

DONALD L. PHILLIPI

Songs of Gods, Songs of Humans

The Epic Tradition of the Ainu



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Donald L. Philippi

with a Foreword by

Gary Snyder

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Foreword

There are two basic modes of learning: “direct experience” and “hearsay.” Nowadays most that we know comes through hearsay—through books, teachers, and television—keyed to only a minimal ground of direct contact with the world. (The “world” is perceived as a rolling outdoor space with weather above, obstructions underfoot, and plants, people, animals, buildings, and machines occupying various niches.)

Hearsay is the great organizer of this apparent chaos via myth, science, or philosophy. Not too long ago there were no writing systems and the world-view/myth/frameworks came to young listeners as long stories chanted in the evening. These old stories are the foundation stones of what the Occident calls classics, and indeed all literature.

In a completely pre-literate society the oral tradition is not memorized, but *remembered*. Thus, every telling is fresh and new, as the teller’s mind’s eye re-views the imagery of origins or journeys or loves or hunts. Themes and formulae are repeated as part of an ever-changing tapestry composed of both the familiar and the novel. Direct experience, generation by generation, feeds back into the tale told. Part of that direct experience is the group context itself, a circle of listeners who murmur the burden back or voice approval, or snore. Meaning flashes from mind to mind, and young eyes sparkle.

All later, civilized educations are by degrees removed from this primacy of together-hearing. An urban cosmopolitanism is gained, with the loss of a keen sense of human/natural systems integration. In the Ainu tales it is gods and animals who speak in the first person as well as human beings, and the several worlds of sense-experience and imagination are knit together.

The many motifs of oral literature found world-wide, which at least prove that humanity enjoys the same themes over and over, are not heard as part of some comparative study demonstrating the brotherhood of man, but as out of the minds, hills, and rivers of the place—maybe through the mouth of a bear or salmon. A people and a place become one.

Such were the Ainu, on one level a remnant population of a few bands, isolated for centuries from the “centers of world civilization.” But it’s all here: the planet-wide themes; the great adventures of love, sorcery, and battle (“The Epic of Kotan Utunnai”); and the almost uniquely Ainu telling of tales direct from non-human entities, a mode of “inter-species communication.”

On another level the Ainu are at the center of an archaic internationalism. Their big island was a meeting place of circum-polar hunting culture pathways with Pacific seacoast cultures. In the practices they lived by are some of the purest teachings according to those old ways that survive: the sacramental food-chain mutual sharing consciousness that was likely the basic religious view of the whole northern hemisphere paleolithic. This view clearly has relevance, after a lapse of many millennia, to us again: the planet Earth:: Gaia must now be seen as *one system*.

The people of pre-civilized times or places knew their specific watershed ecosystems and mastered those details with beautiful and empirical precision. Natural systems, even in small areas, are of the utmost complexity, and to be understood must be grasped in their wholeness. This means, so to speak, leaving the trail and walking up hill and down, through the brush. The trail is what village people use as a straight line between garden plot and garden plot. Hence, “linear.” The forest, for hunting and gathering people, must be grasped, visualized, in its simultaneity: “Where do you suppose the deer are moving today?” Hence, “field.” The Ainu term *iworu*, “field of force,” is a term that can mean simply biome, or territory, but has spirit-world implications as well.

So an Ainu group would live along a river in a house facing east, fire at the center. Upstream was a forest, swamp, and mountain wilderness, penetrated by the trails of the hunters. (The arctic brown bear of Hokkaido is as large as a grizzly.) Downstream was the coast and the ocean, full of herring and salmon, cod and crab; and before the Japanese came, rich in seals, sea-lions, and whales. When men returned from hunting and fishing, and women from gathering plants for food, fiber, medicine, poison, and dyes, they sat by the fire. Men would carve intricate bas-relief designs on knife-sheath and quiver. Women wove, sewed, and embroidered the graceful linear swooping designs that are instantly recognizable as Ainu. An elder perhaps told these

stories. The life of mountains and rivers flowed from their group experience, through speech and hands, into a fabric of artifacts and tales that was a total expression of their world, and themselves. As the Ainu saw it, from the inner mountains upstream, and from the sea depths downstream, game came as visitors. Master of the one realm is Bear, master of the other is Killer Whale. The deer or salmon would leave behind their flesh bodies in exchange for being entertained with songs, stories, and wine by the humans. Humans are good musicians as the whole world knows. Returning to their sea or mountain home with gifts, the animal or fish spirits would hold another party in the spirit realm, and many would agree it was good to visit the human world, and more would soon go. Thus, cycles in and out of a real landscape, and cycles in and out of life-and-death, attended by that highest of pastimes—singing and feasting (in or out of mask) with food and friends.

Paradoxically, only now, in the last years of the twentieth century, can this view be understood for its real worth. Millennia of rapacious states spilling out of their boundaries to plunder the resources and people within reach created a false image of limitless space and wealth on the planet, available for whoever had the weapons, organization, and willingness to kill without saying thanks. Through no wisdom of its own, but out of necessity, industrial civilization in particular is forced to realize that there are limits, and that there is a life support system composed of millions of sub-systems all working or playing together with amazing grace.

Through Donald Philippi's translations, the Ainu suggest to us with great clarity that this life support system is not just a mutual food factory, it is mysteriously *beautiful*. It is what we are. We now see the Ainu not as a fading remnant, but as elders and teachers whose playful sense of their own bio-region points a way to see and live on our planet as a whole.

Gary Snyder

Preface

Such a large amount of folklore material in the Ainu language has been collected that it is extremely difficult to make a selection of the representative pieces. In this volume I have included mainly materials from the Saru Ainu of Hidaka. They are the most numerous group of Ainu, and their culture may have preserved many of the more archaic features. The number of selections taken from the repertory of Hiraga Etenoa may seem to be disproportionate. I have done this because of the very high artistry of the materials obtained from this reciter, who was, in my opinion, the best Ainu epic reciter whose repertory has ever been recorded in writing.

All of the selections in this volume have been translated directly from the Ainu originals in the extensive materials collected by pioneers in the study of Ainu epics. I did not use any source materials which did not give the texts in the original language because I believe that a true translation can be made only by a translator who knows the original language and translates directly from it. For most of the mythic epics (*kamui yukar*) I used *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū* by my teacher Kubodera Itsuhiko. It is the authoritative collection of epics of this genre and is the fruit of many years of patient research. The texts of two of the longer epics (selections 31 and 32) are from the typewritten manuscripts copied by Dr. Kubodera from his field notes. These two longer epics have never been translated before, either into Japanese or into English. One selection was obtained from the field notes kindly lent to me by Kindaichi Kyōsuke, and another was taken from one of his published works; three were taken from Chiri Yukie's publication; and one from John Batchelor, collected in the 1880s.

As mentioned earlier, most of the texts come from the Saru area of Hidaka (informants Hiraga Etenoa, Hirame Karepia, Nabesawa Wakarpa, Nabesawa Taukno, and Hiraga Tumonte). Three texts (selections 7, 8, 12) are from Chiri Yukie, and two are from Chikabumi in Ishikari Province (informant Shikata Shimukani, selections 26 and 29). The final selection in the volume,

“The Epic of Kotan Utunnai,” was collected by Batchelor. He does not name the reciter, but it appears certain from the diction that the reciter was a native of the Saru area.

All of the selections in this volume are in verse as they were sung by their reciters. In translating them into a sort of English free verse, I tried to preserve the sequence of perceptions, the general style, and the turns of speech of the original. Unfortunately, the word order in English is often exactly the opposite of that in Ainu, and it was not always possible to retain the same sequences in the translations. In most cases the number of lines in the translation is approximately the same as the number in the Ainu original. This will give the reader an idea of the way in which the Ainu epic reciter arranges the text into verses. It will also be possible to estimate the length of time required to sing each epic, since there were often pauses between verses, and the mythic epics in particular were sung with burdens (*sakehe*) repeated after every verse.

The selections are grouped into two parts. In part I, the speakers who appear in the songs and narrate their adventures are all gods of various kinds. There being so many of these god songs, I subdivided the first part into three sections. The first section, “The World of Gods,” contains songs narrating experiences of gods who live apart from humans in their own god-worlds. There is very little or no human involvement. The second section, “The World of Gods and Humans,” contains selections which narrate different types of experiences shared by both gods and humans. The third section, “The Culture Hero and His Work,” is devoted to songs about the Ainu culture hero. In part II, all the speakers who narrate the action are human (i.e., Ainu) men and women.

The names of the reciters, the dates of recording, the sources where the texts were obtained, and explanatory notes are given in the introductory sections preceding each of the selections. The introduction provides the history and culture of the Ainu and gives a brief outline of the Ainu epic tradition. A bibliography has been appended for those who wish to read further.

I lived in Japan from 1957 to 1970, and my interest in the Ainu folklore began there when I was working on a translation of the *Kojiki*, Japan’s ear-

liest book. My studies of early Japanese oral literature—the tales, the songs, the prayers, the ritual formulas—led me to the works of Kindaichi Kyōsuke, who connected the oral beginnings of Japanese literature with the literature of the preliterate peoples of northern Asia, in particular, the Ainu. Kindaichi was convinced that the origins of oral literature could be found in the archaic north Asian practice of shamanism, and he pointed to the Ainu epics with their ubiquitous use of the first-person diction as clear evidence of this idea. I read all of Kindaichi's published writings, and Kindaichi allowed me to use his original field notes, which were collected during the early decades of this century and were of priceless value in my study of the Ainu language and epic literature. In 1967, Kindaichi introduced me to his disciple Kubodera Itsuhiko, who had won his doctorate at my alma mater, Kokugakuin University, in 1960, with the above-mentioned book on the Ainu mythic epics as his dissertation. I was given access to Dr. Kubodera's extensive collection of original texts of various genres of Ainu folklore, most of which had never been translated or published. I did extensive work on the vocabulary and grammar of the epics for a 14-month period in 1967 and 1968, and I continued my work in this field after returning to the United States in December 1970. I spent many useful hours working closely with both Kindaichi and Kubodera, and I hope that their teachings have been reflected not too inadequately in the present volume. My entire program of research, and the present volume as well, would have been unthinkable and impossible without their assistance and encouragement. I owe everything to them.

I wish to thank the Institute of Japanese Culture and Classics and the Library of Kokugakuin University for allowing me to use their facilities to study the Ainu-language manuscripts deposited in their custody by Dr. Kubodera. I am grateful to Dr. Kubodera's surviving family for their continuing good will and interest in my work, and to Kindaichi Haruhiko for permission to translate songs recorded by his father. I owe much to Yamada Hidezō, another disciple of Dr. Kindaichi, who has devoted many years to the study of the Ainu language and the toponymy in particular. Mr. Yamada's encouragement has been very helpful to me. I also thank Minowa Shigeo, former director of University of Tokyo Press, for his enthusiastic encouragement, without which I might well have faltered in view of the im-

mensity of my task. Special thanks are due to Urushibara Hideko of Tokyo, who helped me greatly at an early stage of my work by patiently listening to me read the first translations.

A number of Americans have been very helpful to me. David Guss of San Francisco has shown a great interest in the Ainu epics. He read masses of my manuscript materials and gave me valuable advice concerning the selection of the songs for inclusion in this volume. We had many animated discussions about styles of translation. Although I alone must take responsibility for the translations, I hope that they will not disappoint him.

Peter and Judy Berg of San Francisco kindly read and listened to some of my translations and gave me much-needed encouragement in my work. They introduced me to the poet Gary Snyder, who read the manuscript and kindly supplied this volume with a foreword. I imposed heavily on the time and patience of Irving Rosenthal, Ellen Cooney, and other friends, who read translations and gave me helpful suggestions.

Part of the research concerning the Ainu epic folklore was accomplished with a fellowship from the Translation Center at Columbia University.

My deepest gratitude of all is to the Ainu epic reciters whose immense knowledge of their people's traditions was made available to me indirectly through the texts recorded in writing.

This is the first of a series of volumes I intend to publish concerning the Ainu epic folklore. I am currently preparing the texts and English translations of some 220 mythic epics of the Hokkaido Ainu and am working on an Ainu-English dictionary of the vocabulary used in the folklore of the Ainu of Hokkaido (Saru, Horobetsu, and Chikabumi) and Sakhalin. There are many other excellent examples of epic songs and prose tales that deserve to be made public in English translation. I hope that readers of this volume will look forward with anticipation to the publication of these other projected works on the Ainu folklore.

Introduction

This is a collection of English translations of thirty-three epic songs of the Hokkaido Ainu. Except for one selection, all of them were collected during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Most of them were obtained from female Ainu reciters by two Japanese scholars, Kindaichi Kyōsuke and Kubodera Itsuhiko.¹

The reader may be surprised to find that all of the songs without exception use first-person forms of diction. They are, so to speak, monologues or self-revelatory utterances in which a personage describes his or her experiences and adventures from the subjective point of view. The speakers who tell their stories in these songs may be either gods (*kamui*) or humans (*ainu*). These are the two main orders of beings recognized by the Ainu (the word *ainu* means “human being”), and this is why I have chosen the title “Songs of Gods, Songs of Humans.” The title describes the contents of the book exactly: the book contains, literally, songs sung by gods and songs sung by humans. The audiences intended for the songs may also be beings in either of the two categories. The songs of the gods may be intended to be heard by gods as well as by humans, and the songs of the humans may be sung to audiences consisting of gods or of humans. The archaic epic is a form of inter-species communication in which gods or humans speak of their experiences to members of their own or other species. The mythic epics (*kamui yukar*) are especially important as vehicles of mutual communication between the two orders of being, and I have included a large number of them in this volume.

In order for the humans to survive successfully in this world, which they share with the other non-human species (the *kamui*), the humans must elaborate techniques of communicating with them. This is done in a number of ways.

First, the humans address the other species directly by praying to them. Praying is a specialty of the Ainu men. When they are at home by the fireside, the men drop droplets of wine into the fire in the hearth while intoning prayers to the Fire Goddess (*kamui huchi*), who is the deity most closely concerned

¹Twenty-seven of the songs were collected in the province of Hidaka along the Saru river; three are from Horobetsu in Iburi; two are from Chikabumi in Ishikari; and one (selection 33) is from an unknown reciter but is probably from Hidaka.

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with the affairs of the humans. She acts as an intermediary and will relay the prayer to the proper deity. When the men are hunting in the mountains, they pray to the gods who appear to them in the disguise of birds or animals. Here are two hunters' prayers taught to Kindaichi in 1915 by Utomriuk, the chieftain of the village of Shumunkot in the Saru region.² The first is a prayer by a hunter to a bird after it had been shot down.

<i>Tekkup e-ush kusu</i>	Winged creature that you are,
<i>rik peka</i>	you travel
<i>kotan enka peka</i>	high in the skies,
<i>e-apkash kusu</i>	high over the land.
<i>rikun kanto</i>	Thus your spirit
<i>oro un</i>	is now about to
<i>e-yai-ramat-ka</i>	return to
<i>hoshiipi kusu ne na.</i>	the Upper Heavens.
<i>Pirkano</i>	You have been treated
<i>ainu otta</i>	magnificently
<i>a-e-tomte na.</i>	by the humans.
<i>Kamui huchi</i>	The Fire Goddess
<i>e-e-kashpaotte na.</i>	commands it of you.
<i>Rikun kanto un</i>	You will now ascend
<i>e-rikin kusu ne na.</i>	to the Upper Heavens.
<i>Eramuan 'an.</i>	Hear this and obey!

The second is a prayer by a hunter after shooting deer.

<i>A-kor moshir</i>	Let your spirits
<i>moshit tapkashi</i>	return
<i>echi-ko-yai-ramat-ka</i>	atop the summit
<i>oshiipi</i>	of our native country.
<i>ashir kamui ne</i>	May you
<i>echi-oka yakne</i>	abide there
<i>pirka na.</i>	as newborn gods.
<i>Tapan inau</i>	Take these <i>inau</i> ,
<i>pirka inau</i>	these lovely <i>inau</i> ,
<i>echi-kor wa</i>	and may you
<i>echi-yai-kamui-</i>	enhance with them

²The texts of the prayers are from Dr. Kindaichi's field notes for 1915, copied with his permission.

nere kane your glory
yak pirka na. as deities!

A second means of communication with the non-human is through shamanism, which is called *tusu* or sometimes *nupur*. Among the Hokkaido Ainu, almost all the shamans are women. In shamanic seances, the shamaness goes into a trance and becomes possessed by a god or gods speaking through her mouth. The prophecies will usually assume the form of recitatives in the first-person form of diction, as if the god were merely borrowing the mouth of the shamaness.³

A third technique of inter-species communication is the epic folklore, particularly the mythic epics. Although the epic reciter does not go into a trance, the gods borrow the reciter's lips in the same way as those of a shaman. Through the mouth of the reciter, the gods describe their worlds and tell, in their own words, about their lives and adventures.

In this volume the reader will find a large selection of these songs in which the gods themselves appear as speakers, describe the landscape of their world, and narrate their experiences in the self-revelatory style of the Ainu epic tradition. The reader will also become acquainted with human beings, the Ainu men and women, who speak about their experiences in the traditional Ainu world of many centuries ago.

The Ainu, Past and Present

The Ainu are the ethnic group forming the native population of the island of Hokkaido, the large island (78, 513 square kilometers) located between the main Japanese island of Honshū and the island of Sakhalin, which belongs to the Soviet Union.⁴ The Ainu population in 1822 totaled 24,339 (21,768 in Hokkaido, 2,571 in Sakhalin), but by 1854 there was a sharp decrease in the Ainu population of Hokkaido. At that time, the total Ainu population was found to be 18,805 (16,136 in Hokkaido, 2,669 in Sakhalin). This decline in the population of the Hokkaido Ainu between 1822 and 1854 is attributed chiefly to the effects of contagious diseases (smallpox, measles, and cholera, as well as venereal diseases and tuberculosis) resulting from contact with the Japanese.⁵

During the 1920s, at the time of the final collapse of the Ainu culture, the

³Actual songs performed by shamanesses have been recorded in writing and are in the first-person form of diction. However, the shamaness's song given below in "The Epic of Kotan Utunnai" is in the third-person form. See below, pp. 389–90.

⁴In addition to the Ainu population of Hokkaido, 1,600 Ainu also lived in Sakhalin as of 1822, and there were 97 Ainu living on the Kurile Islands as of 1884. Sakhalin and the Kuriles no longer have Ainu populations, and the descendants of the Sakhalin and Kurile Ainu now live in Hokkaido. In the following discussion, the word *ainu* will refer to the native Ainu population of Hokkaido unless otherwise specified.

⁵Kodama Sakuzaemon writing in *Ainu minzoku shi*, vol. 1, p. 6.

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number of Hokkaido Ainu was somewhere between 15,000 and 16,000. The census of 1940 listed 3,676 households with a population of 16,170.⁶ Today the Ainu population is said to be approximately 16,000 but it is now difficult to establish who is an Ainu since the ethnological boundaries between the Japanese and Ainu populations have been obscured by massive intermarriage and acculturation.⁷

Like many other peoples, the Ainu are known to the world by a word in their language which means simply “human being.” The word *ainu* is used chiefly to distinguish human beings from other non-human species, the *kamui*. The word *ainu* has a number of honorific uses; in eulogistic expressions it is synonymous with the word *nishpa*, “chieftain.” It can also mean “father” (*a-kor ainu* is a common way of saying “my father”). The word is also used to distinguish the Ainu from the Japanese, who are called *shisam*.

The terms *ainu kotan* and *ainu moshir* are used in the Ainu epic texts to refer to the world of the humans, the “human homeland” as distinguished from the world of the gods (*kamui kotan* or *kamui moshir*). However, these are not, strictly speaking, geographical terms. The Ainu have a word for their homeland which is strictly geographical. They call it *yaun moshir*, which means “the country on land,” “the mainland.” The inhabitants of the “mainland” are called *yaunkur*, “people of the land,” “mainlanders.” This is the ethnonym applied by the Ainu to themselves in their epic literature. The name of the hero of the epics is Poiyaunpe, which means literally “little mainlander” or “young mainlander.” *Yaunkur* is used in contradistinction to *repunkur*, “people of the sea,” the enemy people whose domains are to the north of the Ainu.

The homeland of the Ainu, their *yaun moshir*, was until quite recently one of the parts of the world where the population had adapted most successfully to the environment by means of a hunting, fishing, and gathering economy. Hunting and fishing were the main sources of livelihood for the Ainu. The mountains had abundant supplies of deer, which were hunted by the men in the fields and hills during spring and autumn. Bear were also hunted during these seasons. Fishing in the rivers was practiced throughout the year except between January and March; the most important varieties of fish were the cherry salmon (*ichaniu*), caught from June to September, and the dog salmon (*kamui chep*, *shipe*, *chuk-kep*), caught from August to December. Various types

⁶Ibid.

⁷Kodama states that pureblooded Ainu are today less than 1 percent of the total.

of edible wild plants, notably the bulbs of a type of lily (*turep*), were gathered by the women, mainly in the summer. Women cultivated small plots of domestic plants, mainly Deccan grass (*piyapa*) and foxtail millet (*munchiro*). A beerlike beverage was brewed from the former, and the latter was made into millet dumplings at festivals. Some beans and a type of turnip (*atane*) were cultivated. The agricultural techniques were extremely primitive, and fertilizers were not used at all. Plant cultivation was of little importance in the economy, and venison and salmon were the main articles of food.⁸

The Ainu settlements were located along rivers near salmon-spawning grounds. The areas for food-gathering, called the *iwor*, were the rivers and the wooded mountain ranges. The *iwor* were regarded as the property of the local populations, and Ainu from other areas were not allowed to hunt or fish in them. The salmon-spawning grounds were called *pet iwor*, "river fishing beds," and the wooded mountain ranges upstream along the rivers were called *kimun iwor*, "mountain hunting grounds," where the local Ainu men would hunt deer and bear in the spring and autumn. The women would collect edible plants during the summer months in the woods or in the unwooded fields on the river banks and river terraces.

The Ainu had domesticated dogs, which played an important role in their hunting activities. Horses were introduced by the Japanese in fairly recent times. No other domesticated animals were known. Metal working was not practiced by the Ainu themselves, but supplies of metal implements were obtained by trade with the Japanese.

According to Watanabe, the techniques and skills employed by the Ainu in their food-gathering activities were extremely successful and enabled them to adapt themselves well to their habitat. They were able to lay up stores for the winter, when economic activities stopped for about two months and were able to accumulate a surplus. As a result, the Ainu lived in permanent settlements while continuing to rely on a gathering economy. They never adopted nomadic ways of life.⁹

According to Ohnuki-Tierney, most Ainu enjoyed a surplus fairly regularly, and trade was a means by which they disposed of their surplus goods, receiving luxury items in return. Bear ceremonialism was a "sensitive barometer" indicating the amount of surplus in each area. "The Ainu," according

⁸The best study on Ainu economic activities is Hitoshi Watanabe, *The Ainu Ecosystem*. See especially pp. 69–78.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 42.

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to Ohnuki-Tierney, “were not foragers forced to survive in an undesirable environment, but had adapted superbly to their environment. The environment was fairly rich and the Ainu mode of life enabled them to produce surplus. Surplus gave the basis for elaborate bear ceremonialism and trade with other peoples as well as the basis for well developed modes of aesthetic expression as part of a rich and complex cognitive world.”¹⁰

Generally speaking, Ainu settlements were small, consisting of perhaps one to ten households. The most densely populated area of Hokkaido was the Saru river area of Hidaka, where one settlement might house as many as thirty-one households.¹¹ Each settlement was autonomous and economically self-sufficient. “Ainu technology did not require the cooperation of a unit larger than the local group. In fact the family was often self-sufficient in this respect although members of a few families sometimes joined together for certain activities. Social intercourse beyond the local group seems to have been rare, although there had been a degree of intermarriage. The principal occasions for Ainus to meet members of other local groups were at the bear ceremony in winter.”¹²

Thus, the Ainu were living a way of life rooted in the remote past, and Hokkaido remained untouched by the main currents of Asian history. The technologies of animal husbandry (domestication of horses and cattle, reindeer breeding), rice cultivation, and the working of iron and bronze, which had played such important roles in the history of the peoples of Asia, were unknown to the Ainu. The Ainu never developed any system of writing or any concept of a political state. Even though there were cultural ties with the Japanese dating back to great antiquity, actual contacts with the Japanese were peripheral during the early centuries. There were no contacts with the Chinese. As nomadism was not practiced, the Ainu of one river valley lived in comparative isolation from the Ainu of other river valleys. Naturally, this isolation resulted in considerable local diversity in culture.

This state of affairs was made possible by the relative abundance of the natural resources, the relatively small Ainu population, and the remoteness of the Ainu homeland from neighboring states. The Ainu remained free from foreign interference in their life until the imposition of Japanese influence after 1669. On the other hand, the Ainu came in time to depend on trade

¹⁰Ohnuki-Tierney, Emiko, “Another look at the Ainu,” pp. 193–94.

¹¹Watanabe, *Ainu Ecosystem*, p. 97.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 12.

with the Japanese for their imported goods. They received from the Japanese metal implements, lacquerware (Japanese lacquer bowls were considered treasures by Ainu families), cotton and silken garments, rice, malt for brewing alcoholic beverages, and Japanese rice wine (*sake*). In exchange they provided the Japanese with animal furs and skins, dried fish, bear's gall (prized in East Asia as a medicine), live hawks for use by Japanese hunters, and imported Chinese goods obtained by them at second hand from the tribes of the Amur basin, adjacent to Sakhalin. The Ainu dependence on trade, which is clearly reflected in the epic texts, eventually had disastrous effects on the Ainu, and the geographical isolation of the population and their inability to unite on an island-wide basis for self-defense made them vulnerable to economic and political subjugation by the Japanese.

At any rate, the Ainu have an extremely long history of undisturbed occupation of their homeland, and there have never been any accounts either written or oral, of any migrations on their part. It is almost certain that the Ainu culture as we know it was developed in the present homeland, Hokkaido. For this reason, the question of the ultimate origins of the Ainu can only be answered in terms of vague speculations.

Racially, the Ainu appear to be unrelated to the surrounding Mongoloid populations. There was a time when scholars pointed to possible Caucasoid, or even "Austronesian," affinities of the Ainu. The more plausible explanation is that the Ainu are a Paleoasiatic people who always lived in Asia and who are not related to any other race of mankind (a "Rasseninsel"). If this is true, the Ainu would be "a surviving remnant of the ancient population of this part of Asia prior to the great expansion of the modern Mongoloid populations."¹³

The Ainu language is basically different from the Japanese and other surrounding languages and cannot be genetically connected with any other language groups in the world. In view of the historical relations known to have existed over many centuries between the Ainu and the Japanese, it is surprising that there is so little resemblance between the two languages. The only similarities are those in phonology and sentence structure; the Japanese loan words in Ainu are fewer than one might expect.

Kindaichi pointed toward possible northern affinities for the Ainu lan-

¹³Chard, Chester S. "A New Look at the Ainu Problem," p. 98. The Caucasoid theory was argued by George Montandon; the "Austronesian" theory by Sternberg and Levin; the Paleoasiatic theory by L. von Schrenck.

8 INTRODUCTION

guage. According to him, incorporation or polysynthesis¹⁴ is one of the characteristic elements of Ainu grammar. He argued that the language may be connected with the Paleoasiatic and American Indian languages, among which there are languages with a strong polysynthetic tendency. Particularly in the archaic diction of the Ainu epics one finds lengthy verbs incorporating a number of different semantic elements.¹⁵

There are a number of identifiable cultural influences which might well have played formative roles in the Ainu culture. One of these would be pre-agricultural Japan, the Japan of the Jōmon period, which lasted in Hokkaido until about the beginning of the Christian era. The culture which existed in Hokkaido during the Jōmon period—and therefore, presumably, the culture of the ancestors of the present-day Ainu—is practically the same as that which was found all over the Japanese archipelago during that period. However, with the introduction of metals and rice cultivation from the Asian continent into the southern part of the archipelago, the entire mode of life underwent a radical change there, and the Japanese culture such as we know it was formed. The new culture imported from the continent gradually spread northward but did not take firm hold in Hokkaido. Thus, the ancestors of the Ainu remained relatively untouched by these continental cultural influences; and their culture developed in a different direction, managing to retain many archaic features which disappeared elsewhere in the archipelago. The early Japanese loan words in the Ainu language indicate close cultural ties between the emerging Japanese state and the Ainu at an early period.

Another important formative element in the Ainu culture must have been that coming from northeast Asia. Kindaichi, pointing to the prevalence of shamanism among the Ainu and to the polysynthetic elements in the Ainu language, holds that in early times the influence of northern Asiatic culture must have been much stronger, deeper, and more permanent than that of Japanese culture.¹⁶ Izumi Seiichi connects the economy, the general pattern of living, the religion, and the sociopolitical organization of the Ainu with those of the hunting peoples of northern Asia.¹⁷ The “Okhotsk people,” who lived in close proximity with the Ainu for many centuries, had many affinities with the cultures of the Amur and Maritime regions, and the Ainu must have been influenced by them to a great degree.¹⁸

¹⁴Incorporating or polysynthetic languages are those which have very long and morphologically complex word forms. They contain many bound morphemes which would be translated by separate words in languages of other types. R. H. Robins, *General Linguistics*, p. 334.

¹⁵Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu-go kenkyū*, pp. 318–25. Examples of this are given below on pp. 36–37.

¹⁶Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu no kenkyū*, p. 349.

¹⁷Izumi Seiichi, ed., *Ainu no sekai*, p. 9.

¹⁸See below, pp. 40–44.

In establishing the history of a preliterate people, the following types of materials must be considered: (1) archeological materials; (2) historical documents of other peoples describing the people in question; and (3) the oral traditions of the people in question. In research on the Ainu, the first two types of materials have been utilized, but only limited attention has been paid to the third. This is unfortunate, since the Ainu epic folklore presents a clear picture of the traditional Ainu society before the Ainu were subjugated by the Japanese. That is, the social conditions and the cultural milieu which are reflected in the epics must be those which ceased to exist in the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Difficulties in understanding the Ainu epics arise because the conditions reflected in them are different from those of the Ainu population studied during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Ainu who came into contact with Japanese and Western scholars during the past hundred years were no longer able to furnish satisfactory explanations of a number of puzzling aspects of the epics referring to earlier periods. As a result, the evidence presented by the oral tradition has often been ignored or regarded as the product of the native imagination. For example, no one took at all seriously the plain accounts in the epics of the existence of the *repunkur*, the Okhotsk people, since nothing was known about the Okhotsk culture until the 1930s. However, the evidence found in the epics coincides superbly with the archeological evidence. This indicates the need for a more careful sifting of the folklore evidence.

The following is a hypothesis of the cultural history of the Ainu based on impressions derived from a study of the Ainu folklore. Although it contains many conjectural elements, it can serve as a working hypothesis. There are at least four different cultural periods that, it seems to me, can be distinguished on the basis of the folklore evidence.

(1) Proto-Ainu Period. The folklore refers vaguely to a dimly remembered period of "barbarism" during which the humans were ignorant of the hunting and fishing rituals. The people do not know how to make *inau*, whittled sticks that play an important role as ritual artifacts. When they kill game animals, they merely skin them. They do not clean the meat off the bones, but carry the whole carcass home. When they are hungry, they hack off a

section of the carcass and cook it. It is possible that the fishing practices of this period involved the use of walnut poison in the rivers, which is mentioned with disapproval in some of the more archaic mythic epics (see selection 21). No doubt these accounts are based on racial memories of the period before the formation of the Ainu ethos, when the predecessors of the Ainu lived in Hokkaido along with representatives of other ethnic groups and had a culture which differed little from that of the rest of Japan during the Jōmon period.

(2) Early Ainu Period. This is the period when the Ainu ethos formed itself in Hokkaido. It is probable that neighboring groups were assimilated and a single language adopted. It appears to be a period of cultural eclecticism, with much borrowing from adjacent peoples. This period may have started around the sixth or seventh century and probably lasted until about the tenth century. During these centuries the Ainu gradually gave up making pottery and began to use imported iron and lacquered products.

The more archaic mythic epics, in which the basic concepts of the religious ideology are stated, appear to reflect this period (see selections 7 and 8). Performance of the hunting and fishing rituals is necessary to placate the God of the Game and the God of the Fish, who are archaic “masters of the animals.” The Owl God, called Kotan-kor-kamui, probably figured prominently during this period as the protector and advocate of the human race (selection 8). The culture hero appears only peripherally in these myths as a supplicant on behalf of humanity. During this period, there is concern about famine, and humans must make constant efforts to placate supernatural forces which control the food supply.

The two adjacent peoples which influenced the early Ainu were the Japanese and the people of the Okhotsk culture. The *Nihon shoki* describes a military campaign led by a general Abe no Hirafu in Hokkaido in the years 658–60. The southwest part of Hokkaido was undoubtedly under the influence of the Abe family who ruled the northern provinces of Honshū during many of these centuries. Small burial mounds of the Late Tumulus type are found in southwestern Hokkaido from Sapporo, Esashi, and Chitose as far east as Tomakomai on the Pacific coast, and the Japanese artifacts found

in the mounds are dated to the Nara and Heian periods (A.D. 710–1185). It was no doubt during this period that a considerable stratum of Old Japanese loan words found its way into the Ainu language. These loan words reflect the phonology of Old Japanese and include names of various artifacts as well as certain religious concepts. Many of these loan words are of great cultural importance, for example: *kane*, metal; *sake*, wine; *kamui*, god; *pito*, spirit (the original Japanese word means “human being”); *onkami*, worship; *nomi*, worship; and *inotu*, life-spirit (the Japanese word means “life”). It is curious that the Japanese word for “god” should have been adopted by the Ainu.

It was during this same period that the Okhotsk culture flourished on the Okhotsk Sea coast of northern Hokkaido. It was probably the people of this culture who introduced into Hokkaido some of the Paleoasiatic elements in the Ainu culture. The wars fought against the Okhotsk people during this period were later commemorated in the *yukar* heroic epics as the wars between the *yaunkur* and the *repunkur*. The epics make no mention of any wars against the Japanese. Is it possible that the Ainu formed an alliance with their Japanese neighbors in order to struggle against the Okhotsk culture? It is clear that there was an Ainu population living also in the northernmost parts of Honshū.

(3) Middle Ainu Period. This period was the time of the greatest flourishing of the Ainu culture, extending perhaps from the tenth until the sixteenth century. The Okhotsk people on the northern coasts of Hokkaido were defeated, and their remnants were probably absorbed into the Ainu population. The Ainu were forged into a single homogeneous cultural entity, and the period must have been a progressive one characterized by optimistic cultural progress, ethnic self-confidence, and considerable social stratification.

During this period, the epics, in particular the heroic epics (*yukar*), must have developed; the subject matter of the epics was the wars which had occurred between the *yaunkur* and the *repunkur* during the preceding period. The two great heroic figures of the Ainu folklore tradition were worked out: the culture hero (the god of the *oina*, the “sacred tradition”) and the *yukar* hero Poiyaunpe. The culture hero is now regarded as the head of the human race, and the supernatural forces are more and more subjected to his (i.e.,

human) control. "Masters of the animals" recede from cultic practice and are replaced by the more favorably disposed deities such as Hashinau Kamui (the goddess of the hunt) and the Fire Goddess.

The word *kotan* at this time meant a "domain" ruled by a definite chiefly family. One can easily imagine that the Ainu were moving away from the primitive tribal system and in the direction of a patriarchal system. However, a unified political organization was never attained, and the middle period seems to have been punctuated by many internecine wars. The social conditions must have been unstable, and it was necessary for the population to concentrate itself at easily defensible places. Warfare must have been cultivated by the upper chiefly stratum, which formed a sort of military elite. The vigor and martial spirit of this upper stratum are clearly reflected in the heroic epics.

The society depicted in the Ainu epics is clearly the society which existed during this period. The Ainu population was organized in socially stratified regional bands, called *utar*, headed by a family of hereditary chiefs. The *utar* was a fictitious kinship group and also had a military organization. The ruling families, calling themselves *utarpa* ("head of the *utar*") or *nishpa* ("chieftain"), were clearly a military elite. The well-born men devoted themselves to warfare and spent all their spare time engaged in leisurely carving. The well-born women devoted their time to embroidery and practiced shamanism (*tusu*). The ruling family lived in a stronghold (*chashi*) surrounded by a stockade (also called *chashi*) on an easily defensible cliff or mountain overlooking the surrounding terrain. Inside their strongholds they had numerous servants or slaves (*usshiu*) who hunted for them and did their household work. Occasionally the ruler would have a large boat built for him and would go trading with the Japanese (see selection 19). The local rulers accumulated large stores of Japanese products in their strongholds; these were their treasures.

The common people, called *usekur* or *wenkur*, lived in settlements outside the stockade of the stronghold and would withdraw inside the fortified area in case of attack. The social differences, the differences of dress, and even the differences of physical appearance between the well-born members of the population and the low-ranking individuals are constantly mentioned in the

epics. It is quite clear that the bulk of the population was subordinated to local ruling families who lived in strongholds.

Most of the mythic epics (with the exception of a few archaic ones and some recognizably dating from the following period), all of the heroic epics (both the *yukar* and the *hau*), and most of the women's epics appear to be rooted in this historical period. It should be possible to establish clear-cut concepts about the social life and customs of this period on the basis of a thorough-going study of all the available epic texts.

During this period, Japanese continued to live in the southern parts of Hokkaido, and there was considerable friction during the first half of the fifteenth century. A great war against the Japanese was led by a chieftain called Koshamain in the years 1456–57. Other anti-Japanese uprisings occurred in 1471, 1501, 1515, 1525, 1529, 1531, and 1536. According to Takakura, the Ainu were more powerful than the Japanese, and the latter were on the defensive. They resorted to such tactics as feigning peace and then striking by surprise.¹⁹ Distrust of Japanese treachery is frequently mentioned in the texts (see selection 28).

(4) Late Ainu Period. The period from the seventeenth until the twentieth century is one of decline and loss of independence. The process began as early as the fifteenth century, and the downfall of the Ainu became inevitable after the defeat in the war of 1669.

During the sixteenth century, the Matsumae clan, which had established itself in the southernmost tip of the island (Hokkaido was in those days called Ezo), did not exercise direct political power over the Ainu.²⁰ The trade with the Ainu became extremely lucrative for the Matsumae, and Japanese traders began to penetrate more and more deeply into the interior of the island. The Ainu became increasingly dissatisfied with the conditions, and a general rebellion, led by Shakushain, a chief of Shibuchari, broke out in 1668. It was finally suppressed, after much bloodshed, during the years 1670–72, and the whole territory of Hokkaido came under the rule of the Matsumae.²¹

As the Japanese gradually extended their direct political domination over the Ainu population, the native social organization underwent great changes. The Ainu ruling stratum was defeated in battle by the Japanese, and the for-

¹⁹Takakura Shin'ichirō, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, p. 12.

²⁰Ibid., p. 27.

²¹Ibid., p. 27–29.

mer military elite ceased to exist. The breakdown of the old social organization was accompanied by social mobility. Considerations of wealth (measured in terms of Japanese imported goods) came to overshadow hereditary social status, and those who had formerly been *wenkur* could now acquire wealth and prestige, perhaps by siding with the Japanese. This type of social upheaval is clearly reflected in selection 12. The need for military organization of the populace and for elaborate hilltop fortifications disappeared, and internecine fighting among the Ainu ceased to occur.

The dynamic optimism of the previous period was replaced by a sense of resignation to fate and a backward-looking conservatism. In religious life, the old cultic observances came to be petrified, and there was a process of semantic depletion in which the original insights into the nature of reality were more and more forgotten. The ethnic heroes, the culture hero and the *yukar* hero, are said to have departed in indignation, leaving their people behind (see selection 25). There is a forlorn atmosphere and a sense of distrust, hatred, and fear of the Japanese, who are regarded as conquerors. The period was one of dissolution and degeneration of the native culture.

However, the people's conservatism during this period no doubt caused them to cling even more tenaciously to their rich folklore traditions, which were not only handed down but enriched and developed. New themes were elaborated in the epics, and the prose tales (*uwepeker*) attained a high level of development. The tales were enriched by the introduction of Japanese themes (in the *shisam uwepeker*), and some of these themes even found their way into the epic songs.

The final Ainu rebellion occurred in 1789, but it was only a local revolt in the Menash area (on the Shiretoko peninsula in Nemuro province) and on the island of Kunashiri in the Kuriles and was easily suppressed.²²

At the time of the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the Ainu population of Hokkaido was about 15,000 to 16,000. This was the proper population-land ratio that had to be maintained to make a hunting-fishing-gathering economy viable. During the Meiji era (1868-1911) the Japanese began large-scale efforts to settle Hokkaido with Japanese agricultural immigrants. Hokkaido came to be regarded as Japan's "new frontier," and the rapid influx of large numbers of Japanese colonists soon destroyed the very conditions on which

²²Ibid., p. 34-47.

the traditional Ainu culture had been based. The abundant herds of deer were killed off. Japanese farmers cleared the forests and burned the underbrush to open up fields. Permanent fishnets were set up along the coasts and at the river estuaries, and the Japanese began deep-sea fishing using dragnets.

The effect on the Ainu was appalling. General demoralization resulted among the entire Ainu population, who found their traditional land preserves usurped and their time-honored way of life impossible. They were decimated by diseases, and alcoholism took a high toll among the menfolk. Unscrupulous Japanese *sake* merchants and speculators used devious means to obtain possession of Ainu land and property. With the once-proud hunter reduced to a migrant laborer, the women were left at home in the villages to raise the children and defend the native culture as well as they could. The Ainu people described by Chamberlain, Hitchcock, and Batchelor at the end of the nineteenth century were a pitiful, doomed people living in the most abject conditions of poverty, disease, and degradation.

The Japanese government, which had allowed all of this to happen, finally took a few half-hearted measures to introduce the Ainu to agriculture. The children were put into Japanese schools, and the Ainu were encouraged to adopt the Japanese language and customs. Nothing was done to foster the native language. During the 1920s and 1930s there were still many Ainu who had been alive during the last half of the nineteenth century, when the traditional life was maintained, and the Ainu language was still spoken in many homes. There were during the 1920s and 1930s many excellent folklore reciters. However, even then it was being predicted that the Ainu language would die out completely within a few decades. By the 1940s the native culture was virtually at its last gasp. The native straw huts had been replaced by wooden farmhouses heated with wood-burning stoves. The people had begun to take up agriculture and horse-breeding. The children no longer spoke Ainu. Only a few elderly women still had tattooed faces, and only a few elderly men still wore long, white beards. But even these elderly persons were usually bilingual, and all of them could understand Japanese to some extent.

Today the total population of Hokkaido numbers some 5,255,000, and the small community of persons of Ainu ancestry, who may number 18,000 or

more, has been submerged in this vast sea of Japanese. Racial mixing and acculturation have gone so far that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the Japanese majority and the Ainu minority in many areas of Hokkaido. The Japanese educational system has never made provision for teaching the Ainu language in the school curriculum, and the Ainu language has gradually gone out of use, even in the home, during the past several decades. A survey made in 1955 revealed that there were probably less than twenty fluent speakers of the Ainu language in all Hokkaido.²³

It has only been during the 1970s that the question of a rebirth of Ainu ethnic consciousness has begun to be raised publicly in Japan. Japanese authors have written a number of books about Ainu history, pointing to the similarities between the position of the Ainu in Japanese society and that of the native Americans in the United States.²⁴ Koshamain and Shakushain have been depicted as heroes in the Ainu struggle of resistance against Japanese conquest. Ōta Ryū, a Japanese writer, has argued strongly that the Ainu should reject assimilationism and press for a national revival, aiming eventually at the establishment of an independent Ainu republic.²⁵ Efforts are being made to revive the Ainu language.²⁶ Many of the Ainu themselves have begun to play an active role in preserving the native arts and folklore traditions. For example, Kayano Shigeru, an Ainu who was born in 1926 in Niputani village in the Saru area, has begun to publish his own recollections and translations of the folklore of his native area.²⁷ Kayano is also director of an Ainu culture museum in his native village. Although the movement for a revival of the Ainu culture is still in its infancy, it appears certain that it will gain considerable support among the persons of Ainu ancestry in Japan and among many Japanese.

History of the Study of Ainu Language and Folklore

The first European ever to visit Hokkaido and observe the Ainu was an Italian Jesuit missionary, Girolamo de Angelis, who came to Japan in 1602 and remained there illegally until 1623, when he was burned alive in Edo. In 1618 he visited Matsumae for the first time, and his second visit was in 1621. He met some Ainu there and wrote reports about them to his superiors. In his reports he gives a short vocabulary of their language.²⁸

²³Hattori Shirō, ed., *An Ainu dialect dictionary*, p. 8.

²⁴See, for example, two recent books by Gyō Shin'ya: *Ainu minzoku teikō shi* and *Yūkara no sekai*.

²⁵Ōta Ryū, *Ainu kakumei ron*.

²⁶For example, Pon Fuchi, *Ainu-go wa ikite iru*.

²⁷For Kayano's writings consult the bibliography.

²⁸de Angelis, Girolamo, "Relatione del regno di Iezo," pp. 217–32.

A number of Japanese works on the Ainu were published during the first part of the nineteenth century.²⁹ The most important of these from the linguistic point of view is a 4,000-word vocabulary of the Ainu language, *Moshiogusa*, first published in 1804. It was compiled by Uehara Kumajirō, a Japanese interpreter. After 1868, Nagata Hōsei, a Japanese official of the Hokkaido government, wrote a short grammar of the Ainu language in Japanese and published it in 1883. Nagata also published the text and translation of a *yukar* epic either in 1882 or 1883.³⁰ Two Japanese scholars, Kanazawa Shōzaburō and Jimbō Kotora, wrote and lectured on the Ainu language in Japan at the end of the nineteenth century.

Some Westerners also made important contributions to the study of the Ainu language and folklore. One of them was Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935), an English scholar who came to Japan in 1873 and became an early pioneer in the study of the Japanese language. Around 1886 Chamberlain made a number of visits to Hokkaido to study the Ainu language and collect specimens of Ainu folklore. The results of Chamberlain's Ainu studies were published in 1887 (*The Language, Mythology, and Geographical Nomenclature of Japan Viewed in the Light of Aino Studies*) and 1888 (*Aino Folk-tales*). Ethnographical data on the Ainu in the 1880 were published by Romyn Hitchcock ("The Ainos of Yezo, Japan," 1890).

The most substantial contribution by a Westerner to the study of the Ainu language was made by John Batchelor (1854–1944), an English missionary who first came to Japan in 1877. He first came into contact with the Ainu in Hakodate in 1878 and began his study of their language in the same year. Around 1881, Batchelor commenced his missionary work among the Ainu and made translations of portions of the Bible into Ainu. In 1887 Batchelor's 59-page "A Grammar of the Ainu Language" was published in Chamberlain's book.³¹ Two years later, in 1889, Batchelor published the first edition of his Ainu-English-Japanese dictionary. The fourth and last edition of it was published in 1938 and contained an expanded section devoted to the grammar, which in the 1938 edition occupies 105 pages. Good examples of Ainu epic folklore collected by Batchelor during the 1880s were made public in papers he delivered to the Asiatic Society of Japan in 1888, 1889, and 1892.³² Other books published by Batchelor include *The Ainu and Their*

²⁹Bibliographies of these works are given in Basil Hall Chamberlain, *The Language, Mythology, and Geographical Nomenclature of Japan Viewed in the Light of Aino Studies*, pp. 137–74, and in Takakura, *Ainu of Northern Japan*, pp. 82–88.

³⁰See Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu jojishi yūkara no kenkyū*, vol. 1, p. 373.

³¹Chamberlain, *Language*, pp. 77–136.

³²Batchelor, "Specimens of Ainu Folk-lore."

Folk-lore (1901) and *Ainu Life and Lore* (1927). Batchelor's writings on the Ainu language and way of life were the first substantial contribution in English and still retain considerable value to this day, although they must be used with caution since Batchelor was a Christian missionary, not a linguist or ethnologist.

Important studies of the Sakhalin Ainu language and folklore were made by a Pole, Bronislaw Pilsudski, who spent many years in exile in Sakhalin and the Maritime Region. Pilsudski was the elder brother of the famous Polish marshal Jozef Pilsudski. He first came into contact with the Sakhalin Ainu for a brief period in 1896. In 1902 he went again to Sakhalin to collect ethnographic data on them and remained there until 1905. He also made a brief trip to Hokkaido in 1903. During these years he lived in an Ainu village called Ai (Aihama in Japanese) on the east coast of Sakhalin. He married the daughter of the village chieftain and had two children. With the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, he returned to Europe.³³ In 1912 his *Materials for the Study of the Ainu Language and Folklore* was published in Cracow. The book contains the texts of 27 Sakhalin Ainu tales with English translations and notes. It is a work of primary importance in studying the Sakhalin Ainu language and folklore.

Ainu texts were collected by a Russian, Nikolai Aleksandrovich Nevskii, who lived in Japan from 1915 until 1929. A small collection of these texts and Nevskii's Russian translations was published posthumously in Moscow in 1972.³⁴ Other Western students of the Ainu culture have included the French ethnologist George Montandon³⁵ and an English doctor, Neil Gordon Munro (1863–1942), who lived in the village of Niputani during the 1930s.³⁶

The greatest contribution to the study of the language and folklore of the Ainu was made by the Japanese scholar Kindaichi Kyōsuke (1882–1971), whose work in this area is of fundamental importance. As a university student in Tokyo, Kindaichi began to investigate the Ainu language in 1904, when he received instruction in the language from Kanazawa at Tokyo Imperial University. In 1906 Kindaichi paid his first visit to the Ainu districts of Hokkaido and became acquainted for the first time with the Ainu epics handed down there.³⁷ In 1907 he made a field trip to the eastern coast of Sakhalin, the southern part of which was then under Japanese rule, and recorded a

³³Kodama in *Ainu minzoku shi*, vol. 1, p. 61.

³⁴Nevskii, Nikolai Aleksandrovich, *Ainskii fol'klor*. Nevskii died in 1945.

³⁵Montandon, George, *La civilisation ainou et les cultures arctiques*.

³⁶Munro, Neil Gordon, *Ainu Creed and Cult*. Munro's research is especially important.

³⁷Kindaichi, *Ainu no kenkyū*, p. 129.

3,000-line Ainu epic. He published this epic with a Japanese translation in 1914.³⁸ In the summer of 1913, Kindaichi made contacts with a number of Ainu reciters in the village of Shumunkot (Japanese Shiunkotsu) in the Saru river area. One of these, Nabesawa Wakarpa, a male reciter, spent about six months at Kindaichi's home in Tokyo in 1913, and Kindaichi recorded in writing a number of heroic and mythic epics from Wakarpa's repertory. Kindaichi also recorded texts from Nabesawa Taukno, Wakarpa's widow; Sankirotte, a male native of Nikap; Nabesawa Kopoanu, a female native of Shumunkot; and Shikosanke, a female native of Shumunkot. Other informants with whom Kindaichi worked during this period and during the 1920s were: Utekare, a female native of Shin-Piraka; Takahashi Haru, a female of Shin-Piraka, the eldest daughter of Kopoanu; and Nabesawa Yuki, the eldest daughter of Wakarpa and Taukno.³⁹

In 1918, Kindaichi was introduced by Batchelor to Imekanu (Japanese name Kannari Matsu, 1875–1961), a member of a prominent Ainu family of Horobetsu in Iburi province. Imekanu was a Christian and worked for many years as a lay missionary in the Episcopal Church under Batchelor. After her retirement from missionary work in 1926, Imekanu began to commit to writing her entire repertory of Ainu epics in the Horobetsu dialect. By her death in 1961, she had filled 72 volumes of notebooks for Kindaichi as well as 52 volumes for her nephew, Chiri Mashiho—a total output of 124 volumes consisting of more than 20,000 pages.⁴⁰ From 1959 until 1966, Kindaichi published seven volumes of the texts of Imekanu's epics together with his Japanese translations.⁴¹

The niece of Imekanu, Chiri Yukie, translated thirteen mythic epics of the Horobetsu region into Japanese. The Ainu texts and Chiri's translations were published in 1923, one year after her death.⁴² This was the first publication of Ainu folklore by an Ainu. Chiri, who was a native speaker of Ainu, also provided Kindaichi with much advice concerning the Ainu language.

Kindaichi's writings on the Ainu language and folklore have been extremely influential. His most important work was the two-volume *Ainu jojishi yūkara no kenkyū* [Study of the Ainu Epic *Yukar*], first published in 1931 and subsequently reprinted under two separate titles. The first volume contains a survey of the entire field of Ainu oral literature. The second volume con-

³⁸Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Kita Ezo koyō ihen*.

³⁹Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu no shinten*, p. 4–5.

⁴⁰Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu jojishi yūkara shū*, vol. 3, p. 2.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, vols. 1–7.

⁴²Chiri Yukie, *Ainu shin'yō shū*.

tains a 233-page grammar of the Ainu epic language and voluminously annotated texts and translations of two versions of the *yukar* epic *Kutune shirka* (the first version obtained by Kindaichi from Wakarpa in 1913, and the second a Horobetsu variant of the same epic obtained from Imekanu). Kindaichi's writings on the Ainu language were collected and published in one volume in 1960.⁴³

Chiri Mashiho (1909–61), a nephew of Imekanu and the brother of Chiri Yukie, studied under Kindaichi at Tokyo Imperial University and later obtained his doctorate at Hokkaido University, specializing in Ainu linguistics. Before his untimely death in 1961, he published a number of important scholarly works, and at the time of his death he was working on a classified dictionary of the Ainu language.⁴⁴ His most important writings have been collected and published in four volumes.⁴⁵ His work on grammar is especially interesting.

Another outstanding disciple of Kindaichi was Kubodera Itsuhiko (1902–71), a native of Hokkaido who devoted himself for many years to collecting Ainu epic texts and ethnographic information from the Saru area of Hidaka, working closely with a number of native informants. In 1960 Kubodera obtained his doctorate from Kokugakuin University in Tokyo for his studies of the Ainu mythic epics.⁴⁶ Kubodera succeeded in establishing an extraordinarily good rapport with his native informants, especially with two female informants, Hiraga Etenoa and Hirame Karepia. These two reciters probably had the best repertoires of any which have ever been recorded in writing. Hiraga Etenoa was a female native of Shin-Piraka village of the Saru area; she was the daughter-in-law of Utekare, an informant with whom Kindaichi had worked. Hirame Karepia was a female native of Nina village in the Saru area. Besides these two informants, Kubodera also obtained texts from Nitani Kunimatsu (1888–1960), a male native of Niputani village, Saru area; Shikata Shimukani, a female resident of Chikabumi in Ishikari province; Hiramura Kanunmore, a female of Piratori village, Saru area; Hiraga Tumonte, a female of Shin-Piraka, Saru area; Yayashi, a male of Shin-Piraka; and several others. Both Etenoa and Karepia stayed for many months in Kubodera's Tokyo home so that he could work with them intensively. Etenoa stayed in Tokyo from August, 1932, until April, 1933, and Karepia stayed there

⁴³Kindaichi, *Ainu-go kenkyū*.

⁴⁴Three volumes of it were published. Chiri Mashiho, *Bunrui Ainu-go jiten*.

⁴⁵Chiri Mashiho, *Chosakushū*.

⁴⁶Kubodera Itsuhiko, *Ainu jojishi shin'yō: seiden no kenkyū*. Ph.D. dissertation, 4 volumes, Kokugakuin University, Tokyo; published by Iwanami.

from January through April, 1936. Nitani Kunimatsu also stayed at Kubodera's home from January until April, 1935, and provided Kubodera with much valuable information concerning religious ideology and ritual.

During the 1950s a number of Japanese scholars under the direction of Hattori Shirō conducted a survey of nine Ainu dialects. The results were published in 1964.⁴⁷ Tamura Suzuko has studied the grammar of the Saru dialect, and two Americans, George John Simeon and Fred C. C. Peng, have made studies of the language. Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney has studied the folklore of the Sakhalin Ainu and Murasaki Kyōko the dialect of the Sakhalin Ainu.⁴⁸

It is extremely fortunate that Batchelor, Chiri Yukie, Kindaichi, Imekanu, Kubodera, and others were able to commit to writing so many texts of the Ainu folklore. These texts were all written down by them during the period when the Ainu language was still in use, and some of them, such as Imekanu and Chiri Yukie, were native speakers. Since that time, the Ainu language has almost completely disappeared from everyday use, and by the 1950s and 1960s it had become difficult, if not impossible, to collect texts of Ainu folklore.⁴⁹

Ainu Oral Literature

Even though the Ainu language has almost entirely disappeared from daily use and the epic tradition has died out with the deaths of the last reciters, we are extremely fortunate in having a substantial body of texts collected, chiefly during the early decades of the twentieth century, by Western and Japanese students. This body of texts reveals that the Ainu epic tradition is one of the richest and most interesting bodies of archaic oral folklore in existence. Writing of the Sakhalin Ainu, Pilsudski said: "The Ainu folklore is, by the general admission of the Far Eastern tribes, exceedingly abundant. The proportion of Ainus acquainted with either one kind or another of these primitive tales is—to my own knowledge—greater than with the Ghilyaks. Their lore of eloquence, of speeches, and of song, is quite astonishing, and has already been remarked by several travellers."⁵⁰ Before massive acculturation eloquence (*pawetok*) was regarded by the Ainu as one of the chief manly virtues. Men intoned ritual prayers and greeting formulas, and litigation took

⁴⁷Hattori, *Ainu dialect dictionary*.

⁴⁸For their writings consult the bibliography.

⁴⁹Kubodera, *Ainu jojishi*, p. v.

⁵⁰Pilsudski, Bronislaw, *Materials for the Study of the Ainu Language and Folklore*, pp. ix-x.

the form of interminable arguments (*charanke*), in which both contestants would continue to harangue until one of them either dropped in exhaustion or could think of nothing more to say—victory went to the longer-winded. There was a dichotomy between the colloquial language and the elevated, poetic language used in the epics. The epic language differed even in its grammar from the colloquial, and a number of special linguistic techniques were developed for epic poetry.

For our present purposes, let us divide folklore (oral literature) into the following main genres: (1) the lyric; (2) the epic; (3) the dramatic; and (4) the ritual or ceremonial.⁵¹

The lyric genre consists of songs which are improvisational, subjective, and emotionally charged. The epic refers to utterances of a narrative type, including both narrative tales and narrative songs of various type. Epics may be mythical, fabulous, heroic, historical, novelistic, didactic, or comical. The ceremonial or ritual utterances include such conventional utterances as prayers, orations, and songs of a public, nonimprovisational nature, such as festival songs or work songs which are collective and have a definite social or communal nature. The lyric, the epic, and the ritual or ceremonial genres exist in abundance among the Ainu, but there is no evidence of any dramatic folklore among the Ainu.

The epic genre is the one which has attained the greatest flowering among the Ainu. If one includes here all types of recited or sung narratives, the Ainu epic literature embraces a vast body of material, greatly overshadowing in its importance and its quantity the lyric and the ritual or ceremonial genres.

The Ainu epic material may be classified in two ways: (1) from the standpoint of its form; and (2) from the standpoint of its content. The following three categories may be distinguished in a formal classification.

(1) Utterances which are pronounced in a monotone or recitative quite similar to ordinary speech (“prose”). The text is recited in a prosaic diction close to that of everyday conversation, no attempt is made to organize the text into verses of any definite length, and archaic phraseology is not prominent. There is a rich tradition of prose tales (*uwepeker*) which are recited in this manner.

⁵¹In this classification I follow V. E. Gusev, *Estetika fol'klora*, pp. 98–163, especially pp. 131–39.

(2) Utterances which are organized into verses of a definite length and sung to definite melodies (“song” or “verse”). Poetic diction with a high density of conventional formulas is used. This style of utterance is used in formal salutations and greetings, prayers, arguments, and in epics.

(3) Utterances which have the stylistic features of (2) but which are sung with the persistent repetition of burdens (*sakehe*). The *sakehe* is a constantly repeated refrain which carries the melody of the epic; the semantically charged text is woven in between the monotonous repetitions of the burden. The narrative text may be interspersed between the repetitions of the burden in various ways; the most common way is for the burden to be repeated after every line of the text. There are cases where more than one burden is used in a single song; at a certain point in the song, there will be a shift from one burden to another.

From the standpoint of content, the epic material may be classified into the following categories:

(1) Mythic narratives. Typically, mythic epics deal with the origins and exploits of deities of various kinds—theriomorphic deities, cult deities, or the culture hero. The deities themselves appear as the speakers, and first-person narration is followed throughout. Mythic epics which are sung with burdens are called *kamui yukar*, and the prose myths are called *kamui uwepeker*. The *kamui yukar* are comparatively short, ranging from perhaps 200 to 1,000 lines in length. The term *oina* is sometimes applied to mythic epics centering around the culture hero.⁵²

(2) Heroic narratives. Heroic epics are relatively long. The usual length would be about 5,000 to 7,000 verses, although especially long ones have as many as 15,000 verses. They deal with the deeds of a single hero, who appears again and again in many different epic songs. First-person narration is followed, and the epics are sung without burdens. In one cycle of epics, the *yukar*, the hero is always Poiyaunpe (“little mainlander,” “young mainlander”), who dwells at a place called Shinutapka by the river Tomisanpet. Poiyaunpe does battle against the *repunkur* and frequently marries a *repunkur* woman. The details of the story of different *yukar* epics may contradict each other; Poiyaunpe may marry a different woman in different epics or may be

⁵²The terminology discussed here is that of the Hidaka and Iburi areas. In other areas the terminology is different.

the child of different parents. In another group of epics, the *hau*, the hero dwells at Otasam (or Otashut) and is called Otasam-un-kur (or Otashut-un-kur).

(3) Novelistic narratives. These are narratives dealing with happenings in the lives of human persons other than the two heroes Poiyaunpe and Otasam-un-kur. The narratives may be prosaic (*ainu uwepeker*, *shisam uwepeker*) or sung (some *kamui yukar* with human speakers and the *menoko yukar*). The *ainu uwepeker* are prose tales telling of the adventures of ordinary Ainu; and the *shisam uwepeker* are tales describing the adventures of Japanese. The *menoko yukar* are “women’s epics” having women as their speakers. Some of them are sung with burdens, and others without them. The heroines are usually related to one or the other of the two major heroes of the heroic epics; thus, they are usually called Shinutapka-un-mat or Otasam-un-mat.

(4) Parodies. There is a type of epic narrative, often identified as a “dream epic” (*wentarap yukar*), which depicts situations that are abnormal. They seem to be fantastic, apocryphal outcroppings of the creative imagination. These are relatively few in number. (Selection 23 is one of these.)

There was a certain amount of give-and-take between the different folklore genres. For instance, even though the *kamui yukar* are by definition mythic epics in which gods are the speakers, some prose tales have been transformed into *kamui yukar* and, even though they have humans as their speakers, are performed in the typical manner of the *kamui yukar* with the monotonously repeated *sakehe* burdens. The Ainu did not draw a clear-cut line between one genre and the others, and heroes identified with a particular genre (such as the *yukar* hero Poiyaunpe) might on certain occasions appear in a different genre (such as the *oina*) where they did not really belong.

Epic reciters (*yukar-kur*) had prodigious memories, and many of them had extremely large repertories drawn from a number of different genres. Naturally, the reciters relied on an arsenal of memorized formulas and phrases which could be used freely whenever they were appropriate. They could, by using a formula (the verb *omommomo*), omit tedious details already well known to the audience. By no means were all of the epic reciters men. The best ones known to us were women, notably Kubodera’s informants Hiraga Etenoa and Hirame Karepia. Some of the female reciters also functioned as prac-

titioners of shamanism (*tusu*). The epics were always sung solo by a single reciter without the accompaniment of musical instruments. The reciter would use a block of wood (*repni*)⁵³ to tap the time on the hearth frame while singing.

It appears that knowledge of the mythic epics was extremely widespread among the general Ainu population. The mythic epics were short and of great importance from the religious point of view. Knowledge of the mythology was considered to enable the possessor to obtain blessings from the good deities and to drive away evil ones. Thus, the performance of mythic epics was not confined to any particular occasion, and they could be sung frequently.

On the other hand, the long heroic epics could not be recited as frequently as the mythic epics. Since the performance could be physically exhausting and last for many hours, sometimes all night, it would be necessary to assemble an audience of listeners who were prepared to listen unhurriedly around the fireplace. While the shorter, less complex mythic epics could be memorized and sung easily by anyone, the memorization of the lengthy heroic epics, with their specialized formulas of diction and antiquated language, would require special skill and long preparation.

The manner of performance of the longer heroic epics has been described by Kubodera.⁵⁴ Occasions would be selected during the long winter months, when the people were relatively free from economic activities and tended to become somewhat bored. The singing of the epic would begin by the fireside in the early evening. The reciter would sit by the fireplace, beating time on the hearth frame with his *repni*. The listeners would also each hold a *repni* in their hands, beating time on the hearth frame or on the wooden floor. From time to time, the audience would interject rhythmical exclamations of *het! het!* at certain points in the narrative. In this manner, a striking choral effect would be achieved. The reciter and his audience would be fused into a unity of experience, and the performance would engage the audience's attention so closely that they would scarcely notice the coming of the dawn. It was by no means unusual for the recitation to be still in progress in the morning.

In early days, it was apparently customary for the reciter to lie down on his back by the fireside and sing the narrative while beating time on his

⁵³*Repni*, a stick about four to five inches long, means "drumstick." The term is also applied to a shaman's wand.

⁵⁴Kubodera Itsuhiko, "Introduction to Ainu Epic Literature," pp. 154-56.

chest or his abdomen with his hand. The work *Ezo kodai fūzoku* (anonymous, latter half of eighteenth–first half of nineteenth century) preserved at the Hakodate Municipal Library has an illustration showing an Ainu lying on his back and singing an epic while beating time on his abdomen with his left hand (see illustration).⁵⁵

It appears that there were no definite occasions on which recital of folklore was imperative. One supposes that folklore was universally performed on an almost daily basis in the villages and in the mountain hunting lodges. It is well known that the Ainu men were constantly hunting for deer and bear in the mountains and that they lived for long periods in lodges in the mountains. They had no other amusements except to entertain each other with epic folklore. The women, who remained closer to the villages, would also have much time in the evenings to tell tales and sing epic songs. Epics were also performed at important ceremonial occasions such as the bear ceremony, although in these cases it was customary to omit the ending in order to induce the god who was being sent off to return in the future to pay another visit to the humans.

The folklore not only provided entertainment and aesthetic satisfaction to the audience; it also must have played an important role in confirming and strengthening the basic values underlying the traditional society. This role was especially important during the more recent centuries when the Ainu culture was in a process of progressive decline.

Aesthetic Techniques

One of the most striking features of the epic songs is that they consistently use first-person narration. That is, the entire story is told in the first person singular from the point of view of the “speaker,” who narrates his experiences subjectively using the pronoun “I.” There is no attempt at an objective approach using third-person narration, and we encounter no impersonal Muse or Spirit of Song which intervenes and takes over the narrative. Everything from start to finish is a monologue told by a single speaker. The only exception is in a few cases where there are shifts from one speaker to another, such as in selection 32. Even here, however, the diction remains in the first person singular; only the identity of the speaker is shifted.

⁵⁵Izumi Seiichi, ed., *Ainu no sekai*, illus. no. 95 [n.p.].

At the beginning of every epic song, we have no way of knowing who the speaker is. We cannot even tell whether the speaker is male or female, human or divine. During the course of the narrative, the speaker will describe the circumstances of his or her upbringing and life and will sometimes quote the words spoken by others to him or around him (or her, as the case may be). The name of the hero or heroine will thus be introduced in overheard dialogues or in two-way conversations between the speaker and another character. Since the landscape and events in each epic are viewed through the consciousness of the speaker, sometimes there are hiatuses in the narrative when the speaker loses consciousness or dies. In such cases, the epics use this formula:

<i>rai hene ya</i>	Was I dead?
<i>mokor hene ya</i>	was I asleep?
<i>a-e-kon ramuhu</i>	my mind
<i>shitne kane</i>	was clouded
<i>tanak kane</i>	and dazed.

The story resumes later on when the hero or heroine recovers consciousness or is restored to life.

The reason for this consistent adoption of first-person narration⁵⁶ in all of the Ainu epic poetry is not hard to find. As the reader will see himself when reading the selections in this volume, the age-old north Asiatic practice of shamanism is an all-pervasive influence in Ainu life. The words spoken during shamanic seances assume the form of utterances of the deities themselves, borrowing the mouth of the shaman. The idea that first-person narration in the epics was derived from shamanism was first advanced by Kindaichi,⁵⁷ and the same idea was applied to Japanese folklore and literature by scholars such as Yanagita Kunio and Orikuchi Shinobu. In the West, a similar theory about the prophetic origins of poetry was developed by Nora K. Chadwick.⁵⁸

Ainu literature is, thus, basically a literature of self-revelation by a speaker. The process of self-revelation is gradual. No matter who the speaker may be, male or female, human or divine, the action always unfolds just as it occurs to the speaker. Not only does the speaker reveal himself by degrees to the audience; he also finds out about himself as the tale progresses. In many cases, the speaker at the beginning of a song does not even know his own

⁵⁶I know of no other example in world epic literature where almost every song is told in the first-person singular. In one type of Nenets folk epic, the *yarabts*, first-person narration is used, but third-person narration is used in another type, the *syudbabts*. Z. N. Kupriyanova, *Epicheskie pesni nentsev*, pp. 40–41. See also Péter Hajdú, *The Samoyed Peoples and Languages*, pp. 37–38.

⁵⁷Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu jojishi: Yūkara gaisetsu*, pp. 391–94, 399–400.

⁵⁸Chadwick, Nora K., *Poetry & Prophecy*.

name or background. His identity and his origins are revealed to him by other characters as the story moves on.

During the performance of the song, the epic reciter in a way assumes a different personality, temporarily becoming the speaker through the use of the first-person pronouns. The psychological mechanism is, one would suspect, rather similar to that of the experiences of a shaman in a trance. The person who is speaking is no longer the reciter, but the personality of the hero or heroine. We must take each revelation on its own terms, that is, as a subjective view into the inner world of a particular god or human. Since the content of an epic song is the autobiography of a particular epic personality, it is quite possible that the epic reciter might refuse, or be unable to provide elucidation about the content, just as a shaman would probably deny any knowledge of the contents of the utterances which had come through his mouth in a trance.

