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Abstract: Although national learning and Chinese learning seemed to stand on opposite poles, they had a much more complicated relationship. While many Tokugawa Confucians engaged themselves in the study of ancient Japanese classics, historical records, and religion, *kokugaku* scholars also read Chinese texts as well as the Confucian classics, using them either as useful references or negative examples. The *Yijing* (Book of Changes) was a text of particular interest to *kokugaku* scholars. Using the *kokugaku* thinker Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) and his school as main references, this study examines how *kokugaku* scholars transformed the *Yijing* from a Chinese Confucian classic into a Japanese Shinto text. Through an investigation of the uses and appropriation of the *Yijing* among *kokugaku* scholars, this study aims to analyze the nature of *kokugaku*, the relationship between Confucianism and *kokugaku*, and the localization of Chinese learning in the Tokugawa period.

The Shintoization of the *Yijing* in Hirata Atsutane's *Kokugaku*

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Introduction

Different schools of culture and thought, such as *kangaku* 漢學 (Chinese learning), *kokugaku* 國學 (national learning) and *rangaku* 蘭學 (Dutch learning), reached their apex during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), competing with and influencing each other. *Kokugaku* was a nativist discourse that underscored traditional or indigenous beliefs, values, and aesthetics. In the *kokugaku* order of knowledge, Chinese culture played the role of “the other,” often marginalized and demonized in cross-cultural comparison.¹ Although national learning and Chinese learning seemed to stand on opposite sides, they had a much more complicated relationship. Many Tokugawa Confucians also engaged themselves in the study of ancient Japanese classics, historical records, and religion, and some even advocated the doctrine of *shinju gōitsu* 神儒合一 (unity of Shinto and Confucianism).² Likewise, *kokugaku* scholars also read Chinese texts and Confucian classics, using them either as useful references or negative examples.³ The *Yijing* (Book of Changes) was a text of particular interest to *kokugaku* scholars.⁴ Using the *kokugaku* thinker Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776-1843) and his school as main references, this study examines how *kokugaku* scholars transformed the *Yijing* from a Chinese Confucian classic into a Japanese Shinto text. Through an investigation of the uses and appropriation of the *Yijing* among *kokugaku* scholars, this study aims to analyze the nature of *kokugaku*,

¹ Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730-1801) was a representative *kokugaku* scholar who built his national identity and developed his nativist ideas in opposition to Chinese culture. See Matsumoto Shigeru 松本滋, *Motoori Norinaga no shisō to shinri: aidentitī tankyū no kiseki* 本居宣長の思想と心理：アイデンティティー探求の軌跡 (The Thought and Psychology of Motoori Norinaga: His Search for Identity) (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1981). His *Naobi no mitama* 直昆靈 (The Rectifying Spirit) puts Confucianism and Shinto on opposite sides. See Ogasawara Haruo 小笠原春夫, *Koku-ju ronsō no kenkyū : Naobi no mitama o kiten to shite* 国儒論争の研究：直昆靈を起点として (A Study of the Conflict between *Kokugaku* and Confucianism: The *Naobi no mitama* as the Point of Departure) (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1988).

² See Zhang Kunjiang 張崑將, “Ribei Dechuan shidai shenru jianshe xuezhe dui ‘shendao’ ‘rudao’ de jieshi tese,” 日本徳川時代神儒兼攝學者對「神道」「儒道」的解釋特色 (The Characteristics of Confucian-Shintoist Thinkers’ Interpretation of Shinto and Confucianism in Tokugawa Japan), *Taida wenshizhe xuebao* 臺大文史哲學報 58 (March 2003), pp. 141-180. See also Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570-1680* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), chapters 6-7.

³ Peter Nosco believes that in the seventeenth century, *kokugaku* and Confucianism were basically not at odds with each other and they only became more confrontational after the eighteenth century. He uses Kada no Azumamaro, Kamo no Mabuchi, and Motoori Norinaga as examples to demonstrate this change. See Peter Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1990).

⁴ Wai-ming Ng, *The I Ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), pp. 96-113.

the relationship between Confucianism and *kokugaku*, and the localization of Chinese learning in the Tokugawa period.

