

Chapter 6 Giving Birth to Deities

After they had finished giving birth to the land, [Izanaki and Izanami] gave birth to deities. The name of the [first] deity they bore is Ōkoto oshio no kami 大事忍男神 (1). Next they bore Iwatsuchibiko no kami 石土毗古神. Next they bore Iwasuhime no kami 石巢比壳神 (2). Next they bore Ōtohiwake no kami 大戸日別神 (3). Next they bore Ame no fukio no kami 天之吹男神 (4). Next they bore Ōyabiko no kami 大屋毗古神 (5). Next they bore Kazamotsuwake no oshio no kami 風木津別之忍男神 (6). Next they bore the deity of the seas, whose name is Ōwatatsumi no kami 大綿津見神 (7). Next they bore the deity of the inlets (8), whose name is Haya akitsuhiko no kami 速秋津日子神, and next his sister-spouse Haya akitsuhime no kami 速秋津比壳神 (9).

[Gloss:] *From Iwatsuchibiko no kami to Akitsuhime no kami is ten deities altogether.*

These two deities, Haya akitsuhiko no kami and Haya akitsuhime no kami, divided between themselves charge of the rivers and the seas (10). The names of the deities [they] bore are Awanagi no kami 沫那芸神; next, Awanami no kami 沫那美神 (11); next, Tsuranagi no kami 頼那芸神; next, Tsuranami no kami 頼那美神 (12); next, Ame no mikumari no kami 天之水分神; next, Kuni no mikumari no kami 国之水分神 (13); next, Ame no kuhizamochi no kami 天之久比奢母智神; next, Kuni no kuhizamochi no kami 国之久比奢母智神 (14).

[Gloss:] *From Awanagi no kami to Kuni no kuhizamochi no kami is eight deities altogether (15).*

Next [Izanaki and Izanami] bore the deity of the wind, whose name is Shinatsuhiko no kami 志那都比古神 (16). Then they gave birth to the deity of the trees, whose name is Kukunochi no kami 久々能智神 (17). Next they bore the deity of the mountains, whose name is Ōyamatsumi no kami 大山津見神 (18). Next they bore the deity of the meadows, whose name is Kayanohime no kami 鹿屋野比壳神 (19). [This deity's] other name is Notsuchi no kami 野椎神 (20).

[Gloss:] *From Shinatsuhiko no kami to Notsuchi no kami is four deities altogether (21).*

These two deities, Ōyamatsumi no kami and Notsuchi no kami (22), divided between themselves charge of the mountains and meadows. The names of the deities [they] bore are Ame no sazuchi no kami 天之狭土神; next Kuni no sazuchi no kami 国之狭土神; next, Ame no sagiri no kami 天之狭霧神; next, Kuni no sagiri no kami 国之狭霧神 (23); next, Ame no kurato no kami 天之閨戸神; next, Kuni no kurato no kami 国之閨戸神 (24); next, Ōtomatoiko no kami 大戸或子神; next, Ōtomatoime no kami 大戸或女神 (25).

[Gloss:] *From Ame no sazuchi no kami to Ōtomatoime no kami is eight deities altogether.*

Next [Izanaki and Izanami] gave birth to a deity whose name is Tori no iwakusufune no kami 鳥之石楠舩神. [This deity's] other name is Ame no torifune 天鳥舩 (26). Next they bore Ōgetsuhime no kami 大宜都比売神 (27). Next they bore Hi no yagihayao no kami 火之夜芸速男神 (28). [This deity's] other name is Hi no kakabiko no kami 火之炫毗古神 (29). Another name is Hi no kagutsuchi no kami 火之迦具土神 (30).

Text Notes

1. Ōkoto oshio no kami 大事忍男神

Motoori Norinaga equates this deity with the deity Koto tokenoo 事解之男, who appears in the eleventh variant of the fifth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter; Norinaga postulates that the name implies “completion of a great accomplishment.” Since he takes the morpheme *oshi* 忍 to be a laudatory element equivalent to *ōshi* 大 (“great”), he sees the theonym as doubly laudatory.¹ Subsequent commentators differ as to whether the “great accomplishment” refers to the “birth of the land” described in the preceding passage or the “birth of deities” that follows hereafter. Nishimiya Kazutami holds that “one typical feature of the *Kojiki*'s mode of expression is to present the conclusion first.” He consequently takes “great accomplishment” to prefigure the following account of “giving birth to deities.” Interpreting the morpheme *oshi* 忍 as meaning “to press down,” “to hold down” (*osaetsukeru* 押さえつける), he sees it as used in praise of a strong, vigorous figure.²