Versification in Ainu song is syllabic. That is, the text is organized into verses (called "mouthfuls") of approximately the same number of syllables. There are no requirements whatever about the sequence or arrangement of syllables within each verse, and no distinction is made between long and short syllables. The number of syllables is irregular. The average length is five syllables, and many verses also have four or six syllables. Occasionally there are verses with three, or even with seven or eight, syllables. In actual performance, each verse is usually followed by a short pause, and in the mythic epics the burden (*sakehe*) is interjected, sometimes after every verse and sometimes sporadically between verses. A verse which is too long can be sung rapidly, and one having too few syllables can be drawn out in singing, or additional sounds or syllables can be added.

Organization of poetic texts into verses of a definite number of syllables is common in folk versification of many peoples. Folk versification of the Turkic peoples is syllabic, and the same principle is also followed by Japanese folk and literary verse. Turkic epic verse is of two types: short verse, having seven or eight syllables, and long verse, having eleven syllables.⁵⁹ Japanese poetry, however, has regular alternation between verses of 5 and 7 syllables, the most popular verse form being the *tanka*, a 31-syllable poem with five

⁵⁹Victor Zhirmunsky, writing in Chadwick and Zhirmunsky, *Oral Epics of Central Asia*, pp. 334–39.

verses of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 7 syllables each. Such regular alternation of verse length is entirely unknown in Ainu poetry. It is possible that the Ainu poetry, with its irregular number of syllables and its relative freedom from metrical restrictions, represents an archaic stage of the development of versification.

In Ainu poetry rhyming occurs quite accidentally, as it does in Japanese poetry, but it is not prosodically relevant and not cultivated per se. Alliteration occurs sporadically, and there sometimes appear to be conscious attempts on the part of the reciters to cultivate it, although it is by no means obligatory. A number of the formulas used in the epic songs are clearly alliterative. For example, the *r* and *sh* sounds are repeated in a musical manner in the following formula, which describes the appearance of the posts in the stockade outside a stronghold:

<i>hushko ash rash</i>	The long standing posts—
<i>rash e-makna-kur-</i>	the posts stood bending
<i>roshki kane</i>	up backward;
<i>ashir ash rash</i>	and the newly standing posts—
<i>rash e-sana-kur-</i>	the posts stood bending
<i>roshki kane</i>	up forward. ⁶⁰

As is true in all oral poetry, Ainu epic poetry abounds in traditional formulas which are employed by the reciters again and again to express ideas or to depict situations which occur frequently. A reciter will be able to perform a lengthy epic without pause only if he or she knows a large number of such phraseological combinations and is able to build his or her own variations of the formulas by analogy.⁶¹

In Ainu epic poetry, the use of formulaic diction appears to be more frequent in the lengthier epics than in the short ones, for example, in the mythic epics. In the heroic epics, entire descriptive passages are repeated verbatim in any situation where they fit. Such are, for example, the descriptions of the interior of the hero's native stronghold with its stacks of treasures which "stretch out like a low cliff" and its many suspended swords with their overlapping tassels, the descriptions of the stockade surrounding the hero's stronghold, and the descriptions of the manner in which the hero attires himself before going out on some mission. However, the use of formu-

⁶⁰Hyphens at the ends of verses in the original indicate enjambement, i.e., a part of a lengthy word is carried over to the following verse.

⁶¹Lord, Albert B., *The Singer of Tales*, pp. 30-67.

laic diction is not confined only to the lengthier heroic epics; we find many formulas in the mythic epics, and typical epic formulas are used even in the prose tales (*uwepeker*), which are narrated, not sung.

The metrical conditions in which formulas are constructed—the organization of the text into verses of four to six syllables in length—impose very few restrictions on formulaic diction, and it is possible to use any formula at any point in the narrative. The only restriction, which applies to the entire body of Ainu poetry, is that the formula must fit into one or more of these verses having approximately the same number of syllables. This metrical requirement has a number of consequences. First, one frequently finds that one verse consists of a single word, a verb or a noun. For instance, the name of the culture hero Okikurmi always occupies one verse. A second consequence is that it is seldom possible to express a complete idea within the limits of a single verse. Some Ainu verbs are quite lengthy incorporative complexes, and in many cases one verse is not long enough to contain the entire verb. Enjambement results when it is necessary to carry over part of the verb to the following line, as can be seen in the example quoted above. Therefore, one will not be surprised to find that many or most of the formulas employed in Ainu epic poetry embrace more than one verse, and that some of them, in fact, are lengthy runs encompassing a large number of verses.

In the following a number of examples of the types of formulas which are encountered in Ainu epic poetry are given. Naturally, since the number of formulas is immense, only a few of the most important formula patterns which the reciters use in reproducing fixed formulas and in evolving their own variations of the models are pointed out. It will be useful to distinguish the following types of formulas in Ainu poetry: attributive formulas, narrative formulas, and formulas of direct discourse.

Under attributive formulas I include all formulas which center around substantives. They include the epithets applied to heroes and heroines, appositions, and stereotyped descriptions applied to individuals, objects, or phenomena. Many of these formulas contain nouns such as *kamui* (“god”), *kane* (“metal”), or *nishpa* (“chieftain”) used attributively. For example, magnificent houses are regularly described by the formula *kane chise* (“metal house”); magnificent robes are described as *kane kosonte* (“metal robes”);

⁶²The word *kane*, meaning “metal” or “iron” in Ainu, is derived from the Japanese word for “metal” (*kane*). The use of the word in Ainu attributive formulas was noted also by Pilsudski, who writes: “In some stories and fairy-tales, trees or houses receive this epithet. I suppose this adjective is used, not because the Ainu believe trees or houses can be of iron, nor because they wish to say that these things have the properties of iron, e.g., strength and solidity. I think that in such cases the Ainus express their highest admiration, and wish to say that this tree had the highest quality in any sense. It is known how much iron was prized in ancient times; the Ainus got it with great difficulty from the Japanese and the Manchurians.

even trees are given this description, as *kane sunku* (“metal fir”).⁶² Magnificent persons or objects are very frequently endowed with the epithet *kamui*, the Ainu word for “god.”⁶³ In the epics we find formulas such as *kamui chacha* (“divine old-man”), *kamui chikirpe* (“divine embroidered-garment”), *kamui ekai-chish* (“divine steep-crag”), *kamui katkemat* (“divine lady”), *kamui kosonte* (“divine robes”), *kamui nupuri* (“divine mountain”), *kamui otop* (“divine locks of hair”), *kamui sarampe* (“divine silken hood”), *kamui shitoki* (“divine pendant necklace”), and many more. The hero’s sword is described as *kamui ranke tam*, “god-given sword,” and his stronghold as *kamui kat chashi*, “divinely made stronghold.” The most common epithet applied to a hero is *kamui-ne-an-kur*, “exalted hero” (literally, “he-who-becomes-a-god”). A highly respected younger brother is always referred to by his adoring elder relatives as *a-reshpa kamui/a-reshpa pito*, “the god whom we are raising, our divine nursling.” Highly successful drinking feasts are eulogized as *nishpa iku / nishpa ipe* (“noble drinking feast, noble feast”) or as *shisak tonoto* (“matchless drinking feast”).

A number of attributive formulas are constructed with participles, which in Ainu are formed with the prefix *chi-*. Some examples are: *chi-e-ranke retar kenna* (“the fallen white snow”), *chi-maka apa* (“the door which opens”), *chi-omap hekachi* (“a lovable baby”), *chi-nuina ape* (“hidden embers”), *chi-tata kewe* (“his mangled corpse”), *chi-ari ape* (“a kindled fire”), or *chi-shina atu* (“its tied cords”).

Some of the implements and articles of clothing used by heroes and heroines are referred to with special formulas, such as *tar-ush ikayop* (“quiver with cord attached”),⁶⁴ *karimpa-unku* (“bow wound with cherry bark”), and *kina-tuye-hosh* (“grass leggings” or literally, “grass-cutting-leggings”). Women in the epics keep their treasured belongings in women’s treasure bags called *sut ketushi* (“grandmother-bag,” as it was handed down matrilineally). The culture hero’s distinctive accoutrements are described formulaically; they are *o-uhui nikap attush* (“elm bark fiber coat with its hem in flames”), *o-uhui shirka* (“sheath with a flaming tip”), and sometimes also *o-uhui kasa* (“helmet with a flaming rim”).

Numbers are often used to form attributive formulas. Special preference is given to the number six, *iwan*, which is sometimes used to mean “many.”

De Vries, the first European traveller who gave an account of his journey to Saghalien in 1620, says that the Ainus in Aniva-Bay asked only for iron, and seemed to like it more than silver or gold.” (Pilsudski, p. 29). Kupriyanova notes that the word “iron” is frequently used as a metaphorical epithet in the Nenets epic songs (“iron sled,” “iron tent,” “iron stick for driving reindeer,” “iron cap,” etc.). Z. N. Kupriyanova, “Epos nentsev” [Epics of the Nenets] in *Spetsifika fol’klornykh zhanrov* (1973) p. 179.

⁶³ In actual fact, the word *kamui* and its synonym *pito* are both loan words borrowed in ancient times from Japanese.

⁶⁴ The quiver is carried slung under the left shoulder by means of a cord passed over the shoulder on the same side.

A large pot is called *iwan at ush shu* (“pot having six cords”). A person wearing many layers of magnificent robes is said to be wearing *kane kosonte | iwan kosonte* (“metal robes, six robes”). The Underworld is said to have sixfold layers and is called *iwan pokna moshir* or *iwan pokna shir* (“sixfold Underworld”). There is also an extended form of the numeral, *noiwan* (“full six, six full, sixfold”). We find such formulas as *tokap rerko | kunne rerko | noiwan rerko* (“night after night and day after day, altogether six full days,” literally, “days three-days, nights three-days, six-full three-days”), or *tu noiwan sui | re noiwan sui* (“scores of times, dozens of times,” literally “two six-full times, three six-full times”).

One of the most frequently used of all the formula patterns in Ainu epic is the parallelism with the numbers *tu* and *re* (or with extended forms of the numerals *otu* and *ore*). *Tu* and *re* are the Ainu numbers two and three, respectively, but in these parallelisms they become indefinite numbers meaning “several,” “two or three,” “many,” “countless,” or even “myriads.” There are literally hundreds of such formulas. Let me give only a few examples: *tu arka itak | re arka itak* (“many harsh words, countless harsh words,” literally, “two harsh words, three harsh words”), *tu atui penrur | re atui penrur* (“many ocean waters, countless ocean waters”), *tu chish teshkar | re chish teshkar* (“many tearful messages, countless tearful messages”), *tu kem poppise | re kem poppise* (“many bloody blisters, countless bloody blisters”), *otu keshto ta | ore keshto ta* (“day after day, day in and day out,” literally, “two everyday, three everyday”), *otu ni temkor | ore ni temkor* (“many armsful of firewood, countless armsful of firewood”), *tu okne ipor | re okne ipor* (“many rueful countenances, countless rueful countenances”), *otu tapkan ru | ore tapkan ru* (“many dance steps, countless dance steps”), and *tu tuima kotan | re tuima kotan* (“many distant lands, countless distant lands”). Obviously, the reciters were entirely free to devise their own numerical formulas by analogy with the other formulas of this type.

The second type of formulas which can be distinguished in Ainu epic poetry is what I call narrative formulas. These are formulas which center in verbs and which depict frequently recurring actions, events, and states. Here again I must confine myself to dwelling upon only a few of the more typical patterns of the formulas.

One common pattern used in construction narrative formulas involves the use of at least two verses, the last one of which is a verb of manner, often ending in one of the aspective suffixes (for example, *-kosanu* / *-kosampa*, *-rototke* / *rototo*, *-atki* or *-natara* / *(h)itara*). The final verb is preceded by one of the modal particles: *hawe* (referring to a sound which is made or a statement which is spoken), *humi* (referring to a sound or a feeling), *katu* (referring to an appearance or a visible fact or action), *ruwe* (referring to a state which is visible or a trace which has been left), and *shiri* (referring to a state or situation which is immediately visible), or their derivatives such as *kauko*, *hau konna*, *humkan*, *hum konna*, *katkan*, *ruko*, *ru konna*, *rukan*, or *shirko*. Several examples will make clear the manner in which these formulas are constructed.

(1) The following is a formula describing how the hero drew his sword: *a-tampi humkan* / *nainatara*, “I drew my sword with a clank” (literally, “the sound of my drawing-the-sword / resounded with a clank”). (2) The next formula describes a speaker who is crying noisily: *chish-an hauko* / *charototke*, “the sounds of my crying rang out noisily.” (3) This formula describes a woman’s gleeful laughter: *wen menoko* / *mina hauko* / *tesesatki*, “the evil maiden’s laughter resounded gleefully” (*tesesatki* is a verb of manner meaning “to resound gleefully”—of laughter). (4) A formula describing a large house: *kane chise* / *poro chise* / *ash ru konna* / *meunatara*, “the metal house, the big house, could be seen standing majestically” (more literally, “the appearance of the house as it stood there was majestic”). (5) A formula describing a soul rumbling off through the sky after leaving the body: *kamui inotu* / *hopuni humi* / *keurototke* / *turimimse*, “his life-spirit was heard flying off with an intense rumbling and roaring.” (Both *keurototke* and *turimimse* are verbs of manner depicting loud rumbling and roaring noises.) (6) A formula describing how the cords of a flying chariot pull tight with a shrill whistling: *kane ito-at* / *shiyupu humi* / *shiushiwatki*, “the metal cords were heard pulling themselves tight with a shrill whistling” (more literally, “the sounds of the metal cords pulling-themselves-tight resounded with a shrill whistling”). It is clear that this is another very productive pattern allowing the reciter much room for effective improvisation, since the language abounds in onomatopoeic expressions describing different types of sounds, and in verbs depicting very graphically different types of sparkling, glittering, and shining.

A large number of the narrative formulas are constructed on the principle of syntactical parallelism, which was described above in connection with the numerical patterns using *tu* and *re*. Many of the narrative formulas involve the use of synonyms. For example, a curse is pronounced upon an evil swordfish: *e-toi-munin* / *e-toi-ko-pene*, “you will rot in the ground, you will decay in the ground.” Onomatopoeitic expressions are often compounded to make up parallel verses, as in the following example:

<i>ane chikuni</i>	I knocked him against
<i>ruwe chikuni</i>	the slender trees
<i>a-e-kik humi</i>	and the stout trees,
<i>yaknatara</i>	making cracking noises
<i>rimnatara</i>	and thudding noises.

In other cases, narrative formulas are constructed using the numerals *tu* and *re*. In these cases, the formulas contain verbs, as in the following example.

<i>tu ipe somo a-ki</i>	Many (literally “two”) meals I did not eat,
<i>re ipe somo a-ki</i>	countless (literally “three”) meals I did not
	eat

Parallelisms are frequently constructed with contrasting pairs or with pairs of opposites, such as land and sea, near and far, outside and inside, top and bottom.

<i>a-hanke-yashkar</i>	I grabbed at him close up,
<i>a-tuima-yashkar</i>	I grabbed at him from afar.

<i>pokna atui</i>	The bottom [waters of the] sea
<i>chi-kannare</i>	ascended to the top,
<i>kanna atui</i>	and the top [waters of the] sea
<i>chi-poknare</i>	descended to the bottom.
	(Describes a storm at sea in which the waters
	churn about wildly.)

<i>ya o usat</i>	The ashes around the edges [of the fireplace]
<i>reporaye</i>	he raked out to the center,

rep o usat
yaoraye

and the ashes in the center
he raked out to the edges.
(Describes the actions of a person who is preparing to make a weighty pronouncement.)

soyun usshiu
chi-aunaraye
aun usshiu
chi-soinaraye

The outdoor servants
came running inside
and the indoor servants
went running outside.
(Describes the hubbub of the servants upon the arrival of an important person.)

Very often the parallelisms embrace more extensive blocks of text. For instance, the following formula is used to describe the clothing of a character who is wearing many layers of magnificent robes, some fastened under the belt and others hanging loose:

kane kosonte
iwan kosonte
uko-e-kutkor
kane kosonte
iwan kosonte
opanna-atte

He wore sixfold
magnificent robes
fastened under his belt,
and he wore sixfold
magnificent robes
hanging loose.

The following formula describes the state of a hero who is unable to sleep in his bed at night. It seems as if he is being thrust upward and downward at the same time by different spirits:

Sotki asam
ampa kamui
i-e-rikna-kur-
otke pekor
yainu-an ruwe ne.
Aman empok
ampa kamui
i-e-rana-kur-
otke pekor

It seemed to me
as if the god ruling
the bottom of the bed
were thrusting me
upward.
It seemed to me
as if the god ruling
[the area] under the rafters
were thrusting me

yainu-an ruwe ne.

downward.

There is perfect syntactical parallelism between both sentences. Another example may be given.

Reppa chip arke

On the side of the ship

reppa rok kamui

facing the sea,

tu noka orke

I carved

re noka orke

many pictures,

a-e-nuye-kar

countless pictures,

ki ruwe ne.

of the gods dwelling in the sea.

Kimma chip arke

On the side of the ship

kimma rok kamui

facing the mountains,

tu noka orke

I carved

re noka orke

many pictures,

a-e-nuye-kar

countless pictures,

ki ruwe ne.

of the gods dwelling in the mountains.

Thus, parallelism appears to be another very productive technique used in constructing narrative formulas.

The Ainu epic language makes frequent use of incorporation (“polysynthesis”), in which a number of elements are combined to form a lengthy verb having more than five syllables. These incorporative complexes are of great importance in the formulaic diction. In the following examples, all of the incorporative formulas have enjambement.

shi-chupka nehi

he went rumbling

ko-hum-eriki-

upward

tesuitara

toward due east

ainu penram

his body was enveloped

chi-e-urar-ko-

from his chest up

noipa kane

in twisting billows of mist

tar-ush ikayop

I tossed up

a-e-shi-setur-ka-

onto my back

terkere

a quiver with cord attached

pet-etok-ushke the divine mountain
kamui nupuri at the source of the river
chi-e-kanto-or-
soipa kane soared up
 into the heavens

chi-kitai-ko-kur-
raipa kane a pretty little house,
 its roof darting
chi-tumam-ko-kur
yuppa kane upward gracefully
 and its sides bound
pirka pon chise firmly in place

senne moyo large numbers
nishpa turemppe of noble companion spirits
kotan enka hovered,
ko-nish-oshirko-
noipa kane enveloped in clouds,
 over the village

hanke ukpe when [the deer] took grass nearby,
ko-kirau-shika-
omare kane he drew his antlers
 back over his body,
tuima ukpe and when he took grass far away,
ko-kirau-riki-
pumpa kane he raised his antlers
 up high

In all of these examples, the Ainu verbs formed by means of incorporation require a whole string of English words to translate them. For example, the Ainu incorporative complex *ko-kirau-shika-omare*, which is grammatically a single verb, is translated by eight English words: "he drew his antlers back over his body." The formulas are strikingly similar in their rhythms; compare, for example, the following two formulas:

chi-e-urar-ko- it is enveloped
noipa kane in twisting billows of mist

chi-e-kanto-or-
soipa kane it soars up
 into the heavens

A third type of formulas frequently found in Ainu epic poetry is what I call "formulas of direct discourse." These formulas are all used before, in, or after direct discourse. The following are typical formulas used to introduce direct quotations:

<i>itak-an hawe</i>	I spoke
<i>ene okahi</i>	these words
<i>yainu-an humi</i>	This is what
<i>ene okahi</i>	I thought to myself
<i>tuikashike</i>	While doing so,
<i>itak-o hawe</i>	he uttered
<i>ene okahi</i>	the following words

Speeches addressed by one character to another in epic songs begin with monotonous regularity with the following formula:

<i>inkar kusu</i>	See here,
<i>iresu sapo</i>	my elder sister,
<i>itak-an chiki</i>	listen well
<i>e-inu katu</i>	to these words
<i>ene okahi</i>	I have to say!

Direct discourse is usually followed by formulas such as this one:

<i>sekor okaipe</i>	These words
<i>iresu yupi</i>	my elder brother
<i>ye ruwe ne</i>	spoke.

Similar formulas are frequently used to end mythic epics:

<i>sekor okaipe</i>	These things
<i>peurep kamui</i>	a bear-cub god
<i>isoitak</i>	narrated.

<i>sekor okaipe</i>	These things
<i>chironnup kamui</i>	a fox god
<i>yaieyukar</i>	narrated concerning himself.

An interesting, and perhaps unique, feature found in formulaic diction in the Ainu epic songs is that omission of formulas is optional. That is, the reciter

can recite a special formula if he or she wishes to omit a formula which is already well known to the audience. The formula consists in the words *an-omommomo*, “I describe in detail.”⁶⁵ For example, instead of reciting the lengthy descriptive passage about the beauties of the wooden stockade surrounding the hero’s stronghold, the reciter can simply say:

<i>a-kot chashi</i>	I describe in detail
<i>pirka ruwe</i>	the beauties
<i>an-omommomo</i>	of my native stockade

It should be noted that, even here, the convention of first-person diction is kept up. It is the epic speaker who is doing the omitting, not the reciter. This formula no doubt is very useful when the reciter feels the need to speed up the narrative.

The epic formulas, which are heavily stocked with archaisms and lengthy incorporative complexes, must have diverged considerably from the colloquial Ainu language used in everyday conversation. The epic language itself was sort of special language, with its own grammar and conventions, cultivated by epic reciters for their own use, and one would suppose that the epic songs would be almost unintelligible to Ainu who had not made a special effort to master the epic diction. Kindaichi and Kubodera found that the reciters themselves no longer understood some of the archaic words and expressions used in the epic songs and were unable to supply any explanations of their meanings.

Very little is known about the techniques by which Ainu epic reciters acquired their repertoires of formulas and stories, although it appears that the following three steps were followed by reciters when learning a new epic. First, a skeleton plot of the whole epic would be memorized. This amounted to a sort of catalogue of each of the important events in the epic but contained no details at all. Such catalogues were never recited publicly and were used by the reciters themselves as mnemonic devices only. The next step would be to recite the epic rhythmically in recitative without putting it to a melody. This nonmelodic recitative is called *rupaye*, which means something like “plain reciting.” In *rupaye* the reciter maintains a definite beat throughout and actually shapes the verses to fit the required rhythm. After the text of the epic has been constructed by the reciter in recitative, it can be performed

⁶⁵ For examples of these omissions, see p. 219 and p. 268 in this volume.

publicly in the normal manner, that is, sung to a melody. This is called *sako-ye*, “recite with a melody,” “sing to a melody.” Epics were never performed publicly in the *rupaye* fashion.⁶⁶

No research has been done about the techniques used by the reciters in combining the words of the text with the melodic lines. In fact, practically nothing at all is known about the melodies used by the reciters. Very few recordings of Ainu epic songs are available.

The People of the Sea (Repunkur)

We have already seen that the ethnonym applied by the Ainu to themselves in their heroic epics was *yaunkur*, “people of the land” or “mainlanders.” The Ainu were, indeed, a “people of the land,” leading a land-oriented economic life centered in hunting and river fishing.

The dyad *ya* and *rep* (“land” and “sea”) is a very productive element in Ainu word formation, and we find countless parallelisms such as *rep ta koikip* (“animals hunted at sea”) and *ya ta koikip* (“animals hunted on land”) or *rep kush tumi* (“battles passing over the sea”) and *ya kush tumi* (“battles passing over the land”). Thus, the word *yaunkur* inevitably forms a parallelism with the word *repunkur*. If there is a “people of the land,” the genius of the language requires that there also be a “people of the sea.”

The *repunkur*, the “people of the sea” or “islanders” (as contrasted to “mainlanders”), are the enemies of the *yaunkur* in the heroic epics. They are a non-Ainu race of people who are basically sea-oriented. The epics state that they are extremely numerous (in Etenoa’s words, *repunkur anak utari inne nep ne kusu*, “since the *repunkur* have numerous kinsfolk”) and that there are many powerful shamanesses among the *repunkur* women (to quote Etenoa again, *repun-mat anak nupur hikehe tusu hikehe atpe ne kusu*, “since there are many wizardesses, many shamanesses among the *repunkur* women”). The epics locate the *repunkur* geographically along the northern coastline of Hokkaido facing the Okhotsk Sea, in the Kurile Islands, and on the island of Sakhalin (called Karapto in the epics). The name Santa is also mentioned in the epics in connection with the *repunkur*. Santa is the Japanese Santan, an old name for the Maritime Region around the Amur river and for the peoples living there.

It was Chiri Mashihō who first identified the *repunkur* of the Ainu heroic

⁶⁶ Mombetsu-chō Kyōdo-shi Kenkyūkai, *Saru Ainu no kayō*, pp. 37–38.

epics with the people who were the bearers of the Okhotsk culture known to archeologists.⁶⁷ The following is Chiri's argument:

The antagonists of the Ainu in these wars are a foreign people called the *rep-un-kur*, which means "people from overseas." Among them there appear people from Santan (Santa-un-kur), and among these people from Santan there are some called Tuima-Santa-un-kur (people from distant Santa) who wear their hair behind their backs like cows' tails. This clearly has reference to pigtails, and the people must be from the continent. The heroes who appear in the *yukar* epics are all named after the localities they rule, such as Iyochi, Ishikari, Chupka, Omanpeshka, or Repunshir. Strangely, all of these places appear to be areas within the sphere of the so-called Okhotsk culture, where Okhotsk-type pottery is excavated. In other words, the *yukar* are tales of wars between two peoples: the *yaunkur* ("people of the land," "mainlanders," "natives of Hokkaido"), based in Hokkaido, and the *repunkur*, who came over the seas from the continent and maintained their bridgeheads in various parts of Hokkaido extending from the central part of the Japan Sea coast to the Okhotsk Sea coast. The arena of these wars is a broad area centering around the central, northern, and eastern parts of Hokkaido and including the Kuriles, Sakhalin, Rishiri, Rebun, and the northern Asian continent. The Okhotsk culture is believed to have flourished along the coasts of Hokkaido during a period of about 500 years from 1,300 years ago to about 800 years ago. Thus, one can understand that the contents of the *yukar* deal with the ethnic conflicts which actually took place at that period.⁶⁸

Chiri goes on to say that the invasion of the foreign people forced the Ainu population of Hokkaido to unite and form a confederacy under an overall commander. This solidarity against a common enemy enhanced the consciousness of their ethnic unity and created the basis for the formation of the single people which came to be known later as the Ainu.⁶⁹

The Okhotsk culture of northern Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands clearly belonged to a north Pacific cultural complex of groups of hunters of sea animals. The chief occupation of the Okhotsk people was hunting of whales, sea-lions, seals, and dolphins. Fishing and land hunting were also practiced, and implements made of bone and stone, as well as

⁶⁷ The only substantial description of the Okhotsk culture in English is that of Harumi Befu and Chester S. Chard, "A Prehistoric Maritime Culture of the Okhotsk Sea."

⁶⁸ Chiri Mashihō, "Ainu no shin'yō," pp. 5-7. Reprinted in Chiri, *Chosakushū*, vol. 1, pp. 155-222.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

imported metal implements, are found. Abundant pottery of the Okhotsk type is found at Moyoro, the best-known site, located near Abashiri in Hokkaido. According to Chard, "an arctic or subarctic maritime group," coming originally from the Magadan area on the north shore of the Sea of Okhotsk, moved into southern Sakhalin during the last centuries B.C. and introduced the sea-hunting economy in this area for the first time. In Sakhalin, he says, the newcomers mingled with the local Neolithic population and adopted the pottery of the latter, but always remained close to the sea and retained their original economic pattern. The resulting culture and population then expanded to the northwestern tip of Hokkaido and eventually spread along all the northern shores of Hokkaido. Some of them eventually went up into the Kuriles. In northern Hokkaido, the Okhotsk culture continued until the eleventh to twelfth centuries A.D. and perhaps later. Chard believes that in the Kurile Islands the culture lingered into the second millennium A.D. and that "the Kurile Ainu were the last *cultural* survivors of the Okhotsk people."⁷⁰

R. S. Vasil'evskii points out that there are remarkable similarities between the ancient Koryak culture around the Magadan area and the Okhotsk culture of Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kuriles. He also points to profound connections between the Okhotsk culture and the cultures of the Maritime Region and the lower Amur. His theory is that Paleoasiatic tribes of the lower Amur and Maritime Region were the main components of the people of the Okhotsk culture and that they were also influential in the formation of the closely related ancient Koryak culture. Vasil'evskii connects these peoples with a clearly delineated configuration of cultures of sea hunters stretching across the northern part of the Pacific Ocean from Hokkaido to California. These cultures include the Okhotsk culture, the ancient Koryak culture (continental coast of the Okhotsk Sea, the offshore islands, the coast of Kamchatka), and the early cultures of the Aleutian Islands, Kodiak island, and western Alaska. The Eskimo cultures of northern Asia and northern and northwestern Alaska, he says, are outside the realm of these cultures.⁷¹

It is very possible that this north Pacific culture complex, stretching along the North Pacific Rim, was an important formative element in the Ainu culture. It is known that the Okhotsk people lived in close proximity with

⁷⁰ Chard, Chester S., "Time Depth and Culture Process in Maritime Northeast Asia," p. 215, and personal communication dated March 7, 1975. As to the lower limit date of the Okhotsk culture, Befu and Chard write: "It is not impossible for the Okhotsk culture to have lasted until the 13th or the 14th century A.D. in Hokkaido and perhaps even later in the Kuriles. The discovery of 10th-century Japanese swords at Moyoro suggests that the culture was still thriving in Hokkaido after the 10th century." Befu and Chard, "Prehistoric Maritime Culture," p. 15.

⁷¹ Vasil'evskii, Ruslan Sergeevich, *Proiskhozhdenie i drevnyaya kul'tura koryakov* pp. 180-99.

the Ainu or their ancestors for many centuries. Inter-marriage must have taken place between the two peoples, and the Ainu language may have been enriched by borrowings from the Paleosianic language spoken by the Okhotsk people. Thus, the Ainu would seem to occupy the westernmost position in a chain of related cultures stretching across the Pacific from Hokkaido to Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and California.

The reasons for the disappearance of the Okhotsk culture have not been explained. If the Okhotsk culture died out during the thirteenth or fourteenth century, it might be possible to explain its disappearance in terms of the inroads of the Mongols, who expanded their power to the Maritime Region during the first half of the thirteenth century. They are said to have invaded Sakhalin five times during this period.

The epics may shed some light on the fate of the Okhotsk people. Although there is frequent mention of warfare between the *yaunkur* and the *repunkur*, or rather between Poiyaunpe and the *repunkur*, at the same time the Ainu epic heroes frequently marry *repunkur* women. In the epic Poi-Soya-un-mat (selection 32) the hero Otasam-un-kur finally marries a *repunkur* shamaness, Kunnepet-un-mat, even though she is "an enemy offspring, a woman of the enemy race." In the *yukar* epic "Kotan Utunnai" (selection 33) the hero Poiyaunpe marries Shipish-un-mat, a bellicose *repunkur* woman who is also a shamaness. In the epic *Kutune shirka* the hero Poiyaunpe is himself part *repunkur*. That is, a *repunkur* chieftain from a place called Omanpesh had formerly fought side by side with Poiyaunpe's father, and both men had married each other's sisters. Thus, Poiyaunpe's mother was a *repunkur*. When Poiyaunpe himself goes to do battle at Omanpesh, he finds relatives there. The young chieftain of Omanpesh recalls that they are cousins and decides to fight on Poiyaunpe's side. Poiyaunpe refers to the young chieftain and his sister as *repunkur yupi* (*repunkur* elder brother) and *repunkut tureshi* (*repunkur* younger sister). In the same epic Poiyaunpe marries the *repunkur* woman of Ukampeshka who has the nickname Nisap Tasum (Sudden Illness). Other such examples of inter-marriage between *yaunkur* and *repunkur* could be mentioned.

It is quite probable that the epics reflect a complex historical process of interaction between two different peoples, one a land-oriented group of

hunters and river fishers, and the other a sea-oriented group engaged in hunting of sea animals. At times the two peoples must have lived peacefully side by side; at others there must have been hostility and warfare between them. The frequent references to intermarriage probably indicate that in the end the “people of the sea” were absorbed by the Ainu. The conclusion of Etenoa’s version of the epic *Kutune shirka* seems to point to such a peaceful conclusion. The following is a synopsis of the final passages of her version of the epic:

Finally, the hero hears a rumor. On the opposite side of the bay, his enemies of old have come sailing up in a large fleet and are building a village there. They say that they are unable to compete with Poiyaunpe and desire to cast their lot in with him and to fight on his side. They are preparing wine and treasures as gifts to present to him. Hearing this rumor, the hero laughs silently to himself and continues to do his carving, his eyes focused on a single spot.

The hero Poiyaunpe thus gives his tacit consent to a merging of the *yaunkur* with the surviving remnants of their old enemies, the *repunkur*.

Women in the Ainu Epic Tradition

An extremely important economic and social role was played by women in the traditional Ainu society. The society was split into two parts, with strictly defined tasks being assigned to each sex. The labor to be performed by the men was hunting and fishing. The men were to perform religious rituals, entertain guests, and fight in case of warfare. All the other daily tasks fell to the lot of the women, who gathered the firewood, prepared the meals and clothing, raised the children, collected wild food plants, and cultivated a few agricultural crops. Not only were the women quite able to support themselves; it even appeared that it was they who were supporting their husbands.⁷²

Men who were able to do so would have concubines (*pon mat*) in various places. The concubines would support themselves and would depend on the husband only for those tasks which were tabooed to women, such as hunting and worship. Far from being costly to the man, concubines would increase

⁷² Kindaichi, *Ainu no kenkyū*, p. 30.

his wealth by weaving and embroidering garments for him. The men who had the largest number of concubines were the wealthiest.⁷³

While men specialized in praying to the gods, women were practitioners of shamanism (*tusu*). Some of the epic reciters with whom Kindaichi worked were shamanesses. The heroines who appear in the epic literature are almost always depicted as being shamanesses. The conventional formula in the epics describing a shamaness with her companion spirits (*turenpe*) hovering around her is the following:

<i>sara turenpe</i>	Her visible companion spirits
<i>kapap sai kunne</i>	flocked about her
<i>e-pishkanike</i>	darkly
<i>kurunitara,</i>	like a bunch of bats,
<i>mukke turenpe</i>	and her invisible companion spirits
<i>e-kimui-kashi</i>	twinkled
<i>nochiu meru ne</i>	over her head
<i>ko-teunin kane</i>	like stars flashing.

During the period of decline of the Ainu culture, it was the women who remained in the villages and kept the traditional culture alive. Consequently, during this period the women tended more often to have good repertoires of epics than the men, and thus most of the outstanding reciters known to us are women.

The Ainu social organization was unusual in the fact that women traced their ancestry separately from the men. The male line (*ekashi ikir*) was traced and recognized only by the males, and the female line (*huchi ikir*) only by the females. This curious male-female dichotomy ran through every aspect of Ainu society and has been much remarked upon. B. Z. Seligman, writing on the basis of Munro's discoveries, remarks that in each group the members of each sex recognized their own kinship obligations and rendered each other mutual aid. "The Ainu [social] system has double unilineal elements, in that both matriliney and patriliney are recognized, but it is unusual in that each sex acknowledges only the line of its own sex."⁷⁴ There was exogamy in matrilineal descent; males and females descended from females of the same matrilineal kin group could not marry each other.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁷⁴ B. Z. Seligman, writing in Munro, *Ainu Creed and Cult*, pp. 157-58.

The matrilineal kin group was identified by means of secret girdles (*upsor kut*) which must never be shown to any man. These girdles were reputed to have magical powers. They could be used by women to calm storms, hold back tidal waves or fires, and repel pestilence deities.⁷⁵ A woman could not marry any man whose mother wore the same type of girdle as she did. Each mother made the girdle for her daughter and instructed her in how to make and wear it. The women were organized into various *kut* groups associated with the following deities: the Goddess of the Waters (Wakka-ush-kamui); the bear (*kimun kamui*); the killer whale (*repun kamui*); the wolf (*horkeu kamui*); the fox (*chironnup kamui*); the eagle (*kapachir kamui*); the racoon-dog (*moyuk*); and the hare (*isepo kamui*).⁷⁶

Women wearing the same types of girdles were members of the same female kinship group (*huchi ikir*) and had a high degree of solidarity. They had obligations to come to each other's assistance in cases of illness, childbirth, and death. When a woman died, her body could be prepared for the funeral only by women of the same *kut* group (*shine upsor*). It was believed that women belonging to certain *kut* groups inherited abilities such as the ability to shamanize, to practice midwifery, or to recite epics. They inherited such skills and did not need to learn them.

Women belonging to the same *kut* group tended to become dispersed geographically, since obviously the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law living in the same house were always of different kinship groups. In case of divorce, the female children would remain with the mother and the male children with the father. Matrilineal property was inherited by female descendants only. The epics mention women's treasure bags (*ketushi, sut ketushi*) in which women stored the property they inherited from their mothers and grandmothers.

Other interesting women's customs include the practice of tattooing around the lips. The tattooing began when a young woman was around the age of thirteen, and she became marriageable when it was completed. When a woman came of age, she would begin to wear a one-piece shift (*mour*) tied around the neck with cords or buttons to conceal her breasts.

A separate "woman's house" (*menoko chise*) was built in some areas of Hokkaido for a young woman of marriageable age. She would sleep alone there

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 143. The existence of the secret girdles was discovered by Munro during the course of his medical practice among the Ainu during the 1930s and was unknown until that time.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 142-43.

and would be able to receive male visitors. Marriage was by mutual consent, and when a young couple decided to marry they would be given their own separate house. The epics mention an interesting practice concerning marriage. The woman cooks a meal, evidently of cereal, for the man. The man eats half of the bowlful and gives the remainder of the bowl to the woman. If the woman eats the remainder of the food in the bowl, this signifies that she consents to marry him.

Widows were expected to cut their hair short and wear widow's hoods (*chish konchi*) which concealed their faces (see selection 29). Mourning lasted for a number of years, sometimes as long as three. Either the husband or the wife could ask for a divorce. If the husband was to blame, he would be required to pay indemnities to the wife (see selection 2).

A form of psychoneurosis called *imu* was common among Ainu women. It consisted in fits of hysteria, usually accompanied by the repetition of certain sounds or actions. When a woman was surprised by something, she would act compulsively, repeating nonsense syllables over and over or doing or saying the opposite of what was asserted or requested by others. The fits were regarded as amusing by other members of the community, and the epic texts depict them humorously (see selection 5). Women who had fits of *imu* were said to be predisposed to becoming shamanesses.⁷⁷ However, it is not clear whether *imu* was a necessary stage which women had to pass through before they become shamanesses.

Women play very prominent roles in the heroic epics. The heroines fight in battle along with the heroes. In some cases, as in "The Epic of Kotan Utunnai," the hero states that he is amazed at a woman's valor in battle. Sometimes separate women's battles will be fought out in the sky concurrently with the men's battles on the ground.

A familiar theme in the epics is that of the enemy woman who is a powerful shamaness and who turns against her own kinsfolk, casting her lot in with the hero Poiyaunpe. Typical heroines of this type are Shipish-un-mat in "The Epic of Kotan Utunnai" and Nisap Tasum in *Kutune shirka*. The following is a synopsis of that part of *Kutune shirka* in which the story of Nisap Tasum is told. (The version is that of Hiraga Etenoa, recorded in writing by Kubodera in February and March, 1933.)

⁷⁷ Munro, *Ainu Creed and Cult*, p. 108; Chiri, Mashiho, "Jushi to kawauso," pp. 55-58. An identical disorder is reported by Czaplicka among the natives of Siberia. Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia*, pp. 315-16.

The hero is resting after a battle, and his female relatives are just beginning to treat his wounds when, suddenly, he hears a god coming from the land of the *repunkur*. A voice cries out, bringing the following message: "I am the servant woman of Ukampeshka-un-mat, the younger sister of Ukampeshka-un-kur. When you were previously doing battle at Omanpesh, both Ukampeshka-un-kur and his younger sister were to have gone to fight against you, but the younger sister secretly sympathized with you and refused to fight against you. She announced that she had a sudden stomachache and that she was unable to accompany her brother into battle. However, there being many potent wizardesses among the *repunkur*, it was discovered that Ukampeshka-un-mat was secretly in love with Poiyaunpe. Ukampeshka-un-mat was taken prisoner and is now being tortured in a place called Shisuye-Santa Kari-Santa." The servant woman begs the hero to go and rescue the lady, who is known by the nickname Nisap Tasum (Sudden Illness).

The hero immediately forgets his pain, pushes aside the women, and goes out. Jumping into the water, he swims along through the ocean until he arrives on the sandy beach at Shisuye-Santa Kari-Santa. He extracts the many sharp points from his own body (he had been wounded with them in a previous battle) and prays to his companion spirits to restore him to his former bodily condition. His wounds are healed by revivifying winds which come blowing down.

The hero walks inside the stockade on top of the cliff. Inside the house a feast is in progress. The hero peers through the window. The chieftain of Kari-Santa Shisuye-Santa is the host of the feast, and the guests include the hero's old enemies. There is a creaking among the rafters. Ukampeshka-un-mat (Nisap Tasum) is hanging there naked and is being subjected to the stream torture. She addresses her tormentors, telling them to kill her quickly. If she dies, she says, it will make no difference to the land. "Sooner or later, after I have died, the lord of the *yaunkur* will fight to avenge me, and all of you will die."

At the feast, two women are asked to shamanize. The first woman is unable to. The second woman shamanizes and prophesies that everyone at the feast will be slain. At this moment, the hero decides to reveal himself. He

comes stamping fiercely inside, and the assembled guests at the feast fall silent.

The hero demands to be given something to eat and drink. He is served. The creaking in the rafters continues. He sees Nisap Tasum being tortured there and goes and cuts her down. Restoring her spirits with wine, he speaks to her. As the hero continues to give Nisap Tasum wine to drink, the assembled enemies begin to deride him.

At this point, the hero begins to run around on all fours on the floor. The gods on the sheath of his sword, *Kutune shirka*, come to life, and the hero himself is transformed into a supernatural fox (*sak kimotpe*). As the fox barks, clouds of mist come streaming forth from its mouth. He kills many of the enemies with his claws, and many more warriors rush into the house to join the fighting. The hero sets the house on fire, and Nisap Tasum also cuts down many of the warriors who are coming in through the doorway. He smashes all the ancestral treasures, which go winging their way up into the air with muffled rumblings. A powerful wind comes blowing down, and they all rush outside just before the house tumbles down inflames. The hero and Nisap Tasum continue to fight outside until the very last enemy has been slain.

After the battle, the hero and Nisap Tasum sit down to rest. Nisap Tasum addresses the hero, saying that she was motivated nobly in what she did, that she had been persecuted all her life by the evil *repunkur*, and that she is ashamed that her bosom (*upsor*) had been laid bare to the hero's sight. She says that she will be happy after death if he will deign to slay her with his own blade. The hero ignores her request and flies up into the air, heading toward his native stronghold. Nisap Tasum, apparently pleased, follows after him. They arrive home at Shinutapka.

After they return home, the hero and Nisap Tasum are welcomed exuberantly by the hero's relatives, who perform a ritual (*ukewehomsu*) to celebrate the hero's safe return and to welcome Nisap Tasum.

Much emphasis in the epics is placed on a woman's "bosom" (*upsor*). The secret girdle is called "bosom girdle" (*upsor kut*), and women belonging to the same kinship group (*huchi ikir*) are said to be of the "same bosom"

(*shine upsor*). For a man to see a woman's body, or perhaps her girdle, was tantamount to raping her, and he would have to marry her or kill her (or she kill him). In some epics, when there has been a shipwreck and bodies are washed ashore, other women will run ahead to cover up the bodies of the women who may be lying injured or unconscious so that they will not accidentally be seen by the men.

It is possible to conclude from these facts, and also from the epics in this volume, nearly all of which were recited by women, that Ainu women had a highly developed culture of their own which differed from that of men and contained many elements which were kept strictly secret from them. Most of the studies of the Ainu which have been written in the past have overlooked this aspect of Ainu culture, since female informants were unwilling to provide any information about the women's secrets.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the epic poetry of the Ainu reflects the social conditions and world-view of the traditional Ainu society of past centuries, specifically the period before the Ainu were subjugated by the Japanese around the years 1669 to 1672. Like the wood carvings made by the Ainu men and the weaving and embroidery done by the women, the oral literature shows high aesthetic qualities and has a long history of development obviously going back over many centuries.

The ideas which are expressed in the epics and which, in fact, formed the basis for the traditional Ainu way of life, are extremely archaic and share many common features with the ideology which was prevalent among the Paleosian peoples of northeast Asia until recent times. The bear cult and bear ceremonialism, in particular, appear to be of the greatest antiquity. The Ainu epic tradition, with its extremely archaic mental patterns and modes of diction, is one of the purest and most beautiful surviving examples of the oral literatures of the hunting and fishing peoples of northeast Asia.

ユウカラ



1



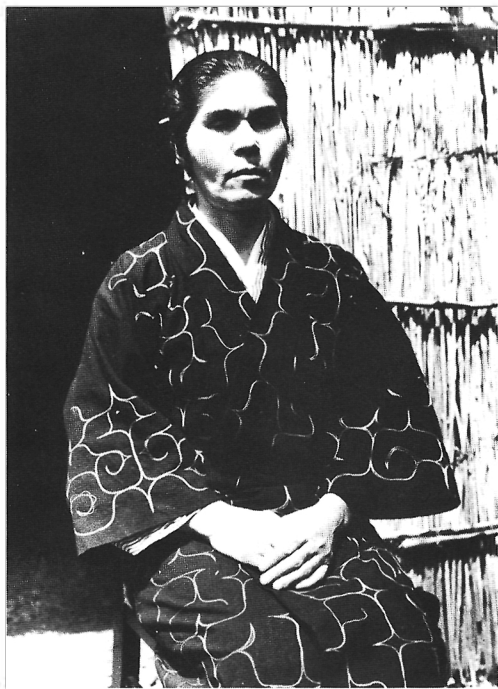
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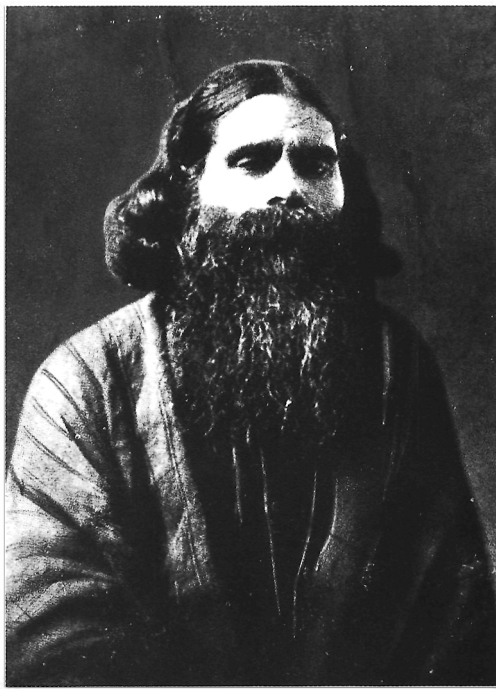
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1. A scene from *Ezo kodai fūzoku*. The reciter is lying on his back singing an epic while beating time on his abdomen with his left hand. Collection Hakodate Municipal Library.
2. An epic recitation around a fireside. Both reciter and listeners are seen holding sticks, *repni*, in their hands, beating time on the hearth frame. Courtesy of the Kubodera family.
3. Hiraga Etenoa, reciter of epic selections 1-4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21-25, 31, and 32 in this volume. Courtesy of the Kubodera family.
4. Hirame Karepia, reciter of epic selections 5, 10, 15, 27, 28, and 30 in this volume. Courtesy of the Kubodera family.
5. Shikata Shimukani, reciter of epic selections 26 and 29 in this volume. Courtesy of the Kubodera family.
6. Nabesawa Wakarpa, reciter of epic selection 18 in this volume. Courtesy of the Kindaichi family.
7. People of the Saru region, Iburi Province. Back row, second from left, Kindaichi Kyōsuke; second from right, Kubodera Itsuhiko. Courtesy of the Kubodera family.
8. Kubodera Itsuhiko. Courtesy of the Kubodera family.
9. Kindaichi Kyōsuke. Courtesy of the Kindaichi family.
10. Chiri Yukie. Reprinted from *Ainu shin'yō shū*.
11. John Batchelor. Reprinted from *An Ainu-English-Japanese Dictionary*.

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Part I
Songs of Gods

Introduction to Part I

The twenty-five selections in this part are songs sung by *kamui* of various types, and the native term for this genre of the epic folklore is *kamui yukar*, “god epic.”

In the traditional world-view of the Ainu, all species of non-human beings are endowed with supernatural characteristics and are called *kamui*. The dictionary definition of “god” is no doubt inadequate, but there is no other convenient equivalent for *kamui*, which is actually a loan word borrowed from the Old Japanese *kami*, meaning “god.” The *kamui* are gods in the Paleolithic sense, not in the Western sense. That is, they are non-human beings with supernatural attributes who live in thoroughly anthropomorphic fashion in their own god-worlds, where they are invisible to human eyes, but who also share a common territory with the humans and pay frequent visits to the humans in disguise. Animals are such gods in disguise.

The Ainu are extremely liberal in their use of the word *kamui*. Besides being used as a noun meaning god in the sense discussed, it can also be used as an adjective meaning “magnificent” or “splendid.” In the epics we find “divine embroidered garments” (*kamui chikirpe*), “divine robes” (*kamui kosonte*), “divine pendant necklaces” (*kamui shitoki*), and “divine winds” (*kamui mau*). The magnificent locks of wavy hair of epic heroes are called “divine hair” (*kamui otopi*), and highly respected human women are called “divine ladies” (*kamui katkemat* or *kamui moiremat*). Strongholds (*chashi*), old men (*chacha*), and armor (*hayokpe*) are deified and called *chashi kamui*, *chacha kamui*, and *hayokpe kamui*. In the epics, a younger brother who is being raised by his older relatives is respectfully called “god whom we are raising, our divine nursling” (*a-reshpa kamui a-reshpa pito*). In this case, the word *pito*, also a loan word from Old Japanese (meaning “human being”), is used as a synonym for *kamui*. The word *kamui* also means “bear.” Thus, *yuk chikoikip kamui chikoikip* is a common couplet meaning “game animals, both deer and bear.” *Kamui menoko* (“god woman”) may mean either “goddess” or “she-bear.”

At first glance, it would seem that the Ainu use of the word *kamui* with its troublesome polysemantism is hopelessly confusing and that no clear distinctions are made, semantically or otherwise, between animals, humans, man-made implements, and gods. All animals, all plants, and even human artifacts are impartially called *kamui*. The epithet *kamui* is even applied to highly respected human beings. However, the Ainu obviously are capable of making the necessary distinctions between different orders of being, and they have a series of coherent beliefs about the nature of reality.

In the Ainu world-view, the world is a common territory shared between different species of beings. The humans (*ainu*) are one of these species and are totally dependent for their survival on the other types of beings with which they share the world. Continued human existence was made possible by rituals and beliefs implying social relationships with the natural world, the *kamui*. This system has been called, with penetrating insight, "the system of social solidarity between man and nature" by Watanabe.¹

The human-*kamui* relationship is one of interdependence. The non-human species in nature also depend on the humans for their well-being, and the traditional world-view is based on the fundamental concept that the world is a space shared by interdependent species. Humans and gods are more or less equals, with the humans having a slight advantage over the gods. True, the gods can do some things that ordinary humans cannot. They have supernatural powers, can move from place to place swiftly, can fly through the air, and can change their forms at will. Among the humans, only shamans have such powers. But in certain matters the humans are superior to the gods. The gods fear the humans, depend on them, and are subject to their power. The gods admire the humans and wish very much to visit the human homeland (*ainu kotan*, *ainu moshir*). The gods can enhance their prestige in their communities when they are worshiped and are given presents by the humans. In fact, the wealth of the gods consists of the presents they receive from the humans.²

The humans also depend on the gods. They are guarded and protected by the good deities, who surround the humans inside and outside the house and who have the responsibility for watching over them and warding off evil from them. The most important deity in this respect is the ancient Fire God-

¹ Watanabe, Hitoshi, *The Ainu Ecosystem*, pp. 69–78.

² The ideas on the human-god relationship were developed in greatest detail by Kindaichi. See, for example, his *Ainu jojishi: Yukara gaisetsu*, pp. 3–15.

dess (*kamui huchi*) who dwells in the hearth of every Ainu home. She acts as the intermediary between humans and gods and is prayed to first by the humans every time they address prayers to any deities. There are evil deities (*wen kamui, nitne kamui*) who envy the good fortune and happiness of the humans and of the good deities and seek to harm them both. These evil beings also desire to have for themselves the presents which the humans offer to the good deities. They steal away the souls of the food (the fish and the game), spread diseases, and cause famines. The evil deities can succeed in their wicked schemes only when the vigilance of the good deities is diminished. Exactly like human beings, the good deities are rather absentminded, and their attention can easily wander. Calamities may occur if they are not minding their business of looking after the affairs of the humans. This is why it is so important for the humans to master the techniques of attracting and holding the attention of the good deities and of invoking the aid of extremely powerful deities who can be called on in emergencies to ward off evil influences. Ainu men were specialists in these techniques, and all of their activities were accompanied or preceded by prayers and rituals.

The gods are anthropomorphic through and through. No matter whether they live in the human homeland (the plains, the meadows, the rivers, the seas, the mountains, the forests, or inside the houses of the humans), in the skies, in far-away lands, or in the Underworld, the lives of the gods follow the human pattern closely. When they are at home in their god-worlds, they have human form. Their appearance is human-like, but more majestic than that of ordinary humans. They build themselves houses to live in; they form their own communities; they wear clothing; they pray to the gods; they fight battles; they love their spouses and children; and they like to brew wine and invite their friends and relatives to drinking feasts. They love to dance and sing and to listen to epics. In fact, their tastes, their likes and dislikes, correspond exactly to those of humans. At the same time, their worlds are separate from the world of the humans, and there is a certain strangeness about humans for them. The gods especially dislike the smell of humans, which they seemingly cannot tolerate. They hide themselves from the humans by wrapping themselves in black or white clouds, but if they choose they can reveal themselves to humans in their true form, anthropomorphic but ex-

tremely majestic. Or if they wish they can appear in their disguises as animals or plants.

The presents of wine and of *inau* which the gods receive from the humans are their prized treasures. The *inau* are elaborately whittled sticks of willow or other wood with beautifully fashioned curled shavings. The Ainu make great numbers of these ritual artifacts, and there are a great many different varieties of them, each variety having its specific purpose and being intended for a certain deity to whom it is especially acceptable.³ The Ainu attribute supernatural powers to these man-made artifacts, which are regarded as being messengers to gods, intermediaries between humans and gods, and sometimes even as gods themselves. (A god made by human hands appears in selection 9). The gods prize the gifts of *inau* given to them by the humans in exactly the same way that the Ainu prize their own household treasures, which consist of imported Japanese goods. A god who returns from a visit to the humans laden with many presents of wine and of *inau* has his prestige greatly enhanced. This dependence of the gods on the humans for presents is strikingly similar to the attitude of the Ainu toward the Japanese.

The gods admire the beauties of the human homeland and long to come and visit it, but many of them seldom have an opportunity to make this visit. When they come on their visits to the humans, the gods do not come only for sightseeing purposes; they come also with business in mind. The key word for this in Ainu is *irauketupa*, a verb with the following meanings: (1) to make one's livelihood, to practice a profession or business; (2) to go trading, to visit for the purpose of trading, to go on a business trip; (3) to strike a profitable transaction.⁴ This verb is applied both to humans going on trading expeditions and to gods who come to visit the land of the humans in the guise of animals. When the gods come to the world of humans, they come because they wish to receive presents of *inau* and wine. The exchange of presents of *inau* and wine for animal fur and flesh is thought of as a "business transaction." This god-human transaction is at the very basis of the Ainu religion, which expresses it most spectacularly in the bear ceremony.

At home in their own country, the gods have clothing racks where they hang up their different costumes. When they come to visit the human homeland, they always come in their disguises. If they do not intend to trade, they

³ Munro's chapter on the *inau* is especially interesting. Munro, *Ainu Creed and Cult*, pp. 28-43.

⁴ Quoted from my unpublished manuscript of an Ainu-English dictionary.

will put on a worthless old coat, but they will put on their best costumes if they want to make a transaction. These costumes are called *hayokpe*, which may mean “armor” as well as “disguise” or “costume.”⁵ The *hayokpe* is a disguise which is material and perceptible to the humans and which is put on by the god because it is desirable and economically useful to the humans. For example, the god of the mountains (*kimun kamui*), the representative of the mountain game, comes wearing a bear costume (selection 9). The god of the sea (*repun kamui*), the ruler of the food animals in the ocean, comes in the guise of a killer whale (selection 6). Another important deity, the guardian spirit of the land (*kotan-kor-kamui*) comes disguised as an owl (selection 12). Pestilence deities (*pa-kor-kamui*) come in the form of flocks of little birds (selection 26) when they come for their gruesome type of *irauketupa*.

The *hayokpe* worn by a god friendly to the humans is a present brought with him to leave with his human friends. It is not the human hunter who chooses and kills a bear or a deer. It is a god masquerading as an animal who chooses the hunter, voluntarily allows the hunter to kill what appears to be an animal, and gives the hunter the animal disguise as a present. The grateful hunter in exchange presents the god with *inau* or with the curled shavings which are equally potent. The presents given by the humans to the gods make up the wealth of the gods, and the presents left by the gods among the humans enable the latter to survive and to carry on their economic activities. When the god of the mountains comes on a visit, he will leave behind his warm bear’s fur, his tasty meat, his marrow and blood, and his internal organs. The humans can make clothing of the fur or use it for trading; they will reverently and joyfully consume the flesh, the marrow, the blood, and the organs; and they will dry the gall, which is a valuable trade commodity used for medicinal purposes.

When a god’s *hayokpe* is broken, the god’s spirit is released. By slaying the “animal,” the humans set free the spirit of the god trapped inside the disguise and enable him to return to his own world. The bear ceremony illustrates this most clearly. After the humans have killed the bear, they lay the bear’s head in state and make offerings of food, wine, and *inau* to the god. An elaborate feast is held, and the spirit of the god remains for several days as an honored guest among the feasting humans. The god is seated in the place of

⁵ See also note 4, selection 12.

honor at the head of the fireplace (the *ror*), just under the sacred window (*rorun puyar*). During the god's sojourn, the divine visitor delights in watching the humans feasting and dancing and in hearing their songs and epics. Simultaneously, another non-human convocation is going on; the god is being entertained by the gods who dwell inside the human house, especially by the Fire Goddess. For the Ainu, feasting and drinking are important cultic acts by which solidarity with the supernaturals is reaffirmed and strengthened.

After the feast is over, the divine visitor is sent home (*arpare, omante, hopunire*) to his own world. This is what is known as "ritual dismissal." The bear ceremony is called *iyomante*, "sending-off," that is, a farewell ceremony for a departing guest. After his send-off, the god returns home laden with many gifts from the humans. Upon his arrival, he finds his house filled with gifts from the humans. The gifts have been delivered mysteriously in his absence. The more of these presents a deity receives, the more renowned will he be in the society of the gods, just as an Ainu will have more social prestige the greater the amount of trade goods he manages to accumulate.

After returning to his native land, the god will gather together his friends and relatives from near and far and will hold a magnificent feast, using the gifts of wine and food that he has received as presents from the humans. He will speak admiringly of the wonders of the land of the humans. He will tell the gods how well he was treated by the humans and will distribute one or two of the human *inau* to each guest. The gods will all praise him and wish to go to visit the human homeland for themselves. The continuing round of visiting and exchanging of presents must be maintained in order for the humans to enjoy prosperity.

The World of Gods

This section introduces the reader to the world of the gods as they describe it in their own terms. This world occupies the extreme edge of the spectrum of god-human communication, one in which there is little or no human involvement. Some of the gods lead rather dull lives, having no excitement except attending drinking feasts, and others involve themselves in exciting adventures. The humans appear here only peripherally as suppliers of wine and *inau*. But even here, in their own god-worlds, the gods for the most part live in the human manner, and their interpersonal relationships are recognizably of the human type.

This section contains five selections, all from the two most important reciters from the Saru region of Hidaka: Hiraga Etenoa and Hiramé Karepia.

1. Song of Kararat (Carrion Crow) Goddess

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing on October 28, 1932, by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa. It was sung to the burden *Heikuna ō*. Kubodera mentions that it might also be sung with the burden *Hetuina*. The literal meanings of both the burdens are unclear.

A crow goddess amuses herself by performing the “dance of the glittering treasures, dance of the glittering metals” (*tama kin tapkar, kane kin tapkar*). When she does this dance, acorns and chestnuts come dropping down from her hands. News of this dance of hers spreads among the gods, and she begins to be invited to the drinking feasts of the gods.

The Ainu distinguished between two types of crows: the hondo jungle crow (*Corvus coronoides*), which was disliked and called *shi-pashkur* or *shi-e-pashkur* (“dung-crow,” “dung-eating-crow”) and the carrion crow (*kararat, Corvus corone*), which was regarded as auspicious. Kayano gives a tale in which a human’s life is saved by a carrion crow. (Kayano, *Uepekere shūtasei*, pp. 63–75).

The text is Kamui Yukar 47 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 218–20.

I lived
in the Upper Heavens,
dwelling
among the gods.
However,
whenever I would hear
the sounds of feasting,
the sounds of drinking
of the gods
who had received [presents of]

human *inau*
and human wine,
I would always
be longing to have them.

I longed for them
so very much that,
when I would get lonely,
I would stand up and
would do

the dance of the glittering treasures,
 the dance of the glittering metals
 on the floor at the head of the fireplace.¹
 Then acorns would come dropping down
 from one of my hands,
 and chestnuts would come dropping down
 from my other hand.
 Thanks to this,
 I was able to amuse myself,
 and this was the way
 I continued to live
 on and on
 uneventfully.

Then news spread
 among the gods
 that I was doing this,
 and only then
 did the gods
 become aware for the first time
 of my existence.
 After that,
 when wine was delivered
 from the humans,
 I was invited for the first time,
 and I was able
 to attend a drinking feast.

I drank, and
 o how very
 delicious
 was the wine!
 As I drank,
 my heart
 was very

mellowed by the wine,
 mellowed by the liquor.
 At that time
 I did
 the dance of the glittering treasures,
 the dance of the glittering metals,
 moving up along the floor
 and down along the floor.
 As I danced,
 acorns came falling down
 from one of my hands,
 and chestnuts came falling down
 from my other hand.
 Then the gods
 began to race each other
 to pick up
 the chestnuts
 and to pick up
 the acorns
 on the floor.
 Sounds of loud laughter,
 sounds of great merriment
 rose up all at once.
 While this was going on,
 the God Ruling
 the Upper Heavens
 spoke these words:

“I did not know
 until now
 that the weighty deity²
 the *kararat* goddess
 had her dwelling
 so very close by,
 near my own house.

¹ *Rorui-so*, the expanse of floor at the *ror*, the section of the house located at the head of the fireplace near the sacred window (*rorun puyar*). It lies at the opposite end of the house from the entrance and is the place of honor in the house.

² *Pase kamui*. A god who is important, of great consequence. The Ainu word *pase* literally means “heavy.”

One of the reasons
 why I invited
 the *kararat* goddess
 was because I wished
 to apologize to her,
 but look
 how mellowed by the wine
 are her spirits!’’
 Thus did he speak.

The peerless feast
 wore on to its conclusion.
 After that,
 I have remained
 in my own house.
 Ever since then,
 whenever the gods
 are worshiped
 by the humans
 and wine is delivered,
 there is not a banquet,
 not a drinking feast
 from which I am
 ever omitted.
 I am always invited
 and attend every feast,
 and as I drink,
 my spirits are
 mellowed by the wine.
 After that
 I do
 the dance of the glittering metals,
 the dance of the glittering jewels
 among the guests at the feast,

and acorns fall down
 from one of my hands,
 and chestnuts fall down
 from my other hand.
 The gods
 race each other
 to pick up
 the chestnuts
 and the acorns.
 Sounds of loud laughter,
 sounds of great merriment
 rise up all at once,
 and I take
 delight in all this
 as I attend
 all the noble drinking feasts,
 the noble feasts.

This is the way
 I continue to live
 on and on.
 Whenever wine
 or *inau*
 are delivered
 from the humans,
 I am given
 portions of *inau*
 and portions of wine,
 and this enhances
 my glory as a deity.
 This is the way
 I continue to live
 on and on
 uneventfully.

2. Song of the Fire Goddess

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing on September 6, 1932, by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa. It was sung to the burden *Apemeru koyan koyan, matateya tenna*. The first words of the burden mean “fire sparks rise-rise” and are derived from the name of the Fire Goddess, Apemeru-ko-yan-mat, “Fire-sparks-Rise-Woman.”

The Fire Goddess dwells in the fireplace of every Ainu home and acts as an intermediary between the Ainu and all the other gods. Worship of this goddess is central in all Ainu religious life. Whenever prayers are addressed to any god, the first prayer and the first *inau* are offered to her. Women are said to regard her as their own ancestor. The Fire Goddess is usually called *kamui huchi* (“god grandmother,” Elderly Goddess) or *ape huchi* (“fire grandmother”), but her full name is Apemeru-ko-yan-mat Unameru-ko-yan-mat, “Fire-sparks-Rise-Woman Cinder-sparks-Rise-Woman.”

In this song, the husband of the Fire Goddess has been stolen away by the Goddess of the Waters (*Wakka-ush-kamui*). The Fire Goddess vanquishes the other goddess in a contest of magic powers but spares her life. The husband later returns sheepishly and offers “indemnity” (*ashimpe*) to the Fire Goddess. The Fire Goddess ignores the repentant husband but allows him to stay. The role of woman as the guardian of the family hearth and the relatively independent position of women in Ainu society seem to be emphasized in this song. The Fire Goddess definitely is stronger than her husband in every way.

The text is Kamui Yukar 1 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 42–47.

Doing nothing but needlework,
I remained with my eyes

focused on a single spot,
and this is the way

I continued to live
on and on
uneventfully.

Then one day
my wedded husband,
my honored husband
went outside
holding in his hands
silver wiping sticks
six in number,
and ordinary wiping sticks
six in number.¹
After that,
he did not come back
for a long time,
for a very long time.
Nevertheless,
I thought to myself:

“Am I
a deity with weak powers?”²

Thinking this,
I paid no attention.
As always,
I did nothing but needlework,
remaining with my eyes
focused on a single spot.
I continued
in this way
for a very long time,
but my beloved husband
did not return

for entirely too long a time.
I thought this
most strange.
Then I stared at
the needle I had been sewing with.³
When I looked,
this is what I found:
The Goddess of the Waters
had fallen in love with
none other than
my beloved husband,
my wedded husband.
For this reason,
she had sent for him
and had shut him up
at her place.
This is what the matter was.

Therefore,
I stuck my needle through
the handiwork I was doing
and put it aside.
After that,
I girded myself
with a single sedge stalk.
I arranged my hair
up high
with a silken hood.
I slipped on my feet
a pair of fleeting clogs,
and I slipped on my hands
a pair of fleeting gloves.
I stuck into the front of my robes
a metal fan.⁴

¹ Blocks of wood (*hoyaikeni* or *hoyaiketep*) used for the same purpose as toilet paper. Because the husband is such an exalted deity, he uses six blocks of silver as well as six wooden (“ordinary”) blocks. The husband, in other words, went outside to go to the privy.

² The goddess asks herself the rhetorical question: “Why should I, being a powerful deity, be thrown into confusion?” Powerful deities (*nupur kamui*) were slow to respond, and only weak deities (*nupan kamui*) could be rushed into action.

³ To divine.

⁴ The word “metal” may also be used as an adjective meaning “magnificent.” It is not clear whether a “metal fan” is meant here, or a “magnificent fan.”

Then
 I set out,
 and I arrived at
 the house of
 the Goddess of the Waters.
 When I went inside,
 this is what I found:
 On the right-hand side of the fireplace,⁵
 the Goddess of the Waters
 was sitting by the fireside.
 To the left⁶
 of the divine lady
 was sitting
 my beloved husband,
 my wedded husband.
 I stepped along
 the left-hand side of the fireplace.⁷

I was so
 terribly angry that
 I seized in my hands
 the pot-hook hanging [over the hearth]
 and shook it
 back and forth
 again and again.
 While doing this,
 I uttered
 these words:

“Look here,
 o divine lady,
 Goddess of the Waters!
 Listen to
 what I have to say.

Since you have dared
 to do such a thing,
 let us compare
 our magic powers!
 If I lose,
 I will give you
 right away
 my wedded husband,
 my beloved husband,
 since you have done this
 because you want to marry him.
 If you lose,
 then you will
 never see
 my beloved husband,
 my wedded husband [again]!”

As I said this,
 I took out
 the metal fan
 and remained standing
 rooted to the spot
 on the floor
 on the left-hand side of the fireplace.
 On one side of the fan,
 the metal fan,
 were painted
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of scorching rays of sunlight,
 of lethal rays of sunlight.
 On the other side of the fan
 were painted
 many pictures,

⁵ The *shiso*, the side of the fireplace on the right when viewed from the *ror* (the section in front of the sacred window), is where the head of the house sits.

⁶ In the place of honor next to her, as if he were her husband.

⁷ *Harkiso* (also called *hekari-so*), the side of the house where guests are seated.

countless pictures
of many columns of flames,
of myriads of columns of flames.

I took out

this fan.

I challenged to battle
the Goddess of the Waters,
the divine lady.

Then

she took out

a metal fan

which was like this:

On one side of the fan

were painted

many pictures,

countless pictures

of frost-laden clouds.

On the other side of the fan

were painted

many pictures,

countless pictures

of summer rainstorms.

She took out

this fan.

She pointed toward me

the part

of the fan with the pictures

of the frost-laden clouds.

Slowly

she fluttered it

in my direction.

As she did this,

a fierce

winter sleet storm

came raining down.

However,

I took out

my metal fan

and pointed toward her

the part of it with pictures

of the scorching rays of sunlight,

the lethal rays of sunlight.

Lethal rays of sunlight,

scorching rays of sunlight

came blazing down.

After a while,

the Goddess of the Waters

was about

to die of sunstroke

at any moment.

