

Shinto

Columbia Asia for Educators

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Talk Outline

- Definition of Shinto
- What are Kami?
- Distinguishing Shinto and Buddhism
- Primary Practices of Contemporary Shinto
- Further Reading

Definitions

- Shinto (Shintō/Jindō): “The Way of the Gods” or “Way of the Kami”
 - 神道
- Kami: Japanese spirits or deities
 - 神

What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods
- Some humans
- Animals
- Plants and trees
- Topographic features
- Inanimate objects
- Buddhist deities

What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods



Kobayashi Eitaku
Izanami and Izanagi
c. 1885

Fox at Statue to Inari (Inuyama Castle)

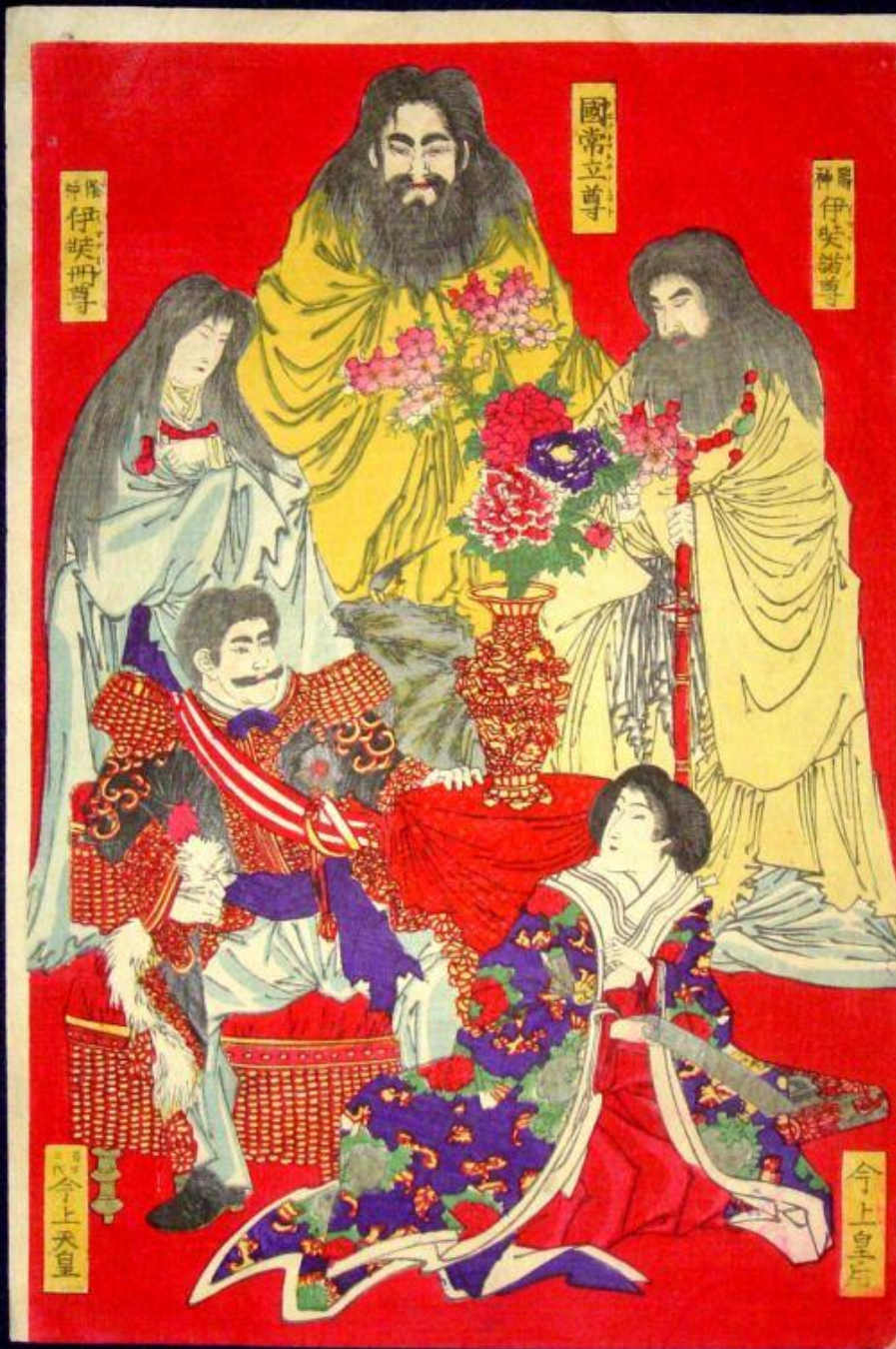


Fushimi Inari shrine, Kyoto



What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods
- Some humans



Kunitokotachi, Izanami, and Izanaki

With Emperor Meiji and Empress Shōken

1878, Toyohara Chikanobu

Torii (shrine gate) at the entrance to Meiji Shrine, Tokyo



Asahi Newspaper, January 1, 1946 (cover)

朝日新聞
昭和二十一年一月一日
（日）

年頭、國運振興の詔書渙發
平和に徹し民生向上
思想の混亂を御軫念

詔書
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一、廣ク教育ヲ興シ萬民ノ智識ヲ進メテ
一、上下同心ニシテ盛ニ國權ヲ行フヘ
シ
一、官武ニ分限シ至ルニ志ヲ達セ
人心ヲ安シテ
一、舊來ノ陋ヲ改メテ新ニ基テ
一、智識ヲ世ニ大ニ開闢ス
一、實業ヲ振興ス
一、衛生ヲ進メテ國民ノ健康ヲ保ツ
一、教育ヲ普及シテ國民ノ智識ヲ進メ
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天皇、現御神にあらず
君民信頼と敬愛に結ぶ

内閣總理大臣
各國務大臣

わが民族

What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods
- Some humans
- Animals




