

B. Mikolajewska • F.E.J. Linton

Victimage *in the*
Kojiki *of*
FRAGMENTS
Japan



The Lintons' Video Press

Mikolajewska & Linton • Victimage in the *Kojiki* of Japan

Fragments:

Part I • In the place of pure beginning

Supplements

Appendix

Victimage in the *Kojiki* of Japan

Fragments

Barbara Mikołajewska

in cooperation with **F.E.J Linton**

Wydanie II Internetowe (pliki PDF)



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Part I

In the place of pure beginning



“... Amë-nö-uzume-nö-mikötö bound up her sleeves with a cord of heavenly Pi-kagë 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. Then she became divinely possessed, exposed her breast, and pushed her skirt-band down to her genitals.

Then Takama-nö-para shook as the eight-hundred myriad deities laughed at once.”

Kojiki, University of Tokyo Press; translated with an Introduction and Notes by Donald L. Philippi; 17:14-16, p.84.

Chapter 1

Takachiho and its Yokagura: Reliving the Lore of Yesteryear

One of the more perplexing bits of common knowledge or received wisdom that American second-graders are said to have passed on to each other in the late nineteen forties, concerning their simple, die-stamped sheet-metal toys, was that, while some bore the self-explanatory imprints “Made in USA” or “Made in Japan,” those bearing instead the wily imprint “Made in Usa” were in fact made in Japan.

Only the most intrepid of those second-graders would ever have ventured to an encyclopedia, there to learn that, in fact, there is in Japan a city called Usa, a city with a not inconsiderable manufacturing base, a good portion of which was devoted, during the years immediately following World War II, to the production and exportation of just such simple, die-stamped sheet-metal toys.

Any atlas will reveal that Japan itself, a nation of countless islands, is concentrated on four principal islands, and that it is on Kyushu, at once the westernmost and southernmost of those four large islands, that this town of Usa is located, on the shore along its eastern coast, barely 75 kilometers south of the Kokura-Shimonoseki strait separating Kyushu from the adjacent island of Honshu, north-east of Kyushu and home to the far more familiar and vastly larger cities of Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Hiroshima.

Another 180 kilometers south of Usa, however, on the eastern seaboard of Kyushu, past the ports of Beppu, Usuki, and Saiki, where the inter-island ferries linking Kyushu with the islands Honshu and Shikoku dock, lies the modern coastal town of Nobeoka, too far to the south and the west, by now, to attract those inter-island ferries, but rail-head for the private Takachiho Tetsudo railway, which, in a north-westerly run of perhaps ninety minutes, traverses some fifty steep, scenic kilometers, along a narrow, largely single-track rail-bed, gaining nearly half a kilometer in elevation as it climbs high into the central mountains of Kyushu’s Miyazaki province, ending at the mountain-ringed high-country terminus of Takachiho, in a trip that has also taken its passengers untold centuries back in time, to the place of pure beginning where unfolded the world-shaking events memorialized even today in Takachiho’s sacred and centuries-old Yokagura dance-drama.

For near here, certainly, just outside Takachiho, are the twin caves Amano-Iwato, within which the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu-

opo-mi-kamī had sequestered herself in angry protest against her “evil” brother’s abhorrent heavenly misdeeds, and Gyobo-Iwaya, where all the eight hundred myriad deities of that time, resolved to restore to the worlds of heaven and earth the solar warmth and light that Ama-terasu’s voluntary concealment deprived them of, gathered together so as to hatch a scheme by which to entice Ama-terasu back out again.

Here, too, are the twin peaks of Mount Futagami, where Ama-terasu’s grandson Ninigi-nō-mikōtō, future grandfather, in turn, of Jimmu, the legendary first Yamatō emperor of Japan, is held to have descended from heaven, at his grandmother Ama-terasu’s behest, to wrest earthly rule from Ama-terasu’s “evil” brother’s descendant, the earthly deity Opo-kuni-nusi, and to establish heavenly rule on earth.

In fact, even heaven itself figures in the Takachiho landscape, taking the form of a rambling, shrine-dotted, forested park that, covering the hill through which, for its last few hundred meters before entering the city limits, tunnels the main road to Takachiho from the coast, bears the name Takama-ga-hara, clearly a modern rendering of the more ancient name Takama-nō-para by which the *Kojiki* refers to “The Plain of High Heaven” that serves as abode of all the heavenly deities.



2



3



4



5



Moreover, one's visual field in Takachiho is filled with Yokagura-inspired images depicting these places, recalling these events, and extolling their protagonists. A life size image of Amë-nö-uzume (1) greets passengers arriving at the Takachiho rail station. Within the station, Tajikarao and Amë-nö-uzume, portrayed (2) with the mirror that helped recapture Ama-terasu, invite the traveler to make use of the station's souvenir-passport stamp (3) with its depiction of a Yokagura scene; and a poster (4) advertises the nightly Yokagura performance at the Takachiho Jinja (admission tickets (5): 500 yen).

6



7



8



Just outside the station there stands a poured-concrete replica of the cave Amano-Iwato: a telephone booth, actually, in disguise, its door extending the illusion by depicting Tajikarao (6) grappling with the large and obstinate boulder that, after all, once blocked up the cave's mouth. Not far beyond stands an old wooden structure, resembling a small, disused shrine (7), within which one finds full-size marionette figures of Tajikarao and Amë-nö-uzume (8).

9



10

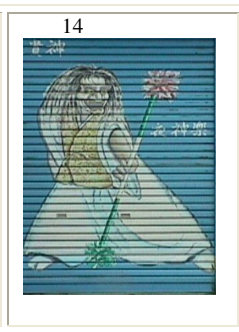


11



Nearby, a tiny park hosts a granite-carved statue of the same longhaired god Tajikarao (9). In another, we may see carved in granite the quick-witted and fearless Amë-nö-uzume (10), that “formidable woman,” as she performs before the mouth of Amano-Iwato her inspired and uninhibited dance – the “original Kagura,” her first great claim to fame – whose bawdy ribaldry caused such raucous merriment among the assembled throng of deities that Ama-terasu, unable to quell her curiosity, would find herself compelled to have a closer peek, at which point she could indeed

be restrained from retreating back into seclusion and brought forth again into the world, her spirit being captured for all time by a well-positioned mirror. Elsewhere still stands a *tengu* (11), a granite statue of the long-nosed deity Saruta-Biko, god of the cross-roads, and presumably Amë-nö-uzume's husband.



A roll-up sheet-metal shop-window shutter, for example, rolled down because the store has already closed for the evening, or has not yet opened for the new day, may depict Amë-nö-uzume (13), preparing to dance, or the god Tajikarao, desperation distorting his flushed face, tugging frantically (12) on his long hair, or brandishing (14) a magical wand topped with a clump of shredded paper, as he gathers his superhuman strength in preparation for prying out of the mouth of the cave Amano-Iwato the enormous,

immovable boulder behind which the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu lies hidden.

15



16



17



Yet another roll-up awning may portray Opo-kuni-nusi (15) ceding earthly rule to Ninigi, or even show Ama-terasu's own father Izanagi, seated arm-in-arm with his consort and help-mate Izanami, taking a break from their life-long task of creating and populating the islands of Japan, savoring a couple of very anachronistic ice-cream cones (this over the window of a sweet-shop), Tajikarao is even featured in a billboard (17) advertising beef.

18



19



20



Such scenes also inspire more personal works of art, as found on a mural (18) in the private dining room of a local ryokan, displayed in the window (19) of a private dwelling, or painted on the exterior wall (20) of small Takachiho hotel.

21



22



They may appear as well in simple charcoal sketches (21) or watercolors (22).

23



24



For the tourist, souvenir postcards bear photographic depictions of masked actors playing Tajikarao (23) or Amë-nö-uzume (24) in Yokagura performances.

All these places are revisited, and the events that unfolded there preserved, recorded and reenacted, in the Takachiho Yokagura, a sacred dance drama that has been mounted in ritual and in festival for more than a dozen centuries. Said to have taken its inspiration from Amë-nö-uzume's "original Kagura," the impassioned dance she performed before the mouth of the cave Amano-Iwato in the hope of luring Ama-terasu back out, today's Yokagura comprises

some thirty-three episodes, and is performed in many venues around Takachiho, both nightly, in abbreviated form, at the Takachiho shrine, and seasonally, in its full glory, during the cold, dark heart of winter, at the homes of local farmers and land owners, in celebratory events lasting all night and on into the next morning.

Here, then, in Takachiho, in this place of pure beginning, all the intrigue and violence and laughter and profound significance of those mysterious events of long ago remain alive today.

Chapter 2

The Takachiho Yokagura

Once it has entered Takachiho, after threading its way through the tunnel under the hill on whose slopes lies the park Takama-gahara, and before it bids Takachiho a final farewell as it rolls on to other destinations deeper inland, the main road to Takachiho from Nobeoka on the coast becomes for a time one of Takachiho's principal thoroughfares, lined on either side by gasoline stations, ramen vendors, welding depots, lumber yards, shops of all sorts, private dwellings, apartment houses, hotels, and just on the right before its final turn before leaving Takachiho, the low hill occupied by a grove of ancient evergreens amongst which are to be found the wooden buildings that make up the Takachiho Jinja, the Takachiho shrine complex where nightly are performed four selected morsels from the Takachiho Yokagura dance ceremony.

The several buildings that this complex comprises include the sacred central shrine itself, where the kamis are enshrined; a separate building where administrative tasks are carried out, and where visitors may purchase a great variety of religious articles; assorted utilitarian outbuildings; and a Kagura-den, the sacred building housing the performance-space in which the nightly Yokagura presentations are mounted.

A broad, shallow threshold area separates the outer entrance to the Kagura-den from the performance space itself; here, if not already earlier, visitors are expected to doff shoes and dispose of umbrellas before entering further. The actual performance space, a theater after all, in some sense, is hard to distinguish from a generic shrine: in the distance, against the back wall, is a slightly raised altar-like structure — the stage, in fact — with low railings along most of its front edge; the rest of this large room is just floor, covered with woven sea-grass tatami mats, like the floor on which worshippers at a shrine might sit during a ceremony, where the Yokagura audience disposes itself to view the Yokagura performance.

Like the altar in a shrine, the stage is adorned in classic Shinto fashion, with sprigs of *sakaki* tree, with cascading cut-paper *gohei* wands, with cut-and-folded paper strips resembling bolts of lightning, and with tufts of rice stalks (Plate 1a). The back wall of the stage, on the other hand — for this is a stage — sets the scene for the Yokagura performance by depicting the exterior of Amaterasu's hiding place, the dark cave Amano-Iwato, its mouth blocked by an imposing dark boulder, a spare but effective set

(Plate 1b). And at far stage left (on the right side of the stage as the audience sees it) there sits a large hide-covered drum (Plate 1c) which, along with a flute, will provide the musical accompaniment to the dance.

The performance is preceded by the appearance of one of the shrine's priests (Plate 2a), who offers a brief introduction to the events to come and then, using a purification wand which had been standing ready behind the drum, undertakes a ritual purification (Plate 2b) by alternately swishing that wand, with its long, rustling mass of cut-paper tresses, over first one shoulder and then the other, replacing it, finally, behind the drum when he is done.

In the dances themselves, one first sees the god Tajikarao (Plate 3), armed only with divine bells, gohei wands, and the great strength he is famous for, searching for the missing Ama-terasu. He finds the cave Amano-Iwato, its mouth sealed by a great boulder, and, suspecting that this may be Ama-terasu's hiding place, listens intently for any sounds that might confirm her presence within.

Next, once Tajikarao has satisfied himself that Amano-Iwato is in fact harboring Ama-terasu, one sees Amë-nö-uzume (Plate 4) performing the flamboyant dance, for which she is so remembered, by which she hopes to lure Ama-terasu back out of the cave. And indeed, the noisy merriment it is said to have engendered in the eight-hundred myriad deities all assembled there is thought so to have intrigued Ama-terasu that she would at least peek out from just behind the boulder for a closer look.

Now Tajikarao (Plate 5) puts in another appearance, first working up his strength to the level the task at hand requires, then setting about to lift the boulder up out of the cave mouth, and finally, after a dance of triumph with that boulder hoisted jubilantly overhead, becoming subdued with awe and reverence at finding within the now open cave mouth the long missing Ama-terasu, in the visible form of a bright mirror borne on a miniature shrine, mirror that, for the audience, because it is after all just such a mirror that, enshrined at Ise, embodies the spirit of Ama-terasu, clearly serves as spiritual replica of Ama-terasu herself.

An intermission now follows, during which one of the Shinto priests of the Takachiho Jinja provides further explanations to the audience, who may be as few as two or three, or as numerous as a whole tourbusful of visiting travelers, all wearing their current ryokan's yukata lounge-robos. It may be worth remarking that these onlookers, while respectful in their demeanor, are quite casual in their attire and, with full approval of the shrine, make use

of their still and video cameras to capture photographic records of the events here enacted.

Finally, with the mirror that “is” Ama-terasu still prominently enshrined within the open mouth of the stage-cave Amano-Iwato, there appear dancers depicting Izanagi (Plate 6a) and Izanami (Plate 6b, c), the gods who, after descending from heaven to earth to become the first earthly couple, jointly created and populated the islands of Japan, and are credited even with inventing the production of sake. They are shown here gathering the first rice, fermenting the first rice-mash (Plate 6d-g), enjoying the world’s first sake (Plate 6h-j), and, ultimately, succumbing to their tipsy drowsiness and falling happily asleep (Plate 6k).

What is striking in this last dance, even more than the asynchrony inherent in its being presented after the depiction of events that, chronologically, can only have happened much later—after all it was only after Izanami’s death that Izanagi had fathered Ama-terasu, and by the time of her seclusion in Amano-Iwato Izanagi too had already passed on—is that, performed in plain view of the Ama-terasu-mirror so visibly enshrined within the mouth of the cave, it seems almost a dance of homage to the spiritual replica of Ama-terasu now residing, captive, in that mirror. By the same token, what is striking in the first dances is the parallel between the original events, in which Amë-nö-uzume’s dance before the mouth of the cave has all the assembled gods as audience, and its stage recreation here, where it is almost as if the audience is standing in for those eight-hundred myriad heavenly deities.

And we learn from this abbreviated Yokagura of the centrality of Ama-terasu’s role in the cultural fabric of Japan. Catastrophic as was her concealment within the cave, so was her restoration providential; finding an effective means by which to cause to rise again a sun sunken beneath the surface of the earth — finding this communal solution to the problem of restoring order after some unspeakably heavy, dark, long-lasting, chillingly oppressive, social calamity — has somehow become a discovery that needs continually to be reaffirmed, to be celebrated and celebrated again, and reenacted, and thoroughly appreciated, here in what is, after all, among other things, known as the Land of the Rising Sun. And the same structure of theater inherent in Amë-nö-uzume’s original performance seems to be required as the setting for its subsequent reenactments.

Plate 1. Proscenium

a

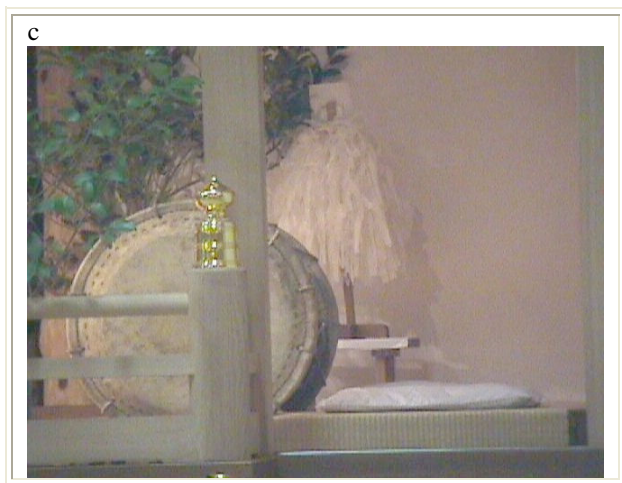


a. The proscenium, as decorated with strips of paper and sprigs of *sakaki* tree.

b



b. The cave Amano-Iwato, boulder in its mouth, behind two wands of symbolic paper offerings (gohei).



c. Drum, with purification wand in the background.

Plate 2. The Purification Ritual

d



e



- a. A priest addressing the audience before the performance begins.
b. Priest using purification wand in purification ritual.

Plate 3. Dance of Tajikarao

a



b



c



a, b, c. Tajikarao searching for Ama-terasu.

Plate 4. Dance of Amë-nö-uzume

a



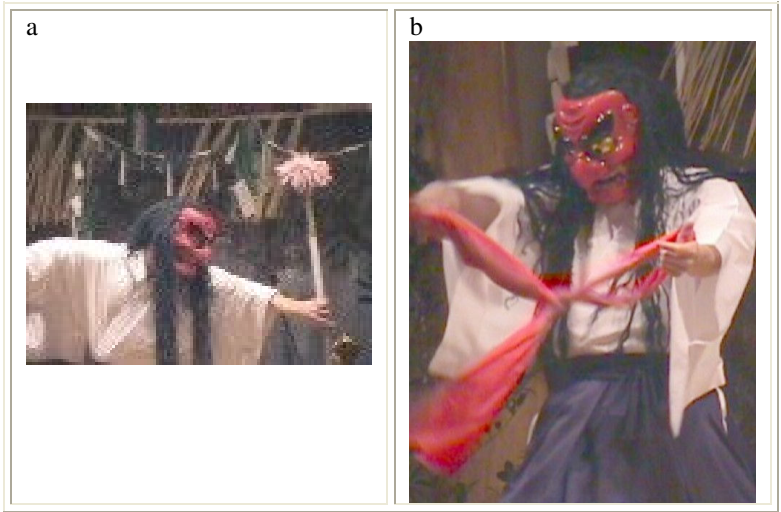
b



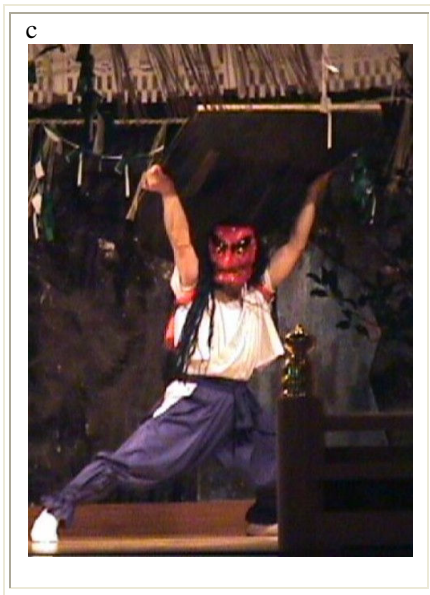
c



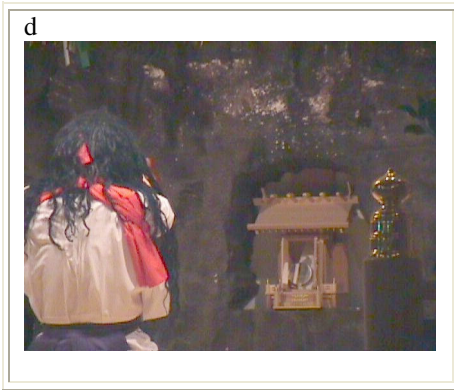
a, b, c. Three stills of Amë-nö-uzume in the flamboyant dance she is remembered for.

Plate 5. *Totorii* Dance (Tajikarao removing boulder and revealing Ama-terasu:)

a, b. Tajikarao's preparations before removing the boulder.



c. Tajikarao with that boulder.



d. Tajikarao facing the open moth of Amano-Iwato, with Amaterasu-mirror revealed within.



e. Close-up: Ama-terasu-mirror in its shrine mounting.