Unable to bear it any longer,

she pointed toward me

the side of her fan

with the pictures

of the summer rainstorms.

Fierce

summer rainstorms

came pouring down.

When that happened,

I pointed toward her

the side

of my metal fan

with the pictures

of many columns of flames,

of myriads of columns of flames.
 Slowly
 I fluttered
 the metal fan
 up high and down low.
 As I did this,
 fierce showers
 of red rainbow-like sparks
 rained down,
 and many columns of flame,
 myriads of columns of flame
 came raining down
 onto the floor.
 The walls
 burst into flames,
 and the hems
 of the robes worn
 by the Goddess of the Waters
 burst into flames.
 The beautifully embroidered garments
 made by the divine lady
 which were
 weighing down
 her long clothing racks
 burst into flames.

When this happened,
 the Goddess of the Waters
 apologized,
 speaking these words:

“Truly,
 what I did was wrong,
 my deeds were wrong,

and this is why
 I am now being
 punished so cruelly.
 But
 I apologize!
 O most weighty deity,
 o divine lady,
 please calm
 your anger against me!”

When I heard
 her say this,
 I reflected carefully,
 turning various matters over in my mind.
 This is what I thought to myself:

“In the beginning,
 when we were sent down
 from the Upper Heavens
 to the land of the humans,
 we were sent down
 in order to rule
 the land of the humans.
 In spite of this,
 she has acted
 with brazen disrespect
 toward me.
 Nevertheless,
 no matter how I may punish her,
 no matter how angry I may be at her,
 it is not for me
 to kill her in a miserable manner.”

Thinking this,

I plunged head first
 through the door hangings.
 Departing in anger,
 I came home
 to my house.
 After that
 I continued
 to live on
 doing nothing
 but needlework.
 Then one day
 the door opened.
 I looked,
 and this is what I saw:
 My beloved husband,
 my wedded husband
 came walking in
 carrying
 a bundle wrapped in a sedge mat.
 He put down
 that sedge mat
 at the head of the fireplace.

Nevertheless,
 I did not want
 even to turn around
 or to glance that way.
 I stayed there
 without even
 turning toward him.
 He stared fixedly
 down into the center of the hearth
 and remained for a time
 without saying anything.
 Then he opened

that sedge mat
 and spread out [its contents]
 at the head of the fireplace.
 It contained
 many precious treasures,
 divinely made treasures.
 There was a glittering
 brightness over
 the treasures.
 Taking out
 the many precious treasures,
 he said these words:

“My beloved wife!
 Since what I did
 was wrong,
 I would not dare
 come home
 without an indemnity.⁸
 Thus I offer these
 as payment
 so that I may come home.”

Though he spoke these words,
 I did not breathe a word
 in reply to him.
 After a while,
 without saying a word,
 he folded up
 that sedge mat
 and put it
 on the stacks of sacred vessels.⁹
 After that,
 he remained [at home].

⁸ *Ashimpe*, “fine,” “indemnity.” The husband apologizes for his infidelity and offers payment of treasures as a penalty.

⁹ *Lyoiikir*, the piles of household heirlooms or treasures lining the north wall of the house. They consisted mostly of lacquered tubs, boxes, and utensils of Japanese manufacture.

3. Song of Wolf Goddess

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hira-ga Etenoa on the same day as the preceding selection, September 6, 1932. It was sung with two burdens: *Heurur heurur* and *Uokar kanto*. Except for the word *kanto* (sky, heaven), both the burdens are semantically unclear.

Wolves (*horkeu*) figure prominently in Ainu mythic songs and tales. They were not regarded as being harmful predators by the Ainu. In fact, the wolves inhabiting Hokkaido in the past caught the plentiful deer for food and did not trouble the Ainu, who admired them greatly for their intelligence and skill at hunting. The Wolf God of the Upper Heavens (*rikun kanto ta horkeu kamui*) is a favorite character in epics, and sometimes the younger sister of this Wolf God is the mother of the *yukar* epic hero Poiyaunpe. She is a goddess of very beautiful appearance who wears white robes. (See below, p. 208.)

The wolf goddess in this song is living with her cubs in the land of the humans. She is attacked by an evil monster bear (*wen arsarush*). The cubs cry out to summon their father from the Upper Heavens. He arrives and defeats the monster bear, and the wolves go home to the Upper Heavens.

The text is Kamui Yukar 27 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi : Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 158–59.

I was among my cubs
on a meadow beside a brook.
This was the way
I continued to live
on and on until

One day
downstream

noises were heard.
I looked and saw
an evil monster bear,
a vile demon bear,
with his lower fangs
jutting out beyond
his upper jaw,
with his upper fangs

jutting out beyond
his lower jaw,
and with his inner gums
exposed.

The evil monster bear,
the vile demon bear
came this way.
As soon as he caught sight of me,
he glared at me
with his eyes wide open.
Then he attacked me.

After that
we fought each other,
rolling over each other
and rolling under each other
as we wrestled
on the meadow beside the brook.
We took turns
seizing each other by the teeth
and shaking each other about,
as we wrestled together
going in this direction and that.
As we continued to fight,
I bit out
small chunks of flesh
and large chunks of flesh
of the evil monster bear.
In his turn
he bit out
small chunks of my flesh
and large chunks of my flesh.
We continued
to take turns doing this.

The evil monster bear
had
ordinary heart strings¹
six in number
and metal heart strings
six in number.
I also
had
ordinary heart strings
six in number
and metal heart strings
six in number.

We each continued
to take turns
in cutting
the other's ordinary heart strings
one by one
and the other's metal heart strings
one by one.
As we continued fighting each other,
by this time
I still had left
one heart string,
an ordinary heart string,
and one heart string,
a metal heart string
which he had been unable to get at.
The evil monster bear,
he also
still had left
one heart string,
a metal heart string,
and one heart string,

¹ *Sampe-at*, cords on which the heart is suspended. The bear has six ordinary strings and six metal strings. Each one of these must be cut before he can be killed.

an ordinary heart string,
which I had been unable to get at.

“Hear us,²
our father,
who must be
in the Upper Heavens,
in the high skies!
Come quickly
to rescue
our mother!
An evil monster bear,
a vile demon bear
looks as if he is
about to kill
our mother.
Our father,
come quickly
to rescue
our mother!”

The gods my children
cried out these words.

Then,
right away,
the Wolf God,
the most weighty deity,
came down
from the Upper Heavens.
In an instant
he gave a mighty kick
to the evil monster bear,
the vile demon bear
and kicked him down
to the Underworld,
the dank land.

Afterward,
we went home
to the Upper Heavens
together with
our cubs.

² At this point the burden changes to *Uokar kanto*, which continues to the end.

4. Song of Spider Goddess

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on the same day as the two preceding selections, September 6, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Nōpe*. The significance of the burden is not clear.

Spider goddesses (*yaoshkep kamui*) are worshiped by women. Some shamans have them as their companion spirits (*turen kamui, turenpe*), and spiders are also invoked to assist childbirth. The name of the spider goddess is Ashketanne-mat, “Long-Fingered-Woman.” The long fingers of the spider are evidently connected with the practice of midwifery.

In this song, Big Demon (*poro nitne kamui*) who dwells behind the Cloud Horizon (*nishoshitchiwi*) comes to marry Spider Goddess. Spider Goddess easily repels the intruder, who turns out to be incredibly stupid and boorish. After the battle is over, Spider Goddess returns to her needlework as if nothing had happened. The Ainu goddess can overcome male marauders easily by using her superior shamanistic powers. Here we have undoubtedly a reflection of the social role of women as shamanesses.

The text is Kamui Yukar 4 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jōjishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 55–58.

Doing nothing but needlework,
I remained with my eyes
focused on a single spot,
and this is the way
I continued to live
on and on until

One day

from far out at sea
a god was heard coming this way
with a loud roaring
and rumbling.
After a while
he stopped his chariot¹
over
my house.

¹ Ainu gods are said to fly through the sky riding aboard vehicles called *shintā*, which is the common word for “cradle.” The Ainu cradle consists of a wooden frame with rails at the sides. Cords are attached to it at four places, and it is suspended from a rafter or a branch. The cradle is swung back and forth like a swing to put the baby to sleep. The “chariots” in which the gods fly through the sky, emitting fierce rumblings, are clearly patterned after these cradles. I follow Batchelor’s precedent in adopting the word “chariot” for this cradle-like vehicle for want of any better English equivalent. (Batchelor, *Ainu Life and Lore*, p. 291)

All around
it grew silent.
Then after a while,
the voice of a god
came ringing out.
This is what he said:

“Greetings,
o goddess dwelling
in this place.
Listen to
what I have
to say.

“Behind
the Cloud Horizon
there dwells
Big Demon,
and he has fallen in love
with you
and you alone.
Because of this,
he is now
getting ready
to come here.
I have come [to warn you]
because I was
worried about you
in case Big Demon
should arrive
unexpectedly.”

The voice of the god
rang out with these words.

Nevertheless.
I thought to myself:

“Am I
a deity with weak powers?”²

Thinking this,
I paid no attention.

After that,
doing nothing but needlework,
I remained with my eyes
focused on a single spot,
and this is the way
I continued to live
on and on
uneventfully until

One day
a god was heard moving shoreward
with an even louder
roaring
and rumbling.
After a while
he stopped his chariot
over
my house.
The voice of a god
came ringing out.

“It was not
a lie
that I told you, but
you, weighty goddess,

² The same response as that of the Fire Goddess. See note 2, selection 2.

seem to have
doubted me,
for you do
nothing about it
even while Big Demon
is on his way here.
This is why
I have come here
to give you
a warning.”

At these words,
I turned and looked,
and true enough,
Big Demon
was on his way.
Thus,
at my sitting place
I set in waiting
Thin Needle Boy.
In the middle of the fireplace
I set in waiting
Chestnut Boy.
At the window
I set in waiting
Hornet Boy.
In the water barrel
I set in waiting
Viper Boy.
Above the doorway
I set in waiting
Pestle Boy.
Above the outer doorway

I set in waiting
Mortar Boy.
After that
I transformed myself
into a reed stalk³
and waited.

Just then,
outside the house
there was the sound of a voice.
Without hesitation
some sort of being
came in,
wiggling its way through
the narrow doorway.
The one who came in
was surely
the so-called
Big Demon,
he who dwells
behind
the Cloud Horizon.
He stepped along
the right-hand side of the fireplace⁴
and sat down
at my sitting place
on the right-hand side of the fireplace.
He started to dig up
the hidden embers in the fireplace,
uttering these words
while he did so:

“I thought that

³ A contest of magic powers is coming. Spider Goddess transforms herself into a stalk of reed and hides in the thatching of the wall. She will watch as her six servants deal with Big Demon.

⁴ I.e., the visitor is acting as if he were master of the house.

the goddess dwelling
in this place
was here
just a moment ago,
but now she is gone.
Where could she
have gone?"

Saying these words,
he dug up the embers.
When he did that,
there was a loud snap
in the middle of the fireplace.
Chestnut Boy
popped into
one of the eyes
of Big Demon.
When that happened,

"Hai, my eye!"

he cried, and
fell over backward.

When he did that,
Needle Boy
jabbed him
in the flesh on his rump.
When that happened,

*"Hai, my eye!
Hai, my rump!"*

he cried, and
stood up and
went
toward the window.

Then Hornet Boy
stung him
in one of his eyes.
After that,

*"Hai, my eyes!
Hai, my rump!"*

he cried, and
went
toward the water barrel.

Then Viper Boy
bit
Big Demon
on one of his hands.

When that happened,
Big Demon cried:

*"Hai, my hand!
Hai, my eyes!
Hai, my rump!"*

Crying this,
he went out.
Then Pestle Boy
tumbled down

on top of the head
of Big Demon.

Then Big Demon
moaned in pain,
crying:

“*Ha!*, my eyes!
Ha!, my hand!
Ha!, my rump!
Ha!, my head!”

Crying this,
he went outside,
Then when he went out
through the outer doorway,
Mortar Boy
tumbled down
on top of his head.

Right away
Big Demon
was heard moving off dying
with a loud rumbling
and roaring.⁵

When it was all over,
everything grew quiet all around.

After that,
I came out
by the fireside
and did nothing but needlework,
remaining with my eyes
focused on a single spot,
and this is the way
I live on and on
uneventfully.

This tale was told by Spider Goddess.⁶

⁵ When gods die, they rumble away noisily across the sky.

⁶ The final formula was added by Kubodera. These formulas, which are usually spoken, rather than being sung, are appended at the ends of some of the mythic epics to identify the speaker who is telling the story.

5. Song of Young Killer Whale

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter HIRAME KAREPIA on February 19, 1936. It was sung with the burden *Inahō*. The meaning of this burden is not clear.

Just as the bear (*kimun kamui*) is the supreme land deity, so is the killer whale (*repun kamui*) worshiped as the supreme sea deity. Whales which were washed ashore were regarded as gifts sent to the humans by the killer whale. The Ainu no doubt admired the killer whale for its ability to kill whales. One of the female kinship groups is associated with the killer whale.

In this song, a young killer whale hero is being raised by his elder sister (his “foster sister”), who addresses him with the respectful term Young Offspring (*Wariunekur*) applied to the epic heroes. The elder sister punishes him for his pranks, and he cries ceaselessly day and night. One day a shoal of whales comes, and the elder sister and the young killer whale both rush outside. The sister harpoons a rorqual, and the young hero a little whale. After that, they have a whole house full of blubber to eat. The behavior of the killer whale siblings when they are at home is so human that the sister even has an attack of *imu* when she is surprised by her little brother.

The text is *Kamui Yukar 18* in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 128–30.

My elder sister
raised me,
and we lived on.
She raised me with
a little toy bow
and little toy arrows,
and we lived on.

Turning around
toward the head of the fireplace,
I would shoot arrows
at the small wine-tubs
and the big wine-tubs.
Turning around
toward the foot of the fireplace,

I would shoot arrows
 at the big pots
 and the small pots.
 Laughing gleefully
 to myself,
 I would jump and skip about
 on one side of the fireplace
 and on the other side of the fireplace.

Then, one day,
 my elder sister
 was weaving a mat.
 Turning
 her back to the fire,
 she would weave one row of weft.
 Turning around
 to face the fire,
 she would weave another row.
 While she was doing this,
 I shot [an arrow] with mighty force
 at the cord tying up her sleeves.
 It was amazing
 how very
 startled she was by this.
 She went into a fit of *imu*,¹
 saying these words:

‘‘It breaks at the top,
 it breaks at the bottom!’’

My foster sister
 spoke these words
 in her fit of *imu*.

When I laughed at her,
 she got angry
 and sprang up.
 She threw me down
 onto the floor.
 She hit me hard
 again and again
 with her fists.

I was angry
 and began
 to cry.
 I continued to cry
 both night
 and day.
 Then my elder sister
 brought in
 armful after armful
 of firewood.
 She kindled a fire next to me.

‘‘You irritate me,
 o Young Offspring!²
 If you cry like this,
 how will you ever grow strong?
 Stop this crying,
 please stop!’’

My foster sister
 uttered
 these words,
 but in spite of that
 I still kept on
 kicking my feet

¹ *Imu* is a form of psychoneurotic behavior common among Ainu women. When surprised by something, the woman will act compulsively, such as repeating nonsensical syllables over and over. The fits are regarded as humorous by other members of the community. Women who have fits of *imu* are said to be predisposed toward becoming shamanesses. See also p.47

² *Wariunekur*, a title applied in epics to youthful (human) heroes. See note 1, selection 21. Here the young killer whale god is treated exactly as if he were a human hero.

as I cried and cried.

Then one day,
my foster sister
said these words:

“A shoal of whales is coming!
O Young Offspring,
stop your crying
and come quickly!”

Saying these words,
she took in her hands
a pretty harpoon
and dashed outside.
Only then
did I jump up.
I grasped in my hand
a pretty little harpoon
and hurried outside.

I went down to the beach.
I looked out and saw that,
true enough,
a shoal of whales,
a big flock of whales,
was coming this way.

My elder sister
harpooned
a rorqual
and hauled it ashore.
Just then,
a little whale

came along,
splashing with his tail
and paddling with [the fins on] his chest.
I harpooned him with a mighty thrust.

After that,
the little whale
redoubled his strength,
and he pulled me
half-way into the water.
Now I redoubled my strength,
and I thought
I had hauled
the little whale
half-way ashore.
But then
the little whale
redoubled his strength,
and pulled me into the water.
We continued
to struggle together
back and forth
in a mighty contest.

At this time,
my foster sister
bent backward
and bent forward
with laughter.

“I told you,
Young Offspring
that you would be weak
from all that crying.

Now look at you!
One little whale
is too much for you to manage!’

Saying this,
my foster sister
came along,
laughing as she came.
Taking hold of
the pretty little harpoon,
she hauled
that little whale
up onto the sandy beach.

Then
my foster sister

busily set about
cutting up the whales.
We carried home
so much blubber
that our house
was full of it,
and on and on
uneventfully
we lived,
feeding ourselves with it.
This is why
I tell the story about it.

These words
were spoken
by Young Killer Whale.

The World of Gods and Humans

This section contains fourteen selections describing various types of experiences shared by gods (non-human beings) and humans. Gods save humans from famine and tell them how to prevent famines in the future; bears come on visits to the land of the humans; gods bless certain humans and punish others; and the culture hero Okikurmi chastises evil deities. The human-god interaction involves mutual assistance and mutual instruction: Gods help and teach humans, and humans, through their culture hero, help and teach gods.

As mentioned before, food animals are gods in disguise and must be treated with religious reverence (*oripak*) and given presents. The performance of the necessary ritual acts for the “animals” is a religious act essential for human survival, and the very existence of the human community depends on the observance of these rituals by all hunters and fishers. For instance, the salmon are given presents of *inau* symbolically by the observance of a certain rite. No matter whether they have been caught in nets, speared, or trapped in fish traps, the salmon must be individually beaten over their heads with a special type of decorated club (*i-sapa-kik-ni*, “head-beating-club”). This is tantamount to giving them *inau*. The deer are also given individual presents of curled wood shavings, which are considered to have the same potency as the actual *inau*. If the humans neglect to perform these hunting and fishing rituals, the souls of the animals will go home in tears and will complain of mistreatment to their species rulers (the “masters” of the game or of the fish). Famine will invariably result (see selections 7 and 8).

Similar patterns of thought apply to the treatment of spirits of dead ancestors. They also are entertained and given offerings of wine and food which enable them to give their own feasts and enhance their prestige in the land of the dead. A different welcome is given to evil deities, such as the gods of pestilence and disease, when they come to visit. These deities are told that there is famine among the humans, that the village is empty, and that there

is nothing to eat but certain types of food known to be abhorrent to these particular deities. They are demonstratively given offerings of these foods. This is supposed to induce them to go elsewhere and seek out victims among humans who are in better circumstances.

This section contains seven selections from Hiraga Etenoa, three selections from Chiri Yukie, two selections from Hirame Karepia, one from Nabesawa Wakarpa, and one from his wife Nabesawa Taukno. Chiri Yukie was a native of Horobetsu in Iburi province; all the other reciters mentioned are from the Saru region of Hidaka province.

6. Song of a Killer Whale

The text and Japanese translation of this *kamui yukar* in the Horobetsu dialect were published by Chiri Yukie in her *Ainu shin'yō shū* (1923), pp. 86–101. It was sung with the burden *Atuika tomatomaki kuntuteashi hm hm!* The meaning of the burden is not entirely clear, but *atui ka* means “on the sea” and *kuntu* evidently means “immense.”

A young killer whale shoots a rorqual and her young and tosses them ashore by the village of Otashut. The humans in the village worshipfully receive the whales and send presents to the killer whale.

The young killer whale has twelve elder brothers and twelve elder sisters (six long elder brothers, six long elder sisters, six short elder brothers, and six short elder sisters). The elder brothers and sisters are inept at hunting whales, and the young killer whale finds them ridiculous.

My six elder brothers,
the long elder brothers,
my six elder sisters,
the long elder sisters,
my six elder brothers,
the short elder brothers,
and my six elder sisters,
the short elder sisters
raised me,
and I lived on.
I would sit
on a seat,
a movable seat,¹
in front of the rows of treasures

and would concentrate
on carving on sheaths
and carving on scabbards.
This was
the only work
I ever did
as I lived on.

Everyday,
in the morning
my elder brothers
would take their quivers on their backs
and would go outside
along with my elder sisters.

¹ *Chituye amset*. *Amset* is a seat, bed, or movable platform. Epic heroes are raised on such a platform, where they sit during the day and sleep at night. *Chituye amset*, literally “cut seat,” seems to mean a movable seat, one which can be taken from place to place. Movable platforms 6 feet by 4 and 14 inches high were noticed in every Ainu house by Isabella Bird in 1881. They were placed at the head of the fireplace, and guests sat and slept on them. Isabella Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (New York, 1881), II, 89, quoted by Richard W. Howell, “The Kamui Oina,” p. 399.

In the evening,
 they would come home
 empty-handed
 with discouraged looks
 on their faces.
 My elder sisters,
 looking tired,
 would cook food
 and serve it to me.
 They themselves also
 would eat.
 After the meal
 was finished,
 my elder brothers
 would start
 to work their hands busily
 at making arrows.
 As soon as their quivers were full,
 since they all
 were tired,
 they would go to bed,
 and there would be the rumbling
 sounds of their snoring.

The following morning,
 they would get up
 at the first cracks
 of dawn.
 My elder sisters
 would cook food
 and serve it to me.
 After they all
 had finished eating,
 once again they would take their quivers

on their backs
 and would go off somewhere.

Again, in the evening,
 they would come back
 empty-handed
 with discouraged looks
 on their faces.
 My elder sisters
 would cook food,
 and my elder brothers
 would make arrows.
 This was what they did
 all the time.

One day again
 my elder brothers
 and my elder sisters
 took their quivers on their backs
 and went outside.
 I continued for a while
 to make
 carvings on treasures.
 Then I stood up
 on the seat.
 I took in my hands
 a little golden bow
 and a little golden arrow.
 I went outside
 and looked around.

I saw the calm sea
 stretching out smooth into the distance.
 Far at the eastern tip of the ocean

and far at the western tip of the ocean
 were many whales
 splashing about
 as they played.

Far at the eastern tip of the ocean,
 my six elder sisters,
 the long elder sisters
 would make a circle,
 and my six elder sisters,
 the short elder sisters
 would drive whales
 inside the circle.

My six elder brothers,
 the long elder brothers,
 and my six elder brothers,
 the short elder brothers
 would shoot at the whales
 inside the circle,
 but the arrows would pass under
 the whales
 or would pass over them.
 So this was what
 they had been doing
 day after day!

I looked and saw,
 at the middle of the ocean,
 a rorqual
 together with her young
 splashing about
 in this direction
 and in that direction
 as they played.
 After I saw them,

I fixed
 the little golden arrow
 to my little golden bow
 and shot it
 from far off.
 With this one arrow
 I shot down with mighty force
 both of them at once,
 both the whale and her young.

Then
 I cut in two
 one of the whales.
 I tossed
 one of the halves of this whale
 into the circle
 formed by my elder sisters.

Then
 I put under my tail
 the [remaining] one
 and a half whales,
 and moved shoreward
 in the direction of
 the land of the humans²
 until I reached
 the village of Otashut.³
 I pushed ashore
 the one
 and a half whales
 just below the village.

After that
 I went homeward,
 gently submerging

² The country where the humans live, the human world, is called *ainu moshir*, which also means "Ainu land." The name for the country inhabited by the Ainu, as distinguished from that inhabited by their enemies, is *yaunkur moshir*, "country of the people of the land."

³ Otashut is a common place name in both Hokkaido and Sakhalin. It is said to mean "stretch of sand extending from the sea's edge up to the grass upland."

[and emerging]
 on the surface of the ocean.
 As I moved along,
 some sort of creature
 came running up
 alongside me,
 panting hard
 for breath.
 When I looked,
 I saw that it was
 a sea wren.
 Panting heavily,
 he said these words:

“Tominkari-kur,
 Kamuikari-kur,
 Iso-yanke-kur,⁴
 o mighty warrior,
 o weighty deity!
 Why on earth
 have you cast ashore
 such magnificent game
 for the miserable humans,
 the wretched humans?
 The miserable humans,
 the wretched humans
 are using axes
 and sickles
 to chop the meat
 and hack the meat
 of the magnificent game.
 O mighty warrior,
 o weighty deity,
 go quickly

and take back
 the magnificent game!
 Even when game
 is cast ashore for them
 in such abundance,
 the miserable humans,
 the wretched humans
 act like this
 without even
 thanking you for it!”

When he said this,
 I laughed at him
 and spoke,
 my voice ringing out.
 These are the words I spoke:

“Since I have given it
 to the humans,
 it now
 belongs to them.
 If it belongs
 to the humans,
 what difference does it make
 if they hack at it
 or chop it up
 with sickles
 or with axes?
 Why shouldn’t they
 do anything they want with it
 when they eat it
 if it belongs to them?”

When I said this,

⁴ These three names are used in prayers and mythic epics of the Horobetsu region to refer to the killer whale. The first word (Tominkari-kur) probably means “He who watches over the treasures.” The second word (Kamuikari-kur) probably means “He who watches over the gods.” The third word (Iso-yanke-kur) means “He who casts game ashore.” Whales washed ashore are believed to be presents cast ashore for the humans by the killer whale. *Iso*, translated as “game” in this epic, means any type of prey granted as a boon to humans. Here it is used consistently to mean “whales.”

the sea wren
 was much
 discomfited, but
 I paid not
 the slightest
 attention to him.
 Gently submerging
 [and emerging]
 on the surface of the ocean,
 I went on
 and arrived
 at my native ocean
 just before
 the sun set.

I looked and saw
 my elder brothers,
 all twelve of them,
 and my elder sisters,
 all twelve of them,
 uttering shouts
 in unison
 and milling around
 in confusion together
 at the eastern tip of the ocean.
 They were having a difficult time pulling
 that half of a whale.
 Feelings of wonder
 rose up in me.⁵

Paying no attention to them,
 I returned
 to my own home
 and sat

on my seat.

After that,
 I turned around
 and looked back toward
 the land of the humans.
 I saw that
 the menfolk
 and the womenfolk,
 all decked out
 in their festive garb,
 were doing joyful dances,
 were doing dances of rejoicing
 all around
 the one
 and a half whales
 that I had cast ashore.
 On the grassy downs
 above the sandy beach
 they had spread out
 ornamented sedge mats.
 On them [was seated]
 the village chieftain
 of the village of Otashut,
 wearing sixfold robes
 fastened under his belt
 and sixfold robes
 hanging loosely.
 On his head he wore
 a sacred headgear,
 an ancestral headgear.
 In his belt he wore
 a god-given sword.
 Godlike in appearance,

⁵ Evidently meant ironically. Chiri Yukie translates this as "I was really exasperated." The young killer whale hero is surprised and amused at the utter ineptitude of his elder brothers and sisters.

he was worshiping,
 raising his hands
 up high.
 The humans
 were shedding tears
 of joy over the game.

What was this
 the sea wren
 had said
 about the humans
 using axes
 and sickles
 to chop up
 the whales I had cast ashore?
 Instead, the village chieftain
 and the village people
 had taken out
 their sacred swords,
 which they had kept stored away
 from of old as their most cherished treasures.
 They were using them to cut up the meat
 and were carrying it away.

After that,
 there was no sign at all
 of the return
 of my elder brothers
 and my elder sisters.

When two or three days
 had gone by,
 something caught
 my eye

at the window.
 I looked
 and saw that
 on the window,
 the sacred window⁶
 there was standing
 a metal wine-cup⁷
 filled
 to the brim
 with wine.
 On top of it was
 a winged libation wand.⁸
 Turning this way and that,
 it spoke a message.
 This is what it said:

“I am
 the chieftain
 of Otashut.
 With full reverence
 we make
 this offering of wine.”

It went on in detail
 about how the chieftain
 of the village of Otashut
 thanked me
 on behalf of
 all his people.

“Tominkari-kur,
 Kamuikari-kur,
 Iso-yanke-kur,
 o weighty deity,

⁶ *Rorun purai* (or *rorun puyar* in the Saru dialect), the sacred window at the head of the fireplace said to face in an eastern direction or toward the upstream. The spirit fence (the fence of clustered *inau*) is located a few steps outside this window.

⁷ This may mean either “metal wine-cup” or “magnificent wine-cup.”

⁸ *Kike-ush-pashui*, a special type of libation wand (“moustache-lifter”) with curled shavings attached to it. The family mark is carved on it. This libation wand is regarded as a messenger from humans to the gods, and it accompanies the offering of wine to the god and speaks the message from the humans.

o mighty warrior,
 it is no one but you
 who has taken pity on us
 like this
 just when there was famine
 in our village
 and we were
 so short of food
 that we didn't know what to do!
 Thank you
 for having
 given life to
 our village!
 We are so delighted with the game
 that we have brewed
 a little wine,
 and here we make
 an offering of thanks
 to the weighty deity,
 together with
 a few little *inau*.''

The winged libation wand
 uttered these words
 in its oration
 as it turned this way and that.

After that
 I stood up,
 picked up
 the metal wine-cup,
 and raised it
 and lowered it.
 I removed the lids

from six wine-tubs
 on the floor at the head of the fireplace
 and poured
 a little
 of the delicious wine into each.
 Then I set
 the metal wine-cup
 on the window.
 After that,
 I sat down
 on my seat.
 When I looked up,
 that wine-cup,
 along with the libation wand,
 had vanished completely.

After that,
 I continued
 to make
 carvings on sheaths
 and carvings on scabbards.
 Then by and by
 I happened to look up
 and saw that
 the inside of the house
 was filled with
 beautiful *inau*.
 White mists
 were hovering
 inside the house,
 and flashes of white light
 were glittering.
 It was a delightful sight,
 and my heart leaped with pleasure.

After that,
 another two or three days
 went by.
 Now at last
 outside the house
 it sounded as if
 my elder brothers
 and my elder sisters
 had come home, pulling
 that whale,
 uttering shouts
 in unison.
 Feelings of wonder
 rose up in me.

When I looked at them
 as they came
 inside the house,
 my elder brothers
 and my elder sisters
 were very tired,
 and their faces
 looked withered and wan.
 They came inside.
 When they saw
 so many *inau*,
 they were amazed
 and made gestures of worship
 again and again.

In the meantime
 the six wine-tubs
 on the floor at the head of the fireplace
 had become

brimming full,
 and the aroma of the wine,
 the beloved beverage of the gods.
 wafted about
 inside the house.

After that,
 we decorated
 the inside of the house
 with beautiful *inau*.
 We invited
 the gods from far away
 and the gods nearby.
 We held
 a peerless wine feast.
 My elder sisters
 cooked the whale
 and served it
 to the gods.
 Then the gods
 ate, uttering
 cries of gratitude.

When the drinking feast
 had reached its mid-point,
 I stood up
 and told the tale
 of how I had been moved to pity
 when famine broke out
 in the land of the humans,
 of how I had cast game ashore,
 and of how the evil deities
 had been jealous
 when I had prospered

the humans,
 and the sea wren
 had spoken
 slanders to me.
 I told them in detail
 about exactly how
 the village chieftain
 of the village of Otashut
 had thanked me,
 and how the winged libation wand
 had come
 to deliver the message.
 As I pronounced my oration,
 the gods
 shouted out in unison
 cries of *het! het!*
 and grunts of *hum! hum!*
 Their voices rang out
 as they praised me.

After that again
 we resumed
 our peerless wine feast.
 From one end of the festive mats
 to the other end of the festive mats,
 the gods
 performed *tapkar*
 and *rimse*,⁹
 their voices resounding beautifully.

Half of
 my elder sisters,
 carrying
 wine flagons,

wound their way around
 among the guests.
 Half of them
 mingled with
 the goddesses
 and sang festive songs,
 their voices resounding beautifully.

When two or three days
 had gone by,
 the drinking feast came to an end.
 When I gave
 two or three
 of the beautiful *inau*
 to each of the gods,
 the gods
 bowed down low,
 bending their waists over double,
 and made gestures of worship
 again and again.
 They all
 returned
 to their own home.

Afterward,
 as always
 I have lived with
 my six elder brothers,
 the long elder brothers,
 my six elder sisters,
 the long elder sisters,
 my six elder sisters,
 the short elder sisters,
 and my six elder brothers,

⁹ *Tapkar* is a slow, stately man's dance performed during drinking feasts by the guests one at a time. Sometimes one or two women would support the male dancer by dancing along behind him. *Rimse*, in the dialect of the Horobetsu Ainu, is a group dance performed by both women and men at festivals and feasts; the dancers form a circle and dance around toward the left, singing in unison. These dances could only be performed by dancers dressed in their best festive costumes. There was a belief that they were performed for the gods, who delighted in watching the humans do their dances. A mountain god, out of his desire to witness the Ainu dances again, might visit the Ainu village once more in the form of a bear. (Chiri Mashihō, *Chosakushū*, v. 2, pp. 48–52, 64–74)

the short elder brothers.

Whenever the humans
brew wine,
every time
they worship me
and always send me
presents of *inau*.

Now
the humans
are living
in peace
free from all
hunger
and troubles, and
my heart is at ease.

7. Song of the Goddess of the Waters

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on September 19, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Petru a petru*. The word *petru* is no doubt the same as the word *petaru*, meaning “watering place,” that is, the place by the river where water is drawn. The Goddess of the Waters is sometimes called *Petru-ush-mat*, meaning “Woman-Dwelling-in-the-Watering Place.”

The Goddess of the Waters, *Wakka-ush-kamui* (“Goddess-Dwelling-in-the-Water”), was worshiped by being given offerings of *inau* by the river and at the spirit fence (*inau san, nusa san*) outside the house. A special cluster of *inau* dedicated to the goddess was set aside at the right-hand end of the spirit fence, as viewed from the sacred window. In this song the goddess is also called *Petorush-mat* (*pet-or-ush-mat*), apparently meaning “Woman-Dwelling-in-the-River.” *Petru-ush-mat* and *Petorush-mat* are no doubt variants of the same word.

In this song, the Goddess of the Waters, together with the Goddess of the River Rapids (*Chiwash-kor-kamui*), saves the human race from famine and tells them how to prevent famines in the future by observing the proper hunting and fishing rituals. The role played by the culture hero *Okikurmi* in this mythic epic is secondary. He appears only as a supplicant on behalf of the human race. Variants of this song were obtained by *Kindaichi* from *Taukno* and by *Kubodera* from *Hiramura Kanunmore* and *Nitani Kuni-matsu*.

The text is *Kamui Yukar* 81 in *Kubodera's Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 368–75.

Doing nothing but needlework,
I remained with my eyes

focused on a single spot,
and this is the way

I continued to live
on and on.

Then one day
something dark appeared
at the window.

I looked and saw
on the window sill
a large wine-cup
filled [with wine]
to the brim.

On top of the wine-cup
there was
a winged libation wand.
That libation wand
went leaping and hopping
on the window sill,
turning around
in this direction
and in that direction.

As it did this,
the winged libation wand,
while it turned this way and that
on the wine-cup,
spoke a message.
These were its words:

“The god Okikurmi
has sent me
to speak this message:

‘Famine has broken out
in the human homeland,¹
and I have been assisting

my kinsfolk
by giving them
all the food I had,
but by this time
even I
have become
hard pressed.
Nevertheless,
I have brewed wine
with the only food I had,
with the last grains I had,
and I am now
invoking your aid
with wine
and with *inau*.
O Goddess of the Waters,
o Petorush-mat,
come to our assistance,
I pray!’

“This is the message
which the god Okikurmi
sent me to bear.”

This was the message
spoken by
the winged libation wand.
So I stood up
and put six wine-tubs
at the foot of the fireplace
and put six wine-tubs
at the head of the fireplace.²
After that,
I picked up

¹ *Ainu kotan*, same as *ainu moshir*. The words *ainu kotan* may also mean “Ainu village,” but in this case it means the land or world of the humans.

² The *ror* (head of the fireplace) is the section of the house by the sacred window (*rorun puyar*) farthest away from the entrance. The foot of the fireplace (*útur*), the section of the house near the entrance, is separated from the *ror* by the fireplace.

that wine-cup
and emptied its contents
into those wine-tubs.

After that,
two or three days
passed by, and
I invited
the Goddess of the River Rapids.³
I invited
the Owl God.⁴
I invited
the God of the Game.⁵
I invited
the God of the Fish.⁶

After that,
the invited guests
were ushered in with much ceremony.
At that time,
I seated
the Owl God
in back of
the big wine-tub.⁷
I seated opposite him
the Goddess of the Hunt.⁸
I seated facing each other
the God of the Game
and the God of the Fish.

After that,
I began to wind my way about
among the guests
to pour wine to them.

After a while,
I began to speak,
saying these words:

“See here,
God of the Game,
and God of the Fish!
I have something to say
that both of you
and all the gods
must hear.
What I have to say is this.

“Famine has broken out
in the human homeland,
and the god Okikurmi
is hard pressed by it.
For this reason,
he has brewed wine
with the last grains he had,
with the only food he had,
and he has sent
presents of wine
and presents of *inou*
to my abode
because he wishes,
by means of *inou*
and by means of wine,
to invoke the aid
of the God of the Game
and the God of the Fish.
This is why
I have invited
all of you

³ Chiwash-kor-kamui

⁴ Kotan-kor-kamui, literally “god who rules the land” or “god who rules the village.”

⁵ Yuk-kor-kamui, the master of the animals (chiefly the deer).

⁶ Chep-kor-kamui, the master of the fish (chiefly the salmon).

⁷ This is the position of the chief guest (*sake-iyush-kur*). He is seated with his back toward the north wall, facing the wine-tubs.

⁸ Hashinai-kor-kamui.

weighty deities.
 Give your consent,
 I pray you,
 to this request of mine!”

When I said this,
 the God of the Game
 remained silent
 for a time.
 Then he spoke these words:

“When my kinsfolk [the deer]
 go to pay visits
 to the humans,
 the humans say:
 ‘Spring venison!
 Bah, who can ever
 eat such meat?’
 Saying this,
 they throw away
 my kinsfolk
 with utter contempt
 without any *inau*,
 and they come home in tears.
 I am angry
 because of this,
 and I have shut up
 all of my kinsfolk
 in the storehouse.”

Thus spoke
 the God of the Game.
 The God of the Fish
 spoke these words:

“When my kinsfolk [the fish]
 go there
 to do business,⁹
 the humans
 kill the fish
 by beating them
 with rotten wood.
 They say:
 ‘Who would ever eat
 such ragged-tailed fish?’
 They throw them away
 with utter contempt,
 and my poor kinsfolk
 come home in tears.
 I am angry
 because of this, and
 I have shut up
 all of my kinsfolk
 in the storehouse.”

These words
 were spoken by
 the God of the Fish.

In the meanwhile,
 the two of us—
 the Goddess of the River Rapids
 and I—were performing
 many different songs and dances.
 During this while,
 the Owl God
 remained
 with his eyelids
 shut tight over each other.

⁹ The word is *irauketupa*, “to transact business,” “to go on a business trip.” Animals visit the land of the humans in order to make a definite transaction. In exchange for the bodies they leave, they want to receive presents to take home with them. See above, p. 62.

I pondered
 within my heart
 what might be the cause for this.
 It turned out that
 a hair from the head
 of a human woman
 had gotten into the wine,
 and this way why
 the Owl God
 was angry.

Therefore,
 I started to speak,
 saying these words:

“O what a gangling
 hobgoblin of a woman
 am I!
 I did not
 even know that
 a hair of mine
 had gotten into the wine.
 And the Owl God
 had gotten angry,
 thinking that it was
 a hair from the head
 of a human woman!”

When I said this,
 the Owl God
 popped his eyes open
 and spoke these words:

“O, I see!

One of the magnificent tresses
 of Petorush-mat,
 the exalted lady,
 was in the wine!
 And all the time
 I was angry,
 thinking that it was
 a hair from the head
 of a human woman!”

Thus did he speak.
 In the meanwhile
 the two of us—
 the Goddess of the River Rapids
 and I—continued performing
 many different songs and dances.
 While we were dancing
 my soul [left my body and]
 went off.
 It went
 to the home of
 the God of the Game
 and opened
 the doors of the storehouse
 of the God of the Game.
 After that
 herds of small deer
 and herds of large deer
 came running out all at once.
 They went skipping and jumping together
 over the mountain slopes,
 the herds of small deer
 by themselves,
 and the herds of large deer

by themselves.
 Then, turning back,
 my soul
 returned and
 came back into
 my mortal body.

In the meantime,
 the soul of
 the Goddess of the River Rapids
 [left her body and] went outside.
 It went on until
 it came to
 the home of
 the God of the Fish.
 It opened
 the doors
 of the storehouse
 of the God of the Fish.
 It took down
 the baskets with fish in them.
 It scattered them
 over the river fishing beds.
 As soon as it did this,
 the fish were
 so abundant
 in the river fishing beds
 that it seemed as if
 the schools of fish on the bottom
 were rubbing against the rocks
 and the schools of fish at the top
 were scorched by the sunshine.

During all this while,

the two of us—
 the Goddess of the River Rapids
 and I—still kept on performing
 many different songs and dances.
 As we did them,
 all of the gods
 were watching us
 with smiles
 on their lips.
 After a while,
 both the God of the Fish
 and the God of the Game
 found out that
 the two of us—
 the Goddess of the River Rapids
 and I—had gone
 to their homes in their absence,
 had opened
 the doors of their storehouses,
 and had let out
 the deer
 and the fish.
 Although they found it out,
 there was nothing
 they could say about it,
 and they kept silent
 as if nothing had happened.

Then
 we got on with
 the peerless wine feast.
 After that,
 all the gods
 expressed

their gratitude
and went home.

After that,
I did nothing but needlework,
remaining with my eyes
focused on a single spot,
and this was the way
I continued to live
on and on,
uneventfully.
As time went on,
I spoke in a dream
to the god Okikurmi:

“When the deer
went to pay visits
to the humans,
they were treated badly
and went home
to the God of the Game
saying
that they were angry
because of this.
This is why
the God of the Game,
wishing to avenge
his kinsfolk,
shut them up in his storehouse.
The souls of the food
did he shut up in his storehouse.

“[The same thing was true] also
of the God of the Fish.

When the humans
killed the fish,
they would kill them by beating them
with rotten wood.
The right way
to kill fish
is to cut
willow trees
and to make.
pretty *i-sapa-kik-ni*.¹⁰

“The salmon
are to be killed
with these.
But they were killing them
by beating them
with rotten wood.
The God of the Fish
was angry
because of this,
and shut up the souls of the food
in his storehouse.
This was the cause
of the famine
in the human homeland.

“However,
your wine
and your *inau*
arrived at my abode.
Using them,
I invited
the God of the Game
and the God of the Fish,

¹⁰ “Head-beating-sticks,” clubs for beating the fish over the heads. A willow branch about 1.5 inch in diameter is cut to a length of about 1 foot 5 inches. A square-shaped grip is whittled at one end, removing the bark. The bark is left on the remaining half of the stick. At approximately the middle, where the grip part comes to an end, curled wood shavings are made. It was believed to be necessary to beat the salmon on the heads with these clubs to enable them to return to the land of the gods joyfully with presents of *inau*. The beating with the special club was equivalent to giving them presents of *inau*.

as well as
 the Goddess of the Hunt
 and the Owl God,
 and we had a drinking feast.
 During the drinking feast,
 while the gods
 were enjoying themselves,
 this is what we did.
 The Goddess of the River Rapids
 opened
 the doors of the storehouse
 of the God of the Fish,
 and I
 opened
 the doors of the storehouse
 of the God of the Game.
 Thanks to this,
 there is now
 plenty of fish
 and deer.
 For this reason,
 from now on,
 you must command
 your kinsfolk—
 you must
 command them
 never to do
 these things again
 from now on.

“One thing more—
 You must apologize
 both to the God of the Game
 and to the God of the Fish

and must worship them
 with *inau*
 and with wine
 on behalf of
 your kinsfolk.
 You must also
 express your gratitude
 to the Goddess of the River Rapids.’

These words
 I spoke in a dream
 to the god Okikurmi.
 I continued to live
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 Then,
 both the God of the Game
 and the God of the Fish
 expressed
 their gratitude to me.
 This is what they said:

“Petorush-mat,
 o exalted lady,
 thanks to you
 our kinsfolk
 are being treated well.”

They expressed
 their gratitude.

Okikurmi also
 worshiped me,
 expressing

his reverence
with wine
and with *inau*.
The God of the Fish
and the God of the Game
also expressed
their gratitude.

The god Okikurmi
worships me,
expressing

his gratitude
with wine
and with *inau*,
and I live on
with my glory as a deity
enhanced thereby.

These words
were narrated
by Petorush-mat,
the exalted lady.

8. Song of the Owl God

The text and Japanese translation of this *kamui yukar* in the Horobetsu dialect were published by Chiri Yukie in her *Ainu shin'yō shu*, pp. 74–85. It was sung with the burden *Konkuwa*. The meaning of the burden is not immediately clear.

The speaker in the song is the Owl God, identified in the title supplied by Chiri as *kamui-chikap kamui* (“god-bird god,” “owl god”). At the end of the song the speaker is identified as *kotan-kor-kamui-kamui ekashi* (“god-ruling-the-land, god grandfather,” the Owl God, the elderly god). In this song, the Owl God is residing in the land of the humans, of which he is the guardian. At the very end of the song, his work completed, he ascends into the heavens, leaving “a most mighty warrior, a youthful warrior” (*shino rametok, upen rametok*) behind him to watch over the human homeland. According to Kindaichi, there are considerable differences in religious belief about the Owl God from one area to another. In the Saru region of Hidaka, the Owl God is not accorded the same degree of daily worship as in other regions. In Iburi, and even more so in Ishikari, Tokachi, Kushiro, and Kitami, the Owl God is regarded as the second most important cult deity in daily worship, following after the Fire Goddess. In these latter regions, the Goddess of the Hunt (Hashinau-uk-kamui) is not the object of any particular religious cult (Kindaichi, *Ainu no shinten*, p. 120).

The term *kotan-kor-kamui*, applied to the owl, means “god ruling the land.” This seems to indicate that in earlier periods the owl was regarded as being responsible for ruling or watching over the human homeland. In a whole series of culture hero epics, the culture hero is pictured as marrying the younger sister of the Owl God (see selection 24).

The other personages who appear in the song include a crow boy (*pashkur okkayo*), a mountain jay (*metot-eyami*), and a dipper boy (*katken okkayo*). The crow is the hondo jungle crow (*Corvus coronoides*), which was despised by the Ainu. The dipper (the Siberian black-bellied dipper, *Cinclus pallasii pal-*

lasii) was regarded as a particularly auspicious bird by the Ainu and frequently appears in epics as a messenger. The Owl God has an important message to send to the heavens. The first two would-be messengers, the crow and the mountain jay, fall asleep while listening to the Owl God recite the message. The third messenger, the dipper, listens without tiring to the entire message and then flies off immediately to deliver it. The message has to do with famine which has broken out among the humans. The reply brought back by the dipper tells the reasons why famine has occurred. The Owl God teaches the humans in their dreams how to observe the proper hunting and fishing rituals in order to prevent recurrences of famine in the future. The necessary observances are the same as those enjoined in selection 7.

Like all the mythic epics recorded in Chiri's book, this song is most interesting from the aesthetic viewpoint and has many delightful touches.

“Long ago,
when I used to speak,
my voice
would ring out
like the buzzing
at the center of the handgrips
of bows wound with cherry bark,¹
but now
I feel old,
I feel feeble.
O for someone
who is eloquent
enough to be trusted
with a message!
If only there were such a one,
I would send him as a messenger
to the heavens
bearing five

and a half messages!”

While saying these words,
I beat time
on top of the lid
of a wine-tub with a hoop around it.

Then someone [appeared]
at the door
and said:

“Who but me
is eloquent
enough to be trusted
with a message?”

I looked and saw
that it was

¹ The bows would snap with a buzzing sound when the warriors would twang the strings. The Owl God compares his own voice with this snapping sound.

Crow Boy.
 I invited him in.
 Then
 I beat time
 on top of the lid
 of the wine-tub with a hoop around it
 while I recited
 the message which
 Crow Boy
 was to bear.
 Three days went by.
 While I was just reciting
 the third message,
 I looked up and saw that
 Crow Boy
 had dozed off, nodding his head,
 behind the hearth frame.
 When that happened,
 I flew into
 a terrible rage.
 I thrashed Crow Boy,
 feathers and all,
 and killed him.

Then once again,
 I began to beat time
 on top of the lid
 of the wine-tub with the hoop around it,
 saying these words:

“If only there were someone
 who might be trusted
 with a message,
 I would send him as a messenger

to the heavens
 bearing five
 and a half messages!”

Then again someone [appeared]
 at the door
 and said:

“Who but me
 is eloquent
 enough to be
 sent as a messenger
 to the heavens?”

I looked and saw
 that it was
 Mountain Jay.
 I invited him in.
 Then once again
 I began to beat time
 on top of the lid
 of the wine-tub with the hoop around it
 while I recited
 the five
 and a half messages.
 Four days went by.
 While I was just reciting
 the fourth message,
 Mountain Jay
 dozed off, nodding his head,
 behind the hearth frame.
 I got angry,
 thrashed Mountain Jay,
 feathers and all,

and killed him.

Then once again
I began to beat time
on top of the lid
of the wine-tub with the hoop around it,
saying these words:

“O for someone
who is eloquent
enough to be trusted
with a message!
If only there were such a one,
I would send him
to the heavens
with five
and a half messages!”

Then someone
came inside
with a respectful manner.
I looked and saw that it was
Dipper Boy.
Godlike in appearance,
he sat down
on the left-hand side of the fireplace.
When that happened,
I began to beat time
on top of the lid
of the wine-tub with the hoop around it
while I intoned,
both night
and day,
the five

and a half messages.
When I looked, I saw that
Dipper Boy
was listening
intently,
with no signs at all
of weariness.
[I went on]
day after day
and night after night,
altogether
for six days and nights.
Finally,
as soon as I had finished reciting,
he flew out right away
through the smokehole
and went flying off
toward the heavens.

Now, the import
of the message was this.
There was famine
in the land of the humans,
and the humans
were on the verge of starving to death
at any moment.
When I looked
to see what was the reason
that this had happened,
I found that it was because
the God of the Game
and the God of the Fish
in the heavens
had taken counsel together

and decided not to send any deer
 and not to send any fish.
 No matter what the gods
 said to them,
 they would not pay
 the slightest attention.
 Thus, when the humans
 would go into the mountains
 to hunt,
 there were no deer,
 and when they would go
 to the rivers
 to fish,
 there were no fish.
 Seeing this,
 I became angry,
 and this was why
 I sent a message
 to the God of the Game
 and the God of the Fish
 in the heavens.

After that,
 day after day
 went by.
 Then there was heard
 a pattering
 in the skies,
 and someone
 came inside.
 I looked and saw
 Dipper Boy,
 now looking even more
 beautiful than before.

The features of a warrior
 stood out majestically
 on his countenance.
 He intoned
 the message in reply.

This was the reason
 why the God of the Game
 and the God of the Fish
 in the heavens
 had withdrawn the supply of deer
 and withdrawn the supply of fish
 until this day.
 When the humans
 hunt deer,
 they beat the deer on their heads
 with pieces of wood.
 When they skin them,
 they throw away
 the heads of the deer
 and leave them right there
 in the woodlands.
 When they catch fish,
 they beat the fish on their heads
 with pieces of rotten wood.
 The deer
 come home
 naked
 and in tears
 to the God of the Game.
 The fish
 come home
 to the God of the Fish
 holding in their mouths

pieces of rotten wood.
 The God of the Game
 and the God of the Fish,
 indignant at this,
 took counsel together
 and decided to withdraw the supply of deer
 and to withdraw the supply of fish.
 However,
 the God of the Game
 and the God of the Fish
 said that
 they would provide plenty of game
 and provide plenty of fish
 if the humans
 would treat the deer well
 and would treat the fish well
 after this.
 This message
 he recited in detail.

After I heard this,
 I praised
 Dipper Boy.
 I looked and saw that,
 true enough,
 the humans
 had been treating the deer badly
 and treating the fish badly.

After that,
 I taught
 the humans
 in their sleep,
 in their dreams

that they must not
 do such things
 after this.
 The humans also
 suddenly became
 aware of this.

Ever since then,
 they decorate
 their *i-sapa-kik-ni*
 beautifully like *inau*
 and use these to kill the fish.
 When they hunt deer,
 they decorate beautifully
 the heads of the deer
 and give them *inau*.
 As a result,
 the fish
 come home
 with rejoicing
 to the God of the Fish,
 holding in their mouths
 beautiful *inau*.
 The deer
 come home
 with rejoicing
 to the God of the Game
 with their heads newly decked out.
 The God of the Game
 and the God of the Fish
 are overjoyed at this, and
 they provide plenty of fish
 and plenty of deer.
 The humans

live now
free from all
troubles
and hunger.
Having seen this,
my heart is at ease.

As for me,
I am now old
and feeble,
and I have been
desiring to go
to the heavens, but
in the land of the humans,
over which I watch,
should there be famine,
and should the humans
be on the verge of starving to death,
I could not

ignore this
and go away,
and this is why
I have remained
until now.
But now
there are no troubles
to worry about,
and I am now going
to the heavens,
leaving behind me
a most mighty warrior,
a youthful warrior,
to watch over
the land of the humans.

Thus recounted the Owl God, the elderly god,
before he went to the heavens, they say.

9. Song of a Bear

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa in 1932. It was sung with the burden *Howēwē hum*. The burden clearly represents the sound of a bear's cry. Songs of bears very often have similar burdens: *Ho wēi ho wēi*; *Uēwewe wē*; *Weiwei inou*; *Wēwa hum*. No doubt these all had similar melodies.

The bear appearing in this song calls himself *nupuri-kor-kamui*, “god ruling the mountain.” These gods are gentle, wise, and friendly toward the humans. When they appear in human form, they wear black robes. Other types of bears are ferocious, unreasonable, and violently inclined toward the humans; they are known as monster bears (*arsarush*). However, even bears of a benevolent type could behave themselves violently toward humans on account of a misunderstanding, as is true in this case.

The song gives the whole scenario for human-bear relationships: the hunting magic practiced by the hunters in the mountains, the eery night spent by the fireside in the mountains, the trip down to the human village, the magnificent bear ceremony, the welcome given the visiting deity by the Fire Goddess, the ritual dismissal, the delivery of piles of presents from the humans, and the feast held by the god after his return to his own country. One can understand how central was this bear ceremonialism in the life of the Ainu.

Other bears appear in selections 10, 15, and 31.

The text is *Kamui Yukar 6* in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 61–72.

I am
a Mountain God.¹
My wedded wife,

She of the Shiny Fur—
so much did I respect her
that I did not even allow her to fetch water

¹ *Nupuri-kor-kamui*.

or even to kindle a fire.

We lived
on and on,
and finally
a lovely little baby
was born to us.
On and on
we continued to live.
Then, one day,
this is what
I thought to myself:

“If I were to leave home,
I would be worried
about things at home in my absence.
Nevertheless,
I want to go and visit
the god ruling
the Lower Heavens,
for he and I
have become
the greatest of friends.”

Thus,
I gave parting instructions
to She of the Shiny Fur,
my wedded wife.
I went
to pay a visit to
the god ruling
the Lower Heavens.
After I arrived
at the abode
of the god ruling

the Lower Heavens,
we began to enjoy
pleasant conversation,
and we remained
day after day
occupied in this way.
As time went on,
even though I was worried
about things at home in my absence,
the god ruling
the Lower Heavens
was so exceedingly
talkative
that I was quite
unable to carry out my intention
of leaving for home.

Then, one day,
all of a sudden
Uncle Crow [appeared and]
kept pecking
and scratching
at the post by the doorway.
This is what he said:

“O Mountain God,
o most weighty deity!
Are you blind
to such a degree?
After you left,
She of the Shiny Fur,
your wedded wife,
decided that she wanted
to visit the humans.

She left behind
 your little baby.
 She closed up tightly
 the windows
 and the door
 and tied them shut
 with leather thongs,
 and left him behind.
 Ever since then,
 that little baby,
 your little baby
 jumps at the windows
 and jumps at the door,
 the sound of his weeping
 ringing out noisily.
 He continues
 to scream out in distress,
 calling for his mother dear
 both night
 and day.
 Can it be,
 o Mountain God,
 that you are blind
 to such an extent?"

When I heard
 Crow Boy,
 Uncle Crow
 say these things,
 I flew into
 a frenzied rage
 at the mere
 hearing of them.
 I sprang up.

At the head of the fireplace
 I got up
 and went rushing
 toward the doorway.
 I plunged head first
 through the middle of the door [hangings].
 After that
 I went down,
 with blasts of wind
 whirling in my ears.

I darted down
 onto the yard
 of my own home.
 This is what
 I heard.
 Inside the house
 my little baby
 was crying,
 his cries ringing out noisily.
 Just then,
 I headed
 toward the doorway.
 When I tried
 to go inside,
 the doorway
 was tied shut
 with leather thongs.
 Then
 I cut
 the leather thongs.
 Breaking down
 the doorway,
 I went inside.

My little baby
 was shrieking and weeping,
 was jumping and crying.
 He was jumping
 at the windows.
 Just then,
 I rushed toward him.
 Picking up
 my little baby,
 I tossed him up
 onto my back
 and tied up tightly
 the carrying cords.
 After that
 I went outside,
 intending
 to go down to
 the human village
 and to ravage
 the human village.

After this,
 I went down
 along the course
 of our native river,
 with blasts of wind
 whirling in my ears.
 As I was going down,
 Light-Footed-One
 Swift-Footed-One²
 came dashing out
 from somewhere.
 He ran around and around
 at a distance from me

and stretched his tail
 far out
 while barking to bewitch me.

Just then,
 from behind a tree,
 the top of a bow
 could be seen protruding.
 Overjoyed,
 I rushed
 toward it.
 A pretty little arrow
 lodged itself with a thump
 on my body.
 Two young men
 went running away
 from behind the tree.
 After that,
 I began to chase
 right after them.

As I went on,
 Light-Footed-One,
 Swift-Footed-One
 stretched his tail
 far out
 while barking to bewitch me.
 He slipped through
 right under my neck
 and kept running in circles
 around and around me.
 I got angry
 at this
 and began to try

² Names applied to the fox (*chironnuŋ kamui*). Foxes are believed to bark for the purpose of casting spells or bewitching. Here the fox is trying to bewitch the bear.

to strike at
 Light-Footed-One,
 Swift-Footed-One,
 but he slipped
 through my hands.
 I continued to strike at him
 and miss him again and again.
 I was quite unable
 to get at him.

When I had been doing this
 for some time,
 the God of Aconite Poison³
 came dashing out [and said]:

“The Fire Goddess
 has sent me
 to bear this message:

‘O weighty deity,
 please come to pay me
 a peaceable visit,
 and let us meet
 to enjoy
 peaceful conversation!’

“I have come
 to bring this message
 from the Fire Goddess.”

Thus spoke
 the God of Aconite Poison, but
 I still continued to strike out violently.
 Light-Footed-One,

Swift-Footed-One
 still continued
 to stretch his tail
 far out
 while barking to bewitch me
 as he ran around and around
 at a distance from me
 and came dashing up
 closer and closer to me.

Just then,
 the Resin God⁴
 came dashing out.
 He and the God of Aconite Poison
 working together
 wrapped themselves around
 my hind limbs
 and my fore limbs
 and seized me with their hands.
 I tumbled down
 and lay outstretched
 majestic and godlike.
 I lost all consciousness
 of what was happening.

After sleeping for a while,
 I opened my eyes,
 and this is what I saw.
 I was sitting
 on a tree branch,
 with my hands and legs
 hanging down limply,⁵
 and at this point
 I regained consciousness.

³ *Shuruku-kamui*. Aconite poison (*shuruku*, *shurku*), obtained from the root of the wolfbane (*Aconitum subcuneatum* Nakai), was used to poison arrows. The poison god enters the hunted animal, depriving him of his freedom of movement.

⁴ *Unkotuk kamui*. Fir or spruce resin is used to attach the arrowhead to the arrow shaft.

⁵ A conventional formula applied to the soul after it has left the corpse. The soul of the Mountain God looks down uncomprehendingly on the corpse it has just left, not recognizing that the carcass of the bear is his own.

Underneath me
 a big old he-bear
 was lying outstretched
 majestic and godlike.
 On top of
 that he-bear
 a little bear-cub
 was playing.

Just then,
 those same young men
 came walking back
 together.
 They whispered
 to each other,
 saying:

“It seemed
 as if this was
 a benevolent deity,
 but what was the meaning
 of his behavior just now?”⁶

As they were
 whispering these things
 to each other,
 the dogs
 went chasing after
 the bear-cub, but
 those young men
 beat them off soundly.
 The bare-fanged ones [the dogs]
 went running away.
 Afterward,

they picked up
 the bear-cub.

Then they began
 to prepare⁷
 the he-bear
 and worshiped him.
 Then they whittled wing-shaped notches
 on a stick of wood with sharpened endings.⁸
 They stood it up
 by the side of
 that bear.
 The young men
 worshiped it by rubbing their hands together,
 [saying]:

“Do you deities enjoy yourselves
 by conversing together!
 It has already
 become dark by now,
 and since it is
 too late
 to move the bear,
 we will leave him here.
 When morning comes,
 we will come back.
 Then we will bring
 the weighty deity [the bear]
 down to the village.
 Do you deities both
 watch over each other!”

While saying
 these things,

⁶ The hunters had thought that the bear wished to be taken by them and wondered why the bear seemed to be so enraged.

⁷ An animal carcass is prepared for ritual dismissal according to ancient tradition. The brains and eyeballs are removed from the bear's head, which is stuffed with wooden shavings.

⁸ This describes the whittling of a “club *inau*” (*shuu inau*), also called “winged *inau*.” It is an *inau* with flaps known as “wings” cut on the stem. In this case, the club *inau* is set up to watch over the bear's carcass overnight. The humans are able to impart souls to the deities they fashion with their hands. Later on, the *inau* god appears to the bear's soul and spends the night with him in pleasant conversation.

they cut
 a stick of wood
 with sharpened endings,
 stood it up
 by the side of
 that bear,
 and worshiped it by rubbing their hands
 together.

Then
 they put the bear-cub
 on their backs
 and went down the mountain.

After they were gone,
 I wondered
 what was the purpose
 for which they had
 made this [stick of wood]
 and left it there.
 I continued
 to stare steadily
 at it, but
 once, for a moment,
 I looked away.
 Then [when I looked again],
 a blazing bonfire
 had been kindled
 and was burning
 by the side of
 that bear.
 A young man
 was sitting
 by the fire.
 He began to speak,

saying these words:

“O weighty deity,
 come down
 beside the fire,
 and let us enjoy ourselves
 in conversation!”

Thus did he speak.
 Therefore,
 I went down
 beside the fire,
 and we began
 to engage in pleasant conversation.
 While we were conversing,
 birds
 and different demons
 would come
 to steal the meat.
 Then that young man
 would stand up
 with a club
 and would go running
 all around me,
 beating off soundly
 and chasing after
 those creatures who had come
 to steal the meat.
 We continued to do this
 for a long time until
 finally
 morning came.

Then

the fire
 was gone,
 though I was sure
 that a fire had been burning right there.
 That young man also
 was gone.
 There was standing there [only]
 a stick of wood with sharpened endings.

Thus,
 I went up
 onto the tree branch
 and remained there.
 Just then,
 many people were heard
 coming this way with a noisy clamor.
 A large crowd of people
 came this way.
 Then they began
 to skin
 that bear.
 When they had finished,
 the large crowd of people
 went down the mountain
 bearing the meat on their backs.
 The elder one of
 those [two] young men
 carried on his back
 the bear's head
 with the skin still attached to it.
 So I jumped down
 from the tree branch
 onto the bundle
 of the man who was carrying

the bear's head.
 When I did this,
 he could hardly walk,
 and he was having such a hard time
 that I [got off his back and] went
 walking down
 by his side.

We walked downhill
 until we came upon
 a human village,
 a populous village.
 At the center of the village,
 an immense house⁹
 was seen standing
 majestically.
 I was seated
 in the middle of
 the spirit fence,
 the *inau* fence
 just east of the house.

After I had remained
 there for a while,
 the Fire Goddess,
 wearing sixfold layers
 of magnificent robes
 fastened under her girdle
 and sixfold robes
 hanging loosely,
 came outside
 hobbling along
 on a crooked staff,
 a magnificent staff.

⁹ Literally, "a house the size of a mountain"

“I thank you
for having come to pay me
a peaceable visit,
for it is
just such conduct
for which a weighty deity
wins praise!”

Speaking these words,
she came outside.

After that

I was invited inside.

I went inside

and was seated

under the sacred window.¹⁰

My wedded wife

was already there

before me.

After that

crowds of young men

and crowds of young women

gathered together.

Those who were making dumplings

went running about

this way and that.

Those who were whittling *inau*

were plying their whittling knives

together this way and that.

They continued to make *inau*

until now

it was time

for me to be dismissed.¹¹

I was given

one bundle of *inau*

and one bundle of dumplings

and went outside.

After that

I went on my way

until I came back

to my own home.

I went inside.

Before I had arrived,

bundles of dumplings

and piles of *inau*

had been delivered in

through the window.

The floor at the head of the fireplace

was filled up

with all the many dumplings

and the many *inau*.

After that,

I remained there

for two or three days.

Then She of the Shiny Fur,

my wedded wife,

came along

after me.

She came back

loaded down with

much wine,

many *inau*,

and dumplings too.

After that,

I sent out messages everywhere

¹⁰ *Rorun puyar*. A visiting god is seated in state, at the *ror*, the most sacred place in the house.

¹¹ *Hopunire*, to give ritual dismissal to, to send off.

to the gods dwelling nearby
 and the gods dwelling far away
 and invited them [to the feast].
 The invited guests
 were ushered in with much ceremony.
 Then we began
 to hold
 the delightful banquet.

My wedded wife
 spoke these words:

“So exceedingly
 did I long to have
 the human wine
 and the human *inau*
 that I went to visit
 the humans.
 Then my beloved husband,
 getting angry,
 came down
 intending
 to ravage
 the human village.
 Were he ever
 to do such a thing,
 however weighty
 a deity he might be,
 he would be kicked down
 to the dank country,
 to the Underworld.
 The Fox God,
 worried about this,
 bewitched you,

my beloved husband,
 and thanks to this
 your heart was calmed.

“Since I was afraid of you,
 you were given dismissal
 first.
 After that,
 I requested
 the humans
 to raise
 our little baby.
 Thus,
 I had to wait
 while the wine was being brewed,
 and I was delayed
 on this account.
 This is why
 I have come back
 after [the return of]
 my beloved husband.
 We are now
 holding this banquet
 for all of the gods
 with the wine
 and the dumplings.
 I implore you,
 my beloved husband,
 do not punish me!”

My wedded wife
 spoke these words.
 All of the gods
 also scolded me.

After that
 I made many
 worshipful gestures
 again and again.
 Afterward,
 all of the gods
 left for home,
 expressing
 their thanks.

After that,
 we lived on
 uneventfully.
 After some time
 had gone by,
 our dear little child
 came back
 from the humans
 carrying on his back
 much wine

and many *inau*.

Once again
 we invited
 the gods dwelling nearby
 and the gods dwelling far away.
 The invited guests
 were shown in with much ceremony.
 After that,
 the peerless feast
 went on magnificently.
 All of the gods
 expressed
 their thanks
 and left for home.

These things
 were recounted
 by a Mountain God.

10. Song of the Daughter of the Mountain God

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiramé Karepia on February 17, 1936. It was sung with the burden *Weiwei inou*. Like the burden of selection 9, this burden clearly is meant to indicate the sound of a bear's cry.

The speaker is a she-bear, the daughter of a Mountain God (*nupuri-kor-kamui kor matnepo*). Although she comes from a family of benevolent bears who are supposedly friendly toward the humans, she has an evil disposition, and her only thought is that she wants to kill a human. One day she slips out and accomplishes her dream: she kills a human woman. At the demand of the Fire Goddess, the bear maiden goes and restores the dead human woman to life. In spite of her evil deeds, the humans are grateful to the bear maiden and give her a splendid ritual dismissal. The bear maiden repents of her evil conduct and warns other she-bears against doing such evil deeds in the future.

The didactic formula at the end (“I bid you, o she-bears, do not, on any account, do such deeds as these!”) is of a type frequently encountered in the *kamui yukar*. In this case the instruction is given by one deity to other deities; in other cases, the humans, through their culture hero, impart instruction to gods. Evil conduct is punished, whether the guilty one is a god or a human.

The text is Kamui Yukar 10 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 94–98.

I lived together with
my mother,
my father,
my little elder brother,
and my big elder brother.

Ever since I was little,
I had always thought
these things to myself:

“Somehow or other, I wish

that I could see a human!
How I would love to kill one!”

I thought nothing but this
as time went by.

When we would go to bed,
my mother
and my father
would always put me to bed
between both of them.
During the daytime,
they would forbid me
to go outside,
and they would keep watch
over me all the time.
Whenever my little elder brother
and my big elder brother
were about to go outside,
this is what they would say:

“Be sure to keep careful watch
over our younger sister!”

Saying these words,
they would go out.
After that,
they would go on visits
to the humans
and would come back
loaded down
with bundles of *inau*,
bundles of dumplings,
and bundles of wine.

We would invite
the gods nearby
and the gods far away
and would hold
peerless banquets, and
this is the way
we lived
on and on.

Then, one day,
my elder brothers
went outside
and were gone.
Slipping out
when my mother
and my father
were not looking,
I dashed outside
and went down the mountain.

There was a big woodland by a river.
I went down toward it.
I twisted my voice
into subtle melodies of a song
deep within my throat,
and I continued
to bite off
carelessly
the tips of the stalks
of the hawkweed.

“How I wish I would see a human!
How I would like to fight one!
How I would like to kill one!”

Thinking these thoughts,
 I walked downhill until
 the sound of a song
 was heard rising up.
 Hiding myself
 behind a tree,
 I looked and saw
 a human woman
 walking this way,
 a basket with a carrying cord attached
 tossed up on her back.
 She was twisting her voice
 into subtle melodies of a song
 deep within her throat.

