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4. Gods and Myths

Treading the crests of the waves,
he crossed over to the land of Tokoyo.
Kojiki 46, 2

AMATERASU

Jimmu's Mirror and the second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya, better than any other works of art, let us see the looks and specific traits of the earliest Japanese gods³⁵⁶. Third-century gods, we learn, were not mere nature spirits but true, if shape-shifting personalities³⁵⁷, and their deeds are told in the much later *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. Even as animals, the gods represented 'the will in nature'³⁵⁸. They also tended to touch their offspring, witness the waves on Jimmu's Mirror touching Tagishimimi, or the sun touching Jimmu in the Kiyotosaku painting³⁵⁹.

The second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya goes further than Jimmu's Mirror and portrays the gods, even Amaterasu herself, while Jimmu's Mirror only depicts the symbol of the goddess, the famous sun mirror. The third-century evidence for Amaterasu on the two mirrors matters, for although Japan's imperial dynasty traces its origins to the sun-goddess, scholars have doubted whether early Yamato rulers worshiped the sun at all. The legend says that the Yamato court did so until, by the end of the third century, Emperor Sujin sent the sun mirror away³⁶⁰. Some have taken this as a fabrication by seventh-century emperors trying to justify their late adoption of the Ise sun goddess³⁶¹. Now, however, with Amaterasu portrayed on the second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya (fig. 27), one must admit that she was indeed Jimmu's main goddess.

With Jimmu worshiping Amaterasu, light falls on the ring next to the outer shaman on Jimmu's Mirror. As seen on the frontispiece, eleven rings dot the outer band of figures on Jimmu's Mirror. Ten of these have a counterpart across the center and therefore belong to a pre-arranged group, though their meaning escapes us³⁶². The eleventh ring, while of the same size

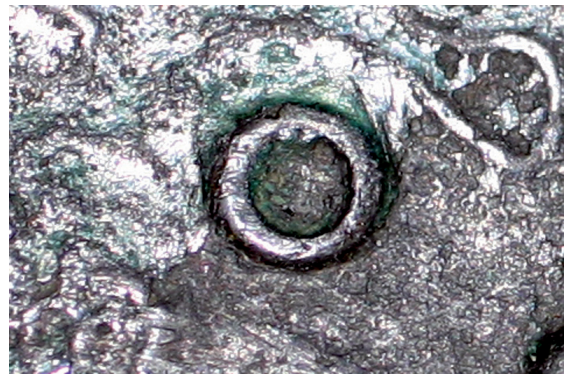


Fig. 34. Jimmu's Mirror. The mirror of the outer shaman.

as the others, floats alone near the outer shaman (fig. 34). It is therefore likely to have a meaning of its own³⁶³.

The ring seems to be a large mirror, wider than the shaman's body, yet not as wide as her

³⁵⁶ Compare Naumann 1988, 108; Okada 1991, 127.

³⁵⁷ Compare e. g. Kishi 1986, 57.

³⁵⁸ Campbell 1988, II, 9.

³⁵⁹ Tsuboi / Machida 1977, fig. 136; Saitō 1973, II, pls. 1 and 193.

³⁶⁰ *Nihon shoki* 151 f. Ellwood 1990. Emperor Temmu, the reborn Jimmu, restored her to imperial favor in 672: *Nihon shoki* II, 307.

³⁶¹ E. g. Matsumae 1993, 348 who, however, did not go so far as Tsuda and think of mere power manipulation (ibid. 323 and Philippi 1969, 74).

³⁶² They may, or may not, be food platters set to float on the sea to ensure a safe crossing: *Kojiki* 93, 12. Takahashi 1915, 339 takes them for ring-shaped knobs (*kanjō-nyū*) as on Six-Dynasties mirrors. The first and second mirrors from Higashi-no-Miya also float such rings on the sea.

³⁶³ Thus Gōda 1991, 75.

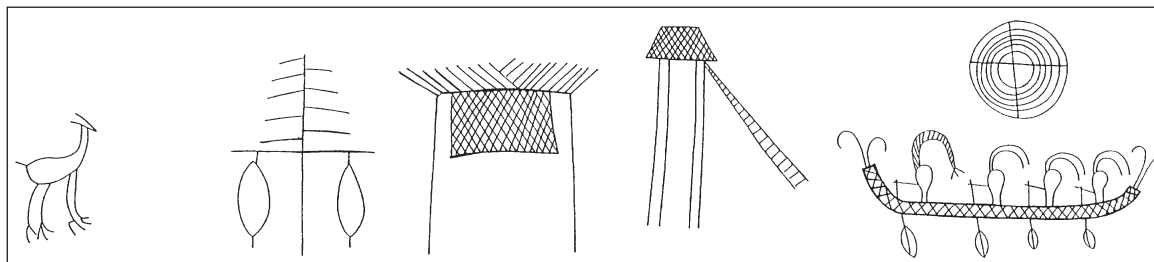


Fig. 35. Yayoi pottery drawing from Inayoshi-Sumida. Plumed heroes riding to Tokyo in a boat.

head³⁶⁴. The broad rim and sunken field (and perhaps two eyelets near the upper rim) suggest a kind of mirror typical of Korea and the lands of nomadic tribes along China's northern border. Such mirrors, brought to Japan as early as the third century before our era³⁶⁵, are found mostly in Kyushu and tend to be ritual objects for communities rather than privately owned adornments³⁶⁶.

Flanking her boldly, the shaman's mirror seems to be one of her main tools and thus one of the attributes that identified her to knowledgeable viewers. Belonging to Jimmu's shaman, it may be the sacred sun mirror, of which the legend says that Amaterasu gave it to her descendants to underpin their everlasting rule³⁶⁷. Fittingly, a woman, not a man, dances with the mirror, as in later centuries too women cared for the sacred mirror of the Yamato rulers³⁶⁸, and women of the Sarume clan danced with the emperors fetishes³⁶⁹.

Until now we have had no ancient images of any of the three imperial regalia (*sanshu no jin-gi*): mirror, sword, and jewels. Perhaps Jimmu's Mirror depicts now all three of them: the jewels as Jimmu's necklace, the sun-mirror with the shaman, and the sword with Tagishimimi^{369a}.

Heroes going to the Sun

On Jimmu's Mirror, as we have seen, warriors with feather plumes dance in Tokoyo, the land of everlasting life³⁷⁰. In several Yayoi pottery drawings, men with plumes, dancing or crossing the sea, are therefore likely to be warrior heroes as well³⁷¹, and such drawings may reveal the purpose of Jimmu's heroes in Tokoyo.

One of these drawings, slightly restored, comes from Inayoshi-Sumida, Tottori Prefecture, and shows men with plumes rowing toward a watchtower and a house, hence toward a sea palace. Their leader is marked by a great plume. Further along stands a tree, hung with symbols, and, further still, a deer (fig. 35)³⁷².

Since the men wear feather plumes like Jimmu's warriors on his Mirror, and since their leader's plume looks like Jimmu's in the Takehara kofun painting³⁷³, one may wonder whether the men in the boat are not, like Jimmu and his men, heroes, here journeying to the other world beyond the sea. This seems all the more likely since, as we have seen, on Sea-Dance mirrors

³⁶⁴ This would fit the Sun mirror kept at Ise, which is according to Aston 1905, 135 about eight inch (19 cm) wide. Its name *yata-kagami* ('eight-measure Mirror') might mean 'eight fingers broad', i. e. about 15 cm. 'Eight hand' (Naumann 1988, 99) would be huge indeed. For a Korean mirror from Japan of 21,7 cm in diameter see Kurumazaki 2002, p. 47, fig. 3.

³⁶⁵ Imamura 1996, 171; Mori 1994, 98f.; Kurumazaki 2002, 45ff. *Wa Koku* 1993, 49. The *Nihon shoki* 168; 185 knows a further 'sun-mirror' brought from Korea, so named, perhaps, because it looked like Amaterasu's mirror.

³⁶⁶ Kōmoto 1989, 38–40; Kurumazaki 2002, 45–52.

³⁶⁷ *Kojiki* 39, 2–3; *Nihon shoki* 76; 83; *Kujiki* 173. Gotō 1947, 110ff. (at first only mirror and sword); Naumann 1988, 93ff. The canonical view is found with Kitabatake Chikafusa in 1339: Varley 1980, 76ff.; also Varley in de Bary 2001, 358f.; a description in Holtom 1972, 1–43; Tsuchihashi 1990, 90f. The two eyelets inside the upper rim would be suitable for hanging the mirror from the branches of a tree, as the gods did with their mirror when they lured Amaterasu back out of her rock cave (*Kojiki* 17,11). Examples for such eyelets: Tanaka 1977, 169; Shiraishi 1990, 91, fig. 163. Mirrors as shamans' tools: Kidder 1965, 144f.; Blacker 1975, 106ff.

