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Other Traditions

Kojiki — The Age of the Gods

(sections I–XIX)

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Ō no Yasumaro (compiler), from the recitation of Hieda no Are

Basil Hall Chamberlain (1882)

Credits

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About:

The Kojiki ("Records of Ancient Matters") is the oldest book of Japan, compiled in 712 by Ō no Yasumaro from the traditions that Hieda no Are knew by heart. It is the chief source of the myths of Shinto and of the divine origin of the imperial house.

This selection gives the beginning of the Age of the Gods: the deities who arise when heaven and earth begin; the pair Izanagi and Izanami (here "the Male-Who-Invites" and "the Female-Who-Invites"), who stir the sea with a spear and give birth to the islands of Japan and to many gods; the death of Izanami in giving birth to the fire-god and Izanagi's descent to the land of the dead; the purification from which are born Amaterasu, goddess of the sun, Tsukuyomi, of the moon, and Susanoo, the impetuous; the contest between Amaterasu and Susanoo, the goddess hidden in the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling and drawn out by the dance of Ame-no-Uzume; and Susanoo's victory over the eight-forked serpent, from whose tail he takes the sacred sword.

Amaterasu is still worshipped at the Ise shrine, the holiest in Japan, and the sword Susanoo takes from the serpent is one of the three sacred treasures of the imperial regalia.

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THE BEGINNING OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

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The names of the Deities that were born in the Plain of High Heaven when the Heaven and Earth began were the Deity Master-of-the-August-Centre-of-Heaven, next the High-August-Producing-Wondrous Deity, next the Divine-Producing-Wondrous-Deity. These three Deities were all Deities born alone, and hid their persons.

The names of the Deities that were born next from a thing that sprouted up like unto a reed-shoot when the earth, young and like unto floating oil, drifted about medusa-like, were the Pleasant-Reed-Shoot-Prince-Elder Deity, next the Heavenly-Eternally-Standing-Deity. These two Deities were likewise born alone, and hid their persons.

The five Deities in the above list are separate Heavenly Deities.

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THE SEVEN DIVINE GENERATIONS

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The names of the Deities that were born next were the Earthly-Eternally-Standing-Deity, next the Luxuriant-Integrating-Master-Deity. These two Deities were likewise Deities born alone, and hid their persons.

The names of the Deities that were born next were the Deity Mud-Earth-Lord, next his younger sister the Deity Mud-Earth-Lady; next the Germ-Integrating-Deity, next his younger sister the Life-Integrating-Deity; next the Deity Elder-of-the-Great-Place, next his younger sister the Deity Elder-Lady-of-the-Great-Place; next the Deity Perfect-Exterior, next his younger sister the Deity Oh-Awful-Lady; next the Deity the Male-Who-Invites, next his younger sister the Deity the Female-Who-Invites.

From the Earthly-Eternally-Standing Deity down to the Deity the Female-Who-Invites in the previous list are what are termed the Seven Divine Generations. (The two solitary Deities above [-mentioned] are each called one generation. Of the succeeding ten Deities each pair of deities is called a generation.)

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THE ISLAND OF ONOGORO

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Hereupon all the Heavenly Deities commanded the two Deities His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites and Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites, ordering them to "make, consolidate, and give birth to this drifting land." Granting to them an heavenly jewelled spear, they [thus] deigned to charge them.

So the two Deities, standing upon the Floating Bridge of Heaven, pushed down the jewelled spear and stirred with it, whereupon, when they had stirred the brine till it went curdle-curdle, and drew [the spear] up, the brine that dripped down from the end of the spear was piled up and became an island. This is the Island of Onogoro.

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COURTSHIP OF THE DEITIES THE MALE-WHO-INVITES AND THE FEMALE-WHO-INVITES

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Having descended from Heaven onto this island, they saw to the erection of an heavenly august pillar, they saw to the erection of an hall of eight fathoms. Tunc quæsivit [Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat] a minore sorore Augustâ Feminâ-Qui-Invitat: “Tuum corpus quo in modo factum est?” Respondit dicens: “Meum corpus crescens crevit, sed una pars est quæ non crevit continua.”

Tunc dixit Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat: “Meum corpus crescens crevit, sed est una pars quæ crevit superflua. Ergo an bonum erit ut hanc corporis mei partem quæ crevit superflua in tui corporis partem quæ non crevit continua inseram, et regiones procreem?” Augusta Femina-Quæ-Invitat respondit dicens: “Bonum erit.”

Tunc dixit Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat: “Quod quum ita sit, ego et tu, hanc cœlestem augustam columnam circumeuntes mutuoque occurrentes, augustarum [i.e. privatarum] partium augustam coitionem faciemus.” Hâc pactione factâ, dixit [Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat]: “Tu a dexterâ circumeuns occurre; ego a sinistrâ occurram.”

Absolutâ pactione ubi circumierunt, Augusta Femina-Qui-Invitat primum inquit: “O venuste et amabilis adolescens!” Deinde Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat inquit: “O venusta et amabilis virgo!”

