

Record of Ancient Matters

In the dimness of the great beginning, there was neither form nor movement, and nothing ^{was} named or known. Chaos then began to condense, and the heavens and earth parted. The three Primal Dieties were born without conception, and performed the commencement of creation.

Twelve new Dieties, six male and six female, were born without progenitors, then two more developed, the active and the passive spirits, known as Izanagi and Izanami, the male Who Invites and the female Who Invites.

The heavenly Dieties gave these two a jeweled spear and commanded them to create and give form to this drifting land. In obedience to this command, Izanagi and Izanami stood on the Floating Bridge of Heaven and thrust down the jeweled spear, stirring the waters of the sea until they became thick and curdled. The brine that dripped from the spear as they lifted it, piled up to form the island of Onogoro.

These two Dieties left the bridge of heaven and came down to dwell on the island they had created. Here they made a sacred pillar and a hall many times the width of their outstretched arms.

The Male Who Invites spoke then to the Female Who Invites.

"In what way is your body formed?" he asked.

"My body has grown well, but there is one part which has not grown together completely," she answered.

"My body has grown well, but there is one part that has grown superfluous," he said. "Would it not be well then if I unite that part of my body which is superfluous with that part of your body which has not grown together completely, and procreate territories?"

"It would be well."

"Let us go around the sacred pillar, I and you and when we meet we will unite this parts in cohabitation," the female Dieties said.

So the two Dieties went separately around the sacred pillar, she to the left and he to the right, and when they met the female Dietie spoke first, saying, "O lovely and lovable youth."

"O lovely and lovable maiden" the male Dietie said, ^{but he was displeased,} and added, "It is not right that the woman should have spoken first. Mine should have been the first words."

But the female Dietie took the hand of the male Dietie and they were united as husband and wife.

Their first child was the Leech, whom they put in a boat made of reeds and set adrift. The next child was the island of Awa which pleased them much better, and this too was not reckoned among their children.

"These children we have from are not good," they said, in taking council together. "Let us return to the Plains of Heaven and announce this to the Heavenly Dieties."

The Heavenly Dieties divined the reason by the greater divination from the scorched shoulder blade of a deer, and they said, "It is because the woman spoke first. Go down and try again."

At the time was decided by divination, the two Dieties returned. ^{upon another} When they went around the pillar as before, it was the man who went from the left and the woman from the right.

"O lovely and lovable maiden!" the man was the first to speak.

"O lovely and lovable youth," the woman replied.

They were united as husband and wife, and gave birth to ^{Elemental} fourteen islands, and to the Dieties of Food, Trees, mountains and rivers, and to the Dietie of Fire.

Izanami, through giving birth to this last child,
was burned, and she sickened. As she lay ^{even} dying ^{one} Even more
Dieties were born, from her vomit, from her feces and one
from her urine.

"O my lovely younger sister! O that I should have
exchanged you for a single child!"
He crept around her pillow and around her feet
and wept, and from his tears there was born the Weeping
Female Diety, the one that dwells at the foot of the trees on
Mount Hiba.

Then Izanagi drew his sword of ten hand lengths and
cut off the head of the Fire Diety, whose birth had caused
the death of Izanami. Eight Dieties were born from the
splint spattered upon the sword.

SONG FROM KOJIKI

1. THE GOD SUSANOHO

When this god Susanoho first elected the Palace of Suga,
clouds arose over the place. And he made a song which
says:

- (1) Many clouds rise up,
Izumo's eightfold fences:
to enfold a spouse
we raise the eightfold fences,
oh, these fences manifold!