³⁶⁸ *Kojiki* 64, 8 with the commentary of Philippi 1969, 199; *Nihon shoki* 151f.; 176f.; Naumann 1988, 116ff.

³⁶⁹ *Kujiki* 209.

^{369a} Cf. Kidder 2007, 78.

³⁷⁰ Warriors, rather than *shin-jin* priests as suggested by Gōda 1991 or Sahara / Harunari 1997, 104. Tokoyo: Philippi 1969, 610f.

³⁷¹ Sahara / Harunari 1997, 82–85; Tawaramoto 4, 2006.

³⁷² Gōda 1991, 82; Takesue / Ishikawa 2003, 33–1 and 2. Our drawing (somewhat restored) is from Sahara / Harunari 1997, 81, fig. 166. Cf. Kidder 2007, 43, fig. 4. 1. 4; Mori 1993, 169, with drawings from the site of Sumida; Hashiguchi 2004, 58f. Discussion: Tatsumi 1992, 11ff.; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 83ff.

³⁷³ Kidder 1964, 131; Saitō 1973, pl. 22; Tsuboi / Machida 1977, 95.

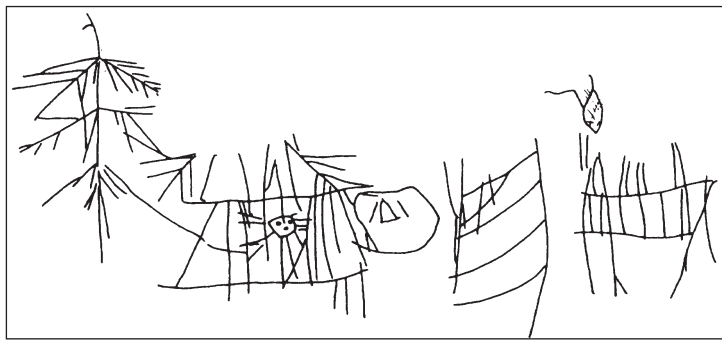


Fig. 36. Rock drawing in a Takaida grave. Heroes coming to the sun.

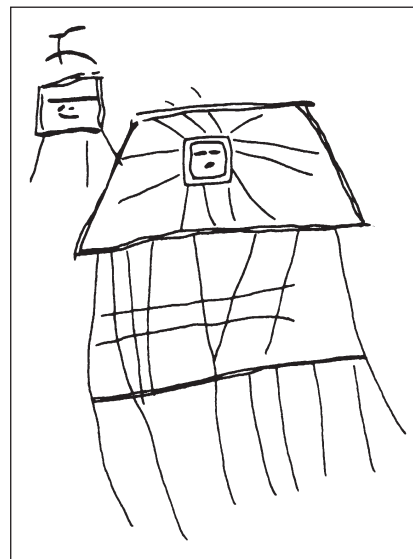


Fig. 37. Rock drawing in a Takaida grave. The sun goddess in the Heavenly Weaving Hall.

Tokoyo is a palace of buildings and towers surrounded by water, and since the Hōju mirror portrays bird-men dancing there.

The building toward which the men are rowing is not the only one known to stand on the waves. Fourth-century sword pommels show such a building (alternatively the sun) over high-rising waves (cf. fig. 38)³⁷⁴. The written legend too knows of such a building, ‘the eight-fathom hall on the highest rising waves, built by the maidens who tend the loom with jingling wrist jewels’³⁷⁵. Scholars have identified this hall with the Holy Weaving Hall in the middle of the other world, where life and death are woven³⁷⁶.

The buildings on the Inayoshi-Sumida drawing thus may be the sun goddess’ hall and tower, and not only because they stand in the sea but also because of the nearby stag and tree. This seems to be the world tree, the *axis mundi* in the center of the world³⁷⁷, that recurs in fig. 36. It is hung here with two strings of beads, the right string having a large, curved bead in the middle (hence the string is not a fruit or a *dōtaku* bell as is often said)³⁷⁸. According to the legend, the gods hung such strings of beads on a tree that represented the world and that they gave to Amaterasu³⁷⁹. The legend, moreover, says that the pillar of heaven stands near the eight-fathom palace³⁸⁰, and since by common consent the pillar of heaven is the same as the world tree³⁸¹, the hall of the Inayoshi-Sumida drawing seems for that reason as well to be the Holy Weaving Hall.

A little-known drawing from a sixth-century rock-cut grave at Takaida (fig. 36)³⁸² fur-

ther suggests that the Heavenly Weaving Hall is meant.

The drawing is clumsy, but comparison with the one from Inayoshi-Sumida (fig. 35) reveals the same elements: the boat, the tower, the hall, and the tree, depicted in the same sequence. In the boat’s bow stands a leader with feather headgear. Like fig. 35, then, this drawing portrays plumed heroes arriving by boat in the other world. The startling difference is that here the sun goddess with her radiate head looms in the hall. Indeed, she is thus portrayed a dozen more times in the Takaida caves, often in the upper story of a large house, as in fig. 37³⁸³.

³⁷⁴ Kanaseki / Onoyama 1978, 83; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 105, fig. 231; Chiga / Murakami 2003, 24.

³⁷⁵ *Nihon shoki* 90.

³⁷⁶ Naumann 1988, 79; 1994, 394.

³⁷⁷ Cf. *Nihon shoki* 12; Kidder 1964, 105. According to Siberian myths, the world tree stands in the sea, and stags stand beside it (Paulson 1962, 32; Naumann 1994, 396).

³⁷⁸ Not all drawings (nor even ours) show the bead as curved, but good photographs do. For a comparable necklace see e. g. Miki 1960, fig. 71.

³⁷⁹ Later the goddess gave such beads to the sun-line rulers as one of the three imperial treasures. *Kojiki* 17, 11; 39, 2; *Nihon shoki* 43 f.; 49; *Kujiki* 150 f. Naumann 1988, 96–98.

³⁸⁰ *Kojiki* 3, 3–4, 1; *Nihon shoki* 12 and 14; *Kujiki* 124.

³⁸¹ Paulson 1962, 31 f.; 132; Eliade 1964, 264; Naumann 1971, 186 ff.; Naumann / Miller 1990, 32; Naumann 1994, 395. Cf. Philippi 1969, 398.

³⁸² Yasumura 2003, pl. 13.

According to the legend, Amaterasu weaves in the Heavenly Weaving Hall, hence the large buildings in figures 35–37 represent that hall, the center of the world³⁸⁴, confirmation of which comes from the eight posts on which it stands, for the legend says that the hall in the center of the world is an eight-width, that is an eight-post, building³⁸⁵.

Since the earliest Takaida drawings belong to the mid-sixth century³⁸⁶, the iconographic tradition of depicting the sun's palace with hall and tower lasted for over five hundreds years during the Yayoi and Kofun periods. And so, of course, did the warriors' hope to reach Tokoyo and the sun.

The sun's hall as seen in figs. 36 and 37 looks like one of the buildings on the famous four-house mirror from the Takarazuka kofun, for on fig. 36 it shares with them the human figure in the field to the right of the house, and in fig. 37 it shares with them the well or harbor to the left. The four-house mirror was always seen as a companion to Jimmu's Mirror in that it too is altogether Japanese in its motifs. Now we may add that it is a companion to Jimmu's Mirror also in showing where heroes go in the afterlife³⁸⁷.

The Inayoshi-Sumida pot with the drawings of fig. 35 on its neck has been restored to be one and a half meters high; it was therefore well-suited to hold bones after burial. If it was indeed a burial pot, then the drawing fits the pot's purpose, for magic representation is to bring about what it portrays: here to bring the dead to the Holy Weaving Hall where their life can be woven anew³⁸⁸. This seems to be the meaning of fig. 35 also since the sun above the journeying boat typically belongs to scenes where boats bring souls as birds to the other world³⁸⁹. Since the unconquered sun always rises again, sun gods worldwide meant much to heroes and sovereigns, the chosen among the dead³⁹⁰.

Other Yayoi pottery sherds from Karako-Kagi likewise show boats rowing to high-built halls and towers. Portraying deer, birds, and plumed warriors³⁹¹, they very likely refer to the journey of the dead as well. Kofun-period paintings or drawings such as those in the Mezurashizuka and Takaida graves show that the context is funerary³⁹², hence the journey is to Tokoyo, to the sun.

Five bronze ring pommels for sword hilts that have come to light in the Tōdaijiyama Kofun at Tenri City, Nara Prefecture, make it clear that the journey to the sun is above all for those who fought bravely. Gold-covered and datable

to the fourth century, the pommels let us see something of the Yamato warriors' morale at the time of Jimmu or shortly thereafter (fig. 38)³⁹³.