Plate 6. *Goshintai* Dance: the Creation of Japan

a



a. Izanagi.

b



b. Izanami.



c. Izanagi and Izanami performing in full view of the Ama-terasu-mirror.



d, e, f, g. Izanagi and Izanami fermenting rice-mash and brewing sake.

h



i



j



k



h, i, j. Taste-testing the results. k. Amorously succumbing to its tipsifying effects.

Chapter 3 In worship of Ama-terasu

1. Amano-Iwato

Amano-Iwato, the cave from within which the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu was successfully restored to the world, and Gyobo Iwaya, the cave where the eight-hundred myriad deities assembled to plan their restoration strategy, are situated on either side of the river Amano-Yasugawara, in a heavily wooded preserve that is both maintained by, and home to, the shrine complex Amano-Iwato Jinja, the “Boulder Door of Heaven” shrine. Indirectly, by naming itself after the cave to which Ama-terasu had withdrawn – and in which, therefore, her spirit somehow still resides – this shrine complex manifests its purpose as the worship of Ama-terasu. Indeed, instead of physically housing a *shintai*, or sacred object in which the spirit of its kami can reside, centrally enshrined behind the altar within the main shrine building, this shrine takes as its *shintai* its entire namesake, the whole cave Amano-Iwato, as a holy place still suffused with the spirit of Ama-terasu.

Plate 1.

Amano-Iwato Jinja: the shrine grounds



a. Entrance *torii*, with sacred *shimenawa* rope suspended between its uprights, symbolically separating the secular world from the sacred.



b. *Shimenawa* and other decorations festooning the ablution well.



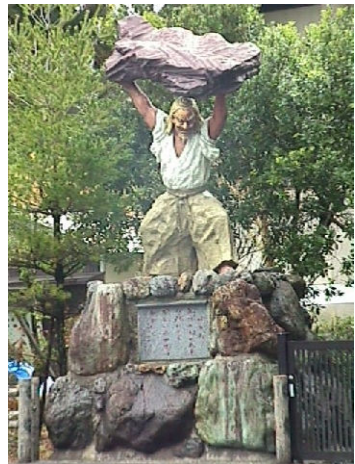
c. One of the stone lanterns lining the path to the sanctuary buildings.



d. Kiosk plastered with Yokagura posters.



e. A rock with the sacred rope.



f. Tajikaro after removing the rock from the cave.

Of course, nothing the visitor meets upon entering these grounds hints at this unusual geophysical form of *shintai*. One passes under perfectly ordinary torii (Plate 1a), one comes across a

perfectly ordinary ablution well (Plate 1b), perfectly ordinary stone lanterns (Plate 1c) line one's path; even the kiosks plastered with announcement-posters (Plate 1d), like the trees or stones (Plate 1e) reverentially decorated with sacred ropes, could be found at any shrine. More unusual, though, is to encounter a statue of Tajikarao (Plate 1f), his strong arms hoisting overhead, as if in a pose from the Yokagura dance drama, the massive boulder he has just extricated from the mouth of the cave Amano-Iwato; and more unusual still are the interiors of the various shrine buildings themselves.

For these interiors, each in its own unique way, resemble the stage of the Takachiho Jinja Kagura-den and call to mind the sacred space before the mouth of Amano-Iwato where the first Kagura was danced. Within the central portico of the first main shrine building (Plate 2a), for example, behind the large, grate-lidded offerings coffer, on a table, accompanied by food offerings, and behind a *gohei*, there stands a mirror (Plate 2b) as if ready once more (Plate 2d) to capture the Sun Goddess's spirit, as did the very similar mirror revealed within the mouth of the stage-cave when Tajikarao finally removes the boulder; and the adjacent portico to the right shelters an enormous drum (Plate 2c), an oversize cousin of the smaller one that accompanies the nightly Takachiho Yokagura.

Plate 2.

The first shrine building



a. The main shrine building, as seen through the entrance-way, with offering box under the central portico, and drum within the right hand portico.



b. Foreground: table with offerings and two guardian creatures (*shishi*?); background: mirror (2c) with *gohei*.



b. Close-up: the drum, with a purification wand standing before it.



c. Close-up: mirror with gohei.

Plate 3.
A second shrine building



a. A second shrine building (foreground), with the same characteristic roof ornamentation as the first (rear).



b. Inside the second shrine building: mirror and offerings.

In another shrine building (Plate 4a), this one exceedingly dark, a point of light deep in the darkness (Plate 4b) turns out to be a tiny window (Plate 4c), looking out in the direction, probably, of Amano-Iwato itself, with a mirror set before it, also brimming with

light (Plate 4d), the whole impression being that of a recreation of the original scene before the cave, in the cold and the dark, when the ancient gods gathered to watch Amē-nō-uzume's marvelous dance and its miraculous effect. The entire shrine complex, for that matter, seems prepared at any time to host a reenactment, in the form of Yokagura, complete with requisite onlookers, of that event of long ago, with the expectation of a comparably miraculous outcome today.

Plate 4.

A third shrine building



a. A third shrine building (left).



b. The proverbial light at the end of the tunnel?



c. The light (partial close-up): the sun? a mirror?



d. The light (full close-up): a mirror; and a curtained window, giving out onto the twin caves.

2. Gyobo Iwaya

A pleasant, meandering, woodland path, more or less following the course of the heavenly river Amano-Yasugawara (Plate 5), leads in fifteen minutes or so from the main complex of shrine buildings of Amano-Iwato Jinja to the sacred cave Gyobo Iwaya.

A signpost along the way indicates the approximate location of the cave Amano-Iwato, across the river and off-limits to the casual visitor. Finally, just as a cavernous opening in the hillside comes into view, with a sacred straw *shimenawa* rope stretched across it from one side to the other, a sequence of torii signals the end of the path and the sacred presence of the cave Gyobo Iwaya (Plate 5c). Already before the first of these torii, and on as far as the very floor of the cave itself, the ground on either side of the path is densely bedecked with innumerable low cairns (Plate 6), little stone towers built by visiting believers using small stones brought with them expressly for this purpose, hoping in this way to manifest their worship and to realize their prayers.

Plate 5.

The way to *Gyobo Iwaya*.



a. The heavenly river Ama-no-Yasugawara.



b. A bridge over the river.



c. A general view of the interior of the cave Gyobo Iwaya.

Plate 6.
Gyobo Iwaya



a. From the mouth of the Gyobo Iwaya, looking out at the path leading within.



b. The path leading within first Gyobo Iwaya.



c. Close-up of one of the cairns.

Within the cave, surrounded by these cairns, there stand two shrine-cabinets: one, set rather far back, is virtually inaccessible; the other (Plate 7b), closer to the end of the path, houses yet another great round mirror (Plate 7c), accompanied by flasks and dishes bearing offerings of sake and food, by *gohei*, and by other items representative of the objects gathered and prepared as offerings to Ama-terasu by the gods who had assembled here during their quest to entice her out of the nearby cave Amano-Iwato.

Plate 7.
Within *Gyobo Iwaya*.



3. Ise

The mirrors encountered in the Takachiho Jinja Yokagura performances, in the various shrine buildings of Amano-Iwato Jinja, or in the cave Gyobo Iwaya, are certainly all evocative of the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu and of the original mirror, prepared at the behest of the eight-hundred myriad deities by the heavenly stone-cutting goddess *Isi-kōri-dome-nō-mikōtō*, that captured Ama-terasu's spirit, but they themselves are accorded no special reverence in that connection. The original mirror, however, is another matter. For it is this mirror, endowed with all her spiritual attributes, and therefore serving as her earthly spiritual replica, that Ama-terasu bestowed upon her grandson Ninigi, along with two other imperial regalia, when she had him descend upon the earth to take up earthly rule. The three imperial regalia were jointly to empower his rule on earth, but the mirror, in particular, he was to worship as he would worship Ama-terasu herself.

Originally with Ninigi, this mirror was then with Ninigi's great-grandson Jimmu when he left Kyushu for Honshu to become the first Yamatō emperor of Japan, and was enshrined, through successive emperors after Jimmu, within the Imperial Palace, which was where the sacred rites of worshipping the Sun Goddess took place in continuing fulfillment of the sacred obligation Ama-terasu first placed upon Ninigi. Indeed, there were particular rituals in the worship of Ama-terasu that only the emperor, as the highest priest and sole intermediary with Ama-terasu on behalf of his subjects, could perform, a situation that may be the obverse of the coin whose face is the belief that imperial power comes to the emperor, through the sacred rites of enthronement, only by direct transmission from the Sun Goddess.

Eventually, however, some time around the beginning of the first century, the Sun Goddess made manifest her will that the mirror, and the attendant worship of Ama-terasu, be relocated instead to a Grand Shrine to be erected at Ise (Plate 8), and it is there that this mirror was consequently enshrined, there to remain to this day, a most highly revered object of worship, carefully protected within the inner sanctuary of the shrine Naikū (Plate 8d), so holy that no ordinary person may even pass through the outer gate of Naikū, let alone approach the mirror itself, and tended to, as it were, largely only by the abundant food-princess deity *Tōyō-ukē-bime-nō-kamī*, who is enshrined within the inner sanctuary of the nearby shrine Gekū (Plate 8e).

Plate 8.
The Grand Shrine at Ise.

a. Ise: an ablation well.



b. Ise visitors approaching the first torii.



c. An Ise priestess ready to welcome pilgrims with sacred sake.



d. Pilgrims before the main sanctuary at Naikū.



e. Pilgrims before the main sanctuary at Gekū

Chapter 4

Worshipping Amaterasu's grandson Ninigi

The Sun Goddess Ama-terasu is inextricably linked with Takachiho because the cave Amano-Iwato, in which she hid from her “evil” brother and from which she was successfully lured out at last, has its physical location so near. Similarly linked with Takachiho is Ama-terasu's grandson Ninigi, great-grandfather of Jimmu, for the *Kojiki* tells that when, at Ama-terasu's command, he descended to earth to take up the reins of earthly rule from the hands of Opo-kuni-nusi, it was on the peak of a Takachiho mountain that he first made landfall on earth at the end of his descent, peak that Takachiho residents confidently identify as one of the twin peaks of the nearby mountain Futa-gami-yama just northwest of the town of Takachiho proper. Ninigi's importance, of course, stems not only from the fact that he bore with him the sacred mirror, to be worshipped as Ama-terasu herself, but also from the illustrious line of descendants he would leave in his wake, from his sons Po-wori and Po-deri, through his legendary great-grandson Jimmu, first Yamatō emperor of Japan, and on through all the successive generations of subsequent emperors.

So it comes as no surprise that the shrine Kushifuru Jinja (Plate 1), just on the edge of the park Takama-ga-hara on the outskirts of Takachiho, is dedicated to Ninigi and his sons. Ninigi is enshrined, as well, in the Takachiho Jinja (Plate 2), though it is actually another great-grandson of Ninigi's, Jimmu's eldest brother, in whose castle in Takachiho the *Kojiki* reports Jimmu resided for a time, who is the principal *kami* enshrined here: Ninigi himself is but one of numerous other figures from the *Kojiki* also revered here. Many of these are in the blood-line from Ninigi to Jimmu. Two others, however, took part in the descent itself: these are Saruta-biko, an earthly deity who appeared in the heavenly crossroads just as Ninigi was about to begin his descent, offering to serve Ninigi as guide both during the descent and, after, on the earth – and Ame-nō-uzume, the intrepid dancer, who, at Ama-terasu's command, confronted Saruta-biko in the heavenly crossroads to learn whether he be friend or foe and then, satisfied that his intentions were amicable, encouraged the rest of the descent party to welcome his services. Upon the successful completion of the descent and the transfer to Ninigi of earthly rule, Saruta-biko meant to return to his homeland, and Ninigi, in gratitude, bid Ame-nō-uzume not only accompany him thither but

even assume his name; it is for this reason, probably, that at Takachiho Jinja these two are fondly venerated as a couple.

Still in the general environs of the town of Takachiho, though rather far to the northwest of the town, there is the volcanic Mt. Aso, at the foot of which lies the Aso Jinja shrine where a son of Jimmu is enshrined, along with the grandsons he sired – and even, collectively somehow, all the eight-hundred myriad deities themselves. Moving rather farther afield, south of Takachiho, two thirds of the way to the prefectural capital Miyazaki, the burial mounds of Saito Baru are thought to include the burial mound of Ninigi.

Unlike that of Ninigi, the burial mound of the emperor Jimmu is not on Kyushu at all, of course, but on Honshu, near Nara, at Kashihara, and the Kashihara Jinja was erected near there, towards the end of the nineteenth century, expressly to enshrine him in the vicinity of his burial place. At the same time, Jimmu is also enshrined in the Miyazaki Jinja, in the Kyushu prefectural capital Miyazaki itself.

But wait: if all the eastern slopes of Kyushu already seem freighted with the residue of that prehistorical time of pure beginning, it only gets worse. For there is another Takachiho. This one is a mountain, not a town. And it is located somewhat west-northwest of Miyazaki (itself already a good eighty kilometers south of Nobeoka), just on the border with the adjacent prefecture of Kagoshima. Local residents are as confident that it is this Mount Takachiho on whose peak Ninigi's descent ended as are the inhabitants of Takachiho town that it is rather their Mt. Futa-gami. And so it is at the nearby Mt. Kirishima, just north of Mt. Takachiho, that stands the imposing Kirishima Jinja (Plate 3), where Ninigi's spirit is thought to dwell. And the spirit of Ninigi's youngest son Po-wori-nö-mikötö is thought still to dwell here, too, in a palace of his own somewhere in these Kirishima/Takachiho mountains.

The Takachiho Yokagura, in its full form, pays respect and homage to all these legendary heroes and more; just how will be the subject of the next chapter but one. The next chapter itself will step back a bit to provide some perspective, offering some words of explanation regarding the *Kojiki*, as well as some general remarks about Japanese kami, and about their shrines and the nature of worship undertaken in them.

Plate 1.

Manifestations of worship in Takamaga-hara Park



a. The Kushifuru Jinja.



b. Torii.



c. A small wayside shrine.



d. Sacred shimenawa rope, sanctifying a shrine entrance.



e. Sacred shimenawa rope encircling an aged tree-trunk.



f. Sacred shimenawa rope joining two trees.

Plate 2.
Takachiho Jinja



a. Principal shrine building.



b. The Kagura-den, where Yokagura is performed.



c. Two ancient cedars inspire this outdoor shrine.

d



e



f



g



d-g. *Emas*: wooden shingles, often with imprinted Yokagura scenes, conveying handwritten messages to the kami.

Plate 3.
Kirishima Jinja



a. Stone entrance steps, mounting towards the sacred space just beyond the torii barely visible at the top.



b. The first torii, atop the stone entrance steps.



c. Ablution well.



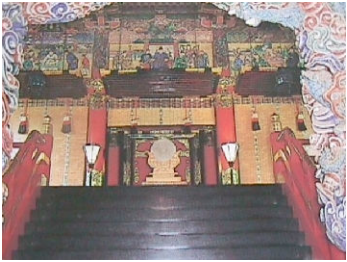
d. Second torii, with shrine building beyond.



e. Kirishima shrine detail: the entrance.



f. Kirishima shrine overview: exterior view of the shrine building.



g. Kirishima shrine overview: interior view of the shrine building.



h. Kirishima shrine detail: close-up of offering table with an purification wand.

Chapter 5

On *kami*, their shrines, and their worship

Valuable information, gleaned from Sokyo Ono's classic *Shinto: The Kami Way* (Tuttle, 1962) and incorporated in these pages, is hereby gratefully acknowledged.)

1. *Kojiki*

Thus far we have encountered, as a tourist might do, without any deeper understanding, a seemingly random assortment of legendary personages (Ama-terasu, Ame-nō-uzume, Ninigi, and the like), along with snippets of the legendry associated with them, visits to some shrines dedicated to them, samples of the worship practices to be found there, and repeated references, without further elaboration, to the canonical sourcebook known as the *Kojiki*. The time has come to shed more light on each of these matters.

Let us begin with the *Kojiki*. Prior to the year 405 AD Japan had been a pre-literate society: all that was known — myths, legends, historical facts, practical knowledge — was transmitted orally, passed on from parent to child, from teacher to pupil, from master to apprentice, by word of mouth, by precept, or by example. In that year, however, a learned Korean was summoned to teach a young Japanese Imperial prince the Chinese system of writing, and soon, just as had happened in Korea after the introduction of that system there some thirty years earlier, written materials began to proliferate — recording the accounts of the Imperial treasury, the genealogies of the Imperial family and of other noble families, and other words and events of note.

Not quite three centuries later, towards 682 AD, the then-reigning Emperor Temmu, sensitive to the importance of an accurate account of various leading families' hereditary ranks, rights, and titles, based on histories unblemished by the exaggerations and outright falsifications which had gradually been introduced, commissioned a critical selection of material from the existing record, in hope of "discarding the mistaken and establishing the true" (*Kojiki*, Preface, v. 42, p. 41) for transmission to posterity as the official record of reference. This effort, despite a quarter-century hiatus beginning with Temmu's death in 686, came to fruition in the year 712 AD, under the reign of Empress Gemmei, with the completion of the *Kojiki*, or "Record of Ancient Matters," a manuscript that would serve to this day as

the authoritative, official, orthodox record of everything of importance, a record that “begins with the beginning of heaven and earth and ends with the reign [several generations before Emperor Temmu] of [Empress Suiko],” (Literally, “Woparida,” the site of Empress Suiko’s palace. *Kojiki*, Preface, v. 63, p. 44.) first wife of the Emperor Bitatsu (whose third wife would become the future Emperor Temmu’s great grandmother).

Another such compilation, likewise to be assembled from myth, legend, and historical fact, was undertaken two years later at the command of Empress Gemmei. Begun in the year 714, and aiming to produce a complete national history, this new effort culminated in 720 with the completion of the *Nihongi*, or *Chronicles of Japan*, a manuscript far more comprehensive than the *Kojiki* — indeed, easily twice as long — that serves more as a comparative concordance of all the various source materials than as the authoritative arbiter of official truth. But it is in the *Kojiki*, primarily in Book One, that we find recorded the official versions of the myths and legends (also to be found, of course, but with multiple variations, in the first two books of the *Nihongi*) that constitute the basis of the Shinto religion of Japan. So it will be to the *Kojiki* that we turn again and again as our primary source of information regarding all those legendary personages, as we have called them, encountered earlier in these pages, and their exploits.

2. *Kami*

Regarding those legendary personages, there is one absolutely central trait they all share that requires comment. All of them — whether heavenly deities such as Ama-terasu, Ame-nö-uzume, Tajikarao, Ninigi, Izanami, Izanagi, the food deity Töyö-ukë-bime-nö-kamï, and the eight-hundred myriad deities, both individually and as a collective, or earthly rulers such as Opo-kuni-nusi, Jimmu, Jimmu’s grandfather (and Ninigi’s son) Po-wori — all of them, along with all the successive emperors after Jimmu, are *kamï*, a term that calls for some clarification.

The English language, alas, lacks any fully adequate counterpart of the word *kamï*: the terms god (or goddess), deity, divinity, divine (or sacred) spirit (or being), all commonly used to render *kamï*, all somehow fail to convey quite all of the conceptual freight with which that word is laden. As William George Aston, the translator of the *Nihongi*, points out, for example: “The word *Kamï*, deity, ... means primarily upper, and hence nobles, the sovereign, gods, and generally any wonderful or mysterious thing.

The leopard and wolf are *Kami*, the peach with which Izanagi put to flight the thunders which pursued him in the land of Yomi, etc.” (*Nihongi*, p. 3, end of footnote 6).

It is also worth pointing out that, linguistically, an important role of the vocable *kami* is to serve as an honorific suffix, as is illustrated in the fully expanded form *Ama-terasu-opo-mi—kami* of the name of the Sun Goddess, in which the honorific *kami*, itself augmented by the prefix *opo-mi* (“*opo*”=great, “*mi*”=august, honorable), is appended to the simple name *Ama-terasu* of the Sun Goddess, in expression of the supremely reverent awe the Sun Goddess inspires.