11. THE GOD YACHIHOKO

This god Yachihoko went to woo Nunakawahime in the
land of Koshi; and when he came to her house he sang:

- (2) His Great Augustness,
godly Prince Yachihoko!
through the eight-isled realm
all in vain he sought a spouse,
till within the land
of far away Koshi,
learning that there dwelt
a maiden wise and noble,
learning that there dwelt
a maiden fair and lovely,
to woo her truly
he made a journey;
and to win her
he made frequent calls.
Without untying
even the cord of this sword,
without taking off
even this outer cloak,
at → the wooden doors
where the maiden lies asleep,
I push and shake them
as I stand before these doors,
I shove and pull them
as I stand before these doors;
then the ouzel sings
on the deep blue mountain;
there the meadow-fowl,
the pheasant cries out sharply;
here the garden-fowl,
the rooster, crowing;
and how annoying
these birds that are all crying!
these loudy birds!
beat them till they never sing.

*a pure and noble maiden,
a fair and lovely maiden
he made a journey
to woo her truly;
he made visits
back and forth to win her:*

By the swift flying
heaven-racing messenger,
the things told
as the old tradition
have been these.

Then without opening the door Nunakawahime sang
from within, saying:

- (3) Your Great Augustness,
godly Prince Yachihoko!
being yet a maid
tender as a supple plant,
my heart is a bird
along the inlet seashore;
though it may appear
~~now a bird to be my own,~~ / *now to you a bird my own,*
afterward
a bird for you and yours alone;
so with yearning
do not will your life away.
By the swift flying
heaven-racing messenger,
the things told
as the old tradition
have been these.

- (4) When the sun goes down
behind the green mountain,
day turns into night
black like pardanthus-berries;
then radiant with smile
as the rising sun you come:
with your spotless arms
white like paper-mulberry ropes,
you hold me closely,
stroking tenderly you stroke
young ~~this maiden breast that thrills,~~
white ~~young~~ and soft as foam-like snow;
arm in jewel-arm
entwined and clasped together,
with outstretched thighs
we two will lie and sleep:
do not speak
too passionately of love,
your Great Augustness,
godly Prince Yachihoko!
The things told
as the old tradition
have been these.

Thereafter on that night they did not meet but on the
night of the following day they came together.

111 SUSARIHIME

Susarihime, the wife of the god Yachihoko, was most jealous. Thereupon he suffered. When he was about to go to Yamato, as he stood in his best robe with one hand on the saddle of his horse and one foot in the stirrup, he sang, saying:

- (5) When I dress with care
in garments dark and sable
like those black berries,
and I look them over
about my bosom
like some sea-birds looking
as they flap their wings,
I find them not becoming
and cast them off
like the waves that ebb away;
when I dress with care
in garments blue and lovely
like those kingfishers
and look them over
like some sea-birds looking
as they flap their wings,
I find them too not good
and cast them off
like the waves that ebb away;
pounding crimson seeds
sown among the mountain meadows,
mixing them with dy-tree sap
men color cloth for dress
which I carefully ware
and when I look them
about my bosom
like some sea-birds looking
as they flap their wings,
I find them fitting!
Your Fair Augustness,
my true beloved consort,
as the flacking birds
if I rise away and go,
as the leaving birds,
if I'm led away and go,
even so you say
you will not weep at all;
like a pampass
growing at the mountain-base,
you will droop your head
and weep and so your weeping
will rise like the mist
rising from a morning shower,
your Fair Augustness,
my spouse sweet like young herbs.
The things told
as the old tradition
have been these.

Then Suserihime took the great sake-cup and drawing near she held it up and sang:

- (6) Your Great Augustness,
godly Prince Yachihoko!
my dear Okuninushi!
you are indeed
a mighty gallant man,
so at each point
of the island headland you go,
and all the reafs
on the sea-beach headland you go,
you keep a mistress
fair and tender like young herbs;
but as for me,
since I am a woman,
excepting you
I have no husband:
behind the wafting
of richly colored curtains,
beneath the softness
of warmly tafted coverings,
beneath the rustling
~~of snow-white coverlets,~~
with your spotless arms
white like paper-mulberry ropes,
you hold me closely,
stroking tenderly you stroke
this young maiden-breast
soft and white as foam-like snow;
arm in jewel-arm
entwined and clasped together,
with outstretched thighs
we will lie and sleep;
lift up and drink
this rich august sake!

of silk-white coverlets

Having sung this, they pledged their vows with the cup, placing a hand on the other's neck and they are at peace to this day.

