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Significance of Military Power in the *Jindai Moji* Text *Hotsuma Tsutae*—With a Focus on Susanoo and Yamato Takeru

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Abstract: The *jindai moji* (神代文字—“characters of the Age of the Gods”) are pseudocharacters (疑字: “giji”) created in the early modern period, which purport to be an ancient Japanese writing script. One of the most famous examples of literature written in the *jindai moji* is the epic poem *Hotsuma Tsutae*, which is regarded as an account of the development of medieval mythology in the early modern age. It includes tales of evil lords known as the *hatate* (rendered as 魔王 in Kanbun), who bring chaos to the land and are vanquished by a divine army led by gods. Ultrationalists in early modern Japan enthusiastically embraced these *jindai moji* writings. This article examines the significance of the divine battles in the early modern *jindai moji* literature.

Keywords: *jindai moji*; *Hotsuma Tsutae*; soul pacification (tamashizume); sword



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1. Introduction

The *jindai moji* are pseudocharacters that allegedly existed in Japan before the arrival of the kanji¹ (漢字—Chinese script used for written Japanese). In *Kogoshui* (古語拾遺—“Gleanings from Ancient Stories”) of the Heian period, Inbe no Hironari wrote that Japan had no script of its own before the introduction of the kanji. However, Urabe Kanetaka's *Shaku Nihongi* (釈日本紀—an annotated version of *Nihon Shoki* (日本書紀—“The Chronicles of Japan”) written during the Kamakura period does mention the existence of a Japanese script. During the Edo period, several *jindai moji* were discovered across Japan, intensifying debate over the authenticity of these writings. Kaihara Ekiken (1630–1714), Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769), and Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) were among those who denied the authenticity of the *jindai moji*, while Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), Tsurumine Shigenobu (1788–1859), and Ochiai Naozumi (1840–1891) embraced them. The debate was settled when Yamada Yoshio (1875–1958) published his “Treatise on the So-Called *Jindai Moji*” (Iwayuru Jindai Moji no Ron 1953). Although no longer considered worthy of attention after Yamada's treatise, there has been a recent revival of scholarly interest in the *jindai moji*. Scholars such as Shimizu Yutaka, Yamashita Hisao, Iwane Takashi, Mitsumatsu Makoto, and Ito Satoshi, while remaining skeptical of their authenticity, have examined it from the perspective of how Hirata Atsutane perceived the *jindai moji*². This is the first instance of research on the *jindai moji* that recognizes them as a subject of academic study rather than absurd writings.

This paper focuses on the question of how the military actions described in the *jindai moji* literature affect mythology. This issue might explain why the *jindai moji* writings caused the enthusiastic ultranationalist fervor during the Showa era. As an example of its acceptance in the modern times, during the Pacific War, Sakai Katsutoki (1874–1940) positioned the *jindai moji* as the oldest script in the world, comparable to Hebrew, and stated that the Emperor would reign over the world. Sakai was not the lone proponent of this idea—army officials and Diet members at the time supported it as well—and it is an example of the inseparable relationship between the rise of nationalism during the war and the *jindai moji*. I suspect that Hirata Atsutane was at the root of Sakai's ideas. Atsutane,

like Sakai, believed in the global supremacy of Japan, and the Siddham script was based on the *jindai moji*³. To consider the relationship between the wars occurring during the Showa era and the *jindai moji* and Atsutane's theory of the *jindai moji*, it is thus necessary to investigate what was gained by the connection of military power and the *jindai moji* in the early modern era through *Hotsuma Tsutae*, which was written just before Atsutane Hirata became active.

2. Apocryphal Hotsuma Tsutae

Most of the *jindai moji* texts have not been dated; *Hotsuma Tsutae* is rare in being one with an established date. *Hotsuma Tsutae* is divided into three parts: The Book of Heaven, The Book of the Earth, and The Book of Man, and consists of 40 *aya*, or chapters. Although the length and the general framework is based on mythology from *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, the contents of individual myths differ from *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*. For example, *Hotsuma Tsutae* describes Amaterasu as a male deity with 12 consorts. Thus, while the epic is based on the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* myths, it contains its own unique interpretation⁴. If one believes *Hotsuma Tsutae* to have been written between 1772–1781, how is it that the existing copy of *Hotsuma Tsutae* in the Hiyoshi Shrine manuscript (in the Toju Memorial Museum) in Shiga Prefecture, copied in 1903, can be dated back to around 1772–1781?⁵ This is because the book *Kasugayama no Fumi* (春日山紀), published in 1780 and currently held by the Kyoto University Library, contains several sentences which are identical to the contents of the *Hotsuma Tsutae* version copied in 1903.

The preface states that *Kasugayama no Fumi* is an annotated version of *Hotsuma Tsutae* written in 1780 by the monk Fusen (birth and death dates unknown, approximately 1772) in his old age. Notably, the *Hotsuma Tsutae* owned by the Cabinet Library was published in 1843. The Cabinet Library *Hotsuma Tsutae* manuscript has the same title as the one in the Hiyoshi Shrine, but with a different textual format. The Hiyoshi Shrine manuscript is written in a set of three scripts: the *jindai moji* following the 5–7 syllables pattern, the *katakana* text that indicates how to read the *jindai moji*, and the Kanbun text indicating its meaning. However, there are many cases of discrepancy between the Kanbun and the *jindai moji*, or where the meaning is different. It is believed that the Kanbun was tasked with explaining the *jindai moji*, and it was difficult to fit everything in the 5–7 syllable pattern. On the other hand, the Cabinet Library manuscript is not written in the 5–7 syllables pattern. It quotes words and phrases of *Nihon Shoki* and explains these by quoting *Hotsuma Tsutae*. Although the Cabinet Library manuscript and the Hiyoshi Shrine manuscript are both titled “*Hotsuma Tsutae*”, the former may better be described as a commentary on the Hiyoshi Shrine *Hotsuma Tsutae*. Furthermore, it is important to look at the *Mikasayama no Fumi Toshiuchi ni Nasukoto no Aya* (神嶺山伝記歳中行事紋) held in the Omiya Library of Ryukoku University, which is similar to the Hiyoshi Shrine *Hotsuma Tsutae* manuscript: written in the 5–7 syllables pattern in *jindai moji* along with the explanatory *katakana* and Kanbun. We do not know who transcribed *Mikasayama no Fumi Toshiuchi ni Nasukoto no Aya*, but the handwriting of the marginalia in the manuscript matches that of Fusen. Therefore, it is possible that the manuscript was in his possession⁶. In that case, we can infer that *Mikasayama no Fumi Toshiuchi ni Nasukoto no Aya* was written before 1772, but (given its binding and other details) no earlier than the Edo period. In any case, this points to the existence of the contents of the Hiyoshi Shrine *Hotsuma Tsutae* manuscript during the late Edo period, even though its only extant version was transcribed in 1903.

However, from a bibliographical perspective, the earliest examples of a text using the Hotsuma script are *Mikasayama no Fumi Toshiuchi ni Nasukoto no Aya* and a woodblock print of *Kasugayama no Fumi*. This is not sufficient evidence to claim that these characters were created in the Edo period. In verifying the content, I previously positioned *Hotsuma Tsutae* as an example of early modern mythology. Yamashita Hisao defines modern mythology as follows⁷:

“Early modern mythology” is a catch-all term that refers to epistemic movement that created sources to open up new dimensions, whether in Confucianism, Buddhism, folk religion, or in the waka poetry, stories, and so on.