Though hitherto overlooked, the trefoil feature inside the ring is, in fact, a rooster's head, witness the three triangular jags of the comb, the long straight hair of the neck, the beak to the left, and the comb to the right ending in three more, backward pointing jags. Several features on the pommels suggest that these roosters are the long-crying birds of Tokoyo, of whom the legend says that the gods made them cry so as to lure the sun back out of her cave³⁹⁴.

Three of the pommels, including the two shown here, show on top the image of the sun, while two show a house like that in figures 35–37 and 44. Instead of the sun on the pommel, scholars have so far seen a flower-shape³⁹⁵, but the feature is decked out with a three-legged *tomoe* (*mitsu-tomoe*), a symbol befitting the sun rather than a flower. A house and the sun as interchangeable symbols, after all we have seen, can only mean the sun's Heavenly Weaving Hall set over the highest raising waves. It follows that the protrusions on the ring are waves, the smaller, beak-like ones looking like those on

³⁸³ Yasumura 2003, pl. 3.

³⁸⁴ *Kojiki* 16, 7; *Nihon shoki* 41; Naumann 1988, 76–80; 1994, 394.

³⁸⁵ *Kojiki* 4,1; *Nihon shoki* 14; Naumann 1971, 204ff. For a picture of such a hall see the abovementioned *Kaoku-jinbutsu-jū-mon-kyō mirror*.

³⁸⁶ Yasumura 2002, 52.

³⁸⁷ For the four-house mirror (Tanaka 1977, 121; Shirai-shi 1990, 4; Sahara / Harunari 1997 40; 43; 45; 104; 137) depicting the palace of heaven, see Naumann 1971, 203f. There Yamato aristocrats hoped to go after death (*Man'yōshū* 167; 200).

³⁸⁸ In another drawing from Karako-Kagi plumed heroes climb a ladder toward such a high-built house (Kusaka / Kameda 1970, 15; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 106, fig. 233). Climbing a ladder at the center of the world is what the dead do in the world-wide belief of going to heaven (Eliade 1991, 48ff.).

³⁸⁹ Mezurashizuka; Torifume-zuka; Shiraishi 1990, 60.

³⁹⁰ Eliade 1958, 135–138.

³⁹¹ Tawaramoto 4, 2006.

³⁹² Cf. Kidder 2007, 48.

³⁹³ Kanaseki / Onoyama 1978, 83; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 105, fig. 231; Chiga / Murakami 2003, 24.

³⁹⁴ *Kojiki* 17, 6 with Philippi's commentary; *Nihon shoki* 42. Compare the roosters on the roofs of the four-house mirror (*Kaoku-mon-kyō*), Sahara / Harunari 1997, 105. A painting in the Takehara kofun also shows such a bird: Kusaka / Kameda 1970, 37 (reconstructed); Fujii 1979, 33.

³⁹⁵ Kanaseki / Onoyama 1978, 83; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 105, fig. 231; Chiga / Murakami 2003, 24.



a



b

Fig. 38. Gilt bronze sword pommels from Nara, with roosters, waves, and the sun.

the innermost rim of Jimmu's Mirror or those around the Hōju mirror, the bigger ones resembling the high-breaking waves beneath the twelfth warrior of Jimmu's Mirror³⁹⁶. Parallel lines covering them confirm that, as in fig. 33, they are indeed waves. The symbols on their swords show the warriors' hope that should they die in battle they would go to the house of the sun, there to find new life³⁹⁷.

As Yamato's greatest hero, Jimmu later became the model and leader of those who journeyed to Tokoyo, witness the Gorōyama paintings and Takaida drawings (figs. 17 and 18). Yayoi pottery drawings such as figs. 35 and 45,

being from earlier centuries, reveal that Jimmu did not bring a new myth or a new religion but bodied forth existing belief. And, as in the belief of the time, the ruler, after death, led the way to the sun, so he was no doubt also believed to have come from the sun – the origin of today's sun-line dynastic myth.

³⁹⁶ Kanaseki / Onoyama 1978, 179 suggest a 'bird-neck shape'.

³⁹⁷ If the lines on the ring are in the *chokkō-mon* pattern (Chiga / Murakami 2003, 173), they too point to the afterlife.



Fig. 39. Jimmu's Mirror. Head of the *wani* (detail of pl. 1).

THE SEA GODS

While the second Higashi-no-Miya mirror depicts Amaterasu outright, Jimmu's Mirror merely points to the goddess by her token, the sun-mirror. Perhaps the artist felt the Great Gods were too awesome to portray³⁹⁸; more likely – since he had no qualms to portray the god Sarutahiko – he wished to use all available space for historic human figures. Whatever his reason, he points to the sea gods only by portraying the *wani* and the tide-jewels.

The wani

Jimmu was a man of the sea (*ama-zoku* or *kai-jin*)³⁹⁹ and, like Achilles, the son of a sea goddess⁴⁰⁰. According to the legend he was also the son and grandson of a *wani* sea god, married to the daughter of a *wani*⁴⁰¹, and first urged by the sea-god (Shiotsuchi-no-oji) to conquer Yamato. In the sea storm during his expedition of conquest, his brother Ina-hi turned into a *wani*⁴⁰².

On Jimmu's Mirror a *wani*, hitherto overlooked⁴⁰³, hovers close to the emperor (fig. 39). Its rounded head, protruding lower jaw, and ring around the eye could be those of a porpoise. The curved sword, fastened to its neck, as the legend says, and looking here like a tongue identifies this *wani* as the mythological animal *Sabi-mochi* (blade-holder) seen also on the Hōju mirror (fig. 31).

The animal's body seems to stretch along the outside of the Mirror's second warrior, complete with two bent feet like those on the Hōju mirror. The *wani*, a fantastic being of power, is

a sea creature – the *Kojiki* speaks of a '*wani*-fish'⁴⁰⁴. In olden times it is neither dragon nor shark or crocodile, as is often said, but a fantastic whale with legs⁴⁰⁵. The *Wamyō-ruijū-shō* (931–938) says that it 'is like a tortoise, and has four legs; its snout is three feet long and its teeth sharp. If a tiger or large deer fords the water, the "crocodile" will attack it. Its Japanese name is *wani*'⁴⁰⁶.

³⁹⁸ Compare their being 'too awesome to speak of' (*Man'yōshū* VI, 1020; above, p. 56).

³⁹⁹ Cf. *Kojiki* 46, 1–3. Ōbayashi 1987; Mori 1993, 153; Satō 1995, 16.

⁴⁰⁰ Clovis too was an offspring of the sea god: Wenskus 1994. For Germanic myths of sea gods uncannily resembling Japanese ones, see Dumézil 1997, 185–196.

⁴⁰¹ *Nihon shoki* 61f.; *Kujiki* 191f.

⁴⁰² *Nihon shoki* 114, *sabi-mochi*, for whom see Akima 1993, 137 and Naumann / Miller 1995, 411ff., referring to *Kojiki* 44, 21–22.

⁴⁰³ Gōda 1991, 81: 'A motif of unknown shape'.

⁴⁰⁴ *Kojiki* NKBT 142; Florenz 1919, 80. To Naumann / Miller 1995, 413 *wani* have a 'dragon-like appearance'. Best: Harunari 2000.

⁴⁰⁵ Crocodile: Ueda 1995, 71. Dragon: Aston 1905, 149 who argued from a very late print. Shark: Kurokawa (after Florenz 1919, 47); Bentley 2006, 185; 191; 236; 242. Fantastic: Takeda according to Philippi 1969, 407. For sundry views held about the shape of the *wani* see Philippi 1969, 406f., additional note 13; also Aston 1896 (1972), 61f.; Florenz 1919, 80 and 173f.; Antoni 1982, 45; Akima 1993, 136ff.; Naumann / Miller 1995, 411ff.; Bentley 2006, 185.

⁴⁰⁶ Philippi 1969, 407, after Motoori, *Kojiki-den* II, 504. Etymology: Korean *wang-i* 'king' (Aston 1896, 62); Chinese *wan-e* 'bay-crocodile' (Antoni 1982, 274), or sundry Japanese possibilities (Bentley 2006, 185).

Harunari Hideji has outstandingly traced the growth of the *wani*'s image through the early centuries of our era⁴⁰⁷. One may now add to his evidence the Hōju mirror (fig. 31) and the Nangō mirror (fig. 43) depicting an eight-fathom *wani*⁴⁰⁸ with a winding, almost snakelike body, a round lower jaw, and four feet – halfway between a horse and a fishlike *wani* such as the one shown on a Yayoi pottery drawing from Ikegami / Osaka⁴⁰⁹.

