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The Communal Cult.

As by the religion of the household each individual was ruled in every action of domestic life, so, by the religion of the village or district the family was ruled in all its relations to the outer world. Like the religion of the home, the religion of the commune was ancestor-worship. What the household shrine represented to the family, the Shintō parish-temple represented to the community; and the deity there worshipped as the clan god was called Ujigami, the god of the uji, which term originally signified the patriarchal family or gens, as well as the family-name.

# 1/2 line

Letter

Some obscurity still attaches to the question of the original relation of the community to the Uji-god. Hirata declares the god of the uji to have been the common ancestor of the clan-family, — the ghost of the first patriarch; and this opinion (allowing for sundry exceptions) is almost certainly correct. But it is difficult to decide whether the ujiko, or "children of the family" (as Shinto parishioners are still termed) at first included only the descendants of the clan-ancestor, or also the whole of the inhabitants of the district ruled by the clan. It is certainly not true at the present time that the tutelary deity of each Japanese district represents the

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the common ancestor of its inhabitants  
— though, & this general rule, there  
might be found exception in some  
of the remote provinces. Most  
probably, the god of the Uji was  
first <sup>by the people of the district</sup> publicly worshipped rather  
as the spirit of a former ruler  
or the patron-god of a ruling family,  
than as the spirit of a common  
ancestor. It has been tolerably  
well proved that the bulk of  
the Japanese people, were in  
a state of servitude from before  
the beginning of the historic  
period, and so remained until  
within comparatively recent times.  
The subject-classes would not  
have had at first a cult of  
their own: their religion would  
most likely have been that of



their masters. In later times the  
vassal was certainly attached to  
the cult of the lord. But it  
is difficult as yet to venture  
any general statement as to  
the earliest phase of the com-  
-munal cult in Japan; for  
the history of the Japanese nation  
is not that of a single people  
of one blood, but a history  
of many clan-groups, of dif-  
-ferent origin, gradually brought  
together to form one huge  
patrilarchal society.

#2 lines

However, it is quite safe  
to assume, with the best native  
authorities, that the Ujigami  
were originally clan-deities, and

But they were usually, though not invariably,  
 worshipped as clan-ancestors. Some  
*ujigami* belong to the historic period.  
 The war-god Hachiman, for example,  
 — to whom parish-temples are dedica-  
 -ted in almost every large city, — is  
 the apotheosized spirit of the Emperor  
 Ōjin, patron of the famous Minamoto  
 clan. This is an example of *ujigami*  
 worship in which the clan-god is not  
 an ancestor. But in many instances,  
 the *Ujigami* is really the ancestor  
 of an *uji*; — as in the case of  
 the great deity of Kasuga, from  
 whom the Fujiwara clan claimed  
 descent. Altogether there were  
 in ancient Japan, after the begin-  
 -ning of the historic era, 1,182  
 clans, great and small; and these  
 appear to have established the  
 same number of cults. We find,

as might be expected, that the temples  
 now called Ujigami — which is to  
 say, Shintō parish-temples in  
 general, — are always dedicated  
 to a particular class of divinities,  
 and never dedicated to certain  
 other gods. Also, it is signifi-  
 -cant that in every large town  
 there are Shintō temples  
 dedicated to the same Uji-gods,  
 — proving the transfer of com-  
 -munal worship from its place  
 of origin. Thus the Izumo wor-  
 -shipper of Kasuga-Dama can  
 find in Osaka, Kyōto, Tōkyō,  
 parish-temples dedicated to  
 his patron: the Kyūshū  
 worshipper of Hachiman-Dama  
 can place himself under the  
 protection of the same deity

in Musashi quite as well as in  
 Hōgo or Bungo. Another fact  
 worth observing is that the Ujigami  
 temple is not necessarily the most  
 important Shintō temple in  
 the parish: it is the parish-  
 temple, and important to the  
 communal worship; but it  
 may be outshone and over-  
 shadowed by some adjacent  
 temple dedicated to higher  
 Shintō gods. Thus in Kizuki  
 of Izumo, for example, the  
 great Izumo temple is not the  
 Ujigami, — not the parish-  
 temple: the local cult is  
 maintained at a much smaller  
 temple... Of the higher cults I  
 shall speak further on: for



The present let us consider only the communal cult, in its relation to communal life. From the social conditions represented by the worship of the Ujigami today, much can be inferred as to its influence in past times.

