

# KOJIKI

Translated  
with an Introduction and Notes  
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207

CHAPTER 1

THE FIVE SEPARATE HEAVENLY DEITIES COME  
INTO EXISTENCE.

- 1 At the time of the beginning of heaven and earth,' there came ing into existence in TAKAMA-NÖ-PARA a deity named AMĒ-NÖ-MI-NAKA-NUSI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, TAKA-MI-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KAMĪ-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ. These three deities all came into existence as single deities,<sup>2</sup> and their forms were not visible.<sup>3</sup>
- 2 Next, when the land was young, resembling floating oil and drift-like a jellyfish, there sprouted forth something like reed-shoots.<sup>4</sup> From<sup>5</sup> these came into existence the deity UMASI-ASI-KABĪ-PIKO-DI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AMĒ-NÖ-TÖKÖ-TATI-NÖ-KAMĪ.<sup>6</sup> These two deities also came into existence as single deities,<sup>6</sup> and their forms were not visible.<sup>3</sup>
- 3 The five deities in the above section are the Separate Heavenly Deities.'

<sup>1</sup> See **ADDITIONAL NOTE I** for a discussion of the cosmogony of this chapter. For discussions of proper names see **GLOSSARY**.

<sup>2</sup> *Pitōri-gami*; unlike the pairs of male and female deities who came into existence later, these deities came into being one by one and had no counterparts. However, it later becomes apparent that both *Kamī-musubi-no-kamī* and *Taka-mi-musubi-nij-kami* had children (cf. 30:4; 38:5).

<sup>3</sup> Or 'they hid their bodies.'

<sup>4</sup> *Asi-kabi*; the word forms part of the name of the next deity.

<sup>5</sup> Or 'by, by means of.'

<sup>6</sup> The first two sentences of this verse are written phonetically, for the most part, and must have originated in oral tradition. *Kanda* Hidco surmises that the section from 1:2 through 2:2 was originally a poem depicting the birth of all things from reed-thoots springing up in the muddy water of some primeval period. *Kojiki no kōzō* (Meiji Shoin, 1959), pp. 246-47.

<sup>7</sup> *Kōtō-ama-tu-kamī*. For some reason which is unclear to us today, these five deities were distinguished from the other heavenly deities and were set apart in a special category.

## CHAPTER 2

THE SEVEN GENERATIONS OF THE AGE OF THE  
GODS COME INTO EXISTENCE.

- 1 Next there came into existence the deity KUNI-NÖ-TÖKÖ-TATI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, TÖYÖ-KUMO-NO-NÖ-KAMĪ. These two deities also came into existence as single deities,<sup>1</sup> and their forms were not visible.<sup>2</sup>
- 2 Next there came into existence the deity named U-PIDI-NI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, his spouse<sup>3</sup> SU-PIDI-NI-NÖ-KAMĪ. Next, TUNO-GUPI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, his spouse IKU-GUPI-NÖ-KAMĪ. Next, OPO-TO-NÖ-DI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, his spouse OPO-TO-NÖ-BE-NÖ-KAMĪ. Next, OMÖ-DARU-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, his spouse AYA-KASIKO-NE-NÖ-KAMĪ. Next, IZANAGI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, his spouse IZANAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 3 The deities in the above section, from KUNI-NÖ-TÖKÖ-TATI-NÖ-KAMĪ through IZANAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ, are called collectively the Seven Generations of the Age of the Gods.\*
- 4 The first two single deities<sup>1</sup> are each called one generation.<sup>5</sup> The next pairs of ten deities are arranged in couples, each couple being called one generation.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Pitōri-gami*.

<sup>2</sup> Or 'they hid their bodies.'

<sup>3</sup> *Imo*. Literally, 'younger sister.'

<sup>4</sup> *Kami-yō nana-yō*.

<sup>5</sup> *Yō*. The two single deities in verse 1 are each counted as one *yō*; the ten deities which follow are in couples, each couple being reckoned as one *yō*. Thus there are altogether seven *yō*. Verse 4 is a redactorial gloss, written in small characters in the original, no doubt by Yasumarō. For the cosmogony of this chapter, see ADDITIONAL NOTE 2.

## CHAPTER 3

IZANAGI AND IZANAMI ARE COMMANDED TO  
SOLIDIFY THE LAND. THEY CREATE  
ONÖGÖRÖ ISLAND.

- 1 At this time the heavenly deities,<sup>1</sup> all with one command,<sup>2</sup> said to the two deities IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ and IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ:  
"Complete and solidify this drifting land!"<sup>3</sup>
- 2 Giving them the Heavenly Jeweled Spear,<sup>4</sup> they entrusted the mission to them.
- 3 Thereupon, the two deities stood on the Heavenly Floating Bridge<sup>5</sup> and, lowering the jeweled spear, stirred with it. They stirred the brine with a churning-churning sound;<sup>6</sup> and when they lifted up [the spear] again, the brine dripping down from the tip of the spear piled up and became an island. This was the island ONÖGÖRÖ.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evidently the Separate Heavenly Deities of Chapter 1.

<sup>2</sup> Some manuscripts have 'giving a command.' A heavenly mandate is not an essential element in the story of Izanagi and Izanami (its omission in most of the versions in the *Nihon shoki* reveals that it was something of an afterthought). Matsumura Takeo contends that it was included in the *Kojiki* version to conform with a traditional idea that any deities descending from the heavens to perform any activities should be acting under a mandate from the heavenly deities. *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, II, 71-83.

<sup>3</sup> The land mentioned above (1:2) as 'drifting like a jellyfish.' A similar command is given later to Opo-kuni-nusi (cf. 30:5).

<sup>4</sup> *Amē no nu-bokō*. The words *amē no* ('heavenly') are a stylized epithet praising an object by connecting it with the heavenly abode of the gods. *Nu* is an element which seems to mean 'jewel'; thus, *nu-bokō* would mean a spear made of, or decorated with, precious stones.

<sup>5</sup> *Amē no uki-pasi*; cf. 32:3; 39:13. A bridge over which divine beings traveled between heaven and earth. Commentators have interpreted it as a boat or raft, a high ladder, a bridge of rainbows, or the Milky Way.

<sup>6</sup> *Kōworō kōworō ni*. This onomatopoeia, which appears again in the song in 133:57-58, has also the sense of 'curdling' or 'congealing.' This section of the narrative is perhaps reminiscent of the ancient Inland Sea custom of manufacturing salt by boiling down sea water.

<sup>7</sup> *Onōgōrō* island, which may literally mean 'self-curdling' island (see GLOSSARY).

## CHAPTER 4

IZANAGI AND IZANAMI MARRY AND BEAR  
THEIR FIRST OFFSPRING.

- 1 Descending from the heavens to this island, they erected a heavenly pillar<sup>1</sup> and a spacious palace.<sup>2</sup>
- 2 At this time [Izanagi-nō-mikōtō] asked his spouse IZANAMI-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ, saying:
- “How is your body formed?”
- 3 She replied, saying:
- “My body, formed though it be formed, has one place which is formed insufficiently.”
- 4 Then IZANAGI-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ said :
- “My body, formed though it be formed, has one place which is formed to excess. Therefore, I would like to take that place in my body which is formed to excess and insert it into that place in your body which is formed insufficiently, and [thus] give birth to the land. How would this be?”
- 5 IZANAMI-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ replied, saying :
- “That will be good.”
- 6 Then IZANAGI-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ said :
- “Then let us, you and me, walk in a circle around this heavenly pillar and meet and have conjugal intercourse.”
- 7 After thus agreeing, [Izanagi-nō-mikōtō] then said :

was evidently thought to be near what is now Ōsaka Bay (see 111:22). The dripping brine congealed or crystallized to form this island, which became the base of operations of Izanagi and Izanami when they descended from the heavens to begin their procreative work.

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the significance of this pillar (*amē nō mi-pasira*), see ADDITIONAL NOTE 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ya-pirō-dōnō*. The wedding palace of Izanagi and Izanami. According to Kurano, *pirō* is a unit of length equivalent to the distance from fingertip to fingertip when a person has both arms extended.

“You walk around from the right, and I will walk around from the left and meet you.”

- 8 After having agreed to this, they circled around; then IZANAMI-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ said first:
- “*Ana-ni-yasi*,<sup>3</sup> how good a lad !”
- 9 Afterwards, IZANAGI-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ said :
- “*Ana-ni-yasi*, how good a maiden!”
- 10 After each had finished speaking, [Izanagi-nō-mikōtō] said to his spouse :
- “It is not proper<sup>4</sup> that the woman speak first.”
- 11 Nevertheless, they commenced procreation and gave birth to a leech-child.<sup>5</sup> They placed this child into a boat made of reeds and floated it away.
- 12 Next, they gave birth to the island of APA. This also is not reckoned as one of their children.

<sup>3</sup> An exclamation of wonder and delight.

<sup>4</sup> Or ‘it bodes no good.’

<sup>5</sup> *Piru-go*; for a discussion of the leech-child, see ADDITIONAL NOTE 4. The leech-child and the island of APA were considered failures and were not counted among Izanami and Izanagi’s rightful progeny (cf. 7:25).

## CHAPTER 5

IZANAGI AND IZANAMI, LEARNING THE REASON  
FOR THEIR FAILURE, REPEAT THE  
MARRIAGE RITUAL.

- 1 Then the two deities consulted together and said:  
“The child which we have just borne is not good. It is best to report [this matter] before the heavenly deities.”
- 2 Then they ascended together and sought the will of the heavenly deities. The heavenly deities thereupon performed a grand divination<sup>1</sup> and said:
- 3 “Because the woman spoke first, [the child] was not good.<sup>2</sup> Descend once more and say it again.”
- 4 Then they descended again and walked once more in a circle around the heavenly pillar as [they had done] before.
- 5 Then IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said first:  
“*Ana-ni-yasi*, how good a maiden !”
- 6 Afterwards, his spouse IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said:  
“*Ana-ni-yasi*, how good a lad !”