Postquam singuli orationi finem fecerunt, [Augustus Mas-Qui-Invitat] locutus est sorori, dicens: “Non decet feminam primum verba facere.” Nihilominus in thalamo [opus procreationis] inceperunt, et filium [nomine] Hirudinem [vel Hirudini similem] pepererunt. This child they placed in a boat of reeds, and let it float away. Next they gave birth to the Island of Aha. This likewise is not reckoned among their children.

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BIRTH OF THE EIGHT GREAT ISLANDS

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Hereupon the two Deities took counsel, saying: “The children to whom we have now given birth are not good. It will be best to announce this in the august place of the Heavenly Deities.” They ascended forthwith to Heaven and enquired of Their Augustnesses the Heavenly Deities.

Then the Heavenly Deities commanded and found out by grand divination, and ordered them, saying: “They were not good because the woman spoke first. Descend back again and amend your words.” So thereupon descending back, they again went round the heavenly august pillar as before. Thereupon his Augustness the Male-Who-Invites spoke first: “Ah! what a fair and lovely maiden!”

Afterwards his younger sister Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites spoke: “Ah! what a fair and lovely youth!” Tali modo quum orationi finem fecerant, auguste coierunt et pepererunt a child, the Island of Ahaji, Ho-no-sa-wake. Next they gave birth to the Island of Futa-na in Iyo. This island has one body and four faces, and each face has a name.

So the Land of Iyo is called Lovely-Princess; the Land of Sanuki is called Prince-Good-Boiled-Rice; the Land of Aha is called the Princess-of-Great-Food; the Land of Tosa is called Brave-Good-Youth.

Next they gave birth to the Islands of Mitsu-go near Oki, another name for which [islands] is Heavenly-Great-Heart-Youth. Next they gave birth

to the island of Tsukushi. This island likewise has one body and four faces, and each face has a name.

So the Land of Tsukushi is called White-Sun-Youth; the Land of Toyo is called Luxuriant-Sun-Youth; the Land of Hi is called Brave Sun-Confronting-Luxuriant-Wondrous-Lord-Youth; the Land of Kumaso is called Brave-Sun-Youth. Next they gave birth to the Island of Iki, another name for which is Heaven's One-Pillar.

Next they gave birth to the Island of Tsu, another name for which is Heavenly-Hand-net-Good-Princess. Next they gave birth to the Island of Sado. Next they gave birth to Great-Yamato-the-Luxuriant-Island-of-the-Dragon-Fly, another name for which is Heavenly-August-Sky-Luxuriant-Dragon-fly-Lord-Youth.

The name of "Land-of-the Eight-Great-Islands" therefore originated in these eight islands having been born first. After that, when they had returned, they gave birth to the Island of Ko [-zhima] in Kibi, another name for which [island] is Brave-Sun-Direction-Youth.

Next they gave birth to the Island of Adzuki, another name for which is Oho-Nu-De-Hime. Next they gave birth to the Island of Oho [-shima], another name for which is Oho-Tamaru-Wake. Next they gave birth to the Island of Hime, another name for which is Heaven's-One-Root. Next they gave birth to the Island of Chika, another name for which is Heavenly-Great-Male.

Next they gave birth to the Island[s] of Futa-go, another name for which is Heaven's-Two-Houses. (Six islands in all from the Island of Ko in Kibi to

the Island of Heaven's-Two-Houses.)

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BIRTH OF THE VARIOUS DEITIES

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When they had finished giving birth to countries, they began afresh giving birth to Deities.

So the name of the Deity they gave birth to was the Deity Great-Male-of-the-Great-Thing; next they gave birth to the Deity Rock-Earth-Prince; next they gave birth to the Deity Rock-Nest-Princess; next they gave birth to the Deity Great-Door-Sun-Youth; next they gave birth to the Deity Heavenly-Blowing-Male; next they gave birth to the Deity Great-House-Prince; next they gave birth to the Deity Youth-of-the-Wind-Breath-the-Great-Male; next they gave birth to the Sea-Deity, whose name is the Deity Great-Ocean-Possessor; next they gave birth to the Deity of the Water-Gates, whose name is the Deity Prince-of-Swift-Autumn; next they gave birth to his younger sister the Deity Princess-of-Swift-Autumn.

(Ten Deities in all from the Deity-Great-Male-of-the-Great-Thing to the Deity Princess-of-Autumn.) The names of the Deities given birth to by these two Deities Prince-of-Swift-Autumn and Princess-of-Swift-Autumn from their separate dominions of river and sea were: the Deity Foam-Calm; next the Deity Foam-Waves; next the Deity Bubble-Calm; Next the Deity Bubble-Waves; next the Deity Heavenly-Water-Divider; next the Deity Earthly-Water-Divider; next the Deity Heavenly-Water-Drawing-Gourd-Possessor; next the Deity Earthly-Water-Drawing-Gourd-Possessor.

