (a powerful Patron, lots of Luck, an Unusual Background, or even some magical abilities, depending on the campaign).

### Junrei (Pilgrim)

A pilgrimage is a legally and socially acceptable reason – practically the only one – for a person to leave family and job and enjoy the delights of tourism. Travelers from all social classes, often in groups, set off to visit a holy shrine (or a set of them). They collect souvenirs, keep diaries, and sometimes hire tour guides. Pilgrims are not particularly pious, or even necessarily honest.

Other than their journey, junrei do not have a lot in common, and certainly not enough to define a template. Any of the other character types, though, may undertake a pilgrimage – just remove any job-based Duty or other disadvantages and pack a bag!

### Mahōtsukai (Sorcerer)

93 points

A *mahōtsukai* (“magic bearer”) is a Japanese sorcerer, able to command the elements: Earth, Fire, Water, Metal, and Wood.

Believing that all practitioners of the magical arts are capable of great evil and destruction (the word for magic, *mahō*, means “evil spirit rites”), the Japanese fear and distrust most mages. The only Japanese who readily accept mages as part of their families and households are ninja clans.

**Attributes:** ST 9 [-10], DX 10 [0], IQ 14 [45], HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** Literacy [5] and Magery 3 [35].

**Disadvantages:** Disciplines of Faith (Ritualism) [-5], Disowned [-15] or Social Stigma (Outsider) [-15], Status -1 [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Occultism (M/A) IQ [2]-14 and either Philosophy (Confucianism) or Theology (Shintoism or Zen Buddhism), (both M/H) IQ-1 [2]-12/18.

**Secondary Skills:** Astrology (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-12, Chinese Ideographs (M/A) IQ-2 [½]-12, Physics (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-12.

### Sample Geinin: Korezo (100 points)

Age 26, 5'5", 116 lbs.; long glistening black hair, smooth skin; a trim man with an easy smile.

ST 9 [-10], DX 12 [20], IQ 13 [30], HT 12 [20].

Basic Speed 6.00; Move 6.

Dodge 6.

**Advantages:** Appearance: Handsome [15]; Harmony with the Tao [20]; Patron (Provincial Daimyō, 6 or less) [5]; Reputation (Famous Nō Actor, +4 to the aristocracy, all the time) [10].

**Disadvantages:** Combat Paralysis [-15]; Gregarious [-10]; Jealousy [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

**Quirks:** Afraid that a gaki will steal his acting ability; Fascinated by some of the fantastic stories of the theater; Overestimates his importance to the daimyō; Thinks kabuki and bunraku are childish; Would like to travel abroad [-5].

**Skills:** Acting-16 [2]; Carousing-12 [2]; History-11 [2]; Literature-11 [2]; Occultism-11 [1]; Performance-17 [12]; Savoir-Faire-16 [8]; Singing-13 [2]; Tea Ceremony-12 [4].



Korezo is a gifted performer in the Nō theater. He has worked exclusively in Edo, but currently travels around the country with a respected troupe. He would prefer to travel farther, but the Shogunate's rules are not to be trifled with. Traveling around the country, however, has allowed Korezo to attain favor with one of the provincial daimyō. Impressed with Korezo's handling of a drunk samurai at one show (Korezo's Harmony allowed him to Fast-Talk the troublemaker into leaving the theater), the daimyō sponsors the troupe.

The wide travels bring many interesting tales to Korezo's ears. In particular, the ghost stories that followed one performance rattled him – he now worries about losing his talents to some drama-stealing gaki (see p. 62). He has not yet embarrassed himself terribly because of this, but he may soon.



## Sample Bussō: Shioji (100 points)

Age 50, 5'5", 120 lbs.; an aging man with crow's feet around his eyes and the stubble of salt-and-pepper hair.

ST 9 [-10], DX 10 [0], IQ 15 [60], HT 10 [0]

Basic Speed 5.00; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Clerical Investment (Rank 1) [5]; Pious [5]; Patron (Local temple, 9 or less) [10]; Status 2 (Bussō) [10]; Literate [5]; Reputation (Go master, +4, among go players, 10 or less) [3].

**Disadvantages:** Disciplines of Faith (Devout Buddhist) [-5]; Pacifism (Self-Defense Only) [-15]; Charitable [-15]; Compulsive Behavior (Indiscriminate Reading) [-5].

**Quirks:** Always carries scrolls; Apologetic for his stubbly scalp; Leisurely in character; Mutters in Chinese when puzzled; Uses go terminology metaphorically in conversation [-5].

**Skills:** Administration-14 [1]; Appreciate Beauty-13 [2]; Area Knowledge (Honshu)-15 [1]; Area Knowledge (Osaka)-14 [½]; Astrology-12 [½]; Calligraphy-10 [2]; Cartography/TL3-13 [½]; Chess (Shogi)-16 [2]; Chinese Ideographs-15 [2]; Diagnosis/TL3-12 [½]; Diplomacy-14 [2]; Economics-12 [½]; First Aid-15 [1]; Games (Go)-20 [10]; History-14 [2]; Literature-14 [2]; Mathematics-12 [½]; Meditation-15 [4]; Merchant-15 [2]; Naturalist-12 [½]; Occultism-15 [2]; Performance/Ritual (Buddhism)-15 [2]; Philosophy (Confucianism)-13 [1]; Psychology-13 [1]; Research-15 [2]; Survival (Woodlands)-13 [½]; Tea Ceremony-14 [1]\*; Teaching-15 [2]; Theology (Buddhism)-14/20 [4]; Writing-14 [1].

\* Bought from Meditation default.

**Languages:** Japanese (native)-16 [1]; Mandarin-15 [2]; Portugese-14 [1].

For years Shioji was a successful merchant, specializing in books and writing supplies. But Shioji's heart was always in his books themselves, not in his business. He read widely, taking in whatever materials passed through his hands. After his wife died, he passed his business on to his sons and went inkyo (see p. 12).

Shioji now spends his time on his favorite pursuits: reading, tourism, and go. He will read any commentary on the game and has written one himself. When in a good-sized town, he teaches go and other subjects to support himself and the local Buddhist temple. When this fails, he is not too proud to beg. Shioji might be a more prominent scholar, but he reads indiscriminately, even material with which he is already familiar.



**Background Skills:** Physiology (M/VH) IQ-4 [½]-10, Survival (Mountain Woodlands) (M/A) IQ-2 [½]-12, Yin/Yang Healing (M/H) IQ-3 [½]-11.

**Spells:** The spell list below. One point was spent on each spell, and each learned at level 15:

**Earth [5]:** Create Earth, Earth to Stone, Predict Earth Movement, Seek Earth, Shape Earth.

**Fire [5]:** Create Fire, Extinguish Fire, Ignite Fire, Resist Fire, Shape Fire.

**Metal [5]:** Identify Metal, Purify Metal, Seek Metal, Shape Metal, Sharpen.

**Water [5]:** Create Well, Dry Well, Purify Water, Predict Weather, Seek Water.

**Wood [5]:** Heal Plant, Identify Plant, Plant Growth, Seek Plant, and either Create Plant or Wither Plant.

**Customization Notes:** *Reibai* (mediums) and *uranaisha* (diviners) do not suffer the same revulsion shown towards other mahōtsukai; drop all Disadvantages except Disciplines of Faith. *Reibai* reduce Magery to One-College Magery 2 [13] in Communication & Empathy and replace the spell list above with Sense Life, Sense Spirit, and Summon Spirit (2 points each for level 15). The *Reibai* template costs 72 points. *Uranaisha* replace Magery 3 with Divination Talent [5] and drop the spell list above for one Divination spell: Geomancy, I Ching, or *Senseijustu* (astrology) at IQ+1 [6]-15 and 13 other spells (Seeker, Trace, History, and the 10 prerequisites for the Divination spell chosen; two Seek spells may need to be added if they cannot be included in the 10) with 1 point each at level 12. The *Uranaisha* template costs 77 points.



## Ninja

80/150 points

Ninja are spies, assassins, and saboteurs. They live in a twilight world that touches all of Japanese society, but is never a part of it. They are useful but never respectable. They are pieces of the night that reach out to strike, then vanish.

In a society that values conformity above all, they are the pieces that have no place. One of the classic scenes of Japanese film is of a daimyō contacting his ninja with a mission. The daimyō enters a room. The audience can see the daimyō, and on the wall the shadow of a man. The daimyō gives his instructions and leaves. The camera pans back to the room, and the shadow is gone.

Ninja clans must keep not only their missions but also their very existence secret, in a society where everyone is watched from birth to death. In a world of interwoven relationships, their only real contacts are with the other ninja of their own clan. All the details that define a Japanese life – family, job, temple, status – are illusions for a ninja. Identity is a fleeting necessity for a mission. He has no permanent home, only fronts and safe houses. His training must begin in childhood – nearly in infancy – and leaves little time for any off-duty life.

Ninja make better NPCs than adventurers. For one thing, unless the party is all ninja, other Japanese will normally refuse to associate with a known ninja. Anyone who uses distinctively ninja weapons or skills will be suspected of being a ninja and treated as one . . . with fear and suspicion. Ninja are more suitable as a menace or a *deus ex machina* than as day-to-day companions.

The Japanese firmly believe that ninja have magical powers. They also believe that ninja are consummate tricksters who use Sleight of Hand, Chemistry, Hypnotism, and their ninja weapons and tools to simulate magic. The GM is free to have either be true in her campaign, or even both simultaneously.



**Attributes:** ST 10 [0], DX 13 [30], IQ 13 [30], HT 10 [0].

**Advantages:** 15 points chosen from Absolute Direction [5], Absolute Timing [5], Acute Senses [2/level], Alertness [5/level], Contacts [varies], Double-Jointed [5], Literacy [5], Manual Dexterity [3/level], Night Vision [10], and Patron (Ninja clan, 6 or less) [8]. In a cinematic campaign, add Trained by a Master [40].

**Disadvantages:** Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20] and either Status -3 [-15] or Secret (Ninja) [-10], and -10 points from Enemy [varies], Loner [-5], Overconfidence [-10] or Poverty (Struggling) [-10].

**Primary Skills:** 30 points (60 points in a cinematic campaign) in Ninjutsu martial-arts style skills and maneuvers (see p. 81).

**Secondary Skills:** Area Knowledge (M/E) IQ [1]-13 and 10 points in Lockpicking, Shadowing, Streetwise or Traps (all M/A) or Poisons (M/H).

**Background Skills:** 4 points in Gesture or Savoir-Faire, both (M/E), Chinese Ideographs, Gambling, Hidden Lore (City Secrets), Intimidation or Language (Korean, Mandarin or Portuguese), all (M/A), Calligraphy (P/A), Chemistry or Hypnotism, both (M/H), or Sleight of Hand (P/H).

**Customization Notes:** In a magical campaign, a ninja mage can be a formidable entity. Add Magery 1 [15], and 5 points in the spells Control Illusion, Hide, Illusion Disguise, Independence, Mage-Stealth, See Invisible, Walk on Water, or their prerequisites. Increase template cost by 20 points. *Nukenin* are ninja who have left their clan – probably acquiring the clan as an Enemy in the process.

## Sample Sanzoku:

### Tarō the Tiger (100 points)

Age 19, 5'8", 136 lbs.; a taciturn young man with an air of menace when first met.

ST 13 [30], DX 13 [30], IQ 12 [20], HT 11 [10]

Basic Speed 6.00, Move 7.

Dodge 6, Parry 7.

**Advantages:** Alertness +1 [5]; Ally Group (Small Group of Gambling House Members, 10 or less) [10].

**Disadvantages:** Compulsive Carousing [-5]; Disowned [-15]; Poverty: Struggling [-10]; Status -2 [-10].

**Quirks:** Horrible singing voice; Marked as a gambler by the large tiger tattoo on his right arm; Treasures his fue [-3].

**Skills:** Appreciate Beauty-10 [2]; Area Knowledge (Niigata)-13 [2]; Carousing-12 [4]; Climbing-13 [2]; Gambling-15 [8]; Intimidation-13 [4]; Merchant-12 [2]; Musical Instrument (Fue)-11 [2]; Running-10 [2]; Shortsword-14 [4]; Streetwise-14 [6].

Tarō was recently disowned by his



father, an umbrella merchant in the coastal town of Niigata. His father threw him out when he caught him taking money from the cash box to gamble, but he did not report him to the police. Tarō took very little with him but made sure that he kept his fue, one of his earliest gambling winnings.

Tarō works when he can as a servant or *kagokashi* (palanquin bearer); when he cannot find work, he spends time hanging around on the street or at the gambling house, where the gang boss lets him sleep for free (figuring Tarō's wakizashi skill may come in handy some day).



### Sample Geisha: Wakaba (100 points)

Age 19, 5'3", 120 lbs., a beautiful young woman, with long hair and elaborately carved mahogany hair sticks.

ST 9 [-10], DX 12 [20], IQ 12 [20], HT 11 [10]

Basic Speed 5.75, Move 5.

Dodge 5

**Advantages:** Appearance: Beautiful [15]; Charisma [5]; Fashion Sense [5]; Literacy [5]; Magey 1 (Illusion and Creation College Only) [10]; Voice [10]; Wealth: Comfortable [10].

**Disadvantages:** Involuntary Duty to Okiya (12 or less, Not Life-Threatening) [-10]; Jealousy [-10]; Social Stigma (Valuable Property) [-10]; Status -1 [-5].

**Quirks:** Admires writings of Sei Shōnagon (see p. WW140); Refuses to part with her favorite set of hair sticks; Sometimes has trouble keeping silent [-3].

**Skills:** Area Knowledge (Yoshiwara) 11 [½]; Bard-15\* [4]; Brawling-11 [½]; Calligraphy-10 [½]; Carousing-11 [2]; Dancing-12 [2]; Fast-Talk-11 [1]; Literature-11 [2]; Make-Up/TL3-13 [2]; Musical Instrument (Samisen)-11 [2]; Performance-13\* [1]; Philosophy (Confucianism)-11 [2]; Poetry-11 [1]; PS: Hairdresser-12 [2]; Savoir-Faire-16\* [4]; Sex Appeal-14\* [4]; Singing-15\* [4]; Tea Ceremony-11 [2]; Theology (Shintoism)-8/14 [½]; Writing-11 [1].

\* includes +2 for Voice.

A beautiful but headstrong girl, Wakaba was sold to an okiya at age 14 by her father, an impoverished merchant. Although she has flourished in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters, Wakaba remains resentful of her life as a geisha. Her clients appreciate her poetry and singing, but she sometimes expresses her opinions too forcefully.

A devotee of Sei Shōnagon's *The Pillow Book*, Wakaba dreams of being rescued from the okiya by a daimyō and taken to his court. She may soon get her wish. Wakaba's has garnered the attention of several wealthy admirers, including a successful merchant and a minor crime boss. The okiya is loath to allow such a talented youth to slip away, but if Wakaba does not learn to temper her tongue, she may find herself out on the street. If she can find a wizardly customer to teach her a few Illusion spells, getting out may be easier...



**Attributes:** ST 11 [10], DX 13 [30], IQ 10 [0], HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** Status 2 [10], Literacy [5], and a total of 20 points from Alertness [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Fit [5], High Pain Threshold [10], Military Rank [5/level], Patron [varies], Reputation [varies], Strong Will [4/level].

**Disadvantages:** Code of Honor (Bushidō) [-15] and a total of -15 points from Bad Temper [-10], Bloodlust [-10], Duty [varies], Fanaticism [-15], Glorious Hound [-15], Overconfidence [-10], Sense of Duty [varies], and Stubbornness [-5].

**Primary Skills:** 24 points in martial-arts style skills and maneuvers (at least 2 points in each of Katana and Shortsword, even if the styles do not require them), Riding (P/A) DX [2]-13.

**Secondary Skills:** Leadership (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-12, Swimming (P/E) DX [1]-13, Tactics (M/H) IQ [4]-10.

**Background Skills:** A total of 4 points in Calligraphy (P/A), Falconry or Tracking, (both M/A), History, Literature, Philosophy (Confucianism and/or Zen Buddhism), Strategy (Land), and Tea Ceremony, (all M/H). Savior-Faire (M/E) can also be bought up from its default of IQ+2 (from high Status).

**Customization Notes:** Japanese samurai all rank as warriors in the Confucian scheme, but some are bureaucrats rather than professional fighters. This is especially true during the Late Tokugawa Era, when years of peace have lessened the need for true warriors. For the more bureaucratic type, reduce the Primary Skills in martial arts to 8 and add Administration (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-12. The template cost drops to 76 points.



*Rōnin* are samurai who have been disowned by their daimyō, or whose clan has been abolished. Some look for a new daimyō who might accept them as a samurai, or a rich commoner in need of a bodyguard, or a martial arts school that could be taken over. Some nurse plans of revenge, while others throw away their money at gambling or in a life of dissipation. They rank lower than other samurai – drop Status to 1. They will not have a Patron or Duty, but may have a Secret, negative Reputation or an Obsession. They might even not have the Code of Honor, which could be why they were disowned.

### Yamabushi (Warrior Priest)

86/100 points

The *yamabushi* (“mountain warriors”) belong to a religious sect known as Shugendō which embraces a fusion of certain Shintō and Buddhist practices. These sects train novices in combat skills. Unlike other temples, they also permit killing, eating fish, and drinking sake. The *yamabushi* are thought to have the ability to internalize *kami* and heal others, and some stories indicate an association between the *yamabushi* and the *tengu* (p. 121). Their reputed knowledge of supernatural powers inspired respect and fear.

*Yamabushi* are also known as *gyōja*, *kenja*, or *shugenja*. Their dress includes black cap, tunic, loose trousers, and Buddhist rosary, and they usually carry their staffs and conch-trumpets with them.

Towards the end of the Period of Unification, Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi systematically razed the temples of the *yamabushi*, who they saw as contenders for political power.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0], DX 13 [30], IQ 12 [20], HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** Status 1 [5] and 15 points from Combat Reflexes [15], Fit/Very Fit [5 or 15], High Pain Threshold [10], Literacy [5], Patron (Temple) [varies], Strong Will [4/level], Toughness 1 [10], and Unfazeable [15]. In a mystical campaign, take 25 points from the list above and at least one of Medium [10] and Spirit Empathy [10].

**Disadvantages:** Disciplines of Faith (Mikkyō) [-5] and -25 points from Duty [varies], Honesty [-10], Loner [-5], No Sense of Humor [-10], Obdurate [-10], Pacifism (Self-Defense Only) [-15], Poverty (Struggling) [-10], Reclusive [-10], Sense of Duty [varies], and Vow [varies].

**Primary Skills:** Theology (Shugendō) (M/H) IQ+2 [8]-13/19, 12 points in one or more of these martial-arts styles: Aikijutsu, Jūjutsu, Kempo (p. MA88), Kenjutsu, Kyūjutsu, Masaki Ryū, Naginatajutsu, Shindō-Mūsō Ryū, and Sōjutsu. *Yamabushi* may study Axe/Mace within the styles of Jōjutsu and Naginatajutsu as well.

**Secondary Skills:** Meditation (M/H) IQ [4]-12, Occultism (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13, Survival (Mountains) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13. In a mystical campaign, add Exorcism (M/H) IQ+1 [4]-13 (bought up from the Theology default).

**Background Skills:** A total of 4 points Calligraphy (P/A), Naturalist (M/A), Yin/Yang Healing (M/A), and further Combat/Weapon skills.

**Customization Notes:** Other *sohei* (fighting monks) are also possible – although not all of them had the mystical connotations of the *yamabushi*. See the Monk character type on p. MA22. In a cinematic campaign with mystical powers available, the *yamabushi* might also be able to find room for Faith Healing [30], but it is a bit too expensive for a 100-point character already skilled in combat and wisdom.

### Sample Mahōtsukai: Tamahiko (100 points)

Age 30, 5'2", 168 lbs.; a rotund little man with unkempt hair, a gleam in his eye, and a whisper on his lips.

ST 9 [-10], DX 10 [0], IQ 14 [45], HT 11 [10]

Basic Speed 5.25, Move 2.

Dodge 2, Parry 6.

**Advantages:** Literacy [5], Magery 3 [35].

**Disadvantages:** Disciplines of Faith (Ritualism) [-5]; Enemy (Eiji, sidebar p. 62, 6 or less) [-5]; Fat [-10]; Social Stigma (Outsider) [-15]; Status -1 [-5].

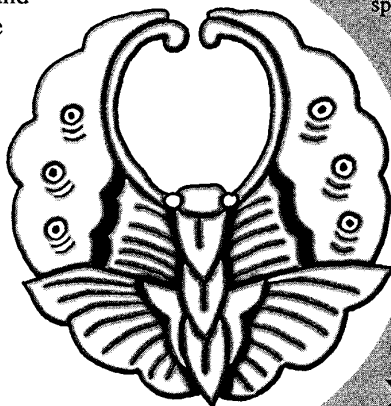
**Quirks:** Carries a bokken to avoid spilling blood; Delusion (Believes dragons watch over him); Talks incessantly to his created craftsmen; Wishes he were more athletic [-4].

**Skills:** Area Knowledge (Kai)-14 [1]; Armoury (Katana)-17 [8]; Astrology-12 [1]; Chinese Ideographs-12 [1]; Hidden Lore (Fujisan)-14 [2]; Katana-10 [2]; Occultism-14 [2]; Physics-12 [1]; Physiology-11 [1]; Savoir-Faire-13 [½]; Survival (Mountains)-14 [2]; Theology (Shintoism)-12/18 [2]; Yin/Yang Healing-11 [½].

**Spells\*** (1 point in each, except where noted): Accuracy-16 [2]; Beast-Soother-15; Create Craftsmen-16 [2]; Create Earth-15; Create Fire-15; Earth to Stone-15; Enchant-16 [4]; Extinguish Fire-15; Identify Metal-15; Identify Plant-15; Ignite Fire-15; Minor Healing-15; Piuissance-16 [2]; Purify Metal-15; Purify Water-15; Resist Fire-15; Seek Earth-15; Seek Metal-15; Seek Plant-15; Seek Water-15; Seeker-15; Sense Danger-15; Sense Foes-15; Shape Earth-15; Shape Fire-15; Shape Metal-16 [2]; Sharpen-16 [2].

\* includes +3 for Magery.

Tamahiko is an enchanter who sees himself as tapping the very heart of Japan – Fujisan. He makes his own katana to enchant, or at least he creates the craftsmen who do so. He even refines the steel he gets from the refinery with the Purify Metal skill. He has a good relationship with several of the nearby daimyō; he sells them swords, and they look after his well-being. Magic may be frowned upon by the common man, but a good sword is a good sword. The protection has been useful in keeping a particular *rōnin*, Eiji, from becoming more than a nuisance.



## Sample Ninja: O-Aki (100 points)

Age 29, 4'11", 99 lbs., a slight woman with many façades.

ST 9 [-10]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 14 [45]; HT 10 [0].

Basic Speed 5.50, Move 5.

Dodge 5, Parry 6.

**Advantages:** Acute Hearing +1 [2]; Magery 1 [15]; Patron (Ninja Clan, 6 or less) [8]; Strong Will +1 [4].

**Disadvantages:** Extremely Hazardous Duty [-20]; Secret (Ninja) [-10]; Social Stigma (Valuable Property) [-10].

**Quirks:** Careful not to kill female bystanders; Prefers plans that involve no brute force [-2].

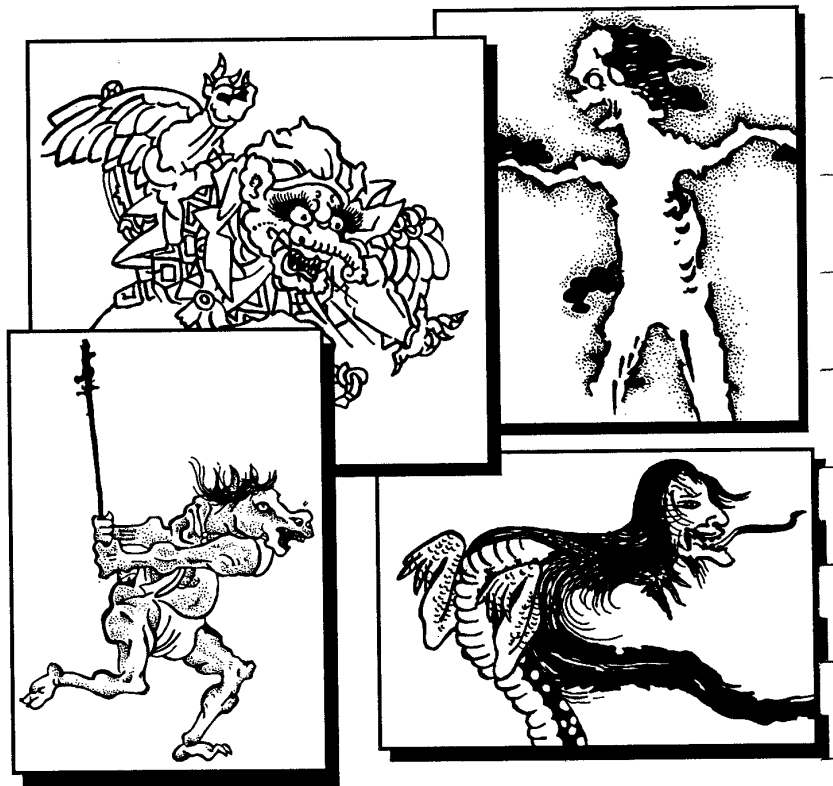
**Skills:** Acting-13 [1]; Area Knowledge (Honshū)-14 [1]; Black Powder Weapons (Matchlock Musket)-16 [4]; Blowpipe (Fukuya)-11 [½]; Breath Control-10 [½]; Dancing-11 [1]; Disguise-13 [1]; Fast-Talk-13 [1]; First Aid-14 [1]; Garrotte-12 [1]; Judo-13 [8]; Karate-12 [4]; Knife-12 [1]; Lockpicking-13 [1]; Poisons-15 [6]; Savoir-Faire (Servant)-16 [4]; Stealth-13 [4]; Throwing-10 [1]; Traps-15 [4].

**Spells\*** (1 point in each, except where noted): Blur-13; Complex Illusion-13; False Coins-15 [4]; Hide-15 [4]; Ignite Fire-13; Mage-Stealth-13; Simple Illusion-13.

\*includes +1 for Magery.

O-Aki is a mission leader in her ninja clan. She often infiltrates target castles first, posing as a servant. She knows very well that her slight stature makes her easy to overlook, but her *teppō*, poisons, and spells help ensure that when she is noticed, she leaves an impression.

Note that O-Aki does not have the ninjutsu style (and so her combat opponents do not get a -1 to their active defenses). See pp. MA20-21 for Saburo, a sample historical ninja with the ninjutsu style.



## Racial Templates

The nonhuman races in Japan were considered monsters for most purposes. GMs should be cautious about using them as PCs – apart from all-monster campaigns, one-shot adventures or cinematic “anything goes” campaigns, it will be very difficult to keep the party going. Tsukumogami, kitsune, *hengeyōkai*, and *rokurokubi* are the most likely possibilities in a mixed group; *gaki* and *tatsu* might make good enemies (or patrons!).

All these creatures speak Japanese, in the dialect they have most often heard. The GM should read this chapter carefully and decide just which of these creatures are common in his campaign, which ones are rare and which ones are mere legend and superstition. He may also wish to change their powers to suit the magic level of his campaign. The spirit races, in particular, might also possess the advantages of Doesn't Eat/Drink, Doesn't Sleep, and Unaging, at the GM's option.

### Gaki (Hungry Spirit)

85 points

*Gaki* are tormented by a ravenous hunger that only one thing can satisfy. There are thousands of sorts of *gaki*, each with its own craving. A brief list of cravings is given below, but the GM should feel free to create more. The only things *gaki* aren't interested in eating are normal foods and commercially valuable items such as jewels and money.

*Gaki* only appear at night, usually as small clouds of black smoke or small balls of cool fire. They can, however, use their Morph ability to assume a human form (usually *not* their own; they are too ashamed of what they have become to want to be recognized). If it must hunt the living to satisfy its craving (for blood is the classic example), it will often use guile and deceit to stalk its prey rather





can make a direct attack. A typical tactic is to use its shapeshifting ability to gain the confidence of the intended victim – either by dispatching and replacing someone who is already close to the victim, or by merely taking a very pleasing form and relying on its charms. See p. BT89 for a treatment of this most vampiric type of gaki; p. UN83 has another variation for those gaki who hunger for things other than blood.

*Attributes:* ST +5 [60].

*Advantages:* Bite\* [30], Morph [40], Night Vision [10], Vampiric Immortality [60].

*Disadvantages:* Appearance: Ugly [-10], Dependency: Mana, Constantly [-25], Dependency\* (daily) [-30], Dread: Shintō Holy Site [-10], Status -4 [-20], Unhealing [-20].

*Innate Spells:* Body of Air, Body of Fire.

\*The Bite advantage is appropriate for a gaki dependent upon blood. Other dependencies are possible; the 30 points spent on the Bite advantage would be considered spent on a separate advantage for drawing sustenance from the particular dependence. Some possible hungers are blood, corpses, fragrance (the “attack” does no damage, but does consume the fragrance), heat (the area becomes colder), music (the area will become silent), poison, and sex (the victim uses HT as per Bite).

### *Tsukumogami (Artifact Spirit)*

78 points

Any treasured and beautiful creation is thought to have a spirit sleeping inside it. A magic spell can awaken this spirit (see p. 101). It may emerge on its own if its creator or owner needs help or revenge. It is corporeal and usually appears as a beautiful woman or a handsome man.

Legends tell of such spirits emanating from a man’s weapon, a woman’s mirror, a temple bell, a calligrapher’s brush, a noble’s samisen, an artist’s or poet’s work, and so on. The tsukumogami’s personality depends on that of the person who most influenced it (see p. 101). The tsukumogami might suffer damage if the object it emanates from is harmed or destroyed (GM’s option); treat this as a vulnerability.

*Attributes:* ST +3 [30], DX +3 [30], IQ -1 [-10], HT +2 [20]. Health will vary with the sturdiness of the object.

*Advantages:* Alertness +1 [5], Appearance: Handsome or Beautiful [15], Magery 1 [15].

*Disadvantages:* Dependency: Mana, Constantly [-25], Impulsiveness [-10], Jealousy [-10], Sense of Duty (Object’s Owner) [-5], Status -4 [-20].

*Racially Learned Skills:* Appreciate Beauty IQ+1 [12], Savoir-Faire IQ [1].

### *Kitsune Hengeyōkai (Fox Spirit)*

-15 points

The Japanese fox is clever and arrogant. White foxes are the messengers of Inari, the god of the five grains and the patron of swordsmiths. The fox thinks of itself as an aristocrat; its favorite human forms are the noble, samurai, and eisha. It usually finds humans merely amusing, but it will loyally repay any favor it receives.

*Attributes:* ST -6 [-50], DX +4 [45], HT +2 [20].

*Advantages:* Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6], Combat Reflexes [15], Enhanced Move ½ [5], Four Legs (Cannot Kick) [0], Fur [4], Knack: Perfect Illusion [Disguise [10], Magery 1 [15], PD 1 [25], Sharp Teeth [5], Ultrahearing [5].

*Disadvantages:* Code of Honor (Repay any favor) [-5], Dependency: Mana, Constantly [-25], Horizontal [-10], Illiteracy [-5], Impulsiveness [-10], Inconvenient Size [-15], No Fine Manipulators [-30], Reduced Hit Points [-30], Status -4 [-20].

## Sample Rōnin: Hasegawa Eiji (100 points)

Age 36, 5’5”, 128 lbs.; a rōnin with the air of a samurai, dressed in flowing robes and usually astride his very fine horse.

ST 11 [10], DX 13 [30], IQ 11 [10], HT 11 [10]

Basic Speed 6.00, Move 6.