Kokugaku's Attitudes towards the Yijing before Hirata Atsutane

Early and mid-Tokugawa *kokugaku* scholars tended to see the *Yijing* in a negative light, either ignoring or criticizing it. This attitude can be found in Kada no Azumamaro 荷田春満 (1669 -1736) and Kamo no Mabuchi 賀茂真淵 (1697-1769) who focused on Japanese history, literature, or religion and were not particularly interested in Confucianism and Chinese culture.⁵ However, the divinational and metaphysical values of the *Yijing* were recognized by such early *kokugaku* scholars as Amano Sadakage 天野信景 (1663-1733) and Yoshimi Yukikazu 吉見幸和 (1672-1761). Sadakage, a retainer of the Owari domain 尾張藩, studied Japanese texts under the Shintoist Watarai Nobuyoshi 度會延佳 (1615-1690), but also read Chinese books and Confucian writings. He wrote the *Kokon ekikai* 古今易解 (Explanations of the *Yijing*, Past and Present), *Sōeki engi* 宋易衍義 (An Explanation of Song Commentaries on the *Yijing*), and *Shūeki medogi zukai* 周易著木圖解 (An Illustrative Explanation of the Yarrow Stalks Used in the *Zhouyi*). Yukikazu was a Shinto priest in the Owari domain. He was influenced by Suika Shinto 垂加神道 and the Zhu Xi 朱熹 school of Confucianism. He was interested in the oracle of the *Yijing* and wrote the *Shūeki zeigi kuden* 周易筮儀口傳 (The Oral Transmission of Divination of the *Zhouyi*).

Compared with early Tokugawa *kokugaku* scholars, Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) was more critical of Confucian values. Like the naturalism in Lao-Zhuang 老莊 Daoism, Norinaga criticized the so-called ancient Chinese sages for making such artificial constructs as morality, law, and institutions to rule. To Norinaga, there was no fundamental difference between the *Yijing* and other Confucian classics, regarding it as a tool created and used by Chinese sages to deceive the people. He remarked: “Confucians believe that they have grasped the meaning of the universe through the creation of the *Yijing* and its very profound words. But all that is only a deception to win people over and be masters over them.”⁶ At the age of 23, he studied Confucianism under Hori Keizan 堀景山 (1688-1757), a Confucian physician who combined the Zhu Xi school with the Sorai School 徂徠學 in his interpretation of Chinese classics.⁷ During this period, Norinaga read Zhu Xi's (1130-1200) *Yixue qimeng* 易學啟蒙 (Enlightenment on the Study of the *Yijing*), but

⁵ Mabuchi and his school in Edo did not see Chinese Confucianism as something necessarily incompatible with Japanese tradition. See Mark McNally, *Proving the Way: Conflict and Practice in the History of Japanese Nativism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), p. 23. Nevertheless, Mabuchi criticized China's ancient sages for replacing natural law with human wisdom and endorsing the evil ideas of revolution and the abdication of the throne. See Peter Flueckiger, *Imagining Harmony: Poetry, Empathy, and Community in Mid-Tokugawa Confucianism and Nativism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 155-65. This view had a strong impact on Norinaga. See also Nosco, *Remembering Paradise*, pp. 136-51. Azumamaro was critical of Confucianism and Chinese studies, but he employed *yinyang wuxing* theory to explain the *Nihon shoki*. See *Remembering Paradise*, pp. 87, 91-93.

⁶ Modified from Harry Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 99.

⁷ Keizan was also interested in *kokugaku* and was befriended by Motoori Norinaga, Keichū 契沖 (1640-1701), and Higuchi Munetake 樋口宗武 (1674-1754).

did not leave a deep impression.⁸ He looked down upon the *Yijing* as a profound-looking “white elephant” (*muyō no chōbutsu* 無用の長物) and its *yinyang wuxing* 陰陽五行 (*yin-yang* and five phases) doctrine as a stupid speculation that could not explain the mysteries of the universe.

