

The Body as a Mode of Conceptualization in the *Kojiki* Cosmogony¹⁾

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Although the *Kojiki* was submitted to the court in 712, it is not mentioned in the *Shoku Nihongi*, which contains the official history from 697 till 791. This paper is based on the assumption that intrinsic reasons were at least partially at work and will address the problem by subjecting the conceptualization of the text to closer review. “Conceptualization” refers to *kōsō* 構想 (concept, idea, design of a text), an important concept used in text-oriented *Kojiki* research to describe the selections and restrictions of words, phrases or stories and their arrangement in a coherent and closed text. The examination shows that *mi* 身 (“body”) belongs to the keywords in *Kojiki* myths, and another assumption is that the involvement of *mi* is a unique feature of *Kojiki* text design which distinguishes the work from the *Nihon Shoki* myths – one, which possibly overshot the mark.

キーワード：日本神話 (Japanese myths)、古事記 (*Kojiki*)、構想 (conceptualization)、身 (body)、上代史 (pre-Heian history)

1) This paper is based on a talk given at a conference at Hamburg University (Arbeitskreis vormoderne Literatur Japans, 2017, June 29th to July 2nd).

According to its preface the *Kojiki* is an official chronicle which was commissioned by Genmei Tenno in 711 and submitted some months later in 712. But why is it not mentioned in the *Shoku Nihongi*, the second of the six Japanese histories (*rikkokushi* 六国史) of the Nara and Heian period, which contains the official history from 697 till 791 and was submitted in 797? There are many possible explanations, ranging from a forged *Kojiki* preface to the simple fact that other texts of the eighth century are not mentioned either. However, since the *Kojiki* in many respects is strikingly different from the *Nihon Shoki* (720), the first of the six chronicles, there might be intrinsic reasons as well. Above all, the question of why it was necessary to submit the latter chronicle only eight years after the former remains. This paper is based on the assumption that intrinsic reasons were at least partially at work and will address the problem by subjecting the conceptualization of the text to closer review. “Conceptualization” refers to *kōsō* 構想 (concept, idea, design of a text), a concept used in Japanese *Kojiki* research to describe the selections of words, myths or stories and their arrangement in a coherent and closed text. The term concerns other aspects as well, such as the restrictions and regulations governing the use of Chinese characters, but this paper will focus on the concept of body, and other words relating to body or carnal activities, occurring within the *Kojiki* cosmogony. Another underlying assumption of the present paper is that the involvement of the body as a key concept is a unique feature of text design which distinguishes the work from the *Nihon Shoki* myths – one which possibly overshot the mark. To understand this assumption requires some historical background on political developments as well as the traditional treatments of Japanese myths.

1 The historical and mythological background

The seventh century can be summarized politically as marking a shift from the Yamato kingdom to a state governed in accordance with *ritsuryō* codes (law and etiquette).²⁾ The chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, which together with the poetic anthology *Man'yōshū* belonged to “the Court’s larger historiographic project” (Ebersole 1992: 10), and the *Taihō ritsuryō* from 701, the first complete

2) For an introduction to Japanese history of the sixth and seventh century as viewed in the East Asian context, see Inoue / Brown 2006: 163–220. Naoki summarizes the years after 672 thus: “(1) the development of religious rites and institutions, both Shinto and Buddhist, that would enhance the sacral side of their authority; (2) the building of T’ang-style capitals that would sanctify and legitimize their rule over the emerging Japanese state; and (3) the establishment of a bureaucratic system (like the one in T’ang China) that would increase state control over all lands and peoples” (2006: 221).

constitution, suggest that the building of the state went hand in hand with the development of reading and writing.³⁾ However, since history is also recorded by deeds and battles, a crucial event of the later seventh century was the Jinshin war from 672. After Tenji Tenno died in 671 his son Ōtomo was determined to be his successor. The historical circumstances are still obscure but Ōama, Tenji's younger brother, decided to retire in seclusion to the shelter of the Yoshino mountains. But he did not stay for long and moved eastwards to muster military support in order to attack and destroy the Ōmi court at Lake Biwa. It was a short but successful war that forced the designated king, his own nephew, to commit suicide. Ōama moved the capital back to the center of Yamato (Nara prefecture) where he ascended the throne in spring of the next year under the name of Tenmu.

Japanese rulers of the seventh century learned about the importance of written history from the successful models of Chinese dynasties, as evident from the *Nihon Shoki*, which testifies to Tenmu's order to compile an official history in 681.⁴⁾ One of the biggest problems in establishing a dynasty was to win the loyalty of powerful local parties. Without the agreement of the *mae tsu kimi* (different writings), the powerful politicians at court who attended the emperor (literally: *in front of the emperor*), it was impossible to claim the throne.⁵⁾ On the other hand, the destruction of the old capital, the wiping out of certain powerful families who were in the way, and Tenmu's responsibility for his nephew's death were historical facts impossible to hide. The *Nihon Shoki* shows impressively how history was rewritten by presenting Tenmu's war as a mere act of self-defense, while similar exculpatory statements, though in much shorter form, are contained in the preface to the *Kojiki* as well.