(Eight Deities in all from the Deity Foam-Prince to the Deity Earthly-Water-Drawing-Gourd-Possessor.) Next they gave birth to the Deity of

Wind, whose name is the Deity Prince-of-Long-Wind.

Next they gave birth to the Deity of Trees, whose name is Deity Stem-Elder, next they gave birth to the Deity of Mountains, whose name is the Deity Great-Mountain-Possessor. Next they gave birth to the Deity of Moors, whose name is the Deity Thatch-Moor-Princess, another name for whom is the Deity Moor-Elder.

(Four Deities in all from the Deity Prince-of-Long-Wind to Moor-Elder.) The names of the Deities given birth to by these two Deities, the Deity Great-Mountain-Possessor and the Deity Moor-Elder from their separate dominions of mountain and moor were: the Deity Heavenly-Elder-of-the-Passes, next the Deity Earthly-Elder-of-the-Passes; next the Deity Heavenly-Pass-Boundary, next the Deity Earthly-Pass-Boundary; next the Deity Heavenly-Dark-Door, next the Deity Earthly Dark-Door; next the Deity Great-Vale-Prince, next the Deity Great-Vale-Princess.

(Eight Deities in all from the Deity Heavenly-Elder-of the-Passes to the Deity Great-Vale-Princess.) The name of the Deity they next gave birth to was the Deity Bird's-Rock-Camphor-tree-Boat, another name for whom is the Heavenly-Bird-Boat. Next they gave birth to the Deity Princess-of-Great-Food.

Next they gave birth to the Fire-Burning-Swift-Male-Deity, another name for whom is the Deity Fire-Shining-Prince, and another name is the Deity Fire-Shining-Elder.

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RETIREMENT OF HER AUGUSTNESS THE PRINCESS-WHO-INVITES

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Through giving birth to this child her august private parts were burnt, and she sickened and lay down. The names of the Deities born from her vomit were the Deity Metal-Mountain-Prince and next the Deity Metal-Mountain-Princess. The names of the Deities that were born from her fæces were the Deity Clay-Viscid-Prince and next the Deity Clay-Viscid-Princess.

The names of the Deities that were next born from her urine were the Deity Mitsuhanome and next the Young-Wondrous-Producing-Deity. The child of this Deity was called the Deity Luxuriant-Food-Princess. So the Deity the Female-Who-Invites, through giving birth to the Deity-of-Fire, at length divinely retired. (Eight Deities in all from the Heavenly-Bird-Boat to the Deity Luxuriant-Food-Princess.)

The total number of islands given birth to jointly by the two Deities the Male-Who-Invites and the Female-Who-Invites was fourteen, and of Deities thirty-five. (These are such as were given birth to before the Deity the Princess-Who-Invites divinely retired. Only the Island of Onogoro was not given birth to, and moreover the Leech-Child and the Island of Aha are not reckoned among the children.)

So then His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites said: “Oh! Thine Augustness my lovely younger sister! Oh! that I should have exchanged thee for this single child!”

And as he crept round her august pillow, and as he crept round her august feet and wept, there was born from his august tears the Deity that dwells at Konomoto near Unewo on Mount Kagu, and whose name is the Crying-Weeping-Female-Deity. So he buried the divinely retired Deity the Female-Who-Invites on Mount Hiba at the boundary of the Land of Idzumo and the Land of Hahaki.

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THE SLAYING OF THE FIRE-DEITY

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Then His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites, drawing the ten-grasp sabre that was augustly girded on him, cut off the head of his child the Deity Shining-Elder. Hereupon the names of the Deities that were born from the blood that stuck to the point of the august sword and bespattered the multitudinous rock-masses were: the Deity Rock-Splitter, next the Deity Root-Splitter, next the Rock-Possessing-Male-Deity.

The names of the Deities that were next born from the blood that stuck to the upper part of the august sword and again bespattered the multitudinous rock-masses were: the Awfully-Swift-Deity, next the Fire-Swift-Deity, next the Brave-Awful-Possessing-Male-Deity, another name for whom is the Brave-Snapping-Deity, and another name is the Luxuriant-Snapping Deity.

The names of the Deities that were next born from the blood that collected on the hilt of the august sword and leaked out between his fingers were: the Deity Kura-okami and next the Deity Kura-mitsuha.

All the eight Deities in the above list, from the Deity Rock-Splitter to the Deity Kura-mitsuha, are Deities that were born from the august sword.

The name of the Deity that was born from the head of the Deity Shining-Elder who had been slain was the Deity Possessor-of-the-True-Pass-Mountains. The name of the Deity that was next born from his chest was the Deity Possessor-of-Descent-Mountains. The name of the Deity that

was next born from his belly was the Deity Possessor-of-the-Innermost Mountains.

The name of Deity that was next born from his private parts was the Deity Possessor-of-the-Dark-Mountains. The name of the Deity that was next born from his left hand was the Deity Possessor-of-the-Dense[ly-Wooded]-Mountains. The name of the Deity that was next born from his right hand was the Deity Possessor-of-the-Outlying-Mountains.