As a student of medieval mythology, I believe that *jindai moji* writings may fall under Yamashita’s definition of early modern mythology⁸. *Hotsuma Tsutae* contains myths closely related to early modern thought, such as the origin of the waka poetry and the Great Purification (大祓: *ōharae*; an ancient Shinto purification ritual to wash away committed sins), which points to its possible creation during the early modern period⁹.

This paper focuses on the significance of myths related to military force in *Hotsuma Tsutae*. *Hotsuma Tsutae* is based on the mythology in *Kojiki*, *Nihon Shoki*, and *Kujiki* (先代旧事本紀: *Sendai Kuji Hongi*). Unsurprisingly, its stories are about pacifying a country through military force. However, there is more to it. Of the Three Treasures (三種の神器 *Sanshu no Jingi*: the sword, the gem, and the mirror, which form the Imperial Treasures of Japan), *Hotsuma Tsutae* focuses on the sword. According to *Denrai Yuishoki* (伝来由緒書—Book of Ancestral History) in the Hiyoshi Shrine manuscript of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, *Amanokaguyama honki* (天香具山本紀), one of the *Hotsuma* documents where Emperor Keiko wrote about the teachings of Amaterasu, *Mikasa Yamanofumi* (神載山書紀) is one of the *Hotsuma* documents consisting of the writings of Okashima no Mikoto, the ancestor of the Nakatomi clan, on the teachings of Ame-no-Koyane. *Hotsuma Tsutae*, in which Ota Taneko wrote down the teachings of his father, Omononushi, were kept in the inner sanctum as the Three Sacred Treasures (*Amanokaguyama honki*—the jewel, *Mikasa Yamanofumi*—the mirror, and *Hotsuma Tsutae*—the sword). It is impossible to study the contents of *Amanokaguyama honki* and *Mikasa Yamanofumi* as their whereabouts are unknown, and it is unclear whether the three books were actually kept in the inner sanctum. However, this description suggests that *Hotsuma Tsutae* itself was treated as one of the Three Sacred Treasures. It is possible that Susanoo’s story is significant in *Hotsuma Tsutae* precisely because it symbolizes the sword.

However, Chapter 40, “*Atsuta kami yo o inamu aya*” (アツタカミ. ヨマイナムアヤ—The Passing of Lord Atsuta) explains that the book was written upon Yamato Takeru’s¹⁰ death and presented to the Emperor. What, then, is the relationship with Susanoo? Yamato Takeru prayed to Susanoo (Chapter 39), and Emperor Keiko learned in a dream that though Susanoo became a god thanks to Ibukido, he had regrets about his previous life. He was envious of the Emperor, so he was reborn as the parent–child pair, Emperor Keiko and Yamato Takeru. Thus, Yamato Takeru is positioned as a reincarnation of Susanoo (Chapter 40)¹¹. The story of Susanoo’s envy of the Emperor and his reincarnation as Yamato Takeru is unique to *Hotsuma Tsutae*, featuring neither in *Kojiki* nor in *Nihon Shoki*. The Emperor’s revelatory dream explains the reason behind the naming of the shrine “Atsuta”, which was dedicated to Yamato Takeru. Thus, the story would naturally focus on the sword; since *Hotsuma Tsutae* was composed in the last moments of Yamato Takeru, its primary goal was pacifying the soul of Susanoo—Yamato Takeru’s previous incarnation. This is supported by the fact that although there are many accounts of Yamato Takeru common across *Hotsuma Tsutae*, *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* such as the conquest of Kumaso and the transformation into a white plover, *Hotsuma Tsutae* contains many myths about Susanoo not found in the others.

3. The Six Hatate

The previous section referenced the regrets of Susanoo in a previous incarnation—what, exactly, does this refer to? Let us briefly examine a story in which Susanoo appears. This is notable because *Hotsuma Tsutae* includes unique stories and contents, and Susanoo’s characterization is vastly different from his portrayal in the other myths. Such differences were possibly intended to give the impression that the book predates *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* (Yoshida 2021b, No. 9).

The episode in question occurs in the Chapter 8, “*Tamagaere hatate utsu aya*” (タマガエレ. ハタレウツアヤ—Rebirth and the Smiting of Rebels) of *Hotsuma Tsutae*. The story is as follows. Amaterasu was to rule the country, but trouble arose. According to *Hotsuma Tsutae*,

after Susanoo was banished for his violent deeds and began wandering the netherworlds (ネの国: Ne-no-kuni) and other realms, evil lords known as the hatare rose and threatened the gods. The evil lords banded into six groups: the Shimumichi, the Harunahamichi, the Isoramichi, the Kikumichi, the Itsunamichi, and the Aenomichi, collectively referred to as the Six Hatare. This narrative of the six hatare seems to have been influenced by medieval mythology, specifically the myth of the Demon of the Sixth Heaven (第六天魔王: Dairokuten no mao).

Eventually, all the six hatare were subdued by the divine armies. Let us take a closer look at the Kikumichi, the fourth band of hatare, consisting of devilish forces that took on the guise of foxes and raccoons, who appear in Chapter 8 “*Tamagaere hatare utsu aya*” (タマガエレ. ハタレウツアヤ—Rebirth and the Smiting of Rebels) of *Hotsuma Tsutae*. To summarize the story, three hatare led an army of 300,000 from Tsukushi to Hanayamano in Nakanokuni (present-day Kinki). Amaterasu commanded Kadamaro, the grandson of Ukemochi, to bring back news of the happenings in the land, but his army was unable to advance in Hanayamano because of the witchcraft practiced by the three hatare (as foxes and raccoons). Kadamaro, the leader of the divine army, reported back to Amaterasu, who then advised him on how to defeat them.

Amaterasu explained the weakness of the hatare, saying, “This is the work of the *kitsune* and *kutsune*, the fox and the raccoons. The *kitsune* are associated with the *ki* syllable. In our calendar, “*ki*” (東—east) follows “*ne*” (北—north) and returns to the “*ne*” (子—rat) via the “*tsusa*” (西南—southwest). Therefore, fry rats (*nezumi*) which live in the north and bring them with you. The *kutsune*, racoon dogs, are associated with the *ku* syllable. In the *jindai moji*, “*ku*” is made of the intersection of the “*ki-u*” sound. Since a “*hi*” arises at the tail of the syllable, the *kutsune* dislikes the will o’ the wisp (陰火: *kitsunebi*). Therefore, they can be defeated by *oga* and *mega* smoke.” The *kikumichi* are described as “*kikutsune*”, a word that combines *kitsune* and *kutsune*. *Kitsune* is made of three syllables: *ki*, which means east, *tsusa*, which means southwest, and *ne*, which means north. Amaterasu reasoned that since the word “*kitsune*” contains the “*ne*” syllable also representing “*子*” (rat), while the *Kikumichi* liked deep-fried rats (*nezumi*), they could thus be conquered if presented with them. The strategy for *Kutsune* (raccoon dogs) was a little different: the “*ku*” sound intersects with the “*ki-u*” sound, resulting in a “*hi*” sound at the end. Since “*hi*” represents fire, Amaterasu assumed that the *kutsune* disliked fire, and could be repelled with the smoke of ginger (*oga* and *mega*), and that the *kitsune* could be tempted using fried rats.¹² Having learned their weaknesses, Kadamaro returned to fight the hatare. The hatare fought over the scattered fried rats, disturbing their witchcraft, and Kadamaro was able to capture them. Kadamaro then burned *oga* and *mega*, and the smoke allowed him to capture the three leaders. The three captive hatare leaders were sentenced to the following fate:

The three brothers begged for their life, and Kadamaro took pity on them. He ordered the oldest brother to go to Hanayama (Tsukushi), the middle brother—to Hanayamano in Yamashiro, and the youngest—to Asukano in the eastern provinces. There, the brothers were to use their *kitsune* and *kutsune* aspects to protect rice fields¹³. These hatare were subdued by Ukanomitama, Ukemochi, and Kadamaro; this is why the three are often worshipped as a triple deity in shrines dedicated to the deity of rice cultivation, Inari no Kami. The three hatare were separated to protect rice fields in three locations, the eastern provinces, Yamashiro, and Tsukushi, probably indicative of Inari no Kami, together protecting the whole of Japan. The three locations to which the hatare were assigned correspond to the three largest Inari shrines in Japan: Kasama Inari Shrine in the eastern provinces (Ibaraki Prefecture), Fushimi Inari Shrine in Yamashiro (Kyoto), and Yutoku Inari Shrine in the Tsukushi Province (Saga Prefecture).