<sup>1</sup> *Puto-mani*; mentioned also in 73:10. According to the description in 17:10, *puto-mani* was an ancient method of divination, in which the shoulder blade of a deer was heated (using bark from the *papaka* tree) and the cracks observed. This system was evidently practiced in Japan from antiquity and was later replaced by the tortoise-shell system of divination imported from China. Archeological evidence reveals that scapulomancy was performed at least as early as the Yayoi period: remains of such bones have been discovered in late Yayoi period strata in Miura, Kanagawa-ken. as well as in the Yayoi-period Chigusa remains on Sado island, Niigata-ken. The *History of the Kingdom of Wei (Wei Chih)*, written about 297 A.D., attests to the prevalence of scapular divination among the early Japanese (Tsunoda Ryusaku et al., comp. *Sources of Japanese Tradition* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1958], p. 7). For information about the archeological finds see Saitō Tadashi, *Nihon zenshi* 1: *Genshi* (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1958), pp. 241-43.

<sup>2</sup> This statement was anticipated by Izanagi in 4:10. The condemnation of the woman for speaking before the man was probably influenced by Chinese ideas; it is doubtful that the ancient Japanese had any such clear-cut ideas of male supremacy. Tsuda. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 353.

## CHAPTER 6

IZANAGI AND IZANAMI GIVE BIRTH TO  
NUMEROUS ISLANDS.

- 1 After they had finished saying this, they were united and bore as a child [the island] APADI-NÖ-PO-NÖ-SA-WAKĒ-NÖ-SIMA.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 Next they bore the double island<sup>2</sup> of IYÖ. This island has one body and four countenances, each with a separate name:
- 3 Thus, the land of IYÖ is named EPIME; the land of SANUKI is named IPI-YÖRI-PIKO; the land of APA is named OPO-GĒ-TU-PIME; and the land of TOSA is named TAKE-YÖRI-WAKĒ.
- 4 Next they bore the triple island of OKI, also named AMĒ-NÖ-OSI-KÖRÖ-WAKĒ.
- 5 Next they bore the island of TUKUSI. This island also has one body and four countenances, each with a separate name:
- 6 Thus, the land of TUKUSI is named SIRA-PI-WAKĒ; [the land of] TÖYÖ-KUNI is named TÖYÖ-PI-WAKĒ; [the land of] Pi is named

<sup>1</sup> All of the islands which Izanagi and Izanami bore have alternative personal names, and some of them clearly have gender. The island of Apadi plays a central role in all of the Kojiki and *Nihon shoki* accounts of island-bearing; in one version in the *Nihon shoki*, Izanagi is said to dwell enshrined upon this island (wc note on 13:9).

As Tsuda says, the accounts of island-bearing are not a *cosmogony*, but are merely accounts of the origin of Japan in a political sense. It is strange that there is no account of the creation of man or animals in these origin myths. To Tsuda, Izanagi and Izanami are national deities in a narrow sense, who give birth first to the islands of Japan, then to the deities who dwell in them, and finally to Ama-terasu-ōpo-mi-kami, the emperor-symbol; at no time do they leave Japan. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 343, 350, 358.

Kanda (pp. 251-54) argues that the Izanagi-Izanami myth was originally a myth-complex from the Inland Sea area and could be dated from the end of the Jōmon Period, or approximately the third century B.C.

At any rate, it is clear that the Kojiki account reflects the geographical knowledge of a fairly late period, when sea communications along the Inland Sea to Kyūshū were well developed and when the nation was unified under the Yamatō court.

\*Literally, ‘double-named island.’ Both Iyō (Shikoku) and Tūkusi (Kyūshū) have four divisions.

TAKE-PI-MUKAPI-TÖYÖ-KUZI-PI-NE-WAKĒ;<sup>3</sup> and the land of KUMASÖ is named TAKE-PI-WAKĒ.<sup>5</sup>

7 Next they bore the island of IKI, also named AMĒ-PITÖTU-BASIRA.

8 Next they bore [the island of] TU-SIMA, also named AMĒ-NÖ-SADE-YÖRI-PIME.

9 Next they bore <sup>6</sup>the island of SADO.

10 Next they bore<sup>7</sup> [the island] OPO-YAMATÖ-TÖYÖ-AKI-TU-SIMA, also named AM A-TU-MI-SORA-T-Y&AKI-TU-NE-W AG.

11 Thus, because the eight islands<sup>8</sup> were born first, they are called OPO-YASIMA-GUNI.<sup>9</sup>

12 After this, when they returned,<sup>10</sup> they bore [the island] KIBI-NÖ-KOZIMA, also named TAKE-PI-KATA-WAKĒ.

13 Next they bore [the island of] ADUKĪ-SIMA, also named OPO-NO-DE-PIME.

14 Next they bore [the island of] OPO-SIMA, also named OPO-TAMARU-WAKĒ.

15 Next they bore [the island of] PIME-ZIMA,<sup>11</sup> also named AMĒ-PITÖTU-NE.

16 Next they bore [the island of] TIKANÖ-SIMA, also named AMĒ-NÖ-OSI-WO.

17 Next they bore [the island of] PUTA-GO-NÖ-SIMA, also named AMĒ-PUTA-YA.

18 From KIBI-NÖ-KOZIMA through AMĒ-PUTA-YA are altogether six islands.

<sup>3</sup> There are textual difficulties in regard to this name; see GLOSSARY.

<sup>4,5</sup> Tanaka proposes to *emend* the text to read: "Next they bore the island of Sado, also named Take-pi-wakf." *Kojiki taisei*, VII, 15, head-note 14.

<sup>6-7</sup> Tanaka suppresses the words: "... the island of Sado. Next they bore ..." Ibid., VII, 16, head-note 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ya-sima*. 'Eight,' *ya*, was a sacred number to the Japanese, and may often be translated as 'myriad.'

<sup>9</sup> 'Great Eight-Island Land; Great Land of Yasima.' A poetical name for Japan.

<sup>10</sup> Evidently to Onögörö.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. 116:1.

## CHAPTER 7

IZANAGI AND IZANAMI GIVE BIRTH TO  
NUMEROUS DEITIES. IZANAMI DIES AFTER  
BEARING THE FIRE-DEITY.

1 After they had finished bearing the land, they went on to bear deities.<sup>1</sup>

2 The name of the deity they bore was OPO-KÖTÖ-OSI-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next they bore IPA-TUTI-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ;<sup>2</sup> next they bore IPA-SU-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ; next they bore OPO-TO-PI-WAKĒ-NÖ-KAMĪ; next they bore AMĒ-NÖ-PUKI-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next they bore OPO-YA-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next they bore KAZA-MÖTU-WAKĒ-NÖ-OSI-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next they bore the sea-deity, whose name is OPO-WATA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ;<sup>3</sup> next they bore the deity of the sea-straits,<sup>4</sup> whose name is PAYA-AKI-TU-PIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, his spouse PAYA-AKI-TU-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ.

3 From OPO-KÖTÖ-OSI-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ through PAYA-AKI-TU-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ are altogether ten deities.

4 These two deities PAYA-AKI-TU-PIKO and PAYA-AKI-TU-PIME rule, respectively, the rivers and the seas.

5 They<sup>5</sup> bore the deity AWA-NAGI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AWA-NAMI-

<sup>1</sup> At this point *Izanami* gives birth to the deities who are to inhabit the islands. The deities represent various natural phenomena and physical features of the land.

Tsuda, reasoning from the fact that many of the deities in this section do not seem to have any gender and that their functions and rôles are not mentioned, concludes that they were gods having names but no distinctive characteristics; even their names were given to them in the absence of any real basis in folk belief. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, 1. 365.

Matsumura (II, 345-50) draws attention to the similarities between the deities mentioned here and those which are listed in Chapter 2. Both accounts supply lists of names of deities without giving any information about their characters or functions.

<sup>2</sup> Tsugita (pp. 41-42) suggests that the six deities from *Ipa-tuti-biko-nō-kamī* through *Kaza-mōtu-wakē-nō-osi-wo-nō-kamī* were deities of buildings.

<sup>3</sup> Other sea deities, whose names contain the element *wata-tu-mi* ('sea spirit'), are born of *Izanagi's* purification (cf. Chapter 11).

<sup>4</sup> *Minato*; also 'river-mouth,' [later] 'harbor.' Cf. 37:6.

<sup>5</sup> I.e., *Paya-aki-tu-piko* and *Paya-aki-tu-pime*.

- NÖ-KAMĪ; next, TURA-NAGI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, TURA-NAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AMĒ-NÖ-MI-KUMARI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KUNI-NÖ-MI-KUMARI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AMĒ-NÖ-KUPIZA-MÖTI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KUNI-NÖ-KUPIZA-MÖTI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 6 From AWA-NAGI-NÖ-KAMĪ through KUNI-NÖ-KUPIZA-MÖTI-NÖ-KAMĪ are altogether eight deities.
- 7 Next they<sup>6</sup> bore the wind-deity, whose name is SINA-TU-PIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 8 Next they bore the tree-deity, whose name is KUKU-NÖ-TI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 9 Next they bore the mountain-deity, whose name is OPO-YAMA-TU-MI-NIJ-KAMĪ.
- 10 Next they bore the deity of the plains, whose name is KAYA-NO-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ, also named NO-DUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 11 From SINA-TU-PIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ through NO-DUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ are altogether four deities.
- 12 These two deities OPO-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ and NO-DUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ rule, respectively, the mountains and plains.
- 13 They bore the deity AMĒ-NÖ-SA-DUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KUNI-NÖ-SA-DUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AMĒ-NÖ-SA-GĪRI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KUNI-NÖ-SA-GĪRI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, AMĒ-NÖ-KURA-DO-NÖ-KAMĪ; <sup>8</sup>next, KUNI-NÖ-KURA-DO-NÖ-KAMĪ; <sup>9</sup> next, OPO-TO-MATO-PIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, OPO-TO-MATO-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 14 From AMĒ-NÖ-SA-DUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ through OPO-TO-MATO-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ are altogether eight deities.
- 15 Next they<sup>10</sup> bore the deity TÖRI-NÖ-IPA-KUSU-PUNE-NÖ-KAMĪ, also named AMĒ-NÖ-TÖRI-PUNE-NÖ-KAMĪ.<sup>11</sup>
- 16 Next they bore OPO-GĒ-TU-PIME-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 17 Next they bore PĪ-NÖ-YAGI-PAYA-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ, also named PĪ-NÖ-KAGA-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ, and also named PĪ-NÖ-KAGU-TUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ.

<sup>6</sup>I.e., Izanagi and Izanami. The deities born in verses 7-10 are the children of Izanagi and Izanami.

<sup>7</sup> I.e., Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī and Kaya-no-pime-nö-kamī.

<sup>8-9</sup> Lacking in the Shimpuku-ji manuscript.