2. Iwatsuchibiko no kami 石土毗古神 / Iwasuhime no kami 石巢比売神

The deity Iwatsuchibiko (“man of rocks and soil”) is a deification of the rocks and soil that provide the foundation for a dwelling. Many consider Iwasuhime to be a counterpart female deity of rocks and sand, but Nishimiya Kazutami takes *su* 巢 (“nest”) to mean “dwelling” and postulates that she is a deity of dwellings as strong as rocks.³ Many commentators hold the following succession of deities to be linked to the construction of dwellings. Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu counter, however, that the overall narrative context presents the birth of the land followed by the birth of deities representing natural phenomena. It thus would be more appropriate in their view to see the next several deities as also related to the natural environment. They take Iwatsuchibiko and Iwasuhime as signifying the material consolidation of the islands whose birth was described in the preceding episode.⁴

¹ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 203–204; Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 56–57. The editors read 事解之男 as Koto sakanoo. (TN)

² Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, pp. 32n5, 330, 332.

³ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 333.

⁴ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, p. 38n13.

3. Ōtohiwake no kami 大戸日別神

Some take *to* 戸 (“door”) to be a phonetic representation of *to* 処 (“place”) and to indicate a dwelling. Others adopt the graph’s meaning of “door” and see it as referring here to a dwelling’s gate. The graph *hi* 日 (“sun”) is generally held to be a phonetic representation of *hi* 霊 (“spirit”), but is this interpretation congruent with that of the names “so-and-so-hiwake” ○○日別 seen in the preceding episode? Further consideration of this point would seem desirable.

4. Ame no fukio no kami 天之吹男神

Commentators generally take the graph *fuku* 吹 (“to blow”) here as a phonetic representation of *fuku* 葺 (“to thatch”) and see this deity as linked to the thatching of roofs. Elsewhere in the *Kojiki*, however, the graph 吹 is used in connection with “breath” or “wind”; this is the only instance where it might be considered to be used phonetically.

5. Ōyabiko no kami 大屋毘古神

The core element of this name is the graph *ya* 屋. Some hold that here it means “roof” (*yane* 屋根), others that it means “dwelling” (*kaoku* 家屋). The deity Yafune no mikoto 屋船命 figuring in the Ōtonohokai 大庭祭 liturgy for the safety of the palace is said to be a deification of the imperial palace, and Ōyabiko no kami may be of a similar nature. Views diverge as to whether this deity can be identified with the one of the same name from the land of Ki who subsequently appears in the story of Ōanamuji. As that story also refers to the erection of a hall for Ōanamuji, the two Ōyabiko no kami are plausibly the same entity.⁵

Sendai kuji hongī 先代旧事本紀 (ninth century) gives the name Ōyabiko no kami 大屋彦神 as an alternative name of the deity Isotakeru 五十猛, an offspring of Susanoo. Isotakeru was enshrined in Kii Province, and some would see the later *Kojiki* reference to Ōyabiko no kami as being from the land of Ki as suggesting a link to that narrative. Isotakeru does not appear in the *Kojiki*, however, and it describes Ōyabiko no kami as an offspring of Izanaki and Izanami. It thus seems best not to conflate the two narratives.

6. Kazamotsuwake no oshio no kami 風木津別之忍男神

Kurano Kenji suggests that this name may mean keeping the wind from blowing away a roof—in other words, this is a deity who protects roofs.⁶ Saigō Nobutsuna notes that it is difficult to grasp the name’s meaning, but continues, “If I were to venture an opinion, the name may be linked to that of the deities of the wind (*kaze* 風) and trees (*ki* 木) that are

⁵ See chapters 26 and 28 and Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 112–13. For further discussion, see also Taniguchi Masahiro, “Ki no kuni no Ōyabiko no kami.”