The *yinyang wuxing* theory in Shina 支那 [China] was not the way founded by the deities in the beginning [of creation]. The [Chinese] sages used their wits, believing that the theory could be used to explain everything. However, we should know that their knowledge was limited and they were no match for the way of the deities.⁹

Hence, Norinaga disapproved of Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583-1657) and Watarai Nobuyoshi using such *Yijing*-related concepts as *taiji* 太極 (supreme ultimate), *yinyang wuxing*, *sancai* 三才 (three powers), and hexagrams to explain the Age of the Gods and Shinto teachings.¹⁰ In reconstructing the Age of the Gods, he preferred the *Kojiki* 古事記 (Records of Ancient Matters, 712) to the Chinese-influenced *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (Chronicles of Japan, 720).¹¹ The *Nihon shoki* identifies Izanagi 伊弉諾 and Izanami 伊弉冉, the two central deities in the Japanese creation myth, with *yinyang* and *qiankun* 乾坤 (the first two hexagrams) respectively. Razan and Nobuyoshi were the champions of this theory in the early Tokugawa period and thus were under severe attack from Norinaga. In regard to some Tokugawa Confucians and Shintoists who used the *Yijing*-related concepts to elucidate the gender of Amaterasu-ōmikami 天照大神, the Sun Goddess and the divine ancestor of the Japanese imperial family according to Shinto myth. He remarked:

You can conclude that using the concepts from the *Yijing* to explain why the Sun Goddess was a female and making things in accordance with the principle of *yinyang* are stupid thoughts. Early scholars cited the principle of the hexagrams of the *Yijing*, and present-day people followed. The *Yijing* and the principle of *yinyang* are fallacies.¹²

⁸ Muraoka Tsunetsugu 村岡典嗣, *Motoori Norinaga* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1941), p. 13, 21.

⁹ Motoori Norinaga, *Kuzuka* 葛花 (*Pueraria lobata*), in Dai-Nippon shisō zenshū kankōkai 大日本思想全集刊行會, ed., *Dai-Nippon shisō zenshū 9* 大日本思想全集第九卷 (Tokyo: Dai Nippon shisō zenshū kankōkai, 1933), Part 2, p. 166. Despite holding negative views of China, Norinaga read Chinese texts throughout his life.

¹⁰ Regarding Razan’s and Nobuyoshi’s attempts to apply the *yinyang wuxing* theory to explain Shinto, see Ng, *The I Ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture*, pp. 97-98, 102-3. On Norinaga’s criticism of Razan and Nobuyoshi in this regard, see Motoori Norinaga, *Kojiki den* 古事記伝 (Commentary on the *Kojiki*), in Umezawa Isezō 梅澤伊勢三 and Takahashi Miyuki 高橋美由紀, annot., *Shintō taikai: ronsetsuhen 25, Fukko shintō 3, Motoori Norinaga* 神道大系：論說編 25 復古神道 3 本居宣長 (Tokyo: Shintō taikai hensankai, 1982), p. 331, 386.

¹¹ *Kojiki den*, pp. 176-77; Shigeru Matsumoto, *Motoori Norinaga* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 89.

¹² *Kuzuka*, Part 2, p. 169.

Many early Tokugawa Confucians, including Hayashi Razan, Yamaga Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622-1685) and Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728), cited this passage, “The sages, in accordance with spirit-like (*shintō*) way, laid down their instructions, and all under heaven yield submission to them,” from the hexagram *guan* 觀 (contemplation) to suggest that Shinto was also a way of the Chinese sages and both Shinto and Confucianism shared the same natural principle. Norinaga stressed that the term *shintō* came from the *Nihon shoki* and not the *Yijing*, and that Japanese Shinto and the way of the Chinese sages were fundamentally different.