Indeed, at the very heart of being *kami* may well lie exactly the inherent capacity innately to inspire such an overwhelmingly reverent awe. Thus, not only the legendary figures prominent in the *Kojiki* chronicles, but virtually any manifestation of the power to inspire reverent awe may be *kami*, be this a uniquely admirable feature of the natural world, such as a majestic river, an impressive mountain like Japan’s Mount Fuji, a prominent pair of off-shore boulders like Japan’s famous “Wedded Rocks” Meotoiwa, recalling Izanami and Izanagi, the various examples, already cited, of William George Aston, or a uniquely old and venerable tree; likewise, the spirits of statesmen or teachers whose fame their death has only augmented — even the spirits of one’s own ancestors — may all be *kami*.

That said, we hasten to point out that the *kami* these pages will concerned with are the earliest *kami*, those coming into being at the beginning of time and their immediate descendants — the original founders of Japan; and to learn what the *Kojiki* recounts about them, it suffices to consult Book One.

But we digress. With reverent awe the natural human response to *kami*, worship becomes the natural human expression of that awe — worship, and a perceived need so to care for the *kami* that, rather than becoming angry and, in displeasure, wreaking havoc on earth or in the affairs of men, the *kami* will become so pleased as to ensure, in gratitude, good fortune where there might otherwise be ill. The *Kojiki* itself provides numerous illustrations of both correct and incorrect approaches, and their consequences, and with its help as official codex, the same eighth-century administrations that caused the compilation of the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* could oversee a standardization or unification of the rather more diverse worship practices prevalent theretofore into the forms one can still see today.

A core component of these worship forms is their overwhelming focus on shrines, the protective custodians of the *kami* enshrined therein. While in dim history any natural location with a sufficiently conducive atmosphere — a particularly splendid grove, an impressive cave, a marvelous cliff — may have served as a suitable place for worship, for two millennia or more the tendency grew to use primarily man-made shrines as the locus of worship activities. In fact, setting aside for the moment the innumerable private shrines in people's homes, there are tens of thousands of shrines, large and small, in public operation throughout Japan. Moreover, just as, in the Ama-terasu-out-of-Amano-Iwato luring episode, the *Kojiki* sets a normative standard for the details of the worship procedure, so too does it give quite explicit instructions for many aspects of shrine architecture, specifying precise characteristics for, among other things, the foundation posts, the roof beams, even the enclosing fences (for a quick overview, see the descriptions of the palaces of Opo-kuni-nusi, of Ninigi, and of Susa-nō-wo in items IV.7, V.B.2, and III.7 of Appendix 3 below). So let us turn to a closer examination of these shrines.

3. Shinto shrines

Etymologically, the component syllables of the Japanese term *Jinja*, term conventionally rendered as shrine, signify respectively *kami* and *dwelling place* or *abode*. Thus the purpose of a Shinto shrine is to provide for its *kami* both a secure place in which to dwell, and the care and attention that will enable the *kami* to feel “at home” there.

The *kami*'s dwelling place, or sanctuary, is generally provided for within a sanctuary building, whose interior is off-limits to ordinary mortals; the requisite care and attention are provided by the shrine's priests and the shrine's visiting faithful in acts of worship and other service carried out in the exterior space adjacent to the sanctuary building, space itself often organized as another building, separate from but contiguous with the sanctuary, and open to the visiting public, termed oratory or worship hall (Plate 1).

Thus, while an oratory building per se is not, strictly speaking, an essential component of a shrine, a shrine without some sort of sanctuary is, by the very root meaning of the word *Jinja*, such a complete contradiction in terms that it can be no shrine at all.

In a nutshell, then, the function of a shrine is to provide for one or more *kami* a safe heaven, or sanctuary, in which the *kami* can be

worshipped, venerated or otherwise served. The smallest of shrines (household shrines aside) may consist of little more than a diminutive sanctuary building, situated on a tiny plot of land barely able to accommodate that structure. The largest, on the other hand, perhaps situated on a quite a vast expanse of land, some of it intentionally left unimproved (as is the case for the Amano-Iwato Jinja outside Takachiho), may comprise numerous auxiliary buildings beyond just the sanctuary. An administrative building, sleeping quarters for the resident priests and/or their assistants, kitchens, a dining facility, gardeners' and maintenance sheds, public lavatories, retail kiosks for the sale of shrine devotionalia, secondary shrines, and a *kagura-den*, all are possible such auxiliary buildings. Even in such a large shrine complex, however, the most important structure is the sanctuary.

This sanctuary is generally a full-size building, modest in appearance, manifesting certain characteristic architectural details, and equipped with an inner chamber — the *honden*, a kind of sanctum sanctorum — within which a distinguished sacred object — the *shintai*, or divine body, a manifestation of the *kami* there enshrined — is carefully maintained.

Despite varying architectural styles, the sanctuary building characteristically sports a roof supported at either end by a pair of crossbeams (supporting an internal or external ridge beam) — the *chigi* (Plate 1) — that extend diagonally upward far further than structurally necessary, in keeping with the *Kojiki*'s implicit injunction that they strive “unto Takama-nö-para itself,” and with ridge decorated with a number of short, horizontal boards or logs, laid perpendicularly across the ridge at intervals, and generally thought to resemble dried fish, whence their Japanese name *katsuogi* (Plate 1b). These *chigi* and *katsuogi*, then, are among the field-marks of a sanctuary, as are the sacred straw rope (*shimenawa*) (Plate 2c), often decorated with short pendants of flax or zigzag-cut paper, suspended between (or simply hanging from) the sanctuary's entrance pillars, and the one or more ceremonial gateway-arches, or *torii*, often set before the entrance.

The *honden* within the sanctuary is generally set fairly far back from the front of the sanctuary structure, and shielded from view by a pair of swinging doors, most often closed. Even when these are swung open, however, curtains of split bamboo, strung beads, or other such opaque material, prevent priests and worshippers alike from seeing the receptacle within that houses the *shintai*.



a. Only the chigi marking the sanctuary roof are visible behind this oratory (Rokusho Jinja, Shimane pref.).



b. Roof top chigi and katsuogi mark the sanctuary building: the low building in the foreground is an oratory (Manai-Jinja, Shimane pref.).

The *shintai* itself is in most cases a specific tangible object, such as a mirror, a sword, a painting, a comb, an iron ball, or an especially significant piece of wood or paper or metal or stone.

Generally it is swathed in layer upon layer of wrappings and ensconced within a box that may itself again be wrapped in more cloth before being enclosed in yet another box, and so on, never to be seen by layman's eye, and only rarely, if ever, by priest's. Thus the precise nature of the *shintai*, often simply a secret, may in some cases be totally unknown, having been kept too secret too long in a setting forbidding human inspection of the *shintai*.

In other cases the *shintai* may be a natural feature of the nearby terrain, such as a local boulder, or waterfall, or volcano, or mountain, or (as is the case for Amano-Iwato Jinja) a cave. Here, obviously, the *shintai* cannot literally be housed within the *honden* of a sanctuary; yet, in a symbolic sense, it can be — and, indeed, is — considered so to be. While in each case the *shintai* is considered a manifestation of a particular *kami*, there is no predefined universal correspondence between the various *kami*, on the one hand, and possible *shintai* objects on the other. And while in many cases there is but one *kami* a given shrine enshrines, other shrines may well enshrine several. There are even *kami* who are plural in their very nature.

If the *honden* area in the rear portion of a sanctuary is painstakingly shielded from public view, the forward area in front of the protective *honden* doors is openly visible. And there one usually finds, all according to the space actually available, one or more tables bearing offerings of various sorts — vessels of food or drink, sacks of rice, or kegs of sake — often with a large round mirror mounted somewhat behind them as if gazing out over them; banners or figurines of animals sometimes watch over these offerings; and, in close proximity hereto, there generally stand one or more *gohei* (Plate 2a) — long, slender, upright wooden wands from which there hang, on either side, two long strips of paper so cut and folded as to descend in a zigzag or thunderbolt pattern, suggesting vastly elongated versions of the short zigzag pendants adorning the *shimenawa* (Plate 2c) outside.

Except in the case of the very smallest shrines, there will also be an oratory building, or worship hall, facing the front of the sanctuary, from which the *honden* doors and the paraphernalia before them can easily be seen. The rear of this oratory is likely to be furnished, like the visible part of the sanctuary, with tables bearing offerings, or a mirror, or a pair of guardian creatures, and a *gohei* wand or two. To one side, moreover, there is apt to stand a *haraigushi* (Plate 2b), or purification wand, again a long slender, upright wooden wand, from whose tip, however, there hang down, like the long tresses of a thick head of hair, innumerable long

slender streamers of paper and flax: these rustle audibly when the *haraigushi* is shaken, with a sound that purifies like droplets of clean fresh rain. And a large, resonant Taiko drum may be standing in patient readiness nearby, as well.

Plate 2. Some characteristic Shinto decorative elements.



a. Gohei.



b. Haraigushi.



c. Shimenawa.



d. Tamagushi: sakaki greenery festooned with a gohei strip.

The rest of the oratory, available to accommodate priest and parishioners during services of worship or marriage, of offering or benediction, of *kagura*, or the like, is largely unoccupied, save for a long pull-rope at the entrance to the oratory, affixed to an annunciatory bell or clapper, beneath which there stands a large collection box, its open top covered by a grate through which offerings can easily be accepted.

It remains to say a few words about the private shrines people maintain in their homes. These tend to be smallish affairs, bookshelf-sized, maintained on a shelf or two in some quiet niche,

nook, or corner of the home, often incorporating a small mirror with small lanterns or candles and sprigs of *sakaki* tree on either side, and a talisman, if not from the Grand Shrine at Ise, then from some other shrine of personal significance to the household, with depictions of ancillary *kami* around it, the whole sometimes covered by a curtain draped before it, and framed under an appropriately diminutive *shimenawa*. A separate lower shelf, dedicated to the spirits of the forebears of this household, may contain a small box holding memorial tablets of deceased relatives, another mirror, and more such items as the higher shelf holds.

As a rule, these domestic shrines lack all ostentation. One (or rather three) notable exception(s): the private shrines of the Imperial Family — three of them — opulent, full-size shrines within the Palace grounds. These are: (i) a central shrine, *Kashiko-dokoro*, dedicated to Ama-terasu, and enshrining a copy of the legendary mirror currently ensconced in the Great Shrine of the Sun Goddess at Ise; (ii) an Ancestral Spirit Sanctuary, *Korei-den*, which enshrines the divine spirits of all the successive emperors; and (iii) a Sanctuary of the *Kami*, *Shin-den*, which is sacred to all the *kami* of heaven and earth.

4. Worship

We have already pointed out that the reverent awe that the *kami* inspire in humans finds expression in worship, on the one hand, and in the impulse so to care for the *kami* that, in gratitude, they will ensure good fortune where otherwise — were they to feel rebuffed, or abandon, or ignored — there might be ill. We should make it clear that no *kami* is intentionally good or bad. But a *kami* annoyed — like Ama-terasu in the face of her “evil” brother’s heavenly misdeeds — may, out of petulance, engage in actions inadvertently having calamitous consequences for others — Ama-terasu’s retreat to the cave, for example, deprives all the world of life-giving warmth and light; so one wants to propitiate the *kami*, to minimize the chances of their feeling neglected, or becoming polluted, or becoming for whatever other reason upset enough to create what for humans would be havoc. And it is this propitiation that every act of worship, modest or elaborate, in some measure achieves.

Plate 3: Shinto wedding (at Atsuta Jinja, Nagoya; here the enshrined kami is the fabled sword Kusa Nagi).



a. The wedding pair.



b. The altar with offerings to the kami.



c. Priestess performing nuptial Kagura dance.



d. Priestess in her ritual attire.



e. After the ceremony: sake ritually offered to the newlyweds.



f. The wedding offerings ready to shared with the newlyweds.

Among the particular circumstances in a person's life calling for special such acts of propitiation to help assure good fortune or avoid the lingering consequences of inadvertent bad luck, we may mention marriage (Plate 3), the birth of a child, an impending university entrance or degree examination, an upcoming job interview, moving into a new residence, the inception of a new year, or, for a farmer or anyone in the farmer's circle, the start of sowing or transplanting or harvest seasons. Worship on these occasions often calls for the assistance or intervention of a priest. Less focused instances of worship, however, can occur practically every day, as people are apt to wish simply to pay their respects to their *kami*, so as not, so to speak, to be forgotten.

Let us watch as a believer engages in a typical such act of daily worship at a shrine. The whole process is quite simple, and relatively brief. Having reached the shrine compound by whatever means of transport was appropriate, our worshipper enters on foot. Passing under the first *torii* and proceeding along the *sandō*, its gravel crunching reassuringly underfoot, our worshipper will experience a sense of calm, of neatness, of order, of the heart becoming purified. Upon reaching the ablution spring, our worshipper will pause to cleanse first one hand, by means of spring water poured over it with the help of a special dipper, then the other, and finally the mouth (Plate 4a). Thus purified in body as in heart, our worshipper will pass under the last *torii* and approach the sanctuary building. There, before the collection box, beneath the cord hanging down from the annunciatory bell or clapper, our worshipper will pause a moment to bow, to jangle the bell or clapper, to toss a coin or two, or a small bill, into the collection box, to bow again slightly, perhaps reciting a silent prayer, and then, bowing twice more, clapping the hands twice at chest level, and making one last parting bow (Plate 4b), turn quietly away, perhaps to visit the shrine kiosk so as to purchase some postcards, or shrine memorabilia, or a tightly wrapped written oracle, before departing the grounds.

Even in this simple act of worship, one can already discern three of the four elements indispensable to all more formal worship ceremonies — these are purification, offerings, and prayer; the fourth is symbolic feasting. These elements may be of a modest, simple nature, or may be quite elaborately carried out, all accordingly to the nature of the occasion, for ceremonies can vary enormously in intricacy, from simple daily priestly presentation of offerings to the *kami*, to annual festivals with grand processions

sufficiently to permit them to worship without hopelessly offending the *kami* their worship would be focused upon.

Indicative of the all-important role of the element of offerings is the belief that neglect of this component would render the *kami* seriously unhappy, with attendant great misfortune befalling the neglectful worshipper. While an offering may be as simple as the coin or two we have already witnessed being tossed into the offering-box, the offerings prepared in connection with an annual festival at a shrine of great importance can become quite elaborate, with their mode of preparation usually prescribed in exquisite detail in the shrine's records. Offerings tend to fall under one of four main types: money, as we have seen; food and drink; other material offerings; and offerings of purely symbolic character, many of them modeled after offerings described in the *Kojiki*.

More elaborate forms of monetary offerings than the coin or two tossed into an offering-box may take the form of a rather larger sum of money elegantly wrapped up as a gift and offered in exchange for a special service, or as a donation.

As to food and drink, drink offerings are prepared primarily by the priest of shrine, and consist mainly of water drawn from a sacred well located on the shrine grounds, and of sake, while offerings of food can include rice (which may be cooked or uncooked), fish, seaweed, fruits, vegetables, grain, cakes, and more. Their preparation generally involves the intervention of the shrine's priest, and includes a special purification ceremony to help ensure that even such potentially hazardous items as raw fish remain ritually clean and unpolluted.

Other material offerings may include bolts of cloth, jewels, weapons, or paper, or even special white chickens, white horses, or white boars, not killed, but just maintained on the grounds of the shrine to be shown to the *kami* from time to time. The monthly showing of a white horse at one of the shrines in Ise is a case in point.

Among the symbolic offerings we may mention green sprigs of the sacred *sakaki* tree, as first used in the attempt to lure Amaterasu out of the cave, often adorned with attached strips of flax and paper; or again, *gohei* as already mentioned; and also various forms of what appear to be entertainments, such as dances, dramas, wrestling bouts, or archery contests. All of these may be viewed as some sort of invocation to the *kami*, inducements to the *kami* to come and to accept the monetary, food, drink, and other material offerings.

The element of prayer, of course, is equally indispensable. There are traditional prayers, the *norito*, written in classical Japanese, taking the form of beautifully sonorous, rhythmic poetry, and recited by the priests. Some priests may also compose their own prayers, in a style consistent with the traditional ones, for recital in worship services. Depending on the rite of the moment, they might be expressing respect, or offering thanks, or making a plea, or reporting an event of personal significance.

Finally, there is the element we have not yet seen, the symbolic feasting, the *naorai* (sacred feast), or “eating together with the *kami*,” which concludes any but the simplest Shinto ceremony. In the case of an individual visiting shrine for some more special worship purpose, this feast takes the form of a little cup of sake offered the worshipper by the priest or a priestess at the conclusion of the service; on larger festival worship occasions, there may well be a large communal feast that is offered to all the participants, using parts of the earlier offerings of food and drink, as we will see in more detail in our examination of a *matsuri*.

But let us take a moment to identify these elements in the service that take place when a worshipper engages the intermediation of a priest on some special occasion (Plate 5). After the usual self-purifying ablution, the worshipper will make known to the priest the special service required, and present to the priest a small sum of money, ceremonially wrapped, or a relevant material object. This the priest will then purify and place on the offering table, whereupon the worshipper will be taken to the sanctuary, or oratory, there to be seated behind the priest, who, facing the inner sanctuary, recites a prayer and presents an offering, such as a sprig of *sakaki*, to the *kami*. The priest then receives from the *kami* a symbolic cup of sake, which the priest in turn offers to the worshipper as symbolic feast.

Daily worship at home, before a domestic shrine, follows a comparable pattern. Hands and mouth are rinsed with water; fresh offerings — perhaps water, or food, or flowers — are set out near the *kami*; the worshipper will bow several times toward the shrine, offer a prayer, clap twice, and bow again. Any offerings of food may be removed now, and, as a token of the symbolic feast, incorporated into the next family meal.

A wholly separate system of rites is connected with the important milestones in the lives of the members of the imperial family, but these, like the rites that only the emperor can perform, are quite beyond the purview of these pages.

Plate 5. Worship with the mediation of a priest.



a. Priest and worshipper in the oratory.



b. Haraigushi being used as purification tool.



c. The worshipper's offering (of sakaki) resting on a table before the honden.



d. Use of the gohei to attract the *kami*.



e. The worshippers own offerings being offered back to the worshipper.



f. The final ritual sharing of sake.

5. Festivals (*matsuri*)

The Japanese religious festival known as *matsuri*, no matter how unabashedly playful, exuberantly uninhibited, and even irreverent it may appear to the casual outside observer, really deserves to be classified as yet another mode of worship. Without a doubt, *matsuri* are indeed festive occasions. Yet shrines organize them, generally on an annual basis, to mark the passage of a particular milestone in the year or the agricultural cycle, to commemorate an enshrined spirit or the decease of a notable person, to celebrate a seasonal holiday, or to honor a local custom or national tradition. Always there is some religious purpose in view. Rarely, as for example at Ise in conjunction with the centuries-old tradition of renewing the sacred buildings on a twenty-year cycle, *matsuri* may be timed not annually but in synchronicity with the period of the event-cycle they mark.

Matsuri share with all the other forms of worship the four basic elements of purification, prayer, offerings, and feast, though in them it is the feast, the festive component, that is the most apparent. But it is a fifth element, one intimately related to — one might even say, serving as underlying motive for — the feasting, but quite absent from any other form of worship, that is the most important: namely the return of the *kami* from the protected seclusion of the innermost sanctuary into the open bosom of the community from which the *kami* arose. This involves the opening of the inner sanctuary and the removal therefrom of the *kami* there enshrined, to be carefully transported to a special cart or palanquin — the *mikoshi* — therein to reside while being paraded through the streets and, presumably pleasurably, regaled and entertained by the festive activities — floats and parades, bouts of eating and drinking, contests of skill or luck or bravado, performances of music or dance or theater — of the *matsuri* participants.