Harrington - #121

Almost every Japanese village has its Ujigami; and each district of every large town or city also has its Ujigami.

The worship of the tutelary deity is maintained by the whole body of parishioners, - the Ujiko, or children of the tutelary god.

Every such parish-temple has its holy days, when all Ujiko are expected to visit the temple, and

when, as a matter of fact, every household sends at least one representative to the Ujigami. There are great festival-days, and ordinary festival-days; — there are processions, music, dancing, and whatever in the way of popular amusement can serve to make the occasion attractive. The people of adjacent districts vie with each other in rendering their respective temple-festivals (matsuri) enjoyable: every household contributes according to its means.

The Shinto parish-temple has an intimate relation to the life of the community as a body, and also to the individual existence of every ujiko. As a baby he or she is taken to the Ujigami — (at the expiration of thirty-one days after birth, for a boy; or thirty-

- three days after birth, if a girl) - and placed under the protection of the god, in whose supposed presence the little one's name is recorded. There-  
 - after the child is regularly taken to the temple on holy days, and of course to all the big festivals, which are made delightful to young fancy by the display of toys on sale in temporary booths, and by the amusing spectacles to be witnessed in the temple-grounds, - artists forming pictures on the pavement with coloured sands, - sweetmeat-sellers moulding animals and monsters out of sugar-paste, - conjurers and jugglers exhibiting their skill... Later, when the child becomes strong enough to run about, the temple gardens are



groves serve for a play-ground. School-life does not separate the *ujiko* from the *ujigami* (unless the family should permanently leave the district) ; — the visits to the temple are still continued as a duty. Grown-up and married, the *ujiko* regularly visits the guardian-god, accompanied by wife or husband, and brings the children to pay obeisance. If obliged to make a long journey, or to quit the district for ever, the *ujiko* pays a farewell visit to the *ujigami*, as well as to the souls of the family ancestors; and on returning to one's native place after prolonged absence, the first visit is to the god.

... I have more than once been



touched by the spectacle of soldiers  
at prayer before lonesome little  
temples in country-places, — soldiers  
but first returned from Korea,  
China, or Formosa: their first  
thought on reaching home was  
to utter their thanks to the  
god of their childhood, whom  
they believed to have guarded  
them in the hour of battle  
and the season of pestilence.

#line

The best authority on  
the local customs and laws  
of Old Japan, John Henry  
Wigmore, remarks that the  
Shinto cult had few relations  
with local administration. In

his opinion the Ijigami were the  
deified ancestors of certain noble  
families of early times; and their  
temples continued to be in the  
patronage of those families. The  
office of the Shinto priest, or  
"god-master" (kannushi) was,  
and still is, hereditary; and,  
as a rule, any kannushi can  
trace back his descent from  
the family of which the Ijigami  
was originally the patron-god.  
But the Shinto priests, with  
some few exceptions, were neither  
magistrates nor administrators;  
and Professor Wigness thinks  
that this may have been "due  
to the lack of administrative  
organization within the cult itself."\*

note to preceding page

\* The vague character of the Shinto hierarchy is probably best explained by Mr. Spencer in Chapter VIII of the third volume of Principles of Sociology:—

"The establishment of an ecclesiastical organization separate from the political organization, but akin to it in structure, appears to be largely determined by the rise of a decided distinction in thought between the affairs of this world and those of a supposed other world. Where the two are conceived as existing in continuity, or as intimately related, the organizations appropriate to their respective administrations remain either identical, or imperfectly distinguished... If the Chinese are 'remarkable' for the complete absence of a priestly caste, it is because, along with their universal and active ancestor-worship, they have preserved that inclusion of the duties of priest in the duties of ruler, which ancestor-worship in its simple form shows no."

