

History East Asia G9875y
Topics in the Cultural History of Premodern Japan
Spring 2011

Myths of Japan I

309 Hamilton Hall, Thursdays 4:10-6:00

David Lurie

DBL11@columbia.edu • Office Hours: 500A Kent Hall, Tues. 2:00-3:30 & Wed. 11:30-1:00

Course Rationale:

An introduction to Japanese mythology, considering the earliest sources (the eighth century *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Fudoki* gazetteers) and the reception and transformation of their mythic narratives in the medieval, early modern, and modern periods. The class is intended for PhD. and advanced M.A. students in Japanese literature, history, and related fields. Because the scope and difficulty of the materials make comprehensive treatment inadvisable, this course will focus loosely on myths connected with the Izumo region and the Kusanagi sword; a sequel, tentatively scheduled for Spring 2012, will examine cosmogonic narratives and myth sequences centered on Kyushu and Ise.

Prerequisites:

A grounding in *kanbun* and/or classical Chinese will be enormously helpful, but the only firm prerequisite is a solid command of classical Japanese. Note, though, that this is an advanced graduate seminar with extensive readings in premodern primary sources and also in modern Japanese scholarship. Students with concerns about their ability to keep up should consult with the instructor before registering for the class.

Requirements:

- 1) Consistent attendance/participation, including in-class reading and translation of sources.
- 2) Occasional presentations on selected secondary sources.
- 3) A short final project (around 10 pages), topic subject to instructor's approval: an interpretive essay concerning one or more *primary sources* considered this semester, or an annotated translation of a passage from one of them or from a reasonably closely connected work.

Course Materials:

As our basic texts for the first half of the semester (and for reference thereafter), we will rely on the *Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (SNKBZ) editions of the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Fudoki*. These works include poetry and some words spelled out phonographically (in so-called *man'yōgana*), but for the most they are written logographically (in '*kanbun*'), using both Sinitic and non-Sinitic styles. In the 8th century both of these styles were read through *kundoku* as Japanese texts: the *yomikudashi* portions of the SNKBZ texts can be taken as attempts by modern scholars to approximate such early readings. **For the purposes of this class we will work from the classical Japanese of these *yomikudashi* readings, making reference to the original character texts only when doing so is particularly called for by interpretive or stylistic considerations.** The SNKBZ editions should be supplemented by other modern

commentaries, including:

Kojiki: *Shinchō Nihon koten shūsei*, *Nihon shisō taikēi*, and Saigō Nobutsuna's *Kojiki chūshaku* (4 vols.; Heibonsha, 1976-89)

Nihon shoki: *Nihon koten bungaku taikēi* (NKBT)

Fudoki: NKBT and *Fudoki itsubun chūshaku* (Jōdai bunken o yomu kai, Kanrin shobō, 2001).¹

Besides the *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten*, *Kokushi daijiten* (on Japan Knowledge, less illustrations), *Nihon kokugo daijiten* (on Japan Knowledge) and *Jidaibetsu Kokugo daijiten Jōdaihen*, essential references include the *Jōdai bungaku kenkyū jiten*, ***Nihon shinwa jiten***, and ***Jōdai setsuwa jiten***. Students should familiarize themselves with all of these works, especially the last two. Other specialized sources will be introduced as we proceed through the semester.² Bear in mind that although some secondary sources have been selected because they are classic or representative works, little attempt has been made to provide a representative survey of the enormous body of Japanese-language scholarship on mythology; in addition to the essential references listed above, resources for such a survey can also be found in the Gakutōsha 'Bessatsu kokubungaku' *Nihon shinwa hikēi* (1982) and *Kojiki Nihon shoki hikēi* (1995).

Students in need of an overview of early Japanese literature are encouraged to consult Edwin Cranston's "Asuka and Nara Culture: Literacy, Literature, and Music" (*Cambridge History of Japan* vol. 1 [1993], 453-503) and the relevant chapters of Donald Keene's *Seeds in the Heart* (1993).

Because of time limitations, and also because this course rejects the notion that texts may be elucidated through the straightforward 'application' of transcendental (=western) theoretical concepts, readings from myth theory and comparative mythology have not been incorporated into this syllabus. Nonetheless this rich and contentious body of thought contains many valuable insights, and students are encouraged to look for useful perspectives on their own. As a starting point, consult Robert Segal's entry on "Myth" from the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (Scribner's, 2005; electronic edition available through CLIO) or the work that it summarizes, his *Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2004); the *Oxford Companion to World Mythology* (2005) is also helpful.