In portraying the *wani* so prominently, Jimmu's Mirror adds a major fact to our knowledge of ancient Japanese religion and the dynastic myth: Jimmu's helper was a *wani*. With a water animal as his helper, Jimmu is closely linked to Korean myths that see dynasty founders as the offspring of the sky god and a water goddess, coming to power with their parents' magic help⁴¹⁰.

The tide jewels

The Mirror shows Jimmu wearing two large, crescent-shaped objects on his waist, one bending right, the other left. Being of a size like ritual objects known from archaeological finds⁴¹¹, they could well function as such. Yet Jimmu's sea god ancestry, as told in the legend and reflected in the *wani* near his head, together with the waves shown on the Mirror as snapping at the heels of his foes, make it likely that the two objects are the tide jewels bestowed by the sea god⁴¹². With them Jimmu, as Hiko-Hohodemi, could beset his foes by raising the tide.

The image of raising the tide has parallels in flood myths the world over. As creation everywhere arises from water, floods not only dissolve the old (washing the unclean away), but also bring in the new, in Japan documented by the myth of Izanagi and Izanami on the island Onogoro, the only speck of earth in the salt sea⁴¹³. Offspring of the sun and married to the sea king's daughter, Jimmu-Hiko-Hohodemi is a primordial hero in this worldwide pattern, bringing back the primeval unity of sea and sky through a mythical marriage from which springs a new, lasting dynasty⁴¹⁴.

A sea symbol

Jimmu's bond with the sea seems to be marked also by a symbol on his shield badge (fig. 40)⁴¹⁵.

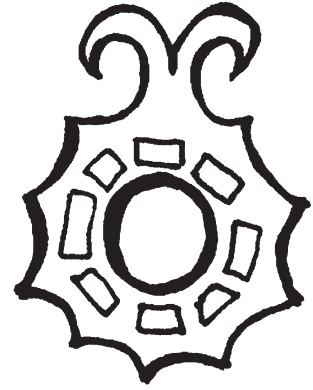


Fig. 40. Jimmu's Mirror. Jimmu's shield badge.

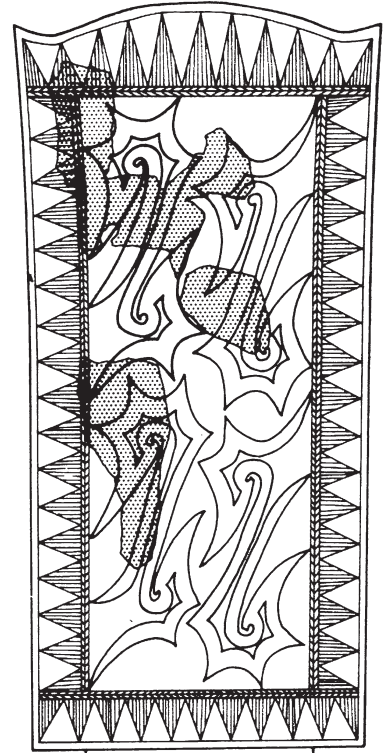


Fig. 41. Haniwa shield with floating *sōkyaku-rinjō-mon* symbols.

⁴⁰⁷ Harunari 2000, though thinking of dragons.

⁴⁰⁸ *Kojiki* 44, 17f.; 45, 7; *Nihon shoki* 98; 103ff. The Nangō mirror also shows the contrasting one-fathom *wani*.

⁴⁰⁹ Harunari 2000. Hitherto taken for a dragon, it has a fish's middle line, a round head or eye, breast fins changing into legs, and large jaws, yawning fiercely.

⁴¹⁰ Szczesniak 1954.

⁴¹¹ Kidder 1966, 180f.; Kanaseki 1978, no. 266. For others, handed over by Ōnamuchi of Izumo, see *Nihon shoki* 81. Although more than 150 such large jewels have been found, only three come from graves: Kanaseki / Onayama 1978, 184 on nos. 266–267. They were therefore ritual objects rather than private adornments. The largest jade jewel found so far is 7,4 cm (Mori 1994, 293).

⁴¹² Deleted

⁴¹³ *Kojiki* 3ff.; *Nihon shoki* 10ff.; Naumann / Miller 1990, 22–25.

⁴¹⁴ Eliade 1958, 209–212.

⁴¹⁵ Perhaps one may infer on his shield a corresponding upper symbol from this lower one.

Well-known from Kofun paintings, the symbol is variously described as a ‘wheel-with-two-legs pattern’ (*sōkyaku-rinjō-mon*), a ‘circle with radial lines and a pair of *warabite* fronds’, or ‘a star fish with tails’⁴¹⁶. It may also be a sea shell⁴¹⁷ or even a stylized jellyfish like those depicted whirling round on Kofun-era mirrors⁴¹⁸. What is more, it or very similar sea-born signs emblazon later *haniwa* shields as well, close functional parallels to Jimmu’s shield (fig. 41), only there the symbol floats around without much sense of direction⁴¹⁹.

Whatever it is, from the Mirror we now learn that the symbol was in use as early as the mid-third century⁴²⁰ and that it has to do with Jimmu, heralding the sea as the source of his strength⁴²¹.

Jingū’s sea gods

Amaterasu and the three sea gods of Suminoe on the second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya find a striking parallel in the tale of Jingū’s legendary invasion of Korea⁴²². As Amaterasu and the sea gods⁴²³ bade Jimmu conquer a rich land overseas, so Amaterasu and the three sea gods of Suminoe also bade Jingū to do the same in Korea. As the Mirror’s waves buoy Jimmu’s warriors, so the fish and the billows of the sea bore Jingū’s fleet along. And as on Jimmu’s Mirror the tide rises against his foes, so the tide rose against Jingū’s foes, lifting her boat far inland⁴²⁴. Finally, as on the second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya Amaterasu and the three sea gods of Suminoe join in Jimmu’s triumph, so they do, according to the legend, in Jingū’s campaign⁴²⁵.

Jimmu and Jingū’s sea myths are thus split images of each other and quite unlike the myths of later emperors⁴²⁶. They therefore belong to the same historical period. In these myths, and in the power of women shamans, we meet the imagery, belief, and ritual of maritime third or fourth-century Japan, its thalassocracy, its sea-people, and the rulers that brought about the birth of the country⁴²⁷. Whether or not Jingū ever ruled and led overseas expeditions⁴²⁸, her legendary Korean invasion was cast in the mythology of sea gods who, as we now see, are nearly the same as those of Jimmu.

It has been said that deeply anchored in the old hunting cultures of Eurasia, Shinto’s animal-shaped gods tend to be mountain gods and hostile to conquerors, and that nearly all belong to the legends of Jimmu and the fourth-century hero Yamato Takeru, being otherwise

rare in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*⁴²⁹. Yet on the Sea-Dance mirrors we can now discern another group of animal gods: the porpoise, the *wani*, the dragon-snake Orochi⁴³⁰, the sea-god monkey Sarutahiko⁴³¹, and sea birds like the cormorant

⁴¹⁶ Mizuno 1959 [1991], 585; Kidder 1964, 286f.; 1966, 162; Saitō 1973, II, 52f.; Fujii / Ishiyama 1979, 56; Tatsumi 1992, 144–146; Sahara / Harunari 1997, figs. 70, 94, 208, 210.

⁴¹⁷ For the rich and powerful symbolism of the shell see Eliade 1991, 125ff.

⁴¹⁸ Cf. Kurumazaki 2002, 302.

⁴¹⁹ 4th-century Kanagurayama kofun, Fujii 1979, 55, fig. 81, cf. Ōkubo 1981, 51; Tatsumi 1992, 142; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 97. 5th-century: Hozu / Iwata ruin, see *Tawaramoto* 2007, fig. 17.

⁴²⁰ Kidder 1964, 286f.: ‘a sixth-century motif’; similarly: Shiraishi 1990, 78.

⁴²¹ Compare Ōkubo 1981, 51. It may also be combined with *Tomoe*: Kurumazaki 2002, 303–1.

⁴²² *Kojiki* 92ff.; *Nihon shoki* 221ff. Mythical: Akima 1993.

⁴²³ Shiotsuchi-no-kami (*Kojiki* 43, 1 and 6), who bade Jimmu undertake this (*Nihon shoki* 110), is said to be the human appearance of the three sea gods of Suminoe: Florenz 1919, 77, note 1. Philippi 1969, 586: ‘probably some sort of sea-deity’.

⁴²⁴ *Kojiki* 94; *Nihon shoki* 230. The myth of Isora, written down only in the thirteenth-century, but much older, says that for her invasion of Korea Jingū called a war council of the gods to Kyushu. All came, but not Isora, who lived at the bottom of the sea and loved the fish too much to come. To lure him out, the gods sang and danced the *kagura*. Isora came indeed to join the dance, whereupon they sent him to get the tide jewels from the sea god (*Hachiman-gudōkin*, as reported by Müller 1971, 109ff.). The Nyoï pearl (*Nihon shoki* 219) also refers to Jingū’s tide jewel: Florenz 1919, 80; Akima 1993, 106.