Tenmu was not the originator of these political changes, but he continued and strengthened what already had begun in the early seventh century. An important step was the reformation of the *uji* system in 684, two years before his death.⁶⁾ The 氏 *uji*, local groups or clans as the emperor's family itself once was, were powerful institutions around the court in Yamato and in the countryside. There were different kinds of *uji*-groups such as 臣 *omi*, 君 · 公 *kimi*, or 国造 *kuni no miyatsuko*, which were

3) Cf. Mizoguchi 2000: 279–280. For a detailed history of reading and writing within the east Asian context in Japan, see Lurie 2011.

4) Entry of the seventeenth day, 3rd month, 10th year Tenmu (days are written in the Chinese *kanshi* 干支 system, month and years in ordinary numbers), cf. Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 1: 406–407 (i.e. 1st book; book 1–3, first print, 1994, cited after the sixth print 2012).

5) Cf. Shinokawa 2013: 48–57. Several entries of the *Nihon Shoki* corroborate this assumption; see for example Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 2: 528.

6) For the original text and further explanations, cf. Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 3: 438–439.

located in the countryside around the court or even in remoter areas, and the 連 *muraji* and 伴造 *banzō* (*tomo no miyatsuko*), which were located closer to the court while directly serving the imperial family. The status of the *miyatsuko*, who were once rulers of their own territories as well, and other *uji* groups was lower than that of the *omi*, *kimi*, and *muraji*, while these latter three 姓 *kabane* (the title of an *uji* group) had equal standing. This arrangement changed with the introduction of the new ranking system in 684 known as 八色姓 *yakusa no kabane*, literally the *kabane* of eight colors. The new system was a hierarchy with the 真人 *mahito* at the top, a rank restricted to direct members of the emperor's house⁷⁾, followed by the 朝臣 *asomi* (*ason*), the 宿禰 *sukune*, and the 忌寸 *imiki* (there were four more ranks but only the first four were actually conferred). We will examine the connections between this reform and the conceptualization of the *Kojiki* later, but first some background is required.

The comparative approach to mythology, which was introduced to Japan with Basil Hall Chamberlain's translation of the *Kojiki* (1882) and other works of western scholars, took some years to be established in Japan as well. Nevertheless, the Japanese realization that their own myths are based on traditions coming from outside of the country can be traced back to the years before World War II. Since then, two branches of traditions have been identified, described as the southern and the northern line (system), the *nanpō-kei* 南方系 and the *hoppō-kei* 北方系.⁸⁾ Mizoguchi Mutsuko characterizes these two systems as a “dual structure” (*nigen kōzō* 二元構造) consisting of the Izanaki-Izanami line (southern system) and the *musuhi* line (northern system).⁹⁾ The southern line appears to be the older system, with origins traced back to the Yayoi period, more than two thousand years ago. Consequently, this line is considered to be autochthonous, as opposed to the younger system from the north. Notable examples in *Kojiki* that attest to the myths of the southern system are the story of the white or naked rabbit from Inaba, an episode of the so-called Izumo myths (*Kojiki*), the slaying of Ōgetsu Hime by Susa no Wo, which is connected to the Hainuwele myth from Indonesia, and the island fishing (*kuni-hiki* 国引き). The latter is known from the book “Izumo” contained in 風土記 *Fudoki*, a collection of

7) That means that the line of ancestors of most of these families are connected with Keitai (26th Tenno, died 531?) or a Tenno after him: cf. Shinokawa 2014: 213, and for Keitai in English research Brown 2006: 145–148.

8) See, for example Oka 1994: 9, quoted after the “Ōbayashi Taryō edition” *Ijin sono ta – hoka jūni-hen*, 13 papers based on the collection *Ijin sono ta – Nihon minzoku / bunka no genryū to Nihon kokka no keisei* (1979), here a treatise from 1956 (*Nihon minzoku bunka no keisei*, “The formation of the culture of the Japanese people”).

9) My brief outline follows Mizoguchi 2016: 102–103, 165–174. Amaterasu and her younger brother Susa no Wo, Ōkuninushi et cetera, belong to the Izanaki-Izanami system, Takami Musuhi and Kamu Musuhi are the main representatives of the *musuhi* line. For a detailed exploration, see Mizoguchi 2000.

regional gazetteers compiled by imperial order in the early eighth century, but the land-fishing motif can be confirmed from the account of the creation of the first island, Onogoro, by Izanaki and Izanami as well. The main transmitters of these myths were the *omi*, *kimi*, and *kuni no miyatsuko* groups, the powerful *uji* families in the countryside.

By contrast, the northern system is much younger. It presumably arrived in the Japanese islands during the fifth century, when great turbulence and migration governed northeast Asia. The northern part of China was under the control of foreign rulers, such as the tribes from Tibet and nomads from north-east Asia. The historical circumstances were complex and we have to leave further explanations to the historians¹⁰⁾, but for an understanding of the northern line it is crucial to note, that the myths of the nomads and tribes from northeast Asia reached Japan via the Korean peninsula. While the southern line is described as governed by a horizontal world view, the northern line by contrast is connected with the idea of a vertical world view, i.e. the idea that a spirit or god in heaven created the earth beneath by himself or ordered the creation. Representatives of these myths in the *Kojiki* are the *musuhi* spirits, such as Takami Musuhi and Kamu Musuhi, who appeared in the beginning of the cosmogony. The main worshippers of these spirits were the house of the emperor and the *uji* groups of the *muraji* and *banzō*. The following observations on the conceptualization of the body will shed light on the complicated relations between the historical circumstances and the attempt to appropriate myths in order to corroborate and legitimize sovereignty.