In the following schedule, primary sources appear in boxes: these will be read and translated in part or in their entirety during class. '*' designates other required readings; '©' indicates

¹ All of the 8th century works we read this semester are available in English translations, although they vary in quality and suitability for this course. Students should be particularly aware of Donald Philippi's *Kojiki* (1968), W.G. Aston's *Nihongi* (originally 1896), and Michiko Aoki's *Records of Wind and Earth* (1997); Edwin Cranston's *Waka Anthology Volume One: The Gem-Glistening Cup* (1993) contains translations of verse (with prose contexts) from the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Fudoki*.

² Other than mentioning references in the Japan Knowledge service (access through CLIO) I will not attempt to list online resources, but students should bear in mind that electronic texts (of varying provenance and quality) are available for all of the 8th century works surveyed in the class. In particular there are two bilingual *Nihon shoki* sites, at the following urls:

<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/JHTI/Nihon%20shoki.html>

<http://nihonshoki.wikidot.com/>

assignments that will be introduced by designated presenters. Common readings for the entire class will be made available on Courseworks; supplementary sources and items to be reported on by presenters will be there or on reserve in Starr Library. Presentations will be limited to *ten minutes* and will: 1) explain who the author of the reading is, 2) summarize its basic arguments, and 3) relate them to that week's primary and secondary readings. Handouts are not required but are recommended as a way of organizing the presentation and remaining within the time limit.

Schedule:

1) 20 Jan. **Introduction: Objectives and Materials**

2) 27 Jan. **Myth in a Nutshell: The Izumo Liturgy**

• *Izumo no kuni no miyatsuko kamuyogoto* 出雲国造神賀詞 (*norito* from the *Engi shiki* [927]): NKBT 1, *Kojiki/Norito* (1958), 452-57

*The main narrative of the *Nihon shoki*, from Robert Borgen and Marian Ury, “Readable Japanese Mythology: Selections from *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki*” (*Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 21[1]:61-97, 1990), pp. 75-87

*Kōnoshi Takamitsu, “Constructing Imperial Mythology: *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*,” trans. Iori Jōkō, in Shirane and Suzuki, *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature* (Stanford University Press, 2000), 51-67

*“Norito,” in *Nihon bungeishi: Hyōgen no nagare* vol. 1 (Kawade shobō, 1986), 57-60

*Takioto Yoshiyuki, *Kodai no Izumo jiten* (Shinjinbutsu ōraisha, 2001), 136-37

FOR REFERENCE: Matsumoto Naoki, “Izumo no kuni no miyatsuko kamuyogoto chūshaku,” in *Izumo no kuni fudoki chūshaku* (Shintensha, 2007), 545-87

©Kaneko Yoshimitsu, “Kiki shinwa to norito shinwa,” in *Kojiki kenkyū taikei* 4, *Kojiki no shinwa* (Takashina shoten, 1993), 235-56

3) 3 Feb. **Susano-o's Fall: Expulsion and Purification**

• *Nihon shoki* God Age section V; beginning and end of section VII: SNKBZ 35(ln.12)-37(ln.15), 75(ln.9)-76, 79(ln.3-ln.6)
 • *Kojiki* accounts of initial misbehavior, raging with victory, and eventual expulsion: SNKBZ 53(ln.10)-55(ln.10), 63, 67(ln.11-14)
 • *Minazuki no tsugomori no ōharae* 六月晦大祓 (*norito* from the *Engi shiki* [927]): NKBT 1, *Kojiki/Norito* (1958), 422-26

*SKIM Philippi translation of first third of first book of the *Kojiki*, pp. 47-87

*Gary Ebersole, “The Mythology of Death and the *Niiname*,” *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of*

Death in Early Japan (Princeton University Press, 1989), 79-122³
 FOR REFERENCE: Aoki Kigen, *Norito zenhyōshaku* (Yūbun shoin, 2000), 235-63

©Kōnoshi Takamitsu, “Tennō shinwa to ritsuryō saishi: Saigi shinwa ron hihan,” *Kodai tennō shinwa ron* (Wakakusa shobō, 1999), 248-70

4) 10 Feb. **Slaying the Dragon, Finding the Sword**

- Nihon shoki* God Age section VIII: SNKBZ 90(ln.4)-94(ln.2)
- Kojiki* account: SNKBZ 67(ln.15)-73(ln.12)

*J. Marshall Unger, “Syncretism in Japanese Mythology,” *The Role of Contact in the Origins of the Japanese and Korean Languages* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 123-42.

