

# **Purity, 650-950: A Tentative Trajectory**

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# Introduction

1. Abstaining (*sai* 斋) and Expelling (*harae* 禊)
2. Shifting Function of Nara *ōharae*
3. Pollution *kegare* 糜 Inflation in the 850s
4. Heian, a Polluted Polity *kegare kokka*
5. Institutional Devolution

# 1. Abstaining (*sai* 斋) and Expelling (*harae* 禦)

Jōgan era: 859-877

# The 927 *Engishiki* Rules of Abstinence 斋

(dating from Jōgan era: 859-877)

1. Abstinence after contact with **defilement evil** (穢惡):  
30 days after a **funeral**, 7 days after the **birth**, 6 days after  
the death of a domestic **animal**, 3 days after **eating meat**.
2. When in **mourning**, **visiting the sick**, or **encountering a memorial service**: no visit to the palace the same day.
3. In the case of **reburial** or a **miscarriage** at 4 months or more, 30 days; for **abortions** at 3 months or less, 7 days.
4. During days of abstinence before / after festivals, **monks**, **nuns**, **persons in mourning** may not enter the palace.

5. During **mourning for a young child**, no participation in festivals is allowed.
6. **Pregnant or menstruating ladies of the palace shall withdraw outside the palace.**
7. **The range of pollution is as follows: a polluted place affects all people in it, including visitors if they sit down, who will spread the pollution to all persons in their own dwelling, but this is where the pollution stops.**
8. **Defiled palace officials may not interrupt festival proceedings.**
9. A person defiled by contact with [accidental, unforeseen] **fire** must avoid kami affairs for 7 days.

## Taihō Code 702

### Abstinence for officials:

- 30 days for major festivals
- 3 days for medium festivals
- 1 day for minor festivals

### Officials abstain from:

- mourning
- visiting the sick
- consuming meat
- issuing death verdicts or executing punishments
- performing music
- any contact with impurities

## **Public Restorations of Purity 698 - 886**

*Ōharae 大祓 Great Purifications :*

**twice yearly (6/30, 12/31)**

**36 extra-ōharae (18 death-related)**

**Interrupted ceremonies:**

**16 death of person**

**10 birth or death of dogs**

**12 ōharae connected to Ise**

**8 national mourning**

*Jō* 淨 (*kiyoi*, pure), *Myō* 明 (*akarui*, bright)

Asuka no Kiyomihara no miya 飛鳥淨御原宮  
Palace on the Pure Plain of Asuka

*saiō* 斋王 “Abstinence Royal”