⁶ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, pp. 171–72.

mentioned below. Or it may simply be meant to introduce (or echo) the particle *tsu*, which will appear in the names of the next deities, Ōwatatsumi no kami 大綿津見神 and Haya akitsuhiko no kami 速秋津日子神.⁷ Nishimiya Kazutami takes the name to mean “a man so full of male vigor as to hold out against the wind” and to express the deification of a dwelling’s durability.⁸

These commentators all read the name Kazamotsuwake no oshio no kami, but Kōnoshi Takamitsu and Yamaguchi Yoshinori hold that it should be read Kazamokutsuwake. Introducing a variety of evidence in support of this approach, they argue that the compilers may have used the graph 木 to indicate that *moku* should be read as a single lexical unit rather than abbreviated as *mo*.⁹

A central problem with this deity name is the accompanying reading gloss: “Read 風 as *kaza*; read 木 according to its *on* 音 [pronunciation]” (訓風云加耶訓木以音). The irregular format of this gloss, with its specification to use an *on* pronunciation, suggests a need to reconsider the meaning of the term 訓 (*kun/yomu*, “read as,” usually interpreted to mean “read according to the Japanese pronunciation”).¹⁰ Saijō Tsutomu 西條勉 proposes that this gloss may have been intended to indicate that the reading should be phonetic but also retain the meaning “tree” of the graph 木. In other words, the compilers used the graph for both its phonetic value and its meaning.¹¹

7. “The deity of the seas, whose name is Ōwatatsumi no kami” (*umi no kami, na wa Ōwatatsumi no kami* 海神名大綿津見神)

Wata means “sea,” *tsu* is a possessive particle, *mi* conveys the sense of “spirit.” This deity is a counterpart to the deity of the mountains, Ōyamatsumi (see text note 18).

8. “Deity of the inlets” (*minato no kami* 水戸神)

Minato conveys the idea of a portal through which water flows in and out. The *Kojiki* transcribes *minato* in deity names as 水戸, but elsewhere, as with the toponym Onominato 男水門 in the land of Kii, it renders it as 水門. The phrase “strait of swift tidal currents” (*hayasui no to* 速吸門), a description of the Akashi strait, likewise adopts the graph 門. These usages suggest a difference in the understanding of the scope of the graphs 門 (“gate”) and 戸 (“door”).¹² We will address the implications of 戸 more fully below in the Land of Yomi (Yomotsukuni) episode.¹³

⁷ Saigō, *Kojiki chūshaku*, vol. 1, p. 135.

⁸ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, pp. 333–34.

⁹ Kōnoshi and Yamaguchi, *Kojiki chūkai*, vol. 2, pp. 143–45. They hold that *mo* here is a *kō* 甲-type syllable.

¹⁰ See Arashi, “‘Kun un’ ni tsuite no ichi kōsatsu.”

¹¹ Saijō, *Kojiki no mojihō*, pp. 22–26.

¹² For these two instances, see Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 142–45.

¹³ See chapter 11, text note 1.

9. **Haya akitsuhiko no kami** 速秋津日子神 / **Haya akitsuhime no kami** 速秋津比売神

Haya (“swift”) is a laudatory element seen in the names of deities such as *Haya susanoo* in the *Kojiki* or *Haya surahime* in the *Ōharae* 大祓 liturgy for purification of the land. Since *Haya akitsuhiko* and *Haya akitsuhime* are “deities of the inlets,” *haya* here presumably alludes to the swiftness of the current. Some see the morpheme *aki* 秋 (“autumn”) as a phonetic equivalent for “bright” (明) or “open” (開), but this remains uncertain. Kanda Hideo and Ōta Yoshimaro interpret it as conveying the release of water as it flows from a river mouth into the sea, whereas Nakajima Etsuji and others see it as linked to the washing away of pollution in a swift current.¹⁴

10. “Divided between themselves charge . . . [and] bore” (*mochiwakite umeru* 持別而生)

“Divided between themselves” (*mochiwakite* 持別) indicates that the two deities divided responsibility between themselves, one as the deity of the rivers, and the other as the deity of the seas. Opinions diverge as to the implications of the following verb *umu* 生 (“to give birth”). The Edo-period commentator Watarai Nobuyoshi took the verb’s subject to be *Haya akitsuhiko* and *Haya akitsuhime*.¹⁵ In contrast, Motoori Norinaga held that *Izanaki* and *Izanami* gave birth to all the deities mentioned in this passage.¹⁶