Dodge 7, Parry 11.

*Advantages:* Combat Reflexes [15], Literacy [5], Status 1 [5], Strong Will +1 [4].

*Disadvantages:* Code of Honor (Bushidō) [-15], Secret (Christian) [-20], Vow (End the daimyō’s relationship with the sorcerer Tamahiko, see p. 61) [-5].

*Quirks:* Fiddles with rosary when concentrating; Likes the way his name sounds in Portuguese; Never drinks; Recites the Pater Noster only in Japanese; Trademark: Makes the sign of the cross after a battle [-5].

*Skills:* Animal Handling-12 [4]; Area Knowledge (central Honshū)-11 [1]; Armoury (Bows and Arrows)-11 [2]; Black Powder Weapons (Matchlock Musket)-13 [4]; Bow-13 [4]; Brawling-13 [1]; Karate-12 [2]; Katana-15 [8]; Knife-13 [1]; Leadership-11 [2]; Literature-10 [2]; Philosophy (Confucianism)-9 [1]; Polearm-12 [1]; Riding-14 [4]; Shortsword-13 [2]; Spear-12 [1]; Strategy-10 [2]; Survival (Mountains)-10 [1]; Survival (Plains)-11 [2]; Tactics-10 [2]; Theology (Catholicism)-9/15 [2]; Veterinary-10 [2].

*Maneuvers:* Direct Mount-13 [2]; Fighting While Mounted (Katana)-14 [1]; Hit Location (Katana)-13 [1]; Horse Archery-11 [2].

*Languages:* Japanese (Native)-12 [1]; Latin-9 [½]; Portuguese-10 [1].

When the Tokugawa Shogunate implemented its policies of national seclusion and the persecution of Christianity, Catholic samurai Eiji found himself out of favor with his daimyō. Feeling it dishonorable to apostatize, Eiji left the court to wander the highland villages of southern Honshū. He awaits the day when the Portuguese come back to end the tyranny of the Shogunate and he can worship freely.

In the meantime, he ministers to remote villagers and occasionally meets other renegade Christians. He is shocked to see that some Christian rōnin have become sanzoku, pillaging merchants and pilgrims who refuse to profess Christianity.

Eiji takes particular umbrage with Tamahiko, the sorcerer of Fujisan who supplies his former daimyō with katana through his diabolic methods.



## Sample Yamabushi: Yasukuni (250 points)

Age 34, 5'7", 140 lbs.; a politely reserved man with little to distinguish himself, except for the precision of his movements.

ST 13 [30], DX 15 [60], IQ 13 [30], HT 13 [30]  
Basic Speed 7.00, Move 7.

Dodge 7, Parry 10 (hand) and 8 (kusari).

**Advantages:** Faith Healing [30]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Literacy [5]; Medium [10]; Trained by a Master [20]; Unusual Background (Aikijutsu Stylist) [5].

**Disadvantages:** Disciplines of Faith (Mikkyō) [-5]; Enemy (the Bakemono, 6 or less) [-15]; No Sense of Humor [-10]; Sense of Duty (To Japan) [-10].

**Quirks:** Draws temporary mandalas in the ground with his manrikigusari. Feels no hate for the goblins he hunts; Keeps friendships shallow; Never retains a staff once used in combat; Slow to answer questions [-5].

**Skills:** Bolas-14 [1]; Calligraphy-14 [1]; Exorcism-10 [6]; Immovable Stance-13 [1]; Jūdō-16 [8]; Karate-13 [1]; Katana-14 [1]; Kusari-16 [8]; Meditation-11 [1]; Mental Strength-11 [1]; Naturalist-15 [8]; Occultism-12 [1]; Power Blow (Manrikigusari Only)-14 [6]; Pressure Points-11 [1]; Pressure Secrets-10\* [1]; Push-15 [4]; Savoir-Faire (Dōjō)-16 [2]; Shortsword-14 [1]; Staff-13 [1]; Survival (Mountains)-13\*\* [1]; Theology (Shintoism and Shugendō)-9/16 [1]; Yin/Yang Healing-11 [1].

\*Unusable until Pressure Points is known at 18+.

\*\*Bought from Naturalist default.

**Maneuvers:** Arm Lock-18 [1]; Back Strike (Kusari)-13 [1]; Binding-17 [1]; Breakfall-18 [1]; Choke Hold-15 [1]; Ground Fighting (Jūdō)-13 [1]; Return Strike-12 [1]; Roll with Blow-10 [1].

A cinematic hero, Yasukuni travels from village to village (and throughout the wilderness) challenging the presence of any *bakemono* who prey on the locals. He collects no rewards for his efforts and so occasionally will take casual jobs to support his simple expenses (and foregoes the trappings of his priestly status).

Yasukuni is a "black belt" (primary skills at 15+) in both aikijutsu and the Masaki Ryū.

**Innate Spells:** Permanent Possession IQ+5 [24], Steal Strength IQ+2 [6].

Fox Possession is treated as a long-distance spell (see p. M10 for long-distance modifiers). There is virtually no chance of finding the body of the fox whose spirit is possessing the victim.

A person possessed by a fox may become tired and feverish. He may act like a mischievous fox instead of his usual responsible self. He may even run through the streets, yelping like a fox. He will also have a foxtail as a side effect!

Victims of fox possession frequently refuse to eat anything except red beans boiled with rice; these they devour greedily. The possessing fox is hungry for tasty human food. After the possession ends, the victim will be sleepy for many hours, and he will never again willingly eat red beans.

If a fox has possessed someone, the victim's relatives or neighbors might try beating or burning the victim in the hope of driving the fox away. If that did not work, they would call an exorcist to contact the fox. The exorcist would argue with the fox and try to persuade it to leave. The price was a donation of money to the local Inari shrine and a dish of sweet red beans and rice, to be left at the shrine for the foxes to eat.

One other fox amusement is to imitate human parades, either the daimyō's procession escorted by his samurai and servants, or a wedding procession escorting the bride to her new house. Such a procession might have 20 to 200 foxes, all wearing appropriate illusions.

Many other types *hengeyōkai* are known, but the fox is the most common. See the Bestiary (p. 114) for others.



## Rokurokubi (Long-Neck)

-40 points

Long-necks look like normal Japanese, but they have the power to lengthen their necks. They can extend the neck up to six feet. In extended form, the neck is as flexible as a squid's tentacle. It can be used to grapple an enemy, look around corners, or go into any place the head will fit. They like drinking oil from lamps and may do so in their sleep (on a failed Will roll; check each night).

**Advantages:** Stretching (Neck only -50%) [15].

**Disadvantages:** Compulsive Behavior: Drinking Lamp Oil [-5], Dependency: Mana, Constantly [-25], Sleepwalker [-5], Status -4 [-20].





### Tatsu (Dragon)

831 points

*Tatsu* (see p. 121) are large creatures which look like legless dragons made of cloud and water. They are two yards wide and 10 yards long. They frolic in the clouds, despite having no visible means of staying airborne. They do not breathe fire but are masters of water and weather. Dragons are old, wise, and learned. They can speak human languages, when it suits them to do so. They resent humans who spoil the natural beauty of their home area. They are enemies of the Giant Centipede (see p. 118). Their underwater palaces are usually full of loyal servants, such as fish and shellfish.

A dragon may cooperate with humans for its own reasons, and it will always keep its oaths, although it will not pledge an oath without first giving it careful consideration. Although a human army is one of the few things a dragon really fears, a dragon sometimes participates in human wars, if it believes the cause is just.

**Attributes:** ST +5 [60], ST +45 (Natural) [81], DX +4 [45], IQ +6 [80], HT +5 [60].

**Advantages:** Amphibious [10], Appearance: Beautiful [15], Combat Reflexes [15], Damage Resistance 6 [18], Enhanced Dodge [15], Enhanced Move 2 [20], Extra Hit Points +55 [275], Gills [10], Luck [15], Magery 1 [15], Magery 3 (Water College Only) [12], Passive Defense 4 [100], Sharp Teeth [5], Speak with Fish [10], Talons [40], Unaging [15].

**Disadvantages:** Code of Honor (Always Keep Oath) [-5], Dependency: Mana, Constantly [-25], Enemy: Giant Centipedes, 9 or less [-30], Inconvenient Size [-10], Status -4 [-20].

**Innate Spells:** Cloud-Walking IQ+1 [1], Shapeshifting (Human) IQ-1 [2].



### Sample Kitsune Hengeyōkai: Sarusaru (100 points)

Age 20; 3' long, 12 lbs.; a handsome red fox with red fur, a black-tipped tail, black feet and ears, and a white belly.

ST 4 [0], DX 16 [20], IQ 14 [45], HT 11 [-10]

Basic Speed 6.75, Move 9.

Dodge 9.

**Advantages:** Absolute Direction [5], Animal Empathy [5], Appearance: Handsome [15], Luck [15], Single-Minded [5], Voice [10].

**Disadvantages:** Edgy [-5], Enemy (Unknown, Neimōshi, 6 or less) [-8], Kitsune Hengeyōkai [-15], Kleptomania [-15], Nightmares [-5].

**Quirks:** Admires humans; Sometimes succumbs to his animal instincts when in human company; Loves human food; Seeking a mate; Takes pride in his beautiful fur [-5].

**Skills:** Acting-14 [2], Area Knowledge (local forest)-16 [4], Brawling-12 [1], Camouflage-16\* [½], Fast-Talk-13 [1], Hiking-8 [1], Illusion Art-16 [8], Jumping-12 [1], Lockpicking-12 [½], Naturalist-12 [1], Pickpocket-10 [1], Stealth-14 [8], Survival (Woodlands)-18 [10], Tracking-15 [4].

\*Bought from Survival default.

Humans have always fascinated Sarusaru. Pilgrims frequently travel his forest, and Sarusaru spends hours observing them from afar. He now uses his magical abilities to blend in with passing groups. During these encounters, Sarusaru takes on the persona of a busso and offers to guide the pilgrims through the forest. When the pilgrims bed down for the evening, Sarusaru possesses one of them and steals whatever baubles catch his fancy. He has a smattering of thief skills now, although he relies more on his luck and single-mindedness during these robberies. He cannot explain his compulsion to steal, but he always leads the pilgrims safely through the forest afterward as payment.

Recently, Sarusaru has been plagued by nightmares. Almost all of them feature an ugly, horned bakemono. These dreams are being sent by Neimōshi, an oni (see p. 119) who was a victim of Sarusaru's compulsion. Sarusaru stole Neimōshi's enchanted dagger, and now the oni wants it back. Neimōshi has been relentlessly tracking Sarusaru down, and a confrontation is not far away.

Sarusaru has a hoard of stolen goods in his den, but he has little use for any of it. The GM should feel free to add any item to the hoard, depending on the characters' current need.



**Heir** *see p. C125*

The eldest son is the usual heir in feudal Japan, although sometimes the honor would go to a younger brother or a nephew or even an exemplary student in the absence of (or in preference to) a direct descendent. Note also that an heir could sometimes find himself in a dangerous situation, if the previous head of the clan died in a traitorous act or simply at an inopportune time.

**Literacy** *see p. B21*

Japanese uses three different sets of characters in its writing. The two simpler sets are syllabaries, in which each character represents a syllable. There are 46 characters in each syllabary, and with a few accent marks they can represent the range of syllables listed on p. 122. The third set of characters is the ideographs adopted from China in the eighth century. They have meaning as well as pronunciation associated with them, and each character may have multiple possible pronunciations. Roughly 2,000 of these ideographs are in common use, and another 3,000 sometimes appear in print. The actual count of all kanji (including those created by Emperors just because they could) may approach 50,000. Note also that there is no separate set of characters for numbers – they are represented by kanji as well.

Feudal Japan's norm is Semi-Literacy (see p. C129), although here it means that a person can read and write *katakana* (the most common script, used on signs, informal letters, etc.) fairly well and *hiragana* (the other syllabary, used in more formal writing), but not kanji (except perhaps for the characters used for the numbers 1-10). Illiteracy is worth -5 points. Literacy, meaning the character is familiar with the 2,000 common ideographs, is worth 5 points. Knowledge of the remaining ideographs is a separate language skill, Chinese Ideographs (see p. 70). Characters with knowledge of a foreign language will know its script at their level of literacy for game purposes.

Male samurai and nobles are expected to be fully literate, although many rural samurai were not. A few commoners are also fully literate, but they are considered pretentious and may get a reaction penalty from some people.

**Patron** *see p. B 4*

In a sense, any employer is a Patron in Japan. Since servants and employees are part of the extended family, the employer can be expected to lie for his employees in a court case, assist them with money or supplies in time of famine, or fight for them in a blood-feud. The value of the Patron depends on his power within Japanese society, and his accessibility by the employee in the adventure. Anyone with a job (including regular membership in a criminal gang) must take a Patron.

**Style Familiarity** *see p. C130*

There are many *ryū* (schools) of the martial arts in feudal Japan, and the styles being taught were often developed by the *sensei* (teacher) there. Many innovations and other changes were made. Secrecy was prized, and information was slow to be relayed in any event. It would be very difficult to keep up with many styles, and next to impossible to be familiar with all of them. It is recommended that the 20-point level (familiar with *all* styles known in the game world) not be allowed in a non-cinematic campaign, and that the 1-point versions be limited to a particular *ryū's* interpretation of a style (as listed below or in *GURPS Martial Arts*).

**Trained by a Master** *see p. C 1*

In a cinematic campaign set in feudal Japan, it would not be as difficult to find a true master. GMs should consider reducing the cost of this advantage to 15 or 20 points, or even making it a required advantage (and thus given to the characters at no cost).



# Disadvantages



Albinism (in humans), Berserk, Hemophilia, and Split Personality are not found in traditional sources. GMs should decide whether they will allow any PCs to take them based on how rigorously they want to adhere to the tradition.

**Addiction** *see p. B30*

Other than alcohol, the only addictive substance used in Japan is tobacco, introduced after 1600. Tobacco addiction is a -5-point disadvantage.

**Age** *see p. B27*

Asians respect the aged for their wisdom. In particular, masters of the fine or martial arts are often quite old. Anyone over 60 (or of generally aged appearance) gets +1 on reaction rolls; anyone over 70 (or of ancient appearance) gets +2. This decreases the value of this disadvantage in Japanese campaigns by 5 or 10 points, respectively.

**Blindness** *see p. B27*

Only blind people are licensed to be shampooers or masseurs.

**Code of Honor** *see p. B31*

Codes of honor are very important to the Japanese culture. Many codes of honor existed for different social classes: here are two important ones. See also *Sense of Duty*, p. 68.

## **Bushidō**

The Japanese "Way of the Warrior" centered on absolute loyalty to one's master and single-mindedness in the execution of orders dictated by that master or by one's own station. The *go jō* (five articles) of a warrior's virtue are *chi*, *gi*, *jin*, *rei*, and *shin* (wisdom, justice, benevolence, courtesy, and fidelity). A samurai is expected to die rather than fail in his task, and to commit ritual suicide without hesitation if ordered to do so. He must answer any challenge or insult to his lord. Pain, discomfort, and even death must be faced stoically. He must always be polite to his equals and superiors, and cannot overlook disrespect from a social inferior; such disrespect is usually punished by death. -15 points.

## **Chōnindō**

Appropriate in a Late Tokugawa campaign, the Japanese "Way of the Merchant" emphasized honest business practices, frugality, and pursuit of excellence in one's field. If you are known to follow this code, the GM should allow you a +2 on any commercial transaction reaction roll. Note that these are different from Honesty (p. B33) and Miserliness (p. B34), but still have some overlap. Reduce the cost of either of those disadvantages to -5 points if taken in conjunction with this Code of Honor. -10 points.



**Cowardice** *see p. B32*

Cowards are despised; -5 reaction from samurai, -3 reaction from everyone else, making this worth -20 points. Frightened people will never admit fear, but will make a brave show and then find a logical reason to retreat very quickly.

Successful Acting, Fast-Talk or Savoir-Faire can help disguise cowardice. The negative reaction is only to *known* cowards.

**Dependents** *see p. B38*

Servants and employees are part of the extended family, and so may count as Dependents. Anyone with employees may take the Dependent disadvantage at an appropriate cost in points.

**Disciplines of Faith (Mikkyō)** *see p. C189*

*Mikkyō* (Esoteric Buddhism) promises enlightenment through secrets. The teacher passes on these secrets in return for the student's obedience. Mantras must be recited and mudras performed. Isolation is also preferred; many practitioners live as hermits in the mountains of Japan.

**Fanaticism** *see p. B33*

Nearly all Japanese, by Western standards, are fanatics in one respect or another. However, this fanaticism is usually expressed as a Sense of Duty – see below.

**Gigantism** *see p. B28*

A Japanese giant is 20% taller than the Japanese normal (6' 1" minimum). Anyone over 6' 5" is rumored to be half-tengu and is -3 on reaction rolls (except in potential combat situations when he is +2 to his own side); this increases the value of the disadvantage to -15 points. Giants also have to cope with low doorways, short beds, small servings of food, and so on. Many commoners with this disadvantage turn it to profit by becoming sumō wrestlers.

**Miserliness** *see p. B34*

Samurai and nobility despise misers, no matter what their social status; they suffer a -2 on their reaction rolls. Thus, this disadvantage is worth -15 points in a Japanese campaign.



**Obsession (Courtesan or Geisha)** *see p. B93*

Japanese men occasionally become deeply involved with a courtesan or geisha. This type of "love" is considered destructive. The victim must pay for the company of his beloved. The average courtesan charges \$8 for an hour of her company; the average geisha charges \$20 to attend a party. Fees can range up to 10 times that amount, depending on the woman's reputation. 90% of the fee goes to the manager who owns her contract. A courtesan or geisha only grants her favors to a man who pleases her. Winning a *fashionable* courtesan's or geisha's favors raises your reaction rolls +1 among men. Buying her contract and marrying her raises reaction rolls +2 among men (except among samurai). -10 points

**Pacifism** *see p. B35*

Anyone outside the priesthood who does not defend or avenge those to whom he should be loyal is despised (-4 reaction penalty). This increases the value of this disadvantage in a Japanese campaign to -35 or -50 points. (Priests pay the normal -15 or -30 points).

**Phobias** *see p. B35*

Appropriate phobias in feudal Japan include the fears of being alone, crowds, darkness, death, heights, insects, loud noises, magic, monsters, oceans, reptiles, and strangeness. Phobic people are considered cowardly, and get the reaction described under Cowardice, above, from those who witness their phobia. This may increase the value of the Phobia, depending on the frequency of possibly encountering the source of the fear and the likelihood of being observed, at the GM's discretion.

**Pyromania** *see p. B36*

Since the punishment for arson in Japan does not always carry any leniency for mental illness, someone with this disadvantage is more likely to have a Secret (Accidentally Burned This or That), a negative Reputation, or both. Or will run the risk of acquiring them shortly . . .

**Sense of Duty** *see p. B39*

Most Japanese characters should take this disadvantage. People are expected to have a Sense of Duty to their parents and teachers. Women are expected to have a Sense of Duty to their parents-in-law, husband, and children. Employees are expected to have a Sense of Duty to their employers. Each personal Duty is worth -5 points to a maximum of -10 points.

Most samurai have a Sense of Duty to their clan (-10 points) in addition to personal Duties.

A person with conflicting Duties can reconcile them by committing suicide or becoming a Buddhist priest. If he does neither, the GM should lower his Sense of Duty disadvantage, and raise his Cowardice disadvantage by the same amount, lowering reaction rolls appropriately. A Sense of Duty can be faked with Acting or Fast-Talk.

**Social Stigma** *see p. B47*

Women in feudal Japan are treated as valuable property (-10 points). They receive a -2 on all reaction rolls. Chirase are treated as second-class citizens (-5 points). Other Asuras are minority groups (-10 points). Ainu, non-humans and *gaijin* (foreigners) are outsiders (-15 points).

## Skills



Mastery in Artistic and Combat/Weapon skills is highly admired in Japan. Skilled artists, and combatants should consider purchasing appropriate levels of the Reputation advantage.

Contests of Artistic Skill are common amusements. Modify the rolls by Social Status to determine who is declared the winner. For instance, a lady of samurai birth (Status 2) who makes a skill roll by 3 will be adjudged the loser when in competition with a lady of noble birth (Status 5) who makes a skill roll by 1.

Training in Combat/Weapon skills is available to nobles, samurai, yamabushi, and ninja. A teacher who accepts a student becomes his Patron. It is virtually impossible for a would-be fighter to persuade a nonhuman or someone from a different social group to become his teacher. The GM should require the would-be student to get a Reaction Roll of Excellent from the potential teacher to proceed.

The following Combat/Weapon skills are not in the Japanese tradition: Axe Throwing, Fencing, Net, and Sling. The only Vehicle skills in the Japanese tradition are Boating, Shiphandling, and Teamster (Horse or Ox).

Some skills are not in the warrior tradition. A samurai seen using them suffers -1 reaction rolls (-4 from other samurai) and might be forced to become a rōnin to wipe out the disgrace to his clan. These skills include Blowpipe, Brawling, Lasso, Flail, and Western weapons such as Black Powder guns. Flail weapons included Kusarigama (Chain and Sickle), Kusari (weighted chain), and Nunchaku. Use of Axe/Mace weapons is also considered unseemly for samurai, but draws only a -1 reaction, even from other samurai.

Anyone seen using certain skills is assumed to be a ninja. These include Blowpipe, Lasso, Shuriken, and any concealed weapons or poisons.



Non-human outcasts practice certain craft and professional skills that other people disdain because they involve working with dead bodies. Such contact defiles the person so he cannot enter a Shintō shrine. These professions include butcher, executioner, gravedigger, leatherworker, and torturer.

## Cultural Familiarity: Advantages and Skills

A Westerner entering the Japanese culture, or vice versa, will suffer a substantial penalty on many of his skills until he becomes used to the culture. This also applies to Empathy rolls dealing with the foreigners.

Affected skills include Criminology, History, Literature, Occultism, Psychology, Savoir-Faire, and Streetwise, plus the ability to appreciate the other culture's art.

Newcomers start at a base -3. After a month's residence, this penalty becomes -2. After 3 months, it is -1; after a year, there is no penalty. This assumes that anyone skilled in (for instance) History will be interested enough to learn about Japanese history while he is in Japan. If (for instance) a character were jailed upon arriving in Japan, he might increase some of his skills in jail, but not those requiring reading and intellectual conversation!

### Language Limitations

Some skills depend on speech and may never exceed the speaker's (or translator's) Language Skill. These include Bard, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Gossip, Hypnotism, Interrogation, Lip-Reading, Savoir-Faire, and Ventriloquism. For instance, someone with Fast-Talk at 14 whose speech is translated at Skill 12 fails his Fast-Talk roll on 13 or higher. Gesture communication is done at a -4 penalty (see p. 70).

In attempting a skill not found in one's own culture (e.g. a Japanese trying Sling or a Westerner trying Origami), the listed default does not apply. New skills are learned at the usual cost in time and points. There may even be an additional difficulty because of the language difference.

## Extraordinary Diligence to Maintain High Skill

As per the sidebar on p. C116, the GM may require any character with a Combat/Weapon skill of higher than DX+10 to set aside an hour every day for practice, or else make a DX roll, with the skill going down 1 point on a failure.

The traditional Japanese rule was that a fighter should practice a combat skill a thousand times a day to keep his reflexes honed. For instance, a swordsman was supposed to draw his sword 120 times a day and take 1,000 cuts with it; an archer was supposed to fire 1,000 arrows a day.

Samurai and nobles also had other traditional forms of archery practice. The *taka inu* took place in a large penned field, allowing mounted archers to shoot at fleeing dogs. In *enteki*, archers shot at a target at least 70 yards away. In *inagashi*, archers shot for one hour at a target over 35 yards away.

Finally, there were formal exercises in which fighters who trusted one another "fought" in *kata*, rehearsed patterns of combat using strong attacks. The GM should have both fighters make their skill rolls. Critical success raises reaction rolls by +1 among those who observe it for a while (perhaps a month). Failure lowers reaction rolls by -1 similarly. Critical failure may result in breaking the pattern so as to attack the other fighter (who defends normally); this involves great loss of face, and lowers reaction rolls by -2 for a much longer period, up to a year!



### Animal Handling see p. B46

This offers the chance to specialize (see p. B43), at +5 with one type of animal and -1 with all others. Specialization depends on status. There is the samurai's or noble's hunting hawk, pony and horse, the farmer's plow animal, the fisher's cormorant, the merchant's watchdog, and the street entertainer's monkey. All social classes keep and train pets including cats, goldfish, and singing animals (birds, frogs, and insects). Dogs are not kept as pets, but as guards. Cats are valued for their ability to destroy vermin.

### Armoury/TL4 see p. B53

Katana is a *required* specialization of Armoury, even at TL5 and below. The *katanakaji* (swordsmiths) of feudal Japan practice a ritualistic craft and the details of the process tend to be carefully guarded.

### Artist see p. B47

This includes engraving and painting with colors or ink. Most Japanese painting styles aim at capturing a visual impression, not at accurate depiction of details.

### Black-Powder Weapons/TL4 see p. B49

The Portuguese introduced firearms to Japan in 1543. Many successful daimyō readily adopted them in their battles until the Tokugawa Shogunate banned their use. These use the Matchlock Musket specialization.

### Chess see p. C1145

The Japanese version of chess is called *shogi*. It is played on a 9x9-square board. Both players' pieces are the same color – they are distinguished by their facing on the board, and captured pieces can be returned to play by the capturing player. The goal is to checkmate the other player's king or jewel (since an Emperor decided that there can only be one king on the board, the lesser player protects an otherwise identical piece called the jewel). Chess (Shogi) and Chess (Western) default to each other at -3.



*Chinese Ideographs (M/A) Defaults to Language  
(Japanese, Korean, Okinawan or any Chinese) -3  
Prerequisite: Literacy*

This is the knowledge of the *kanji* beyond those encountered in day-to-day writing. Old manuscripts, academic texts, flowery literature, and scrolls of secret knowledge might require the use of this skill for full comprehension and appreciation. If this skill exceeds the appropriate language skill, it is even possible to discern the meaning of a text without being able to read it aloud (although most ideographs include a pronunciation cue). This will also enable communication between, say, a Japanese speaker and a Mandarin speaker if they can trace the characters on the ground, for instance.



*Combat/Weapon Art or Sport see p. C1133*

During the peaceful late Tokugawa period, the Japanese developed combat as a highly stylized art form, aiming at beauty and exercise, often using non-lethal weapons such as *bokken* (wooden swords; see p. 96). On the other hand, tournaments were not as concerned with minimizing the potential for injury as the Sport skills; tournament deaths were to be expected, although intentionally killing a lesser opponent was to be avoided.

*Dancing see p. B47*

The graceful dance style of the Imperial Court is known as *bugaku*. During the Tokugawa Era, the lively *odori* dance forms became popular. Religious dance styles include *nembutsu odori* (Buddhist) and *kagura* (Shintō). Each of these would be treated as a familiarity of the Dancing skill (see p. B43).

*Exorcism see p. C1153*

A Buddhist or Shintō priest can use this skill to force a fox or ghost to release a possessed human. If successful, the victim of the possession must sleep for as many hours as he was possessed (maximum one day). It has no effect on Japanese demons (see p. 100).

A Buddhist exorcism forces the fox or ghost from the victim into a human medium, where it remains long enough to answer 2d questions to the best of its ability. Afterwards, the fox or ghost may flee the medium, but it may not attempt to re-possess its previous victim.

A Shintō exorcism puts the fox or ghost directly under the control of a powerful kami, which usually bears it away. If the GM decides, however, the kami may have other plans for the hapless fox or ghost . . .

*Fireworks see p. C1126*

This is the skill of making black powder fireworks, *nagetepō* (grenades), and *uzumebi* (land mines). It is used professionally or as a ninja skill.

*Forgery/TL3 see p. B15*

This includes forging wooden travel passes and cremation tickets (authorizations for a temple to cremate a body), as well as forging official documents and personal letters using an ink brush. In Japan, it defaults to Calligraphy-5 rather than to Artist-5.

*Gambling see p. B13*

The most common gambling games are *saikoro* (dice games). After *karuta* (playing cards) were introduced by the Portuguese in the 16th century, a card game called *samurai karuta*, similar to blackjack, became a popular form of gambling. *Hanafuda* (a card game of matching flowers) is a widely played.

A Contest of Gambling Skills can be held for any stakes that two people agree on. Sleight of Hand can be used to cheat. A man can stake a daughter or wife in a game; if he loses, the winner gets her contract as a courtesan.

The Tokugawa Shogunate made all gambling illegal in 1697.

*Games see p. C1146*

In addition to shogi (see *Chess*, p. 69) and the gambling games, the ancient game of Go is also popular with the Japanese.

*Gesture see p. B15*

Gesture skill is at -4 between Westerners and Japanese. Some of the common differences are the Japanese points to his nose rather than his chest to signify himself, he wiggles his index and middle finger in the palm of his left hand (like chopsticks) to signify hunger, and he waves his palm in front of his face to tell someone to go away.

*Heraldry see p. B58*

The *mon* (crest) or *kamon* (family crest) is a Japanese heraldic device. It normally appears on a warrior's armor and on the kimono of a family's retainers. The most familiar mon to Westerners is probably the chrysanthemum of the Imperial family. Like Western heraldry, the pictures seem to have begun as pure decoration, then become identified with particular families. After 1642, the right of a family to exclusive use of its mon was guaranteed by government order.

*Interrogation see p. B13*

Supervised by local magistrates or court officials, this often includes torture, such as flogging or pressing with stones. The actual torturer will be a non-human outcast, but





an official may have, and use, the skill without ever dirtying his own hands. No criminal is legally guilty unless he confesses.

*Jūdō* see p. B51

Although the first jūdō dojo did not open until 1882, the roots of its precursor jūjutsu run back to the 11th century. The principles represented by the skill allowed the police during the Tokugawa Era, in particular, to make arrests without the risk of killing the subject. In Japanese, these principles are *nage waza* (throwing techniques) and *osae waza* (holding techniques).

*Karate* see p. B51

The various styles of karate were not practiced in Japan until the early 20th century, but (like Jūdō above) the principles were practiced in other guises. These principles are known as *atemi waza* (striking techniques).

*Kite Flying* see p. C1146

Kite-flying is a common entertainment of all ages and classes, including the highest nobility.

*Language* see p. B54

Each Japanese clan has its own dialect; there is also an Imperial Court dialect. For game purposes, the regional dialects default to one another at -1 (although some were almost mutually unintelligible). The court dialect defaults to a regional dialect or vice versa at -2.

Foreign languages that are potentially useful would be Mandarin, Korean, Okinawan, Russian, Portuguese, Dutch, and English.

*Merchant* see p. B64

In a scholar or warrior, this skill is considered a sign of miserliness, and is not admired. Japanese merchants deal with Westerners, and vice versa, at -4.

*Musical Instrument* see p. B47

Japanese instruments include the *biwa* (four- or five-stringed lute), *fue* (flute), *koto* (13-stringed lap harp), *samisen* or *shamisen* (three-stringed lute), *shakuhachi* (bamboo recorder), *shō* (mouth organ), *taiko* (large barrel-shaped drum), and *tsuzumi* (small hourglass-shaped hand drum). It is expected that most nobles and geisha will play at least one instrument. Most of these instruments are similar enough to Western ones that musicians from either culture could play the others' instruments at the normal -3 default . . . but they would play in their own style, not the native style!

*Performance* see p. B64

This is the ability to perform a role on the stage from a memorized script. It is of use primarily to earn a living.

*Nō* actors wear character masks; they declaim their lines in an archaic dialect to their aristocratic audience. Samurai and nobles are forbidden to attend the more realistic *Kabuki* plays, with their elaborate special effects (but sometimes do so anyway, watching from curtained boxes).