However, a Chinese book [*Yijing*] reads: “The sages, in accordance with spirit-like (*shendao* or *shintō*) way, laid down their instructions.” Hence, some people believed that Shinto in my nation borrowed the name from it. These people do not have a mind to understand things. From the beginning, the meanings of gods in Japan have been different from those used by the Chinese. In that country [China], they explain gods and the universe in terms of *yinyang* of heaven and earth. Their discussion is only empty theory without substance. The deities of Japan were the ancestors of the current emperor and thus our discussion is by no means empty theory. The spirit-like way in the Chinese book is an unpredictable, strange idea. Shinto in Japan has been passed on from our ancestral deities and thus is different.¹³

All in all, in Norinaga’s thinking, China serves as a negative model or “the other” to highlight the superiority of Japan from a comparative perspective. For instance, China is a land of non-stop revolution, whereas Japan enjoys an unbroken line of imperial succession. The Chinese mind (漢意 *karagokoro*) is artificial and empty, but the Japanese heart (大和心 *Yamatogokoro*) is natural and true. The Japanese language is elegant, while Chinese is decorative.¹⁴

While Norinaga’s view of China represented the mainstream voice in *kokugaku* circles, there were *kokugaku* scholars who were more accommodating to the *Yijing* and other Chinese classics. Izumi Makuni 和泉真國 (1765-1805), a disciple of Norinaga and book dealer in Edo, was familiar with the Confucian classics and Chinese books, and in particular he liked to use the *Yijing* and *Zhongyong* 中庸 (Doctrine of the Mean) to explain the nature of Shinto, asserting that some of the ideas in these two texts were in agreement with Shinto.¹⁵ As a *kokugaku* scholar, he underscored the superiority of Japan over China in terms of morality and longevity and denied Confucian and Chinese impact on Shinto. Taking sincerity 誠 (*cheng* in Chinese, *makoto* in Japanese) as an example, Makuni pointed out both Japan and China put emphasis on this virtue, but *cheng* in Confucianism was an empty theory, while *makoto* in Shinto was a feasible lifestyle.

¹³ Motoori Norinaga, *Naobi no mitama* 直昆靈, in *Shintō taikai: ronsetsuhen* 25, *Fukko shintō* 2, Motoori Norinaga pp. 17-18.

¹⁴ Nosco, *Remembering Paradise*, pp. 186-89, 195-98. See also Susan Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 95-97.

¹⁵ Izumi Makuni, *Meidō sho* 明道書 (Book to Explain the Way, publ. 1830), in Haga Noboru 芳賀登 and Matsumoto Sannosuke 松本三之介, annot., *Nihon shisō taikai* 51, *Kokugaku undō no shisō* 日本思想大系 51 国学運動の思想 (The Thought of the Nativist Movement) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1971), p. 151.

The *Zhouyi* and *Zhongyong* are fine books with many right words. However, the so-called way of sincerity has been impractical and unprofitable armchair theory since the founding of China. Our imperial nation did not have a name for the Way or books to teach it. The Way has been carried out for ten thousand generations from the Age of the Gods. Its benefits can be seen even now.¹⁶

Ban Nobutomo 伴信友 (1773-1846), a student of Norinaga's adopted son, Motoori Ōhira 本居大平 (1756-1833), was interested in the oracles of the *Yijing*. He compared methods of divination in Japan and China in the *Shūeki shiron* 周易私論 (My Personal Views of the *Zhouyi*, also entitled *Ekisenben* 易占辨 [Debating the *Yijing* Oracles], 1834).¹⁷ Norinaga denied the value of the divination of the *Yijing* in the *Naobi no mitama* because it was invented by Chinese sages and did not originate from the gods. Nobutomo was more flexible in choosing ways to divine. According to his study, the Japanese used deer bones to divine in antiquity, but turned to consult the *Yijing* in the Tokugawa period. Although the *Yijing* was a divinational manual of foreign origin, he believed that if the users were sincere, the oracle would be accurate. In regard to the divination of the *Yijing*, he remarked: "Introduced to my nation, its divination has been used for a long time. If the people use its oracle to communicate with the deities, we cannot deny that its oracles can be accurate."¹⁸ While acknowledging the divinational value of the *Yijing*, he was mindful of the fact that people should not consult the oracles too often.