*Matsumura Takeo, “Mondai no shinwa ni okeru Susano-o no mikoto no yakuwari/igi” and “Hōken shutsugen no mondai,” *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū* 3 (Baifūkan, 1955), 218-226 and 235-246

©Matsumura Takeo, “Susano-o no mikoto no naisei/shokunō,” *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū* 2, 602-624; “Jurai no shokaishaku to sono hihan,” *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū* 3, 165-96

5) 17 Feb. **Making the Land: Ōkuninushi and Sukunabikona**

- Kojiki* account: SNKBZ 94-97(ln.2)
- Nihon shoki* God Age section VIII, variant 6: SNKBZ 102-107

*SKIM Philippi translation of the Ōkuninushi narrative, 93-119

*Michael Como, “Pure Land and the Millenium in the Early Shōtoku Cult,” *Shōtoku: Ethnicity, Ritual, and Violence in the Japanese Buddhist Tradition* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2008), 33-54

*Kōnoshi Takamitsu, “Ōkuninushi ni yoru kunizukuri no kansei,” *Kojiki: Tennō no sekai no monogatari* (NHK Books, 1995), 106-124

©Terakawa Machio, “Ōkuninushi no kami no kunizuri no seikaku to Ōkuninushi no kami no keisei,” in *Kojiki kenkyū taikai* 4, *Kojiki no shinwa* (Takashina shoten, 1993), 109-133

6) 24 Feb. **Giving up the Land: The Kuni-yuzuri Narratives**

- Kojiki* account: SNKBZ 99(ln.4)-113(ln.6)
- Nihon shoki*, from God Age section IX: SNKBZ 116(ln.3)-119(ln.16)

³ For a discussion of Susano’o and Amaterasu that treats connections between myth and ritual, see Michael Como, “Silkworm Cults in the Heavenly Grotto,” *Weaving and Binding: Immigrant Gods and Female Immortals in Ancient Japan* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 155-92 (esp. pp. 155-62).

- *Joan R. Piggott, “Sacral Kingship and Confederacy in Early Izumo” (*Monumenta Nipponica* 44[1]:45-74 [1989])
- *Saigō Nobutsuna, “Ōkuninushi no kami: Izumo sekai,” *Kojiki no sekai* (Iwanami shoten, 1967), 91-112

©Saigō Nobutsuna, “Kuni-yuzuri shinwa,” *Kojiki kenkyū* (Miraisha, 1973), 81-114

7) 3 March **Diverse Accounts of Susano-o and Ōnamuchi (Ōkuninushi)**

Susano-o material:

- Raincoated wanderer: from *Nihon shoki* God Age section VII, variant 3, SNKBZ 85(ln.14)-87(ln.9)
- Korea and trees: *Nihon shoki* God Age section VIII, variants 4 and 5, SNKBZ 99(ln.2)-102(ln.1)
- Naming and dancing: *Izumo no kuni Fudoki*, Iishi no kōri/Susa no sato; Ōhara no kōri/Sase no sato, SNKBZ 243(ln.4-9) and 262-263(ln.1)
- Plague god: *Bingo no kuni Fudoki (itsubun)*, “Enokuma no kuni tsu yashiro,” SNKBZ 496-97

Ōnamuchi material:

- Giving up the land: *Izumo no kuni Fudoki*, Ou no kōri/Mori no sato, SNKBZ 139(ln.17)-141(ln.3)
- Concerned father: *Izumo no kuni Fudoki*, Kamuto no kōri/Takakishi no sato; Nita no kōri/Misawa no sato, SNKBZ 229(ln.14)-230 and 251(ln.13)-253(ln.7)
- Contest with Sukunabikona: *Harima no kuni Fudoki*, Kamusaki no kōri/Hanioka no sato, SNKBZ 93(ln.11)-95(ln.8)
- Hot-springs creator: *Iyo no kuni Fudoki (itsubun)*, from “Yu no kōri,” SNKBZ 505 (first paragraph)