⁴²⁵ *Kojiki* 94, 7; *Nihon shoki* 235–238.

⁴²⁶ As least as far as *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* are concerned. Akima 1993, however, reviews many further and later sea myth allusions.

⁴²⁷ Thalassocracy, sea-people: Ledyard 1975, 230ff.; Ōbayashi 1987; Satō 1995, 16. Ueda 1995, 206 sees the culture before Yamato power as maritime. The Mirror now shows that this was still so under Jimmu. The earliest Kofun period rulers, then, did not yet bring about ‘the vertical, three-layered universe of the *Kojiki* myths, contra: Blacker 1975, 70ff.

⁴²⁸ Allen 2003 shows that Jingū did indeed live, cf. Kidder 2007, 4. Jingū may nevertheless also be a very old mythological figure as Akima 1993 suggests. For the wealth of Jingū’s tradition in Japanese historiography see Bentley 2006, 303: several lost works refer to her; cf. Ellwood 1990.

⁴²⁹ Shiga 1971 passim; Takemura 1979, 112; Naumann 1988, 108; Miller / Naumann 1991, 75 (referring to Hultkrantz; Matsumae 1993, 340. Hostile: Naumann 1963, 146ff.; e. g. 149: ‘Die Berggottheit . . . überall tritt sie als Gegner der Eroberer auf, ob es sich um Jimmu handelt oder um Yamato Takeru’; Matsumae 1986, 32.

⁴³⁰ Orochi a water god: Mishina 1971, 36ff.

⁴³¹ In a sense a sea god, for three sea gods came from him when he drowned, *Kojiki* 40.

and the osprey. Friendly and belonging to the sea⁴³², they come from the time when the sea and the horizontal cosmology were the mainstay of Japanese religion, when people looked to the water world as the source of power, wealth, and miraculous help⁴³³, traces of which are still found in present-day folk tales and legends⁴³⁴. The sea animals' presence on the mirrors befits the sea-borne expedition of Japan's first Emperor at the dawn of history.

SARUME AND SARUTAHIKO

Perhaps the best-known tale of Japanese myth is how the gods lured the sun goddess back out of the heavenly rock-house. When Amaterasu, in anger over her brother's misdeeds, hid herself, darkness fell in heaven. To bring back the light, the gods bade Uzume, the Wild Woman, sing and dance before the heavenly rock-house door. Uzume 'bound up her sleeves with a cord of heavenly *hikage* vine, tied around her head a heavenly *masaki* vine, bound together bundles of *sasa* leaves to hold in her hand, lit fires, and, overturning a tub, loudly stamped on it. God-possessed, she then bared her breasts and pushed her skirt-band down to her sex. Heaven shook as the eight-hundred myriad gods all together laughed⁴³⁵. Amaterasu, wondering what fun the gods were having when all should be dark, opened her door a crack and so they could coax her back out.

Jimmu's Mirror now offers a most welcome third-century illustration of this tale in the image of the outer shaman who likewise leads a dance for a large audience, stamps on a tub, and bares herself (fig. 12). The third-century image shows how accurately and reliably the legend preserves the old myths; it also shows how images easily can outdo words in wealth of detail.

Dance as pleasure, ritual, and art ranked high in early Japan⁴³⁶. As everywhere, it was a burst of vitality and a way to reach ecstasy. The shaman's dance on Jimmu's Mirror is also erotic, for by such a dance Uzume seduced Sarutahiko at the heavenly crossroads. Scholars have wondered, therefore, whether the intended viewer of Uzume's heavenly exhibition should not be a man⁴³⁷, but the Yayoi pottery drawing of fig. 44 (below) suggests that Uzume danced indeed before the dwelling of the sun goddess. Hence the traditional explanation – and that of the legend itself – seems right that Uzume's baring herself made the gods laugh and this laughter brought

the sun goddess back out of the cave⁴³⁸. Sarume's dance on Jimmu's Mirror seems also to have been erotic, perhaps in the spirit of the *chinkon-sai*, still celebrated today to impart the emperor with new vitality⁴³⁹. Whatever the reason for her dance, we have now pictorial evidence of a naked dance performed for Jimmu by his shaman, and women baring themselves in dances⁴⁴⁰ are now known not only from the written legend, from pottery drawings, and *haniwa* figures, but also from the second Higashi-no-Miya mirror and from Jimmu's Mirror⁴⁴¹.

The myth⁴⁴² of Uzume and Sarutahiko says that when the heavenly grandchild was about to descend to earth, the earthly god Sarutahiko blocked his way at the eight-forked crossroads of heaven. Among the eighty myriads of gods there was not one who could stand up to Sarutahiko, so Amaterasu and Taka-mi-musubi said to Uzume: 'Although you are a graceful maiden, you are the kind of goddess who can face and overwhelm others. Therefore go alone and ask: Who is there on the path of my offspring descending from the heavens?' Uzume went to the

⁴³² An exception would be the incident of the bear that lamed Jimmu's forces (*Kojiki* 49) – if that story is old.

⁴³³ Blacker 1975, 69ff. See also the turtles and fish of the legend, *Kojiki* 47, 8; *Nihon shoki* 70. Other than Blacker suggested, though, in Japan as in the rest of the world, the heavenly gods are the oldest: Eliade 1975, 138ff.

⁴³⁴ Such as the tale of Urashima Tarō. *Nihon shoki* 368; Blacker 1975, 28; 110ff.; 116; Akima 1993, 107ff.

⁴³⁵ *Kojiki* 17, 14–15; cf. *Nihon shoki* 44ff.; *Kujiki* 151. Naumann 1988, 86 suggests that a 'god-possessed' goddess makes little sense and is perhaps a late interpolation.

⁴³⁶ Smith 1964, 31; Ellwood 1967, 39.

⁴³⁷ E. g. Kidder 2007, 337: 'Such a show should have been seductive only to a male viewer'.

⁴³⁸ Matsumura 1954, III, 66 according to Philippi 1979, 83.

⁴³⁹ Cf. Philippi 1969, 84; Naumann 1988, 85.

⁴⁴⁰ *Kagura* dances going back to Yayoi times: Yoshie 1986, 43ff.; Nakamura 1999, 98. The *Kagura* has 'the basic circular movement, the rhythmical stamping of the feet, and the lifting of both hands into the air in a beckoning motion to invite the gods to be present': Ortolani 1988.

⁴⁴¹ Women shamans were an ancient Altaic custom: Blacker 1975, 115; Miller / Naumann 1994, 63. A shaman, dancing with wide open arms, is painted in the 6th-century Chibusan mound (Tsuboi / Machida 1977, 114 = Fujii 1979, 16). Further such figures: Munro 1911, 514; 380. Eliade 1964, 156f. *Haniwa* women baring themselves: Ichinose / Kurumazaki 2004, figs. 311–3; 4; 5; 6. *Haniwa* figures of women shamans with deer: Sahara 2005, 233.

⁴⁴² For the two myths being closely related, see Philippi 1979, 83.

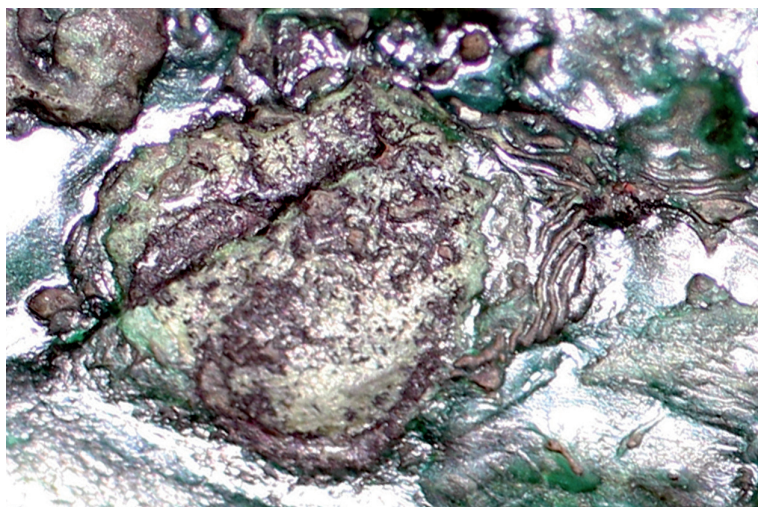


Fig. 42. Jimmu's Mirror. Sarutahiko, the monkey god (detail of pl. 8).

crossroads, 'bared her breasts, pushed her skirt band below her navel, and confronted Sarutahiko with a mocking laugh'. Thereupon Sarutahiko said he had only come to serve and to guide the heavenly grandchild⁴⁴³. He then asked that Uzume come with him and 'complete her task', which the gods granted. Sarutahiko, it follows, served the heavenly grandchild to get his way with Uzume.