Hirata Atsutane and His Appropriation of the *Yijing*

Hirata Atsutane and his school changed the direction of the study and the uses of the *Yijing* in *kokugaku*. Seeing Norinaga as his spiritual mentor, Atsutane at first adopted the views of the *Yijing* from Norinaga and thus opposed the use of *yinyang wuxing* and Confucian concepts to explicate Shinto. Like Norinaga, he divided Shinto into Chinese Shinto and Japanese Shinto. He maintained that Chinese Shinto associated with the *Yijing* was an empty theory, because the notion of god did not really exist in either Chinese history or Confucian thought. In contrast, Japanese Shinto was a living principle manifested and implemented uninterruptedly in Japanese history from Amaterasu to the current emperor.¹⁹

Atsutane seldom studied Confucian classics in his early years. At the age of eighteen, he was scolded by his father for failing to read the *Yijing* and *Lunyu* 論語 (The Analects). As a punishment, he was not allowed to wear a sword. At the age of twenty, he began to study Chinese books seriously. Having read many Confucian classics and Chinese historical writings, he was able to cite Chinese sources extensively and write in Chinese in his own writings. In his later years, he became

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁷ He also wrote the *Ekikōsetsu* 易考説 (An Investigation of the *Yijing*), *Ekisenkō* 易占考 (An Investigation of the Divination of the *Yijing*), and *Ekisen mondō* 易占問答 (Question and Answer about the *Yijing* Oracles).

¹⁸ Ban Nobutomo, *Shūeki shiron*, in Kokusho kankōkai 國書刊行會, ed., *Ban Nobutomo zenshū* 5 伴信友全集 5 (Complete Writings of Ban Nobutomo, Vol. 5), (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1909), p. 157.

¹⁹ See Kiyohara Sadao 清原貞雄, *Kokugaku hattatsushi* 國學發達史 (The History of Kokugaku) (Tokyo: Unebi shobō, 1940), pp. 315-316.

absorbed in the study of the *Yijing* and developed his own views that changed the direction of discussion of the text in *kokugaku* circles. In his reading of the *Yijing*, he found out that many of its ideas were in agreement with Shinto and could be used to explicate and enrich Shinto. Atsutane fully understood the dilemma that praising a Chinese text could create problems in cultural identity and put himself in the position of Confucian Shinto that Norinaga criticized severely. In order to solve this problem, he advocated a very innovative view about the history of the *Yijing* by reinterpreting the theory of the three versions of the *Yijing* (*sanyishuo* 三易說).

According to Chinese tradition, the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties each had its own version of the *Yijing*; they were *Lianshan* 連山 by Fuxi 伏羲, *Guicang* 歸藏 by Shennong 神農 and Huangdi 黃帝, and *Zhouyi* by King Wen 文王 respectively.²⁰ Most Chinese Confucians regarded the *Zhouyi* as the best edition, but Atsutane disagreed. He praised the *Lianshan* and *Guicang* as works of wisdom transmitted orally in the Xia and Shang eras and condemned King Wen for compiling the *Zhouyi* based on the distortion and corruption of the *Lianshan* and *Guicang*. Of the three versions of the *Yijing*, only the *Zhouyi* survived and thus the real meaning of the *Yijing* was lost in transmission. Atsutane offered his own interpretation of the theory of the three versions of the *Yijing* in the *San'eki yuraiki* 三易由來記 (The Origins of the Three Versions of the *Yijing*, 1835) and *Taiko koekiden* 太昊古易傳 (The Old Edition of the *Yijing* by Tai Hao 太昊 [Fu Xi], 1836). In the *Kōshi seisetsu kō* 孔子聖說考 (An Investigation of the Theory about Confucius as the Sage) and *Sango hongokukō* 三五本國考 (An Investigation of the Japanese Origins of the Three Sovereigns and the Five Emperors), he alleged that the sage-kings of ancient China were manifestations of Japanese Shinto deities and that Fuxi, Shennong, and Huangdi, the three alleged authors of the *Yijing*, were no exceptions.²¹ The beginning of the *Sango hongokukō* reads:

²⁰ This theory first appeared in the *Zhouli* 周禮 (The Rites of Zhou) and *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (The Classic of the Mountains and Seas) and became well-known in the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States period (770-221 B.C.E.). The Song scholar Zhu Yuansheng 朱元昇 (d. 1275) and the late Ming scholar Huang Daozhou 黃道周 (1585-1646) elaborated this theory in the *Sanyi beiyi* 三易備遺 (Supplementary Notes on the Three Versions of the *Yijing*) and *Sanyi dongji* 三易洞璣 (Revealing the Nature of the Three Versions of the *Yijing*) respectively.