I sprang toward her
 with a roar, and
 she ran away.
 As she whirled around,
 she began to speak,
 saying these words:

“O weighty deity,
 listen, I pray you,
 to what I have to say!
 I am
 the only daughter
 of the village chieftain,
 and his only child.
 We are both
 feeding ourselves
 on nothing but
 herbs and grasses.
 I have come here

to gather lily bulbs.¹
 Do not, I pray you,
 [kill me],
 mistaking me for someone else!”

As she spoke
 these words,
 I knocked her over.
 I attacked her
 and killed her utterly.

After that,
 I went homeward
 along the woodland by the river,
 licking my paws.

When I went inside
 the dwelling of
 my father
 and my mother,
 they both spoke the same words:

“Where on earth
 could our worthless daughter
 have gone?
 Look at the way
 she has come back—
 is it possible that
 she has done
 some evil deed?”

Saying
 these things,
 they scolded me.

¹ *Turep*, edible bulbs of the lily plant (*Cardiocrinum Glehni* Makino) growing in shady woods and pounded to make starch.

After a while,
when the day
had come quite to an end,
a message
arrived
from the Fire Goddess.

“Your evil daughter
has killed
a young human woman,
the only child
of a human chieftain,
who lived with her
and depended on her for his food.
Restore her
to life!
If this is not done,
no matter whether
you are the Mountain God,
you, together with
your kinsfolk,
will be kicked down
to the utterly evil country,
the dank country!”²

These words
arrived
as a message
from the Fire Goddess.
[Then my father said]:

“There now! What did I say!
Our worthless daughter,
you went off somewhere,

were gone for a while,
and then came back.
If you did
this evil deed,
go then
and restore
the human woman to life!
If you don’t do it
right away,
with my own hands
I will kick you down
to the utterly evil country,
the land of bogs!”

As he said
these words,
blows rained down on me from all sides.
Weeping,
I stepped
outside.

After that,
licking my paws
and weeping,
I went downhill along
that big woodland by the river.

Before I got there,
a large crowd of people
had already come up
and carried
that woman away.
I licked and licked
the blood spattered

on the leaves of grass.

Then once again
I started to go downhill,
weeping as I went.
I made my way
just east of a village,
a populous village.
In the center of the village
there was a big house.
From within it
the sounds of wailing
were soaring upward.

At that,
I broke through the window
and went inside.
The people who were sitting
all around
the dead woman
sprang up
and ran away.
At that time,
the village chieftain
began to speak,
saying these words:

“If the weighty deity
has come here
because she was worried
about the wounds she herself inflicted,
it must mean that
she has come
in order to restore

my daughter
to life for me.
Let all the humans
remain carefully
respectful!”

When he said this,
all of the humans
remained
with their heads
hanging down very low.
Then
the humans
undressed
that woman.

After that,
I began to lick
the wounds over and over
from one end to the other.
While doing so,
I blew silently
many puffs of breath³
onto them,
while I continued
to lick the wounds again and again
from one end to the other.
As I did this,
the smaller wounds
and the larger wounds
gradually closed up,
and after a while
they healed back again.
Finally,

³ Women (usually shamanesses) blow puffs of breath (*hukse*) out of their mouths to drive away evil or to heal the sick and wounded.

I restored her
to her previous form.

After that,
she raised herself up on her elbows.

After that,
I went out
through the window.
Then the humans
tipped their quivers
and shot me with their arrows.
Immediately,
the God of the Aconite Poison
wrapped himself around my legs,
and I became an animal carcass.

After that,
they invited me
inside the house.
At that time,
the Fire Goddess,
wearing sixfold robes
fastened under her girdle
and sixfold robes
hanging loosely,
came walking up
and beat me mightily.

“You who are
the daughter of
a weighty deity,
what is this you have done?
From now on,
it will be well

if you
repent,
if you have
a godlike disposition,
a peaceful disposition!”

Saying this,
she beat me mightily.
Nevertheless,
I was decorated with
splendid *inau*
and many different foods
and was given dismissal.⁴

I went homeward,
and when I went inside
my own home,
on the window sill [there was]
a big wine-cup,
filled [with wine]
to the brim.
The winged libation wand
recounted the message
from the beginning
and brought the message
to the end.
Turning about this way and that,
it spoke the message.

My father
put six wine-tubs
at the head of the fireplace
and emptied
that wine-cup into them.

⁴ That is, I was given splendid offerings and given ritual dismissal (*hopunire*).

Piles of *inau*
 were delivered.
 We invited
 the gods nearby
 and the gods far away.
 After that,
 the peerless drinking feast
 went on magnificently.
 All of the gods
 spoke these words:

“Even though you,
 o daughter
 of the weighty deity,
 did deeds
 meriting slight words
 of disapproval,
 now on the contrary
 you are being praised
 in this way
 by the humans
 and the gods.
 This being the case,
 we rejoice in you!”

Saying these words,

they drank the wine.
 All the gods
 went off in different directions.
 After they were gone,
 I repented,
 thinking to myself:

“What [evil] spirit
 could have bewitched me,
 that I could
 possibly have done those things?”

And so I have continued
 to live
 on and on
 ever since.

Thus, I bid you,
 o she-bears,
 do not, on any account,
 do such deeds as these!

These words
 were spoken
 by the daughter
 of the Mountain God.

11. Song of an Elderly Eagle

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on September 28, 1932. The burden is not recorded; the reciter stated that she had “forgotten” the burden to which the song was performed. Does this mean that the burden had some sacred significance for women and could not be divulged to men?

The speaker in the song is an eagle (*kapachir*). The story is simple but rich in possible meanings. Two women come along and refuse to pick out the lice from the eagle’s head. The eagle curses them and predicts that one of them will marry a crow (*pashkur*, the type of crow despised by the Ainu) and the other will marry a rat. Two other women come along. These women pick out the lice from the eagle’s head. The eagle blesses them and predicts that one of them will marry a sea god (*repun kamui*, a killer whale) and the other will marry a mountain god (*kimun kamui*, a bear). The prophecies come true, and the eagle is brought presents regularly by the two women who have married the killer whale and the bear.

No doubt this song was of especially deep significance for women, since there were women’s kinship groups associated with the eagle, the killer whale, and the bear.

The text is Kamui Yukar 46 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 215–17.

Having lice
and lonely as well,
I was sorely distressed
and lived on.
On and on
I lived

uneventfully
until

One day
downstream
there were voices.

I looked and
saw that it was
two women
coming this way
carrying axes
to cut firewood.

So
I told them
to pick out my lice.
They were afraid of me
and went running away.
I got angry
at this.

“One of the women
will have a crow
for a husband;
one of the women
will have a rat
for a husband,”
I said.

After that
on and on
uneventfully
always lonely
I continued
to live
until

One day
downstream
there were voices.

I looked, and it was
two women
carrying axes
coming this way
to cut firewood.

So
I told them
to pick out my lice,
and they put down
the axes they were carrying
and walked up beside me.
Then
they picked out my lice;
turning my little head
this way and that way,
they picked out my lice.
To thank them for it,
I spoke and
said these things:

“One of the women
will have a killer whale
for a husband;
one of the women
will have a bear
for a husband,”
I said.

After that
those women
went away and were gone.

After that

I lived on
 and on until
 I looked and,
 true enough,
 of the women who had not picked out my lice,
 one of the women
 had a crow for a husband,
 and one of the women
 had a rat for a husband,
 I saw.

After that
 I lived on and
 I looked and saw
 one of the women
 who had picked out my lice
 coming this way
 bearing a present for me
 of a bundle of blubber.
 She said this:

“Just as the weighty god
 did say,
 truly enough,
 I have a killer whale
 for a husband and here
 I have come
 bearing a present to you
 of a bundle of blubber,” so
 she said.

After that
 she went away and was gone.

After she was gone,
 on and on
 uneventfully
 I lived
 until

One time
 the other woman
 came this way
 bearing a present to me
 of a bundle of bear’s meat.
 She said this:

“Just as the weighty god
 did say,
 truly enough,
 I have a bear
 for a husband and here
 I am coming
 bearing a present to you
 of a bundle of bear’s meat,”
 so saying,
 she came this way.

After that
 she went away and was gone.
 After that
 on and on
 I lived
 and during all this time
 until they grew old
 those women—
 one of the women
 would come bearing blubber

and one of the women
would come bearing
bear's meat
until they grew old.
They took turns
doing it until

Now finally

I have grown old
and I am now
ascending to
the heavenly skies. So

Said
an elderly eagle.

12. Song of the Owl God

The text and Japanese translation of this *kamui yukar* in the Horobetsu dialect were published by Chiri Yukie in her *Ainu shin'yo shū*, pp. 2–23. The burden given by Chiri is *Shirokanipe ranran pishkan*, which means “Silver droplets sprinkle down all around.” This is the refrain spoken by the Owl God at various places in the course of the song. Evidently the burden is not repeated after each line.

The speaker is the Owl God, identified in the title supplied by Chiri as *kamui-chikap kamui*. In the text of the song he is also referred to by his other name *kotan-kor-kamui* (“god-ruling-the land”). For a discussion of the Owl God, see introduction to selection 8. Concerning the owl as a dispenser of blessings, Chamberlain records the following story:

There are six owls,—brethren. The eldest of them is only a little bigger than a sparrow. When perching on a tree, it balances itself backwards, for which reason it is called “The Faller Backwards.” The youngest of the six has a very large body. It is a bird which brings great luck. If anyone walks beneath this bird, and there comes the sound of rain falling on him, it is a very lucky thing. Such a man will become very rich. For this reason the youngest of the six owls is called “Mr. Owl.”

[The rain here mentioned is supposed to be a rain of gold from the owl's eyes.]—(Translated literally. Told by Penri, 16 July 1886.)¹

Two variants were collected by Dr. Kubodera from the Saru region, one from Hiraga Tumonte and the other from Nitani Kunimatsu. In both these Saru variants the speaker is a *kesorap*, a fabulous bird with speckled feathers, rather than an owl. In the variant of Nitani Kunimatsu, the burden is *Akishkato apishka*, but within the text of the song the bird is made to sing: *Shirotani-pe ran ran, konkani-pe ran ran* (“Silver droplets sprinkle down, golden droplets sprinkle down”).

¹ Chamberlain, Basil Hall, *Aino folk-tales*, p. 54.

In the variant from Hiraga Tumonte, the bird is shot down by a human man who used to be wealthy but is now poor. Being ignorant and ineloquent, he was victimized by false litigation, and all of his treasures were taken away from him. The *kesorap* pities him and imparts some of his, the bird's, eloquence to the poor man. This enables the poor man to take back all his possessions, and he becomes much wealthier than he had ever been before. This song contains the idea that eloquence, given as a blessing by a god, leads to prosperity. Litigation among the Ainu took the form of prolonged oratorical contests (*charanke*), in which the more eloquent of the two litigants emerged victorious.

In the variant from Nitani Kunimatsu, the bird is shot down by a little boy who is raised by his grandmother. The boy's father and mother used to be prosperous but had died in the prime of life. The bird blesses the boy, who becomes wealthy.

In Chiri's variant no reasons are given to explain why the poor boy's family had become impoverished. Social discord is mentioned, and it is necessary for the poor boy's father to ask the other villagers for a reconciliation. The narrative seems to reflect some sort of upheaval which occurred in the Ainu society, perhaps as a result of the breakdown of the highly stratified society at the end of the Middle Ainu Period (on this point, see the Introduction, pp. 9–12).

On the other hand, it is possible that the variants obtained from the reciters in the Saru region may be more archaic in contents than the Horobetsu version published by Chiri. Chiri was highly literate and came from a Christian family, and her version may have been somewhat influenced by modern patterns of thought. However, like the other texts in her book, the song is very aesthetically pleasing.

“Silver droplets sprinkle down all around,
Golden droplets sprinkle down all around”

Singing

this song,
I came down
along the river.
While I passed

over
 a human village,
 I looked down
 below me.
 It seemed that
 those who used to be poor
 were now rich,
 and those who used to be rich
 were now poor.

By the seashore,
 human children
 were playing together
 with little play bows
 and little play arrows.

“Silver droplets sprinkle down all around,
 Golden droplets sprinkle down all around”

Singing
 this song,
 I passed
 over
 the children.
 Then they ran along
 underneath me,
 speaking these words:

“What a beautiful bird!
 It is a little owl!
 Come,
 let’s shoot arrows at it!
 He who shoots
 that little bird,

the little owl,
 he who is first to take him
 will be
 a true warrior,
 a real chieftain!”

Saying this,
 the children
 of those who used to be poor
 but were now rich
 fixed
 little golden arrows
 to their little golden bows
 and shot them at me.
 I let the little golden arrows
 pass under me
 and pass over me.

At that time,
 in the midst
 of the children,
 one little boy
 holding in his hands
 an ordinary² little bow
 and ordinary little arrows
 was standing among them.
 When I looked at him,
 I could tell
 from his clothes
 that he appeared to be
 the child of a poor family.
 But
 when I gazed
 at his eyes,

² I.e., wooden

he seemed to be
the offspring of a well-born family.
He stood there among them
like a bird of a different breed.

He also
fixed
an ordinary little arrow
to his ordinary little bow
and took aim at me.
Then the children
of those who used to be poor
but were now rich
all laughed at him
and spoke these words:

“Confound you,
poor boy!
If that little bird,
the little owl
does not even take
the little golden arrows
belonging to us,
why ever should
that little bird,
the little owl,
take
an ordinary arrow,
an arrow of rotten wood,
belonging to a poor boy
like you?”

Saying this,
they all kicked

the poor boy
and beat him.
Nevertheless,
the poor boy
paid not the slightest
attention to them
and took aim at me.
When he did this,
I was seized
by feelings of sympathy for him.

“Silver droplets sprinkle down all around,
Golden droplets sprinkle down all around”

Singing
this song,
I circled around
slowly
in the heavenly skies.
The poor boy
planted one of his legs
far away
and planted his other leg
nearby.
He bit hard
on his lower lip
and took aim. Then,
he released [the arrow] with a snap.
The little arrow
gleamed brightly
as it came this way.
At that time
I stretched out
my hand

and grasped
 that little arrow.
 I fluttered about again and again.
 I plunged downward,
 with blasts of wind
 whirling in my ears.

When I did this,
 those children
 all came running.
 Kicking up
 fierce sprays of sand,
 they raced toward me.
 At the very moment when
 I tumbled down
 onto the ground,
 the poor boy
 was the first one
 to reach me
 and grab me.

When that happened,
 the children
 of those who used to be poor
 but were now rich
 came running up
 afterward.
 Spilling out
 many words of abuse,
 countless words of abuse,
 they all pushed
 the poor boy
 and beat him.

“The despicable boy,
 the poor boy
 has beat us
 at what we were trying
 to do first!”

When they said this,
 the poor boy
 bent his body over me
 and clutched me to his belly.
 He continued doing this
 for a very long time, and then
 darted out
 from the crowd.
 Then
 there were the sounds of running
 with hurried steps.
 The children
 of those who used to be poor
 but were now rich
 threw rocks
 and pieces of wood
 at him, but
 the poor boy
 paid not the slightest
 attention.
 He went running along,
 kicking up
 fierce sprays of sand.

Then we arrived
 outside a house,
 a little house.
 The little boy

put me inside
 through the sacred window.
 While he did that,
 he began to speak.
 He told exactly
 the story of
 what had happened.

From inside the house,
 an elderly couple
 came walking up,
 raising their hands
 and lowering their hands
 to shade their eyes.
 When I looked at them,
 although they were
 very poor,
 both of them had
 the facial features
 of a well-born man and woman.
 When they saw me,
 they bowed down low,
 bending their waists over double.
 The old man
 straightened
 his girdle
 and worshiped me.

“O Owl God,
 o weighty deity,
 thank you
 for having come
 to our humble house
 in all our poverty!

In the old days,
 I used to
 count myself
 among the well-born,
 but now
 I have become
 poor and despised
 as you can see.
 It would be presumptuous
 for such as me
 to give lodging
 to the Owl God,
 the weighty deity,
 but since today
 it is now dark already,
 we will give lodging
 to the weighty deity.
 Then tomorrow
 we will send
 the weighty deity home³
 even if only with *inau*.”

Speaking these words,
 he made countless
 gestures of worship
 again and again.
 The old woman
 spread out
 ornamented sedge mats
 underneath
 the sacred window
 and placed me on them.
 After that
 they all

³ *Omante*, to send off, to give ritual dismissal (synonymous with *hopunire*).

went to bed, and right away
there were the rumbling
sounds of their snoring.

I remained
sitting
between the ears
of my body. Then,
when midnight came,
I stood up.

“Silver droplets sprinkle down all around,
Golden droplets sprinkle down all around”

Singing
this song
very softly,
I went jumping around
that little house
on one side of the fireplace
and on the other side of the fireplace,
making tinkling noises as I went.
When I flapped my wings,
all around me
beautiful treasures,
magnificent treasures
came dropping down,
making tinkling noises.
Within a short while,
I had filled up
that little house
with beautiful treasures,
magnificent treasures.

“Silver droplets sprinkle down all around,
Golden droplets sprinkle down all around”

Singing
this song,
within a short while
I had changed
that little house
into a splendid house,
a big house.
Inside the house
I made up
magnificent piles of sacred vessels.
I made quickly
magnificent robes,
beautiful ones,
and decorated the inside
of the house with them.
I decorated
the inside
of that house
more beautifully than
the dwelling of a well-born man.
When I finished,
I pretended that
I had been there all the time
and remained
sitting
between the ears
of my armor.⁴

I showed a dream
to the people of the house:
A well-born human

⁴ The “armor” or “costume” (*hayokpe*) of a god is the outward form he assumes when he comes on a visit to the humans. Chiri Yukie adds the following note: “Birds and animals, when they are in the mountains, are not visible to human eyes, but they each have houses like those of the humans, and they all live in the same form as humans. When they appear in the human villages, they are said to appear wearing armor. The carcasses of birds and animals are the armor. The real body is not visible, but it is said to be between the ears of the carcass.” *Ainu shin'yo shū*, pp. 12–13. See also pp. 62–63.

has bad luck
and becomes poor.
Those who used to be poor
but are now rich
insult him
and treat him badly.
Seeing this,
I take pity on him.
Even though I
am by no means
a low-ranking deity,
I spend the night
in the house of the humans
and prosper them.
This I made known
to them [in the dream].

A little while
after that,
morning came,
and the people of the house
all got up
at once.
Rubbing their eyes again and again,
they looked around them.
Then all of them
fell down [in amazement]
on the floor.
The old woman
wept
loud and long.
The old man
shed
many sparkling teardrops,

countless sparkling teardrops.
After a while,
the old man
stood up,
came up toward me,
and made countless
gestures of worship
again and again.
While he did this,
he spoke these words:

“I thought that
it was a dream,
that I was asleep,
but—amazing thing!—
it has really happened!
We would have been grateful enough
if he had done nothing more
than just come
to our humble house,
in all our poverty
and all our misery.
But the Owl God,
the weighty deity
has taken pity
on us for
our misfortunes
and has given us
the most weighty
of all blessings!”

Saying this,
he worshiped
tearfully.

Then the old man
 cut trees
 for making *inau*.
 He whittled
 beautiful *inau*
 and decorated me with them.
 The old woman
 straightened
 her girdle
 and had the little boy
 help her
 to gather firewood
 and to draw water
 in preparation
 for brewing the wine.
 Within a short while
 they put six wine-tubs
 at the head of the fireplace.

After that,
 I amused myself in conversation
 with the Fire Goddess
 about different topics
 of news among the gods.

When two or three days
 had gone by,
 the aroma of the wine,
 the beloved
 beverage of the gods,
 wafted about
 inside the house.

At that time,

they dressed
 the little boy
 on purpose
 in old clothes
 and sent him out
 to invite
 all the people
 throughout the village
 who used to be poor
 but were now rich.
 I looked after him [and saw that]
 when the little boy
 would go into
 each house
 and would speak the message,
 those who used to be poor
 but were now rich
 would laugh together [saying]:

“What in the world
 does it mean?
 The poor people
 are presuming
 to brew
 some kind of wine
 and to invite us
 to some kind of a feast.
 Let’s all go
 and see
 what this is all about,
 and have a good laugh at them!”

Saying these things,
 a large crowd of them

got together
 and came walking this way.
 From far away,
 when they had merely caught a glimpse
 of the house alone,
 they were astounded
 and ashamed.
 Some of them turned back right away.
 Others came up
 as far as the outside of the house
 and fell down [in amazement].

Just then
 the lady of the house
 came outside
 and invited
 all of them inside.
 When she brought them inside,
 all of them
 came creeping
 and crawling
 inside,
 and none of them dared
 even to raise their faces.

After that,
 the master of the house
 stood up
 and made an oration,
 his voice ringing out clear
 like the voice of the cuckoo.
 He told in detail
 the story
 of what had happened.

“Being poor,
 we were unable
 to visit each other
 without reserve,
 but now
 the weighty deity
 has taken pity on me.
 Since I was
 never guilty
 of any evil deeds,
 I have been blessed
 like this. So,
 since we
 in the village
 are all one people,
 from now on
 let us all
 be friendly with each other
 and go to visit each other!
 This is what
 I request of you.”

When he had spoken
 this oration,
 all the people
 raised and lowered
 their outstretched hands
 again and again
 and apologized
 to the master of the house.
 They agreed
 that they would be friendly with each other
 from then on.
 I also

was worshiped by them.

After that, the spirits
of all the people
were softened,
and they held
a peerless drinking feast.
As for me,
I enjoyed conversation
with the Fire Goddess,
the God of the House,⁵
and the Goddess of the Spirit Fence,⁶
while taking delight
in watching
the humans
as they performed *tapkar*
and *rimse*.

When two or three days
had gone by,
the drinking feast came to an end.
Seeing that
the humans
were now friendly with each other,
my heart was at ease.
I bade farewell
to the Fire Goddess,
the God of the House,
and the Goddess of the Spirit Fence.

After that,
I went back
to my own home.
Before I arrived there,

my own home
had been filled
with beautiful *inau*
and delicious wine.
At that time,
I sent out messages
to the gods nearby
and the gods far away,
inviting them,
and I held
a peerless drinking feast.
During the drinking feast,
I told the story
to the assembled gods.
When I recounted in detail
how I had visited
the human village,
and told what had happened
and what had taken place,
the gods
praised me.
When the gods
left for home,
I gave them each
two or three
of the beautiful *inau*.

When I turn my glance
toward that human village,
everything now
is peaceful.
The humans
are all
friendly with each other.

⁵ *Chise-kor-kamui*. The God of the House, the guardian of the household, is said to reside in the northeast corner of the house, that is, among the treasures at the head of the fireplace. He joins with the Fire Goddess in guarding and protecting the house and is sometimes said to be the husband of the Fire Goddess. The "body" of the god is made at the time when the house is built and consists of an effigy made of lilac or pagoda-tree wood to which curled shavings are attached.

⁶ *Nusa-kor-kuchi*. The goddess ruling the spirit fence, the place where the gods customarily assemble for conversation. When the goddess appears in visible form, she assumes the form of a serpent.

That old man
now rules the village.
The little boy
has now
grown up
into a man.
He has a wife
and children.
He takes good care of
his father
and his mother,
Whenever
he brews wine,

at the beginning of the feast
he always worships me
with offerings of *inau*
and offerings of wine.

I also
continue forever
to hover behind⁷
the humans
and always watch over
the land of the humans.

Thus recounted the Owl God.

⁷ I.e., to give them supernatural protection.

13. Song of the Thunder God

This *kamui yukai* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on August 31, 1932. It was sung with two burdens: first *Rittunna*, then *Humpakpak*. The shift in burdens in the course of the song obviously signals a change in mood. The speaker is the Thunder God (*kanna kamui*). Thunder gods are depicted as dwelling in the Upper Heavens (*rikun kanto*). They assume the form of fiery serpents or dragons.

This song was widely disseminated and has been collected in many variants. The speaker, the Thunder God, flies down to admire the beauties of the human homeland. As he flies upstream along the Shishirmuka river, he comes over the village of one chieftain (sometimes identified as the culture hero Okikurmi, sometimes not specifically identified). The village chieftain commands his kinsfolk to maintain a reverent attitude (*oripak*), for a weighty deity has come. The entire village immediately assumes an attitude of reverence. Then he goes upstream along the Shishirmuka until he comes over the village of another chieftain (sometimes identified as Samai-un-kur). This chieftain gives the identical command, sometimes including an injunction against sharpening knives and weaving mats. Evidently it was taboo for women to weave mats and for men to sharpen knives during a thunderstorm. The command is disobeyed by impious individuals in the village, and the Thunder God, enraged, rains down a shower of sparks and embers. The village of the second chieftain is destroyed by fire.

In a number of mythic epics, the culture hero figure is split up into two antipodal personalities, called Okikurmi and Samai-un-kur in the Saru dialect. In the Saru region, Okikurmi performs heroic feats and is wise and good, while Samai-un-kur is stupid, weak, and destructive. Chiri derives the word Okikurmi from words meaning "he wears a leather robe with a shiny hem," perhaps a shaman's costume, but this derivation is dubious.¹ Somewhat more plausible is Chiri's derivation of Samai-un-kur from a

¹ Chiri Mashiho, "Jushi to kawauso," p. 66.

conjectural *saman-ye-kur* > *samai-ye-kur* > *samai-un-kur*, which would mean “shaman-speaking god” or “shamanizing god.”²

The typical story about Okikurmi and Samai-un-kur, which is repeated with many variations in a large number of mythic epics, can be summarized as follows in skeleton form: A deity visits two villages or two persons. He is insulted in village A (or by person A), and he is greeted worshipfully in village B (or by person B). The deity responds by bringing misfortune on village A (person A) and blessing village or person B. The story is extremely popular in the mythic epics, no doubt because it is short and can be conveniently sung in these short songs with burdens, and also because the content must have appealed to the native sense of ethics.

The text of this selection is Kamui Yukar 76 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 347–50.

I wanted to see
the human land
and so
I came down to
the human country.
I came down to
the top of the country.
the country of the *repunkur*.³
After that
I came down to
the country of the *yaunkur*.⁴
I came shoreward
heading toward
the mouth
of the Shishirmuka.⁵

After that
upstream along

the Shishirmuka river
I moved myself along
with a leisurely traveling,
and I cast my glance
out over the face of the country.
The human country,
the human land,
it was because
I had wanted to see it
that I had come down,
and now my heart leaped
with pleasure at
the beauties of the land,
the beauties of the country
as
I moved on
slowly, leisurely
upstream along

² Chiri Mashihō, *Bunrui Aini-go jiten*, vol. 1, p. 89.

³ “People of the sea,” “islanders.” The name of the alien race living north of the Ainu. This people has been identified with the people of the Okhotsk culture and were the enemies of the Ainu. See Introduction, pp. 40–44.

⁴ “People of the land,” “mainlanders.” The name applied by the Ainu to themselves in the epics.

⁵ A mythical name for the Saru river in Hidaka.

the Shishirmuka river.

The chieftain ruling over
the section midway along
the Shishirmuka river
was Ainurakkur,
the god Okikurmi.
I moved on
slowly, leisurely
over his village.

Just then
the village chieftain
the god Okikurmi,
Ainurakkur,
appeared at the window.
To the head of his village,
to the foot of his village
he called out
saying these words:

“It sounds
as if a weighty god
were traveling by.
Let both the womenfolk
and the menfolk as well
carefully
maintain an attitude of reverence!”

These words
he called out
to the head of the village,
to the foot of the village.
Oh how very

readily they obeyed!
Both the womenfolk
and the menfolk
remained respectful.

Looking at this,
I moved on
slowly, leisurely
upstream along
the Shishirmuka river until
I moved
slowly, leisurely
over the village of
Samai-un-kur.

Samai-un-kur
the village chieftain,
appeared at the window.
To the head of the village,
to the foot of the village
he called out
saying these words:

“It sounds
as if a weighty god
were traveling by.
Let my kinsfolk
carefully
maintain
an attitude of reverence!”

He called this out
to the head of the village,
to the foot of the village.

Then
 from one of the houses
 a woman
 came out
 in this way:
 she came out
 carrying
 a pot full of dirty water,
 and she threw out
 that dirty water while
 uttering
 these words:

“What if it be a god?
 Does that mean then
 that we are not
 to cook meals?”

Saying this,
 she threw out
 that dirty water
 and went back inside.

From one of the houses
 a woman came out
 in this way:
 she came out
 carrying
 a handful of rushes.
 That handful of rushes
 she dipped in the water
 and shook it
 straight at my face,
 saying these words:

“Suppose it be a god!
 Does this mean that
 one is not allowed
 to weave mats?”

Saying this,
 she shook
 that handful of rushes
 straight at my face.
 Then
 she went back inside and was gone.

At this⁶
 I got angry and so
 I hit and hit
 the head of my chariot
 and hit and hit
 the foot of my chariot.
 As I did this
 its metal cords,
 the thin cords
 and the thick cords,
 tightened up
 with a very loud
 shrill whistling.
 The thin cord tips
 whistled shrilly,
 and the thick cord tips
 hummed and rumbled.

As this went on
 from the top of the chariot,
 the metal chariot,
 a rainbow of sparks

⁶ Here the burden changes from *Rittunna* to *Humpakpak*.

went flying up.

Then
 Samai-un-kur's
 village,
 from the head of the village
 to the foot of the village,
 burst into flames.

Where that village,
 where the village had been,
 only charred sticks of wood
 were left jutting up.
 Looking back
 behind me,
 I departed in anger
 and went back
 toward the Upper Heavens,
 toward my home.

After that
 I turned around and looked
 behind me
 and saw this:

I had thought
 that no humans,
 not a single one,
 would remain alive, but
 the two women,
 the ones I had punished,
 were still alive.

I got angry and
 wanted
 the humans
 to know
 that such things
 are punished by the gods. So
 the one I punished more
 I stuck a poplar leaf
 to her genitals,
 and the one I punished less
 I stuck an oak leaf
 to her genitals.

These things
 recounted
 the Thunder God.

14. Song of a Dragon God

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on September 28, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Tōkantō*. It does not appear to have any particular meaning, and there are other songs with similar burdens (*Tōkanakana tōkantō*, *Tōkina tō*, *Kinatō kantō*, *Tanne tō*).

The speaker is a dragon god (*sak-somo-ayep*). Dragons are always depicted as living in lakes or swamps and emitting a terrible stench. They are variously called *hoyau* (“snake”), *chatai* (a loan word from the Japanese *jatai* which may mean “snake” or “dragon”), and *sak-somo-ayep*. The latter term means “that which must not be mentioned in the summer.” The dragons thrive in heat and abhor the cold, and it is taboo to mention them during the summer or by the fireside. Dragons are sometimes companion spirits of shamanesses. This is one of the very numerous mythic epics in which the culture hero chastises evil deities. A human bids the dragon in the lake to go upstream, promising that he will be treated well and will find a wife. When the dragon follows this advice, he is stung to death by hornets (*shi-soya*). All the time, it was Okikurmi who had deceived him and driven him from his home. There is a didactic ending in which the dragon warns other dragons not to repeat his misdeeds.

The text of this selection is Kamui Yukar 38 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō*, *seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 189–94.

I lived all alone
in my big lake,
at the head of the lake.
On and on
uneventfully
I lived.

If any gods
or any humans
came close
to my big lake,
they would all die
because of my stench.

This is the way
I lived
on and on.

Then one day
there was the sound of voices
downstream.
I looked
and saw that it was
a young human man
coming this way.

“When even the gods
come close
to my big lake,
they all die.
This one who comes
must surely
want to die!”

Thinking this,
I waited there.
He kept coming until
he had come down
beside the shore
of my big lake.
He remained
standing there
for a very long time.
Then he said:

“Greetings,
o deity dwelling
in this place!

Listen to
what I have to say!
The truth
of the matter
is this:
When you were sent down
from the Upper Heavens
to this land of the humans,
the gods took counsel together
and decided
that you were to be sent down
to this big lake
and were to dwell
in this big lake.
Since this was
what the gods decided,
you were sent down
to this big lake,
and you have
been dwelling
in this big lake
until now.

“Nevertheless,
you have now
grown tired
of this place.
For this reason,
I have come here
to teach you
where to go.

“Go right away
up along the river

from here.
 When you have gone
 far upstream,
 there will be a fork in the river.
 Go upstream along
 the river flowing down from the west.
 As you go on and on,
 you will finally come
 to the headwaters
 of the river flowing down from the west.
 When you look out
 in front of you,
 this is what you will see.

“There will be
 a populous village,
 stretching out peacefully
 into the distance.
 In the center of the village
 there will be
 an immense house,¹
 a big house
 standing there
 majestically.
 Outside the house
 crowds of young women
 and crowds of young men
 will be pounding grain
 to make dumplings.

“Go on
 through the village,
 and when you come
 to the yard outside

that big house,
 without hesitation
 go right inside
 that big house.
 When you go in,
 an old man
 and an old woman
 will be sitting
 side by side
 on the right-hand side of the fireplace.
 When you sit down
 by the fireside,
 the old man
 will say these words:

‘My daughter,
 listen to
 what I have to say.
 I am without an heir,
 and you are
 my only child.
 The gods took counsel together
 and decided
 that I should marry you
 to a weighty deity.
 If this were done,
 he would care for me
 for the rest of my life.
 Well, it was decided
 by the counsel of the gods
 that I should marry you
 to the Dragon God,
 the weighty deity.
 Now

¹ Literally, “a house the size of a mountain”

the god my nephew²
has come.
Feed him!’

‘‘The old man
will say these words.
At that time,
crowds of young men
and crowds of young women
will gather
until the house is full of them.
They will be
running about busily
this way and that
to cook dumplings.
At that time,
they will bring in
a fish of silver.
It will be placed
on a silver chopping block
and will be laid
at the head of the fireplace.
That fish
will be meant
for you to eat.
You will make
worshipful gestures
toward the fish of silver
and will eat it.
It will be
more delicious than
any other fish.

‘‘After you have

eaten it,
you will marry
that old man’s
daughter,
and this will truly
enhance your glory
as a deity.
Therefore,
I have come
to teach you
where to go.’’

The young human man
spoke
these words.
I laughed inwardly
in amusement,
thinking to myself:

‘‘Who is he,
a mere human,
to teach me
what I am to do!’’

I remained there
thinking this.
That young man
went away.

After he left,
I continued
to live on until
one day
I decided that I wanted to go

² I.e., my son-in-law

upstream along the river.

Therefore, I began
to go slithering,
creeping up
along the river.

After that,

I went on and on.

When I had come
far upstream,
there was a fork in the river.

I went upstream along
the river flowing down from the west.

I went on and on until

I came to

the headwaters of the river.

When I looked out

in front of me,

true enough,

there was

a populous village
stretching out peacefully
into the distance.

Looking at it,

I went slithering along,

I went creeping along.

As I went on,
in the center of the village

there stood

an immense house,

a big house.

Outside the house

crowds of young men

and crowds of young women

had gathered together
to pound grain
and were pounding grain
to make dumplings.

I went

to the yard outside the house.

At that time,

it was incredible

how very afraid of me

they seemed to be.

Nevertheless,

without hesitation,

I went inside.

I walked along the floor

on the left-hand side of the fireplace

and walked up

by the fireside.

On the right-hand side of the fireplace,

by the fireside

an old man

and an old woman

were sitting

side by side.

Crowds of young men

and crowds of young women

came inside

until the house was full of them.

They went running about busily

this way and that

to cook dumplings.

At that time

the old man

spoke these words:

“My daughter,
the gods took counsel together
and decided
that I was to marry you
to the Dragon God,
my nephew god.
Now at last
he has come.”

When he said this,
they brought in
from outside
a fish of silver.
The fish of silver
was laid
on top of
a silver chopping block.
After that,
the old man
spoke these words:

“At any rate,
you have come
now
to dwell here
as my son.
This fish of silver
has been brought in
for you to eat.”

The old man
spoke these words.

Therefore,
I drew that chopping block
toward myself.
They gave it to me
along with
a silver carving knife.
Then I began
to eat
that fish.
When I tasted it,
it was incredible
how very
delicious it was.
I ate and ate
until I had finished it all.

Then
quite suddenly
my belly
started to hurt.
After that,
I writhed
and tossed about
lying flat on my back
on the floor
on the left-hand side of the fireplace.

Until that very moment
I had thought
that there was a house there,
and that I
was in it,
but now the house
was gone.

I had thought
 that there were
 crowds of young men
 and crowds of young women.
 But the fact of the matter was this:
 Actually
 I had been sent
 to the land of the hornets,
 to the country of the hornets.

The old man
 spoke these words:

“Listen,
 you dragon,
 to what I have to say.
 I am
 the master of the hornets.
 I was sent down
 from the Upper Heavens
 together with my kinsfolk
 to dwell
 in this place.
 Since I dwell
 in a desolate country,
 even the gods
 are afraid
 of my fierce disposition.
 Thus, I had thought
 that no one,
 not even any of the gods,
 would dare to come near
 my abode.
 Then the god Okikurmi

found out
 somehow or other
 where I live.
 In order to punish you
 for your evil deeds,
 for your evil disposition,
 the god Okikurmi
 deceived you
 and sent you
 to my place.
 Before sending you here,
 he sent a message,
 saying these things:

‘If he were
 to dwell
 in the human homeland,
 in the land of the humans,
 neither the gods
 nor the humans
 would be able
 to survive.
 O master of the hornets,
 o weighty deity,
 you and you alone
 can I rely on
 for your bravery.
 I am going to send
 the Dragon God,
 the utterly evil deity,
 to your place.
 Punish him
 on my behalf,
 I pray you.’

“Thus, the god Okikurmi
 [said that he would] send you here.
 And now,
 true enough,
 he has sent you here.
 This is why
 I am now
 punishing you.
 Now, after this,
 you will never
 be able to dwell
 in the land of the humans.”

The old man
 spoke these words.
 Only then
 did I look and see that,
 all along,

the god Okikurmi
 had been deceiving me
 to make me leave
 my abode
 so as to punish me.
 Only then
 did I realize it.

After that,
 I died
 a miserable death,
 a terrible death.

You dragons of today,
 do not have evil dispositions!

These things recounted a dragon.

15. Song of an Evil Bear

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hirame Karepia on February 19, 1936. It was sung with the burden *Heninuisa*. It does not appear to have any particular meaning.

The speaker is an evil monster bear (*wen arsarush*). He has many racks for drying fish and meat outside his house; this seems to mean that he is a famine god (*kemram kamui*) who withholds the food from the humans and hoards it for himself. As in the previous selection, the culture hero Okikurmi uses deception to banish the evil god.

In a variant obtained by Kindaichi in 1915 from Taukno, Okikurmi enters the home of the famine god and tells him to visit an old man dwelling at Atui-sachsachi (“place where the sea dries up”?) across the sea. After he leaves, Okikurmi scatters all the fish and meat over the mountains and rivers. The famine god decides to remain with the old man across the sea and does not return.

The text of this selection is Kamui Yukar 15 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 118–19. He gives another version of the same song obtained from the same reciter on a different occasion (September 9, 1935) as Kamui Yukar 14. The only differences are minor ones in wording.

On and on
I lived
uneventfully.
I had outside my house
many racks for drying fish,
many racks for drying meat.
As I lived on,

one day
there was the sound of voices
outside.
I looked and saw
Okikurmi,
the human god.¹
He came walking inside
and spoke these words:

¹ *Ainu pito*. The term is applied to chieftains and epic heroes and is interchangeable with *kamui rametok*, “mighty warrior.”

“Listen well
 to what I have to say!
 Now I am going to tie
 this garland of curled shavings²
 to your neck.
 When I do so,
 go downstream right away
 along the river.
 As you go downstream,
 the sound of the waves on the beach
 will come closer and closer.
 Walk down
 along
 the big promontory.
 When you walk out
 to the tip of the promontory,
 dive right down
 into the sea.
 Go swimming along,
 sending this way and that
 many ripples in the water,
 countless ripples in the water.
 When you have reached
 the opposite shore across the sea,
 go up on shore.
 Then many gods
 looking exactly like you
 will be there,
 rooting around in the seaweed
 and rooting around in the kelp.
 You also
 will do the same,
 and you will greatly enhance
 your glory as a deity.”

He spoke
 these words.
 Therefore,
 I went outside.
 So very angry
 was I that
 I knocked down
 the many racks for drying fish
 and the many racks for drying meat,
 and scattered them all about.³

After that,
 I went down along the river.
 As I went downstream,
 the sound of the waves on the beach
 came closer and closer.
 Then I came down
 to the seashore.
 A big promontory
 was seen clearly
 jutting out in the distance.
 I walked out
 along
 that promontory.
 Then, at the tip of the promontory,
 I dived down right
 into the sea.
 I swam along,
 sending this way and that
 many ripples in the water,
 countless ripples in the water.

When I reached
 the opposite shore across the sea,

² *Inau kike*, curled wood shavings. The shavings are regarded as *inau* and have considerable supernatural potency.

³ In Taukno's version, the culture hero knocks down the racks for drying the fish and meat after the famine deity's departure.

I went up on shore.
 When I looked around,
 true enough,
 there were many gods
 each with a garland of curled shavings
 tied
 to their necks.
 They were rooting around in the seaweed
 and rooting around in the kelp.
 They all looked as if
 they were about to die at any moment.
 I walked up to them.

Since this was what
 they were doing,
 I started
 to root around in the seaweed
 and to root around in the kelp.
 But I still was hungry.
 After a while of this,
 I starved to death.

Only then

did I look and see
 that this was
 the place where
 all of
 the evil bears,
 the ones who
 are being punished,
 are banished.⁴
 Only then,
 after I had died,
 did I see this.

You evil bears of today,
 do not, on any account,
 steal in the villages,
 steal in the countries [of the humans].
 If you do not,
 it will be well.⁵

These words
 were spoken
 by an evil bear.

⁴ In another version by the same reciter recorded in writing about six months previously (on September 9, 1935), there was the statement at this point: "I had been banished by the god Okikurmi because I had stolen [food] from the humans and eaten it."

⁵ In the earlier version of September 9, 1935, the final warning is: "You evil bears of today, do not steal from the humans!"

16. Song of a Huri Bird

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on September 6, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Hetuna hetuna*. The meaning of the burden is not clear. It resembles the alternate burden mentioned by Kubodera for selection 1, *Hetuina*.

The *huri* is a huge mythical bird mentioned in legends and epics; we might possibly call it a griffin. In the Saru region there is a cult of a pair of these birds, which are said to live in a place called Chikapohi (“place where there are birds”) near Piratori. In the epics there are *huri chikap* (“huri bird”), *huri chikap kamui* (“huri bird deity”), *huri kamui* (“huri deity”), and *huri nitnehi* (“demon huri”). These birds are depicted as being extremely ferocious and are sometimes invoked in battle by evil characters. Munro says that the *huri* was “a huge bird which lived in a cave and devoured human beings.”¹

In this song, the culture hero Okikurmi transforms himself into a little old man to deceive the *huri* bird. There is a didactic ending of the usual type.

The text of this selection is Kamui Yukar 63 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 298–99.

I roamed about in the mountains.
I roamed about on the beaches.
I would kill
even those gathering
grasses to feed themselves,
and I would feed myself on them.
This is the way
I used to live
on and on.

As time went on,
one day,
no matter how
I roamed about in the mountains,
I was unable to catch
even any [humans] gathering
grasses to feed themselves.
I was quite hard pressed
and went roaming about on the beaches.

¹ Munro, *Ainu Creed and Cult*, p. 22.

Just then,
 there was a little old man,
 all naked,
 holding
 a dirty old ax,
 cutting firewood
 on the grassy downs by the beach.

Therefore,
 from the heavenly skies
 I swooped down
 on him.
 Down and down
 I went,
 heading
 straight toward him.
 I thought
 surely that
 I had caught him,
 but he had already
 run away
 before I came down.
 I passed
 all the way through
 six layers of earth,
 and my beak
 struck the bottom.

Then I tried
 to get up,
 but I was quite unable
 to manage it.
 Just then,
 the little old man

came running up beside me.
 Grasping in his hand
 a goodly club,
 he beat me mightily.
 While doing this,
 he uttered these words:

“You evil *huri*,
 what deeds
 are these
 you are doing!
 Are the humans
 not to be allowed
 to feed themselves?
 You kill
 even those gathering
 grasses to feed themselves,
 and feed yourself on them.
 You do not allow
 the humans
 to make their livelihood,
 nor do you allow
 the gods
 to make their livelihood.
 To punish you
 for doing this,
 I was lying
 in wait for you.
 Then you acted
 as if you wanted to eat
 even me.
 But I have been
 lying in wait for you
 in order to teach you

a good lesson!’’

Saying
these words,
he beat me mightily.
After a while,
he gave me a mighty kick,
and I was hurled down
to the sixfold Underworld.

The fact of the matter was
that it had been

the god Okikurmi
lying in wait for me
to punish me.

You *huri* of today,
do not, on any account,
kill the humans!

These things
were recounted
by a *huri* bird god.

17. Song of a North Wind Goddess

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kindaichi from the reciter Nabesawa Taukno in 1915. It was sung with the burden *Kenekumaka pētuitui*. The burden appears to mean “Water drips down on the alder drying racks.” A variant of the same song obtained by Kindaichi from Utekare uses the burden *Penekumaka penetuitui*; the meaning of this latter burden is less clear.

The speaker is a north wind (*matnau*) goddess who dances atop the mountain, causing a storm at sea. Okikurmi and Samai-un-kur are caught in the storm in their boat, and Samai-un-kur dies. Okikurmi shoots arrows of swallow-wort (*ikema*) and kills the goddess. There is a didactic ending.

The Gilyaks (Nivkhi) of Sakhalin, the northern neighbors of the Ainu, also told of wind goddesses. E. A. Kreinovich, a Russian investigator, was told by a Gilyak informant that winds are produced by a woman. When this woman sits at home and occupies herself with some kind of work, the weather is quiet. But when the woman goes outside and dances, the wind starts to blow. If she dances quietly for a short time, the wind blows weakly. The stronger she dances, the stronger the wind will blow. (E. A. Kreinovich, *Nivkhgu, zagadochnye obitateli Sakhalina i Amura*, p. 61)

I obtained the text directly from Kindaichi's field notes of 1915.

The only work I did
was my needlework.
Casting my glances
ahead of the needle,
following with my eyes
after the needle,
I lived on.

Then, so exceedingly
lonley
was I,
I put aside
my needlework.
Sixfold robes
I fastened under my girdle,
and sixfold robes

I wore hanging loosely.
 I put on
 a silken cap,
 and I wore
 silken gloves.

I stepped
 outside.
 I went down closer and closer
 to the edge of the mountain.
 Back and forth I tripped
 making countless dancing steps.
 As I danced,
 many calm breezes
 blew about
 over the sea,
 and the calm sea
 stretched out
 into the distance.

Just then
 I noticed
 Okikurmi
 and Samai-un-kur
 sailing out to sea together
 to go fishing.
 I turned around
 and went back.
 Going back
 inside my house,
 I took off
 my magnificent robes.
 I attired myself
 in ragged clothes.

I put on
 a ragged cap
 and ragged gloves.

I stepped
 outside.
 I went down closer and closer
 to the edge of the mountain.
 Back and forth I tripped
 making countless dancing steps.
 As I danced,
 fierce winds
 came blowing down
 and whirled about
 over the sea.
 As the winds blew,
 it looked
 exactly as if
 the waters at the top of the sea
 went down to the bottom,
 and the waters at the bottom of the sea
 emerged at the surface.

Okikurmi
 and Samai-un-kur
 cried out
 with youthful shouts
 as they continued
 to row the boat.
 Many bloody blisters
 appeared
 on the backs of their hands
 and on the palms of their hands
 as they continued to row the boat.

They went floating about
this way and that in the ocean waters.

Samai-un-kur
first of all
died of exhaustion.
Okikurmi,
even though a mere human,
seemed not to be weary at all.
He showed on his face
an expression
of renewed strength.
As he continued to row the boat,
finally he too,
being a mere human,
showed on his face
an expression
of weariness.

Just then,
he did something
which I would never
have expected him to do.
He felt around
inside his tinder box.
He brought out
a little bow of swallow-wort
and little arrows of swallow-wort.¹
He spoke these words:

“O evil north wind over yonder,
these things that you are doing

are truly
detestable.
You may be doing this
thinking that
I can't see you,
but I'll teach you a lesson!”

Saying these words,
he shot me with an arrow.
He shot with mighty force
one of my legs
and broke it.
As I hopped about
on one leg,
once again
he shot with mighty force
my other leg.
Both of my legs
were broken.
I still went on dancing,
jumping along
on my sides.
Then he shot with mighty force
my big belly.
He also shot arrows
at my arms.
Then finally
he killed me.

You north winds of today,
do not do these things!
Then it will be well.

¹ The roots of this plant (*ikema*, *Cynanchum caudatum* Maxim) were used widely as a medicine and for various magic purposes.

18. Song of a Swordfish

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kindaichi from the reciter Nabesawa Wakarpa in 1913. It was sung with the burden *Tusunabanu*.

The song must have been extremely popular, as there are a number of variants. One was obtained by Batchelor in 1880 from Kanturuka; this one by Kindaichi from Wakarpa in 1913; another by Kindaichi from Utomriuk, the elder brother of Wakarpa, in 1915; another by Kubodera from Hiraga Etenoa in 1932; and still another by Kubodera from Nitani Kanimatsu in 1935. All of them coincide except for differences in the wording. Etenoa's version is much more detailed and longer than the other four extant variants.

The story is very simple. A swordfish is harpooned by Okikurmi and Samai-un-kur and flees, pulling their boat after it all over the ocean. Samai-un-kur dies and Okikurmi curses the swordfish. The swordfish meets with a terrible end. All the variants have didactic endings.

The text is from Kindaichi, *Ainu jojishi: Yukara gaisetsu*, pp. 362–67.

Okikurmi
and Samai-un-kur
came [sailing] along
together.
I emerged
and waited
just in their path.
Grasping in his hand
a goodly little harpoon,¹
[Okikurmi] speared me with it,
he pierced me with it.
I fled, pulling them after me,

across many ocean waters,
across countless ocean waters.
Time went on, and
day after day
for six days
and night after night
for six nights
I fled, pulling them after me.
Then Samai-un-kur
died of exhaustion.
Nevertheless,
Okikurmi

¹ In Etenoa's version of this epic, at this point Okikurmi addresses the swordfish. He asks the swordfish to come to him peacefully and promises to worship it with *inau*, enabling it to enhance its glory as a deity.

seemed not to be
 weary at all.
 He began anew
 to cry out
 with youthful shouts,
 and once again
 I fled pulling him after me
 day after day
 and night after night.

Time went on, and
 many bloody blisters
 appeared
 on the backs of the hands
 and on the palms of the hands
 of Okikurmi.
 His countenance now
 looked withered and wasted.
 At that time
 Okikurmi
 spoke these words:

“What are these things
 that you are doing,
 you evil swordfish?
 Even though you do these things,
 [this is what will happen to you].
 The harpoon head
 is made of metal,
 and inside your belly
 metals will be heard hitting
 with clanking noises.
 The harpoon tip
 is made of bone,

and inside your belly
 bones will be heard
 scraping.
 The shank
 is made of hydrangea wood,²
 and forests of hydrangeas will grow
 on one side of your body.
 The shaft
 is made of bird cherry,³
 and forests of bird cherry trees will grow
 on one side of your body.
 The line
 is made of nettle fibers,
 and nettle thickets will grow
 on one side of your body.
 The rope
 is made of linden bark fibers,
 and forests of lindens will grow
 on top of you.
 You will be sorely
 distressed.

“Since you have done this
 because you wanted to do it,
 you will be feared everywhere
 over the entire expanse
 of the ocean.
 As you continue to go on,
 you will come ashore
 at the mouth
 of the Shishirmuka.
 Then all sorts of dogs,
 all sorts of foxes,
 all sorts of crows,

² *Rashpa-ni* (*Hydrangea paniculata*, Sieb.). The wood is viscous.

³ *Shiuri* (*Prunus Ssiori* Fr. Schm.). The wood resembles that of the Japanese flowering cherry.

and all sorts of birds
 will peck at you from all sides
 and bite at you from all sides.
 They will defecate on you
 and will piss on you.”

Saying this,
 he cut the rope
 and let me go.

However,
 I thought to myself:

“What of it?
 It is only human talk!”

and I snickered to myself
 deep down in my throat.

After that,
 when I went on,
 true enough,
 inside my belly
 metals were heard hitting,
 and bones were heard scraping.
 My heart
 grew dazed from it.
 On one side of my body
 forests of bird cherry trees grew up.
 On the other side of my body
 forests of lindens grew up,
 and nettle thickets grew up.
 My heart
 was sorely distressed by it.

I was feared
 everywhere
 on the ocean.

As I continued to go on,
 true enough,
 I was carried ashore
 at the mouth
 of the Shishirmuka.
 Just as Okikurmi
 had said,
 all sorts of dogs,
 all sorts of foxes,
 all sorts of crows,
 and all sorts of birds
 bit at me from all sides
 and pecked at me from all sides.
 They defecated on me
 and pissed on me.

Just then
 the god Okikurmi
 came walking down.
 He laughed
 gleefully
 and said:

“There now! What did I say?
 You went right ahead,
 thinking that
 it was nothing
 but human talk,
 but look!
 Just as I said,

all sorts of dogs,
all sorts of birds
are pissing on you
and defecating on you!
Even though you are a god,
now this is your fate—
your spirit
must wander lost

without any *inau*.⁴
This will be
a lesson [for others].”

You swordfish of today,
do not make fun
of the words of the humans!⁵

⁴ To be deprived of *inau* would be the greatest misfortune for a god, since it would signify complete withdrawal of human favor.

⁵ In this version, it seems as if the transgression of the swordfish was to despise Okikurmi’s prophecy about the forests of bird cherry trees, lindens, and so forth. However, in Etenoa’s version the swordfish is punished for *disobeying* Okikurmi’s words (that is, when Okikurmi asked the swordfish to come peacefully). Etenoa’s version seems more consistent.

19. Song of an Old Boat Goddess

This *kamui yukar* was recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on August 31, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Poinashō*. The meaning of the burden is not clear. Kubodera reports that Nitani Kunimatsu informed him that the same *kamui yukar* could also be sung with the burden *Sō wa sō*.

The speaker is an old boat goddess (*onne chip kamui*). The song consists of two parts. In the first part, a tree growing on top of a waterfall on the Soratki river refuses to be cut down by Samai-un-kur but allows Okikurmi to cut her down. Okikurmi makes the tree into a boat and goes trading. In the second part, many years later the son of Okikurmi (*pon Okikurmi*) takes the old boat on another trading expedition. On the way home, the boat is wrecked by a storm. Young Okikurmi dismisses it with many offerings.

Kubodera also collected variants of the same song from the reciter Hirame Karepia. The first part and second part are performed by Karepia as separate songs using different burdens (the first one *Koinawash*, the second one *Tehama tehuri*).

The text of this selection is Kamui Yukar 69 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 319–26.

I was living
all by myself
on top of the waterfall
on the Soratki river.
On and on
I lived
uneventfully.

Then, one day
there was the sound of voices
downstream.
I looked and saw
that it was
Samai-un-kur
coming this way
carrying on his back

six axes
 and six hatchets
 all pointing in different directions.
 He walked up
 to the outside
 of my house.
 Walking around
 and around the house,
 he spoke these words:

“You, tree!
 Worthless tree!
 I will make you into a boat.
 Then I will take you
 with me
 on a trading expedition.
 I will decorate
 your bosom beautifully
 with trade wine,
 trade brew,
 and with grains as well.
 Your will enhance
 your glory
 as a deity.”

Thus did he speak.
 However,
 so very angry
 was I, that
 I exposed on the outside
 my hard flesh,
 and I hid on the inside
 my soft flesh.

As I did so,
 he broke
 the six axes against me,
 and he broke
 the six hatchets against me.
 After that,
 he went away,
 pouring out
 many words of abuse,
 countless words of abuse.

After that,
 on and on
 I lived
 uneventfully.

Then, one day
 there was the sound of voices
 downstream.
 I looked and saw
 the god Okikurmi
 coming this way,
 carrying on his back
 six axes
 and six hatchets
 all pointing in different directions.
 When he came up
 by my side,
 he walked around
 and around the house,
 my house.
 Then he spoke
 these words:

“Greetings,
 o Goddess Ruling the Earth!¹
 Listen to
 what I have to say!
 I will make you into a boat.
 Then I will take you
 with me
 on a trading expedition,
 and I will decorate
 your bosom beautifully
 with wine,
 with foods,
 and with tobacco.
 You will enhance
 your glory as a deity,
 and you will take
 great delight in this.”

While saying
 these words,
 he began to chop me down.
 After this,
 since he was intending
 to make me into a boat,
 I hid on the inside
 my hard flesh,
 and I exposed on the outside
 my soft flesh.
 Immediately,
 large ax-chips
 and small ax-chips
 went flying in all directions.
 As the ax-chips
 went flying,

it sounded to me
 like these words:

“*Sake-pe tui-tui*
inau-pe tui-tui”²

This is what
 I seemed to hear
 as the ax-chips
 went flying.

After that,
 he started to make me into a boat.
 He finished making the boat.
 Then he made carvings
 on the boat in this way:
 On the side of the boat facing the mountains,
 he carved
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of the gods dwelling in the mountains.
 On the side of the boat facing the beach,
 he carved
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of the gods dwelling in the sea.

After that,
 as he lowered me
 over the top of the waterfall
 on the Soratki river,
 he spoke these words:

“O god ruling

¹ *Shir-kor-kamui*, “deity ruling the earth,” an archaic expression meaning “tree.” The ruler of all the trees is called *Shiranpa-kamui*.

² Meaning “wine-drops drip-drip, *inau*-drops drip-drip.” The sound made by the ax-chips reminds the tree goddess of these auspicious-sounding Ainu words, perhaps the refrain of some song. Wine and *inau* were of central importance in Ainu ritualism.

the top of the waterfall
 on the Soratki river!
 Grasp firmly
 my dear little boat
 by her stern
 and let her down gradually!
 O god ruling
 the basin below the waterfall
 on the Soratki river!
 Support firmly
 my dear little boat
 under her prow!"

Saying this,
 he lowered me
 over the top of the waterfall
 on the Soratki river.
 Just as the god Okikurmi
 had said,
 the god ruling
 the top of the waterfall
 on the Soratki river
 grasped me firmly
 by the stern
 and lowered me gently.
 He let my stern
 down gradually.
 The god ruling
 the basin below the waterfall
 on the Soratki river
 supported me firmly
 under the prow,
 and I was lowered
 gently

into the basin below the waterfall
 on the Soratki river.

After that,
 I went downstream
 along the river until
 I came down
 to the river mouth
 of the Soratki river.

After that
 I went along with
 the god Okikurmi
 on a trading expedition.
 I went
 to the land of the Japanese.³
 Just as the god Okikurmi
 had said,
 my bosom was
 decorated beautifully
 with wine,
 with tobacco,
 with grains,
 with sacred vessels,⁴
 and with treasures.⁵
 Taking great
 delight in this,
 I returned homeward.
 After that,
 I was drawn ashore
 midway between
 the lower grassy downs
 and the upper grassy downs [near the beach].
 There I remained,

³ *Tono kotan*. *Tono* is a Japanese loan word meaning "lord," "master." It was originally applied to the officials and samurai of Matsumae, but in time it came to mean simply "Japanese." The more common word for "Japanese (person)" is *shisam*

⁴ *Iyoipe*, eating utensils, especially imported lacquer utensils regarded as treasures by the Ainu.

⁵ *Ikor*, household treasures, fancy goods, riches. These treasures include swords with decorated sheaths. They are counted as the person's wealth and can be offered as indemnities in case of quarrels.

living on and on
uneventfully.
Year after year,
year in and year out,
I remained there.

During this while,
when the breeze blew
from the west,
many sprays of sand,
countless sprays of sand
came trickling down
into my bosom.

When the breeze blew
from the east,
many sprays of sand,
countless sprays of sand
came trickling down
into my bosom.
My heart became weary
and sorely distressed.
This is the way
I continued to live
on and on
for a very long time.

Then, one day,
back of me
the sound of crunching footsteps in the sand
came closer and closer.
I looked and saw
the Young Okikurmi⁶
coming down.
He was still a lad,

a youth,
a young boy
lacking as yet
even the shadow of a beard.
He came down
by my side.
He remained for a while
standing by my side,
absorbed in thoughts.
He brushed away the sand
piled up in heaps
in my bosom.
He wiped it off again and again
and cleaned it out again and again.
After a while,
he turned around
and went away again.

Some time passed,
and then he came down
[again] in this way:
He came down
carrying
an armful of *inau*.
Decorating
my bosom beautifully
with those *inau*,
he spoke these words:

“Listen,
o Lady Boat,
to what I have to say!
Long ago,
in days gone by,

⁶ The son of the culture hero Okikurmi.

when my father
 was still alive,
 he took you
 on a trading expedition
 and decorated
 your bosom beautifully
 with wine,
 with tobacco,
 and with grains.
 You took
 great delight in that.
 But
 my father
 departed, leaving me.
 After that,
 you have been
 lonely
 until now.

“However,
 I will strengthen you
 with new power,
 with new energy,
 and will take you with me
 on a trading expedition.
 Then I will decorate
 your bosom beautifully
 with trade wine,
 trade brew,
 with tobacco,
 with grains,
 and with sacred vessels.
 Then you will take great
 delight in this.”

While saying this,
 he decorated
 my bosom beautifully
 with splendid *inau*
 and then went away.
 The night
 went by.
 The next morning,
 he came down again,
 bearing on his back
 big bundles
 of articles traded with the Japanese,
 deer furs and hides,
 and bear furs and hides.

After that,
 he lowered me
 onto the face of the ocean.
 He filled
 my bosom
 with those furs and hides.
 After that,
 he sailed out
 to sea,
 and this was the way
 we went on:
 We sailed across
 many ocean waters,
 countless ocean waters.

We went on and on
 until we came
 to the land of the Japanese.
 The Young Okikurmi

decorated
 my bosom beautifully
 with those things
 he had promised me:
 with wine,
 with vessels,
 with grains,
 and with tobacco,
 and we set sail
 and were sailing homeward.

Just then,
 when we had reached
 the mid-point in the ocean
 between the ocean of the *repunkur*
 and the ocean of the *yaunkur*,
 this is what happened.
 Atop the mountain peaks,
 the peaks far in the distance,
 many black clouds,
 countless black clouds
 rose up.
 Downstream along the course
 of the Soratki river,
 storm clouds,
 black clouds
 came floating
 and came out over the ocean.
 After that
 a fierce storm
 broke out
 at sea.
 It seemed as if
 the waters at the bottom of the sea

had come up to the top
 and the waters at the top of the sea
 had gone down to the bottom.
 On the face of the ocean
 many fierce mountainous waves,
 countless fierce mountainous waves
 broke over each other
 with a noisy slapping.
 In the midst of all this,
 I was buffeted about
 among many mighty waves,
 between countless mighty waves.

After that
 the Young Okikurmi
 uttered youthful whoops
 to drum up
 his spirits.
 I still continued
 to go on.
 Then, just when
 I had mounted
 the crest of the billows
 out in the offing,
 my backbone
 began to shake and shiver.
 The Young Okikurmi
 still continued
 to utter youthful whoops
 to drum up
 his spirits,
 and I kept coming shoreward.
 When I had mounted
 the crest of the billows

near the shore,
 something happened
 which I would never
 have expected to happen.
 My backbone
 broke with a crack,
 and I lost all consciousness
 of what was happening.

When I [awoke and] looked around,
 this is what I saw.
 The fragments of a wrecked boat
 had been washed up
 on the sandy beach
 and were lying there
 piled up in stacks.
 Beside them
 piles of wine [barrels],
 piles of [grain] sacks,
 as well as tobacco
 and sacred vessels
 had been washed up
 and were lying there.
 The Young Okikurmi
 stood beside them,
 absorbed in thought
 for some time.
 Then he walked off
 away from the beach.

After a short while,
 a large crowd of people
 came down to the beach.
 They carried away

all of it—
 the wine,
 the [grain] sacks,
 and the tobacco.

After a while,
 the Young Okikurmi
 came down to the beach.
 He came down
 carrying
 wine
 and an armful of *inau*.
 He also brought down
 tobacco.
 He offered
 these *inau*
 to the fragments of the wrecked boat.
 Making offerings
 of the wine,
 he spoke these words:

“Listen,
 o Lady Boat,
 to what I have to say!
 You have now
 grown weak with old age
 and decrepit.
 You have become
 too feeble to withstand
 the storm demon.
 At this time
 I am performing
 these rites
 to prepare you

for going [back]
to your abode
as a newborn deity,
as a newborn spirit.

“Take along with you
the splendid *inau*,
as well as the wine,
the tobacco,
and the foods.
Go now
from here!
Go up
along the stream
of the Soratki river.
When you have gone
to the top of the waterfall
on the Soratki river,
at the top of the waterfall
there will be standing
only the stump
of a tree which was felled
long ago.
As soon as
you reach
that stump,
ascend
into the heavenly skies
from atop the stump,
from that stump.
Then you will
be able to arrive
at the abode
of the god your master.”⁷

The Young Okikurmi
spoke
these words.

As the Young Okikurmi
had told me,
I took along with me
the wine,
the *inau*,
the grains,
and the tobacco
and went upstream
along the river,
the Soratki river.
When I arrived
at the top of the waterfall
on the Soratki river,
there was standing there
only the stump
of a tree which had been felled
long ago,
in days gone by.
I ascended
into the heavenly skies
from atop the stump,
from that stump.
As I went on and on,
I arrived
in the land of the gods,
bringing along with me
as splendid presents
the wine
and the splendid *inau*
which had been given to me as offerings.

⁷ The reciter gave an alternative version of this passage: “Go to the land of the gods from atop the stump, from that stump. Then you will arrive at the place of your ruler, and you will be praised.” The “god your master” or “ruler” is the ruler of all the trees, *Shirampa-kamui*.

When I arrived,
all of the gods
praised me.

These things
were recounted
by an old boat goddess.

The Culture Hero and His Work

A central hero in the mythic epics is a character whom we may call the "culture hero." Among the Ainu, this hero is the sacred ancestor of the human race, a demigod who lays the foundations for all human life. This great ancestor figure gives useful knowledge, does battle against harmful demons, and makes it possible for the humans to lead pleasant and comfortable lives. Sometimes he himself descends from the heavens; in other versions, his father descended from the heavens but has since returned, leaving the hero an orphan in the care of an older woman, whom the hero calls his "foster sister" or "elder sister." In any case, the hero is generally a child and an orphan, like the hero of the *yukar* epics. The culture hero myth complex probably is of the greatest antiquity, and there is a wide variety of divergent and sometimes contradictory versions.

In his most archaic form, the culture hero appears in a dual light. At times he seems to be a sublime, lofty, heroic being. But sometimes he may be a mischievous trickster, a foolish, cruel rogue whose deeds are outrageous and at the same time amusing. This combination of heroic and dastardly elements into a single image must have reflected a definite thought pattern among the early hunters and fishers. On the one hand, the culture hero is the ancestor of the human race, the originator of everything of value in human life, and the possessor of powers far superior to those of any of the gods in heaven or on earth. Here we see clearly the archaic concept of the superiority of human beings over gods. However, this same hero is depicted as being stupid, violent, and uncouth. In some accounts he is made to steal someone else's wife. In other cases he is unable to control his fury and, after victory over the harmful demons, proceeds to ravage the human homeland. This contradiction does not seem to strike the native audience as odd. The highest ideal of a hero for them apparently has nothing to do with right or wrong. The hero is great simply because he is great, and ethical considerations do not apply to him. He is the incarnation of wild, ruthless might and is cruel and terrible when

enraged. He may also be kind and compassionate. The qualities of compassion and cruelty, of the noble and the ridiculous, seemingly contradictory ones, are here subsumed among the attributes of the culture hero, and no one senses any discrepancy.¹

Although in the most archaic strata of the mythical traditions the hero seems to be an ambiguous combination of both positive and negative qualities, there is a tendency for these qualities to be separated. With social changes, with changes in the population's attitude toward the cult of the hero, and with the gradual evolution of the folklore tradition itself, there took place a splitting, a polarization of the myths and tales about the culture hero. The heroic element was detached from the comical element and concentrated in an all-good, noble hero, while the comical and ridiculous elements were split off and attached to an antipodal image. Now we have twin heroes. One is the wise, mighty, and creative culture hero. His twin brother or alter ego is stupid, weak, and destructive. The unlucky, ineffective twin becomes the butt of derision and provides an even more pronounced contrast to the positive qualities attributed to the culture hero.²

This splitting of the single primeval culture hero into twins, one ridiculous and the other sublime, appears to have been a later development in Ainu folklore. This can be proved easily by pointing to the confusion in the names of the twins. In some areas, the noble hero is called Okikurmi, and his negative counterpart is called Samai-un-kur; but in other areas the names and the roles of the positive and negative heroes are reversed completely.

Another later development is the tendency to detach a certain group of songs about the culture hero, segregate them into a definite folklore genre, and assign a special word to this group of songs. In Hidaka and Iburi, this has been done; in these areas, the word *oina* is sometimes used to refer to a special "sacred tradition" connected with the culture hero.

In the Saru region of Hidaka there are a number of names for the culture hero. One is Oina-kamui. Chiri assumes that the word *oina* must have meant anciently "to go into a trance," "to shamanize." He argues that the word is derived from the verb *oira*, "to forget," and thus concludes that *oina* is a synonym of *tusu*.³ If we accept this theory, Oina-kamui means "god who shamanizes." It seems more probable that *oina* means simply "to sing" or "to sing

¹ Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu bungaku*, p. 49.

² This process of splitting of the culture hero figure into positive and negative twins has been described on the basis of cross-cultural materials by V. E. Gusev in his *Estetika fol'klora*, pp. 303-4. Even though Gusev probably was not acquainted with the Ainu mythic epics, his theoretical formulation fits the Ainu culture hero myths perfectly and provides us with an excellent key for interpreting them.

³ Chiri Mashihō, *Bunrui Ainu-go jiten*, vol. 1, pp.88-89.

the sacred tradition.” In that case, Oina-kamui would mean “god of the sacred tradition (*oina*).” Another name of the culture hero is Aeoina-kamui, which means either “god concerning whom we sing the *oina*” or “god about whom we shamanize,” depending upon which interpretation of *oina* we adopt. Still another name of the culture hero is Ainurakkur, which means “he who has a human smell” or perhaps “he who is of human descent.” This appellation emphasizes the culture hero’s solidarity with the human race. Another name is Okikurmi, which Chiri interprets as meaning “he wears a leather robe with a shiny hem.” (See introduction to selection 13) In the Horobetsu dialect of Iburi, this name is Okikirmui.