What role did the six hatare play as a whole? We can find the answer in Chapter 9 of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, “*Yagumo uchi koto tsukuru aya*” (ヤクモウチコトツクルアヤ—The Conquest of Izumo and the Making of Zithers), set after the gods defeated the six hatare. In this chapter, Susanoo defeats the famous serpent known as Yamata no Orochi and reads *Yakumo no Uta* (八雲の歌—The Song of the Eight Clouds; the word “eight” can also refer to large

quantities). *Yakumo no Uta* is also recorded in *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, and its lyrics are as follows: “yakumo tatsu/Izumo yaegaki/tsumagome ni/yaekaki tsukuru/sono yaekaki wo” (Where rise eightfold clouds/Izumo, an eightfold fence/to keep my wife home/I put up, an eightfold fence/yes, a fence I build, eightfold!). The kana preface of *Kokin Wakashū* (古今和歌集—a Heian-era collection of the waka poetry) cites Susanoo’s waka poem as the origin of the 31-characters waka poetry, and is presented to Princess Shitateru in *Hotsuma Tsutae*. The account of the gift to Princess Shitateru reflects the teachings of Yakumo Shineiden. *Yakumo no Uta*, composed by Susanoo, features in the chapter as a symbol of peace, marking the end of conflict and signifying the reign of peace throughout Japan. Therefore, we need to look at the story starting from Susanoo’s banishment from *Takamagahara* (High Plain of Heavens) and ending with the reading of *Yakumo no Uta* as a single narrative arc.

In this case, Susanoo regrets that it was his evil spirit that caused all the turmoil: it was after he started wandering all over the country after his banishment that the *hatare* emerged and plunged the land into an eight-year reign of chaos. The evil of Susanoo’s spirit devastated Japan, while the divine army vanquished the rebels and brought peace. Saeki Shinichi speaks of soul pacification in *The Tale of the Heike* as follows:

We are familiar with the notion of vengeful spirits causing misfortunes like epidemics, storms, earthquakes, or even lightning strikes to an enemy. However, what does it mean for a vengeful spirit to cause a war? Since war is, at least in a direct sense, the work of human actions in the world, one would assume that vengeful spirits would intervene by possessing people (this is not to say that the relationship between vengeful spirits and war was always logically conceptualized in this manner). In an era where war had come to be regarded as a major disaster, the depictions of the wrath of spirits seem to have correspondingly adapted, resulting in tales of vengeful spirits possessing people and causing wars. (Saeki 2021a)

Thus, a war was also attributable to evil spirits. We can apply this interpretation to *Hotsuma Tsutae*—that the *hatare* were the manifestations of Susanoo’s evil spirits.

This interpretation is consistent with the narrative flow of *Hotsuma Tsutae*: Susanoo’s flight from the Plain of High Heaven, followed by the subduing of the six *hatare*; Prince Yamato Takeru driving out the great serpent Yamata no Orochi; and finally the reading of *Yakumo no Uta*. The Cabinet Library manuscript of *Hotsuma Tsutae* cites the contents of *Nihon Shoki* and provides explanations corresponding to each region using the *jindai moji*, suggesting that the six *hatare* and Yamata no Orochi represent the eight islands created by Izanagi and Izanami in *Nihon Shoki*. Therefore, the forcible quelling of the six *hatare* and Yamata no Orochi by the gods may represent the pacification of Japan. It also represents the quelling of Susanoo’s own evil spirit. The six-stringed zither made from the subdued *hatare* was named the “Yagumo-goto”. According to the story, peace will come to Japan by calming Susanoo’s evil spirit, and the instrument is positioned as a symbol of the reign of peace in Japan.

Yoshikawa Koretari (1616–1695), the founder of the Yoshikawa Shinto branch of Shintoism, offered his interpretation of Susanoo’s characterization in a commentary titled “*Shinken hotendan*” (神劍奉天段), which forms the sixth chapter of *Nihon Shoki Jindai Kan Kaden Kikigaki* (日本書紀神代卷家伝聞書). According to it, Susanoo’s punishment caused him to self-reflect, and it was in Izumo that he repented his past deeds, had a change of heart and transformed from an evil deity to a good deity (Taira 1983, p. 34). This is slightly different from the interpretation of Yoshida Kanetomo (1453–1511), the founder of the Yoshida Shinto branch. According to Hideki Saito’s analysis, Susanoo’s vileness was purged by “ritual purification”. On the other hand, Yoshikawa Koretari’s views and the Hiyoshi Shrine *Hotsuma Tsutae* manuscript both link the transformation to Susanoo’s understanding of the evilness of his own heart. *Hotsuma Tsutae* is undoubtedly influenced by the Yoshida Shinto, but given this context, it was perhaps even more influenced by the Yoshikawa Shinto. Following Susanoo’s change of heart, Ibukido arranged for Susanoo to

be restored as a god and take up the divine seal of the Hikawa Deity (Chapter 9). Later, he also appeared as the serpent before Yamato Takeru, and was the god who led to Yamato Takeru's death (Chapter 40).

Nihon Shoki mentions Ibukido's appearance as a great serpent as well, but in *Hotsuma Tsutae*, Ibukido's purpose appears to have been to help Yamato Takeru remember how Ibukido helped his previous reincarnation, Susanoo. Ultimately, Ibukido, the god of soul pacification, attempted once again to calm the soul of Yamato Takeru, who was the reincarnation of Susanoo.

What kind of a deity was Ibukido? In *Hotsuma Tsutae*, Takano, a place closely associated with Ibukido, appears as the scene where the divine army led by Kadamaro drove out the hatare forces of the Kikumichi (Kikutsune). While the area ravaged by the Kikumichi was in Kyoto, for the execution of the hatare, the setting somehow moved to Takano. The hatare begged Kadamaro for their lives, saying that they were heavenly beings. If the hatare were indeed manifestations of Susanoo's evil spirits, the claim was indeed just. Therefore, Kadamaro forgave the hatare, and used the smoke to dispel their witchcraft. Thus, *Hotsuma Tsutae* recognizes Takano as a place of execution or ritual purification, and the setting was changed to Takano for the purpose of cleansing evil. What is the connection between Takano and Ibukido? After the six hatare were subdued, the spirits of the slain hatare appeared at Mount Takano. According to *Hotsuma Tsutae*, Ibukido appeased them by building a palace at the site, and for this, the divine seal of the Takano Deity in the Woshite script (*jindai moji*) was conferred upon him.¹⁴ According to *Hotsuma Tsutae*, the reason for worshipping Niu Myōjin (丹生明神), the local Shinto deity of Mount Takano, is because Ibukido enshrined the hatare souls in Mount Takano to confine them there, and not because of his assistance to Empress Jingu in the conquest of the Korean kingdom of Silla—a unique interpretation.