Of course *matsuri* is therefore also the most dangerous form of worship, by virtue of the breaking of the all-important barriers normally insulating the *kami* from the general community. Thus, the rituals of purification at the outset must be far more thorough and elaborate, the presentation of offerings must be far more careful and considered, and the removal of the *kami* from the inner sanctuary — otherwise unheard of! — and transfer to the specially prepared *mikoshi*, must be carried out with the utmost ceremonial care. For the least taint by exposure to illness, or blood, or death, or other trace of pollution in air, drink, food, or actions, could have calamitous consequences of unforeseeable character but

catastrophic proportions. But if this is all done well, and if the *kami* is pleased with and rejuvenated by his reintroduction to the community and the entertainment this joyride amidst the community provides, he is sure to remain a benevolent spirit during the year ahead.

Among the *matsuri* of international renown we may mention Kyoto's Gion Festival, the August Feast of the Dead, or the Bon festivals. Perhaps less well known abroad, but certainly no less important or impressive, is Takachiho's Yokagura festival, celebrated each winter, and remembered briefly every evening of the year at the Takachiho Jinja, as we have reported. It is to this festival in particular, and to a Girardian analysis of its religious significance, that the next chapter will be devoted.

Appendix 1.

A Genealogical Who's Who of the Deities in Book I of the *Kojiki*

I. The Five Separate Heavenly Deities

These single deities, probably all male, whose forms were not visible, and to whom we refer in the text, collectively, as the “Elders” of Izanagi and Izanami, are:

A. three who came into existence at the very beginning, and whose origins are unknown:

1. Amë-nö-mi-naka-nusi-nö-kamï (“Heavenly Center Lord Deity”) — the deity, some hold, with whom the emperor may be equated,
2. Taka-mi-musubi-nö-kamï (“High Generative-Force Deity”), a.k.a. Taka-ki-nö-kamï (“High Tree Deity”) — not only is this deity the grandfather of Ninigi, he also plays a crucial role in paving the way for Ninigi’s descent (*cf.* App. 2, (III.A.i & ii) — and
3. Kamï-musubi-nö-kamï (“Divine Generative-Force Deity”), a.k.a. Kamï-musubi-mioya-nö-mikötö (“Divine Generative-Force Parent Deity”) — parent of Sukuna-biko (*cf.* (IV.B.3) and App. 2, (II.1)); and

B. two more, whose origins are the “something like reed-shoots” that had sprouted forth between heaven and the young land:

4. Umasi-asi-kabï-piko-di-nö-kamï (“Excellent Reed-shoots Male Deity”), and
5. Amë-nö-tökö-tati-nö-kamï (“Heavenly Eternal Standing Deity”).

II. The Seven Generations of the Age of the Gods

These are the twelve deities who came into existence once the Five Separate Heavenly Deities were present. The first two, like the Five Separate Heavenly Deities, have forms that are not visible, and each counts as one generation; the next ten are organized into five espoused pairs, each pair counting as another generation. The seventh, or last, of these generations consists of Izanagi-nö-kamï and Izanami-nö-kamï, the male and female deities “He-who-

Invites” and “She-who-Invites,” respectively (Izanagi and Izanami, for short), who, “when the land was still young, resembling floating oil and drifting like a jellyfish,” were given the task to “complete and solidify this drifting land.”

III. The Eight-hundred Myriad Deities

Called *Ya-po-yörödu-nö-kamī*, these appear and reappear at numerous critical junctures. Note that *ya*, like its modern counterpart *hachi*, means “eight,” *po*, like *hyaku*, means “hundred,” and *yörödu*, like *man*, means “ten thousand,” whence *ya-po-yörödu* has the literal meaning of “eight million.” At the same time, *yörödu*, like colloquial English “gazillion,” may simply be conveying the notion of “ineffably many,” whence the translator’s rendering of *ya-po-yörödu-nö-kamī* not as “the eight million deities” but as “the eight-hundred myriad deities.” The same rationale dictates the English rendering of the *yörödu* in the name of Taka-mi-musubi’s daughter, in (IV.A.2), below.

IV. The three offspring of the Generative Force Deities

A. Children of Taka-mi-musubi-nö-kamī:

1. Omöpi-kane-nö-kamī (“Many-Minds’-Thought-Combining Deity”) — each time some crisis caused the eight-hundred myriad deities to gather in deliberative assembly, it is to this deity that they turn with the task of pondering out a strategy for resolving the crisis. Later, it is he who must descend with Ninigi to oversee the proper worship of Ama-terasu on earth; and
2. Yörödu-pata-töyö-aki-tu-si-pime-nö-mikötö (“Myriad Woven-Fabric Abundant Autumn-Harbor Princess Deity”) — wife of the eldest of the sons born from the maga-tama beads during the contest between Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī and Susa-nö-wo; and mother of both Amë-nö-po-akari-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Fire Brightness Lord”) and his vitally important younger brother Ninigi, already mentioned above.

B. Child of Kamī-musubi-nö-kamī:

3. Sukuna-biko-na-nö-kamī (“Little Lad Deity”) — helped Opo-kuni-nusi-nö-kamī (“Great Land-Ruler Deity”) to create the land;

sometimes identified with Ebisu, the Good Luck Deity who, being deaf, and therefore never hearing the call to the annual October Gathering of the Gods at Izumo, becomes the brunt of their laughter on account of his absence there.

V. Entities produced by Izanagi and Izanami

A. The first island created by Izanagi and Izanami:

Onögöro — the island coming into existence when Izanagi and Izanami, standing on the Heavenly Floating Bridge, stirred the brine below with the Heavenly Jeweled Spear that they had received from their Elders along with their mission to descend to earth and to “complete and solidify this drifting land;” and to which they then descended, there to build their wedding palace.

B. Monsters born from Izanagi and Izanami’s first attempts at conjugal union:

1. Piru-go (the “leech-child”), set adrift on a boat made of reeds; and
2. Apa, an island.

C. Islands born from Izanagi and Izanami’s next attempts at conjugal union, after consultation with their Elders:

Numerous other islands were born after the initial crisis of giving birth to monsters was successfully resolved.

D. Deities born from subsequent acts of conjugal union of Izanagi and Izanami:

1. Opo-kötö-osi-wo-nö-kamī (“Great-Male of the Great-Undertaking Deity”);
2. several deities of dwellings:
 - Ipa-su-pime-nö-kamī (“Rock-Nest-Dwelling-Place Goddess”),
 - Opo-to-pi-wakë-nö-kamī (a deity connected with architecture),
 - Amë-nö-puki-wo-nö-kamī (“Heavenly [Roof]-Thatching Male Deity”),
 - Opo-ya-biko-nö-kamī (“Great House-Lad Deity”), and

- Kaza-mötu-wakë-nö-osi-wo-nö-kamī (a deity protecting dwellings from the wind);

3. Opo-wata-tu-mi-nö-kamī (“Great Sea-Spirit Deity”);

4. Paya-aki-tu-piko-nö-kamī (“Rapid Autumn Lad Deity”) — a male deity of sea-straits, ruling the rivers — and his spouse Paya-aki-tu-pime-nö-kamī (“Rapid Autumn Princess Deity”) — ruling the seas; the name of the former may be associated with “purification by ablution in rapid waters,” while a deity with the same name as the latter “swallows with a gulp all the sins which have been cast into the sea;” from these autumn deities, in turn, four more pairs of deities are born:

- a. Awa-nagi-nö-kamī (“Foam Male Deity”) and his spouse Awa-nami-nö-kamī (“Foam Female Deity”),
- b. Tura-nagi-nö-mikötö (“Surface Male Deity”) and his spouse Tura-nami-nö-mikötö (“Surface Female Deity”),
- c. Amë-nö-mi-kumari-nö-kamī (“Heavenly Water-Partings Deity”) and his spouse Kuni-nö-mi-kumari-nö-kamī (“Earthly Water-Partings Deity”), and
- d. Amë-nö-kupiza-möti-nö-kamī (“Heavenly Dipper-Holder Deity”) and his spouse Kuni-nö-kupiza-möti-nö-kamī (“Earthly Dipper-Holder Deity”);

5. Sina-tu-piko-nö-kamī (“Wind Lad Deity”);

6. Kuku-nö-ti-nö-kamī (“Stem Spirit Deity”), a tree deity;

7. Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī (“Male Mountain-Deity”) and his spouse, the plains deity Kaya-no-pime-nö-kamī (“Grassy Plains Princess Deity”), a.k.a. No-duti-nö-kamī (“Plains-Spirit Deity”); from these, in turn, four more pairs of deities are born (but see also (VII.1-5) below, for yet another five):

- a. Amë-nö-sa-duti-nö-kamī (“Heavenly Soil Deity”) and his spouse Kuni-nö-sa-duti-nö-kamī (“Earthly Soil Deity”),
- b. Amë-nö-sa-giri-nö-kamī (“Heavenly Mist Deity”) and his spouse Kuni-nö-sa-giri-nö-kamī (“Earthly Mist Deity”),
- c. Amë-nö-kura-do-nö-kamī (“Heavenly Dark-Door Deity”) and his spouse Kuni-nö-kura-do-nö-kamī (“Earthly Dark-Door Deity”), and
- d. Opo-to-mato-piko-nö-kamī (“Great Door Mismatch Child Deity”) and his spouse Opo-to-mato-pime-nö-kamī (“Great Door Mismatch Woman Deity”);

8. Tōri-nō-ipa-kusu-pune-nō-kamī (“Bird-shaped Rock-hard Camphor-wood-Boat Deity”), a.k.a. Amē-nō-tōri-pune-nō-kamī (“Heavenly Bird-Boat Deity”), *cf.* App. 2, (III.A.v.3);
9. Opo-gē-tu-pime (“Great-Food-Princess Deity”) — married to Pa-yama-to-nō-kamī (“Deity of the Mountain Foothill Entrances”), himself a child of the harvest and grain deity Opo-tōsi-nō-kami (*cf.* XII) and Amē-tikaru-midu-pime (“Water-Fresh-Youthful Deity”); mother of Waka-tōsi-nō-kamī (“Young Harvest Deity”); killed by Susa-nō-wo when he thought she was offering him polluted food; the source, in death, of various seeds, found in the orifices of her corpse, that Kamī-musubi-nō-kamī (“Divine Generative-Force Deity”) planted into soil, thereby initiating the harvesting/sowing cycle of agriculture; and
10. Kagu-tuti-nō-kami (“Fire-Shining-Spirit Deity”) — Izanami’s last-born child, the Fire Deity, whose birth caused the sickness and death of Izanami, and whom Izanagi consequently beheaded with the sword Amē-nō-wo-pa-bari-nō-kamī (“Heavenly Wide-Pointed Blade Deity”), a.k.a. Itu-nō-wo-pa-bari-nō-kamī (“Sacred Wide-Pointed Blade Deity”).

E. Deities born from the secretions or excreta of the dying Izanami and the mourning Izanagi:

- 1-2. Kana-yama-biko-nō-kamī (“Metal-Mountain Lad Deity”) and his spouse Kana-yama-bime-nō-kamī (“Metal-Mountain Princess Deity”), born from Izanami’s vomit;
- 3-4. Pani-yasu-biko-nō-kamī (“Clay-Kneading Lad Deity”) and Pani-yasu-bime-nō-kamī (“Clay-Kneading Princess Deity”), two clay or fertilizer deities, born from Izanami’s faeces;
- 5-6. Mitu-pa-nō-me-nō-kamī (“Water-greens Woman Deity”) and Waku-musubi-nō-kamī (the male “Seething Generative-Force Deity”), born from Izanami’s urine; and
7. Naki-sapa-me-nō-kamī (“Weeping Marsh-Woman Deity”), born from the weeping Izanagi’s tears.

F. Deities said to be “born by the sword,” who came into being from the blood of the infant Fire Deity Kagu-tuti-nō-kamī whom Izanagi had slain with his sword Itu-nō-wo-pa-bari-nō-kamī:

three deities who came into being when “the blood adhering to the tip of the sword gushed forth onto the massed rocks:”

1. Ipa-saku-nō-kamī (“Rock-Splitting Deity”),

2. Ne-saku-nö-kamī (“Root-Splitting Deity”), his spouse, and
3. Ipa-tutu-nö-wo-nö-kamī (“Rock Pipe Male Deity”);

three more deities, when “the blood adhering to the sword-guard of the sword ... gushed forth onto the massed rocks:”

4. Mika-paya-pi-nö-kamī (“Awesome Vigorous-Force Deity”),
5. Pi-paya-pi-nö-kamī (“Fire Vigorous-Force Deity”), and
6. Take-mika-duti-nö-wo-nö-kamī (“Valiant Lighting Male Deity”);

and yet two more deities, when “the blood [that had] collected at the hilt of the sword dripped through his fingers:”

7. Kura-okami-nö-kamī, a dragon-deity, and
8. Kura-mitu-pa-nö-kamī (“Valley Water-greens Deity”).

G. Deities arising from the bodies of the slain Fire Deity and of the dead Izanami:

1. eight Mountain Spirit Deities, from the Fire Deity's body, and
2. eight Thunder Deities, present in Izanami's corpse.

H. Deities born from Izanagi's purification upon returning from Yömi, the Land of the Dead:

- i. Twelve deities from Izanagi's cast-off clothing and accessories:
 1. Tuki-tatu-puna-to-nö-kamī (“Stand-Erect Fork-In-The-Road Deity”), identified sometimes as a phallic deity, coming into existence when Izanagi discarded his stick;
 2. Miti-nö-naga-ti-pa-nö-kamī (“Deity of the Rocks of the Road”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded his sash;
 3. Töki-pakasi-nö-kamī (“Time-Measurer Deity”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded his bag;
 4. Wadurapi-nö-usi-nö-kamī (“Lord-of-Misfortune Deity”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded his cloak;
 5. Ti-mata-nö-kamī (“Road-Fork Deity”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded his trousers;
 6. Aki-gupi-nö-usi-nö-kamī (“Insatiable Swallowing-Master Deity”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded his headgear — “this deity may have performed some sort of purificatory function by opening his mouth and swallowing sins or evil;”
 - 7-9. Oki-zakaru-nö-kamī (“Offshore Distant Deity”), Oki-tu-nagisa-biko-nö-kamī (“Offshore Surf-Lad Deity”), and Oki-tu-

kapī-bera-nō-kamī (“Offshore Space Deity”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded the arm-bands of his left arm; and

10-12. Pe-zakaru-nō-kamī (“Shore Distant Deity”), Pe-tu-nagisa-biko-nō-kamī (“Shore Surf Lad Deity”), and Pe-tu-kapī-bera-nō-kamī (“Shore Space Deity”), coming into existence when Izanagi discarded the arm-bands of his right arm.

ii. Eleven more from Izanagi’s bathing in the waters of the river Tati-Bana:

1-2. Yaso-maga-tu-pi-nō-kamī (“Abundant Misfortune-Working-Force Deity”) and Opo-maga-tu-pi-nō-kamī (“Great Misfortune-Force Deity”), evil deities that came into being from the pollution of the Land of the Dead when Izanagi began his bathing;

3-5. Kamu-napobi-nō-kamī (“Divine Corrective Deity”), Oponapobi-nō-kamī (“Great-Corrective-Working Deity”), and Idu-nō-me-nō-kamī (“Consecrated-Woman Deity”), three deities born in order to rectify these evils;

6-7. Sökō-tu-wata-tu-mi-nō-mikötö (“Bottom Sea-Spirit Deity”), and Sökō-dutu-nō-wo-nō-mikötö (“Bottom Spirit Male Deity”), who came into being when Izanagi bathed at the bottom of the water;

8-9. Naka-tu-wata-tu-mi-nō-mikötö (“Middle Sea-Spirit Deity”) and Naka-dutu-nō-wo-nō-mikötö (“Middle Spirit Male Lord”), who came into being when Izanagi bathed in the middle of the water; and

10-11. Upa-tu-wata-tu-mi-nō-mikötö (“Upper Sea-Spirit Deity”) and Upa-dutu-nō-wo-nō-mikötö (“Upper Spirit Male Lord”), who came into being when Izanagi bathed on the surface of the water.

iii. Three noble children, finally, from the last of Izanagi’s ablutions:

1. Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī (“Heaven-Illuminating Great Deity”), the Sun Goddess, who came into existence when Izanagi washed his left eye, and would be given the mission of ruling heaven;

2. Tuku-yömi-nō-mikötö (“Moon Counting Lord”), who came into existence when Izanagi washed his right eye, and would be given the mission of ruling the realms of night; and

3. Susa-nō-wo-nō-mikötö (“Valiant Intrepid Raging Male Lord”), the Sun Goddess’s “evil” brother, who came into existence when Izanagi washed his nose, and would be given the mission of ruling the ocean.

VI. Deities that came into being during the contest between Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kami, the Sun Goddess, and her “evil” brother, Susa-nö-wo-nö-mikötö

A. Three female deities, called the goddesses of Munakata, and enshrined in three famous shrines in what is now Munakata-gun, Fukuoka-ken, Kyushu, who came into being when Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kami asked her brother for his sword:

1. Takiri-bime-nö-mikötö (“Mist-Princess Goddess”), a.k.a. Okitu-sima-pime-nö-mikötö — to become one of Opo-kuni-nusi’s wives, and the mother of the following two deities involved in events leading to Ninigi’s descent (*cf.* App. 2, (III.A.iv)):

- a. Adi-siki-taka-pikone-nö-kami (“Massed-Ploughs High-Princeling Deity”), a male thunder deity, and
- b. Taka-pime-nö-mikötö (“High Princess Lady”), a.k.a. Sitareru-pime (“Lower Radiant Princess”);

2. Ikiti-sima-pime-nö-mikötö, a.k.a. Sa-yöri-bime-nö-mikötö; and
 3. Takitu-pime-nö-mikötö (“Seething-Waters-Princess Goddess”).

B. Five male deities, generally considered sons of Ama-terasu, who came into being when Susa-nö-wo asked for the myriad maga-tama beads wrapped in the Sun Goddess’s hair:

1. Masa-katu-a-katu-kati-paya-pi-Amë-nö-osi-po-mimi-nö-mikötö (“I-am-Victorious Victorious-Vigorous-Force Heavenly Great-Rice-Ears-Ruler Deity”), a.k.a. Amë-nö-osi-po-mimi-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Great-Rice-Ears-Ruler Deity”) — father of Ninigi, and precursor of Ninigi’s descent: indeed, selected by Ama-terasu to descend to the earth and rule there, he demurred, citing unruly earthly deities; once these were subdued, he was again asked to descend, but proposed that his son Ninigi go in his stead; it is through him, therefore, and also through his younger brother Amatu-pikone-nö-mikötö (*q.v. infra*), that the Yamatö rulers traced their ancestry back to Ama-terasu;

2. Amë-nö-po-pi-nö-mikötö — younger brother of Amë-nö-osi-po-mimi-nö-mikötö; the first of several deities dispatched to the earth with the mission, from which he failed to return, of subduing the unruly earthly deities his brother had reported; considered to be the ancestor of the rulers of Izumo, as well as of several other families of local rulers;

3. Ama-tu-pikone-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Princeling Lord”), considered the ancestor of twelve families of local rulers;
4. Iku-tu-pikone-nö-mikötö (“Prince-of-Life Lord”); and
5. Kumano-kusubi-nö-mikötö (“Wondrous-Working Kumano Deity”) — an Izumo deity, as is his older brother Amë-nö-po-pi-nö-mikötö; “in ancient times there was a Kumano Shrine in [the part of Izumo that] is now Yatsuka-gun, Shimane-ken,” where Susa-nö-wo himself may also have been enshrined.