What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods
- Some humans
- Animals
- Plants and trees



What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods
- Some humans
- Animals
- Plants and trees
- Topographic features

A scenic view of the Nachi Waterfall in Wakayama, Japan. The waterfall cascades down a steep, rocky cliff face. In the foreground, a traditional Japanese shrine with multiple tiers of dark roofs and orange-brown wooden railings sits on a hillside. A wide stone staircase leads up to the shrine. To the left, a large cherry blossom tree is in full bloom, its white flowers contrasting with the green foliage. The background is a dense forest of evergreen trees covering the surrounding mountains.

Nachi Waterfall,
Wakayama



Male & female rocks, Mie

torii





Torii, Naoshima

Itsukushima Shrine, Hiroshima





EPCOT World Showcase

What are Kami?

- Heavenly and Earthly Gods
- Some humans
- Animals
- Plants and trees
- Topographic features
- Inanimate objects



Hari kuyō (memorial ceremony for needles)

Tsukumogami (spirits of unused or discarded household objects)



From *Tsukumogami emaki*, 10th c.

Tsukumogami (spirits of unused or discarded household objects)



From *Tsukumogami emaki*, 10th c.

Tsukumogami (spirits of unused or discarded household objects)



From *Tsukumogami emaki*, 10th c.

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Sōgyō Hachiman (Hachiman in the guise of a monk) – Art Institute Chicago