- *James Grayson, “Susa-no-o: A Culture Hero from Korea” *Japan Forum* 14:3 (2002), 465–87⁴
- *Takeda Yūkichi, “Bingo no kuni Fudoki: Chi no wa,” in *Takeda Yūkichi chosakushū* 4 (Kadokawa shoten, 1973 [originally published 1942]), 340-42
- *From *Fudoki no kami to shūkyōteki sekai* (Ōfū, 1997): Kimura Shigeiko, “Fudoki to Kiki no Ōnamuchi,” 64-67; Ui Takashi, “Ajisuki-takahikone,” 83-87

©Masuda Katsumi, “Kazan rettō no shisō: Nihonteki koyūgami 固有神 no seikaku,” *Kazan rettō no shisō* (Chikuma shobō, 1968); as reprinted in *Masuda Katsumi no shigoto* 2 (Chikuma shobō, 2006), 65-83

⁴ For more on the significance of the *Bingo no kuni Fudoki* fragment, see Neil McMullin, “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace: The Case of the Gion ‘Goryō’ Cult,” *History of Religions* 27:3 (1988), 270-93.

8) 10 March **The Izumo and Yamato Braves**

- Kojiki* Yamato Takeru narrative up to his departure for the east, and then the portions concerning Kusanagi: SNKBZ 215(ln.12)-227(ln.2), 229(ln.10)-231(ln.5), 232-235(ln.8)
- Nihon shoki* Izumo treasures story, Sujin 60/7/14: SNKBZ 289(ln.14)-293(ln.2)

*The entire *Kojiki* version of the Yamato Takeru story, from Robert Borgen and Marian Ury, “Readable Japanese Mythology: Selections from *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki*” (*Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 21[1]:61-97, 1990), pp. 89-97

*SKIM: Aston translation of Keikō annal (I:188-214)

*David Bialock, “Royalizing the Realm and the Ritualization of Violence,” *Eccentric Spaces, Hidden Histories: Narrative, Ritual, and Royal Authority from The Chronicles of Japan to The Tale of the Heike* (Stanford University Press, 2007), 111-142:⁵

©Okabe Takashi, “Ensei suru eiyū to rekishi,” in Miura Sukeyuki, ed., *Kojiki o yomu* (Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2008), 50-73.

NO CLASS 17 MARCH (SPRING BREAK)

9) 24 March **The Book of Swords: A Glimpse of the Medieval Chronicles of Japan**

- The Book of Swords (*Tsurugi no maki*) [first half] from the Hyaku-nijukkubon *Heike monogatari* (*Shinchō Nihon koten shūsei* edition [1981]) III:268-274

*Itō Satoshi, “The Medieval Period: The Kami Merge with Buddhism,” trans. Mark Teeuwen, in *Shinto: A Short History* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 63-107

*Isomae Jun’ichi, “Myth in Metamorphosis: Ancient and Medieval Versions of the Yamatotakeru Legend,” trans. Kate Wildman Nakai (*Monumenta Nipponica* 54[3]: 361-385 [1999])⁶

©Saitō Hideki, *Yomikaerareta Nihon shinwa* (Kōdansha, 2006), 81-138: “Chūsei Nihongi no kyōen”

10) 31 March **The Crying Hero: Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) on Yamato Takeru**

- Commentary on the Yamato Takeru story, from fratricide through departure for the east: *Kojiki-den* book 27, *Motoori Norinaga zenshū* vol. 11 (Chikuma shobō, 1969), 189-221. Read through all of this, but in class we will focus on the following lemmas: 1) 惶 (194-95); 2) 給 (196-97); 3) 不得拔詐刀

⁵ For an early, widely read discussion of the Yamato Takeru narrative, see Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (1975)

⁶ For an introduction to the “Book of Swords,” see Elizabeth Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, and Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan* (2006), Chapter 5: “The Soga Brothers: Swords and Lineage” (115-137).