Mr. Spencer remarks in the same paragraph on the fact that in ancient Japan "religion and government were the same." A distinct Shinto hierarchy was therefore never evolved.

Spencer's  
— term.



This would be an adequate explanation.  
But in spite of the fact that  
they exercised no civil function,  
I believe it can be shown that  
Shintō priests had, and still  
have, powers above the law.  
Their relation to the community  
was of an extremely important  
kind: their authority was  
only religious; but it was  
heavy, and irresistible.

~~Word~~ To understand this,  
we must remember that the  
Shintō priest represented the  
religious sentiment of his district.  
The social bond of each com-  
-munity was identical with  
the religious bond, — the cult of  
the local In-lar god. It



was to the Ujigami that prayers were made for success in all communal undertakings, for protection against sickness, for the triumph of the lord in time of war, for succour in the season of famine or epidemic.

The Ujigami was the giver of all good things, — the special helper and guardian of the people. That this belief still prevails ~~everywhere~~ may be verified by any one who studies the peasant-life of Japan. It is not to the Buddhas that the farmer prays for bountiful harvests, or for rain in time of drought; — it is not to the Buddhas that thanks are rendered

for a plentiful rice-crop — but to the  
 ancient local god. And the cult  
 of the Ujigami embodies the  
 moral experience of the community  
 , — represents all its cherished tradi-  
 -tions and customs, its unwritten  
 laws of conduct, its sentiment  
 of duty . . . Now just as an  
 offense against the edicts of the  
 family must, in such a society,  
 be regarded as an impiety towards  
 the family-ancestor, so any  
 breach of custom in the village  
 or district must be considered  
 as an act of disrespect to  
 its Ujigami. The prosperity  
 of the family depends, it is  
 thought, upon the observance  
 of filial piety, which is identi-  
 -fied with obedience to the

Traditional rules of household conduct ; and, in like manner, the prosperity of the commune is supposed to depend upon the observance of ancestral custom, — <sup>upon</sup> obedience to those unwritten laws of the district, which are taught to all from the time of their childhood. Customs are identified with morals. Any offense against the customs of the settlement is an offense against the gods who protect it, and therefore a menace to the public weal. The existence of the community is endangered by the crime of any of its members : every member is therefore held accountable by the community for his

conduct. Every action must conform to the traditional usages of the ujiko: independent exceptional conduct is a public offence.

What the obligations of the individual to the community, signified in ancient times, may therefore be imagined. He had certainly no more right to himself than had the Greek citizen three thousand years ago, — probably not so much. Today, though laws have been greatly changed, he is practically in much the same condition. The mere idea of the right to do as one pleases (within such limits as are imposed on conduct by English and American societies, for example),



could not enter into his mind. Such freedom, if explained to him, he would probably consider as a condition morally comparable to that of birds and beasts. Among ourselves, the social regulations for ordinary people chiefly settle what must not be done. But what one must not do in Japan — though representing a very wide range of prohibition — means much less than half of the common obligation: what one must do is still more necessary to learn. . . . Let us briefly consider the restraints which custom places upon the liberty of the individual.

# 31st

Davis

First of all, be it observed that the communal will reinforces the will of the household, — compels the observance of filial piety. Even the conduct of a boy, who has passed the age of childhood, is regulated not only by the family, but by the public. He must obey the household; and he must also obey public opinion in regard to his domestic relations. Any marked act of disrespect, inconsistent with filial piety, would be judged and rebuked by all. When old enough to begin work or study, a lad's daily conduct is observed and criticized; and at the age when the household law first registers about him, he also commences to feel the pressure of common opinion. On coming of age, he has to marry; and the idea of permitting him

to choose a wife for himself is quite out of the question: he is expected to accept the companion selected for him. But should reasons be found for humouring him in the event of an irresistible aversion, then he must wait until another choice has been made by the family. The community would not tolerate insubordination in such matters: one example of filial revolt would constitute too dangerous a precedent. When the young man at last becomes the head of a household, and responsible for the conduct of its members, he is still constrained by public sentiment to accept advice in his direction of domestic