Distinguishing Shinto and Buddhism

- Places of Worship

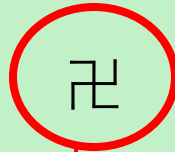
Places of Worship

Shinto



Shrine

Buddhism



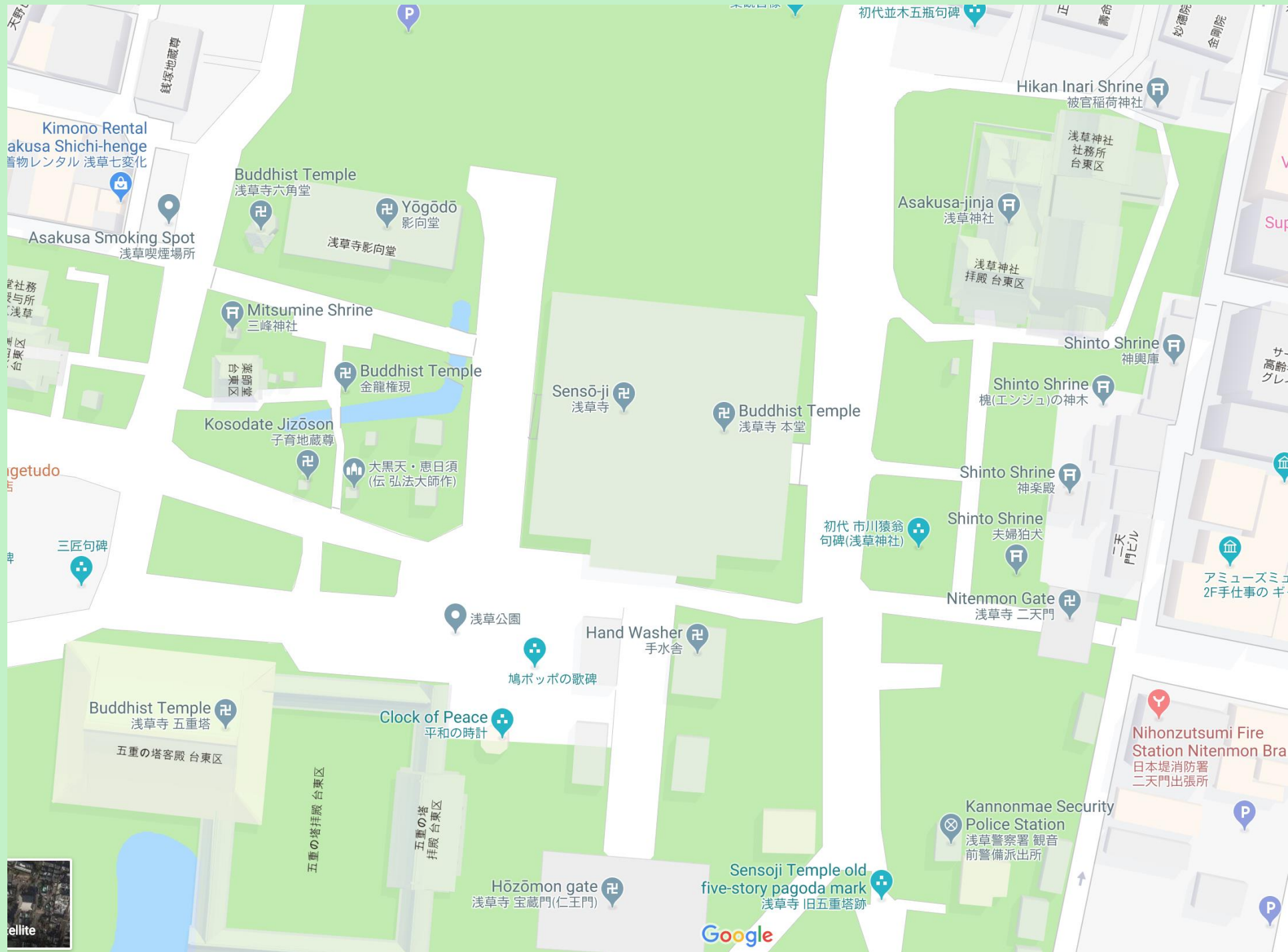
Temple

Leftward-facing,
set at 90 degrees



Raimon, Asakusa Shrine / Sensō Temple, Tokyo







Distinguishing Shinto and Buddhism

- Places of Worship
- Organizational Structure

Shinto Organization

- No Unified Clerical Body
- No Central Text or Canon (*Kojiki? Nihon shoki?*)
- No Unified Doctrine
- No Common Liturgy
- No Head Cleric

Distinguishing Shinto and Buddhism

- Organizational Structure
- Places of Worship
- Ethics vs. Purity



Shinto priest performing *harae* (purification)

