# Ainu people
## —History and Culture—

**The Foundation for Ainu Culture**

# Preface

The Ainu people, who are indigenous to the northern part of the Japanese archipelago, especially Hokkaido, have their own language, Ainu, and have developed a rich, diverse culture. This includes oral literature such as *yukar* epics, traditional rituals such as the *iomante* ceremony, and unique Ainu patterns.

During Japan's modern and contemporary history, however, Ainu society and culture have been severely impacted. Many Ainu have been forced to live in poverty and have been subjected to discrimination in various aspects of their lives. This has brought Ainu culture and traditions to the brink of extinction.

Despite such circumstances, some Ainu people have refused to succumb to social prejudice and have endeavored to preserve and hand down their culture. Although no one strictly follows the traditional Ainu lifestyle today, the core parts of Ainu culture and traditions have been steadily passed down. The Ainu people today are starting to develop new characteristics of their ethnic culture based on their ancestors' cultural traditions.

This booklet was compiled to provide a more accurate understanding of the Ainu, particularly regarding their history, culture, language, and lifestyle. It is our hope that the booklet will help promote Ainu culture and traditions and provide some clues for building a society in which the ethnic pride of the Ainu is respected.

February 2023

The Foundation for Ainu Culture

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# The Formation of the Ainu Culture

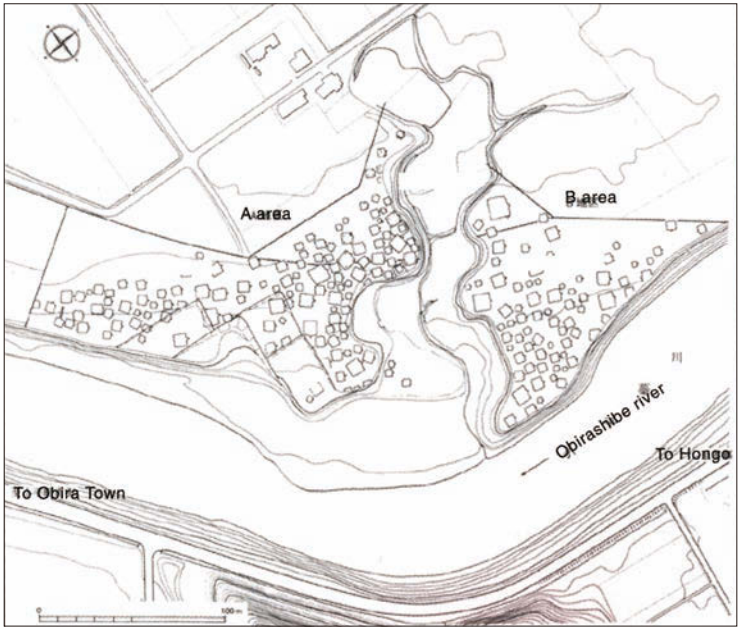
From the Yayoi period on Japan's main island of Honshu and continuing through the Kofun, Nara, Heian, and Kamakura periods there, people in Hokkaido used earthenware and subsisted by fishing, hunting, and gathering. This period in Hokkaido is called the period of the Epi-Jomon or Satsumon culture. The period of the Satsumon culture presumably started around the seventh century and transitioned into that of the Ainu culture under the influence of the Okhotsk culture between the 12th and 13th centuries, although the estimated time frame differs by researcher and region.

## The Satsumon Culture, the predecessor to the Ainu culture

Commonalities between the Satsumon and Ainu cultures include the establishment of villages in the basins or near the estuaries of rivers where salmon and trout migrating upstream could be caught. Like the Ainu, the people of the Satsumon culture depended on seasonal runs of large numbers of salmon and trout as their main source of food.

## Relationship between the Okhotsk and Ainu Cultures

The Okhotsk culture arose concurrently




Satsumon-period village
(*Obira Takasago II*, published by the Obira Town Board of Education, partially revised)

Remains of a dwelling at the Moyoro Shell Mound, which dates from the Okhotsk culture period. The left foreground shows the remains of a bone mound.
(Courtesy: Tokoro Research Laboratory, Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, The University of Tokyo, Digital Archive No. 37)

with the Satsumon culture, primarily in areas along the Sea of Okhotsk in Hokkaido. People of the Okhotsk culture kept bear skulls in their dwellings. Bears seem to have played a role in their religion. The Ainu also enshrined bear skulls on altars outside their dwellings after performing a ceremony to send back the bear's spirit.

Based on the above, the Okhotsk culture is believed to have exerted a significant influence on the Ainu culture in terms of spirituality.

## The Formation of the Ainu Culture

In light of the above-mentioned history and Ainu culture, which has been handed down for generations, people of the Satsumon culture conceivably formed the Ainu culture while influenced by the Satsumon culture. The era and other details about the Ainu culture's formation, however, have yet to be clarified.

Ainu ritual implements called *ikupasuy* (libation sticks), which are believed to have been in use between the late 16th century and the early 17th century, were recently excavated in Kaminokuni Town in southern Hokkaido. Such archaeological excavations are sure to shed light on the ancient Ainu culture.

*Ikupasuy* (libation sticks) excavated from the right bank of the Miyanosawa River in downtown Kaminokuni
(Property of the Kaminokuni Town Board of Education)

# History

While Ainu culture was established presumably around the 12th or 13th century, the first known reference to the Ainu in historical materials dates from around the 15th century. In those days, the Ainu made their livelihood primarily by fishing, hunting, and gathering plants, and they traded with peoples in other regions. It remains uncertain when Wajin* began living in Ezochi (presently Hokkaido). By the 15th century, their areas of residence had spread from Mukawa in the east to Yoichi in the west. In the vicinity of what is now Hakodate, merchant ships had come from Wakasa (in southwestern Fukui Prefecture), and wholesale shops and smithies had been established. From Ezochi, the three local specialties of kelp, dried salmon, and herring, as well as products that came from China via Kita Ezochi (presently Sakhalin), were shipped to Honshu. Iron implements, lacquerware, sake, and the like were transported from Honshu. The Ainu were direct and indirect producers and traders of articles shipped to Honshu.

## Reaching a Compromise with the Ainu

In 1456, a young Ainu man quarreled with a Wajin blacksmith in Shinori (presently Hakodate) over a knife that he had ordered. In the heat of the argument, the blacksmith knifed the young man to death, prompting an Ainu leader named Koshamain and his son to lead an uprising the following year.

With increases in the number of Wajin in Ezochi, powerful figures among them became local feudal lords and their bases were referred to as castles (*tate*). Twelve castles dotted the southern tip of the Oshima Peninsula. Koshamain and his son captured all but two of these castles in quick succession. One of the holdouts was Hanazawa Castle, under Lord KAKIZAKI Sueshige, and it was here that TAKEDA Nobuhiro was serving as a guest commander. Takeda launched a surprise attack and defeated Koshamain and his son, thereby escaping the imminent danger of annihilation. In recognition of this achievement, Takeda was made head of the Kakizaki family and later became the founder of the Matsumae family. After the Battle of Koshamain, conflicts between Ainu and Wajin occurred continually for nearly a century. These long, drawn-out conflicts were presumably caused by political or economic discord between the Ainu and the Wajin. During this time, Kakizaki solidified his position as the ruler of the Wajin and obtained the authority to collect taxes from merchant ships from Honshu. Even so, political and military stability was not achieved.

In 1550, the *Iteki no Shohaku Oukan no Hatto* (Law Concerning Commercial Vessel Traffic) was enacted to appease the Ainu and reach a compromise with them. Under this law, two Ainu leaders were made to live in the areas now known as Kaminokuni and Shiriuchi, with Ainu and Wajin living north and south of these areas, respectively. Taxes levied on merchant ships from Honshu were partially distributed to these leaders. Ainu ships lowered their sails and sailors bowed when approaching Kaminokuni in the west and Shiriuchi in the east.

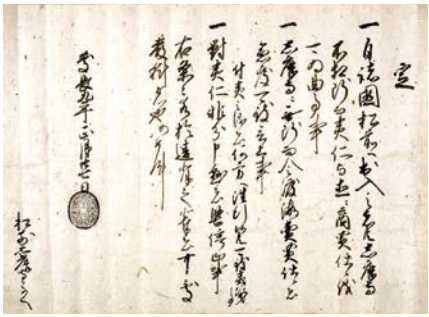
*In and before the Meiji era, "Wajin" referred to ethnic Japanese who migrated to Hokkaido from Honshu. The term is currently used to distinguish the ethnic Japanese majority from the Ainu.