Even today, opinions differ on this point, related to the issue of the later description of *Izanaki* and *Izanami* as having given birth to thirty-five deities (see chapter 7). *Nishimiya Kazutami* argues that although *Haya akitsuhiko* and *Haya akitsuhime* are male and female deities, they cannot be the subject of the verb *umitamaeru* (“give birth”) because nowhere are they said to have united themselves conjugally. Rather, by dividing between themselves the management of their respective realms, *Haya akitsuhiko* and *Haya akitsuhime* facilitated *Izanaki* and *Izanami*’s continuing to give birth to deities. He thus postulates that all the deities born in this episode are the offspring of *Izanaki* and *Izanami*.¹⁷ *Kōnoshi Takamitsu* and *Yamaguchi Yoshinori* take the opposite position. Holding that 持別而 should be read *mochiwakete* (expressing a physical act of division) rather than *mochiwakite* (conveying a more abstract allocation of authority), they argue that *Izanaki* and *Izanami* are not the subject of the full phrase 持別而生. It is instead *Haya akitsuhiko* and *Haya akitsuhime*, who, having taken charge of their respective realms, jointly produce the following deities as their offshoots (*hasei shite itta* 派生していった).¹⁸

¹⁴ Kanda and Ōta, *Kojiki*, vol. 1, p. 183n10; Nakajima, *Kojiki hyōshaku*, p. 47.

¹⁵ Watarai Nobuyoshi, *Gōtō Kojiki*, pp. 24–25.

¹⁶ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 208, 222–23.

¹⁷ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 33n11.

¹⁸ Kōnoshi and Yamaguchi, *Kojiki chūkai*, vol. 2, pp. 146–47.

11. Awanagi no kami 沫那芸神 / Awanami no kami 沫那美神

These are male and female deifications of the spume forming on the sea's surface. Some see the names as combining *awa* 泡 (“spume,” “foam”), the particle *na*, and the gender suffixes *gi* (“man”) / *mi* (“woman”). Others see them as combining *awa* 泡 and *nagi* 凪 (“calm sea”) / *nami* 波 (“wave”).

12. Tsuranagi no kami 頼那芸神 / Tsuranami no kami 頼那美神

The consensus is that *tsura* (“face”) alludes to a water surface, but as with the preceding Awanagi no kami and Awanami no kami, opinions diverge regarding *nagi* and *nami*. Some see these as gender markers, others as meaning “calm sea” (*nagi*) or “wave” (*nami*). Nishimiya Kazutami holds that “in the context of Izanaki and Izanami's giving birth to the deities, Tsuranagi was born on the land side of a river mouth and Tsuranami on the water side.”¹⁹ This conclusion cannot be derived from the deity names alone, however.

13. Ame no mikumari no kami 天之水分神 / Kuni no mikumari no kami 国之水分神

From Motoori Norinaga on the element *kumari* has been interpreted as meaning “distribution” (*kubari* 分配).²⁰ The comprehensive list of shrines (*jinmyōchō* 神名帳) in the tenth-century *Engi shiki* 延喜式 lists several examples of Mikumari shrines in Yamato Province, including in Yoshino 吉野 in Yoshino district, Uda 宇太 in Uda 宇陀 district, Tsuge 都祁 in Yamanobe 山辺 district, and Katsuraki 葛木 in Katsurakinokami 葛上 district. Dedicated to the water deity Mikumari no kami, these shrines are located at points important to the supply of water to the Nara basin, such as river sources in the surrounding mountains.

14. Ame no kuhizamochi no kami 天之久比奢母智神 / Kuni no kuhizamochi no kami 国之久比奢母智神

Norinaga posits that *kuhizamochi* is a contraction of *kumi hisago mochi* 汲匏持 (“to draw [water],” “gourd,” and “to carry”).²¹ Yamada Yoshio holds that the Mikumari deities cause water to spring forth and these deities see that it is properly distributed.²² Saigō Nobutsuna takes *mochi* to be an honorific similar to *muchī/mochi* in the name of the deity Ōnamuji.²³ Nishimiya Kazutami understands *hiza* not as a gourd (*hisago*) but a ladle (*hishaku* 柄杓).²⁴

¹⁹ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 335.

²⁰ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 209–10.

²¹ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 210.

²² Yamada, *Kojiki jōkan kōgi*, pp. 279–82.

²³ Saigō, *Kojiki chūshaku*, vol. 1, p. 139.

²⁴ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 336.

15. “From Awanagi no kami to Kuni no kuhizamochi no kami is eight deities altogether” (Awanagi no kami yori Kuni no kuhizamochi no kami ni itaru made wa, awasete yahashira no kami zo 自沫那芸神至国之久比奢母智神并八神)

The eight deities specified in this note incorporated in the *Kojiki* text are all related to water. Mikumari no kami, Kuhizamochi no kami, and Haya akitsuhime no kami appear respectively in the *norito* 祝詞 liturgies for rites to pray for a good crop (Kinensai 祈年祭), protection from fire (Chinkasai 鎮火祭), and purification of the land (Ōharae).