*Poetry* see p. B47

Typical Japanese poetry forms include the *haiku*, with five *jion* (Japanese syllables) in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third, and *tanka*, like the haiku with two more seven-*jion* lines. By far the most common subject is the beauty and ephemerality of nature.

*Politics* see p. B64

In Japan, this is the skill of being appointed by bureaucrats or the ruler, not being elected. Staying in office involves making sure any failures seem the fault of someone else.

*Savoir-Faire* see p. B64

There is little significant connection between Western good manners and those of Japan. If Western characters assume that their *Savoir-Faire* will help them get along in Japan, the GM should let them try, and hope that the results will not be fatal.

Between Japanese, treat the skill as usual. Part of Japanese *Savoir-Faire* is knowing how to goad someone into a rage. Samurai can legally kill annoying commoners, but they are supposed to get official permission to duel other samurai. One of the deadlier insults is hitting someone with a sandal.

Another facet of *Savoir-Faire*, appropriate for a geisha, is the skill of keeping a party going while insuring that everyone has a good time and nobody feels left out. This is very different from Carousing – though that, too, is a geisha skill!

*Sculpting* see p. B47

This includes casting bronze and carving stone, wood, and ivory.

*Sex Appeal* see p. B64

Respectable women do not act seductively, even with their husbands. Such behavior is only proper for women such as geisha, courtesans, and entertainers (though some inn maids and non-human beggar women imitate it). Anyone viewing a woman's inappropriate use of Sex Appeal, except for the target, will react at -2 to the user. If the attempt is successful, the target will still be affected normally. But if the attempt fails, the reaction of the target will be 2 worse than that rolled.

*Tea Ceremony* see p. C1147

*Chadō*, the way of tea, is a ritualized process in Japan. The tea master Rikyu, who served Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, established the black Raku tea bowl style of tea ceremony. The entire formal ritual takes hours, from the building of the fire to the final round of sweets. Being a good guest at a tea ceremony also involves knowing this skill, as everyone must follow the rules of respect toward each other and toward the utensils. Often three to five guests are invited, but many roleplaying opportunities may involve only the host and one guest – the ceremony can be a stylized battlefield wherein each tries to gain the advantage over the other during the prescribed discussions.



# Economics, Jobs, and Wealth



Standard starting wealth for a medieval Japanese character is \$1,000. This includes all possessions, not just cash in hand. Any character except a genuine itinerant (a bandit or peddler) should spend no more than 20% of his wealth on portable goods. The rest is tied up in his home (see p. 112).

A recently Disowned character has the Starting Wealth of his old Wealth Level and the income of his new Wealth Level.

Yearly cost of living is given under Status (see below).

## Living Expenses and Loss of Status

Living expenses are given in \$ (silver pieces) per month. This is the minimum required to maintain a lifestyle appropriate to that status. Some types (wealthy commoners, for instance, and gamblers) would actually spend much more money every month. Some jobs (see *Job Table*, p. 74) allow lower costs of living because many expenses are covered by the employer or (for a high noble at court) by the Shogunate.

Anyone who cannot manage the cost of living for his status in any given month is at -1 to effective status. A Japanese who loses status must contemplate suicide (see p. 16).

Level	Rank	Cost of Living
8	Emperor	20,000
7	Shōgun	15,000
6	Major Imperial noble or high priest	8,000
5	Imperial noble or minor high priest	4,000
4	Major clan head or major abbot	1,000
3	Minor clan head, member of major clan, minor abbot	600
2	Samurai, member of minor noble clan, physician	200
1	Wealthy farmer, rōnin, yamabushi, Shintō priest, bodyguard	100
0	Artisan, peasant, diviner, exorcist	80
-1	Merchant, trader, servant, wandering entertainer, geisha, courtesan	50
-2	Casual laborer, gambler, bandit, thief	20
-3	Ninja, outcast, beggar	15
-4	Nonhuman	-

Women have the same status as their husbands or other male relatives.

## Money

Japan uses a system of copper, silver, and gold coins and *mon* ( $\frac{2}{3}$  of a cent), *shu* (\$1), *bu* (\$4), and *ryo* (\$16) values. So 1 ryo = 4 bu = 16 shu = 4000 mon.

Gold coins come in values of 1 bu (*ichibukin*), 1 ryo (*kobankin*), and 5- and 10-ryo (*ōbankin*), silver coins in values of 1 shu (*ichishugin*), 2-shu (*nishugin*), and 1 bu (*ichibugin*), and copper coins in 1 mon (*kaneitsuhō*), 4 mon (*bunkeyueihō*), 10 mon (*hōeitsuhō*), and 100 mon (*tempōsuhō*). There are also low-quality silver coins that are valued by weight, and generally worth 50-60 mon.

The Japanese also use the *roku* (a year's supply of rice for one man; about 5 bushels) as a monetary unit. 1 roku = about \$20, but can fluctuate (see p. 44)

Finally, each clan issues paper money backed by its treasury and used in cities in its territory. Merchants will change it into coins for travelers, charging a 1% conversion fee. If the Shogunate abolishes a clan, its paper money may be redeemed at half value or may become totally worthless. The clan treasury may be spent on bribes to Shogunate officials, in an effort to get them to spare the lives of the daimyō's family. It may be divided by the samurai, who take it to finance themselves in their new lives as rōnin.

## Savings

Every Japanese of any substance tries to accumulate savings. They prefer coins to paper, and keep the cash at home. Even a poor villager may have a trove of silver carefully hidden away, though he will deny it to even his closest friends. To tell a friend about your hidden wealth is, after all, unseemly bragging, and to tell anyone else is foolish.



# Jobs



Any respectable person must have a job. A job should cover the PC's cost of living, as required by his Status. The Job Table lists a number of jobs; the GM may add others. Some have skill or experience prerequisites (default values do not count here; you must have at least a half-point invested in the listed skill).

Servants and employees are part of the Japanese employer's family. Firing one is like disowning a child, and is done only if the person has acted disloyally. An employee whose stupidity or incompetence makes him unfit for one job will be assigned another at the same pay.

Anyone who fails at a job or important task is shamed. A samurai also shames his lord by failure at a job; he might commit suicide or become a rōnin. A noble who embarrasses himself by failure at court might go home in voluntary exile or become a Buddhist priest.

## Wealth Level and Weekly Work Hours

In Japan a worker will not lose his job for missing work. Being fired is far too serious to be the penalty for absenteeism. The absent worker may be beaten, insulted or unpaid, but not fired. Anyone who is not at work full time will excite the curiosity of everyone around, including magistrates, gang bosses, and other figures of authority. Except for the very wealthy, this does not leave many unaccounted-for hours.

## Time Off Work

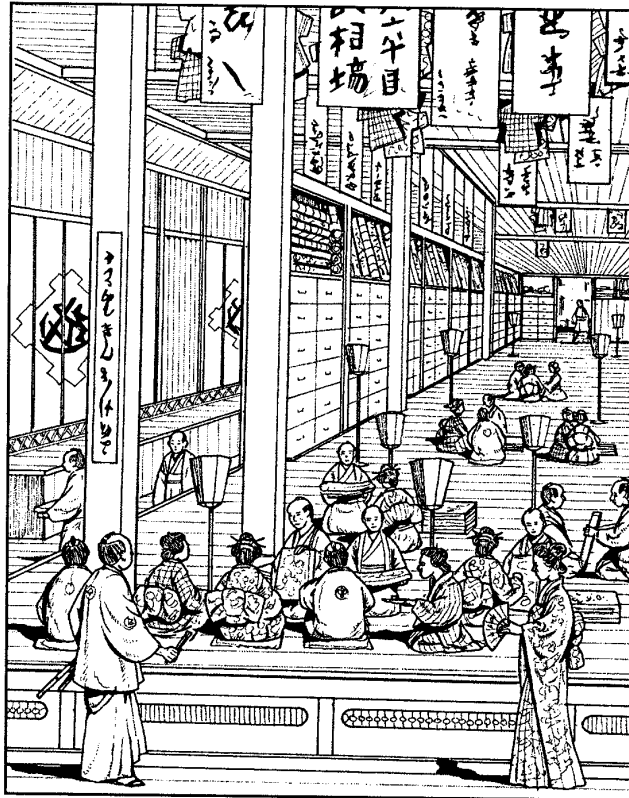
For the usual peasant, artisan or merchant, time not spent working is still usually spent in the company of his family or fellow employees. There are religious and popular holidays, but usually the family or business celebrates them together. The average Japanese has virtually no time to himself. People are suspicious of those who keep to themselves; they wonder what they have to hide. There is always the possibility that a stranger might not be a human at all, but a *hengeyōkai* (shapechanging animal).

## Finding Work

Finding a full-time job means persuading your potential employer to enter a potentially lifelong relationship . . . to become your Patron. A letter of recommendation is necessary. Anyone without a letter is assumed by most potential masters to be Disowned (-3 on reaction rolls). If the recommendation is from a stranger, the employer's reaction rolls will be at -2. His reaction will not be affected by skill; he is hiring loyalty first, and competence is not nearly as important.

Casual laborers do servant's work when they can get jobs, perhaps 20 hours a week. Their highest possible Wealth level is Struggling, but they have lots of free time to starve in.

Itinerant workers travel from job to job, working 40 hours a week. They have half the income of a craftsman with an established location. They may be of any Wealth level, and they have a legitimate reason to move from locality to locality.



Street work (e.g., begging, peddling) and casual labor (e.g., porter, palanquin bearer) is available to anyone who does not offend the local powers (ward or village head or gambling gang boss).

Itinerant artisans and merchants can work, as long as they do not offend the authorities or local competitors. This also applies to diviners, exorcists, mediums, physicians, and teachers.

The newcomer can challenge the local resident to a quick Contest of Skills (with the newcomer at -3 to Skill due to local favoritism). If the newcomer loses, he leaves town. If he wins, the local resident will share facilities and market, or offer the stranger a bribe to leave town. This might be as much as half the local's savings. If the stranger wins by a significant margin, the local resident might offer to become his apprentice, or just leave town himself.

Recommendations are also generally demanded of itinerant artisans and merchants, entertainers, courtesans, and geisha who move into a new locality. Even gamblers need an introduction to the local gang boss. Criminals like bandits, thieves, and ninja can work as long as they avoid the attention of the local authorities, or, perhaps, stay on good terms with them.

Working in the wilderness (e.g., hermit, herb gatherer, woodcutter) is possible for anyone who does not offend the local nushi (see p. 18).



# Job Table

Some skills referenced here (e.g., Mining, Fire Fighting) are not defined elsewhere; they are professional skills having little application except to earn a living. Such occupations are listed here because they are typical, honorable, important Japanese jobs. A retired character, or one living in a village city, might follow such a track.

## Job, (Required Skills), Monthly Income

## Success Roll Critical Failure

### Poor Jobs

Beggar* (no qualifications), \$25	Panhandling	2d
Non-human (inherited), \$25	11	3d/5d
Porter* (ST 12+), \$20	PR	-1i/1d,-2i
Palanquin bearer* (ST 12+), \$20	PR	2d/3d
Hermit Mage* (any four spells at 11+, or any two at 14+), \$30	Worst PR	1d/2d,-2i
Peddler* (Merchant 11+), \$35	PR	-1i/-1i,2d

### Struggling Jobs

Apprentice (Craft Skill 10+), \$10 (no living expenses)	PR	2d/4d or disowned
Bandit* (Survival 11+, one Weapon Skill 11+), \$35	Best PR	3d/3d, caught
Ascetic Buddhist Priest (living expenses 1/8 normal) (Theology 11+, Meditation 11+), \$45	Best PR	2d/3d,-1i
Gambler* (Gambling 11+, one Combat Skill 11+), \$35	Gambling-2	-1i/ 2d, -2i
Hunter* (Survival 11+, Tracking 11+), \$70	Best PR	2d, 3d,-1i
Maid servant (Savoir Faire 11+), \$45	PR	-1i/1d,-1i
Ninja (one Thief/Spy skill 13+, one Combat Skill 13+, DX 13+), \$75	Worst PR	3d/5d
Miner (Mining 11+), \$70	PR	3d/5d
Rōnin* (Katana 11+, Savoir-Faire 11+), \$55	Best PR	2d,-1i/4d,-1 status
Thief* (any four Thief skills at 11+, or any two at 14+), \$35	Best PR	-2i/2d, caught
Woodcutter* (ST 11+, Survival 10+), \$65	Best PR	1d,-1i/3d,-1i

### Average Jobs

Artisan (Craft Skill 13+), \$90	PR	-1i/-2i
Bodyguard (one Combat Skill 12+), \$100	PR	3d/5d
Cook (Cooking 12+), \$70	PR	1d/3d
Courier* (no requirements), \$65	12	2d/4d
Courtesan* (Attractive or better, Sex Appeal 12+), \$25 (no living expenses)	PR	-1i/1d, -1i
Diviner* (Divination spell 11+ or Fast-Talk 13+), \$110	PR	-1i/-3i
Exorcist*(Exorcism 11+ or Fast-Talk 13+), \$110	PR	-1i/-3i
Fireman (Firefighting 12+), \$95	PR	3d/5d
Medium* (Summon Spirit spell 11+ or Fast-talk 13+), \$110	PR	-2i/2d, -2i
Peasant Farmer* (Agronomy 11+), \$85	PR	1d/2d,-1i
Peasant Fisherman* (Fishing 11+), \$90	PR	1d/3d,-2i
Samurai (Katana 12+, Savoir-Faire 12+, Status 2), \$165	Best PR+Status	2d/4d, LS
Shampooer* (Blind, a boy to lead him), \$80	11	-1i/-2i
Shintō Priest (Theology 12+, Status 1), \$110	PR	-1i/-2i, defiled
Shopkeeper* (Merchant 12+, a shop), \$135	PR	-1i/2d,-1i
Sumō Wrestler (ST 14+, Sumo Wrestling 12+), \$110	Worst PR	2d/4d
Tour Guide* (Area Knowledge 12+, Bard 11+), \$90	Best PR	-1i/2d,-1i

### Comfortable Jobs

Chōja (well-off farmer)* (Agronomy 11+, own land), \$220	PR	1d/2d,-1i
Geisha* (Reaction bonus, Artistic Skill 12+, Savoir-Faire 12+), \$45 (no living expenses)	Best PR	-1i/-3i
Local Temple Head (Administration 13+, Theology 13+, Status 3), \$440	Best PR	-1i/-1i, LS
Imperial Noble (½ normal cost of living) (Savoir-Faire 12+, one Artistic Skill 12+, Status 5), \$330	Best PR	-2i/-3i, LS
Merchant* (Merchant 13+, Administration 13+), \$385	Best PR	-1i/2d, -2i
Masseur* (Masseur 12+, Blind, a boy to lead him), \$110	10	-1i/-2i
Physician (Physician 13+ or Surgery 13+), \$220	PR	-1i/-2i
Teacher of an art or skill (Teaching 12+, requisite skill 14+), \$165	Best PR	-1i/2d,-1i
Theater Owner (Administration 13+, Merchant 12+, Appreciate Beauty 9+), \$165	Worst PR	-2i
Ward Head (Administration 13+, Politics 13+), \$165	Worst PR	-2i/-2i, LS

### Wealthy Jobs (all hereditary in principle)

Head of a Temple Order (inherited), \$440	10	-1i/-3i
Close relative of a daimyō (inherited), \$440	10	2d/4d
Imperial relative (inherited), \$330	10	-2i/-2i, LS
Clan or Court key official (inherited, Politics 13+), \$440	PR	-2i/-2i, LS
Karō (inherited, Administration 13+, Politics 13+, Status 2+), \$660	Worst PR	-2i/-2i, LS
Close relative of the Shōgun (inherited), \$880	10	-1i
Minor daimyō (inherited, Politics 13+, Strategy 13+), \$660	Worst PR	-3i/-3i, LS
Daimyō/major daimyō (inherited, Politics 14+, Strategy 13+), \$1,100	Worst PR	-3i/-3i, LS

#### Key to Table

\* freelance jobs  
 PR prerequisite  
 LJ Lost Job  
 d dice of damage suffered  
 i months' income  
 LS means the character has suffered embarrassment and lost status; he must contemplate suicide and/or go on a quest.

If there are two entries separated by a slash, use the second result only when a natural 1 is rolled.

Note that for some dangerous jobs, the result of a critical failure can be serious injury. The GM may choose to play out these episodes to give the PC a fighting chance.





## CHAPTER SIX

# Bujutsu: Japanese Martial Arts



Japanese combat arts have a long history intertwined with their social and religious traditions. There are two terms often translated as “school” – a *ryū* is a school of thought or a style, and a *dōjō* is a physical building or training hall. Training methods are carefully guarded secrets, and every *ryū* claims a unique heritage.

If the campaign emphasizes combat or martial arts training, the GM should refer to *GURPS Martial Arts* for full details on style costs, combining styles, cinematic combat rules, and other useful information. An overview of the style system is presented below.



## The Bujutsu Ryū

Feudal Japan is teeming with *bujutsu ryū* (martial arts schools). Every military clan includes at least one training center and, by the Late Tokugawa Era, employs at least one instructor for each of the "core" skills (archery, horsemanship, spearmanship, and swordsmanship). In the poorer clans the teachers might share a *dōjō* while the richer clans might have separate halls available.

The major temples and shrines of the *yamabushi* (see p. 61) and other warrior priests have their own *dōjō*, where the priests as well as members of the other classes (including the samurai) could study. Most of these have been shut down by the Late Tokugawa Era, but they are easily found during the Warring States Period.

The urban population studies *bujutsu* at centers sponsored by the various guilds. Again, the schools of armed *bujutsu* are more common before the rise of the Tokugawa Shogunate, but clandestine centers continue to operate in spacious private homes. Unarmed *bujutsu ryū* remain legal throughout the periods covered here.

## The Students

Getting into a *ryū* is straightforward enough. If the *sensei* is in charge of his own school, he normally takes students by recommendation. The student may have to take a *keppan* (blood oath) before admission as well. If the *ryū* is part of a clan, then the clan assigns students as desired. The students fall into two basic categories. *Deshu* are regular trainees. *Uchideshi* are special students who live with the instructor and devote themselves to the study of the art with the ultimate goal of becoming instructors. The *gokui* (hidden techniques) of a style, if any, are often reserved for the *uchideshi*, and some perhaps just for the *jukugashira* (see below).

### Student Rankings

*Mukyū* ("classless") are rank beginners. From there students progress from *rokkyū* (class 6) through *ikkyū* (class 1) before receiving their black belts and becoming *shodan* (1st degree). Black belts progress through the 10th degree (*jūdan*). Belts of various colors distinguish the students beneath black belt, but the number of different belts and the colors used are different across the schools. The senior student in a school is the *jukugashira* ("school leader").



## Style Cost

There are at least three benefits to characters studying a martial arts style. It may be the only way that teachers will agree to impart the training (and this is certainly true in feudal Japan). Characters may not improve maneuvers unless they study a style that provides training in those maneuvers. And opponents who are unfamiliar with the style will be at -1 to their Active Defenses (see p. CI30).

Each style has a point cost, which is the minimum number of points that must be spent on the style's skills and maneuvers to gain the benefits of familiarity with that style. It is possible to create a character who has fewer points in a given style – but he is still unfamiliar with it, and his opponents will not yet have their defenses reduced. The cost is normally the number of *Primary skills* and *Maneuvers* in the style (with a minimum cost of 5). Some styles demand more points in certain skills and maneuvers; these are noted with the required number in [ ]s.

Most styles have a second point cost, representing the cost of the cinematic version of that style. Learning the cinematic version requires the advantage Trained by a Master (see pp. 61, CI31). Cinematic skills cannot be used until the student has learned all *Primary skills* at 16+, but the GM may require at least one point to be spent on them to be considered familiar with the style.



## Restrictions

At least one point must be spent on each Primary skill for a student to be considered familiar with it. A Primary skill may not be improved further if that would raise its level to three or more above another Primary skill. For example, if an Iaijutsu practitioner has Fast-Draw (Sword)-14, he cannot raise it to 15 if he has only Body Language-12.

A Secondary skill may not be improved if the new level would equal or exceed any of the Primary skills. Each Optional skill may only be improved to *two levels* less than the lowest Primary skill. These restrictions are removed once all Primary skills are learned at 15+.

At least a half-point must be spent in each average maneuver, and one point in each hard maneuver, unless another number appears in the [ ]s.

## Bujutsu of Feudal Japan

### Aikijutsu (Harmony) 5/10 points

*Aiki* is the harmony of mind – harmony with the body, or harmony with outside circumstances such as combat. The techniques (*jutsu*) of this philosophy were traditionally the domain of the Minamoto and then (by the feudal era) the Takeda families. They kept the practice secret – the GM may require an Unusual Background for a non-Takeda to learn this style.

The modern version of this style, developed by Uyeshiba Morihei, is presented in *GURPS Martial Arts* (p. MA77). One historical version is presented here.

*Primary Skills:* Jūdō.

*Secondary Skills:* Katana, Shortsword.

*Optional Skills:* Karate, Staff, Theology (Shintō).

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Breakfall, Ground Fighting (Jūdō).

*Cinematic Skills:* Immovable Stance, Mental Strength, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets, Push.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Roll with Blow.

### Bajutsu (Horsemanship) 6/15 points

Samurai are expected to know how to ride horses, but some carried this proficiency to the level of a full-fledged martial arts style. Schools focus on its principles, some even specializing in either land-based horsemanship or swimming horsemanship. It emphasizes archery, as there is ample time to loose arrows while charging to the battle, and the use of the katana, naginata, and yari in closer quarters.

This style is not prevalent during the Late Tokugawa Era; many years of peace and restrictions on horse ownership enforced by the bakufu make it impractical.

*Primary Skills:* Bow, Riding (Horse) [2].

*Secondary Skills:* Animal Handling (Horse), Katana, Polearm, Spear.

*Optional Skills:* Strategy, Swimming, Tactics, Veterinary.

*Maneuvers:* Fighting While Mounted (Katana, Polearm, or Spear), Horse Archery, Direct Mount.

*Cinematic Skills:* Equestrian Acrobatics.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Dodge\*.

\*Enhances the mount's Dodge only, 8 points.

## Shield Blocking

Japanese use shields against missile attacks but not in melee combat. Even teppo bullets are slow enough to be stopped by a thick shield.

The defender usually plants his shield on the ground and crouches behind it until the missiles have struck, then runs forward while the next attack is being readied. Treat as cover, front only, only the head exposed (-5 to hit; see p. B118). Moving the shield forward is -2 to move. While moving with the shield, the fighter is -3 to be hit with a missile (body half exposed).



## Martial Arts Schools

Several ryū taught variations of the major styles listed in *GURPS Martial Arts* and this chapter. The names of some of the ryū noted for these styles appear below. The GM can use these ryū to provide additional flavor to the styles by making small changes in the secondary or optional skills or the number of points required in different maneuvers. At the GM's discretion, they might also require different style familiarities (p. 79) – someone familiar with Aisu-Kage Kenjutsu might not be as sure against a Tamiya Kenjutsu practitioner. Each ryū provided instruction in several styles, but the major feudal-era ryū are listed here with the styles they emphasized.

### Kyūjutsu Ryū

- Hioki
- Kajima
- Nichoku
- Nihon
- Sōken

### Kenjutsu Ryū

- Aisu-Kage
- Hasegawa
- Hōki
- Ito
- Katori-Shintō
- Koto-Eiri
- Mūsō-Jukiden-Eishin
- Mūsō-Shinden
- Nen
- Nitō (see *Nitō Ryū* p. 81)
- Omori
- Shintō
- Tamiya
- Yagyū

### Kusarijutsu Ryū

- Araki
- Isshin
- Masaki (see main text)
- Toda

### Sōjutsu Ryū

- Hozo-In
- Tendō

### Bōjutsu Ryū

The only other major school of bōjutsu besides the Shindō-Mūsō ryū is the Kukishin ryū.

### Sutejutsu Ryū

- Kōbō
- Kankai
- Mukai
- Sasanuma
- Shinden
- Suifu
- Takeda
- Yamanouchi

The GM should allow a *bushi* Trained by a Master in this style to “play” himself as his own character, making Animal Handling or Riding rolls only in unusual circumstances. Note that Equestrian Acrobatics does not normally require the Trained by a Master advantage, but it would not be available to most “normal” Japanese.



## Iaijutsu (Sword Drawing)

5/5 point

*Iai* is the drawing and striking with a weapon with a single motion. This art is more useful during the Late Tokugawa Era, when a samurai is likelier to be off the battlefield and thus have his sword sheathed. It has two primary uses – aggressively attacking with surprise and defensively striking before an attacker can land his blow. The style gained disfavor when “crossroad cuttings,” where the samurai tested the edge of his sword on a convenient passerby, became more common.

The style demands instinctive reactions to danger, and study of *iai*jutsu is a good justification for acquiring Combat Reflexes after character creation. Certain combinations (see p. MA54) are also likely, particularly Ready Katana-Katana Attack and Ready Katana-Katana Parry. They have same effect as a successful Fast-Draw, but do not need the Fast-Draw skill roll.

Nearly all *iai*jutsu *kata* (exercises) include a *chiburi*, a wide swing to whittle the fresh blood from the blade. Allow the *iai*jutsu stylist a separate roll against Katana to execute the *chiburi*. Success means the blade is clean enough to return to its sheath without further attention.

*Primary Skills:* Body Language, Fast-Draw (Sword).

*Secondary Skills:* Katana, Fast-Draw (Two-Handed Sword).

*Optional Skills:* Acrobatics, Philosophy (Zen Buddhism).

*Maneuvers:* Stop Hit.

*Cinematic Skills:* Mental Strength.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Fighting While Seated.





## Kenjutsu (Sword)

8/18 points

*Ken* is one of the Japanese words for sword; the same character can also be pronounced *tsurugi* (and still means sword). The Japanese reserve more honor and respect for their swords than for any other weapon. It should come as no surprise to discover that schools of training in sword techniques abound in feudal Japan. Many styles differed from each other so minutely that they could only be distinguished by the teachers of those styles and their best students.

*GURPS Martial Arts* presents one version of this style (p. MA88). The one below does not incorporate *iaijutsu* (see p. 78).

**Primary Skills:** Katana [2].

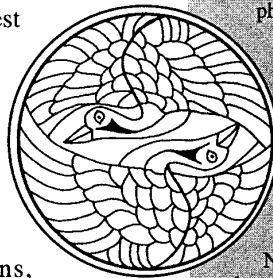
**Secondary Skills:** Body Language, Meditation, one of Philosophy (Confucianism) or Theology (Shintō or Zen Buddhism).

**Optional Skills:** Breath Control, Parry Missile Weapons, Shortsword.

**Maneuvers:** Feint (Katana) [2], Hit Location (Katana) [2], Lunge (Katana), Riposte (Katana).

**Cinematic Skills:** Immovable Stance, Mental Strength, Power Blow (Katana only).

**Cinematic Maneuvers:** Enhanced Parry (Katana), Whirlwind Attack (Katana).



## Other Styles

*GURPS Martial Arts* presents several other traditional Japanese *bujutsu*. Jūjutsu, Karate (known as *iōdejutsu*), Kempō, Kobujutsu, and Sumō are all appropriate for a historical campaign, although (especially in a Warring States campaign) the GM may wish to reduce the emphasis on philosophy, theology, and combat art skills.

## The Kiai-o-matic, As Seen on TV!

Some Western analysts try to explain the peculiar capabilities of *kiaijutsu* practitioner by tying it to subsonics and supersonics. Nothing definitive has been proven, but the GM is free to accept this explanation. In an ultra-tech campaign, devices may be available that mimic these sonic effects, effectively allowing anyone to perform the feats ascribed to *kiaijutsu* masters.

## Kiaijutsu (Energy)

5/5 points

*Kiai* means spirit harmony (it uses the same two characters as *aiki* in reverse order). *Kiaijutsu* is the most mystical of the Japanese fighting arts. Incredible claims about its effectiveness on and off the battlefield and a lack of historical records make this one of the most difficult to recreate in game terms. GMs may want to use the psionic skills Mental Blow (p. B169), Mental Stab (p. P22), and PK Shield (p. B174), or the magical spells Awaken (p. B162), Block (p. G91), and Daze (p. B164) as bases for some of the abilities attributed to *kiaijutsu*.

**Primary Skills:** Breath Control.

**Secondary Skills:** Meditation, Theology (Zen Buddhism).

**Optional Skills:** Yin/Yang Healing.

**Maneuvers:** None.

**Cinematic Skills:** Kiai, Mental Strength.

**Cinematic Maneuvers:** None.

## Kyūjutsu (Bow)

5/9 points

*Kyū* is another reading for the character *yumi*, or bow. Archery is almost as highly regarded as swordsmanship in Japan, and it boasts a longer heritage. Even off the battlefield, a skilled archer can display his talents in the many staged hunts and contests of target-shooting. This is also one of the first styles to develop a *dō* form (p. MA92).

**Primary Skills:** Bow [2], Breath Control, Fast-Draw (Arrow).

**Secondary Skills:** Meditation, Philosophy (Zen Buddhism).

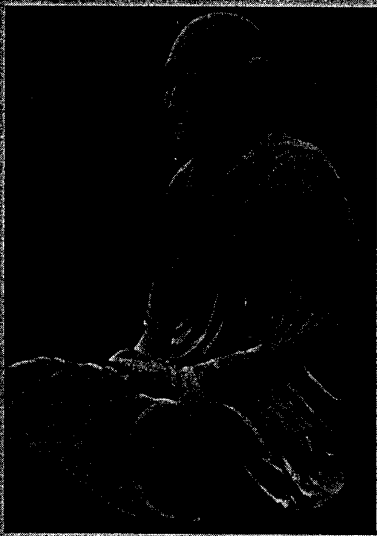
**Optional Skills:** Calligraphy.

**Maneuvers:** None.

**Cinematic Skills:** Body Control, Mental Strength, Power Blow (Bow only), Pressure Points (Bow only), Zen Archery.

**Cinematic Maneuvers:** None.





### Nitō Ryū and Gorin no Sho

Miyamoto Musashi's *Gorin no Sho* (The Book of Five Rings) describes his philosophy in terms of wielding *nitōchi* (two swords as one), fighting with any weapons, commanding other men in battle, and all other aspects of *heihō* (the art of fighting). In the book, he explains why it is better to avoid using both hands for a single blade.

**To hold a sword with both hands is awkward. It's awkward when you're on horseback, awkward when you're running. It's awkward in the swamps, muddy rice paddies, stony ground, on steep slopes, and in crowded places. In your left hand you hold a bow, a spear, or whatever other tool it may be, so you must use your sword with the remaining hand. Holding a sword with both hands is not the true way. If or when you find it hard to strike the enemy dead with one hand, you may dispatch him with both hands. There's nothing complicated about it. (Translation by Hiroaki Sato in *Legends of the Samurai*.)**

## Masaki Ryū (Weighted Chain)

5/7 points

The Masaki Ryū trains students in the use of the *manrikigusari* ("10,000 power chain," also called *kusari fundō*, weighted chain). Masaki Toshimitsu Dannoshin developed both the *manrikigusari* and the *ryū* devoted to its use. Once he has used the chain to grapple a foe, the wielder could also use the chain with his Jūdō skill to place an Arm Lock or Choke Hold. Practitioners would occasionally use the chains as bolas to entangle their opponents' legs.



*Primary Skills:* Kusari.

*Secondary Skills:* Jūdō, Savoir-Faire (Dōjō).

*Optional Skills:* Bolas.

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Back Strike (Kusari), Choke Hold, Return Strike

*Cinematic Skills:* Power Blow (Manrikigusari only).

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Binding.