<sup>10</sup> I.e., Izanagi and Izanami.

<sup>11</sup> The element *-nö-kamī*, missing in the text, has been supplied here on the authority of 35:7, II.

- 18 Because [Izanami-nö-mikötö] bore this **child**, her genitals were burned, and she lay down sick.<sup>12</sup>
- 19 In her vomit there came into existence<sup>13</sup> the deity KANA-YAMA-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, KANA-YAMA-BIME-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 20 Next, in her faeces there came into existence the deity PANI-YASU-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, PANI-YASU-BIME-NÖ-KAMĪ.<sup>14</sup>
- 21 Next, in her urine there came into existence the deity MITU-PA-NÖ-ME-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, WAKU-MUSUBI-NÖ-KAMĪ. The child of this deity is TÖYÖ-UKĒ-BIME-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 22 Thus at last, IZANAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ, because she had borne the fire-deity, divinely passed away.<sup>15</sup>
- 23 From AMĒ-NÖ-TÖRI-PUNE through TÖYÖ-UKĒ-BIME-NÖ-KAMĪ are altogether eight deities.
- 24 All of the islands borne by the two deities IZANAGI and IZANAMI were fourteen; the deities [borne by them were] thirty-five.
- 25 These were born before IZANAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ divinely passed away. However, the island ONÖGÖRÖ was not born.<sup>16</sup> Also the leech-child and the island of APA are not reckoned as their children.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See ADDITIONAL NOTE 5.

<sup>13</sup> Most manuscripts have 'were born'; the verse has been emended to agree with verses 20ff.

<sup>14</sup> The deities who came into existence in Izanami's faeces were deities of clay or earth, and Mitu-pa-nö-me-nö-kamī, who came into existence in her urine, was a deity connected with water or water-greens. Matsumura (II. 370-72) says that he knows of no other people who have deities born from excreta, and alludes to their importance as fertilizer in Yayoi period agriculture.

<sup>15</sup> From Izanami's death, Motoori concludes that even the gods are subject to death and must then descend to the detestable land of Yömi. In his *Tama-kushige*, he goes on to write:

"Everything is an exotic, alien falsehood and deception which esteems the ideas of not rejoicing at what should rejoice us, not sorrowing at what should sorrow us, not being surprised at what should surprise us, and in general not feeling emotion when we should. This is against human nature and a most bothersome matter. Death, in particular, is one thing about which we cannot help but feel sorrow. Even the great god Izanagi, who formed the land and all things in it and who initiated the Way of this world-did he not, at the death of the goddess, weep and sorrow with all his heart like a little child, and out of his yearning follow after her to the land of Yömi? This is the true, the real human nature, and the people of the world must of necessity be this way."

*Motoori Norinaga zenshū* [Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1926-28], VI, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. 3:3.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. 4:11.

- 26 At this time **IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ** said:  
 “Alas, I have given my beloved spouse in exchange for a mere child!”
- 27 Then he crawled around her head and around her feet, weeping.
- 28 At this time in his tears there came into existence the deity who dwells at the foot of the trees in the foothills of Mount **KAGU**, named **NAKI-SAPA-ME-NÖ-KAMĪ**.<sup>18</sup>
- 29 Then he buried the departed **IZANAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ** on Mount **PIBA**, the border between the land of **IDUMO** and the land of **PAPAKI**.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> ‘Weeping-Marsh-Woman Deity’ (see GLOSSARY). This account undoubtedly reflects the practice of using female lamenters or professional mourners (naki-me, ‘weeping woman,’ cf. 33 :7, 34 :3) at funerals.

<sup>19</sup> One important variant in the *Nihon shoki* relates that **Izanami** was buried in the village of Arima in Kumano in the land of Ki (**Minami-muro-gun**, Wakayama-ken). “The local people pay worship to the spirit of this deity with flowers during flower-time and also with singing and dancing, using drums, flutes, and banners.” [*Kōtei*] *Nihon shoki*, ed. Takeda Yūkichi (Asahi Shimbunsha. 1953–57), hereafter cited Asahi ed., I, 72. Both are probably late glosses and do not form an essential part of the original **Izanagi-Izanami** myth.

## CHAPTER 8

IZANAGI KILLS THE FIRE-DEITY. VARIOUS  
DEITIES COME INTO EXISTENCE.

- 1 Then **IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ** unsheathed the sword ten hands long which he was wearing at his side and cut off the head of his child **KAGU-TUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ**.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 Hereupon the blood adhering to the tip of the sword gushed forth onto the massed rocks; the deity who came into existence therefrom was **IPA-SAKU-NÖ-KAMĪ**; next, **NE-SAKU-NÖ-KAMĪ**; next, **IPA-TUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ**. (Three deities)
- 3 Next, the blood adhering to the sword-guard of the sword also gushed forth onto the massed rocks; the deity who came into existence therefrom was **MIKA-PAYA-PI-NÖ-KAMĪ**; next, **PI-PAYA-PI-NÖ-KAMĪ**; next, **TAKE-MIKA-DUTI-NÖ-WO-NÖ-KAMĪ**, also named **TAKE-PUTU-NÖ-KAMĪ**, and also named **TÖYÖ-PUTU-NÖ-KAMĪ**. (Three deities)
- 4 Next, the blood collected at the hilt of the sword dripped through his fingers; the deity who came into existence therefrom was **KURA-OKAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ**; next, **KURA-MITU-PA-NÖ-KAMĪ**.
- 5 The deities in the above section, altogether eight in number from **IPA-SAKU-NÖ-KAMĪ** through **KURA-MITU-PA-NÖ-KAMĪ**, are deities born by the sword.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The god whose birth, in 7:17, was the cause of **Izanami**'s sickness and death.

<sup>2</sup> Or ‘from, by means of’ the sword. Tsugita (p. 54) regards this section as a reference to the tempering of a sword.

“The three gods **Ipa-saku**, **Ne-saku**, and **Ipa-tutu-nö-wo** represent rock: the two gods **Mika-paya-pi** and **Pi-paya-pi** represent fire; and the two gods **Kura-okami** and **Kura-mitu-pa** represent water. Thus, the necessary steps in making a sword-firing it, shaping it on a rock, and soaking it in water-are the meaning behind this myth. The blood flowing over the surrounding rocks is reminiscent of the sparks which fly out when a sword is being tempered. Also, at the appearance of the dragon-god [**Kura-okami-nbkami**] one imagines the smith seeking out sacred waters in the mountain valleys and soaking the blade in them.”

Nakajima Etsuji says with regard to this section :

- 6 The deity who came into existence in the head of the slain KAGU-TUTI-NÖ-KAMĪ was named MA-SAKA-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.<sup>3</sup>
- 7 Next, the deity who came into existence in his chest was named ODÖ-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 8 Next, the deity who came into existence in his belly was named OKU-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 9 Next, the deity who came into existence in his genitals was named KURA-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 10 Next, the deity who came into existence in his left hand was named SIGI-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 11 Next, the deity who came into existence in his right hand was named PA-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 12 Next, the deity who came into existence in his left foot was named PARA-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 13 Next, the deity who came into existence in his right foot was named TO-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 14 From MA-SAKA-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ through TO-YAMA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ are altogether eight deities.
- 15 The name of the sword with which [Izanagi-nö-mikötö] killed [the fire-deity] was AMĒ-NÖ-WO-PA-BARI;<sup>4</sup> another name is ITU-NÖ-WO-PA-BARI.

<sup>3</sup> "When the heavenly god *Izanagi* kills with a sword the fire-god (probably a volcanic fire-god), gods connected with rocks, gods connected with fire, thunder-gods, and water-gods are born from his blood. Is this not because volcanic explosions were regarded as the fearsome manifestation of a god tempering a sword?" Kojiki *hyōshaku* (Sankaidō, 1930), p. 55.

Matsumura (II, 380-81) writes that the violent explosion of *Izanagi's* emotions, accompanied by sword flashes, blood spurting forth, and the slashing into pieces of the body of the fire-god, points to volcanic eruption, which includes not only the destruction of the mountain and the bursting forth of molten rocks but also, frequently, thunder and lightning, rainstorms, and floods.

<sup>4</sup> The type of metamorphosis seen in verses 6-13 has already been seen in the account of the dying *Izanami* (7:19-21) and appears again in 9:7-14 and in 18:4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. 35:3f.

## CHAPTER 9

IZANAGI VISITS IZANAMI IN THE LAND OF  
YÖMĪ. BREAKING THE TABOO, HE LOOKS  
UPON HER CORPSE.

- 1 At this time, [Izanagi-nö-mikötö], wishing to meet again his spouse IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, went after her to the land of YÖMĪ.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 When she came forth out of the door<sup>2</sup> of the hall to greet him, IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said:
- "O, my beloved spouse, the lands which you and I were making have not yet been completed; you must come back!"<sup>3</sup>
- 3 Then IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ replied, saying:
- "How I regret that you did not come sooner. I have eaten at the hearth of YÖMĪ.<sup>4</sup> But, O my beloved husband, how awesome

<sup>1</sup> See ADDITIONAL NOTE 6 for a discussion of the evidence in this chapter regarding the ancient Japanese ideas of death and the afterlife.

It has frequently been suggested that the accounts of the visit to Yömi were influenced by the ancient practice of burial in subterranean stone chambers with stone passageways. (For a description of these tombs, similar to the tumuli of ancient Europe, see Kidder's *Japan before Buddhism*, pp. 145-92.) That some such recollection was at work can be argued from the fact that *Izanami's* corpse was found in an inner chamber (a 'hall,' cf. 9:4-5), and that the entrance to Yömi was a 'pass' closed by a large boulder (10:11). The archeologist Gotō Shuichi argues that the *Kojiki* account of the visit to Yömi clearly reflected the burial customs of the late Tomb Period-i.e., the sixth, seventh, and first half of the eighth centuries. *Nihon kodaishi no kōkogakuteki kentō* (Yamaoka Shoten, 1947), pp. 11-21. (See also Tsugita, pp. 57, 65-66, for an eloquent statement of the tumulus theory; and Matsumura, II, 393-407, for a dispassionate evaluation of this theory.)

Matsumura (Ibid.) concludes that it is patent that a separate land of the dead was intended here; arguing that the ancient Japanese fundamentally regarded the abode of the dead as being not a subterranean land but a place deep inside caves or far in the mountains, he believes that the suggestions derived from tomb construction were merely secondary elaborations.