Thus, Ibukido's achievement at Mount Takano earned him the *jindai moji* title of the "Takano Deity", and he became the god of Mount Koya, which is what the area is currently called. The rise of belief in Susanoo in the era when *Hotsuma Tsutae* was written may have contributed to the creation of myths of Susanoo such as *Hotsuma Tsutae*.¹⁵ Kwon Dong-woo states:

Neither *Nihon Shoki* nor *Kojiki* ever associate Susanoo with the plague. Likewise, Susanoo is never referred to as a deity of pestilence in historical sources. However, although Susanoo's name is never directly mentioned, we can see a development in the literature that might connect to the plague from a section assumed to be related to Susanoo. The section in question is *Incantations* (祝詞: *Norito*). (Kwon 2013b, p. 231)

and points out that *Kogoshui* ascribes the origin of heavenly transgressions to Susanoo (Kwon 2013c, p. 177).

The point is that the "heavenly transgressions" which the *Great Purification* intends to purge are concentrated on a single deity, Susanoo. This marks a new development in the mythological discourse that goes beyond the interpretation of the Great Purification recorded in *Nakatomi Incantations* (中臣祓詞: *Nakatomi no Harae no Kotoba*) and identifies Susanoo as the origin of the Great Purification.

What, then, is the relationship between *Hotsuma Tsutae* and the *Great Purification*?

4. Relationship with the Great Purification

After the defeat of the hatare, Ibukido pacified their dead souls on Mount Takano. Let us look at the connection between military force and soul pacification through earlier research on the Sword Chapter (劍巻: *Tsurugi no maki*) in *The Tale of the Heike*. In his analysis, Saeki Shinichi says that soul pacification provides the crucial underpinnings to *The Tale of the Heike*:

The Tale of the Heike seems to have been built on various legends of soul pacification. *The Tale of the Heike* seems to have been composed as a historical narrative,

but by absorbing a number of stories related to soul pacification of individuals, it incorporates a spirit of mourning into the story and reflects the thoughts of the nation in ways to pacify vengeful spirits. Reading them brings to mind the sheer variety of soul-pacification legends that form the backdrop to the tale, and one cannot help but dwell on all these stories as we read the text. (Saeki 2021b)

Given this context, what is the role of the Sword Chapter? The Sword Chapter of *The Tale of the Heike* includes the stories of Yamata no Orochi's defeat by Susanoo, of Yamato Takeru's vanquishing of the serpent, and the story of the attempt to steal the sword—all of which are connected to the obsession of the serpent. The Chapter also includes the story in which the Dragon King's daughter took on the form of 8-year-old Emperor Antoku, retrieved the sword, and delivered it to the Dragon Palace at the bottom of the sea. This is cited as the reason the historic Emperor Antoku, while still a child, drowned in the sea while holding the sacred sword—one of the Three Sacred Treasures. Of interest here is the idea that the great serpent that Prince Yamato Takeru encountered on Mount Ibuki was Yamata no Orochi taking on this form to retrieve the sword from Yamato Takeru.¹⁶ By contrast, *Hotsuma Tsutae* never refers to the serpent as a form of Yamata no Orochi; rather, it describes Yamato Takeru as a reincarnation of Susanoo. Thus, the intended message of the Sword Chapter of *The Tale of the Heike* differs from that in *Hotsuma Tsutae*. *Hotsuma Tsutae* places more importance on Ibukido as the deity appearing to pacify Susanoo and Yamato Takeru. Tada Keiko argues, regarding the narrative around the Three Treasures in the Sword Chapter of *The Tale of the Heike* (Tada 1988. See also Tsurumaki 1994).

The Sword Chapter focuses on clarifying the origins, power, and whereabouts of the Three Treasures that symbolize the existence of the Emperor of Japan. Particularly, its emphasis on the Atsuta Shrine rituals pertaining to Kusanagi no Tsurugi, which was supposedly lost during the Genpei War, understands the loss of the sword in terms of losing the divine sword, and the existence of the Kusanagi sword. Consequently, rather than records that describe the loss of imperial fortune as writings on the Sword generally do, the Sword Chapter of *The Tale of the Heike* includes accounts related to the Atsuta Shrine which serve as the evidence of the continued existence of Kusanagi no Tsurugi. The story of the Kusanagi Sword in the Sword Chapter strictly asserts the existence of the Three Treasures, centered on the Kusanagi Sword, and the sure presence of the imperial power it symbolizes.

Abe Yasuro says, "It is not rare to establish relations with the sacred sword" and analyzes it as "a reflection of the so-called medieval *Nihongi*". *Medieval Nihongi* (中世日本紀: *Chūsei Nihongi*) refers to medieval reinterpretations of *Nihon-shoki* (Abe 2020b, p. 216). Abe further explains the point (Abe 2020c, p. 285).

The Imperial Regalia of Japan are sacred treasures upon which the imperial right to rule is based. The tale of the Three Sacred Treasures, insofar as it recorded the treasures' provenance, represented a discourse that was truly about its own origins. During the ancient times, a series of texts, *Nihon Shoki* being the chief among them, would themselves represent the evidence of this imperial legitimacy. By the medieval times, *Nihongi* had come to be regarded as the most authoritative and exalted of the texts; revered and worshipped in altars throughout the lands as far as the question of kingship was concerned. However, the relationship between the two began to change internally at some point, and a new discourse emerged in the form of *Nihongi* that diverged from the text. The shift reflected a transformation reflecting the structural changes in medieval kingship itself, which was founded on such discourses. One trigger for this shift was the accession ritual (即位法: *Sokui ho*—an imperial enthronement ritual with Buddhist elements), which was underpinned by Buddhist ecclesiastical elites surrounding the imperial court. It was probably mediated by the status of the households governing the poetic arts and *Nihongi*, which were established and developed in parallel.

Although *Hotsuma Tsutae* was created under similar circumstances, it greatly diverges from the world of *Medieval Nihongi*. This is because, unlike the *Medieval Nihongi* that used *Nihongi* and *Nihon Shoki* as justification, *Hotsuma Tsutae* purports to be older than *Nihon*

Shoki. In other words, while *Medieval Nihongi* created myths based on *Nihon Shoki*, *Hotsuma Tsutae* represented an attempt to create a new mythological narrative dated to before *Nihon Shoki*. This is another factor for classifying the *jindai moji* text as early modern mythology.