**When the character of  
a man is not clear to  
you, look at his friends.**

**– Japanese proverb**

## Naginatajutsu (Polearm) and Sōjutsu (Spear)

*Naginata* literally means "long sword" – it is basically a sword blade mounted on a staff. It resembles the western glaive, but the blade is more balanced. Female members of the warrior families learned the use of this weapon by the age of 18, but men studied it as well. The schools of *naginatajutsu* had many moves and techniques in common with the schools of *sōjutsu*. *Sō* is another reading for the character *yari* or spear. *Sōjutsu* forms the basis of modern *jūkenjutsu* (bayonet techniques).

### Naginatajutsu

10/12 points

*Primary Skills:* Polearm, Staff.

*Secondary Skills:* Body Language, Theology (Shintō).

*Optional Skills:* Breath Control, Spear.

*Maneuvers:* Disarming (Staff), Feint (Polearm), Feint (Staff), Hit Location (Polearm), Hit Location (Staff), Lunge (Polearm), Spinning Strike (Polearm), Sweep (Polearm).

*Cinematic Skills:* Power Blow (Naginata only).

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Whirlwind Attack (Staff).



## Sōjutsu

11/13 points

*Primary Skills:* Spear, Staff.

*Secondary Skills:* Body Language, Theology (Shintō).

*Optional Skills:* Breath Control.

*Maneuvers:* Disarming (Staff), Feint (Spear), Feint (Staff), Hit Location (Spear), Hit Location (Staff), Lunge (Spear), Spinning Strike (Spear), Sweep (Spear), Tip Slash (Spear).

*Cinematic Skills:* Power Blow (Yari only).

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Whirlwind Attack (Staff).

## Ninjutsu (Mystery)

21/37 points

One of the most secret styles, ninjutsu may require an Unusual Background, at the GM's discretion. Ninjutsu families often act as mercenaries, selling their services to the *daimyō*, *yamabushi*, and even the *bakufu* when they needed discreet action taken. Discreet attacks could still be useful in times of open warfare – ninja can slip past military lines and strike at important targets.

This is a historical version based on the style presented in *GURPS Martial Arts* (pp. MA93-94). Appropriate weapon skills are Axe/Mace, Black Powder Weapons, Blowpipe, Bow, Garrote, Katana, Knife, Kusari, Lasso, Shortsword, Shuriken, Staff, and Throwing. At least one of the weapon skills chosen must be a ranged weapon.

*Primary Skills:* Jūdō, Karate, Stealth, and two weapon skills.

*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Climbing, Jumping, Swimming, and two more weapons skills.

*Optional Skills:* Acting, Bard, Breath Control, Camouflage, Demolition, Disguise, Escape, Fast-Talk, Forgery, Hiking, Hypnotism, Meditation, Sex Appeal (for female ninja), Tactics, and Yin/Yang Healing.

*Maneuvers:* Aggressive Parry [2], Arm Lock, Back Kick, Ear Clap, Elbow Strike, Feint (any) [2], Ground Fighting (Jūdō or Karate), Head Butt, Hit Location (any), Jump Kick, Knee Strike, Riposte (any), Spin Kick, Stamp Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Blind Fighting, Blinding Touch, Breaking Blow, Dislocation, Hand of Death, Hypnotic Hands, Invisibility Art, Light Walk, Mental Strength, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets, and Throwing Art.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Binding [2] and Roll with Blow.

## Nitō Ryū (Two Swords)

9/13 points

The legendary swordsman Miyamoto Musashi founded this school of two swords in the 1600s. When facing multiple opponents, the swordsman keeps the blades in almost constant motion, circling his body. Normally, the blades used are the katana and the wakizashi, but two katana are sometimes used simultaneously instead.

## Ninja Adventure

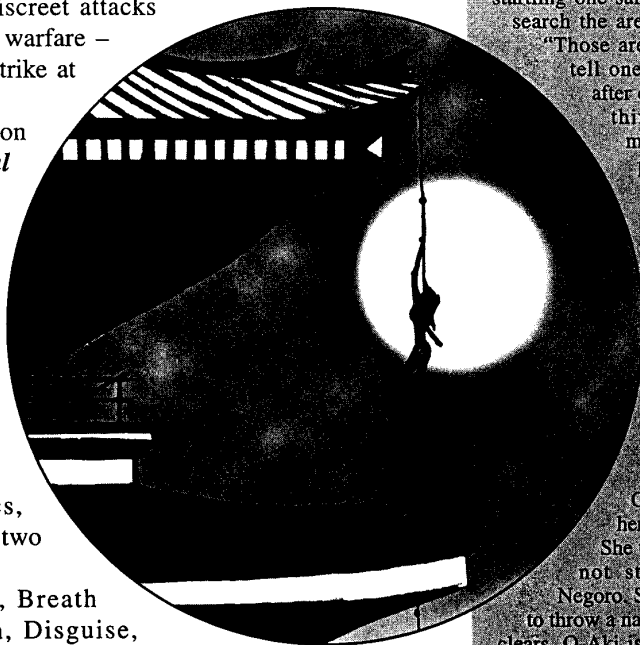
The ninja Saruzō and O-Aki (p. 62) are traveling disguised as an exorcist and a reibai. Saruzō carries a bō and O-Aki a first-aid kit (with poisons); she has concealed a gaudy kimono which has been rubbed with fox fur. They are to enter Wakayama castle and kill the Kuwayama daimyō in retaliation for his attack on their village. They are readily accepted into the castle and make a good impression on the temple *bussō*.

That night, O-Aki sneaks out to place *uzumebi*. She leaves the kimono nearby. Upon her return, Saruzō's prayers wake the *bussō*. Saruzō tells him of his nightmare: a *kitsune* killed Kuwayama and burned the castle. The *bussō* joins him in prayer. A little later, the *uzumebi* go off, startling one samurai. Others rush over, search the area and find the kimono.

"Those aren't human hairs," they tell one another. "A *kitsune* is after our lord." The *bussō* says things would have been much worse if not for their prayers of protection.

Back inside, O-Aki congratulates the samurai for driving off the *kitsune*. Then she screams and faints as fire lights up the room on the other side of the paper screen (caused by Ignite Fire). A *tatami* burns briefly, but the samurai stamp it out. Saruzō kneels to awaken O-Aki, but she jumps to her feet and laughs hoarsely. She tells the samurai they cannot stop the Great Fox of Negoro. Saruzō uses the distraction to throw a *nageteppo*. When the smoke clears, O-Aki is kneeling demurely. The *bussō* asks her about what happened, but Saruzō tells him that she never remembers what she says when she's possessed.

Kuwayama's *karō* suggests that they guard the daimyō's chambers for the night. O-Aki starts back to the temple, but Saruzō does not want to chance her being possessed when he's not around. When they reach the chambers, they begin to pray. Then things begin to burn (more Ignite Fire) and the chambers grow dark (more *nageteppo*). Saruzō leaps through the smoke and kills Kuwayama with his staff, and they escape. Outside, Saruzō shows her the baby he impulsively picked up on their way out. "Kuwayama's son," he tells her. "The Negoro need more babies if we're going to regain our former size."

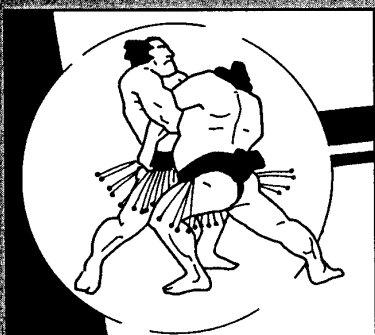


## Here a Jutsu, There a Jutsu . . .

There are many more techniques studied by the *bushi*, although not all of them translate well into *GURPS* martial arts styles. Here is a short list of *jutsu* that correspond with skills. Ambitious GMs might still want to flesh them out with the style rules.

Chikujōjutsu	Engineer (Combat)
Dōtonjutsu*	Camouflage
Hayabakujutsu	Hiding
Henshōjutsu	Disguise
Hōjutsu	Black Powder Weapons (Matchlock Musket)
Kayakujutsu	Demolition
Senjōjutsu	Strategy (Land)
Shinobi no Jutsu*	Stealth
Yadomejutsu	Parry Missile Weapons

\* Primarily ninja techniques.

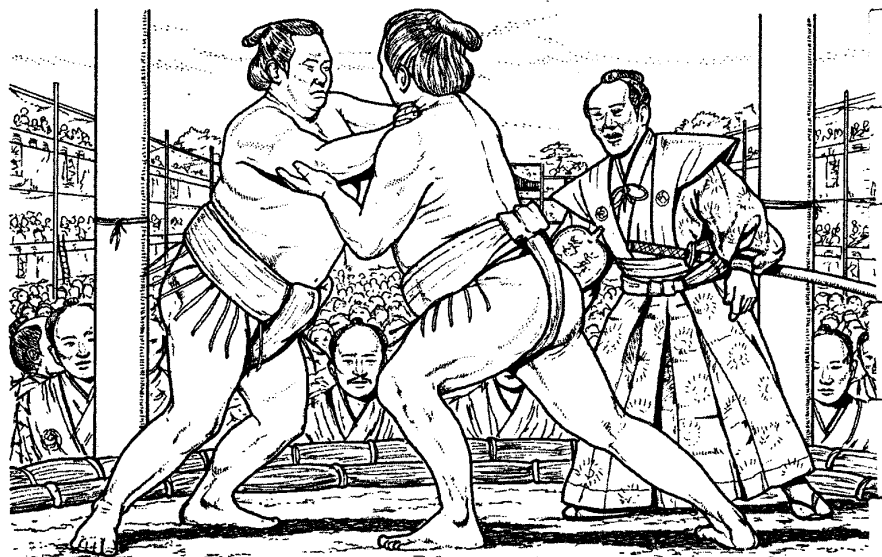


### Sumō

Sumō (see pp. MA102-103, and GMs should consider adding the Sweep maneuver from p. MA56) is the oldest form of unarmed bujutsu in Japan. Although it is couched in the most involved ceremonies, sumō also has benefited from the rise of the samurai class. Wrestling as a profession begins during the *sengekujidai* and continues during the Tokugawa Era. The wrestlers are called *sumōtori* or, preferably, *rikishi* (strong gentlemen). Some daimyō patronize the sport by sponsoring successful *rikishi*. National tournaments to determine the *yokozuna* (grand champion) are held once a year starting in the final years of the 18th century.

Wrestling in Japan began as a free-for-all competition, but the Emperor Shōmu (r. 724-749) forbade killing techniques as "inelegant." The use of the *dohyō* (wrestling ring) starts in 1578. The victor is the first to force the other out of the ring or down to the mat (touching it with anything higher than the knee).

Shintō law forbids women from entering the *dohyō*.



The GM should allow a character familiar with this style a 2/3 parry (based on the lower of the two weapon skills) if he has Light encumbrance or less; this counts as his parry for both weapons that turn. He could parry normally with each weapon individually instead, if desired. Note also that when using the Whirlwind Attack cinematic maneuver, the Dual-Weapon Attack (Shortsword) allows one additional attack (with the wakizashi) at the opponent of the attacker's choice.

*Primary Skills:* Katana, Shortsword.

*Secondary Skills:* Body Language, Fast-Draw (Sword), Katana Art, Philosophy (Zen Buddhism).

*Optional Skills:* Breath Control, Armoury.

*Maneuvers:* Back Strike (Katana), Back Strike (Shortsword), Feint (Katana), Feint (Shortsword), Off-Hand Weapon Training (Katana), Off-Hand Weapon Training (Shortsword), Riposte (Katana).

*Cinematic Skills:* Mental Strength.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Dual-Weapon Attack (Katana), Dual-Weapon Attack (Shortsword), Whirlwind Attack (Katana).

## Shindō-Mūsō Ryū (Staff)

### 9/13 points

Just as there are many different stick weapons in Japan, there are many styles of fighting with those weapons. Mūsō Gonnosuke developed the Shindō-Mūsō ryū of jōjutsu in the 1500s. The students practice their techniques by facing each other with *bokken* (wooden swords) and *jō* (staves), and often go on to study other weapons and unarmed techniques as well.

*Primary Skills:* Short Staff.

*Secondary Skills:* Katana, Meditation, Theology (Shintō).

*Optional Skills:* Jūdō, Karate, Kusari.

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Disarming, Feint, Hit Location, Off-Hand Weapon Training, Riposte, Spinning Strike, Sweep, all with (Short Staff).

*Cinematic Skills:* Power Blow (Jō only), Pressure Points, Push.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Whirlwind Attack (Short Staff).



## Suieijutsu (Swimming)

5/10 points

Warfare in Japan often involves fighting in and around water, and warriors learn how to handle themselves effectively in water, even while fully armored. Schools devoted to these techniques can be found throughout feudal Japan. One school, the Sasanuma Ryū, even specializes in lake fighting. It is reported that the ninja had their own separate schools of combat swimming.

*Primary Skills:* Swimming.

*Secondary Skills:* Navigation.

*Optional Skills:* Seamanship, Strategy (Naval).

*Maneuvers:* Fighting in Water (Black Powder Weapons, Bow, Katana, Spear, or possibly others) [2], Fighting Underwater (Katana, Spear, or possibly others).

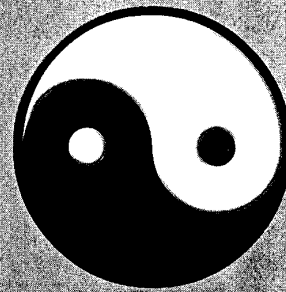
*Cinematic Advantages:* Amphibious\*.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* None.

\* Replaces the Maneuvers and Primary Skill.

## Customizing Styles

Each of these styles has many different competing *ryū* offering their views on the best fighting methods. GMs may customize these styles to reflect this in several ways. Renaming the school without changing the game terms is the easiest – the differences here are too subtle to be reflected in the skills and maneuvers, but the characters must treat them as different styles for familiarity purposes. Maneuvers can be dropped, or more points required in certain maneuvers, with little concern for disrupting historical accuracy. Especially toward the end of the Tokugawa Era, some schools place more emphasis on the philosophical background in their style, raising Secondary Philosophy and Theology skills to the Primary level, or such Optional skills to Primary or Secondary. *Savoir-Faire* (Dōjo) may also be part of a school's style, at any level. After the conquest of the Okinawan islands in 1609, some schools might also begin training their students in the use of Okinawan weapons (see *Kobujutsu*, pp. MA89-90, for a list of these Weapon Skills).

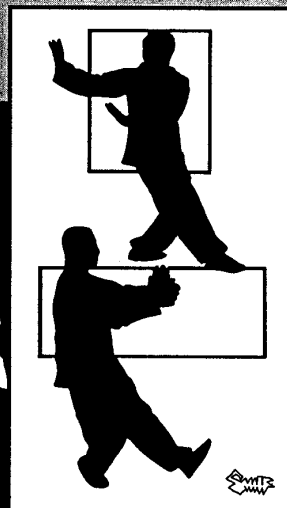


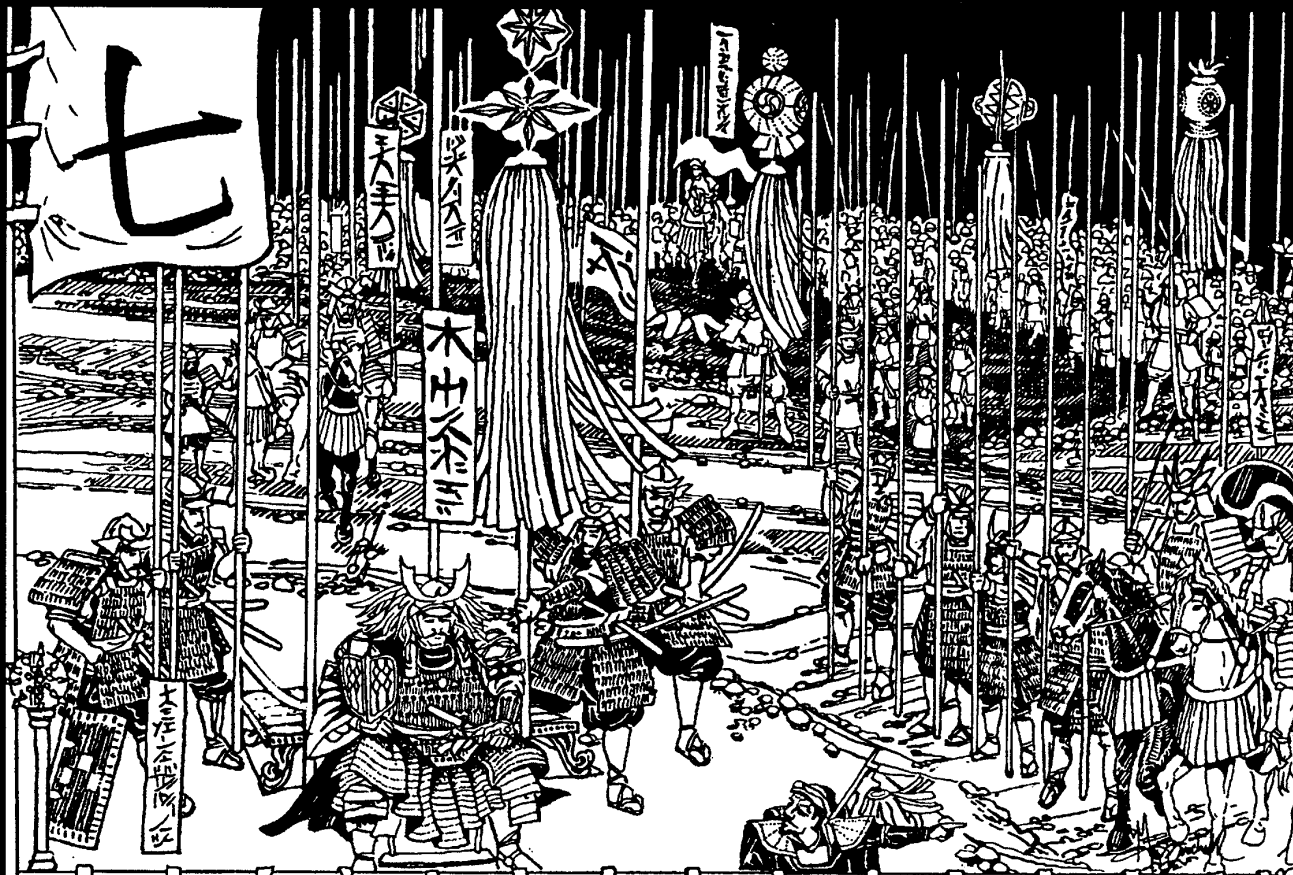
### Head Viewing

Japanese has a special word for a freshly severed head: *namakubi*. In large battles, a samurai will cut off the head of any noteworthy foe he kills, impale it on his *kozuka*, and ride off to show it to the general. (He would not touch the head directly, so the blood would not defile him and he could still enter a Shintō shrine without purification.) Heads of famous people are put in special boxes to be shown later to their supporters or relatives to prove they are dead.

Because of this custom, Japanese samurai prepare for a battle by paying particular attention to their heads. They perfume their hair with incense. They either carefully blacken their teeth or brush them to make sure they are white, not yellow. Many young samurai, afraid that after death their heads might be mistaken for those of women, wear mustaches.

A children's song goes, "My neighbor Semmatsu was busy at the fighting in Omi. One year passed but he did not return. Two years passed but he did not return. Three years passed, and his head returned."





## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Weapons and Equipment



### *Distinctive Japanese Weapons*

Many Japanese weapons are only slightly different from the weapons described in the *GURPS Basic Set*. Differences and Japanese names are described below. Japanese have very firm convictions that some weapons were reserved to particular social groups. Only samurai may wear the *daisho* (katana and wakizashi pair); only ninja may use shuriken. A samurai caught using ninja or peasant weapons suffers a severe reaction penalty from other samurai.



## Swords

Japanese swords (*to*) are classified by their length and by their mountings, which include the hilts (*tsuka*), guards (*tsuba*), scabbards (*saya*), and the like. A sword with a cutting edge two feet long or longer is called a *daitō*, or long sword. This included the *katana* or *uchigatana*, the *tachi* or *jindachi*, and the *daikatana* or *nodachi*. A sword with a one- to two-foot-long cutting edge is called a *wakizashi* – these served as secondary blades for the samurai and as primary weapons for other classes. A sword with a blade less than one foot long is called a *tantō* (knife).

The most common sword mounting in 1531-1867 (the Shintō period in sword history) is the *buke-zukuri* mounting. The hilt is bound with tape or strips of leather, and the scabbarded weapon was worn edge-upward thrust in a sash at the hip. The scabbard could include one or two slots for a utility knife (*kozuka*, usually in the *katana* scabbard), skewer/bodkin (usually in the *wakizashi* scabbard), or pair of chopsticks (either). The mountings were 3½ to 4½ feet long.

In the Koto period (900-1530, which overlaps the beginning of the Warring States Period), the prevalent mounting is the *jindachi-zukuri* mounting. The scabbarded blade was suspended edge-downward from the hip by a cord that ran through a pair of rings on the scabbard. Holes could also be made in the hilt or guard, allowing the sword to be tied to the wrist. The mountings were four to five feet long.

Before the Koto period, most swords had straight blades and double edges. These were called *ken* and were copied from the Chinese. Some swordsmiths (*kaji*) continued to make straight swords during the Shintō period, with some advances over the ancient methods.

The nomenclature is not always distinct. Any single-edged Japanese sword can be called a *katana*, but the term is more properly used in reference to a standard *daitō* in a *buke-zukuri* mounting. A *tachi* is properly an early Japanese sword and an ancestor of the *katana*, but since it is associated with the *jindachi-zukuri* mounting, even a later *katana* worn suspended at the hip (as horsemen continued to do even during the Shintō period) can be referred to as a *tachi*.

## Bows

Many *daikyū* (use the composite bow stats in the *Basic Set*) are made with a pointed end, to be used as spears in emergencies. Increase cost by \$50 for this feature. Any individual thrust is unlikely to damage a dai-kyū designed to take this punishment, but repeated abuse will probably damage the bow. Roll 3 dice each time the bow is used in melee (attack or parry); on a roll of 16 or more (12 or more if parried by a weapon of 4+ pounds), it is no longer a useful bow.



## Weapon Quality and Personality

Japanese swordsmiths are masters of their art, and have the advantage of working from better ore than Europeans. All Japanese steel weapons are made of sword steel. Many swords and naginata are fine (see p. B74), but by the Warring States Period quality is on a downward path. *Katanakaji* (swordsmiths) meet the increase in demand during the Warring States Period by using steel smelted at a refinery, rather than processing the sand ores themselves. Emphasis on decoration at the expense of utility during the Late Tokugawa Era also diminishes the average quality.

It takes months to make a sword. The smith welds steel and iron plates, then folds and reforges them repeatedly, alternately immersing the blade in water and oil, then polishing it for weeks. Forging a sword is like a Shintō religious ceremony; the smith wears formal kimono and the forging area is purified to scare away evil spirits and invite the presence of good ones.

Some exceptional swordsmiths are said to have imparted their personality to their creations. Legends say that swords made by the noble-minded Masamune turn in their wielder's hands rather than attack a friend or kill their owner if his suicide is not necessary. Swords made by Masamune's apprentice, the bloody-minded Muramasa, on the other hand, are said to crave blood and impel the bearer to commit murder or suicide. It is said that if you thrust a Masamune sword in the river, the petals drifting downstream will turn to one side or the other of the blade, but that a Muramasa sword will cut the petals.

The GM may wish to treat some swords as Lucky, others Unlucky. A Lucky Sword gives its user the Luck advantage (see p. B21), as long as he is carrying the sword. An Unlucky sword gives the Unluckiness disadvantage (p. B37) under the same conditions. It is possible for someone to have the sword and not know of its peculiar power. In such a case, the GM should apply the advantage/disadvantage without informing the player. Lucky or Unlucky swords should not be for sale at every armorer's shop. They are mystical parts of the very soul of Japan.

Weapons are tested on the bodies of dead criminals. A samurai who has just given his son his first real sword at age 12 takes him to a prison to make sure the boy knows how to use it properly by having him cut through a dead criminal's body. Because of this practice, criminals' bodies usually end up in small pieces.

Another traditional test of a sword's sharpness is throwing a sheet of paper in the air and catching it on the blade; a truly sharp sword will cut the paper.



## A Sword By Any Other Name (Optional Rule)

The style and stance of katana use are different from those for Western sword use. But if the GM feels that the special abilities given by the separate Katana skill are unwarranted, these differences can be covered by the Familiarity rules (p. B43) and the use of martial arts styles (giving a -1 to active defenses if the opponent is unfamiliar with the style). In this case, treat the katana like a bastard sword – a separate familiarity of Broadsword and of Two-Handed Sword. This optional rule may be particularly useful in fantasy settings, where warriors of different cultures are more likely to cross paths, and swords.

## Sword Etiquette

At a friend's home, a samurai removes his katana in the outer hall and puts it on a sword rack there. At a stranger's home, a samurai lays his katana beside him as he kneels on the tatami mat. If he puts it on his right, so the sword could not be easily drawn, it means he feels some trust for his host. If he puts it on his left, it means he distrusts his host (or that his host should distrust him). If he goes to another room or even to another part of the same room, he takes his sword with him. The wakizashi remains in his obi, since it is too short to get in his way.

It is quite impolite to lay the katana down with its hilt facing the host, since this implies he was too unskilled to be any sort of danger. It is also impolite for a host to wear swords while receiving a guest, but they are usually kept nearby on a sword rack.

It is extremely impolite to step over someone's sword instead of circling around it or to touch it without the owner's permission. Samurai whose scabbards clash (*saya ate*) in the crowded city streets often draw their swords immediately and try to kill one another to wipe out the insult.

When samurai enters a theater or the geisha district, they usually leave their swords outside (much as Westerners check their coats at the door of a nightclub).

A samurai's sword is sometimes spoken of as his soul, just as a woman's mirror is her soul. Certainly, a samurai's katana and wakizashi are usually the gift of his clan lord, either directly to him or inherited from an ancestor who had received such a gift directly. Losing one's sword or having it stolen is a social disgrace (-3 to reaction rolls) that can be wiped out only by recovering the missing sword or by suicide.

## Arrows

Japanese arrows are made of fire-hardened bamboo fletched with feathers. A warrior's *ebira* (quiver) is made of leather or lacquered wood. It holds 24 arrows, bundled according to type. The quiver has a flap or lid that protects the arrows from the weather and from bouncing out during a rough ride. The flap has to be unfastened to remove the arrows (it takes 1 turn to do so). A hunter's quiver (made of light bamboo) holds 24 arrows but has no lid.

There are three common arrowheads. The *yanagiba* (willow leaf) is a double-edged, unbarbed head. The *togariya* (sharp arrow) is designed to punch through the cuirass of an enemy. The *watakushi* (bowel raker) is barbed to cut up an enemy's vitals as much as possible. It does impaling damage as a yanagiba (max damage 2 less than normal for the bow) and also does cutting damage (*daikyū*: thr-1, max 1d; *hankyū* thr-4, max 1d-1). If any cutting damage penetrates DR, one or more barbs are embedded in the target. Removing the arrow in the field will cause an additional 1d-3 points of damage (minimum 1).

## Ninja Equipment Clothing

Ninja wear hooded kimonos and *hakama*, usually black on one side and the more common blue or gray on the other. In cinematic campaigns, they might wear the all-black ninja costumes popular in Hollywood movies, but there is little evidence that ninja wore these historically. The association may have come from the *kabuki* convention of so clothing stagehands and others that were supposed to be ignored by (or invisible to) the audience.

Sometimes ninja kimono or hats are reinforced with hidden steel bars. Moving as if this is ordinary clothing requires a DX-4 or Acting-4 roll, once per hour.

Ninja women sometimes wear *shuriken*, *hishi*, or *tetsubishi* made to look like hair ornaments. These cost twice as much as the ordinary varieties, and take only one turn to ready.

Almost any item of ninja clothing or ornament is liable to be a disguised weapon or tool. Blades are concealed in staffs. Grenades are disguised as lunch. A samisen can be reassembled into a bow. Ingenuity and the inherent capacity of the material are the only limits and the material limits can be very flexible in a magical campaign.

## Gear

*Lockpicks* (ordinary quality): negligible weight, \$30.

*Lockpicks* (good quality, +1 on all attempts, +5 to holdout): negligible weight, \$200.

*Grapnel and 10 yards of rope* (can support 500 lbs.): 5 lbs., \$25. Ninja grapnels are padded to make minimum noise when they land.

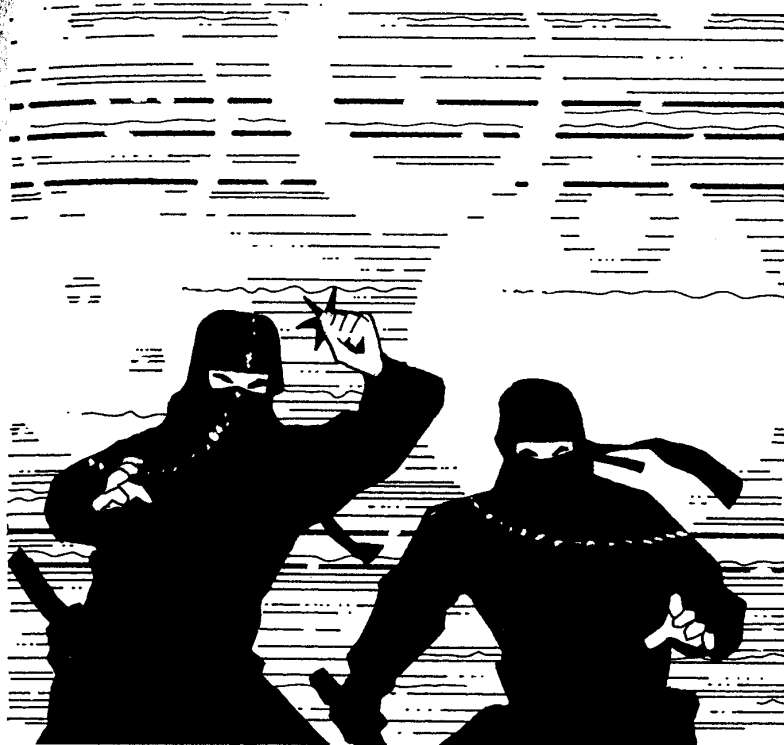
*Bamboo snorkel*: ¼ lb., free. Allows breathing under water to a depth of 6 feet.

*Inflatable shoes*: 2 lbs., \$100. With a successful Acrobatics+2 roll every 10 seconds, the wearer can walk (at half Move) on the surface of calm water. On a failure, the walker falls over. On a critical failure, his shoes deflate.

While using the shoes, treat as on bad footing (p. B107) for combat; in addition, any firearm use would require an Acrobatics roll at the weapon's Recoil







## Readying Carried Weapons

The katana and wakizashi are carried with the scabbards tucked loosely into the obi. Normally they require a turn to ready, but can be readied and used instantly with a successful Fast-Draw roll.

However, it is common for a samurai to grasp the hilt in one hand and the scabbard in the other, turn his sword and loosen it in its sheath; this is a deadly threat. The weapon is then considered ready although it is still in the scabbard. Any swordsman in this position can draw his sword and attack on the same turn with a Fast-Draw (Sword)+4 or DX roll. Combat Reflexes will give a +1 bonus to the DX roll, just as it does to the Fast-Draw skill.

The *nodachi* (greatsword) is carried in a back sheath, the *yari* (spear), and *naginata* (staff-sword) are carried across the shoulder, their tips sheathed in leather. Any of these can be readied from their sheaths in 1 turn and returned in 2 turns. Fast-Draw skill for all of these is Fast-Draw (Two-Handed Sword).