affairs. He is not free to follow his  
 own judgment, in certain contingencies.  
 For example, he is bound by custom  
 to furnish help to relatives; and he is obliged  
 to accept arbitration in the event  
 of trouble with them. He is not  
 permitted to think of his own  
 wife and children only, — such  
 conduct would be deemed intoler-  
 -ably selfish: he must be  
 able to act, to outward seeming  
 at least, as if uninfluenced  
 by paternal or marital affection  
 in his public conduct. Even  
 supposing that, later in life, he  
 should be appointed to the  
 position of village <sup>or district</sup> headman, his  
 right of action and judgment  
 would be under just as much



restriction as before. Indeed, the  
 range of his personal freedom  
 actually decreases in proportion  
 to his ascent in the social scale.  
 Nominally he rules as headman  
 : practically his authority is  
 only lent to him by the com-  
 mune, and it will remain  
 to him just so long as the  
 commune pleases. For he  
 is elected to enforce the public  
 will, not to impose his own, -  
 to serve the common interests,  
 not to serve his own, - to  
 maintain and confirm custom,  
 not to break with it. Thus,  
 though appointed chief, he is  
 only the public servant, and the  
 least free man in his native place.

Various documents translated and published by Professor Wignose, in his "Notes on Land-Tenure and Local Institutions in Old Japan," give a startling idea of the minute regulation of communal-life in country-districts during the period of the Tokugawa Shōguns. Much of the regulation was certainly imposed by higher authority; but it is likely that a considerable portion of the rules represented old local custom. Such documents were called Kumi-chō, or "kumi\*-inact-ments": they established the rules of conduct to be observed by all the members of a village-community, and their social interest is

\* =

Down to the close of the feudal period, the mass of the population throughout the country, in the great cities as well as in the villages, was administratively ordered by groups of families, or rather of households, called kumi, or "companies." The general number of households in a kumi was five; but there were in some provinces kumi consisting of six, and of ten, households. The heads of the households composing a kumi elected one of their number as chief, - who became the responsible representative of all the members of the kumi. The origin and history of the kumi-system is obscure: a similar system exists in China and in Korea. (Professor Vigmore's reasons for doubting that the Japanese kumi-system had a military origin, appear to be cogent.) Certainly the system greatly facilitated administration. To superior authority the kumi was responsible, not the single household.

very great. By personal enquiry I have learned that in various parts of the country, rules much like those recorded in the Kumi-cho are still enforced by village custom. I select a few examples from Professor Wignmore's translation:—

*Smaller*

— "If there be any of our number who are unkind to parents, or neglectful or disobedient, we will not conceal it or condone it, but will report it..."

"We shall require children to respect their parents, servants to obey their masters, husbands and wives and brothers and sisters to live together in harmony, and the younger people to revere and cherish their elders... Each kumi (group of five households) shall carefully watch over the conduct of its members, so as to prevent wrong-doing."

*Smaller*  
— *Small*



"If any member of a kumi, whether farmer, merchant, or artisan, is lazy, and does not attend properly to his business, the ban-gashira [chief officer] will advise him, warn him, and lead him in the better ways. If the person does not listen to this advice, and becomes angry and obstinate, he is to be reported to the oshigori [village elder]. . ."

"When men who are quarrelsome and who like to indulge in late hours away from home will not listen to admonition, we will report them. If any other kumi neglects to do this, it will be part of our duty to do it for them. . ."

"All those who quarrel with their relatives, and refuse

Sanctity  
[The  
Lead

to listen to their good advice,  
or disobey their parents, or are  
unkind to their fellow-villagers,  
shall be reported [to the village  
officers]...."

"Dancing, wrestling, and  
other public shows shall be  
forbidden. Singing and  
dancing - girls and prostitutes  
shall not be allowed to  
remain a single night in  
the mura [village]."

"Quarrels among the  
people shall be forbidden.  
In case of dispute the  
matter shall be reported.  
If this is not done, all  
parties shall be indiscrimi-  
nately punished...."