Ibukido appears in *Nihon Shoki* and the Sword Chapter of *The Tale of the Heike* as a deity whom Yamato Takeru offended. However, in *Hotsuma Tsutae*, he plays an important role as the link between Susanoo and Yamato Takeru and who pacifies the souls of the hatare which were caused by the evil of Susanoo. Ibukido's appearance in the first place is related to the Great Purification (*Nakatomi Incantations*). The first half of *Great Purification* begins with commentary on heavenly transgressions and earthly transgressions (天津罪と国津罪: Amatsu-tsumi and Kunitsu-tsumi), followed by an instruction to recite *Amatsu norito* (天祝詞) and *Futo norito goto* (太祝詞事) in the event of a disaster.¹⁷ The text then states that the evils will be purged by four "purification deities" (祓戸四神: Haraedo no shishin): Seoritsu Hime, Haya'akitsu Hime, Ibukido, and Hayasasura Hime. Ibukido is one of the four deities of purification. I have noted above that the first half of *Hotsuma Tsutae* was based on *Great Purification*; the reasons can be summarized as follows. *Nakatomi Incantations* (*Great Purification*), included in the third *Jingi Teiyo* (神祇提要—a text of the Yoshida branch of Shintoism), were said to have been written in the *jindai moji* during the reign of Emperor Jimmu by Ama-no-Taneko, the grandson of Ame-no-Koyane and son of Ame-no-Oshikumone. Further, they were rewritten in the kanji by Tokiwa-no-Omuraji, who was the 19th generation from Ame-no-Koyane, during the reign of Emperor Ankan.¹⁸ The same account later appeared in the text *Fusuiso* (風水草) by Yamazaki Ansai (1619–1682).¹⁹

Many claimed that *Great Purification* was written in the *jindai moji* after Ansai, including Kuwana Shoun (1662–1731) in *Nakatomi no Harae Morohagusa* (中臣祓諸葉草), Takada Bihaku (1630–1716) in *Nakatomi no Harae Seimeisho* (中臣祓清明抄), Atobe Terumi (1658–1729) in *Nakatomi no Harae Kiyomekusa* (中臣祓清浄草), Okada Masatoshi (1667–1744) in *Nakatomi Harae Misogi Gusa* (中臣祓禊除草), and in the oral instructions of Tamaki Masahide (1671–1736) as recorded by Okada Masatoshi in *Nakatomi no Harae Niju Kuju* (中臣祓二重口授). Given that all these scholars were proponents of the Suika Shinto (垂加神道) branch of Shintoism, it seems likely that the claim of *Great Purification* being written in the *jindai moji* prevailed primarily within the Yoshida Shinto and the Suika Shinto which followed it. On the status of *Great Purification* in the Edo period, Okada Yoneo said the following:

During the Edo period, all Shinto priests went to the Yoshida household in Kyoto to receive their training. There, for the first month, beginners learned, in addition to the purification rite itself, how to read and interpret *Nakatomi Incantations*, and then received lectures on the Deity Chapters (神代巻: *Kami no yo no maki*) of *Nihon Shoki*. However, the order was reversed from the time of Yamazaki Ansai: the students first attended lectures on the Deities Scroll, and then learned *Nakatomi Incantations*. This was because it was difficult to understand the true meaning of the incantations without understanding the contents of the Deities Scroll. In other words, the first *Nakatomi Incantations* scroll summarized the key contents of the Deities Scroll. (Okada 1977, p. 30)

Although the Yoshida branch and Yamazaki Ansai disagreed on the order of learning in *Great Purification* (*Nakatomi Incantations*) and *Nihon Shoki*, both clearly emphasized the importance of *Great Purification* (*Nakatomi Incantations*). Any literary source claiming that this important text was originally written in the *jindai moji* would be beneficial to followers seeking to recognize the *jindai moji* as an ancient script and the official writing system. By basing the *Hotsuma Epic* on *Great Purification* as written in this "official" script, its author portrayed the text as older than *Nihon Shoki* and even older than *Great Purification*.

Now, let us look at the roles of Seoritsu Hime, Haya'akitsu Hime, and Hayasasura Hime—the purification deities other than Ibukido. Chapter 8, "*Tamagaere hatare utsu aya*" (タマガエレ。ハタレウツアヤ—Rebirth and the Smiting of Rebels) of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, discusses them.

To summarize, the hatare, enraged by the deities, launched volleys of arrows, but every arrow missed, further enraging them. When the hatare eventually gave up and tried to flee,

the deity Tachikarao seized them, tied them up, and presented them to Amateru. In the trial scene, Amateru stood in the center holding a magatama (勾玉—a comma-shaped jewel), Seoritsu Hime stood on the left holding the mirror, and Akitsu Hime stood on the right holding the sword: the Three Sacred Treasures. The trial of the hatare Harunahamichi began, and Ibukido asked him why he committed such acts. Of the Sacred Treasures that they possessed, the mirror was used to verify whether the hatare spoke the truth.²⁰ After drawing blood from the hatare, the mirror was used to see their reflections and check whether their witchcraft had broken, following which they were restored to their original form. The story also describes how the blood was drawn and reflected in the mirror of Seoritsu Hime as they turned back into humans. Ultimately, 700,009,000 hatare were turned back into humans by Seoritsu Hime's mirror. This is followed by the account of the burial and purification of the hatare as discussed in Chapter 3. For his achievements at Mount Takano, Ibukido was conferred with the divine seal, "The Deity of Mount Takano". This was followed by the conquest of the six bands of hatare and Susanoo composing the famous *Yakumo no Uta*, symbolizing the return of peace to Japan²¹. It is worth noting here that although the *Hotsuma Tsutae* account is based on *Great Purification*, only Hayasasura Hime does not appear in *Hotsuma Tsutae*. An insight into her absence might be found in the commentary to *Nakatomi Incantations*, *Nakatomi no Harae Kunge* (中臣祓訓解), a Shinto–Buddhist work produced during the Kamakura period. The book refers to her as one of the deities of the Buddhist netherworld (冥道: Myodo) (Osumi 1977, pp. 50–51). Kwon provides the following argument:

Here, Susanoo seems to have been recognized as Hayasasura Hime no kami and Lord Enmao. We can also infer that *Ne-no-Kuni* (根国底国—the Netherworld) was understood to refer to the realm of the dead. Thus, Susanoo came to be seen as a deity that governs the realm of the dead. Particularly relevant is the passage "The deities mentioned above rule over *Myodo*. Mercy is given to all children for the sake of all sentient beings. They will wash away the stains of life and death with the wishes of the bodhisattvas." This indicates that Susanoo, now compared with Hayasasura Hime of *Ne-no-Kuni*, served the role of "washing away the impurities accumulated in the cycle of birth and death," implying that Susanoo now served in this specialized role—purifying souls. (Kwon 2013b, p. 260)

This is Kwon's commentary on the interpretation of *Nakatomi Incantations*. It indicates Susanoo being equated with Hayasasura Hime. Additionally, the bold text in the above paragraph indicates Susanoo's role in cleansing souls of their impurities. We can also apply this interpretation to *Hotsuma Tsutae*, under which Hayasasura Hime is absent, and the purification was performed by Susanoo himself. While three of the purification deities cleansed the evil, Susanoo himself, as the cause of the evil in the first place, sang *Yakumo no Uta*, heralding the arrival of peace in Japan. After this, the story progressed to the passing of the Three Sacred Treasures. In other words, the description of the conflict in Japan based on *Great Purification* seems to have been an essential part of the story completing the inheritance of the Three Sacred Treasures and slightly differing from the Sword Chapter in *The Tale of the Heike*.²²

5. Role of the Sword in the Three Sacred Treasures

Although Susanoo's role was to bring peace to Japan, we examine the role of the Sword, one of the Three Sacred Treasures as described in *Hotsuma Tsutae*, to understand the necessity of resorting to force. For this, we need to explore how each of the Three Treasures is described in *Hotsuma Tsutae*. Since *Hotsuma Tsutae* is about the Sword, it is important to investigate the representation of all three to understand the role of the Sword. Let us start with *Yata no Kagami* (八咫鏡). Chapter 17 of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, "*Kan Kagami yata no na no aya*" (カンカガミヤタノナノアヤ—The Heavenly Mirror and the Name of Yata) contains a passage where Ame-no-Koyane asks Amatersasu about the significance behind the name "Yata" of Yata no Kagami (with "ya" meaning eight and "ta" being a unit of measurement). Amatersasu replies that "yata" refers to the original height of the eight peoples.

