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Notes on Usage

General Conventions

- From 2015 to 2021, the printed installments of the Kokugakuin *Kojiki* project appeared in the dedicated publication *Kojiki gaku* (volumes 1–7). Since 2022 they have been published in *Kokugakuin Daigaku Kenkyū Kaihatsu Suishin Kikō kiyō* 國學院大學研究開発推進機構紀要 (abbreviated in citations as KSKK).
- The English translations included in the project generally follow the stylistic conventions and citation format detailed in the *Monumenta Nipponica* style sheet (http://dept.sophia.ac.jp/monumenta/pdf/MN-Style-Sheet_201809.pdf).
- In the interest of readability, phonetic transcriptions of names, terms, and phrases from the *Kojiki* and other Nara-period texts are rendered in a modified Hepburn system of romanization and according to the modern dictionary pronunciation. No attempt is made to indicate archaic Japanese phonetic distinctions such as the *kō* 甲/ *otsu* 乙 vowels. Likewise, archaic usages that later evolved into extended vowel sounds, such as in the honorific prefix “Oho,” are indicated by a macron, “Ō.”
- Phonetic transliterations from archaic texts follow the rendering given in the *yomikudashi* 読下し version of the edition cited. The translation generally omits the phonetic glosses given in the original text.
- The *pinyin* system is used to transliterate Chinese terms.
- In principle characters are given for Japanese and Chinese names and terms at the first instance where they occur in each issue of *Kojiki gaku* / KSKK. They are only repeated in that issue when they are the subject of discussion or if necessary for clarity.
- Citations to the *Kojiki* and other archaic texts indicate the page numbers of both

the original text (generally speaking, the *kanbun* 漢文 text) as reprinted in the modern edition cited and the *yomikudashi* version adopted by that edition.

- Cross-references to other passages in the *Kojiki* cite the *Kojiki gaku* / KKSCKK version of the text when possible. In cases of passages from sections not yet covered by *Kojiki gaku* / KKSCKK, citations are to the SNKBZ version edited by Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnosshi Takamitsu.
- Information in the notes added by the translator is indicated by the acronym TN.
- Bibliographic details of the different commentaries and other works cited are given in the list of references included in each issue. Footnotes use a shortened citation format. Only the surname is used for citations to modern (Meiji and later) authors; citations to premodern works give the author's full name.

Studies on the *Kojiki*

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Chapter 23: The Suga Hall (1)

Haya susanoo no mikoto thereupon sought a place in the land of Izumo suitable for building a hall (*miya* 宮). Eventually he arrived at the place called Suga 湊賀 (1). “Now that I have come here, my heart is at ease (2),” he proclaimed, and he proceeded to build a hall there. This place is therefore now called Suga. When the great deity first began to build the hall in Suga, clouds arose, whereupon he composed a verse (3):

In Izumo, of billowing clouds (4),
I build a hall circled by fences (5),
Within those fences my spouse shall dwell (6),
O those encircling fences!

Thereafter he summoned the deity Anazuchi no kami 足名鉄神 (7). “I appoint you as the headman of my hall (8),” he declared, and further bestowed upon him the name Inada no miyanushi suga no yatsumimi no kami 稲田宮主湊賀之八耳神 (9).

Text Notes

1. “The place called Suga” (Suga no tokoro 湊賀地)

Why does the narrative setting shift to Suga for the account of Susanoo’s union with Kushinadahime? As discussed in text note 2, the compilers may have chosen this location to convey Susanoo’s feelings. Were not other of the site’s

implications also a factor, though? The parallel accounts in the eighth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter suggest a connection between Suga and Ōkuninushi 大国主神. Like the *Kojiki*, the *Nihon shoki* main text describes Susanoo as traveling to Suga after slaying the Yamata serpent. By contrast, the variants do not incorporate both elements. The first *Nihon shoki* variant says nothing about the slaying of the Yamata serpent. It simply describes Susanoo as descending to the upper reaches of the Hinokawa 簸之川 river in Izumo, taking Inadahime 稲田媛 as a spouse, and producing a child. Although it does not specify the locale, it gives three alternative names for the child, all of which incorporate the element *suga* 清, and it goes on to state that the fifth-generation descendant of this deity was the deity Ōkuninushi.⁽¹⁾ The second, third, and fourth variants incorporate the slaying of the Yamata serpent, but do not mention the place name Suga.⁽²⁾ We may thus plausibly conclude that Suga is not associated with the story of the serpent's slaying, but rather is situated within the myths as the place where Susanoo takes Kushinadahime as his spouse and where their progeny and descendants—particularly Ōkuninushi—are born.

The name Suga occurs multiple times in the *Izumo no kuni fudoki*. The section on Ou 意宇 district mentions a mountain called Sugayama 須賀山, stating, “The Noshirogawa 野代川 river has its source in Sugayama mountain, which is located 18 *ri* 里 southwest of the [Ou] district headquarters, and flows northward before emptying into the sea.”⁽³⁾ The section on Ōhara 大原 district mentions Suga several times, noting that “in Yubuchi 湯渕 village, which is located along the Suga small river in the northeast, there is a hot spring in the river.” It states as well of Sugayama that it “is located 19 *ri* and 180 *bu* 足 northeast of the [Ōhara] district headquarters. Cedar and cypress trees grow on it.” And, “The Suga small river has its source in Sugayama mountain and flows westward.”⁽⁴⁾

As the descriptions of Sugayama in the section on Ōhara district indicate, the mountain was located on the border between the districts of Ou and Ōhara,

and the *Fudoki* describes it as the source for both the Noshirogawa river in Ou district and the Suga small river in Ōhara district. The Suga small river flows into the great river of Izumo, that is, the Hinokawa 斐伊川 river. In other words, the Hinokawa river serves as a link between Torikamiyama, which is the setting for the slaying of the Yamata serpent, and the Suga area, which is the stage for the union of Susanoo and Kushinadahime. Motoori Norinaga argues that the *Fudoki*'s description of the position of Sugayama and Kumanoyama 熊野山 mountains suggests that the Suga hall was located in the same place as the Kumano 熊野 Shrine.⁽⁵⁾ While the Suga area cannot be seen as identical with the Kumano area of Izumo, it lies close enough to the location of the Kumano Shrine (considered to have been the center of eastern Izumo) that one might think of them as being the same. Further, the Hinokawa river flows towards the area where the Izumo 出雲 Shrine is located. Although the hypothesis remains speculative, these geographical connections may partly explain why the *Kojiki* links the Torikami and Suga regions.⁽⁶⁾

A Suga Shrine lies within the present Suga area, situated in the town of Daitō-chō 大東町 in the city of Unnan 雲南, Shimane 島根 Prefecture.

2. “[My heart is] at ease” (*sugasugashi* 湊賀湊賀斯)

The corresponding passage in the main text of the eighth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter states, “[Susanoo] eventually arrived at the place in Izumo called Suga 清地 ([the graphs] 清地 are to be read here as *suga*), whereupon he declared, ‘My heart is at ease (*sugasugashi* 清清).’”⁽⁸⁾ This transcription suggests that *suga* has the same meaning as *kiyoraka* 清 (“pure,” “clear,” “fresh”). But although the term has generally been understood in this way, there are not many other examples in ancient literature of *suga* being used in this sense. A love song that Emperor Nintoku exchanges with Yata no wakairatsume 八田若郎女 plays with the term. Likening Yata no wakairatsume

to “a single sedge (*suge/suga* 菅) reed, lacking sprouts (*ko* 子),” the poem first declares, “What a pity for a sedge plain (*sugawara* 菅原)” to have only a single reed. It goes on to explain that “what a pity for a sedge plain” means “what a pity for a lovely woman” (*atara sugashi me* 阿多良須賀志売／惜ら清し女).⁽⁹⁾

The section on the district of Ibo 揖保 in the *Harima no kuni fudoki* 播磨国風土記 includes the following description:

The Sugōyama 菅生山 mountain. Sedges (*suge* 菅) grow (*ō* 生) on it, hence the name Sugō (“sedges grow”). Another text states that when the Homuda 品太 emperor [Emperor Ōjin 応神] visited [this mountain], he dug a well here. The water was extremely clear (*kiyoku* 清) and cold. Thereupon, he proclaimed, “Because the water [of this well] is clear and cold, my heart is at ease (*sogasogashi* 宗々我々志).” Therefore, [this mountain] is called Sogō 宗我富.⁽¹⁰⁾

Some commentators read the graphs 宗々我々志 in this *Fudoki* passage as *sugasugashi*. However, given that ancient Japanese texts typically use the graph 宗 phonetically to represent the sound *so* (a *ko*-type vowel), it would seem more suitable to read the graph sequence as *sogasogashi* and to understand the latter term as a variation of *sugasugashi*. In both cases the term conveys the state of a pure, unsullied heart.

In the contest of oaths (*ukei*) episode, Susanoo faces suspicion of not having a pure heart. He demonstrates that this is not the case by producing female deities in the contest of oaths and goes on to “play the victor” and rampage. One might see the episode at hand as providing the ultimate confirmation that his heart is “pure and clear.” The editors of the SNKBZ edition of *Nihon shoki* explain in a headnote that the term *suga* means a pleasurable feeling of moving forward without hindrance, but they do not indicate the basis for this interpretation.⁽¹¹⁾

The antonym of such a reading might be *tagitagishi* タギタギシ, used of a bumpy road presenting obstacles, but it remains uncertain whether such a term is applicable to a state of mind.

3. “[He] composed a verse” (*miuta o tsukuriki* 作御歌)

This is the first verse to appear in the *Kojiki*. As a general rule, *Kojiki* verses are presented as voiced directly by the parties concerned. They differ in this regard from *Nihon shoki* verses, which are often presented as recited by a third party. The *Kojiki* verses serve to express in an unmediated form the characters’ inner thoughts and emotions. In that sense, they can be said to perform a function similar to conversational dialogue.⁽¹²⁾

Further comment: Poetry and Prose in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*.

To put the matter in drastically simplified terms, commentators have taken two approaches to interpreting the poetry incorporated in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. One links the verse to its narrative context and the other detaches it from that context and treats it as an independent entity. Traditional commentaries such as those of Keichū 契沖 (1640–1701), Motoori Norinaga, and Tachibana no Moribe 橘守部 (1781–1849) followed the former approach, but those who have engaged in the study of “ancient songs” (*kodai kayō* 古代歌謡) have adopted the latter. In effect they established this study as a field of research by elevating the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* poems from verses embedded in the text to singular “songs” (*kayō* 歌謡). A shaping influence in this regard was Tsuchihashi Yutaka’s 土橋寛 efforts to bring the concept of “independent songs” (*dokuritsu kayō* 独立歌謡) into the study of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* poems. For a while thereafter the predominant trend among researchers in this area was to try to reconstruct the setting out of which the verses emerged, with the aim of recovering their original form prior to incorporation in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* narratives. Researchers have argued, for example, that Susanoo’s “In Izumo” poem was originally a song

associated with the marriage of the heir of a local chief and was sung at the roof-raising ceremony for the new dwelling of the freshly married couple. Followers of this approach came to identify many *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses as having been sung at “courting-song” gatherings (*utagaki* 歌垣).

The main contribution of the “independent song” approach to study of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* is that it encouraged analysis of how the verses’ original collective and ritual meaning and function may have shaped the narrative’s formation and character. Reconstruction of a poem’s original form may make it possible to see what nuances it adds to the narrative or what kinds of emotions the reciter wanted to evoke. Yet we also should keep in mind the limitations of this approach: the resources available for reconstructing that original “pre-*Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*” form are necessarily those same texts combined with comparative examples of modern “courting-song” practices.

The “independent song” approach appears to have been taken more or less as far as it can be, and in recent years the main trend in study of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses seems to have shifted back to exploration of their meaning and function within the narrative context. An issue here is the disjuncture that often arises from the introduction of songs originally composed in another (including ritual) setting into a different narrative context. It was in fact such disjunctures that initially encouraged the “independent song” approach. The current tendency is not to treat these disjunctures as contradictions but to interpret them as intrinsic to the narrative. The effort to smooth over contradictions, however, sometimes leads to far-fetched rationalizations. Perhaps the problem lies in an approach that insists too strongly on consistency in a narrative structure that combines the different forms of poetry and prose. Is it not possible to see in this structure that mixes different modes of expression an attempt to create a polysemic narrative? There have been some efforts to explore the *Kojiki* from this angle. The present commentary, too, tries to keep in mind the multiple

implications of the text's mixture of prose and poetry.