"Speaking as graceful things  
of another man, or publicly  
portraying him as a bad man, even  
if he is so, is forbidden."

Quarrels - Type  
— (each)

"Filial piety and faithful service to a master should be a matter of course; but when there is any one who is especially faithful and diligent in these things, we promise to report him... for recommendation to the government..."

Quarter (1st/2nd/3rd/4th)

"As members of a kumi we will cultivate friendly feeling even more than with our relatives, and will promote each other's happiness, as well as share each other's griefs. If there is an unprincipled or lawless person in a kumi, we will all share the responsibility for him." \*

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\* "Notes on Land Tenure and Local Institutions in Old Japan" (Transactions Asiatic Society of Japan, Vol. XIX, Part I. — I have chosen the quotations from different kumi-chō, and arranged them illustratively.



Ward

# 3. (14)

The above are samples of the moral regulations only: there were even more minute regulations about other duties, - for instance: -

# 2. (14)

"When a fire occurs, the people shall immediately hasten to the spot, each bringing a bucketful of water, and shall endeavour, under direction of the officers, to put the fire out. . . . Those who absent themselves shall be deemed culpable.

"When a stranger comes to reside here, inquiries shall be made as to the town whence he came, and a surety shall be furnished by him. . . . No traveller shall lodge, even for a single night, in a house other than a public inn."

Quarta  
The - Kent.



Annals of the  
— Land

" News of robberies and night-attacks shall be given by the ringing of bells or otherwise; and all who hear shall join in pursuit, until the offender is taken. Any one wilfully refraining shall, on investigation, be punished."

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From these same kunichō, it appears that no one could leave his village, even for a single night, without permission, — or take service elsewhere, or marry in another province, or settle in another place. Punishments were severe, — a terrible flogging being the common mode of chastisement by the higher authority.

... Today, there are no such punishments;  
 and, legally, a man can go where  
 he pleases. But as a matter of  
 fact he can nowhere do as he  
 pleases; for individual liberty  
 is still largely restricted by  
 the survival of communal sentiment  
 and old-fashioned custom. In  
 any ~~old-fashioned~~ country community  
 it would be unwise to proclaim such  
 a doctrine as that a man has the  
 right to employ his leisure and  
 his means as he may think proper.  
 No man's time or money or effort  
 can be considered exclusively his  
 own, — not even the body that  
 his ghost inhabits. His right to  
 live in the community rests solely  
 upon his willingness to serve the

community; and whoever may need his help or sympathy has the privilege of demanding it. That "a man's house is his castle" cannot be asserted in Japan — except in the case of some high potentate. No ordinary person can shut his door ~~by day~~ & look out the rest of the world. Everybody's house must be open to visitors; — to close its gates by day would be regarded as an insult to the community, — sickness affording no excuse. Only persons in very great authority have the right of making themselves inaccessible. And to displease the community in which one lives, — especially if the community be a rural one, — is a serious matter. When a community is displeased,



it act as an individual. It may consist of five hundred, a thousand, or several thousand persons; but the thinking of all is the thinking of one. By a single serious

mistake, a man may find himself suddenly placed in solitary opposition to the common will, — isolated, and most effectively ostracized. The silence and

the softness of the hostility only render it all the more alarming. This is the ordi-

nary form of punishment for a grave offense against cus-

-dom: violence is rare, and when resorted to is intended

— (except in some extraordinary cases presently to be noticed) —

as a mere correction, the punish-



-ment of a blunder. In certain rough communities, blunders endangering life, are immediately punished by physical chastisement, — not in anger, but on traditional principle. Once I witnessed at a fishing-settlement, a chastisement of this kind. Men were killing herring in the surf; the work was bloody and dangerous; and in the midst of the excitement, one of the fishermen struck his killing-spike into the head of a boy. Every body knew that it was a pure accident; but accidents involving danger to life are rarely dealt with, and this blunderer was instantly knocked senseless

by the men nearest him, - then dragged out of the surf and flung down on the sand to recover himself as best he might. No word was said about the matter; and the killing went on as before. Young fishermen, <sup>I am told</sup> are roughly handled by their fellows on board a ship also, in the case of any error involving risk to the vessel. But, as I have already observed, only stupidity is punished in this fashion; and ostracism is much more dreaded than violence. There is, indeed, only one yet heavier punishment than ostracism, - namely, banishment, either for a term of years or for life.