16. “The deity of the wind, whose name is Shinatsuhiko no kami” (*kaze no kami, na wa Shinatsuhiko no kami* 風神名志那都比古神)

Norinaga suggests that *shina* may be related to the term *shinaga* found in ancient texts, which in turn may derive from *okinaga* 息長 (“long breath”).²⁵ Kurano Kenji counters that *shi* cannot be derived from *oki*. He takes as reference instead the transcription of the wind deity’s name as Shinatsuhiko no mikoto 級長津彦命 in the sixth variant of the fifth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter and posits that *shina* combines two elements: *shi*, meaning “wind,” and *na*, meaning “long.”²⁶ Nakamura Hirotoishi suggests that *na* may come from *ana* 穴 (“hole”).²⁷

The graph 風 (“wind”) occurs two times in the *Kojiki* preface, eight times in the first book, and two times in the second. Some of these instances associate the wind with sea travel, as when a favorable wind aids Empress Jingū’s 神功 crossing the sea to Silla.²⁸ Others suggest that the wind may have been believed to reach to the heavens, as when it carries the wails of the spouse of the deceased Ame no wakahiko to the heavens.²⁹

17. “The deity of the trees, whose name is Kukunochi no kami” (*ki no kami, na wa Kukunochi no kami* 木神名久々能智神)

Norinaga holds that *kuku* has the same meaning as *kuki* 茎 (“stalk”).³⁰ The compilers of the *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系 edition of the *Nihon shoki* take it to be an ancient form of *kiki* 木木 (“trees”).³¹ Opinion continues to divide between these two interpretations. Saigō Nobutsuna, who adopts the “trees” theory, argues that “stalk” might be used in reference to grass and flowers, but that it cannot be applied to trees.³² Kurano Kenji, by contrast, seconds the “stalk” theory, noting that terms meaning “stalk” are phonetically transcribed as *kuku* in *Man’yōshū* poems 3406 and 3444. As he

²⁵ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 210–11.

²⁶ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, p. 178; Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 42–43.

²⁷ Nakamura, *Shinpan Kojiki*, p. 29n6.

²⁸ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 246–47.

²⁹ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 102–103.

³⁰ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 211.

³¹ Sakamoto et al., *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, p. 86n2.

³² Saigō, *Kojiki chūshaku*, vol. 1, pp. 140–41.

acknowledges, however, these two poems are *azuma uta* 東歌, or “songs from the east,” and they thus may not represent standard usage.³³ The Ōtonohokai liturgy for the protection of the palace includes an explanatory note identifying the deity Yafune kukunochi no mikoto 屋船久久遲命 as “the spirit of trees.”³⁴ Judging from these points, the “trees” interpretation seems more plausible.

18. “The deity of the mountains, whose name is Ōyamatsumi no kami” (*yama no kami, na wa Ōyamatsumi no kami* 山神名大山津見神)

This name is homologous to that of the deity of the seas, Ōwatatsumi no kami (see text note 7). A deity of the same name appears in two subsequent *Kojiki* episodes: that in which Susanoo slays the eight-tailed serpent and that of Ninigi’s descent to earth. Some, such as Kurano Kenji, hold that the deity named here is different from the Ōyamatsumi figuring in these later passages.³⁵ There is no clear evidence to support such a conclusion, however. More notable are the circumstances surrounding the mountain and sea deities following Ninigi’s descent to earth. Ninigi and his descendants marry daughters of these two deities, thereby incorporating their powers into the heavenly deity–imperial lineage. The implications of the presentation here of the mountain and sea deities as offspring of Izanagi and Izanagi should be considered in that context.

19. “The deity of the meadows, Kayanohime no kami” (*no no kami, na wa Kayanohime no kami* 野神名鹿屋野比売神)

This deity is the deification of meadows (*no* 野) where *kaya* grass grows.

20. Notsuchi no kami 野椎神

This deity name means “spirit of meadows” and indicates a link to grasses and meadows. The *Nihon shoki* identifies it as “ancestor of the grasses” (*kusa no oya* 草祖).³⁶

21. “From Shinatsuhiko no kami to Notsuchi no kami is four deities altogether” (*Shinatsuhiko no kami yori Notsuchi no kami ni itaru made wa awasete yohashira no kami zo* 自志那都比古神至野椎并四神)

The four deities in this group represent natural phenomena closely related to human life—wind, trees, mountains, and meadows.