Shinori Castle, one of the 12 castles along the southern tip of the Oshima Peninsula, is rectangular and measures 152.7 m east-west by 112.7 m north-south.
(Property of the Hakodate City Board of Education; Historic Site Shinoridate Ruins Aerial Photo)

## The Transition from Producers to Fishing Ground Laborers

KAKIZAKI Yoshihiro (the fifth-generation descendent of TAKEDA Nobuhiro) met TOYOTOMI Hideyoshi in Nagoya in 1593 and TOKUGAWA Ieyasu in Osaka in 1599. Around that time, he changed his surname from Kakizaki to Matsumae. In 1604, he received from TOKUGAWA Ieyasu an official letter with a black seal (*kokuin-jo*) granting him the exclusive right to trade in Ezochi. Under the shogunate government, the Matsumae clan was unable to use rice as a stipend for clansmen as was done by the clans in Honshu, because Ezochi was too cold to grow rice. The Matsumae clan instead gave upper vassals the right to trade with Ainu people in limited areas in a system that was approved by the Tokugawa shogunate. These trading areas were referred to as places of commerce (*akinaiba*) or trading posts (*basho*). The vassals who were provided with trading posts sent ships to their own trading posts once a year to trade with local Ainu. They obtained goods there and resold them in Matsumae to merchants from Honshu, living off the profits. Later on, the vassals came to borrow money to cover expenses necessary to trade with Ainu and even their own living expenses from merchants from Honshu and repaid the debts in the form of articles obtained through trade.

When the debts to the merchants began to mount, those vassals began contracting out to the merchants the management of trading posts in exchange for commissions. This is referred to as the "subcontracted trading post" (*basho ukeoi*) system. As the vassals had done, those manager merchants also traded with Ainu at their trading posts. The manager merchants themselves began to engage in fishing around 1740 or so in response to a growing demand for marine products such as dried sea cucumbers, abalone, and kelp, which were known as Nagasaki *tawaramono* (dried foods in straw bags), and for fish meal used in Honshu as fertilizer for cash crops like indigo. The manager merchants attempted to increase their catches by improving their fishing gear and introducing new techniques, which led to their use of Ainu as laborers at fishing grounds. The Ainu went from being producers and traders to living as laborers tied to the fishing grounds.



The official letter with a black seal (*kokuin-jo*) sent to MATSUMAE Yoshihiro by TOKUGAWA Ieyasu granting the Matsumae clan the exclusive right to trade in Ezochi.
(*Black-Seal Letter (Kokuin-jo) Sent by TOKUGAWA Ieyasu,* property of the Hokkaido Museum)

## The Battle of Shakushain

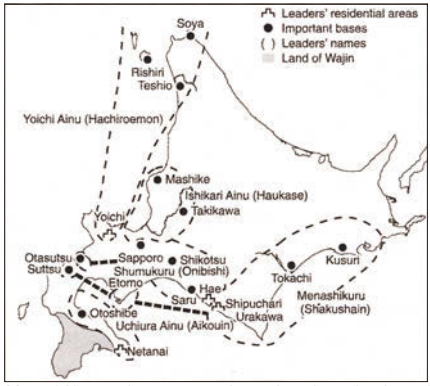
The Battle of Shakushain originated from a dispute over fishing and hunting rights between two groups of Ainu living in the Hidaka region. The dispute escalated into all-out war with the Matsumae clan in 1669, when Ainu in Ezochi responded to a call from Shakushain, one of the leaders of the two groups, to fight the oppressive Matsumae clan. The battle was roughly deadlocked until the Matsumae clan gradually prevailed, as it was backed by reinforcements from the shogunate. The war eventually ended after Shakushain was assassinated in an ambush at a feast celebrating a peace agreement. As a result, the Ainu were left with no choice but to submit to the Matsumae clan.

The Matsumae clan brought several of its battles with the Ainu to a close with surprise attacks when it thought it was losing ground.

Such incidents were reportedly attributable to the Ainu's trade-dependent livelihood. Trade, which was indispensable to the Ainu livelihood, was not simply an act of exchanging goods. Rather, it involved a solemn ceremony for politely apologizing for the long period of not keeping in touch with one's trading partners. When Wajin would politely suggest reconciliation, therefore, the Ainu, and particularly their leaders, would not brush aside such suggestions but would respond in a dignified manner.

## The Kunashiri-Menashi Battle

With the Battle of Shakushain, the Wajin solidified their advantage. Many Ainu were forced to toil at fishing grounds and put up with abuse and trading improprieties by those who were contracted to run trading posts and their subordinates. The Matsumae clan continued to open trading posts that had spread to remote places in Matsumae and beyond—even to Kunashiri Island and the Menashi region (presently Shibetsu)—by the mid-18th century. In 1789, young Ainu living on Kunashiri Island were fed up with the abuse and improprieties of HIDAYA Kyubei, a Wajin merchant and manager of the Kunashiri trading post, and these Ainu stood up to the Wajin. The fighting spread to the Menashi region on the shore across from Kunashiri Island. The battle was brought to an end by the persuasion of Ainu leaders in the Kunashiri and Akkeshi regions. Nonetheless, a punitive force dispatched by the Matsumae clan executed major Ainu figures and punished others involved in the battle. This battle prompted the Matsumae clan to bring the Ainu on Kunashiri Island and in eastern Hokkaido under its control. This was the last battle fought by the Ainu against Wajin.



Map of Ainu settlement areas by region about the time of the battle of Shakushain
(property of Hokkaido Museum)

## In the Shadow of Politics

In 1799, ten years after the Kunashiri–Menashi Battle, the Tokugawa shogunate placed Ezochi under its direct control in order to counter Russia's policy of southward expansion as well as the mismanagement of trading posts, which had imposed harsh labor conditions on Ainu at fishing grounds. The shogunate gained direct rule over the southern half of today's Hokkaido (Higashi Ezochi) in 1799, and in 1807, it extended this control to the northern half of Hokkaido (Nishi Ezochi) and today's Sakhalin (Kita Ezochi), forcing the Matsumae clan to relocate to Yanagawa (presently Yanagawa Town, Date City of Fukushima Prefecture). The shogunate conducted fair trade with the Ainu so that they would not be tempted by Russian overtures, and the shogunate had other clans in Honshu dispatch soldiers to defend Ezochi. Profits from trade were used for the management of Ezochi, but the expenses for opening roads and expanding defense preparations exceeded these profits. As a result of lowered vigilance against Russia and the Matsumae clan's campaigns for their territory's return, Ezochi was returned to the Matsumae clan in 1821.

The Tokugawa shogunate, allowing foreign ships to stop at Hakodate, started to directly rule areas around Hakodate in 1855 and put Ezochi and its surrounding islands under its control in 1856. The southwestern part of the Oshima Peninsula, however, continued to belong to the Matsumae clan, who held it to reinforce the defenses against Russia, to cultivate the land, and to foster new industries.

Japanized Ainu
(*Hakodate yori Soya made no ezu* [Pictures from Hakodate to Soya], property of Hokkaido Museum)

Aiming to demonstrate to Russia that the Ainu belonged to Japan and that their places of residence were Japanese territories, the Tokugawa shogunate tried to appease the Ainu through trade and protection, and lifted the ban on wearing bamboo hats, straw raincoats, and straw sandals that had been imposed by the Matsumae clan. Furthermore, the shogunate forced the Ainu to change their hairstyles, clothes, names, and the like to those of Honshu and outlawed traditional Ainu customs and manners, including earrings, tattoos and the ceremony to send back bear spirits. The aforementioned measures were reinforced when the Ainu came under the rule of the shogunate for the second time, provoking the antipathy of the Ainu. This indicates that the customs and manners cultivated by the Ainu were deeply rooted in their daily lives and could not be easily changed—not even by force.

## Incorporation into Japan, and the Development of Hokkaido

In 1869, the new Meiji Government renamed Ezochi as "Hokkaido," unilaterally making it part of Japan. The government incorporated the Ainu people into the nation and listed them as "commoners" on newly created family registers, but it also referred to them as "former aborigines" and continued to discriminate against them.

In the same year, the Hokkaido Development Commission (Kaitakushi), which was established to govern Hokkaido, prohibited the Ainu language and lifestyle, and introduced a policy to promote Japanization. It expropriated land and resources from the Ainu, making these national property. This property was then sold to members of the private sector. Salmon fishing and deer hunting were banned. With the establishment of a national system that aimed to move Japan away from Asia and toward Europe as well as to increase wealth and military power, social pressures that aimed to transform livelihoods and lifestyles mounted.

As a result of development policies that favored Wajin, the situation of the Ainu worsened, even to the point where they did not have enough food. Although agriculture was encouraged, in many cases it was difficult to change lifestyles overnight. For this reason, the Ainu were mistakenly defined as being deficient in property management skills, resulting in restrictions on their rights to own land and other property.

The government concluded the Treaty for the Exchange of Sakhalin for the Kuril Islands (a.k.a. the Treaty of Saint Petersburg) with Russia in 1875, forcefully relocating the Ainu on Sakhalin and the Kurils to the islands of Hokkaido and Shikotan. Those who were forced to relocate suffered from the abrupt change in lifestyle and the prevalence of diseases, and many of them died. Such forced relocation continued in many areas.