There being such a wide divergence in local traditions, it is not surprising to find varying accounts about who exactly the culture hero is. The Ainu themselves were responsible for some of the confusion, since some of them were accustomed to telling visitors that their Okikurmi was the Japanese hero Minamoto no Yoshitsune.⁴

According to the most reliable native accounts from the Saru Ainu obtained by Kindaichi, the culture hero Okikurmi was a half-divine, half-human being (*arke ainu arke kamui*) who was the father of the Ainu race. He was the first ruler of the land of men and laid the groundwork for the Ainu life of today. All Ainu customs and mores were taught by this god. He himself lived entirely according to human, i.e., Ainu, patterns, and for this reason he is called Ainurakkur.⁵ In many of the mythic epics of Saru and Iburi, the culture hero is identified and symbolized by his mystic paraphernalia or trappings which consist of an elm-bark fiber coat with a flaming hem (*o-uhui nikap attush*) and a sheath with a flaming tip (*o-uhui shirka*). When these trappings are mentioned in the course of an epic account, the audience automatically understands that the hero being described is the culture hero. In the Saru and Iburi regions, the culture hero is said to have dwelt along the Shishirmuka (Saru) river. His stronghold was at the hill Hayopira near the village of Piratori in the Saru region.⁶

The culture hero is credited with having given a number of cultural boons to the humans in his role as the great teacher of mankind. Some of them are:

(1) Ritual techniques: which gods are to be worshiped, and how to pray to them; how to whittle and erect *inau*; how to offer wine to the gods. These

⁴ The entire question of the Ainu and the legend of Yoshitsune was dealt with at length by Kindaichi in an essay reprinted in Kindaichi’s *Ainu no kenkyū*, pp. 307–40. The spurious account was accepted at face value by a number of Western writers, including Chamberlain, Hitchcock, and even Batchelor.

⁵ Kindaichi, *Ainu no shinten*.

⁶ Kindaichi Kyōsuke, *Ainu bunka shi*, p. 268.

activities are restricted to males, and women are forbidden to perform them.

(2) Handicraft techniques for both sexes. These include the wood carving performed by the men and the needlework and basketwork made by women.

(3) Hunting techniques: how to make poisoned arrows, how to make spring bows, how to make bows and arrows.

(4) Fishing techniques.

(5) Agricultural techniques.

(6) Architectural techniques: how to build houses.

(7) Medicinal techniques: diagnoses of illnesses and methods of praying to cure them; how to identify the grasses and roots which are useful for medicinal purposes.

(8) Methods of reciting ritual salutations and methods of settling disputes.

(9) Folklore: all types of songs, epics, and entertainments.

In short, it would seem that all cultural skills and activities which the Ainu believed to be native to them were originally attributed to the culture hero.⁷

Although the culture hero plays an active role at the beginning of Ainu cultural history, he does not continue to do so. In fact, the culture hero is widely believed to have departed in indignation (*ikesui*) and gone to live in another country, Samor-moshir (see selection 25). According to Wakarpa, during the later years of the culture hero, the Ainu became more and more depraved, in many instances committing sacrilegious acts toward him. Finally, the culture hero forsook the human homeland and went to live in a neighboring country. Hearing about this, the *yukar* hero also departed. Since then, the world has continued to degenerate until finally the Ainu have come into days of irreparable evil.⁸ This concept of the departure of the racial heroes and the arrival of evil days reflects the extreme conservatism of the traditionally minded Ainu and their complete dissatisfaction with life under the new conditions resulting from Japanese colonization.

At any rate, the materials from Saru depict the culture hero as the "human god," the head of the human race. There are head gods who rule the bears, the owls, the killer whale, and all the other species. In the case of the human beings, the lord of the species is the culture hero, who represents the humans in their dealings with the gods. When there is famine, the culture hero intercedes for the humans, and he defeats the demons and evil deities who

⁷ Kindaichi, *Ainu no kenkyū*, p. 102, pp. 214–15.

⁸ Kindaichi, *Ainu no shinten*, p. 162.

plague them. There are no gods anywhere—in the heavens or on the earth—who can compare with him in his might and wisdom. His superiority over orders of beings represents the excellence of mankind, and the mythic songs about the culture hero may be understood in terms of the archaic concept of the superiority of humans over the world of animals and spirits.

The culture hero is the ancestor, benefactor, advocate, and teacher of the human race. It was he who arranged things in the world of men in their present order. To him is attributed everything that is precious and noble in human (i.e., Ainu) culture. In revering and worshiping the culture hero, the humans are paying tribute to their own vision of a glorified humanity. It seems that this is what we find at the core of the Ainu culture hero myths. The primeval mythic act by which man becomes human is perpetuated and recollected in the cult of the culture hero, who founded human culture. The culture hero *is* man, and in worshiping him man glorifies his own species.

This section contains six selections dealing with the exploits and the origins of the culture hero. Five of them are from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa, and one is from Hiraga Tumonte. All were recorded in writing by Kubodera.

20. Song of Aeoina-kamui

This is a mythic epic of the *oina* type recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Tumonte of Shin-Piraka village, Saru, on August 14, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Kane-ka-un, ka-un*. The meaning of the burden is not clear. Nitani Kunimatsu informed Kubodera that the same song could also be sung with the burden *Unhu unhu, unhu unhu*.

In this account, the culture hero Aeoina-kamui does battle against a huge char in a lake to save the human race from famine. He uses a twig of mugwort (*noya-nit*) to stab at the char. After his victory, the hero's vigor is so abundant that he grasps the edge of the lake and shakes it, causing mountain floods. He is barely restrained by his elder sister. After he returns home, the hero is worshiped by the humans, who send him offerings of wine and *inau* in thanksgiving, exactly as they would to a cult deity.

It is of interest that the hero appears in a dual light: both as the benevolent hero and as a frenzied destroyer who may possibly ravage his own homeland. The hero is depicted as if he might be a giant.

The text is Oina 2 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 489–92.

My elder sister
raised me,
and we lived
on and on
uneventfully.
Stacks of sacred vessels
were stretched out
like a low cliff.
Just below the treasures
was a magnificent seat,

a movable seat.
I dwelt
on the seat
and was raised well.

My elder sister—
it was incredible
how she could ever be
so very beautiful,
so very comely.

She transformed herself
 into a ball of flashing lightning.
 We lived there.
 Together with
 my younger sister
 we lived
 on and on until
 by this time
 I had come to look
 like a young man.
 The only work
 I ever did was
 to carve on precious swords,
 to carve on treasures.

Then once,
 my elder sister
 went outside.
 Afterward, [she came inside again and]
 shed
 many sparkling teardrops.
 After this had continued for some time,
 she huddled her head close
 to my younger sister
 and whispered these words
 into her ear:

“My younger sister,
 listen to
 what I have to say!
 We used to have also
 an elder brother
 and lived together with him,
 but at the headwaters
 of our native river

there is a big lake.
 In that lake
 there dwells
 a fiendish monster,
 the god of the lake.
 He is a famine god,
 a huge char.¹
 He brings about famines
 in the land of the humans.
 For this reason,
 the gods who were living
 in the land of the humans
 gathered
 at that lake.
 The gods
 gathered
 to do battle against
 the god of the lake,
 but they were all killed.
 By that time,
 it looked as if
 all of the gods
 were about to be killed,
 and our elder brother also
 went there.
 When he left,
 this is what he said:

‘If I die,
 bloody rain will fall
 in the western part of the land.
 The sun will shine bright
 in the eastern part of the land.’

“These were the words he spoke

¹ The Ainu word is *tukushish*. This is the white-spotted char (*Salvelinus leucomaenis leucomaenis* Pallas), a trout-like fish found in the rivers of northern Japan and Hokkaido.

when he went there.
 Now, this day,
 bloody rain is falling
 in the western part of the land.
 The sun is shining brightly
 in the eastern part of the land.
 Thus, our elder brother
 must surely have died.
 The god we are raising,
 our divine nursling,²
 is still too young,
 and it would be dangerous
 if he heard of it.
 Thus, I have not
 told him about it.”

When I heard
 her say this,
 I spoke these words:

“My elder sister,
 what did you say?
 Say it again!
 I want to hear it!”

Then my elder sister
 shed
 many sparkling teardrops.
 After a while [she said]:

“It would be dangerous
 if you were to hear
 about these things.
 Since you were still so young,

I was worried
 that you might hear,
 and this is why
 I did not tell you.
 But now that you
 have already heard,
 I will tell you.”

When my elder sister
 had spoken,
 I clad myself
 in a magnificent robe.
 A metal buckled belt
 I wrapped around myself
 in a single wrapping.
 A god-given sword
 I thrust under my belt.
 I tied firmly
 the dangling cords
 of a delicately fashioned helmet.
 After that
 I stepped
 outside.
 I went upstream
 along the river,
 with blasts of wind
 whirling in my ears.
 Going on and on,
 I went
 far upstream.
 While I ran along,
 I broke off
 a twig of mugwort³
 and used it as a staff.

² This formula (in Ainu *a-reshpa kamui/a-reshpa pito*) is used by the older relatives to refer to a young epic hero. Both of the components mean “god whom I (or we) raise.” Both *kamui* and *pito* are loan words from early Japanese. The Japanese words mean “god” and “human,” respectively, but in the Ainu language both the words are usually used synonymously to mean “god” or “spirit.”

³ The Ainu name is *noya*. This plant (*Artemisia vulgaris* L. var. *yezoana* Kudo) is believed to be efficacious for driving away evil spirits. “Mugwort effigies” (*imosh kamui*) are made in extreme emergencies and used to repel powerful evil spirits.

As I went on up
 along the river,
 there was a big lake.
 On the shores of the lake
 the lodges [built by]
 many gods
 were standing.
 As I went on,
 I looked and saw that,
 true enough,
 the god of the lake,
 the famine god,
 a big char,
 was waving his fins
 at the head of the lake
 and was waving his tail
 at the foot of the lake.

I stabbed mightily at him
 with the twig of mugwort.
 The fiendish monster
 put forth his strength
 and jerked me down into the water
 to a depth half-way up my leggings.
 Then I, in my turn,
 put forth my strength
 and tossed him up
 onto the shore of the lake.
 After we continued doing this
 for dozens of times,
 the flesh of the fiendish monster's
 body was torn,
 and I chopped him to pieces
 with my sword.

Becoming noxious insects,
 [the pieces] went flying up together.

After that,
 I kicked
 at the dead bodies
 of all the many gods
 lying piled up
 on the shores of the lake
 like many pieces
 of driftwood washed ashore.
 Rubbing their eyes again and again,
 the gods all [said]:

“We thought that
 we were asleep
 for just a short while,
 and now the exalted hero⁴
 has restored us
 to life, it seems!”

Saying these words,
 all of them
 stood up,
 rubbing their eyes again and again.
 At that time,
 the one who was
 my elder brother
 stood up,
 rubbing his eyes again and again.

“Thanks to you,
 my dear younger brother,
 I too

* *Kamui-ne-an-kur*, a title frequently applied to epic heroes. The literal meaning is apparently “he who becomes a god.”

have woken up,
it seems!”

Saying these words,
he stood up.
After that
I considered
what I ought to do,
turning over various
things in my mind.
I grasped in my hands
the edge of the lake
and shook it again and again.
Just then
a terrible mountain flood
went flowing down.
My elder sister
appeared at the window [and said]:

“What are you doing?
You were supposed
to save
the human homeland.
And now,
what is this you are doing?
Are you trying to ravage
the land of the humans?
My younger brother,
calm yourself,
calm yourself please!”

Thus did she speak.
At that time

I came to my senses
and went down
to my own home.
As I was going down,
offerings of human *inau*
and of human wine
came to my abode.

“O weighty god,
thanks to you
the most evil deity
has been killed,
and now
there is nothing
for us to fear.
To show our gratitude,
we send offerings
of wine
and of *inau*
to the weighty god.”

With this message
from the humans,
many *inau*
and much wine
came to my abode,
and I live on
with my glory as a deity
greatly enhanced.

These things
were recounted
by Aeoina-kamui.

21. Song of Aeoina-kamui

This is a mythic epic of the *oina* type recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on September 4, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Atte panna*. The meaning of the burden is unclear.

In this account, the culture hero Aeoina-kamui does battle against the Earth Crone (Moshir Huchi) dwelling at the bottom of the ocean and destroys her wickerwork fish trap along the Shishirmuka river in order to save the humans from famine. After he has broken down the fish trap, the hero walks along the mountain peak and kicks lumps of snow out from the tips of his snowshoes. Here again the hero appears to be a giant, for these lumps of snow are transformed into herds of deer and into schools of fish. He uses silver snowshoes to alleviate the famine; in other epics he accomplishes this by using a silver fish-spear or silver bow and arrows.

The exact nature of Earth Crone is not known clearly. She appears to be a famine goddess. It is interesting that she lives at the bottom of the ocean and has disheveled hair. In the fray with the hero, she uses her hair as a weapon, entangling it with the hero's spear and sword. There is no indication of why she is called Earth Crone, but there appear to be similarities with the Eskimo Sedna.

The text is Oina 7 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 530-35.

My foster sister
raised me,
and this is the way
we lived on and on
uneventfully:
Stacks of sacred vessels

were stretched out
like a low cliff.
Just below the treasures
was a movable seat,
a magnificent seat.
I was raised

on the seat,
and I lived on and on
uneventfully.

As time went on,
I would do nothing but
carve on scabbards,
carve on treasures,
with my eyes staring fixedly
at a single spot.

As time went on,
this is what
my foster sister
began to do.
At frequent intervals
she would take outside
reed mats full of grain.
As time went on,
gradually
this is what
she then began to do.
Now she would constantly
be taking outside
winnows full of grain.

After some time,
one day
she apparently wished
to say something.
She stared fixedly
down into the fire in the hearth
for a while,
then turned to me
and spoke, her voice

ringing out in sonorous accents.
This is what she said:

“O god I have raised,
o my divine nursling,
Young Offspring,¹
listen well
to what I have to say.
The Earth Crone,
the most evil deity,
became angry
at the exceeding
prosperity
of the human homeland,
and she stole away
the souls of the food.
Midway along the course
of the Shishirmuka river,
she erected a fish trap
in this way:
She made
stakes of walnut wood
and stakes of pagoda-tree wood.
When she set up
these stakes,
walnut-tainted water
went flowing downstream;
pagoda-tree-tainted water
went flowing downstream.
The fish
were unable
even to drink the water.
As a result,
famine has broken out

¹ *Wariunekur*, an epithet applied to the culture hero in the epics of the Saru Ainu. It seems to be derived from the verb *uwari*, meaning “to multiply,” “to propagate the race,” or “to give birth.” The meaning is not entirely clear, but parallels in the Sakhalin dialect lead us to suppose that *wariunekur* might mean “young child,” or perhaps “youngest child.”

in the homeland of the gods
 and in the human homeland.
 Now it appears that
 the human homeland
 is about to be destroyed.
 Intending to assist
 the humans,
 I have been taking outside
 reed mats full of grain,
 and have been taking outside
 winnows full of grain,
 and I have been assisting
 the humans with this.
 But now,
 even I
 have become
 short of provisions.
 I should feel uneasy
 if it were anyone
 else but you;
 only you
 can I rely on.
 If you do not do battle against her,
 the country of the humans,
 the human homeland
 will be destroyed,
 and the populace of your land,
 the people of your country
 will die out.
 Were this to happen,
 all your life
 you would bear life-long disgrace.
 You must do battle
 against the Earth Crone!"

These words
 were spoken by
 my foster sister.

Then
 I wrapped in a sedge mat
 the carving I had been doing
 and put it
 on top of the stacks of sacred vessels.
 Jumping up,
 I attired myself
 in a magnificent robe.
 I went inside
 my suit of metal armor.
 In a single wrapping
 I wrapped around myself
 my metal buckled belt.
 Under my belt I thrust
 my god-given sword.
 Over this I put on
 my elm-bark fiber coat with its hem in flames.
 Grasping in my hand
 my short-hilted spear,
 I went outside.
 I stepped
 outside
 my native stockade.

After that
 I went
 across the ocean.
 When I arrived
 midway between
 the ocean of the *repunkur*

and the ocean of the *yaunkur*,
there,
at the bottom of the sea
was the abode
of the Earth Crone.

I headed toward
the window
of the house
of the Earth Crone.
I darted in
onto the floor at the head of the fireplace.
When I looked at her,
this is what I saw.
The Earth Crone,
the most evil deity,
had her hair hanging
as if she were wearing
a half-woven basket
on her head.
Underneath her hair,
only her evil eyes
were gleaming brightly.
She was staring at me
with her eyes opened wide in amazement.
Then
I swung my spear at her,
and she sprang up.

If I were to fight
against the most evil deity,
the Earth Crone,
on the surface of the earth,
the country would be in danger,

the land would be in danger.
Because of this,
I hurled her down
into the Underworld,
the six-layered country.
After that,
I did battle against her.

The accursed hair
of the Earth Crone
would become entangled
with my spear and with my sword,
and this made it
difficult for me to land
any blows on her.
As this went on,
I reckoned the time,
and it seemed to me
as if by this time
I had been doing battle
against the Earth Crone
for six summers
and six winters.
As time went on,
I succeeded at long last
in slaying
the Earth Crone,
the most evil deity.

At this time,
I emerged
on the surface of the earth.
I came forth
atop the ocean.

After that,
 I went shoreward
 and came down
 to the mouth
 of the Shishirmuka river.
 After that,
 I went upstream
 along the river.
 When I had arrived
 midway along the course
 of the Shishirmuka river,
 true enough,
 the Earth Crone,
 the most evil deity,
 had erected a fish trap
 in this way:
 Stakes of walnut wood
 and stakes of pagoda-tree wood
 had been set up there
 mixed together.

I broke and scattered
 that fish trap.
 Dirty, polluted water
 was flowing downstream.
 On one side of the river
 yellowish water
 was flowing down,
 and on the other side of the river
 blackish water
 was flowing down.
 Then,
 after a while,
 clear water

began to flow downstream,
 and this is what
 came about:
 The deities dwelling
 in the river
 came rushing
 to draw water.
 The deities
 expressed their gratitude,
 saying:

“On account of
 the miserable fault
 of the Earth Crone,
 the most evil deity,
 until now
 we have been quite unable
 to drink the water at all,
 and as time went on
 it seemed as if
 we were about to
 perish of thirst
 at any moment.
 But thanks to
 the Young Offspring,
 the mighty hero,
 we can drink the water,
 and now our lives
 have been saved!”

As I heard
 the deities
 speak these words
 of gratitude,

I went upstream
 along the Shishirmuka river
 until I arrived
 atop the peak,
 the mighty mountain peak
 at its headwaters.

At that time
 I went walking about
 here and there on the mountain slopes
 in this way:
 I jumped from one end
 of the mountain peak
 to the other end,
 sliding along
 on silver snowshoes.
 As I did this,
 from the tips of my snowshoes
 small lumps of snow
 and large lumps of snow
 went flying up
 over the mountain slopes.
 I kicked them with my snowshoes,
 and the lumps of snow
 fell scattered here and there
 over the mountain slopes.
 As they fell,
 those lumps of snow
 on the mountain slopes
 were transformed
 into herds of small deer
 and into herds of large deer
 and went skipping and jumping together
 over the mountain slopes.

I went down
 to the top
 of a divinely made precipice.
 I went sliding along,
 I went gliding along
 on my silver snowshoes,
 and this is what
 came about:
 From the tips of my snowshoes
 small lumps of snow
 and large lumps of snow
 went flying up
 and came falling down
 over the surface of the river.
 As they fell down,
 this is what happened:
 In the fishing grounds
 of the Shishirmuka river,
 there were fish so abundant
 that the schools of fish on the bottom
 would rub against the rocks
 and the schools of fish on the top
 would be scorched by the sunshine.

Seeing this,
 I turned around
 and went down again
 heading toward
 my native stronghold.
 Then I returned
 to the abode of
 my elder sister,
 my foster sister.
 When she caught sight of me,

she nodded approvingly
at me again and again.

“Such deeds
as those you have done,
o god I have raised,
o my divine nursling,
are exploits which win
the praise of the gods!”

My elder sister
spoke
these words.

These things
were recounted by
Aeoina-kamui.

22. Song of Aeoina-kamui (Excerpt)

This excerpt is from a mythic epic of the *oina* type recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on August 29, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Hei inou*. The meaning of the burden is unclear. Similar burdens are used with many other mythic epics.

The excerpt given here is the section where the foster sister, who identifies herself as the goddess watching over mount Optateshke, tells the hero the story of his birth. He is the offspring of a little elm growing at the foot of mount Optateshke and the Pestilence God (*Pa-kor-kamui*).

Other informants also agreed with this account attributing the culture hero's parentage to the elm goddess and the Pestilence God. Nabesawa Taukno of Shumunkot village and Kotanpira of Piratori village told this version to Kindaichi.¹ In other versions, he is the offspring of the elm goddess and a sky god ("the younger of two brothers ruling the Upper Heavens"). In some accounts the hero's foster sister is the Sun Goddess; in others she is the Moon Goddess. All accounts from this area of Hokkaido seem to agree that the culture hero's mother is the elm goddess (*chikisani kamui*). It is odd that his father should be the Pestilence God, feared as the source of smallpox and other infectious diseases.

The text is Oina 3 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 493–509.

One day
my foster sister
stared fixedly down
at the center of the hearth.
She seemed to have
something she wanted to say.

The ashes in the center of the fireplace
she raked out toward the edges,
and the ashes at the edges of the fireplace
she raked out toward the center.
Here and there in the ashes
she jabbed [with the tongs]

¹ Kindaichi, *Ainu jojishi yakara gaisetsu*, pp. 19–23.

and traced furrows and lines.
 But she seemed to have
 something she wanted to say.
 Again and again she would steal
 glances in my direction.
 However,
 it would be understandable
 if she hesitated to speak out
 to a moderate degree,
 [but her hesitation was extraordinary].
 She remained silent,
 gulping down many words,
 gulping down countless words
 which had come to the tip of her tongue.
 Finally, she raised up
 her eyebrows sharply
 and spoke these words:

“Listen to
 what I have to say!
 Since you were still
 much too young,
 much too helpless,
 I have not
 told you the tale
 until now.
 But now finally
 I will tell you.
 The tale is this:

“Long ago,
 in days gone by,
 the Land Creator God,
 the Country Creator God

came down
 to this land of the humans
 to create the land,
 to create the country.
 He created the land,
 he created the country.
 Then he finished the land,
 he finished the country.
 This native mountain of ours
 is called
 the divine mountain
 Optateshke.²
 After he had finished,
 the Land Creator God
 ascended
 into the heavenly skies
 from atop the peak of
 that mountain.
 He had made
 a mattock handle of elm,³
 had fitted it onto his mattock,
 and had used it
 to create the country,
 to create the land.
 Then, when he
 had finished,
 he forgot
 that mattock handle
 atop the peak
 of the divine mountain
 Optateshke.
 Since it would be a great pity
 if something made by hand
 by the most weighty god

² A mountain in Hokkaido at the headwaters of the Tokapchi (Tokachi) river in Daisetsuzan National Park.

³ The *chikisani* elm (*Ulmus davidiana* Planch. var. *japonica* Nakai). The bark of this type of elm was made into fibers which used to be woven into garments by the Ainu. The word *chikisani* means “fire-drilling tree.” According to Batchelor, the dried roots were formerly used to make fire drills.

were left to rot in the ground,
it sprouted forth
and became a little elm.

“During this while,
the gods
would descend
from the heavenly skies
to view the land.
Then they would return
to the heavenly skies
and would speak
admiringly in praise
of the beauties of the country,
the beauties of the land.
The Pestilence God⁴
heard this.

For this reason,
he descended
to view the country,
to view the land.

Nevertheless,
there was not
a single of blade grass,
and there was not
a single tree.

There was not any place
for him to rest on
while viewing the land,
while viewing the country.

After that,
he made his way
through the country
and finally came

to the peak
of the divine mountain
Optateshke.
He looked and saw that,
at the foot
of the divine mountain
Optateshke,
a little elm
was growing.
Since this was
the only tree,
he rested on it.
After that,
he viewed the land.
Delighting in
the beauties of the country,
the beauties of the land,
he viewed the land,
he viewed the country.
This is what
he thought to himself:

‘Truly, it is no wonder
that the gods
spoke admiringly
in praise of
the beauties of the land.
What a beautiful
land this is!’

“Thinking this thought,
he continued to view the land.
Then he ascended
into the heavenly skies.

⁴ *Pa-kor-kamui*, the god who controls infectious diseases and epidemics, especially smallpox. He is the chieftain of a band of pestilence gods who travel around the land spreading diseases. He is sometimes called the Smallpox God.

“After that,
 it would have been a great pity
 if the fact that
 the most weighty deity
 had rested on
 that little elm
 were allowed to fall [fruitlessly] to the
 ground.

[The little elm] became pregnant
 and gave birth to a child.

“After that,
 the little elm
 was blown about together with her child.
 When the wind blew
 from the west,
 it blew her and her child
 to the east
 of the divine mountain
 Optateshke.
 When the wind blew
 from the east,
 it blew her and her child
 to the west
 of the divine mountain
 Optateshke.
 Both night
 and day
 she continued
 to be blown about with her child
 all the time.
 Then finally, one time
 the little elm
 threw

the baby she had been holding
 up to the peak
 of the divine mountain
 Optateshke.
 As she did so,
 she uttered
 these words:

‘My heart is tired
 and sorely distressed!
 When the wind blows
 from the west,
 it blows me and my child
 to the east
 of the divine mountain
 Optateshke.
 When the wind blows
 from the east,
 it blows me and my child
 to the west
 of the divine mountain.
 My heart is tired
 and sorely distressed!
 Surely there must be
 some deity sent down
 from the Upper Heavens
 to watch over
 the divine mountain
 Optateshke.
 Whoever you may be,
 look after
 my baby for me,
 I pray!’

“Saying these words,
she threw you,
she cast you
to the peak of the mountain.

“As for me,
I am
the deity sent down
from the heavenly skies
to watch over
the divine mountain
Optateshke.
At that time
you were cast away.
Therefore,
I took you in
and have until now
been raising you
with a splendid upbringing,
a magnificent upbringing.

“In the meanwhile,
Big Demon
was seeking out lands,
was seeking out countries.⁵
On account of this,
the gods gathered,
and you have heard
them doing battle against
Big Demon.
For a very long time,
many rumbling and thudding noises,
countless rumbling and thudding noises
have been rising up,

and you have
been hearing them.
However,
you were still much too young,
you were still much too helpless,
and I gave up the idea
of telling you the tale of it.
Thus, I have not
told you the tale
until now.
But now at last
I have told you the tale.

“You must go to assist
in the battle,
the battle against
Big Demon.
If you do not,
it looks as if
your land,
your country
will be stolen away from you.
So you must
go to assist
in the battle,
the battle against
Big Demon,
and these are the preparations
I have made for you:

“Since you had
your origins in
the little elm,
I wanted you

⁵ He was roaming about seeking lands and countries to steal and make his own.

to have this as your emblem,
 and I made with my own hands
 an elm-bark fiber coat with a flaming
 hem,⁶
 and a sheath with a flaming tip
 as your divine armor.⁷
 I have prepared
 them for you.
 Wearing them,
 you must go
 to assist
 in the battle,
 the battle against
 Big Demon!"

While she said
 these words,
 my foster sister
 brought out
 the divine armor:
 an elm-bark fiber coat with a flaming hem
 and a sheath with a flaming tip
 and held them out toward me.

Overjoyed,
 I sprang up
 on the bed.
 I clad myself
 in a magnificent robe.
 A metal buckled belt
 I wrapped around myself
 in a single wrapping.
 After that,
 I stepped
 inside
 the divine armor:
 the elm-bark fiber coat with the flaming hem
 and the sheath with the flaming tip.
 I describe in detail
 how I dressed myself,
 how I arrayed myself.

After that
 I headed
 toward the doorway.
 I stepped
 outside.

Here is a prose synopsis of the rest of the story of this mythic epic:

I went into battle, shedding tears of grief at the thought that I was the offspring of a little elm. I arrived at the place where the battle against Big Demon was taking place. I engaged Big Demon in battle, and we fought on and on for year after year. Finally my sword broke, and I lost consciousness.

When I awoke, I was atop the branch of a tree at the foot of the volcano at the source of the Shikot river. I looked down and saw the corpse of a young boy lying under me. I managed with difficulty to tear myself away from the

⁶ *O-uhui nikap attush*. This is the distinctive emblem of the culture hero.

⁷ *Kamui hayokpe*, the divine armor or costume distinctive of the culture hero.

corpse and went down to the mouth of the Shikot river. The god ruling over the mouth of the river brought out treasures to induce me to turn back, accusing me of fleeing after only a single battle. I jumped over the treasures and went on. When I had come to the mouth of the Iput river, the god ruling over the mouth of the river also brought out treasures and asked me to turn back. I ignored him and went on to the mouth of the Muka river. Here again the god of the river mouth urged me to go back, offering to pay me treasures as inducement. I leaped over them and went on. When I reached the mouth of the Shishirmuka river, the god of the river rapids once again urged me to turn back, offering me treasures. I jumped over them and went upstream along the Shishirmuka river.

I went upstream until I reached a fork in the river. There was a bridge of mist rising up into the sky. I climbed up higher and higher on this bridge. When I had climbed up into the highest heaven, a sort of dog-like creature came toward me. It had jutting fangs and continued to snap at me. I turned around and fled back.

I fled past the god of the mouth of the Shishirmuka river, the god of the mouth of the Muka river, the god of the mouth of the Iput river, and the god of the mouth of the Shikot river. Each one of them laughed at me, but the dog still continued to chase and snap at me.

When I finally arrived at the foot of the volcano at the source of the Shikot river, I jumped down onto the corpse. This was the last thing I remember.

After a period of unconsciousness, I awoke to see a young woman of amazing beauty. She was wearing white robes and was singing a song while blowing puffs of breath on my body. My wounds healed up, and I was revived. The young woman said:

“I am the younger sister of the Wolf God of the Upper Heavens. Both you and Big Demon perished in battle: you were making your way toward the land of the gods. I was asked by my elder brother to cause you to turn back and to restore you to life. He also asked me to go home with you and cook your meals for you. I transformed myself into my shape of a dog and went to meet you, causing you to flee. Now I have restored you to life.”

I ignored the young woman completely and returned to the stronghold where I was raised. The young woman trailed along after me.

23. Song of the Young God Okikurmi (Dream Song)

This is a mythic epic of the *oina* type recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa in August, 1932. The burden is not recorded; the reciter said that she had “forgotten” the burden.

This is a parody of the *oina* type mythic epic in which the speaker is the “young Okikurmi” (*pon Okikurmi*), the son of the culture hero Okikurmi. The action is atypical throughout. The young hero is raised by a cannibal foster sister (*ainu ep sapo*) who has previously killed his father. The hero goes into the mountains with her, sings her to sleep, and sets fire to the hut. Just then the hero awakes. The action is presented as if it happened in a dream.

Atypical narratives of this type, containing grotesque departures from the normal order of things, are usually called “dream songs.” (This one is called *wentarap kamui yukar*, “dream god-epic.”)

The text is Oina 6 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 527–29

A cannibal elder sister
raised me,
and we lived on.
When she went hunting in the mountains,
she would [come back] carrying on her back
equal amounts of
human flesh and deer flesh.
She would cook
the deer flesh for me,
and she would cook
the human flesh for herself.
This was the way
we lived
on and on.

Then one day
this is what she said:

“O Young Offspring,
come along with me!
Let us go into the mountains!”

She spoke
these words.
Therefore,
I dressed myself.
After that,
we went on and on
somewhere or other.

Finally, we came
to a certain place.
It was incredible
what an amazing
divinely made ravine
it was!

Spanning the ravine,
a needle-thin bridge
was stretched.

Now
this is what
my cannibal elder sister said:

“I am going
to go across on
the needle-thin bridge.
You must do
exactly the same as I do!”

Saying this,
she leaped
onto the bridge,
the needle-thin bridge,
and started across.
After that,
at times
the needle-thin bridge
would go swinging up
to the skies.
At other times
it would go swinging down
to the bottom of the ravine.
My cannibal elder sister
would cling tight

to the top of the bridge
and to the bottom of the bridge.
After doing this for some time,
she finally arrived across
at the opposite side.

After that,
this is what she said:

“Come across, doing
exactly the same as I did!”

Thus did she say.
After that,
I stripped off my clothes
and leaped
onto the bridge,
the needle-thin bridge.

Then
the needle-thin bridge
at times
would go swinging up
to the skies.
At other times
it would go swinging down
to the bottom of the ravine.
I strove to my utmost,
I did my very utmost
so that I would not
be bested by
my cannibal elder sister.
I clung tight
to the bottom of the bridge

and to the top of the bridge.

After that
my cannibal elder sister
bent backward
and bent forward
with laughter [saying]:

“It is no wonder
the Young Offspring
does such feats,
for he is the offspring
of illustrious forebears!”

As she laughed,
human flesh appeared
from between her teeth
and dangled down
when she spoke these words.

I continued to go on
and finally arrived across
at the opposite side.
My cannibal elder sister
spoke these words:

“Long ago,
I brought
your father there
and killed him
by doing just that.
Now once again,
I have brought you,
but it is no wonder

that you have done this feat
because you are the offspring
of illustrious forebears.
Your father’s
armor
is tied to
the top of [that] spruce.
Remember this well!”

These words
were spoken by
my cannibal elder sister.
When she said this,
I turned aside
for a moment [and thought]:

“What is this thing
called father,
that mine
should have been killed?”¹

As I thought this,
I shed
many sparkling teardrops,
countless sparkling teardrops.

After that,
I considered
what I ought to do
with my cannibal elder sister,
turning over various
things in my mind.
This is what
I said:

¹ The meaning is: “I did not even know that I had a father, and now it appears that I had a father and that he was killed.”

“Look here,
 cannibal elder sister,
 let us spend this night
 here in the mountains.
 You have raised me
 well, and
 I would like to sing epics² for you,
 so that at least
 you might hear them.”

When I said this,
 she nodded approvingly
 at me again and again.

“Are you telling
 me the truth,
 o Young Offspring?”

I replied
 that it was true.
 After that
 I made
 a little grass hut.
 I kindled
 a blazing bonfire.

Then
 I said:

“Listen carefully,
 cannibal elder sister!”

and started to sing epics.

One of the eyes
 of my cannibal elder sister
 went to sleep.
 One of her ears
 went to sleep.
 She was listening
 with one eye
 and with one ear.
 After that
 I continued to sing epics
 until at long last
 I noticed that
 both of her eyes
 and both of her ears
 had gone to sleep.

The window
 and the door
 of that grass hut
 I tied shut
 with leather thongs.
 I set fire
 to the upper thatch layers
 and the lower thatch layers [on the roof].
 That grass hut
 burst into flames
 with a tremendous roar.

Now
 my cannibal elder sister
 went running around inside the hut [crying]:

“O Young Offspring,

² *Yukar*, the heroic epics. The hero wants to recite epics for his elder sister to recompense her for having given him such a good upbringing.

where are you?
Come quickly
and rescue me!"

I thought I heard
her crying out these words.
Just then there was the sound

of dogs barking,
and at that moment I awoke.

These things
were recounted
by the Young Okikurmi.

24. Song of the Younger Sister of the Owl God

This is a mythic epic of the *pon oina* type recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on September 9, 1932. The burden is not recorded. Probably it was recited without a burden in the manner of the heroic epics.

This selection is one of a whole cluster of mythic epics dealing with how the culture hero courts a maiden and fights against a rival god for her hand. In this case, the maiden is the younger sister of the Owl God (*Kotan-kor-kamui kot tureshi*), and the rival is the god of mount Poroshir.

The speaker is the younger sister of the Owl God. She is betrothed to the god of Poroshir. One day, the God of the Western Seaboard (*Anrur-un-kamui*) from the opposite coast of Hokkaido comes to visit, and the Owl God gives a drinking feast in his honor. During the feast, the god of Poroshir comes in and accuses the Owl God of having given his younger sister to the God of the Western Seaboard rather than to him, the god of Poroshir. He threatens warfare against the Owl God. The God of the Western Seaboard takes up the challenge and does battle against Poroshir. The younger sister of the Owl God is transformed into a “female sword rivet” (*matne shik*) and accompanies the hero into battle. During the battle she catches brief glimpses of an elm-bark fiber coat with a flaming hem and a sheath with a flaming tip, and this makes it clear that the hero is really Ainurakkur, the culture hero. After the battles are over, the hero takes the young goddess home with him, and they live together as man and wife.

There are very many variants of this epic, which must have been extremely popular. The most remarkable variant is that of Kannari Matsu (Imekanu) of Horobetsu (called the *pon aina*). Her version has nearly seven thousand lines. The story is closely similar to the version of Etenoa given here. (Imekanu’s version is given in Kindaichi’s *Ainu jojishi: Yukara shū*, vol. 1)

The text is Kamui Yukar 62 in Kubodera’s *Ainu jojishi: Shin’yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 285–97.

My elder brother
 raised me,
 and we lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 Doing nothing but needlework,
 I remained with my eyes
 focused on a single spot,
 and we lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.

Then, one day,
 all of a sudden,
 the door opened,
 and someone came inside.
 When I looked,
 this is what I saw:
 A young boy
 of amazing beauty
 came in.
 So beautiful was he
 that I could not tell
 whether he was a human
 or whether he was a god.
 He was dressed
 with his garments hanging loose,
 as if he had just come
 from quite nearby.
 He came in
 and sat down
 at the head of the fireplace.

My elder brother

remained for some time
 with his eyelids
 shut tight over each other.
 Then he popped his eyes open.
 The young boy
 made salutations.
 After that,
 [my elder brother] made inquiries
 of the young boy.
 In reply,
 the young boy
 said these words:

“I am
 the God of the Western Seaboard.¹
 I have come
 because I was
 so exceedingly
 lonely.”

He spoke
 these words.
 Then
 my elder brother
 spoke these words:

“If the weighty god
 has come
 to pay me a visit,
 then it would be
 most unfitting
 for us to meet
 without wine.
 Let me brew

¹ *Anrur-un-kamui*, god from the opposite coast of Hokkaido. This god is said to be from the Ishikari region. The young boy is really the culture hero Ainurakkur, who is merely assuming the identity of the God of the Western Seaboard.

a little wine,
and let us enjoy
our conversation over it!’

Saying these things,
he raced his hands
nimble
to brew a little wine.
When two or three days
had gone by,
the wine was now
finally ready,
and the odor of the wine
hovered about
inside the house.
After that,
those of the servants
who were whittling *inau*
plied their whittling knives
together this way and that,
and those who were straining the wine
darted their wicker baskets
together this way and that.
The sounds of the wine being strained,
and the creaking sounds of the *inau* being
whittled
were quite delightful,
and my heart leaped with pleasure.
During the time
while this was being done,
I took great
delight in the voices
of the [two] gods in their conversation.
After some time had gone by,

now the preparations
were finally completed
for holding the drinking feast,
for holding the banquet.
My foster brother
sent out
the messages of invitation.
The first messenger
to be sent out
was the one inviting
the god of Poroshir.²
After that,
my foster brother
dispatched messages
to all the gods living nearby
and all the gods living far away.

After a short while,
the invited deities
were shown in with much ceremony.
After that,
my foster brother
stood up and,
leading
the God of the Western Seaboard
by the hand,
seated him
in back of
the big wine-tub.³
He himself sat down
facing him.
Then all the guests
at the divine drinking feast
were arranged at their positions

² Poroshir (“big mountain”) is a common name for mountains in Hokkaido. The one referred to here is the peak known today as Horoshiri-dake, on the border between the provinces of Hidaka and Tokachi.

³ In the position of the chief guest.

from the head of the festal mats
 to the foot of the festal mats.
 Then I began
 to wind my way about
 among the guests,
 holding
 the wine flagon
 close by my side,
 to pour the wine to them.

Just then,
 when the drinking feast,
 the banquet
 had reached its height,
 there was a loud booming
 somewhere over the land—
 I didn't know exactly where,
 I wasn't sure at what place
 it might be.
 A most weighty god
 was heard coming this way
 with a loud rumbling.

At that time,
 my foster brother
 stood up
 and seated himself
 by the fireside.
 While doing so,
 he uttered these words:

“This sounds
 as if the god of Poroshir
 were coming.

Let me alone
 speak to him.
 No matter what happens,
 let no one
 beside me
 speak to
 the god of Poroshir!”

While speaking
 these words,
 my foster brother
 seated himself
 by the fireside.

After a short while,
 someone dropped down
 onto the clearing outside the house
 with a mighty thud.
 Without any hesitation,
 he stepped inside
 the entrance porch.⁴
 Some sort of being
 pushed open
 the door hangings
 up to the very rafters,
 and someone came in.
 When I looked,
 this is what I saw.
 One who looked like
 a stout tree
 growing in a wood by the river
 which has been broken
 at the middle of its trunk
 came walking in.

⁴ *Mosem*, the earthen-floored antechamber or entrance shed.

He came darting
 into the vestibule,
 the earthen-floored vestibule.⁵
 He was [so angry that he was]
 scarcely able to stand.
 When I looked at him,
 this is what I saw.
 On the back of his head
 it looked as if
 he had
 a reddish bald spot.
 He was [so angry that he was]
 scarcely able to stand.

Just then
 my elder brother,
 my foster brother
 spoke these words:

“The god of Poroshir
 was the very first
 I invited,
 but for some reason
 he was late
 in coming.
 It is good
 that he has now
 arrived
 during the course
 of our wine feast,
 our drinking feast.”

When my elder brother
 spoke these words,

the god of Poroshir
 poured out
 biting words,
 harsh words,
 exactly as if
 my foster brother
 had said something evil.
 This is what he said:

“Yes, indeed,
 the Owl God
 has a beautiful younger sister,
 and this is why
 he has deceived me!
 He told me that
 he would give her
 to me in marriage,
 but he was
 deceiving me most basely!
 All along, it appears,
 he was intending
 to marry her
 to the God of the Western Seaboard.
 This encounter
 will be your last
 in the land of the living.⁶
 I will go back
 and return once
 to my own homeland.
 After that
 I will launch
 a war of annihilation,
 a war of extirpation
 against your homeland!”

⁵ *Aun chiketoi*, the earthen-floored part just inside the entrance of the main part of the house.

⁶ The original phrase means literally: “This encounter will be for you a present to take with you into the land of the dead.”

After saying this,
 he turned around
 and went outside.
 After that,
 he went off
 with a loud roaring.
 What could ever
 have caused him
 to be so terribly angry?
 As he went off,
 the rumbling was so loud
 that it seemed as if
 the land would collapse.
 After it was over,
 my elder brother
 spoke these words:

“The truth of the matter
 is this:
 the gods took counsel together
 and decided
 that I should marry
 my younger sister
 to the god of Poroshir.
 When ever
 did I say
 that I would marry
 my younger sister
 to the God of the Western Seaboard?
 Why did he say
 such a thing?”

Thus spoke
 my foster brother.

After that
 I describe in detail⁷
 how the drinking feast went on.
 Taking great
 delight in the voices
 of the conversations of the guests,
 the conversations of the gods,
 I wound my way about
 among the guests
 to pour the wine to them.
 I continued
 to do this until
 by now
 the peerless drinking feast
 progressed majestically
 and the drinking feast,
 the banquet
 came to an end.

After that
 the gods
 expressed
 their gratitude
 and left for home.
 Only one,
 the God of the Western Seaboard,
 remained behind.

He stared fixedly
 down into the center of the hearth
 and remained for some time
 saying nothing.
 Then he spoke these words:

⁷ The verb meaning “to describe in detail,” “to relate fully” is *omommomo*. It is used when the reciter wishes to abbreviate a lengthy passage of description which is already familiar to the audience. Even when this convention is used, the first-person narration is adhered to, since the speaker (in this case the Young Sister of the Owl God) is narrating the story about himself or herself. See above, Introduction, pp. 38–39.

“Listen,
 o Owl God,
 to what I have to say!
 So exceedingly
 lonely
 was I, that
 I came
 to enjoy
 a peaceful visit.
 I did not
 come here
 in the least
 for any mischief,
 for any lewdness.
 But if
 such things
 are said,
 I would rather
 take up the challenge myself.
 The god of Poroshir
 was surely
 not speaking
 any empty words.
 It would be bad
 if I were to stay here,
 and a war of annihilation,
 a war of extirpation
 were to be launched.
 against the homeland
 of the Owl God.
 This being the case,
 I have decided
 to take up the challenge myself.

“If I were to go
 and do battle against
 the god of Poroshir
 and his kinsfolk,
 that would be
 like play for me.
 Nevertheless,
 to the west
 of mount Poroshir,
 the mountain ruled
 by the god of Poroshir,
 there dwell
 these beings:
 ordinary wolves,
 altogether threescore in number;
 poisonous wolves,
 altogether threescore in number;
 poisonous *huri*,
 altogether threescore in number;
 ordinary *huri*,
 altogether threescore in number;
 ordinary *kuruisse*,⁸
 altogether threescore in number;
 and poisonous *kuruisse*,
 altogether threescore in number.
 These creatures
 dwell
 to the west of the mountain.

“At whatever cost,
 I will do battle against
 the homeland
 of the god of Poroshir.
 Then, when the battle,

⁸ *Kuruisse* are man-eating devils said to assume the form of huge predatory insects resembling grasshoppers.

when the war is
 half finished,
 in the midst of the fighting
 battles of the demons
 will be launched against me.
 This is what it will be like
 when the battles of the demons
 are launched against me:
 For six summers
 and for six winters,
 the battles of the demons
 will rage against me.
 If I manage
 to come through them alive,
 you will hear
 a most weighty god
 traveling [through the sky]
 across the land
 with a single roar.
 If I die,
 bloody rain will fall
 on half of the land,
 and the sun will shine bright
 on half of the land.
 These [will be the signs];
 be sure to note them carefully,
 o Owl God!"

When the God of the Western Seaboard
 had spoken
 these words,
 he stood up.
 At first
 I thought that

he meant
 to leave me behind,
 but he picked me up,
 rubbed me again and again between his
 hands,
 and blew his breath on me.
 At this, I was transformed
 into a female sword rivet.⁹
 He attached me
 onto the sheath
 of his sword.
 After that,
 he united himself with
 the rising smoke,
 the smoke ascending
 from the hearth,
 and headed up
 toward the smokehole.

After that,
 he carried me away,
 and we went off
 somewhere or other.
 Where ever
 could he be going?
 Both night
 and day
 we traveled on,
 with blasts of wind
 whirling in my ears.

We came to
 a place which seemed to be
 the homeland

⁹ Some of the rivets on the sword hilt are called male and others female.

of the god of Poroshir.
 It was amazing
 how many were his kinsfolk,
 how many were his relatives!
 The populous villages
 stretched out peacefully
 into the distance,
 filling up the entire
 foot of the mountain,
 the divine mountain.

We arrived [in the air]
 over the villages.
 Just then,
 the villages were thrown
 into an uproar.
 Throughout the villages,
 these populous villages,
 people were milling about
 like swarming insects.
 They donned their armor hastily,
 they donned their armor quickly,
 and there was a noisy
 creaking and grating of armor.

After that
 the God of the Western Seaboard
 plunged head first
 into the midst
 of this mass of people.
 When he drew his sword,
 this was the way it was:
 How ever could he
 possibly wield his sword

in such a way!
 Wherever he passed
 the corpses mowed down like grass
 lay stretched out in the distance.
 How ever could he
 wield his sword
 in such a way,
 perform such feats!
 All that could be seen
 was the flashing of his sword.
 In the meantime,
 the god of Poroshir
 was stamping a war dance
 behind his armies.
 He cried out these words:

“Come, be quick,
 my kinsmen!
 Wield your swords fiercely!
 Struggle mightily!
 Who will be the one to kill
 the God of the Western Seaboard?
 When we bring
 to our homeland
 the sacred vessels,
 the treasures which are
 in the divinely made stronghold
 of the God of the Western Seaboard,
 even those who are poor
 will be made rich.
 Wield your swords fiercely,
 struggle mightily,
 my kinsmen!”

These commands
 he cried out
 to the least ones of his kinsfolk
 and to the chief ones of his kinsfolk.

By this time
 the battle had reached
 its mid-point, the war
 was half finished.

Now what was this
 that happened?
 From the west of the mountain,
 the mountain ruled
 by the god of Poroshir,
 dense clouds,
 black clouds
 arose.

They moved swiftly
 like an arrow in flight.

They came speeding
 in this direction,
 heading straight
 toward the battle
 being fought by
 the God of the Western Seaboard.

Within a short while
 the dense clouds,
 the black clouds
 came down and enveloped
 the battle.

I felt exactly as if
 I had been thrust down
 into a black abyss,
 and I couldn't tell

when it was daytime
 and when it was nighttime.

Within the clouds,
 the dense clouds,
 the black clouds,
 wild shrieks of alarm,
 loud screaming voices
 went soaring upward.

As I listened
 to these voices,

I also heard
 other sounds:

Within the clouds,
 the dense clouds,
 the black clouds,
 the sounds of dogs barking,
 the sounds of birds flapping their wings

I heard also
 within the clouds.

When I would look
 from time to time,
 I would be able to see
 by the light,
 the light of sharp blades flashing,
 the one who had said
 that he was

the God of the Western Seaboard.

I would see him
 by the light of sharp blades flashing.
 There would be a little mound of mist,
 and within the mist

I would see
 faintly
 an elm-bark fiber coat with a flaming hem,

and a sheath with a flaming tip.
 Wondering at this,
 I would look again
 carefully,
 and the God of the Western Seaboard
 would be there
 exactly as he was before,
 and all that could be seen
 was the flashing of his sword.
 When I saw this,
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

“It is all for my sake,
 my miserable sake,
 my contemptible sake,
 that the God of the Western Seaboard
 is now being harassed
 so very sorely!
 Let me come out
 and do something to help,
 even though I may be able to serve no
 better
 than an old worn-out mat
 which merely gets in the way.”

Thinking this,
 I tried to
 lift up my head
 on the sheath where I was.
 Then he pressed me down firmly
 with his left hand,
 and in this way
 he did not even let me

raise up my head.

After this,
 it seemed to me
 as if the battles of the demons
 raged on
 for six summers
 and six winters.
 At long last,
 he finally emerged alive
 from the battles of the demons.
 After that
 we went
 along the land.
 Then when we had come
 to a certain place,
 this is what I saw.
 A magnificent house,¹⁰
 a big house
 was standing there,
 sparkling brilliantly
 from the ground up.
 He went
 inside it.
 When I looked,
 this is what I saw.
 The surface of the floor,
 the magnificent floor,¹¹
 stretched out smooth and flat.
 The magnificent hearth frame¹²
 extended out far,
 gleaming brilliantly.
 As I was looking at these things,
 the God of the Western Seaboard

¹⁰ Literally, “a metal house.”

¹¹ Literally, “the metal floor.”

¹² Literally, “the metal hearth frame.”

walked up
 onto the floor at the head of the fireplace.
 He picked me up
 off the sheath
 and cast me down onto the floor.

It looked as if
 the fire had not been burning
 for a very long time,
 for there was a hollowed depression
 in the place where the fire had been burning.
 All around the fireplace
 a number of round bright objects,
 bright objects which moved about,
 were lined up in a row
 on the hearth frame.
 He stamped his feet
 on those bright objects
 all around the fireplace.
 While doing so,
 he spoke these words:

“You low-born servants,
 what sleepy-heads you are!
 What a long time
 you have been asleep!”

While saying this,
 he stamped his feet
 on those bright objects
 all around the fireplace.
 When he did that,
 men servants
 and women servants

got up,
 rubbing their eyes again and again.
 This is what they said:

“We were going
 to stay asleep
 for a little while longer,
 but now we have
 been awakened, it seems!”

Saying this,
 they all got up.
 Then
 the women servants
 began to dust
 the floor.
 The men servants
 brought in
 many armfuls of firewood,
 countless armfuls of firewood
 and worked busily together
 to kindle the fire.

The stacks of sacred vessels
 were stretched out
 like a low cliff.
 Above them
 hung noble swords,
 with their many sword handles,
 their countless sword handles
 overhanging each other.
 The brightness of the vessels
 and the brightness of the treasures
 were glittering brightly

and casting shadows
 on the walls.
 Below the stacks,
 the stacks of sacred vessels,
 there stood
 a movable seat,
 a magnificent seat.
 He took his place
 on the seat.

After that
 we lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 He carved on scabbards
 and carved on treasures,
 with his eyes focused
 on a single spot.
 While we lived on,
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

“O for my foster brother,
 who raised me
 so very well!
 What must he
 be thinking of me?
 To what land,
 to what country
 must he be thinking
 that I have gone?”

Thinking this,
 I shed

many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.
 As I continued
 to live on in this way,
 the servants,
 the men servants,
 day after day,
 day in and day out,
 would go hunting in the mountains
 and would bring home
 deer
 and bears.
 They fed me
 well with them,
 and we lived on.

Then, one day,
 the exalted hero
 spoke these words:

“Just across the river from here
 is the abode
 of your elder brother.
 You may go
 and see him
 if you wish.”

When he said this,
 I was overjoyed.
 Therefore
 I piled up many
 of the best pieces
 of my embroidered handiwork.
 Carrying them in my hands,

I stepped
 outside.
 When I went
 across the river,
 true enough,
 just across the river
 was the abode
 of my foster brother.
 When I went
 inside it,
 my foster brother
 was sitting there
 with his eyelids
 shut tightly over each other.
 I rushed toward him,
 crying out
 "Brother dear!"
 Then
 he popped his eyes open.
 When he saw me,
 he cried out
 "Dear little sister!"
 We rejoiced
 greatly together.
 After that
 I spoke these words:

"Sometimes during the fighting
 I would catch glimpses
 of the one who took me along with him,
 the one who called himself
 the God of the Western Seaboard.
 There would be a little mound of mist,
 and I would seem to see

faintly
 an elm-bark fiber coat with a flaming hem
 and a sheath with a flaming tip
 within the mist.
 Then when I would look carefully,
 the God of the Western Seaboard
 would be there
 exactly as he was before.
 This continued
 through all the fighting.
 Then, after great effort,
 he finally emerged alive
 from the battles of the demons.
 After that,
 we came
 along the land,
 and he came back
 to the place which
 was his abode.
 After that
 I thought to myself:

'O, what land is this,
 what country is this,
 where I have been
 [brought and] abandoned?'

"And I was shedding
 many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.
 Then, only this very day,
 he told me that,
 all the time,
 he had brought me

just across the river
 from my elder brother,
 my foster brother,
 and only today
 he told me
 where my elder
 brother was.
 It is thanks to this
 that I have come!"

When I said this,
 my elder brother,
 my foster brother
 covered his nose
 and covered his mouth [in amazement]
 and said this:

"Can this be true?
 O to think that
 Ainurakkur,
 my divine nephew,
 my revered nephew
 deceived me!
 When he said
 that he was
 the God of the Western Seaboard,
 I believed
 him to be
 the God of the Western Seaboard,
 and all the time
 I did not know
 that Ainurakkur,
 my revered nephew,
 my divine nephew

was living there
 just across the river from me!
 To think that
 he deceived me!"

These words
 were spoken by
 my foster brother.

After that,
 the best pieces
 of my embroidered handiwork
 which I had brought
 I left with
 my elder brother,
 my foster brother.
 After that,
 I came back.
 I came back
 to the place of
 the exalted hero.

Since then,
 I have done nothing but needlework,
 with my eyes focused
 on a single spot.
 We have lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 We lead
 a magnificent married life,
 a glorious married life.
 I lack nothing
 that I want to eat

or that I want to possess,
and I live on.

These things

were recounted
by the younger sister
of the Owl God.

25. Song of the Younger Sister of Okikurmi

This is a mythic epic recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa on December 18, 1932. It was sung with the burden *Anna hōre hore hōre*. The meaning of the burden is unclear.

The speaker is the younger sister of Okikurmi (*Okikurmi kot tureshi*). The word *tureshi* may mean either “younger sister” or “beloved.” It is not clear whether the woman is the sister or the wife of Okikurmi. The woman is pining away in longing for her native homeland, the area around the Shishirmuka river. Okikurmi magically shows her pictures of their homeland and tells her why they have left the land of the Ainu and are now living in an adjacent country, Samor-moshir.

A variant of the same song, using the burden *Hōre hōre*, was recorded in writing by Kindaichi in 1915 from Nabesawa Taukno.

In his *Ainu seiten*, Kindaichi notes that various legends were current among the Saru Ainu of his day concerning Oina-kamui's departure. They have various compositions, but in general they describe how Oina-kamui, who had been dwelling at Hayopira and teaching the Ainu, became incensed at them when they grew depraved and refused to obey him. The life of the pious elderly Ainu in Kindaichi's day was imbued with a melancholic sense of forlornness and regret on account of the departure of Oina-kamui. Kindaichi says that this was no doubt an understandable result of the tragic conditions in which the Ainu people found themselves. However, the Ainu were unable to accept this separation from Oina-kamui as being irreversible. The elderly Ainu told Kindaichi that they believed that even at the present day Oina-kamui sometimes came to visit the Ainu villages. For instance, when the first rumblings of thunder were heard in the spring far away at sea off the mouth of the Saru river, and the rumblings would then move up along the river, the pious elders would go outside and worship. They would say that the thunder indicated that Oina-kamui had come to visit. Taking their sense of yearning one step further, the Ainu attributed their own feelings to the younger sister

of Oina-kamui. They came to believe that she, too, yearned for the Ainu homeland and had become homesick in her place of exile. The Ainu explained to Kindaichi that this song was transmitted in a dream to an elderly Ainu in the old days, who would frequently obtain dream revelations of this type. That is, an upright Ainu elder in the old days once dreamed that he was rowing a boat at sea in a thick mist. Out of the mist he heard the burden of a song being repeated sadly: *Hōre hōure*. Then the younger sister of Oina-kamui, alone, came rowing up to him in a boat. She sang this song to him and then vanished, leaving behind her the melancholic sounds of the burden: *Hōre hōure*. When the Ainu awoke, he sang this song to others (pp. 319–20).

The text is Kamui Yukar 86 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 385–89.

In my longing
for my native homeland,
I turned aside
from all food,
both the foods which were not tasty
and the tasty foods.
For a very long time
I remained
without eating anything
and lying in bed all the time.
Black mold
appeared
on the food served to me before,
and white mold
appeared
on the food served to me lately.

During this while,
my foster brother,

my elder brother
did nothing but
carve on scabbards
and carve on treasures,
with his eyes focused
on a single spot.
We continued to live
on and on,
and by this time
I thought that
I was about to die,
I was on the verge of dying
on any moment.
I remained conscious
only deep within my heart,
and this is the way
I continued to live.

Then one day,

my foster brother
 wrapped in a sedge mat
 the carving he had been doing
 and laid it aside.

After that
 he stepped
 outside
 and went away.

After that
 he was gone for a while
 and then came inside again.

He sat down
 by the fireside
 on the right-hand side of the fireplace.

After that
 he began to stare fixedly
 down into the center of the hearth.

After a while,
 he turned toward me
 and spoke these words:

“Look here,
 my younger sister,
 get up!
 Since you have been behaving like this
 because you wanted to see
 our native homeland,
 I have made pictures of it.
 Wanting to show them to you,
 I have finished making
 pictures of the country,
 pictures of the land.¹
 Get up
 and come outside

to see how
 our native homeland
 looks!’”

Thus spoke
 my foster brother.
 Therefore,
 with the utmost effort
 I raised myself up
 from where I had been lying.
 Feeling as if
 I would fall over
 in this direction
 and in that direction,
 I crawled along
 on all fours
 and went
 outside.
 I sat down
 by the outer doorway
 and looked.
 This is what I saw.

Exactly as it used to be,
 the Shishirmuka
 could be seen clearly
 as it flowed along.
 There were many small meadows
 and big meadows by the river
 spread out one after another.
 There were many small woods
 and big woods by the river
 spread out one after another.
 Reed thickets

¹ In Taukno's version of this mythic epic, written down by Kindaichi in 1915, the elder brother draws pictures of the native homeland in the ashes in the fireplace. In this version, it is not clear how he has produced the pictures.

grew densely in the background,
 and rush thickets
 grew densely in the foreground.
 It was a delightful sight,
 and my heart leaped with pleasure.
 The forests
 by the riverside
 looked like this.
 Groves of willows
 grew densely in the foreground,
 and groves of alders
 grew densely in the background.
 In the river fishing grounds,
 [the fish were so abundant that]
 the schools of fish on the bottom
 would rub against the rocks,
 and the schools of fish on the top
 would be scorched by the sunshine.

Groups of young men,
 going out to catch fish,
 darted their harpoons
 this way and that way.
 Plying their spear shafts,
 they jumped around in every direction.

In the mountain hunting grounds,
 the small deer
 were running in their own herds,
 the stags
 were running in their own herds,
 and the does
 were running in their own herds.
 They were all skipping and leaping about

over the mountain hunting grounds.

Groups of young men,
 going out to hunt the deer,
 tipped their quivers
 back [to take out the arrows]
 and were all skipping and leaping about.
 Loud laughing voices
 and loud singing voices
 could be heard
 rising up all at once
 as they jumped around in every direction.

In the woods by the river
 small lily-bulb beds
 and large lily-bulb beds
 spread out one after another.

Groups of young women,
 going out to dig up the lily bulbs,
 threw down here and there
 their small baskets
 and raced with each other to fill
 their big baskets.
 In the woods by the river
 the groups of young women
 rushed about busily here and there
 to dig up the lily bulbs.
 Loud laughing voices
 and loud singing voices
 rose up all at once.

When I saw this,
 it was a delightful sight,

and my heart leaped with pleasure.
 Since I had been behaving like that
 because I longed for
 my native homeland,
 because I wanted to see it,
 I continued to take
 great delight in
 its beauty.
 Then, after a while,
 the vision vanished
 from before my eyes
 as if a light had been put out.

After that
 I went inside
 and sat down
 by the fireside.
 At that time,
 my foster brother
 spoke these words:

“My younger sister,
 listen to
 what I have to say!
 I was so
 exceedingly
 angry at
 the humans
 that I departed in anger
 and came here.
 The name of
 this country
 is Samor-moshir.²
 I was so

exceedingly
 delighted by
 the beauty of the country
 that I departed in anger
 and came here
 to the eastern tip of the land of
 Samor-moshir,
 and we have been
 living here.
 Now
 I continue
 to live here,
 intending
 never to go back
 to the land of the *yaunkur*.
 But since you
 have been longing
 so very much
 for our native homeland,
 and your behavior
 distressed my heart
 so sorely,
 I fashioned with my hands
 pictures
 of our native homeland,
 of our native river
 the Shishirmuka,
 and I have
 shown them to you.
 From now on,
 stop doing
 what you have been doing!”

Thus spoke

² Said to mean “adjacent country.” A mythical country where epic heroes go to live when they leave the land of the Ainu. Samor may be an old name for the northern provinces of Honshū, once inhabited by Ainu.

my foster brother.
Only then did I begin
to do nothing but needlework,
with my eyes focused
on a single spot.
This is the way we live
on and on
uneventfully.
My foster brother
does nothing but

carve on scabbards
and carve on treasures,
with his eyes focused
on a single spot,
and we live on.

These things
were recounted
by the younger sister
of the god Okikurmi.

Part II
Songs of Humans

Introduction to Part II

The eight selections in this part are all songs sung by human men or women. Three of them are from the repertory of Hiramé Karepia, two from the repertory of Shikata Shimukani of Chikabumi (Ishikari province), and two from the repertory of Hiraga Etenoa. The last one (33) is from an unknown reciter recorded by Batchelor during the 1880s.

The songs in this section belong to different epic genres. The first five selections are shorter epic songs sung with burdens in exactly the same way as the *kamui yukar*. The sixth selection, “Song of the Woman of Shinutapka” (31), is an example of a “woman’s epic” (*menoko yukar*). The seventh selection, “The Woman of Poi-Soya” (32), is an example of a *hau*. The hero is Otasam-un-kur, and there are frequent changes of speaker during the course of the epic. The final selection, “The Epic of Kotan Utunnai” (33), is an example of a *yukar* heroic epic. The hero and speaker is Poiyaunpe of Shinutapka.

26. Lullaby

This is an epic in the form of a lullaby (*ihumke*) recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Shikata Shimukani of Chikabumi (Ishikari province) on January 5, 1936. It was sung with the burden *O ō hum payārā hum*. The words have no particular meaning but were probably used by women when trying to put babies to sleep.

The speaker is an unidentified human woman. The chief of the Traveling Gods (pestilence gods, *payekai kamui*) appears to the woman in a dream and promises her that there will never be sickness in her village, although small-pox will break out to the east.

The text is Kamui Yukar 95 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shinyō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 423–24.

My little baby,
what could be bothering him
that both night
and day
he screamed
so that I could get
no sleep at all?
Night after night,
day after day,
altogether six full days,
I was unable
to get any sleep at all
as I turned over
to one side
and then turned over

to the other side.

I never would
have thought that
I had dropped off to sleep,
but I found myself to be asleep.
At the head of my pillow
a magnificent personage
with a god-like appearance,
who surely was a god,
was sitting.
This is what he said:

“O woman,
listen to

what I have to say!
 I am
 the chief god
 of the Traveling Gods.
 I have come
 at the head of the flock,
 the numerous flock
 of all of my kinsfolk,
 and we have come
 on our way
 to the eastern part of the land
 to do business.¹
 When I looked,
 I found that
 there was no woman
 as noble-hearted
 as you. Thus,
 we took our lodging
 on the upper thatching
 and the lower thatching
 on the roof of your house.
 This bothered
 your little baby, and
 this is why he has been screaming
 and crying so loudly.
 In the morning,
 go outside the house
 and look around.
 Then you will see
 a numerous flock [of birds]
 go flying up in the air
 from the upper thatching on the roof
 and the lower thatching on the roof.
 They will go flying off

toward the eastern part of the land.
 You will hear [later]
 that smallpox has broken out
 in the eastern part of the land.
 But in your settlement,
 there will never be
 so much as a cold or a cough
 as long as you live.”

I thought that
 the god
 spoke these words,
 but it turned out
 to be a dream.
 I got up,
 went outside the house,
 and looked around.
 I had thought
 that it had been
 merely a dream, but
 true enough,
 I saw
 a numerous flock [of birds]
 fly up in the air
 from the upper thatching on the roof
 and the lower thatching on the roof
 and go flying off
 toward the eastern part of the land.
 Afterward, I listened to the news
 and heard rumors
 that smallpox had broken out
 in the eastern part of the land.

We will live on

¹ The Ainu word is *irauketupa*. The “business” of the Traveling Gods is to spread smallpox and other infectious diseases among the humans in order to increase the number of their flocks. The souls of the humans who die of the diseases assume the form of little birds and join the flock of the pestilence gods. For *irauketupa*, see p. 62.

all our lives,
until old age
without so much as
a cold or a cough.
Since my [goodness of] heart
has won the approval
of the gods,

we will live on
without so much as
a cold or a cough
as long as we live.

Now stop your crying,
my little baby!

27. Song of a Blood-Red Bird (A Woman of Menash)

This is a woman's epic in the form of a *kamui yukar* recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hirame Karepia on January 26, 1936. It was sung with the burden *Heinou*. The meaning of the burden is unclear. A similar burden (*Hei inou*) was used with selection 22, and similar burdens are found frequently in the mythic epics.

The speaker is an anonymous woman of Menash. Her lover, Poi-sar-un-kur, commits suicide, evidently on account of her. The woman of Menash also commits suicide to follow him, but when she arrives at his abode in the land of the dead, he curses her and drives her away, blaming her for his untimely death. The woman of Menash is transformed into a blood-red bird (*kem chikappo*) which is fated to roam and wander over the earth and cannot receive offerings of the dead. The way in which the story is handled is rather unusual. There is no preamble of any kind, and we are plunged into the midst of the events immediately. The song ends with a didactic warning of the usual type, addressed to humans.

The text is Kamui Yukar 52 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 241-43.

I spoke to
Poi-sar-un-kur,¹
saying these words:

“The women of Menash
put
peerless little daggers
at the bottom of their treasure bags.²
In the middle of their treasure bags

they put
peerless dagger-quiver amulets.³
At the top of their treasure bags
they put
peerless long swords.
Even if strong voices
are raised up against you,
I myself
will win

¹ The woman's lover, a native of a place called Poi-sar (“Little Sar”). Characters in epics are usually identified by their native places.

² *Shut ketushi*, a bag or trunk made of sedge matting handed down matrilineally. When a girl married, she would pack her belongings (inherited in the female line) in one of these bags and take it with her to her husband's house. The bag contained treasured heirlooms and garments, including sometimes the woman's funeral garments.

³ *Chi-ukoseshkep*, a set consisting of a little treasure quiver (*ikayop-ikor*) tied to a little dagger (*emushpo*). The set is regarded as an amulet.

the argument.”⁴

When I said this,
fierce anger
flared up
on the face
of Poi-sar-un-kur,
as if I had spoken
some evil words.
He sprang up.
Then he went and
unsheathed
a sharp-bladed sword
hanging on the wall.
He turned the blade toward himself
on the floor at the head of the fireplace
and sank down lifeless.

At that time,
I sprang up.
I drew out
that sword [from his body].
After that
I brought out
my woman’s treasure bag.
Thrusting my hand
into the bottom of the treasure bag,
I took out
a magnificent silken cloth.
Then I spoke
these words:

“O Fire Goddess whom I serve,
listen well to

what I have to say!
I will put this piece of silk
into the hearth.
If Poi-sar-un-kur
is to remain
dead,
let this piece of silk
burn up.”⁵

Saying this,
I put that piece of silk
into the hearth.
Then
the piece of silk
burned up.

After that
I clung to
the corpse
of Poi-sar-un-kur
and wept and wept.
After that
I brought out
my woman’s treasure bag.
I thrust my hand
into the bottom of the treasure bag.
I took out
my ancestral bead necklace
and my ancestral earrings.⁶
I arrayed myself
in my death garments,
my funeral garments.
After that
I grasped in my hand

⁴ “Even if you are criticized for marrying me, never mind. I will argue against them and will win the argument.” An unheard-of statement for a woman to make.