VII. Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamï and his children

Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamï (“Male Mountain-Deity”), a son of Izanagi and Izanami, apart from having fathered eight children with his plains deity spouse Kaya-no-pime-nö-kamï (*cf.* (V.D.7) above), is also the single father of one son and four daughters:

1. Asi-na-duti (“Foot-Stroking Elder”) — a male earthly deity; his daughter Kusi-nada-pime (“Wondrous Inada Princess”), to have been offered to an eight-tailed dragon, was spared that fate by Susa-nö-wo, who, to everyone’s great relief, slew the dragon, married Kusi-nada-pime, and, after building a palace at Suga, installed Asi-na-duti as headman there;
2. Kamu-opo-iti-pime (“Divine Opo-iti Princess”) — became the wife of Susa-nö-wo, and bore him the son Opo-tösi-nö-kamï (“Great Harvest Deity”) and the daughter (?) Uka-nö-mi-tama-nö-kamï (“Food Spirit Deity”);
3. Kö-nö-pana-tiru-pime (“Blossoms-of-the-Trees Blooming-Princess”) — married the first-born son Ya-sima-zinumi-nö-kamï (*q.v. infra*) of Susa-nö-wo and Kusi-nada-pime;
4. Kö-nö-pana-nö-saku-ya-bime (“Blossoms-of-the-Trees Blooming-Princess”) — became Ninigi’s wife, after his descent to the earth, and gave birth to Po-wori-nö-mikötö (“Fire-Bending Lord”), one of whose grandchildren was to become Jimmu, the legendary first emperor of the Yamatö line; and
5. Ipa-naga-pime (“Rock-Long Princess”) — the ugly eldest daughter of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamï; her rejection by Ninigi when she was offered to him in marriage along with her younger sister Kö-nö-pana-nö-saku-ya-bime led Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamï to strip Ninigi of his immortality.

VIII. Children of Susa-nö-wo-nö-mikötö

1. Ya-sima-zinumi-nö-kamï (“Eight Island Zinumi [?] Deity”) — the first of the deities of the seventeen generations (*q.v. infra*);

born in Susa-nö-wo's marriage to the granddaughter Kusi-nada-pime ("Wondrous Inada Princess") of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī (*q.v. supra*); noteworthy about Ya-sima-zinumi-nö-kami are: that his mother Kusi-nada-pime was that granddaughter of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī whose sacrifice to the dragon his father averted by slaying that dragon; that, like his father, he too marries a daughter of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī; and that the crucial Great Land-Ruler Deity Opo-kuni-nusi (*q.v. infra*) counts as one of his descendants; 2-3. Opo-tösi-nö-kamī ("Great Harvest Deity"), and Uka-nö-mi-tama-nö-kamī ("Food Spirit Deity"), born from Susa-nö-wo's marriage to the daughter Kamu-opo-iti-pime ("Divine Opo-iti Princess") of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī (*q.v. supra*); 4. Suseri-bime ("Raging Princess Deity"), so named in recognition of her extreme jealousy; the second, but principal, wife of Opo-kuni-nusi ("Great Land-Ruler Deity"), *q.v. infra*.

Note: Susa-nö-wo, who once ravaged Ama-terasu's heavenly rice paddies, and slew the great food princess deity Opo-gë-tu-pime (with the result that her corpse yielded all manner of seeds), is now the father of two new food or harvest deities, Opo-tösi-nö-kamī and Uka-nö-mi-tama-nö-kamī, and the scion of three more: one, the son Mi-tosi-nö-kamī ("August Harvest Deity") of Opo-tösi-nö-kamī himself; and the two sons Waka-tösi-nö-kamī ("Young Harvest Deity") and Kuku-tösi-nö-kamī ("Stem Harvest Deity") born to the marriage of Opo-tösi-nö-kamī's son Pa-yama-to-nö-kamī ("Deity of the Mountain Foothill Entrances") with Opo-gë-tu-pime. Is this the same Opo-gë-tu-pime once slain by Susa-nö-wo, but now restored to life? or some sort of spiritual copy, or name-sake? In any event, we see here the intimate connections between food and death, as we see also in the appearance of Töyö-uke-bime-nö-kamī ("Abundant Food-princess Deity") as the daughter of the deity Waku-musubi-nö-kamī ("Seething Generative-Force Deity"), who had been born of the seeping urine of the dying Izanami; despite her father's polluted origin, it is she who descends with Ninigi to be the provider of unpolluted food for Ama-terasu at her shrine in Ise.

IX. The family of Opo-kuni-nusi-nö-kamī

Opo-kuni-nusi ("Great Land-Ruler Deity"), both a son-in law (through his marriage to Suseri-bime) and a sixth-generation descendant (*cf.* The Deities of Seventeen Generations, below) of Susa-nö-wo, the Sun Goddess's "evil" brother, from the latter's

marriage to Kusi-nada-pime (“Wondrous Inada Princess”); known also as Opo-namudi-nō-kamī (“Great Revered-One”), Asi-parasikō-wo-nō-kamī (“Ugly Male of the Reed Plains”), Ya-ti-pokō-nō-kamī (“Eight-Thousand-Spears Deity”), and Utusi-kuni-tama-nō-kamī (“Land-Spirit Deity of the Visible Land”); twice killed by his eighty older brothers for having unwittingly won the affections of the princess they were all in contention for, but each time restored to life by his mother (*cf.* App. 3, (IV.1)); sometimes identified with Daikoku (the kami of laughter).

A. Opo-kuni-nusi’s wives:

1. Ya-gami-pime (“Princess of Ya-gami”), who, though being courted by his eighty brothers, chose Opo-kuni-nusi in preference to any of them; later she left him, out of fear of the raging jealousy of the childless
2. Suseri-bime-nō-mikötō (“Raging Princess Deity”), his second — and, at the behest of her father Susa-nō-wo, principal — wife, whom Opo-kuni-nusi eloped with after she helped him emerge unscathed from the trials her father imposed on him; her jealousy caused Opo-kuni-nusi’s first wife Ya-gami-pime to abandon both son and husband and return to her home;
3. Takīri-bime-nō-mikötō (“Mist-Princess Goddess”), the first of the three goddesses of Munakata (who all came into being from the sword of Susa-nō-wo during his contest with his sister Amaterasu);
4. Kamu-ya-tate-pime-nō-mikötō (“Divine Eight-Shields-Princess Goddess”); and
5. Tōri-mimi-nō-kamī.

B. Opo-kuni-nusi’s children:

1. Kī-nō-mata-nō-kamī (“Tree-Fork Deity”), a.k.a. Mi-wi-nō-kamī (“August Well Deity”), born of Ya-gami-pime, but abandoned in the fork of a tree when Ya-gami-pime, out of fear of the jealous Suseri-bime, fled back to her home;
- 2-3. Adi-sikī-taka-pikone-nō-kamī (“Massed-Ploughs High-Princeling Deity”), a male deity, and Taka-pime-nō-mikötō (“High Princess Lady”), a.k.a. Sita-teru-pime-nō-mikötō (“Lower Radiant Princess Deity”), both born of the Munakata goddess Takīri-bime-nō-mikötō;
4. Kötō-sirō-nusi-nō-kamī, a deity of the verbal expression of the divine will in oracular form, born of Kamu-ya-tate-pime-nō-

mikötö) (“Divine Eight-Shields-Princess Goddess”), and decisive in the surrender of Izumo to Ninigi;

5. Tōri-naru-mi-nō kamī (“Bird-like Sounding-Ocean Deity”), born of Tōri-mimi-nō-kamī; he and his descendants figure among the “Deities of Seventeen Generations,” whose counting begins with Ya-sima-zinumi-nō-kamī, the son born in Susa-nō-wo’s marriage to Kusi-nada-pime; and

6. Take-mi-na-kata-nō-kamī (“Valiant Minakata Deity”), a son whose mother is left unspecified.

X. The Deities of Seventeen¹ Generations

This term refers to the deities in the ancestral line that begins with Ya-sima-zinumi-nō-kamī (son of Susa-nō-wo and Kusi-nada-pime, that granddaughter of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nō-kamī whom Susa-nō-wo had saved from being offered to a dragon), and descends down, through Opo-kuni-nusi and Tōri-naru-mi-nō-kamī (*q.v. supra*), as far as Tōpo-tu-yama-zaki-tarasi-nō-kamī, the great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandson of Opo-kuni-nusi.

1. Ya-sima-zinumi-nō-kamī (*q.v. supra*), born in the marriage of Susa-nō-wo with Kusi-nada-pime;
2. Pupa-nō-mōdi-kunusunu-nō-kamī (whose name is thought to be of foreign origin), born in the marriage of Ya-sima-zinumi-nō-kamī with the daughter Kō-nō-pana-tiru-pime (“Blossoms-of-the-Trees Falling-Princess”) of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nō-kamī;
3. Puka-buti-nō-midu-yare-pana-nō-kamī (“Water-on-the-Flowers-Sprinkle Deity of Pukabuti”), born in the marriage of Pupa-nō-mōdi-kunusunu-nō-kamī with the daughter Pi-kapa-pime (“Sun River Princess”) of Okami-nō-kamī (a dragon deity, worshipped as a rain-maker, and thought to be connected with the dragon deity Kura-okami-nō-kamī born from the blood dripping from the hilt of the sword Izanagi used to slay the Fire Deity);
4. Omidu-nu-nō-kamī (“Land-Pulling Deity”), born in the marriage of Puka-buti-nō-midu-yare-pana-nō-kamī with Amē-nō-tudopē-tine-nō-kamī (“Heavenly To-Call-Together Goddess”);

¹ The sharp-eyed reader, who is puzzled that the generations as the *Kojiki* actually enumerates them, which are listed here in their totality, seem to number only fifteen, may wish to count Ya-sima-zinumi-nō-kamī’s step-siblings – Suseri-bime, on the one hand, and Susa-nō-wo’s food and harvest deity children by Opo-yama-tu-mi-nō-kamī’s daughter Kamu-opo-iti-pime, on the other – as the requisite “missing” generations.

5. Amë-nö-puyu-kinu-nö-kamï (“Heavenly Winter-Clothing Deity”), born in the marriage of Omidu-nu-nö-kamï with the daughter Pute-mimi-nö-kamï (“Great Ear Goddess”) of a certain Punodumo-nö-kamï;
6. Opo-kuni-nusi-nö-kamï (“Great Land-Ruler Deity”), born in the marriage of Amë-nö-puyu-kinu-nö-kamï with the daughter Sasi-kuni-waka-pime (“Pierce Land Young Princess”) of Sasi-kuni-opo-nö-kamï (“Pierce Land Great Deity”);
7. Töri-naru-mi-nö kamï (“Bird-Like Sounding-Ocean Deity”), born in the marriage of Opo-kuni-nusi-nö-kamï with the daughter Töri-mimi-nö-kamï of Ya-sima-mudi-nö-kamï (“Many-Islands Revered-One Deity”);
8. Kuni-osi-tömi-nö-kamï (“Earthly Great-Wealth Deity”), born in the marriage of Töri-naru-mi-nö-kamï with Pina-teri-nukata-bitivo-ikötini-nö-kamï (“Rural Nukata Shining Deity”);
9. Paya-mika-nö-takë-sapayadi-numi-nö-kamï (“Rapid Awesome Bamboo Deity”), born in the marriage of Kuni-osi-tömi-nö-kamï with Asi-nadaka-nö-kamï (“Nadaka Reed Deity”), a.k.a. Ya-gapaye-pime (“Many River-Inlets Princess”);
10. Mika-nusi-piko-nö-kamï (“Awesome-Lord-Lad Deity”), born in the marriage of Paya-mika-nö-takë-sapayadi-numi-nö-kamï with the daughter Saki-tama-pime (“Lucky Spirit Princess”) of Amë-nö-mika-nusi-nö-kamï (“Heavenly Awesome Lord Deity”);
11. Tapiriki-simarumi-nö-kamï, born in the marriage of Mika-nusi-piko-nö-kamï with the daughter Pi-narasi-bime of Okami-nö-kamï (the dragon deity mentioned in point 3);
12. Mirö-nami-nö-kamï (“Mirö Wave Deity”), born in the marriage of Tapiriki-simarumi-nö-kamï with the daughter Iku-tama-sakitama-pime-nö-kamï (“Living-Spirit Lucky-Spirit Princess Goddess”) of Pipiragï-nö-sönö-pana-madumi-nö-kamï (“Deity of the Holly Whose Flowers Are Rarely Seen”);
13. Nunö-osi-tömi-töri-naru-mi-nö-kamï (“Cloth Great Wealth Bird-Like Sounding-Ocean Deity”), born of the marriage of Mirö-nami-nö-kamï with the daughter Awo-numa-nu-osi-pime (“Blue Pond Horse Great Princess”) of Siki-yama-nusi-nö-kamï (“Layered-Mountain-Lord Deity”);
14. Amë-nö-pi-bara-opo-sina-domi-nö-kamï (“Heavenly Sun Belly Great-Wind Deity”), born from the marriage of Nunö-osi-tömi-töri-naru-mi-nö-kamï with Waka-piru-me-nö-kamï (“Young Sun-Woman Deity”);
15. Töpo-tu-yama-zaki-tarasi-nö-kamï (“Distant-Cave Mountain-Promontory Abundance Deity”), born from the marriage of Amë-nö-pi-bara-opo-sina-domi-nö-kamï with the daughter Töpo-tu-

mati-ne-nö-kamī (“Distant-Cove Wait-Root Deity”) of the mist deities Amë-nö-sa-gīri-nö-kamī and Kuni-nö-sa-gīri-nö-kamī (who had been born to Izanagi and Izanami’s children Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī and Kaya-no-pime-nö-kamī, *cf.* (V.D.7.b), above).

XI. Ninigi and his descendants

Ninigi-nö-mikötö (full name: Amë-nigisi-kuni-nigisi-Ama-tu-piko-piko-po-nö-ninigi-nö-mikötö (“The-Heavens-are-Peaceful The-Lands-are-Peaceful Heavenly-Lad Lad-of-the-Rice-Ears-which-are-Peaceful Deity”); abbreviated name: Piko-po-nö-ninigi-nö-mikötö (“Lad-of-the-Rice-Ears-which-are-Peaceful Deity”); or, for short, simply Ninigi), born in the marriage of Ama-terasu’s magatama bead son-deity Amë-nö-osi-po-mimi-nö-mikötö with Takami-musubi-nö-kamī’s daughter Yörödu-pata-töyö-aki-tu-si-pime-nö-mikötö, can therefore claim to be the grandson both of the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu and of the High Generative-Force Deity Taka-mi-musubi-nö-kamī. He will also become the great-grandfather of Jimmu, the legendary first emperor of the Yamatö line, whose ancestral line thus traces back to Ama-terasu. Indeed, in his marriage to Kö-nö-pana-nö-saku-ya-bime (“Blossoms-of-the-Trees Blooming-Princess”), a daughter of the Male Mountain-Deity Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī, Ninigi has three sons:

1. Po-deri-nö-mikötö (“Fire Radiant Lord”),
2. Po-suseri-nö-mikötö (“Fire Raging Lord”), and
3. Po-wori-nö-mikötö (“Fire-Bending Lord”).

It is the last of these, Po-wori-nö-mikötö, who becomes the grandfather of Jimmu, for Po-wori marries the crocodile- or dragon-daughter Töyö-tama-bime (“Abundant Jewel Princess”) of Wata-tu-mi-nö-kamī (“Sea-Spirit Great-Deity”) and has several children, one of whom, the son Ama-tu-piko-nagisa-take-U-gayapuki-apëzu-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly-Lad Valiant-Lad-of-the-Shore Cormorant-Thatch-Incompletely-Thatched Lord”), goes on to marry his dragon-mother’s sister Tama-yöri-bime (“Spirit-Medium Princess”) and to father a son Waka-mi-kë-nu-nö-mikötö (“Young August Hair Deity”), a.k.a. Töyö-mi-kë-nu-nö-mikötö (“Abundant August Hair Deity”), a.k.a. Kamu-yamatö-ipare-biko-nö-mikötö (“Divine Yamatö-Ipare-Lad Lord”); it is this grandson of Po-wori who ultimately becomes the first Yamatö emperor, Jimmu.

XII. Opo-tösi-nö-kamī: Parents, Wives, Children

Opo-tösi-nö-kamī (“Great Harvest Deity”) was the son of Susa-nö-wo and Kamu-opo-iti-pime, one of the five daughters (*cf.* (VII.2) above) of Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī.

A. Opo-tösi-nö-kamī had 3 wives:

1. Ino-pime (“Princess of Ino” [Ino is an Izumo place-name]), the daughter of yet another generative-force deity Kamu-iku-subi-nö-kamī,
2. Kagayo-pime (“Shining-Princess”), a sort of sun deity, and
3. Amë-tikaru-midu-pime, a.k.a Amë-wakaru-midu-pime and Amë-siru-karu-midu-pime.

B. He had what the *Kojiki* counts as sixteen children (though the sharp-eyed reader will see seventeen):

five from his marriage to Ino-pime:

1. Opo-kuni-mi-tama-nö-kamī (“Great Land Spirit Deity”)
2. Kara-nö-kamī (the so-called “Korean Deity”), to whom, for a time, it was the practice to sacrifice cattle,
3. Söpori-nö-kamī (“God of Söpori”),
4. Sira-pi-nö-kamī (“Deity of Mukapi”), and
5. Piziri-nö-kamī (“Day-Knower Deity”), who knew the days good for planting and for harvesting;

two from his marriage to Kagayo-pime:

6. Opo-kaga-yama-to-omi-nö-kamī (“Great Radiant-Mountain-Entrance-Noble Deity), and
7. Mi-tösi-nö-kamī (“August Harvest Deity”);

and nine from his marriage to Amë-tikaru-midu-pime (and it is here that the sharp-eyed reader will see ten):

- 8a-b. the hearth- or kitchen-deities Oki-tu-piko-nö-kamī (“Embers Lad Deity”) and Oki-tu-pime-nö-kamī (“Embers Princess Deity”),
9. Opo-yama-gupi-nö-kamī (“Great Mountain Stake Deity”),
10. Nipa-tu-pi-nö-kamī (“Ceremonial-Place Spirit Deity”),
- 11-12. Asupa-nö-kamī and Papiki-nö-kamī, two deities protective of house and land,
13. Kaga-yama-to-omi-nö-kamī (“Radiant-Mountain-Entrance-Noble Deity”),

14. Pa-yama-to-nö-kamī (“Deity of the Mountain Foothill Entrances”),
15. Nipa-taka-tu-pi-nö-kamī (“Yard High Sun Deity”), and
16. Opo-tuti-nö-kamī (“Great Soil Deity”), a.k.a. Tuti-nö-mi-oya-nö-kamī (“Earth-Mother Deity”).

C. From the marriage of Opo-tosi-nö-kamī’s son Pa-yama-to-nö-kamī (“Deity of the Mountain Foothill Entrances”) to the daughter Opo-gë-to-pime-nö-kamī (“Great Food-Princess-Deity”) of Izanagi and Izanami (but see the Note to (VIII) above), eight deities were born; their enumeration evokes the annual calendar of agricultural activities, interspersed with ritual religious events:

1. Waka-yama-gupi-nö-kamī (“Young Mountain Stake Deity”),
2. Waka-tösi-nö-kamī (“Young Harvest Deity”),
3. his younger sister Waka-sana-mi-nö-kamī (“Young Rice-planting-Maiden Deity”),
4. Midu-maki-nö-kamī (“Water-Sprinkling Deity”),
5. Natu-taka-tu-pi-nö-kamī (“Summer High Sun Deity”), a.k.a. Natu-nö-mi-nö-kamī (“Summer Woman Deity”),
6. Aki-bime-nö-kamī (“Autumn-Princess Deity”),
7. Kuku-tösi-nö-kamī (“Stem Harvest Deity”), and
8. Kuku-kī-waka-murö-tuna-ne-nö-kamī (“Tendrils Youthful-Dwelling-Vines Deity”).