## Enactment of the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act

In 1886, the Hokkaido Government was established. The new government promoted the transfer of land and resources to the private sector to accelerate land development, thereby reducing the places where Ainu could live.

When the hardships of the Ainu were further aggravated by this policy, the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act was enacted in 1899. To stabilize the lives of the Ainu, this law was aimed at granting land to be used for farming and at assimilating the Ainu to ethnic Japanese culture by educating them in the Japanese language and Wajin customs.

Some Ainu who were given land succeeded in farming, but many failed to convert their land to farmland, thereby resulting in the expropriation of that land, or they were given land unsuitable for farming from the very beginning. Much less land was granted to Ainu than to Wajin, especially than to Wajin with large amounts of capital. The Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act allowed each Ainu household to purchase a maximum of 15,000 *tsubo* (49,500 $m^2$) of land. In contrast, the Regulations on Land Sales and Leasing in Hokkaido allowed each Wajin to purchase up to 100,000 *tsubo* (330,000 $m^2$) of land, and the Act Concerning the Disposal

Ainu from Sakhalin who were forcefully relocated to Tsuishikari
(Property of Hokkaido University Library)

of Nationally Owned Undeveloped Land in Hokkaido stipulated that up to 1.5 million *tsubo* (4.95 million $m^2$) of land brought under cultivation could be transferred to the cultivators free of charge.

With regard to the establishment of schools, there were Ainu who donated land and funds to enable their children to receive an education. However, speaking Ainu and practicing Ainu culture were prohibited at school, and children had to learn the Japanese language and Wajin lifestyle. Important aspects of education under the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act included the basic principle of education segregated from Wajin children and differences in educational content.

## From the Taisho Era to the Early Showa Era

The period from the 1910s to the 1920s saw a breath of social freedom as the waves of the Taisho democracy movement toward broader representational government spread. This prompted the Ainu to become more aggressively engaged in activities. The Ainu protested against discrimination, criticized the prejudice and lack of understanding of Wajin who still believed the Ainu were leading traditional lives, and called for independence. There were also movements to form ethnic organizations. Some Ainu were even elected to municipal assemblies.

In 1934, the Act of the Disposal of the Protected Areas for Former Aborigines in Asahikawa was enacted. This was a measure to redress the problematic situation of the Ainu in the Chikabumi district of Asahikawa, who were facing expulsion from their land. The Ainu had their representatives lobby in Tokyo and took other measures to prevent the expropriation of the land. The situation was restored to normalcy, although some problems remained unsolved, such as placing the land that was supposed to be granted to the Ainu under the control of the Governor of Hokkaido as common property.

## Ainu Activities after World War II

After Japan's defeat in World War II, Ainu people established in 1946 the Ainu Association of Hokkaido (renamed the Hokkaido Utari Association in 1961) toward becoming a proud ethnic group by enhancing their social standing. In those days, agricultural land reform was being undertaken whereby land was taken from landlords and sold to tenant farmers at low prices. As a result of this policy, much of the land granted to the Ainu under the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act was lost. The Ainu Association of Hokkaido opposed this reform, but no consideration was given to the unjust seizure of Ainu lands in the past. As a result of a series of measures taken since the Meiji era and the transfer of rights for economic reasons, land still belonging to Ainu now accounts for less than 15% of that initially granted to the Ainu.

In the 1960s, environmental improvement projects were initiated whereby assembly halls (community halls) and joint workshops were established in areas where many Ainu lived, to redress the disparity in living standards and the hardships they had faced. In 1974, the Hokkaido Utari Welfare Measures, which incorporated measures for housing, employment, school attendance, and other issues, were launched. Although this started as a one-term, seven-year program, it has been continued to date with different priorities and under different names. In the 1970s, activities designed to preserve and pass on the unique culture of the Ainu began to spread.

At its general meeting in 1984, the Hokkaido Utari Association passed a resolution to promote the draft Law Concerning the Ainu People, which calls for the restoration of basic human rights for Ainu, the elimination of discrimination against them, the introduction of special legislative seats aimed at enabling the direct reflection of Ainu representatives' views in politics, the implementation of comprehensive educational and cultural measures, and the improvement of conditions concerning agriculture, fisheries, forestry, commerce, and industry that would allow the Ainu to achieve economic independence. The Association lobbied the Hokkaido Government, the central government, the Diet, and other organizations for the enactment of this new law. After then Prime Minister NAKASONE Yasuhiro stated in 1986 that "Japan is an ethnically homogeneous nation" and that "there is no discrimination against ethnic minorities who hold Japanese citizenship," discussions and campaigns related to the Ainu gathered momentum. In addition, the Ainu began to pay attention to international trends with regard to the rights of indigenous peoples, which accelerated their exchanges with other indigenous peoples with whom they share circumstances of subjugation, oppression, and disadvantage in today's nations and societies. Against this backdrop, the first Ainu was elected to the Upper House of the Japanese Diet in 1994.

## Enactment of the Ainu Culture Promotion Act

In response to wide-ranging campaigns carried on mainly by Ainu seeking the enactment of a new law, the Act on the Promotion of Ainu Culture, and Dissemination and Enlightenment of Knowledge about Ainu Tradition, etc. came into force and the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act was abolished in 1997.

The new law, however, addressed only cultural aspects from among all the requests that the Hokkaido Utari Association had made.

## Societal Trends at Home and Abroad

While the enactment of the Ainu Culture Promotion Act broadened the foundations for activities to hand down the Ainu language and traditional culture, challenges such as wealth gaps, prejudice, and discrimination remained. The Ainu, therefore, continued their campaigns within and beyond Japan.

The United Nations had long studied ways to restore the rights of indigenous peoples around the world. Finally in September 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which sets out international guidelines for policies related to indigenous peoples.

Based on this declaration, the Japanese Diet unanimously passed the Resolution to Recognize the Ainu as an Indigenous People of Japan in June 2008. In response to the Resolution, the Chief Cabinet Secretary announced the government's intention to establish Ainu policy based on the recognition that the Ainu are an indigenous people. In July of the same year, the government established the Advisory Council for Future Ainu Policy. In April 2009, the Hokkaido Utari Association was renamed the Ainu Association of Hokkaido.

In response to a set of recommendations contained in a report submitted by the Advisory Council in July 2009, the government established the Council for Ainu Policy Promotion in December of the same year as a forum for discussion to reflect opinions of the Ainu in policy promotion. Furthermore, working groups were established under the Council to discuss the development of a Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony as the cornerstone of Ainu policy, the deployment of measures from a national perspective based on results of the Survey on the Ainu Living Conditions outside Hokkaido, and activities to promote the understanding of the people of Japan. Based on these discussions, the government promoted the implementation of Ainu policy measures.

## Enactment of the Ainu Policy Promotion Act and the opening of Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park

In June 2014, the government approved at a Cabinet meeting the Basic Policy for Development, Management and Operation of Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony to Promote the Revival of Ainu Culture, with the decision that the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony be set up in the area near Lake Poroto in Shiraoi Town. The Act Promoting Measures to Achieve a Society in which the Pride of Ainu People is Respected (a.k.a. the Ainu Policy Promotion Act) was promulgated in April 2019 and came into effect on May 24. The law was the first to recognize the Ainu as an indigenous people of Japan. It also prohibits discrimination on the basis of Ainu ethnicity, provides for grants, and stipulates the establishment of the Ainu Policy Headquarters in the Cabinet. Based on this law, the Foundation for Ainu Culture was designated by the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology as a juridical person in charge of promoting Ainu culture and managing the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony (Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park).

In July 2020, Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park opened as a hub for the revival and development of Ainu culture—an invaluable culture in Japan that is on the verge of extinction—and as a symbol of Japan's commitment to creating a vibrant, discrimination-free society in which the dignity of the indigenous people is fully respected and in which rich, diverse cultures flourish.

# Language

## Familiar Ainu Words

The Ainu language is unique to the Ainu. Familiar Ainu words include place names. These names are found not just in Hokkaido, but also on Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands and in the Tohoku region in northeastern Honshu. For example, the words *pet* and *nay*, as in Noboribetsu (*nupur-pet*) and Wakkanai (*wakka-nay*), mean "river" in Ainu. This indicates that native Ainu speakers had long lived in these areas.

Other familiar Ainu words include *shishamo* (*susam* in Ainu, or smelt), *rakko* (*rahko*, or sea otter), and *tonakai* (*tunakkay*, or reindeer), the last of which pull Santa's sled.

## Stories

The Ainu have handed down many stories from generation to generation. These stories are diverse, ranging from adventure stories with boy or girl protagonists, to tales featuring bear, fox, and other animal deities as the main characters, to those of historical events and the experiences of the elderly. Storytellers incorporate unique melodies, particularly in tales involving adventures and deities.