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4. "In Izumo, of billowing clouds" (*yakumo tatsu Izumo* 夜久毛多都伊豆毛／八雲立出雲)

Izumo 伊豆毛 here designates the ancient land of Izumo 出雲, located in the present Shimane Prefecture. Various epithets used as pillow-word-like prefixes to this toponym can be found in ancient literature. In addition to *yakumo tatsu* 夜久毛多都 / 八雲立つ ("of billowing clouds"), the phrase in the passage at hand, these epithets include the following: *yatsume sasu Izumotakeru* 夜都米佐須伊豆毛多祁流 ("the brave of Izumo, land of luxuriant waterweed"), in poem 23 in the *Kojiki* chronicle of Emperor Keikō;⁽¹³⁾ *yakumo sasu Izumo no kora* 八雲刺出雲子等 ("the girl from Izumo, land of surging clouds"), in *Man'yōshū* poem 430;⁽¹⁴⁾ and *tamamo shizukushi Izumo hito* 玉萎鎮石出雲人 ("the treasured stone submerged among the bejeweled waterweed of Izumo, whose people . . ."), which occurs in an oracular pronouncement in the *Nihon shoki* chronicle of Emperor Sujin (sixtieth year).⁽¹⁵⁾

Generally speaking, pillow-words used as a prefix to a place name serve a laudatory function. The image conveyed in the expression *yakumo tatsu Izumo* is of a land where clouds billow up from the ground, a sign of its vitality. The phrase *yatsume sasu Izumo* is thought to connote a land where the life force of algae/waterweed (*mo* 藻) or sprouts (*me* 芽) bursts forth (*izu* 出づ). Which of the two expressions is more ancient cannot be determined. The development of a pillow-word associating Izumo with "luxuriant waterweed" is thought to be linked to the reference to bejeweled waterweed in the oracular pronouncement found in the chronicle of Emperor Sujin, while the "billowing clouds" association is thought to be linked to the "land-pulling" (*kunihiki* 国引) myth related in the section on Ou district in the *Izumo no kuni fudoki*. In that passage the deity Yatsuka mizu

omizuno no mikoto 八束水臣津野命 states, “The land of Izumo, of billowing clouds, . . . was the first land to be created, and it was made small.”⁽¹⁶⁾ Both of these passages appear to draw from archaic oral traditions.

Considered from the perspective of graphic transcription, however, it seems quite possible that the pillow word “of billowing clouds” was applied to the toponym Izumo only after the graphs 出雲 (“emerging clouds”) were adopted for it. Once that transcription became established, the place name’s earlier association with waterweed or sprouts might well have been forgotten and replaced by the image of rising clouds. On the other hand, it seems unlikely that an association with waterweed or sprouts would have taken shape after the transcription 出雲 became standard. The question of the etymology of Izumo would seem caught up with the issue of these different pillow-words. Did the place name Izumo originally have any connection with the word “cloud” (*kumo*)? Is not a derivation from the phrase *izuru mo* 出づる藻 (“waterweed bursting forth”) more plausible than one resulting from a phonetic shift in the phrase *izuru kumo* 出づる雲 (“emerging clouds”)? To be sure, the difficulty in determining the etymology of place names makes it difficult to reach a definitive conclusion in this matter. The place name might also have an entirely different meaning from these two possibilities.

Further comment (1): The reception and development of the “In Izumo” verse (a). When Susanoō erects his Suga hall, he recites the “In Izumo, of billowing clouds . . .” poem.⁽¹⁷⁾ This is the first “verse” (*uta* 歌) to appear in the *Kojiki*. Although the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* have the format of historical works, they each include over one hundred verses, a circumstance that suggests that in the Nara period, the incorporation of poetry was regarded as a standard method of historical narrative. The other side of the incorporation of verse within historical narratives is the organization of the poems of the *Man’yōshū* (particularly those of fascicles 1 and 2) according to the sequence of reigns, in the same

manner as a historical chronicle. These two phenomena should be considered in conjunction with each other. An understanding of poetry as something associated with a particular historical moment is rooted in a perception of it as a one-time production, not as a traditional song to be recited on repeated occasions of a similar nature. That perception is linked as well to an understanding of poetry as the product of a specific individual.

The verses incorporated in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* are today commonly called “*Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* songs” (*Kiki kayō* 記紀歌謡). In combination with the verses included in the *Fudoki* and *Shoku Nihongi*, they are also referred to as “ancient songs” (*kodai kayō* 古代歌謡, *jōdai kayō* 上代歌謡). The historical evolution underlying this nomenclature calls for consideration. The early commentary *Shaku Nihongi* 釈日本紀, which is organized topically, includes *waka* 和歌 (“Japanese verse”) as one of its categories. Keichū 契沖 (1640–1701) similarly speaks of *Nihongi waka* and *Kojiki waka* in his *Kōganshō* 厚顔抄, a commentary on the verses in these two works. Kamo no Mabuchi 賀茂真淵 (1697–1769) does likewise. Mabuchi’s disciple Hayashi Morotori 林諸鳥 (1720–1790) in his *Kiki kashū* 記紀歌集 and Arakida Hisaoyu 荒木田久老 (1746–1804) in his *Nihongi kakai tsuki no ochiba* 日本紀歌解槻乃落葉 use the terms *Kiki uta* 記紀歌 and *Nihongi uta* 日本紀歌. In other words, seen from the perspective of commentarial tradition, the term *kayō* is not an obvious choice. A forerunner in its use was Uchiyama Matatsu 内山真龍 (1740–1821), who adopted the similar term *yōka* in his *Kojiki yōka chū* 古事記謡歌註. Uchiyama presumably chose this term because he held the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses to be songs performed by the Gagakuryō 雅楽寮 (the music bureau within the *ritsuryō* government structure).

Several reasons can be adduced for referring to the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses as “songs.” One is that terms for “song,” such as *yōka* 謡歌, *dōyō* 童謡, and *yō* 謡, appear in the *Nihon shoki* itself. We should keep in mind, however, that such terms clearly echo language found in Chinese historical writings—which

themselves presume the oral transmission of songs—and thus do not serve as direct evidence that the verses in question were actually sung. Another ground for considering the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses to be “songs” is phrasing that indicates that the figure to whom the verse is attributed voiced it in some fashion, or that the verse was “heard” or accompanied by some sort of musical activity. The problem here, however, is that all such evidence comes from within the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* texts and cannot be independently corroborated. This is true as well of the statement in the chronicle of Emperor Jinmu in the *Nihon shoki* that a verse recorded in it “is sung today in the Music Bureau (*utamai no tsukasa* 楽府).⁽¹⁸⁾

The only objective evidence that verses from the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were performed as musical pieces comes from the early Heian musical transcript *Kinkafu* 琴歌譜. This includes a number of songs that overlap with verses occurring in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. In this instance, though, there is also the possibility that *Kinkafu* was composed under the influence of those works. Perhaps the strongest evidence of the song-like character of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses is their irregular form and meter. Compared to *Man'yōshū* poems, for instance, this characteristic suggests an orally recited verse as opposed to a written one. It thus must be granted that there are grounds for using the term *Kiki kayō* and that it should not be rejected out of hand as inappropriate. At the same time, it is also important to recognize that the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses have been preserved as written transcripts and have been situated within a historical narrative of which they constitute one part. They thus have a two-sided character, containing within them a song-like orientation while also contributing to the narrative development.

In the case of the “In Izumo” poem, those who see the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses as drawn from a collective tradition of orally transmitted song have variously characterized it as having originated as a song to celebrate the

construction of a new building or a marriage.⁽¹⁹⁾ On the other hand, within the context of the *Kojiki* narrative, the verse is presented as a singular declaration, expressing the feelings of Susanoo as an individual. A statement that Susanoo “composed a verse” (*miuta o tsukuriki* 作御歌) precedes the verse as such. This “composed,” like the comparable headings in the *Man'yōshū* explaining a poem’s context, carries a strong connotation of “created.” The *Kojiki* text itself thus does not offer support for a view of the verse as a widely sung existing song. Further, within the narrative context, the “In Izumo” verse serves to point up Susanoo’s transformation. Originally a problematic figure who continues to wail and rampage even after reaching adulthood, he has become a “great deity” who constructs a hall and who has attained ease of heart.⁽²⁰⁾ At the same time it is also possible to see the assertive tone of “my spouse shall dwell” (*tsumagomi ni*), with its implication of “securing” or “secluding” the woman, as an expression of Susanoo’s irrepressible emotional character.

From the time of the compilation of the *Kokin waka shū* 古今和歌集, Susanoo’s “In Izumo” verse has been treated as constituting the origin of “Japanese verse.” This circumstance bears on the debate over whether the verse represents an archaic, transmitted song or a relatively new “composed” verse. Those taking the former position can point to its “naïve” or “primitive” structure, with the phrase “circled by fences” (*yaegaki*) repeated three times. On the other hand, we also should pay heed to its place within the topology of verses found in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. In that regard, “In Izumo” is notable for its adherence to the formal tanka structure of five units (*ku* 句) of respectively 5, 7, 5, 7, 7 syllables.

Verses in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* vary widely in terms of both the number of *ku* and their syllabic length. Many *ku* consist of 4, 6, or 8 syllables, and the 5-7 pattern that later came to be seen as standard cannot be said at all to predominate. Indeed, of the 112 *Kojiki* verses included in the compilation of “ancient songs” in the Iwanami *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, only 18 have a strict tanka form. Even

if the proximate examples of 6 verses with a 5-*ku* structure of 4, 7, 5, 7, 7 and 6 verses with a 5-*ku* structure of 5, 7, 5, 7, 8 are added to the total, it comes to only 30 verses, a little more than a quarter of the entire body of *Kojiki* verses.⁽²¹⁾

In its adherence to the tanka format, “In Izumo” is in some regards closer to the poems of the *Man’yōshū* than to the other verses found in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. This circumstance has led some researchers to argue its form reflects a refinement that could only have occurred through a process of written transcription.⁽²²⁾ Does not the refined tanka format of “In Izumo” help to account for the place it has occupied in poetic discourse as the “origin of waka”?

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Further comment (2): The reception and development of the “In Izumo” verse (b). Both the kana and *kanbun* prefaces to the *Kokin waka shū* hold up the “In Izumo” verse as having established the format of the thirty-one-syllable waka.⁽²³⁾ The kana preface states that the number of syllables in a verse originally varied, but it became set at thirty-one through Susanoo’s recitation of “In Izumo.” This notion in fact antedates the *Kokinshū*. *Kakyō hyōshiki* 歌経標式 (772), a treatise on waka by Fujiwara no Hamanari 藤原浜成 (724–790), expresses the same perspective. That it became a widely shared view can be seen from its reiteration in later anthologies, commentaries, and poetic treatises. Later poets also harked back to the “In Izumo” verse by incorporating its component phrases into their own works. Although the first of these components, *yakumo tatsu*, today is generally held to mean “rising layers upon layers of clouds,” it might be noted that poetic commentators of the Heian period tended to interpret it as meaning multicolored (*yairo* 八色) clouds.

Scott Spears, Japanese Medieval Literature, Waka Literature

5. “In Izumo . . . circled by fences” (*Izumo yaegaki* 伊豆毛夜弊賀岐)

Yaegaki means a multilayered series of fences. Motoori Norinaga, who takes the preceding phrase *yakumo tatsu* (“billowing clouds”) to refer to the landscape’s actual appearance, interprets *yaegaki* as a metaphoric description of that scene. In his understanding, Izumo here is not a place name but means literally “rising clouds.”⁽²⁴⁾ However, “billowing clouds” can also be seen as a laudatory epithet attached to the place name Izumo. The term “fences” (*kaki* 垣) refers to the site of intended conjugal union.

Further comment: In Izumo . . . circled by fences: “Fences” and conjugal union. In the “In Izumo” verse, Susanoo goes on to sing that he will keep his spouse in a hall encircled by layer upon layer of fences.⁽²⁵⁾ The image set out in the poem may well bespeak an association in ancient Japan between fences and conjugal union. The concrete nature of that association remains vague, but we can see examples of it in a number of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* verses.

The largest number of such verses is the set comprising poems 87 to 91 included in the *Nihon shoki* chronicle of Emperor Buretsu.⁽²⁶⁾ This set depicts the ill-fated triangle involving Buretsu (prior to his taking the throne), the arrogant and ambitious Shibi no omi 鮪臣 (the son of a powerful minister plotting to seize the realm), and Kagehime 影媛 (the daughter of another minister). Shibi no omi and Kagehime were already involved in a romantic relationship, but Buretsu, not realizing this, seeks to secure her for himself. Hesitating to reject the prince outright, Kagehime suggests that they meet at the crossroads at Tsubakichi 海石榴市. There Shibi and Buretsu take part in a courting-song contest (*utagaki* 歌場) in which each asserts his claims as Kagehime’s suitor and denigrates the other.