Carrying a weapon in a kimono sleeve is like carrying it in a pocket (p. B101); it takes 1d turns to find it. If the weapon is inside a pouch, it takes two more turns. If the user believes that the weapon in the pouch is poisoned, it takes four turns to get it out with assured safety; otherwise, make a DX roll, with failure resulting in a scratch sufficient to deliver the poison (if the user was right).

Travelers sometimes carried their swords scabbarded in boxes. Untying the box takes one turn, and the user may not Fast Draw it from the scabbard in the box.

penalty to remain standing (and should an anachronistic firearm find its way into the ninja's hands, the penalty applied to the next shot is doubled even if he remains upright). The GM can assess penalties for rough water conditions, or simply rule that the water is too rough for any attempt to work.

Inflating each shoe takes  $(20 - HT) \times 6$  seconds (minimum 6 seconds) of uninterrupted effort. A pair of shoes can support 250 lbs. A ninja on inflatable shoes floats so low in the water that he appears to be walking on the surface.

*Climbing spikes:* 1 lb., \$300. Fitted to hands and feet, they give a +4 to Climbing rolls. A skilled ninja can use these to climb wooden walls even if the sides are completely sheer. Putting on the spikes takes one minute per foot or hand. At least one hand and one foot must be spiked for successful climbing.

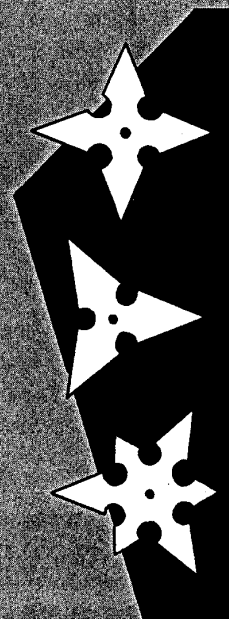
Moving on a wall takes a roll against Climbing skill every three seconds; hanging on the wall takes a roll against Climbing skill every 10 seconds. On a failure, the ninja falls off. On a critical failure he either falls off very noisily or breaks his spikes, whichever is more embarrassing and dangerous at the time.

## Weapons

The ninja is famous for his arsenal of secret weapons. If ninja PCs are allowed, the GM should encourage them to develop concealed or disguised weapons of all types. Likewise, the GM should feel free to invent devices to be carried by ninja NPCs.

### Shuriken

Shuriken are small needle-like blades which ninja often keep in a band where they can be thrown rapidly (1 per turn with Fast-Draw Shuriken, or even faster with cinematic martial arts rules). The star-shaped *shaken* are also encompassed within shurikenjutsu.



## Siege Weapons

Attackers facing a fortified castle or temple used these heavy weapons.

A battering ram is carried by 10 to 20 men and requires 3 turns to ready. It does the same damage as the total of their punch attacks; it does maximum damage if they have trained together for at least a day and their commander makes a Leadership roll.

Japanese carefully design the paths to castle gates to be narrow, winding, and steep, to make such attacks difficult. Gates are usually within view of one or more guard towers, allowing missile attacks on the rammers.

Castle walls are attacked by mining. After the Japanese learn of gunpowder (in 1543), they sometimes use explosive charges to breach the walls.

Dealing with ordinary dirt, 10 skilled miners of average ability can dig and brace one yard of tunnel big enough for a man to walk in every half hour. Tunneling through very loose dirt or under a moat takes twice as long for the same distance; it takes more bracing. Tunneling through rock takes three to 10 times as long (GM's decision).

Planting and setting off explosives to breach a wall requires a Demolition skill. The explosive does 3d crushing damage multiplied by the pounds of gunpowder used, if it explodes. On a failed roll the charge hangs fire for 3d seconds, then goes off for half damage. On a critical failure, the charge will not explode unless it is fused and lit again. Re-fusing takes a roll against Demolition skill; on a critical failure, the blaster goes up with his charge.



## Fukiya (Blowpipe)

Ninja use fukiya at close range to blow powder or bamboo slivers. It is a hollow tube two or three feet long which can easily be concealed.

A blowpipe can be used to spray *onibi* (literally, "demon fire"), an incendiary powder. The powder ignites at the end of the fukiya, creating a yard-long tongue of flame. It will ignite flammable items, and also temporarily blinds nighttime viewers (all Vision rolls at -3 for 10 seconds for anyone within 10 yards who makes a HT roll, -3 for 1 minute for those who fail the roll). The wielder may attack using the Fire-Siphon skill (p. CI134). These attacks can be dodged or blocked, but not parried. Onibi powder is made in 2d hours with Chemistry skills from ingredients found with Naturalist or Area Knowledge skill.

The blowgun can also fire a bamboo sliver dipped in any type of poison. The sliver can be dodged or blocked, but it is too small to be parried. In a cinematic game, the GM might allow parries as for darts: -5 to the parry provided by the Parry Missile Weapons skill (p. CI135).



## Hankyū ("Half Bow")

The hankyū is a small bow that can be concealed in the sleeve of a kimono (+1 to Holdout). A ninja's quiver (made of cloth) holds 12 arrows and is concealable in his kimono sleeve.

## Nageteppō (Grenades)

The nageteppō is a blown eggshell that is filled with a carefully prepared mixture of gunpowder and several secret ingredients. These powders are not available for sale on the open market; the secret ingredients to make them cost about \$1 each and are freely available. It takes 1d hours to make the powder from purchased ingredients, or 2d hours and successful Naturalist (or Area Knowledge if applicable) and Chemistry rolls if the ninja must find the secret ingredients in the countryside and purify them. Lacquer can be added as a respiratory poison (see p. CII143).

Each nageteppō is carried in a padded bag inside a kimono sleeve. It has a 10% chance of breakage if the ninja falls down and then fails a DX roll. The nageteppō's contents affect seven hexes: the hex where it breaks and the six bordering hexes. The target gets no Active Defense, but on a roll of DX-5 the target can catch the nageteppō before it breaks. Breaking the shell is enough to activate the nageteppō; it does not have to be fused in any way.

There are two types of nageteppō; one is used in the daytime, one at night. If the ninja carries both types, he must make an IQ roll to select the right one.

Day nageteppō (*kemuridama*) produce a cloud of smoke (all vision rolls are at -3). The cloud affects everyone in its seven-hex area. It also hides the ninja from anyone whose direct line of vision to the ninja is through one of those hexes. The cloud persists for 10 seconds in still air; wind may disperse it sooner.

Night nageteppō (*hikaridama*) produce a flash of bright light, temporarily blinding viewers within 10 yards (all night vision rolls at -3).



## Path Obstacles

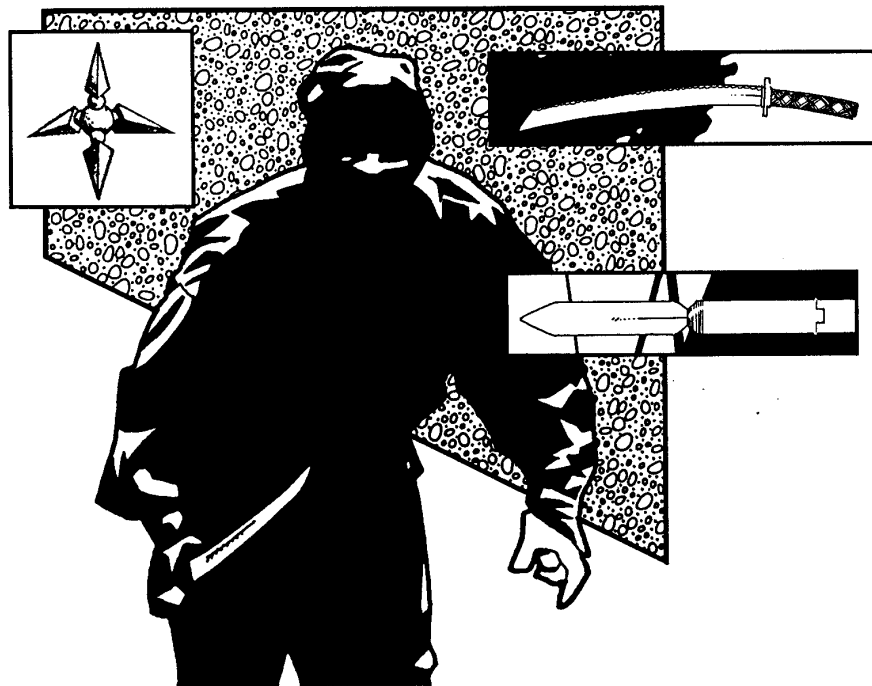
Ninja can leave various surprises behind to discourage pursuit or just to demoralize those they have visited.

### Tetsubishi (Caltrops)

These are vicious metal caltrops, designed with four points so that whatever way they fall, one spike will point up. They may be poisoned. They can penetrate the sole of even the heaviest leather shoe if someone steps on them with full weight; roll thrust-3 damage based on the victim's ST. If any gets through the shoe, the victim has been poked. A person who steps on a caltrop takes no actual damage (other than poison, if any), but must make a Will roll to avoid crying out. A DX roll, taking a turn, is required to get the caltrop out of his foot; failure simply means the victim has fallen and can remove the caltrop on the next turn.

Someone walking on a path strewn with these obstacles must make a Vision roll each second to avoid them, with a penalty to the roll equal to his current movement rate. If he is unaware of the caltrops and is not specifically looking out for them, the Vision roll is at -4 (but if he *is* looking at the path, he might not spot a wire the ninja strung just neck high . . .). Failure means the victim steps on one caltrop for every 3 full points by which he missed the roll (minimum of 1 caltrop).

10 tetsubishi weigh one pound. They cost about \$1 for four. Ninja will normally scatter tetsubishi about one per yard.



### Uzumebi (Land Mines)

These hold more gunpowder than the nageteppō but use the same secret ingredients. An explosion does 3d crushing damage and creates either a cloud of dark smoke or a flash of bright light. They may be fused to go off at a specific time or to go off if they are stepped on. The Vision roll to notice an uzumebi gets +2 bonus.

Six uzumebi weigh a pound. The ingredients for one uzumebi cost \$10.

## Japanese Armor

Armor is worn only by soldiers or bandits. It varies with station and duty, from the helmet and mostly leather protection for the torso, arms, and shins to the predominantly metal full suits of armor worn by the high-ranking mounted leaders. In times of prevailing peace (the late Tokugawa, for instance, as opposed to the Warring States Period), many Japanese eschew armor altogether. A samurai's armor has his clan *mon* on the chest and helm. A full suit of armor has four components: helmet and face mask, cuirass, sleeves (covering shoulders, arms, and hands), and leggings (covering legs and feet). Mounted samurai usually wear full armor; samurai on foot usually do not wear face masks. Some may wear only the helmet and cuirass for lower encumbrance. Samurai can usually afford steel armor; poorer samurai and *ashigaru* (peasant soldiers) have lacquered leather armor or none at all.

Foot soldiers sometimes use medium shields when besieging a castle, as a defense against missiles. Shields are not used in *mélee* combat.

## Knives

*hishi* – A small dagger, often carried by women. Treat as a dagger.

*kozuka* – A small knife carried in the same scabbard as the katana; samurai use it to carry the severed head of an enemy. Treat as a small knife.

*tanken* – A large straight knife. Treat as a large knife.

*tantō* – A large curved knife with a chisel-like point; in effect a katana with a very short blade. Treat as a large knife.

## Spears and Staffs

*yari* – A thrusting spear; can also be used for staff attacks with the butt. Treat as a spear, but it cannot be thrown.

*yarinage* – A javelin.

*bō* – A man-tall bamboo staff. Treat as a staff.

*teisubō* – An iron bar used as a staff. See the Weapons Table (p. 96).

*jō* – A shorter staff, about half as long as the *bō*. Treat as a short staff.

*naginata* – A polearm similar to the Western glaive. It has a sword-like blade mounted at the end of a staff and can be used as a polearm, staff, or two-handed sword with the appropriate skills. See the Weapons Table (p. 96).



## Food

*Gyokai* (fish) is everywhere, boiled, broiled, fried, stewed, or raw on vinegared rice (*sushi*). Kinds of *gyokai* include mackerel, salmon, shark, trout, mullet, cod, yellowtail, carp, flounder, sardine, swordfish, bonito, tuna, herring, sea bass, eel, pike, squid, octopus, shrimp, clam, crab, sea urchin, abalone, scallops, and oysters.

Grains include expensive rice plus barley, millet, and buckwheat noodles.

Vegetables and fruits include mushrooms, seaweed, soy bean curd, eggplants, cabbages, radishes, red beans, bamboo shoots, chestnuts, tangerines, and persimmons.

Game animals include wild boar, stag, and antelope. Although most Japanese do not eat *niku* (meat), game is sometimes eaten by hunters. It is illegal to use traps or pitfalls to catch game.

Non-humans eat beef, pork, horseflesh, chicken, butter, milk, and cheese. A diet rich in such *abura* (animal fats) make non-humans (and Westerners!) smell bad to the Japanese.

Snacks (dumplings, fruit, roasted chestnuts, sweets, etc.): 5 coppers. Snack sellers roam the street near tourist spots. It is vulgar to eat snacks on the street; polite people have the food wrapped up and eat it later with tea. Most travelers eat meals in their inn room. Restaurants, shrines, temples, and teahouses also serve meals. Many inns and restaurants prepare cold meals (½ lb., bamboo trays) for travelers to take with them.

Vegetarian meal: soup, rice, and pickled vegetables, 10 coppers; with salted fish, \$1 silver; with fresh fish, \$2.

Sake (rice wine, alcohol rating 4; see p. CII162): 1 pint, 1 lb., \$1; in small ceramic bottle: 2 lbs., \$4.

Shōchū (sweet potato brandy, alcohol rating 8; see p. CII162): 1 pint, 1 lb., \$0.60.

Tea: \$0.04 per cup; ceremonial tea, \$1 per cup.

Pipe Tobacco: 1 small pouchful, \$0.20. Pipe: \$1.

## Miscellaneous

Abacus: 1 lb., \$1.

Book (poetry, engravings, guidebook, etc.): 1 lb., \$1.

Chopsticks, lacquer: negligible weight, \$0.40.

Dice and dice cup: ¼ lb., \$1.

Games (go, shogi, etc.): 5 lbs., \$1.

Ginseng, 1 ounce: \$40.

Inkcase with ink and brush: 1 lb., \$2.

Paints: ½ lb., \$1.

Jewelry (comb, hair ornaments, etc.): negligible weight, \$10.

Kite and string: 1 lb., 5 coppers.

Mirror (polished steel, kept in a lacquer case): 1 lb., \$5.

Musical Instrument (biwa, fue, samisan, shakuhachi, shō, tsuzumi): 1 lb., \$5; (koto, taiko): 5 lbs., \$5.

Writing/Drawing paper: \$0.01 per sheet.

Origami paper: \$0.04 per sheet.

Strongbox: 10 lbs., holds 40 lbs., \$60.

Tinderbox: ½ lb., \$0.40.



## Special Arrows

In addition to the three common arrowheads, three other types are sometimes found in the quivers of highly skilled archers.

The *kaburaya* (turnip-head arrow) makes a whistling or humming noise as it flies. It is customary to begin a battle by firing these arrows over the heads of the enemy. Sometimes fighters fill *kaburaya* with black powder and ignite them, creating *hiya* (fire arrows). If set aflame, the fire does 1 additional point of damage and may ignite flammable objects (see pp. B129-130).

The *karimata* (forked arrow) is used to demonstrate the precision of the archer's aim. Its head is a U-shaped cutting blade, suitable for slicing through a rope. On a good enough roll (depending on distance and the size of the target), it can cut down a banner, sever a fan tied onto a ship's mast, or cut the lacings that hold on a samurai's helmet or armor. Ropes are always very hard targets – at least -6.

Finally, *matoya* (target arrows) are blunt arrows used in *inuoi* (dog hunts) and similar sport.



## Evolution of the Japanese Castle

The Japanese castle exists to hold a strategic position, usually on top of a hill, often with one flank defended by a mountain, ocean, or river. But clan lords usually rely on the valor of their samurai to defend them rather than the strength of their castles.

A general might commandeer a shrine or temple because of its strategic position, then reinforce it by felling trees, throwing up a palisade (sometimes plastered with mud as a defense against fire arrows), digging ditches, and constructing flimsy towers for lookouts and archers.

In the late 16th century, after the introduction of Western firearms, the Japanese build the first massive stone-walled castles. (Some historians think they were inspired by Portuguese traders' tales of European castles.) The typical Japanese castle has extensive grounds, with wide moats and high interior walls. The iron-studded wooden gates open onto small courtyards, commanded by towers that allow missile fire from both longbows and muskets. But only the ground floors of the tower and inner keep have stone walls; the rest are still built of wood, perhaps as a safeguard against earthquakes.

Such a castle cannot be easily taken. A general might order his samurai to storm the castle walls, but only if he has at least 10 samurai to each archer inside the castle. One such attack was ignominiously routed when the defenders dumped the castle's accumulated sewage over the walls.

Stone-walled castles are sometimes taken by having a team of miners dig a tunnel under the outer walls and plant black powder charges to bring them down. And sometimes the castle gates are opened from within, either by a traitor or by a ninja who has somehow managed to sneak inside. Ninja are also sent to besieged castles to assassinate the defenders' clan lord or to lower the defenders' morale by spreading rumors.

Only samurai clans have castles, though some Buddhist temples are also fortified. The Tokugawa Shogunate strictly controls clan castle building and temple fortification.

## Costs of New Items From the West

- Candles, wax (1 dozen, each burning for one hour): 2 lbs., \$25.
- Clock: 10 lbs., \$500.
- Glass goblets, 1 dozen: 4 lbs., \$250.
- Manrikigusari: 4 lbs., \$50.
- Mosquito net: 1 lb., \$10.
- Spectacles: Weight negligible, \$100.
- Telescope: 25 lbs., \$1,000.
- Thermometer: 1 lb., \$50.
- Velvet (10' length, enough for a kimono): 3 lbs., \$50.
- Western book: 2-12 lbs., \$50 (\$100 in translation).



## Lodging and Other Amenities

An inn room holds up to 10 travelers. Common inns charge \$1 per guest for a room, meals, and common bath. Tipping (about 20%) is expected.

Buddhist temples take in pilgrims for \$0.04, or twice that if they use wood to heat food or drink or to warm the room.

Samurai or nobles stay at high-class inns that charge \$5 a guest (plus tip). Provisions for soldiers (including their mounts) cost \$1 for four men.

Shrines and temples have offering boxes into which people toss money (copper or silver coins, depending on means) before praying. Afterwards, the worshipper can get a lump of Purified Rice (see p. 19) from the local priest, or buy a *mamori* (see p. 99) for \$0.40.

Beggars and street entertainers are common around temples. Most people toss them a few coppers. Non-human beggar women will probably grant their favors for a silver; any man seen arranging this would suffer -2 to reaction rolls, or -4 if he were samurai or noble.

Theater tickets: \$0.40.

Firewood costs \$0.04 for 5 lbs., enough to heat a room for one night.

Charcoal costs \$1 for 5 lbs., enough for one day's work at the forge.

Bathhouse communal bath: \$0.32. Massage: \$1. Shampoo and style (normally done every 10 days for women and samurai; takes two hours): \$4.

Perfume or incense: 1 ounce, \$1. Incense burner: ¼lb., \$2.

Courtesan: \$8 per hour on average.

Geisha party: \$20 for an average geisha, including food and drink for one guest; \$1 more for each additional guest.

## Travel and Wilderness Gear

*Inro* (first aid kit, with herbal remedies, adds 1 to First Aid skill): 1 lb., \$5.

Paper lantern, 2 lbs., \$1. 1 ounce of oil burns 1 hour, costs \$0.08.

Bamboo fishing pole and silk line, 1 lb., \$2.

## Animals

The Japanese horse is smaller than European or Arabian varieties, but still quite strong and fast. Horse-breeding is the specialty of some clans, and the Nambū clan is especially noted for their success.

These are average prices. Costs can be up to 10 times as much for creatures of quality.

Dog (mastiff watchdog, never a pet): 100 lbs., \$10.

Plowhorse (pony-sized): 1,000 lbs., \$500.

Ox: 2,500 lbs., \$400.

Hawk: \$40.

Mongolian riding pony: 800 lbs., \$1,200.

Saddle horse (imported by Western traders): 1,200 lbs., \$1,800.

Singing animal (bird, insect, frog) or fireflies in cage: 1 lb., \$0.40.

## Readying Clothing

Japanese clothing is not designed for combat efficiency. Samurai on duty and ninja on a mission wear *hakama* to keep their kimono from tangling. A Japanese expecting to fight usually ties up his sleeves with a piece of string. Lacking string and *hakama*, fighters can tuck the tail of the kimono in their *obi* and roll up the sleeves as an expedient. Experienced fighters (GM's call) can do this in three turns; others take 3d turns. Movement cost for a kimono without *hakama* is +1 per turn; the cost for dangling sleeves is an additional +1 (see p. B107).



## Armor

Armor is made of iron or steel plates, laced together with silk or leather. Wet lacing (from rain or fording a river) doubles the armor's encumbrance. Some steel armor is made of plates that have been proved (tested and not pierced) by bow or musket. Such armor is +2 PD and costs twice as much.



Type	PD	DR	Cost	Wt
<b>Full Armor</b>				
Leather	2	2	220	16
Steel	4	5	1680	73

<b>Partial Armor</b>				
Leather				
Kabuto (Helmet)	2	2	20	-
Dō (Chest)	2	2	60	9
Kote* (Sleeves)	2	2	70	2
Suneate (Leggings)	2	2	60	4
Waraji (Sandals)**	2	2	10	1
Steel				
Kabuto	3	4	100	2
Mempo (Face Mask)	3	4	100	1
Dō	4	5	900	30
Kote*	3	4	300	15
Suneate	3	4	250	21
Waraji**	3	4	30	4

<b>Clothing</b>				
Kimono				
Summer	0	10	1	-
Winter	0	1	20	5
Ninja***	1	3	100	20
Hakama	0	0	2	1
Hachimaki	0	0	2	1
Straw Overcoat	0	1	1	10
Hat				
Cloth/Straw	1	1	1	-
Ninja***	1	3	60	2
Straw Sandals	0	0	1	1
Shield				
Medium	3	-	60	15

\* covers areas 6 and 7.  
 \*\* only protects the soles of the feet.  
 \*\*\* reinforced with metal.

## Vehicles

The *kobaya* is representative of the kind of warboat used by Japanese samurai and *wakō* (pirates). It carries 20 rowers (10 per side) and six warriors. As part of a regular fighting force, these crewmen will be armored samurai; in a pirate ship, they are more likely to be commoners with widely variable weapons and armor. In combat the fighters will stand and harass the enemy vessel with arrows before closing to board. The hull was light enough that sometimes the vessel would be sunk by the arrow fire alone.

The ship is about 40 feet long and 8 feet wide amidships, tapering to a point at the bow and to a low, wide platform astern. A tiller connected to the rear rudder controls the direction of the boat's movement. The vessel has a very low free board, a problem that is only exacerbated when it is loaded with provisions for a sea voyage.

Crews would sometimes hang shields to the gunwale for several reasons: the shields kept the crewmen reasonably dry (and able to sleep without worrying about falling overboard), prevented the boat from being swamped, and protected the rowers from enemy arrows (-7 to hit; -3 for when standing up). These shields are accessories of the vessel, not combat equipment of the crew. They weigh 16 lbs. each and grant PD 2, DR 2 to the crew when put up. A full set of shields weighs 320 lbs. and costs \$160. They cannot double as shields in combat.

**Subassemblies and Body Features:** One 25-foot mast (the masts of *waku* ships are known to have been stowable), flotation hull with average hydrodynamic lines; flotation rating: 43,805 lbs.

**Propulsion:** 20 rowing positions (facing forward, rowed seated), 100 lbs. motive thrust; Fore-and-aft sail, 250 sf., average motive thrust 500 lbs. (Cloth lugsail with top and bottom yards, unreinforced, or possible a square rig during *sengoku* jidai.)

**Controls & Crew Stations:** Primitive. Helmsman controls tiller from exposed crew station.

**Occupancy:** Long. (Note that no modern seaman would accept this designation. Pre-modern societies had different definitions of comfort.) **Crew:** 20 exposed standard seats for rowers, 6 exposed standard seats for warriors. Provisions for 30 days kept in open cargo space (requires 1/2 space). For operations inshore the boat will carry less provisions, or forgo them entirely, improving seaworthiness and performance.



*Volume:* Body 842 cf., mast 1.6 cf. *Surface areas:* Body 535, mast 8.2.

*Structure:* Light frame, cheap materials. (The Asian tradition of using coniferous softwoods for shipbuilding makes the material "cheap" by European standards. On the bright side, given the use of cedarwood, camphor laurel and resinous woods in shipbuilding a character unfamiliar with the boat may well find that a kobaya smells rather good, and these woods may also resist rot better than the Western types).

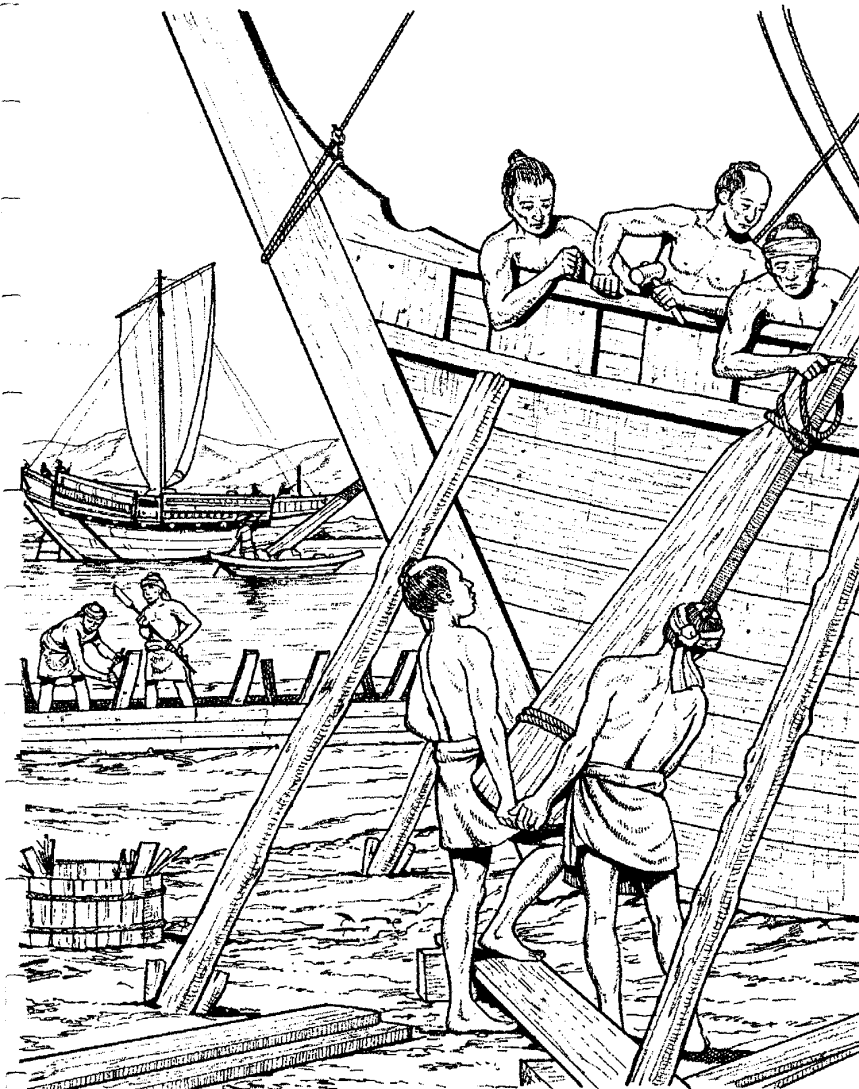
*Hit Points:* Body 401.

*Armor:* Top: none ( $\frac{1}{2}$  surface, open). Hull: DR 4, PD 2.

*Surface Features:* Waterproof.

*Statistics:* Empty weight: 10,151 lbs. Usual payload: 15,440 lbs. (5,720 lbs. inshore). Loaded weight: 25,591 lbs. (15,871 inshore). Price: \$10,105.85. HT: 8 (10 inshore).

*Water Performance:* Can float. Hydrodynamic drag 86 (62 without provisions). Aquatic motive thrust 600 lbs. Speed 11.5 mph (12.8 inshore). wAccel 0.39 mph/s (0.64 inshore). wMR 0.1. wSR 2. wDecel 1 mph/s. Draft 2.3' (2' inshore).



## After the Battle

Japanese troops do not make a practice of looting the battlefield. They may take the heads of brave enemies but they do not strip off armor and weapons. This is partly because of the samurai disdain for greed, and partly to keep themselves undefiled so they could enter a Shinto shrine. The locality's poor (bandits or peasants) sometimes loot battlefields before the relatives of the dead can make arrangements for burial. Sometimes such scavengers also find soldiers left for dead by their comrades and enemies. In such a case, make a Reaction roll for the scavenger; he might kill the soldier, ignore him, or nurse him back to health.

Japanese do not hold captured enemies for ransom. They are either executed or held as hostages for their relatives' good behavior. Most clan lords or nobles, if they believe they can neither win nor escape the enemy's clutches, will commit seppuku.





# Weapons Table

Weapon	Type	Damage	Reach	Cost	Weight	Min ST	Special Notes
<b>BLOWPIPE</b>							
Fukiya	See p. 88	See p. 88	C,1	5	1	None	See p. 88
<b>DX, BRAWLING or KARATE</b>							
Tessen	Cut	Thr-2	C	40	1	None	Max. damage 1d-1. Uses Karate or DX-2. Receives Karate bonuses.
	Cr	Thr	C,1				
Nekode	Cut	Sw-2	C	100	1	None	Receives Brawling or Karate bonuses
	Imp	Thr	C				
<b>FLAIL</b>							
Nunchaku	Cr	Sw+2	1,2	20	2	10	1 turn to ready.* -2 to block.
<b>JITTE/SAI</b>							
Jitte	Cr	Thr	C,1	20	1	7	Used to disarm.
<b>KATANA</b>							
Bokken	Cr	Sw+1	1,2	40	5	11	
	Cr	Thr+1	1				
Katana	Cut	Sw+1	1,2	650	5	11	
	Imp	Thr+1	1				
Scabbarded	Cr	Sw+1					
<b>KUSARI</b>							
Kusari	Cr	Sw+2	1-4	70	5	11	1 turn to ready per yard of attack.*
Kusarigama	Cut	Sw+2	1,2	80	3	11	1 turn to ready after each use.*
Manrikigusari	Cr	Sw+4	1,2	60	3	11	1 turn to ready after each use.
<b>POLEARM</b>							
Naginata	Cut	Sw+3	2	100	6	9	1 turn to ready after swing.*
	Imp	Thr+3	1,2				
<b>SHORT STAFF</b>							
Jō	Cr	Sw+1	1	10	2	None	
	Cr	Thr+1	1				
<b>STAFF</b>							
Naginata	Cr	Sw+2	1,2	100	6	9	With shaft With blunt end.
	Cr	Thr+2	1,2				
Sodegarami	Special	See p. CII35	1,2	100	4	6	Used to grapple.
	Cr	Sw+2	1,2				
Tetsubō	Cr	Thr+2	1,2				
	Cr	Sw+4	1,2	100	10	13	
<b>TWO-HANDED SWORD</b>							
Naginata	Cut	Sw+3	2	100	6	9	1 turn to ready after swing. With shaft.
	Cr	Sw+3	1				
	Imp	Thr+3	2				
Nodachi	Cut	Sw+4	1,2	800	7	12	
	Cr	Thr+2	2				
Tetsubō	Cr	Sw+4	1,2	100	10	13	1 turn to ready after swing.
	Cr	Thr+2	2				

\* Becomes *unready* if used to parry.



