

Some of the crucial lessons of the Five Constitutions are repeated here. The first line of the poem exhorts all people to follow the Way to thoughtfulness and compassion. In the second line each person is given a role to play in society and a general reminder of how to execute this role. Finally, Amaterasu admonishes humanity to stay on the right path to ensure happiness and prosperity.

The forty-seven-syllable song has strong esoteric meanings of unknown age that carry on today. It is the basis of *chinkon-kishin*, a Shinto form of meditation that can be practiced by anyone and is chanted at the beginning of a meditation session. It is also considered the song of creation by some Shinto traditions and can sometimes be found on the wall of an esoteric training room written in kamiyo moji. Where exactly did the author of the *Kujiki-72*, whether he was medieval or ancient, get this secret information? Did he invent it, hear it from a teacher, or see it in a text?

The "last national scholar," Yoshio Yamada, proposed in 1953 that this incantation was invented for the *Kujiki-72*. He claimed it could not be ancient because it contains all forty-seven syllables of spoken Japanese, and the Japanese supposedly had no knowledge of syllables before Chinese writing was imported and probably spoke a very different language. But the critic Minoru Harada has recently challenged this theory: If these verses are original to the *Kujiki-72*, how on Earth did they become so influential throughout the Shinto world? In the opinion of Shintoists the Hifumi Song was considered too sacred to record before the *Kujiki-72* but has existed for many centuries. Furthermore there is linguistic evidence that the verses of Amaterasu's song are written in Old Japanese, using grammar so subtle that early modern commentators did not understand it. But if the ancients understood the syllabic nature of language, what does that mean about kamiyo moji?²⁸

What is clear is that this later Hifumi Song appeared in a completely different era from the tenth-century version, and it seems to have matched some inexplicable desire for a more relevant song. Other parahistories provide their own, competing Hifumi songs to match their alternative images of Japan. The idea of a song of origin seems to have resonated with Japanese people both then and now.

THE KUJIKI'S LEGACY AND THE HITSUKI SHINJI

The *Kujiki-72* was probably the first parahistory, but is it the birth of a genre? It seems to me it could have provided some of the inspiration for Norinaga Motoori's work with the *Kojiki*, but the link to other parahistories is more tenuous. As we will see, none of the four documents I have chosen are really anything like each other. Generally the *Kujiki-72* is responsible for a great number of new ideas. Even while it was banned it was secretly consulted by national scholars like Zankō Masuho, and in the twentieth century when it was rediscovered it seems to have inspired someone, or something.²⁹

When the *Kujiki* was unbanned in the imperial period, many independent researchers studied and promoted it. Generally they were interested in promoting a patriotic interest in Japan's heritage, but a few of these researchers took parahistory into a totally different realm. In April 1944 a meeting of parahistorians carried out an unusual kind of ancient Chinese divination, using branches in sand to spell out letters. Rather than giving expected answers like a Ouija board, though, when the parahistorians asked who they were speaking to, the branches spelled out the characters Ame, Hi, Tsu, Ku 天ヒツク, which meant absolutely nothing to anyone present. Perhaps some trickster spirit had interfered with the process.

The parahistorians were roundly disappointed, except for a man named Tenmei Okamoto who felt somehow intrigued. He went to an encyclopedia of shrines and looked up the unknown name, discovering that there was a shrine with that name not too far from Tokyo. When he visited this shrine, his arm began to throb with pain, and he was suddenly possessed to take up a brush and start writing. He looked down at the paper and discovered that he was unable to read what he had written. This was the beginning of the *Hitsuki Shinji* (fig. 2.5), the "Sun-Moon Revelation," a collection of 100 books of automatic writing in a unique script replete with phonetic numbers and other symbols (much like Christian mystic Emanuel Swedenborg's "writings from