Allusions to a fenced enclosure in which to seclude the woman or the couple figure in several of the verses in this set of poems. In verse 88, Shibi asserts that he has sheltered Kagehime in his house surrounded by layer upon layer of “Korean fences” (*karakaki* 韓垣)—strong, splendid fences of a continental style—and

asks whether Buretsu is asking him to loosen those fences and send Kagehime out. In verse 90 he taunts Buretsu, saying that he had thought of weaving layers of fences (*kumikaki* 組垣) around Buretsu's dwelling for him, but would not, as Buretsu probably would not find them pleasing. In other words, Buretsu would not be able to obtain Kagehime. In return, in verse 91, Buretsu jeers at Shibi's fences, declaring that the latter's brushwood fences might have many nodes (*yafu no shibakaki* 耶賦能之魔柯枳 / 八節の柴垣), but even so, they would collapse should there be an earthquake. The text notes that a variant has *yae karakaki* (耶陞哥羅哥枳 / 八重韓垣) instead of *yafu no shibakaki*, but "brushwood fence" conveys more fully the exchange's mocking tone. Although these references to fences occur within the context of mutual taunting, they also suggest that the image of enclosing the woman within layers of fences serves as a metaphoric expression for the formation of a conjugal relationship.

A similar set of verses (poems 105–110) occurs in the *Kojiki*, but in a different context.⁽²⁷⁾ In this instance one of the male protagonists is again a Shibi no omi 志毘臣, but his opponent is the future Emperor Kenzō 顯宗天皇, Prince Oke 袁祁. The woman over whom they engage in the courting-song contest is named Ouo 大魚. In poem 107, Shibi declares that because Prince Oke is not upright, Shibi will not allow him into his house encircled by layers of brushwood fences (in other words, he will not allow Oke to seize Ouo). Oke counters in poem 108 that it is his own spouse (Ouo) that he sees standing next to Shibi. Shibi answers angrily in poem 109 that although the brushwood fences at the prince's dwelling may have many nodes and be tied firmly together, those ties might break and the fence might burn.

In yet another instance from the *Kojiki*, the association of fences with the establishment of conjugal ties is put a little more indirectly. In this instance, from the chronicle of Emperor Yūryaku, the emperor is said to have once encountered a young girl while on an outing.⁽²⁸⁾ Attracted, he asked her name and learned

it was Akaiko 赤猪子. He told her that she should not take a husband and that he would send for her. For many years she waited patiently for the emperor's summons, until eighty years had passed and she had become an old woman. When at that point she presented herself, Yūryaku no longer recognized her. He praised her for her faithfulness but noted with regret that her advanced age foreclosed the possibility for them to be united. In poem 93, Akaiko responded that for many years she had remained within the fenced enclosure (*tamakaki* 多麻加岐 / 玉垣) of the shrine at Mimoroyama 御諸山 mountain, serving the deity (in other words, she had not taken a spouse). On whom, then, could she now depend?

In all these verses the seclusion of a woman within “fences” indicates the establishment of conjugal ties. Including the “In Izumo” poem in the passage at hand was presumably similarly intended to highlight Susanoo's successful union with Kushinadahime. We might add that the etymology of the term *utagaki* 歌垣 (courting-poem contest) is uncertain. The practice, however, of using the graph for “fence” (垣) to transcribe it may have arisen from an association between “fences” and the establishment of conjugal ties.

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6. “[Within those fences] my spouse shall dwell” (*tsumagomi ni* 都麻碁微尔)

The *Kojiki* phonetic transcription indicates that the verb *komu* 籠む (“to put into”) in the phrase *tsumagomi ni* 都麻碁微尔 / 妻籠みに is in the continuative form (*ren'yōkei* 連用形) of an upper bigrade (*kami nidan* 上二段) verb. The *Nihon shoki*, by contrast, has the continuative form of a lower bigrade (*shimo nidan* 下二段) verb: *tsumagome ni* 菟磨語味爾 / 妻籠めに.⁽²⁹⁾ It is generally held that the upper bigrade verb antedates the lower but that both forms can be considered as transitive verbs meaning “to confine [sb]” or “to enclose [sb].”

Motoori Norinaga and others hold the term *tsuma* here to refer to the couple rather than one or the other of the spouses (in other words, he takes this line

to mean “within those fences, we shall dwell”).⁽³⁰⁾ Given that *tsuma* denotes a spouse, however, it implies reference to one rather than both. In this narrative context, it most likely refers to Kushinadahime.

7. Anazuchi no kami 足名鉄神

The name transcribed here as 足名鉄神 designates the entity that was transcribed in the preceding chapters 21 and 22 as Anazuchi 足名椎.⁽³¹⁾ The reason for using the graph 鉄 (“iron”) here instead of 椎 (“hammer”) to represent *zuchi* is unclear. The corresponding passage of the *Nihon shoki* transcribes the name as Ashinazuchi 脚摩乳. The addition of the suffix *kami* 神 to this entity is also unique to this passage.

8. “The headman [of my hall]” (*obito* 首)

Obito 首 is a contraction of the word *ōhito* 大人, which originally meant a leader. Subsequently it became a hereditary title (*kabane*) granted to the heads of districts and granary lands (*agatanushi* 県主, *inaki* 稲置), heads of subordinate worker groups (*bemin* 部民), and administrators of court granaries (*miyake* 屯倉).⁽³²⁾

Further comment: The term “headman” (*obito* 首) was used for the head of local social units and occupational groups and subsequently as a *kabane* title.⁽³³⁾ Examples of the former usage can be found in *Nihon shoki* passages that depict local disorder because of the absence of proper authority structures. A passage from the chronicle of Emperor Keikō describes a situation where “there are no chiefs (*hito no kami* 長) in districts (*fure* 村) and no heads (*obito* 首) in villages (*mura* 邑).” A similar passage from the following chronicle of Emperor Seimu declares the emperor’s intention to “establish chiefs in provinces (*kuni* 国) and districts (*kōri* 郡) and heads in counties (*agata* 県) and villages (*mura* 邑).”⁽³⁴⁾ Subsequent references indicate that village heads were referred to as *obito* in the

seventh and eighth century.⁽³⁵⁾ Use of the graph 首 to identify the leader of an occupational group can be seen in its appearance in the inscription on the sword excavated from the Inariyama tumulus in Saitama Prefecture. The inscription identifies the sword's owner as having served the Yamato rulers generation after generation as "head of the sword bearers" (杖刀人首).⁽³⁶⁾

The reading of the graph 首 as *obito* was favored by Tanikawa Kotosuga 谷川士清 (1709–1776), who interpreted it as a contraction of *ōbito* 大人 ("great person"). Motoori Norinaga also adopted the reading *obito* and held that it was an honorific term with the meaning of "great person."⁽³⁷⁾ Others have argued that it should be read as *ofushi* or that it derives from a combination of *hito* ("person") and the honorific prefix *o*.

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9. Inada no miyanushi suga no yatsumimi no kami 稲田宮主湊賀之八耳神

The corresponding passage in the main text of the eighth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter differs from the *Kojiki*'s account in that Susanoo bestows the title of head on both of Kushinadahime's parents: "Therefore, [Susanoo] proclaimed, 'The heads of my child's hall shall be Ashinazuchi and Tenazuchi.' He thereupon bestowed on the two deities the title of Inada no miyanushi no kami 稲田宮主神."⁽³⁸⁾

The first two variants give yet different accounts. The first variant states that Inadahime, "the daughter of Inada no miyanushi suga no yatsumimi 稲田宮主簀狭之八箇耳," gave birth to Suga no yuina sakakuruhiko yashimade no mikoto 清繫名坂輕彦八島手命.⁽³⁹⁾ The second variant states that Susanoo encountered the deity Ashinazutenazu 脚摩手摩, "whose wife was named Inada no miyanushi suga no yatsumimi."⁽⁴⁰⁾ In the latter instance, the name indicates that Inadahime's mother was the head of the hall.

Endnotes

- (1) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 94–95.
- (2) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 94–100.
- (3) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 154–55. Eighteen *ri* would be approximately 9.6 km. This edition uses the *kun* reading *sato* for 里. (TN)
- (4) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 262–63, 266–67, 268–69. Nineteen *ri*, 180 *bu* would be approximately 10.5 km. This edition uses the *kun* reading *ashi* for 足. (TN)
- (5) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 409.
- (6) For further discussion of this issue, see Taniguchi Masahiro, “‘Kojiki’ yamata no orochi taiji shinwa no kūkan ninshiki.”
- (7) For the connection between the toponym “Suga” and shrines of that name, see Fujimoto, “‘Kojiki’ ni mirareru jinja kanren chimei shōko to shamei hyōki ni tsuite no ichi kōsatsu.”
- (8) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 92–93.
- (9) Poem 64; Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 298–99.
- (10) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 50–52.
- (11) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, p. 93n18.
- (12) Regarding the relationship between poetry and conversation in the *Kojiki*, see Aoki Shūhei, *Kojiki kenkyū*, pp. 392–422.
- (13) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 222–23.
- (14) Kojima et al., *Man'yōshū*, SNKBZ 6, p. 241.
- (15) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 292–93.
- (16) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 130–31, 134–35.
- (17) This translation of the further comment abridges and paraphrases the original Japanese text. For the latter, see the online Kojiki Viewer Japanese version of this chapter or *Kojiki gaku* 5 (2019), pp. 42–47.
- (18) See Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 208–209.
- (19) See Aiso, *Kiki kayō zenchūkai*, p. 7; Tsuchihashi, *Kodai kayō zenchūshaku: Kojiki hen*, pp. 17–18.
- (20) See Tosa, “Utau Susano.”
- (21) See Tsuchihashi and Konishi, *Kodai kayō shū*.
- (22) See Kume, *Man'yō kayō ron*, pp. 200–201; Ōta, *Kodai Nihon bungaku shichōron*, vol. 4, pp. 8–10.
- (23) This translation of the further comment abridges and paraphrases the original

- Japanese text. For the latter, see the online Kojiki Viewer Japanese version of this chapter or *Kojiki gaku* 5 (2019), pp. 48–50.
- (24) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 411.
- (25) This translation of the further comment omits the actual poems cited in the original and instead provides background about their setting. For the original, see the online Kojiki Viewer Japanese version of this chapter or *Kojiki gaku* 5 (2019), pp. 50–54.
- (26) See Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 270–75.
- (27) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 358–61.
- (28) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 340–44.
- (29) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 92–93.
- (30) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 412.
- (31) On the reading and meaning of this name, see chapter 21, text note 4.
- (32) See Aoki Kazuo et al., *Kojiki*, p. 341.
- (33) This translation of the further comment abridges the original Japanese text. For the latter, see the online Kojiki Viewer Japanese version of this chapter or *Kojiki gaku* 5 (2019), pp. 54–60.
- (34) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 370–71, 396–97. The commentators to this edition read 長 here as *osa* and 首 as *kami*. (TN)
- (35) The Taika edict calling for the termination of private estates includes “village heads” (*mura no obito* 村首) among the categories who currently hold such estates. Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 4, pp. 128–29.
- (36) Regarding this figure’s position and status, see Satō Nagato, “Yūmei tōken no kashi, kenshō.”
- (37) Tanikawa Kotosuga, *Wakun no shiori*, vol. 1, p. 373. Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 412–13.
- (38) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 92–94.
- (39) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 94–95.
- (40) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 94–95.

Chapter 24: The Suga Hall (2)

[Susanoo no mikoto] thereupon [went] with Kushinadahime into a secluded place and engaged with her. [The child he] thereby bore [with her] (1) was named Yashimajinumi no kami 八嶋土奴美神 (2). He then took as spouse (3) a daughter of Ōyamatsumi no kami 大山津見神 named Kamuōichihime 神大市比売 (4). The child he bore [with her] was Ōtoshi no kami 大年神 (5). Next [he bore with her] Uka no mitama 宇迦之御魂 (6). The eldest of the three children, Yashimajinumi no kami, took as spouse a daughter of Ōyamatsumi no kami named Konohana no chiruhime 木花知流比売 (7). The child he bore [with her] was Fuha no mojikunusunu no kami 布波能母遲久奴須奴神 (8).

This deity took as spouse a daughter of Okami no kami 淤迦美神 (9) named Hikawahime 日河比売 (10). The child he bore [with her] was Fukafuchi no mizuyarehana no kami 深淵水夜礼花神 (11). This deity took as spouse Ame no tsudohechine no kami 天之都度閑知泥神 (12). The child he bore [with her] was Omizunu no kami 淤美豆奴神 (13). This deity took as spouse a daughter of Funozuno no kami 布怒豆怒神 named Futemimi no kami 布帝耳神 (14). The child he bore [with her] was Ame no fuyukinu no kami 天之冬衣神 (15).

This deity took as spouse a daughter of Sashikuniōkami 刺国大神 named Sashikuniwakahime 刺国若比売 (16). The child he bore [with her] was Ōkuninushi no kami 大国主神 (17). [This deity] also has the name Ōanamuji no kami 大穴牟遲神 (18). Another name is Ashihara shikoo no kami 葦原色許男神 (19). Another name is Yachihoko no kami 八千矛神 (20). Another name is Utsushikunitama no kami 宇都志国玉神 (21). He has five names altogether.