Weapon	Type	Damage	SS	Acc	1/2D	Max	Cost	Weight	Min ST	Special Notes
<b>BOW</b>										
Daikyū			14				\$900	4	10	
Yanagiba	imp	thr+3		3	ST×20	ST×25	\$2			the standard arrow; Max 1d+4
Kaburaya	cr	thr+3		2	ST×15	ST×20	\$2			Max 1d+4
Karimata	cut	thr+3		3	ST×15	ST×20	\$2			Max 1d+4 vs. animate targets
Matoya	cr	thr+2		2	ST×15	ST×20	\$1			Max 1d+3
Togariya	imp	thr+3(2)		3	ST×20	ST×25	\$5			Damage is not doubled after penetrating DR; Max 1d
Watakushi	Special	Special		2	ST×15	ST×20	\$5			
<b>Hankyū</b>										
Yanagiba	imp	thr	12	1	ST×10	ST×15	\$2			the standard arrow; Max 1d+3
Kaburaya	cr	thr		0	ST×6	ST×10	\$2	2.5	7	Max 1d+3
Karimata	cut	thr		1	ST×6	ST×10	\$2			Max 1d+3 vs. animate targets
Matoya	cr	thr-1		0	ST×6	ST×10	\$1			Max 1d+2
Togariya	imp	thr(2)		1	ST×10	ST×15	\$5			Damage is not doubled after penetrating DR; Max 1d-1
Watakushi	Special	Special		0	ST×6	ST×10	\$5			

#### BLOWPIPE

Fukiya	Special	See p. B49	10	1	-	ST/2	\$30	1	none	
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#### SHURIKEN

Shāken	cut	thr-1	8	1	ST-5	ST	\$3	1/10	none	Max damage 1d+2.
Shuriken	imp	thr-2	10	2	ST-5	ST	\$2	1/10	none	Max damage 1d.

#### Weapon Malf Damage SS Acc 1/2D Max RoF Shots ST Rcl Cost Wt Notes

##### BLACK POWDER WEAPONS (Matchlock Musket)

Teppō	14	3d-2	16	3	100	700	1/60	1	10	-2	\$100	9	Damage is doubled after subtracting DR
Teppō shot											\$2	0.1	

#### Weapon Malf Damage Can Acc 1/2D Max RoF Shots Cr Cost Wt

##### GUNNER (Cannon)

Taihō	14	6d×4		2	200	1200	1/30	1	6		\$8000		
Taihō shot											\$60	7.5	





## CHAPTER EIGHT

# Magic



Only particular groups know certain spells; for example, only demons know Create Warrior. Local nushi (p. 18) will notice someone else casting such a restricted spell. Learning spells not known by the mage's group requires an Unusual Background and (depending on the details and cost of the Unusual Background) might still take twice as long to learn (costing twice as much; see *Finding a Teacher* p. B146). Successful use of Occultism (p. B61) or appropriate Hidden Lore (p. CI47) skills will allow PCs to know if certain spells exist and the groups that might know them.



## Mana Level

The settled areas of Japan – the villages, towns, and farms – are all low-mana areas. Undeified temples and shrines are Aspected (p. M94) toward the appropriate Clerical magic (Shintō or Buddhist) – effectively eliminating the -5 penalty for low mana. The wilderness areas (including the ocean and the sky) have normal mana; this is one reason why most mages live as hermits in unsettled areas. The GM may decide places such as abandoned shrines or demons' lairs are high-mana or even no-mana, but otherwise there are no such predictable locations.



## Changes to the GURPS Magic Rules

### Critical Spell Failure Table (p. M6)

A roll of 7 on the Critical Spell Failure Table does not produce a brimstone smell; brimstone is not found in Japanese legends. Instead, the spell produces only a groaning noise and a stench of rotting flesh.

### Magic Rituals (p. M7)

*Skill 11 or below:* The spellcaster must sing and dance when casting a spell, just like a Shintō priest during a religious ritual. The spell takes *double* the listed time to cast, because it is not yet fully mastered.

### Magic Items and Grimoires

Magical items such as staffs, wands, and scrolls are very rare in Japan, and Japanese mages do not record their spells in grimoires as European wizards do. Diviners do use tomes in their divinations, but these are simply reference books, and have no magical properties. Some shrines and temples sell or give away *mamori* (see *Repel Spirits*, p. 102). A few weapons and suits of armor with great enchantments are stored in shrines and temples, kept safe to give to heroes in times of dire crisis. The GM will have to decide whether less powerful enchantments (such as Accuracy or Fortify) will be rare in the campaign.

## Increased Magic Resistance

Anyone *without* High Pain Threshold may attempt to increase his resistance to Illusion and Possession spells by deliberately injuring himself. To do so, he must cut himself (or find another way to inflict damage). He then makes a Will roll (at -4 if he has Low Pain Threshold). If he succeeds, he is able to concentrate on the pain of the wound, giving him a bonus to his roll to resist the incoming spell equal to the damage of the wound. If he fails the roll, the pain shatters his concentration and leaves him very vulnerable to the hostile spell, taking a *penalty* on his roll to resist equal to the damage of the wound (doubled for Low Pain Threshold).

## Asian Alchemy

The Asian tradition of alchemy is a very different art than the Hermetic tradition outlined in *Magic* (pp. M98.). The goal of Asian alchemy is not the transmutation of lead to gold, but rather immortality!

In addition to the Alchemy skill (p. C1148), Japanese alchemists will often have expertise in Chinese Ideographs (p. 70), the Mandarin language, and Theology (Taoism), in order to study the extensive Chinese texts on the subject. Disciplines of Faith (Ritualism) (p. C189) are also appropriate.

The following *reiyaku* (elixirs) from *GURPS Magic* (pp. M100-101) are appropriate in a Japanese campaign: Flight, Healing, Health, Invisibility, Invulnerability, Transformation, Water-Walking, and Youth. The Elixir of Magic Resistance (p. M113) is suitable as well. As with the spell lists, GMs may choose to add any of the remaining elixirs on the assumption that they simply were overlooked in the legends.

### The Elixir of Life

The most important elixir in Asian alchemy is *fushi no reiyaku*, the Elixir of Immortality. Nothing could be more coveted than the drink of immortality. Taoist alchemists work to blend and refine lead, mercury, sulfur, cinnabar, and other elements, eventually creating *fushi no reiyaku*, a substance that appears to be gold. By eating this false gold, a person can extend his life.

Because the primary ingredients in *fushi no reiyaku* are lead and mercury, the person consuming the elixir must make a HT roll. On a failure, treat as if the person had drunk either an Elixir of Death or an Elixir of Aging (p. M101). On a successful HT check, however, the character may skip all Aging rolls for the next 3d years (record this secretly; the character will not know that the effect has worn off until he fails an Aging roll).

*Note:* This version varies slightly from the one in *China* (p. CH42).





## Demons

The Japanese use the same word, *oni*, for the demon goblins of the wilderness (see p. 62) and the damned demons of the hells; the latter will be called by the English term here. The stats for the demon goblin can be used for the "true" demons as well (perhaps with increases of HT, hit points, and size). Combat is decidedly different, however: a demon will be dispersed for 1d hours by a hit from a weapon washed with purified water or from the unarmed attack of a devout *bussō* or *kannushi*. Only enchanted weapons can do real damage. Demons can be affected by social skills (at -3) or by the spells Turn Spirit, Repel Spirits, and Summon Demon. Sense Spirit will detect them. They are not affected by spells of Illusion, Mind Control, or Body Control, nor are they affected by Exorcism. In addition to high combat skills, demons are likely to have knowledge of Enchantment, Fire, Illusion, and Mind Control spells as well as Create Warrior, Curse, Steal Strength, Summon Gaki, and Summon Spirit.

## Minions of Demons

The *kishinsūhaisha* (demonolater) is the retainer of a particular demon, just as a samurai is a particular clan lord's retainer or a Shintō priest serves a particular kami.

The *kishinsūhaisha* is often taught magic spells such as Summon Demon (but will anger his master if he disturbs him at an inconvenient time). Like the samurai, the *kishinsūhaisha* may receive weapons from his master, and a gift of enchanted weapons usually accompanies an assignment to kill a particular person. The *kishinsūhaisha* might also be put at the head of a gang of Brute Warriors (see Create Warrior, p. M52).

The demon might appear unannounced at any time to see how things are going for his retainer. Demons feel little loyalty to humans. A *kishinsūhaisha* who fails at an assigned task might well be attacked by his own master seeking to wipe out the embarrassment of having such an incompetent retainer.

# Available Standard Spells

Many spells from *GURPS Magic* appear in Japanese folklore or seem compatible with it. If the campaign only uses these spells, then the GM should only require the prerequisite spells that are themselves authentic; other specific changes are noted in the spell lists below. Spells from *GURPS Grimoire* are likewise left to the GM to determine, using the lists below as cultural guidelines (for instance, Hide Emotion, p. G20, would be quite useful).

If players want to bring established mage characters into a Japanese campaign as foreign explorers or traders (see pp. 109-110), the GM will have to decide how to handle their spells. Foreign magic might be slightly incompatible with the local mana, so that foreign mages treat each mana level as one level worse. Foreign mages might not be able to draw power from the surrounding mana for casting, so their spells always cost standard energy regardless of the mage's skill. And of course, the same might be true for a Japanese mage casting spells in an area of foreign mana.

## Elemental Magic

In Japan, the *gogyō* (five cosmological elements) are Earth, Fire, Water, Metal, and Wood, rather than the four Western elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Japanese folklore lacks the controllable elemental spirits of European belief. Instead, each wilderness area has its own master, or *nushi* (see p. 18). A *nushi* wields great power within its own domain and may command all the elements within it.

The five-element system of Japanese belief does not lend itself to the elemental oppositions known in Europe. The Japanese view all oppositions as being tied to *in'yō* (yin and yang) from *Dōkyō* (Taoism).



# Spell List for GURPS Japan



The following spells are appropriate to Japanese legend and lore. Other spells from *GURPS Magic* are less typical of Japanese mythology, but storytellers may not have been privy to all of the *mahōtsukai's* abilities. GMs may choose to add any of the remaining spells, as well as those from *GURPS Grimoire* and other historical supplements such as *China, Russia, or Arabian Nights*. Prerequisite spells which are unknown in a particular campaign should be replaced with known spells or simply ignored. The spell list below indicates some possible prerequisite substitutions.

## Animal Spells

The Beast-Soother, Master, Beast Summoning, Beast Seeker, Beast Link, and Beast Speech spells are the only *Magic* spells available in this college.

## Communication and Empathy

Many of these spells would be considered "necromancy" by Westerners (and see the note on the Necromantic Spells below), but the Japanese do not see it that way. They believe necromancy an abominable idea, but they do not consider any of these spells necromantic! Japanese mages learn all the following spells through the College of Communication and Empathy.

Sense Life, Sense Foes, Sense Emotion, and Lend Language are the only Communication and Empathy spells from *Magic* known to human mages, but the spells Sense Spirit, Summon Spirit (prerequisite: Sense Spirit), Summon Shade, and Banish from the Necromantic College are considered part of this college in Japan.

Japanese mages use Lend Language to give animals the ability to speak, but there is no reason it should not work on a foreign barbarian. Beast Speech is its prerequisite, however. It is also an Animal spell – the spell can be learned and cast by a mage aspected to the Animal college (see *Magery, Limited*, p. CI39), but then only if the subject is an animal.

Summon Spirit can only affect a spirit who received a spirit name at its funeral service (see p. 54), and then only after 49 days have passed since its death. A spirit who held a

higher station in life than the mage's will have a bonus to its resistance roll equal to the difference in their Statuses. There is no penalty for having a lesser Status.

### Awaken Tsukumogami

Regular

Every well-crafted object, whether a tool, a weapon, a work of art, or other item, contains a spirit, or tsukumogami, which sleeps within it. This spell allows the caster to awaken the tsukumogami of any item created by an artisan who made his roll by 5 or more (the GM can assume this was the case for an artisan with skill 15+). This spirit can answer one question per minute regarding its maker or any of its owners. The spirit will remain awake for the duration of the spell; it may remain awake or return to slumber after the spell finishes, according to its own whim.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 3 to cast, 1 to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 5 second.

*Prerequisite:* Sense Spirit.

### Summon Gaki

Special

Summons one gaki, and allows the caster to demand one favor of the gaki – to be performed within an hour – in exchange for a feast of the gaki's "food" (see p. 62). The type of gaki summoned will be determined by the type of feast prepared for it; a "flower gaki" will not appear for a feast of poison. Range does not matter for this spell; the mage will know the location of the nearest appropriate gaki and the amount of time it will take it to reach him.

A Buddhist priest may cast this spell as part of a six-hour ritual; if he does so, his prayers will suffice as the gaki's feast, and no other "food" need be offered.

*Duration:* Until the gaki's task is done, or one hour after its arrival, whichever is less.

*Cost:* 4.

*Time to cast:* 30 seconds.

*Prerequisite:* Summon Spirit.

### Turn Spirit

Regular; Resisted by IQ

Causes a single spirit – including ghosts, gaki, ubume, and possessed beings (but not nushi or demons) – to retreat from the caster. The caster must be able to see the subject. The subject will move away from the caster at its current maximum Move until the spell ends or the caster loses sight of it. The subject cannot attack the caster in any way during this time; this includes the use of special powers and spells.

If the spirit is currently possessing a living entity, Turn Spirit will *not* force it out of its host. Instead, the spirit will flee using the host's body.

*Duration:* 10 seconds.

*Base Cost:* 4 to cast; 2 to maintain.

*Prerequisite:* Either Fear and Sense Spirit or Power Investiture (p. CI42).

*Item:* Wand, staff, or jewelry. Mage or Power-Invested priest only. Energy cost to create: 350.



## Repel Spirits

Area; Resisted by IQ

Repels spirits from an area. The spell resists attempts by spirits to enter the area or remain in it.

Each spirit may try to enter the area once per hour, rolling a regular Contest between its IQ and the caster's effective skill (each contest takes one turn). Once inside, the invader resists with its IQ and is expelled from the area on its first failure.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Base Cost:* 4 to cast; 2 to maintain.

*Prerequisite:* Banish and Turn Spirit.

*Item:* (a) Wand, staff, or jewelry. Mage or Power-Invested priest only. Energy cost to create: 1,100. (b) An area can be made permanently repellent for 100 times casting cost. In Japanese tradition, this area is normally centered on a *mamori* (talisman), which must be enchanted normally. A *mamorigami* (paper *mamori*) – a scroll inscribed with Buddhist scripture – is tacked to a door or window to make that portal impassable to spirits (1-hex area). A statue *mamori* – created using a tiny statue of Buddha – can protect a larger area from spirits.



## Earth Spells

All the *GURPS Magic* Earth spells except Sand Jet, Walk Through Earth, Body of Stone, Earth to Air, Earthquake, and Volcano are available to human mages. Casting any Earth spell is likely to attract the attention of the local *nushi*. None of the Earth spells can be used to affect metals or their ores in any way; to affect metals a mage must learn spells from the Metal College (see below).

### Seek Pass

#### Information

Tells a caster the direction and approximate distance of the nearest pass through a mountain range.

*Cost:* 3.

*Time to cast:* 10 seconds.

*Prerequisite:* Seek Earth.

### Predict Earth Movement

#### Information

Successfully cast, this spell accurately predicts any landslides, earthquakes, or volcanic activity likely to occur within a given area over a given period. It gives approximate information regarding the nature, location, and severity of the impending disaster.

*Cost:* 2 times the length of the forecast in days. Double the cost for a place outside the local area (beyond the horizon). Quadruple the cost for a place on another continent.

*Time to cast:* 5 seconds per day of forecast.

*Prerequisite:* 4 Earth Spells.

## Air Spells

This college does not fit into the Japanese view of the elements. The only Air spells which are definitely available in Japan are Predict Weather (in the Water College; prerequisite: four Water Spells), and Walk on Air (in the Movement College; prerequisite: Apportation). The GM may place other Air spells in other colleges as desired.

## Fire Spells

The only Fire spells from *Magic* available to human mages are Ignite Fire, Create Fire, Shape Fire, Extinguish Fire, Resist Fire, and Heat. Wherever a ruby is called for as a component for a spell or magical item, substitute a pine cone.

## Metal Spells

*GURPS Grimoire* places Metal spells in the Tech College. In the less technologically centered world of Japan the spells may be treated more appropriately as another elemental college. Seek Metal and Metal Vision are identical to their Earth-College counterparts, except that Metal Vision's cost is doubled. Shatterproof and Sharpen (both on p. M60) are also Metal Spells, each with Shape Metal as a prerequisite.

### Identify Metal

#### Information

Tells the caster what metal he is dealing with. He must touch the metal to be identified.

*Cost:* 1.

*Prerequisite:* Seek Metal.

*Note:* This spell is from *Grimoire*.

### Shape Metal

#### Regular

Allows the caster to move metal about and shape it into any form. The metal will retain the shape it holds it when the spell expires, until it is reshaped either physically or magically. Metal moved with this spell travels at 1/2 hex per turn.

It is possible to form functional weapons using this spell though such weapons will lack a good temper, and will be of *cheap* quality. A successful Engineering roll may be required to create a stable arch, overhang, or other structure.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 6 per hex of metal shaped (4 for soft metals such as gold); half that to maintain

*Prerequisite:* Magery, Seek Metal.

*Note:* This version varies slightly from the one in *Grimoire* (p. G106)

### Purify Metal

#### Regular

This spell removes all impurities in the subject metal or ore.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 8.

*Time to Cast:* 2 seconds.

*Prerequisite:* Shape Metal.



## Water Spells

The available Water spells from *Magic* are Seek Water, Purify Water, Shape Water, Swim, Walk on Water (known by ninja mages only), and Umbrella. The Air spell Predict Weather is a Water spell in Japan; its prerequisite is four Water spells. It can predict *tsunami* on a critical success. Similarly, the Food spell Water to Wine (*Sake*) is a Water spell; its prerequisite is Purify Water.

### Create Well

Regular

Creates or revives a spring or well. Water from a well or spring created by a devout Buddhist priest is purified until it is defiled by blood or tears; once defiled, it cannot be re-purified.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 5 times the spring's output in gallons per hour.

*Time to Cast:* 1 minute.

*Prerequisite:* Purify Water.

### Dry Well

Regular

Causes a small well or spring to run dry.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 3 times the spring's output in gallons per hour.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

*Prerequisite:* Create Well.

### Seek Coastline

Information

Tells a caster at sea the direction and approximate distance of the nearest coastline. Use long-distance modifiers. Any known coastline, such as that of a nearby island, may be excluded if the caster specifically mentions it during casting.

*Cost:* 3.

*Time to cast:* 10 seconds.

*Prerequisite:* Seek Water.

## Wood Spells

This is the Plant College in *GURPS Magic*. All are available except for Animate Plant and Plant Form. Frost (from the Water College) is also considered a Wood spell; it affects only plants within the area of effect, and its prerequisite is Plant Growth.

### Blossom

Area

Causes the plants within the area of effect to bloom and bear fruit within the one-hour duration of the spell. To be affected, the entire plant must be within the area of effect. The plant will remain in this condition for 24 hours, at the end of which it will enter its fall phase – leaves of deciduous trees will turn color, blossoms and fruit will drop off, etc. The spell may be limited to a single plant, or a single type of plant, at the time of casting.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Base Cost:* 2.

*Time to cast:* 5 minutes.

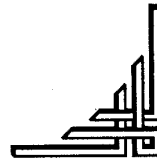
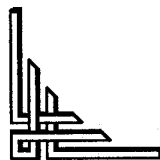
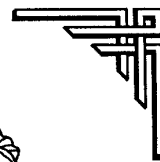
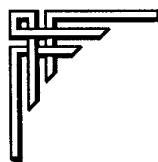
*Prerequisite:* Plant Growth.

## Enchantment Spells

Enchant, Power, Speed, Accuracy, Puisseance, Bane, and Fortify are all commonly known in Japan. Accuracy has a prerequisite of one spell from each of the five elements; Puisseance, five Metal Spells.

## Food Spells

These spells are not generally known in Japan. Water to Wine is a Water spell (see above).





## Healing Spells

Healing spells from *Magic* available include Minor Healing, Cure Disease, and Restoration. Cure Disease and Restoration each have Minor Healing as a prerequisite. Most mages require fresh blood from a fox, monkey, or human in casting these spells; Buddhist priests substitute ginseng for this blood.

Shintō priests are proscribed from casting any curing spells.

### Transfer Health

### Regular

Allows the caster to expend his own hit points to cure the injuries of another being. For every hit point restored, the caster expends one of his own hit points. When the spell is successfully cast, the caster must make a second roll against his skill with this spell. If this second roll is successful, the hit points expended are treated as injury and will heal normally; if he fails this roll, the loss is *permanent* and will not return naturally. The player may spend character points to buy back the lost hit points.

It is possible to raise the subject's hit points up to 3 points beyond the normal level. Any points beyond the subject's normal value will be lost, one per day, until it has returned to normal. It is also possible for the caster to transfer *more* hit points to the subject than he actually possesses, by driving his own level below 0. If the caster does so, he immediately falls unconscious upon completing the ritual.

This spell can be used to heal a human being, an animal, or even a tree or flower.

*Duration:* Instantaneous.

*Cost:* None.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

*Prerequisite:* Minor Healing.

## Illusion and Creation Spells

All the Illusion spells in *Magic* are available to Japanese mages. None of the Creation spells are available to humans, except for Create Craftsmen below. Some demons know Create Warrior.

The Know Illusion spell is resisted by the subject spell, just as Dispel Illusion is. If the subject resists the Know Illusion spell, the caster will believe the object is real.

### False Coins

### Regular

This spell is cast on leaves or pieces of paper, making them look and feel just like silver or gold coins.

*Duration:* 5 minutes.

*Cost:* 1 per \$10 of coins; half that to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 2 seconds.

*Prerequisites:* Identify Metal, Simple Illusion.

### Create Craftsmen

### Regular

Turns *ningyō* (dolls) of straw, carved stone, or origami into miniature craftsmen, each possessing a craft skill at a level equal to that of the caster -2. In addition to the fatigue cost, the caster must endow the dolls with part of his soul; thus, he temporarily loses 1 HT per 5 dolls animated (rounded up). This lost HT returns when the spell expires. This spell may be cast only after sundown, and normally lasts until dawn, when the dolls revert to their inanimate form. If anyone except the caster views the miniature craftsmen, the spell is immediately broken.

*Duration:* Special.

*Cost:* 1 per doll.

*Time to cast:* 10 seconds per doll.

*Prerequisites:* One spell from each of the five elements.



## Knowledge Spells

The Find Direction, Aura, Seeker, Trace, Pathfinder, History, Ancient History, and the Divination spells below are available in this college.

### Divination

### Information

Japanese divination operates just as it does in *GURPS Magic*, giving the caster a vision relevant to his question, or the answer to a single yes-or-no question. Each type of Divination is a separate spell, and requires the appropriate materials. The following types of Divination are known in Japan:

*Geomancy* is divining by studying patterns of earth and water in a given area. The construction of a temple or other important building is seldom begun without first consulting a geomancer, for fear that it may be built in an unfortunate location. Geomantic divination will reveal information only about the immediate area; it is impossible to use geomancy to learn about another location. *Prerequisite*: 5 Earth spells.

Diviners use the *I Ching* by casting six sticks, each with an unbroken line on one side and a broken line on the other. This produces a hexagram that gives an answer to one yes-or-no question. Without a copy of the *I Ching* (cost \$50, weight 5 lbs.), the diviner is at -8 to skill. *Prerequisite*: Literacy and 2 spells from each of the five elements. This is a personal divination (p. M56).

*Senseijustu* (astrology) functions as in *Magic*. It is as important to the Japanese in selecting dates for various events as geomancy is in selecting locations. For example, a Japanese will consult an astrologer before setting the date for his daughter's wedding, his father's funeral, or the signing of a contract. *Prerequisite*: Astrology 12+ and 10 spells from the elemental colleges.

Cost, time to cast, and general prerequisites are as described in *GURPS Magic* (p. M55).

## Light and Darkness Spells

Most of the Light and Darkness spells described in *Magic* are unknown in Japan. Some ninja mages know the Blur, Hide, Invisibility, Night Vision, Dark Vision, and See Invisible spells.

## Making and Breaking Spells

Find Weakness (prerequisite: one spell from each of the five elemental colleges) and Weaken are the only spells from *Magic* in the Making and Breaking College available to Japanese mages. Shatterproof and Sharpen are part of the Metal College, with Shape Metal as the prerequisite for either.

### Inspired Creation (Very Hard)

### Regular

Lets the subject create one *very fine* work – a weapon, suit of armor, painting, etc. – of a quality far beyond his usual ability. This spell costs the *subject*, who may or may not be the caster, one point of HT, *permanently*. The work is as good as if it were made with a critical success by an arti-

san of a skill 5 greater than the subject. An object of art created under the influence of this spell is automatically of high enough quality to be affected by the Artistic Creation spell, below; a weapon created under this spell is automatically of *very fine* quality.

*Duration*: Permanent.

*Cost*: 5 per day need to create the object.

*Time to cast*: Usual time to make the object.

### Artistic Creation (Very Hard)

### Regular

By casting this spell upon a brilliant work of art, such as a painting or sculpture, the artwork actually becomes *real*. A sculpted fish upon which this spell is cast can be eaten; a painted horse would wander out of the picture, unless it were tethered by a painted rope.

Only an expert artist (skill 16 or better) may cast this spell, and he may cast it only on the best examples of his own work. When creating a work of art, the artist must make a roll against Artist or Sculpture, as appropriate, to determine the quality of the piece; if the roll is a critical success, then the piece is good enough to serve as the subject of the Artistic Creation spell. Cast upon a piece created with only a normal success, the spell is ineffective. This spell may not be cast on the work of another artist.

Anyone stepping into a painting will disappear, reappearing in the real location portrayed in the picture. Those who entered that locale through the painting will be able to step back through it, reappearing at the painting's current location, but those who entered the area any other way may only step back through the painting if they are in physical contact with someone who arrived through the painting.

*Duration*: 1 day.

*Cost*: 10 to cast; 5 to maintain.

*Time to cast*: 10 seconds.

*Prerequisite*: Inspired Creation.

### Soul Creation (Very Hard)

### Regular

Lets the subject (who must be a master artisan, skill 16+) create a brilliant work, usually a weapon or tool, which also contains a part of the artisan's soul. The object carries the artisan's skill to use the object, and may convey that skill to other users. Thus, anyone using a Soul Sword created by an armorer with Katana-16 would fight with the weapon as if he himself had Katana-16; a Soul Brush, created by a calligrapher with Calligraphy-21, would allow anyone using that brush to write as if they had a skill of 21 in calligraphy. Weapons created under the influence of this spell are always *very fine*.

This spell costs the *subject*, who may or may not be the caster, 1 HT and five levels with the skill in question, *permanently* (though these levels may be relearned). The item carries a skill level equal to the subject's skill *prior* to casting this spell. It takes twice as long to make a Soul Creation as it would to make the same object normally. No skill roll, other than the Soul Creation spell, is necessary to create the item.

*Duration*: Permanent.

*Cost*: 5 per day spent making the object.

*Time to cast*: Twice usual time to make the object.

*Prerequisite*: Inspired Creation.





### Soul Repair (Very Hard)

Regular

Repairs a broken inanimate object of great significance to the caster or another person. In addition to the energy cost listed below, the Soul Repair also costs the caster 1 HT (for a non-magical item) or 3 HT (for a magical item); this HT loss is permanent.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 3 per 10 pounds of the object's weight.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute per 10 pounds of the object's weight.

### Meta-Spells

Available Meta-Spells include Scryguard, Spell Shield, Counterspell, Dispel Magic, Ward, Reflect, Bless, Curse, Delay, and Link. The Remove Curse spell is also available, but affects only Curse spells.

Anyone may learn the Bless spell, but it may be cast only by a feudal lord, teacher, or parent, and only upon his own followers, students, or children, respectively.

Reverse

Regular;  
Resists incoming spells

This spell may reverse any other spells – friendly or hostile – cast on or at the subject, reflecting them back upon their caster. To determine whether a spell is reversed, the

caster of the incoming spell and the caster of the Reverse spell roll a Quick Contest of spell skills. If the caster of the Reverse spell wins, the incoming spell is reversed, and affects its caster as if the spell were cast upon him to begin with; if the caster of the incoming spell wins, or if the Contest is a tie, the incoming spell penetrates the Reverse spell, and affects the subject normally.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 10 to cast; 5 to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 5 seconds.

*Prerequisite:* Spell Shield, Reflect.

### Mind Control Spells

The Fear, Panic, Terror, Daze, Mass Daze, Mental Stun, Sleep, Mass Sleep, and Peaceful Sleep spells from *Magic* are available to human mages. Ninja may also learn Forgetfulness, False Memory, and Avoid.

### Movement Spells

The only *Magic* Movement spells available are Haste, Apportation, Lighten Burden, Slow Fall, Levitation, and Swim. Ninja mages can also learn Wallwalker. The Air spell Walk on Air is a Movement spell in Japan.

#### Cloud Walking

Regular

This spell allows the subject to walk on clouds (including fog banks) as though they were solid. If the subject falls for any reason (e.g., injury), the spell is broken! If the spell is recast immediately, the subject will fall for only one second (about 5 hexes); if he is still in the midst of the cloud, he'll have to "dig" his way out, which will take about 5 seconds. If he is already through the cloud deck, too bad!

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Cost:* 3 to cast, 2 to maintain.

*Prerequisites:* Walk on Air and Walk on Water.

### Necromantic Spells

Sense Spirit, Summon Spirit, Summon Shade, Summon Demon, and Banish are all considered part of the Communication & Empathy College in Japan. None of the other Necromantic spells are available to human spellcasters – the Japanese would consider spells relating to bodily death great abominations. However, some demons may cast them, especially Steal Strength.

### Protection and Warning Spells

Sense Danger, Watchdog, and Umbrella are the only spells of this college generally known in Japan.

### Sound Spells

The only Sound spell from *Magic* available to humans is Mage-Stealth, which is known only to ninja. Its prerequisite is Complex Illusion.



九



C H A P T E R N I N E

*The Japanese Campaign*



The Japanese campaign should have a different mood from a Western campaign. There should be a strong sense of formality, and an outward show of politeness. Consider referring to the game master in his official capacity as *sensei*. Sushi, or at least steamed rice and *daikon* (radish), will be more appropriate than pizza. This is alien ground, and the players must become familiar with it.



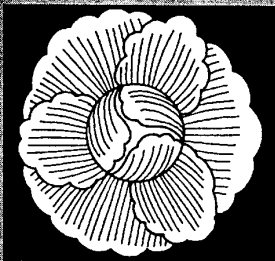
## The Eight Sights of Lake Biwa

Lake Biwa is near Kyoto; its beauty has inspired many artists. Traditionally, eight famous sites around the lake are the most popular places for contemplation:

- The autumn moon at Ishiyama, the site of a major temple to Kannon.
- The evening snow at Hirayama, an ancient castle town.
- The setting sun at the village of Seta.
- The evening bell of Miidera temple.
- The boats leaving the port of Yabase.
- The sky and breeze at the village of Awazu.
- The night rain at the village of Karasaki.
- The wild geese at the village of Katata.

## City Mapping

Japanese streets do not have names and Japanese buildings are not numbered. Instead, each ward has a name and each of its blocks has a number. Major buildings and major intersections also have names. There is a registry of buildings at the city magistrate's office. It numbers the buildings according to the year of construction. While numbered streets and buildings make it easy for strangers to find their way, Japanese streets make strangers stand out as they ask for directions. This may be their purpose.