Exile

Banishment must in old feudal times have been a very serious penalty: it is a serious penalty even today, under the new order of things. In former years the man expelled from his native place by the communal will, — cast out from his home, his clan, his occupation, — found himself face to face with misery absolute. In another community there would be no place for him, unless he happened to have relatives there; and these would be obliged to consult with the local authorities, and also with the officials of the fugitive's native place, before rendering to harbor him. No stranger was suffered to settle in another district than his own without official permission. Old



documents are extant which record the punishments inflicted upon households for having given shelter to a stranger under pretence of relationship. A banished man was homeless and friendless. He might be a skilled craftsman; but the right to exercise his craft depended upon the consent of the guild representing that craft in the place to which he might go; and banished men were not received by the guilds. He might try to become a servant; but the commune in which he sought refuge would question the right of any master to employ a fugitive and a stranger. His religious connexions could not serve him in the least:



The code of communal life was decided  
 not by Buddhist, but by Shintō ethics.  
 Since the gods of his birth place had  
 cast him out, and the gods of  
 any other locality had nothing to  
 do with his original cult, there  
 was no religious help for him.  
 Besides, the mere fact of his  
 being a refugee was itself proof  
 that he must have offended  
 against his own cult. In any  
 event no stranger could look  
 for sympathy among strangers.  
 Even now to take a wife from  
 another province is condemned by  
 local opinion - (it was forbidden  
 in feudal times) ; - one is still  
 expected to live, work, and marry  
 in the place where one has been  
 born, - though, in certain cases, and

with the public approval of one's own people, adoption in another community is tolerated. Under the feudal system there was incomparably less likelihood of sympathy for the stranger; and banishment signified hunger, solitude, and privation inseparable. For be it remembered that the legal existence of the individual, at that period, ceased entirely outside of his relation to the family and to the commune. Everybody lived and worked for some household; every household for some clan: outside of the household, and the related aggregate of households, there was no life to be lived, — except the life of criminals, beggars, and pariahs.

Have with official permission, one  
 could not even become a Buddhist  
 monk. The very outcasts ~~even~~, —  
 such as the Éla classes, — former  
 self-governing communities, with  
<sup>traditions</sup> of their own, and would  
 not voluntarily accept strangers.  
 So the banished man was most  
 often doomed to become a hinin  
 , — one of that wretched class  
 of wandering pariahs who were  
 officially termed "not-men", and  
 lived by begging, or by the  
 exercise of some vulgar profession,  
 such as that of ambulant musician  
 or mountebank. In more ancient  
 days a banished man could  
 have sold himself into slavery;  
 but even this poor privilege  
 seems to have been withdrawn



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during the Tokugawa era.

~~Hampton~~ We can scarcely imagine  
how the conditions of such banish-  
ment: I find a Western parallel  
we must go back to ancient Greek  
and Roman times long preceding the  
Empire.

Banishment then signi-  
fied religious excommunication,  
and practically expulsion from all  
civilized society, — since there yet  
existed no idea of human brotherhood,  
no conception of any claim upon  
kindness except the claim of  
kinship.

The stranger was very  
- where the enemy. Now in Japan,  
as in the Greek city of old time,  
the religion of the tutelary god has  
always been the religion of a group  
only, the cult of a community:  
it never became even the religion  
of a province. The higher cults,  
on the other hand, did not concern



themselves with the individual: his religion was only of the household and of the village or district;—the cults of other households and districts were entirely distinct; one could belong to them only by adoption, and strangers, as a rule, were not adopted. Without a household or a clan-cult, the individual was morally and socially dead; for other cults and clans excluded him. When cast out by the domestic cult that regulated his private life, and by the local cult that ordered his life in relation to the community, he simply ceased to exist in relation to human society,—his moral being was practically suspended.