2 身 *mi* in old Japanese

The beginning of the *Kojiki* cosmogony repeatedly contains a sentence consisting of the three characters 隱身也. The usual reading is *mi wo kakushiki*,¹¹⁾ variously translated into English as “hid their persons” (Chamberlain), “their forms were not visible” (Philippi) or “concealed themselves” (Heldt). However, *mi* 身 in old Japanese is neither person nor form nor themselves, but the living

10) For the Chinese “Sixteen Kingdoms” (*wuhu shiliuguo* 五胡十六国), “between 304 and 439”, see Wilkinson 2015: 728–729, for the “situation in northeast Asia”, see Brown 2006: 110–112.

11) Cf. Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 2007: 29. To this reading the honorific verb *tamahi* can be added, as in *kakushi-tamahiki* (Kurano 1971: 51). For a thorough discussion of all words of the *Kojiki* cosmogony mentioned in this paper, see the explanations in Saigō 2005 (*Kojiki chūshaku*, paperback edition, vol. 1) and the separately written entries in Kōnoshi / Yamaguchi 1993. Kōnoshi’s (1993: 31–36) discussion of 隱身也 shows the complexity of the matter, which will be simplified in this paper in order to focus on a particular aspect that does not appear in Kōnoshi’s discussion; for a summary of the main opinions, see also Matsumoto 2003: 95–99.

body. Metonymically, the word can express *mi no ue* 身の上, one's personal background, the status quo,¹²⁾ too, but important for our observations is its basic meaning as a living body. Japanese distinguishes between *mi* and the younger concept of *karada* 体, just as the German language has a similar distinction between “Leib” and “Körper”, which is also comparable to body and corpse in English.¹³⁾ Florenz and Naumann translate *mi wo kakushiki* as “verbargen ihre Leiber [in Unsichtbarkeit]”, Antoni “ihr Leib blieb unsichtbar verborgen”.¹⁴⁾ The first meaning of the character 身 *syn* in Middle Chinese is “torso of a man or animal, trunk of the body, the body below the neck / a) by synecdoche, gen. term for body” (Kroll 2015, 身), but the pronunciation in old Japanese belongs to the so-called *otsurui*-type and is homonymous with *mi* 実, literally “fruit, seeds”. Japanese dictionaries explain 身 usually with *nikutai* 肉体 (flesh, body, flesh and blood) and *karada*, but it is crucial to keep in mind the idea of the living body. The following observations will corroborate this assumption.

3 Conceptualization (*kōsō*) in *Kojiki*

While mainstream modern research on the *Kojiki* myths concentrated on questions of comparative mythology and historical reality, many Japanese works since the late 1960s narrowed the focus to the text as a whole, that is, as a coherent narrative consisting of three books (*maki* 卷). It was Saigō Nobutsuna who inaugurated the so-called *sakuhinron* (“text-immanence-based analysis”)¹⁵⁾, which reached its peak with the works of Kōnoshi Takamitsu. The focus on the work as a whole and the comparison with *Nihon Shoki* have revealed that the conceptualization of the *Kojiki* text is governed by

12) Cf. Omodaka 1983: 696, Ōno 2011: 1138–1139.

13) Following Dietmar Kamper, “Leib” originally was synonymous with “Leben” (life). By contrast, “Körper” since the 13th century was associated closely with the concept of “Leiche” (corpse, dead body); cf. Kamper 2001: 428–429. Consequently, the translation of old Japanese 身 into German should be “Leib”.

14) Cf. Chamberlain 1919: 15, Philippi 1968: 47, Heldt 2012: 7, Florenz 2014 [original 1919]: 11, Naumann 1996: 23, Antoni 2012: 16. Since the quoted sentence is written in Chinese, 隱 is a transitive verb. If this assumption is correct, the translations by Philippi and Antoni are not accurate. However, another reading of 隱身 is *kakuri-mi*, literally “the concealed body”.

15) The term *sakuhinron* 作品論 defies a literal translation, while the methodology of the “text-immanence-based analyses” was proposed at the EAJS panel “*Sakuhinron* – a viable approach to *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* myths?” (2017, section Sb8: Intellectual History and Philosophy, organized and chaired by the author). In presenting Japanese words and phrases in English texts, it is customary to first provide the reading, followed by the characters. The presentation of concepts from academic discourse will follow this convention, but characters from the original text will precede their readings. The reasons are, first, to provide a tool to distinguish between object and meta languages, and second, as a reminder that many readings in old Japanese texts are still obscure.

strict regulations about the use of Chinese characters and readings.¹⁶⁾ The reader sensitized to the carefully selected characters, will realize that many of them behave in accordance with regulations, including expressions which belong to the conceptualization of the body, and are of special interest here.