⁵ If the silk burns, he cannot be resuscitated. If it does not burn, it will be possible to restore him to life.

⁶ Inherited from mother and grandmother.

that same sword.
 I stood it up firmly
 in the floor
 by its hilt
 and threw myself down
 on its blade.
 I lost all consciousness
 of what was happening.

After a while
 I [awoke and] saw
 that I was sitting
 on top of the rafters
 with my hands and legs
 hanging down limply.⁷

After that
 I went out
 through the smokehole.
 A thin path of light
 could be seen clearly
 going upstream
 along the course of the river.
 I rushed forward
 along it.
 As I went on, [I came to]
 a very large house
 which was standing there
 majestically.
 Inside the house,
 the voice of Poi-sar-un-kur
 was raised loud
 in regretful complaints.
 As I stood

outside the house,
 Poi-sar-un-kur
 spoke these words:

“That evil woman,
 that contemptible woman—
 it was her fault
 that I died
 in the midst of my youth
 and came here!
 For what reason
 has she followed me here?
 Don’t let her come inside!
 Drive her away!”

Thus did he speak.
 And true enough,
 they did not let me come inside.

After that,
 I could do nothing about it,
 and I have since then
 been roaming
 and wandering about
 over the earth.
 My elder sister,
 even though you make offerings to my soul,
 I am unable to receive them.
 Do not make
 offerings to my soul!

Saying these words,
 a blood-red bird
 kept pecking

⁷ The soul is sitting on the rafters above the corpse. See note 5, selection 9.

and scratching
at the charred posts.
Since then,
I have continued
to cry on and on.

All you humans,
listen to me!
O humans of today,
do not kill yourselves!

28. Song of a Human Woman

This is a woman's epic in the form of *kamui yukar* recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hirame Karepia on February 25, 1936. It was sung with the burden *Rukaninka huō, rukaninka*. The meaning of the burden is unclear.

The speaker is an Ainu woman (*ainu menoko*). The woman goes with her brothers on a trading expedition. The brothers are poisoned by a wicked Japanese interpreter (*wen tono tunchi*), but the woman is saved and taken home by a huge bird. The spirit of one of her brothers appears as a bird and bids her to continue their line.

The story illustrates well the ambiguous feelings of the Ainu of previous centuries about the Japanese. The Ainu relied heavily on the Japanese for trade, obtaining a large variety of luxury goods from them. On the other hand, they distrusted them and suspected them of treachery.

The text is Kamui Yukar 92 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 412–16.

My little elder brother
and my big elder brother
raised me,
and we lived
on and on
uneventfully.
Then
one day
my big elder brother
said this:

“Listen well
to what I have to say!
I have gone through
many hardships
in raising both of you.
Even though
we often used to go
trading with the Japanese,¹
we have not done so
until now.
Now at last

¹ *Tono-ko-uimam*. For *tono*, see note 3, selection 19.

I want to go trading.
Let us make a boat
in preparation for it!"

Thus did he speak
After that,
every day
my elder brothers
made a boat
with very loud
cracking and crashing noises.
After a while,
they finally
finished making the boat.
After that,
my big elder brother
picked up
a whittling knife
and stepped
outside with it.²
After that,
he came back
and said this:

"Now finally
the boat is finished.
Let us load the cargo!"

He spoke
these words.
After that,
he carried out the trade articles.
Finally
the big boat decorated with fancy carvings

was filled with them.
After that,
my big elder brother
said this:

"If those who have younger sisters
take their sisters with them,
they are given both
women's presents
and men's presents.³
Since these also
we long to have,
let us take
our younger sister
along with us."

These words
were spoken by
my big elder brother.
Therefore,
I picked up
a little treasure bag.
I also picked up
two or three
of the best garments
which I had embroidered.
I went down
along the path,
the path down to the beach.
When I looked,
this is what I saw.
O how could
my big elder brother
ever be so skillful!

² To make carvings on the boat. The boat was a big one decorated with fancy carvings.

³ The Ainu did not receive money in exchange for their products at Matsumae. Instead they were given "presents" (*myyanki*, from the Japanese word *miyage*) consisting of rice, *sake*, tobacco, clothing, lacquerware, and other articles of Japanese manufacture.

On the side of the boat,
 that big boat,
 he had carved
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of the gods dwelling in the mountains,
 both the good ones
 and the evil ones.

On the other side of the boat
 he had carved
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of the gods dwelling in the sea,
 both the evil ones
 and the good ones.
 It was a delightful sight,
 and my heart leaped with pleasure.

After that,
 underneath
 a little cabin⁴
 on the boat's deck,
 I did needlework
 while my elder brothers
 were skillfully
 working their arms together
 to row the boat.

As we sailed on and on,
 when we came
 to the middle of the ocean,
 a large flock of birds
 came along.
 At the forefront of the flock of birds

was a big bird,
 a white bird.
 It was flying along in front
 of the flock of birds.
 When they passed
 over us,
 the bird flying in front
 of the flock of birds
 circled around
 over our heads.
 Although it was a bird,
 the teardrops it shed
 came raining down
 on us
 like large raindrops.
 The flapping of its wings
 came to my ears
 sounding like many words being spoken,
 like countless words being spoken.
 This is what
 I seemed to hear:

“I also
 went off
 to go trading,
 but a wicked Japanese interpreter
 gave me poisoned wine
 to drink.
 After a while,
 I died and this
 is my dead soul
 which is now going homeward.
 Do not go on!
 Turn back at once!

⁴ A cabin, called *shukush-chise* or *shukush-pon-chise*, was built on the deck for younger travelers. The cabin was perhaps a lean-to on the deck which was open to the sunshine (*shukush*).

Go back quickly!’

These are the words
I seemed to hear
as the flapping of its wings
came to my ears
like many words being spoken,
like countless words being spoken.

After that,
my little elder brother
wished to turn back,
and my big elder brother
wanted to go ahead.
Therefore,
they contended fiercely,
each rowing in the opposite direction.
After a while,
my big elder brother
won out.

After that,
we went on until
we came
to the land of the Japanese.
After that,
my elder brothers
landed the boat
and built
a large hut of matting.
After that,
they unloaded the trade goods.
After a while,
they finished the unloading.

After they were finished,
my elder brothers
attired themselves
in the best garments
which I had embroidered
in order to have an audience
with the Japanese lord.
I also
dressed myself
in the best garments
which I had embroidered.
Then we set out.

The Japanese town,
of which I had heard,
went stretching out
far in the distance.
As we walked on,
a large wooden house
stood there
majestically.
We went inside it.
Then
the wicked Japanese interpreter,
of whom we had heard,
came out.
After my elder brothers
had finished their audience
with the Japanese lord,
my elder brothers
were seated
on the entrance porch,
where a single mat
had been spread out.

The wicked Japanese interpreter
 got wine and brought it out
 from an inner chamber.
 He poured out the wine
 for my elder brothers.
 When I sniffed
 the odor,
 there was a whiff
 of the smell of poison.
 When my elder brothers
 drank the wine,
 their bones broke
 and they dropped down.

Right away
 I let out
 a piercing shriek of alarm
 and went running outside.
 I ran
 screaming
 to our boat
 and threw myself down
 on the sandy beach.
 Crying, I writhed and twisted,
 wailing, I writhed and twisted
 again and again.
 I continued to
 roll and writhe while weeping.
 Then after a while
 I opened my eyes a mere slit
 and looked about.
 Then I saw
 a big bird
 coming this way

from the direction of the land.
 It circled around
 over my head for a while.
 Then it seized me in its claws
 and flew up in the air with me.

After that,
 we went homeward,
 with blasts of wind
 whirling in my ears.
 After a while,
 I was thrown down
 on the sandy beach
 at the entrance of the path
 to my native place.
 A god's voice
 rang out sonorously:

“O evil woman,
 contemptible woman,
 for what reason
 has only your life
 been spared!”

After speaking
 these words,
 the weighty deity
 darted up with a loud rumbling.
 The soles of his feet
 were whitish, I saw
 as I looked after him.

After that,
 crying, I writhed and twisted,

wailing, I writhed and twisted
 again and again
 on the sandy beach.
 As I continued to cry,
 from the direction of the sea
 a bird larger than
 any [ordinary] bird
 came flying this way
 and circled around
 over my head.
 Although it was a bird,
 the teardrops it shed
 came raining down
 on me
 like large raindrops.
 The flapping of its wings
 came to my ears
 sounding like many words being spoken,
 like countless words being spoken.
 This is what
 I seemed to hear:

“My younger sister!
 True enough,
 we were given
 poisoned wine
 to drink,
 and we died.
 Now this is
 my dead spirit
 which has come.
 If you can do it
 somehow or other,
 dwell with some people,

it matters not even if they are lowly.⁵
 If you manage to do this,
 the first child born to you,
 make him my child!
 The next child born to you,
 make him the child
 of my younger brother!
 If you do this,
 then at least
 my ancestral line
 will be continued.”

These words
 I seemed to hear
 in the flapping of its wings.
 [The bird] could scarcely bring itself
 to leave me.
 Underneath it,
 I screamed out
 “Brother dear!”
 As I continued to
 roll and writhe while weeping,
 it went flying up
 along the river and was gone.

After that,
 I came back
 to my own home.
 Crying, I writhed and twisted,
 wailing, I writhed and twisted
 again and again as
 I grieved.
 As I grieved,
 I have been growing fainter and fainter,

⁵ *Wenkur*, persons of low social status. See Introduction, p. 12–14.

I have been growing weaker and weaker.
Thus I tell
the story of it.

These words
were told
by that woman
about herself.

29. Song of a Human Woman

This is a woman's epic in the form of a *kamui yukar* recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Shikata Shimukani of Chikabumi (Ishikari province) on August 19, 1940. It was sung with the burden *Hunna ō*. The meaning of the burden is not immediately clear, but Kubodera suggested that it might be the cry of a woman seeking help in an emergency.

The speaker is an anonymous Ainu woman who marries the youngest of six Thunder Gods (*kanna kamui*). His older brothers find out his whereabouts and summon him back to heaven. She remarries and has many children. She always remembers her divine husband and prefers him to her second husband, who is a human.

The text is *Kamui Yukar* 90 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 404–9.

I did not know
what sort of creature
I was;
as time went on
I gradually became aware.

Then each day,
day after day,
I remained staring
after the many needle paths,
after the countless needle paths,
and in the paths of my needle
there would take form
many swirling patterns,

countless swirling patterns.
The upper clothing racks
and the lower clothing racks
would bend down under the weight
of the beautiful robes
which I had embroidered.
There was a brilliant glittering
over the clothing racks
where hung the beautiful robes
which I had embroidered.

One day
a young man
came.

I married him,
and we lived on.

Every day
he would go into the mountains
and would bring home
bear
and deer.

I lived in plenty,
lacking nothing
that I wished to eat,
and lacking nothing
that I desired to have.

Then one day
from the heavens
a cuckoo with a beautiful voice,
a cuckoo which sang very skillfully
came down
and lighted atop the spirit fence.
Raising its tail,
bobbing its tail
in this direction
and in that direction,
that cuckoo
sang on and on
both night
and day.

My wedded husband
remained
with his face turned away
before
the food which was tasty

and the food which was not tasty.
I would cook
and serve the food
to my wedded husband,
but he
remained
without eating anything.
The foods I had served him first
were covered
with black mold,
and the foods I had served him later
were covered
with white mold.
Day after day,
for six full days,
and night after night,
for six full nights
the cuckoo sang on.
Then the sound of the cuckoo ceased.

One day
my wedded husband
got up.
The ashes at the edges of the fireplace
he raked out toward the center,
and the ashes in the center of the fireplace
he raked out toward the edges.
Here and there
he traced furrows and lines.
As he did this,
he spoke these words:

“My wedded wife,
listen well

to what I have to say!
 I am not
 a human at all
 whom you have married.
 Who I am is this:

“In the heavens
 are six brothers,
 Thunder Gods,
 and the youngest of them
 am I.

When I looked
 among the gods,
 there was not a single one
 who was to my liking.
 When I looked
 among the humans,
 you alone
 were to my liking
 on account of your disposition,
 your skill at needlework,
 and your beauty.
 For this reason
 I came down
 in secret
 and married you.
 My elder brothers
 have now found me,
 and the lord of the cuckoos
 was sent down
 from the heavens
 to harangue me.
 You probably
 thought that this

was nothing but
 an ordinary cuckoo
 singing,
 but the lord of the cuckoos
 was saying that
 if I do not return home
 I will be banished
 to the Country-without-birds,
 to the Land-without-birds.
 By all means
 I must return home.

“Even though I return home,
 I bid you not to weep.
 Make for yourself
 silken hoods,
 sixfold hoods.¹
 Each year
 wear one of them
 and discard them one by one.
 In the meantime
 there will be gods traveling [overhead].
 First of all
 a quiet rumbling
 will come along.
 At the very last
 will come thunder
 with a crunching, crashing rumbling.
 When there comes a god
 thundering like that,
 it will be me.

“Since I am a god indignant
 at being separated from his wife,

¹ The six silken hoods (*sarampe konchi*) which the divine husband commands the woman to wear are “widow’s hoods” (*chish konchi*). Ainu widows would customarily wear these hoods for a considerable period (one, two, or three years). The heroine of this song was commanded to wear widow’s hoods for six years, after which she was to remarry.

I will be
 the god who thunders
 with a crunching, crashing rumbling.
 Go outside,
 and make as if
 you are doing something or other.
 If you do this,
 you yourself
 will not be able to see me,
 but I, being a god,
 will be able to see you.
 This is what you must do
 from now on.

“One more thing—
 after you have worn
 and discarded
 all six of the hoods,
 you will marry
 another young man
 who will be like me.
 Rather than
 your marrying me,
 who am a god,
 it will be better
 for both of you
 to be humans
 married to each other.

“Now I want to eat
 of your goodly cooking.
 Cook food quickly!”

At these words of his,

I hung over the fire
 a pretty little pot.
 Into the pot
 I poured with a splash
 the treasured grains.
 Stirring with a wooden spoon,
 I finished cooking
 the goodly cereal.
 Stacking
 delicate bowls
 on a delicate tray,
 I served the meal
 to my wedded husband.
 Receiving it,
 he ate several mouthfuls
 as if to taste the flavor;
 then the remainder of the bowl
 he proffered to me.
 Receiving it,
 I lifted it up high
 and lowered it down low,
 and ate the food.

Though I had thought
 that it would happen later,
 my wedded husband
 stood up.
 I clung to both hems
 of his robe.
 Crying out
 “My dear husband!”
 I screamed out
 loud and long,
 clinging to both hems

of his robe.
 My wedded husband
 seemed to make
 a flapping motion.
 Then he turned
 into a bird larger
 than any bird
 and flew out through the window.

I caught a glimpse
 of him sitting
 atop the spirit fence.
 I went outside
 and threw myself down
 on the sandy beach.
 As I continued
 to weep,
 that bird
 raised its tail
 and bobbed its tail
 in this direction
 and in that direction
 and the teardrops it shed
 rained down
 like a summer cloudburst.

That bird
 went flying up
 and circled over me,
 the teardrops it shed
 raining down
 like a summer cloudburst.
 It swooped down
 and grazed me with its wings,

then it flew up again
 and withdrew
 into the skies.
 Though it seemed to me
 that it had gone far off yonder,
 six more times
 it flew back toward me,
 circled over me,
 and grazed me with its wings,
 the teardrops it shed
 raining down
 like a summer cloudburst.
 After that
 it ascended toward the skies
 and withdrew
 into the highest heavens.

“What was it
 my wedded husband
 said?”
 I thought to myself.

Weeping,
 I went back
 into the house.
 Then I made for myself
 silken hoods,
 sixfold hoods,
 and wore one of them.

As time went on,
 when thunder would come rumbling,
 first of all
 a quiet rumbling

would come along.
 At the very last
 there would come thunder
 with a crunching, crashing rumbling.
 Knowing that
 this was the sound
 of my divine husband coming,
 I would go outside
 and would make as if
 I were doing something or other.
 I myself
 would not be able
 to see
 my divine husband,
 but I thought that
 he could see me,
 and I lived on
 with this
 as my only pleasure.

When I had discarded
 all six hoods,
 one day
 a young man
 came, and
 I married him.

Every day
 he would go into the mountains
 and would bring home
 bear
 and deer.
 I lived in plenty,
 lacking nothing

that I wished to eat,
 and lacking nothing
 that I desired to have,
 but I never
 was able to like
 my human husband,
 and I was unable
 to forget
 my divine husband
 even for a single day.

As time went on,
 children were born to us,
 both boys
 and girls.
 But
 always
 whenever thunder would come rumbling,
 I would go outside
 and would make as if
 I were doing something or other.
 I would think that
 my divine husband
 could see me,
 and I lived on
 with this
 as my only pleasure.

As for the children,
 the boys
 have grown up,
 and they go with their father
 to do different kinds of hunting.
 And the girls

who are older
help me.
They help me to gather
different food plants.

Now I am old and heavy of foot,
and as my death approaches,
I tell the story of it
to you, my children:
about how, long ago,
when I was young
the youngest one
of the six brothers,

Thunder Gods,
came down
in secret
to marry me.
I married him,
and we lived on together
until his elder brothers
found him out,
and he returned home,
a god indignant
at being separated from his wife,
a god whose thunder
has a crunching, crashing rumbling.

30. Song of the Woman of Shinutapka

This is a woman's epic in the form of a *kamui yukar* recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hirame Karepia on February 21, 1936. It was sung with the burden *Penkuratō penkuratō*. The meaning of the burden is not clear.

A young woman of Shinutapka has been killed by her wicked elder sister, who herself desired to marry the younger sister's betrothed, Otasam-un-kur. The young woman was restored to life and raised to young womanhood by the Chestnut-tree Grandmother (*yamni huchi*). Now the Chestnut-tree Grandmother sends the young woman to visit her betrothed, Otasam-un-kur. She tells him the story, and they marry. After he has killed her wicked elder sister, they move to the stronghold of Shinutapka. The hero Otasam-un-kur always worships the Chestnut-tree Grandmother.

The text is Kamui Yukar 104 in Kubodera's *Ainu jojishi: Shin'yō, seiden no kenkyū*, pp. 456-62.

My grandmother
raised me,
and we lived
on and on
uneventfully.
Finally
I came to look
like a woman.¹
As we lived
on and on
uneventfully,
my grandmother

provided well
for me, feeding
me with nothing
but delicious
cooked chestnuts—
where could she
ever have gotten them?

Then, one day
my grandmother
cooked some chestnuts
and put them into

¹ "I grew to womanhood." This refers to the tattooing around the lips given to Ainu women. The woman had grown to womanhood when this tattooing was completed.

a little silver pot.
This is what she said:

“Take
this little pot
and go down along
this big plain by the river.
Go on down
until you come
to the lower edge of the plain.
Then a big house
will be standing there.
Go inside it.
Inside the house,
in front of the stacks of sacred vessels
there will be someone
who has been lying in bed
for a long time.
You will set down
this little pot
by his pillow,
and these are the words
that you will speak:

‘Eat
the good food cooked
by the Woman on the Plain!’²

“Speaking these words,
set down
the little pot.
Then quickly
run outside
and come home!’”

When my grandmother
said this,
I picked up
the little pot
and stepped
outside.
Swinging
my one free arm,
I walked
down along
the big plain by the river.
When I had gone down
to the lower edge of the plain,
there was a big house
standing there
majestically.

I stepped
inside the house.
I looked around and saw
big stacks of sacred vessels
stretched out
like a low cliff.
Above them
hung noble swords,
with their many sword handles,
their countless sword handles
overhanging each other.
Underneath the stacks
was a magnificent seat,
a seat raised above the floor.
On the seat
there was someone,
I could not tell who,

² Nupka-ush-mat, “Woman-Growing-On-the-Plain-by-the-River.” This is the name of the Chestnut-tree Grandmother (*Tamni huchi*), the “grandmother” of the heroine of this epic.

lying there
 with many robes
 pulled up over his head.
 By his pillow
 stood row and rows of [servings of] food.
 Black mold
 had appeared
 on the food served to him long before,
 and white mold
 had appeared
 on the food served to him recently.

I set down
 the little pot
 by the pillow
 of the person lying in bed,
 and these are the words
 I spoke:

“Eat
 the good food cooked
 by the Woman on the Plain!”

As soon as I had said this,
 I ran outside
 and came back.
 I came back
 to my grandmother’s place.

After a while,
 one day
 my grandmother
 spoke these words:

“Listen,
 my little girl,
 to what I have to say!
 Your elder sister
 at Shinutapka
 was raising you.
 According to
 the instructions left behind
 by your mother,
 when you grew up
 you were to be
 given in marriage
 to Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero.
 But your evil elder sister
 thought to herself:

‘If my worthless younger sister
 is alive,
 she alone
 will be married
 to a well-born husband.
 I will kill
 her quickly. Then
 after she is gone
 I myself will marry
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero.’

“This is what she thought.

“I am
 the Chestnut-tree Grandmother,
 who was sent down

from the Upper Heavens
 to the upper edge
 of this big plain by the river.
 Your evil elder sister
 came here carrying you on her back.
 She knocked you against the trees
 and killed you.
 Feeling sorry for you,
 I restored you to life,
 and I have been
 raising you
 until now.
 But now
 I have grown old,
 and I am about
 to ascend
 to the heavenly skies.
 Otasam-un-kur,
 grieving over you,
 has remained
 lying in bed despondently
 his whole life long.
 By now
 you have grown old enough,
 and you can now
 cook his food for him.
 Go down
 and tell him:

‘The Chestnut-tree Grandmother
 raised me.
 Such-and-such is
 what she told me.’

“After that,
 even if you come
 here again,
 there will be
 no house here.
 Don’t come back,
 but cook food
 for the exalted hero.
 Since I
 long to have
 human *inau*,
 worship me with [offerings of] them.
 I will take them along with me
 and will ascend
 to the heavenly skies.
 In this way
 I will exalt
 my glory as a deity.”

These words
 were spoken
 by my grandmother.
 Thinking about
 how well
 she had raised me,
 I shed
 many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.
 As I was crying,
 my grandmother [said]:

“Go down quickly now!”

She spoke

these words.
 I stepped
 outside.
 I walked down
 in tears
 and went inside
 that big house.

After that
 I kindled
 a blazing fire [in the fireplace].
 I swept
 the floor.
 After a while,
 the exalted hero
 got up
 and sat down
 by the fireside.
 [I lowered my head so that] the tips of my
 locks of hair
 were resting on the floor.
 I did not
 raise my eyes
 at all.
 After a while
 he spoke,
 his voice ringing out
 in sonorous accents.
 This is what he said:

“Where have you
 come from?
 By the names of each other’s homelands
 are we able

to know each other.
 Tell me
 the name of your homeland.”

These words
 did he speak.
 When he said this,
 my forehead
 began to quake in fear,
 since I
 had never
 even heard
 a man’s speech
 until that time.
 Repeating the words again and again,
 repeating the words over and over,
 he questioned me.
 I was quite overawed
 and terrified.
 I told him
 all the things
 that the Chestnut-tree Grandmother
 had told me.

After that,
 he seized me,
 he held me tight.

“It was just for you
 that I was grieving
 and have been lying
 in bed despondently
 until now.
 Truly the

gods are powerful,
for you have
until now
been raised by the gods!”

While saying
these words,
he shed
many sparkling teardrops,
countless sparkling teardrops
over me.
After that
he spoke these words:

“I had thought that,
if your evil elder sister
was raising you,
she would follow
the words of your mother,
the instructions of your parents
and would be giving you
a good upbringing.
But one day,
she came here
and said this:

‘My younger sister
fell ill
to some sickness,
some ailment,
and died.
Since I would not dare
leave the exalted hero
unaware of this,

I have now come
to tell you about it.’

“She said
these things
and came here.
I was so angry that
I began to
turn aside
from all food,
both the tasty foods
and the foods which were not tasty.
Both night
and day,
she would
bring food to me,
but I loathed to eat
the foods cooked
by your evil elder sister.
All around me
the small bowlfuls of food
and the big bowlfuls of food
have been standing in rows,
and this is the way
I have continued to live on
until now.
And all the time
you were alive!”

He spoke
these words.
After that
I began to cook
the food

for the exalted hero.
After a while [he said]:

“You owe your life
to the Chestnut-tree Grandmother,
for your life was spared
because she raised you.
Let us go
and worship her!”

He spoke these words.
Then he whittled *inau*,
and we went there,
with him carrying
a big bundle of *inau*.
I had thought
that my grandmother
had raised me
inside
a big house,
but there was no house at all.
Where it used to be,
there was only a big chestnut tree,
a very old chestnut tree,
which was lying there fallen over.
I went down again
in tears.
The exalted hero
made offerings of *inau*
to that chestnut tree.
Then we went down again.
The exalted hero
spoke these words:

“I want to go and attack
your evil elder sister.
I am going to
hack her to pieces!”

Saying this,
he rushed outside
and could be heard going off
with a loud roaring.
Right after this,
the dying spirit
of my evil elder sister
could be heard going off
with a loud roaring
and an intense rumbling.
I thought to myself that,
if only my evil elder sister
had been skilled
at correct behavior,
at good manners,
she would not
have been killed.
I shed
many sparkling teardrops,
countless sparkling teardrops.
After a while
the exalted hero
spoke these words:

“It would be an inexcusable [offense]
against the ancestors
and against the gods
if the divinely built stronghold
of Shinutapka

were left to be neglected
by nothing but lowly servants.
Let us go there!’’

These words
were spoken
by the exalted hero.
After that
I made my preparations,
and we went to
my native stronghold
at Shinutapka,
of which I had heard.
I describe in detail³
the beauties
of the divinely built stronghold.

Since that time,
we have led

a magnificent married life,
a glorious married life,
and we live
on and on
uneventfully.

Since then,
whenever we brew wine,
the exalted hero
always worships elaborately
the Chestnut-tree Grandmother
with his own hands,
and this is the way
we live on,
and I tell the story of it.

These things
recounted about herself
the Woman of Shinutapka.

³ See note 7, selection 24.

31. Woman's Epic: Repunnot-un-kur

This is a full-length woman's epic recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa from December 26 to 28, 1932. The epic is sung without a burden.

The speaker is a *yaunkur* woman who is being raised at a place called Repunnot by a man whom she calls Repunnot-un-kur and believes to be her elder brother. He is a *repunkur*. A bear-cub appears to her in a dream and reveals that she is a *yaunkur* woman from Shinutapka who has been stolen away and raised by Repunnot-un-kur, who intends to marry her when she has grown up. The bear-cub saves her life and returns her to her native stronghold, where her two elder brothers are living. Later, they give the bear-cub a magnificent ritual dismissal. In the end, the bear-cub returns in human form and marries the woman.

A much shorter version of the same woman's epic was recorded by Nevskii and is published, together with Nevskii's Russian translation, in his *Ainskii fol'klor*, pp. 53–66. The name of Nevskii's informant is not recorded.

I obtained the text from Dr. Kubodera's typed manuscript. It is in volume 14 of the Ainu epic typescripts at the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Kokugakuin University, Tokyo. Except for the short version translated into Russian by Nevskii, this epic has never been translated into any language.

At Repunnot,
my elder brother
Repunnot-un-kur¹
raised me,
and we lived
on and on

uneventfully.
He raised me
with a magnificent upbringing,
with a splendid upbringing.
As time went on,
I finally

¹ The "elder brother" is a native of Repunnot and is therefore called Repunnot-un-kur. Repunnot is located somewhere in *repunkur* territory.

came to look
like a woman.
After that time,
I did nothing but needlework,
with my eyes focused
on a single spot.
While I was doing this,
my foster brother
for his part
did nothing but
carve on scabbards,
carve on treasures.
As we lived on
in this way,
he brought down
a bear-cub [from the mountains],
and we were
raising it.
As time went on,
the bear-cub we were raising
had by now
spent three years
with us.

Then one day
my foster brother
spoke these words:

“Our bear-cub
has been
among the humans
for quite a long time.
After such a long time,
I would not dare

to send him back
with only Ainu wine.²
Thus, I want to go
trading with the Japanese.
Then I will bring home
trade wine,
trade brew.
I wish to
send him back with this,
adding it to
the Ainu wine.”

Saying this,
he made preparations
to go trading.
After a while,
they said that
he was now about
to set sail,
and the servants
carried outside
the best ones of
the goods traded with the Japanese.³
After this,
my foster brother,
before going outside,
spoke these words:

“Even when I am gone,
be sure
to cook the food
nicely
for my god⁴
in my absence!”

² It would be unfitting to use only native millet beer (*ainu sake*) in the bear ceremony. The elder brother will obtain trade wine (*uimam sake*) from the Japanese and hold the bear ceremony using both Japanese and native liquors.

³ *Tono chihoki*, chiefly hides and furs of bear and deer.

⁴ *A-kor kamui*, “my god,” “my bear.”

Saying these words,
he went out and was gone.

After he went away,
I did nothing but needlework,
remaining with my eyes
focused on a single spot.
Every once in a while
I would wash my hands
from the shoulders on down,
would cook
good food,
and would feed it to
our bear-cub.
This is the way
I lived
on and on.
By now,
I began to think
that it was almost time
for my foster brother
to return home.

Then one day,
the outdoor servants
came bustling inside,
and the indoor servants
went bustling outside.
They whispered
to each other, saying
that a boat
had been sighted.
This is what they
whispered to each other.

Then after a while,
they said that [the boat]
was heading toward
the harbor entrance,
that a boat bearing
the boat's emblem
of my foster brother
was coming shoreward.
These things
the servants
were whispering
to each other.

After a while,
the boat finally
came ashore, it seemed,
for the servants
went outside
to unload the cargo,
throwing down
the shorter carrying slings
and racing each other to get
the longer carrying slings.⁵

After a while,
this is what I heard:
For some reason,
I didn't understand why,
the cargo was
being unloaded
to the house of
Kotanra-un-kur.⁶
This is what
I heard.

⁵ The servants want to have the longer slings and discard the shorter ones. The carrying slings (*tar*) are carrying cords worn over the forehead for carrying bundles on the back.

⁶ "The man living below the village," a relative of R epunnot-un-kur living in village below the the latter's village.

As time went on,
 little by little,
 this is what I heard:
 From the house of
 Kotanra-un-kur,
 both night
 and day,
 the sounds of drinking,
 the sounds of feasting
 came soaring upward.
 While I continued
 to hear these sounds,
 our bear-cub
 both night
 and day
 would growl angrily,
 his voice resounding out
 over the village.

While this was
 going on,
 I would cook
 good food
 and feed it to him,
 but he would not eat it.
 He would act angrily,
 as if he wanted to break out
 of the bear cage.
 At that time
 I thought to myself:

“Perhaps it is because
 you have been
 cooking badly

that your bear-cub
 is so angry.”

Thinking this,
 I threw away
 the food I had cooked before.
 Then once again
 I cooked
 a good meal
 and fed it to him,
 but he would not eat it,
 and night
 and day
 would act angrily
 as if he wanted to break out
 of his cage.
 By this time,
 the sounds of drinking,
 the sounds of feasting
 at the house of
 Kotanra-un-kur
 had continued to
 soar upward
 night after night
 for six full nights
 and day after day
 for six full days.

Then, one night
 I lay down
 in tears
 by the fireside,
 resting my head on my sleeve
 as a pillow.

I would never
 have expected
 that I would go to sleep,
 but I was asleep,
 and I saw a dream.
 This is what I dreamt.

By the east side of the house
 there was the sound of someone
 coming this way in a hurry.
 When he came
 under the sacred window,
 the hangings on the window
 were flipped upward,
 and someone appeared
 at the window.
 I looked,
 and this is what I saw.
 He was a god
 and had a god-like appearance,
 but he was quite a young boy.
 Wrapped in
 layer upon layer
 of black robes,
 he appeared at the window.
 This is what he said:

“Listen well,
 human woman,
 to what I have to say!
 It is not because
 you are a descendant of *repunkur*
 that you are being raised
 among the *repunkur*.

Long ago,
 in days gone by,
 your mother
 and your father
 once lived.
 They had between them
 two sons
 and one daughter.
 [Your father] was
 the ruler of Shinutapka,⁷
 the exalted hero.
 Your mother
 carried you on her back
 in order to give you
 the most protection.
 Your father
 and your mother
 together
 set out to sea
 to go trading,
 leaving
 your elder brothers
 in the stronghold
 at Shinutapka.
 As they sailed on,
 they passed off the shore
 of mainland Karapto.⁸
 They were beckoned
 shoreward
 with wine
 and with *inau*.

The husband
 wanted to go ashore,

⁷ The father's name is Shinutapka-un-kur, "native of Shinutapka" or "ruler of Shinutapka." Therefore, the heroine of this epic is known as Shinutapka-un-mat, "woman of Shinutapka."

⁸ *Yanke Karapto*. Karapto is the island of Sakhalin (Karafuto in Japanese). "Mainland Karapto" is probably that part of the island nearest to Hokkaido, or perhaps a part of Hokkaido inhabited by *yaunkur*.

and the woman
 refused to go ashore.
 They contended fiercely,
 each rowing in opposite directions.
 Then he gave up,
 and they sailed out to sea.
 After that,
 they sailed on.
 When they sailed by
 the shore of
 offshore Karapto,⁹
 they were beckoned
 shoreward
 with wine
 and with *inau*.
 But the woman refused
 to go ashore,
 and they turned the boat
 out toward the sea.
 But two hundred boats
 came out to sea.
 Shinutapka-un-kur,
 your father,
 was forced to
 bring his boat ashore.
 After that,
 both night
 and day,
 he was given
 poisoned wine to drink.
 After a while,
 the drunken man,
 speaking under the wine's influence,
 speaking under the liquor's influence,¹⁰

said these things:
 He offered to buy
 together with his kinsfolk
 the principal treasure of the land
 of offshore Karapto.
 In their turn
 they wanted to see
 the guardian spirit of his boat.
 Both sides became enraged,
 and as a result of this
 fierce fighting,
 fierce battles
 broke out on all sides.¹¹

“After that,
 offshore Karapto
 was completely
 laid to waste.
 Then the fighting
 came ashore.
 The fighting came ashore
 to mainland Karapto,
 and mainland Karapto
 was completely
 laid to waste.
 After that,
 the fighting
 went offshore.
 The fighting
 extended to
 many lands of the *repunkur*,
 countless lands of the *repunkur*.
 After some time,
 your father,

⁹ *Repun Karapto*. Probably that part of Sakhalin which is farthest away from Hokkaido.

¹⁰ Literally, “the wine caused him to speak, the liquor caused him to speak”

¹¹ This account is the same as that given in “The Epic of Kotan Utunnai,” p. 368.

since he had
 been made drunk,
 was killed
 in the midst of the fighting,
 in the midst of the battles.
 After that,
 your mother,
 carrying you on her back,
 continued to fight.
 Though she moved through
 many lands of the *repunkur*,
 countless lands of the *repunkur*,
 she was never
 overtaken.
 As this continued,
 at the last,
 your mother
 moved on
 to the land of Santa.¹²
 Now, there is no place
 which has as many people
 as the land of Santa.
 At that time,
 since there are
 many wizardesses,
 many shamanesses¹³
 among the *repunkur* women,
 your mother
 was captured.

 “At that time,
 Repunnot-un-kur,
 your foster brother,
 had gone to join

in the battles,
 the battles against
 your mother.
 When he saw
 your mother
 being captured,
 he stole you
 off her back.
 After that
 he ran off with you
 and came home.
 He brought you here,
 to Repunnot,
 and after that
 he raised you
 secretly.
 While he was raising you,
 this is what
 he thought to himself.
 He would raise you
 until you were grown up,
 and after that
 he would marry you.
 He raised you
 with this thought in his mind.
 This is what he thought
 until now.
 But now,
 after you came to look
 like a woman,
 this is what
 he thought to himself:

 ‘I will go

¹² Japanese Santan. The old name for Manchuria and the Amur estuary.

¹³ *Nupur hikehe, tusu hikehe*. The enemy shamanesses discovered her whereabouts, and she was taken captive because of this.

to trade with the Japanese.
 Then I will bring home
 trade wine,
 trade brew.
 Adding it to
 the Ainu wine,
 I will send off [the bear-cub].
 Then after that
 is finished,
 I will then
 marry her.’

“Thinking this,
 he left us here together
 and went off
 to trade with the Japanese.
 And now
 he has finally
 come back.
 As he was coming home,
 Kotanpa-un-mat¹⁴
 came down
 on the path,
 the path down to the beach,
 and called out
 to your foster brother.
 She called out these words:

‘O Repunnot-un-kur,
 my little elder brother,
 listen to
 what I have to say!
 You said that

Shinutapka-un-mat
 was the only woman,
 the only lady,
 and you raised her
 with a magnificent upbringing,
 with a splendid upbringing.
 But indeed,
 she is the offspring of our murderers,
 she is a descendant of our enemies,
 and it is no wonder
 that in your absence,
 after you set sail
 to go trading,
 the ones that you were raising
 lay together like dogs,
 did wicked things together.¹⁵
 Therefore,
 I was worried
 lest you,
 being a great chieftain,
 might arrive
 at your own home
 without knowing
 what awaited you there,
 and this is why
 I am telling you
 the things which
 your nurslings have done.’

“Kotanpa-un-mat
 called out these words.
 Repunnot-un-kur,
 your foster brother,

¹⁴ “Woman living at the head of the village,” a high-ranking *repunkur* woman living in the village of Repunnot. She is evidently jealous of the captive Ainu woman whom Repunnot-un-kur intends to marry.

¹⁵ The two nurslings, Shinutapka-un-mat and the bear-cub, transgressed together.

was angry about this,
 and he unloaded
 the trade wine,
 the trade brew
 at the house of
 Kotanra-un-kur,
 and after that
 both night
 and day
 you have been
 hearing the sounds
 of noisy reveling.
 When the drinking,
 when the feasting
 comes to an end,
 after that
 they are going
 to kill us both.
 These things
 they have been plotting together
 while they drank
 night after night
 for six full nights
 and day after day
 for six full days.
 Tomorrow morning
 they will come
 to kill us,
 to slay us.
 When they come,
 I will break out of my cage
 and come out.
 Don't cry!
 Get up now

and cook the meal.
 After we have
 finished eating,
 dress yourself
 and wait.
 When it seems to you
 as if I have come out,
 then you must go outside
 and stick closely
 behind me.
 No matter
 what I do,
 do not
 be afraid of me.
 Stick closely
 behind me,
 closely by my side.
 Only if you do this
 will your life
 be saved!"

I dreamt
 that the young man
 spoke
 these words.
 After that
 I got up
 in tears.
 Washing my hands
 from the shoulders on down,
 I cooked
 good food
 and fed it
 to my bear-cub.

After the meal
 was finished,
 I put on
 the best garments
 which I had embroidered.
 After I had
 finished dressing,
 by this time
 the first faint signs
 of dawn began
 to appear.
 Just then
 many people
 could be heard running
 up the road
 with a noisy tumult.
 Just then,
 the angry growling
 of my bear-cub
 could be heard faintly.
 At the same time,
 there was a crash
 as he broke out of his cage.
 As soon as I thought
 that he had come out,
 I stepped
 outside.
 I looked around,
 and this is what I saw.

 On the road
 crowds of people
 were running around.
 The companies of armored men

were running around.
 There were companies
 of spearmen,
 and there were companies
 of archers.
 These crowds of people
 were running around.

Then
 this is what
 my bear-cub
 did.
 My bear-cub
 dived head first
 into the midst of
 these crowds of people.
 After that
 he wound and twisted himself
 like a soft hoop [made of vines]
 in the very midst
 of these crowds of people.
 Whenever he would seize one
 in the crowds of people,
 he would slash him
 in two
 and cast him away.
 He would break
 their necks
 and would scatter them about
 all around him.
 He raged fiercely
 all around me.
 Just then,
 Repunnot-un-kur,

my foster brother,
 was standing
 in back of the crowds.
 He cried out these words
 to exhort
 his own forces:

“Up with you now,
 my kinsfolk!
 Struggle mightily!
 Kill them,
 the evil-doers.”

These commands
 he cried out
 to his kinsfolk.
 As he cried this,
 the companies of archers
 twanged on the grips of their bows
 with buzzing sounds.
 The companies of spearmen
 aimed
 their spear tips
 at my bear-cub.
 The companies of archers
 aimed
 the points of their arrows at him.
 But
 my bear-cub
 darted about
 between the spears
 and between the arrows.
 Wherever he passed
 the corpses mowed down like grass

lay stretched out in the distance.
 The companies of spearmen
 he beat and broke their spears.
 The companies of archers
 he beat and broke their arrows.
 As he did this,
 the broken corpses
 of the enemies he struck
 he scattered about
 all around him.
 As he continued to do this,
 within a short while,
 he had completely
 laid to waste
 the village of Repunnot.

After that
 my bear-cub
 seemed to be
 very tired.
 He threw himself down
 and was trying
 to catch his breath.
 During this while
 I was shedding
 many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.

After a while,
 the sound of
 my bear-cub's breathing
 came to my ears
 sounding like many words being spoken,
 like countless words being spoken.

This is what I heard:

“O woman,
listen to what
I have to say!
I am going
to take you back
to your native land,
Shinutapka.
You must do
exactly as I do.
Only then
will your life
be saved!”

I heard
these words
in the sound of
my bear-cub's breathing
like many words being spoken,
like countless words being spoken.

After that
he got up
and went walking off
toward somewhere or other.
I went along with him
wherever he went.
After that
we went on
toward somewhere or other.
Finally we came out
beside the sea.
He lay down

on the sandy beach
and stayed there for a while.
Then he got up,
and the sound of his breathing
came into my ears
sounding like many words being spoken,
like countless words being spoken.
This is what I heard:

“After this
we are going
to go across
the sea.
Hold on
to my back.
If you keep hold of me
and do not
let go of me,
only then, when we come ashore,
will your life
be saved!
Whatever may happen,
do not let go of me!”

These words
I heard
in the sound of his breathing.
After that
my bear-cub
dived into the sea.
Therefore,
just as I had heard
him say,
I held on

to his back.
 After that
 we went
 across the sea.
 Both night
 and day
 we went across.
 Finally, after great effort,
 when we came ashore
 on the mainland,
 this is what I saw.
 There was
 a big river
 emptying into
 the ocean,
 its rapids swirling
 out seaward.
 We came ashore
 by the river mouth.
 My bear-cub
 came ashore
 on the sandy beach
 and remained there
 resting.
 I sat down
 by his side
 and was shedding
 many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.
 After a while,
 once again
 I seemed to hear
 these words
 in the sound

of my bear-cub's breathing:

"We will go
 upstream along the course
 of this big river.
 Then there will be
 a populous village.
 Then, as we pass
 on the outskirts of the village
 a cry will go up
 in the village.
 They will cry out:

'Look, these ones
 coming along must be
 the ones we heard about—
 the ones who were raised together
 by Repunnot-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 who did wicked things together
 and lay together like dogs!
 As if that were not enough,
 they completely
 laid to waste
 the village of Repunnot.
 Kill them!'

"This cry
 will go up
 in the village.
 After that
 there will be
 companies of archers,
 and there will be

companies of spearmen.
 Crowds of people
 will attack us.
 What ever may happen
 do not run
 even so much as
 a single step
 away from me!
 If you do,
 your life
 will not be saved.
 No matter what
 I may seem
 to be doing,
 do not be afraid of me.
 Stick closely
 behind me!
 Only if you do this
 will your life
 be saved.”

I heard
 these words
 in the sound of
 my bear-cub's breathing
 like many words being spoken,
 like countless words being spoken.
 After that
 my bear-cub
 stood up
 and went walking
 along the river.
 I went along with him
 wherever he went.

We walked on until
 we had come to a place
 far up along the river's course.
 I looked out
 in front of me,
 and this is what I saw:
 A populous village¹⁶
 stood there.
 In the center of the village
 a divinely made stronghold
 was seen standing
 majestically.
 I saw this
 in front of me
 as we walked on.
 Then, as we came
 to the outskirts
 of the settlement of the common folk,
 the sounds of dogs barking noisily
 rang out.
 Just then
 a cry went up
 in the village.
 This is what they cried:

“Look, these ones
 coming along must be
 the ones we heard about—
 the ones who were raised together
 by Repunnot-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 who lay together like dogs
 and did wicked things together!
 As if that were not enough,

¹⁶ It is stated later on that this village is Ishikar.

they devastated
 the village of Repunnot.
 They completely laid
 to waste
 the village of Repunnot
 so that where the village once stood
 it looked like a stony field.
 Kill them both!"

This cry
 went up
 in the village.
 Then, after that
 within the village,
 the populous village,
 crowds of people
 went running around.
 There were companies
 of archers,
 and there were companies
 of spearmen
 running around.
 Then
 this is what
 my bear-cub
 did:
 In the midst of
 these crowds of people,
 he wound and twisted himself
 like a soft hoop [made of vines]
 and went raging fiercely
 all around me.
 The companies of spearmen
 he beat and broke their spears.

The companies of archers
 he beat and broke their arrows.
 Their broken corpses
 he scattered about
 all around him.
 As he continued to do this,
 within a short while,
 the populous village
 was reduced to nothing but
 charred, bare sticks of wood,
 and not a single one
 of the crowds of people
 was left alive.

After that
 we went on
 toward somewhere or other.
 When we arrived
 at a certain place,
 we came out
 by the seashore.
 After that
 we walked along
 by the seacoast.
 When we arrived
 at a certain place,
 a pretty little river
 could be seen clearly
 flowing down.
 We came to
 the river mouth.
 Midway along the course
 of the pretty little river
 a majestic steep crag

was standing.
 This is the way it looked:
 The steep crag
 was enveloped half-way
 in twisting billows of mist.

My bear-cub
 walked up
 along the little river,
 and I went along with him.
 As we walked along,
 up along the crag,
 the majestic steep crag
 a path had been made.
 The path twisted again and again
 in many bendings,
 in countless bendings.
 The traces of the mattock
 looked dark,
 and the traces of the scythe
 looked bright.¹⁷
 When we went up
 along the path,
 this is what we saw:
 On both sides of the path
 stone Buddhas¹⁸
 were standing
 like living spirits,
 like living gods.
 Looking at all this,
 I finally arrived
 at the top of the crag,
 the majestic steep crag.
 I looked around,

and this is what I saw:
 The entire top of the crag
 was filled by
 a divinely made stockade,
 which stood there
 majestically.
 I looked at
 the beauties
 of the stockade-god,¹⁹
 which was exactly
 what I would expect
 to find only in
 the abode of a god.
 I stepped
 inside the stockade.
 The entire area inside the stockade
 was filled by
 a big house
 which stood there
 majestically.

Just then,
 my bear-cub
 made his way
 along the side of the house.
 He went up to
 the spirit fence²⁰
 and seated himself
 leaning against
 the spirit fence.
 At the same time
 I also
 seated myself
 on the rubbish heap in the yard

¹⁷ When viewed from a distance, the places where the path had been cleared with mattocks looked black, and the places where it had been cleared with scythes showed up brightly.

¹⁸ The Ainu word for Buddha is *potoki*, a loan word from Old Japanese. The contemporary Japanese is *hotoke*. Many of the Japanese loan words in Ainu reflect an early historical stage of Japanese phonology. See Introduction, p. 11.

¹⁹ The stockade is spoken of eulogistically as being a god (*chashi kamui*). *Chashi* may mean either "stockade," "stronghold," or "house."

²⁰ *Inau-chipa*. The fence of clustered *inau* located outside the sacred window.

and waited there
shedding
many sparkling teardrops,
countless sparkling teardrops.

In the meantime,
there were noises
inside the house,
and someone come outside.

Before
whoever it was
came out,
many flashes of light,
countless flashes of light
came streaming out.
Above the flashing lights
a human face
appeared.

I looked at it,
and this is what I saw:
It was a human man
of such majestic beauty
as I had never before seen.

His hair was
curly hair,
magnificent hair²¹
stretching out
over his head.

Many streams of glistening water.
countless streams of glistening water²²
went trickling down
amidst his hairs.

The tips of his hairs
went out into curls,

went out into ringlets.²³

His beard
was like sedge
and covered
his entire chest.

His beard hung down
in plaits on its sides.
On account of it
he looked all the more beautiful,
all the more imposing.

This human man
came outside
and saw me.

He turned toward
the spirit fence
and saw
my bear-cub
sitting there.

After that,
without saying a word,
he went back inside.

After a while,
he came back
outside.

He came out
holding
a beautiful
swordguard treasure
with curled shavings tied to it.

He walked up
to the spirit fence
and tied
the swordguard treasure

²¹ *Kane otop*, literally "metal hair"

²² *Kane wakka*, literally "metal water"

²³ This personage, the elder brother of Poiyaunpe, is named Kamui-otopush on account of his remarkable hair. The name means "He-has-divine-hair." Curly hair was highly prized and was called *kamui otop*, "divine hair," "magnificent hair."

onto the neck
of my bear-cub
While he did so
he uttered these words:

“I give this
to the weighty god
as payment
for his coming inside.”

Saying
these words,
he tied
the swordguard treasure
onto the neck
of my bear-cub.
Then
he went back inside.
After that
my bear-cub
walked up beside me.
It seemed that
he wanted me
to go inside.
So I stood up
and walked
to the doorway.
My bear-cub
cast fierce
glances at me,
and it seemed that
he wanted me
to go inside
first.

Then I went inside
first,
stepped inside the doorway,
and sat down.
Only then
did my bear-cub
come inside after me.
He walked
up along the floor
on the left-hand side of the fireplace
and sat down
leaning against
the sacred window.

In the meanwhile,
I looked around,
and this is what I saw:
Stacks of sacred vessels
were stretched out
like a low cliff.
Above them
hung noble swords,
with their many sword handles,
their countless sword handles
overhanging each other,
their dangling tassels
swaying together.
The brightness of the treasures,
the brightness of the vessels
glittered brightly
and cast shadows
on the walls.
The surface of the floor,
the magnificent floor²⁴

²⁴ *Kane amso*, literally “metal floor.”

gleamed brightly
 Below the stacks,
 the stacks of sacred vessels,
 there stood
 a movable seat,
 a magnificent seat.
 What sort of being
 was sitting
 on the seat?
 The upper part of his body
 was enveloped in
 twisting billows of mist,
 and it was impossible
 to see him
 in his human form.
 He remained
 seated there
 on the seat.

On the right-hand side of the fireplace
 next to the fire
 there was sitting
 the human man
 whom I had seen
 come outside.
 He stared fixedly
 down into the center of the hearth.
 After a while,
 he turned toward
 my bear-cub.
 Raising his hands
 up high [in worship],
 he said:

“Listen,
 o weighty god,
 to what I have to say!
 It is from you,
 o weighty god,
 that we ought to hear
 the explanation,
 and we question you.
 We want to hear
 for what reason
 are you, the weighty god,
 traveling about,
 but we are
 unable to hear
 the explanation
 from you, the weighty god.
 Since you brought along with you
 a woman who is
 a human like us,
 let us humans
 converse with each other.
 Only then
 can we hear
 for what reason
 you, the weighty god,
 are traveling about.
 By all means,
 o weighty god,
 do not be angry with us!”

While saying
 these things,
 the human man
 made gestures of worship

toward my bear-cub.
After he was finished,
he turned to me
and said:

“O divine lady,
please seat yourself
beside the fire!”

Thus, I went up
beside the fire
on the left-hand side of the fireplace.
Then [he said]:

“Listen,
o divine lady,
to what I have to say!
What is the reason
that you have come,
and from what place
did you come?
Only if you tell us
the causes behind
both of your coming here,
will we be able
to know each other.”

These words
were spoken by
the lord of the house,
the master of the house.
Therefore,
I spoke these words:

“I did not know
who I was,
or how it was
that I was being raised.

Repunnot-un-kur
raised me,
and this is what
I thought:

I thought only
that my real elder brother
was raising me.

He raised me,
and we lived
on and on.

But all the time²⁵

.
Within a short while
he had completely
laid to waste
the populous village.

Then once again
I went along with him
as he went off
toward somewhere or other,
and we came along
and arrived here
at the stronghold.”

When I said this,
the one who
was sitting
on the seat,
the magnificent seat
which was placed

²⁵ I omit here an extremely long passage (over 500 lines) which recapitulates the whole story up to this point.

below the stacks,
 the stacks of sacred vessels,
 he too
 came down
 by the fireside.
 The one who
 was sitting
 at the head of the fireplace,
 and the one who
 was sitting
 by the fireside,
 on the right-hand side of the fireplace
 both of these
 human men
 said:

“Our younger sister!”

Saying this,
 all at once
 they grabbed me,
 and one after another
 we wept over each other.
 When that was finished,
 the elder one of them
 spoke these words:

“My younger sister,
 listen well to
 what I have to say!
 Even though
 I am
 the eldest,
 the first born,

I was entirely
 too faint-hearted,
 too weak.
 I had decided
 to forget completely
 that our mother,
 carrying on her back
 our younger sister,
 had gone trading
 together with
 our father,
 and to remain
 at the very least
 together with
 my younger brother,
 my divine nursling.
 This was the only thing
 that I ever thought about
 as I was raising
 my divine nursling
 until this time.
 But as time went by,
 this is what
 I began to think.
 Once the god I am raising,
 my divine nursling,
 grows up,
 after that
 I will follow
 in the footsteps
 of my father
 and my mother
 and will carry on their battles.
 Just as I was

thinking this,
 thanks to
 the weighty god,
 our younger sister
 has come back to us!"

While he spoke
 these words,
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 turned around toward
 my bear-cub
 and worshiped him.
 bowing his head
 down to the ground.

After that
 the one who was
 my little elder brother
 also continued to sit
 right by the fireside.
 It was incredible
 how he could ever
 rejoice over me so greatly.

While we were
 engaged in this,
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 took the servants
 with him
 and stepped
 outside
 to make

a cage
 for my bear-cub.
 After a while
 had gone by,
 the cage was finished,
 and they put
 my bear-cub
 into the cage.

After that
 we raised
 my bear-cub
 with a magnificent upbringing,
 a splendid upbringing,
 and this is how we lived
 on and on,
 uneventfully,
 with me doing nothing but needlework,
 my eyes focused
 on a single spot.

After we had lived on
 in this way for some time,
 on one occasion
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 remained for a while
 without saying anything.
 Then this is what he said:

"O god whom we are raising,
 o our divine nursling,
 and you also,
 our younger sister,

listen well to
 what I have to say.
 Although we are
 reluctant to part with
 our bear-cub,
 he was kept,
 it seems,
 for quite a long time
 at Repunnot.
 Besides that,
 since he arrived here
 at our native Shinutapka,
 he has now
 been here
 for two years, for three years.
 Since it would be
 an indignity
 to make a weighty god
 remain
 for a very long time
 among the humans,
 I want to go
 to trade with the Japanese
 in preparation
 for sending him home,
 for giving him ritual dismissal.
 Then I will bring back
 trade wine,
 trade brew,
 will add it to
 the Ainu wine,
 and will give dismissal
 with it
 to our bear-cub.”

Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 spoke these words
 and set out to sea
 to go trading.
 After he was gone,
 I remained
 together with
 my little elder brother.
 I continued to raise
 my bear-cub
 with a splendid upbringing.
 After a time,
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 came back
 from trading.
 He brought ashore
 trade wine,
 trade brew,
 as well as sacks [of rice].

After that
 he prepared
 to give dismissal
 to my bear-cub,
 getting the servants
 to help him.
 Time continued
 to pass in this way
 until finally
 the wine was ready,
 and those who were straining the wine
 darted their wicker baskets

together this way and that,
 while those who were whittling *inau*
 plied their whittling knives
 together this way and that.
 The sounds of the *inau* being whittled
 and the sounds of the wine being strained
 made a very loud
 creaking and squeaking.

After this went on
 for some time,
 now they said that
 the preparations were completed,
 and the drinking would begin,
 the feasting would start.
 At that time,
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 whispered these words
 to himself:

“Ishikar-un-kur,
 my evil younger brother,²⁶
 what on earth
 ever made him decide
 to go to the assistance of
 Repunnot-un-kur?
 He came very close,
 it seems, to killing
 both of them—
 my little sister
 and the weighty god.
 That is why
 his village

was devastated.
 Even though we
 give ritual dismissal to
 the weighty god,
 we ought to
 give up all thought of
 inviting him,
 Ishikar-un-kur.”

Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 whispered these words
 to himself
 and sent out word to
 all the relatives nearby
 and all the relatives far away.
 After that,
 the invited guests,
 both the women
 and the men,
 were shown in with much ceremony.

After that
 the time finally came
 for them to let
 my bear-cub play,²⁷
 and my elder brothers
 went outside for this.
 Right after that,
 I also went outside.
 I walked up
 next to the spirit fence
 just east of the house
 and remained there.

²⁶ The chieftain of Ishikar was evidently a relative of the family of heroes of Shinutapka. Ishikar was the second place where the bear-cub had to fight a battle on the way to Shinutapka.

²⁷ *Shinotte*, to allow the bear-cub to play. Part of the bear ceremony consists in leading the bear-cub around on a rope among the assembled crowd just before killing it.

During this while,
 a large crowd of people
 had gathered so thick that
 the ground under them
 looked black.
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 was at the head of the crowd.
 He came outside,
 holding my bear-cub
 by a rope.
 After that
 my bear-cub
 played
 peacefully
 by the side of
 the spirit fence.
 After a while,
 when this was finished,
 I heard
 them say that
 now it was time
 for them to put
 my bear-cub to sleep.
 This is what
 I thought to myself:

"It was thanks to him,
 your bear-cub,
 that your life
 was saved.
 And now
 they say that
 you will never see him again!"

Thinking this,
 I threw myself down
 and wept
 by the spirit fence.
 After that
 I shed
 many fierce, sobbing tears,
 countless fierce, sobbing tears.
 After I continued
 to do this
 for some time,
 I looked,
 and this is what I saw:
 Over the spirit fence
 was one who was a god
 and had a god-like appearance.
 He was quite a young boy,
 who lacked
 even the shadow of a beard,
 and he was wrapped in
 layer upon layer
 of black robes.
 He transformed himself
 into a ball of flashing light
 and remained
 standing
 over the spirit fence.
 He said this:

"Woman, listen to me!
 If you are really doing this
 with sincere thoughts,
 with true emotions,
 then this is what

you must do.
 As you celebrate the feast,
 do not even do so much
 as to lick the bits [of food]
 sticking to your fingers.
 Celebrate the feast in this way,
 and all will be well.”

After saying this,
 he vanished
 and was gone.
 After that
 the women
 all took me
 by the hands
 and spoke these words:

“Shinutapka-un-mat,
 our little sister,
 listen well to
 what we have to say!
 You are grieving
 for your bear-cub.
 All the more reason
 for you to celebrate
 a good feast.
 Wash your hands
 carefully
 and cook a meal
 for your bear-cub.
 Then exalt yourself
 tranquilly
 with a good feast!”

The women
 spoke
 these words
 as they took me
 by the hands
 and brought me inside.
 In the meanwhile
 my bear-cub
 had been brought inside.²⁸

After that,
 I washed my hands
 from the shoulders on down.
 In the meanwhile
 the women
 went running about
 this way and that
 while cooking the food.
 After they had cooked for a while,
 I removed the pot from the fire,
 and the women
 commanded me
 to serve the food.
 Although I served the food
 to my bear-cub,
 just as the weighty god
 had told me to do,
 I did not so much as
 lick my fingers.
 Though I received portions of food
 and served food,
 through the entire feast
 I did not eat
 anything at all.

²⁸ The head of the bear is brought inside the house and laid in state by the sacred window. During the final feast, food is set in front of it.

The feast went on
and finally came
to an end.

It seemed to me
that my elder brothers
gave ritual dismissal²⁹
to my bear-cub
more splendidly
than any other god ascending.
When the feast was over,
when the drinking feast
had come to an end,
all the guests
praised me
and went home.

After that,
doing nothing
but needlework,
I lived on
with my elder brothers.
We lived
on and on
uneventfully.
During this time,
my little elder brother
would remain
on the seat,
the magnificent seat,
and would do nothing
but carve on scabbards,
carve on treasures,
with his eyes focused
on a single spot.

This is the way
we lived on.

By now,
some time had gone by.
Then one day,
by the side of the house,
there was the sound of someone
coming this way in a hurry.
Without hesitation,
he headed straight
toward the doorway.
He opened wide
the door hangings.
Before
whoever it was
came in,
many flashes of light,
countless flashes of light
came streaming in.
Above the flashing lights
a human face
suddenly appeared.

When I looked at him,
this is what I saw:
The exalted hero,
the one whom I had seen
before
standing
on the spirit fence,
came inside.
His appearance now,
his beauty now

²⁹ The verb used here is *hopumpare*, meaning "to cause to ascend."

was even more imposing than before.
 He transformed himself
 into a ball of flashing light
 and came inside.
 He walked along the floor
 on the left-hand side of the fireplace
 and sat down
 at the head of the fireplace.
 He remained for a while
 staring fixedly
 down into the middle of the hearth.
 Then he spoke these words:

“O human men,
 listen well to
 what I have to say!
 Unless I myself
 say the reason
 why I have come down,
 we will not be able
 to know each other.
 This is the reason
 why I have come down:

“I am the bear-cub
 that you sent off.³⁰
 I went
 to the place of
 the god my father
 with bundles of wine,
 bundles of millet cakes,
 and big piles
 of both *inau*
 and food.

After that
 we invited
 all the gods,
 and we held
 an excellent feast,
 an excellent drinking feast.
 After it was finished,
 all of the gods
 thanked me
 and praised me
 and left for home.
 After that,
 this is what
 I said
 to my father:

‘I want to marry
 the human woman.’

“When I said this,
 this is what
 my father said:

‘If you want
 to marry
 the human woman,
 then you may
 go down
 among the humans
 and then marry
 the human woman.’³¹

“Thus spoke
 my father.

³⁰ *Arpare*, to send off, to give ritual dismissal to

³¹ In the version recorded by N. A. Nevskii, the father says at this point: “I am a weighty god, and if you were to take a human woman and marry her in the land of the gods, I would be censured by the weighty gods. If you want to marry a human woman, then go down there and marry her!” Nevskii, *Ainskii fol'klor*, p. 66.

Therefore,
 because
 I feel sorry for
 your younger sister,
 who grieves for me
 so excessively,
 even though I am
 a god, the child
 of a most weighty god,
 I have raised
 myself up
 and have come down.
 If you think
 it would be well
 for us to dwell together
 as a single family
 from now on,
 then I would like
 to live
 together with
 your younger sister.
 This was what I thought
 as I came down.’’

When the most weighty god
 said this,
 my little elder brother
 came down
 beside the fire
 and sat down
 in the position above³²
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother.
 Both my elder brothers

made again and again
 many gestures of profound worship,
 countless gestures of profound worship.
 As they did so,
 my little elder brother
 spoke these words:

‘‘This comes at an auspicious time,
 for we were
 without relatives,
 without brothers.
 Our younger sister,
 though she is unattractive,
 though she lacks beauty,
 has come back to us
 thanks to
 the weighty god.
 If only on account
 of our younger sister alone,
 we must thank
 and show gratitude
 to the weighty god,
 but now
 he has raised
 himself up
 and has come to us!
 We are most grateful
 and worship you
 most reverently for this.
 Were such a thing
 to take place,
 we would greatly enhance
 our standing among the gods
 and our position among men.’’

³² The younger brother Poiyaunpe sat in the more honored position nearer the head of the fireplace. The younger brother is treated as being of a higher rank than the elder brother Kamui-otopush.

These words
 were spoken by
 my little elder brother.
 After that
 we lived
 on and on,
 and I lived
 together with
 the exalted hero.
 After a while
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 spoke these words:

“It would be an indignity
 to make the weighty god
 take his lodging with us
 forever.
 Therefore,
 let us build him
 a separate house,
 and let the weighty god
 dwell in it!”

These words
 were spoken by
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother.
 After that,
 every day
 east of the stronghold
 there were very loud
 crashing, cracking sounds
 of wood being carved,

of wood being cut,
 which they said were
 sounds of building
 the separate house.

After a while
 they finally said
 that the separate house
 had been finished.
 Then Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother
 took things outside.
 He chose some
 of the vessels and
 some of the treasures.
 Some of these
 he took out
 through the window,
 and there was a tinkling
 as they went out
 by the window.
 Some of them
 he took out
 through the door,
 and there was
 a loud tinkling
 as they went out
 by the door.

After a while,
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 said these words:

“Now at last
the building of the house
is finished.”

Since then,
I have been living
together with
the exalted hero
inside
the separate house
east of the stronghold.
We are living
on and on
uneventfully.
Since I am married

to a most weighty god,
I have nothing
to worry about,
and I am leading
a magnificent married life.
My wedded husband
does nothing but
carve on scabbards,
carve on treasures,
with his eyes focused
on a single spot,
and this is the way
we live
on and on
uneventfully.

32. The Woman of Poi-Soya

This is a full-length heroic epic of the *hau* type recorded in writing by Kubodera from the reciter Hiraga Etenoa from October 3 to 11, 1932. The epic is sung without a burden.

Like all *hau* epics of the Saru area of Hidaka, the hero is Otasam-un-kur. The story is an interesting and involved one, revolving around the outrageous indignities committed by the woman of Poi-Soya (Poi-Soya-un-mat), who breaks taboo after taboo by dressing up like a man and hunting in the mountains, or by sailing around trading with the *repunkur* and provoking them into fights.

The Ainu title is *Poi-Soya-un-mat shipitonere shikamuinere*, meaning something like “The Woman of Poi-Soya Exalts Herself and Behaves with Outrageous Arrogance.” The sense is that she has exalted herself above the gods (both the word *shipitonere* and the word *shikamuinere* are synonymous and mean “to make oneself into a god”) and has deviated from all norms of respectable human life. Her outrageous conduct enrages Otasam-un-kur, who learns that he is betrothed to her. In the end, after many vicissitudes, the hero marries the woman of Kunnepet (Kunnepet-un-mat), who has restored him to life by her wizardry.

The structure of the epic is complex. There are the following five sections, each one with a shift in speaker: (1) Otasam-un-kur is the speaker; (2) Poi-Soya-un-mat is the speaker; (3) Otasam-un-kur is the speaker again; (4) Kunnepet-un-mat is the speaker; (5) Otasam-un-kur is the speaker again. I have not labeled the speakers in each of the sections.

The frequent shift in speakers in the epic adds a very interesting, multi-dimensional depth to the telling of the story. Some of the incidents overlap, and the same incidents are viewed from the points of view of more than one character, each speaking in the first person. This gives the narration a much greater psychological depth than would be possible if the entire story were narrated by a single character. One can only marvel at the symmetry, the

economy of detail, and the thorough consistency with which Etenoa sings the story, weaving all the strands together into a harmonious whole.

I obtained the text from Dr. Kubodera's typed manuscript. It is in volume 10 of the Ainu epic typescripts at the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics, Kokugakuin University, Tokyo. This epic has never been translated into any language.

I

My elder sister
 raised me,
 and we lived
 on and on.
 The stacks of sacred vessels
 were stretched out
 like a low cliff.
 Above them
 hung noble swords,
 with their many sword handles,
 their countless sword handles
 overhanging each other,
 their dangling tassels
 swaying together.
 Below the stacks
 there stood
 a movable seat,
 a magnificent seat.
 I was raised
 on the seat.
 My foster sister—
 it was utterly amazing
 how she could ever

be so imposing in appearance,
 so beautiful.
 The brightness of her face
 was like the rising sun,
 sending out
 dazzling rays of light.
 She and my younger sister,
 the two of them together,
 would send out
 brilliant flashes of light.
 It was amazing
 how very lovingly
 my foster sister
 treated me.
 She raised me
 with a splendid upbringing,
 with a magnificent upbringing,
 and this is the way
 we lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 During this while,
 I did nothing but
 carve on scabbards,
 carve on treasures,

with my eyes focused
on a single spot.
We continued to live
on and on
uneventfully.

Then, beginning not long ago,
I started to hear
rumors.

This is what they said:

Poi-Soya-un-mat¹
has been behaving
in this manner:
She would disguise herself
in men's garments,
in men's clothing.
She would outfit herself
with a quiver with a sling attached
and a bow wound with cherry bark,
would take six
servants with her,
and would go hunting
in the mountains.

Then, when she would see
someone who had killed a deer,
she would extract
as indemnity²
their hunting swords,
along with the deer.

When anyone had caught fish,
she would beat them and take away the fish;
and when anyone had killed a deer,
she would beat them and take away the deer.
These rumors

I continued to hear
all the time.

“Even if a man
had done such things,
I would be terribly angry,
but for a woman to do it
means self-exaltation,
outrageous arrogance!”

Thinking this,
I would feel shock
as if cold water
had been splashed
onto my flesh.
I continued to be
haunted in my sleep,
haunted in my dreams
by Poi-Soya-un-mat,
and this is the way
I continued to live
on and on
uneventfully.

As this went on,
one day
I wrapped in a sedge mat
the carving I had been doing
and laid it
on the stacks of sacred vessels.
After that
I came down
by the fireside
and spoke these words:

¹ The woman of Poi-Soya. Poi-Soya means “Little Soya” and is evidently a subsidiary settlement of the Soya Ainu. Soya is the northernmost part of Hokkaido, separated by the Sōya Kaikyō (La Perouse Strait) from Sakhalin.

² Her acts amounted to brigandage.

“My foster sister,
listen to me!
Bring out
some garments,
that I may put them on.
I want to go hunting
in the mountains
and kill a nice deer.
Then since you,
my foster sister,
have gone through
so many hardships
in raising me,
I want to
provide food
for you to eat.”

When I said this,
she spoke in a hushed voice,
saying these words:

“How astonishing
are the words
you speak,
o god whom I have raised,
o my divine nursling.
Deer is not
something which we can eat
only if it is killed
by my divine nursling!³
The area near the mountains
behind our village
is infested by droves
of robber birds,

of stealing birds.
If anyone resembling
a human
goes hunting in the mountains,
they steal him away.
I am afraid of this,
and now you,
o god whom I have raised,
o my divine nursling,
say that you want
to go hunting in the mountains!”