<sup>2</sup> One ideograph (臍) in this passage is corrupt and cannot be given a suitable translation.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting that the appeal to return rests on the necessity of resuming the work of land-creating.

<sup>4</sup> See ADDITIONAL NOTE 7 for a discussion of this passage.

it is that you have entered here ! Therefore I will go and discuss for a while with the gods of YÖMI<sup>5</sup> my desire to return. Pray do not look upon me !”<sup>6</sup>

4 Thus saying, she went back into the hall, but her absence was so long that [Izanagi-nō-mikötö] could no longer wait.

5 Thereupon he broke off one of the large end-teeth of the comb he was wearing in his left hair-bunch,<sup>7</sup> lit [it as] one fire,<sup>8</sup> and entered in to see.

6 At this time, maggots were squirming and roaring<sup>9</sup> [in the corpse of Izanami-nō-mikötö].

<sup>5</sup> The *Kojiki* is apparently **inconsistent** about the nature of the rulers of Yömi. Here it seems to say that there are some unnamed ‘gods [or god] of Yömi’—the word may be singular or plural—to whom *Izanami* is subordinate, while in 10:16 *Izanami* herself is called the ‘great deity of Yömi’ (Yömō-tu-opo-kami). Tsuda writes that this reflects a state of mental confusion about the nature of Yömi on the part of the ancient Japanese. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 400–403.

In the *Nihon shoki* and *norito*, *Izanami* is depicted as the ruler of the underworld while *Izanagi* figures as the ruler of the world of men; this idea is also present in the *Kojiki* in 10:13–14.

<sup>6</sup> A similar taboo is found in 45:6. Some scholars have regarded both of these myths as variants of a single ‘forbidden chamber’ story, and some have connected the taboo related here with taboos against **witnessing** parturition (*Izanami*’s downfall being connected with her giving birth to the fire-god—see also the variant mythological narrative in the *norito* for the fire-pacifying festival). Some scholars have thought this a reflection of an actual taboo against looking at a corpse. Matsumura (II, 439–48), on the other hand, supposes that there may have been a practice of going at stated intervals to look at a corpse in order to see whether it had come back to life, and that this myth is a reflection of such a custom.

<sup>7</sup> *Mi-midura*. The *midura* [from *mimi-dura*, ‘ear bunch’?] was a man’s hair style: the hair was parted in the middle, then tied in bunches on both sides of the head; combs were inserted at the top of each bunch, and the bunches were secured with strings called *kadura*, often made of vines. The word *midura* was later corrupted to *bizura* or *binzura*, which was in later periods a boy’s hair style.

<sup>8</sup> Motoori says that, because the ancient custom must have been to kindle two or more fires, here special attention is drawn to the fact that only one fire is kindled. *Kojiki-den*, in Motoori *Norinaga zenshū*, Vols. I–IV, hereafter cited as *Kojiki-den*, I, 382.

The *Nihon shoki* has the following interesting gloss on this passage: “This is the origin of the taboo among the people of the present day against [lighting] a single light at night and against casting down a comb at night.” (*Asahi* ed., 1:74; *Aston*, I, 24)

Motoori (*loc. cit.*) mentions a taboo, in the region of *Iwami* (modern Shimane-ken), against presenting only one light to a god and against throwing down a comb. According to B. H. Chamberlain, the superstition still existed in Tokyo (*Kojiki*, Supp. to TASJ. X [1882], [rep. ed.: Tokyo, 1906], 42).

<sup>9</sup> Some manuscripts have ‘oozing.’

- 7 In her head was Great-Thunder ;<sup>10</sup>  
 8 In her breast was Fire-Thunder;<sup>11</sup>  
 9 In her belly was Black-Thunder;<sup>12</sup>  
 10 In her genitals was Crack-Thunder;<sup>13</sup>  
 11 In her left hand was Young-Thunder;<sup>14</sup>  
 12 In her right hand was Earth-Thunder;<sup>15</sup>  
 13 In her left foot was Sounding-Thunder;<sup>16</sup>  
 14 In her right foot was Reclining-Thunder.<sup>17</sup>  
 15 Altogether there were eight thunder-deities.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Opo-ikaduti.

<sup>11</sup> Po-nō-ikaduti.

<sup>12</sup> Kuro-ikaduti.

<sup>13</sup> Saku-ikaduti [*saku* meaning ‘to be cracked,’ ‘to have a crevice’].

<sup>14</sup> Waka-ikaduti.

<sup>15</sup> Tuti-ikaduti.

<sup>16</sup> Nari-ikaduti.

<sup>17</sup> Pusi-ikaduti.

<sup>18</sup> *Ikaduti-gami*; cf. 10:6. *Ikaduti* is written with the ideograph meaning ‘thunder’ and is so translated. Some scholars, however, have questioned whether *ikaduti* originally meant ‘thunder.’ In folk belief thunder is and was closely connected with snakes, which dwell in damp, dark places like those used for burying the dead. Tsuda argues, for instance, that snakes were regarded as the spirits of the dead or as evil spirits residing inside corpses, and interprets *ikaduti* as ‘fearsome spirit’ (*ika-tu-ti*) and as having been originally applied to snakes. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 247, 397. For a criticism of this view, see Matsumura, II, 411–14.

According to Shiratori Kurakichi, the maggots, which the ancient Japanese equated with the spirits of the dead, were here transformed into snakes. *Jindaishi no shinkenkyū* (Iwanami Shoten, 1955), pp. 210, 218–20.

## CHAPTER 10

## IZANAGI FLEES AND ELUDES HIS PURSUERS.

## IZANAGI AND IZANAMI BREAK THEIR TROTH.

- 1 Hereupon, IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, seeing this, was afraid, and he turned and fled.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 At this time his spouse IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said:  
"He has shamed me!"
- 3 Thereupon she dispatched the hags of YÖMĪ<sup>2</sup> to pursue him.
- 4 Then IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ undid the black vine securing his hair<sup>3</sup> and flung it down; immediately it bore grapes. While [the hags] were picking and eating [the grapes], he fled.<sup>4</sup>
- 5 When again they pursued him, he next pulled out the comb he was wearing in his right hair-bunch and flung it down; immediately bamboo shoots sprouted forth. While [the hags] were pulling up and eating [the bamboo shoots], he fled.
- 6 Later, [Izanami-nö-mikötö dispatched] the eight thunder-deities<sup>5</sup> and a horde of warriors of YÖMĪ<sup>6</sup> to pursue him.
- 7 Then [Izanagi-nö-mikötö] unsheathed the sword ten hands long

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 45:7.

<sup>2</sup> *Yömō-tu-sikō-me*. The word is written phonetically. *Sikō-me* is literally 'ugly woman' or 'ugly women.' The word *sikō* appears again as an adjective *sikōmeki* (translated as 'unpleasant, horrible') in 11:1, and also as an element in the name *Asi-para-sikō-wo-nō-kami* (Ugly-Male-of-the-Reed-Plains Deity), another name for *Opo-kuni-nusi-nō-kami* (20:19, 23:5, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> *Kadura*; cf. 9:5 and footnote. Much later the word came to mean 'head-band' and 'wig' (Modern Japanese *katsura*).

<sup>4</sup> Similar stories, involving throwing at one's pursuers various objects which change into other things and stop their pursuit, are found in folk tales throughout the world and in later Japanese folk tales. Such tales are called 'magic flight' or 'transformation flight' tales. Matsumura, II, 450.

Matsumura (II. 452-58) connects this myth with folk practices designed to prevent the spirits of the dead from coming back to disturb the living.

<sup>5</sup> The *ikaduti-gami* mentioned in 9:15.

<sup>6</sup> Literally, 'the thousand five-hundred Yömī army.'

which he was wearing at his side and fled while waving it behind him.

- 8 The pursuit continued, and when [Izanagi-nö-mikötö] had arrived at the foot of [the pass] YÖMÖ-TU-PIRA-SAKA,<sup>7</sup> he took three peaches<sup>8</sup> which were there and, waiting for [his pursuers], attacked [them with the peaches]. They all turned and fled.
- 9 Then IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said to the peaches:  
"Just as you<sup>9</sup> have saved me, when, in the Central Land of the Reed Plains,<sup>10</sup> any of the race of mortal men<sup>11</sup> fall into painful straits and suffer in anguish, then do you save them also."
- 10 He bestowed [upon the peaches] the name OPO-KAMU-DU-MI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.
- 11 Finally, his spouse IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ herself came in pursuit of him. Then he pulled a tremendous boulder<sup>12</sup> and closed [the pass] YÖMÖ-TU-PIRA-SAKA with it.
- 12 They stood facing each other, one on each side of the boulder, and broke their troth.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. verse 18 below; also 24:12.

<sup>8</sup> Using peaches to dispel demons or evil spirits was a common practice in China from antiquity; this myth is regarded by commentators as the product of an age when Chinese influence was strong.

<sup>9</sup> A singular pronoun is used.

<sup>10</sup> *Asi-para-nō-naka-tu-keuni*; a mythical expression referring to the islands of Japan, 'Central' may be used to locate the land between the heavenly land of *Takama-nō-para* and the subterranean land of *Yömī*.

<sup>11</sup> *Utusiki awo-pitō-gusa*; literally, 'mortal-green-human grass' (cf. 107:16). The human race, thriving in profusion like the countless blades of grass.

<sup>12</sup> *Ti-biki nō ipa*; literally, 'thousand-pulling boulder' (i.e., one requiring a thousand persons to pull it); cf. 24:8, 36:3. One interpretation is that this boulder is the rock used to seal the entrance to an underground burial mound. Matsumura (II, 466-73) doubts whether the long flight described in the chapter could have been thought to have taken place in the relatively short entrance corridor of a tomb.

Some scholars, including Matsumura, see in this boulder a *type* of the *Sai-no-kami*, a rock-deity worshipped at the outskirts of a village in order to keep evil spirits away. It seems more probable that the rock was used to block *physically* the passage of *Izanami*, rather than magically, as the *Sai-no-kami* is used; the latter is a small road-side idol and *does* not coincide with the description here.

<sup>13</sup> The Japanese words present some difficulties; they are read either (a) *kōtō-do[wo] watasu*, or (b) *kōtō-do wataru*. Their literal translations would be (a) 'to hand over a thing-door,' or (b) 'to cross a thing-door.' Both of these are, of course, quite meaningless, and some other interpretation independent of the literal meanings of the ideographs must be attempted.