From the appearance of the first god Ame no Minakanushi, the “spirit Master Mighty Center of Heaven” (Heldt 2012: 7), in the short passage at the beginning, to the appearance of the creator spirits Izanaki and his younger sister Izanami, the character 成 plays a conspicuous role, occurring no less than seven times. It is often read as *naru*, which Chamberlain translates with “were born”.¹⁷⁾ However, his translation cannot be correct due to the fact that in *Kojiki* the process of giving birth or being born is expressed by the character 生. In order to highlight the distinction between 成 and 生 an annotation is given immediately after the first use of 生, which explains the reading of the character as *umu*. Saigō counts 成 *naru* among “the extremely important words” (1: 97) in *Kojiki*, and Maruyama Masao realized the relevance of the concept as well. In order to distinguish it from concepts such as “to give birth” or “to create/produce”, which can be found in many myths around the world, he proposes the gloss *weruden* (ヴェルデテン) from German “werden” (to become).¹⁸⁾

To realize the distinction between 成 and 生 sufficiently one has to consider the whole process from the *weruden* of Ame no Minakanushi to the *weruden* of Izanaki and Izanami and the subsequent discovery of the bodies. The first five spirits who concealed their bodies are epitomized as 別天神 *koto ama tsu kami* (“single and separate from the other spirits of the heaven”, Heldt p. 7), and they are distinguished from the following 神世七代 *kamu-yo nana-yo* (“the seven generations in the world of the spirits”, p. 8). The first two of the seven generation were spirits, who also concealed their bodies, but the following five generations are presented as elder brother and younger sister with no effort made to conceal their material existence. A scrutiny of their names, from “Floating Mud” via “Swelling and

16) For the restrictions of Chinese characters (logograms and phonograms) in “*Kojiki* as a text”, see Kōnoshi 2007: 67–75. For conceptualization (*kōsō*) in *Kojiki*, see Yoshii 1978: 108–109; Kōnoshi 1983: 14 (*bungakuteki kōsō-ryoku* 文学的構想力, the literary power of conceptualization); Nishimiya 1994: 15–16; Matsumoto 2003: 104–108; and Yajima 2008: 109, 112, 122, 127 etc. (Yoshii and Nishimiya from the standpoint of *sakuhinron*, text-immanence-based analysis; Matsumoto for the beginning of the *Kojiki* cosmogony; Yajima from the historical perspective).

17) Cf. Chamberlain 1919: 16, 17. Philippi chooses “came into existence” (1968: 47, 48), Heldt “came about”, “appears” or simply “was” (2012: 7, 8). The German translations render with “entstanden” (Florenz 2014: 10, 11, Naumann 1996: 23, Antoni 2012: 16, 17).

18) Maruyama quoted from Miura 2013: 30; Steineck 2017: 151–157.

Thriving Tip” to “He and She Who Beckoned”, reveals a process that is described by Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi as giving form to the body.¹⁹⁾ After the creation of the first island, Onogoro, in accord with the orders of the spirits of heaven, Izanaki and Izanami descended to that island to discover their bodies:²⁰⁾

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Koko ni, kono imo Izanami no Mikoto wo tohite ihishiku: “namuchi ga mi ha, ika ni ka nareru?” to ihishi ni, kotahete mawoshishiku: “A ga mi ha, nari narite nari-ahanu tokoro hito tokoro ari” to mawoshiki. Shikakushite, Izanaki no Mikoto no nori-tamahishiku: “A ga mi ha, nari narite nari-amareru tokoro hito tokoro ari. Kare, kono a ga mi no nari-ahanu tokoro wo mochite, namuchi ga mi no nari-ahanu tokoro wo sashi-fusagite, kuni wo umi-nasamu to omofu. Umu ha ika ni” to nori-tamahishi ni [...]

At this time [Izanaki] asked his spouse²¹⁾ Izanami [...], saying:

“How is your body formed [成]?”

She replied, saying:

“My body, formed though it be formed, has one place which is formed insufficiently.”

Then [Izanaki] said:

“My body, formed though it be formed, has one place which is formed to excess. Therefore, I would like to take that place in my body which is formed to excess and insert it into that place in your body which is formed insufficiently, and [thus] give birth [生] to the land. How would this be?”²²⁾

It is this passage which provides the first attestation of 生 *umu*, while also conspicuously employing the character 成 ten times.

19) Cf. Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 2007: 29; Kōnoshi 1983: 104–106. The formulation is *shintai keisei no katei* 身体形成の過程, but »*mi*« *no keisei katei* 「身」の形成過程 (Kōnoshi 2013: 89) seems more appropriate. For the translations of the names, see Heldt 2012: 8.

20) For the Japanese text and transliteration, see Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 2007: 30–33. The annotation at the end of the text was originally written with conspicuously smaller characters and entered as two lines into the text.

21) 妹 *imo* in the songs of the anthology *Man'yōshū* can be translated with “spouse” or “beloved”. However, in old Japanese prose texts *imo* always denotes a younger sister; see Saigō 1: 94, pp. 121–123, 129–131; and Saigō 1984: 59.

22) Translation by Philippi 1968: 50. Heldt’s translations of the quoted passage is inadequate (“She replied saying: »My body is empty in one place«”; 2012: 9). Chamberlains, oppressed by the Victorian spirit of his time, generally translates in Latin whenever he considers something lascivious or obscene.