(210-11); 4) 佐味那志爾阿波禮 (212-13); 5) 所思看 (218-19); 6) 草那藝劍の事 (219-20); and 7) 書記云 (220-21; only the last lines, after the *Nihon shoki* quote)

*Isomae Jun'ichi, "Reappropriating the Japanese Myths: Motoori Norinaga and the Creation Myths of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*," trans. Sarah Thal (*Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 27[1-2]:15-39 [2000])

*Kōnoshi Takamitsu, "Motoori Norinaga *Kojiki-den* o megutte," *Kojiki to Nihon shoki: 'Tennō shinwa' no rekishi* (Kōdansha, 1999), 12-31

*Kōnoshi Takamitsu, "Kojiki-den o yomu koto no 'tanoshisa,'" *Hon* 35:4 (April 2010, 33-35)

◎Susan Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan* (Duke, 2003), especially chapters 2 and 3 (pp. 35-101)⁷

11) 7 April **Myth into History: The 'Rationalism' of Tsuda Sōkichi (1873-1961)**

- *Jindaishi no atarashii kenkyū* (1913), "Shoron" (*Tsuda sōkichi zenshū*, bekkān 1, 13-33)
- *Kojiki oyobi Nihon shoki no shinkenkyū* (1919), "Kenkyū no mokuteki oyobi sono hōhō" (*Tsuda sōkichi zenshū*, bekkān 1, 191-203)
- *Nihon koten no kenkyū* (1948), "Yamata orochi no monogatari" and "Ōnamuchi no mikoto no kuni-yuzuri no monogatari," 448-59, 496-509

*Isomae Jun'ichi, "Myth and Rationality: Understanding God in the Early-Modern and Modern Periods," *Japanese Mythology: Hermeneutics on Scripture* (Equinox Publishing/Nichibunken, 2009), 85-107

*Yonetani Masafumi, "Tsuda Sōkichi to Watsuji Tetsurō," in *Kojiki Nihon shoki hikkei* (Gakutōsha, 1995), 184-86

◎Naoki Kōjirō, "Kodaishi kenkyū to Tsuda shigaku," *Nihon shinwa to kodai kokka* (Kōdansha, 1990 [original articles 1965-1986]), 240-301

12) 14 April **Euhemerism and Anachronism in Postwar Manga Adaptations**

- Tezuka Osamu, *Hi no tori* part 3, *Yamato-hen* (1968-69 [1992 paperback]): 3-175
- Yasuhiko Yoshikazu, *Namuji* (1989-91 [1997 paperback]): "Susano-o" (part 1 chap. 5, I:167-236) and "Sukunabikona" (part 2 chap. 4; II:135-84)
- Ishinomori Shōtarō, *Kojiki (Manga Nihon no koten 1; 1994 [1999 paperback]): Susano-o* (58-105) and *Kunizukuri/Kuni-yuzuri* (164-211)

⁷ On the *Kojiki-den* in English, see also Ann Wehmeyer, *Kojiki-den* (East Asia Program, Cornell University, 1997).

- *Frederik Schodt, “Osamu Tezuka: A Tribute to the God of Comics,” *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga* (Stonebridge Press, 1996), 233-74⁸
- *Yasuhiko Yoshikazu, “‘Fugū’ naru Nihon shinwa to Harada Tsuneji setsu,” in *Nihon shinwa ga wakarū* (Aera Mook 72; Asahi shinbunsha, 2001), 147-51
- **“Atogaki” from Ishinomori, pp. 270-71

©Natsume Fusanosuke, “Tezuka manga no sai-kōchiku,” *Tezuka Osamu no bōken: Sengo manga no kamigami* (Chikuma shobō 1995; paperback from Shōgakkan, 1998), 228-91

13) 21 April **The “Kojiki Boom”: Myths Revised for Post-Bubble Japan**

- Miura Sukeyuki, *Kōgoyaku Kojiki* (2002): 34-36; 40-43; 46; 49-53; 82-95; 191-200; 379-83
- Onmyōji II* (directed by Takita Yōjirō; 2003)

- *Miura Sukeyuki, “Naze *Kojiki* ka,” *Nihon bungaku* 54 (2005), 49-56⁹
- *Interview with Era Itaru (*Onmyōji II* screenwriter), *Shinario* (Nov. 2003), 18-20
- *Klaus Antoni, “Izumo as the ‘Other Japan’: Construction vs. Reality” *Japanese Religions* 30 (2005), 1-20

©Saitō Hideki, “Sengo/Posutomodan no ‘Nihon shinwa,’” *Yomikaerareta Nihon shinwa* (Kōdansha, 2006), 189-220

14) 28 April **Presentations on Final Papers**

⁸ Also consult the informative articles on *Hi no tori* and *Namuji* on the Japanese-language Wikipedia.

⁹ See also Miura’s webpage on the *Kōgoyaku Kojiki*, including discussion of its bestseller status:
<http://homepage2.nifty.com/wayway/shokai-top.html>