The name of the Deity that was next born from his left foot was the Deity Possessor-of-the-Moorland-Mountains.

The name of the Deity that was next born from his right foot was the Deity Possessor-of-the-Outer-Mountains. (Eight Deities in all from the Deity Possessor-of-the-True-Pass-Mountains to the Deity Possessor-of-the-Outer-Mountains.) So the name of the sword with which [the Male-Who-Invites] cut off [his son's head] was Heavenly-Point-Blade-Extended, and another name was Majestic-Point-Blade-Extended.

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THE LAND OF HADES

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Thereupon [His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites], wishing to meet and see his younger sister Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites, followed after her to the Land of Hades.

So when from the palace she raised the door and came out to meet him, His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites spoke, saying: "Thine Augustness my lovely younger sister! the lands that I and thou made are not yet finished making; so come back!" Then Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites answered, saying: "Lamentable indeed that thou camest not sooner! I have eaten of the furnace of Hades. Nevertheless, as I reverence the entry here of Thine Augustness my lovely elder brother, I wish to return. Moreover I will discuss it particularly with the Deities of Hades. Look not at me!"

Having thus spoken, she went back inside the palace; and as she tarried there very long, he could not wait. So having taken and broken off one of the end-teeth of the multitudinous and close-toothed comb stuck in the august left bunch [of his hair], he lit one light and went in and looked.

Maggots were swarming, and [she was] rotting, and in her head dwelt the Great-Thunder, in her breast dwelt the Fire-Thunder, in her belly dwelt the Black-Thunder, in her private parts dwelt the Cleaving-Thunder, in her left hand dwelt the Young-Thunder, in her right hand dwelt the Earth-Thunder, in her left foot dwelt the Rumbling-Thunder, in her right foot

dwelt the Couchant-Thunder:—altogether eight Thunder-Deities had been born and dwelt there.

Hereupon His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites, overawed at the sight, fled back, whereupon his younger sister Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites said: “Thou hast put me to shame,” and at once sent the Ugly-Female-of-Hades to pursue him. So His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites took his black august head-dress and cast it down, and it instantly turned into grapes.

While she picked them up and ate them, he fled on; but as she still pursued him, he took and broke the multitudinous and close-toothed comb in the right bunch [of his hair] and cast it down, and it instantly turned into bamboo-sprouts. While she pulled them up and ate them, he fled on.

Again later [his younger sister] sent the eight Thunder-Deities with a thousand and five hundred warriors of Hades to pursue him. So he, drawing the ten-grasp sabre that was augustly girded on him, fled forward brandishing it in his back hand; and as they still pursued, he took, on reaching the base of the Even Pass of Hades, three peaches that were growing at its base, and waited and smote [his pursuers therewith], so that they all fled back.

Then His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites announced to the peaches: “Like as ye have helped me, so must ye help all living people in the Central Land of Reed-Plains when they shall fall into troublous circumstances and be harrassed!”—and he gave [to the peaches] the designation of Their Augustnesses Great-Divine-Fruit.

Last of all his younger sister Her Augustness the Princess-Who-Invites came out herself in pursuit. So he drew a thousand-draught rock, and [with it] blocked up the Even Pass of Hades, and placed the rock in the middle; and they stood opposite to one another and exchanged leave-takings; and Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites said: “My lovely elder brother, thine Augustness!

If thou do like this, I will in one day strangle to death a thousand of the folks of thy land.” Then His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites replied: “My lovely younger sister, Thine Augustness! If thou do this, I will in one day set up a thousand and five hundred parturition-houses. In this manner each day a thousand people would surely die, and each day a thousand and five hundred people would surely be born.”

So Her Augustness the Female-Who-Invites is called the Great-Deity-of-Hades. Again it is said that, owing to her having pursued and reached [her elder brother], she is called the Road-Reaching-Great-Deity.

Again the rock with which he blocked up the Pass of Hades is called the Great-Deity-of-the-Road-Turning-back, and again it is called the Blocking-Great-Deity-of-the-Door-of-Hades. So what was called the Even-Pass-of-Hades is now called the Ifuya-Pass in the Land of Idzumo.

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THE PURIFICATION OF THE AUGUST PERSON

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Therefore the Great Deity the Male-Who-Invites said: “Nay! hideous! I have come to a hideous and polluted land,—I have! So I will perform the purification of my august person.” So he went out to a plain [covered with] ahagi at a small river-mouth near Tachibana in Himuka in [the island of] Tsukushi, and purified and cleansed himself.

So the name of the Deity that was born from the august staff which he threw down was the Deity Thrust-Erect-Come-Not-Place. The name of the Deity that was born from the august girdle which he next threw down was the Deity Road-Long-Space. The name of Deity that was born from the august skirt which he next threw down was the Deity Loosen-Put.