Due to the mistake made by the woman in speaking first during the subsequent ritual of “walking around the mighty pillar”, the firstborn children were the “limbless Leech Child” and the “Froth Isle”; they did not make their parents happy and did not “count among their children” (Heldt p. 9). The dissatisfied siblings realized their mistake and after consultation with the heaven’s spirits they tried again. The following episodes are known as the birth of land (*kuni-umi* 国生み) and the birth of spirits (*kami-umi* 神生み), a process which finally led to the death of Izanami.

4 From the birth of the land to Izanami’s death

While 成 renders something that happens without an active subject, the character 生 expresses intentional bodily activity, including the procreative act and delivery from the womb. After the discovery of their body differences Izanaki explained the details of the subsequent process: “Well then, let us walk around this mighty pillar of heaven and then join in bed” (Heldt p. 9). The crucial formulation here is 美斗能麻具波比 *mito no maguhahi* (“join in bed”), made so because it is spelled out in *ongana* 音仮名 phonograms. Yamaguchi and Kōnoshi (2007: 32) explain that this phrase cannot be expressed with *kunji* 訓字 logograms, that is, characters such as 生, which have the same meanings as in Chinese but are read as Japanese (*umu*). However, this explanation does not sound convincing, because there surely must have been several Chinese expressions for sexual intercourse (Japanese: *maguhahi*).²³ Furthermore, the usual glossing of *mi-to* is “bed”, which means that *mito* is understood metonymically as the location of the sexual intercourse. However, Saigō criticizes this meaning and explains *to* as *inbu* 陰部, i.e. male or female genitals (with *mi* as an honorific prefix). The word *to* in *kō-ru* pronunciation is homonymous with *to* denoting the narrow mouth of a river, or a narrow passage in the sea, with mountains on both sides, thus resembling a door or a gate.²⁴ In this reading *mito* is metonymical, too, but has a more direct reference to the involvement of living and active bodies. Might it not be the case that the phonograms were chosen to emphasize the body and at the same time to give a hint of what happened later, when Izanami gave birth to Kagutsuchi, the fire spirit? Heldt translates the later passage: “Because [Izanami] bore this child, her mighty privates [美蕃登 *mi-hoto*]

23) The main version in *Nihon Shoki* gives 遵合, which Kojima et al. (1: 117) read *mito no maguhahi*. Their explanation for *mito* is 御陰 (genital organs) and for *maguhahi* is 目交 (literally “crossing eyes”, sexual intercourse). The character 遵 in Middle Chinese possesses the meaning “joint, link up, unite; couple” (Kroll 2015, kuwH; see also 合 hop).

24) Cf. Saigō 1: 148; Omodaka 1983: 485, 711.

were burned and she fell gravely ill” (p. 12). This passage and *mito no maguhahi* have a close connection, established by *mito* and *mihoto*. It is as if the two words are acting as a frame for a crucial episode of the narrative. Conceptualization, as we can see now, is a means to strengthen the coherence of the text.

The birth of the land in *Kojiki* differs in several aspects from that of *Nihon Shoki*. In the main version some islands were born (産) with “two names” or as “twins”, but in *Kojiki* two islands (Shikoku and Kyūshū) were born as “one body with four faces” (身一而有面四 *mi hitotsu ni shite omote yotsu ari*). As is the case with the formulation “concealing their bodies”, the metaphorical description as one body with four faces is found only in *Kojiki*. Another important difference is the details in each account. A comparison of the birth of the spirits, who represent phenomena of nature, such as rivers, mountains, or sea spirits, reveals how much weight *Kojiki* gives to the descriptions of this process.

次生海、次生川、次生山、次生木祖句句廻 馳、次生草祖草野姬、亦名野槌。	既生國竟、更生神。故、生神名、大事忍男 神、次生石土毘古神訓、次生石巢比賣神、次 生大戸日別神、次生天之吹上男神、次生大屋 毘古神、次生風木津別之忍男神、次生海神、 名大綿津見神、次生水戸神、名速秋津日子 神、次妹速秋津比賣神。此速秋津日子、速秋 津比賣二神、因河海、持別而生神名、沫那藝 神、次沫那美神、次頰那藝神、次頰那美神、 次天之水分神訓、次國之水分神、次天之久比 奢母智神、次國之久比奢母智神。 次生風神、名志那都比古神、次生木神、名久 久能智神、次生山神、名大山上津見神、次生 野神、名鹿屋野比賣神、亦名謂野椎神。此大 山津見神、野椎神二神、因山野、持別而生神 名、天之狹土神訓、次國之狹土神、次天之狹 霧神、次國之狹霧神、次天之闊戸神、次國之 闊戸神、次大戸惑子神、次大戸惑女神。次 生神名、鳥之石楠船神、亦名謂天鳥船。次 生大宜都比賣神。次生火之夜藝速男神、亦 名謂火之炫毘古神、亦名謂火之迦具土神。
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Left side: main Version *Nihon Shoki*, beginning of the 5th section; right side: *Kojiki*, the birth of the gods.