Many of these stories include the wisdom of living amidst nature, methods for making use of nature, and the like. Various lessons can be learned by listening to them.

Reindeer running on the snow
(Private property)

Storytelling
(*Meiji shoki Ainu fuzoku emaki* [Picture scroll of Ainu customs in the early Meiji era] (tentative title), Property of the Hakodate City Central Library)

## The Ainu Language Today

In the Meiji era, the Ainu were forced to use the language and customs of the Wajin (ethnic Japanese from Honshu). Since Japanese was taught at school, there were few opportunities for Ainu to speak their own language. As a result, only a few Ainu speakers remain. Today, however, various activities aimed at increasing the number of people who can speak the Ainu language, which has been passed down by their ancestors, have been conducted, such as Ainu language courses and Ainu-language radio programs.

Textbooks for 2020 Ainu language radio programs
(Vols. 1 - 4)

Advanced Ainu language course
(in Urakawa) (Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

# Religious Faith

## Coexistence with Deities

The Ainu believe that everything in their realm *(ainumosir)*, including animals, plants, tools, tsunamis, earthquakes, and endemic diseases, has a *ramat* (spirit). *Ramat* that are important for humans, that strongly affect us, or that are beyond our control are called *kamuy* (deities).

The Ainu believe that *kamuy* look and live like humans in the realm of *kamuy* and have emotions just as humans do. When they visit the realm of humans, they manifest as animals, plants, natural phenomena, and the like.

The Ainu take every opportunity to pray to deities. No matter which deities they pray to, they start by praying to *apehuci kamuy*, the deity of fire, so that their prayers will also reach the deity they are aimed at. *Apehuci kamuy*, which resides in the hearth of each *cise* (house), is the deity with whom the Ainu are most familiar, the one who keeps watch over them.

Ceremony to send back the spirit of a bear
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

An *ikupasuy* (libation stick) and a *tuki* (lacquered cup), used when praying to deities
The *ikupasuy* is used to convey people's prayers to deities.
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

## Sending Back the Spirits of Deities

The Ainu Bear Festival is well known. Bears are believed to play the role of delivering fur, meat, and the like to the Ainu, and the festival is actually a ritual to send the spirits of bears who have visited *ainumosir*, the Ainu homeland, back to the world where they belong. Sending back spirits involves a solemn ceremony accompanied by a huge feast and the handing out of mementos. Ceremonies to send the spirits of things and phenomena in *ainumosir* back to the world where they belong have been very important to the Ainu. The more closely related are the spirits to daily life, the grander and more solemn is the ceremony.

*Inaw* (prayer sticks) used when praying to deities
*Inaw* has many roles: the *inaw* itself serves as a deity and also becomes an offering to deities.
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

*Inoka* (wooden figures used as charms)
Wooden figures called *inoka* were used by the Ainu on Sakhalin. They were made for use in ceremonies to send back bear spirits.
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

# Living

## Life in the *Kotan*

The Ainu people built their houses and villages in areas along rivers and sea coasts where they could easily obtain food and drinking water and would be safe from natural disasters.

Their villages, called *kotan* in Ainu, consisted of several to more than ten houses. Led by village leaders, people lived by hunting, fishing, and gathering plants in the mountains, rivers, and seas near their *kotan*.

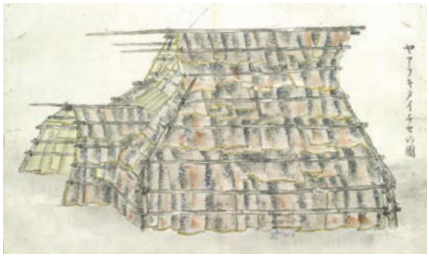
A restored *cise*, food storage and altar
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

## *Cise*

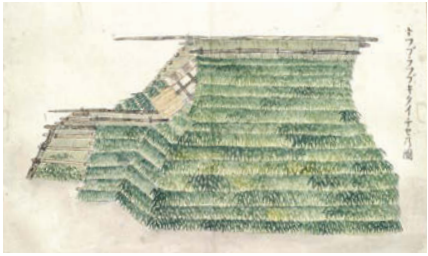
Houses built in *kotan* are called *cise* in Ainu. The most distinctive feature of a *cise* is that natural materials were used for the framework, roof, walls, and other parts. For example, the Japanese tree lilac and the Manchurian ash were used for the framework. Grasses such as reeds and bamboo grass, the bark of Amur cork trees and birch trees, and other materials were used for the walls and roofs. When building a *cise*, people in the *kotan* cooperated in everything from gathering the materials to doing the actual construction.

The roof of the *cise* sloped down on all four sides, and the entrance often had a small room used as an entranceway or storage space.

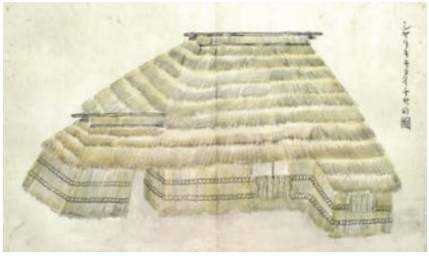
*Cise* varied in size from about 20 $m^2$ to about 100 $m^2$.



A *cise* made using bark
(*Ezo-shima zusetsu* [Illustrated exposition of Ezo Island], Property of the Hakodate City Central Library)



A *cise* made using bamboo grass
(*Ezo-shima zusetsu* [Illustrated exposition of Ezo Island], Property of the Hakodate City Central Library)

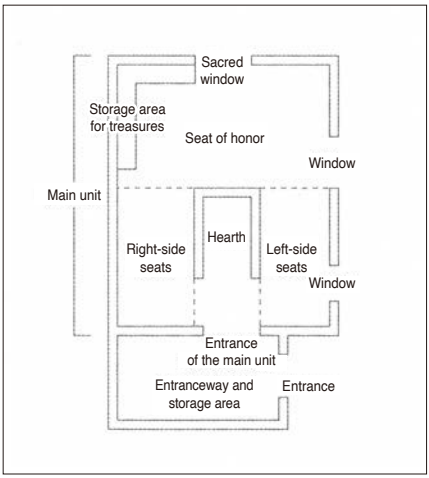


A *cise* made using reeds
(*Ezo-shima zusetsu* [Illustrated exposition of Ezo Island], Property of the Hakodate City Central Library)

## The *Cise* Interior

Inside the *cise* was a square room with a hearth set slightly off-center toward the entrance. The *cise* had one window opposite the entrance and one or two other windows on the wall to the right (or left) of the entrance. The window facing the entrance was treasured as a sacred window through which deities came and went. In the back-left corner was a storage area for family heirlooms and treasures where lacquered containers, swords, and other valuables were displayed, and the deities of the house were enshrined above them.

Inside the *cise*, seats for family members and guests were assigned, as were sleeping spaces. Such traditional *cise* gradually disappeared with the times. Today, restored *cise* can be observed at museums and places that are active in transmitting Ainu culture.




The interior of a *cise*, with left- and right-side seats as seen from the sacred window.

## *Cise* Surroundings

Around the *cise* were poles for drying clothes on, a food shed, an outhouse, and other structures necessary for daily life, as well as an altar for prayer and a cage for a bear or other animal. *Cise* and surrounding structures in each region had a distinctive layout.

*Cise* in Obihiro during the Taisho era (early 20th century)
(Property of Obihiro Centennial City Museum)

# Livelihood

## Fishing, Hunting, and Gathering Plants

Amidst the harsh natural environment of the north, the Ainu lived by fishing, hunting, gathering plants, and engaging in other activities in mountains, fields, seas, and rivers throughout the year. They worked not only to obtain food, but also to make tools for everyday use. Men engaged in fishing, hunting, and other physical work, whereas women and children picked wild vegetables, wove fabric on looms, and did other light work. Such activities were performed throughout the year: Early spring was for hunting Yezo sika deer and brown bear, as well as for picking wild vegetables; summer was for trout fishing in rivers; autumn was for salmon fishing in rivers and offshore, as well as for wild vegetable picking; and winter was for hunting small animals such as rabbits and sable.

As valuable foods, the Ainu hunted Yezo sika deer, brown bears, seals, Steller's sea lions, fur seals, and other mammals, caught fish such as trout and salmon, and gathered wild vegetables, including giant lilies (*Cardiocrinum cordatum* var. *glehnii*).

The hides and skin of Yezo sika deer, brown bears, seals, and salmon were used for clothes, boots, bags, and other items.

Plants such as the Manchurian elm, Japanese linden, and nettles were collected primarily to make clothes and bags. The Ainu on the Kuril Islands also caught tufted puffins and other birds from which to fashion clothes. Numerous tools were used according to the task at hand: bows and arrows, traps, *marek* (fishing spears), *kite* (toggling harpoons), hunting nets, digging devices, reaping tools, looms, *makiri* (knives), and more.