As for Sarutahiko, Jimmu's Mirror shows over the eighth warrior's head the grinning face of a monkey (fig. 42) who, as the Kume warriors' god, is likely to be Sarutahiko ('Monkey-Field-Lad') for, like the Kume, he lived in the mountains between Ise and Yamato⁴⁴⁴. His picture on the Mirror makes it now clear that the element *saru* in the god's name means indeed monkey, which had been doubted⁴⁴⁵. Since monkeys go out on the beach to gather shellfish and since the legend reports that Sarutahiko drowned when he was caught by a big shellfish, Minakata Kumagusu has inferred that Sarutahiko is a monkey god⁴⁴⁶. The monkey picture on the Mirror brilliantly confirms that identification.

Depicting the god's friendly nearness to leaders of men, it offers an example of a god's close relationship with a tribe. The monkey god with the long, thin mouth and the cheek-beard or sideburns is typical of Japanese macaques. As with the *wani* and the Orochi dragon-snake, his is the epiphany of an animal-shape god. Monkey gods are known to have been worshiped in ancient Japan⁴⁴⁷, and even today, mountain gods are believed to take the shape of monkeys⁴⁴⁸.

The myth also suggests that Jimmu's shaman was of the Sarume clan. Uzume is a forebear of that clan⁴⁴⁹, and after she had won over Saru-

tahiko, the legend says, she took his name and thus became Sarume ('Monkey-Woman'). The Sarume clan, like the Kume, lived in the Ise region⁴⁵⁰; their women's aristocratic title *kimi* seems to denote a religious function⁴⁵¹. Centuries later still, Sarume women did similar dances at court⁴⁵², while monkey bridegrooms yet live in Japanese folklore⁴⁵³.

⁴⁴³ *Kojiki* 38, 8–11; *Nihon shoki*, 77–79; *Kujiki* 228f.; *Kogoshūi* 428f. Kawazoe 1966, 141; cf. Shiga 1971, 4; 218, though he takes Sarutahiko for a Hayato god.

⁴⁴⁴ *Kojiki* 40, 3; *Nihon shoki*, 78–79; cf. Okada 1973; Matsumae 1979, 81; Antoni 1988, 170. Kume: Naumann 1981, passim. Katō in: Aoki 2005, 116f. Takahashi 1915, 341 had assumed they came from Kyushu. Sarutahiko is worshiped at Ise, as is Uzume: Okada 1973.

⁴⁴⁵ NKBT *Kojiki*, commentary p. 127; NKBT *Nihon shoki*, commentary p. 148. The other etymologies listed by Philippi 1969, 581 for Sarume and Sarutahiko are out of the question now that the Mirror shows the monkey.

⁴⁴⁶ *Kojiki* 40, 3–4; Minakata 1946, 21; Philippi 1969, 142, no. 6; Matsumae 1986, 15; 34. Myth makes Sarutahiko the husband of Uzume, hence the Sarume family is linked to the Kume. In court dances the Sarume kept up the genital flaunting as Uzume had done (*Kojiki* 17, 14): Sakurai, 1980.

⁴⁴⁷ Naumann 1963, 150ff.; Kidder 1966, 75; Sakurai, 1980; Okada 1991, 127f.; Czaja 1974, 291.

⁴⁴⁸ Naumann 1963, 150–152; Shiga 1971.

⁴⁴⁹ *Kojiki* 39, 1; 10; 40; *Kujiki* 174.

⁴⁵⁰ *Nihon shoki* 78f.

⁴⁵¹ Tanigawa 1983, 392.

⁴⁵² *Kojiki* 39, 10; 40; see Philippi's commentary *ad loc.*; *Nihon shoki* 44, and the NKBT *Nihon shoki* commentary I, 572; *Kujiki* 269. *Kojiki* 40, 11 says that Uzume carried a short sword in her belt (see the comment by Chamberlain 1906, 138), a further hint that Sarume is meant here.

⁴⁵³ Blacker 1975, 116.

The seventh-century monkey stones (*sarui-shi*) sculptures of Nara⁴⁵⁴ portray monkeys that share Sarutahiko's round eyes and his tightlipped grin, widening only at the upturned corners of the mouth. The unselfconscious nature of these monkeys befits the Kume behavior of penis-flaunting. Later too, people concluded from monkey behavior, that baring oneself pleased the monkey god. Even today, mountain gods (*yama no kami*), some of them in the shape of monkeys, are thought to be driven by lust. In the Yoshino area, men who want the help of a mountain god or goddess, for example in trying to find an ax lost in the woods, may open their fly as they search for it, hoping to please the god⁴⁵⁵. So in Yayoi and Kofun times, too, baring oneself was apparently a gesture to please a god⁴⁵⁶. The Mirror shows only the head of Sarutahiko, hence we do not know whether he, like his Kume worshippers, flaunted his penis, but a phallic getup is likely, for in later years he is indeed portrayed that way⁴⁵⁷.

The eighth warrior's penis-flaunting seems to have been political as well as martial and religious – it very likely has to do with the Kume joining Jimmu in the conquest of Yamato. As a feisty hill tribe in the trackless mountains north of Ise, the Kume could have stopped Jimmu's advance on Yamato, yet they became his allies, very likely because Jimmu granted and promised them women. One may guess this from their song of triumph at Uda, as we will see, and confirmation for it comes from the above myth that says Sarutahiko could have stopped the heavenly grandchild's descent from heaven, but because of Uzume became an ally instead⁴⁵⁸.

Sarutahiko's joining the sun-line at the heavenly crossroads thus is a fairly certain projection of a historic event into myth. Yet despite its apparently one-time, historic origin, the relationship between Sarutahiko and Uzume still inspired worshipers these seventeen hundred years. Many still look to the pair as *Dosō-jin*, travelers' guardian gods at crossroads as well as eager lovers, often portrayed in the act of lovemaking⁴⁵⁹.

HIKO-HOHODEMI

A little-known mirror kept at the Mikado shrine in Misato Town, Miyazaki Prefecture, Kyushu (fig. 43)⁴⁶⁰, sheds further light on the role of the above-mentioned Hiko-Hohodemi myth in Jimmu's conquest of Yamato, for it too suggests that Jimmu was Hiko-Hohodemi.

The key to understanding this mirror is the very long, horse-like creature seen on the right. The four-legged beast with lengthy snout, bent neck, very long back, and huge, upturned tail is a fantastic *wani* sea steed. As the Hiko-Hohodemi myth's eight-fathom *wani* it contrasts with the smaller fishlike animal on the mirror's left side. That animal, much smaller, seems to be the one-fathom *wani*⁴⁶¹ of the legend (as in fig. 31): though it does not look like a porpoise, it is growing four tentative feet, the hallmark of a *wani*. Shape-shifting is a quality the legend more than once reports of *wani* creatures⁴⁶².

On the Nangō mirror, as on the second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya, the four knobs around the middle are transformed into *tomoe* creatures, here with four arms, shaped like brittle stars. The origin and significance of these symbols is still in the dark, but they matter on the way to the other world, and they point to the sea⁴⁶³.

The man standing below in a strange dress holds in his left hand a thin, bent object, perhaps a fishhook. The mirror thus seems to tell the

⁴⁵⁴ Kidder 1966, 200 with figures 107–8; Tsuboi / Machida 1977, fig. 209–214; Sakurai 1980. Erotics of the gods: Aston 1905, 186–198; Naumann 1963, 224f.; Czaja 1974.

⁴⁵⁵ Naumann 1963, 224f.; Sakurai 1980, 128; cf. Okada 1973; Takemura 1979, 129; Matsumae 1993, 330, with reference to Hotta Yoshio.

⁴⁵⁶ Compare the Yayoi pottery drawing from Nara, Sahara / Harunari 1997, 18, fig. 21, where a man on a boat flaunts his penis. Further instances in the Takaida drawings: Yasumura 2003, pls. 1; 13; 14. A *baniwa* figure with this gesture: Ichinose / Kurumazaki 2004, 344, 1.

⁴⁵⁷ Aston 1896, 77. Ellwood 1967, 38f. reports also peasant rites with Sarutahiko coming in from the sea to fructify the fields and possess oracular priestesses.