Unlucky Ages for 2023

令和5年 厄除

Men

男性

女性

Women

24歳 前厄 平成12年生
25歳 本厄 平成11年生
 26歳 後厄 平成10年生

18歳 前厄 平成18年生
19歳 本厄 平成17年生
 20歳 後厄 平成16年生

41歳 前厄 昭和58年生
42歳 本厄 昭和57年生
 43歳 後厄 昭和56年生

32歳 前厄 平成4年生
33歳 本厄 平成3年生
 34歳 後厄 平成2年生

男女共に

36歳 前厄 昭和63年生
37歳 本厄 昭和62年生
 38歳 後厄 昭和61年生

Coed

60歳 前厄 昭和39年生
還暦61歳 本厄 昭和38年生
 62歳 後厄 昭和37年生

(年齢は数え年です)

前厄 令和3年生
幼児厄4歳 本厄 令和2年生
 後厄 令和元年 平成31年生

十三詣り 平成23年生

厄年は古来より災難が多く、行動を忌み慎む年とされて参りました。精神的・肉体的にも変調を来す時期であり、社会的にも転機の時期で、大事な節目の年です。

Maternity House, Kyoto Prefecture

shide



Hikohohodemi no mikoto emaki, 14th c.





Shinto priest performing *harae* (purification)



morishio (piled salt)





'Unclean' woman doctor blocked from sumo ring after mayor collapses

By Anna Fifield

6 April 2018 — 5:42am



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[View all comments](#)

Tokyo: The Japan Sumo Association apologised on Thursday after a sumo judge ordered women, including a physician, out of the ring while trying to administer first aid to the mayor after he collapsed - because women are considered "ritually unclean" in the sport.

Video of the incident, in which an announcer repeatedly asked over the speaker system for the women to leave the ring, went viral in Japan on Thursday. It is the latest case clearly illustrating the challenges that women face in achieving equality in Japan.

Sydney Morning Herald, April 6, 2018

misogi **(ritual ablution)**





**water for hand– and mouth–
rinsing at Shinto shrine**

In their worship, men of importance simply clap their hands instead of kneeling or bowing.

History of the Kingdom of Wei (ca. 297 CE)



Definitions

- Shinto (Shintō/Jindō): “The Way of the Gods” or “Way of the Kami”
 - 神道
- Kami (Sinified reading Shin/Jin): Japanese deities
 - 神
- Michi (Sinified reading Tō/Dō)
 - 道

Primary Practices of Contemporary Shinto

- Hatsumōde (New Year's Shrine Visit)

Hatsumōde



Primary Practices of Contemporary Shinto

- Hatsumōde (New Year's Shrine Visit)
- Shichi-Go-San (7-5-3)

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Primary Practices of Contemporary Shinto

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- Shichi-Go-San (7-5-3)
- Yakudoshi (inauspicious years)

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Primary Practices of Contemporary Shinto

- Hatsumōde (New Year's Shrine Visit)
- Shichi-Go-San (7-5-3)
- Yakudoshi (inauspicious years)
- Local Matsuri (Festivals)



mikoshi
(portable Shinto shrine)

Local Matsuri (Festivals)



Primary Practices of Contemporary Shinto

- Hatsumōde (New Year's Shrine Visit)
- Shichi-Go-San (7-5-3)
- Yakudoshi (inauspicious years)
- Local Matsuri (Festivals)

Primary Practices of Contemporary Buddhism

- Hatsumōde (New Year's Shrine Visit)
- Obon Festival (summer)
- Buddha's Birthday (hanamatsuri, April 08)
- Funerals and memorial services
- Personal Reasons (prayer, temple stays, pilgrimage)

Religious Adherents in Japan

Shinto:	70.4%
Buddhism:	69.8%
Christianity:	1.5%
Other:	6.9%

CIA World Factbook 2015 (format allowed multiple choices)

Readings: Academic

Hardacre, H. (2017). *Shinto: A History*. Oxford University Press.

Breen, J., & Teeuwen, M. (2010). *A New History of Shinto*. Wiley-Blackwell.

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