These words
were spoken by
my foster sister,
but I insisted
again and again.
After a while,
she looked as if
she were very frightened.
She ran to the back of the house
and brought out
a woman's treasure bag.
She thrust her hands
to the bottom of the bag.
She took out
a pair of
grass leggings
and held them out toward me.
Overjoyed,
I took them
and wrapped them
around my legs.
After that

³ “It is not necessary for you to kill deer so that we can have venison to eat. The servants go hunting for us.” The foster sister tries to dissuade the hero from going hunting in the mountains.

I wrapped around myself
 a thin garment.
 I tossed up
 onto my back
 a quiver with a sling attached.
 I grasped
 a bow wound with cherry bark
 at the center of its handgrip.
 After that
 I went outside.
 I stepped
 outside.

Only now, for the first time
 did I acquaint myself
 with the outside
 of my native stronghold.
 It was amazing
 how very beautiful
 was my native stronghold.⁴
 The older stockade posts
 stood bending
 up backward,
 and the newly erected posts
 stood bending
 up forward.
 On account of this,
 this is what
 was happening
 above them.
 Over the posts,
 the newly erected posts,
 clouds went soaring
 up high into

the heavenly skies
 like white mist.
 Over
 the older posts
 clouds went soaring
 up high into
 the heavenly skies
 like black mist.
 On account of this,
 black clouds
 and white clouds
 were hovering
 in thick billows there.
 The upper boards [of the stockade]
 curved upward into the clouds.
 The lower boards
 went curving deep down
 into countless layers of the earth.
 On account of this,
 the upper spear holes
 had turned into nests
 of little birds
 and stood out brightly.
 The lower spear holes
 had turned into nests
 of rats
 and looked like black spots.
 The wind beating against the spear holes
 rang out sonorously
 like the chirpings of little birds.
 It was a delightful sight,
 and my heart leaped with pleasure.

The trail followed

⁴ The Ainu word *chashi* may mean “stockade,” “stronghold,” or “house.” What follows is a stereotyped description of the beauties of a stockade. Compare this description with that in “The Epic of Kotan Utunnai,” p. 387.

by the servants
 when they went into the mountains
 could be seen clearly.
 I started up
 along the trail,
 and as I went along
 some spirits,
 some gods
 must have attached themselves to me,⁵
 for my companion spirits
 sent forth rumblings
 above me.
 Just then
 a divine wind came blowing down,
 and I was swept up
 lightly
 in the forefront of the wind.
 After that
 I continued
 to go on.
 When I had come
 to a certain place,
 there was a big stag
 bending his head down low
 as he ate.
 When he took grass nearby
 he drew his antlers
 back over his body,
 and when he took grass far away
 he raised his antlers
 up high.
 When I saw this,
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

I have heard
 it said
 that he who approaches
 the game too closely
 is an unlucky hunter.
 Thus, I aimed my arrow
 at the tops of the leaves
 of the low-growing trees.
 I aimed my arrow
 at the middle of the trunks
 of the tall trees.
 I shot
 my pretty little arrow.
 The pretty little arrow
 went speeding
 along swiftly.
 The pretty little arrow
 lodged itself with a thump
 on the torso
 of the big stag.
 The white arrow feathers
 were swallowed up,
 and the black arrow feathers
 were quivering there.
 After that
 the big stag
 went stumbling
 along swiftly
 away from me.
 He spread out the grass
 like a mat underneath himself,
 toppled down and lay
 outstretched majestically.

† *I-turen*, attached themselves to me as my companion spirits. The Ainu word for "my companion spirit" (a person's spirit helper) is *i-turen kamui*.

When I walked up
 to where he was,
 his eyes were focused
 on me from afar,
 as if he had heard
 some rumor about me.⁶
 Enraged at this,
 I grasped in my hands
 his fore limbs
 and his rear limbs,
 and I knocked him against
 the slender trees
 and the stout trees,
 making cracking noises
 and thudding noises.
 After a while,
 I threw him down on the ground
 in the woods by the river.
 Then I thought
 things over
 carefully,
 and I realized
 that this must be
 the usual manner
 of game animals.
 After that
 I broke with a snap
 his fore legs
 and his hind legs
 and busily set about
 the work of skinning the animal.

 While I was
 continuing to do this,

just then
 there was a loud boom
 over the land,
 I didn't know where.
 A large number
 of gods were coming this way
 making a loud roaring
 and an intense rumbling.
 After a short while,
 a short distance from me,
 something the size of a grove of trees
 was soaring upward,
 and a large number of them
 came dropping down.
 When I looked at them,
 this is what I saw:
 One who appeared to be
 the much-rumored
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 dressed exactly like a man
 in men's garments,
 in men's clothing,
 with a quiver with a sling attached
 together with
 a bow wound with cherry bark,
 was carrying
 on her back
 the quiver with the sling attached,
 and was holding
 the bow wound with cherry bark
 at the center of its handgrip.
 She had brought along with her
 six servants
 and was holding

⁶ The hero, who knows nothing about hunting, is angered at first when the eyes of the dead deer stare at him fixedly. Later he realizes that this is, of course, the way with game animals when they are killed.

a short-hilted spear.
 She came dropping down
 a short distance away from me.
 Nevertheless,
 I pretended that
 I had not seen them
 and turned my back
 toward them.
 I continued to
 busy myself with
 the work of skinning the animal.
 After a while
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 sent one of her servants
 to speak this message:

“We have been roaming about
 intending to kill,
 intending to slay
 a deer,
 and you, a stranger
 have gone ahead of us
 and spoiled our hunting.
 No matter who you may be,
 give us as indemnity
 your hunting sword
 along with the deer
 as well.
 If you refuse,
 we will hack you
 to pieces!”

The servant
 came and spoke

this message.
 Enraged at this,
 I struck
 the servant
 with a club
 and threw his mangled corpse
 down to the ground.
 Then
 once again
 another servant
 came with a message.
 I killed
 this servant too.
 Once again
 she sent a servant
 with a message.
 Each time they came
 I would kill them.
 As this went on,
 I finally killed
 all six servants.
 After that
 the evil woman
 poured out
 many words of abuse,
 countless words of abuse.
 She spoke these words:

“A stranger
 from an unknown land,
 were he to commit
 such unforgivable
 indignities
 in the mountains,

this alone
 would enrage me.
 But not stopping at that,
 you have annihilated
 all my kinsmen,
 you have massacred
 the chief ones of my kinsmen.
 Do not delude yourself
 that you will
 save your life,
 that you will
 survive at all,
 for you have committed
 unforgivable
 indignities.
 No matter
 that I may be
 a woman,
 there are no warriors
 comparable to me,
 no warriors like me,
 even among men,
 in any land,
 in any country.
 Whoever you may be,
 you stranger
 from an unknown land,
 you have exalted yourself
 and behaved with
 outrageous arrogance!
 Nevertheless,
 do not delude yourself
 that your life will be saved,
 that you will survive!"

While speaking
 these words,
 she came stamping
 fiercely toward me.
 However,
 I paid no attention
 and busied myself
 with the work of skinning the animal.
 During this while,
 I exerted
 many utmost efforts,
 countless utmost efforts
 to prevent her from seeing me
 in my human form.
 For this reason
 I scattered
 all around me
 many billowy clouds of mist,
 countless billowy clouds of mist
 in the forms of men.
 Just then
 she came up
 beside me.
 The evil woman's
 eyes
 stood there
 side by side
 like little stars.
 She could scarcely
 remain standing.
 She spewed out at me
 biting words,
 harsh words.
 This is what she said:

“Look here, stranger,
 no matter who
 you may be
 who are behaving
 in this way,
 I loathe
 concealing
 one’s own identity.
 The name
 of my native land
 is Poi-Soya,
 and I who am
 doing this here
 am Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 If you who are
 doing this here
 have a native land,
 if you have a country,
 state your native land,
 state your country,
 that I may hear it!
 I am a warrior
 who slashes down
 slow speakers
 before they start to speak.
 I am a warrior
 who slashes down
 fast speakers
 after they finish speaking.
 If you speak slowly,
 I will slash you down
 before you start to speak.
 If you speak quickly,
 I will slash you down

after you finish speaking.
 Speak quickly!
 Come, speak up!”

The evil woman
 spoke
 these words.
 Just then
 I sprang up suddenly
 and lunged toward
 the evil woman.
 I pulled mightily
 at her hair
 and wound in my hands
 her locks of hair.
 After that
 I beat her violently,
 I struck her mightily,
 and at the ends of my arms
 there were thudding noises
 and cracking noises.
 Like many dead fish,
 like countless dead fish,
 I dragged her along
 after myself.
 I avoided
 the slender
 trees growing on the ground.
 I knocked her against
 the stout trees,
 and at the ends of my arms
 there were thudding noises.
 After a while
 I threw her mangled corpse

down onto the ground.

After that
I hurled her down
onto the surface of the ground.
I went running around
among the clumps of trees
growing on the ground
and busily set about
cutting vines.

After that
I tied
Poi-Soya-un-mat
with the vines
onto the trunk
of a stout
tree growing on the ground.

After that
I laid out
her servants
side by side
facing in the direction
of the land of Poi-Soya.

After that
I made
the big stag
into a large bundle.

After that
I returned home.

I came down
to my native stronghold
and put the meat in
through the window.⁷

At that time
my foster sister
came walking up
to the window
clapping her hands
together
to greet me.
Her voice resounded faintly
as she rejoiced over me.

After that
I went inside
and sliced
the parts eaten raw.⁸
I served
my foster sister
heaping trayfuls
of food.⁹

Afterward
my foster sister
rejoiced
and spoke these words:

“I would rejoice
when eating this
even if the common servants
served it to me,
but now the god I have raised,
my divine nursling
serves me
with his own hands,
and this makes
the deer

⁷ Gods and spirits enter and leave the house through the sacred window. This is why the meat of game animals is put in through this window.

⁸ The organ meats of fish and game, called *huipe*, were eaten raw and considered to be the greatest delicacies.

⁹ Literally, “I served my foster sister food so that it was impossible to grasp the trays.” The food was served on wooden platters.

all the more
delicious!"

My foster sister
spoke
these words
while she ate.

After that
I did nothing but
carve on scabbards
and carve on treasures,
with my eyes focused
on a single spot,
and this is the way
I continued to live
on and on
uneventfully.

Then, beginning not long ago,
slight rumors
began to come to my ears.
This is what they said:

Poi-Soya-un-mat
one day
went hunting
in the mountains,
but she did not
come home
all night long.
When she went hunting
into the mountains
she had taken with her

servants
six in number,
but none of them,
neither she
nor the servants
came home.
Then this is the way
they finally came home:
Poi-Soya-un-mat
was entirely without
any signs of life,
and the servants
came back carrying
the lifeless corpse
of Poi-Soya-un-mat.
Since then
Poi-Soya-un-mat
has been nursing herself
back to health.
Poi-Soya-un-mat
did not know [who it was],
and they all consulted
together about it,
but Poi-Soya-un-mat
has never been able
to find out who it was
who had struck her down.

This was the rumor
that came to my ears.
When I heard it,
I laughed to myself
in amusement.
While doing so,

I did nothing but
 carve on scabbards
 and carve on treasures,
 with my eyes focused
 on a single spot,
 and this is the way
 I continued to live
 on and on
 uneventfully.

Then on one occasion
 my foster sister
 stared fixedly down
 at the center of the hearth.
 She seemed to have
 something she wanted to say.
 The ashes in the center of the fireplace
 she raked out toward the edges,
 and the ashes at the edges of the fireplace
 she raked out toward the center.
 Here and there in the ashes
 she jabbed [with the tongs]
 and traced furrows and lines.
 After some time
 she turned toward me
 and spoke these words:

“O god whom I have raised,
 o my divine nursling,
 listen to
 what I have to say!
 I had been intending
 to tell you the story,
 but since you were

still much too young,
 I have remained
 silent about it
 until this time.
 In the meanwhile,
 quite suddenly,
 you said that you wanted
 to go hunting
 in the mountains.
 But never in the world
 did I expect
 that you would do
 such a thing.
 I never thought
 that it was you,
 of all persons,
 who had struck down
 Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 The fact of the matter
 is this:
 The story
 does not have to do
 with any
 stranger.
 The words of your parents
 are these:

‘When you have grown up,
 you are to marry
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the divine lady,
 and you are to be together
 a well-matched couple.’

“These are
 the words of your parents,
 the instructions they left behind.
 However,
 before I had
 even told you,
 you have, they say,
 [killed] your own betrothed,
 mistaking her for someone else.
 Nevertheless,
 my divine nursling,
 you must never
 even think
 of disobeying
 the words of your parents,
 the instructions they left behind.
 This was why
 I have raised you
 with such a splendid upbringing,
 such a magnificent upbringing.
 You must
 agree to
 my well-meaning request!”

My foster sister
 spoke
 these words.
 Nevertheless,
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

“Even if it had been
 a complete stranger
 who had done this,

I would have been
 terribly angry,
 but now, it turns out,
 it was none other than a relative,
 someone called my betrothed,
 who has, they say,
 exalted herself
 and behaved with such
 outrageous arrogance!”

Thinking this,
 I continued
 to be overcome
 with feelings of anger,
 and this is the way
 I continued to live
 on and on.

Then, little by little,
 I began to hear
 these rumors:

Ever since
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 recovered her health,
 this is what
 she has been doing:
 She takes aboard with her
 six servants
 and sets sail
 for the lands of the *repunkur*
 to go trading.
 While she travels
 about trading,

those who fall in love with her
because she is such
an exceedingly beautiful woman
propose to Poi-Soya-un-mat,
asking her hand in marriage.
Then Poi-Soya-un-mat
is enraged at them
and says these words:

“I am not
by any means
an unbetrothed woman.
I was raised
in a portion
of the swaddling clothes
in which was raised
Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero.¹⁰
In saying that,
you evil-doing
criminals
are behaving
disrespectfully to him
behind his back.”

Saying
these things,
she has been going around
fighting battles
of revenge.

These things
I continued to hear,
and this is the way

I continued to live
on and on,
overcome
with feelings of fury
and feelings of anger.
In this way
I continued to live
on and on.

Then, one year,
I decided that I wanted
to go trading.
I commanded
the servants
to make a boat.
After that
day after day,
day in and day out,
the servants
could be heard
building the boat,
carving away at the boat
with loud cracking and crashing noises.
While I heard
them making these noises,
I continued to
carve on scabbards
and carve on treasures.
After a while
had gone by,
the servants finally
finished
building the boat.
Therefore,

¹⁰ This means that she and the hero Otasam-un-kur were betrothed to each other from the cradle by their parents

I took up
 my whittling knives
 and stepped
 outside.
 I went down to the beach
 and made carvings
 on the boat.
 This was what I carved:
 On the side of the boat facing the sea,
 I carved
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of the gods dwelling in the sea.
 On the side of the boat facing the mountains,
 I carved
 many pictures,
 countless pictures
 of the gods dwelling in the mountains.
 Now finally
 I finished
 carving the boat.
 After that
 I came back
 to the stronghold
 and commanded
 the servants,
 saying these words:

"Come now,
 load
 onto the boat
 the best ones
 of the articles traded with the Japanese!"

I said these words.
 In the meanwhile
 I made my preparations
 for going trading.
 While I was doing this,
 the servants
 worked together busily
 in loading
 the articles traded with the Japanese.
 After a while,
 everything was finally
 ready for me
 to set sail.

After that
 I came down
 bringing along with me
 the servants.
 I came down
 along the path,
 the path leading down to the beach.
 I came down to the beach.
 We lowered the boat,
 the big boat decorated with carvings,
 onto the face of the sea.
 After that
 I got into the boat.
 Then
 the servants
 watched out ahead of the boat
 and sang
 rowing songs,
 which passed along
 from mouth to mouth.

On the stern of the boat,
 I skillfully handled
 the rudder.
 After that
 we sailed on and on
 until we arrived
 at the land of the Japanese.

After that
 I traded
 the articles traded with the Japanese,
 and this is what I obtained in exchange:
 I got in exchange
 nothing but wine,
 as well as tobacco
 and also grains.
 After that
 I sailed homeward
 in this way:
 At every village
 on the way home
 I would stop overnight,
 and would bring out
 wine,
 as well as tobacco,
 and also grains
 and would take them ashore.
 Continuing to do this,
 I sailed homeward.

Ahead of me
 I began to hear
 these sounds:
 Many thudding, rumbling sounds,

countless thudding, rumbling sounds
 were rising up somewhere in the distance.
 Listening to them,
 I came sailing onward.
 Then I sailed shoreward,
 heading
 in their direction.
 I looked out,
 and this is what I saw.
 A huge steep crag
 could be seen standing up
 majestically.
 Atop the steep crag
 a stronghold
 seemed to be
 standing.
 Underneath the steep crag
 there stood
 settlements of the common people,
 populous settlements.
 Where the settlements
 of the common people were,
 fierce battles,
 fierce fighting
 had broken out on all sides,
 so it appeared.
 As I sailed shoreward,
 looking out
 in front of me,
 someone—
 I didn't know who—
 called out,
 and these words
 came flowing

from his lips:

“Listen well,
yaunkun nishpa,¹¹
 to what I have to say!
 I have seen
 that your boat’s emblem
 is that of
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 whose god-like
 fame I have heard.
 I will tell you
 what has happened.
 I loathe
 those who conceal
 their own identity.
 The name
 of this my native land
 is Repui-shir,¹²
 and I have two
 elder brothers.
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 was traveling
 about trading
 and came ashore
 to our land.
 At that time,
 my younger elder brother
 became infatuated
 with Poi-Soya-un-mat
 for her exceeding
 beauty
 and her skill at needlework.

For this reason,
 my eldest brother
 proposed to
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 that she marry
 my younger elder brother.
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 became furious at that
 and said:

‘I am not
 by any means
 an unbetrothed woman.
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 is half human
 and half god,
 and thus for the most part
 he eats among the gods
 and for the lesser part
 he eats among the humans.
 He is half god
 and half human,
 and the words of our parents,
 the instructions they left behind
 were that
 I should marry him.
 For the sake of this,
 I have kept myself unsullied,
 I have maintained myself unblemished
 in the absence
 of Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero.
 But you have behaved

¹¹ *Yaunkur* gentleman, mainlander gentleman. A term of respect applied to the Ainu (the *yaunkur*) by the *repunkur*.

¹² Repui-shir or Repunshir is no doubt the island known today as Rebun-tō. It is located just off the coast of Hokkaido near the Sōya Kaikyō.

disrespectfully to him
 behind his back,
 in his absence,
 although only in words.
 Now that these words
 have been uttered,
 your land
 will by no means
 be safe!’

“Saying
 these words,
 she has been
 fighting battles
 of revenge.
 Just at this time,
 a boat bearing
 the boat’s emblems
 of Otasam-un-kur
 came shoreward.
 The evil woman
 is acting in this way
 not because of any
 mischief,
 any lewdness
 done by my younger elder brother.
 I implore you,
yaunkun nishpa,
 do not hold
 any grudge
 against us!”

These cries
 came dropping down

over me.
 At the mere
 hearing of it,
 a frenzied rage
 burst over me.
 For this reason
 I turned the boat
 toward the shore
 and moved shoreward.
 When I had come
 onto the crest of the billows,
 the billows out in the *offing*,
 I sprang up
 from inside the boat.
 Holding in my hands
 a silver club,
 I went flying up
 from inside the ship.
 I darted down
 onto the sandy beach.
 I walked on.
 The settlements of the *common people*,
 the populous settlements,
 were spread out,
 filling up
 all the lower cliff
 and filling up
 all the higher cliff.
 But
 in the midst of the settlement,
 the settlement on
 the lower cliff,
 large crowds of people
 were milling about

like swarming insects.
 In the middle of the crowds
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 was whirling about
 like a bird.
 Wherever she passed
 the corpses mowed down like grass
 lay stretched out in the distance.

Just then
 I dived head first
 into the midst of the crowds,
 the large crowds of people.
 I followed right after
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 as she whirled about.
 I ran right up
 next to
 Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 Just as she jumped,
 just as she flew,
 I slashed at the nape of her neck.
 On the nape of
 Poi-Soya-un-mat's neck
 the silver club
 struck home
 with a thud.
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 turned around
 like a fish thrashing about.
 I trailed immediately
 behind her.
 As I struck her
 with the silver club,

at the ends of my arms
 there were thudding noises,
 there were cracking noises.

After that
 I tied ropes
 around the legs
 of Poi-Soya-un-mat's
 mangled corpse.
 After that
 I tied her
 to my ankles
 and went down to the beach.
 The servants
 of Poi-Soya-un-mat
 were in
 their hut of matting.
 I beat them soundly
 and commanded them
 to move quickly
 and start for home.
 They went scattering
 all at once,
 got into their boat,
 and set sail.
 After that
 I went running
 to my own boat.
 Then
 I set out
 heading toward
 my native land.

After that

I sailed homeward.
 After a while
 I arrived
 exactly
 off the shore of
 the land of Poi-Soya.
 Just then
 I untied
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 whom I had tied
 to my ankles,
 and threw her
 into the boat
 of her servants.

After that
 I sailed on
 heading
 in the direction of
 my own stronghold.
 I finally
 headed toward
 my own harbor
 and came ashore.
 After that
 the servants
 went running about
 this way and that
 to unload the boat.
 In the meanwhile
 I came back
 into the stronghold
 and threw myself down
 on my bed.

I was overcome
 with feelings of rage.

“The evil deeds
 of the evil woman,
 the contemptible woman,
 have been
 altogether
 too excessive!”

Thinking this to myself,
 I was overcome
 with feelings of rage,
 and this was the way
 I continued to live
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 During this while,
 I carved on scabbards
 and carved on treasures,
 with my eyes focused
 on a single spot,
 and I continued to live
 on and on
 uneventfully.

II

Doing nothing but needlework,
 I remained with my eyes
 focused on a single spot,
 and this is the way I lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.

This is what
I thought to myself:

“I have heard that
the words of my parents,
the instructions they left behind
were that I should marry
my little elder brother
Otasam-un-kur,
and that we were to live together
as a well-matched couple,
as a well-matched pair.
But if I continue
to do as I am now,
will he not perhaps
take a dislike to me?”

Thinking this thought,
this is what
I began to do:
I had seen
a quiver with a sling attached
and a bow wound with cherry bark
which had been hanging
for a very long time
by the window.
Beginning
not long ago,
I began to imitate
a man's clothes
and a man's behavior.
Dressing myself
in men's clothes,
I would toss up

the quiver with the sling attached
onto my back,
and I would grasp
the bow wound with cherry bark
at the center of its handgrip.
Then, using as a staff
a short-hilted spear,
I would take along with me
men servants
six in number,
and we would go hunting in the mountains.
When anyone had caught fish,
I would beat them and take away the fish;
and when anyone had killed a deer,
I would beat them and take away the deer.
From those who were wealthy
I would take away
their hunting swords
together with their deer
as indemnity.
I had continued
to do these things
for a long time.

Then, one season,
I took along with me
men servants
six in number
and went hunting in the mountains.
We went on and on.
When we had come
to a certain place,
ahead of us there was
someone whom I couldn't recognize.

Was he a human,
 or was he a god?
 Nevertheless,
 I approached closer,
 and this is what
 I sensed:
 The force of presence of a chieftain,
 the force of presence of a warrior
 drove me
 backward.
 Until this time
 I had gone into the mountains
 and had seen
 any number of chieftains,
 but never before
 had I seen anyone
 who was as awe-inspiring
 as this.
 I thought to myself:

“Who ever may he be,
 what country may he be from,
 that he arouses
 such intense fear
 and apprehension in me?”

Nevertheless,
 I did not want
 to act as if
 I were cowardly,
 as if I were weak.
 For this reason,
 I sent my servants
 as messengers,

but he killed
 all of them,
 all six servants.
 Desire to avenge them
 sprang up in me.
 Therefore,
 I went stamping
 fiercely toward him.
 I stepped up
 close by his side.
 But even then
 I was quite unable
 to catch a glimpse
 of his human form.
 These are the words
 that I spoke:

“Are you a human?
 What is it that
 you may be?
 No matter
 that I may be
 a woman,
 I still surpass
 the male warriors.
 No matter who you may be,
 no matter what country you may be from,
 you are here
 massacring
 the chief ones of my kinsmen.
 I am one
 who loathes
 those who conceal
 their own identity.

The name
 of my native land
 is the land of Poi-Soya.
 I who am
 doing this here
 am Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the divine lady.
 You have committed
 unforgivable indignities
 in the mountains
 behind my native village,
 and this alone
 would enrage me.
 But you have also
 annihilated
 my kinsmen.
 Nevertheless,
 if you have
 a native land,
 state
 your native land.
 No matter
 that I may be
 a woman,
 I am a warrior
 who slashes down
 slow speakers
 before they start to speak.
 I am a warrior
 who slashes down
 fast speakers
 after they finish speaking.
 Come then,
 speak up!

Speak quickly!
 If you speak slowly,
 I will slash you down,
 I will kill you
 before you start to speak!’’

When I said this,
 he who had been
 thus far entirely
 deaf,
 sprung up suddenly
 from his skinning
 and stepped toward me.
 However,
 his chest
 was enveloped
 in twisting billows of mist,
 and because of that
 I was quite unable
 to catch a glimpse
 of his human form.
 From inside the mist,
 he took hold of
 the hair on my head,
 my magnificent locks of hair.
 After that,
 he knocked me against
 the slender fallen tree trunks
 and the stout fallen tree trunks
 on the mountain slopes,
 and my heart grew faint
 with the mortal agony of it.
 After a while,
 little by little,

I could feel him slashing me,
 and excruciating pains
 gripped my insides.
 At this time,
 whoever it was,
 a human
 or a god,
 spewed out toward me
 harsh words,
 biting words.
 This is what he said:

“Evil woman,
 contemptible woman,
 I came into the mountains
 after growing sick of hearing
 about your conduct,
 and now you are acting
 with brazen disrespect
 toward me by the words,
 the evil words,
 you uttered.
 Did you think
 that I have been
 lying in wait
 for you here
 in order to do you a good deed?
 Is this why you dared
 to commit
 such unforgivable
 indignities against me?”

While he said
 these words,

I felt him slashing me,
 I felt him tearing me,
 and excruciating pains
 gripped my insides.
 After a while,
 I lost all consciousness
 of what was happening.

After that,
 was I dead?
 was I asleep?
 my mind
 was clouded
 and dazed.
 After a while,
 I regained consciousness,
 and this was
 the state I was in:
 Never would I have
 thought that such a thing
 could have been done to me—
 I was tied
 with vines
 onto the trunk
 of a stout
 tree growing on the ground.
 At that point
 I regained
 my consciousness.

I was quite unable
 to move,
 and there were
 no signs of life

in me anywhere.
 Just then,
 my servants
 came walking up
 underneath me.
 They were whispering
 to each other,
 saying these words:

“This is why
 it is better
 for women
 to stay in the house
 and to amuse themselves
 with needlework
 or with women’s work.
 But what kind of
 behavior of a woman
 is this?
 The divine lady
 does nothing but
 imitate
 men’s occupations
 and men’s behavior.
 Since she has performed
 deeds punished by the gods,
 she has thus
 been punished
 so severely.”

The servants
 whispered these words
 to each other
 as they cut me loose

from my vines
 and let me down.
 They spoke these words:

“We also
 recall
 like a faint dream
 only that
 we were beaten
 with clubs.
 After that,
 were we asleep?
 were we dead?
 our minds
 were dazed.
 After a while,
 we awoke
 and found that
 we also
 had remained here
 overnight.
 However,
 we thought
 that we probably
 were alone.
 But all the time,
 it turned out,
 the divine lady
 was here,
 tied to
 the trunk
 of a tree.
 This is why
 we are now

untying her.”

They spoke these words.

After that,

I came home,

feeling as if

I were dead.

I came down

to my own house,

and after that

I continued

to nurse myself back to health

for a long time.

After some time,

finally

the scabs dropped off

my smaller wounds,

and scabs grew over

my larger wounds,

and I lived on

in this way.

After that,

I did nothing but needlework,

with my eyes focused

on a single point,

and this is the way

I lived

on and on

uneventfully.

As time went on,

my embroidery

had come to the point

of weighing down

the clothing racks in the back

and the clothing racks in the front.

After that,

this is what

I thought to myself:

“Though you went

hunting like a man

through the mountains,

a stranger

from an unknown land

struck you down

in this way.

It would be good

if you were to travel around

in order to trade

your best possessions,

your best embroidery.”

Thinking this,

I had the servants

take me in the boat.

Loading the boat full

of my best embroidery,

I set sail.

After that

I traveled around,

sailing to

many lands of the *repunkur*,

countless lands of the *repunkur*,

and traveling around

trading.

I traded profitably [and received]

many vessels
and many treasures.

In the meanwhile,
while I was traveling around,
there were some
who became infatuated
with my beauty
and my skill at needlework
and who proposed marriage to me.
This would
make me angry,
and I would fight battles
of revenge,
as I sailed about to
many lands of the *repunkur*,
countless lands of the *repunkur*.
This is the way
I continued to live on.

Then, one season,
I sailed to
the land of Repunshir.
In that place
there lived
the rulers of Repunshir,
two brothers
and one sister.
I came ashore
to their village.
At that time,
the elder one
of the rulers of Repunshir
stated his will

in this way:

“The divine lady
is extremely
beautiful
and skilled at needlework,
and we are infatuated
with her for this.
I wish to give
the divine lady
in marriage to
the god whom we are raising,
our divine nursling,
my younger brother.”¹³

Since this
made me angry,
I began
to fight battles
of revenge.
I was continuing
to mow down
all around me
many human corpses,
countless human corpses.
Just then,
something happened
which I would never have expected.
All of a sudden,
something came darting
like a spear which is thrown.
Immediately after this,
some sort of being,
I didn't know who,

¹³ Here the title *a-reshta kamui a-reshta pito* is applied to the younger brother of a chieftain of the *repunkur*.

began to pull mightily
on the hair on my head.
After that
I was beaten violently,
and my heart grew faint
with the mortal agony of it.

After that,
I felt him slashing me,
I felt him tearing me,
and my heart was faint
with the mortal agony of it.
After that,
he continued to beat me,
and I felt him striking me,
I felt him slashing me,
and excruciating pains
gripped my insides.

During this time,
even in my intense pain,
even though I was alarmed
and confused,
I still managed to open
my eyes a mere slit,
and saw that it was
none other than
Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
my own little brother,
who was beating me.

After that,
he continued to beat me until
I lost all consciousness

of what was happening.
Was I dead?
was I asleep?
my mind
was dazed.
After a while,
I regained consciousness
and looked around.
This was what I saw.

I was tied up
with leather thongs,
both my arms
and my legs.
I was trussed up
like little pebbles.¹⁴
Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
had tied
the end of the rope
to his ankles,
and I was
in his ship.
However,
I was quite unable
to move.

After that
we sailed on
in this way:
Whenever he would think of it,
he would grasp in his hand
the boat's scull
and would beat me

¹⁴ On Ainu looms for weaving mats, the warp strings are tied up with little pebbles.

using the scull
 as a club on me.
 Excruciating pains
 would grip my insides.
 As this was going on,
 we continued to sail on.
 Now finally
 the land of the *yaunkur*
 came looming up
 toward us
 as we sailed on.

After that
 we continued
 to sail on
 until finally
 we were sailing
 off the shore
 of the land of Poi-Soya.
 My servants
 had been sailing along
 in the boat alongside us.
 When we sailed
 by the shore
 of the land of Poi-Soya,
 my native land,
 Otasam-un-kur,
 my little elder brother,
 untied me
 from his ankles
 and threw me
 into the boat
 of my servants,
 into my own boat.

After that
 he turned his boat
 out to sea
 and went sailing
 in the direction of
 his native land,
 the land of Otasam.

My servants
 sailed me off
 in the opposite direction,
 and we came shoreward.
 While we were sailing homeward,
 I had not
 acted at all
 as if I were in pain
 because I was afraid
 that if Otasam-un-kur,
 my little elder brother,
 were to hear
 that I was in pain,
 he might punish me
 all the more intensely.
 However,
 now that my servants
 were sailing me
 and we were on the way home,
 I began to utter
 many loud moans
 one after another
 as I was sailing shoreward.
 Now finally
 we came ashore
 at my native landing place.

The servants
brought the boat ashore.
After that
the servants
took me
by my hands
and led me back
to my native stronghold.

After that
I continued to
nurse myself back to health
for a very long time
until, after great efforts,
I finally brought myself
to the point of recovery.
After that,
I continued to live
on and on
uneventfully.
After some time had gone by,
one season,
while I was
doing my needlework,
just then,
there was the sound of someone
coming this way in a hurry.
If it were a woman
it would sound differently.
It seemed to be a man,
for there was the sound of a swordguard
clinking
very loudly.
The clinking continued,

and he seemed to come walking on.
Then, without hesitation,
whoever it was
opened wide
the door hangings.
Before
he came in,
many flashes of light,
countless flashes of light
came streaming in.
Above the flashing lights
a human face
suddenly appeared.
When he entered,
I looked at him
and this is what I saw:
Though Otasam-un-kur
had never before
looked unattractive
or ugly,
he now came in
with his beauty
even more imposing
than before.
He stood
in the vestibule.
This is what he said:

“Listen well,
o Poi-Soya-un-mat,
my younger sister,
to what I have to say!
I have been traveling
in order to trade

with the Japanese,
and I am now sailing
on my way home
from there.

But I have stopped
on the way
because I desired
to leave with you
[some pieces] of silken cloth.
If you will come along with me,
I will give them
to you.”

So he spoke, but
I thought to myself:

“Let me finish
one needle stitch
before I get up.”

Thus, I did not
get up immediately.
Then
fierce rage
flashed forth
on his face.
He came stamping
fiercely toward me.
While he came,
he uttered these words:

“How long,
o evil woman,
o contemptible woman,

are you going to
commit these
unforgivable
indignities against me?”

As he spoke
these words,
he came stamping
fiercely toward me.
He pulled me mightily.
Once again—for when
had he ever
treated me nicely?—
he knocked me against
the upper rafters
and the lower rafters,
and excruciating pains
gripped my insides.
As time went on,
I felt him tearing me
more and more,
and excruciating pains
gripped my insides.
After a while
I lost all consciousness
of what was happening.

Was I dead?
was I asleep?
my mind
was dazed
and clouded.
When I opened
my eyes,

this is what I saw:
 I was on the floor,
 floating this way
 and floating that way
 in a pool of blood.
 At that point
 I regained
 consciousness.
 However,
 I was quite unable
 to move.
 After that
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

“What evil spirit
 could have bewitched me,
 that as a result
 all my life long
 I continue
 to be killed over and over,
 to be killed again and again
 in this way?”

Thinking this,
 I shed
 many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.
 In the meantime
 I continued to
 nurse myself back to health.
 After a while,
 with the utmost effort
 I finally

brought myself
 to the point of recovery.

After that, once again
 I continued to do
 nothing but needlework,
 and this is the way
 I lived on.
 After I had been
 doing my needlework
 for not a very long while,
 one time again
 there was the sound of someone
 coming this way in a hurry.
 Someone came inside.
 I looked at him,
 and this is what I saw:
 Otasam-un-kur,
 my little elder brother,
 came inside.
 He remained
 standing
 in the vestibule,
 and then he said this:

“Listen well,
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 to what I have to say!
 You were bewitched
 by some evil spirit,
 and as a result
 all your life long
 I have been punishing
 you in this way,

but I have not
 been doing this
 because I had
 any evil intentions.
 I have been doing it
 because I wanted,
 in this way,
 to cause your evil conduct
 to run its course.
 Nevertheless,
 I have not
 been doing this
 because I had
 any evil intentions.
 This being the case,
 please do not
 hold a grudge against me,
 do not harbor dislike for me!
 I have just gone
 to trade.
 I went
 to the land of the Japanese,
 and I am now
 on my way home
 from there,
 but I have come
 ashore here
 because I wanted
 to leave with you
 [some pieces of] silken cloth
 for you to embroider.
 Come along with me!"

When he spoke this,

this is what
 I thought to myself:

"The last time
 when he said this to me
 I took too long
 in getting up,
 and I was
 slain
 as a result!"

Thinking this,
 I got up
 before he had finished speaking.
 I stuck my needle
 through my needlework
 and put it aside.
 After that
 I girded myself
 with a single sedge stalk.

After that
 I followed
 close behind
 the exalted hero.
 I went down
 along the path,
 the path down to the beach.
 I looked out,
 and this is what I saw:
 A big boat decorated with carvings
 was
 in the harbor.
 A landing plank

had been
 thrown up
 onto the sandy beach.
 The exalted hero
 leaped up
 onto the plank.
 I followed
 close behind him
 and went
 inside the boat.
 When I looked around,
 this is what I saw:
 There were
 all sorts of trade goods
 filling up
 the inside.
 The exalted hero
 spoke these words:

“Those pieces of silken cloth over there—
 you may take
 any of them
 that you want.”

When he said this,
 I thought to myself:

“Which ones, indeed,
 ought I
 to take?”

While I was
 thinking this,
 just then,

that big boat
 seemed
 to move.
 Therefore,
 I looked around and saw
 that that big boat
 was being sailed
 out to sea
 by the servants.
 At that time
 I let out
 a loud shriek.
 Just then
 I was grabbed by the shoulders
 and was held down.
 I wondered
 who it was
 who was holding me down.
 I looked back
 over my shoulders.
 What I saw then
 was something
 that I never would have expected.
 A person I did not recognize,
 a total stranger
 was holding me by the shoulders.
 I screamed out
 loud and long.
 Then
 the one who was holding me
 spoke these words:

“Listen well,
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,

to what I have to say!
 I loathe
 those who conceal
 their own identity.
 The name
 of my native land
 is Moshirpa.
 The rulers of Moshirpa
 are two brothers,
 and they have
 two younger sisters.
 I am the younger one
 of the two brothers.
 I set sail
 to go trading.
 Afterward
 I was going home
 from trading,
 but this is what
 I thought to myself:
 I have been hearing
 all the time
 that Poi-Soya-un-mat
 is so beautiful
 that rumors have
 arisen about her among the gods.
 Then, beginning not long ago,
 this is what
 I started to hear:
 Even though
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the divine lady,
 has done nothing
 to deserve punishment,

she has continued
 to be killed over and over,
 to be killed again and again
 by Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero.
 When I heard this,
 desire to avenge her
 sprang up in me.
 For this reason,
 as I was coming home
 from trading,
 I decided to pretend
 to be Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 and to go ashore
 and bring you with me.
 Then I would
 take you with me
 to the land of Moshirpa,
 and we would marry each other.
 For what, indeed,
 is Otasam-un-kur
 punishing you
 that he
 kills you over and over,
 troubling
 your youthful heart?
 Rather than this,
 if you were to marry me,
 it would be
 exactly as if
 you had stepped
 inside
 an impregnable stronghold.¹⁵

¹⁵ Literally, a stronghold on a cliff.

Please agree
to my well-meaning request!"

The young boy
spoke these words.
After that
I continued to
scratch at
the face of
the evil wretch
as we sailed on,
but I did not act at all
as if I were angry
at what I had heard.
After that
he instructed me
with many pieces of good advice
as we sailed on.
Then, when we came
to a certain place,
it appeared that
we had come
off the shore of
the place known as
the land of Moshirpa.
They sailed shoreward,
heading toward
the harbor entrance.
They pulled
that big boat
up onto the sandy beach.

After that
the servants

jumped out
and started to unload the cargo,
throwing down
the shorter carrying slings
and racing each other to get
the longer carrying slings.
They worked busily together
to unload the cargo.
In the meantime,
the evil wretch
picked me up
like a baby.
Carrying me,
he went
climbing up
along the path.
As we went along,
I looked out
ahead of me,
and this is
what I saw:
A populous village
stood there.
filling up the entire
lower cliff.
In the center of the village
a divinely made stronghold
could be seen standing
majestically.
I continued to look at this
as we went on.
The evil wretch
made his way
up beside the village,

the village which was
 on the lower cliff.
 He went inside
 the divinely made stronghold
 which I had seen
 standing
 in the center of the village.

He walked along the floor
 on the left-hand side of the fireplace
 and sat down
 at the head of the fireplace.
 I looked and saw
 a young woman
 of amazing beauty.
 I did not know
 that there could be
 such a beautiful young woman.
 The brightness of her face
 was like the rising sun,
 sending out
 dazzling rays of light.
 Not only was she beautiful,
 but in addition to her beauty,
 it was amazing
 how skillful she was [at needlework].
 Many rays of light,
 countless rays of light
 streamed out
 from between the stitches
 of her embroidered garments,
 her magnificent embroidered robes.
 The glittering light sent out
 by the young woman,

and the brightness of her embroidered robes
 brightened
 the inside of the house
 like brilliant sunlight.
 The woman
 was awe-inspiring
 for her beauty
 and her skill at needlework.

In the meanwhile
 the evil wretch
 still continued
 to hold me like a baby,
 to hold me like a child.
 Then
 the young woman
 spoke these words:

“Listen carefully,
 my little elder brother,
 to what I have to say!
 It would be much better
 for us women among ourselves
 to reach an agreement.
 I will speak to
 the divine lady
 and calm her down.
 My little elder brother,
 please leave
 the divine lady
 in my charge!”

The young woman
 spoke these words.

Only then
 did the evil wretch
 release me.
 After that
 the young woman
 took me by the hand.
 At that time
 I got up quickly
 and threw myself down
 in the back corner of the house
 on the left-hand side of the fireplace.

After that
 I remained lying in bed
 all the time.
 During this while,
 whenever the young woman
 would go to bed,
 she would always
 sleep on top of
 my sleeves
 on the side away from the fireplace,
 and this is the way
 we lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.

Then, during this while,
 the village chieftain¹⁶
 sent a message
 from the village,
 the village which was
 on the upper cliff.
 This was the message:

“What strange conduct is this?
 I detest
 the things that you have done,
 my evil younger brother.
 It is not as if
 Otasam-un-kur
 were a stranger.¹⁷
 I have heard
 it said that
 Otasam-un-kur
 has been angered
 all his life,
 his whole life long,
 on account of
 the evil woman
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 and I have felt
 sympathy for him.
 But [your conduct]—
 if even a stranger
 were to do such a thing to me
 I would be terribly angry.
 For what reason
 have you stolen away
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 and brought her here?
 Rather than this,
 act quickly
 before
 Otasam-un-kur
 comes here.
 Bring out
 your best possessions¹⁸
 and give them up together with

¹⁶ The elder one of the two brothers who are the chieftains of Moshirpa (Moshirpa-un-kur). He lives on the upper cliff, and the younger brother (the one who has stolen away Poi-Soya-un-mat) lives on the lower cliff.

¹⁷ Otasam-un-kur is stated to be a relative of the chieftains of Moshirpa, but their relationship is not specified. Later on, the elder brother calls Otasam-un-kur “my younger brother.”

¹⁸ As indemnities to pay for the wrong done.

Poi-Soya-un-mat!’

This message
came down.
Nevertheless,
the evil wretch
whispered
these words
to himself:

“Sooner
or later
if Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
should come here,
I will make
my amends
with vessels
and with treasures.’”

These words
he whispered
to himself,
and this is the way
we lived
on and on.

Then, one day
the outdoor servants
came bustling inside,
and the indoor servants
went bustling outside.
They whispered
these words

to each other:

“A boat bearing
the boat’s emblem
of Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
is coming shoreward!’”

These words
the servants
whispered
to each other.
Just then,
there was the sound of someone
coming this way in a hurry.
Without hesitation
he stepped
inside the entrance porch.
He opened wide
the door hangings
and tossed them up
over his shoulders.
A human face
suddenly appeared
over the vestibule.
He was scarcely able
to remain standing
in the vestibule.
His eyes
stood there
beside each other
like little stars.
He came stamping
fiercely along

the left-hand side of the fireplace.
 From up very high
 there was a clanking sound
 as he drew his sword.
 He darted
 a fierce sword thrust at me.
 When he did this,
 the young woman
 seized me
 and held me,
 while uttering
 these words:

“It was the fault of
 my evil elder brother,
 it was he
 who did evil,
 and it would [not] be bad for the land
 if he were slain.
 But the divine lady
 was brought here
 by my evil elder brother,
 and ever since she came here
 I have watched over her,
 and my evil elder brother
 has not even
 come near her.
 Do not do this—
 do not slay her,
 do not kill
 the divine lady!”

Thus spoke
 the young woman.

The young woman,
 holding me,
 went flying up
 to the smokehole.
 The young woman
 went dashing
 behind the grassy downs,
 the upper grassy downs by the beach,
 and she hid me there.

After that,
 after we had left
 fierce fighting
 broke out on all sides.
 As I listened
 to the sounds of fighting,
 on the pathway
 in front of the stronghold,
 the divinely built stronghold
 which I had seen
 standing
 in the center of the village,
 the village which was
 on the upper cliff,
 someone or other
 pronounced an oration,
 which rang out loud and clear
 like the voice of a cuckoo.
 This is what he said:

“Greetings to you,
 Otasam-un-kur,
 o exalted hero,
 my younger brother!

Listen well
 to what I have to say!
 Never in the world
 would I have expected
 my evil younger brother
 to do such a deed,
 but he became infatuated
 with the beauty
 of Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 stole her away,
 and brought her here.
 I did not
 know anything
 about this at all.
 My younger brother—
 if he
 were to be slain,
 it would not be
 bad for the land,
 bad for the country.
 You seem
 to be about
 to kill me,
 to slay me
 as well.
 Do not do this!
 I will,
 together with my kinsfolk,
 make my amends
 with vessels,
 with treasures!"

This oration
 came flowing

from the lips
 of whoever it was,
 and I remained there
 listening to it.
 The two of us —
 the young woman,
 Moshirpa-un-mat, and I—
 remained there
 hiding.

III

All her life long,
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the evil maiden,
 had exalted herself
 and behaved with
 outrageous arrogance,
 and this alone
 continued to
 arouse my anger.
 But all the time
 I was unaware that
 the younger of the brothers
 ruling Moshirpa
 had conceived a lewd passion,
 a lascivious passion for
 Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 I became angry
 [when I learned of] that.
 Then on one occasion,
 I decided that
 I wanted to go to visit
 the younger of the brothers

ruling Moshirpa.
 At that time
 my foster sister
 spoke these words:

“Look here,
 o god whom I have raised,
 o my divine nursling,
 listen well to
 what I have to say!
 The chieftains of Moshirpa,
 the two brothers
 and two sisters,
 are by no means
 strangers to us,¹⁹
 and it is hardly possible
 that they should
 become infatuated
 with Poi-Soya-un-mat
 for her beauty
 and her skill at needlework,
 that they should ever
 conceive a lewd passion,
 a lascivious passion
 for Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 Nevertheless,
 one who is a chieftain,
 one who is a warrior
 ought to walk
 in peaceful ways.
 O god whom I have raised,
 o my divine nursling
 do not hold a grudge,
 do not harbor dislike for them!”

My foster sister
 spoke these words.
 After that
 I stood up.
 I attired
 myself in
 magnificent robes,
 majestic robes.
 My metal buckled belt
 I wrapped around my waist
 in a single wrapping.
 I placed on my head
 my delicately fashioned helmet.
 My god-given sword
 I thrust down into its sheath
 as far as the swordguard.

After that
 I strode
 toward the door
 and stepped
 outside.
 I walked
 down
 along the road,
 the road going down to the beach.
 I came down
 by the beach.
 I brought down
 a small boat
 and cast it out
 on the sea.

Just then,

¹⁹ “They are our relatives.” We are never told how they are related.

as I was doing this,
 my foster sister
 also came down.
 She leaped
 into the boat,
 and I jumped into the boat.
 After that
 my foster sister
 grasped in her hands
 the pretty oar
 and rowed the boat.
 This is how she rowed:
 It was incredible
 for what reason
 my foster sister
 was rowing the boat
 so very powerfully!
 The little boat
 glided along
 over the waves.

After that
 we sailed along
 over the sea.
 Then a very populous land,
 which surely was
 the land of Moshirpa,
 came into view.
 A populous village
 could be seen spread out
 filling up the entire area
 on top of the lower cliff.
 In the center of the village
 a divinely built stronghold

could be seen standing
 majestically.
 A populous village
 could be seen spread out
 filling up the entire area
 on top of the upper cliff.
 In the center of the village
 a divinely built stronghold
 could be seen standing
 majestically.
 It was amazing
 how they could possibly
 have so many people,
 so many kinsfolk.
 As I looked at this,
 we came shoreward.
 We came ashore,
 and the little boat
 darted up
 onto the sandy beach.

After that
 I jumped
 out of the boat
 and went onto the land.
 I went stamping
 fiercely along
 toward the village,
 the village which was
 on the lower cliff.
 As I went on,
 in the center of the village
 the divinely built stronghold
 could be seen standing

majestically.
 Without hesitation
 I stepped
 inside the stockade.
 The entire area inside the stockade
 was filled by
 a big house
 which stood there
 majestically.

I headed toward
 the entrance door.
 I pulled
 the door hangings
 right up to the threads
 and sent them flying
 like a cast javelin.
 I dashed
 half-way
 into the vestibule.
 I was scarcely able
 to remain standing
 in the vestibule.
 I cast my glance out
 in front of me.
 When I looked,
 this is what I saw:
 One who seemed to be
 the younger of the brothers
 ruling Moshirpa
 was sitting
 at the head of the fireplace.
 He was awe-inspiring
 in his beauty.

In the back corner of the house
 on the left-hand side of the fireplace
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the evil woman,
 was lying in bed.
 In front of her,
 a young woman
 who seemed to be
 Moshirpa-un-mat
 was sitting.
 She was awe-inspiring
 in her beauty
 and her skill at needlework.

I went stamping
 fiercely toward
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the evil woman.
 There was a flash of light
 under my arms,²⁰
 and like an arching rainbow
 my fierce sword sweep
 darted down
 over
 Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 Though my thrust was swift,
 the young woman
 Moshirpa-un-mat
 seized her
 away from the tip of my blade
 and held her.
 She dashed up
 onto the ceiling beams.
 I swung at her and missed

²⁰ I unsheathed my sword with a sudden flash of light.

on the ceiling beams.
 She dashed up
 onto the rafters.
 I swung at her and missed
 on the rafters.
 It was incredible
 how very quick
 in fleeing was
 the young woman
 Moshirpa-un-mat.
 She went flying up
 to the smokehole.

After that
 I whirled around
 and darted
 a fierce sword thrust
 at Moshirpa-un-kur.
 When I did this,
 just as Moshirpa-un-kur
 was getting up,
 I sliced him
 into several pieces.
 His life-spirit²¹
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.

After that
 no enemies to slay
 still remained.
 Then
 I threw into a tumult
 the settlement of the common people.²²
 Within the settlement

some fled holding
 their children by the hand,
 and some holding their women by the hand.
 Throngs of fleeing people
 surged along one after the other.
 After that,
 fierce shrieks of terror
 followed in my wake.

As this was going on,
 from the stronghold,
 the divinely built stronghold
 which I had seen
 standing
 in the center of the village,
 the village which was
 on the upper cliff,
 someone—I couldn't tell
 exactly who it was—
 brought out indemnities.²³
 He was doing a war dance²⁴
 beside the indemnities.
 While he danced,
 his voice rang out loud and clear
 like the voice of a cuckoo.
 He pronounced an oration,
 in which he uttered
 these words:

“Greetings to you,
 Otasam-un-kur,
 my younger brother!
 Listen well to
 what I have to say!

²¹ *Inotu orke*, the soul or spirit, especially that which departs from the body at death. Also called *kamui inotu* (“divine life-spirit”). The word *inotu* is derived from the old Japanese word for “life” from which the contemporary Japanese word *inochi* is also derived. Departing life-spirits would fly off with an audible rumbling. Those spirits destined to be restored to life would become “living spirits” and would rumble off toward the east. The “utterly dead” spirits would rumble off toward the west.

²² *Usekur kotan*. The ordinary rank-and-file members of the community who did not belong to the chiefly stratum were known as *usekur* or *wenkur*.

²³ Treasures brought out and lined up as payment for the wrong done.

²⁴ *Horipi*, a stamping dance performed during battle.

I am
 by no means
 a stranger to you.
 But on account of
 the evil deeds
 of my evil younger brother,
 the miserable wretch,
 Otasam-un-kur,
 my younger brother
 has become angry.
 By no means
 do I disapprove of it.
 The evil woman
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 has exalted herself
 and behaved with
 outrageous arrogance,
 and has committed
 unforgivable indignities
 against the exalted hero,
 Otasam-un-kur.
 This alone would
 arouse my anger,
 but now my evil younger brother
 has conceived a lewd passion,
 a lascivious passion for
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 and he is now
 being punished
 in this way for it.
 Although I told
 my evil younger brother
 to give back
 Poi-Soya-un-mat

together with
 his best possessions,
 he continued
 to do nothing about it.
 In the meantime,
 the exalted hero
 Otasam-un-kur
 has come here.
 Since his deeds were evil,
 I do not regret it
 in the least
 if he is slain,
 if he is killed.
 I wish to
 make amends
 with vessels,
 with treasures,
 and this is why
 I have brought out
 these indemnities.
 O exalted hero
 Otasam-un-kur,
 please accept
 my well-meaning request!"

The oration pronounced
 by this person, whoever he was,
 came ringing out loud and clear
 like the voice of a cuckoo.
 While I was listening
 to his voice,
 I had fought to a point
 half-way through the village,
 the village which was

on the lower cliff.
 Just then,
 all of a sudden,
 someone grabbed me by the shoulders
 from behind.
 I wondered
 what was the matter
 and looked back
 over my shoulder.
 Then I saw
 that it was
 my foster sister
 who had grabbed me by the shoulders
 and was holding me.
 While she did this,
 she uttered these words:

“O god whom I have raised,
 o my divine nursling,
 look at what
 you are doing,
 in spite of
 what I told you!
 One who is a chieftain,
 one who is a warrior
 ought to walk
 in peaceful ways.
 But the younger brother
 of the chieftains of Moshirpa
 followed after
 the evil ways,
 the evil heart
 of the evil woman.
 Since his deeds were evil,

he has now
 been slain
 as a result,
 but on the other hand
 the common people
 could not
 possibly
 have known anything about it.
 Now here
 the corpses
 of the common people
 are being strewn about
 on account of
 the evil ways
 of the evil woman
 Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 Calm yourself,
 I pray you,
 o god whom I have raised,
 o my divine nursling!”

Saying these words,
 my foster sister
 grabbed me by the shoulders
 and held me—it was she
 whom I had felt doing this.
 Only at this point
 did I come
 to my senses.

After that
 Moshirpa-un-kur
 loaded his indemnities
 onto my boat.

After that
 I cast
 the little boat
 out onto the face of the sea.
 After that,
 I still continued
 to be overcome
 with feelings of anger,
 as my foster sister
 bent the pretty oar
 this way in the water
 and that way in the water.
 We continued to sail
 heading
 in the direction
 of our native land.
 Then we arrived home
 at our native stronghold.

After that,
 I would be overcome
 with feelings of anger
 whenever I would think
 of how the evil woman,
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 had committed
 unforgivable
 indignities against me,
 and this is the way
 I lived on.
 I did nothing but
 carve on scabbards,
 carve on treasures,
 with my eyes focused

on a single spot,
 and this is the way
 I lived
 on and on
 uneventfully.
 As time went on,
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

Long ago,
 when I was traveling
 about trading,
 I once went
 trading
 to the place of
 Retarpira-un-kur.²⁵
 When I was there,
 Retarpira-un-kur
 had a younger sister,
 who was an ugly woman,
 an unattractive woman.
 So exceedingly
 angry was I
 at Poi-Soya-un-mat
 that I had asked for the hand
 of Retarpira-un-mat,
 the ugly woman,
 and had then come home.
 For this reason,
 since I was
 so exceedingly
 angry at
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 I decided that

²⁵ The inhabitant, or chieftain, of Retarpira ("White Cliff"). His younger sister is called Retarpira-un-mat.

I wanted to go to woo
 the younger sister
 of Retarpira-un-kur,
 even though she was
 an ugly woman,
 an unattractive woman.

For this reason,
 I made my preparations
 to go there.
 In the meantime,
 I heard
 these rumors:

Moshirpa-un-mat
 was traveling about
 together with
 Poi-Soya-un-mat.
 They were staying
 at the homes of servants,²⁶
 at the homes of low-ranking persons.²⁷

I kept hearing
 these rumors.
 Wishing to go
 to the place of
 Retarpira-un-kur,
 I went outside.
 Then my younger sister
 spoke these words:

“I would be worried about
 my little elder brother
 if he were to go

all alone.
 I will go along
 together with
 my little elder brother.’’

Saying this,
 she wrapped a carrying sling
 around a little woman’s bag
 and tossed it up
 onto her back.
 She followed closely
 behind me.
 We stepped
 outside.

After that
 we walked
 down
 along the road,
 the road down to the beach.
 We came down
 by the beach.
 After that,
 I put out
 the big boat decorated with carvings
 onto the face of the sea.

After that
 the two of us—
 my younger sister and I—
 went sailing along
 heading
 toward the land,
 the land of Retarpira.

²⁶ *Usshiu*, “servant,” “slave.”

²⁷ *Wenkur*, “low-ranking person,” “poor person.” Sometimes used synonymously with *usekur*, “commoner.” The two women are not given lodging in the homes of the chieftains but are forced to lodge with the lower strata of society.

When we had come
to a certain place,
we went sailing along
next to a cliff,
a cliff jutting up above the water.
As we went by,
this is what I heard:
The eddying waters around the oar
bubbled noisily
and churned noisily,
and this is what
I seemed to hear them say:

“How pitiful it is
for Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
that his luck²⁸
should always
be withdrawn!”

These words
I seemed to hear
in the eddying waters around the oar
as they bubbled noisily
and churned noisily.
After that
the god ruling
the cliff
said these things:

“What strange words are these?
I detest
the lies spoken
by the eddying waters around the oar.

Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
has luck
stronger
than anyone’s.
The eddying waters around the oar
are lying!”

The god ruling
the cliff
said this.
This is what
I thought to myself:

“Which god,
I wonder,
is telling the truth?”

Thinking this,
I sailed on.
After that
I sailed on
and came to
the land of Retarpira.
I brought the ship ashore
in the harbor.
After that
I went
to the place of
Retarpira-un-kur.
The two of us—
my younger sister and I—
both went inside.
I sat down

²⁸ *Sermak orke*, supernatural protection. Any type of being or object which hovers behind a person and provides protection is known as *sermak* (the word literally means “behind”).

at the guest's place on the left-hand side of the
fireplace.

When I looked, I saw that
wine had been prepared,
and a drinking feast
was just about to begin.

Retarpira-un-kur
was an acquaintance
of mine.

He rejoiced to see me
and said these words:

“So exceedingly
lonely was I that
I decided
to brew
a little wine
to amuse myself.
That is why
I was just
brewing
a little wine
when Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
arrived!”

Saying these words,
he rejoiced
to see me.
A big wine-tub,
filled brimful
with wine,
was standing
on the floor at the head of the fireplace.

At that time
Retarpira-un-kur
got up and,
leading me by the hand
with much ceremony,
seated me
at the big wine-tub.
Retarpira-un-kur
sat down facing me.

After that
the guests at the noble drinking feast
were all seated in order,
from the head of the festal mats
to the foot of the festal mats.

The elder one
of the younger sisters
of Retarpira-un-kur²⁹
wound her way about
among the guests
to pour the wine to them.

At that time
the froth on the wine
churned noisily
and bubbled noisily,
and this is what
I thought I heard it say:

“How pitiful it is
for Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
that his luck
should be withdrawn
always!”

²⁹ He had two younger sisters; the one whom the hero Otasam-un-kur intended to marry was not at the drinking feast.

These words
 I seemed to hear
 in the froth on the wine
 as it churned noisily
 and bubbled noisily.
 At that time
 the god ruling
 the area below the rafters
 spoke these words:

“What strange words are these?
 I detest
 the lies spoken by
 the froth on the wine.
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 has luck
 stronger
 than anyone’s.
 The froth on the wine
 is lying!”

These words
 I heard
 spoken by
 the god ruling
 the area below the rafters.
 This is what
 I thought to myself:

“Which god,
 I wonder,
 is lying?
 Which god,

I wonder,
 is telling the truth?”

I thought this
 as I drank at the feast.
 As time went on,
 the drinking feast
 was half-way over,
 and I stepped outside
 because I wanted
 to relieve myself.
 When I stepped outside
 to relieve myself
 and was standing there,
 I looked and saw that
 on the right-hand side of the stronghold
 a pretty little house³⁰
 was standing
 majestically.
 The pretty little house
 stood there,
 its walls bound
 firmly in place,
 and its roof darting
 up gracefully.
 My heart
 was drawn
 toward it.
 Therefore,
 I walked up
 outside the house.
 I stepped
 inside the entrance porch.
 Just then,

³⁰ A house where an unmarried daughter was living alone. This is the house of the youngest sister of Retarpira-un-kur, whom the hero intends to marry.

inside the house
these words were spoken:

“O Retarpira-un-mat,
o divine lady,
listen well
to what I have to say!
I loathe
those who conceal
their own identity.
The name
of my homeland
is Kunnepet.³¹
There are two brothers
who are chieftains of Kunnepet,³²
and there is
one younger sister.
I am
the elder brother.
As I was listening
to distant rumors,
I heard that
you were to be married
to Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero.
Though I heard
these rumors,
I was infatuated
with you
on account of
the many rumors,
the countless rumors
which had risen up
about your excessive

beauty
and your skill at needlework.
This is what
I really did:
I pretended to be
Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
and I have been
coming to your place
until now
telling you
that I am
Otasam-un-kur.
I have been
lying to you
until now.
But now
it seems as if
Otasam-un-kur,
the exalted hero,
has finally
come here
to woo you.
For this reason,
I thought that,
if I did not come here
tonight
I would lose you.
This is why
I have come.
I ask you to
agree to
my well-meaning request.
If you agree,

³¹ “Black River”

³² Kunnepet-un-kur

I will steal you away
 tonight
 and will take you
 to my native land,
 to my stronghold.
 Since the *repunkur*
 are a very numerous people,
 even if Otasam-un-kur
 were to come
 in pursuit of you,
 he would not
 require more than
 a single sword stroke [to kill].
 If you marry me,
 we will live together
 as a well-matched couple,
 as a well-suited pair.”

When he said this,
 Retarpira-un-mat,
 as if something evil
 had been uttered,
 poured out
 many words of abuse,
 countless words of abuse.
 She spoke these words:

“What strange words are these
 spoken by a stranger
 from an unknown land?
 Your words
 are evil words,
 and you have behaved
 disrespectfully

behind my betrothed’s back,
 in my betrothed’s absence!
 I was
 keeping myself unsullied,
 keeping myself unblemished
 for Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 in his absence,
 And to think
 that all the time,
 you, evil wretch,
 were deceiving me
 vilely and basely
 until now,
 and that you
 lay with me like dogs,
 you did wicked things with me!”

As the evil woman
 was speaking
 these words,
 I opened the door.
 I was overcome
 with feelings of anger,
 and this is what I thought:

“It was, to begin with,
 on account of
 the evil deeds of
 Poi-Soya-un-mat
 that I asked for the hand
 of Retarpira-un-mat,
 even though she is
 an ugly woman,

an unattractive woman.
 O why is it
 that these evil women
 are constantly
 committing
 such unforgivable
 indignities against me?"

Thinking this,
 I was overcome
 with feelings of anger.
 I suddenly burst inside.
 When I looked around, I saw
 on the right-hand side of the fireplace
 a silken chamber³³
 standing there
 majestically.
 At that time
 I went stamping
 fiercely along
 in the direction of
 the silken chamber.
 I grasped in my hands
 the top of the chamber,
 the silken chamber,
 and pulled it mightily.
 I threw it out
 into the vestibule.
 After it was gone,
 I pulled mightily
 at the hair growing on the head
 of the evil woman
 and of Kunnepet-un-kur.
 After that

I knocked them against
 the upper ceiling beams
 and the lower ceiling beams,
 and at the ends of my arms
 there were thudding noises
 and cracking noises.

After a while
 the woman,
 Retarpira-un-mat,
 I tied to
 one of the poles
 on the right-hand side of the fireplace.
 Kunnepet-un-kur
 I tied to
 one of the poles
 on the left-hand side of the fireplace.
 After that
 I tied up
 the door
 and the windows
 with leather thongs.
 After that
 I set fire to
 the upper thatch layers
 and the lower thatch layers [on the ceiling]
 of that little house.
 That little house
 went up in flames
 with a deafening roar.

In the meantime,
 under the sacred window
 I unfastened

³³ *Sarampe tumpu*, a chamber partitioned off with silken curtains. No doubt something like a bed with a silken canopy around it is meant.

my belt
 and threw myself down
 under the window.
 I buried my head
 in the collar of a robe,
 a metal robe,³⁴
 a robe adorned with bells,
 and I buried my feet
 in the hem of the robe.
 Just then,
 that little house
 was going up in flames
 with a deafening roar.
 At that time,
 Retarpira-un-mat
 shrieked out a loud wailing.
 As she shrieked,
 she cried out
 these words:

“O my elder brother,
 listen to
 what I have to say!
 All the time
 Kunnepet-un-kur,
 the evil wretch,
 has been deceiving me
 vilely and basely.
 Until now
 he told me
 that he was
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 and he lay with me like dogs,

and did wicked things with me!
 It is only natural,
 since I did
 deeds punished by the gods,
 that I should
 be found out.
 But since
 my actions were evil,
 my deeds were evil,
 it will not be
 bad for the land,
 bad for the country
 should I die.
 But Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 seems to be
 about to commit
 suicide!
 O please
 save his life!”

These words
 Retarpira-un-mat
 cried out
 as she shrieked.
 Now by this time
 the robe adorned with bells,
 the metal robe
 had grown hot.
 I could feel it sink
 down into my body,
 and excruciating pains
 gripped my insides.

³⁴ *Kane kosonte*, literally “metal robe.” Usually “metal robe” means simply “magnificent robe,” but here it seems to be some sort of metallic garment.

During this time
 I could hear
 my younger sister
 running
 around the house
 screaming out
 "Brother dear!"
 This is the last thing
 I recall
 as if a faint dream.
 After that,
 was I dead?
 was I asleep?
 my mind
 was clouded
 and dazed.

IV

My elder brother
 Kunnepet-un-kur
 raised me,
 and we lived
 together with
 our younger brother.
 After a certain time,
 this is how
 my elder brother
 began to behave:
 He would go out
 and would be gone,
 and he would not return
 for much too long a time.
 Then after a while

he would come back.
 He continued to do this
 as we lived on.
 Then one season,
 he stepped
 outside
 and after that
 he was gone.

One day,
 tidings of calamity
 could be heard coming,
 echoing resonantly,
 moving in the direction
 of the beach.
 After a while
 it sounded as if it had come
 as far as the boat landing.
 Therefore,
 I went out to find out
 where the tidings had come from.
 It was a servant
 bearing a message.
 This is what he said:

"Greetings,
 Kunnepet-un-mat,
 o divine lady,
 it is to you
 that I have come
 to bear the tidings.
 This is the message
 that I bear:
 Kunnepet-un-kur

pretended to be
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 and lay like dogs with
 Retarpira-un-mat.
 As a result
 of this,
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
set fire to the house
 and burned up
 all three of them together—
 himself as well as
 Kunnepet-un-kur
 and Retarpira-un-mat.
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 has died
 by his own hand,
 and his death has been
 an evil one.
 If Kunnepet-un-kur
 and Retarpira-un-mat
 were to die,
 it would not be
 bad for the land,
 bad for the country.
 But if Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero
 were to die,
 it would be
 bad for the land,
 bad for the country.
 It was because

of the evil ways
 of Kunnepet-un-kur
 that Otasam-un-kur
 died an evil death
 by his own hand.
 For this reason,
 Kunnepet-un-mat,
 o divine lady,
 if you are unable
 to restore
 Otasam-un-kur
 to life,
 a war of annihilation,
 a war of extirpation
 will be launched against
 the land of Kunnepet.
 These are the tidings
 that I have come
 to bring!”

Thus spoke
 the servant.
 After that
 I turned around
 and went back.
 I went inside
 the stronghold.
 I ran to the back of the house.
 I brought out
 my woman's treasure bag.
 I thrust my hand
 down to the bottom of the bag.
 I brought out
 a silken hood,³⁵

³⁵ A shamaness's hood.

and arranged my hair
 up high with it.
 I put into the front of my robes
 a little shamaness's wand.³⁶
 After that
 I fastened the little robes
 of my younger brother
 under his girdle.
 I spoke to him,
 saying these words:

“Once a man
 has grown this old,
 tidings of battle
 will surely
 come to him.
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 has died
 an evil death,
 they say,
 because of the evil deeds
 of our evil elder brother.
 I have no idea
 what I am to do
 to restore him to life
 as I have been bidden.
 This being the case,
 o god whom I have raised,
 o my younger brother,
 one who is a man
 must act bravely!
 He must never
 act fearfully

or act weakly!”

With these words
 I heartened
 the spirits of
 my younger brother.
 After that
 I held him
 by his little hand
 and set out.
 I came ashore at
 the land of Retarpira.

It was amazing
 how many kinsmen,
 how many relatives
 had Retarpira-un-kur.
 The crowds of people
 were so thick that
 the ground under the people
 looked black.

Just east of the stronghold,
 the stronghold of
 Retarpira-un-kur,
 was a spirit fence,
 and the charred bones
 of what must have been
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 were there
 on the spirit fence.
 After that,
 beginning from

³⁶ *Tusu pon repni*. The shamaness's wand (*tusu repni*) was probably derived from a drumstick, although drums were not used in Hokkaido.

a distance away,
 I began to imitate
 a man's speech
 and a man's behavior.
 I was holding
 my younger brother
 by his little hand,
 and my little brother's
 forehead
 was shaking and quivering [with fear].
 In this way
 I made my way
 through the thick of
 the large crowds.
 I went on
 and came up
 to the spirit fence.
 On the charred bones
 of Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 faintly, very faintly,
 one could make out
 the outlines of his corpse.³⁷

Then
 I sat down
 by the side of
 the charred bones
 of Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero.
 After that
 I took out
 my little shamaness's wand.
 I twisted my voice

into subtle melodies of a song
 deep within my throat.
 I blew
 many mighty puffs of breath,
 countless mighty puffs of breath
 onto what was
 nothing but charred bones.
 With a magnificent fan³⁸
 I fanned
 onto what was
 nothing but charred bones.
 Both night
 and day
 went by, and
 little by little
 on those charred bones,
 the charred bones of
 Otasam-un-kur,
 the exalted hero,
 the flesh
 went growing back,
 flesh formed itself again.