The name of the Deity that was born from the august upper garment which he next threw down was the Deity Master-of-Trouble. The name of the Deity that was born from the august trousers which he next threw down was the Road-Fork-Deity. The name of the Deity that was born from the august hat which he next threw down was the Deity Master-of-the-Open-Mouth.

The names of the Deities that were born from the bracelet of his august left hand which he next threw down were the Deity Offing-Distant, next the Deity Wash-Prince-of-the-Offing, next the Deity Intermediate-Direction-of-the-Offing. The names of the Deities that were born from the bracelet of his august right hand which he next threw down were: the

Deity Shore-Distant, next the Deity Wash-Prince-of-the-Shore, next the Deity Intermediate-Direction-of-the-Shore.

The twelve Deities mentioned in the foregoing list from the Deity Come-Not-Place down to the Deity Intermediate-Direction-of-the-Shore are Deities that were born from his taking off the things that were on his person.

Thereupon saying: "The water in the upper reach is [too] rapid; the water in the lower reach is [too] sluggish," he went down and plunged in the middle reach; and, as he washed, there was first born the Wondrous-Deity-of-Eighty-Evils, and next the Wondrous-Deity-of-Great-Evils.

These two Deities are the Deities that were born from the filth [he contracted] when he went to that polluted, hideous land. The names of the Deities that were next born to rectify those evils were: the Divine-Rectifying-Wondrous Deity, next the Great-Rectifying-Wondrous-Deity, next the Female-Deity-Idzu.

The names of the Deities that were next born, as he bathed at the bottom of the water, were: the Deity Possessor-of-the-Ocean-Bottom, and next His Augustness Elder-Male-of-the-Bottom. The names of the Deities that were born as he bathed in the middle [of the water] were: the Deity Possessor-of-the-Ocean-Middle, and next His Augustness Elder-Male-of-the-Middle.

The names of the Deities that were born as he bathed at the top of the water were the Deity Possessor-of-the-Ocean-Surface, and next His Augustness Elder-Male-of-the-Surface.

These three Ocean-Possessing Deities are the Deities held in reverence as their ancestral Deities by the Chiefs of Adzumi. So the Chiefs of Adzumi are the descendants of His Augustness Utsushi-hi-gana-saku, a child of these Ocean-Possessing Deities.

These three Deities His Augustness Elder-Male-of-the-Bottom, His Augustness Elder-Male-of-the-Middle, and His Augustness Elder-Male-of-the-Surface are the three Great Deities of the Inlet of Sumi. The name of the Deity that was born as he thereupon washed his left august eye was the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity.

The name of the Deity that was next born as he washed his right august eye was His Augustness Moon-Night-Possessor. The name of the Deity that was next born as he washed his august nose was His Brave-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness.

The fourteen Deities in the foregoing list from the Wondrous-Deity-of-Eighty-Evils down to His Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness are Deities born from the bathing of his august person.

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INVESTITURE OF THE THREE DEITIES THE ILLUSTRIOUS AUGUST CHILDREN

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At this time His Augustness the Male-Who-Invites greatly rejoiced, saying: “I, begetting child after child, have at my final begetting gotten three illustrious children,” [with which words,] at once jinglingly taking off and shaking the jewel-string forming his august necklace, he bestowed it on the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, saying: “Do Thine Augustness rule the Plain-of-High-Heaven.”

With this charge he bestowed it on her. Now the name of this august necklace was the August-Store-house-Shelf-Deity. Next he said to His Augustness Moon-Night-Possessor: “Do Thine Augustness rule the Dominion of the Night.” Thus he charged him. Next he said to His-Brave-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness: “Do Thine Augustness rule the Sea-Plain.”

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THE CRYING AND WEEPING OF HIS IMPETUOUS-MALE-AUGUSTNESS

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So while [the other two Deities] each [assumed his and her] rule according to the command with which [their father] had deigned to charge them, His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness did not [assume the] rule [of] the dominion with which he had been charged, but cried and wept till his eight-grasp beard reached to the pit of his stomach.

The fashion of his weeping was such as by his weeping to wither the green mountains into withered mountains, and by his weeping to dry up all the rivers and seas. For this reason the sound of bad Deities was like unto the flies in the fifth moon as they all swarmed, and in all things every portent of woe arose.

So the Great August Deity the Male-Who-Invites said to His Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness: "How is it that, instead of ruling the land with which I charged thee, thou dost wail and weep?" He replied, saying: "I wail because I wish to depart to my deceased mother's land, to the Nether Distant Land."

Then the Great August Deity the Male-Who-Invites was very angry and said: "If that be so, thou shall not dwell in this land," and forthwith expelled him with a divine expulsion. So the Great Deity the Male-Who-Invites dwells at Taga in Afumi.

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THE AUGUST OATH

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So thereupon His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness said: “If that be so, I will take leave of the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, and depart.” [With these words] he forthwith went up to Heaven, whereupon all the mountains and rivers shook, and every land and country quaked. So the Heaven-Shining-Great-August Deity, alarmed at the noise, said: “The reason of the ascent hither of His Augustness my elder brother is surely no good intent. It is only that he wishes to wrest my land from me.”