Text Notes

1. [Susanoo went with Kushinadahime] into a secluded place and engaged with her. [The child he] thereby bore [with her] . . . (*kumido ni okoshite umeru na wa* 久美度迺起而所生名)

The episode relating the union of Izanaki and Izanami includes the following statement: “Nevertheless, they [went into] a secluded place and engaged [with each other]. The child they bore thereby was a leech child.” (*shika aredomo kumido ni okoshite umeru ko wa hiruko* 雖然久美度迺興而生子水蛭子). Although close to the phrase at hand, the Izanaki and Izanami passage uses the graph 興 instead of 起, as here.⁽¹⁾ Both graphs in these two passages have been read as *okosu*. Motoori Norinaga states of the term, “[The nominal form] *okori* 起り is used to refer to the beginning of something and [the causative form] *okosu* 起す is used to refer to inaugurating something. Here the meaning is that [Izanaki and Izanami] secluded themselves to start the procreation of a child.”⁽²⁾ From Norinaga on, commentators have largely interpreted the verb *okosu* as meaning “to begin,” in other words, to begin an act of sexual intercourse.

The graph 興 also occurs in the *Kojiki* in the phrase “raise an army” (*ikusa o okosu* 興軍), which appears in the chronicles of emperors Jinmu 神武, Sujin 崇神 (two instances), Suinin 垂仁, Chūai 仲哀, Nintoku 仁徳, Ingyō 允恭, Ankō 安康 (two instances), and Seinei 清寧.⁽³⁾ The chronicle of Emperor Keikō includes the expression “[the deity of the straits] stirred up waves” (*nami o okosu* 興浪).⁽⁴⁾ In all of these instances the verb *okosu* is used in a transitive manner with a preceding direct object. The use of it in the phrase *kumido ni okosu*, with the particle *ni* indicating the place (*kumido*) where the action takes place, stands out as distinct.

Since the present passage concerning Susanoo uses the graph 起 instead of 興, it is perhaps appropriate to consider other examples of the occurrence of this graph in the *Kojiki*. It appears with the sense of “to form feelings” in the episode

of the luck of the sea and luck of the land in the phrase “[Hoderi no mikoto] formed yet more hostile feelings [toward his brother]” (*araki kokoro o okoshite* 起荒心), and in the chronicle of Emperor Sujin in the phrase “[this is undoubtedly a sign that my stepbrother] has formed an evil intent” (*ashiki kokoro o okoseru* 起邪心).⁽⁵⁾ The use of it to mean “awaken” can be found in the chronicle of Emperor Jinmu in the phrases “The child of the heavenly deities [Emperor Jinmu] immediately awoke [from the slumber induced by poisonous vapors]” (*amatsukami miko sunawachi sameokite* 天神御子即寤起而) and “the entire army [which had fallen into a dazed slumber] awoke (*miikusa kotogotoku sameokiki* 御軍悉寤起之). A similar usage occurs in the chronicle of Emperor Suinin in the phrase “startled, the emperor awoke” (*sumeramikoto odoroki okite* 天皇驚起).⁽⁶⁾ To sum up, in two instances the graph 起 is used to convey the arousal of an emotion, while in three instances it indicates awakening from a state of sleep. Again, its use in the expression *kumido ni okoshite* stands out as distinct.

In the modern Japanese translation of this passage, we have tentatively rendered *okosu* as “awakened [Kushinadahime]” (*mezamesasete* 目覚めさせて). This rendering, however, poses the problem of inconsistency with the interpretation of the same expression in the Izanaki and Izanami passage and requires further consideration. In the Izanaki and Izanami passage, the textual context suggests that the *kumido* is the “broad-spanned hall” (*yahirodono* 八尋殿), whereas in this passage, the context indicates that it is the space in Izumo encircled by fences (*Izumo yaegaki* 出雲八重垣).

The format of the subsequent genealogy with its use of the transitive verb *metoru* 娶 (“to take a [female] spouse”) indicates that Susanoo is the grammatical subject of the transitive verb *umu* 生む (“to give birth to”) in the phrase “thereby bore” (*umeru* 所生). The two phrases in combination may be taken to mean that Susanoo secluded himself with Kushinadahime, engaged in intercourse with her, and through her, gave birth to a child. The same sentence pattern of “a man

took a woman as a spouse and gave birth to a child” recurs in the genealogies of emperors in the second and third books of the *Kojiki* (see also the following text note 3).

2. Yashimajinumi no kami 八嶋土奴美神

The first variant of the eighth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter states that Susanoo bore with Inadahime 稲田媛 “a child named Suga no yuyamanushi minasamuruhiko yashimashino 清之湯山主三名狭漏彦八嶋篠.” It adds that one source gives this deity’s name as Suga no yuina sakakaruhiko yashimade no mikoto 清之繁名坂輕彦八嶋手命 and another as Suga no yuyamanushi minasamuruhiko yashimano 清之湯山主三名狭漏彦八嶋野. It goes on to identify the fifth-generation descendant of this deity as Ōkuninushi no kami.⁽⁷⁾ The main text, by contrast, states that Susanoo bore as his child the deity Ōanamuchi no kami 大己貴神 (an alternative name for Ōkuninushi). The second variant does not say anything about Susanoo’s immediate offspring but states that Ōanamuchi was his sixth-generation descendant.⁽⁸⁾ None of the *Nihon shoki* versions of this episode describe Susanoo as having any other offspring or descendants.

The term *yashima* (“eight islands”) appears to be used to indicate the entirety of the earthly realm. Its incorporation in the name of Susanoo’s first child is perhaps related to the occurrence of the same term in the episode in which Izanaki and Izanami give birth to the land and in the poems relating how Yachihoko no kami 八千矛神 (another of Ōkuninushi’s names) seeks unsuccessfully for a suitable spouse throughout the land. The former episode states that because Izanaki and Izanami gave birth first to eight islands, “this land [as a whole] is called Great Land of Eight Islands (Ōyashima no kuni 大八島国).”⁽⁹⁾ The latter episode speaks of Yashimakuni 八島国 (Land of Eight Islands).⁽¹⁰⁾ As an element in the name of Susanoo’s first child, might the term *yashima* be intended as a harbinger of Ōkuninushi’s role as the consolidator of Ashihara no nakatsukuni and

the initial possessor of and ruler over the land?

Motoori Norinaga connects the element *jinumi* 士奴美, transcribed phonetically, to these circumstances:

Shi [ji] 士 is an abbreviated representation of *shiri* 知 (“ruling”), *nu* 奴 an abbreviation of *nushi* 主 (“lord,” “ruler”), and *mi* 美 an abbreviation of the laudatory element *mimi* 耳. . . . Was this laudatory name not given him because he was the ancestor of Ōkuninushi no kami, who later consolidated the land and ruled over it? If that were not the case, he would not be given a name such as “Lord of the Eight Islands” (Yashimajinushi 八嶋知主).⁽¹¹⁾

Nishimiya Kazutami similarly takes this name to mean “spirit of the lord who rules over many islands.”⁽¹²⁾

3. “[He] took as spouse . . .” (*meteorite* 娶)

This is the first occurrence of the graph 娶 in the *Kojiki*. The imperial genealogies found in the second and third books generally use this graph to describe conjugal unions. Yoshii Iwao 吉井巖 holds that the two main sources from which the *Kojiki*’s compilers evidently drew—the *Teiki* 帝紀 (“imperial chronicles,” believed to have emphasized genealogical information) and the *Kyūji* 旧辞 (“ancient records,” believed to have consisted of narrative accounts)—used different graphs to describe such unions. The graph 娶 was specific to the *Teiki*, whereas the *Kyūji* used graphs such as 婚 and 御合. Yoshii argues that instances of 娶 found in the *Kojiki*’s narrative sections (the *Kyūji*-like sections) were either inserted during the compilation process or quoted from the *Teiki*.⁽¹³⁾

The *Kojiki* may be said to use the graph 娶 fundamentally to indicate recognized male-female unions. The graph thus also functions to affirm a genealogy’s legitimacy. Its use even when there is no myth or other narrative

evidence to corroborate the existence of a conjugal relationship was perhaps intended to bestow a certain authority upon the genealogy being recounted. The *Kojiki*'s compilers likely deliberately chose to apply the format used for imperial genealogies to the Izumo lineage of deities originating from Susanoo.

Further comment: The lineage of Susanoo. Beginning with the story of Susanoo's slaying of the Yamata serpent and his union with Kushinadahime, Izumo becomes for some time the stage on which the *Kojiki* narrative unfolds. The Izumo cycle of stories from this point forward comprises the following components: **the lineage of Susanoo** → the birth of Ōkuninushi → the bare rabbit of Inaba (the union of Ōanamuji with Yagamihime 八上比売) → the visit to Nenokatasukuni (the union of Ōanamuji with Suseribime 須世理毗売) → **the lineage of Ōkuninushi** → Ōkuninushi's consolidation of the land → **the lineage of Ōtoshi no kami** 大年神. This is followed by the account of the pacification of Ashihara no nakatsukuni by deities from Takamanohara and by the myth of the descent of the Heavenly Grandson.

As seen here, the myths centered on Izumo are punctuated at three points by genealogies of the lineages of deities figuring in these myths. These genealogies are recorded in a manner distinctive among the sequence of episodes that make up the first book of the *Kojiki*. As mentioned in text note 3, the *Kojiki*'s compilers drew from two types of source materials—the genealogical *Teiki* and the narrative *Kyūji*. The accounts of imperial lineages found in the second and third book appear to have been compiled based on materials contained in the *Teiki*, whereas the myths figuring in the first book would seem to have come basically from the *Kyūji*. The three genealogies in this section, starting with that of Susanoo, follow the same format as that of the imperial genealogies in books 2 and 3, in other words, "X took Y as his spouse and bore [with her] Z."

It would not be particularly notable to find the format used for imperial lineages adopted for the deity lineages from Amaterasu on that ultimately

connect to the imperial line. Indeed this format is used at the very end of book 1 to describe Ukayafukiaezu's 鵜葺草葺不合 taking of a spouse and bearing with her the future Emperor Jinmu. Apart from this example, however, the only other instances in book 1, covering the Age of Deities, are the three genealogies emanating from Susanoo, which do not connect to the subsequent imperial line. What might this imply? Since this mode is limited to conjugal unions taking place on earth and serves to demarcate one generation from the next, possibly it was adopted to convey the emergence of generations in the earthly realm and the forward movement of time. A note at the end of the second genealogy, that of the descendants of Ōkuninushi, states explicitly that there were seventeen generations between Susanoo's son Yashimajinumi no kami and Ōkuninushi's descendant Tōtsuyama sakitarashi no kami 遠津山岬帶神 (the actual number is fifteen generations; we will deal with this issue in considering the passage in question).⁽¹⁴⁾

Another pertinent factor is that in several regards the *Kojiki* presents Ōkuninushi as the first entity to rule the earthly realm and thus a forerunner of the emperors. He stands as the precedent within the world of the myths for the emperor's rule over the land within the present world. This is possibly the import of the alternative name Utsushikuninushi no kami 宇都志国主神 ("lord of the visible realm"), the appellation Susanoo later assigns him.⁽¹⁵⁾ The names of the deities listed as descended from Susanoo and culminating in Ōkuninushi likewise seem intended to associate the latter with the attributes essential to the ruler of the land and thus show him to be worthy of the name Ōkuninushi. The names of several of the intermediate generations of deities between Yashimajinumi no kami and Ōkuninushi convey the character of a water deity. Others convey an endowment with spiritual powers or signify possession of the land or heavenly attributes.

The second genealogy, relating Ōkuninushi's descendants, presents several

problems. It serves to account for the offspring who will play a role in the story of the pacification of Ashihara no nakatsukuni, but why was it necessary to list seventeen generations? Why does the genealogy not mention the female deities who figure in the three stories of Ōkuninushi's courting of different women? (The stories of two of those women, Suseribime and Nunakawahime 沼河比売 also say nothing of their bearing children). Why does the genealogy not include Takeminakata no kami 建御名方神, who figures prominently in the story of the yielding of the land to the descendants of Amaterasu? Why is the third genealogy describing the lineage descended from Susanoo's son Ōtoshi no kami put at the end of the account of Ōkuninushi's consolidation of the land? These issues raised by the three genealogies suggest that their purpose lies not simply in describing the connections between deities. We will revisit these issues in considering the genealogies of Ōkuninushi and Ōtoshi no kami below.⁽¹⁶⁾

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4. **Kamuōichihime 神大市比売**

This deity, whom Susanoo takes as his second spouse, is the daughter of Ōyamatsumi no kami. Nishimiya Kazutami holds that this theonym carries the meaning of “an awesome, magnificent market” and is “the name of a deity who rules over markets.”⁽¹⁷⁾ It is unclear, however, why a deity name associated with markets should appear here.