## The Place of Mystery

There are no underground labyrinths in Japanese history, myth, or folklore. (Maybe the frequent earthquakes discourage such architecture.) Those desperate to fight an assortment of monsters had best visit Demon Island, the home of the Demon Emperor, the head of the loose demon hierarchy. If that is too demanding, they might consider the home of one of the lesser demons, on an island in a mountain lake. A local tatsu or orochi (see p. 119) who has lost control of the island in a gambling game, might reward the heroes for evicting the demon.

Anyone who leaves the main roads and strikes off into the mountain wilderness is likely to meet adventure, particularly if neglectful of Shintō purification before the excursion (see p. 19).

## Basic Plots

The GM should find out what the player characters are like before planning an adventure for them. The most interesting scenarios are the ones that grow out of the fears and desires of the characters. The simplest adventures are the ones that revolve around fear and greed, where the PCs fight to stay alive and then try to get as much loot as possible. Adventures can also make the players feel curiosity, pity, hatred, remorse, awe, or wonder at the strangeness and complexity of the Japan they glimpse.

Most Japanese stories fall into the same plot patterns as Western ones. Kabuki plays, folktales, and history can provide more complex versions of these plots (see p. 125 for sources).

One frequent Japanese plot is the search – the heroes have to find something. The GM can drop clues about it now and then while spinning other plot threads. Sometimes the heroes are searching for a missing heirloom, such as a samurai's ancestral sword or perhaps the tea jar he received as a mark of honor from his daimyō. Sometimes the heroes are searching for a missing person, perhaps the clan heir hidden as an infant from the enemy or the noble's daughter thrown out of the house by her jealous stepmother. Sometimes the missing person is an enemy, a man who dishonored the heroes' teacher or daimyō or someone else important to them. Or maybe there has been a murder and the police suspect one of the characters. The others realize the only way to free him is to find the real murderer.

Another standard plot is the rescue. Maybe an enemy clan is holding the heroes' daimyō or one of his relatives hostage. Maybe one of the heroes' relatives or friends is a criminal, in jail awaiting sentence or execution. The criminal might be just a thief or bandit. Then again, depending on the era, his crime might be killing a swallow, or refusing to step on a crucifix, or having written that Japan should open the trade barriers to Westerners. He could even be innocent of the crime but condemned after the authorities tortured a confession from him.

Sometimes the heroes want to protect someone or something, a person or a valuable heirloom or maybe even a whole village (as in Kurosawa's film *The Seven Samurai*). This is a good opportunity for the GM to have not just one Adversary (see p. B180) but a whole group of them to play the other side.

Other possible goals are murder and theft. Maybe the player characters have noble motives. They might be out to assassinate an enemy who has dishonored them or to destroy the power of a demon or an evil wizard. Then again, maybe the player characters are just starving peasants, greedy *sanzoku*, or a band of ninja with an assignment.

The PCs may be just curious sightseers. They might want to find out why the local village sacrifices a young girl every year to the mountain kami or why the townsfolk say it is dangerous to be near the northeast gate at the Hour of the Ox.

## Campaign Types

Note that each of these campaigns can be played in a "realistic" fashion, or – with an entirely different flavor – in a game world where magic, spirits, and demons are real. Remember that the characters can believe in magic and spirits in either setting.

### Rōnin

The PCs are wandering masterless samurai. Depending on their personalities, they may be looking for wrongs to right, for a new master to serve loyally





... or for innocents to prey upon. Other wanderers suitable as PCs in such a campaign would be *yamabushi*, itinerant Buddhist priests, traveling wizards, and *hengeyōkai* (p. 116) disguised as humans. Note that such characters cannot hold steady jobs.

### Daimyō

The characters are all of the high nobility. Each one is a daimyō himself or the close relative of a PC daimyō. This is a large-scale campaign of intrigue and alliance. The objective is to raise one's clan to eminence . . . and, perhaps, to become Shōgun! Armies and ninja will both be important – use the Mass Combat rules (pp. CII112.) to handle the larger engagements. Game years can pass very quickly in this campaign, so the PCs should marry and raise strong heirs to carry on their work.

### Samurai

The PCs are noble warriors in the service of a single lord, or perhaps, for more contention, in the service of two rival lords. In wartime, they will be in the forefront of battle. In peacetime they will live elegantly – when not brutalizing the peasantry in order to collect their lord's taxes. It is important that the players be able to lay down their characters' lives lightly in this sort of campaign – to a true samurai, life is nothing, honor everything.

### Village Life

The PCs are all villagers, none with Status higher than 1. In this campaign, roleplaying and interaction is very important. The village may be faced with earthquake or famine, with supernatural threats like a marauding *tengu* or *hengeyōkai*, with robbers or predatory *rōnin*, or with an unreasonable overlord. Or, perhaps most interesting of all, situations dealing with a social problem like a nonconformist or antisocial villager. The challenge for the players will be to deal with the problem in proper Japanese style, rather than with a Western individualistic attitude.

### The Pilgrimage

This campaign is most suited to a single long adventure or a string of adventures. The PCs are pilgrims, retirees (*inkyō*, p. 12), bridegrooms, village lottery winners, or others on the way to a shrine. Thus, they may have a number of different “non-adventuring” skills. Though travelers in Japan were generally suspect, honest pilgrims were an exception (see p. 14 for more about pilgrims and travel). On their way across Japan, the pilgrims may face demon-beset villages, robbers, ghosts, and who knows what else? In the end, they will return home to take up their daily lives again.

## The Arrival of Western Travelers

A Western ship in Japanese waters will not go unnoticed. The Japanese coast is lined with fishing villages and the boats go out daily. The beaches are patrolled by the local police to make sure that no villager is breaking the clan monopoly by making his own salt.

The GM might use a storm to beach a Western ship on an inhospitable stretch of coastland, several miles from the nearest fishing village. Having survived the storm, the real adventure begins. The village headman will attempt to propitiate the fearsome strangers, much as Shintō priests propitiate the kami. He will offer them food, drink, and entertainment. Meanwhile, he will send a messenger to the local daimyō's castle. If the newcomers seem hostile, he will probably lead the villagers off to hide somewhere (giving him a good excuse to flee to safety).

If the foreigners seem friendly and interested in trading, the local merchants might well want to compare goods. However, they cannot legally finalize any purchases or sales without the permission of the daimyō. If some of the fishermen are also smugglers, they might do business with the foreigners, but only under cover of night – the penalty for smuggling is death!

In the Late Tokugawa Era, there are official Shogunate orders that all foreign ships are to be burned and their crew either captured or killed. In other eras, the daimyō will be eager to trade with the foreign barbarians. Either way, he will hurriedly send his samurai to deal with the Westerners. If the Westerners should turn out to be pirates, the daimyō has the legal right to kill them and loot their ship. Of course, he will also send word to the Shōgun . . . and he might notify allied daimyō. The visitors are in for more of an adventure than they realize!



## The Friendly Native and The Old Japan Hand

*Gaijin* (foreigners) visiting Japan will often employ the services of a guide, either a friendly Japanese or a Westerner more familiar with the environs. The guide might be a local teenager who asks to work as a servant, to learn the foreigner's business. He may have relatives in the same business who are interested in the foreign methods. Or perhaps he cannot get a job in town because he is known as a gambler or thief, or because he is a non-human. Or perhaps he is a secret Christian who wants to meet others of his faith. Or he could be the child of a foreign merchant who left him behind and returned home. The European equivalent is the young sailor with no business interests of his own.

He could just as well be a European merchant, willing to live among these incomprehensible foreigners for the wealth that will let him retire as a gentleman at home. His motives will be no less selfish, and he might see any other Westerner as a potential rival, to be deluded or even disposed of.

The friendly native might also be a curious priest. Priests have the leisure to learn and the freedom to travel. This makes possible behavior that is completely unacceptable for most Japanese. The priest may be interested in increasing his knowledge or just making some money while he is traveling from one spot to another. The European equivalent is the missionary, here to save souls (and possibly to advance the interests of his king). His motives may be as selfish in their own way as the merchant's and he may be as jealous, but his scholarship is likely to be better.

The native might be a young student or artist who wants to study Western art, medicine, or science. His motive in helping the Westerners will probably be to learn as much as he can and then teach it to other Japanese. His European counterpart would be the young man so struck by the exotic beauty of Asia that he immerses himself completely in its culture.

Whatever kind of character the friendly native or old Japan hand is, his goals, motives, and behavior will probably be puzzling to the adventurers. The information he gives will not necessarily be true—either because of a misunderstanding or because of a deliberate attempt to misinform.

## The Fringes

The campaign is centered in one of the more remote areas of Japan. A daimyō in Hokkaidō could garrison the PCs at the border to keep an eye on the *ainujin* (p. 6). At the other end of the island, the PCs may be part of the early effort to conquer the Ryūkyū islands. Or they could be off the islands altogether, trying to preserve their honor during an invasion of Korea under Hideyoshi's command (p. 34). If the players are not interested in the soldiers' lot, they could instead play seafaring Japanese traders, and take a more peaceful look at the surrounding sites. This last option will also give the players more freedom in choosing their next destinations, although the glory will not be as great.

## Ninja

The PCs are members of a ninja clan (see p. 59) serving whomever hires them; they infiltrate, spy, assassinate, and terrorize. A short life probably, but an exciting one. Or the PCs could be a band of thieves and bandits, traveling as they like (or as the local authorities compel) to help part the local fools from their money. Not as enigmatic as the life of the ninja, but not as dire either.

## Round-Eyed Demons

This campaign is set in a port city such as Sakai. Western traders are beginning to appear in Japan, so it must be set after 1542. The PCs may be the traders themselves, braving a beautiful but deadly foreign culture to find profit. Or they may be the Japanese, of high rank or low, who must deal with the uncouth, bad-smelling *gaijin* with their wonderful toys and fearsome weapons (see *First Contact with Westerners*, p. 31, for more on this type of campaign). A generation later, the oppression of Japanese Christians will add further tension to the situation.

# Mapping the Campaign

There are guidebooks to all major roads, cities, shrines, and temples for the benefit of pilgrims and other tourists. Parties of prepared adventurers should have these useful items. The GM should allow such guidebooks or have a good reason to deny them. Well-prepared GMs can have maps and tour guides available for the players who remember to take advantage.

Each major city, shrine, and temple has its own well-known beauty spots which have been immortalized in paintings, poems, and songs—there are usually people there selling souvenirs and snacks to the sightseers. Tour guides are a useful source for local knowledge. Ninja and criminals can use the guides as a quick source of information on who is new in town. Anyone in the tourist business will probably be an informant for the magistrate or the gambler boss (or both).

Most towns have some special product that is not available anywhere else. Pilgrims especially are liable to wander away from the main party after lacquerware, *kokeshi* dolls, ceramics, or *sake* even better than they brew at home. This can lead to many an entertaining, possibly profitable, and possibly painful encounter.



## The Castle

Each daimyō has one or more *shiro* (castles) in his own province. During the Tokugawa Era, each daimyō also had a fortified mansion complex in Edo, the Shogunate capital.

Castles are labyrinths of stone walls, with moats, armored gates, and guard towers. There are barracks for unmarried samurai. Married samurai live in medium-sized homes with servants' quarters and gardens. There is usually a *jōkamachi* (castle town) nearby.

The great age of castle building in Japan was the 16th century, after contact with Westerners. The walls are not the towering structures of medieval Europe. They are comparatively low, but massive earthworks support them, making them nearly impervious to the artillery available to Japanese besiegers. The interior is enormous, accommodating thousands of soldiers under battle conditions. The Shōgun's castle in Edo is surrounded by three walls, the outermost nine miles long, the innermost a mile and a half long.

Castle gates open onto small courtyards, overlooked by guard towers. From the courtyards, winding paths go to the citadels. Most castles have three citadels, each with its own guard barracks and towers. If attackers come at only one of them, troops from the other two can flank the attackers on both sides.

The safest citadel holds the residence of the daimyō, the chief clan officials, and the castle physician. There is also at least one Shintō shrine and one Buddhist temple (though the graveyard is outside the castle walls). There are also stables for horses, and perhaps mews for falcons if the lord is fond of hunting. Extensive storehouses hold armor and weapons, money, food, clothes, artwork, etc.

Under these circumstances, sieges might last for years. A party may need to get either out of or into a castle under siege. Ninja especially may have this assignment. It is frequently easier to kill the commander of a castle than it is to conquer the castle itself. A more humanitarian adventure is to rescue the clan heir, so that even if the citadel falls, the clan will survive.

## The City

Outside the castle lies the *jōkamachi*, also enclosed by a wall. The gates are locked at sunset and only opened in an emergency. To prevent the spread of fire, wide ditches divide each town into wards. City wards each have a police station, firefighting team, and gatekeepers. Each ward is enclosed by its own walls, with gates that are locked at the Hour of the Boar (about 10 p.m.). After that hour, the gatekeepers will demand to see official authorization before they will let anyone pass.

In a large city, each street is lined with the same sort of shops, and controlled by one craft or trade guild with a shrine to the craft's patron kami located somewhere nearby. In smaller towns, many crafts will share the same street, but all will have a shrine to their patron.

One ward, the *ukiyoe* or "Floating World," holds the geisha and prostitute teahouses. Men (even samurai) entering the ward have to leave their swords with the guards at the gate, to prevent fighting over the women.

Vagrants usually sleep on the riverbank or on bridges (underneath them when it rains). If the local magistrate needs some labor or exercise for his assistants, he may order a sweep of the vagrants.

For Shintō shrines, see p. 19; for Buddhist temples, see p. 22.

## Campaign Crossovers

### *China, Russia, and Points West*

Historical sourcebooks are the obvious crossover possibilities. *GURPS China* includes information on the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties, which coincide with the two periods covered in this book, and China is right next door. *GURPS Russia* similarly covers its history through 1725, overlapping with parts of the Late Tokugawa Era. Many of the other historical supplements covering periods that ended well before the Onin War, but the tail end of pre-Conquest Aztec civilization overlaps with the Warring States Period. Having easy contact between Japan and the New World requires magic or other cinematic mechanisms. There is also *GURPS Goblins*, which covers Georgian England, contemporaneous with the late Tokugawa. That crossover is left as an exercise for the reader . . .



### *Swashbucklers*

Piracy is a respectable profession in feudal Japan. Many young men of the upper classes spend a few years on the sea, accosting ships from China and Korea (and Japan as well). This would provide a good opportunity for characters from different backgrounds to adventure together — upper classes to command (and own!) the ship, upper and lower to tend to the business of sailing it, and even some lowly merchants to figure out what to do with the booty.

In a land-based campaign, many of the fixtures of swashbuckling campaigns will fit in well with an adventuresome group of samurai. And if a group of samurai happen to sail back to Europe (perhaps their daimyō has fared poorly during the Warring States Period and can no longer afford to retain all of his warriors), they may find some musketeer-like employment opportunities available for their exotic talents.

*Continued on next page*





## Campaign Crossovers (Continued)

### Fantasy

Many fantasy worlds have Asian-flavored kingdoms or territories, often with a fusion of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and other traditions. GMs can use *GURPS Japan* to make these areas more closely resemble feudal Japan, particularly if the fantasy land has the same geographic properties (small isolated country with efficiently used farmland). For the world of Yrth from *GURPS Fantasy*, the kingdom of Sahud is probably best left a mish-mash. More interesting would be a party of characters caught in the Banestorm, transported from feudal Japan and dropped into Yrth in some land far from Sahud. The initial adventure would be surviving in and adjusting to their new environs, but they may start to hear tales of the enigmatic Sahudese and set off to return to their "homeland," only to find that they have to go through another culture shock when they arrive there.

### Cyberpunk

Japan as a megacorp haven is a standard in cyberpunk gaming, but relatively little of Japan's feudal culture remains. Some street ops might honor the old ways of bushidō, but the class system (with the warriors ahead of the merchants) does not translate. A more fruitful crossover tack would be to have a "Land of the Rising Sun" environmental interface be the most popular one for cyberdecks (or perhaps the only one available if its publisher has some monopoly power). Depending on the rules of the interface, a little savoir-faire on the inside may be required, even if the character is rude and used to making demands in the physical world.

### Robots

Bushidō could also be a standard set of robotic "laws." The high value placed on loyalty and task-completion would be a great benefit, but the robots would not have to be as pacifistic as they are under the Asimovian laws (a robot may not harm a human nor through inaction allow a human to be harmed, etc.). Some settings could have both types of robots, so you might not be able to tell at first glance how dangerous a particular robot is.

Coupled with the interface notes for Cyberpunk above, this could also mean that robots are even more naturally suited for jacking in and moving through cyberspace. See Victor Milan's *The Cybernetic Samurai* and its sequel, *The Cybernetic Shogun*, which feature a nonrobotic AI who follows the bushidō code in such a virtual setting. See also "CybEarth" from *Pyramid* #17.

*Continued on next page...*

### The Daimyō's City Home

The daimyō's residence in Edo or another city is a fortified mansion complex. Its large armored gate is opened only on major occasions; samurai barracks are on each side of it. A small side door leads to a guardroom; from the guardroom is a door to an inner courtyard. (A samurai who leaves the complex hangs a wooden ticket with his name on it in the guardroom.)

Storehouses and buildings for weapons practice are also part of the complex. Central to the residence is a garden. Surrounding the garden are a number of small, detached buildings, used by the daimyō and his officials.

### The Noble's Home

A noble's home is like the small village home described below, but it costs 20 to 100 times as much. It might be only about 10 times as big, but the gardens are far more extensive. The furnishings, of course, are far more fashionable and costly.

### Homes and Shops

City homes and shops are much like those described below for villages, though the gardens are likely to be less extensive.

### The Village

A dense grove of cedars and bamboos ringed by a fire ditch surrounds the typical Japanese village. The trees shade the thatched cottages from the weather. Lafcadio Hearn wrote, "Under the trees it is always twilight, even at high noon; and the houses are half in shadow." This makes sneaking around easier by day and much easier by night, a boon to clandestine lovers, smugglers, and ninja.

Japanese farmers do not live isolated in their own fields as Western farmers do. They live in the villages, go out to the fields to work, and return to the villages at night. Eastern Japan uses horses as plow animals; western Japan uses oxen. Farmers do not use wagons or wheelbarrows.

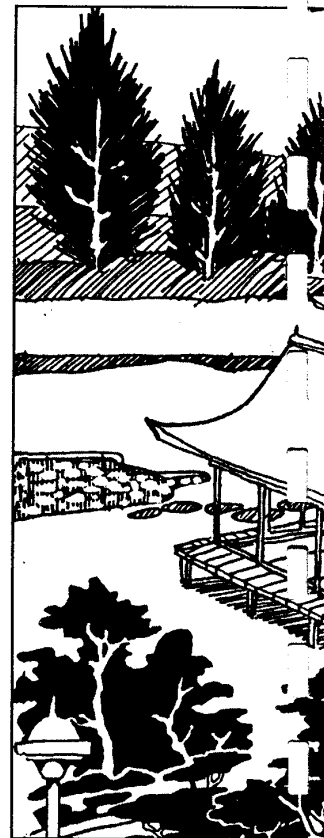
Hedgerows shade the paths leading to the rice fields. This makes the paths very hard to leave, which could be troublesome if, for instance, a group wants to take to the fields when being pursued. During the summer and fall, the fields smell of the village sewage, which is used for fertilizer. In those seasons, the stink is frequently the first indication that a village is near.

Any site with a striking view is probably occupied by a temple or shrine. Every scenic view is the domain of a kami.

Villages do not have restaurants or inns. Their social centers are the headman's house, the local temple and shrine, and the village well, where women gossip while they draw water. Villagers purify themselves at the local Shintō shrine before going to the wilderness or upon re-entering the village.

### The Village Home

The village home is about 500 square feet, single-storied. The thatched roof has eaves that shade a veranda. The living quarters have wood floors. Sliding paper screens divide the rooms. A fireplace is used for both cooking and heating.





The living room is furnished with a few straw mats or cushions. At night, quilts are taken from chests and spread on the floor. The family head and his wife have their own sleeping room; others sleep wherever there is space.

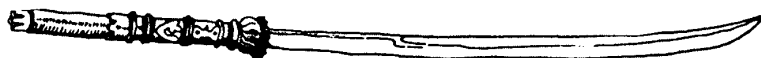
An important villager's house has a reception room with a separate entrance. Here a samurai on official business can receive refreshment; he will not have to demean himself by sitting at the fireplace.

### *The Combined Home and Shop*

Artisans and merchants, as well as their employees, live and work in a small combined shop and home. A small, two-story building (900 square feet) can be built in five days at a cost of \$600 – that is, 600 silver pieces. It has a shingled or thatched roof with a bamboo ceiling, strong enough to support several men. Its wooden floor is two feet above ground level; *tatami* (3' x 6' straw mats) cover the floor of each room except for the kitchen and bathroom. Sliding paper screens divide the rooms and charcoal braziers provide heat.

During the daytime, a building's walls are its paper screens; thin wooden shutters are put up at night and during storms. The building is never locked; it is also never totally deserted, someone is always there. A *sōko*, a locked brick building at the back of the house, serves as a storehouse for almost all the valuables to protect them from the frequent city fires.

The average building can be mortgaged for \$600 or rented for \$60 a year. The second floor of a shop rents for \$2 a month.



## Campaign Crossovers (Continued)

### *Warehouse 23*

During the late Tokugawa period the Shogunate works hard to keep Japan separated from the rest of the world. As European traders arrive with greater frequency, they may decide that the best way to deal with the problem of this dangerous merchandise and the ideas that lie behind them is to collect them all and keep them somewhere safe. The warehouse stores all manner of mundane items like Western books and scientific instruments. Depending on the campaign (which should be at least a little Illuminated, if the GM is considering a W23 crossover), other items such as Christian religious artifacts, grimoires of Western mages, and even some ancient Aztec treasures could be found in the recesses of the warehouse. When Commodore Perry sails in and demands the opening of Japan, the Shogunate may decide that it's time to dust off some of the crates and see what kind of response can be made.

### *Black Ops*

A truly cinematic ninja campaign could follow the broad outline set forth in *GURPS Black Ops*. There's no reason that the Greys cannot visit Earth a few centuries earlier, although (unless the other countries have Black Ops of their own) Japan might find itself one of the last "free" nations. With the level of isolation the Shogunate enforces, the general populace even then might be unaware that anything strange is going on. GMs may also want to take a look at the "Kung Fu 2100" scenario from *GURPS Martial Arts Adventures* for more on dealing with high-powered fighters against higher-tech adversaries.

### *Undead/Robin Hood*

In a society that sees nothing evil in talking to the dead (many Necromantic spells are considered Communication & Empathy spells in Japan; see p. 101), it may be possible for some nefarious individual to build an undead army powerful enough to challenge the Shogun. If this "Daimyō of Doom" also has easy access to *fushi no reiyaku*, the Elixir of Immortality (sidebar, p. 99), a lasting oppressive regime could result. The characters would be outlaw ronin formerly of one of the "good" clans that opposed the new world order. The leader, of course, should be a kyuujutsu master.





C H A P T E R   T E N

# Japanese Bestiary



While the political machinations of warring factions makes dealing with humans fraught with uncertainty, the creatures in a Japan campaign can be straightforward sources of wonder, assistance, or danger. All of the intelligent creatures here speak Japanese. The GM should decide which creatures are common and which are mere legend and superstition.



## Natural Creatures



### Hebi (Snake)

Japanese snakes are generally non-poisonous. Snakes are sometimes thought to be immortal because of their rejuvenating ability to molt.

#### *Aodaishō* ("Blue Shōgun")

The *aodaishō* is a blue-green nonpoisonous snake. It is sometimes found in country homes, where it is treated as a household guardian. It is incapable of harming humans, except possibly in a swarm (see p. B143).

#### *Mamushi* (Viper)

The *mamushi* is one of the few poisonous Japanese snakes, found on all of the islands. Another poisonous snake, the *habu*, can be found on the Ryūkyūs. Use the stats for the rattlesnake (p. B143) or the poisonous snake (p. BE32). Its bite delivers Type A venom doing 1d+1 damage.

#### *Uwabami* (Giant Snake)

Use the stats for the python (p. B143) or the constrictor (p. BE32). The *uwabami*'s constriction attack does 1d-4 to 1d damage, depending on its size. Alternately, the GM can treat the attack as a Constriction Attack (p. CI52).

### Higuma (Bear)

Use the stats for the brown bear on p. B141 or p. BE8. The *higuma* features prominently in *ainujin* religion. Each village raises a cub for the eventual Bear Festival. The grown bear is feted with dancing and singing (and *sake*), and its spirit is released by killing its body.

### Hotaru (Firefly)

Japanese tradition holds that fireflies carry the souls of the dead. During the Tokugawa Era, *hotarugari* (firefly watching) is a popular pastime. The Sumida River (in Edo), the Uji River (near Kyōto), and Lake Biwa (northeast of Kyōto) are some of the sought-out sites for these activities.

### Kame (Tortoise or Turtle)

Another Japanese tradition finds the six cardinal virtues inscribed on *kame no kō* (tortoise shells). There are several types of *kame* in Japan. The Japanese keep *ishigame* (rock tortoises) as pets, and keep *suppon* (soft-shelled turtles) for food.

### Kōrogi (Cricket)

Japanese merchants in the Tokugawa Era sell good luck charms of live *kōrogi* in bamboo cages.

### Oshidori (Mandarin Duck)

The oshidori is famed for its constant love. One story tells of a samurai who shoots a duck. The next day, its mate swims toward him and stabs herself with her own beak, killing herself. The contrite samurai becomes a Buddhist priest.

### Shika (Deer)

Use the stats on p. B142 or p. BE12. The *shika* are found throughout Japan, but they are especially associated with the Kasuga Shrine in Nara. At the shrine, the deer are considered sacred, and they are quite accustomed to human contact. In winter, the male *shika* grow long manes. Their antlers are sometimes used in medicinal powders.

### Usagi (Rabbit)

As do many other cultures, the Japanese associate *usagi* with tricksters. The two most common types of *usagi* are *no-usagi* (wild rabbit), found on Honshū, Kyūshū, and Shikoku, and *yukisage* (snow rabbit), found in the mountains of Hokkaidō.



# Hengeyōkai (Shapeshifters)

Some shrewd animals and plants have learned how to transform themselves into human form using the Shapeshifting spell (see p. M25); many know several Illusion spells as well. The shapeshifter must remember to act and look human. The GM may occasionally (once an hour) call for a DX roll to see if the human form is wavering, an IQ roll to see if the shapeshifter's true form can be seen in a reflection, and a Savoir-Faire roll to see if the shapeshifter can override his instinctive reactions. Even if all the rolls succeed, the shapeshifter is still not a human at heart; for instance, cat and dog shapeshifters dislike each other, and both hate rats. Animal Handling sometimes aids in combat against known *hengeyōkai* (see p. B46) and can be substituted for Savoir-Faire in dealing with them, but has no other effects.

Chapter 4 includes a racial template for the *kitsune hengeyōkai* (fox spirit). Several other types of *hengeyōkai* are listed below. Damage is given for the most common attack in animal form. Reach, Size, Weight, Origin, and Habitat are given for the animal form. Except for IQ, all of the stats apply to the non-magical versions of these animals as well.

## Inu (Dog)

ST: 10-12      Speed/Dodge: 8-12/6      Size: 2  
DX: 11-12      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: 90-150 lbs.  
IQ: 5\*      Damage: #  
HT: 12-15/10-12      Reach: C

\* The GM may wish to treat as IQ 8 when it shapeshifts into human form.

The Japanese mastiff is a watchdog, not a pet, though he is loyal to the family that feeds him. He is never allowed inside because he might dirty the tatami mats. He might choose the form of a man, but lacks the self-confidence to pass himself off as a samurai. He might choose the form of a pretty girl who is lost and needs protection (particularly when it is raining). Inu Hengeyōkai often know the Sense Danger spell.

## Kashin (Flower)

Flower spirits, especially the camellia, peony, and rose, are elegant and beautiful, and usually take the form of charming, beautiful women. A flower may fall in love with someone who has admired it, particularly an artist or poet who has done artwork based on it. A flower's human form dies and then disappears when its petals burn or scatter or wither in a drought or freeze in the winter cold.

## Kodama (Tree)

Tree spirits are strong and beautiful, especially the hackberry and willow. They usually take the form of lovely young women or handsome young men. Like a Kashin, a tree may fall in love with an admirer, particularly an artist or poet. A tree's human form dies and then disappears if it is burned in a forest fire or chopped down by a woodcutter.



## Tsuchigumo (Spider)

ST: 1\*      Speed/Dodge: 6/7      Size: <1  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: 1 ounce  
IQ: 6\*      Damage: 1d-5 cut  
HT: 10/2\*      Reach: C

\*ST 12, IQ 8 and HT 10 in human form

The crafty and treacherous spider shapeshifters are rare. They find humans delicious, and try to trap them and eat them. In human form, they can shoot out strands of web from their hands up to one yard away and use them to pull themselves up to the ceiling or to grapple an unfortunate victim. Like a flail attack, a spider's web strand can be dodged or blocked but is parried at -4. If the web hits, the victim is entangled and must break free, which requires a Quick Contest of ST. A failure costs the victim 1 Fatigue, reducing ST for the next attempt.

## Neko (Cat)

ST: 2-4      Speed/Dodge: 10/7      Size: <1  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: 5-15 lbs.  
IQ: 5\*      Damage: 1d-4 cut  
HT: 13/2-3      Reach: C

\* The GM may wish to treat as IQ 8 to 10 when it shapeshifts into human form.

Buddhism teaches that the neko and the mamushi were the only two animals that did not weep at the Buddha's death. Many people keep neko as mousers, but only a few eccentric artists make pets of them. Neko are arrogant and seldom approve of humans. A neko might model its human form after a particular woman whom it then attacks and kills. A neko often takes the form either of a geisha with a devoted lover, or of an old woman with a household to order around.





## Nezumi (Rat)

ST: 1\*      Speed/Dodge: 6/6      Size: <1  
 DX: 13      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: ½ lb.  
 IQ: 4\*      Damage: 1d-4 cut  
 HT: 17/2      Reach: C

\*IQ 6 and ST 10 when it shapeshifts into human form.

Few nezumi hengeyōkai exist, but those that do are stealthy and vicious. They find humans delicious, and try to kill and eat them. Roll versus HT+2 to avoid infection from a rat bite – this may be an extra hit of damage, or an actual disease. Shapeshifter rats do not come in swarms.

## Tanuki (Raccoon Dog)

ST: 3      Speed/Dodge: 6/6      Size: <1  
 DX: 11      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 20-45 lbs.  
 IQ: 8      Damage: 1d-3 cut  
 HT: 13/3      Reach: C

The chubby *tanuki* delights in disguising itself as a wandering Buddhist priest. It seldom chooses the form of a samurai or yamabushi, as it is not interested in fighting. It is fond of tasty food (particularly snacks and sweets), sake, tea, and music. It is amused by humans' concern with money.

## Hunted Shapeshifters

In addition to the common hengeyōkai above, there are also tales about hunted animals who briefly appear to humans. These tales cover the entire range of game animals, from water creatures like the *koi* (carp) and *kani* (crab) to birds like the *uzura* (quail) and *kiji* (pheasant).

In one story, a *koi* appears as a *bussō* and preaches to a woman that she should not allow her husband to poison a nearby pond because that is contrary to Buddha's commandment against taking life. Later, the rice cake that the woman had given him is found in the stomach of a big *koi* in that pond.

Many stories tell of an animal, caught by a hunter and about to be killed, saved when a kind passerby pays the hunter its worth to free it. Later, the grateful animal appears to its rescuer as a handsome man or a beautiful woman. The GM may wish to treat this as acquiring an Ally.

Sometimes such encounters end in a marriage that lasts until the bride's true nature is discovered. At that point, the woman goes away, too embarrassed to remain with her husband any longer. If she had a child, she leaves it behind.