D. Note the parallel between the ancestral progression from the Great Harvest Deity Opo-tösi-nö-kamī, through his son Mi-tösi-nö-kamī (the “August Harvest Deity”), to his grandsons Waka-tösi-nö-kamī and Kuku-tösi-nö-kamī (the “Young Harvest Deity” and the “Stem Harvest Deity”, respectively), and the cyclically repetitive logic of agriculture, in which harvest follows endlessly upon harvest. Of course, each successive harvest grows out of the seeds gathered from the previous harvest; the very first seeds, though, before there was any previous harvest to gather them from, had to be harvested from the body of the slain food deity Opo-gë-to-pime-nö-kamī.

Appendix 2.

Who Does What in Book I of the *Kojiki*

I. Deities involved in the luring of the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kami out of the cave to which she had retreated in fright upon the death, caused by her brother Susa-nö-wo, of the heavenly weaving maiden

1. Ya-po-yörödu-nö-kami (the “Eight-hundred Myriad Deities”);
2. Omöpi-kane-nö-kami (“Many-Minds’-Thought-Combining Deity”), the child of Taka-mi-musibi-nö-kami (“High Generative-Force Deity”);
3. Ama-tu-mara (“Phallus”), the smith, sought by the eight-hundred myriad deities during their quest to produce the mirror;
4. Isi-köri-dome-nö-mikötö (“Stone Cutting Goddess”), whom the eight-hundred myriad deities commissioned to produce the mirror;
5. Tama-nö-ya-nö-mikötö (“Jewel Ancestor Deity”), commissioned by the eight-hundred myriad deities to produce long strings of maga-tama beads;
- 6-7. Puto-tama-nö-mikötö (“Solemn Offerings Deity”) and Amë-nö-ko-yane-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Small-House Deity”), summoned to perform a divination — later, in hopes of luring Ama-terasu out of the cave, Puto-tama is given to hold in his hands as solemn offerings various objects gathered by the eight-hundred myriad deities (*cf.* App. 3, (II.5-7)), while Amë-nö-ko-yane intones a solemn liturgy;
8. Amë-nö-uzume-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Formidable-Woman Deity”), whose hilarious dance is instrumental in finally coaxing the Sun Goddess out of the cave; and
9. Amë-nö-Ta-dikara-wo-nö-kami (“Heavenly Hand-Strength-Male Deity”), a.k.a. Tajikarao, who, having previously hidden near the mouth of the cave, could, with the help of Puto-tama-nö-mikötö, restrain Ama-terasu from returning into it.

II. Two deities helping Opo-kuni-nusi to create land

1. Sukuna-biko-na (“Little Lad Deity”), the son of Kami-musubi-nö-kami (“Divine Generative-Force Deity”), and elsewhere sometimes identified with Ebisu (the kami of good luck) — the *Kojiki* relates that Opo-kuni-nusi and Sukuna-biko “jointly created

and solidified the land” until Sukuna-biko “passed over to Tökö-yö;” and

2. an unnamed “deity who dwells on Mount Mi-mörö,” who arrives, “lighting up the sea,” once Sukuna-biko is gone, and offers to “create together with” Opo-kuni-nusi, provided the latter agrees to worship him “well,” that is, “on the eastern mountain of the verdant fence of Yamatö.”

III. Deities Involved in Ninigi’s Descent

A. Deities Involved in Events Preliminary to the Descent:

i. The Aborted First Descent

Amë-nö-osi-po-mimi-nö-mikötö, Ninigi’s father and the first male deity emerging from Ama-terasu’s maga-tama beads; commanded by Ama-terasu to descend to earth so as to rule the lands, he balks when he sees the chaos and disorder caused by the unruly earthly deities. Later, the unruly earthly deities having been subdued, and Opo-kuni-nusi having agreed to yield his power over the earthly realm to the heavenly deities, he is once again commanded (this time jointly by Ama-terasu and the Separate Heavenly Deity Taka-mi-musubi-nö-kamī) to descend to earth to rule the lands, but he proposes that his son Ninigi be sent instead.

ii. The Deliberative Council — The deliberative assembly of deities concerning with subduing the unruly earthy deities

1. Ya-po-yörödu-nö-kamī (the “Eight-hundred Myriad Deities”),
2. Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kamī, the Sun Goddess,
3. Taka-mi-musubi-nö-kamī (“High Generative-Force Deity”), and
4. Omöpi-kane-nö-kamī (“Many-Minds’-Thought-Combining Deity”).

iii. The Failed Attempts to Subdue the Unruly Earthly Deities

Various emissaries were dispatched to subdue the earthly deities, or to report on progress in that matter:

1. Amë-nö-po-pi-nö-mikötö, younger brother of Amë-nö-osi-po-mimi-nö-mikötö, likewise born from Ama-terasu’s maga-tama beads; soon befriending Opo-kuni-nusi, he fails to return;

2. Amë-nö-waka-piko (“Heavenly Young Lad”), heavenly deity dispatched three years later, who soon marries the daughter Sita-teru-pime of the Great Land-Ruler Deity Opo-kuni-nusi and, seeking to gain the land for himself, also fails to return;

3. Naki-me (“Weeping-woman”), a pheasant, dispatched eight years later to bring back word why Amë-nö-waka-piko has not yet returned; shot to death by Amë-nö-waka-piko using his heavenly deer-slaying arrow, she too fails to return; the arrow, on the other hand, having continued its flight until it came to rest in Heaven, is found there and returned to its owner, fatally piercing Amë-nö-waka-piko’s chest on its arrival.

iv. Deities Attending the Funeral of Amë-nö-waka-piko

1. Ama-tu-kuni-tama-nö-kamī, the father of the deceased Amë-nö-waka-piko, who descends from heaven along with his wife and children to mourn his dead son,

2. Sita-teru-pime, daughter of Opo-kuni-nusi and the Munakata goddess Takiri-bime-nö-mikötö, and wife of the deceased Amë-nö-waka-piko,

3. Adi-siki-taka-pikone-nö-kamī, a thunder deity, elder brother of Sita-teru-pime, and close friend of the deceased, whom he very strongly resembled.

v. Deities whose Actions Resulted in the Successful “Pacification”

1. Amë-nö-kaku-nö-kamī, the deer-deity dispatched by the assembly of heavenly deities to inquire — for they knew the unruly earthly deities had not yet been subdued — whether the sword deity Itu-nö-wo-pa-bari-nö-kamī — used by Izanagi to kill the Fire Deity, but now dwelling in the Heavenly Rock-cave (Amë-nö-ipa-ya) — would consent to be the next emissary, or whether his son, Take-mika-duti-nö-kamī, should be dispatched instead;

2. Take-mika-duti-nö-kamī (“Valiant Lightning Male Deity”), the sword deity son of Itu-nö-wo-pa-bari-nö-kamī, accompanied by

3. Amë-nö-töri-pune-nö-kamī (“Heavenly Bird-Boat Deity”), the vehicle deity born from Izanagi and Izanami; together they subdue the unruly earthly deities, with Take-mika-duti-nö-kamī returning to report Opo-kuni-nusi’s consent to relinquish his land to the heavenly deities.

B. Deities involved with Ninigi's descent

i. Facilitators of the Descent

1. Saruta-biko-nö-kamī (“Monkey/Mime/Guide-Lad Deity”), a male earthly deity, of startling physiognomy, who appeared unexpectedly in the myriad heavenly crossroads just as Ninigi was about to begin his descent; the *Nihongi* describes him as emitting glowing radiances from both his mouth and his posterior; other sources identify him as a *tengu*, i.e., one of the folkloric trickster-goblin descendants of Susa-nö-wo, or even as a hostile earthly wizard-deity come to block or sidetrack the descent. The *saru* in his name, literally “monkey,” can also signify “mime” or “actor,” or even, by extension, “guide.” See also (ii.3).

2. Amë-nö-uzume, the Formidable-Woman deity whose uninhibited dance was so pivotal in the restoration of Ama-terasu, who is now called upon (as the only one capable of this) to confront Saruta-biko, learning from him his name and that he has come to serve Ninigi as guide; some sources see her as having actually neutralized the wizardry by which Saruta-biko had meant to impede the descent; in any event, Ninigi, once the descent is successfully accomplished, bids Amë-nö-uzume both to accompany Saruta-biko on his return and, when serving Ninigi, to assume Saruta-biko's name.

ii. The Future Clan Heads

Five deities, all involved in the luring of Ama-terasu out of the cave, were now assigned the role of clan heads, and made to descend before Ninigi:

1. Puto-tama-nö-mikötö (“Solemn Offerings Deity”), the ancestor of the rulers of the Imube hereditary family that, connected with the Yamatö court, had the traditional duty “to provide the implements used in religious worship at the central court or to finance that worship;”

2. Amë-nö-ko-yane-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Small-House Deity”), the ancestor of the rulers of the Nakatömi priestly family that, likewise connected with the Yamatö court, provided the “court functionaries charged with religious ceremonies and with reporting to the throne;”

3. Amë-nö-uzume-nö-mikötö (“Heavenly Formidable-Woman Deity”), the ancestor of the rulers of yet another hereditary family

connected with Yamatō court, the Sarume, whose members, in keeping with the interpretation of the term *saru* as “mime” or “actor,” served as participants in ritual dance performances at court; the name *Sarume* is surely derived from the name of Saruta-biko; the rulers, or *kimi*, of the Sarume, moreover, tracing their ancestry, after all, to the formidable woman Amë-nö-uzume, are also all women (important families’ *kimi* generally, in sharp contrast, are men); and — as did Amë-nö-uzume herself, at Ninigi’s request — they too go by the name of the male deity Saruta-biko, perhaps simply because that is (for them) the name their ancestor Amë-nö-uzume is known by;

4. Isi-köri-dome-nö-mikötö (“Stone Cutting Goddess”), the ancestor of the rulers of the Kagami-tukuri, “the ruling family of a scattered corporation of mirror-makers;” and

5. Tama-nö-ya-nö-mikötö (“Jewel Ancestor Deity”), the ancestor of the rulers of the Tama-nö-ya, an old corporation of jewel-makers.

iii. Caretakers of Ama-terasu

Four more deities were sent along to minister to the august mirror, entrusted to Ninigi, in which the Sun Goddess’s captured spirit would reside on earth. Two of these had likewise participated in the luring of Ama-terasu out of her cave:

1. Tökö-yö-nö-omöpi-kane-nö-kamï (“Many-Minds’-Thought-Combining Deity”), authorized to “take the responsibility for the affairs of the presence and carry on the government,” and

2. Amë-nö-Ta-dikara-wo-nö-kamï (“Heavenly Hand-Strength-Male Deity”), a.k.a. Tajikaro;

and two had not:

3. Amë-nö-ipa-to-wakë-nö-kamï (“Heavenly-Rock-Door-Youth Deity”), a.k.a. Kusi-ipa-mado-nö-kamï (“Wondrous Rock-Window Deity”) or Toyö-ipa-mado-nö-kamï (“Abundant Rock-Window Deity”), sometimes called the “deity of the Gate,” all of whose names make reference to the boulder with which Ama-terasu sealed up the mouth of her cave, and

4. Töyö-ukë-bime-nö-kamï (“Abundant Food-Princess Deity”), daughter of the deity Waku-musubi-nö-kamï who had come into existence from the urine of the dying Izanami; enshrined in Gekū, the outer shrine of the Grand Shrine of Ise, she provides the pure

food used as offerings to Ama-terasu, whose spirit resides in the mirror enshrined in Naikū, the inner shrine of the Grand Shrine of Ise.

It is believed that, with the sole exception of Tōyō-ukē, the deities mentioned here did not themselves descend to earth, but rather sent to earth their spirit-substitutes, that is, articles in which their spirits inhere; they themselves remain forever in heaven, as does Ama-terasu, even though her spirit inheres in her mirror. All four deities mentioned here are enshrined at Ise, as, of course, is Ama-terasu herself.

iv. Ninigi's welcomers

Two heavily armed heavenly deities confront Ninigi upon his descent, and “standing in front of him served him:”

1. Ama-tu-kumē-nō-mikōtō (“Heavenly Kumē Lord”), and
2. Amē-nō-osi-pi-nō-mikōtō (“Heavenly Stealthy Sun Deity”).

These are considered the ancestors of two families specializing in carrying out military and punitive actions.

Appendix 3.

What Does What in Book I of the *Kojiki*

I. Entities of Importance to Izanagi and Izanami

1. Amë-nö-nu-bokö, the Heavenly Jeweled Spear that their Elders bestowed upon Izanagi and Izanami when entrusting to them their mission “to complete and solidify this drifting land.” (Recall that, at this time, “the land was still young, resembling floating oil and drifting like a jellyfish.”)

2. Amë-nö-uki-pasi, the Heavenly Floating Bridge joining Takama-nö-para, or heaven, with the terrestrial Central Land of the Reed Plains, over which Izanagi and Izanami would descend to earth, pausing first to create the island Onögörö, their future home, by using the spear Amë-nö-nu-bokö to stir the brine beneath the bridge in a churning manner.

3. Amë-nö-mi-pasira, the Heavenly Pillar that Izanagi and Izanami erected on the island Onögörö once they had descended there, and around which they circled, in a nuptial ritual, prior to engaging in their conjugal procreative activities.

4. Ya-pirö-dönö, the spacious wedding palace that Izanagi and Izanami had erected as well, prior to performing their nuptial ritual around the Heavenly Pillar Amë-nö-mi-pasira.

5. Amë-nö-wo-pa-bari, the sword (later to become known as Itu-nö-wo-pa-bari-nö-kamī, “Heavenly (or Sacred) Wide-Pointed-Blade Deity,” and to be consulted in conjunction with the actions preparatory to the earthly descent of Ninigi) with which Izanagi killed the infant Fire Deity, the last of the conjugal children of Izanagi and Izanami, whose birth had brought about Izanami’s demise.

6. The items of food — the grapes growing from Izanagi’s discarded head-band, the bamboo-shoots sprouting from Izanagi’s discarded comb, and the three peaches Izanagi found on his path — with which Izanagi could deter, hold at bay, and ultimately repulse the “hags of Yömī” whom Izanami had sent to pursue Izanagi on his flight from Yömī, the Land of the Dead, into which he had ventured from the Land of Papaki (where he had buried her) in the hope of reclaiming his dead spouse; this Land of Papaki, later a Honshu province lying between Izumo and Inaba, today, together with Inaba, forms Tottori-ken.

7. Ti-gapasi-nö-opo-kamī (“Great Road-Returning-Back Deity”) or Sayari-masu-yömī-do-nö-opo-kamī (“Great Abiding Yömī-

Entrance-Blocking Deity”), the massive (or “thousand-pulling”) boulder (so called for the thousand persons that would be required to pull it) with which Izanagi was able to seal the pass Yömö-tu-pira-saka (“Flat Pass of Yömi”), thereby forever separating himself and his world of the living from his dead wife Izanami and her Land of the Dead (Yömi); the *Kojiki* notes that the pass it calls Yömö-tu-pira-saka, which is probably also where Susa-nö-wo was later to slay the dragon Kosi (*cf.* III.4, below), and where Opo-kuni-nusi, still later, would slay his eighty older brothers, “is now” the pass called Ipuya-zaka in Izumo province; indeed, indications of a village called Ifuya, perhaps the site of an Ipuya shrine mentioned in other early writings, have apparently been located in modern-day Izumo, in what is now Yatsuka-gun, Shimane-ken, not far from Matsue.

8. The maga-tama beads, strings of which Izanagi shook ceremonially and then gave over to his daughter Ama-terasu when entrusting to her the mission to rule over heaven; thereafter, they are almost an attribute of Ama-terasu: to fortify herself for her contest with Susa-nö-wo, for example, she adorns her hair and her arms with them; during the contest with Susa-nö-wo, once she has broken into three the sword he offered her, chewed up the pieces, and spat them out again as the Munakata goddesses, Susa-nö-wo five time begs for Ama-terasu’s strings of maga-tama beads and, likewise chewing them up, spits out the debris as the five male deities later to be known as Ama-terasu’s sons; again, strings of maga-tama beads figure among the offerings placed before the Heavenly Rock-Cave Door during the attempts to lure the sulking Ama-terasu back out; and they are given to Ninigi as one of the three sacred regalia with which to worship Ama-terasu following his descent to earth.

II. Objects and Creatures Figuring in Ama-terasu’s Concealment and Restoration

1. The heavenly dappled pony which Susa-nö-wo skins “with a backward skinning,” and whose flayed carcass he drops down into the heavenly weaving hall (through a hole he had opened in its roof) while Ama-terasu is engaged in overseeing her heavenly weaving maiden at work there; this prank of Susa-nö-wo so alarms the heavenly weaving maiden that she dies, and Ama-terasu becomes so afraid that she enters the heavenly rock-cave door Amë-nö-ipa-ya-to and seals herself within.

2. Amë-nö-ipa-ya-to, the heavenly rock-cave door within which the fearful Ama-terasu concealed herself after the events just mentioned in the heavenly weaving hall; later, in the time of Ninigi, the residence of Itu-nö-wo-pa-bari-nö-kamī, the Sacred Wide-Pointed-Blade Deity, formerly Amë-nö-wo-pa-bari (*q.v. supra*). In today's Kyushu, just a few miles outside the town Takachiho, there is an Amano-Iwato shrine, whose grounds encompass two caves: one thought to be that in which Ama-terasu actually concealed herself; the other, quite near to the first, that in which the gods all assembled to devise the means of bringing her forth again (see the discussion in Chapter 3).
3. The long-crying birds of Tökö-yö, whose cries the eight-hundred myriad deities hoped would lure the Sun Goddess out of the cave.
4. The whole shoulder-bone, removed from a male deer of the mountain Amë-nö-kagu-yama, and used, along with papaka wood taken from the same mountain, in a divination performed before preparing to lure the Sun Goddess out of the cave.
5. The ma-sakaki trees, uprooted from the mountain Amë-nö-kagu-yama mentioned above, amongst whose branches the various solemn offerings meant to lure the Sun Goddess out of the cave were displayed; branches of sakaki are still in use today as offerings in Shinto ritual.
6. The white and blue nikite cloth suspended amidst the lower branches of the ma-sakaki trees; according to at least one *Nihongi* account, however, these have their origin later, being first produced by Susa-nö-wo, from his spittle and mucus, respectively, after his expulsion order; in a curious parallel, Susa-nö-wo himself was produced from the cleansing of the nose of his father Izanagi.
7. The strings of maga-tama beads made by Tama-nö-ya-nö-mikötö, affixed to the upper branches of the ma-sakaki trees.
8. The august mirror, made by Isi-köri-dome, first hung in the middle branches of the ma-sakaki trees, then taken down and placed before the mouth of the cave in which the Sun Goddess had concealed herself; later used to capture her image; still later, given to Ninigi, along with the maga-tama beads, as one of the three sacred regalia, with the directive to worship it on earth as the Sun Goddess is worshipped in heaven; currently enshrined in Ise.