5. **Ōtoshi no kami 大年神**

The name of this deity, Susanoo's first child with Kamuōichihime, is associated with the harvest of grains and rice. Nishimiya Kazutami notes that the graph 年 means “the ripening of grains.” It took on the meaning of “year,” he argues, because among grains, it takes a year for rice to mature.⁽¹⁸⁾ Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu take 大 “great” as laudatory and *toshi* 年 to mean the

ripening of rice.⁽¹⁹⁾

6. Uka no mitama 宇迦之御魂

The name of this deity, Susanoo's second child with Kamuōichihime, is also related to food and rice. The terms *ke*, *uke*, and *uka* are generally taken to mean food, and *mitama* means “spirit,” so this name indicates a food spirit. The seventh variant of the fifth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter gives the phonetic gloss Uka no mitama 于介能美陀磨 for the theonym written with the graphs 倉稻魂, also indicating a rice spirit.⁽²⁰⁾ The liturgy for the Ōtonohokai 大殿祭 rite to pray for the protection of the palace includes a gloss identifying the deity Yafune toyoukehime no mikoto 屋船豊于気姫命 as “the spirit of rice. In common parlance this is called Uka no mitama.”⁽²¹⁾

7. Konohana no chiruhime 木花知流比売

This deity, whom Yashimajinumi no kami takes as his spouse, is also identified as a daughter of the deity Ōyamatsumi. The name Konohana no chiruhime would again seem to be associated with the ripening of grains and rice. Meaning “falling flowers maiden,” it makes a pair with Konohana no sakuyabime 木花之佐久夜毘売 (“blooming flowers maiden”), who appears in the later episode in which the Heavenly Grandson, Ninigi, takes her as his spouse. Both women are identified as daughters of Ōyamatsumi.⁽²²⁾ Some, such as Nakanishi Susumu 中西進, see Konohana no chiruhime as “a woman who brings misfortune,” in contrast to Konohana no sakuyabime, who is associated with the flourishing of Ninigi and his descendants.⁽²³⁾ Others, however, such as Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu, point out that blooming and withering are part of plants’ natural cycle. They argue that Chiruhime can be understood together with Sakuyabime as a “name holding within it the expectation of a bountiful harvest.”⁽²⁴⁾

8. *Fuha no mojikunusunu no kami* 布波能母遲久奴須奴神

The meaning of this deity name is not clear. Norinaga suggests that “*fuha* may be a place name, *moji* is the same as *muji* in Ōanamuji no mikoto, . . . *kunu* may be [a contraction of] *kuninushi* 国主 [‘lord of the land’]. It is difficult to grasp the sense of *sunu* (as a guess, might it be a contraction of *shirunushi* 知主 [‘the lord who rules’])?”⁽²⁵⁾

Nishimiya Kazutami proposes that the element *fuha* may derive from the same root as *fufu*, the stem of the verb *fufumu* 含む (“to enclose,” as with a flower bud), and imply not yet fully opened. As such it might be an allusion to this deity’s mother, Konohana no chiruhime, and mean “bud.” He takes *kunusu* to be equivalent to *kunisu* 国巢 (“land nests”), with *su* (“nest”) meaning “dwelling.” The final *nu* he interprets as “lord.” He sees this deity’s name as forming a parallel to that of the deity’s father, Yashimajinumi no kami—a theonym he interprets as carrying the sense of “spirit of the lord who rules over many islands” (see text note 2 above)—and takes it to mean “the lord of the areas of the land where people dwell.”⁽²⁶⁾

9. *Okami no kami* 淤迦美神

This is a theonym associated with water. The episode of the slaying of the fire deity mentions a deity named Kura okami no kami 闇淤加美神, which comes into existence from the blood that oozes from Izanaki’s fingers after he slays the fire deity.⁽²⁷⁾ In its account of a village called Kutami 球曇 (Naori 直入 district), the *Bungo no kuni fudoki* 豊後国風土記 relates that a creature identified by the digraph 蛇龍 appeared when people sought to draw water from a spring. A gloss indicates that the digraph 蛇龍 is to be read as *okami*, while the graphs suggest that the entity in question was a serpent deity.⁽²⁸⁾

10. Hikawahime 日河比売

The name of this deity is also related to water. Nishimiya Kazutami interprets *hikawa* 日河 as a “river with spiritual potency” and takes the name as a whole to mean a female ritual attendant serving that river.⁽²⁹⁾ It could also be understood, however, as the female deity of the river. This *hikawa* cannot be equated with the Hinokawa 肥川 river in Izumo, the setting for the episode of the slaying of the Yamata serpent (see chapters 21 and 22). In ancient Japanese phonetic transcriptions, *hi* 日 is a *kō*-type vowel sound, whereas *hi* 肥 (rendered as 簸 in the *Nihon shoki*) is an *otsu*-type vowel sound. Hikawahime here thus cannot be considered a deity of the Hinokawa river. In the chronicle of Emperor Suinin, however, a certain Hinagahime 肥長比売 appears within a narrative context linked to the Izumo Hinokawa river.⁽³⁰⁾ The context and the fact that she takes the form of a snake suggests that she might be a female deity associated with the Hinokawa river.

11. Fukafuchi no mizuyarehana no kami 深淵水夜礼花神

This name appears to indicate a deity associated with water, but its specific implications remain uncertain. Nishimiya Kazutami holds that it may signify “the beginning of the flow of water within a deep pool (*fukai fuchi* 深い淵)” and express the deification of water circulation.⁽³¹⁾

12. Ame no tsudohechine no kami 天之都度閤知泥神

This name also appears to indicate a deity associated with water, but the specifics remain uncertain. Nishimiya Kazutami takes *ame no* 天之 to be a laudatory element added in reference to water sources. He proposes that *tsudohe* 都度閤 might derive from the passive form (lower bigrade) of the intransitive fourth-grade verb *tsudou* 集ふ (“to gather”) and be an allusion to something brought together by an invisible force. He interprets *chi* 知 as “road” (*michi* 道), carrying

here the idea of a water channel. In his view, the name as a whole might signify “water channels that converge in the heavenly realm.”⁽³²⁾

13. Omizunu no kami 淤美豆奴神

Another deity name related to water. Many draw a connection between this deity and the deity Yatsuka mizu omizuno no mikoto 八束水臣津野命, mentioned in various sections of the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* and described in it as having pulled land (*kunihiki* 国引) from the Korean peninsula to enlarge Izumo. This latter deity is also identified in an alternate transcription as Omizuno no mikoto 意美豆努命. In the section on the Izumo district, the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* relates that “after Yatsuka mizu omizuno no mikoto pulled the land [to Izumo], he undertook to provide a hall for the great deity who created the earthly realm [i.e., Ōanamuji].”⁽³³⁾ This suggests that the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* sees Omizuno no mikoto as antecedent to Ōanamuji no mikoto, a perspective in line with the sequence of the genealogy descending from Susanoō presented in the *Kojiki*. Motoori Norinaga holds that the name Omizuno may signify “lord of vast waters.”⁽³⁴⁾ Uegaki Setsuya argues that “Yatsuka mizu is a modifier conveying the notion of deep water. Omizuno is a name expressing the deification of vast waters. [The name as a whole] symbolizes the power of water to transport sediment and form land.”⁽³⁵⁾

14. “A daughter of Funozuno no kami named Futemimi no kami” (Funozuno no kami no musume, na wa Futemimi no kami 布怒豆怒神之女名布帝耳神)

The two deities’ names both include the term *fu* 布 (“fabric”), suggesting a connection to that item, but the specifics remain uncertain. Regarding the first, Funozuno no kami, Nishimiya Kazutami proposes that *funo* 布怒 might derive from *kuna* 曲 (“twining”) and *zuno* 豆怒 mean *tsuta* 葛 (“vine,” “creeper”). He thus interprets this theonym as referring to the types of vines that were soaked

in water to extract fibers for clothing. He takes Futemimi no kami to be a “clothing spirit.”⁽³⁶⁾ It is unclear why two deity names associated with clothing should appear here. Funozuno no kami may possibly be connected to the abovementioned Fuha no mojikunusunu no kami (see text note 8). Futemimi no kami perhaps has the same meaning as Futomimi 太耳 (“thick ears”). A variant source cited in the *Nihon shoki* chronicle of Emperor Suinin gives this latter name as that of the father of the woman whom Ame no hihoko 天日槍 takes as his spouse.⁽³⁷⁾

15. Ame no fuyukinu no kami 天之冬衣神

Similar to the two preceding deities, this name may be related to clothing, but the specifics are uncertain in this case, too. Nishimiya Kazutami holds that *fuyukinu* 冬衣 (transcribed with the graphs for “winter” and “clothing”) also implies *fuyu kinu* 増ゆ衣 (“increasing clothing”), conveying praise of abundant clothing. He takes *ame no* 天之 as a laudatory element indicating something bestowed from the heavenly realm.⁽³⁸⁾ Ozaki Nobuo 尾崎暢殃 notes that *fuyu* 冬 (“winter”) is a homonym of *fuyu* 殖ゆ (“to increase”) and *fuyu* 触ゆ (“to approach,” “come in contact with”). Winter, he points out, was seen in antiquity as the season for renewing and securing the spirit within the body. “Clothing” (*kinu* 衣) functioned in this context as a catalyst spurring the process of renewal.⁽³⁹⁾ If one follows this line of interpretation, it is perhaps possible to see the previous two deities discussed in text note 14 as also clothing deities.

16. “A daughter of Sashikuniōkami named Sashikuniwakahime” (Sashikuniōkami *no musume, na wa* Sashikuniwakahime 刺国大神之 女名刺国若比壳)

These two deity names are related to the notion of “land.” The term *sashi* 刺 carries the sense of establishing possession of the land. The terms *ō* 大 (“large,” “great”) and *waka* 若 (“young,” “junior”) make the two deities a complementary

pair. Many aspects of the meaning of the names of the deities listed in the genealogy descending from Susanoo remain unclear. They nevertheless would seem to comprise elements related to agriculture, water, and clothing (nourishing and renewal of the spirit) together with elements linked to the heavenly realm. The two deities at hand, associated with establishing possession of the land, represent the culmination of this sequence and portend the birth of the deity Ōkuninushi.

17. Ōkuninushi no kami 大国主神

This name means “the deity who is the great lord of the land.” The deity in question has four alternative names. In the *Kojiki*, the narrative concerning him initially unfolds with him identified as Ōanamuji no kami (see text note 18). Following a sequence of three episodes of his courting different women (in which he is referred to as Yachihoko), he ultimately emerges as the great deity Ōkuninushi no kami. As such, he will go on to play a central role in the consolidation and cession of the land to Amaterasu’s descendants.

Further comment: Ōkuninushi’s alternative names. The sixth variant of the eighth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter states:

Ōkuninushi no kami also is called Ōmononushi no kami 大物主神, also is called Kunitsukuri ōanamuchi no mikoto 国作大己貴命, also is called Ashihara no shikoo 葦原醜男, also is called Yachihoko no kami 八千矛神, also is called Ōkunitama no kami 大国玉神, also is called Utsushikunitama no kami 鵜国玉神.⁽⁴⁰⁾

This list has seven names and differs from the *Kojiki* in adding Ōmononushi and Ōkunitama. The name Ōkunitama can be thought to signify the spirit of the land. Each locale presumably worshiped its own spirit of the land, but does the

name Ōkunitama imply a comparable spirit of the earthly realm as a whole? If so, the name's implications may overlap with those of Ōkuninushi and not necessarily connote a specific, regional deity. On the other hand, in the *Nihon shoki* chronicle of Emperor Sujin, Yamato ōkunitama no kami 倭大国魂神 (“the great spirit of the land of Yamato”) is named together with Ōmononushi as expressing anger and displeasure through the destructive act (*tatari* 祟り) of causing pestilence.⁽⁴¹⁾ The conjoining of the two in this passage likely bears on the listing of Ōmononushi no kami and Ōkunitama no kami in the sixth variant of the eighth section of the Age of Deities chapter as two further alternative names for Ōkuninushi. The Ōkunitama no kami mentioned in this variant is plausibly the same deity as the Yamato ōkunitama no kami figuring in the chronicle of Emperor Sujin.