- 13 At this time IZANAMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said :  
 “O my beloved husband, if you do thus, I will each day strangle to death one thousand of the populace<sup>14</sup> of your country.”
- 14 To this IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said :  
 “O my beloved spouse, if you do thus, I will each day build one thousand five hundred parturition huts.”<sup>15</sup>
- 15 This is the reason why one thousand people inevitably die and one thousand five hundred people are inevitably born every day.”
- 16 IZANAMI-NÖ-KAMĪ<sup>17</sup> is also called YÖMÖ-TU-OPO-KAMĪ.<sup>18</sup> Also, because she joined in the pursuit,<sup>19</sup> she is called TI-SIKI-NÖ-OPO-KAMĪ.

The *Nihon shoki* has for this passage ideographs meaning ‘made an oath of divorce.’ The pronunciation *kötö-do* is indicated in a gloss.

The word *kötö* may be a word meaning ‘separate’ or ‘different.’ It may also mean ‘thing,’ ‘word,’ or the musical instrument *kötö*.

The word *do*, written with the ideograph for ‘door,’ is unclear, but may mean ‘place’; more probably it is a term for any sort of solemn rite or magic ceremony. In this case it is the same as the *to* in the word *norito*. See Kaneko Takeo, *Engi-shiki norito kō* (Mushino Shoin, 1951), pp. 439-45.

Although *kötö-do* may have come to mean ‘an oath of divorce,’ it may earlier have meant some sort of magic-religious ceremony of rejection. Cf. Kaneko, *ibid.*; Matsu-mura, II, 473-81.

<sup>14</sup> Literally, ‘human grass.’

<sup>15</sup> *Ubu-ya* (childbearing-houses). A parturition hut is mentioned also in 45:3 and referred to in 41:16. In ancient Japan childbirth, as well as menstruation, was regarded as pollution, and the pregnant or menstruant woman was required to live in a building apart from the main dwelling and to eat food prepared separately. In many localities, until the Meiji period, pregnant and menstruant women were segregated in separate buildings as a matter of course, and some of these houses may still be seen today. For photographs see *Minzokugaku Kenkyūjo, comp., Nihon minzoku zuroku* (Asahi Shimbunsha, 1955), pp. 32, 114-15.

<sup>16</sup> The account in verses 13-15 is a mythical explanation for the statistical fact of population increase. Watanabe Ybshimichi sees in this passage the writer’s awareness of the rapid population increase accompanying the development of agricultural production after the third and fourth centuries. Kojiki *kōwa* (Hakuybsha, 1936), p. 52.

Matsu-mura (II, 485-90) says that this account reflects also the ancient custom of deciding disputes by verbal battles. However, in such cases the engagements usually took place by means of songs or long harangues, not by brief statements as here.

<sup>17</sup> Most manuscripts have *Izanami-nō-kamī-nō-mikötö*.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Great Deity of Yōmī.’ The metamorphosis of the goddess *Izanami* from a land-creating goddess to a goddess of death and the underworld is paralleled in other mythologies, where the *Earth-mother* (*Freya*, *Persephone*, *Nerthus*, *Frigg*) becomes a goddess presiding over the abode of the dead. See also Matsu-mura, II, 161-66, 388-93.

<sup>19</sup> *Opi-sikisi*.

- 17 The boulder which closed [the pass] YÖMÖ-TU-PIRA-SAKA is called TI-GAPESI-NÖ-OPO-KAMĪ; it is also called SAYARI-MASU-YÖMĪ-DO-NÖ-OPO-KAMĪ.
- 18 The so-called YÖMÖ-TU-PIRA-SAKA is now called the pass<sup>20</sup> IPUYA-ZAKA in the land of IDUMO.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Or ‘is now said to be the pass.’

<sup>21</sup> Why is the entrance to the land of Yōmī located in the land of Idumo? Tsugita (p. 66) writes that *Ipuya-zaka* was the main route between Idumo and *Yamatō*, and the mythical account of its being closed was a reflection of a historical rupture between the two regions.

This viewpoint is unconvincing, and it is now obvious that the passage was a late gloss which did not exist in the original version of the myth,

## CHAPTER 11

IZANAGI PURIFIES HIMSELF, GIVING BIRTH TO  
 MANY DEITIES INCLUDING AMA-TERASU-  
 OPO-MI-KAMI AND SUSANÖ-WO.

- 1 Hereupon, IZANAGI-NÖ-OPO-KAMĪ said :  
 "I have been to a most unpleasant land, a horrible, unclean land.  
 Therefore I shall purify myself."<sup>1</sup>
- 2 Arriving at [the plain] APAKI-PARA by the river-mouth of TATI-  
 BANA in PIMUKA in TUKUSI, he purified and exorcised himself.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 When he flung down his stick, there came into existence a deity  
 named TUKI-TATU-PUNA-TO-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 4 Next, when he flung down his sash, there came into existence a  
 deity named MITI-NÖ-NAGA-TI-PA-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 5 Next, when he flung down his bag,<sup>3</sup> there came into existence  
 a deity named TÖKI-PAKASI-NÖ-KAMĪ.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'therefore I shall work my body's purification.' The word used implies purification by ablution. Motoori, rejecting a spiritualizing interpretation, insists that pollution of **the** body, not of the soul, was meant:

"Exorcism and purification *are* for the purpose of cleansing the pollutions of the body. To say that they *are* for exorcising and cleansing the spirit is a concept *completely alien* to Japanese antiquity." *Kojiki-den*, I, 317.

It is questionable whether the ancient Japanese distinguished **between** physical and mental pollution. Matsumura, II, 504-506.

<sup>2</sup> The practice of purification by ablution had a very early origin in Japan. The account of Japan in the *History of the Kingdom of Wei (Wei Chih)* says this of Japanese funeral customs:

"When there is a death, they mourn for ten days, during which period they do not eat meat. The chief mourners wail and weep, and the others sing, dance, and drink liquor. After the burial, the whole family goes into the water to bathe, like the Chinese sackcloth-ablutions." Wada Sei and Ishihara Michihiro, eds., *Gishi wajinden* (Iwanami Shoten, 1951), p. 45; see also Tsunoda et al., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, pp. 6-7.

Even today, purification by washing is a common element in Japanese folk religion. The propensity for bathing of the ancient Japanese probably reflected, not an inordinate wish for bodily cleanliness, but a desire to rid themselves by magical practices of evils and ritual impurity originating in contact with death.

<sup>3</sup> Some manuscripts have 'skirt.'

- 6 Next, when he flung down his cloak, there came into existence  
 a deity named WADURAPI-NÖ-USI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 7 Next, when he flung down his trousers, there came into exist-  
 ence a deity named TI-MATA-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 8 Next, when he flung down his headgear, there came into exist-  
 ence a deity named AKI-GUPI-NÖ-USI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 9 Next, when he flung down the arm-bands of his left arm, there  
 came into existence a deity named OKI-ZAKARU-NÖ-KAMĪ; next,  
 OKI-TU-NAGISA-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, OKI-TU-KAPĪ-BERA-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 10 Next, when he flung down the arm-bands of his right arm, there  
 came into existence a deity named PE-ZAKARU-NÖ-KAMĪ; next,  
 PE-TU-NAGISA-BIKO-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, PE-TU-KAPĪ-BERA-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 11 The twelve deities in the above section, from PUNA-DO-NÖ-  
 KAMĪ through PE-TU-KAPĪ-BERA-NÖ-KAMĪ, all were born from his  
 taking off the articles worn on his body.
- 12 Then he said:  
 "The current of the upper stream is <sup>4</sup>a current<sup>5</sup> too swift; the  
 current of the lower stream is <sup>4</sup>a currents too weak."
- 13 Then, when he went down and dived into the middle stream  
 and bathed, there came into existence a deity named YASO-MAGA-  
 TU-PI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, OPO-MAGA-TU-PI-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 14 These two deities came into existence from the pollution which  
 he took on when he went to that unclean land.
- 15 Next, in order to rectify<sup>6</sup> these evils,<sup>7</sup> there came into existence  
 the deity KAMU-NAPOBI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, OPO-NAPOBI-NÖ-KAMĪ;  
 next, IDU-NÖ-ME-NÖ-KAMĪ. (Altogether three deities)
- 16 Next, when he bathed at the bottoms of the water, there came  
 into existence the deity named SÖKÖ-TU-WATA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ;  
 next, SÖKÖ-DUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.
- 17 When he bathed in the middle<sup>9</sup> [of the water], there came into

<sup>4-5</sup> Omitted in certain manuscripts.

<sup>6</sup> Naposu.

<sup>7</sup> Maga.

<sup>8</sup> Sökö.

<sup>9</sup> Naka.

existence the deity named NAKA-TU-WATA-TU-MI-NÖ-KAMĪ; next, NAKA-DUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.

- 18 When he bathed on the surface<sup>10</sup> of the water, there came into existence the deity named UPA-TU-WATA-TU-MI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ; next, UPA-DUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.<sup>11</sup>
- 19 These three WATA-TU-MI deities are the deities worshipped by the MURAZI of the ADUMI as their ancestral deities.<sup>12</sup> The MURAZI of the ADUMI are the descendants of UTUSI-PI-GANA-SAKU-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, the child of these WATA-TU-MI deities.
- 20 The three deities SÖKÖ-DUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, NAKA-DUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, and UPA-DUTU-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ are the three great deities of SUMI-NÖ-YE.
- 21 Then when he washed his left eye, there came into existence a deity named AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ.
- 22 Next, when he washed his right eye, there came into existence a deity named TUKU-YÖMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.<sup>13</sup>
- 23 Next, when he washed his nose, there came into existence a deity named TAKE-PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.<sup>14</sup>
- 24 The fourteen<sup>15</sup> deities in the above section, from YA-SO-MAGATU-PI-NÖ-KAMĪ through PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, are deities born<sup>16</sup> from bathing his body.

<sup>10</sup> *Upé*.

<sup>11</sup> Compare the account in verses 16-18 with the performance of Saruta-biko-nö-kamĪ in 40:4. Matsumura (II, 511-12) is of the opinion that both these accounts reflect an ancient practice of the Ama people involving ablution in three steps.