While the *Kojiki* describes at length the birth of the spirits, the corresponding account in *Nihon Shoki* is conspicuously shorter: “Next [they] give birth to the sea, next [they] give birth to the rivers, next [they] give birth to the mountains, next [they] give birth to Kukunochi, the ancestor of the trees, next [they] give birth to Kaya Hime, the ancestor of the grass plants, another name is Notsuchi”. Furthermore, the *Kojiki* text makes a distinction between 次生 (“next, they give birth to ...”) and 次...

(simply “next” without 生). The difference is that whereas 次生 describes the activities of Izanaki and Izanami, the passages containing only “next” imply a different subject, namely, the children of Izanaki and Izanami. This conceptualization is another special feature of the *Kojiki* narrative.

Having burned her “mighty privates” (p. 12) by giving birth to “Swift Burning Flame Man” (Hi no Yagi Hayano), Izanami “fell gravely ill” and from her vomit, excrement, and urine came (成) more spirits till she eventually passed away. What happened then is best described in the words of Roland Schenda, though addressing another context:

The body parts of depicted as well as of real humans are flying around in front of our eyes again and again. [...] the limbs are scattered everywhere, be it realistic, be it psycho-symbolic in the literature and painting of the Christian culture. (1998: 17)

After Izanami “died the death of a spirit” the “weeping and wailing” (p. 13) brother took his sword and dismembered Kagutsuchi (“Flickering Elder”, = Hi no Yagi Hayano) into parts. This is described in detail, but from the perspective of the *Kojiki* myths it is crucial to understand that from these body parts came new life. From the blood of the beheaded Kagutsuchi “caught by the tip of his mighty blade splattered onto a clump of hallowed boulders” came three other spirits. From the “blood caught by the guard of his mighty blade” that splattered onto the rocks, again three spirits appeared, and the blood “that had collected on the hilt of his mighty blade and dripped down through his fingers” (p. 14) changed to three more spirits. After that the narrator relates that from the head, the chest, the abdomen, the genitals, the left and the right hand, and the left and the right foot, respectively, came more spirits.

In the main version of the *Nihon Shoki* myths Izanami did not die but some of the variants present a similar narrative.²⁵⁾ In the seventh and eighth version of the fifth “myth block” Izanaki broke Kagutsuchi into parts as well, and the latter is described as having his head, trunk, hands, hips, and feet changed into five mountain spirits.²⁶⁾ Nevertheless, the account is conspicuously less detailed than the corresponding narrative of the *Kojiki*. The process of 成 *naru* of spirits occurs in *Kojiki* two more times.

25) The *Nihon Shoki* myths contain several alternative versions that originally were inserted directly into the text with smaller characters written in two lines (cf. n. 20). These variants divide the myths into eleven “myth blocks”; see the table in Metevelis 1993: 386–387.

26) Cf. Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 1: 50–54.

After realizing that he had been in a “foul and filthy land” (p. 17), in order to visit his deceased sister, Izanaki decided to “cleanse his mighty body”. From his clothes and the things he was carrying and now “flung away”, as well as from the water he was using to wash his body, emerged a lot of new spirits. The second occasion was when Susa no Wo was ritually cleaned (禊 *harae*) and banished from heaven. After discovering that Ōgetsu Hime was producing food through her “nose, her mouth, and her rear”, he flew into a rage and “slew the spirit Lady Great Sustenance” (p. 25). From her “head came silkworms, from her ears foxtail millet, from her nose red beans, from her privates barley, and from her rear soybeans”. The *Nihon Shoki* presents a similar narrative, but the compilers decided to omit it from the main version and transferred it to a different context in one of the variant versions.²⁷⁾ However, for the *Kojiki* narrative the conceptualization of body remains a central feature, which is sustained throughout the whole myth. It is now time to ask again what all this has to do with the ideologically driven conceptualization of the *Kojiki*.

5 Conceptualization and ideological preferences

The assumption was made above that an important aim of Tenmu’s *kabane* reformation of 684 was to provide the *uji*-groups with a rank system in order to assign more weight to the local groups of the *omi*, *kimi*, and *kuni no miyatsuko*. The *Nihon Shoki* gives the exact numbers of the change:

new <i>kabane</i>	old <i>kabane</i>
52 <i>asomi</i>	39 <i>omi</i> , 11 <i>kimi</i> , 2 <i>muraji</i> (Mononobe and Nakatomi)
50 <i>sukune</i>	49 <i>muraji</i> , 1 <i>omi</i>
11 <i>imiki</i>	10 <i>muraji</i> , 1 <i>atai</i>

Table 1: data after Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 3: 440–443 (*asomi* and *sukune*), 3: 446–447 (*imiki*); see also Mizoguchi 2016: 201.

The table reveals a distinct preference for elevating the *omi* and *kimi* groups to the *asomi* rank, the highest one achievable for members outside of the imperial family. Although the *muraji* groups were once at the same level with the *omi* and *kimi*, the new system assigned them a lower rank. A comparison of these data with the accounts of the founders of the *uji* groups reveals interesting parallels. The incorporation of the founders or ancestors’ names into the mythological and historical narratives meant

27) Cf. Held 2014: 25. The motif of producing food from the orifices of the body is compared with the so-called Hainuwele myth. The eleventh variant to the fifth myth block presents a similar narrative but in a different context; see Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 1: 58–61.

the integration of these groups into the emperor's line. Thus, it was not only important to be mentioned, it was no less crucial to be well positioned in the historical records: the earlier their names are mentioned in the texts, the closer their symbolical affiliation to the descendant line of the emperor. Both chronicles differ in the number and form of these connections, but before giving an example we have to take a look at the numbers of founders and ancestors given in *Kojiki*:

accounts of founders / founder spirits in <i>Kojiki</i> altogether:	253
<i>omi</i> / <i>kimi</i> / <i>kuni no miyatsuko</i>	59 / 54 / 28
<i>muraji</i> / <i>banzō</i>	20 / 8

Table 2: data after Mizoguchi 2016: 198.