The inclusion of these two additional names in the *Nihon shoki* thus points to significant differences between it and the *Kojiki* regarding Ōkuninushi. Whereas the *Kojiki* does not identify Ōkuninushi/Ōanamuji with Ōmononushi, the *Nihon shoki* does—the same sixth variant goes on to identify Ōmononushi explicitly as Ōanamuchi's “spirit that brings good fortune, spirit that brings marvelous happenings” (*sakimitama kushimitama* 幸魂奇魂).⁽⁴²⁾ The *Kojiki* likewise does not treat Ōkuninushi as a “Yamato” deity. We shall consider further these distinctive aspects of the *Kojiki*'s presentation of the myths at the point where Ōmononushi makes his appearance.⁽⁴³⁾

The *Kojiki* treats Ōkuninushi as the primary name among the five that it uses. This is another difference with the *Nihon shoki*, which takes Ōanamuchi as the main name. To be sure, the name Ōanamuji also figures centrally in the *Kojiki*. The narrative concerning this deity refers to him as Ōanamuji from the first episode of the bare rabbit of Inaba until the point where Susano'o calls upon him to become Ōkuninushi. The name Yachihoko figures in the courting episodes, but the other two names, Ashihara shikoo no kami and Utsushikunitama no kami, appear hardly at all. Ashihara shikoo no kami occurs in only two places:

When Ōkuninushi arrives at Nenokatasukuni, Susanoo refers to him as Ashihara shikoo no mikoto. Then, in the land-consolidation episode, when Ōkuninushi asks Kamumusuhi no mioya no mikoto about the identity of Sukunabikona, Kamumusuhi similarly addresses Ōkuninushi as Ashihara shikoo no mikoto.⁽⁴⁴⁾ In both instances the epithet Ashihara shikoo reflects a view of Ōkuninushi as the representative of the earthly realm of Ashihara no nakatsukuni as seen from a different realm, respectively Nenokatasukuni and Takamanohara.

Commentators diverge in their interpretation of the implications of “shikoo,” with some taking “shiko” to mean “ugly” or “wretched” and others to mean “stalwart.”⁽⁴⁵⁾ The latter interpretation sees the name Ashihara shikoo as reflecting Ōkuninushi’s role as the valiant figure overseeing Ashihara no nakatsukuni. Those who take the name to mean simply “ugly”/“wretched” point to the fact that the one who assigns it to Ōkuninushi is Susanoo and that he does so in the context where Suseribime (Susanoo’s daughter) has brought Ōkuninushi to Susanoo and described him as an “extremely handsome deity” (*itō uruwashiki kami* 甚麗神). In other words, Susanoo possibly is denigrating the figure who has claimed his daughter. On the other hand, Susanoo subsequently calls upon Ōkuninushi to “become Ōkuninushi no kami.” Is it not likely that at their first encounter Susanoo describes Ōkuninushi as a “wretched man” because at that stage he sees him as a weak figure who is not worthy of being termed “lord” (*nushi*)? This usage perhaps echoes the structurally similar phrase “hags of Yomi” (*yomotsushikome*) used to describe the creatures who pursue Izanaki as he flees from Yomi. By referring to Ōkuninushi as Ashihara shikoo, Susanoo plausibly intends to characterize him as an inadequate entity rather than the one responsible for Ashihara no nakatsukuni.

Kamumusuhi’s use of the epithet Ashihara shikoo occurs after the point in the narrative where Ōkuninushi has “become” Ōkuninushi. Its use in this instance may reflect the perspective of a heavenly deity viewing the situation from

Takamanohara. From that standpoint it perhaps would be preferable to refer to him as a deity of Ashihara no nakatsukuni rather than as the “great lord of the land.” Indeed from this point on, in no instance does a heavenly deity use the name Ōkuninushi no kami, not even in the context of the pacification of Ashihara no nakatsukuni.

The name Ashihara shikoo appears several times in the *Harima no kuni fudoki*, in the context of the stories of the contest between Ashihara shikoo and Ame no hiboko 天日槍 to lay claim to the land.⁽⁴⁶⁾ This has led some to hold that Ashihara shikoo was originally a deity indigenous to Harima. This is not the case, however. Rather, a deity that was formulated by the *Kojiki* as a deity of Ashihara no nakatsukuni has been incorporated into the Harima stories of laying claim to the land.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Apart from calling upon Ōkuninushi to “become Ōkuninushi,” on the same occasion Susanoo also calls upon him to “become Utsushikuninushi no kami.” We will discuss this issue more fully at that point in the narrative, but let us note here that although the genealogy in the present episode unmistakably gives the alternative name as Utsushikunitama no kami 宇都志国玉神 (“**spirit** of the visible realm”), the early manuscripts are unified in giving the name in the Nenokatasukuni episode as Utsushikuninushi no kami 宇都志国主神 (“**lord** of the visible realm”).⁽⁴⁸⁾ The compilers plausibly adopted the latter name as a pair to Ōkuninushi (“great lord of the land”) and to convey the idea that this deity possessed and ruled over the present world.

The remaining name is Yachihoko no kami. Whereas the other names all carry some connection to each other and to the overall narrative context, Yachihoko seems to stand apart, even isolated. At the point where Ōkuninushi, having completed his development from Ōanamuji, returns from Nenokatasukuni and is about to embark on the consolidation of the land, the narrative shifts abruptly. He suddenly appears under the name Yachihoko, and there follow the “deity

tales” (*kamugatari* 神語) in which his courting of successive women is related largely through the medium of verses exchanged between him and the women. The reference to him as Yachihoko in the prose settings that introduce the poems possibly derives from its occurrence within the poems, but the shift leaves one with the sense of a break between this section and those that precede and follow it.

On the other hand, the disconnect with the preceding and following passages is not total. The exchange of verses with Suseribime, the primary spouse whom he took when he visited Nenokatsukuni, provides a link to the preceding narrative, and the verses about the courting of different women can be seen as an aspect of the consolidation of the land. The last set of verses, exchanged with Suseribime, begins with her exclaiming “Oh, Lord Yachihoko no kami,” and continuing, “My Ōkununushi!”⁽⁴⁹⁾ Perhaps these stories told through the exchange of verses seek both to present the courting of women from different regions as an expression of consolidation of the land and to relate Yachihoko’s growth into Ōkununushi.⁽⁵⁰⁾

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18. Ōanamuji no kami 大穴牟遲神

This theonym is transcribed variously in ancient texts. In the *Nihon shoki* the name is rendered as Ōanamuchi no mikoto 大己貴命 and Ōanamuchi no kami 大己貴神.⁽⁵¹⁾ The *Fudoki* includes the forms Ōnamuchi 大己貴, Ōnamochi no mikoto 大穴持命, Ōnamuchi no mikoto 大汝命, and Ōnamuchi no kami 大汝神.⁽⁵²⁾ The *Man'yōshū* has Ōnamuji 大汝, Ōnamichi 大穴道, and Ōnamuchi 於保奈牟知.⁽⁵³⁾

As indicated by the romanizations in the paragraph above (which follow the transliterations of the editions cited), opinions diverge as to whether this deity name should be read as Ōnamuji/Ōnamuchi or Ōanamuji/Ōanamuchi. The transcriptions 於保奈牟知 and 大汝 found in the *Man'yōshū* and the phonetic gloss 於保那武智 given in the *Kogo shūi* suggest the reading Ōnamuchi.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Conversely, the *Kojiki* transcription 大穴牟遲 and the phonetic gloss 於婁婁娜武智 included in the *Nihon shoki* support the reading Ōnamuji/Ōnamuchi. *Ana* might have evolved into *na* through vowel elision, but interpretations of the theonym's meaning vary depending on views of the original pronunciation. Motoori Norinaga cites Kamo no Mabuchi as holding that “[the graph] 穴 represents the sound *na* 那, and *mu* 牟 is a sound shift of *mo* 母, so [this theonym] means ‘holder of a great name’ (Ōnamochi 大名持).”⁽⁵⁵⁾ Kurano Kenji concludes that “Ōnamuchi no kami means great (大) land (地) noble (貴) deity (神), that is, ‘the great lord of the land.’”⁽⁵⁶⁾ Nishimiya Kazutami reads the graph 穴 as *ana* and interprets it literally as “hole.” The theonym as such, he proposes, means “the great noble of the mining hole. ‘Hole’ refers to the hole of a mine for extracting iron sand.”⁽⁵⁷⁾

19. Ashihara shikoo no kami 葦原色許男神

The prefix *ashihara* indicates that this is a deity associated with Ashihara no nakatsukuni. Opinions diverge, however, as to the meaning of the word *shikoo* (see the preceding further comment to text note 17). The *Nihon shoki* transliterates Ashihara shikoo as 葦原醜男, and commentators such as Saigō Nobutsuna and Nishimiya Kazutami interpret *shikoo* to mean “ugly/wretched man.”⁽⁵⁸⁾ Others, such as Motoori Norinaga and Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu, take it to mean “stalwart man.”⁽⁵⁹⁾

20. Yachihoko no kami 八千矛神

Commentaries generally interpret *hoko* 矛 literally as “spear” and take Yachihoko to be a deity associated with military power. The main text of the ninth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter includes the following declaration from Ōnamuchi no kami in its account of the cession of the land: “With this spear, I was finally able to succeed in pacifying the land. If the Heavenly Grandson rules

over the land with this spear, lasting peace will ensue.”⁽⁶⁰⁾ Here “spear” clearly functions as a symbol of land pacification. Instances like this might be taken to indicate a connection between this deity name and military prowess. In the *Kojiki*, however, this name does not figure in contexts with a martial aspect. It appears only in the account of Yachihoko’s courtship of Nunakawahime from Koshi and the jealousy of his first spouse, Suseribime. Questions arise, therefore, as to whether Yachihoko should be seen as a deity associated with military power.

21. Utsushikunitama no kami 宇都志国玉神

As noted in the discussion of the Land of Yomi, the adjective *utsushi* means “visible.”⁽⁶¹⁾ *Kunitama* is a spirit of the land that protects a particular region. We will consider the name Utsushikunitama no kami further in the section on Ōanamuji no kami’s visit to Nenokatasukuni.⁽⁶²⁾

Endnotes

- (1) See chapter 4.
- (2) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 177–78. Norinaga interprets *kumido* as deriving from *komorinurudokoro* 隠り寝る所 (“a place for the couple to seclude themselves and sleep together”). In his annotations to the text, Ono Susumu 大野晋 argues that *kumi* is not an elided form of *komori* but instead comes from *kumi* 組み (“to join”). See pp. 541–42.
- (3) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 142–43, 190–91, 200–201, 250–51, 300–301, 320–21, 330–31, 360–61.
- (4) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 226–27
- (5) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 132–33, 180–90.
- (6) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 144–45, 146, 198–99.
- (7) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 94–95.
- (8) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 92–93, 96–97. The graphic transcription (and thus transliteration) of the theonym Ōanamuchi/Ōanamuji varies from text to text. See text note 18 below. (TN)
- (9) See chapter 5.

- (10) See chapter 29.
- (11) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 415.
- (12) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 370.
- (13) Yoshii, *Tennō no keifu to shinwa*, vol. 1, pp. 99–124. See also chapter 5, text note 1.
- (14) See chapter 33.
- (15) This name used by Susanoo diverges from the name Utsushikunitama no kami listed as one of Ōkuninushi's alternative names in the passage at hand. See text note 17 below and chapter 28.
- (16) See also Taniguchi Masahiro, “‘Kojiki’ jōkan, Izumo kei keifu kisai no igi.”
- (17) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 371.
- (18) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 371.
- (19) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, p. 73n13.
- (20) The *Nihon shoki* mentions this deity in the sections on Izanaki and Izanami. See Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 42–43, 52. (TN)
- (21) Kurano and Takeda, *Kojiki, Norito*, pp. 418–19.
- (22) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 120–23.
- (23) Nakanishi, *Kojiki o yomu*, vol. 1, p. 219.
- (24) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, p. 73n15.
- (25) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 418.
- (26) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, pp. 371–72.
- (27) See chapter 8.
- (28) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 292–93.
- (29) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 372.
- (30) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 208–209
- (31) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 372.
- (32) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 372.
- (33) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 130–31, 134–35, 160–61, 210–12.
- (34) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 419.
- (35) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 131–32n22.
- (36) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 373.
- (37) See Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 306–307, 334–35. The *Nihon shoki* describes Ame no hihoko as a prince from the Silla kingdom. (TN)
- (38) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 373.
- (39) Ozaki Nobuo, *Kojiki zenkō*, p. 130.

- (40) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 102–103.
- (41) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 270–73.
- (42) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 104–105.
- (43) See chapter 34.
- (44) See chapter 28 and 34.
- (45) See chapter 10, text note 3.
- (46) See, for instance, Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 70–71.
- (47) See Taniguchi Masahiro, *Fudoki setsuwa no hyōgen sekai*, pp. 241–54.
- (48) See chapter 28. Most present-day editions emend *nushi* 主 in the Nenokatasukuni episode to *tama* 玉. See, for instance, Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 84–85.
(TN)
- (49) See chapter 32.
- (50) On this point, see Taniguchi Masahiro, “Ōkuninushi no kami no ‘mata na’ kisai no igi.”
- (51) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 92–93, 96–97 (among other occurrences).
- (52) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 577, 140, 32–33, 34 (among other occurrences).
- (53) Kojima et al., *Man’yōshū*, SNKBZ 6, p. 211; 7, p. 231; 9, p. 264 (among other occurrences).
- (54) Nishimiya, *Kogo shūi*, pp. 24, 126.
- (55) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 420–21.
- (56) Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 3, pp. 174–76.
- (57) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 374.
- (58) Saigō, *Kojiki chūshaku*, vol. 1, pp. 400–401; Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, pp. 376–77.
- (59) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 421; Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, p. 74n9.
- (60) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 118–19.
- (61) See chapter 10, text note 7.
- (62) See chapter 28.