After cultivation techniques were introduced to the Ainu by Wajin, simple farming was practiced in addition to the traditional work of hunting, fishing, and gathering plants.

Picking giant lilies (*Cardiocrinum cordatum var. glehnii*) (*Meiji shoki Ainu fuzoku emaki* [Picture scroll of Ainu customs in the early Meiji era] (tentative title), property of the Hakodate City Central Library)

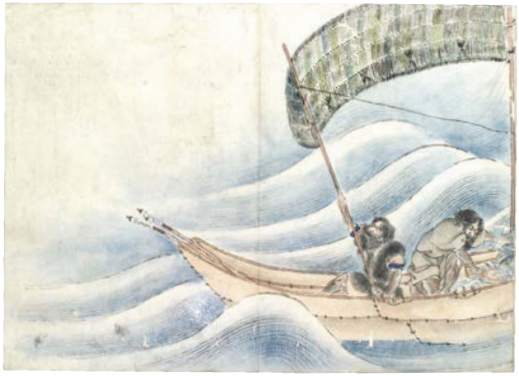
A woman weaves *attus* (bark cloth). (Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

## Overseas Trade

The fruits of their labor were used for food, materials for everyday tools, and trade items. Pelts of Yezo sika deer, sables, and other animals; hawk feathers; and other items were traded to Wajin and other surrounding peoples, including those on Sakhalin and in Russia's Primorsky and Kamchatka regions, for glass beads, silk fabric, metal implements and the like.

The subsistence activities of the Ainu and the hunting tools and fishing gear they used, including *marek* (fishing spears), *kite* (toggling harpoons), and hunting traps, resembled those of surrounding peoples, including those in Russia's Primorsky and Kamchatka regions. This indicates that the Ainu lived their lives while enjoying exchanges with surrounding peoples.

River fishing
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)



Ainu sailed *itaomacip* (oceangoing boarded boats) and actively engaged in trade.
(*Ezo-shima zusetsu* [Illustrated exposition of Ezo Island], Property of the Hakodate City Central Library)

# Food

The Ainu spent a great deal of time during the year gathering food in the wilds. They never uprooted wild plants, but rather left the roots behind to secure a harvest for the following year. Seasonal wild plants, game, and seafood were served at dining tables while also being stored for the long winter and occasions of poor harvests.

*Pukusa* (victory onion)
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

The Ainu cooked by stewing, roasting, and boiling. Main dishes included *ohaw* and *rur* (soups), which were cooked by simmering meat or fish with wild vegetables as the base. There were different kinds of *ohaw* depending on the ingredients, such as *cep ohaw* (salmon soup), *pukusa ohaw* (victory onion soup), and *kam ohaw* (meat soup).

Side dishes included *sayo* (porridge), cooked by simmering grains such as foxtail millet and barnyard millet, and *rataskep* (stew), cooked by stewing wild vegetables until the liquid had almost completely evaporated. Meat and fish were also skewered and grilled. They were eaten raw in some seasons.

Dried grilled Japanese dace: Fish caught in summer were grilled and sun-dried for storage.
(Property of the Shinhidaka Town Museum)

## Ceremonial Meals

During ceremonies to send back the spirits of bears or Blakiston's fish owls, rituals of ancestor worship, weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies, special dishes such as boiled grains and dumplings were prepared in addition to ordinary meals. Ainu enjoyed these special dishes, which could be eaten only a few times a year, not only among themselves but also with their ancestors and deities.

## Passing on Traditions

By the end of the Edo period (the mid-19th century), the Ainu also began to grow vegetables, which were used for a wide variety of dishes. From the Meiji era, which followed the Edo period, the environment surrounding the Ainu and their eating habits underwent significant changes due to increases in the number of immigrants from Honshu. One example is the use of seasonings. Dishes cooked today throughout Hokkaido are based on those cooked in those days. *Cep ohaw* (salmon soup), *rataskep* (stew), and many other dishes were popular as daily dishes or special ceremonial dishes. This tradition has been passed on to date.

*Cep ohaw*
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

*Rataskep*
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

Dumplings called *sito*
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

Dishes cooked for the ceremony to send back bear spirits: People enjoyed them together with the deities.
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

# Clothing

## Everyday Clothes and Festive Attire

The Ainu had everyday clothes, and festive clothes for special occasions. The oldest traditional Ainu clothing can be seen in ancient records such as *Ezo-shima kikan* (Wonderful sights of Ezo Island), written by a Wajin during the second half of the Edo period. They show clothes traditionally made by the Ainu and those obtained through trade with other peoples.

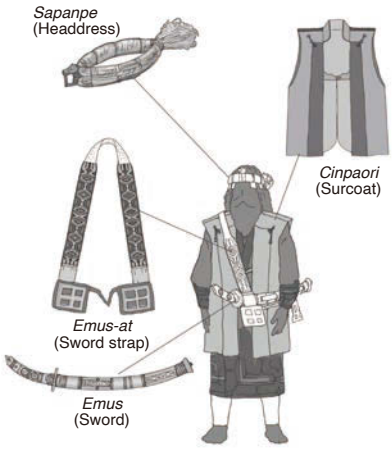
Traditional Ainu clothes included garments woven using the inner bark fibers of trees such as the Manchurian elm and the Japanese linden, those woven from nettle fibers, those made of salmon and trout skins, those made of seal or brown bear pelts, and those sewn from tufted puffin feathers.

Festive clothes included those made of cotton or silk obtained through trade with Wajin and other peoples. For ceremonies and rituals, the Ainu also wore clothes used by other peoples, such as Santan silk robes and *jinbaori* surcoats.

Among the many types of clothes, those made using traditional techniques passed from mother to daughter were unisex, and many of them had patterns distinctive to each region of Hokkaido and Sakhalin.

The Ainu also wore accessories that included headbands, coverings for the back of the hands, gaiters, and aprons for ceremonies and work. To keep out the cold during winter hunting in the mountains, they wore cotton or fur headdress, as well as boots made of salmon skins or deer hides.

Depicted at the far left is a person wearing a garment made by sewing together feathery bird skins.
(*Ezo-shima kikan* [Wonderful sights of Ezo Island), Property of the Hakodate City Central Library)




Full dress for men
(Illustration by KITAHARA Mokottunas)

## Unique Patterns

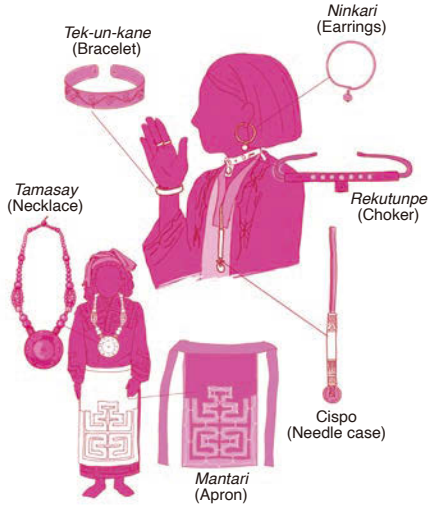
These clothes and other articles meant to be worn were embroidered and/or appliqued with Ainu patterns. Popular patterns include whorls called *moreu* and thorns known as *ayus*.

Tradition has it that the patterns on the cuffs and hems of clothes would prevent evil spirits from entering through those openings. These patterns are similar to those on clothes worn by peoples living in Russia's Primorsky and Sakhalin regions, indicating mutual influences through exchanges.

Male ornaments worn for bear spirit-sending ceremonies and other rituals include headdresses made of wood shavings and decorative swords. These ornaments and accessories such as necklaces and earrings are among many obtained from other peoples.

*Cep ker* (Salmon-skin boots)
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

*Ruunpe* (cotton garment)
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)




Full dress for women
(Illustration of KITAHARA Mokottunas)

# Entertainment

## Dance

The Ainu almost always sang and danced during work, rituals, and get-togethers with relatives and friends. There are various dances: those in a large circle, called *rimse, upopo*, or *horippa*; those to pay homage to the deities; playful dances; those born out of rituals to ward off bad deities; those to pray for luck in fishing and hunting; work dances; and those that mimic the movements of animals. Most of these have been primarily performed by women, and men-only dances are rare. These dances have been performed to the singing and clapping of the dancers and bystanders, without musical accompaniment.

For the Ainu, dancing is something to be enjoyed together with deities

Crane dance
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

## Songs That Express Feelings

With these dances are songs referred to as *yaysama* and *yaysamanena*. Mainly sung by women, they express inner feelings, such as sorrow or love for their beloved. Singers would use their own lyrics and melodies.

Songs sung by individuals have been passed down by locals and enjoyed as folk songs.