IV THE BURIAL OF AJISHIKITAKANIKONE

At the time when Ajishikitahakikone flew away in anger, his younger sister Takahime, wishing to reveal his name, made a song:

- (7) In the heaven there dwells
the young sweet weaver-maiden,
round about whose neck
there hangs a string of jewels;
bright as hole-drilled ones

among the string of jewels,
how august
through the twine valleys walks
the Diety,
Ajishikitakahikome!

This song is in the Rustic Style (Hinaburi).

V THE SONG BY TOYOTAMAHIME

Toyotamahime hated the heart of the god Ho-ori who
peeped in ~~through~~, but she was unable to resist the
love in her heart. When her sister, Tamayorihime, went
to rear the child, Toyotamahime sent a song with her.

That song said:

- (8) Though crimson jewels
glisten even to their cord,
like a pure white pearl
far more augustly noble
is the virtue of your air!

Then her Consort made a song in reply:

- (9) ~~XIX~~ Upon the island
offing-birds, wild ducks, come down
where I slept with you,
I shall not forget our love
in this world throughout my life.

VI' EASTERN EXPEDITION OF EMPEROR JIMMU

Otoutakashi

A great feast, given by ~~Otoutakashi~~ to Emperor Jimmu,
was granted all to his royal army. At the time a song
was made:

- (10) At Uda
upon the heights
a woodcock-snare we set
and waited for them
but none would fall into it;
in their stead indeed we caught
the balliant Falcon!
If the first wife
ask for some tasty food,
like the meat-less fruit
from the standing soba-tree,
couve out a peice for her;
if the second wife
ask for some tasty food,
like the clustered fruit
from the ichihaki-tree,
couve out a peice for her.

When he reached the great pit-house at Osaka, many
braves of the tailed Tsuchigumo clan waiting and shouting
inside ~~the~~. There, by the command of the august son of the
heavenly diety, a feast was given to those many braves;
appointing many stewards for those ^{may} braves, and girding
each of them with a sword he told them, "when you hear a song,
cut them all down". The song by which he gave the sign to
smite the Tsuchigumo is:

(11) At Osaka
into the huge pit-house
men come in number
enter and remain;
and though in number
men enter and remain,
we, the glorious sons
of the mighty Kume Clan,
with neck-sized mallets,
~~with~~ stone-head mallets ^{the} held in hand,
~~we will smite them through and through;~~
we, the glorious sons
of the mighty Kume Clan,
with neck-sized mallets, ^{the}
stone-head mallets ~~held~~ in hand,
now to smite them down
will be good.

We will smite them ^{to the end} ~~till they die~~

As he sang the song they drew their swords and all at
once hit and killed them.

~~A~~
After this, when he was about to attack Tomibiko, he
made a song:

(12) In the millet-field
of the mighty glorious sons
of the Kume Clan
grows one stalk of stinking leek;
with roots and sproutings
and all of them together
we will smite them ~~till they die.~~

And he also sang this song:

(13) As the pepper-plants
cultivated near the fence
by the glorious sons
of the mighty Kume Clan
make my whole mouth sting,
I still cannot forget them;
we will smite them ~~till they die.~~