³³ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, p. 179; Kojima et al., *Man’yōshū*, SNKBZ 8, pp. 474, 484–85. *Azuma uta* are held to reflect the popular language of the eastern regions and include many colloquial words that differ from the language associated with the Yamato region. (TN)

³⁴ Kurano and Takeda, *Kojiki, Norito*, pp. 418–19.

³⁵ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, p. 180.

³⁶ Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 34–35.

22. “These two deities, Ōyamatsumi no kami and Notsuchi no kami” (*kono Ōyamatsumi no kami Notsuchi no kami futahashira* 此大山津見神野椎神二神)

The second of the two deities named here is identified not by its main name, Kayanohime no kami, given when it was first mentioned, but its alternative name, Notsuchi no kami. Norinaga points out that the *Kojiki* frequently uses the alternative name for subsequent references to a deity.³⁷

23. Ame no sagiri no kami 天之狭霧神 / Kuni no sagiri no kami 国之狭霧神

Norinaga takes *sagiri* to mean “the end of a slope” (*saka no kagiri* 坂の限り) and interprets these deities as border deities.³⁸ Kurano Kenji holds that *sa* 狭 is a prefix and that *kiri* 霧 should be understood according to the graph’s meaning of “mist,” “fog.”³⁹ If these deities are to be understood as resulting from the division of charge over the mountains and meadows, “mist” seems the most plausible interpretation. Yamada Yoshio points out that mist arises from both mountains and meadows and extends from heaven to earth.⁴⁰ The digraph 狭霧 occurs a total of nine times in the *Kojiki*. Apart from here and in the deity name Ame no sagiri no kami 天狭霧神, mentioned in the lineage descended from Ōkuninushi, the instances are concentrated in the “misty spray” produced in the contest of oaths (*ukei* 宇気比) between Amaterasu and Susanoo.⁴¹

24. Ame no kurato no kami 天之闇戸神 / Kuni no kurato no kami 国之闇戸神

Norinaga views the morpheme *to* 戸 as a phonetic representation of *to* 処, “place,” and takes *kura* 闇 to mean “valley,” “ravine.”⁴² Ogiwara Asao interprets *kura* as “dark” (*kurai* 闇い) and *to* as “place,” with the combination meaning “a dark place between the mountains,” namely a ravine. He sees the sequence “mountain → meadow → soil → mist → ravine” represented by the deities in this passage as expressing a perspective rooted in the everyday life of the people of antiquity.⁴³ Kurano Kenji holds that the graph 闇 here expresses the graph’s innate meaning of “dark,” but at the same time carries the sense of a ravine; it thus has a double meaning.⁴⁴

The graph 闇 occurs a total of ten times in the *Kojiki*. It appears in the deity names Kura okami no kami 闇淤加美神, Kura mitsuha no kami 闇御津羽神, and Kura yamatsumi no kami 闇山津見神 (produced when Izanaki slays the fire deity; see chapter 8), and as the name of a consort of a son of Emperor Kaika 開化, Saho no ōkura

³⁷ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 213.

³⁸ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 213–14.

³⁹ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, p. 182.

⁴⁰ Yamada, *Kojiki jōkan kōgi*, pp. 298–99.

⁴¹ See chapters 16 and 33.

⁴² Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 214.

⁴³ Ogiwara, *Kojiki, Jōdai kayō*, p. 59n18.

⁴⁴ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, pp. 182–83.

mitome 沙本之大闇見戸壳.⁴⁵ It occurs also in the episode where Amaterasu Ōmikami conceals herself in the Heavenly Rock Cave. There it is related that “Takamanohara thereupon became completely dark (*mina kuraku* 皆暗), and Ashihara no nakatsukuni became totally dark (*kotogotoku kurashi* 悉闇) as well” (chapter 17). Amaterasu repeats the same words in her declaration, “Since I am in hiding, the Heavenly Plain should surely be dark (*onozukara kuraku* 自闇) and Ashihara no nakatsukuni completely dark (*mina kurakemu* 皆闇) as well” (chapter 19).