And she forthwith, unbinding her august hair, twisted it into august bunches; and both into the left and into the right august bunch, as likewise into her august head-dress and likewise on to her left and her right august arm, she twisted an augustly complete [string] of curved jewels eight feet [long],—of five hundred jewels, and, slinging on her back a quiver holding a thousand [arrows], and adding [thereto] a quiver holding five hundred [arrows], she likewise took and slung at her side a mighty and high [-sounding] elbow-pad, and brandished and stuck her bow upright so that the top shook, and she stamped her feet into the hard ground up to her opposing thighs, kicking away [the earth] like rotten snow, and stood valiantly like unto a mighty man, and waiting, asked: “Wherefore ascendest thou hither?” Then His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness replied, saying: “I have no evil intent.

It is only that when the Great-August-Deity [our father] spoke, deigning to enquire the cause of my wailing and weeping, I said: ‘I wail because I

wish to go to my deceased mother's land,'—whereupon the Great-August-Deity said: 'Thou shalt not dwell in this land,' and deigned to expel me with a divine expulsion.

It is therefore solely with the thought of taking leave of thee and departing, that I have ascended hither. I have no strange intentions." Then the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity said: "If that be so, whereby shall I know the sincerity of thine intentions?" Thereupon His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness replied, saying: "Let each of us swear, and produce children."

So as they then swore to each other from the opposite banks of the Tranquil River of Heaven, the august names of the Deities that were born from the mist [of her breath] when, having first begged His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness to hand her the ten-grasp sabre which was girded on him and broken it into three fragments, and with the jewels making a jingling sound having brandished and washed them in the True-Pool-Well of Heaven, and having crunchingly crunched them, the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity blew them away, were Her Augustness Torrent-Mist-Princess, another august name for whom is Her Augustness Princess-of-the-Island-of-the-Offing; next Her Augustness Lovely-Island-Princess, another august name for whom is Her Augustness Good-Princess; next Her Augustness Princess-of-the-Torrent.

The august name of the Deity that was born from the mist [of his breath] when, having begged the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity to hand him the augustly complete [string] of curved jewels eight feet [long],—of five hundred jewels,—that was twisted in the left august bunch [of her

hair], and with the jewels making a jingling sound having brandished and washed them in the True-Pool-Well of Heaven, and having crunchingly crunched them, His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness blew them away, was His Augustness Truly-Conqueror-I-Conquer-Conquering-Swift-Heavenly-Great-Great-Ears.

The august name of the Deity that was born from the mist [of his breath] when again, having begged her to hand him the jewels that were twisted in the right august bunch [of her hair], and having crunchingly crunched them, he blew them away, was His Augustness Ame-no-hohi.

The august name of the Deity that was born from the mist [of his breath] when again, having begged her to hand him the jewels that were twisted in her august head-dress, and having crunchingly crunched them, he blew them away, was His Augustness Prince-Lord-of-Heaven.

The august name of the Deity that was born from the mist [of his breath] when again, having begged her to hand him the jewels that were twisted on her left august arm, and having crunchingly crunched them, he blew them away, was His Augustness Prince-Lord-of-Life.

The august name of the Deity that was born from the mist [of his breath] when again, having begged her to hand him the jewels that were twisted on her right august arm, and having crunchingly crunched them, he blew them away, was His-Wondrous-Augustness-of-Kumanu. (Five Deities in all.)

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THE AUGUST DECLARATION OF THE DIVISION OF THE AUGUST MALE CHILDREN AND THE AUGUST FEMALE CHILDREN

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Hereupon the Heavenly Shining-Great-August-Deity said to His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness: "As for the seed of the five male Deities born last, their birth was from things of mine; so undoubtedly they are my children. As for the seed of the three female Deities born first, their birth was from a thing of thine; so doubtless they are thy children."

Thus did she declare the division. So Her Augustness Torrent-Mist-Princess, the Deity born first, dwells in the Inner temple of Munakata. The next, Her Augustness Lovely-Island-Princess, dwells in the middle temple of Munakata. The next, Her Augustness Princess-of-the-Torrent, dwells in the outer temple of Munakata. These three Deities are the three Great Deities held in reverence by the Dukes of Munakata.

So His Augustness Brave-Rustic-Illuminator, child of His Augustness Ame-no-hohi, one of the five children born afterwards (this is the ancestor of the Rulers of the Land of Idzumo, of the Rulers of the Land of Muzashi, of the Rulers of the Upper Land of Unakami, of the Rulers of the Lower Land of Unakami, of the Rulers of the Land of Izhimu, of the Departmental Suzerains of the Island of Tsu and of the Rulers of the Land of Toho-tsu-Afumi.) The next, His Augustness Prince-Lord-of-Heaven (is the ancestor of the Rulers of the Land of Ofushi-kafuchi, of the Chiefs of

Nukatabe-no-yuwe, of the Rulers of the Land of Ki, of the Suzerains of Tanaka in Yamato, of the Rulers of the Land of Yamashiro, of the Rulers of the Land of Umaguta, of the Rulers of the Land of Kihe in Michi-no-Shiri, of the Rulers of the Land of Suhau, of the Rulers of Amuchi, in Yamato, of the Departmental Suzerains of Takechi, of the Territorial Lords of Kamafu, and of the Rulers of Sakikusabe).