These data also reveal a general preference for the *uji* groups of the *omi*, *kimi*, and *kuni no miyatsuko*, who were living mainly on the periphery of the central Yamato court. One group of the *muraji* mentioned in both chronicles was the Owari *uji* named after Owari, a land that matches today the western part of Aichi prefecture. Since this group maintained close connections to the emperor's house, reaching far down into history, it had several subgroups close to Yamato. Accordingly, the *Kojiki* provides more than one account mentioning a founder or remote ancestor, but the earliest connection of the *muraji* group comes with Kōshō, the fifth Tenno, when he married the younger sister of Okitsuyoso, who is introduced as the founder of the Owari *no muraji*.²⁸⁾ In *Nihon Shoki*, on the other hand, the founder of this group takes root deeply in the myth. After descending from heaven, Ho no Ninigi, the grandson of Amaterasu Ōmikami and Takami Musuhi, was blessed with three sons. The name of the youngest was Ho no Akari no Mikoto and a gloss identifies him as the founder of the Owari *no muraji*. The same name is mentioned in the sixth and eighth variants, too, where he appears not as Ho no Ninigi's son but his elder brother, and with no mention of his being the founder of the Owari group. This genealogy is presented by the *Kojiki* as well. Apparently, the compilers of the *Nihon Shoki* decided to elevate the status of the Owari *no muraji* by incorporating the founder's name into the main version of the myths.²⁹⁾ We can now see that the names of spirits, founders, or ancestors become interchangeable in order to manipulate them for ideological purposes.

28) See Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 2007: 168–169, and for the complicated history of the Owari group in *Kojiki* and history, Aoki et al. 1982: 375–376.

29) Cf. Kishine 2016: 175. For *Nihon Shoki*, see Kojima / Naoki / Mōri 1: 122–123, 150–151, 154–155; for *Kojiki*, Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 2007: 114.

As we approach a possible solution to the question of the body and its conceptualization, a closer examination of the opening sentences of the *Kojiki* myths is necessary:

坐而、隱身也。 三柱神者、並獨神成 次、高御產巢日神。 次、神產巢日神。此 云阿麻下效此。 中主神。訓高下天、 天原成神名、天之御 天地初發之時、於高	<i>Ame-tsuchi hajimete arahaeshi toki ni, Takaama no Hara ni narishi kami no na ha, Ame no Minaka Nushi no Kami. Tsugi ni, Takami Musuhi no Kami. Tsugi ni, Kamu Musuhi no Kami. Kono mi-hashira no kami ha, tomo ni hitorigami to nari-mashite, mi wo kakushiki.</i>
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When heaven and earth first appeared³⁰⁾, the names of the spirits who came about in the high plains of heaven [Takaama no Hara] are these:

First was the spirit Master Mighty Center of Heaven [Ame no Minakanushi].

Next was the spirit Lofty Growth [Takami Musuhi].

Next was the spirit Sacred Growth [Kamu Musuhi].

All three spirits were single and concealed themselves.³¹⁾

The original text contains annotations, which were presumably inserted into it in smaller characters written in two lines. In this passage the annotation provides the reader with the pronunciation “*ama*” of the character 天 (underlined part). Such annotations do not belong to the narrative proper, they present the comments of an extradiegetic narrator made from a subjective, historical point of view at the beginning of the eighth century. By contrast, the characters of the last sentence (此三柱神者、並獨神成坐而、隱身也) are in the same size as the characters of the narrative, implying, therefore, that they refer to the narrated world (diegesis). This traditional interpretation, however, leads to a contradiction due to the fact that Takami Musuhi and Kamu Musuhi not only appear repeatedly later in the myths but were spirits assigned important functions as well.

Intrigued by this contradiction Matsumoto Naoki examined the structure of the last sentence, and

30) Philippi's (1968: 47) translation of 初發之時 with “at the time of the beginning” is based on Motoori Norinaga's 本居宣長 explanation found in the *Kojiki-den* 古事記傳 from 1798. Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi (2007: 29) supplied the character 發 with the reading *arawaru* (*arawareru*), explaining it as something that starts to move in a certain direction (see Kōnoshi 2013: 82–86). The “body” of Heldt's translation is explicitly based on Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 1997 [2007]; cf. Heldt 2014: XXV. Original annotations to explain the pronunciations usually do not appear either in transliterations or in translations.