## *Mukkuri*

The *mukkuri*, also called a mouth harp or a Japanese lute, is an Ainu musical instrument made from dwarf bamboo (*Sasa kurilensis*) and other materials. It is shaped like a thin plate and measures 10 to 15 cm in length by 1 cm in width. It has a tongue-shaped groove in the center, with a string attached to both ends. To play it, you hold a looped string attached to one end, put your hand against the side of your mouth, and then pull the string attached to the other end to make a sound by vibrating the reed. The player produces various tones by opening and closing their mouth in line with their breathing and by pulling the string strongly or gently.

Mouth harps are used around the world, and not just by the Ainu. They are also used by indigenous peoples of Taiwan, ethnic minorities in other northern regions, and other peoples.

## *Tonkori*

The *tonkori* is a stringed instrument primarily used by the Ainu on Sakhalin. A log is hollowed out to make the body, and then a top plate is attached. It measures 70 to 150 cm in length by approximately 15 cm in width and has five strings, or sometimes three or six strings. For the body, Yezo spruce, Japanese yew, Japanese whitebark magnolia, and other trees were used. For the strings, fibers from nettles (*Urtica platyphylla*) were twisted tightly into thread, or tendons from whales, deer, reindeer, or other animals were used. To play a *tonkori*, one holds it in one's arms and plucks the strings with both hands, without pressing on them.

A *mukkuri* player
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

*Mukkuri*
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

*Tonkorii*
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

# Present-Day Ainu Culture

Since the Meiji era, the Ainu people have walked a path of hardships, being denied their distinctive culture and victimized with unjust discrimination. The Ainu were considered a dying ethnic group, their culture a dying culture. It was from this perspective that KINDAICHI Kyosuke and other ethnic Japanese researchers conducted research on Ainu culture.

The Ainu, however, have refused to succumb to social prejudice and have striven to preserve and hand down their culture. Among those who have done this are KANNARI Matsu, CHIRI Yukie, and CHIRI Mashiho. CHIRI Yukie authored *Ainu Shin'yoshu* (Collection of Ainu chants of spiritual beings), which was published posthumously in 1923 and which introduced *yukar* (mythic epics) to the world. Kannari transcribed oral literature, including *yukar* sagas, in Romanized Japanese, leaving behind dozens of notebooks. Moreover, IBOSHI Hokuto, MORITAKE Takeichi, BATCHELOR Yaeko, and others explored their ethnic identity through literary works, including by expressing Ainu points of view and feelings in the form of *tanka* and other poems.

CHIRI Yukie
(Property of Chiri Shinsha (NPO corporation)

*Ainu Shin'yoshu*
[Collection of Ainu chants of spiritual beings]
(Property of the Hokkaido Museum of Literature)

## Spiritual Culture – Revival of Traditional Rituals and Ceremonies

Among the social transformations that took place in and after the Meiji era, the loss of religious freedom dealt the Ainu a particularly severe blow. In particular, the ceremony to send back bear spirits, the most important and grandest of their ceremonies, was banned. The ceremony to welcome the first salmon of the year also became difficult to perform in the wake of a salmon fishing ban.

From around 1975, there were calls for the revival of traditional rituals, and ceremonies to send back bear spirits were performed in Biratori, Shiraoi, and Asahikawa, among other places.

In 1983, a ceremony was performed to

Ceremony to welcome the first salmon of the year
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

Performance of traditional dances at the Ainu Cultural Festival
(Property of the Foundation for Ainu Culture)

send back the spirit of a Blakiston's fish owl on the shore of Lake Kussharo. The ceremony to welcome the first salmon of the year has been performed on the Toyohira River in Sapporo since 1982. This ceremony has recently come to be carried out in many other places as well. Rituals of ancestor worship are also flourishing anew in various areas.

## Traditional Dances

Traditional dances, including those with regional variations, have been preserved and passed down. More than 20 preservation societies and transmission groups have been established in Hokkaido and the Kanto region, among which the traditional dances of 17 preservation societies have been collectively designated as an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Japan.

These preservation societies participate in the Ainu Ethnic Cultural Festival and the Ainu Cultural Festival, which are held annually, and perform local dances that have been passed down from generation to generation. In recent years, these societies have begun holding performances overseas to share Ainu culture in countries including the U.S., the U.K., and Finland. Moreover, dances are performed at various ceremonies in various places, and the participants in these ceremonies enjoy dancing with the members of the preservation societies.

As the keepers of Ainu culture grow older, more and more young people are beginning to participate in the dances. The circle of people passing down the culture is growing.

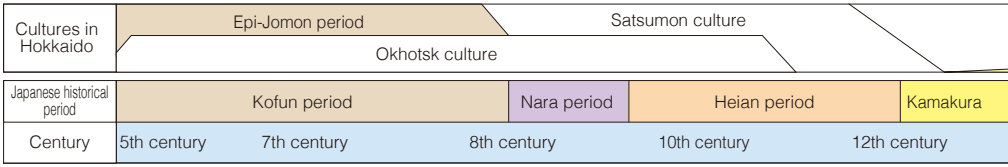
## Further Spread

Since the enactment in 1997 of the Act on the Promotion of Ainu Culture, and Dissemination and Enlightenment of Knowledge about Ainu Tradition, etc., Ainu activities to preserve and hand down their traditional culture have gained considerable traction. In addition to the revival of their spiritual culture, Ainu people across Hokkaido and those living on Honshu, centering around Tokyo, have begun working to revive traditional Ainu lifestyle and culture, including by constructing houses, building boats, and sewing clothes. The previously sporadic activities to preserve and hand down the culture have become more organized on a broader footing.

We must not forget that the revival of Ainu culture is in large part due to the efforts of *ekas* and *fuci* (elder men and women) who faithfully inherited their traditional culture despite the adversity they faced.