25. Ōtomatoiko no kami 大戸或子神 / Ōtomatoime no kami 大戸或女神

The graph 或 (“a certain,” “or”) is a substitute for 惑 (“bewilder,” “go astray”). Norinaga hypothesizes that the name may reflect the culmination of a sequence of events: “mist arises from the soil, it becomes dark, and people are bewildered.” In other words, it conveys the idea of going astray because of mist enveloping the meadows.⁴⁶ Nakamura Hirotoishi suggests that the sequence of divinities born from the mountain and meadow deities expresses the idea of mist enveloping the earth and turbulent air arising from a dark ravine.⁴⁷ Two other deity names with the element 大戸 occur in the *Kojiki*: Ōtohiwake no kami 大戸日別神 (see text note 3 above), and Ōhehime no kami 大戸比壳神, who appears subsequently in the list of the descendants of Ōtoishi no kami 大年神. In the latter passage the text adds that “this is the hearth (*he* 竈) deity worshiped by the multitudes,”⁴⁸ and commentators read the graph 戸 there also as *he* (see chapter 35).

The graph 或 occurs twelve times in the *Kojiki*. Apart from instances where it means “or, either,” it is used with the meaning “to daze,” “to bewilder” in the chronicle of Emperor Keikō in the phrase, “Then, [the deity of Ibukinoyama 伊服岐能山 mountain] brought about a great sleet storm that dazed Yamatotakeru.”⁴⁹ *Jiyun* 集韻 (a Chinese phonetic dictionary compiled in 1039) indicates that the graph 或 can serve as a substitute for 惑, and Onoda Mitsuo holds that the earliest extant *Kojiki* manuscripts’ use of 或 in the sense of “to daze” is true to the text’s original form.⁵⁰

The text includes a gloss after Ōtomatoiko no kami’s name stating that “the graph 或 should be read *matohi* [*matoi*] here and below” (訓或云麻刀比下效此). Kōnoshi Takamitsu and Yamaguchi Yoshinori note that the graph 惑/或 was used to transcribe both the intransitive verb *matou* and the transitive form *matowasu*. They conclude:

This gloss is thus best understood as intended to specify that the graph should be read in the intransitive form *matoi* and not the transitive form *matowashi*. Interpretation of

⁴⁵ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 176–77.

⁴⁶ Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, pp. 214–15.

⁴⁷ Nakamura, *Shinpan Kojiki*, p. 29n10.

⁴⁸ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, SNKZ 1, pp. 96–97.

⁴⁹ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 230–31.

⁵⁰ Onoda, *Kojiki*, p. 70.

this theonym will vary depending on interpretation of the graph 戸 that precedes 或. In general, however, deities are seen as more likely to bewilder people than to become bewildered themselves, a circumstance that could easily lead to adoption here of the transitive reading *matowashi*. Quite likely the compilers sought to forestall this possibility through a gloss indicating that 或 should be read as *matoi*.⁵¹

26. **Tori no iwakusufune no kami** 鳥之石楠舩神 / **Ame no torifune** 天鳥舩

The names of this deity indicate that it is a deification of ships. *Tori no iwakusufune* conveys the sense of a ship (*fune*) that sails as fast as a bird (*tori*) and is made of camphor wood (*kusu*) as hard as a rock (*iwa*). Thinking of heaven and sea as a continuum presumably led the ancients to associate birds flying in the sky with ships sailing on the sea.

A variant fragment of the *Harima no kuni fudoki* describes a ship made of a giant tree and named Hayatori 速鳥 (“fast bird”).⁵² *Man’yōshū* poem 1068 illustrates the superimposition of sky and sea: “Waves of clouds rise in the sky sea (*ame no umi* 天海), and the moon vessel appears to glide into the forest of stars and disappear.”⁵³ Matsumae Takeshi points out that people worldwide envisioned both the sun and moon as being carried by ships.⁵⁴

The main text of the fifth section of the *Nihon shoki* Age of Deities chapter describes Izanaki and Izanami as setting the *hiruko*, the leech-child, adrift in a boat called *Ama no iwakusufune* 天磐櫂樟舩. The second variant of the same section states that Izanaki and Izanami gave birth to the boat *Tori no iwakusufune* 鳥磐櫂樟舩 after bearing the leech-child and Susanoo no mikoto, whereupon they put the leech-child in the boat and set it adrift.⁵⁵ The *Nihon shoki* does not mention *Ame no torifune*, but the *Kojiki* subsequently relates that *Ame no torifune* is sent down to earth together with *Takemikazuchi no kami* when the latter is dispatched to pacify *Ashihara no nakatsukuni*.⁵⁶

27. **Ōgetsuhime no kami** 大宜都比売神

The name *Ōgetsuhime* appeared in the preceding episode as an alternative name of the land of Awa. The *Ōgetsuhime* named here should probably be distinguished from that one, but she can perhaps be identified with another deity of the same name, a female deity who figures in the episode relating the origin of the five grains and is killed by Susanoo.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Kōnoshi and Yamaguchi, *Kojiki chūkai*, vol. 2, pp. 147–48.