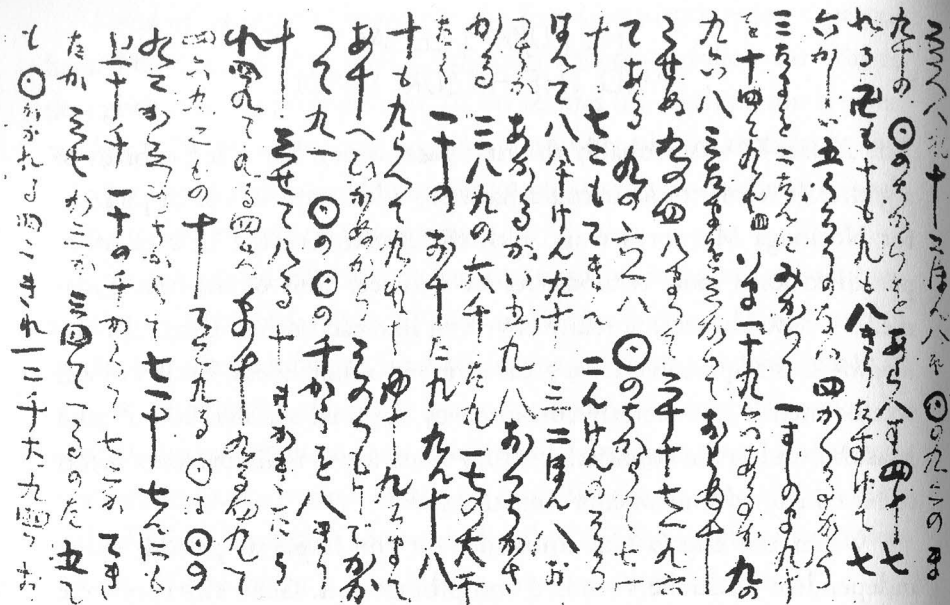


Figure 2.5. Detail from the Hitsuki Shinji manuscript.

heaven made up of mere numbers”), which could be deciphered only slowly and with agony.

The *Hitsuki Shinji*, which has not yet been rendered properly in English, claims to be written by the God of Abraham, Christ, and Mohammed. The first chapters written in 1944 forecast that Japan would lose World War II, but rebuild quickly. This manuscript was widely copied in the Japanese Army and is said to have saved some despairing officers from suicide in 1945. The following chapters deal with what would come after that rebuilding: God warns that the modern world is unsustainable and has been misguided by occult forces, called “Ishiya” (masons?), which are leading it straight to collapse. What is coming within our lifetimes, according to proponents of the *Hitsuki Shinji*, is a worldwide crisis that will be as precipitous as walking along the edge of a cliff, but human beings will be able to pull through this challenge by growing a spiritual resilience. It asserts that “all things will become one-third” of their former sizes, which seems to imply a great reduction in arable land, food, and population.

In the *Hitsuki Shinji* Japan is Nihon, the “Nation of Origin,” and in

the coming crisis those loyal to Nihon will have a unique challenge to face that requires special spiritual training. The symbol for Origin used in the text is ㊦, which kotodama experts may be familiar with as the symbol for “Su,” divine consciousness. Much of the book is concerned with instructing the people of the Nation of ㊦ in finding the original “crystal” nature of their souls as a portion of kami, and directing them toward becoming one with kami.

This would seem to make the *Hitsuki Shinji* a text relevant primarily to people born in Japan. But surprisingly, from its very first book, the *Shinji* asserts that it is not speaking of a political nation but of a spiritual one: “Some are loyal to foreign lands even in the nation of ㊦, and some are children of kami even in foreign lands.” In other words, to adhere to the way of the kami is to be a member of the nation of Nihon, but this is not the same as being physically born in Japan, and indeed, even a Japanese citizen may be spiritually a member of another nation.

The *Hitsuki Shinji* makes reference to the philosophy of the *Kujiki-72* in some places and gives a name for the Creator Kami that more closely resembles the *Kujiki-72* than the *Kujiki-10*. It also tells us that “The Five of Heaven reveals itself on Earth as the Five Weights,” and lists those Five Weights in order. And it quotes the forty-seven-syllable Hifumi Song. Whatever that historical current was that Chouon had caught on to, it appears that the author of the *Hitsuki Shinji* likes it as well.