Chapter 25: The Bare Rabbit of Inaba

Now, this Ōkuninushi no kami had many brothers, but all these myriad deities (1) [eventually] departed, leaving the land to Ōkuninushi no kami. The reason they left (2) is [related below].

Each of those myriad deities harbored a desire to make the maiden Yagamihime 八上比売 from Inaba 稲羽 (3) his own. They set off together for Inaba. They took Ōanamuji no kami with them, treating him as a servant and having him carry their bags. When they arrived at the cape of Keta 気多 (4), [they saw] a naked rabbit (5) lying there. The myriad deities spoke to the rabbit, saying, “You should bathe in the seawater, let the wind blow over you, and lie down atop the ridge of a high mountain.” The rabbit did as the myriad deities instructed and lay down [on the ridge]. But as the seawater dried, the blowing wind completely flayed the skin on its body.

In pain and suffering, the rabbit lay there weeping. Coming at the very end (6) [of the line of myriad deities], Ōanamuji no kami saw the rabbit. “Why are you lying there weeping?” (7) he asked. “I was on the island of Oki 淤岐 (8),” the rabbit replied, “and wanted to cross over to here, but there was no way to do so. So, I deceived a shark (9) in the sea, saying, ‘Let us compare how many kin we each have. Bring all your kin, as many as there are and have them line up from this island to the cape of Keta. I will then run over them, counting as I go. That way, we will know whose kin are more numerous, mine or yours.’ [The sharks] were deceived by what I said and lined up. Treading [on their backs] and counting, I crossed over. Just as I was about to reach land, I said, ‘I fooled you!’ I had no more than said this, though, than the shark at the very end (6’) of the line seized me and ripped off all my clothing. As I wept and lamented, the myriad deities who came first commanded (10) me to bathe in seawater and lie down exposed to the wind. I did as they instructed, only for my body to suffer this injury.”

Ōanamuji no kami thereupon offered the rabbit counsel. “Hurry to the river mouth and wash your body with fresh water,” he instructed. “Then immediately gather [pollen from the] flowers of the bulrushes (11) at the river mouth, spread it out, and roll around in it. Your body will surely heal as if it had its original skin.” The rabbit did as Ōanamuji counseled, and its body was restored to its original state (12). This is “the bare rabbit of Inaba” (13), now known as the Rabbit Deity (*usagigami* 兔神).

“Those myriad deities will surely not be able to get Yagamihime,” the rabbit said to Ōanamuji no kami. “You now may have to carry their bags, but she will become yours, my lord.”

Text Notes

1. “Myriad deities” (*yasogami* 八十神)

These deities are described as Ōanamuji’s brothers (*anioto* 兄弟). In the next episode, Yagamihime addresses them collectively as “you all” (*imashitachi* 汝等), and when they catch up with the fleeing Ōanamuji, the text uses the graph 臻 (*itaru*), which likewise connotes a collective action.⁽¹⁾ These phrases all indicate that *yasō* 八十 (literally “eighty”) is to be understood as a multitude.

The text subsequently refers to the deities as Ōanamuji’s “half-brothers” (*mama anioto* 庶兄弟),⁽²⁾ suggesting that he and they had different mothers. The genealogy that traces Ōkuninushi’s origins does not list any siblings.⁽³⁾ Since the *Kojiki* does not always coordinate the genealogies it includes with the narrative, the lack of any reference to half-brothers in Ōkuninushi’s genealogy may not be notable. On the other hand, if one adopts Nishimiya Kazutami’s interpretation of the myriad deities as “an assemblage similar to later village youth groups (*wakamonogumi* 若者組),”⁽⁴⁾ it is perhaps not necessary to consider Ōanamuji and the myriad deities as siblings with blood ties.

2. “All [the myriad deities eventually] departed, leaving the land to Ōkuninushi no kami. The reason they left is . . .” (*mina kuni wa Ōkuninushi no kami ni sariki. Sarishi yue wa . . .* 皆国者避於大国主神。所以避者。..)

For the implications of the verb *saru* 避 (“to depart,” “to leave”), see the earlier discussion of Izanami’s leaving this world (*kamusari* 神避).⁽⁵⁾ The sequence of episodes initiated by the statement “The reason they left is” concludes by noting that after Ōkuninushi returned from Nenokatasukuni, “Thereupon, wielding that great sword and bow, he chased away and expelled (*oisakuru* 追避) the myriad deities, chasing and subjugating them on every hill ridge, chasing and expelling them at every river shoal. Thereupon he began to form the land.”⁽⁶⁾ In other words, the story of the bare rabbit of Inaba serves to inaugurate the account of how Ōanamuji no kami becomes Ōkuninushi no kami, the great deity who carries out the formation of the land.

3. The maiden Yagamihime from Inaba (Inaba no Yagamihime 稲羽之八上比壳)

Yagami 八上 is a toponym. The Heian dictionary *Wamyō ruiju shō* 和名類聚抄 (1617 movable-type twenty-fascicle version), lists a Yagami district 八上郡 in Inaba Province 因幡国;⁽⁷⁾ the area corresponds to the present district of Yazu 八頭 in Tottori Prefecture 鳥取県. An explanatory note to *Man’yōshū* poem 535 identifies the poem’s subject as “the lady-in-waiting from Yagami in Inaba” (*Inaba no Yagami no uneme* 因幡八上采女).⁽⁸⁾ As in these instances, the place name “Inaba” is usually transcribed as 因幡. The *Kojiki* transcription 稲羽 has as yet been found in no other ancient sources, including *mokkan* 木簡 wooden tablets. Although one cannot say for sure, the choice of this transcription perhaps has something to do with the story’s content.

4. The cape of Keta (Keta no saki 氣多之前)

The Heian dictionary *Wamyō ruiju shō* lists a Keta district 氣多郡 in Inaba Province;⁽⁹⁾ the area corresponds to the present district of Ketaka 氣高 in Tottori Prefecture. The *Engi shiki jinmyōchō* 延喜式神名帳 lists Keta shrines throughout provinces along the Sea of Japan, beginning with Keta Taisha 氣多大社, the first-ranked shrine (Ichinomiya 一宮) of Noto 能登 Province, and including shrines in Etchū 越中, Echigo 越後, Tajima 但馬, and Kaga 加賀 provinces.

Keta is a dialect term meaning “mountain peak” or “shoreline.” Saigō Nobutsuna holds that Keta no saki here likely indicates a promontory jutting out into the sea.⁽¹⁰⁾ The Kamakura-period encyclopedia *Chiribukuro* 塵袋 cites an account of the story of the rabbit from Inaba from a certain *Inaba no ki* 因幡ノ記). It first speaks of Keta no saki 氣多ノ崎 but then describes the rabbit’s destination as Take no saki 竹ノサキ (“bamboo cape”). The *Inaba no ki* version connects the rabbit to a “bamboo grove” (*takebayashi* 竹林) and relates the story as part of an explanation for the name Takekusa no kōri 竹草郡 (“bamboo grass” district) as an alternative for the usual name Takakusa no kōri 高草郡 (“tall grass” district). The shift from Keta no saki to Take no saki may be related to the “bamboo” connection, or it might simply be the result of an unintentional reversal of the syllables *ke* and *ta*.⁽¹¹⁾

5. “A naked rabbit” (*akahada no usagi* 裸兔)

The graph 裸 (“naked”) is read here as *akahada* in line with a passage from the chronicle of Emperor Suinin 垂仁 in the *Nihon shoki* that glosses the digraph 裸伴 (a name assigned to a collection of a large number of swords) as *akahada ga tomo* 阿箇播娜我等母 (“*akahada* attendants”).⁽¹²⁾ Motoori Norinaga takes *akahada* to mean “bare skin,” or alternatively, “red skin.”⁽¹³⁾ Saigō Nobutsuna interprets it as “bright, i.e., red (*aka* 明 [赤]) skin.”⁽¹⁴⁾ Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu take it also as “red skin.”⁽¹⁵⁾ Kurano Kenji, on the other hand,

holds that *aka* indicates “completely” or “entirely.” He interprets the phrase as a whole as “a stark naked rabbit.” In his view, the rabbit’s subsequent explanation that the shark “ripped off all my clothing (*koromo* 衣服)” expresses the idea that, having been “stripped of its fur, the rabbit has been left stark naked.” Nishimiya Kazutami is of the same view.⁽¹⁶⁾

Using words such as “naked,” “clothing,” and “skin,” the *Kojiki* describes the rabbit as if it were human. Does not such usage bear on the question of what the compilers intended when at the end of this episode they identify the rabbit as 素 (“plain,” “bare,” “unadorned”)? See text notes 12 and 13 below for further discussion of the possible implications of this identification.

6. “At the very end” (*iyahate* 最後／*iyahashi* 最端)

The digraph 最後 appears also in the Land of Yomi episode, where it is used to describe Izanami “finally” joining her underlings in the pursuit of Izanaki.⁽¹⁷⁾ In that instance, too, we followed Motoori Norinaga and other commentators in reading the digraph as *iyahate* (“at the end”).⁽¹⁸⁾ Kōnoshi Takamitsu and Yamaguchi Yoshinori take issue with this reading and instead read the digraph 最後 as *motomo nochi ni* 最も後に and the digraph 最端 as *motomo hashi ni* 最も端に. They concede, however, that there are no definitive instances in ancient texts of reading the graph 最 as *motomo*. Their alternative readings are thus also open to question.⁽¹⁹⁾

7. “Why are you lying there weeping?” (*nani no yue ni ka na ga nakifuseru* 何由汝泣伏)

Ōanamuji’s myriad brothers simply recommend a cure to the rabbit without asking anything about the reason for its plight. By contrast, Ōanamuji no kami first asks the rabbit what has happened. Tada Miyako 多田みや子 suggests that this story fits into a narrative pattern of “tales inquiring about the cause of something” and

that as such it sets up an opposition between a deity who inquires what caused the problem and deities who simply advance their own views without asking what has happened. Asking “why” enables the questioner to win over and assist the entity in trouble. Simultaneously it acts as a narrative device for incorporating a small independent story into a larger narrative.⁽²⁰⁾ Tada’s observation offers a valuable perspective on a characteristic feature of the *Kojiki*: the centrality of the spoken word (*koto* 言) to the unfolding of the narrative.

8. “The island of Oki” (*Oki no shima* 淤岐嶋)

The dominant view is that this is a proper name referring to the Oki islands 隠岐島 lying off the present Shimane Prefecture. Nishimiya Kazutami argues that if it meant simply “an island in the offing” (*oki no hō no shima* 沖の方の島), it would be transcribed with the graph 奥, and that the absence of a phonetic gloss also indicates that it is a proper noun.⁽²¹⁾ Some, however, question this view on the grounds that the distance between the Oki islands and Cape Keta makes the islands implausible as the starting point for the rabbit’s misadventure.

9. “A shark in the sea” (*umi no wani* 海和迹)

Interpretations of the term *wani* 和迹 vary: some take it to be a crocodile, others as a type of shark. In the *Kojiki*, the word *wani* also appears in the myth of the brothers Hoori and Hoderi, as well as in the episode where Toyotamabime 豊玉毗売 gives birth. In the former, the term refers to the “small *wani*” (*hitohiro wani* 一尋和迹) that among all the assembled *wani* declares that it can transport Hoori to the “upper land” (*uwatsukuni* 上国, i.e., Ashihara no nakatsukuni) and return within a single day. The text goes on to state that this *wani* is “nowadays called Sahimochi no kami 佐比持神.”⁽²²⁾ *Sahi* has been interpreted as meaning “plow” or “sword” and to allude to the *wani*’s shape. This point, coupled with the association of the *wani* with the sea, has led many to see the *wani* in this episode

as a marine species, specifically a shark.

Conversely, in the Toyotamabime episode, she—the daughter of the sea deity—declares that she will assume the form true to her original land during childbirth. The text describes her as taking the shape of a “large *wani*” (*yahiro wani* 八尋和迹) and “crawling about and writhing” (*harabai mogoyoiki* 匍匐委蛇) while giving birth.⁽²³⁾ Some have argued that the scene evokes the image of a reptilian creature such as a crocodile. If we hypothesize that the tale of the bare rabbit of Inaba and the Hoori–Toyotamabime story are both of Southeast Asian–Pacific origin, the term *wani* might be interpreted as a reptile. Insofar as the tale of the bare rabbit of Inaba is concerned, however, such an origin is open to question.