31) Japanese text and transliteration after Yamaguchi / Kōnoshi 2007: 28–29, English translation by Heldt 2014: 7.

a comparison with other examples from the *Kojiki* text – a typical methodology of the text-immanence-based analyses (*sakuhinron*) – revealed the sentence structure 此...者...也 as another common pattern for annotations from the pen of the extradiegetic narrator.³²⁾ If one agrees with this interpretation, which provides a solution to a notorious problem, it becomes plausible to conclude that the content of the sentence does not refer to the level of the narrated world but to the contemporary time of the narration discourse. In this view, the spirits were active during the mythological period, but now, after arriving in historical time, they were no longer active and were concealing their bodies. There are other spirits, such as Izanami or Ōkuninushi, who left the stage of the narrated world of the myths, but they did not hide their bodies and are still objects of worship.

In other words, the *Kojiki* tries to make the reader believe that the *musuhi* gods of the northern system, which were worshipped by the emperor's family as well as by many *muraji* and *banzō* groups, were no longer objects of religious veneration. However, in reality, that was not true at all, because other accounts, as well as the important *tsuki-nami* ritual, prove the opposite.³³⁾ The name of this ritual indicates that originally it was conducted every month, but from the seventh or eighth century on it took place on the eleventh day of the sixth and twelfth month of the year. The *tsukinami no matsuri* 月次祭 was one of the thirteen court rituals (*jingiryō no saishi* 神祇令の祭祀), but unlike most of them, it was conducted by the Tenno himself.³⁴⁾ The ceremony was interrupted by the Ōnin war in the middle of the fifteenth century but after its revival in 1872 it lasted till the end of the World War II. The ritual was addressed directly to the *musuhi* spirits and its purpose was to petition for the health of the emperor.

The *Nihon Shoki* and the *Kojiki* followed the same objectives of bringing together the two different myth systems in order to satisfy the powerful families and to construct a common basis to corroborate and legitimize the Tenmu-Jitō-Dynasty.³⁵⁾ But in doing so they applied different strategies. Concerning

32) Cf. Matsumoto 2003: 85–111 (“explanation sentence”, *setsumeibun* 説明文, pp. 99, 103–104); and Matsumoto 2016: 109–111.

33) For the presentations of ancestor spirits in *Shinsen shōjiroku* 新撰姓氏録, a collection of genealogies from the *uji* groups (finished 815), and *Kuji hongī* 旧事本紀, a chronicle by an unknown author presumably written during the ninth century, see Mizoguchi 2000: 39–40, who lists the names of the spirits and the *kabane* of the groups referring to them.

34) For the thirteen court rituals, see the chart in Maruyama 2001: 187, for the *tsukinami no matsuri*, see pp. 184, 193. Maruyama (pp. 182–197) shows how the Tenno established religious practices (ceremonies, 祭 *matsuri*) to corroborate his political influence on the local level.

35) Ooms speaks of the “*Tenmu Dynasty, 650–800*” (subtitle 2009) but since Tenmu died in 686 and many of his

the myths, the *Nihon Shoki* divides the narrative into two books, the first one to support the southern line, the second one to assign more weight to the national foundation myths (*kenkoku shinwa* 建国神話), in other words, the myths of the northern system. In this narrative Takami Musuhi was the spirit who gave the order to descend to earth. The *Kojiki*, on the other hand, tries to put together a single, coherent and closed narrative in which Amaterasu Ōmikami is the ancestor of the emperor's house. The obvious show of predilection for the powerful families located at the periphery and in remote provinces, which was an ideological trick to maintain the support of these groups, explains, too, why the so-called Izumo myths play such an important role in *Kojiki*. In these narratives also, emphasis is placed on the local spirits, which belong to the southern system.

Another assumption is that the hiding of the bodies, a claim that only appears in *Kojiki*, promoted the conceptualization of words referring to the body. The consequent use of these concepts during the narrative of the cosmogony provides the text with a dense coherence, which gives evidence of a high level of elaborated and reflexive storytelling. However, the creator of the *Kojiki* narrative possibly assigned too much weight to the myths of the southern line, the spacial aspects that de-centralize the center-orientated (Yamato) world view of the *Nihon Shoki*, and the founders of the *uji* groups of the *omi*, *kimi*, and *kuni no miyatsuko*. The historical reality before and after the reform was that the *sukune* (*muraji*, *banzō*) groups were holding positions on the same level as the *asomi* (*omi*, *kimi*) ranks. Presumably, Tenmu was able to symbolically downgrade the *muraji* and *banzō* groups because he could be sure of their unreserved loyalty. But by the beginning of the eighth century circumstances had changed and presumably powerful *muraji* such as the Fujiwara were not at all contented with the *Kojiki* and demanded a world view that gave more weight to the historical reality of the *ritsuryō* state. Seen in this light its elaborate conceptualization of the body was a measure that overshot the mark. By assigning too much weight to the local *uji* groups, the *Kojiki* weakened its claim to be an official text explaining the origin of the emperor and legitimizing his power.

political goals were achieved by his successors, Jitō, Genmei, and Genshō, it would be more appropriate to speak at least of a Tenmu-Jitō Dynasty. Jitō, presumably, was involved in many of the effected reformations by her husband and without her the Tenmu line would have ended much earlier. In 697 she succeeded in putting her grandson on the throne when he was only fourteen years old (the designated successor already died 689). Furthermore, under her supervision the Taihō *ritsuryō* (701) was finished and she built Fujiwarakyō, the first capital to last longer than one generation (694–710).

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