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THE AUGUST RAVAGES OF HIS-IMPETUOUS-MALE-AUGUSTNESS

✦

Then His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness said to the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity: “Owing to the sincerity of my intentions I have, in begetting children, gotten delicate females. Judging from this, I have undoubtedly gained the victory.”

With these words, and impetuous with victory, he broke down the divisions of the rice-fields laid out by the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, filled up the ditches, and moreover strewed excrements in the palace where she partook of the great food.

So, though he did thus, the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity upbraided him not, but said: “What looks like excrements must be something that His Augustness mine elder brother has vomited through drunkenness. Again, as to his breaking down the divisions of the rice-fields and filling up the ditches, it must be because he grudges the land [they occupy] that His Augustness mine elder brother acts thus.”

But notwithstanding these apologetic words, he still continued his evil acts, and was more and more [violent].

As the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity sat in her awful weaving-hall seeing to the weaving of the august garments of the Deities, he broke a hole in the top of the weaving-hall, and through it let fall a heavenly piebald horse which he had flayed with a backward flaying, at whose sight

the women weaving the heavenly garments were so much alarmed that impegerunt privatas partes adversis radiis et obierunt.

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THE DOOR OF THE HEAVENLY ROCK-DWELLING

✦

So thereupon the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, terrified at the sight, closed [behind her] the door of the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling, made it fast, and retired. Then the whole Plain of High Heaven was obscured and all the Central Land of Reed-Plains darkened. Owing to this, eternal night prevailed. Hereupon the voices of the myriad Deities were like unto the flies in the fifth moon as they swarmed, and a myriad portents of woe all arose.

Therefore did the eight hundred myriad Deities assemble in a divine assembly in the bed of the Tranquil River of Heaven, and bid the Deity Thought-Includer, child of the High-August-Producing-Wondrous-Deity think of a plan, assembling the long-singing birds of eternal night and making them sing, taking the hard rocks of Heaven from the river-bed of the Tranquil River of Heaven, and taking the iron from the Heavenly Metal-Mountains, calling in the smith Ama-tsu-ma-ra, charging Her Augustness I-shi-ko-ri-do-me to make a mirror, and charging His Augustness Jewel-Ancestor to make an augustly complete [string] of curved jewels eight feet [long],—of five hundred jewels,—and summoning His Augustness Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord and His Augustness Grand-Jewel, and causing them to pull out with a complete pulling the shoulder [-blade] of a true stag from the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and take cherry-bark from the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and perform divination, and pulling up by pulling its roots a true cleyera japonica with five hundred

[branches] from the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and taking and putting upon its upper branches the augustly complete [string] of curved jewels eight feet [long],—of five hundred jewels,—and taking and tying to the middle branches the mirror eight feet [long], and taking and hanging upon its lower branches the white pacificatory offerings and the blue pacificatory offerings, His Augustness Grand-Jewel taking these divers things and holding them together with the grand august offerings, and His Augustness Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord prayerfully reciting grand liturgies, and the Heavenly Hand-Strength-Male-Deity standing hidden beside the door, and Her Augustness Heavenly-Alarming-Female hanging [round her] the heavenly clubmoss from the Heavenly Mount Kagu as a sash, and making the heavenly spindle-tree her head-dress, and binding the leaves of the bamboo-grass of the Heavenly Mount Kagu in a posy for her hands, and laying a sounding-board before the door of the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling, and stamping till she made it resound and doing as if possessed by a Deity, and pulling out the nipples of her breasts, pushing down her skirt-string usque ad privatas partes.

Then the Plain of High Heaven shook, and the eight hundred myriad Deities laughed together. Hereupon the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity was amazed, and, slightly opening the door of the Heavenly Rock-Dwelling, spoke thus from the inside: “Methought that owing to my retirement the Plain of Heaven would be dark, and likewise the Central Land of Reed-Plains would all be dark: how then is it that the Heavenly-Alarming-Female makes merry, and that likewise the eight hundred myriad Deities all laugh?”

Then the Heavenly-Alarming-Female spoke, saying: “We rejoice and are glad because there is a Deity more illustrious than Thine Augustness.”