⁴⁵⁸ Kume joining Jimmu: Naumann 1981, 102ff.; the event may have been reported in earlier versions of the legend but was later lost, like the scene where 'men with tails blocked the road' mentioned in the preface (13) of the *Kojiki*. The Ōtomo and Kume in *Kojiki* 39, 15–16 and 51, 11, as well as *Kujiki* 250 are, of course, late insertions, see Naumann 1981, 116ff. Song at Uda: below, p. 88.

⁴⁵⁹ Czaja 1974, 241. One cannot exclude, however, that the historic event itself was inspired by myth.

⁴⁶⁰ Published by Hosaka 1957, 100 and Nangō son 2002, 12, but generally overlooked, the mirror is missing from Kurumazaki 2002. It is 10,3 cm wide, much smaller than Jimmu's Mirror with its 18,1 cm. Photograph: Mikado shrine, Nangō, Kyushu.

⁴⁶¹ Above, p. 60.

⁴⁶² *Kojiki* 45, 6–7; *Nihon shoki* 61f.

⁴⁶³ Cf. Shiraishi 1990, 77 (Kifunehira cave, Oita Prefecture).



Fig. 43. The Nangō mirror with the myth of Hiko-Hohodemi.

tale of Hiko-Hohodemi with the *wani* and the fishhook. Across from the man, on the other side of the mirror, where one expects a fourth figure, there are only two wavy lines of uncertain meaning. They may stand for the waves at the sea-god's palace.

The Nangō mirror, by portraying both the big and the small *wani*, lends third-century authenticity to the *Nihon shoki* report that says Shiotsuchi and Hiko-Hohodemi went to the big *wani* at the Strait of Tachibana to consult with it⁴⁶⁴. From this, some credibility also goes to the sequel of this particular version that says the sea

god gave Hiko-Hohodemi the true coach-blanket – possibly the strange dress he is wearing on the Nangō mirror and that befits him as the heavenly grandchild⁴⁶⁵.

The Nangō mirror shares with Jimmu's Mirror several features that are seldom found in mirrors: they both tell a tale about real people⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁴ *Nihon shoki* 105; *Kujiki* 236.

⁴⁶⁵ *Nihon shoki* 106, *Kujiki* 238; see also above, p. 45 and 59.

⁴⁶⁶ Hiko-Hohodemi's tale being about a real person: Masuda 1970.

and do so by showing attributes; the figures, moreover, are drawn in part by raised relief and in part by raised lines⁴⁶⁷; they lack the busy lines found on so many other mirrors, and their realism, coarse as it is, exceeds all else in Japanese figured mirrors of the time. All this links the Nangō mirror with Jimmu's Mirror; perhaps they even come from the same workshop⁴⁶⁸.

Like Queen Himiko⁴⁶⁹ who gave mirrors to retainers in faraway Miyazaki and Gumma⁴⁷⁰, Jimmu may have given the Nangō mirror to a retainer in Miyazaki and Jimmu's Mirror to a retainer in Gumma. While we do not know what the gods and beasts of the Wei-dynasty mirrors meant to Himiko, Jimmu clearly lived Japanese myths, and his or his successors' artists learned to portray them. He apparently saw himself under the name of Hiko-Hohodemi as the hero of the fishhook story, while the earlier name of that hero had been Honoori or Hoori⁴⁷¹. As Hiko-Hohodemi, Jimmu could claim to be the true offspring of the sun and the one favored by the sea gods, which gave him the power and the right to subdue his elder brother Nigihayahi who had come to Yamato first.

Like the Nangō mirror, Jimmu's Mirror too suggests that the conqueror of Yamato saw himself as Hiko-Hohodemi. It does this by highlighting his *wani* and his tide jewels, as well as the wave that touches him and the waves that sweep his foes away. Jimmu's identification with Hiko-Hohodemi reflects the worldwide custom that where tradition is still more or less a living thing, great monarchs consider themselves imitators of the primordial hero⁴⁷², or indeed the embodiment of the primordial hero. As Alexander the Great was Herakles, so the legend also calls Jimmu the heavenly grandchild and Hiko-Hohodemi⁴⁷³. Since Japanese myth, like heroic genealogy worldwide, telescopes generations into the founder⁴⁷⁴, Jimmu became Hiko-Hohodemi in every way: he is counseled by the sea god Shiotsuchi, finds his fortune across the sea, marries the daughter of a *wani*⁴⁷⁵, writes a love poem about a tryst in a humble place of natural beauty⁴⁷⁶, and wields the tide against his elder brother. The Nangō mirror puts all this in relief.

THE DEER OF MT. KAGU

A Yayoi pottery drawing with a dance scene, found at Karako-Kagi in Nara Prefecture, shows a man and a woman doing a round dance at a decorated, high-built house. The woman, bar-

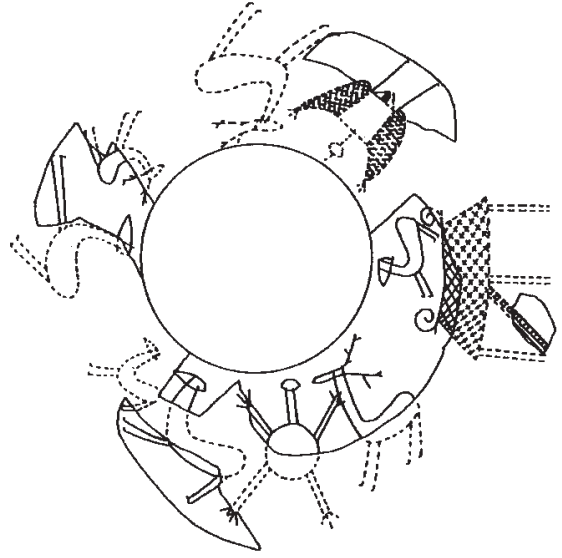


Fig. 44. Yayoi pottery drawing from Karako-Kagi. Dancers with deer.

⁴⁶⁷ Gōda 1991, 75f.

⁴⁶⁸ For early mirror-making in Kyushu see e. g. Hudson / Barnes 1991, 228 (Yoshinogari).

⁴⁶⁹ She is said to have brought mirror worship to Yamato: Kidder 2007, 106; 110.

⁴⁷⁰ Edwards 1999, 102. Queen Himiko had preferred mirrors with raised triangular rims, yet none of the Sea-Dance mirrors has such a rim. It may thus be significant, as Akatsuka says, that the owner of the Higashi-no-Miya kofun preferred other than Himiko-type mirrors – perhaps because a new political era had begun.

⁴⁷¹ *Nihon shoki*, NKBT commentary p. 186: 'Hiko-Hohodemi was the main character of the Eastern Conquest in the original story'; Bentley 2006, 235. Hiko-Hohodemi as Jimmu's name: *Nihon shoki* 62; 109f.; *Kujiki* 263.

⁴⁷² Eliade 1954, 37.

⁴⁷³ While *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* most of the time see Hiko-Hohodemi, the son of the heavenly grandchild, as Jimmu's grandfather, they also call Jimmu 'heavenly grandchild': (*Nihon shoki* 125; *Kujiki* 245; Bentley 2006, 251) and 'Hiko-Hohodemi': (*Kojiki* 41, 20; *Nihon shoki* 62; 108–110; 133. Naumann 1996, 182; Bentley 2006, 235; 244ff.; 261). In the legend, moreover, the tale of Hiko-Hohodemi runs straight into Jimmu's own tale (his father does nothing, not even die), so that the two read like one and the same.

⁴⁷⁴ Wenskus 1994, 183.

⁴⁷⁵ Himetataru Isuzu Yori Hime, *Nihon shoki* 61f.; 132; 138, cf. *Kojiki* 43–45.

⁴⁷⁶ Compare *Kojiki* 45, 19–23 with 54, 25–29. Cf. Tsuda's commentary in *Nihon shoki* NKBT, vol. I, 186; Naumann 1981, 100.

ing herself, waves her sleeves, and several deer bound along with them (fig. 44)⁴⁷⁷.

The high-built house suggests that the dance takes place at the Heavenly Weaving Hall in the center of the world (figs. 35–37). If so, the drawing may help us understand the role of the deer on Jimmu's Mirror. They are holy animals, for their tails curl up, while real deer tails, as any visitor to Nara will recall, do not curl⁴⁷⁸. Hence the deer on the Mirror seem to have an essential role in the other world, as do the ones on the pottery drawings of figures 35 and 44–45.

In Germanic as in Inner Asian myth, stags stand at the holy center of the world⁴⁷⁹. In ancient Japan too, stags stand at the tree in the center of the world⁴⁸⁰. Indeed *kagu* may mean 'Deer Place', shortened from **ka-no-ku*⁴⁸¹. The deer on Jimmu's Mirror as well as on the three pottery drawings thus seem to mark the center of the world⁴⁸², that is, the gods' palace in heaven, across the sea⁴⁸³.