<sup>12</sup> *Oya-gami*. This verse is the first of the *Kojiki*'s many ancestral glosses, in which the ancestors claimed by various powerful families are fitted into the official national mythology. The formulation of a "correct" genealogy relating all the aristocratic families to the Yamatö ruling family was one of the primary objects of ancient Japanese historical compilation.

<sup>13</sup> Tsuda connects these accounts with the Chinese legend of P'an Ku, who in dying gave birth to the universe, and with another legend linking the sun with the left eye and the moon with the right eye. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 380-81.

<sup>14</sup> See ADDITIONAL NOTE 8 for a discussion of the nature and manner of birth of Susa-nö-wo.

<sup>15</sup> All manuscripts read 'ten'; emended.

<sup>16</sup> One manuscript has 'who came into existence.'

## CHAPTER 12

IZANAGI ENTRUSTS THEIR MISSIONS TO  
THE THREE NOBLE CHILDREN.

- 1 At this time IZANAGI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, rejoicing greatly, said:  
"I have borne child after child, and finally in the last bearing I have obtained three noble children."
- 2 Then he removed his necklace, shaking the beads on the string so that they jingled,<sup>1</sup> and, giving it to AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ, he entrusted her with her mission, saying:  
"You shall rule<sup>2</sup> TAKAMA-NÖ-PARA."
- 3 The name of this necklace is MI-KURA-TANA-NÖ-KAMĪ.
- 4 Next he said to TUKU-YÖMI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, entrusting him with his mission:  
"You shall rule the realms of the night."
- 5 Next he said to TAKE-PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, entrusting him with his mission:  
"You shall rule the ocean."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 15:3, 5. Hirata says that Izanagi ceded all of his spiritual power to Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kami, and as a symbol of this, and in order to pray for her longevity, gave her the necklace. He connects the shaking of the beads with the ancient ceremonies of *chinkon*, or spirit-pacification, which included waving or agitating fetiches. It must be remembered that the word for 'bead,' 'jewel' and the word for 'soul,' 'spirit' were both pronounced *tama*. *Hirata Atsutane zenshū* (Itchidō Shoten, 1911), I, 365.

At any rate, the necklace was, like the Three Divine Treasures of 39:2, a symbol of delegated power.

<sup>2</sup> In ancient Japanese, the word for 'to rule' was *siru*, *sirasu* [later *sirosimesu*], meaning 'to know.' The ideograph here is the one meaning 'to know.'

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps because Susa-nö-wo, as a windstorm-deity, was connected mentally with the ocean. In some of the *Nihon shoki* versions, his assignment is to rule Ne-nö-kuni, the underworld realm to which he is later banished in the *Kojiki*.

## CHAPTER 13

SUSA-NÖ-WO DISOBEYS HIS DIVINE TRUST  
AND IS EXPELLED BY IZANAGI.

- 1 While [the other deities] ruled [their realms] in obedience to the  
 2 commands entrusted to them, PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WO-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ did  
 3 not rule the land entrusted to him. [Instead], he wept and howled  
 4 [even] until his beard eight hands long extended down over his  
 5 chest.<sup>1</sup>  
 6 His weeping was such that it caused the verdant mountains to  
 7 wither and all the rivers and seas to dry up. At this, the cries of  
 8 malevolent deities were everywhere abundant like summer flies;  
 9 and all sorts of calamities arose in all things.<sup>2</sup>  
 10 Then IZANAGI-NÖ-OPO-MI-KAMĪ said to PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WO-NÖ-  
 11 MIKÖTÖ:  
 12 “Why is it you do not rule the land entrusted to you, but [instead]  
 13 weep and howl?”  
 14 Then [Paya-susa-nö-wo-nö-mikötö] replied:

<sup>1</sup>Susa-nö-wo's conduct has been interpreted in various ways. Similar conduct is recorded in the *Kojiki* (73 :2), and twice in the *Izumo fudoki*, which reads:

“Adi-suki-taka-piko-nö-mikötö, the son of the great deity who created the lands under the heavens [Opo-namöti-nö-mikötö], cried exceedingly day and night. A high building was made for him . . . and they constructed a ladder on which they went up and down as they raised him.” *Fudoki*, ed. Takeda Yūkichi (Iwanami Shoten, 1939), p. 144.

“Adi-suki-taka-piko-nö-mikötö, the son of the great god Opo-namöti-nö-mikötö, cried day and night until his beard grew eight hands long, and his words were not comprehensible.” *Ibid.*, p. 151.

Matsumura (II, 611-16) supposes that there was an ancient magico-religious rite to summon down the deities by crying and howling. This rite, which had by then been forgotten, was reflected in these accounts.

In verse 3, the actions seem to be those of a ravaging nature-deity such as Susa-nö-wo was often supposed to be. For further notes on the aggressive behavior of Susa-nö-wo see Chapter 16.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 17:3.

“I wish to go to the land of my mother, NE-NÖ-KATA-SU-KUNI.  
 That is why I weep.”<sup>3</sup>

- 7 Then IZANAGI-NÖ-OPO-MI-KAMĪ, greatly enraged, said :  
 8 “In that case, you may not live in this land !”  
 9 Thus [saying], he expelled him with a divine expulsion,<sup>4</sup>  
 10 This IZANAGI-NÖ-OPO-KAMĪ is enshrined in TAGA of APUMI.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See ADDITIONAL NOTE 9 for a discussion of this verse.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 17:25.

<sup>5</sup> This verse is a gloss, inserted here at the end of Izanagi's career. Instead of the words “Taga in Apumi,” the Ise manuscript has “Taga in Apadi.”

Apadi also figures in the *Nihon shoki* account, which says:

“After this, Izanagi-nö-mikötö, his divine mission being completed, passed on in the spirit. Then he provided himself with a hidden shrine on the island of Apadi, and abode there eternally in peaceful seclusion. Also, it is said: Izanagi-nö-mikötö, his merit reaching its supreme limits and his virtue also being at its greatest, at this point ascended to Heaven and reported the accomplishment of his mission. Thus he remained abiding in the Younger Palace of the Sun.” Asahi ed., I, 89; see also Aston, I, 33-34.

In any case, the verse is a gloss of late origin, and there is no need to attach great importance to it. Tsuda argues that Taga in Apumi is a place which has no connection with the god Izanagi, and that the passage is a fabrication of a period when various shrines sought to enhance their importance by creating mythical sanctions. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 351.

- 14 In the misty spray there came into existence a deity named KUMANO-KUSUBI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ.
- 15 At this time AMA-TERASU-OPÖ-MI-KAMi said to PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WÖ-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ:  
 "The latter-born five male children came into existence from my possessions and are therefore naturally my children. The first-born three female children came into existence from your possessions, and are therefore your children."
- 16 Thus saying, she distinguished' [the offspring].
- 17 The first-born deity, TAKIRI-BIME-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, is enshrined in the OKI-TU-MIYA of MUNAKATA.
- 18 Next, ITIKI-SIMA-PIME-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ is enshrined in the NAKA-TU-MIYA of MUNAKATA.
- 19 Next, TAKITU-PIME-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ is enshrined in the PE-TU-MIYA of MUNAKATA.
- 20 These three deities are the three great deities worshipped by the KIMI of MUNAKATA.
- 21 Among the latter-born five deities, the child of AMĒ-NÖ-POPI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ, TAKE-PIRA-TÖRI-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ is the ancestor of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of IDUMO, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of MUZASI, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of KAMI-TU-UNAKAMI, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of SIMO-TU-UNAKAMI, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of IZIMU, of the AGATA-NÖ-ATAPĒ of TU-SIMA, and of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of TÖPO-TU-APUMI.
- 22 Next, AMA-TU-PIKONE-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ is the ancestor of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of OPUSI-KAPUTI, of the MURAZI of the NUKATA-BE-NÖ-YUWE, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of UBARAKI, of the ATAPĒ of TANAKA in YAMATÖ, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of YAMASIRÖ, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of UMAKUDA, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of KIPĒ in MITI-NÖ-SIRI, of the KUNI-NÖ-MIYATUKO of SUPAU, of the MIYATUKO of AMUTI in YAMATÖ, of the AGATA-NÖSI of TAKĒTI, of the INAKI of KAMAPU, and of the MIYATUKO of the SAKIKUSA-BE.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Or 'divided.'

<sup>8</sup> Verses 21-22 include some of the many genealogical glosses which occur in the Kojiki. The intention is clear: by relating the ancestors of all of these powerful families directly to Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kami, the Kojiki hoped to secure their loyalty to the Yamatö ruling family, which claimed descent from the elder brother of AmĒ-nö-popi-nö-mikötö and Ama-tu-pikone-nö-mikötö.

## CHAPTER 16

## SUSA-NÖ-WÖ RAGES WITH VICTORY.

- 1 Then PAYA-SUSA-NÖ-WÖ-NÖ-MIKÖTÖ said to AMA-TERASU-OPÖ-MI-KAMi: '  
 "It was because my intentions were pure and bright that in the children I begot I obtained graceful maidens. By this it is obvious that I have won."
- 2 Thus saying, he raged with victory,<sup>2</sup> breaking down the ridges between the rice paddies of AMA-TERASU-OPÖ-MI-KAMi and covering up the ditches.
- 3 Also he defecated and strewed the faeces about in the hall where the first fruits were tasted.<sup>3</sup>
- 4 Even though he did this, AMA-TERASU-OPÖ-MI-KAMi did not reprove him, but said:
- 5 "That which appears to be faeces must be what my brother has vomited and strewn about while drunk. Also his breaking down the ridges of the paddies and covering up their ditches-my brother must have done this because he thought it was wasteful to use the land thus."

<sup>1</sup> In the Kojiki Susa-nö-wo's victory is due to his' production of female children, whereas in the *Nihon shoki* it is because his offspring are males.

Takeda suggests that this show of respect for women might indicate that the *Kojiki* was transmitted by women and may be adduced as an argument that Piyeda nö Are was a woman. Kojiki (Kadakawa Shoten, 1956), pp. 25-26.

Although it is not impossible to regard the *Kojiki* account as a reminiscence of an earlier matrilinear social system, it is generally agreed that, of the two, the *Nihonshoki* accounts are the older.

Tsuda argues persuasively that Susa-nö-wo's children were originally male, and that the statement that female children were a proof of innocence of heart is a later alteration. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 441-42. Cf. note on 15:6.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of Susa-nii-wo's destructive behavior in this chapter. see ADDITIONAL NOTE 10.