III. The crucial objects and creatures involved with the subsequent punishment, purification, exorcism, and exile of Susa-nö-wo

1. The restitutive gifts, a thousand tables full of which the eight-hundred myriad deities exact of Susa-nö-wo as a fine for all his heavenly sins — his breaking up the ridges between Ama-terasu's rice paddies, his filling in their drainage ditches, his littering with his own faeces “the hall where the first fruits were tasted,” his skinning of the heavenly pony, with the concomitant death of the heavenly weaving maiden, and his many other “misdeeds,” not specified, but deplored as “even more flagrant.”
2. Susa-no-wo's beard, and
3. the nails of his hand and feet, which the eight-hundred myriad deities cut off in connection with having Susa-nö-wo first exorcised and then expelled with a divine expulsion. One *Nihongi* account describes Susa-nö-wo's severed fingernails and toenails as being used to make “things abhorrent of luck” and “things abhorrent of calamity,” respectively.
4. Kosi, the great dragon with eight tails, eight heads, and blood-oozing belly, soon to be offered the eighth daughter Kusi-nada-pime of the already seven-times-bereaved couple Asi-na-duti (son of Opo-yama) and Te-na-duti, that the exiled Susa-nö-wo, having descended to Töri-kami, along the Pï river, where he met these unhappy parents and learned of their plight, killed so that Kusi-nada-pime would not become its next victim; instead, she is now to become Susa-nö-wo's wife. The Pï, incidentally, seems to be today's Izumo river Hii-kawa, which flows from Mt. Sentsü down into Lake Shinji, on whose shore the town of Matsue is situated.
5. The sake Susa-nö-wo had Asi-na-duti and his wife distill, which, poured into eight barrels, each on its own raised platform by each of the eight gates in a fence they had built, would provide each of the dragon's eight heads with such an intoxicating refreshment that, once each head was safely asleep in a drunken stupor, Susa-nö-wo could make short work of slaying the dragon.
6. Kusa-nagi, the mighty sword that Susa-nö-wo extracted from within the dragon's middle tail, and then presented to Ama-terasu, who later conferred it upon Ninigi, along with the august mirror and the maga-tama beads, as another component of the three sacred regalia.
7. The “many-fenced palace” that Susa-nö-wo built at Suga, the place in Izumo of which Susa-nö-wo, now cleansed of his pollution, could feel, “here, my heart is refreshed.” It is here that

Susa-nö-wo begets Ya-sima-zinumi of Kusi-nada-pime, as well as other children by other wives.

IV. The crucial objects and creatures helping Opo-kuni-nusi into — and out of — his ordeals

1. The rabbit of Inaba, who, grateful for Opo-kuni-nusi's help in recovering from his mistreatment at the hands of Opo-kuni-nusi's eighty brothers, "rewards" Opo-kuni-nusi by ensuring that the princess Ya-gami-pime, whom those eighty brothers were intent on courting (with Opo-kuni-nusi serving them as a mere baggage-carrier), would refuse to become the wife of any of them, choosing instead Opo-kuni-nusi himself as husband. Angered at this outcome, the eighty brothers twice succeed in killing Opo-kuni-nusi, only to have his mother each time restore him to life, once through the intervention of the Divine Generative-Force Deity Kamī-musubi-nö-mikötö, and the next time all by herself. Fearing for her son's future safety, however, she urges him to depart for Kī, where he is instructed to seek the counsel of Susa-nö-wo, in Ne-nö-kata-su-kuni (the "Firm Ancestral Land," which is probably just Yomī by another name). His first encounter there is with Susa-nö-wo's daughter Suseri-bime; they quickly fall in love; and Susa-nö-wo, on meeting him, immediately imposes his own trials on Opo-kuni-nusi.

2. The snake-repelling scarf, given to Opo-kuni-nusi by Susa-nö-wo's daughter Suseri-bime so that Opo-kuni-nusi could survive his first ordeal at the hands of Susa-nö-wo, to "sleep in a chamber of snakes."

3. The second magic scarf given to Opo-kuni-nusi by Suseri-bime, with which Opo-kuni-nusi could survive his second ordeal at the hands of Susa-nö-wo, to sleep "in a chamber of centipedes and bees."

4. The mouse, who, when Opo-kuni-nusi was helplessly trapped within a ring of fire — recall that Susa-nö-wo, having caused Opo-kuni-nusi to go fetch and bring back to him a humming arrow he had shot into a large plain, then "set fire all around the edges of the plain" while Opo-kuni-nusi was still within it — taught Opo-kuni-nusi to burrow into the ground while the fire passed harmlessly over him; and who, when Opo-kuni-nusi emerged unscathed, presented him with Susa-nö-wo's humming arrow, so that, despite its having been nibbled at by the mouse's children, he could in fact return it, as bidden, to Susa-nö-wo.

5. The centipedes that Susa-nö-wo, upon receiving back his humming arrow, had Opo-kuni-nusi groom from his hair.
6. The sword of life, the bow-and-arrow of life, and the heavenly speaking koto that Opo-kuni-nusi stole from Susa-nö-wo while the latter, lulled by the pleasurable sensation that Opo-kuni-nusi was still grooming his hair, was peacefully asleep.
7. The palace, with posts firmly rooted “in the bed-rock below” and crossbeams raised high “unto Takama-nö-para itself,” that the desperate Susa-nö-wo, railing at Opo-kuni-nusi as he makes good his escape with Susa-nö-wo’s daughter Suseri-bime and the three stolen objects enumerated above, suggests he should build for himself at the foot of Mount Uka. In fact, it is not until he conveys to Take-mika-duti-nö-kamī and Amë-nö-töri-pune-nö-kamī his readiness to yield control of the Central Land of the Reed Plains to “the offspring of the heavenly deities” that Opo-kuni-nusi builds such a palace — and that near the beach of Tagisi in Izumo — having stipulated that he be so worshipped at this, his dwelling-place, that it become “like the plentiful heavenly dwelling where rules the heavenly sun-lineage of the offspring of the heavenly deities.” It is out of just this palace that today’s Great Izumo-Taisha Shrine is thought to have arisen.

V. Sea Creatures of Importance to Opo-kuni-nusi, Saruta-biko, Ninigi, and Po-wori

A. Participants and Ingredients in the Consecration of Opo-kuni-nusi’s Palace

1. Kusi-ya-tama-nö-kamī, grandson of the sea-straits deity Paya-aki-tu-piko-nö-kamī born to Izanagi and Izanami, who becomes the food-server and principal celebrant in the inaugural worship of Opo-kuni-nusi and attendant consecration of Opo-kuni-nusi’s palace.
2. The cormorant that Kusi-ya-tama-nö-kamī turns into, so as to be able to dive into the sea, thence to bring up the clay with which he would fashion flat pottery vessels.
3. Seaweed leaves and stems, with which Kusi-ya-tama-nö-kamī made a friction-fire starting board and a friction-fire drill.
4. The fire that Kusi-ya-tama-nö-kamī drilled with these implements, whose smoke should rise as high as heaven, and whose heat should burn “the bottom bedrock ... solid,” in this way realizing Opo-kuni-nusi’s aim to fulfill Susa-nö-wo’s prophetic description of the attributes of Opo-kuni-nusi’s palace.

5. The perch, wide-mouthed and broad-finned, that fishermen using nets on “thousand-fathom ropes” should “draw hither and raise up” for Kusi-ya-tama-nö-kamī to “present [as] heavenly sea-food viands.”
6. The trays of split bamboo, to be so laden with these fish offerings that they would “bend down under the weight” thereof.

B. Sea-Creatures and Others in the Mediation of Saruta-biko’s Service to Ninigi

1. Amë-nö-uzume, who first accosts Saruta-biko (in obedience to Ama-terasu and Taka-ki-nö-kamī) to inquire what has brought him to the heavenly crossroads, seemingly blocking the path along which Ninigi is to descend, only to learn that he has come simply to serve as Ninigi’s guide;
2. Mount Taka-ti-po of Pimuka in Tukusi, on whose peak Ninigi and company, guided by Saruta-biko, ended their descent; Mount Taka-ti-po seems to be Kyushu’s Mount Takachiho; here Ninigi, just as did Opo-kuni-nusi before him elsewhere, builds a palace with posts “rooted ... firmly in the bedrock below,” and crossbeams “raised high unto Takama-nö-para itself.”
3. The shellfish (in Azaka, Ise, where Saruta-biko — having been accompanied there, at Ninigi’s request, by Amë-nö-uzume — was now fishing) in whose shell Saruta-biko gets his hand so inextricably caught that he falls into the sea and drowns.
4. The broad universe of fish, both “the wide-finned and the narrow-finned,” who, gathered together by Amë-nö-uzume (who may well be acting here under the name of Saruta-biko, whose name, after all, Ninigi had bid her to assume when serving him), all “as one” pledge their willingness “to serve the offspring of the heavenly deities.”
5. The sea-slug, the only one among the fish to have remained silent, whose silence Amë-nö-uzume rebukes by slitting its mouth with a dagger.

C. Implements and Denizens of the Sea Instrumental in Po-wori’s Gaining Dominance over Po-deri

1. The fishhook, lost by Po-wori after being lent it by his eldest brother Po-deri, that Po-deri insists Po-wori return.
2. Sipo-tuti-nö-kamī (“Brine-Spirit Deity”), who makes Po-wori a boat and instructs him to sail therein to the castle of Wata-tu-mi-

nö-mikötö (“Great Sea-Spirit Deity”), whose daughter will be able to help recover the lost fishhook.

3. Töyö-tama-bime (“Abundant Jewel Princess”), Wata-tu-mi-nö-mikötö’s daughter, whom Po-wori almost immediately weds, not to remember about his lost-fishhook problem for three years.

4. The assembly of “all the large and small fish of the sea,” summoned together by Töyö-tama-bime’s father Wata-tu-mi-nö-mikötö, who asked them “whether any fish had taken the fishhook.”

5. The sea-bream, unanimously identified by the assembled fish as the most likely candidate because of its recent complaints of “a bone ... caught in its throat,” from within whose throat the lost fishhook, indeed found to be lodged there, was recovered. In one *Nihongi* account, it is not a sea-bream but a *kuchi-me* (“Lady-Mouth”) in whose throat the lost fishhook is found lodged, and for this reason “the fish kuchime is not among the articles of food set before the Emperor.”

6. The tide-raising and tide-ebbing jewels, given to Po-wori by Wata-tu-mi-nö-kami, whose powers would enable Po-wori, after pronouncing a suitable malediction over the lost fishhook and then restoring it to Po-deri, to gain dominance over his older brother.

7. The crocodile-dragon on whose back Po-wori was transported from the watery realms of the sea-deity Wata-tu-mi-nö-kami and his daughter — and Po-wori’s wife — Töyö-tama-bime, back to land, there indeed to find Po-deri, return the fishhook, and, with the help of the malediction he had pronounced over it, and the power of the tide-jewels, gain dominance over his brother.

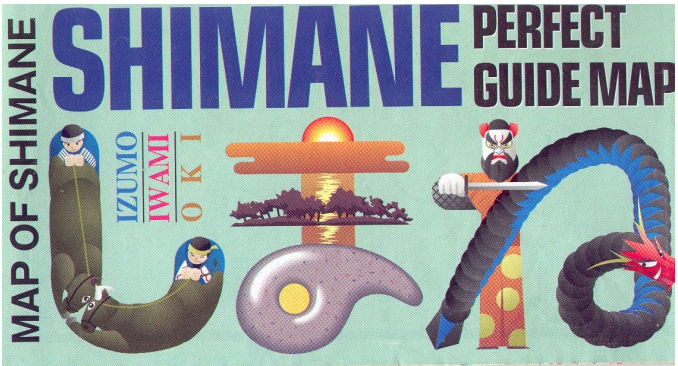
Supplement 1. Shimane, the ”Province of the Gods”

The “land of Izumo” that the *Kojiki* tells us Susa-nö-wo descended to upon being driven out of heaven presumably refers to the same territory as that occupied, at the time the *Kojiki* narrative was being written, by what was then known as the Province of Izumo, and this, in turn, can differ but little from that portion of contemporary Shimane Prefecture — the eastern third of Shimane’s onshore lands, in fact — now known as the former Province of Izumo. (The offshore portion of Shimane — its islands — make up the former Oki Province, while the western two-thirds of Shimane’s onshore lands were once the former Iwami Province.)

Mainland Shimane today is the broad northern swath of the central Chugoku Region of the main island of Honshu that, bordering the Sea of Japan, lies between the Prefectures of Tottori, to the east, Hiroshima, to the south, and Yamaguchi, to the west. Other coastal former Provinces in Chugoku that, like Izumo, also figure in *Kojiki* events include Iwami, adjacent to Izumo on the west, and Tottori’s Hoki, adjacent to Izumo on the east, and Inaba (of Rabbit fame), just to the east of Hoki. But this afterword will concentrate primarily on what *Kojiki* traces can still be found in Izumo Province itself.

For example, the river Pii (Pi), along whose banks the newly descended and aimlessly wandering Susa-nö-wo heard the pitiable lamentations of the parents of the seemingly dragon-doomed Kusi-nada-pime (whom Susa-nö-wo would ultimately make his bride), seems to be today’s river Hii, that flows into Lake Shinji from its source in Izumo’s Mount Sentsu; and it was surely still within Izumo that Susa-nö-wo killed this eight-headed dragon that had been so terrorizing the countryside — and from whose tail he extracted the famous sword Kusa-nagi, that was to become part of the Imperial Regalia. Small wonder, then, that this dragon, known locally (in what looks like a dig at the formerly dominant Yamato clan) as Yamato-nö-Orochi, has become a central feature in the Izumo kagura (festive dance) tradition (and in that of Iwami kagura, as well!)

Plate 1



1. The artist's stylized renderings of the Hiragana glyphs Shi (し), Ma (ま), and Ne (ね) evoke the separation and confrontation of Izanagi and Izanami, the magatama bead in the context of earth, sea, heavens, and sun, and Susa-no-wo slaying the *Orochi* dragon.

It was, moreover, along the shores of Izumo that Susa-no-wo's distant descendant Opo-kuni-nusi, yielding to the advice of his son Kōtō-shirō, ceded the earthly lands to Ama-terasu's grandson Ninigi. Izanagi and Izanami also dwell here, in the sense that it is somewhere in the hinterlands of Izumo that is thought to be found the entrance to the Land of the Dead into which Izanagi wandered in search of his deceased beloved Izanami, and out of which he was chased, with Izanami and the Spirits of the Dead in hot pursuit. [In fact, at least one source — http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_provinces_of_Japan reports — Izanami's final resting place to be on Mount Hiba, close to the old Izumo-Hoki border, and near the present-day Izumo city of Yasugi.]

And the famous *Kunibiki-shinwa*, or "land-pulling" legend, according to which the local deity Yatsuka Mizuomi Tsunu no Mikoto enlarged the originally smaller land of Izumo by annexing to it pieces of land he pulled in from more distant, offshore places, has its focus in Izumo as well, the peak from which Yatsuka did his pulling being thought to be Iwami's Mount Sanbe, near the Izumo border (cf. <http://www.visitiwami.com/modules/overview0>), with the annexation terrain where he finished his work becoming known as the Ou District because — or so goes the Izumo tradition — marking the end of his work by striking a rod into the small forest where his work ended, he took a deep breath and emitted a

loud, final, fatigued sigh of relief: “Oe” (or “Ou”). [This Ou District was the area within Izumo currently occupied by Matsue and Yasugi Cities, along with the southern part of what is now known as Yatsuka County, and adjacent environs.]

Plate 2



2. A map of Shimane showing a part of the ancient Ou district where the *Ou Rokusha* shrines are located

All these figures are actively remembered here in Izumo, not only in such place names as Yatsuka or Izumo (itself derived, it is thought, from the very name of the goddess Izanami), but by the many shrines erected to their worship, some of which claim to trace their origins, through various relocations over time, to original places described in the *Kojiki*. Six Shimane shrines in particular, each with “a long and distinguished history,” seem to be of special importance: jointly known as the *Ou Rokusha* (“the six shrines of the Ou District”), and focus of the tradition, dating back to ancient times, of *Rokusha Mairi*, or “six-shrine pilgrimage festival,” these are: *Kumano Taisha Jinja*, a Susa-no-wo shrine, in Yakumo-shi; *Manai Jinja*, an Izanagi shrine, in Yamashiro-cho; *Rokusho Jinja*, the Six Deities — or Six Creation Gods — shrine, in Okusa-cho; *Yaegaki Jinja*, another Susa-no-wo shrine, in Sakusa-cho; *Kamosu Jinja*, an Izanami shrine, in Oba-cho; and *Iya*

Jinja, or Shrine of the Dead, in Higashi-Izumo-cho. These are the shrines to which the first few sections of this afterword are devoted.

Two more Izumo shrines, freighted with perhaps even more importance, despite lying more distant from Matsue city, than the *Ou Rokusha* just mentioned, are worth noting. These are: the *Izumo Taisha* Grand Shrine, enshrining the land-donor Opo-kuni-nusi, and located at the edge of the sea somewhat outside Izumo City, well beyond the western shores of Lake Shinji (whose eastern shore hosts the city of Matsue); and *Miho Jinja*, the Miho Shrine, between Mihonoseki City and Mihonoseki Lighthouse, where Opo-kuni-nusi's son Kotoshiro (sometimes also referred to as Ebisu) is enshrined. These two shrines form the focus of the last two sections of this afterword.

Supplement 2: In the place where Izanami entered the world of the dead

1. Manai Jinja, dedicated to Izanagi

“Manai Shrine is located in the southern suburbs of Matsue City, at the southeast foot of Mount Chausu, and is dedicated to the god Izanagi no Mikoto. This shrine is one of the ancient shrines described in the ‘Chronicles of the Izumo Province’ and in another ancient book called ‘Engi-shiki’ (927-967). It is also one of the Ou-Rokusha, or ‘the six shrines of the Ou region’ and is situated close to Kamosu Shrine dedicated to Izanami. The present main hall of Manai Shrine was constructed in 1662, and has been designated as a Prefectural Cultural Asset.” (*A Guidebook to the Province of the Gods*, p.26)



1. Lion (shi-shi) at the top of the staircase; the closed mouth symbolizes in (yang).



2. Lion at the top of the staircase approach; the open mouth symbolizes yo (ying).



3. Torii before the stone steps leading to the main Manai Jinja shrine building.



4. The main building of the Manai Jinja shrine complex.

2. Kamosu Jinja, dedicated to Izanami

Izanami's spirit is believed to be enshrined in Kamosu Jinja. About Kamosu Jinja, Lafcadio Hearn wrote: "It is said the shrine was built on the God, Ameno-Hohi-no-mikoto's (Amaterasu's second son) order, and it is one of the most ancient and holiest shrines in this country. The main shrine, rebuilt in 1346, exhibits the oldest style of the 'Taisha Structure,' though it predates the Grand Shrine of Taisha by 400 years, and now is designated as a National Treasure."



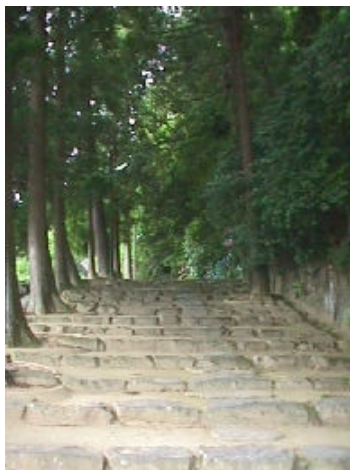
5. The main shrine building of Kamosu Jinja.