As I continued my work,
 I had by now
 restored him
 to his previous form,
 to his old form.
 By this time
 he looked like
 a man who had died yesterday.
 I continued my work,
 and now finally
 he looked like

³⁷ The translation of this passage is uncertain. Apparently it means that the bones still bore some resemblance to a human corpse.

³⁸ *Kane awanki*, literally "metal fan."

a man who had died today.

After that

I blew

many mighty puffs of breath,
countless mighty puffs of breath,
while fanning constantly
with my magnificent fan.

After a while

now finally
from time to time
there were heart beats
in his chest.

After a while,
after great efforts,
the exalted hero
finally opened his eyes
right at my face.

However,

he continued to revive
and die many times.

Then, after great efforts,

I finally
brought him to the point
of coming back to life,
of reviving.

He sat up
amidst the spirit fence.

After that

I went off

a short distance away
and stood there,
holding the hand
of my younger brother.

V

I recalled
like a faint dream
that I had died.

After that,
was I dead?
was I asleep?
my mind
was clouded
and dazed.

After a while
it seemed to me
that I was in the midst
of some sort of voices,
some sort of noises,
and just then
I tried
to rouse myself,
but I couldn't manage it.

After a while,
at the cost of great efforts,
I finally opened my eyes.

There was then
a woman
of unheard-of beauty,
a young woman
I had never seen before.
The brightness of her face
was like the rising sun,
sending out
dazzling rays of light.

Was there ever
such a [majestic] young woman?

I opened my eyes upon her.
 Nevertheless,
 I continued to revive
 and die many times.
 Then, after great efforts,
 she finally brought me to the point
 of coming back to life,
 of reviving.
 She had restored me
 to my previous form,
 to my old form.
 After that
 I stood up
 amidst the spirit fence.
 When I looked around,
 it seemed
 as if
 I had been dead
 for a short time.
 A whole crowd
 of my kinsfolk
 had come
 to help me.
 My elder sister
 had come
 leading them.
 At that place
 the only one
 who had not come
 was Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 the evil woman.

The young woman
 Kunnepet-un-mat

was a short distance away.
 She was holding by the hand
 a little child
 of an amazing appearance—
 he was awe-inspiring
 in his beauty.
 The young woman
 Kunnepet-un-mat
 was shedding
 many sparkling teardrops,
 countless sparkling teardrops.
 At that time
 this is what
 I thought to myself:

“For what reason
 should I leave alive
 the offspring of our murderers,
 the offspring of our enemies?”

Thinking this,
 I darted
 a fierce sword thrust
 at the little child.
 His mangled corpse
 came dropping down.

At that time,
 Retarpira-un-kur
 gave me
 as indemnities
 half of his vessels,
 half of his treasures.

After that
 my elder sister
 took by the hand
 Kunnepet-un-mat.
 Together with
 my younger sister,
 and my kinsmen,
 they sailed me homeward.
 After that
 we came shoreward
 and landed on the shore
 at our boat landing.
 My kinsmen
 carried
 into the stronghold
 the vessels
 and the treasures
 that I had received as indemnities.

After that
 I came back
 to my stronghold
 and remained there.
 I stayed
 on the seat,
 the magnificent seat.

After that
 I did nothing but
 carve on scabbards,
 carve on treasures,
 with my eyes focused
 on a single spot,
 and this is the way
 I lived

on and on
 uneventfully.

After a while
 my elder sister
 spoke these words:

“On account of
 the evil ways of
 Poi-Soya-un-mat,
 until now
 we have not
 even brewed wine,
 and the spirit fence,
 the ancestral spirit fence
 is in a state of decay.
 This is an indignity
 toward the gods
 and toward the ancestors.
 Let us brew wine,
 so that the god I have raised,
 my divine nursling
 may raise up high
 the ancestral spirit fence!”

My elder sister
 spoke
 these words
 and commanded
 the servants
 to brew wine.
 After that
 the servants
 went running about

this way and that
to brew the wine.
When two or three days
had gone by,
the wine was now
finally ready,
and the odor of the wine
hovered about
inside the house.

After that
those who were straining the wine
darted their wicker baskets
together this way and that,
and those who were whittling *inau*
plied their whittling knives
together this way and that.
After a while,
now the preparations
were finally completed
for holding the drinking feast,
for holding the banquet.

Then we sent messages
to all our relatives nearby
and all our relatives far away.
The invited guests
were shown inside.
Around the fireplace
I addressed my greetings
to my elder brothers,³⁹
and I intoned lengthy
words of salutation.
After that

I seated
Iyochi-un-kur⁴⁰
in back of
the big wine-tub.
After that
the guests at the noble drinking feast
were all seated in order,
from the head of the festal mats
to the foot of the festal mats.

After that
we held the feast.
I was amazed
at how very
softened became the spirits
of my elder brothers
as they drank the wine.
The drinking continued
until finally
the excellent wine feast
wore on to an end.

When the drinking feast
had come to an end,
my elder brothers
came up
beside the fire.
After that
my elder brothers
spoke these words:

“Let everyone
select a wife for himself,
and a husband for herself!”

³⁹ My male relatives older than myself.

⁴⁰ Iyochi (Yoichi in Japanese) is a place in the province of Shiribeshi. The rulers of Iyochi are said to be allies and relatives of the rulers of Shinutapka.

Those who were to marry husbands
performed the woman's greeting⁴¹ to them,
and those who were to marry wives
made gestures of salutation to them.

Iyochi-un-kur
made salutations
in order to marry
my younger sister.
Sanput-un-kur
made salutations
in order to marry
my elder sister.

After that
Iyochi-un-kur
went away with
my younger sister.
Sanput-un-kur
went away with
my elder sister.
After they had gone
I remained
together with
Kunnepet-un-mat.
She cooked
the meals for me.

I reflected carefully,
turning over various things
in my mind.

This is what I thought:

“It was all on account of
the evil deeds,
the evil conduct
of Poi-Soya-un-mat,
the evil woman.
Why on earth
should I ever have chosen
precisely
an enemy offspring,
a woman of the enemy race,
to cook my meals
for me?”

Although
I thought this,
it was thanks to her,
Kunnepet-un-mat,
that my life had been spared,
and I allowed her to cook for me
and took her as my wife.
Two children, three children
were born between us,
we lead
a superb married life,
a magnificent married life,
and this is the way
we live on.

⁴¹ The complicated ritual salutations performed by women were called *raimik*. They involved elaborate gestures made with the hands and stroking of the woman's own hair.

33. The Epic of Kotan Utunnai

This is a full-length *yukar* epic recorded in writing by John Batchelor, the English missionary, at some time before 1889. Batchelor does not mention the name of the reciter, but the dialect is apparently that of the Saru Ainu. The epic was sung without a burden. The epic was delivered to the Asiatic Society of Japan on December 4, 1889. The original text and Batchelor's English prose translation were published in April, 1890, in vol. 18, part 1 of the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*. Batchelor's translation is rather like a prose paraphrase, and some troublesome details have been omitted or re-phrased. The present translation was made from the Ainu original, although Batchelor's translation was taken into consideration.

In this epic, the hero Poiyaunpe is raised by a *repunkur* woman in a little-frequented place called Kotan Utunnai in the land of the *repunkur*. After the foster sister has told him the story of his origins, Poiyaunpe rushes off into battle. The main interest of the story lies in the hero's battles against a whole series of enemies: (1) the Pestilence Deities (*Pa-kor-kamui*); (2) the six warriors of Kanepet, six warriors of Shirarpet, and Etu-rachichi, and the twelve "younger sisters" of the warriors of Kanepet and Shirarpet; (3) Shipish-un-kur (The younger sister of Shipish-un-kur casts her lot in with the hero and becomes his wife at the conclusion of the epic.); (4) the man and woman living at Terke-santa, Hopuni-santa; (5) the inhabitants of the land of Chirin-nai; (6) the *kuruse*, a horde of fabulous insect-like monsters; (7) the "bad weather demon" (*shiri wen nitne*) and his younger sister.

After the battles are over, the hero and the young woman of Shipish, Shipish-un-mat, go to the hero's native stronghold, Shinutapka, and are reunited with the hero's relatives there. They all celebrate a drinking feast, and the main characters marry each other.

This epic is of great importance because of the early date when it was recorded in writing. The texts written down by Kindaichi mostly date from the period after 1913, and most of Kubodera's texts were written down during

the 1930s. Thus, this epic was written down several decades earlier than the texts collected by Kindaichi and Kubodera and may be expected to reflect the diction and concepts of the Ainu epic reciters of an older generation.

I was raised
by an elder sister,
and we lived
on and on.
This is how
she raised me:
she raised me
in a little grass hut,
and we lived on.

During this time
sounds of some gods fighting
could be heard rumbling
throughout the land.
Many gods dying,
countless gods dying
continued to rumble
uninterruptedly.

Now finally
I grew somewhat older,
and these sounds
began to make themselves heard:
atop our grass hut
spirits of the *yaunkur*¹
from time to time
would come rumbling.
Going out to meet them,

my own companion spirits
would send forth their rumblings
atop the grass hut.
Gods of the same family,
they would prolong
their rumblings together.
What could be the reason for this,
I wondered.
So
I spoke
these words:

“My elder sister,
you who have
raised me well,
tell me, I pray,
the story!”
thus did I speak.

She appeared
to be awe-stricken
to an extreme.
Her forehead
quaked with fear.
Many sparkling teardrops
did she shed.
After a while
this is what she said:

¹ The hero is being raised among an enemy people, and his first clue of his own identity is the affinity of his “companion spirits” (*ituren kamui*) with the “spirits of the *yaunkur*” (*yaunkur kamui*).

“I would have told you
 after you were a little older.
 Then,
 even if you killed me,
 my heart would have been content
 even after death.
 Nevertheless,
 since you wish to hear it,
 I will tell you,
 but it would be dangerous
 for a mere boy
 to act rashly
 when hearing a story.
 Do not act rashly!
 This is the story
 I have to tell you.

“Long ago
 your father
 was resting
 between battles.
 He was the one
 who held sway over the upper
 and the lower regions
 of Shinutapka
 by the river Tumisanpet.
 He decided to go trading.
 The godlike lady [your mother]
 bore her baby on her back
 and Kamui-otopush²
 went along with his father.
 They set out on their journey.
 When they had come
 to the land of Karapto³

they were lured shoreward
 with *inau*⁴
 and came ashore.
 Night and day
 they were pressed to drink
 poisoned drink.
 After a while
 the drunken man [your father]
 speaking under the wine’s influence
 said such things:
 He proposed to buy
 together with his kinsfolk
 the principal treasure
 of the land of Karapto.
 Because of this
 fighting broke out.⁵
 After that
 it spread
 to the surrounding lands.
 The name
 of our native land
 is the land of Chiwashpet.⁶
 Since it is a land
 abounding in many warriors,
 your father
 was slain.

“At that time
 I took
 your father’s
 garments
 along with his helmet.
 I took you
 from your mother’s

² Kamui-otopush is the name of one of the hero’s elder brothers. When the parents departed on their trading expedition, they left the eldest brother (Yai-pirka-kur) and the elder sister (Shinutapka-un-mat) in the stronghold of Shinutapka, taking with them the second son (Kamui-otopush) and the baby hero (Poiyaunpe). Kamui-otopush means “He-has-divine-hair.” See note 23, selection 31.

³ Karapto is the island of Sakhalin.

⁴ The *inau* were set up as signs of peaceful intention to beckon the travelers ashore.

⁵ Substantially the same account is given in “Repunnot-un-kur,” p. 273–74.

⁶ Literally “Rapids River,” evidently a place somewhere in Sakhalin. This is the native land of the elder sister, who is referred to later on as Chiwashpet-un-mat (“woman of Chiwashpet”).

back and
 tied up tightly
 my baby-carrying cords.
 After that
 I wielded my sword
 all around
 your mother,
 but
 your mother,
 having spent
 her whole life
 in doing nothing but fighting,
 was killed
 in the midst of the battle.
 Since then
 Kamui-otopush
 all alone
 has been fighting
 his whole life.

“In the meantime
 I made off with you.
 This land
 is a place
 never frequented
 either by humans
 or by gods, and so
 it is called
 Kotan Utunnai
 Moshir Utunnai,
 and it is here
 that I have raised you
 and we have lived.

“Kamui-otopush
 all by himself
 has to this very day
 been fighting
 against the demons.⁷
 Since you said
 that you wanted to hear it,
 I have told you, but
 do not act rashly!”
 Thus did she speak.

I came very near
 to killing her but
 I barely managed
 to calm myself.
 I spoke these words:

“My elder sister,
 you who have
 raised me well,
 bring out
 my father’s
 garments
 and give them to me!”
 Thus did I speak.

Then, no sooner
 had I spoken,
 she ran to the back of the house.
 She untied
 the fastening cords
 of a woman’s treasure bag.
 From inside the treasure bag
 she brought out

⁷ The Ainu word is *nitne kamui*. The enemies against whom Kamui-otopush is fighting are the “people of the sea” (*repun-kaw*), but here they are referred to as “demons.” Here and elsewhere one can see clearly the process by which human enemies were gradually transformed in the epic imagination into supernatural beings (“demons,” “evil deities”).

a god-given sword,
 six robes,
 magnificent robes,
 together with
 a metal buckled belt
 and a little metal helmet.
 She held them out to me.

Overjoyed,
 I took off
 my own little robe.
 I attired
 myself in
 the six robes,
 the magnificent robes.
 The metal buckled belt
 in a single wrapping
 I wrapped around my waist.
 The god-given sword
 I thrust under my belt.
 The dangling cords
 of the little metal helmet
 I tied up tightly.

Now
 I was hardly able
 even to stand
 at the head of the fireplace.⁸
 I limbered
 my shoulders
 with warlike motions,
 with the motions of battle.
 On the right-hand side of the fireplace
 and on the left-hand side of the fireplace

I strode up and down,
 stamping my feet again and again.
 As I continued to do this
 I headed up toward
 the smokehole
 of our grass hut.
 Over
 our grass hut
 my companion spirits
 sent forth their rumblings.
 After that
 I went flying up
 at the head of a mighty wind.

My elder sister
 shrieked wildly.
 While screaming
 she uttered words,
 saying these things:

“It is no good
 for a mere boy
 to act rashly
 in battle.
 Let me take you home
 to your native land
 Shinutapka.
 After that
 you may go anywhere
 and fight
 in any land,
 in any country you wish.”
 Thus did she speak.

⁸ The hero is suddenly imbued with a warlike spirit and begins to limber up for battle immediately.

Nevertheless,
I continued
to go on somewhere
blown by the mighty wind until
a beautiful country
came rising up
high toward me.

I landed
on the country's shore and
looked and saw this:
the nearby mountains
were rising
up high.
A pretty little river,
seeming to be
a river with a short course,
had its head soaring up high
and its mouth flowing down deep.
Midway along the river's course
was something which must have been
the abode of
some deity, for
black mists
like overhanging clouds
were hanging over
the pretty little river
midway along its course.
Behind them
red mists
like overhanging clouds
were hanging over
the river's course.
Behind them

blue-green mists⁹
were hanging over
the river's course.

My elder sister
shrieked wildly.
While screaming
she uttered words,
saying these things:

“This is not
the land of
any ordinary gods!
It is nothing but
the abode of
the chief of
the Pestilence Deities!¹⁰
From this place
we ought to turn back at once
and go toward
some other country.
Do not, by any means,
act with disrespect
toward the deities!”
Thus did she speak.

Nevertheless,
I turned
a deaf ear to her
and went on.

I plunged head first
into the midst of the mists,
the black mists, and

⁹ The Ainu language has names for only four colors: white, black, red, and *shiunin*. *Shiunin* is the catch-all term for all other colors, including blue, yellow, and green. The mists are black, red, and “blue-green” (*shiunin*), as are the rocks found under the mists and the robes worn by the Pestilence Deities.

¹⁰ *Pa-kor-kamui*, the deities who cause such diseases as smallpox and cholera. The hero has come blundering into their country.

looked and saw this:
 the black mists
 were hanging
 over six rocks,
 six black rocks.
 This was what
 they were doing.

When I walked
 onto the rocks,
 the black rocks,
 as if from nowhere
 a fierce sword thrust
 came flying at me.
 My elder sister—
 a fierce sword thrust
 came flying at her too.

I was unwilling
 to die outright.
 Amid the sword blows
 I jumped to one side
 with a desperate leap,
 and those sword blows
 struck harmlessly
 on my body.
 It turned out
 that they were
 empty blows.

My elder sister
 once again
 shrieked wildly.
 While screaming

she uttered words,
 saying these things:

“This is by no means
 an omen
 foreshadowing
 any trifling consequences.¹¹
 Let us turn back at once
 from this place!’
 Thus did she speak.

Nevertheless,
 I went straight on.
 I plunged head first
 into the midst of the mists,
 the red mists.
 I looked and saw this:
 six rocks,
 six red rocks,
 were piled on each other.
 When I walked
 onto the rocks,
 a fierce sword thrust
 which made the one before
 seem like child’s play
 came flying at me.
 Nevertheless,
 I did not
 dodge the blade.
 The blow
 being an empty one
 went sliding off
 my body.

¹¹ That is, “what has just happened foreshadows something terrible which is about to happen.” The language abounds in such negative constructions.

Behind this,
 blue-green mists
 were hanging
 over six rocks,
 six blue-green rocks.
 This was what
 they were doing.
 From over these rocks too,
 from over the blue-green rocks,
 a fierce sword thrust
 came flying at me.
 Nevertheless,
 I did not
 dodge the blade.
 It was an empty blow
 and struck harmlessly
 on my body.

Behind this
 I went on and came to
 a mighty mountain.
 A stony path
 could be seen clearly
 coming down
 from the mountain.
 At the foot of the path
 was a metal well
 with a metal ladle
 on the well.

Down the path
 came
 mounds of mist,
 altogether six of them.

The one who came
 first of all
 was clothed all
 from head to toe
 in black robes.
 Behind him
 was one clothed all
 in red robes,
 and behind that one
 came down
 one clothed all
 in blue-green robes.
 After them
 came women,
 altogether three of them.
 Counting the women,
 altogether six of them
 came down.

The one who came first
 repeatedly made
 worshipful gestures with his hands.
 While making these salutations,
 he uttered words,
 saying these things:

“Greetings,
 young Ainu brother!¹²
 Listen well
 to what I have to say.
 It is not at all
 as if we
 were ones
 engaged in

¹² *Ainu akpo*, “dear human (Ainu) younger brother,” a term of respectful address to a younger man.

warfare.
 We are
 weighty deities,
 Pestilence Deities,
 and we are
 dwelling here
 in this country.
 Kamui-otopush
 has done nothing but fighting
 his whole life.
 We felt sorry for him.
 So we have supported him
 with our protection,
 and because of this
 he has had
 exceedingly
 good fortunes
 in battle, and now,
 of all places in the wide world,
 here you have come
 to our country!
 We would be most unworthy
 to receive you
 were you to come
 to our abode.
 That is why
 we tried out our swords
 against you in that way
 on the rocks,
 on the black rocks,
 the red rocks,
 and the blue-green rocks.
 We thought that,
 if you were human,

you would turn back after that,
 but you still come on!
 At any rate,
 turn back,
 I pray you!
 We will support you
 with our protection
 in battle,
 in every battle,
 and you will have
 exceedingly
 good fortunes.
 Turn back,
 I pray you!"

While saying this,
 he repeatedly made
 worshipful gestures with his hands.
 In reply
 I pointed
 one finger at him.
 While doing so,
 I uttered words,
 saying these things:

"If the weighty deities
 slay me,
 my heart will be content
 after death.
 Come on
 and slay me!"
 Thus did I speak.

However,

the chieftains¹³
spoke in hushed voices:

“We are by no means
persons
engaged in
warfare.
Turn back,
we pray you!”
Thus did they speak.

This merely served
to rouse me all the more
to a furious rage.
Thus
I darted
a fierce sword thrust
toward the three chieftains,
all of them at once.
Being gods,
they fluttered
on top of my blade
like a bright breeze.
The three young women¹⁴
were fighting together
with Chiwashpet-un-mat,
my elder sister, and
many metal sword blows
resounded with clanks.

During this time
I darted
countless sword thrusts toward
the three chieftains.

As this went on
they finally
unsheathed their swords.
They countered me
blow for blow.
They darted
countless sword thrusts toward me.
I bent
my utmost efforts
to prevent them from seeing me
in my human form.
I pranced
on top of their blades
as if upon a bridge.
With my left hand
clenched in a fist
like a bunch of grappling hooks,
I grabbed at them
again and again until
by and by
I grasped in my hand
the locks of magnificent hair
of the god wearing
the blue-green robes.
I knocked him against
the large rocks
and the small rocks
with loud cracking noises.
As I continued to do this,
I wounded him mortally¹⁵ and
dragged him behind me
like a dead fish.

After that

¹³ *Utarpa*, a term applied to a chieftain or a warrior. Here and below the Pestilence Deities are depicted sometimes as humans and sometimes as gods.

¹⁴ That is, the three goddesses

¹⁵ The word is *oan-raike*, which usually means “to kill utterly.” In this epic the word is apparently used to mean “to wound mortally.” We learn below that his life-spirit has not yet left his body.

the chieftains
 continued to swing
 their fierce sword strokes
 up and down, right and left.
 At this time
 the mortally wounded man¹⁶
 I swung up high
 and I swung down low
 as a *shield*.
 They turned their blows aside
 before me.
 By and by
 that chieftain
 whom I held in my arms
 I sliced
 into several bits.
 His *life-spirit*
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.
 Becoming a living spirit,
 he went rumbling off
 toward the peaks
 of his native mountains.

In the meantime
 the *life-spirit*
 of the lady wearing
 the blue-green robes
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.

Once again
 I twisted in my hand
 the locks of magnificent hair

of the chieftain wearing
 the red robes.
 I knocked him against
 the large rocks
 and the small rocks
 with loud cracking noises.
 I swung him up high
 and I swung him down low
 as a *shield*.
 The chieftain wearing
 the black robes
 wielded his sword
 around me,
 but
 I held up high
 the mortally wounded man
 as a *shield*.
 For this reason
 he turned his blows aside
 before me.
 As this continued
 by and by
 the chieftain wearing
 the red robes
who was in my arms
 I sliced
 into several bits.
 His *divine life-spirit*
 could be heard going off
 with a loud roaring.
 Becoming a living spirit,
 he rumbled off
 toward the peaks
 of his native mountains.

¹⁶ *Oan-rai ainu*, "utterly dead man." This is the god (wearing blue-green robes) whom the hero has just mortally wounded.

After that
 the god wearing
 the black robes
 and I
 flashed our swords
 back and forth at each other.
 By and by,
 thanks to a stroke of luck,
 he was hit
 by my sword blade.
 I sliced him
 into several bits.
 His life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.
 The lady wearing
 the black robes,
 the lady wearing
 the red robes—
 both together
 their life-spirits
 were heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.
 All of them
 becoming living spirits
 went rumbling away
 toward the peaks
 of their native mountains.

Chiwashpet-un-mat,
 without so much as
 even a scratch,
 dropped down
 by my side.

After that
 a plateau where spruce trees were growing
 stretched out.
 The top of the forest
 was a metal forest.
 The metal forest
 stretched out
 into the lower forest
 and the middle forest.¹⁷
 This certainly was
 what was known as
 the land having two names,
 Ukamu-nitai
 Kane-nitai.¹⁸
 The wind was striking
 that forest,
 making it tinkle.
 It seemed
 as if this were not
 the homeland
 of any inconsequential deities.¹⁹

I went on until
 quite suddenly
 there was a whiff
 of a fire.
 Wondering at this,
 I ducked
 down low
 underneath the forest,
 the thick forest.
 I looked and saw that
 there was
 a big bonfire,

¹⁷ The diction is confused at this point. The passage means that the upper, middle, and lower portions of the forest had trees of metal. One would expect the word *kane* ("metal") here to be merely a modifier meaning "magnificent" or "beautiful." However, we are told explicitly that these metal trees had leaves which jingled together with a metallic tinkling or clanking.

¹⁸ The first name, Ukamu-nitai, means "Forests Overlapping Each Other," and Kane-nitai means "Metal Forest."

¹⁹ Another negative construction typical of the epic. It should be understood in the opposite sense: "This was certainly the homeland of some most weighty (important) deities."

a fire which had just
been kindled hurriedly.

On one side of the fire
were six armored men
wearing stone armor
and six women
who were all
ugly in appearance.
The six armored men
wearing stone armor
were sitting side by side.
The six women
were sitting next to them.

On the other side of the fire
six armored chieftains
wearing metal armor
were sitting side by side
with their hands on their laps.
Six women
were sitting next to them.

At the head of the fire
was someone—could it
possibly be a human?—
who looked like
a small mountain
with arms growing out of it
and legs growing out of it.
His naked skin
was mangy.
His sword big as a boat's scull
he had strapped to his side

with leather thongs.
His face
was like
a cliff after a landslide.
His nose
was like
a steep mountain spur.
Though he was
a stranger to me,
he was surely the one
who was called
Etu-rachichi²⁰—
the evil monster²¹
was seated
at the head of the fire.

During this time—
what ever
could this be?—
the earth where I stood
was lightly
shaken slowly
to and fro, and
the metal branches
of the metal spruce forest
could be heard scraping
against each other
with a loud clanking.
After this continued for a while,
I looked and saw this:
Never in the world
did I expect
to see such a thing.²²
A mortally wounded man²³

²⁰ "Nose Dangles" or "Dangling Nose," name of a *repunkur* warrior who often appears in the *yukar* epics. Here he is identified as being a native of the land of Pon-moshir. In some versions his name is Eton-rachichi, which would mean "Snot Dangles" or "Dangling Snot." Probably Eton-rachichi is the older form of the name.

²¹ *Wen ainu nitne*, literally "evil human demon." The word *nitne kamui* ("demon") was applied above to the *repunkur*, note 7, selection 33.

²² A typical epic expression. A less literal translation would be: "I beheld a sight which I had never expected to see."

²³ This is Kamui-otopush, the hero's elder brother. He is not dead, for later on he writhes in his ropes. Finally he is completely restored to life.

was tied to
 the top of a spruce,
 a large spruce.
 The mortally wounded man
 had his head
 hanging back.
 Over his face
 many glittering lights
 were flashing on and off.
 Even though
 he was a stranger to me,
 he was surely
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother.
 From time to time
 he would writhe about
 in his ropes, and
 this was what
 was causing the earth
 to shake gently
 to and fro.

At that time
 my elder sister
 Chiwashpet-un-mat
 spoke these words:

“My younger brother,
 listen well
 to what I have to say!
 Were we to take
 a badly wounded man,
 we would be hampered
 during the fighting.

In such a case,
 we would feel uneasy
 during the fighting.
 Let me
 make off with his body.
 Then you
 must fight
 all alone.”
 Thus did she speak.

The six chieftains
 wearing metal armor
 on one side of the fire
 all in unison
 spoke these words:

“We are
 people of Kanepet,²⁴
 six brothers
 and six sisters.
 This day
 when we came along
 hunting in the mountains,
 Kamui-otopush,
 badly wounded,
 having finished his battles,
 was heading toward
 his native land.
 When we saw him,
 we might well
 have killed him,
 have slain him, but
 were we to kill him
 without the knowledge of

²⁴ Metal River. The natives of Metal River wear metal armor, and the natives of Stone River wear stone armor.

our uncle,
 the ruler of
 distant Shipish,²⁵
 we thought
 that we might
 be blamed for it, so
 we tied him to
 a large spruce,
 and after a while
 the six chieftains,
 the natives of Shirarpet,²⁶
 came along
 together with their sisters,
 and we remained with them.
 Just then [you also came along]
 are you
 a human
 or a god?
 All together
 let us take
 the goodly body²⁷
 of Kamui-otopush
 as a present to
 Shipish-un-kur.
 If we do so,
 he will surely
 praise us joyfully.”
 Thus did they speak.

The person who was sitting
 at the head of the fire
 spoke out,
 his voice rumbling out
 from deep in his throat.

The sense of his speech,
 translated
 into the Ainu language,²⁸
 was this:

“My native land
 is called by the name of
 the land of Pon-moshir.²⁹
 I am
 Etu-rachichi,
 the ruler of Pon-moshir.
 All together,
 let us take
 Kamui-otopush
 as a present to
 Shipish-un-kur.
 If we do so,
 he will surely
 praise us joyfully.”
 Thus did he speak.

In the meantime,
 my elder sister
 had rushed to
 the top of the spruce.
 There was a clanking sound
 as she sliced away the ropes
 from the body of
 Kamui-otopush.
 The band of
 evil monsters
 all turned around
 at exactly the same moment.

²⁵ An unidentified place name, evidently meaning “Great Beach.” The ruler of Shipish (Shipish-un-kur) is evidently the paramount chief of the people of Kanepet.

²⁶ Stone River.

²⁷ *Pirka kewe*, “nice body,” “beautiful body,” probably in the sense of a “goodly prey.” The corpse of an enemy was regarded as a desirable trophy.

²⁸ *Ainu itak* means either “human speech” or “the Ainu language.” Etu-rachichi is a foreigner (a *repunkur*) speaking a foreign language.

²⁹ Pon-moshir means “little country” or “little island.” Etu-rachichi calls himself Pon-moshir-un-kur, “ruler of Pon-moshir” or “native of Pon-moshir.”

At that time
 I bent
 my utmost efforts
 to prevent them from seeing me
 in my human form.
 Like a bright breeze
 I darted
 a fierce sword thrust
 toward all the band
 of evil monsters
 by the bonfire.
 No sooner had I done this,
 the three men
 and the three women
 on one side of the fire,
 six of them in all,
 were slashed with a single stroke,
 and there was the sound of slicing flesh
 at the tip of my blade.
 The three chieftains
 wearing metal armor
 on the other side of the fire
 were slashed with a single stroke,
 and there was the sound of slicing flesh
 at the tip of my blade.
 With the back stroke
 I darted
 a fierce sword thrust
 toward Etu-rachichi,
 the evil monster.
 Then
 he who was anything but small
 fluttered
 like a bright breeze

on top of my blade.
 While doing so,
 he covered his nose in amazement.
 As he did so,
 he uttered words,
 saying these things:

“Just a moment ago
 I thought that he
 was a mortally wounded man
 who had been tied
 to the top of a spruce, but
 now here he is
 massacring
 our kinsmen!
 Even though
 we were to fight him
 with sword fighting,
 it seems unlikely
 that we would be able
 to kill him.
 Come then,
 let us take him
 to the chasm,
 the battle chasm,
 of Shipish-un-kur.
 Then we will be able
 to kill him
 in the chasm.”

While saying these words,
 he seemed to be jumping about.
 On the mountain slopes
 we flashed our swords

back and forth at each other.
 We went on and on until
 we had come to a certain place, then
 my elder sister
 could be heard coming this way
 with a loud roaring.
 She dropped down
 by my side.
 While she did so,
 she uttered words,
 saying these things:

“I made off with the body
 of your elder brother
 Kamui-otopush
 and took him
 to your native land,
 to Shinutapka.
 When I arrived there
 I found that
 the master of the stronghold,
 your eldest brother
 and your eldest sister
 were there.
 Into their hands
 I delivered
 Kamui-otopush, and
 we brought him to the point
 of being revived,
 of being restored to life.
 After that
 I returned here.”
 Thus did she speak.

In the midst of this,
 the six women
 set upon
 my elder sister.
 They flashed their swords
 back and forth at each other.
 How could
 the evil women
 ever be able to
 fight so bravely!
 One after another
 my elder sister
 would dart
 countless sword thrusts at them,
 but
 at times
 the six women
 all at once
 would whirl their swords
 around their bodies
 [darting out] countless sword thrusts.
 In a separate place
 the women waged their separate battle,
 roaming off toward
 the distant mountains.

The six men
 and Etu-rachichi
 all wielded their swords
 at exactly the same moment.
 At times
 they would dart
 countless sword thrusts at me.
 Time after time

they came very close,
 they almost succeeded
 in bringing me down
 but
 I bent
 my utmost efforts
 to prevent them from seeing me
 in my human form.
 On top of their blades
 like a bright breeze
 atop their blades
 I fluttered.

As I continued to do this,
 a pretty little river
 flowing down
 came clearly into view.
 It seemed to be
 a river with a long course, for
 the river's bottom soared
 up high among
 the nearby mountains,³⁰
 and the river's head sank
 down low among
 the distant mountains.
 Midway along the river's course
 there was
 a divinely made ravine.
 This was surely
 the battle chasm
 they had been speaking of.
 At the ravine's bottom
 many sharp stone spears
 and many sharp stone swords

were jutting up there.
 Over the blades
 poisonous water
 was trickling down.
 The odor of the poison
 made my heart
 feel sick.

The band of chieftains
 all together
 chased me farther and farther
 toward the ravine.
 Time after time
 they came very close
 to slaying me in
 the battle chasm.
 Nevertheless,
 I fluttered
 on top of their blades.
 While doing so,
 I uttered words,
 saying these things:

“O gods of the ravine,
 gods of the chasm,
 listen well
 to what I have to say!
 If I were the only one
 to die,
 you would not have enough
 blood wine
 to drink.
 Cast in your lot
 on my side,

³⁰ A curious archaic expression. The river's bottom (in the literal sense, its “rear end,” its “rump,”) rises up high near the river mouth; here there are no deeply cut ravines. Further upstream, the river's “head” sinks down deep in deeply cut canyons among the faraway mountains. The river is spoken of almost animistically, as if it had a “head” and a “bottom.” There was another similar expression above on p. 371.

I pray you!
 Since it is the *repunkur*
 who are many in numbers,
 you will never
 have an end to your feast
 of blood wine!’’
 Thus did I speak.

Now it was my turn
 to turn the tables on
 the band of chieftains.
 With my mighty sword sweeps
 I drove them
 toward the ravine.
 As I continued to do this,
 the oldest one of
 the warriors wearing the stone armor
 fell to
 the ravine’s bottom.
 He landed
 on the blades,
 the blades in the chasm.
 He went flying about
 exactly like chunks of stew meat.
 His life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.

Once again,
 the biggest one of
 the warriors wearing the metal armor
 fell down
 into the ravine.
 He landed

on the blades in the chasm.
 He went flying about
 exactly like chunks of stew meat.
 At frequent intervals
 I would kill one of them,
 I would kill two of them.
 Of those who died in the ravine,
 there were none at all,
 not a single one,
 who were living dead.³¹
 Becoming utterly dead spirits,
 they sank down
 rumbling toward
 the west of the land.
 I continued to do this until
 I had killed all
 six of the chieftains.

After this was over,
 Etu-rachichi,
 the native of Pon-moshir,
 alone was left.
 After that
 the man alone
 wielded his sword.
 Time after time
 he came very close,
 he almost succeeded
 in bringing me down.
 I countered him
 blow for blow.
 I continued to swing
 my fierce sword sweeps
 up and down, right and left.

³¹ *Shiknu raibe*, “living dead,” that is the dead who survive after death. They are destined to be restored to life again. See note 21, selection 32.

But
 at times
 like a bright breeze
 he would flutter
 on top of the blade
 over my fierce sword sweeps.
For this reason
I was unable
to get at him.

After this had continued
for some time,
he who was anything but small
stripped off his clothes.
He put aside
his trusty sword.
He said these words:

“Come now!
 Chieftains
 do not fight
 only a single battle.
 Let us have
 a contest of strength!”

As he said this,
he lunged toward me.
I bent
my utmost efforts
to prevent him from
getting the best of me.
I laid down
my trusty sword
behind me and

I lunged toward him.
We wrestled together.
Etu-rachichi
brought together
his big hands
around my middle, and
my heart
grew faint with agony.
Nevertheless,
I slipped through
his hands
like trickling water.

After that
we wrestled together
on the surface of the ground.
At times
he came very close
to hurling me down
into the ravine, but
a breeze blowing up
from the ravine's bottom
would blow me up high.
As this went on,
I finally managed
to throw
Etu-rachichi
to the ravine's bottom.
He landed on
the blades in the chasm.
Atop the blades
of the sharp stone spears
and the sharp stone swords
he went flying about

exactly like chunks of stew meat.
 His life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.
 After it was over,
 everything grew quiet all around.

At that time
 I thought to myself:

“Who ever may be
 this person called
 Shipish-un-kur,
 whose name was mentioned
 to frighten me
 in battle?
 Were I to return to
 my native stronghold
 without seeing him,
 I would be regarded
 as a coward.”

Thinking this,
 as I went down
 along the river,
 that little river,
 my companion spirits
 sent out rumblings
 over me.
 Therefore,
 I spoke to them,
 saying these words:

“My companion spirits,

quiet your rumblings
 for me!

I want to catch
 at least a glimpse of
 Shipish-un-kur’s
 abode.

After having done so,
 I may well be slain there,
 but at any rate
 I wish to compare
 my valor with
 Shipish-un-kur!”

When I had spoken these words,
 my companion spirits
 went rumbling off toward
 the distant mountains.
 After they were gone,
 everything grew quiet all around.

I flew up
 at the head of
 a cloudless breeze,
 a faint divine wind.
 I went down until
 by now
 the sounds of waves on the beach
 came closer and closer.
 The pretty little river
 swirled down
 emptying its rapids
 out into the sea.
 A populous village
 stood crowding

the river bank.
 Over the populous village
 hung smoke
 floating slowly
 over the village
 like a low mist.
 In the middle of the village
 a divinely made lone peak
 could be seen standing,
 soaring up majestically.
 The path up to it
 went winding around
 in many bends.
 The divinely made lone peak
 had billows of mist
 wrapped around it.
 On top of the peak
 was a divinely built stockade,
 which appeared to be
 a stockade built long ago, for
 the older posts
 like black clouds
 were bending
 up backward toward
 the heavens, and
 the newly erected posts
 like white clouds
 rose up
 high toward
 the heavens.
 On top of the stockade
 the noble companion spirits
 hovered with billows of clouds
 wrapped around them.

The fearful deities,
 the fearful spirits
 were sending out their rumblings
 on top of the stockade.
 Their rumblings trailed
 out long and far.

I stepped
 inside the stockade.
 I made my way up
 beside the house,
 the large house.
 I peered through
 the window hangings.
 I looked and saw
 someone who surely was
 Shipish-un-kur,
 the one who had been mentioned.
 I had expected
 that he would be
 a grown man, but
 he was quite young,
 and only that same year
 had faint whiskers
 begun to darken
 his chin.
 He was awe-inspiring
 because of his clothing
 and because of his swords.
 He sat
 by the fireside
 with his legs crossed.

On his right

there sat
 a young woman.
 Although I had thought
 that my elder sister,
 Chiwashpet-un-mat,
 could alone be
 so beautiful,
 here was one
 whose beauty
 was awe-inspiring!
 Beyond that,
 she was apparently a wizardess³² also, for
 the facial features of wizardry,
 the appearance of a shamaness³³
 could be seen clearly
 on her countenance.
 The master of the house
 was worried
 about something, for
 on his face were seen
 many woeful expressions.
 After they had sat there for a while,
 he raised
 his eyebrows sharply.
 As he did so,
 he began to speak,
 the words ringing out
 sonorously from his throat.
 He spoke these words:

“My younger sister,
 ever since childhood
 you have dabbled
 in shamanism.

Come now, shamanize!
 I wonder
 why it is that
 these forebodings
 of approaching danger
 are hanging over me
 today.
 Come, shamanize!
 I want to hear
 the prophecy!”
 Thus did he speak.

Just then,
 the young woman
 tied her hair up high
 with a shamaness’s headband.
 She took in her hand
 a shamaness’s wand.
 A song
 came twisting subtly
 from deep in her throat.
 The prophecy
 came flowing forth
 from her lips.
 These were her words:

“Suddenly
 over the chasm,
 the chasm at
 the headwaters of the river,
 of our native river,
 fierce fighting
 breaks out.
 The people of Kanepet,

³² *Nupurpe*, “wizardess,” synonymous with *tusu-kur*, “shamaness.” The word *nupur* means “magic powers,” “wizardry,” or “shamanism.” In the epics, the practitioners of shamanism are almost always female.

³³ *Tusu ipottum*, a shamaness’s countenance.

the people of Shirarpet,
 and Etu-rachichi
 all of them together
 are tangling their swords,
 their trusty swords,
 in confused battle with
 the sword of the *yaunkur*.
 From time to time
 they appear together.
 I lose them
 in many clots of gore.
 But now again
 from time to time,
 in the east
 all of them together
 are tangling their swords
 in confused battle.
 This goes on until
 by and by
 the swords of the *repunkur*
 all at once
 are broken off
 next to the swordguards.
 I lose them
 in the west.
 My vision is unclouded—
 the sword of the *yaunkur*
 is shining bright
 in the east.
 Just then,
 down the river,
 our native river,
 a little *kesorap*³⁴
 is fluttering through

the heavens,
 or so I thought.
 But now
 it disappears,
 I don't know where.
 I strengthen the power
 of my shamanizing until
 the little *kesorap*
 is transformed
 into raindrops and
 is slipping
 through the layers of earth.
 As this goes on,
 look!
 once again
 he is changed
 into a little *kesorap* and
 is going downstream
 along the river,
 our native river.
 Suddenly
 fierce fighting
 bursts forth
 in our native land.
 In a single swoop,
 the settlements of the common folk
 are completely
 ravaged.
 After that
 the sword of the *yaunkur*
 and my elder brother's
 trusty sword
 are tangled
 in confused battle.

³⁴ The *kesorap* ("speckled feathers") is a fabulous bird appearing in Ainu myths and legends (See also introduction to selection 12). It is apparently based on native ideas obtained from peacock feathers. The *kesorap* here represents the hero Poiyaunpe.

I lose them
 in many clots of gore.
 At times
 my vision is clear
 and unclouded again.
 In the east
 there are swords tangled
 in confused battle.
 This continues until—
 o what dreadful
 thing is this?—
 my elder brother's
 trusty sword
 is broken off
 next to the swordguard.
 I lose it
 in many clots of gore.
 The sword of the *yaunkur*,
 it seems to me,
 is shining bright
 in the east.
 This is all,
 the vision vanishes
 from before my eyes.
 O what terrible things
 have I
 been prophesying?"
 Thus did she speak.

Fierce rage
 flashed forth
 on the face of
 the master of the house.
 In his rage,

he uttered words,
 saying these things:

"What strange words are these?
 I detest
 my wretched younger sister's
 evil words!
 I am one
 who disdains
 to fight with humans.
 I am worthy only of
 warfare with the gods.
 I have heard
 that the cursed *repunkur* folk
 have banded together
 against Poiyaunpe³⁵
 all his young life.
 Nevertheless,
 since I am one
 who rules
 in peace,
 even if he comes
 some time,
 I intend
 to greet him
 in peace
 and with kindness.
 Even though these prophecies
 may be of divine origin,
 what you have said,
 my wretched younger sister,
 has disheartened me
 exceedingly!"
 Thus did he speak.

³⁵ The name of the *yukar* hero, meaning "little *yaunkur*" or "young *yaunkur*." (*poi* = *pon*, "little," "young"; *yaunpe* = *yaunkur*)

Then
 tears came streaming
 down the face of
 the young woman.
 While she wept,
 she uttered words,
 saying these things:

“What strange words are these?
 I detest
 the words spoken by
 my elder brother!
 For what reason,
 my elder brother,
 do you think
 that I would make
 false prophecies?
 Why is it
 that you say this?”
 Thus did she speak.

Just then
 I went gliding through
 the window hangings.
 I darted up
 onto the rafters.
 Back and forth
 I went striding along
 stamping my feet mightily
 on the rafters.
 As I did so,
 the upper beams of
 that big house
 shook up and down.

The roof beams
 were jumping about
 on top of the posts
 with a loud creaking.
 The rows of noble treasures³⁶
 in the northeast corner of
 the noble house
 seemed frightened,
 seemed startled;
 the insignificant deities
 sent forth
 prolonged rumblings together.
 Wondering
 what was the matter,
 the master of the house
 turned around
 first this way
 and then that.
 However,
 the young woman
 remained there
 without even
 raising her eyes slightly.

Just then
 I dropped down
 from the rafters
 onto the floor.
 I twisted in my hand
 the master of the house's
 locks of magnificent hair.
 I turned his head around
 first this way
 and then that.

³⁶ *Inuma*. The rows of household heirlooms or treasures lining the north wall of the house consisted chiefly of lacquered tubs and boxes of Japanese manufacture. They were considered to be deities of insignificant degree, as is apparent below.

While I did this,
I uttered words,
saying these things:

“Well now,
Shipish-un-kur,
you warrior,
what was it you said?
Say it again!
I want to hear it!
Why, o why was it that
Kamui-otopush
in all his beauty
was taken prisoner
and tied to
the top of a spruce,
a little spruce tree?
To avenge this,
I fought against
the people of Kanepet,
the people of Shirarpet,
and the ruler of Pon-moshir,
Etu-rachichi.
In the course of the fighting
they mentioned
the valor of
Shipish-un-kur
to frighten me, and
this is why I have come.
Even though you greet me
in peace
and with kindness,
I will not listen.
Let us test

each other’s valor.
Should we both perish,
our hearts
will be content
even after death.
Come,
do your worst against me!”

While speaking these words,
I seized,
I grasped in my hands
the young woman
who was on the right
of the mighty warrior.
I jumped up with her
to the smokehole.
At this
the young woman
shrieked wildly,
her bosom
heaving.
These were her words.

“My elder brother,
you said that
I had made
false prophecies.
Well then, which one of them
was false?
A stranger
from an unknown land
is carrying me off
a prisoner.
Hurry to my rescue!”

When she said this,
 the master of the house
 drew his sword
 with a flash over his arms.
 Though I strove mightily,
 ahead of me
 he swang
 scores of sword blows
 up and down, right and left
 at the smokehole.
 I was hard pressed by his sword play.
 Turning back again,
 I darted
 down
 to the window.
 But when I had done so,
 ahead of me
 scores of sword blows
 came raining down
 by the window.

After that
 we flew back and forth
 like birds.
 Under the ceiling
 I flew about fleeing
 like a bird with hands.

Fierce anger
 flared out
 on the face of
 the mighty warrior.
 In his anger,
 he poured forth

a stream of curses.
 These were his words:

“My wretched younger sister,
 since you
 disheartened me
 exceedingly
 with your prophecies,
 I shall slay
 you first!”

As he spoke these words,
 he darted
 many sword thrusts
 toward both his sister
 and me together.
 I held her aloft
 as a shield
 to receive the blows,
 but he still
 did not turn
 aside his blows.
 While this was going on,
 the young woman
 terrified
 clung for dear life
 to the tops of my hands
 and the palms of my hands.
 At the same time,
 she kicked
 from the back
 and kicked
 from the front
 at the mighty warrior's

noble face.

In the meantime
the young woman
addressed herself to me
with confidential speech,
saying these words:

“Although there was
nothing at all
about your coming
that I did not know,
it is also true
that I did
try to dishearten
my elder brother
with my prophecies.
Let me down!
I want to come
to your assistance,
even though I may be of no more help
than an old worn-out mat
which merely gets in the way.”
Thus did she speak.

For this reason
I let go of her.
She went crawling
along the floor
on all fours.
Then she sprang up.
She drew out a dagger
from the front of her robes.
She darted
fierce stabs

at her elder brother.
While doing this,
she uttered words,
saying these things:

“O wretched brother of mine,
you have always
doubted
my prophecies.
And this is why
you seem to want
to slay me also
together with
the mighty warrior.
If this is so,
I will go to the aid of
the mighty warrior.
Come, my wretched elder brother,
do your worst
against us!”

As she said these words,
she darted
countless stabs
at the mighty one [her brother].
After a while,
bands of commoners,
armies of armored men,
began to jostle together
trying to enter the house
through the windows
and through the doorways.
After that
I went stamping fiercely

back and forth
 by the doorways,
 and went stamping fiercely
 by the windows.
 The throngs of warriors
 jostled together
 swarming
 all over the floor.
 The two of us,
 the young woman and I,
 bestirred ourselves,
 shaking our chests,
 in slashing at them.

In the meantime,
 the companion spirits of the others
 and my companion spirits
 united their rumblings
 as if they were a single spirit.
 They sent forth their rumblings
 on top of the stockade.
 As the rumbling continued,
 a mighty divine wind
 came blowing down.
 Through the doorways
 and through the windows
 the wind came rushing inside,
 and wild confusion broke out
 all over the floor.
 The flames of the fire,
 the fire burning in the hearth,
 were whipped up by the divine wind.
 After a while
 the house

burst into flames.
 Just before
 it collapsed,
 we all went
 rushing outside.

There were separate
 armies bringing up the rear,
 while the companies of spearmen
 came advancing
 toward me.
 The companies of swordsmen—
 nothing but their sword sweeps
 could be seen flashing.

After this,
 on purpose I did it,
 the throngs of warriors
 I chased back with my sword
 and drove them
 into the arms of
 the young woman.
 Drove of them
 jostled together.
 Even then,
 she did not
 retreat
 a single step.
 She still bestirred herself
 shaking her chest
 in slashing at them.

Just then,
 there was seen

far away
 over a distant land
 a bank of thick clouds
 arising.
 It came darting
 as swiftly as an arrow.
 Above it
 a weighty god
 was sending forth rumblings.
 Some chieftain
 dropped down
 by my side.
 I looked and saw
 that it was
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother.
 He saluted me with his sword.
 I saluted him with my sword.
 After that
 the numbers that I slew
 and the numbers that
 the young woman slew
 were but few in comparison with
 Kamui-otopush—
 nothing but his sword sweeps
 could be seen flashing.
 Wherever he passed
 the corpses mowed down like grass
 lay stretched out in the distance.

At that time,
 Shipish-un-kur,
 the mighty warrior,
 poured forth

a stream of curses:

“How detestable
 that my wretched younger sister,
 hoping to gain profit for herself,
 should lust after
 this enemy offspring.
 This is why
 she is wielding
 her sword against
 our own kinsfolk.
 You will surely
 receive your punishment
 in the midst of the battle,
 in this very battle.
 Mark my words well!”
 Thus did he speak.

Just then
 the young woman
 suddenly
 began to shriek wildly.
 As she screamed,
 she uttered words,
 saying these things:

“O mighty warrior,
 listen well
 to what I have to say!
 Your elder sister,
 Chiwashpet-un-mat,
 is fighting battles
 which have spread over
 many surrounding lands.

Your elder sister
 has now made her way as far as
 a distant
 land called
 Chirinnai,³⁷
 but now
 she has gone to
 the homeland of the
tumunchi demons,³⁸ and
 it appears as if
 she may be slain,
 she may be killed.
 If you
 delay,
 you will never
 see
 your elder sister again.
 As for this battle,
 this fighting here,
 we can leave
 Kamui-otopush
 alone
 to deal with it.
 Let us go to the aid of
 your elder sister.”

While speaking these words,
 she drew herself up into
 the heavens.
 At this time
 I sheathed
 my sword and
 went flying up
 right behind

the young woman.
 This was the way
 we went along:
 at times
 she would leave me far behind
 as much as one bowshot
 or more than one bowshot.
 As she did so,
 she would turn
 back toward me
 and would say these things:

“Are you
 a mighty man or not?
 How is it that
 you are bested
 by me
 in traveling!
 Make greater haste!”

Whenever she said this,
 I would strive mightily, and
 I would leave her
 far behind
 as much as one bowshot
 or more than one bowshot.

When we had come
 to a certain place,
 there was a populous village
 stretching down to the water's edge.
 The head of the village
 could be seen only faintly.
 In the middle of the village

³⁷ “Trickling Stream”

³⁸ *Tumunchi kamui*. The word *tumunchi* means “war,” but *tumunchi kamui* appears to mean simply “demon” or “fiend” without any particular connection with warfare.

a large stronghold
could be seen standing
majestically.

It was a stronghold with a lid.³⁹

From time to time
the stronghold's lid
would go swinging up
toward the clouds
in the lower skies.

Turning around again,
the stronghold's lid
would then close up
with a clank.

This is what it was doing.

Just then
the young woman
spoke these words:

“The name
of this land
is called
Terke-santa,
Hopuni-santa,⁴⁰
Let us have
a little fun!
Remain waiting
for me!”

While speaking these words,
she went down
onto the smokehole,
and I went down
by her side.

I looked and saw
an amazing sight.
An awe-inspiring person
because of his noble swords
and because of his armor
was sitting
cross-legged
at the master's place
by the fireside.
On his right
there was a woman—
could there ever be
a woman so beautiful?—
one utterly awe-inspiring
for her beauty,
for her comeliness.
The brightness of her face
was like the rising sun.
It radiated
dazzling light.

Just then
Shipish-un-mat
seized
the young woman
and grasped her in her hands.
She darted out with her
through the smokehole.
At that time
the young woman
shrieked wildly,
her breast
heaving.
Her words were these:

³⁹ *Putu un chashi*, a fortification with a cover on it. The cover rises and falls. This type of stronghold is often mentioned in the epics, but it is uncertain what sort of building is meant by it. Perhaps there is some connection with the name of the place, Terke-santa, Hopuni-santa (“Jumping Santa,” “Flying Santa”).

⁴⁰ “Jumping Santa,” “Flying Santa.” Santa is the Ainu name for Manchuria or the area around the Amur estuary. The ethnic group called Santan by the Japanese may be the Goldi or the Ol’cha, groups that speak closely related languages of the Tunguso-Manchurian group.

“A stranger from an unknown country
 is carrying me off
 a prisoner!
 My elder brother,
 hurry to my rescue!”
 Thus did she speak.

Just then
 the shouts uttered by
 the master of the house
 could be heard resounding.
 He came trailing
 right after
 the young woman.
 He darted out
 through the smokehole.
 Just then
 I darted
 a fierce sword thrust at him.
 I sliced him
 into several bits.
 His life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.

After that
 Shipish-un-mat
 dragged
 the young woman
 along after her,
 knocking her against
 the large rocks
 and the small rocks
 with loud cracking noises.

Feelings of sympathy
 sprang up in me.
 I came very near
 to killing
 Shipish-un-mat
 as we went on until
 by and by
 Shipish-un-mat
 sliced
 into several bits
 the young woman
 she was holding in her arms.
 Her life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.

After that
 we went on until [we reached]
 a place which seemed to be
 the land of Chirinnai
 which had been mentioned before.
 Battle mists
 were hanging
 over the land.
 In the meantime
 at frequent intervals
 many gods dying
 countless gods dying
 could be heard rumbling together
 with loud crashes.
 The companion spirits
 of my elder sister,
 Chiwashpet-un-mat,
 were emitting

many mournful rumblings
which went crashing down low
over the surface of the ground.

I rushed
to her rescue.
When I reached her,
I looked and saw
my elder sister,
who had been
such an imposing woman.
Only her chest
was still attached
to her robes.
Only her backbone
had they been unable to get at.
Her entrails
were hanging out.
By now
she would swing her sword once or twice,
and in the intervals
she would faint
and then regain consciousness.
Even during this time
she continued to strive
at slashing at the foe.
But
when I
dropped down
by her side,
as soon as she caught sight of me,
tears welled up
in her eyes.
As she wept.

she uttered words,
saying these things:

“O god whom I have raised,
listen well
to what I have to say!
Since I am
a wretched woman,
it would not be
bad for the land,
bad for the country
if I were to die.
But you,
if you were to die,
it would be bad for the land.⁴¹
Strive on fiercely,
fight on valiantly!
If you carry on
after I am gone,
my heart
will be content.”
Thus did she speak.

After that
I wielded my sword
all around her.
Just as before,
the numbers that I slew,
the numbers that I killed
were but few
in comparison with the swordfighting of
Shipish-un-mat.
Wherever she passed,
the corpses mowed down like grass

⁴¹ A patriotic expression frequently encountered in the epics in such situations. The speaker's concern for the welfare of the homeland (the land of the *yaunkur*) is emphasized. The hero alone is capable of defending the homeland, and his death would be a disaster for the country.

lay stretched out in the distance.
 So many human corpses
 were lying spread out
 over the ground that
 my legs
 would get tangled up in them.

In the meantime
 my elder sister
 fell down
 headlong on the ground.
 A whole shower of spears
 came plunging down
 toward her.
 I pulled her out
 from under them
 and held her in my grip.
 I sliced her
 into several bits
 as I held her in my arms.
 I swung her up
 toward the heavens.
 While doing this,
 I uttered words,
 saying these things:

“O gods worshiped by
 my father,
 Chiwashpet-un-mat
 has raised me
 well.
 Even though she is
 enemy offspring,
 restore her to life

for me, I pray!”

While I spoke these words,
 I swung her up
 right into the sky.
 From my hands,
 becoming a new spirit,
 becoming a living spirit,
 she went rumbling off
 toward the top of the land,
 the land of the *yaunkur*.

After that,
 the two of us,
 Shipish-un-mat
 and I fought on until
 finally
 the land of Chirinnai
 had been ravaged
 completely.

Then
 tears came streaming
 down the face of
 Shipish-un-mat.
 As she wept,
 she uttered words,
 saying these things:

“The land of Chirinnai
 is now a land
 with no human warriors
 of any importance
 left in it.

Nevertheless,
 to the west of
 the land of Chirinnai
 the storm demon,
 the bad weather demon
 dwells
 together with his younger sister.
 Besides that,
 a numerous race of
kuruisse demons
 dwells
 to the west of
 the land of Chirinnai.
 If the *kuruisse*
 make war on us,
 as they are likely to do,
 their war
 will be worse than
 two or three human battles.
 It is uncertain
 whether
 the two of us
 will be able
 to survive.
 After the war of the *kuruisse*
 is finished,
 the storm demon,
 the bad weather demon
 will make war on us.
 The woman demon
 will attack me
 separately.
 The man
 will come against you.

Since you are a man,
 you will succeed
 in killing
 the bad weather demon.
 Since I am a woman,
 the younger sister of
 the bad weather demon
 will attack me.
 Even though I am
 only a dabbler in shamanism,
 it seems likely
 that I will succeed
 in slaying her.
 If you fight
 only halfheartedly,
 the fiend
 will slay me
 before your eyes,
 and this will not
 suit you in the least.”
 Thus did she speak.

Just then,
 to the west of
 the land of Chirinnai
 a black mist
 arose.
 Before long,
 that mist
 descended
 right over us.
 It felt
 exactly as if
 I was being thrust into

a black abyss.
 After that
 bird-like creatures
 could be heard flying
 all around me
 with whirring, whistling sounds.
 At the same time
 shallow gashes
 and deep gashes
 were gouged on my body.
 Excruciating pains
 shot through my inwards.
 There was something
 gleaming brightly
 at the tip of my sword.
 I couldn't tell
 when it was daytime
 and when it was nighttime.
 I went raging around everywhere
 within the mist,
 the black mist.

This continued until
 I reached a point where
 only my chest
 was still attached
 to my robes.
 Only my backbone
 had they been unable to get at.
 I would faint
 sometimes during the fighting.⁴²

I continued in this way until
 the black mist

disappeared in
 the skies.
 There was good weather
 everywhere.
 I had no idea at all
 what sort of creatures
 I had been fighting.
 Just then,
 Shipish-un-mat
 blew puffs of breath
 on my body.
 No sooner had she done so,
 my large wounds
 and my small wounds
 mended themselves together
 and were healed.
 Shipish-un-mat
 blew puffs of breath
 on her own body.
 No sooner had she done so,
 her large wounds
 and her small wounds
 mended themselves together.
 The robes I wore
 made my old ones
 seem insignificant
 in comparison.

Then once again
 to the west of the land,
 the land of Chirinnai,
 a mist of storm clouds,
 a bad weather mist
 rose up.

⁴² Or, I fainted during some fighting.

The clouds spread out
 over the face of the land,
 over the face of the sea.
 Bad weather
 came dropping down.

Just then
 a creature came this way—
 could it be a human?
 His naked skin
 was mangy.
 His face
 was like
 a cliff after a landslide.
 He looked like
 a small mountain
 with arms growing out of it
 and legs growing out of it.
 He wore in his belt
 a sword big as a boat's scull.
 Close behind him
 came
 a woman wearing
 leather armor
 made from the leather of land animals
 and the leather of sea animals
 sewn together.
 She advanced
 toward
 Shipish-un-mat,
 grasping in her hand
 a red knife.
 It clinked musically
 next to her face.

Shipish-un-mat
 darted
 fierce sword strokes at her,
 and she darted
 countless stabs,
 many stabs at her.
 In the meantime
 the naked man
 darted
 fierce sword strokes at me.
 I was unwilling
 to die outright.
 Therefore,
 I dodged here and there
 like a bright breeze
 between the sweeps
 of the chieftain's blade.
 In return
 I also darted
 fierce sword strokes at him,
 but
 none of them
 struck home.
 Even though I struck
 a number of good blows
 and a number of bad blows,
 wherever my blade would strike
 it would bounce
 right off.
 I didn't know
 how I could ever
 get at him.

Then by and by,

I looked and
 discovered
 the place where the cords
 of his armor were fastened together.
 I took
 careful aim.
 Finally
 I held my sword
 in my hands
 like a good spear.
 I stabbed mightily.
 Thanks to a stroke of luck,
 it was like a spear blow against something soft,
 and there was the sound of ripping flesh
 at the tip of my spear.

The naked man,
 whom I had thought all along
 to be a human being,
 went sprawling out flat
 over the face of the sea.
 It turned out, after all,
 to be merely armor.
 Some sort of creature
 came springing out
 from inside the armor.
 Although I had
 expected that
 it would be a grown man,
 it was
 a mere child,
 a young boy.
 It was incredible
 how the bad weather demon

could ever be
 so beautiful.
 He had a single cloth
 wrapped around him.
 A god-given sword
 was thrust under his belt.
 He uttered words,
 saying these things:

“It is astounding,
 Poiyaunpe—
 is it possible that
 you are a human?
 The gods,
 even the most ferocious gods,
 have never been able
 to destroy
 my armor,
 but now
 you have destroyed it.
 Be that as it may,
 well-matched chieftains
 ought to fight each other
 without armor,
 and even should both of them perish,
 the fame of it
 will rise up
 from the head of the country
 to the foot of the country.
 Now let us test
 each other’s valor!”

As he said these words,
 he drew his sword

with a flash over his arms.
 He darted
 fierce sword strokes at me.
 But
 like a bright breeze
 I fluttered
 between his thrusts.
 Then in return
 I darted
 fierce sword strokes at him.
 We flashed our swords
 back and forth together.
 This continued until
 by and by,
 thanks to a stroke of luck,
 I managed to slash him,
 and there was the sound of slicing flesh
 at the tip of my sword.
 His slices
 dropped down
 over the surface of the sea.
 His life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.
 After that was over,
 everything grew quiet all around.

In their own separate battle
 Shipish-un-mat
 and the bad weather demon's
 younger sister
 were flashing their swords
 back and forth together.
 She struck

a number of good blows
 and a number of bad blows
 on the leather armor,
 but wherever her blade would strike
 it would bounce
 right off.
 Undeterred,
 Shipish-un-mat
 continued to strike
 good blows and bad blows.
 Then quite suddenly
 fierce sprays of blood
 went spurting up
 from her body.

I went up
 by her side and
 examined
 the leather armor
 carefully all over.
 After a while
 I discovered
 the place where the cords
 of her armor were fastened together.
 I held my sword
 in my hands
 like a good spear.
 I aimed the spear
 at the armor's cords.
 Thanks to a stroke of luck,
 it was like a spear blow against something soft,
 and there was the sound of ripping flesh
 at the tip of my spear.

The leather armor
 went sprawling out flat
 over the surface of the sea,
 and a young woman
 came springing out
 from inside the armor.
 Although I had thought
 that Shipish-un-mat
 could alone be
 so beautiful,
 the bad weather demon's
 younger sister,
 being a deity,
 surpassed her
 in her divine beauty.

At that time,
 she covered her nose
 and covered her mouth in amazement
 and spoke these words:

“Is it possible,
 Poiyaunpe,
 that you are a human?
 Even the gods
 have never been able
 to destroy
 my armor,
 but now
 you have destroyed it.
 Without their armor
 the gods
 are soft, and so
 you will probably

succeed in slaying me.
 Even so, should I die
 by your sword,
 my heart
 will be content
 after death.
 Do not, on any account,
 let Shipish-un-mat
 slash me!”
 Thus did she speak.

No sooner had she said this,
 Shipish-un-mat
 poured forth
 a stream of curses.
 These were her words.

“What strange words are these?
 I detest
 the words spoken by
 the wretched maiden!
 Women also
 ought to test
 each other's valor
 without armor.
 Then, even should both of them perish,
 the fame of it
 will rise up
 after death.
 Even while you had
 this godly form,
 you still wore
 leather armor
 made from the leather of sea animals

and the leather of land animals
 sewn together,
 so that I wasn't able
 even to slash you.
 On the other hand,
 you were able to slash me,
 and now it is my turn
 to return the blows.
 For what reason
 are you now saying
 that you don't want
 me to slash you?
 What is this you say?"

As she said these words,
 she darted
 fierce sword strokes
 at the bad weather demoness.
 Just as she was getting up,
 she sliced her
 into several bits.
 After that
 her life-spirit
 was heard flying up
 with a loud roaring.
 Just before
 she died utterly,
 she became a living spirit
 and was heard going off
 toward the east
 with a loud roaring.

At that time
 the young woman,

Shipish-un-mat,
 spoke these words:

"After we left,
 Kamui-otopush
 and Shipish-un-kur
 continued to fight until
 Shipish-un-kur
 was quite defeated.
 As usually happens
 when a brave warrior
 is slain,
 he became an utterly dead spirit
 and went away to
 the land of the gods.

"Now then,
 since I am
 an enemy offspring,
 if you will kill me
 right now
 with your own hands,
 my heart
 will be content
 even after death.
 On the other hand,
 if you take
 pity on me,
 you may
 take me with you
 to your native land.

"Another thing is this.
 It is no good

to exceed
 one's powers
 in warfare.
 Let us go
 to your native land
 and rest
 between battles.
 Please agree
 to my request!"
 Thus did she speak.

After that
 we headed
 in the direction of
 my native country.
 We made our way
 along the shores
 of many countries of the *repunkur*.
 After some time,
 the land which is called
 Tumisanpet
 Shinutapkashi
 rose up high
 toward us.
 The house which had been
 my father's
 long ago
 stood there
 majestically.
 We dropped down
 at the head of
 the path leading down to the beach.
 Then I called out again and again
 with soft cries

and loud cries.
 While I called,
 I uttered words,
 saying these things:

"Kamui-otopush
 and Chiwashpet-un-mat—
 have they arrived
 or have they not?
 If they have
 not arrived,
 I will go
 right away
 to the land of the *repunkur*
 once again."

When I said this,
 a herald
 called out soft cries
 and loud cries.
 In his cries
 he uttered words,
 saying these things:

"Kamui-otopush
 has finished his battles
 and has returned.
 Chiwashpet-un-mat,
 she also,
 has been restored to life
 by the gods,
 has returned,
 and is here."
 He said these words.

After that
 I went to
 my father's stronghold.
 When I went inside,
 it was indeed true:
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 had finished his battles
 and was there.
 Chiwashpet-un-mat,
 who had apparently been
 restored to life by the gods,
 looked even more beautiful
 than before.
 It was indeed true:
 my eldest brother
 and my eldest sister
 were there.
 We waved swords
 at each other in salutation
 up to the point of slashing each other,
 even going beyond slashing each other.

After that
 we lived on until
 one day
 my eldest brother
 Yai-pirka-kur
 spoke these words:

"I have not been
 a good eldest brother.
 Yet please agree
 to my request!

Chiwashpet-un-mat
 took pity on
 our younger brother,
 and thanks to her
 his life was saved.
 During the battles,
 the young woman
 of Shipish
 came to the assistance of
 our younger brother,
 and thanks to her
 his life was saved.
 We are
 grateful.
 Come now,
 let Kamui-otopush,
 my younger brother,
 marry Chiwashpet-un-mat.
 They will be a well-matched couple."
 Thus did he speak.

Then once again
 he turned
 toward me and
 spoke these words:

"O god whom we have raised,
 listen well
 to what I have to say!
 The young woman
 Shipish-un-mat
 has endured
 painful trials
 by your side

in battle.
 Marry her.
 Then all your lives,
 in every battle
 you will protect
 and guard each other.
 Give your assent,
 I pray!’’
 Thus did he speak.

Then once again,
 one day
 he spoke these words:

‘‘Until this day
 my younger brothers
 have been leading lives of hardship,
 doing nothing but fighting wars.
 This is why
 we have gone on
 without even
 brewing wine.
 Now let us brew
 a little wine,
 invite
 our nearby relatives
 and distant relatives,
 and have a feast!’’

When he spoke these words,
 Kamui-otopush,
 my elder brother,
 agreed.
 His heart was

suddenly relieved.
 Going to the storehouse,
 with his own hands
 he rolled out
 six baskets.
 He brewed wine
 in six wine-tubs.
 When two or three days
 had gone by,
 the odor of the wine
 began to hover everywhere
 inside the house.
 Now when
 the wine was ready,
 messages of invitation
 were sent out.
 As the guests,
 Shishiripet-un-kur⁴³
 together with his younger sister, and
 Iyochi-un-kur
 together with his younger sister
 were invited.
 They arrived, and
 the circle was closed.

My elder brothers
 exchanged greetings.
 After they were finished,
 the peerless feast
 got under way.
 We continued to feast
 all night long
 without sleeping.
 After it was over,

⁴³ Shishiripet is an unidentified name. Batchelor says that the Shishiripet river is the Ishikari river.

Iyochi-un-kur
spoke these words:

“Come now,
listen well
to the well-meaning request
which I have to utter!
We have been
living together
with only our younger sisters
and up till now
we have not
taken wives.
Therefore,
let me give
Iyochi-un-mat,
my younger sister,
to your eldest brother.
In exchange,
I want to marry
Shinutapka-un-mat.”
Thus did he speak.

Then

my eldest brother
agreed.

After that
my eldest sister
wrapped a carrying cord
around a large woman's bag.
She went together
with Iyochi-un-kur
to his village.
Iyochi-un-mat
was given in marriage to
my eldest brother, and
we lived on and on
uneventfully.
Kamui-otopush
married
Chiwashpet-un-mat.
The young woman,
Shipish-un-mat,
was given to me in marriage,
and we lived on and on
uneventfully
and peacefully.

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