He then explains that he had gathered 800 thousand subjects together, measured their heights, and calculated the average. Then, he divided the room into eight equal sections to measure one tsubo, named after eight peoples (八民 *Yatami*), added the sun and the moon, and divided it into ten sections, each named one kiri. Thereafter, he divided the measure into four (fire, wind, earth, and water) and connected these to a part of the sky to create the “heavenly measure”. It was then rounded into a mirror measuring six shaku (尺) and four suns (寸) (= eight yata). As Amaterasu explained, it was named “Yatakakagami” (eight-sided mirror) because the Mirror was directed at the eight subjects and used to rule their hearts.

Next, let us look at the Sword. In Chapter 23 of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, “*Miha sadame tsurugi no aya*” (ミハサダメ。ツルギノアヤ—Selection of the August Garment and the Name of the Sword), Amaterasu explained that the Sword originated from Ame no Hoko (the Heavenly Spear). There was no need for a spear during the heavenly reign of Kuni-no-Tokotachi. This was because people were honest and law-abiding, and there was no need for a spear. With hearts as white as snow, they had a lifespan of over ten billion years. However, by the time of Ubichini, people started to adorn themselves, reducing their life spans to a million years. When the heavenly rule passed to the deity Omotaru, looting and violence began, which is why he had a blacksmith forge a spear. At the time, the human lifespan was eighty thousand years. Innocent blood was shed, children were lost, and Omotaru’s reign came to an end along with his family line.²³ He was then succeeded by Izanagi and Izanami, who went to the Land of Abundant Rice (*Mizuho-no-Kuni*) to take up the “To” and the “Hoko”. “To” is perhaps a reference to the deity To, which indicates the use of the Hotsuma script, and Hoko refers to their weapon, the Sakahoko spear. Eventually, as the number of people increased, they had them make a sword that could cut better than the Hoko. This was the Yaegaki sword. Although *Hotsuma Tsutae* includes accounts of the Mirror and the Sword, it makes no mention of the Sacred Jewel. This might be because the Treasure symbolizes Amaterasu herself, who was born of an egg.²⁴

Chapter 24 of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, “*Koyekuni harami Yama no aya*” (コエクニハラミヤマノアヤ—The Land of Koye and Mount Fuji), the Three Sacred Treasures were given to the new sovereign deity, Oshihito (Oshihomimi), who was the son of Amaterasu. At this point, Oshihito was attended by Futotama and Kakuyama. Koyane and Mononushi (Komori) acted as guardians and were described as the wings of Ninigine. Subsequently, the Mirror was given to Koyane (Kasuga), and the Sword—to Komori, with Oshihito having a connecting role. The subsequent Chapter 27, “*Mioya kami funatama no aya*” (ミオヤカミフナタマノアヤ—The August Parent and the Making of Boats), then explains what happened to the Sacred Treasures. The Chapter describes the Three Treasures coming together naturally at the time that the true government (Hotsuma) was established and creating the roots of the people. This, apparently, is the true government. A similar passage exists in Chapter 28, “*Kimi Tomi nokon nori no aya*” (キミトミノコンノリノアヤ—Rules Passed Down by Lords and Ministers). Here, Oshihito explained that since the Three Sacred Treasures were given separately to him and his vassals, he was able to rule the people with one mind and transform the country into a true government (秀真之国: *hotsuma no Kuni*). Thus, it was not enough to just bequeath the Treasures separately; for them to carry meaning, the three holders had to govern the land synchronously. This idea is consistent with the commentary on the Three Sacred Treasures set forth by medieval scholar Kitabatake Chikafusa (1293–1354) in *Chronicles of the Authentic Lineages of the Divine Emperors* (神皇正統記: *Jinnō Shōtōki*), where he wrote, “The divine edicts regarding the Three Sacred Treasures must surely indicate the proper way to govern the country” (Iwasa et al. 1965, p. 60). Chapter 24 of *Hotsuma Tsutae* contains the following song:

kagamitomikoyanekami
 amateruōnkami
 turugitomikomorikami
 かがみとみこやねかみ
 あまてるおおんかみ
 つるぎとみこもりかみ

which places Amateasru (Amateru) in the middle, with Koyane on the right and Komori on the left, since the Japanese text is written vertically and not horizontally. Another song is as follows:

awawotasu amasuberagino morohatomi kasugatokomori kimitomino kokorohi-
totuni miyakotori katatihayatami kubihakimi
kagamitoturugi matenohane mononobehaasi kagamitomi
tugihorobureba tamihanare hitugihumarezu turugitomi
tugihorobureba monohuware yowōbawaruru yataomiha zorōuharuno tamiwazawo
kangamirumezo kakiomiha yokomawokarasi mononohuno tikaramorutezo konoyueni
migusawowakete sadukuruha
nagakuhitotuni naruyosiwo ayanisirusite otedukara
humiwomimagoni sadukemasu seorituhimeha mikagamiwo
motitekasugani sadukemasu hayaakitumeha miturugiwo
motitekomorini sadukemasu mitabiuyamai minaukuru
yamatohitugino miyakotorikana
あわをたす あますべらぎの もろはとみ かすがとこもり きみとみの ここ
ろひとつに みやことり かたちはやたみ くびはきみ かがみとつるぎ まて
のはね もののべはあし かがみとみ つぎほろふれば たみはなれ ひつぎふ
まれず
つるぎとみ つぎほろふれば ものふわれ よをうばわるる やたおみは ぞろ
おうはるの たみわさを かんがみるめぞ かきおみは よこまをからし もの
のふの ちからもるてぞ このゆえに みぐさをわけて さづくるは なかくひ
ひとつに なるよしを あやにしろして おてづから ふみをみまごに さづけま
す せおりつひめは みかがみを もちてかすがに さづけます はやあきつめ
は みつるぎを もちてこもりに さづけます みたびうやまい みなうくる や
まとひつぎの みやことりかな

This song is known as *Miyako Tori no Uta*.²⁵ It describes a proper model of governance, with the ruler and the ruled acting in harmony. This song is set in the background, and at the beginning of this chapter, the deities, Amaterasu, Seoritsu Hime, and Haya'akitsu Hime, each have one of the Three Sacred Treasures. After the hatate went on a rampage, the Mirror was used to return several of them to their original form. Most could not revert and were buried at Mount Takano under Ibukido. Here, Seoritsu Hime, Haya'akitsu Hime, and Ibukido are the deities appearing in the incantations for the Great Purification. Further, other sections of *Hotsuma Tsutae* have antagonists named after diseases and maladies appearing in the *Great Purification* incantations. Ultimately, the deities—primarily, Seoritsu Hime and Haya'akitsu Hime—cleansed Susanoo of his wickedness; thereafter, peace returned to Japan, following which the Three Sacred Treasures were bequeathed to Oshihito. This is the point where *Miyako Tori no Uta* is sung. The song describes the bequeathing of the Three Sacred Treasures—specifically, the Mirror passed from Seoritsu Hime to Kasuga and the Sword passed from Haya'akitsu Hime to Komori. Given that Komori was the adopted son of the thunder god Takemikazuchi, both Kasuga and Komori were associated with Kasuga Myojin (春日明神). Thus, the author seems intent on incorporating the actual links between Komori and Kasuga Myojin—namely, the connection with the Isagawa Shrine, where Komori is venerated. It may also have intended to convey how the Fujiwara clan (Nakatomi) served the Emperors.