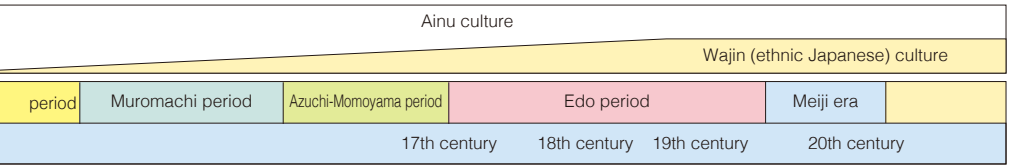
# The History of the Ainu

| | |
|---|---|
| Before the 7th century | The Epi-Jomon culture period |
| 658 | Attack on the Emishi (Ezo) by ABE no Hirafu, according to the *Nihon Shoki* (The Chronicles of Japan) |
| 7th to 11th century | The Okhotsk culture period |
| 8th to 13th century | The Satsumon culture period |
| 1356 | A description of the Ainu in *Suwa Daimyojin Ekotoba* [Illustrated Record of Suwa Daimyojin Shrine] |
| 1443 | ANDO Morisue's escape to Ezo Island (the current Hokkaido) with the ensuing mass migration of Wajin (ethnic Japanese) to the island |
| 1457 | The Battle of Koshamain |
| 1550 | Establishment by KAKIZAKI Suehiro of the I*teki no Shohaku Oukan no Hatto* (Law Concerning Commercial Vessel Traffic) |
| 1593 | Issuance by TOYOTOMI Hideyoshi of a *shuin-jo* red-sealed letter authorizing KAKIZAKI (later MATSUMAE) Yoshihiro to trade with the Ainu |
| 1604 | Receipt by MATSUMAE Yoshihiro from TOKUGAWA Ieyasu of a *kokuin-jo* black-sealed letter granting him the exclusive right to trade in Ezochi |
| 1669 | The Battle of Shakushain |
| 1789 | The Kunashiri–Menashi Battle |
| 1799 | The shogunate puts the southern half of today's Hokkaido (Higashi Ezochi) under its direct control. |
| 1807 | The shogunate puts Matsumae and the northern half of today's Hokkaido (Nishi Ezochi) under its direct control, forcing the Matsumae clan to relocate to Yanagawa (presently Yanagawa Town, Date City of Fukushima Prefecture). |
| 1821 | The shogunate returns Ezochi to the Matsumae clan's control. |
| 1855 (Dec.) | Conclusion of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Japan and Russia (with the official border between Japan and Russia set between the islands of Etorofu and Uruppu, and with the status of Sakhalin left undetermined) |
| 1855 | The return of Kikonai, Otobe, and areas farther north to the shogunate's direct control following the opening of Hakodate Port, and the ordering of feudal domains in northeastern Honshu to guard those regions |
| 1869 | Ezochi is renamed Hokkaido as the Hokkaido Development Commission is established; 11 countries and 86 municipalities are established.<br>Abolition of the subcontracted trading post system<br>Note: Despite the system's abolition, the manager merchants, renamed "persons with fishing grounds," are allowed to manage their fishing grounds as before (until 1876). |
| 1871 | The Family Register Act, which categorizes the Ainu as *heimin* (commoners), is enacted; by proclamation, the Hokkaido Development Commission prohibits the Ainu from performing the ritual for when someone dies by "sending away" the house of the deceased, women from having tattoos, and men from wearing earrings, and encourages farming and the acquisition of the Japanese language. |
| 1872 | The Hokkaido Development Commission attempts to provide the Ainu with a Japanese education at a provisional school located in Shiba Zojoji Temple in Tokyo and on the Development Commission's experimental farm in Shibuya, Tokyo.<br>The Hokkaido Development Commission establishes the *Jisho Kisoku* (Regulation for Land in Hokkaido) and the *Hokkaido Tochi Baitai Kisoku* (Regulation for the Lease and Sale of Land in Hokkaido). |
| 1875 | Based on the Treaty for the Exchange of Sakhalin for the Kuril Islands, 841 Ainu from 108 households are forcefully relocated from Sakhalin to Soya (and to Tsuishikari (today's Ebetsu City) in June of the following year).<br>The first *tondenhei* farmer-soldiers (198 households) settle in Kotoni (Sapporo). |
| 1876 | The Hokkaido Development Commission Sapporo Main Office proclaims that the Ainu are prohibited from hunting with bow traps and that hunting rifles be lent out instead.<br>Hokkaido Deer Hunting Regulations are stipulated.<br>The Hokkaido Development Commission Sapporo Main Office strictly bans Ainu from wearing earrings (men) and having tattoos (women), ordering Directors of the Main Office and the Branch Offices to harshly punish violators. |
| 1877 | The *Hokkaido Chiken Hakko Jorei* (Ordinance for the Issuance of Land Deeds in Hokkaido) is enacted, incorporating Ainu settlements into Type 3 Government-owned Land. |
| 1878 | The Hokkaido Development Commission adopts the uniform term *kyudojin* ("former aborigine") to refer to the Ainu. |
| 1880 | A school for Ainu children is established in Biratori and Usu villages. |
| 1882 | The Hokkaido Development Commission is abolished; three prefectures are set up in Hakodate, Sapporo, and Nemuro, |
| 1883 | Sapporo Prefecture prohibits salmon fishing at the upper reaches of the Tokachi River. |
| 1884 | Ninety-seven Ainu on Shumshu Island are relocated to Shikotan Island. |
| 1886 | The three prefectures of Hakodate, Sapporo, and Nemuro, as well as the Hokkaido Business Administration Bureau, are abolished; the Hokkaido Government is established.<br>The *Hokkaido Tochi Haraisage Kisoku* (Regulation for the Disposal of Land in Hokkaido) is enacted. |




Sources for the historical periods in Hokkaido: Practical Guide 2 for The Establishment of Ainu Culture Permanent Exhibition, compiled by the Historical Museum of Hokkaido (1999), and illustrations in *The History and Culture of the Ainu People*, compiled under the general editorship of Hiroshi Tabata and Masato Kuwabara (2000); partially modified

| | |
|---|---|
| 1889 | Deer hunting, which had been permitted to the Ainu as a subsistence activity, is prohibited. |
| 1894 | Of the 1.5 million *tsubo* of wilderness in the Chikabumi district of Asahikawa that is planned to be granted to the Ainu, only 458,000 *tsubo* is actually granted. |
| 1897 | The *Hokkaido Kokuyu Mikaichi Shobun Ho* (Act on the Disposal of Undeveloped National Lands in Hokkaido) is promulgated. |
| 1899 | The Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act is promulgated. |
| 1900 | A scandal occurs over the possible expropriation of land granted to Ainu in Asahikawa. |
| 1901 | *Kyu-Dojin Jido Kyoiku Kitei* (Regulation for the Education of Former Aboriginal Children) is promulgated.<br>Note: Biratori Primary School, the Former Muroran Primary School, Abuta Second Primary School, and Shiraoi Second Primary School are established at national expense. After that, 21 schools are founded by the end of the Meiji era. When a primary school for Wajin children and one for Ainu children exist in the same school district, the former is referred to as the First Primary School and the latter as the Second Primary School. |
| 1908 | The Regulation for the Education of Former Aboriginal Children is abolished. (The second Regulation for the Education of Former Aboriginal Children is promulgated in 1916.) |
| 1916 | To make way for an imperial ranch, 80 Ainu households in Niikappu Village are forced to relocate. |
| 1922 | The second Regulation for the Education of Former Aboriginal Children is abolished. |
| 1923 | *Ainu Shin'yoshu* (Collection of Ainu chants of spiritual beings), authored by CHIRI Yukie, is published. |
| 1931 | The 1st Hokkaido Ainu Youth Conference is held at Gyoyu Kindergarten in Sapporo. |
| 1934 | The *Asahikawa-shi Kyu-Dojin Hogochi Shobun Ho* (Act on the Disposal of the Protected Areas for Former Aborigines in Asahikawa) is promulgated. |
| 1946 | The Ainu Association of Hokkaido is established. (It is renamed the Hokkaido Utari Association in 1961, and then the Ainu Association of Hokkaido in 2009. |
| 1984 | The Hokkaido Utari Association passes a resolution to promote the draft Law Concerning the Ainu People at its general meeting.<br>Traditional Ainu dance is designated as an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Japan. |
| 1988 | The Hokkaido Government, the Hokkaido Legislative Assembly, and the Hokkaido Utari Association lobby the national government for the enactment of the Law Concerning the Ainu People. |
| 1989 | The government establishes the interagency Consultative Committee on New Ainu Law. |
| 1994 | Shigeru Kayano is elected to Japan's House of Councilors through proportional representation following an incumbent's seat being vacated, making him the first Ainu to serve as a Diet member. |
| 1995 | The Advisory Committee on Future Measures for the Ainu People is established as an ad-hoc advisory body to the Chief Cabinet Secretary. |
| 1996 | The Advisory Committee on Future Measures for the Ainu People submits its report. |
| 1997 | The Act on the Promotion of Ainu Culture, and Dissemination and Enlightenment of Knowledge about Ainu Tradition, etc. (hereinafter referred to as the "Ainu Culture Promotion Act") is promulgated.<br>Based on the Ainu Culture Promotion Act, the Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture is established.<br>The Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act and the Act on the Disposal of the Protected Areas for Former Aborigines in Asahikawa are abolished.<br>Judgement is rendered in the Nibutani Dam case. (The land expropriation is ruled illegal but is not rescinded; the Ainu are recognized as an indigenous people.) |
| 1999 | The Hokkaido Government develops the Basic Plan Concerning Measures to Ensure the Promotion, etc. of Ainu Culture as a prefecture designated pursuant to Article 6 of the Ainu Culture Promotion Act. |
| 2007 | The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is adopted at the 61st session of the General Assembly in New York. |
| 2008 | The Japanese Diet unanimously passes the Resolution to Recognize the Ainu as an Indigenous People of Japan.<br>Note: The Chief Cabinet Secretary announces the government's intention to establish Ainu policy based on the recognition that the Ainu are an indigenous people. The government establishes the Advisory Council for Future Ainu Policy. |
| 2009 | The Advisory Council for Future Ainu Policy submits its report.<br>The government establishes the Comprehensive Ainu Policy Office in the Cabinet Secretariat.<br>Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama becomes the first Japanese prime minister to declare the Ainu an indigenous people at the Diet. |
| 2014 | The Basic Policy for Development, Management and Operation of Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony to Promote the Revival of Ainu Culture and the Like is approved at a Cabinet meeting. |
| 2019 | The Act Promoting Measures to Achieve a Society in which the Pride of Ainu People is Respected is promulgated. It is the first law to recognize the Ainu as an indigenous people of Japan. |
| 2020 | Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park opens as a hub for the revival of Ainu culture. Upopoy consists of the National Ainu Museum, the National Ainu Park, the Upopoy Memorial Site, and other facilities that promote the revival and awareness of Ainu culture. |



# The Foundation for Ainu Culture

## Name
The Foundation for Ainu Culture

## Aims
The Foundation aims to advance measures for the promotion of Ainu culture and for the dissemination and enlightenment of knowledge about Ainu traditions and culture, and it aims to operate Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park, thereby fostering a society where different values are embraced and the ethnic pride of the Ainu is respected and thereby contributing to the further development of diverse cultures in Japan.