<sup>3</sup> Or 'where she tasted the first fruits.' The Hall of the First Fruits was the palace where the harvest festival was celebrated; cf. also 133:11

- 6 Even though she thus spoke with good intention,<sup>4</sup> his misdeeds did not cease, but became even more flagrant.
- 7 When AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ was inside the sacred weaving hall<sup>5</sup> seeing to the weaving of the divine garments," he opened a hole in the roof of the sacred weaving hall and dropped down into it the heavenly dappled pony' which he had skinned with a backwards skinning.<sup>6</sup>
- 8 The heavenly weaving maiden,<sup>9</sup> seeing this, was alarmed and struck her genitals against the shuttle and died.

<sup>4</sup> *Nōri-naposi*; to speak good words *correctively* in an optimistic attempt to improve the situation. Perhaps this is evidence of an ancient belief that one could turn evil into good by speaking well of it. Japanese scholars love to dwell on the *kōtō-dama*, or 'word-spirit,' the magic power dwelling in words or in certain verbal formulae, which were believed to have the power to bring about the announced results.

<sup>5</sup> *Imi-pata-ya*. Matsumura (II, 560-63) suggests that this section is reminiscent of the sun-priestesses whose duty it must have been to weave ceremonial garments to be used in the worship of the sun-deity. This sacred duty is projected into the mythical rôle of Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī, who is confused with these priestesses in the Kojiki. The deity, in other words, has assumed the characteristics of the priestesses, and become a glorified sun priestess.

Tsuda, on the other hand, sees a political significance in Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī's rôles: the goddess is an emperor-symbol against whom Susa-nō-wo rebels in a manner symbolizing the unsuccessful revolts of the enemies of the Yamato Court. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 432.

<sup>6</sup> *Kamu-mi-so*; garments to be presented to a deity, or 'sacred garments.'

<sup>7</sup> *Amē nō puti-koma*; or 'heavenly piebald colt.' Aston says: "Indian myth has a piebald or spotted deer or cow among celestial objects. The idea is probably suggested by the appearance of the stars." *Nihongi*, I, 40.

<sup>8</sup> *Saka-pagi*. "Backwards skinning," evidently flaying a live animal from the tail up, is mentioned together with "skinning alive" in the *norito* as one of the heavenly sins (*ama-tu-tumi*). Perhaps skinning a live animal was some sort of black magic practice.

<sup>9</sup> The heavenly weaving maiden is evidently a subordinate priestess belonging to the entourage of Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī. The *Nihon shoki* has accounts in which it is Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī herself who is alarmed and injured. Matsumura (III, 43-45) is of the opinion that the latter is the original version, and that the *Kojiki's* account is a later revision making a subordinate suffer the direct effects of the indignity.

## CHAPTER 17

AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ CONCEALS HERSELF.

THE OTHER DEITIES LURE HER OUT.

SUSA-NŌ-WO IS EXPELLED.

- 1 At this time, AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ, seeing this, was afraid, and opening the heavenly rock-cave door,' went in and shut herself inside.
- 2 Then TAKAMA-NŌ-PARA was completely dark, and the Central Land of the Reed Plains<sup>2</sup> was entirely dark.
- 3 Because of this, constant night reigned,<sup>3</sup> and the cries of the myriad deities were everywhere abundant, like summer flies; and all manner of calamities arose.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Amē no ipa-ya-to*. Motoori says that *ipa-ya* (lit., 'rock-house') does not necessarily mean 'cave,' since *ipa* is often used attributively to impart the sense of 'firm,' 'solid' to the noun following; thus, the writer could be referring to an ordinary building. *Kojikiden*, II, 407-408. There is also a theory that the concealment of the sun-goddess was a symbolic death; the *ipa-ya* is the stone tomb into which she enters, and the ensuing rites are performed to summon her back to life. In various poems in the *Manyōshū* the words 'to shut oneself inside the rock-door' mean 'to die and be concealed within the rocky tomb.'

<sup>2</sup> *Asi-para-nō-naka-tu-kuni*; cf. note on 10:9.

<sup>3</sup> Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī, who had figured largely as the ruler of Takama-nō-para, now appears to assume more clearly the attributes of the sun-deity. When she conceals herself, constant darkness and night reign everywhere. A similar myth exists among the Ainu: the sun-goddess was taken captive, and all the deities and human beings died from excessive sleep. Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu seiten* (Sckai Bunko Kankhakai, 1923), p. 113.

The concealment of Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī has been explained as representing an eclipse, the death of the sun-goddess, her anger, etc. The ensuing rites are regarded as magico-religious rites to bring the sun back to life, to bring it out of eclipse, or to propitiate the anger of the sun-goddess. Matsumura (III, 46ff.) states that the myth had its origin in a magico-religious rite performed every winter, when the sun's rays are weakest, in order to renew the sun's power; the rite had elements of *chinkon* (or *tama-furi* -spirit pacification) and of ritual laughter.

Matsumura (III, 67) also insists, incidentally, that the rages of Susa-nō-wo, the concealment of Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī, and the expulsion of Susa-nō-wo were originally independent myths, welded together later into a connected story.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 13:4.

- 4 Then the eight-hundred myriad deities<sup>5</sup> assembled in a divine assembly in the river-bed of the AMĒ-NŌ-YASU-NŌ-KAPA.<sup>6</sup>
- 5 They caused the child of TAKA-MI-MUSUBI-NŌ-KAMĪ, OMŌPI-KANE-NŌ-KAMĪ, to ponder.<sup>7</sup>
- 6 They gathered together the long-crying birds of TŌKŌ-YŌ and caused them to cry.<sup>8</sup>
- 7 They took the heavenly hard rock<sup>9</sup> from the upper stream of the river AMĒ-NŌ-YASU-NŌ-KAPA; they took iron from [the mountain] AMĒ-NŌ-KANA-YAMA. They sought the smith AMA-TU-MARA and commissioned ISI-KŌRI-DOME-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ to make a mirror.
- 9 They commissioned TAMA-NŌ-YA-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ to make long strings of myriad MAGA-TAMA beads.
- 10 They summoned AMĒ-NŌ-KO-YANE-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ and PUTO-TAMA-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ to remove the whole shoulder-bone of a male deer of the mountain AMĒ-NŌ-KAGU-YAMA, and take heavenly

<sup>5</sup> *Ya-po-yōrōdu no kami*; the ideographs, translated into Modern Japanese, mean 'eight million gods.' The word *ya*, written 'eight,' is a sacred number often meaning 'many'; and *yōrōdu*, written 'ten-thousand,' is an indefinite term best translated by the word 'myriad.'

<sup>6</sup> Another divine assembly is described in identical terms in 32:5. The ethnologist Torii Ryūzō compares these meetings of the gods with the Mongolian meeting of clans called *Kuriltai*. *Jinruigaku-jō yori mitaru waga jōdai no bunka* (Sōbunkaku, 1925), pp. 57-65. Tsuda says that the assembly of the gods reflects an ancient custom of holding *Kuriltai*-like meetings of powerful clans to confer and cooperate in deciding important questions on behalf of the ruling family. *Nihon koten no kenkyū*, I, 433. Most authorities agree that this convocation reflects not a primitive democratic town-meeting but a confabulation among the powerful ruling families connected with the Yamato court.

<sup>7</sup> *Omōpu*; or 'to think,' 'to devise,' 'to lay a wise plan.' This deity, evidently a god of wisdom or counsel (see GLOSSARY), is always called upon to devise a plan whenever there is a convocation of the gods; cf. Chapters 32, 33.

<sup>8</sup> The 'long-crying birds' (*naga-naki-dōri*) are cocks. *Tōkō-yō* (see GLOSSARY) is clearly the land of *Tōkō-yō*, the mythical 'eternal world.' The word was formerly mistakenly translated as 'eternal night,' on the understanding that 'eternal night' (*tōkō-yō*) was phonemically equivalent to *Tōkō-yō*. Actually, the final elements of the two words are phonemically distinct. Evidently, cocks were made to crow in order to summon the sun at dawn; the crowing of cocks is a feature of funerals among various peoples because of its association with dawn, early morning, resurrection of the dead, and banishment of evil spirits. There is a myth among the Miao tribes of southern China in which the sun concealed itself but came out again on hearing the cock's crowing. Matsumura, III, 71-73.

<sup>9</sup> Evidently, the hard rock was used as a rock anvil on which to temper the iron.

PAPAKA wood from the mountain AMĒ-NŌ-KAGU-YAMA, and [with these] perform a divination.<sup>10</sup>

- 11 They uprooted by the very roots the flourishing MA-SAKAKI<sup>11</sup> trees of the mountain AMĒ-NŌ-KAGU-YAMA; to the upper branches they affixed long strings of myriad MAGA-TAMA beads; in the middle branches they hung a large-dimensioned mirror;<sup>12</sup> in the lower branches they suspended white NIKITE cloth and blue NIKITE cloth.<sup>13</sup>
- 12 These various objects were held in his hands by PUTO-TAMA-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ as solemn offerings,<sup>14</sup> and AMĒ-NŌ-KO-YANE-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ intoned a solemn liturgy.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Uranapi*; cf. the notes on 5:2 in regard to divination by firing the shoulder-bones of deer, called *puto-mani*.

The deities playing important rôles in this chapter—AmĒ-nō-uzume-nō-mikōtō, AmĒ-nō-ko-yane-nō-mikōtō, Puto-tama-nō-mikōtō, Isi-kōri-dome-nō-mikōtō, Tama-nō-ya-nō-mikōtō, Omōpi-kane-nō-kamī, and Ta-dikara-wo-nii-kamī—appear again in the myth of the descent from the heavens (Chapter 39). There was evidently a close connection between the two myths; Matsumura (III, 31) even calls the retirement of the sun-goddess a "prelude" to the descent from the heavens.

The rites in this chapter seem to be based on accounts emanating from the Nakatōmi (descendants of AmĒ-nō-ko-yane-nō-mikōtō), the Imube (descendants of Puto-tama-nō-mikōtō), and the Sarume (descendants of AmĒ-nō-uzume-nō-mikōtō) clans, all priestly families connected with the Yamato court. In this composite version, the Sarume influence seems to be the strongest, since the actions of AmĒ-nō-uzume-nō-mikōtō form the central part of the ceremonies. In some versions in the *Nihon shōki* the coming forth of the sun-goddess is the direct result of the practices of the ancestors of the Imube or of the Nakatōmi; such accounts do not mention the dance of AmĒ-nō-uzume-nō-mikōtō, which is central in the Kojiki.