# 1/2 line

How small were the chances  
in past times for personality to  
develop and assert itself, may be  
imagined from the foregoing facts.  
The individual was completely and  
pitilessly sacrificed to the com-  
munity. Even now the only safe  
rule of conduct in a Japanese  
settlement is to act in all things  
according to local custom; for  
the slightest divergence from  
rule will be observed with  
disfavor. Privacy does not  
exist; nothing can be hidden  
; every body's vices or virtues  
are known to every body else.  
Unusual behaviour is treated as  
as a departure from the tradi-  
-tional standard of conduct;  
all oddities are condemned as

departures from custom; - and tradition and custom still have the force of religious obligations. Indeed they really are religions and obligatory, not only by reason of their origin, but by reason of their relation also to the public cult, which signifies the worship of the past.

— It is therefore easy to understand why China never had a written code of morals, and why its greatest scholars have declared that a moral code is unnecessary.

In that stage of religious evolution which ancestor-worship represents, there can be no distinction between religion and ethics,



not between ethics and custom. Government and religion are the same; custom and law are identified. The ethics of Shintō were all included in conformity to custom. The traditional rules of the household, the traditional laws of the community — these were the morals of Shintō: to obey them was religion; to disobey them, impiety... And, after all, the true significance of any religious code, written or unwritten, lies in its expression of social duty, its doctrine of the right and wrong of conduct, its embodiment of a people's moral experience. Really the difference between any modern



ideal of conduct, such as the English, and the patriarchal ideal, such as that of the early Greeks or of the Japanese, would be found on examination to consist mainly in the minute extension of the older conception to all details of individual life. Assuredly the religion of Shinto needed no written commandments: it was taught to everybody from childhood by precept and example, and any person of ordinary intelligence could learn it. When a religion is capable of rendering it dangerous for anybody to act outside of rules, the framing of a code would be obviously superfluous. We ourselves have no written code of conduct as regards

The higher social life, the exclusive circles of civilized existence, which are not ruled merely by the Ten commandments. The knowledge of what to do in those zones, and of how to do it, can come only by training, by experience, by observation, and by the intuitive recognition of the reason of things.

# line

And now to return to the question of the authority of the Hindu priest as representative of communal sentiment, — an authority which I believe to have been always very great... I think proof that the punishments inflicted by a community upon its erring members

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were originally inflicted in the name of the Intelar god, is furnished by the fact that manifestations of communal displeasure still assume, in various country districts, a religious character. I have witnessed such manifestations, and I am assured that they still occur in most of the provinces. But it is in remote country - towns or isolated villages, where traditions have remained almost unchanged, that one can best observe these survivals of antique custom. In such places the conduct of every resident is closely watched and rigidly judged by all the rest. Little, however, is said about misdeemeanours of a minor sort until the time of the great local Shindo festival, - the annual festival of the Intelar god. It is then that the community gives its warnings or inflicts its penalties: this at least in the case of conduct



offensive to local edicts. The god, on the occasion of this festival, is supposed to visit the dwellings of his ujiko; as his portable shrine, — a weighty structure borne by thirty or forty men, — is carried through the principal streets. The bearers are supposed to act according to the will of the god, — to go whithersoever his divine spirit directs them... I may describe the incidents of the procession as I saw it in a sea-coast-village, not once, but several times.

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Before the procession a band of young men advance, leaping and wildly dancing in circles: these young men clear the way; as it is unsafe to pass near them, for they whirl about as if moved by frenzy... When I first saw such a band of dancers, I could



imagine myself watching some old  
 Dionysiac revel; — their furious  
 gyrations certainly realized Greek  
 accounts of the antique sacred  
 frenzy. There were, indeed, no

Greek heads; but the bronzed like  
 figures, naked save for loin-  
 -cloth and sandals, and most  
 sculp-inesquely muscled, might  
 well have inspired some vase-  
 -design of dancing fauns.