## Representative
TSUNEMOTO Teruki, President

## Scope of Work
### Chapter1 Ainu Culture Promotion and Ainu Tradition Dissemination/Education Projects

Ⅰ Promotion of comprehensive and practical research on the Ainu

1 Ainu-related research

Ⅱ Promotion of Ainu language

1 Ainu language education

① Training instructors

② Advanced language classes

③ Beginner language classes

(a)Ainu language learning for parents and children

(b)Introductory Ainu language classes

④ Development of infrastructure for Ainu language education

2 Dissemination of Ainu language

① Courses for Ainu language transmission

(a) Radio courses

(b) Video courses

② Speech contests

Ⅲ Promotion of Ainu culture

1 Transmission and reproduction of Ainu culture

① Manual preparation

② Practical advanced courses

(a)Training storytellers to pass down oral literature

(b)raining instructors to pass down traditional culture,including woodcarving and embroidery

③ Subsidization of activities to produce replicas of traditional Ainu craftwork

④ Project for the Handing Down of Manners and Customs

2 Ainu cultural exchanges

① Ainu cultural exchanges

(a)Subsidizing domestic cultural exchanges

(b)Subsidizing international cultural exchanges

② Youth intercultural study and exchange

3 Dissemination of Ainu culture

① Subsidization of traditional craftwork exhibitions and releases

② Dispatch of advisors

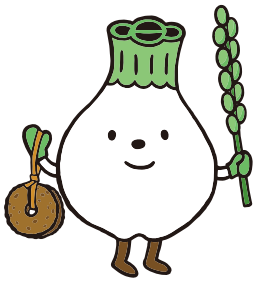
③ Craftwork exhibition

④ Cultural Festival

4 Recognition of Ainu cultural activities

① Craftwork contests

② Ainu Cultural Award



Ⅳ Dissemination of knowledge about Ainu traditions

1 Promotion of public awareness

① Provision of public information

(a)Publishing leaflets and other materials

(b)Internet website

② Preparation and distribution of supplementary textbooks for elementary school, junior high school and high school students

③ Dissemination of knowledge about the Ainu for parents and children

④ Seminars

⑤ Lectures

⑥ Irankarapte Campaign

2 Activities of the Ainu Culture Center

Ⅴ Training of successors to Ainu culture

1 Training successors to Ainu culture

## Chapter2 Operation of Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony

Ⅰ Operation of Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony and other activities

1 Administration of National Ainu Park and others

2 Administration of National Ainu Museum

3 Management of the Memorial Site

4 Archiving of Ainu language

Ⅱ Profit making from Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony

1 Tenant management

2 Parking space

3 Other businesses

## Establishment

September 1976

The Shiraoi Foundation for the Preservation of Ainu Culture (renamed the Ainu Museum in March 1990) is established and starts operations with the aim of implementing projects necessary for the transmission, preservation, and making public of cultural products of the Ainu in the Shiraoi region, thereby contributing to the development of northern culture.

June 1997

The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture is established and starts operations with the aim of advancing measures for the promotion of Ainu culture and for the dissemination and enlightenment of knowledge about Ainu traditions and culture, thereby fostering a society where the ethnic pride of the Ainu is respected and contributing to the further development of diverse cultures in Japan.

April 2018

The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture and the Ainu Museum merge to become the Foundation for Ainu Culture, which starts operations with the aim of taking charge of the administration and operation of Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park.

UPOPOY

NATIONAL AINU MUSEUM and PARK

# Ainu Culture Center, Tokyo

The Foundation for Ainu Culture operates the Ainu Culture Center in Tokyo. This multi-functional Center serves as a place to support exchanges and cultural transmission activities engaged in by Ainu living in and around Tokyo, as well as to collect and provide information regarding Ainu culture.

### ◎ Activities

1. Provision of a place to support cultural activities, such as embroidery, woodcarving, and dancing
2. Permanent exhibition
3. Holding of a monthly open lecture on Ainu culture

### ◎ Information service

1. Provision to the public of Ainu-related books and videos
2. Introduction of Ainu-related events

<Address>
Sumitomo Fudosan Ueno-okachimachi Bldg. 3F,
Motoasakusa 3-chome 7-1, Taito-ku, Tokyo, 111-0041, Japan

<Hours>
– 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, Saturdays, and public holidays
– Closed on Sundays, Mondays (excluding national holidays), the day following a national holiday (excluding Saturdays), and the year-end and New Year's holidays (December 29 through January 3)

Note: To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Center may close temporarily or take other measures in line with instructions from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

# Call for Members

## Applications Now Open for Supporting Membership

Although we at the Foundation receive financial support from the national and Hokkaido governments, we need a strong operational foundation to promote diverse activities in line with the purposes of Ainu-related laws. For this reason, we believe it is important to receive broad support from individuals, businesses, and other organizations not only in Hokkaido, but throughout Japan. We would therefore appreciate it if you would join us as a supporting member of the Foundation.

### Annual membership fee (donation)

- Corporation/organization: 20,000 yen/unit
- Individual: 5,000 yen/unit

Note: Donation of more than one unit is welcomed.

### Membership benefits

- Free delivery of publications and newsletters issued by the Foundation (excluding those issued under the Project for the Operation of Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park)
- Receipt of information on exhibitions, lectures, and other events hosted by the Foundation.
- Receipt of information on events on Ainu culture
- Discount on admission tickets to Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park

### How to join

① To pay your membership fee by bank transfer or postal transfer, please complete the membership application procedures first. Download the membership application form from the Foundation's website and submit the completed version by post, fax, or e-mail.

② To pay your membership fee by credit card, please complete your membership fee payment and application procedure on the Foundation's website.

For details, please visit the website of the Foundation.
https://www.ff-ainu.or.jp/web/overview/about/support.html

### Use of membership fees

- Membership fees are used to purchase books, photos, videos, and other materials related to Ainu culture for our libraries, and to improve our other projects.

# The Foundation for Ainu Culture

**Secretariat**
Presto 1.7 Bldg. 5F, Kita 1-jo Nishi 7-chome, Chuo-ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido, 060-0001, Japan
Tel: (011)271-4171 Fax:(011) 271-4181
URL : https://www.ff-ainu.or.jp ／ E-Mail : ainu@ff-ainu.or.jp

■ **Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park Administration Headquarters**
2-3-2, Wakakusa-cho, Shiraoi Town, Siraoi District, Hokkaido, 059-0902, Japan
TEL.(0144)82-3914 FAX.(0144)82-3685
Website: https://ainu-upopoy.jp

■ **Ainu Culture Center, Tokyo**
Sumitomo Fudosan Ueno-okachimachi Bldg. 3F,
Motoasakusa 3-chome 7-1, Taito-ku, Tokyo, 111-0041, Japan
TEL.(03)5830-7547 FAX.(03)5830-7548
Website: https://www.ff-ainu.or.jp
e-mail:acc-tokyo@ff-ainu.or.jp

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## Services

- Multilingual support (up to 8 languages: Ainu, Japanese, English, Chinese [Traditional and Simplified], Korean, Russian and Thai)
- Barrier-free access
- Free Wi-Fi

## Shops and restaurants (cashless payment accepted)

### Entrance Center Restaurant and Food Court

The restaurant has a view overlooking Lake Poroto, and the food court is a casual space where visitors can choose from a variety of dishes.

### Entrance Center Shop

The shop has original Upopoy goods, Ainu crafts, Hokkaido souvenirs, snacks, and various everyday items.

◆Hours: 9:00am to Upopoy closing time

### National Ainu Museum Shop

The shop carries Ainu crafts, original museum merchandise, and books. Visitors can purchase drinks and relax to enjoy the view overlooking Lake Poroto.

◆Hours: 9:00am to Upopoy closing time

## Dates and Hours (April 2022 to March 2023)

| Period | Hours |
|---|---|
| April 1 to April 28 | 9:00am to 6:00pm |
| April 29 to July 15<br>August 29 to October 31 | Weekdays: 9:00am to 6:00pm<br>Weekends/national holidays: 9:00am to 8:00pm |
| July 16 to August 28 | 9:00am to 8:00pm |
| November 1 to March 31 | 9:00am to 5:00pm |

* Closed on Mondays and from December 29 to January 3 (Excludes May 2 and March 20) (If Monday is a holiday, closed on the next business day)

## Admission (tax included)

| | General visitors | Group visitors (20 or more) |
|---|---|---|
| Adult | 1,200 yen | 960 yen |
| High school student (16 to 18) | 600 yen | 480 yen |
| Junior high school student and younger (15 and under) | Free | Free |

* Admission tickets to museum and park (excluding special exhibitions at museum and hands-on activities)
* In Japan, most students attend high school from age 16 to 18. If you are between 16 and 18, please ask for the high school price.

## Contact


# The Foundation for Ainu Culture

*Designated by Japanese government to manage Upopoy
2-3-2, Wakakusa-cho, Shiraoi Town, Shiraoi District, Hokkaido,Japan 059-0902
Phone: 0144-82-3914 Fax: 0144-82-3685
For inquiries during closing times, please use the inquiry form on the following website:
https://ainu-upopoy.jp/en/inquiry/faq/


Please check the latest information on the Upopoy website before visiting.

Upopoy Search

https://ainu-upopoy.jp/en/