The Heian dictionary *Wamyō ruiju shō* writes of the graph 鰐 (read *wani*) that the Chinese rhyme dictionary *Qie yun* 切韻 (compiled 601 CE) identifies it as “an immense turtle with four legs, a beak three *shaku* long, and extremely sharp teeth. If it encounters a tiger or a large deer crossing the water, it attacks them and breaks them in half.”⁽²⁴⁾ This description implies that from an early stage *wani* may have been understood as reptilian. The depiction in the myths at hand, however, suggests that *wani* might more appropriately be interpreted as some sort of fish. The description of Toyotamabime as “crawling about and writhing” may also be seen as a portrayal of the pains of labor.

We might also note that a passage in the *Nihon shoki* describes the sea deity Kotoshironushi no kami 事代主神 as a “large fierce *wani*” (*yahiro kumawani* 八尋熊鰐).⁽²⁵⁾ This suggests that we should not think of *wani* in literal terms of being either a crocodile or a shark. It may be more fitting to see it as an imaginary being akin to a dragon or a *kirin*, the form assumed by a deity within the realm of mythology.⁽²⁶⁾ Both the *Izumo no kuni fudoki* and the *Hizen no kuni fudoki* relate stories of *wani* seeking to engage in relations with a female deity. The latter text describes the entity in question as “a sea deity” (*umi no kami* 海神) and adds the note, “this is called *wani* 鰐魚.”⁽²⁷⁾

10. “[They] commanded me” (*mikoto mochite* 命以)

The term *mikoto mochi* occurs twelve times in the *Kojiki*. It is fundamentally a term reserved for commands issued by heavenly deities such as Amaterasu ōmikami and Takamimusuhi no kami or from Takamanohara. This instance alone does not fit that pattern.⁽²⁸⁾ Kōnoshi Takamitsu and Yamaguchi Yoshinori posit that it may serve to express the rabbit’s mistaken perception of the myriad deities as noble beings.⁽²⁹⁾ There is no way to be sure about such an interpretation, but the use of *mikoto mochi* here would seem related to the fact that the rabbit is conveying someone else’s utterance.

11. “[Pollen from the] flowers of the bulrushes” (*kama no hana* 蒲黄)

The Heian dictionary *Wamyō ruiju shō* glosses the digraph 蒲黄 (“bulrush yellow”) as *kama no hana* 加万之波奈 and cites Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536 CE) as stating that the term refers to “the yellow [pollen] of bulrush flowers.”⁽³⁰⁾ The Heian encyclopedia of medicinal plants *Honzō wamyō* 本草和名 likewise glosses the name as *kama no hana* 加末乃波奈. It also cites Tao Hongjing and adds that other Chinese sources give the name as 蒲花 (“bulrush flower”) and 覆章.⁽³¹⁾ Kurano Kenji states that the pollen was used as a remedy for bleeding and pain.⁽³²⁾ Nakamura Hirotohi 中村啓信 notes that the early Heian medical work *Daidō ruiju hō* 大同類聚方 prescribes it for stomach pain.⁽³³⁾

12. “Its body was restored to its original state” (*sono mi moto no gotoshi* 其身如本)

What does the statement that the rabbit’s body was restored to “its original state” mean? The various commentaries are not very specific on this point. In general, however, they take the digraph 素兔 to refer to the rabbit’s original condition, that is, as a “white rabbit” (*shiro usagi* 白兔). This suggests that they understand “restoration” to mean that the rabbit recovers its “clothing,” with both its skin

and fur intact. Is this the most plausible reading, however? Let us confirm the sequence of events. When the myriad deities first encounter the rabbit, it is in a “naked” (*akahada* 裸) state. After it follows the myriad deities’ advice, “the blowing wind completely flayed the skin on its body (*mi no kawa kotogotoku* 身皮悉).” Then comes Ōanamuji no kami, who tells the rabbit that if it follows his counsel, “your body will surely heal as if it had its original skin (*mi moto no hada no gotoku* 身如本膚).” The rabbit does as instructed, whereupon “its body was restored to its original state.” These phrases indicate that the rabbit’s “body” (*mi* 身) was injured because it listened to the advice of the myriad deities. The exchange with Ōanamuji no kami also revolves around the rabbit’s “body.” In other words, what was restored to its original state was the rabbit’s “body” (namely, the rabbit in its bare skin), which had been flayed as a result of it having followed the myriad deities’ advice. The rabbit’s “clothing” (namely, its fur) does not figure as an issue. Does not this suggest that the “original state” to which the rabbit is restored is one of being naked and as yet unclothed? It is perhaps for this reason that in identifying the rabbit the text uses the graph 素 (“plain, bare, unadorned”) instead of 白 (“white”; for further discussion of this point, see the following text note).

13. “This is the bare rabbit of Inaba” (*kore, Inaba no shirousagi zo* 此稲羽之素兔者也)

No plausible readings other than *shirousagi* seem to have been proposed for the digraph 素菟. Its use here, however, poses several puzzles. This is the only occurrence of the graph 素 in the *Kojiki* (except for one instance in the preface). Why did the compilers deliberately adopt it here if they meant it simply as a synonym for the graph *shiro* 白 (“white”)? Elsewhere the *Kojiki* typically uses the graph 白 to describe animals as “white,” as with *shiroki inu* 白犬 (“white dog”), *shiroki ka* 白鹿 (“white deer”), *shiroki i* 白猪 (“white boar”), or *yahiro shirochi tori* 八尋白智鳥 (“large white bird”).

Nishimiya Kazutami suggests that the compilers may have avoided the digraph 白菟 (“white rabbit”) because it could be taken as an alternative name for the moon.⁽³⁴⁾ Motoori Norinaga notes, by contrast, that the graph 素 likely means “naked.”⁽³⁵⁾ As this observation indicates, the issue needs to be considered within the context of the myth itself. (Norinaga goes on to say that if the graph 素 means “naked,” “it should not be read *shiro*; there should be another reading. People should continue to reflect on this [point].”)

The narrative speaks first of “a naked rabbit” (*akahada no usagi* 裸兔), whose “clothing” (*koromo* 衣服) is then said to have been ripped off. As Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu as well as Suzuki Hiroyuki 鈴木啓之 point out, this wording may indicate that the graph 素 is intended to denote “white clothing” rather than simply “white” and that the digraph 素兔 means a “rabbit dressed in white clothing.”⁽³⁶⁾ Underlying the difference between this and Norinaga’s view is a divergence in interpretation of the term “this” (*kore* 此) that begins the sentence at hand. Does “this” refer to the rabbit stripped of its symbolic “clothing,” as described earlier in the passage, or to the rabbit restored to “its original state” (*moto no gotoshi* 如本), as described in the immediately preceding sentence?

If “its original state” is taken to mean the rabbit dressed in its original “clothing,” 素 might be understood as “a rabbit wearing white clothing.” In that case, the compilers could be seen as having chosen 素 to contrast “naked” (*akahada* 裸) with “clothed” (素), as opposed to “red” (*aka* 赤) with “white” (*shiro* 白). On the other hand, as discussed in the previous note, “its original state” may not mean that the rabbit regained its “clothing” but simply that its flayed body was healed. Would it not be possible in that case to see 裸 as equivalent to 素, with both graphs describing a rabbit without any clothing? Such an interpretation again raises the issue of how to read the graph here.⁽³⁷⁾

Further comment: The myth of the bare rabbit of Inaba and overseas tales. Two theories exist regarding the origin of the myth of the bare rabbit of

Inaba: one posits a transmission from Southeast Asia, the other a native Japanese origin. The first has wider support, presumably because similar animal tales have been reported in regions ranging from India to Southeast and Northeast Asia. There is a difference, however, in that most overseas tales featuring a contest of wits between animals end with the cunning terrestrial animal's success, whereas the bare rabbit of Inaba myth narrates the rabbit's failure.

An Indian tale relates how a crocodile attempts to snatch a monkey's heart but is deceived and fails to achieve its goal. A similar Chinese tale describes a contest between a macaque and a water serpent (*mizuchi* 虺). In Japan, *Konjaku monogatari shū* 今昔物語集 and *Shasekishu* 沙石集 (thirteenth century) also record stories of this sort, such as that of how a monkey in danger of losing its liver tricks a turtle or water serpent and escapes from its back. Folktales such as *Saru no ikigimo* 猿の生肝 ("The monkey's liver") and *Kurage hone nashi* くらげ骨無し ("The boneless jellyfish") also tell of aquatic animals that try to steal a terrestrial animal's liver, only to be tricked and fail. These stories, which spread and developed as Buddhist tales, differ in orientation and content from the myth of the bare rabbit of Inaba.

An Indonesian example introduced by Nishimiya Kazutami may be more pertinent. In this story, a mouse deer, unable to cross a river due to a flood, gathers a large group of crocodiles and deceives them by claiming that the king commanded him to count them. The mouse deer jumps over the crocodiles, counting them as it goes, and safely reaches the other side, mocking the crocodiles' foolishness. This story's close resemblance to the myth of the bare rabbit of Inaba supports the hypothesis of transmission from overseas. Fukushima Akiho 福島秋穂 argues, on the other hand, that overseas myths of this sort cannot be traced back to ancient sources and that the direction of transmission may have been from Japan instead.⁽³⁸⁾

Endnotes

- (1) See chapter 26.
- (2) See chapter 28.
- (3) See chapter 24.
- (4) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 58n1.
- (5) See chapter 7, text notes 8 and 10.
- (6) See chapter 28.
- (7) Mabuchi, *Koshahon Wamyō ruijushō shūsei*, vol. 3, pp. 183–84.
- (8) Kojima et al., *Man'yōshū*, SNKBZ 6, p. 295.
- (9) Mabuchi, *Koshahon Wamyō ruijushō shūsei*, vol. 3, pp. 183–84.
- (10) Saigō, *Kojiki chūshaku*, vol. 2, p. 11.
- (11) Ōnishi et al., *Chiribukuro*, vol. 2, pp. 180–81. *Inaba no ki* is presumably a no longer extant Heian-period gazeteer. (TN)
- (12) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, p. 329.
- (13) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 427–28.
- (14) Saigō, *Kojiki chūshaku*, vol. 2, p. 12.
- (15) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, p. 75n22.
- (16) Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 3, pp. 190–91; Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 58n6.
- (17) See chapter 11.
- (18) See Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 254.
- (19) Kōnoshi and Yamaguchi, *Kojiki chūkai*, vol. 2, pp. 217–22.
- (20) Tada, *Kodai bungaku no shosō*, p. 313.
- (21) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 59n7.
- (22) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 132–33.
- (23) Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 134–35. On the terms *hitohiro* and *yahiro*, see chapter 4, text note 4 and footnote 21.
- (24) Mabuchi, *Koshahon Wamyō ruijushō shūsei*, vol. 3, p. 630.
- (25) Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 104–105, 105n13
- (26) A *kirin* 麒麟 is a legendary creature depicted in Chinese mythology as having a single horn, a deer-like body, horse-like hoofs, and an ox-like tail. (TN)
- (27) Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 254–55, 326–27.
- (28) On the term *mikoto mochite*, see also chapter 3, text note 2.
- (29) Kōnoshi and Yamaguchi, *Kojiki chūkai*, vol. 2, p. 60.
- (30) Mabuchi, *Koshahon Wamyō ruijushō shūsei*, vol. 3, p. 687. Tao Hongjing was a

Chinese alchemist and pharmacologist who lived in the Northern and Southern Dynasties period. (TN)

- (31) Masamune, *Honzō wamyō*, vol. 1, unpaginated.
- (32) Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 3, p. 196.
- (33) Nakamura, *Shinpan Kojiki*, p. 51n9.
- (34) Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 60n6.
- (35) Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 432.
- (36) Kōnoshi and Yamaguchi, *Kojiki chūkai*, vol. 4, pp. 35–36; Suzuki, *Kojiki no bunshō to sono kyōju*, pp. 93–96.
- (37) For further discussion of this issue, see the detailed analysis in Takahashi Toshiyuki, “Inaba no shirousagi kō.”
- (38) Fukushima Akiho, *Kiki shinwa densetsu no kenkyū*, p. 382.

Frequently Used Bibliographic Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used for frequently cited compendia and sources

- KMZ *Kamo no Mabuchi zenshū* 賀茂真淵全集. 27 vols. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai 続群書類従完成会, 1977–1992.
- KKSKK *Kokugakuin Daigaku Kenkyū Kaihatsu Suishin Kikō kiyō* 國學院大學研究開発推進機構紀要. 2009–.
- MNZ *Motoori Norinaga zenshū* 本居宣長全集. Ed. Ōno Susumu 大野晋 and Ōkubo Tadashi 大久保正. 23 vols. Chikuma Shobō 筑摩書房, 1968–1993.
- NKBT *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 日本古典文学大系. 102 vols. Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, 1957–1967.
- NKBZ *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 日本古典文学全集. 51 vols. Shōgakukan 小学館, 1970–1976.
- NST *Nihon shisō taikai* 日本思想大系. 67 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1970–1982.
- SNKBZ *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* 新編日本古典文学全集. 88 vols. Shōgakukan, 1994–2001.

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