After these god-possessed dancers,  
 whose passage swept the streets  
 clear, scattering the crowd to  
 right and left, — came the  
 virgin priestess, white-robed and  
 veiled, riding upon a horse, and  
 followed by several mounted  
 priests in white garments and high  
 black caps of ceremony. Behind

Then advanced the ponderous shrine,  
swaying above the heads of its  
bearers like a junk in a storm.  
Scores of brawny arms were  
pushing it to the right; other  
scores were pushing it to the  
left; behind and before, also,  
there was furious pulling and  
pushing; and the roar of voices  
uttering invocations made it impossible  
to hear anything else. By im-  
memorial custom the upper stories  
of all the dwellings had been  
rigidly closed: woe to the  
Peeping Tom who should be  
detected, on such a day, in the  
impious act of looking down upon  
the god!....

Don't

Now the shrine-bearers, as I have said, are supposed to be moved by the spirit of the god — (probably by his Rough Spirit; for the Shinto god is multiple); — and all this pushing and pulling and swaying signifies only the deity's inspection of the dwellings on either hand. He is looking about to see whether the hearts of his worshippers are pure, and is deciding whether it will be necessary to give a warning, or to inflict a penalty. His bearers will carry him whithersoever he chooses to go — through solid walls if necessary. If the shrine strikes against any house — even against an awning only, — that is a sign that the god is not pleased with the dwellers in that house. If the shrine breaks part of the house — that is a serious warning.



But it may happen that the gods  
wills to enter a house, - breaking  
his way. Then woe to the  
inmates, unless they flee at once  
through the back-door; and  
the wild procession, thundering  
in, will wreck and rend and  
smash and splinter everything  
on the premises before the gods ~~will~~  
consent to proceed upon his  
round.

Upon enquiring into the  
reasons of two wreckings <sup>of which</sup>  
I witnessed the results, I learned  
enough to assure me that, from  
the communal point of view, both  
aggressions were morally justifiable.  
In one case a fraud had been  
practised; in the other, help had



been refused to the family of a drowned  
resident. Thus one offense had  
been legal; the other only moral.  
A country - community will not hand  
over its delinquents to the police  
- except in case of incendiarism,  
murder, theft or other serious crime  
; it has a horror of law, and  
never invokes it when the matter  
can be settled by any other  
means. This was the rule also

in ancient times; and the feudal  
government encouraged its main-  
-tenance. But when the

Indral deity has been displeased,  
he insists upon the punishment  
or atonement of the offender; and  
the offender is in the family, as  
by feudal custom, are held respon-  
-sible. The victim can invoke

The new law, if he dares, and bring the  
wreckers of his home in court,  
and recover damages, — for the  
modern police-courts are not ruled  
by Shin Do. But only a very  
rash man will invoke the new  
law against the communal judg-  
-ment; — for that action in itself  
would be condemned as a gross  
breach of custom. The community  
is always ready, through its council,  
to do justice in cases where  
innocence can be proved. But  
if a man really guilty of the  
faults charged to his account,  
should try to avenge himself by  
appeal to a non-religious law,  
then it were well for him to  
remove himself and his family,  
as soon as possible thereafter,  
to some far-away place.

#line 7

We have seen that, in Old  
Japan, the life of the individual  
was under two kinds of religious  
control. His acts were  
regulated according to the tradi-  
tions either of the domestic or  
of the communal cult; and  
these conditions probably began  
with the establishment of a  
settled civilization. We have  
also seen that the communal  
religion took upon itself to  
enforce the observance of  
the household religion. The  
fact will not seem strange  
if we remember that the  
underlying idea in either  
cult was the same, — the

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idea that the welfare of the living  
depended upon the welfare of  
the dead. Neglect of the household  
rite would provoke, it was be-  
lieved, the malevolence of  
the spirits; and their malevolence  
might bring about some public  
misfortune. The ghosts of the  
ancestors controlled nature; —  
fire and flood, pestilence and  
famine, were at their disposal  
as means of vengeance. One  
act of impiety in a village  
might therefore bring about  
misfortune to all. And the  
community considered itself  
responsible to the dead for  
the maintenance of filial piety  
in every home.

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