## **2. Shifting Function of Nara ōharae**

**Special Ōharae until end of Nara**

702 ?; 706, 707 epidemic

**729 Nagaya affair**

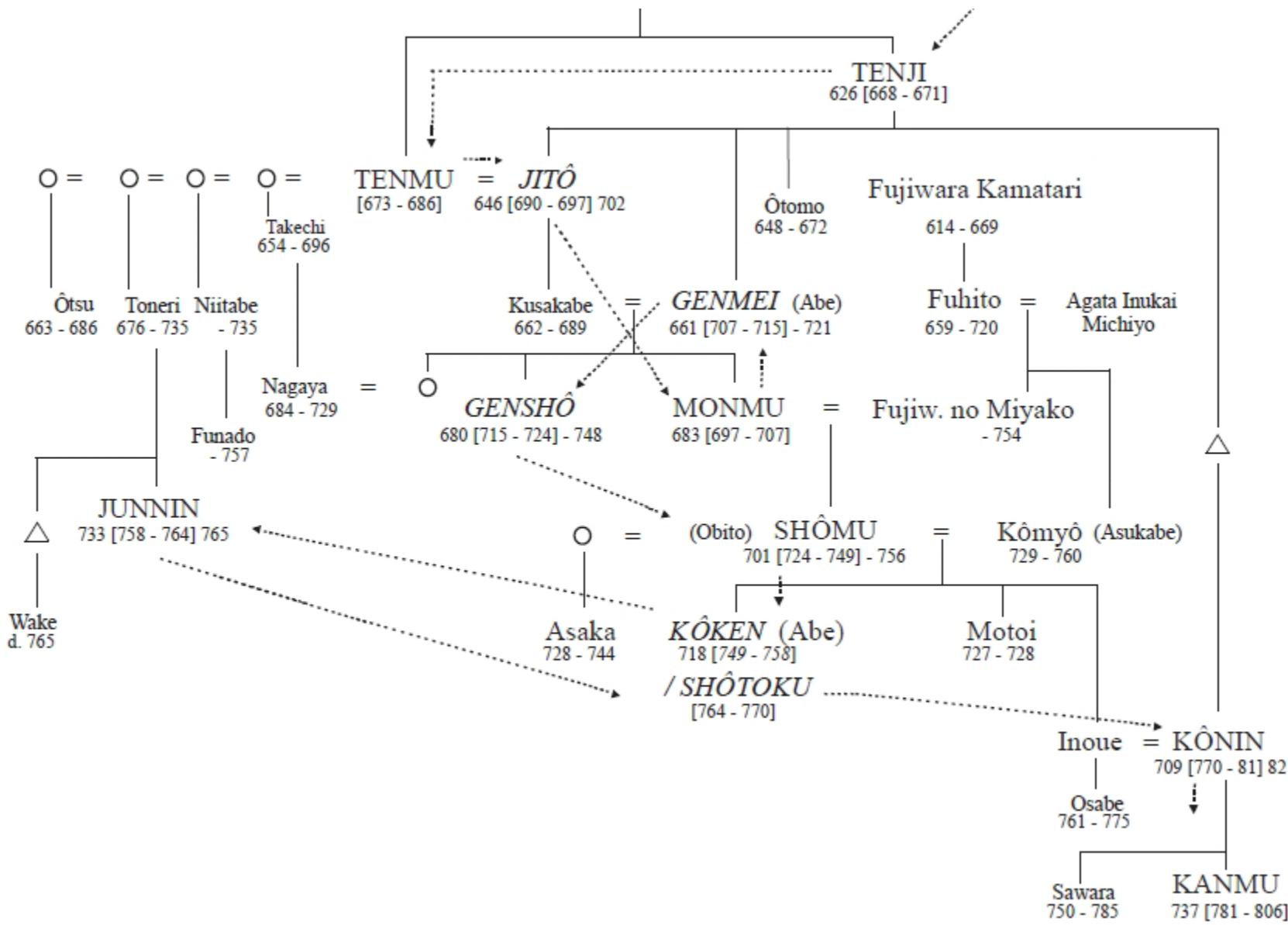
**770/8/4 + 49th day after death of Empress Shōtoku**