⁵² Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 492–93.

⁵³ Kojima et al., *Man’yōshū*, SNKBZ 7, p. 185.

⁵⁴ Matsumae, *Nihon shinwa no shin kenkyū*, pp. 57–75.

⁵⁵ Kojima et al., *Nihon shoki*, SNKBZ 2, pp. 36–37, 38–39.

⁵⁶ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 106–107.

⁵⁷ See chapter 20, particularly the further comment to text note 2.

28. Hi no yagihayao no kami 火之夜芸速男神

Yagi 夜芸 can perhaps be understood as *yaki* 焼 (“to burn”) and *haya* 速 (“swift”) as expressing a fire’s momentum. Some, such as Nishimiya Kazutami, thus take this entity to be a male deity with a fire’s rapid blazing force.⁵⁸ Ogiwara Asao hypothesizes that the sequence “ship → food → fire” seen in this deity name and the previous two (Tori no iwakusufune and Ōgetsuhime) may express an association between ships transporting foodstuffs (grains and drinking water) which are then cooked with fire.⁵⁹

29. Hi no kakabiko no kami 火之炫毘古神

The name means “male with a fire’s bright shining.” *Kaka* 炫 means “shine brightly.” The verb “to shine” is pronounced *kagayaku* today, but until the Muromachi period it was pronounced *kakayaku*. The *Izumo no kuni fudoki* includes an account of a village called Kaka 加賀 in Shimane 島根 district. It relates that when the deity Kisakahime 支佐加比売 “shot [an arrow] with a golden bow, a light shone brightly (*hikari kakayakinu* 光加加明也). Therefore, this is [called the village of] Kaka 加加).”⁶⁰

Kaka could become *kaku* through a phonetic shift. Some thus hold that the *kakuya* 加久矢 arrow that figures in Amewakahiko’s betrayal of his mission to pacify Ashihara no nakatsukuni was a shining arrow made of metal, or that the fruit of the perpetually blooming *kaku* 迦玖 tree that Emperor Suinin ordered Tajimamori 多遲摩毛理 to bring back from the eternal realm was the fruit of the Tachibana 橘 orange (*Citrus tachibana*), which shines like gold.⁶¹ These inferences cannot be confirmed, however.

30. Hi no kagutsuchi no kami 火之迦具土神

Norinaga takes *kagu* 迦具 to mean *kagayaku* 赫 (“to shine”) and considers *kaga*, *kage*, and *kagu* all to be variants of the same word.⁶² Kurano Kenji rejects Norinaga’s view on the grounds that equating *kagu* with *kagayaku* would result in the alternative deity name Hi no kagutsuchi no kami having the same meaning as the preceding Hi no kakabiko no kami. Further, he holds, ancient texts contain no examples of the word *kagu* being used with the meaning *kagayaku* (“to shine”). He sees a pertinent parallel in the name Kaguyahime (the heroine of the early Heian-period *Taketori monogatari* 竹取物語), but argues that this name, too, has been mistakenly associated with *kagayaku*. Rather than *kagayaku*, *kagu* in both Kaguyahime and Kagutsuchi derives from *kaguwashi* (“sweet-smelling”).⁶³ Nishimiya Kazutami takes the words *kaga*, *kagi*, *kagu*, and *kage* to mean “flicker” and the name Hi no kagutsuchi to convey the sense of “a fire that burns with a

⁵⁸ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 340.

⁵⁹ Ogiwara, *Kojiki, Jōdai kayō*, p. 59n22.

⁶⁰ Uegaki, *Fudoki*, pp. 162–63.

⁶¹ Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi, *Kojiki*, pp. 102–103, 210–11. See also chapters 37 and 38.

⁶² Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den*, MNZ 9, p. 217.

⁶³ Kurano, *Kojiki zenchūshaku*, vol. 2, pp. 185–88.

flickering light.” The distinction between Hi no kakabiko and Hi no kagutsuchi is, he holds, that the former name conveys the magical powers of illumination and the latter the magical powers of a fire’s burning.⁶⁴

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⁶⁴ Nishimiya, *Kojiki*, p. 341.