There are traditional stories in which a young man rescues a captured *tsuru* (crane) which then transforms into a beautiful woman, and they live happily ever after. The *tsuru* is the most common origami shape and appears in many mon.

Sometimes the shapeshifter repays its rescuer by using shapeshifting or illusion to turn itself into something that could be sold. In one story, a *tanuki* first turns itself into a copper teapot, then into a beautiful dancing girl, and finally into a horse, in order to get enough money to properly repay its rescuer.

The shapeshifter might appear in a moment of crisis to help its rescuer. One *kitsune* learns that its rescuer's wife had fallen sick, and the disease can only be cured by a fresh fox liver. It appears that night as the physician's servant to deliver a box with a fox liver, taken from its own child!

## Fabulous Creatures



## Amikiri (Net Cutter)

ST: 8      Move/Dodge: 8/8#      Size: 1  
 DX: 14      PD/DR: 4/5      Weight: 25 lbs.  
 IQ: 5      Damage: 1d-3 cut#  
 HT: 14/6      Reach: C

The *amikiri* is a creature about the size of a small dog. From the waist back, it is shaped like a snake; its front is somewhat like a lobster with a gull's head. It has only two limbs, both of which have sharp cutting pincers like scissors – they are carried before it like a lobster. The *amikiri* either glides on the ground like a snake or flies – its speed on the ground is 4. The skin of its belly contains enough mana to allow it to fly for 1 minute out of every hour. It has no wings.

Known as the Net Cutter, it delights in mischief around the house. It dwells in gutters, drains, eaves, odd spaces in

outbuildings, etc. Any little thing it can do to disrupt the household it will – cut ropes, tip over pails, snip scrolls in pieces, rip fabric, etc.

It is not a bold creature and will not do its pranks if it thinks it will be noticed. It never attacks a human outright. If cornered, it will fight, but look constantly for a way to flee. It fights with its pincers for 1d-3 cutting damage – it has Full Coordination and may make two attacks per turn and still defend itself.

An *amikiri* can also ram an opponent with its sharp beak. It needs to be able to fly to do this. The damage from this attack is 1d-1 impaling, and if the foe successfully dodges, it keeps going its full move, trying to get away.

It is active only during the day, but it wakes at dawn to start its mischief. It is a solitary creature.



## Hikigaeru (Giant Toad)

ST: 10-15      Speed/Dodge: 6/5      Size: 3  
DX: 16      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 1,000 lbs.  
IQ: 6      Damage: #  
HT: 10/20      Reach: C 1#

This animal is about the size of a cow. Its hypnotic breath affects victims up to 3 yards away and makes it seem to be the viewer's fondest dream. It has a long, sticky tongue and corrosive saliva. Anyone who looks at it must make a Will roll or fall under its illusion and run to it to be eaten.

Its tongue attacks as a Grapple up to 1 hex away. (A victim hypnotized by its breath may make another Will roll when Grappled.) It takes 1d turns to swallow a victim. Inside its mouth, its saliva does 1d damage per turn, modified by DR.

## Hitotsumekozō (One-Eyed Goblin)

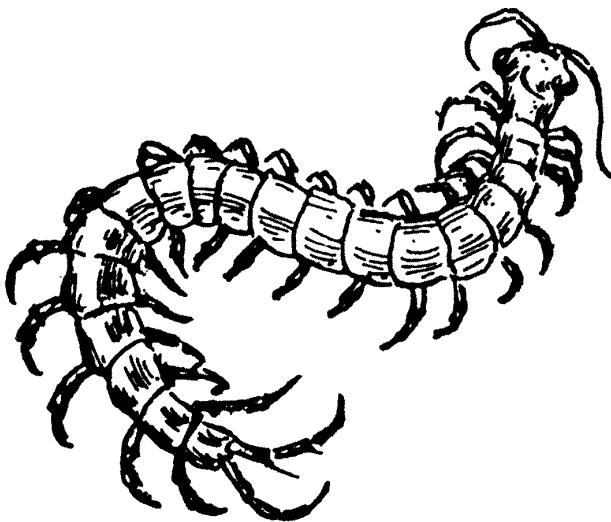
ST: 10      Speed/Dodge: 4/4      Size: 1  
DX: 8      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: 70 lbs.  
IQ: 8      Damage: #  
HT: 10/8      Reach: C

This is an ugly one-eyed goblin, the size of a child. It is intelligent and usually uses wooden weapons. It dresses in a loincloth made of woven grass. Hitotsumekozō often come in bands of 10 to 50.

## Kappa (River Goblin)

ST: 16-21      Speed/Dodge: 4/6      Size: 1  
DX: 16-21      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: 70 lbs.  
IQ: 8      Damage: #  
HT: 10/8      Reach: C

These are ugly child-sized goblins who live in rivers and lakes. They have greenish skin and webbed fingers and toes. They can breathe air as well as water; their breath smells like fish. A kappa can magically re-attach one of its limbs if it is severed.



On the crown of the kappa's head is a saucer-like depression, which is usually full of water. If the water inside this saucer spills out, then the kappa is at ½ ST until it is refilled. The kappa's water spills if it is knocked down or if it is hit and fails a DX roll. The kappa may also be tricked into spilling its water if it fails an IQ roll and, for example, bows politely to someone who has just bowed to it.

The kappa is intelligent, but does not wear clothes or use tools. It eats animals that befoul its home; it is also very fond of cucumbers, and steals them from fields near its home. Kappa like to challenge humans to fight in the water, drowning them if they lose. They sometimes live in groups of 5 to 20.

## Kirin (Fabulous Horse)

ST: 15      Move/Dodge: 18/9      Size: 2  
DX: 16      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 300 lbs.  
IQ: 19      Damage: 1d-1 cr  
HT: 17      Reach: C

The kirin resemble horses with dragon-like features, including heavy scales. Some may have a single fleshy horn, but it cannot be used to attack. In melee, they lash out with their hooves.

When kirin wish, they may walk straight up or down through the air, at their normal speed. They know all Animal spells from the *GURPS Basic Set*. They are invisible unless they choose to be seen. Kirin allow mortals to glimpse them when some great man walks the earth.

Kirin bring prophecies and advice to the wise. They also foretell the doom of evil men. Kirin are intensely compassionate but recognize their duty to destroy evil. They may rally heroes for holy quests. Anyone impious enough to commit blasphemy while a kirin is watching immediately succumbs to a fever. The victim must make an HT roll each day or lose 1d hit points. On any day that the roll succeeds, the victim regains a single hit point. Medicine cannot cure this disease, but the sufferer might win release by performing a quest of atonement.

## Mukade (Giant Centipede)

ST: 40-50      Speed/Dodge: 6/7      Size: 5-8  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 1/2      Weight: 100-500 lbs.  
IQ: 3      Damage: 1d+1#  
HT: 15/25-35      Reach: C

This is a huge ugly animal that grows up to 25 feet long, 3 feet in width and 1 foot in height. Its eyes are like burning lanterns and it has thick skin. It sometimes attacks young dragons in their underwater homes and eats them. It can breathe both air and water. Animal Handling aids in combat against it (see p. B46) but has no other effects. Anyone who looks at it must make a Will roll to avoid being fascinated by its glowing eyes. Those who fail will be unable to move for 1d turns, after which they may make another Will roll. If the *mukade* bites and penetrates DR, it will inject a type F venom.



## Myō (Buddhist Guardian Warrior)

ST: 50                      Move/Dodge: 7/#                      Size: 1  
DX: 20                      PD/DR: n/a                      Weight: 200 lbs.  
IQ: 20                      Damage: Special  
HT: 10/50                      Reach: Special

Myō are fierce male spirits who serve various hotoke and bosatsu. They are usually seen as statues guarding tera (see p. 22). They wield their weapons with skill of 25 to drive away demons. They are known as the "Fearsome Buddhas."

A successful attack always hits, but its only effect is to disperse the myō for 1d days. Myō are not affected by social skills or magic spells.

*The Two Kings* stand at the gate of every tera waving their weapons menacingly to scare off demons. They are sometimes identified with the Hindu gods Indra and Brahma. *The Four Emperors* are the guardians of the four directions and are found in many tera. *The Twelve Generals* are guardians of Yakushi; each wears a helmet with one of the signs of the zodiac. *Aizen* is the three-eyed, six-armed guardian of Kannon. He carries a daikyū with arrows that transmute lust into unselfish benevolence. *Fudō* is the guardian and messenger of Rushana and sometimes identified with the Hindu god Shiva. He usually carries a katana and a snaring rope. His hair is a halo of writhing flames and his body and blade are decorated with snakes or bones. *Monju* and *Fuden* are two disciples of Shaka who crossed the seas to China. They ride a lion and white elephant, respectively, and usually guard Kannon's tera.

## Nue (Goblin Bird)

ST: 20-25                      Move/Dodge: 12/7                      Size: 2  
DX: 13                      PD/DR: 1/1                      Weight: 300-400 lbs.  
IQ: 4                      Damage: 1d+1 cut#  
HT: 16                      Reach: C,1

A nue is a bizarre bird with the head of a monkey, body of a tanuki, feet of a tiger, and tail of a serpent. The wings are those of an eagle and are the only bird-like features of the animal. The nue is active only at night and can see well in almost pitch blackness. It might fly over a village with a defiled shrine and cry out so loudly that no one can sleep. They are usually solitary, though two may be encountered if it is nesting season.

It attacks solely with its paws. On the ground, its Move is 8.

*Rumors:* The flesh of a nue will cure hiccups. A legendary Emperor dispatched many warriors to find one to cure his daughter.

Other legends say it is venomous. The teeth are the injecting agency, and it can only bite in close combat. They do only 2 hits of damage themselves but inject a type A venom for 2d hits.

Still other legends say that it can be killed only by a critical hit from an arrow. (Black powder weapons have no effect.)

## Oni (Demon Goblin)

ST: 40-45                      Speed/Dodge: 8/10                      Size: 1  
DX: 16-21                      PD/DR: 1/1                      Weight: 380 lbs.  
IQ: 10                      Damage: \*  
HT: 20/30                      Reach: C

\* 2d+1 cut, plus 1d-3 impaling from horn

These are tall ugly goblins with large horns and fangs who live in the mountains. They are intelligent, and dress in loincloths made of tiger skins. Their usual weapon is the *tetsubō* (iron staff).

Oni sometimes use Shapeshifting and Illusion spells to appear to travelers as a normal human beings. At other times they choose to appear in a form with one minor "mistake" (a Buddhist monk with a third eye atop his shaved head or a traveler with no features at all – a "potato face").

See p. 100 for the demons of the underworld.

## Onibi (Demon Fire)

ST: n/a                      Speed/Dodge: 6/#                      Size: 1  
DX: 15                      PD/DR: 0/0                      Weight: n/a  
IQ: 10                      Damage: Special  
HT: 20                      Reach: Special

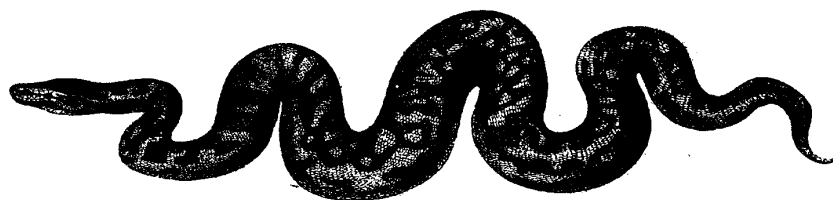
This is a huge lantern with a face set in a malevolent smile. Onibi are the Japanese version of the Western will-o'-the-wisps. They haunt shrines or temples that have been built on unlucky sites (which is why geomancers are consulted before temples are built; see p. 105).

The only attack an onibi has is an innate Breathe Fire attack (no fatigue cost, GM determines whether a given onibi is capable of 1d+1, 2d+2, or 3d+3 damage breaths). They get no active defenses, but take damage only from enchanted weapons. Weapons that have been washed with purified water or unarmed attacks from a devout priest with disperse the onibi for 1d hours.

## Orochi (Serpent)

ST: 16                      Speed/Dodge: 5/4                      Size: #  
DX: 10                      PD/DR: 2/3                      Weight: 4,000 lbs.  
IQ: 10                      Damage: 1d imp. #  
HT: 10/50                      Reach: C

Orochi are huge water serpents, 1 yard wide and 10 yards long. They are sentient and can take on human form when out of the water. They lose 1 HT point permanently per day that they do not return to their own form and breathe water for at least 5 minutes. In addition to Shapeshifting, many orochi can also cast spells from the Fire college. A nushi orochi *cannot* leave its wilderness area.





## Otoroshi (Steeple Dweller)

**ST:** 35      **Move/Dodge:** 9/9      **Size:** 2  
**DX:** 15      **PD/DR:** 3/5      **Weight:** 400 lbs.  
**IQ:** 5      **Damage:** 2d-1 imp  
**HT:** 14/30      **Reach:** C

An otoroshi is an animal that dwells on the roofs of temples, shrines, and other holy places. It is found only in temples of "good" deities, never where demons are worshipped. Possibly of divine origin, it never needs food.

The otoroshi is large and very hairy, somewhat bigger than a wolf. It has a broad, flat face, with protruding fangs that do impaling damage. The body is stocky, like a small bear, and the claws are long and sharp. The fur is over a foot long and serves well as armor, though there is probably some magical enhancement of its ability to resist damage.

An otoroshi can sense impiety in visitors to the temple. Impiety does not mean sinfulness, but a scornful, cynical, or hostile attitude toward the deity of the shrine. If such a person should come with 2 hexes of the rooftop where it dwells, it will pounce on the offender with shrill screams and attempt to tear him to pieces. It will make an All-Out Attack against a weaponless opponent and attack normally otherwise. It will fight to the death, and if it survives, its wounds magically heal within 24 hours. Should the otoroshi be killed a new one will appear 24 hours later, though no one will see it arrive. They do not leave the temple unless it is abandoned.

There is only one otoroshi per building – but this often means more than one per shrine, if there are multiple buildings. They never sleep and are constantly alert.

Otoroshi are the sworn enemies of ommoraki (p. 122) and will drive them off whenever they can.



## Samebito (Shark Man)

**ST:** 16-19      **Speed/Dodge:** 5/5      **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12      **PD/DR:** 0/0      **Weight:** 160 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10      **Damage:** 1d-3 imp.  
**HT:** 10      **Reach:** C

Samebito are humanoid sea dwellers, about 6' tall with long horns, two rows of teeth, black skin, and green eyes. Samebito are the samurai of the Dragon King, and are proud of their status. A few samebito are exiled from the Dragon King's realm and appear on land. Even more rarely, samebito come to land dwellers as messengers of the Dragon King.

There is a story of one exiled samebito who was taken in by a compassionate samurai, Tōtarō. Tōtarō later fell in love with a beautiful maiden, Tamana, but she had a dowry of 10,000 jewels. Tōtarō despaired and his health suffered, and

the samebito's concern for his new lord made him weep. As his tears fell, they turned into precious gems! Upon seeing them, Tōtarō stirred with renewed vigor, and the tears stopped. Together they went to the coast, so that the samebito's longing for his undersea life might bring him to tears again. When he had cried enough, Tōtarō scooped up the gems and the samebito heard the Dragon King calling him back to service.

## Saru (Goblin Monkey)

**ST:** 12-15      **Speed/Dodge:** 4/6      **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 8      **PD/DR:** 3/4      **Weight:** 70 lbs.  
**IQ:** 8      **Damage:** 1d-1 cut  
**HT:** 10/8      **Reach:** C

Saru are the size of children. They cover their skin with lacquer and sand so it is PD 3 and DR 4, the same as steel armor. They live in the mountains and often travel in bands of 10 to 50. Saru find humans amusing to watch. They are also quite fond of sweets and sake. They sometimes pretend to be kami and demand food, sake, or a maiden as a sacrifice, threatening villagers with bad luck if the demand is refused.

## Shiryō (Ghost)

*Shiryō* are spirits of the dead who cannot rest. They may be driven by hatred, love, duty, or the desire to clear their name. If a character dies with unfulfilled duties or strong passions, he may become a *shiryō* (see p. UN34 for more detailed rules).

The *shiryō* appears only at night, unless it has been invited into a home. In ghostly form, it wears a white kimono and has long, tangled hair. It has no feet but floats in the air, gliding a little above the floor or ground. (Since a kimono normally covers the feet, this is not very noticeable.) The *shiryō* may take the form it had when alive; in this form its attacks can do physical damage, but it will still disperse and reappear later if it is hit (as if it had Full Materialization with no fatigue cost, but a limitation that it must wait 1d hours after being struck). The *shiryō* can possess an enemy or someone who owes him loyalty.

Some *shiryō* merely want to take care of their children, or to marry the objects of their desires. In such cases, the *shiryō* tries to convince people that it was all a misunderstanding; he is not really dead. If the death is proven, the *shiryō* vanishes, just like a *hengeyōkai* who has been found out.

*Yūrei* (ghosts of the drowned) are sailors whose bodies did not receive proper funeral services. They are bound to the place of their death, not free until they have drowned someone there.

A woman who dies along with her unborn baby becomes an *ubume* (baby-carrying ghost) unless separate funeral services are performed for the child. Neither she nor the baby can rest until she separates herself from the child.

Typical spells, depending on type of ghost: Complex Illusion, Curse, Daze, Fatigue, Mass Daze, Permanent Possession, Pestilence, Shapeshifting, Steal Strength, Strike Blind, Strike Deaf, and Strike Dumb.





## Tatsu (Dragon)

ST: 55-70      Speed/Dodge: 22/10      Size: 12  
 DX: 14      PD/DR: 4/6      Weight: ½ to 2 tons  
 IQ: 20      Damage: 3 imp.  
 HT: 15/70-90      Reach: R, C, 1, 2

Tatsu are huge, snakelike creatures of cloud and water, approximately six feet across and 30 feet long. They do not have wings but sometimes run across the sky on the tops of the clouds (as the innate spell Cloud Walking, p. 106). They have no breath weapon, but typically know spells of the Water, Geomancy, and Shapeshifting Colleges. Tatsu are venerable and sometimes sought for their wisdom. Their underwater palaces have hundreds of servants. Tatsu and mukade (see p. 118) are natural enemies.

They speak human languages only when they deign to. They resent anyone who ruins the beauty of their home area, and may take action against them. A tatsu may cooperate with humans for its own reasons; its oath, once given, is not broken. Tatsu fear very little, save a mighty army; even then, a dragon may be found aiding humans in their wars.

## Tengu (Forest Goblin)

ST: 20-25      Speed/Dodge: 8/8      Size: 1  
 DX: 15      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 200 lbs.  
 IQ: 10      Damage: 1d+1 cr #  
 HT: 20      Reach: C

These are tall winged goblins with long red noses and claw-like fingernails who live in pine forests. They are intelligent, wear kimono and carry feather fans as well as katana (4d cut, 2d+1 imp for normal quality and ST 20). They sometimes fly in bands of 5 to 30 at night, often amusing themselves by casting Flame Jet at lonely villages. Sometimes they use Illusion to make themselves look like crows.

An annoyed tengu will probably attack intruders. A tengu in a good mood may amuse itself by scaring a human, but will eventually let him go. If it enjoys his reaction, it may even keep track of him, and kidnap him again the next time it wants an amusing audience. A few people with high charisma and excellent potential as magicians or fighters have succeeded in impressing tengu into accepting them as students.



## Ommoraki (Harpy)

ST: 20      Move/Dodge: 10/6      Size: 2  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 2/3      Weight: 110 lbs.  
IQ: 9      Damage: 1d cut#  
HT: 12/25      Reach: R, C

Ommoraki are harpy-like birds of an evil nature. They resemble large black vultures with human foreheads, eyes, and ears. They are messengers of evil forces and may serve demons, evil dragon, or powerful necromancers. They smell terrible: +4 on any roll to notice one by smell at up to 10 yards away.

They can understand speech but do not speak themselves. Since most of the lords they serve have Mind Reading or Beast Speaking spells, this is usually not a problem. They enjoy disrupting holy religious ceremonies and are often used to distract those good mages and priests who are the enemies of their nefarious masters.

An ommoraki may spy on its enemies and then fly to its master to report. However, some are permanently stationed near a holy spot or good mage with instructions to harass as needed. They are sometimes used as war birds in all-out assaults, but this is rare – they are more valuable as guerrillas.

They will raid a temple or mage's quarters whenever they think they can get in, day or night. An open window is as good as a written invitation to an ommoraki. They rarely attack outright, preferring to sabotage.

An ommoraki has a mana organ in its forehead with 10 points stored in it. Its spells, all at level 1, include Spasm, Shape Air, Stench, Create Water, Weaken, Stiffen, Knots, Manipulate, Undo, and Noise.

They can also breathe fire, which costs them 3 fatigue each time, at a range of 1 hex. They use it primarily to burn inanimate objects, but it will do 1d-2 to a living creature. They disrupt a mage's workshop in other ways as much as they can: knocking objects onto the floor, shredding books, scaring servants, spitting in food, vomiting on everything, etc. Their spit and vomit are type H venoms for 1d, only if ingested.

They are especially active on holy days, trying to disrupt chants and ceremonies to prevent them from being effective.

*Rumors:* Ommoraki are otherworldly creatures, according to some stories. They can magically appear at holy rites at the right time to disrupt them without having to wait nearby. They can also pass through walls, taking one turn to materialize or dematerialize.

## Umibōzu (Giant Cuttlefish)

ST: 20-23      Speed/Dodge: 9/7      Size: 2  
DX: 15      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 250 lbs.  
IQ: 10      Damage: 1d+1 cut  
HT: 11/20      Reach: C, 2

The *umibōzu* uses Illusion to make its body look like a bald-headed Buddhist priest, with all but two of its waving tentacles becoming the priest's black robe. In bad weather, it rises from the depths of the sea to prey on shipwrecked sailors, dragging them off the timbers they cling to and eating them.

## Waira (Alligator Dog)

ST: 20      Move/Dodge: 7/7      Size: 2  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 2/4      Weight: 200 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 1d imp#  
HT: 15      Reach: C, 1

Waira are extremely ugly monsters that lurk by roadsides, well hidden by bushes. They will attack small parties, usually waiting for the last member of the group to come alongside. They strike quickly and drag the body into the bushes to devour.

They have lumpish bodies but move quickly nonetheless. Their fur is splotchy and repulsive. Their heads are flat like crocodiles', but otherwise they are shaped like ugly dogs. Their front paws each end in a single large hooked claw. Their heads have two sharp forward-pointing horns and their jaws carry many sharp teeth.

A waira can charge out of the bushes and ram a victim by surprise (slam attack). The horns do 1d+1 impaling. It will next use its front claws to stab the foe until he is unconscious, then drag the body away quickly. The teeth do 1d cutting damage, should it ever bite.

They are cowardly creatures and will run away if the fight looks like it is going against them. They will choose the smaller of two targets if given a choice and really prefer children. They are solitary, active any time.

## Yama Hito (Mountain Goblin)

ST: 30-35      Speed/Dodge: 7/10      Size: 1  
DX: 10      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 360 lbs.  
IQ: 6      Damage: 2d-1 cut  
HT: 20/30      Reach: C

Yama hito are large, repulsively hairy goblins who live in the mountains. They wrestle and kill mountain boar for their meals. They are sentient and wear loincloths made of boar hide.

*Yama uba*, the females, are considered excellent midwives and babysitters by the women of lonely mountain villages (although there are stories that an unwatched and hungry *yama uba* might sometimes eat the baby it was entrusted with).

## Yukionna (Snow Maiden)

ST: 0-15      Speed/Dodge: 6/6      Size: 1  
DX: 15      PD/DR: 0/0      Weight: 110 lbs.  
IQ: 10      Damage: #  
HT: 10      Reach: C

The yukionna only appears in a cold, snowy area, never within one yard of a fire, or within earshot of people who are talking or singing. (She takes three times normal damage from fire.) She is a beautiful young woman with long black hair and pale skin, dressed in a white kimono. She resents people chopping down trees to turn them into firewood and charcoal, and attacks woodcutters she finds working silently or sleeping by a dead fire. She knows spells of Illusion, Mind Control, and Cold.



# Glossary

A quick guide to the Japanese language: in romanized Japanese, vowels are pronounced as in the Romance languages and especially Italian: A as in ah, I as in feet, U as in boot, E as in let, and O as in no; AI rhymes with high, EI with hay. A double consonant other than N or M is pronounced by beginning the sound and then “freezing” for a moment (one syllable-length) before continuing.

Japanese nouns have no distinction between singular and plural. One geisha or 50 geisha, one Shōgun or all the Shōgun, the word is the same. (In this book, most plurals have been formed in the Western fashion for ease of reading.) Japanese verbs have only two tenses: past and non-past.

## Japanese Syllabary

The Japanese syllabary outline appears below. The syllables in the right columns are written by adding a small mark to those in the left columns.

a	i	u	e	o	a	i	u	e	o
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko	ga	gi	gu	ge	go
kya		kyu		kyo	gya		gyu		gyo
sa	shi	su	se	so	za	ji	zu	ze	zo
sha		shu		sho	ja		ju		jo
ta	chi	tsu	te	to	da	ji	zu	de	do
cha		chu		cho					
na	ni	nu	ne	no					
nya		nyu		nyo					
ha	hi	fu	he	ho	ba	bi	bu	be	bo
					pa	pi	pu	pe	po
hya		hyu		hyo	bya		byu		byo
					pya		pyu		pyo
ma	mi	mu	me	mo					
mya		myu		myo					
ya		yu		yo					
ra	ri	ru	re	ro					
rya		ryu		ryo					
wa									

n (sounded and transliterated as “m” when it appears before “b,” “m,” or “p.”)

**ashigaru:** “Foot light,” peasant soldiers in the lowest ranking stratum of the warrior class.

**bakemono:** “Goblin things,” the fantastic creatures of the wilderness.

**bakufu:** “Tent command,” a military government run in the Emperor’s name; the Shogunate. Originally a term for the *Konoe* (Imperial Guards) headquarters.

**bosatsu:** “Sacred tree Buddha,” a bodhisattva, a Buddhist saint.

**bujutsu:** “Martial arts,” the collection of the various armed and unarmed combat systems, each with its own procedures and patterns. The same ideographs are read *wushu* in Chinese.

**bushidō:** “Warrior way,” the strategic tradition and moral

code that each member of the warrior class is expected to live (and die) by. Implicit since *Gempei no Soran* (the Taira-Minamoto War) in the late 12th century, codified in the late 17th century by Yamaga Sokō.

**bussō:** “Buddhist priests,” specifically the monks of the *sōin* (Buddhist monasteries).

**daimyō:** “Great names,” military men whom the Shogunate has appointed as stewards over provincial domains.

**Fujisan:** “Rich gentleman mountain,” the highest mountain in Japan, an active volcano (most recent eruption: 1707) and object of reverence for all Japanese. It is in the Suruga province in the *Chūbu* (Central Districts) area of Honshū, 60 miles southwest of Edō.

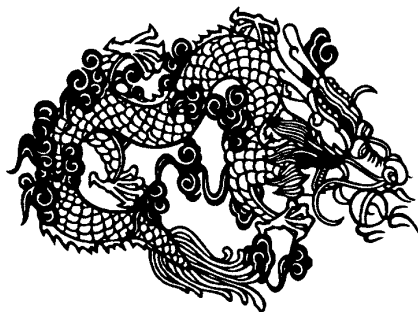
**geisha:** “Art people,” young women trained in music, dance, and conversation as entertainers for hire. Geisha are not courtesans.



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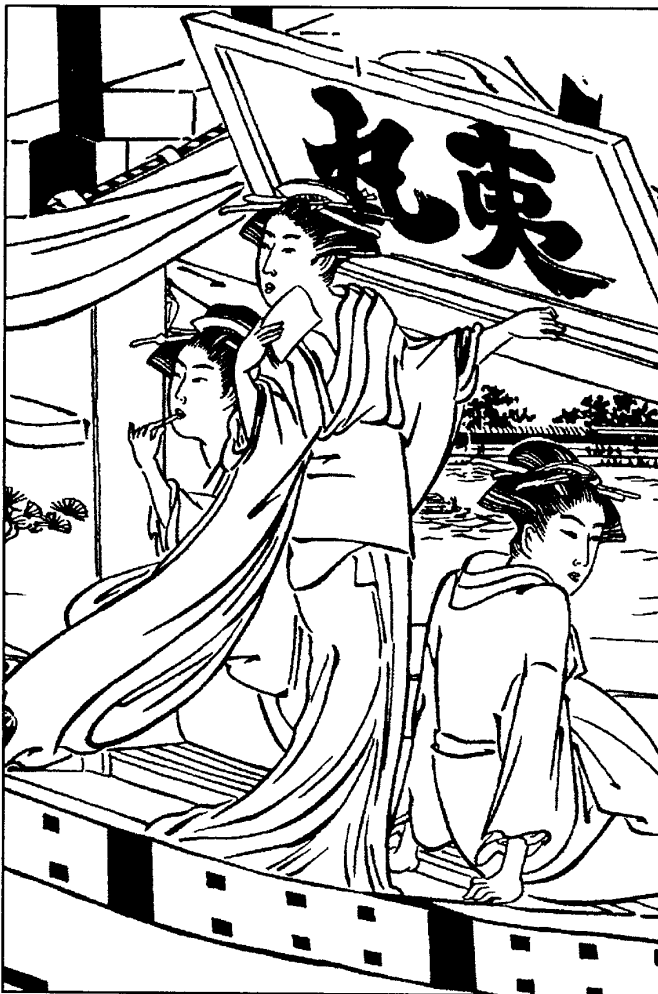
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- Chushingura* (Hiroshi Inagaki, 1962). One of the many retellings of The 47 Rōnin, and perhaps the best.
- Kagemusha* (Akira Kurosawa, 1980). Set in 1574, during the unification of Japan. A common thief poses as the recently assassinated Takeda Shingen to keep the enemies of the Takeda from seizing the opportunity to strike.
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- Shogun* (Jerry London, 1980). The mini-series based on the book. There is also an abridged one-tape version, but it omits too much and becomes jumbled. It does have a more reasonable price-tag, though . . .
- Yojimbo* (Akira Kurosawa, 1962). Set in 1860, the sunset of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Remade as a western (*A Fistful of Dollars*), a fantasy (*The Warrior and the Sorceress*) and a gangster movie (*Last Man Standing*).



In addition, Grey Ghost Games' *A Magical Medley* includes a chapter on Chinese magic which is quite usable as a Japanese magic system as well.

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- Honor of the Samurai* (Gamewright), by Scott Kimball. A card game, but with some historical information.
- Killer Katanas* (Bradford & Fyvie), by Brian Bradford and Robert Fyvie. Miniatures rules for samurai warfare.
- Samurai* (The Avalon Hill Game Company), by Dan Campagna. A light grand strategic game with a system similar to *Kingmaker*.
- Samurai* (GMT Games), by Richard Berg and Mark Herman. Chits-and-hexes simulation of six battles during the sengokujidai.
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- Samurai Swords* (Milton Bradley). Part of their GameMaster series of light grand strategy games.
- Shogun Triumphant* (XTR Games), by Richard Berg. Published in *Command Magazine* #23. The Battle of Sekigahara.

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### Roleplaying Games

There are many roleplaying games and game supplements with Asian flavor; the list here concentrates on those that deal primarily with historical Japan.

- Bushido* (Fantasy Games Unlimited), by Robert Charrette and Paul Hume.
- Land of the Rising Sun* (Fantasy Games Unlimited), by Lee Gold.
- Sengoku* (Gold Rush Games), by Anthony J. Bryant and Mark Arsenaault.
- Ninja Hero* (Hero Games/Gold Rush Games), by Aaron Allston.



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