What, then, is the significance of *Miyako Tori*? “Tori” could potentially mean “bird” (鳥) in Japanese, but it could also mean “take” (取り). A commentary on *Ise Monogatari* believes it to be a reference to the Emperor “taking the capital (都: Miyako)”. Further, since *Hotsuma Tsutae* states that Amaterasu was born as an egg, the song may also have been influenced by mythological narratives of Kaguya Hime’s birth from a golden egg, like Amaterasu, in *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (竹取物語: *Taketori Monogatari*)²⁶. In other words, *Miyako Tori* may refer to the emperorship of Amaterasu, just as it is used in the *Ise Monogatari* notes for Emperor Yozei. This is also consistent with the Makoto-ofusuma (真床追衾) ritual, a part of the post-enthronement ceremony of the Emperor, *Daijō-sai* (大嘗

祭), where the future Emperor is wrapped in a blanket. In fact, in *Hotsuma Tsutae*, Ninikine was wrapped in a blanket before being given the Three Sacred Treasures. Thus, Ninikine would have needed to become a ball-shaped egg to receive the ball-shaped gem of the Three Sacred Treasures in Miyako Tori.

In any case, although the *Hotsuma Tsutae*'s accounts of the Three Sacred Treasures were influenced by *Kojiki*, *Nihon Shoki*, and beliefs from the medieval age, it also contains its own perspectives, such as the link with the Great Purification. The Emperor, who represents the jewel, is flanked by the deity Kasuga Myojin—Kasuga and Komori—ruling over Japan, with the sovereign and subjects uniting their forces.

6. Conclusions

Therefore, the role of military force in *Hotsuma Tsutae* as raised in the Introduction seems intent on demonstrating the legitimacy of the Sword through Susanoo and his reincarnation, Yamato Takeru. This “Sword” refers to one of the Three Sacred Treasures, signifying the legitimacy of the Emperor's rule. This is evident from the fact that *Hotsuma Tsutae* is positioned as a text about the Sword. Is it possible, then, that the epic of *Hotsuma Tsutae* concludes with Yamato Takeru being worshipped by the Emperor who received the Sword? Let us look at Katsuyoshi Watanabe's theory of soul pacification for insight. Watanabe argues:

We see in detail that although the Emperor can personally intercede to pacify the souls of the Imperial ancestral deities, the Emperor cannot appease the malevolent deities of clans outside the imperial lineage... Likewise, we see that even in the case of *Sujinki* (崇神記—Chronicles of Emperor Sujin) Omono-no-nushi no Kami (大物主大神) insisted upon Ota Taneko being the chief priest (hafuri) of his shrine, suggesting that the job of soul pacification (tamashizume) was only open to those from the clan devoted to the deity in question, which is to say, those of the deity's bloodline. (Watanabe 1994)

Applying this perspective to *Hotsuma Tsutae*, we can interpret that it was only after Susanoo and Yamato Takeru's forces pacified the land of Japan using force that Japan became a land governed legitimately by its Emperor. Further, in *Sujin ki* of *Nihon Shoki*, Ota Taneko plays the role of a soul pacifier, who, according to the epilogue of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, is also the one who authored *Hotsuma Tsutae*. This claim, along with the fact that the text was written in mourning for the deceased Yamato Takeru, seems to emphasize the legitimacy of *Hotsuma Tsutae* by invoking Ota Taneko's original office as the chief priest and his role in accordance to *Nihon Shoki*. We can thus conclude the two possible purposes of this book: first, to appease the spirit of Susanoo, i.e., Yamato Takeru, with military force for the sake of peace under the Emperor. This is to say, Susanoo and Yamato Takeru's battle against the deities was a necessary step to achieve a peaceful Japan ruled by its Emperor.

The second possible purpose is the transmission of the Three Sacred Treasures. On the inheritance of *Miyako Tori no Uta* along with the Three Sacred Treasures during enthronement, Matsumoto Ikuyo wrote:

The imperial origins and the oral tradition of kingship expressed in the accession ritual (即位法: Sokui ho) can be classified ideologically as part of esoteric Buddhism, and discursively, they are linked with medieval mythology. Conventionally, a version of the accession ritual conducted according to the method of the Toji Temple (東寺即位法: Tōji sokui hō), was considered to be the definitive accession ritual according to the Shingon sect of Buddhism. (Matsumoto 2005)

Thus, the passing on of the Miyakotori song and the Three Sacred Treasures points to early modern or *jindai moji* accession rituals informed by medieval mythology.²⁷ The conquering of Susanoo and his reincarnation Yamato Takeru by Ibukido, the god of purification, and the divine forces and the ensuing peace in Japan seem to explicitly represent the transmission of the Three Sacred Treasures and the legitimacy of the Sword in particular. In other words, since *Hotsuma Tsutae* positions itself as a canonical history more authoritative

than *Nihon Shoki*, the author had to include accounts supporting the legitimacy of the Sword. Military power proved to be crucial here, as in *The Tale of the Heike*, to establish a narrative of soul pacification (of Susanoo's spirit). This is a topic for future research, along with the study of the early modern conception of the Emperor and the perspective in *Jinno Shotoki* (神皇正統記—Succession of Imperial Rulers in Japan).