^{to the end.}

- (22) On Mt. Unebi
at noon the clouds are moving --
the leaves are stirring,
for the wind will start to blow
when the evening closes in!
- (23) Oh, my dear,
Oh, Prince Mikakiirihiko!
oh, Prince Mikakiirihiko!
now you are going
to take your life in secret,
crossing forward, backward,
going through the back door;
crossing backward, forward,
going through the front door,
all unaware of any spying,
oh, Prince Mikakiirihiko!
- (24) The gallant warrior
of cloud-unfurled Izumo
wears a mighty sword
entwined with many creepers,
but, alas, ~~XXXXXXX~~ it has no blade!
- (25) Upon the moor
of fair, peak-crowned Sagamu,
standing in the midst
of the flames and burning fire
you have asked of me, my Lord!
- (26) Nihibari,
Tsukuba we all have passed --
how many nights have we slept?
- (27) all those days ^{nine}
Adding ~~day/on/day~~ /Counting all those days
as for nights there are ~~night~~ nights,
and for days there are ten days.
- (28) Far and high above,
on heavenly Mt. Kagu
like sharp sickles
the heros take to flight;
sweet and tender
like their necks your soft white arms
I try to gather
and entwin with mine;
I long to hold you
and to sleep together,
but around the hem
of the outer cloak you wear
the moon has shown already.

(29) His shining Highness,
the sun-bright Prince!
our mighty Govergien
who rules the land in peace, ^{the}
~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ As there comes ~~the~~ year
~~xxxxxxx~~ once anew and goes away;
so there comes a month
once anew and goes away:
oh, really oh, really,
I could hardly wait for you;
but now round the hem
of the outer cloak I wear
soon the moon may reach its full.

(30) Facing solely
streight ahead to Ohari,
on the point of Otsu stands
a single pine;
my comerade,
oh, single pine!
only if you were a man
I would gird on you a sword;
I would put a robe on you,
oh, single pine,
my comerade!

(31) Oh, Yamato
is the center in this land:
fold on ranging fold
with ~~deep~~ green walls
and mountains all enclosed,
how beautiful Yamato is!

(32) Let all of you
who are safe and whole ~~of~~ limb,
pluck the broad fine leaves
from those luxuriant oak-trees
on the hills of Heguri
and wear them in your ~~xxxxxx~~ hair,
all of you!

(33) Oh, how delightful!
from the quarter of my home
the clouds come rising hither.

(34) Beside the place
where sleeps the maiden
I myself have placed
my double edged sword,
that double edged sword!

- (35) Amid rice stalks
in the royal tomb-side fields,
here amid rice stalks
creeping, crawling, round we crawl
like those wild yam-vines.
- (36) Across dwarf-bamboo fields
loin-deep we plod;
through the sky we cannot go,
we only go on foot.
- (37) Following by sea
loin-deep we wade;
like thick grass on the bed
of a great river,
through tide-water,
swaying we move.
- (38) Oh beach-side plover,
on the beach we do not go;
on the reef we walk.
- (39) Hear me, my lord,
rather than receive
Furukuma's deadly blow,
like a didapper
I would sooner plunge myself
into the sea of Ōmi.
- (40) This sacred sake
is not my sacred sake;
the Prince of sake,
dwelling in the Land Eternal
Kusuna, the god,
whose great statue stands in stone,
blessings manifold
with words of god-like blessing,
blessing round and round
with words of plenteous blessing
he deigns to send us
this sake!
drink! no emptied cups!
sa! sa!
- (41) This sacred sake --
whatever person brewed it,
to the large hand-drum
set down like a mortar,
singing all the while
he surely must have brewed it,

dancing all the while
he surely must have brewed it --
this sacred sake,
this sake
is wonderous
and strangely joyful!
sa! sa!

(42) ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
As I view
Kazu's verdant fields, I see
the houses lying
more than a hundred thousand
and the land's best regions too.

(43) What good crab this is!
I wonder whence it came!
through a hundred ports,
a crab from Tsunuga!
whither does it go
as it crawls away sidelong?
Ichijishima,
then past Mishima:
and like a dabchick
diving, plunging breathlessly,
on the terraced road
toward Sazanami
without rest or pause
I went on with my journey;
on the way to Kahata
I come to meet a maiden:
the sight of her back
is like a little shield,
and her straight, small teeth,
like acorns or water-nuts!
oh, with the clay --
the first top clay
being ruddy fleshed in grain,
the bottom one
being reddish black in hue,
and the middle one
as that of triplex-chestnuts --
without exposing it
to the flames and burning fire,
she paints her eye-brows,
draws her eye-brows thick and long,
the blooming maiden I met!
dear child I saw
and wanted in this way,
Oh, dear child I saw
and wanted in that way!
beyond all dreams I dreamed
we are sitting face to face;
she is sitting close to me!