**[775/4/27 murder Empr. Inoue, Crown Pr. Osabe]**

**775/8/30**

**10/24**

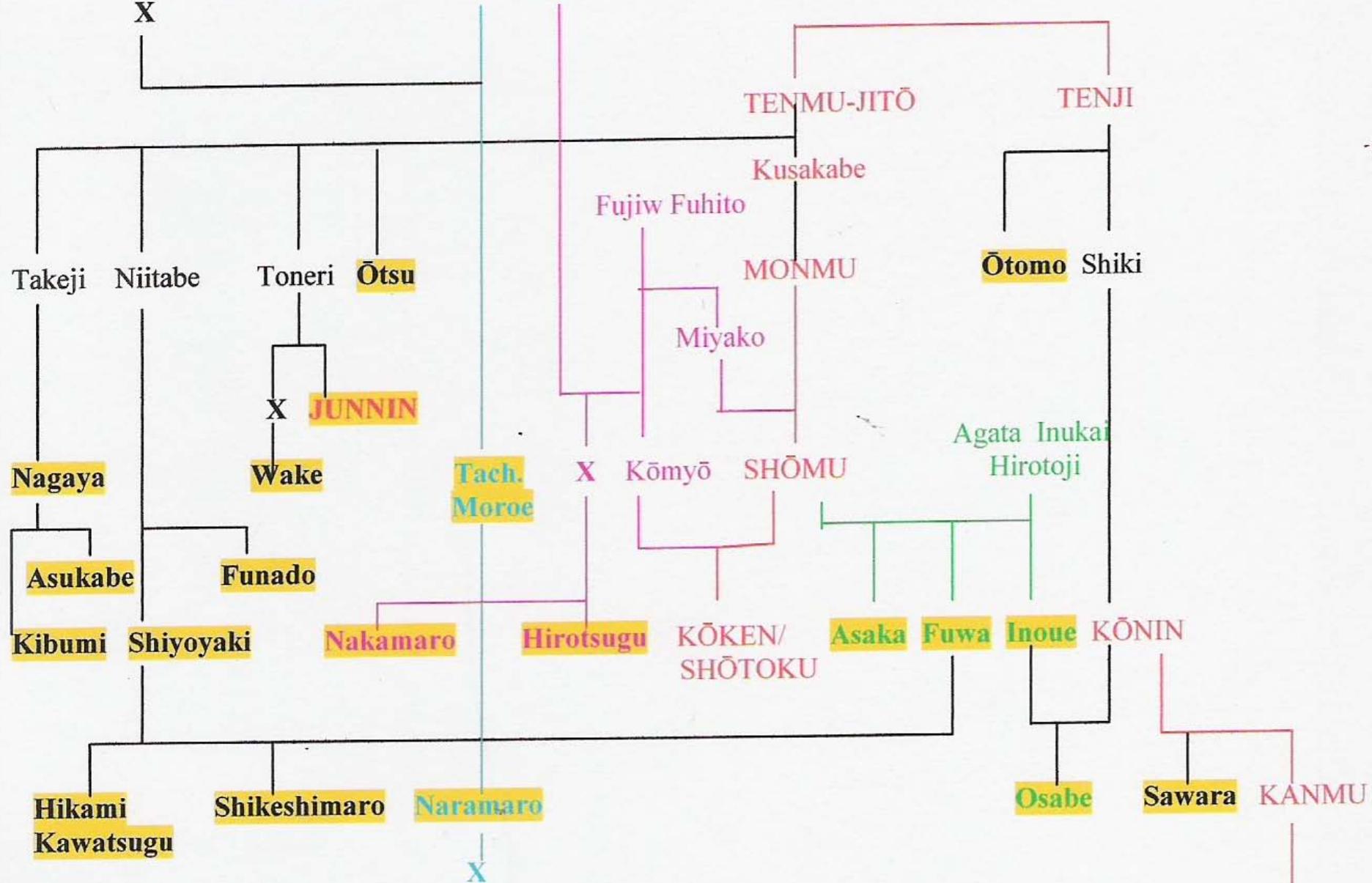
**12/regular ōharae**



A.I.Azumahito

Agata Inukai // Tachibana Michiyo

X



**729 Nagaya affair**

**756: 2 exorcists 作方相司 at funeral Emp. Shōmu**

**770/8/4 + 49th day after death of Empress Shōtoku**

**[775/4/27 murder Empr. Inoue, Crown Pr. Osabe]**

**775/8/30**

**10/24**

**12/regular ōharae**

**776/4 defilement of shrine**

**777/3 ghosts *yōkai* 妖怪 appearing**

**781: 2 exorcists at funeral Emp. Kōnin**

*harai kiyomesu* 掃い清めす

Goryō 御靈

### 3. Pollution *kegare* 犢 Inflation in the 860-890

- 792: 9 (related to *kami* and festivals)

792 - 858: 12

858 - 887: 100 (3/yr; 30 related to birth/death of dogs)

850 - 887: 927 ominous events (2/mo; 133 apparitions

*mono no ke* 物怪

851 *mure* (a swarm of) *kegare* 群犢 → *ōharae*

#### 4. Heian, a Polluted Polity *kegare kokka*

*myōhōke* 明法家, *myōhōhakase* 明法博士

Onmyōdō 陰陽道 (Yin-yang)

Shishinden 紫宸殿

859-1177: 39 new Onmyōdō rituals (22 before 1000)

*kata-imu* 方忌, *kata-tagae* 方違

Hanibe 土部

*ryōko* 陵戸

Inbe 忌部, 齋部

## **5. Institutional Devolution**

**Kurōdo-dokoro (Chamberlains' Office) (810)**

**Hiden'in 悲田院**

**清繼, 清成, 清人, 清雄**

***kiyome* 清目**

***hinin* 非人**

***hōmen* 放免**

***kawaramono* (river people): 1016**