In the legend of Jimmu's conquest of Yamato, Mt. Kagu matters greatly. The legend says that when Jimmu found his foes too many and his conquest stalled, he sent Saonetsuhiko and Oto-ukashi to fetch clay from the top of Mt. Kagu⁴⁸⁴, as soil from there stood for Yamato itself⁴⁸⁵. Though foes blocked their way, Jimmu's men made it back with the clay from which Jimmu molded platters and jars for offerings to the gods at a feast. He thereby won divine favor and new impetus that opened the way to the victories that enabled 'him to establish the world'⁴⁸⁶.

With the legend treating Mt. Kagu as the symbolic center both of Yamato and of Jimmu's conquest⁴⁸⁷, and with Jimmu's Mirror as well as the drawings 35 and 44–45 highlighting deer at the center of the world, Jimmu and his men may well have held the belief, otherwise known only from the eighth century, that earthly Mt. Kagu had fallen from heaven and was the center of the world⁴⁸⁸. If so, that belief is not imported from China, as has been said, but is part of Altaic Japanese myth⁴⁸⁹. It seems also to have given Jimmu and his warriors the strength they needed to conquer Yamato.

The notion of Mt. Kagu in heaven may be present already on the first Higashi-no-Miya mirror and the Hōju mirror, where waves of concentric half circles surround the innermost knob, waves that also line the rims of these mirrors' other bands and thus indicate shores. If the knob has a shore, it is dry land, and as it is steep, it should be a mountain. Jimmu's Mirror too has half-circle waves along the rim of its

bands, but around the innermost knob it uses another kind of shore waves: crashing breakers like those around the palace on the Hōju mirror. Only two such breakers are indicated, but they seem adopted from the Hōju mirror to show Tokoyo's mountain – Mt. Kagu – in the Mirror's midst⁴⁹⁰.

⁴⁷⁷ Karako-Kagi ruin of Nara Prefecture: Tatsumi 1992, 10; Tawaramoto 4, 2006, 3. Drawing after Tatsumi 1992, 11.

⁴⁷⁸ They bewildered interpreters Tomioka 1920, 386: 'This is strange'. See the *wani* in the Takehara Kofun painting with its tail curling up (Kidder 1964, 131, pl. 14 and 315ff.; Kusaka / Kameda 1970, 38f.; Saitō 1973 II, 26–29; Tsuboi / Machida 1977, 95, no. 128; Sahara / Inokuma 1990, 133; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 47, fig. 98). Stag gods in Japan: Chamberlain 1906, 120; Naumann 1963, 157f. Deer as holy animals: *Kojiki* 84, 14f.; *Nihon shoki*, 208; see also the 15th-century 'Deer Bearing Sacred Mirror', illustrated and well described in Levenson 1991, 400f.; cf. Tatsumi 1992, 30ff.; Sahara / Harunari 1997, 72ff.; Gōda 1991, 82f. For the holy whorl pattern (*warabete?* Takahashi 1915, 342; Tatsumi 1992, 33: *Ka-mon*) on animals see also the Eta-Funayama kofun sword with an inlaid horse in the Tokyo National Museum (Photo: *Wa Koku* 1993, 105).

⁴⁷⁹ Snorra Edda, *Gylfaginning* 16. De Vries 1957, 383. Kidder 1964, 104.

⁴⁸⁰ Antlers signify deer at the world tree in Kofun crowns: Kidder 1964, 104–109.

⁴⁸¹ J. R. Bentley of Northern Illinois University wrote us (e-mail of 4-8-08): "We know from early poetry that *ka*, then as now, meant 'deer' (MYS 1.84). It seems plausible, considering what we know about Old Japanese phonology, that *kagu* is composed of an earlier **ka-no-ku*, 'deer-POSSESSIVE-place', or 'the place of the deer'. As often happens, the vowel in *-no-* elides and results in *kagu* <**kangu* <**ka-no-ku*. The *-ku* is found in examples like *komoriku* 'place that is hidden', which also appears in early poetry" (MYS 3.420). See also Chamberlain 1906, 36; 120.

⁴⁸² *Kojiki* 17, 10; *Kujiki* 151. The Kiyotosaku painting too shows stag hunting in Tokoyo (Tsuboi / Machida 1977, fig. 136; Saitō 1973, pls. 193–195). Center of heaven: Naumann 1994, 396f.

⁴⁸³ *Ama* means both sea and sky: Akima 1993, 132.

⁴⁸⁴ *Nihon shoki* 119ff.; 130; *Kujiki* 271; NKBT *Nihon shoki* 579, additional commentary.

⁴⁸⁵ Cf. *Nihon shoki* 157: 'This earth stands for the land of Yamato'. Naumann 1994, 397 and 1996, 85.

⁴⁸⁶ Decisive victories: *Nihon shoki* 124: 'The chief brigands have now been destroyed'.

⁴⁸⁷ *Nihon shoki* 119ff. NKBT *Nihon shoki* 579, additional commentary. Naumann 1994, 397 and 1996, 85.

⁴⁸⁸ *Man'yōshū* 257; 1096, commentary 1, p. 54; Chamberlain 1906, 36; 120; Naumann 1988, 125; 1994, 396f. This is an Altaic myth: Eliade 1954, 6; the place name also existed in Kyushu and thus the story was perhaps brought along from there: Yasumoto 1999, 84ff.

⁴⁸⁹ Contra Aston 1896, 111.

⁴⁹⁰ Gōda 1991, 84 suggested these breakers were claws of a *tomo-e* symbol.

Fig. 45. Yayoi pottery sherd from Hirano, Osaka. War dancer with deer.



Since the man in drawing 44 holds no weapon, the dance there seems to be peaceful, and deer may have belonged to all kinds of dances in the other world. There is nevertheless a strong link between deer and the war dance, for not only Jimmu's Mirror depicts them together, but a Yayoi pottery sherd, perhaps from the first century B.C., does so too (fig. 45)⁴⁹¹.

The dancer is a warrior like those on Jimmu's Mirror. His head and body are drawn straight but his feet sideways. Lifting his foot and holding his shield far from his body, the man seems to be war dancing, as does the warrior in fig. 32⁴⁹². Before him bounds a deer – not a dog, as has been said, for antlers in velvet have widening tips as here, and the pointed ear of a deer is seen next to the near antler; besides, the short uplifted tail is typical for deer when they are alarmed⁴⁹³. The sherd, then, depicts a war dance with deer much like the dance on Jimmu's Mirror.

Already in Yayoi times the dance with deer thus gripped the minds of leaders and was shown in art⁴⁹⁴. Since the dance on Jimmu's Mirror takes place in Tokoyo, and since it is hard to see deer taking part in a war dance in our world, the

dance on the pottery sherd from Hirano very likely was also meant to take place in Tokoyo and with the deer of Mt. Kagu. If so, the myth underlying Jimmu's dance – triumphing at the center of the world^{494a} – and a good part of its iconography, were at least three hundred years old when Jimmu's Mirror was cast.

With the dancer engraved, but the deer added in relief, the Hirano pot was costly and therefore must have belonged to a leader, perhaps to his grave goods. His hopes for afterlife, as one can

⁴⁹¹ Found at the Hirano site in Osaka Prefecture. Picture: *Asahi Gurafu* 1997, 108. Tatsumi 1992, 13.

⁴⁹² If the sherd is indeed from before our era, the man's attack weapon will have been a halberd rather than a sword: Sahara / Harunari 1997, 85.

⁴⁹³ *Cervus nippon* Temminck. Dog: Sahara / Harunari 1997, 20. For deer in Japanese art of the time shown with short tail pointing up: *ibid.*, p. 24. Stags point their tail up when excited or alarmed.

⁴⁹⁴ A further sign of this is the tale (*Kojiki* 14, 6; *Nihon shoki* 34f.) of how Amaterasu herself did the war dance, shouting and stamping, above, p. 46.

^{494a} Stags with their yearly renewed antlers as symbols of regeneration: Eliade 1991, 164.

see, were built on his fighting prowess, befitting the warlike Yayoi period. The sherd from Hirano thus bears out the first centuries of our era as Japan's shamanic-heroic age⁴⁹⁵ and, like the first two mirrors from Higashi-no-Miya, provides a striking historic and mythological background for Jimmu's Mirror.

Jimmu's Mirror thus offers rich insights into ancient Japanese religion. What makes these al-

together matchless is their age, for they come from the third century of our era and, as with the Karako-Kagi drawing and the Hirano sherd, they can be projected far back into the Yayoi period. Indeed, it is fair to say that the second mirror from Higashi-no-Miya and Jimmu's Mirror with their images of the gods and myths constitute the beginning of recorded Japanese religion.

⁴⁹⁵ See above, p. 42.