While she was thus speaking, His Augustness Heavenly-Beckoning-Ancestor-Lord and His Augustness Grand-Jewel pushed forward the mirror and respectfully showed it to the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, whereupon the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity, more and more astonished, gradually came forth from the door and gazed upon it, whereupon the Heavenly-Hand-Strength-Male-Deity, who was standing hidden, took her august hand and drew her out, and then His Augustness Grand-Jewel drew the bottom-tied rope along at her august back, and spoke, saying: “Thou must not go back further in than this!” So when the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity had come forth, both the Plain of High Heaven and the Central-Land-of-Reed-Plains of course again became light.

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THE AUGUST EXPULSION OF HIS-IMPETUOUS-MALE-AUGUSTNESS

✦

Thereupon the eight hundred myriad Deities took counsel together, and imposed on His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness a fine of a thousand tables, and likewise cut his beard, and even caused the nails of his fingers and toes to be pulled out, and expelled him with a divine expulsion. Again he begged food of the Deity Princess-of-Great-Food.

Then the Princess-of-Great-Food took out all sorts of dainty things from her nose, her mouth, and even her fundament, and made them up into all sorts [of dishes], which she offered to him. But His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness watched her proceedings, considered that she was offering up to him filth, and at once killed the Deity Princess-of-Great-Food.

So the things that were born in the body of the Deity who had been killed were [as follows]: in her head were born silkworms, in her two eyes were born rice-seeds, in her two ears was born millet, in her nose were born small beans, in her private parts was born barley, in her fundament were born large beans.

So His Augustness the Deity-Producing-Wondrous-Ancestor caused them to be taken and used as seeds.

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THE EIGHT-FORKED SERPENT

✦

So, having been expelled, [His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness] descended to a place [called] Tori-kami at the head-waters of the River Hi in the Land of Idzumo. At this time some chopsticks came floating down the stream.

So His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness, thinking that there must be people at the head-waters of the river, went up it in quest of them, when he came upon an old man and an old woman,—two of them,—who had a young girl between them, and were weeping. Then he deigned to ask: "Who are ye?"

So the old man replied, saying: "I am an Earthly Deity, child of the Deity Great-Mountain-Possessor. I am called by the name of Foot-Stroking-Elder, my wife is called by the name of Hand-Stroking-Elder, and my daughter is called by the name of Wondrous-Inada-Princess."

Again he asked: "What is the cause of your crying?" [The old man] answered, saying: "I had originally eight young girls as daughters. But the eight-forked serpent of Koshi has come every year and devoured [one], and it is now its time to come, wherefore we weep."

Then he asked him: "What is its form like?" [The old man] answered, saying: "Its eyes are like akakagachi, it has one body with eight heads and eight tails. Moreover on its body grows moss, and also chamæcyparis and

cryptomerias. Its length extends over eight valleys and eight hills, and if one look at its belly, it is all constantly bloody and inflamed."

(What is here called akakagachi is the modern hohodzuki.) Then His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness said to the old man: "If this be thy daughter, wilt thou offer her to me?" He replied, saying: "With reverence, but I know not thine august name." Then he replied, saying: "I am elder brother to the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity. So I have now descended from Heaven."

Then the Deities Foot-Stroking-Elder and Hand-Stroking-Elder said: "If that be so, with reverence will we offer [her to thee]." So His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness, at once taking and changing the young girl into a multitudinous and close-toothed comb which he stuck into his august hair-bunch, said to the Deities Foot-Stroking-Elder and Hand-Stroking-Elder: "Do you distill some eight-fold refined liquor.

Also make a fence round about, in that fence make eight gates, at each gate tie [together] eight platforms, on each platform put a liquor-vat, and into each vat pour the eight-fold refined liquor, and wait."

So as they waited after having thus prepared everything in accordance with his bidding, the eight-forked serpent came truly as [the old man] had said, and immediately dipped a head into each vat, and drank the liquor. Thereupon it was intoxicated with drinking, and all [the heads] lay down and slept.

Then His-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness drew the ten-grasp sabre, that was augustly girded on him, and cut the serpent in pieces, so that the

River Hi flowed on changed into a river of blood. So when he cut the middle tail, the edge of his august sword broke.

Then, thinking it strange, he thrust into and split [the flesh] with the point of his august sword and looked, and there was a sharp great sword [within]. So he took this great sword, and, thinking it a strange thing, he respectfully informed the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity. This is the Herb-Quelling Great Sword.

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THE PALACE OF SUGA

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So thereupon His Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness sought in the land of Idzumo for a place where he might build a palace. Then he arrived at a place [called] Suga, and said: “On coming to this place my august heart is pure,”—and in that place he built a palace to dwell in. So that place is now called Suga. When this Great Deity first built the palace of Suga, clouds rose up thence. Then he made an august song. That song said:

“Eight clouds arise. The eight-fold fence of Idzumo makes an eight-fold fence for the spouses to retire [within]. Oh! that eight-fold fence.”

Then he called the Deity Foot-Stroking-Elder and said: “Thee do I appoint Headman of my palace;” and moreover bestowed on him the name of Master-of-the-Temple-of-Inada Eight-Eared-Deity-of-Suga.

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