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Notes

- ¹ I describe the *jindai moji* as “pseudocharacters” (*giji*) because I doubt that the *jindai moji* could have existed before the arrival of the kanji. The term was coined by Hirata Atsutane in his work *Kanna-hifumi-den* (神字日文伝), where he introduced all the *jindai moji* scripts other than the Ahiru script in the section titled “*Giji-hen*” (Pseudocharacters Section).
- ² These are covered in (Shimizu 1989; Yamashita 2000; Iwane 2008; Mitsumatsu 2017; Ito 2011a; Yoshida 2018, 2020a).
- ³ For more on the belief in the *jindai moji* during the Showa war years see (Yoshida 2020b, 2023).
- ⁴ English translations of *Hotsuma Tsutae* exist. However, since many were translated by people who believe in the authenticity of the *jindai moji*, it would be better to use them after verifying that the English translation is correct.
- ⁵ The Hiyoshi manuscript refers to the manuscript owned by the Hiyoshi Shrine and later gifted to the Toju Memorial Hall. In this manuscript, the title *Hotsuma Tsutae* is rendered as 秀真政伝紀. In this article, when referring to the contents of *Hotsuma Tsutae*, reference was made to the Hiyoshi manuscript, and chapter numbers from that manuscript were cited. For more on the Hiyoshi manuscript, see (Yoshida 2021a).
- ⁶ The Ryukoku University Omiya Library contains an original draft of *Kasugayama-no-fumi* along with Fusen's transcribed annotations of the *jindai moji*. I was, therefore, able to compare the handwriting in the notes to the Mikasayama manuscript with that in these materials.
- ⁷ (Yamashita 2017). For a detailed analysis of the overlaps between *jindai moji* texts and medieval mythology see (Yoshida 2018, 2020a).
- ⁸ For more on medieval mythology see (Yamamoto 1993, 1998a, 1998b). It chronicled medieval mythology from pre-1945 Shinto studies (神道研究 *Shinto kenkyu*) to the first decade of the 20th century, providing insights into the political and social climate of each period therein (Ito 2016). The following is another valuable title, albeit a slightly older one (Sato 1995; Ito 2012). More recent examples of important books on medieval Shintoism are as follows: (Ito 2011b; Funata 2011; Hara 2012; Suzuki 2012; Takahashi 2014; Abe 2020a; Yoshida 2020a; Sakimura 2021).
- ⁹ For more on the relationship between the *Hotsuma Epic* and the *Great Purification* see (Yoshida 2021b).
- ¹⁰ *Hotsuma Tsutae* renders Yamato Takeru as Yamatotake. For the sake of convenience, I use the more familiar rendering, Yamato Takeru, in this paper. For more on the Yamatotake rendering, see *Yamatotake ka Yamato Takeru ka* by Isao Ikada (1961) and *Yamatotake to yomu beki ron* by Hirotohi Nakamura (1987). Incidentally, Moto'ori Norinaga uses “Yamatotake” in *Kokun Kojiki* (古訓古事記).
- ¹¹ For more on the relationship between Susanoo and Yamato Takeru see (Tokura 1981; Takahashi 2004).
- ¹² The act of giving fried rodents to a fox also features in Hirata Atsutane's text on the spirit world, *Senkyo Ibun* (仙境異聞).
- ¹³ Shigeru Gorai, in the “General Discussion” (総論 *soron*) section of his study on Inari devotion, argued that the name for the fox, *kitsune*, relates to the “root spirit” (根元霊) of food (Gorai 1985). Building on this interpretation, Keiko Omori related the fox to food-bound spirits (Omori 2000). In contrast to *Kojiki*, *Nihon Shoki* identifies Ukemochi (or Inari) as the deity of food. “Uke” means “food”, and “uke-mochi” means “having food”. Ukemochi, therefore, means a god that “has food”, and from the corpse arise cattle, horses, silkworms, millet, rice, wheat, soybeans, and azuki beans. The texts suggest that the root spirit of food is the *ketsune*, meaning Inari, the deity of rice cultivation. The deity is widely believed to assume the guise of the animal known as *ketsune* or *kitsune*. Once witchdoctors started commanding them as familiars, the *ketsune/kitsune* forms would become increasingly ethereal, as spirits were bound to food or as possessing spirits. The idea of the fox as a spirit bound to food seems to have been upheld in the *Hotsuma Epic*.
- ¹⁴ The *Hotsuma Epic* emphasizes to readers that the location should be read as “Takano”, as opposed to “Koya” (as it was usually pronounced). Mount Koya has long been regarded as a sacred site associated with spirits of the dead ever since the Buddhist temple Kongobu-ji was consecrated there in the ninth century. Perhaps the author of the *Hotsuma Epic* wanted to convey the message to readers that the mountain was sacred not because Kongobu-ji was built there, but because the location had already been associated with spirits of the dead for many years. For more on the pronunciation of the location and the role of Mount Koya in the *Hotsuma Epic* see (Yoshida 2018).
- ¹⁵ For more on Susanoo worship in early modern Japan see (Saito 2012; Kwon 2013a; Suzuki 2019).
- ¹⁶ The sword that Prince Yamato Takeru owned was *kusanagi-no-tsurugi* (草薙剣: “grass-cutting sword”). According to the account in *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, Susanoo severs an eight-headed serpent using a *totsuka-no-tsurugi* (十束剣: sword of ten hand-breadths),

whereupon *kusanagi-no-tsurugi* emerges from the serpent's tale. Susanoo then dedicates the sword to Amaterasu. Masaaki Ueda notes an overlap with the *Nihon Shoki*'s account of Yamato Takeru and Susanoo. He also notes that *Nihon Shoki* accounts on Susanoo's wanderings, in which he wandered from village to village in straw clothing, and connects with Shinto rituals related to agriculture. On this basis, he argues that tales of Yamato Takeru belong more to Susanoo's anecdotes than to those involving Okuninushi (Ueda [1961] 1966).

- 17 The Encyclopedia of Shinto (神道辞典: *Shinto Jiten*) contains the following entry for *Amatsu norito* and *Futo norito goto*: There are several theories on what *Amatsu norito* and *Futo norito goto* refer to. According to one, they refer to the actual incantations the Nakatomi clan used. *Goshaku* (後釈) is a primary example of this theory. According to another theory, *Amatsu norito* and *Futo norito goto* form a part of the Great Purification incantations . . . One other theory, which predates the first two, claims that *Amatsu norito* and *Futo norito goto* were special incantations existing separately from the Great Purification.
- 18 (Miyaji et al. 1941, p. 89). In *Waji Ko* (和字考), Keiko (1740–1795) introduced the Great Purification written in the Hotsuma script as the “Nakatomi Purification Incantations in the *jindai moji*”.
- 19 See (Miyaji et al. 1941, p. 503). An article in the 1994 edition of Keigo Kondo's 近藤啓吾 *Journal of Shinto History Review* depicts *Fusuiso* as an impassioned work, reflecting Yamazaki Ansai's lifelong devotion to promoting Suika Shinto. Written toward the end of Ansai's life, *Fusuiso* was intended to serve as a commentary on *Kami-no-yo no maki* (神代巻—The *Nihon Shoki* chapters on mythology/deities), although the work was ultimately left unfinished. In effect, the text constitutes Ansai's final word and the culmination of his impassioned lifelong endeavors (Kondo 1994).
- 20 The Hotsuma Epic states that Amateru had 12 wives. For details see (Yoshida 2018).
- 21 For more on the burial and purification rites at Mount Takano see note 4 above, Yoshida (2018).
- 22 For more on the Hotsuma Epic account of the Three Sacred Treasures see (Yoshida 2020a). Drawing from *Sendai Kuji Hongi* (先代旧事本紀), the Hotsuma Epic also includes a passage in which the dead are brought to life by the shaking of the Ten Sacred Treasures (十種神宝: *Tokusa no kandakara*). Likewise, a commentary to the Hotsuma Epic, *Asahi no kami no fumi* (朝日神紀), relates the sacred treasures to *Chinkon-sai* (鎮魂祭—the official state soul pacification rites). According to Chapter 5 of *Sendai Kuji Hongi*, “*Tenson hongi*” (天孫本紀), *Chinkon-sai* had its origins in an episode where Umashimami-no-Mikoto (味間見命), the progenitor of the Mononobe clan, used the Ten Sacred Treasures in a ritual to pray for the repose of the souls of the Emperor and the Empress. Further research should clarify the connection with *Sendai Kuji Hongi*.
- 23 According to the Hotsuma Epic account, Kuni-no-Tokotachi begat eight deities, whose names were abbreviated as To, Ho, Ka, Mi, Ye, Mi, Ta, and Me. Ubichini and Omotaru were descendants of To. To's line ended with Omotaru. Izanagi and Izanami were descendants of Ta.
- 24 For more on the depiction of Amaterasu as an egg see (Yoshida [2013] 2020).
- 25 For more on *Miyoko Tori no Uta* see (Yoshida [2013] 2020).
- 26 For more on the anecdote about Kaguya Hime being born from a golden egg see (Yoshida 2010).
- 27 The reason for mentioning the relationship between *Hotsuma Tsutae* and the inheritance of the Three Sacred Treasures is because I believe that *Hotsuma Tsutae* is deeply related to *Kokin Denju* (古今伝授—ancient and modern instructions) given in the Ogasawara School. It was also the Ogasawara family that transcribed *Hotsuma Tsutae* during the Meiji period. Future research should examine *Hotsuma Tsutae* as a subgenre of *Kokin Denju*, whose secrets include the inheritance of the Three Sacred Treasures. For more on *Hotsuma Tsutae* and the Ogasawara School, see No. 2.

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