<sup>11</sup> *Ipo-tu-ma-sakaki*; cf. *yutu-ma-tubaki* in II 2:21.

<sup>12</sup> *Ya-ata-kagami*; the use of this mirror, which is evidently the one made in verse 8 by Isi-kōri-dome-nō-mikōtō, is described in verse 20. The myriad *maga-tama* beads and "the mirror which had been used to lure" are later (39:2) given, together with the sword *Kusa-nagi* (first mentioned in 19:22), as the three items of the sacred regalia to Piko-po-nō-ninigi-nō-mikōtō on his descent from the heavens.

<sup>13</sup> Hanging mirrors and cloth offerings on branches of uprooted trees was a common practice in ancient Japanese worship; undoubtedly, the tree thus decked became the temporary abode of the spirit of the deity.

<sup>14</sup> *Puto-mi-te-gura*. These were probably not offerings in the strict sense, but implements held in the hands of the shaman in order to induce possession by the spirit of the deity.

<sup>15</sup> *Puto-nōrito-gōtō*; any solemn words having magic power. The preliminary ceremonies in verses 7-12 were probably ritual preparations common to all religious ceremonies; the central part of the rite recorded in the Kojiki is the performance recorded in verses 14-16. According to Matsumura (III, 66), the fundamental magic power which was able to soften the heart of the deity and summon her forth was in AmĒ-nō-uzume's comic dance.

- 13 AMĒ-NŌ-TA-DIKARA-WO-NŌ-KAMĪ stood concealed beside the  
 14 door,<sup>16</sup> while AMĒ-NŌ-UZUME-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ bound up her sleeves  
 with a cord of heavenly PI-KAGĒ vine, tied around her head a  
 head-band of the heavenly MA-SAKI vine, bound together bundles  
 of SASA leaves to hold in her hands, and overturning a bucket  
 before the heavenly rock-cave door, stamped resoundingly upon  
 it.<sup>17</sup> Then she became divinely possessed,<sup>18</sup> exposed her breasts, and  
 pushed her skirt-band down to her genitals.<sup>19</sup>
- 16 Then TAKAMA-NŌ-PARA shook as the eight-hundred myriad de-  
 ities laughed at once.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In order to pull the sun-goddess out, as he does in verse 22.

<sup>17</sup> Note the various preparations of AmĒ-nŌ-uzume-nŌ-mikŌtŌ for shamanistic pos-  
 session. A parallel to the stamping of the overturned bucket is found in the ceremonies  
 of the chinkon-sai (spirit-pacification ceremony) of the imperial court, in which a wooden  
 bucket (or some sort of tub or wooden container) is pouced with the staff of a long  
 spear while the emperor's garments are shaken or waved in a magic rite to increase his  
 longevity. Matsumura, III, 75-76.

Some scholars have held that all the rites in this chapter were the same as those of the  
 chinkon-sai ceremony, in which indeed the women of the Sarume clan played an im-  
 portant rôle. The *chinkon* (or *tama-furi*) rite was a ceremony attempting to prevent the  
 spirit from leaving the body, or to summon it back into a dead body-or, according to  
 one interpretation, to attach additional spiritual forces to a person's soul, and thus to  
 increase his vitality and longevity. Matsumura (III, 76-91) claims that *chinkon* rites must  
 have been performed for the sun when it lost its force during the winter.

<sup>18</sup> *Kamu-gakari*; god-possession. The widespread popularity of shamanistic spirit-  
 possession among the ancient Japanese is amply attested to in documentary sources; it  
 was widely practiced until the Meiji period and is still practiced in the Ryūkyū islands  
 and among the Ainu, Koreans, and other continental peoples. Torii asserts that shaman-  
 ism was the native religion of the Japanese, that the sun-goddess and the deities sur-  
 rounding her in Takama-nŌ-para were shamans, and that the whole setting for the  
 concealment myth is shamanistic. *Jinrui gaku-jō*, pp. 50-53.

<sup>19</sup> Motoori attributes Uzume's exhibitionism to derangement, i.e., to a state of pos-  
 session. The same actions are performed in her encounter with Saruta-biko, as recorded  
 in the *Nihon shoki* (see note on 38:11).

Exposure of the genitals is believed among many peoples to have magic power to  
 drive away evil spirits. Chiri Mashiho records such a custom, called *hoparata*, among the  
 Ainu. *Bunrui Ainu-go jiten* (Nihon Jōminbunka Kenkyūjo, 1954), III, 66-67.

Matsumura (III, 91-107) gives a number of accounts from various peoples which reveal  
 that this type of exhibitionism was used in religious rites, not only to drive away unde-  
 sirable influences, but also to amuse, entertain, and impart vitality to the deities. He likens  
 AmĒ-nŌ-uzume's dance to the one performed by Iambe before Demeter in the Homeric  
 hymns and to that performed by Baubō before Demeter in the Protepticus of Clement  
 of Alexandria.

<sup>20</sup> Matsumura (III, 91-98) says that ritual laughter was used magically to propitiate the  
 anger of the gods or to increase their vitality. The *Kojiki* narrative, of course, records the  
 laughter merely as a device to arouse the curiosity of the sun-goddess.

- 17 Then AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ, thinking this strange, opened  
 a crack in the heavenly rock-cave door, and said from within:
- 18 "Because I have shut myself in, I thought that TAKAMA-NŌ-  
 PARA would be dark, and that the Central Land of the Reed Plains  
 would be completely dark. But why is it that AMĒ-NŌ-UZUME  
 sings and dances,<sup>21</sup> and all the eight-hundred myriad deities laugh?"
- 19 Then AMĒ-NŌ-UZUME said:
- "We rejoice and dance because there is here a deity superior  
 to you."
- 20 While she was saying this, AMĒ-NŌ-KO-YANE-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ and  
 PUTO-TAMA-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ brought out the mirror and showed it to  
 AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ.
- 21 Then AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ, thinking this more and more  
 strange,<sup>22</sup> gradually came out of the door and approached [the  
 mirror.]
- 22 Then the hidden AMĒ-NŌ-TA-DIKARA-WO-NŌ-KAMĪ took her  
 23 hand and pulled her out. Immediately PUTO-TAMA-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ ex-  
 tended a STRI-KUMĒ rope behind her, and said:
- "You may go back no further than this!"<sup>23</sup>
- 24 When AMA-TERASU-OPO-MI-KAMĪ came forth, TAKAMA-NŌ-PARA  
 and the Central Land of the Reed Plains of themselves<sup>24</sup> became  
 light.
- 25 At this time the eight-hundred myriad deities deliberated to-  
 gether, imposed upon PAVA-SUSA-NŌ-WO-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ a fine of a  
 thousand tables of restitutive gifts, and also, cutting off his beard

<sup>21</sup> *Asobi*. The word is written with the ideograph meaning 'pleasure' or 'music'. In  
 Archaic Japanese it was read *asobi* ('singing and dancing') or *uta-mapi* ('song and dance').

<sup>22</sup> Either she saw her reflection in the mirror and thought that the reflected image was  
 another deity; or seeing the mirror, a symbol of the sun-deity, she thought that there  
 was another sun-deity besides herself.

<sup>23</sup> Evidently the two elements—extending the rope behind her back and reciting a  
 magic formula—made it impossible for the sun-goddess to re-enter the cave.

<sup>24</sup> I.e., by themselves, naturally, as a matter of course. The magic rites had been suc-  
 cessful in restoring light to the universe.

and the nails of his hands and feet,<sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup>had him exorcised<sup>27</sup> and expelled him with a divine expulsion.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup>The deities had Susa-nō-wo's beard, fingernails, and toenails cut off to punish him or, rather, in order to exorcise him and thus remove the sins and pollution adhering to him.

<sup>26-27</sup> Some manuscripts substitute an ideograph meaning 'pull out' or 'remove' for the one translated 'exorcism'; thus the passage may read: "cutting off his beard and causing the nails of his hands and feet to be extracted, expelled him. . ."

<sup>28</sup> Here Susa-nō-wo is again expelled (cf. 13:8) from the society of the heavenly deities and, branded as a transgressor, is sent wandering throughout the world.

Susa-nō-wo was regarded as a wandering outcast for some time after his expulsion. The *Nihon shoki*, which records versions in which he went to Korea after having been driven out of heaven, gives this interesting variant:

"After being exorcised, the various deities expelled him with these words:

'Because your conduct has been exceedingly outrageous, you may not remain in the heavens, nor may you dwell in the Central Land of the Reed Plains. Be gone with you quickly to the lowest Ne-nō-kuni!'

"Since there was a rainstorm then, Susa-nō-wo bound up grass and made a braided hat and straw coat and went around asking for shelter of the various deities, who answered that they would not provide shelter for one who was exiled for his evil doings.

"In spite of the fierce wind and rain, he was unable to find anywhere to shelter himself and rest, and he descended in great pain.

"From this time on, there has been a taboo against entering the house of another wearing a braided hat and straw coat, and against entering another's house carrying grass bound in sheaves. If anyone breaks this taboo, he is fined and subjected to exorcism." Asahi ed., I, 108 (condensed).

## CHAPTER 18

OPO-GĒ-TU-PIME PRODUCES FOOD AND IS  
KILLED BY SUSA-NŌ-WO.

- 1 Again, [Susa-nō-wo-nō-mikōtō] asked food of OPO-GĒ-TU-PIME-NŌ-KAMĪ.<sup>1</sup>
- 2 Then OPO-GĒ-TU-PIME took various viands out of her nose, her mouth, and her rectum, prepared them in various ways, and presented them to him.
- 3 Thereupon PAYA-SUSA-NŌ-WO-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ, who had been watching her actions, **thought that** she was polluting the food before offering it to him and killed OPO-GĒ-TU-PIME-NŌ-KAMĪ.
- 4 In the corpse of the slain deity there grew [various] things: in her head there grew silkworms; in her two eyes there grew rice seeds; in her two ears there grew millet; in her nose there grew red beans; in her genitals there grew wheat; and in her rectum there grew soy beans.
- 5 Then KAMĪ-MUSUBI-MI-OYA-NŌ-MIKŌTŌ had these taken and used as seeds.

<sup>1</sup> A food-goddess. See **ADDITIONAL NOTE 11** for a discussion of this chapter.