6. Worshipper bowing at the main shrine.



7. The first torii of Kamosu Jinja.



8. The approach stairway to the shrine.



9. Offerings placed before the steps leading to the inner chamber of Kamosu Jinja.



10. A sacred place inside the compound.

3. Iya Jinja, or Shrine of the Dead

Izanami, Susa-no-wo and Kotoshiro are believed to be enshrined in Iya Jinja. “This shrine was mentioned in the *Izumo Fudoki* (Ancient Chronicles of Izumo Province) and also in another famous ancient chronicle, the *Nihongi*. This shrine is said to have been linked to the ancient realm of the dead. During the civil wars, military leaders such as Amako, Ouchi and Mori came to this shrine to pray for success in battle. Mori is also said to have built the main building of the shrine. ... There is a festival called Hokake Festival held on August 28th every year.” (Tourist guide note)



13. Torii at Iya Jinja.



14. The oratory of Iya Jinja.



15. A small shrine with many goheis, as if to encourage many deities, perhaps for a ritual.



16. A close-up of some of the goheis.



17. The main shrine building of Iya Jinja.



18. On the shrine grounds: a lantern.



19. Offering grate and stone entrance steps leading to the Iya Jinja oratory.



20. Detail: Mirror on the entrance steps.



Under a protective roof at Iya Jinja:
21. A white horse;



22. Sacred female image; and



23. The seven gods of good luck.

4. Rokusho Jinja, dedicated to the six creation gods

“This shrine is dedicated to the six deities: Izanagi no Mikoto, Izanami no Mikoto, Amaterasu Omikami, Tsukuyomi no Mikoto, Susano no Mikoto and Onamuchi no Mikoto. It is therefore called Rokusho Jinja ‘the shrine where six (gods) are enshrined.’ (A *Guidebook to the Province of the Gods*, p. 25)



22. Oratory building, Rokusho Jinja.



23. A sacred Shimenawa rope, in typical ‘taisha’ style, over the Rokusho Jinja oratory entrance.



24. Main shrine building, Rokusho Jinja



25. A purification well, Rokusho Jinja.



26. Assembly ring for gatherings of the gods.



27. Close-up: a "god's seat".

Supplement 3: In the place where Susa-nō-wo killed the dragon

1. Izumo kagura

The current Shimane Prefecture being the modern political union of the former Provinces of Oki, Iwami, and Izumo, and Susa-nō-wo, after all, having descended to Izumo after being cast out of Heaven, then to perform so many heroic deeds here, it is not surprising that Susa-nō-wo should be one of the more popular deities in Shimane. Evidence of this popularity may be found not only in the numerous Shimane shrines dedicated to him, or to him and his bride Kusi-nada-Pime (known locally as Inata), or to him and his Sun Goddess sister Ama-terasu, but also in the local Kagura dance tradition, which reenacts his slaying – and his extraction of the sword Kusanagi from the tail – of the seasonally rampaging dragon that was, around the time of his descent, threatening the maiden Kusi-nada-Pime, who would, in consequence, become Susa-nō-wo's bride. In some local interpretations, this dragon is thought to represent the recurrent experience of excessive seasonal flooding that used to destroy the old-time local farmers' rice fields, with Susa-nō-wo's slaying of it a reference to some unspecified water-containment projects Susa-nō-wo undertook; its local name, Yamato no Orochi, suggests instead that it may symbolize the annual tax- or tithe-collectors sent up from the central Yamato government, with Susa-nō-wo's slaying of it some successful form of tax rebellion.

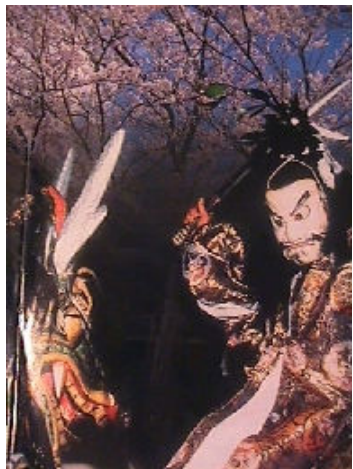
In the Izumo Kagura, whose tradition probably has its origins in an ancient form of Noh theater, Susa-nō-wo is no longer depicted as Ama-te-rasu's "evil" brother, but as the hero who saved the land – and Inata – from the ravages of this dragon; and it, his slaying of it, his discovery of Kusanagi in its tail, and his marriage to Inata, all figure prominently, both in the ritual performances taking place at set times in various shrines, for religious purposes, and in the many seasonal secular performances. Iwami Kagura, though having the same material as its basis, has developed in a tradition thought somehow to be different from that of Izumo Kagura. In Izumo, or eastern Shimane, for example, there is Kagura in May, at the famous Izumo Taisha Jinja, and in September, at the Suga and Sada Shrines; in Iwami, or western Shimane, Kagura is performed mostly in September. At the secular level, there is not far from Izumo Daito Station the Kodai Tetsu

Kagura Museum, whose large stage easily accommodates Izumo Kagura performances; on display here are the huge dragon prop used during performances, as well as numerous other articles associated with Kagura. And Masuda City, in Western Shimane, is famous for the public Kagura performances that take place there roughly every other week throughout the year.

1



2



3



1-3. Images of Susa-nō-wo killing the dragon, from the Iwami Kagura tradition of Western Shimane.



4. Several interwoven kagura dragons.



5. Kagura matsuri, Masuda,
Western Shimane.



6. Kagura matsuri of Eastern Shimane.

From the Kodai Tetsu Kagura Museum



7. Mannequins of Susa-nō-wo, Kusi-nada-pime, and her parents.



8. Massive Kagura performance dragon.

2. Yaegaki Jinja, dedicated to Susa-nō-wo and his wife Kusi-nada-pime

Today Susa-nō-wo and Kusi-nada-pime are believed to be the primary gods of arranged marriages and protectors of marriage. Of the several shrines dedicated to them throughout Shimane province, the Yaegaki Shrine seems to be the most famous. According to local legend, this shrine is exactly the wedding palace (in the place the *Kojiki* calls Suga) in which Susa and Inata took up residence once Susa had killed the giant eight-headed serpent Yamata no Orochi. The main hall of Yaegaki Jinja is covered with “the oldest mural paintings of any shrine in Japan.” One of these three surviving mural paintings, believed to depict Princess Kusi-nada-pime, “was so well preserved that you can still see her vividly colored skin and hair and her bright red lips. ... The reverse side of the painting used to be the outside wall of the main hall, [and] the scribbling of the ancient worshippers can still be seen [there]”.



9. Postcard reproducing the surviving mural image of Kusi-nada-pime.



10. Torii at the entrance to Yaegaki Jinja.

11. Yaegaki Jinja: *Shimenawa* rope over the door of the shrine building.

The small grove behind the shrine, and the “mirror pond” within it, are both legendary. According to one legend, Kusi-nada-Pime used this pond as a mirror when applying her make-up. According to another, this is the wood in which she hid to escape the clutches of that eight-headed serpent; a ritual kagura is still performed in this connection every third of May. And there is a custom, still popular among unmarried women today, of divining one’s marriage prospects by placing a coin on a piece of waxed paper, floating this on the pond surface, and seeing how long it takes, and how far it floats out, before it sinks.

Some time ago, clay horses of the sort that could have been used in ancient rituals were discovered in this pond, which suggests that this had been treated as a sacred place quite early on. “Indeed, in ancient times, when there were no temples and shrines, people used to come to places such as this grove to worship the gods that they believed dwelled in giant rocks and the huge trees. These places where these gods lived were called ‘iwakura’ or

‘himorogi.’ It could be said that this grove is a site of one such ancient himorogi, which would have been a sacred place in ancient times.” (*A guidebook to the Province of the Gods*, p. 23) So it is quite possible that Yaegaki Jinja got built here, as a shrine, in furtherance of this sacredness of place.



12-13. Wooden phalluses are offered here to encourage good luck in having children.



14. Amulets hung around a tree to bring good luck in pregnancy.



15. Young lady about to launch a marriage-divination waxed paper float with coin.



16. After a time, each coin drags its waxed paper vessel down to the bottom of the pond.

3. Kumano Jinja, dedicated to Susa-nō-wo and his wife Kusi-nada-pime

Kumano Jinja, located upstream along the Iu River, and one of *Ou Rokusha* shrines, is dedicated principally to Susa-nō-wo no Mikoto. There are sources claiming that it is this shrine, and not Yaegaki Jinja, that marks the place in Suga where the wedding palace of Susa-nō-wo and Kusi-nada-pime was located. Other sources suggest that, at the time of the ancient chronicle *Engi-Shiki* (927-967), this shrine was in fact dedicated to a deity called Kushimikenu no Mikoto, a patron deity of water and agriculture, worshipped as such by well-to-do farming families farther downstream along the Iu River. In any event, at least until the beginning of the Heian era (7th century), Kumano Jinja was of considerable importance, being counted as the *Ichinomiya*, i.e., both the most historical and the highest-ranking shrine, of that time.



17. Torii and entrance bridge.



18. A small ancient shrine through its torii.



19. Entranceway leading to the main shrine.



20. Main shrine with entrance *shimenawa*.



21. Emas: en masse.



22. Emas: lots of white horses.



23. Ema: the coiled snake image is often to be seen at Susa-nō-wo shrines.



24. Charms used for good luck in marriage.



25. Charms used for good luck in marriage.



26. Hair-combs, recalling those in the Susa-nō-wo / Kusi-nada-pime Kojiki tales.



27. A pond with goldfish.



28. An animal sculpture.



29. Contemporary depiction of various creation tales.

Left to right: Susa-nō-wo slaying Orochi;
 Kusi-nada-Pime and her parents;
 Opo-kuni-nusi and the Rabbit of Inaba;
Izumo Fudoki scenes.



30. Detail: Kusi-nada-Pime and her parents.



31. Detail: Susa-nō-wo about to slay Orochi, after getting him drunk with jugs of sake.

Kumano Jinja and Izumo Taisha Jinja hold a joint annual festival called ‘Sanka-Sai’ each October 15. This “is a traditional ceremony in which Kumano Shrine gives to Izumo Taisha two old-fashioned fire-kindling tools, called ‘Hikirusu’ and ‘Hikirigine.’ Izumo Taisha uses these tools in ‘Shinjyo-Sai’ festival on November 23rd to kindle fire in the ancient way. Every year on October 15th, Kokuso of Izumo Taisha visits Kumano Shrine to receive these tools. In return for receiving the tools, Kokuso has to offer a pair of large rice cakes to Kumano Shrine. Before the rice cakes are offered, a priest called Kamedayu of Kumano Shrine makes it a rule to find faults with the cakes, such as they are smaller than the previous years’ cakes, or they are a bad color. When Komedayu has finished finding faults, he accepts the cakes and gives the tools to Kokuso. This kind of ceremony, where the person accepting a tribute complains, is very rare.” (*A Guidebook to the Province of the Gods*, p. 33.)

The other joint annual festival of Kumano Jinja, called ‘Migushi-sai’, is believed to originate in the ancient Izumo myth according to which Susa-nō-wo no Mikoto, before he married Kusi-nada-pime (Inata), gave her a comb as an engagement gift. This mythical act is repeated every year on April 13, with Kumano Jinja ritually offering a comb to the Kusi-nada-pime shrine Sessha Inata Jinja. Cf. illustration 26 above.

4. Susa Jinja, dedicated to Susa-nö-wo and his wife Kusi-nada-pime

Susa Jinja, dedicated to Susa-nö-wo and his wife Kusi-nada-Pime, is located in the rolling woodlands between Sada town and Kakeya town, considerably south of Izumo-shi. Despite its geographical separation from the Grand Shrine of Izumo Taisha, which is located considerably to the north of Izumo-shi, this shrine maintains somehow a spiritual bond with Izumo Taisha, where Opo-kuni-nushi is the principal deity. Perhaps this spiritual bond, despite the geographical separation between the two shrines, mirrors what the *Kojiki* shows us of both distance and closeness between Susa-nö-wo and his distant descendant, rival and son-in-law, Opo-kuni-nushi, the two deities these shrines are dedicated to.



32. Guardian lion (shi-shi) with closed mouth.



33. Guardian lion (shi-shi) with open mouth.



34. A guardian of the gate.



35. The festival Kagura-den.



36. Torii before the gate to the shrine.



37. The main Susa Jinja shrine building.



38. Tiny shrine with many miniature snake



39. Close-up of a snake miniature.

5. Hinomisaki Jinja, dedicated to Ama-terasu and her brother Susa-nö-wo

Hinomisaki Jinja, dedicated to Ama-terasu and her brother Susa-nö-wo, is located in Hinomisaki, at the western end of the Shimane peninsula, just across from Fumi-shima Island and not far from the *Izumo Taisha* Grand Shrine. It was already mentioned, under the name Misaki Jinja, both in the ancient *Izumo no Kuni Fudoki* and in the *Engi-shiki* (927-967). Upon passing through its red entrance gate, one sees straight ahead the Hishizumi-no-miya shrine, where Ama-terasu is enshrined, with the Kan-no-miya shrine, where her brother Susa-nö-wo is enshrined, to the right, on slightly higher ground. It is believed that the current locations of these shrines are not the original ones. According to legend, Kan-no-miya was moved here from its original location on Kakurega-Oka hill, and Hishizumi-no-miya, originally built in 948 on nearby Fumi-shima Island, just 100 meters offshore, was later moved here as well. While the extent of its influence in ancient times remains unknown, Hinomisaki Jinja had reportedly become quite influential in both religion and economic life by the time of the middle ages.



40. A lantern bestrewn with votive stones.



41. Amaterasu's Hishizumi-no-miya Jinja.



42. Susa's Kan-no-miya Jinja: front view.



43. Susa's Kan-no-miya Jinja: side view



44. Ema: Susa-nō-wo killing the dragon.



45. Two emas: a white horse, and two snakes on an offering plate.

6. Sada Jinja, dedicated to the gods that created Japan

Sada Jinja is located along the spine of the Shimane peninsula, at the base of Asahi-San Mountain, somewhat northwest of Matsue. Its unusual triple-grand-shrine building enshrines multiple deities. In the center are enshrined the first couple Izanagi and Izanami, along with the local deities Sada-no-Ookami, Kototokio-no-Mikoto, and Hayatamao-no-Mikoto. On the right side are enshrined Amaterasu and Ninigi; on the left, Susa-nö-wo. According to the old Izumo chronicles, the *Izumo no Kuni Fudoki*, Sada Jinja was one of the four great shrines of the Izumo area (Izumo Taisha, Kumano Taisha, and Nogi no Ookami were the others), and had a great number of devout believers.



46. Sada Jinja's triple-shrine.



47. Left-side guardian of the gate.



48. Right-side guardian of the gate.

Supplement 4: In the place where stands Opo-kuni-nusi's "Palace connecting Heaven with Earth": Izumo-Taisha Grand Shrine

The Izumo-Taisha Grand Shrine, thought to be the oldest shrine in Japan, is mentioned not only in the two imperial chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*, but also in the provincial chronicles of Izumo, the *Izumo no Kuni Fudoki*. It is dedicated to the earthly deity Opo-kuni-nusi-nö-kamī, the sixth-generation descendant of Susa-nö-wo and his wife Kusi-nada-pime, the granddaughter of the male mountain deity Opo-yama-tu-mi-nö-kamī. Having absconded with Susa-no-wo's sword of life, bow-and-arrow of life, cither, and even his daughter Suseri-bime, and then wresting life and power from his 80 brothers, Opo-kuni-nusi was able to gain sovereignty over all Izumo, only to cede it, in negotiations with the heavenly envoys, to Ninigi, under the stipulation, as the *Kojiki* tells it, "[Only if you will] ... worship me, making my dwelling-place like the plentiful heavenly dwelling where rules the heavenly sun-lineage of the heavenly deities, firmly rooting the posts of the palace in the bedrock below, and raising high the crossbeams unto Takama-nö-para itself." In the *Izumo no Kuni Fudoki*, too, it is recorded that many deities gathered in Taisha town in order to build such a palace for Opo-kuni-nusi. This palace, or dwelling-place, is today's Izumo-Taisha Grand Shrine. (Locate it on IzumoShi-map of the Izumo area.)

In point of historical fact, however, it is not known exactly when the Izumo-Taisha shrine was built. From the contemporary *Guidebook to The Province of the Gods* (part 2, pp. 17-18), we learn that this shrine was known as early as the fourth century, being called 'Unta' then, and that "According to the contents of 3 ancient historical documents, it is possible that during the early part of the 8th century, this shrine was called 'Oyashiro' and it had a huge main building. In the middle of the Heian era (794-1185), there was a book called 'Kuchi-zasami' (970), which was the textbook for the children of the noble. In this book, there is a song that says 'Unta, Wani, Kyosan,' which means Izumo Shrine was the largest, the Great Buddha of Nara was second and Daigoku-den in Kyoto was the third."

While Opo-kuni-nusi is thus the deity who ruled, and then ceded to Ninigi, the province of Izumo, in late medieval times (1200-1600) he became known as Daikoku-ten, and was widely

worshipped as the deity of good fortune. In more recent times, he is worshipped also as the deity of marriage.



1. Source: http://www2.city.izumo.shimane.jp/e/sight_seeing/index.html
[IzumoShi-map.jpg]



2. The first torii leading to Izumo-Taisha.



3. A sacred rope, or shimenawa.



4. Opo-kuni-nusi and the rabbit of Inaba.



5. Sake barrels lining a sanctuary wall.



6. Frontal view of the oracle building.



7. Shrine building behind the oracle building.



6. Shoes of a Shinto priest.



7. Read oracles (o-mikuji) posted on a tree. For an oracle foretelling good fortune, this serves as petition for its fulfillment, while for a bad, such posting serves as an antidote.



9. Within the Oracle Building: bowing to the kami.



10. Shinto priest facing offerings along a wall behind which is the inner sanctuary.



11. A Shinto priest reading an oracle.
On the wall, images of Ebisu and Daikoku.



12. Ebisu, the god of good fortune.



13. Daikoku, the god of laughter.



14. Outer barrier gate before the sanctuary.



15. Special worshippers are allowed into the patio beyond the barrier gate, but no further.



16. A ceremonial stall, decorated with emas.



17. Within it, a sculptured horse; and ...



... 18. a sculptured bull.



19. Detail: emas festooning the animal stall. These serve as good luck talismans, and as charms to ward off misfortune.



20. One particular ema, depicting a couple. On the left, similar couples, and white horses.

Of all the festivals held at Izumo-Taisha, perhaps the best known is that taking place between what is called October 11-17 of the lunar calendar. During that time deities from all over the country gather at Izumo-Taisha for an annual conference. On the night of the 10th, a special welcome ritual is celebrated on the beach at Inasa no Hama. A serpent is placed on a round wooden box (cf. images 23 38, and especially 45 of Supplement 3), and is dedicated at the main shrine by the chief priest. Around the main shrine are smaller shrine buildings which house the visiting deities during their visit. The deities have their meeting in the holy of holies of the inner shrine. The interior of the main shrine is specially designed with this festival in mind, being divided into four quadrants (much as is the Japanese character 田, signifying 'rice field'), with a huge main pillar at the center, and plenty of seats for the deities in each quadrant. Upon leaving Izumo-Taisha, the deities move on to Sada Jinja, for a second conference there.

Supplement 5. In the place where Opo-kuni-nusi's son Kotoshiro met the envoys from Heaven: Miho Jinja

Some sources claim that Miho shrine dedicated to Opo-kuni-nusi's son Kotoshira is the one, which is build in the place described in the *Kojiki* where Kotoshira concealed himself after advising to his father to surrender the land to Ninigi. However, the ancient chronicles of Izumo claims that the shrine was originally dedicated to the deity Mihosusumi-no-Mikoto.



1. Worshippers before the shrine exterior.



2. Tori before Miho Jinja.



3. The two roofs of the main shrine building.

Kotoshiro, also identified as Ebisu, is the very popular patron deity of marine safety, fishing, commercial prosperity, and music and dance. Of the 3,385 shrines said to be dedicated to him through all Japan, Miho shrine is the main one.



4. The tai (sea bream), often seen in Kotoshiro's company.



5. A tai as festival float.



6. Ema depicting tai.



7. One more maritime Kotoshiro ema.



7-9. More maritime Kotoshiro emas.



10. Kotoshiro with rod, tai and wife

One of the buildings on the shrine grounds houses two sacred ceremonial boats, primitively crafted of hollowed-out logs. The second floor of this building exhibits some unique musical instruments, offerings by devotees of Ebisu in appreciation of his reported love of music and dancing.