- (49) Here where white oaks grow
we made an oblong mortar
in which we brewed
the mighty sacred sake;
taste its sweetness,
drink and have your fill of it,
oh, our father.
- (50) With sacred sake
brewed by Susukori
all too drunk have I become;
with soothing sake,
smiling sake,
all too drunk have I become!
- (51) At the rapid ford
of the furious, swift Uji,
among you polers,
oh, come quickly to my side!
- whoever is the swiftest
- (52) At the rapid ford
of the furious, swift Uji,
near its rapid ford
there they stand,
catalpa and evonymus trees!
though within my heart
I thought I would cut them down,
though within my heart
I thought I would pull them out,
the foot of the trees
makes me remember the Lord,
the tip of the trees
makes me recall my sister;
with a vexed feeling
I recall them over there;
with grief and sorrow
I recall them over here,
and come back without cutting
catalpa and evonymus trees.
- (53) Rows of little boats
are floating in the offing;
My Masazuko
of Kurozaya takes her leave
to the country of her birth.

- (54) Round about the point
of ripple-bright Naniwa
I go out and when I stand,
I see across our country
Awa Island,
Onokoro Island,
and there comes in view
Ajimasa Island,
then Sakotsu Island too!
- (55) Should these tender greens
sown among the mountain fields
be plucked and gathered
by the Kibe maid and me,
how delightful it would be!
- (56)

- (56) As the west wind blows
upward toward Yamato,
like the scattered clouds
we may be parted too,
but I will not forget you.
- (57) Whose spouse, I wonder,
journeys there to Yamato!
like hidden waters
feeling out a way he goes;
whose spouse is it, I wonder.
- (58) Range on mountain range
along the Yamashina
here I go upstream,
and as I climb the steep
by its rapids' bank
the rhododendrons
are growing fair,
those rhododendrons!
and beneath their boughs
there grows uprightly,
a broad-leafed
sacred, true camellia tree;
like its blooming flowers
how radiantly bright,
and like its leaves
how broadly spreads his power
as he reigns, our mighty Lord!
- (59) Range on mountain range
along the Yamashina,
toward the Palace
I ascend and take my course;
oh, green-delightful
Nara I will pass;
shield-enclosed
Yamato I will pass;
then the place I wish to see the most,
the Taka Palace of Katsuragi
lying near my native home!
- (60) To Yamato
pursue her, Toriyama!
pursue, pursue her there!
Oh, that I might reach her side
and meet my true beloved one!

(61) At Mimuro
upon the height the meadow
of Great Wild Boar is lying;
and in the belly
of a great wild boar
between his livers
lies a heart, but can you lie
without a thought, at least, of mine?

(62) At peak-continuous
Yamashiro, a woman
with a wooden hoe
digs the long-root radish;
with your white arms
white as that radish-root
if you did not twine me close,
you may say you do not know.

(63) In Yamashiro
at the Tsutsuki Palace
oh, elder brother,
you read the royal message
and my eyes are filled with tears!

(64) At peak-continuous
Yamashiro, a woman
with a wooden hoe
digs the long-root radish;
with just such sharp digs
did you dig with great ado;
and so we have come,
numerous as the trees you see,
stirring with a great ado.

(65) At Yata
will the single sedge, I wonder,
with no seedling
whither as it stands alone?
a poor piteous sedge-field!
Ah, the words sedge-field
I said instead of saying
a poor piteous true maid!

(66) Even though
the single sedge at Yata
is growing solitary,
if your mighty Lord *unhappy*
favours it, it shall be true,
even though it is alone!