²¹ Seeing the ancient Chinese sage-kings as the manifestations of Japanese deities and ancient Chinese classics as works of Japanese deities were not Atsutane's original ideas. Motoori Norinaga, in his *Kojiki den*, suggested that Fuxi, Shennong, Huangdi, Yao, and Shun were all manifestations of Sukuna-bikona-no-kami 少名毘古那神, the Shinto deity of medicine, rain, crops, and wine. His view, based on the story in the *Kojiki* about this deity going to Tokoyo-no-kuni 常世の国 (land of immortality) from Kumano, was probably inspired by the Buddhist doctrine of *honchi suijaku* 本地垂迹 (Shinto deities as local manifestations of Buddha), Norinaga's assertion was criticized by his fellow *kokugaku* scholar Ueda Akinari 上田秋成 (1734-1809). Furthermore, the Suika Shintoist, Suzuki Teisai 鈴木貞齋 (d. 1740), suggested that some Chinese classics were written by Shinto deities in the *Shingaku kokinben* 神學古今辯 (The Comparison of Shinto Schools: Past and Present). See Denki gakkai 傳記學會, ed., *Yamazaki Ansai to sono monryū* 山崎闇齋とその門流 (Yamazaki Ansai and His School) (Tokyo: Meiji shobō, 1933), p. 268.

The three and five refer to the Three Sovereigns and the Five Emperors. They were not born in that country [China] but were indeed the deities of my country. Having seen the stupidity of the people in China, they went across the ocean to cultivate them.²²

In the *Taiko koekiden*, Atsutane maintained that Fuxi was the manifestation of Ōmono nushi no kami 大物主神:

Later, our deity, Ōmono nushi no kami, also known as Taikō fukki shi 大昊宓戲氏, granted the *Hetu* 河圖 (Yellow River Chart) and *Luo shu* 洛書 (Luo River Writing) and created the wonderful trigrams. Mastering the numerology of the universe, he communicated with gods and ghosts. Based on the images of the oracle bones, he invented Chinese characters. The so-called *Yijing* was exclusively used for cultivation.²³

Ōmono nushi no kami is an important Shinto deity, also called Miwa myōjin 三輪明神 (the Deity of Mount Miwa) and Ōkuni nushi no kami 大國主神. He is the serpent god, thunder god, and rain god, and his daughter was said to be the queen of the legendary emperor Jimmu. Atsutane attributed his ideas to Norinaga in the *Tama no mihashira* 霊の真柱 (The True Pillar of Spirit, 1812): “[Norinaga said]: ‘Later, Sukunabikona 少彦名神 (Sukuna-bikona-no-kami) descended from heaven to manage foreign nations.’ Atsutane added: ‘Besides Sukunabikona, Ōkuni nushi no kami also went to manage foreign nations.’”²⁴

He listed the names for Fuxi in China and Japan as follows:

Taiho Fuxi shi 太昊伏羲氏 (Taikō fukki shi) is also called Taiho paoxi shi 太昊庖犧氏, Cangdi 蒼帝, Chunhuang 春皇, Taihao shi 太皞氏, Muhuang 木皇, Taizhen dongwangfu 太真東王父, Mugong 木公, Qingdi 青帝, and Fusang dadi 扶桑大帝. Our Shinto text suggested that he was the manifestation of Ōkuni nushi no kami. Taiyi xiaozi 泰一小子, Donghaihuang qinghua xiaotongjun 東海王清華小童君, Donghua dashen qingtongjun 東華大神青童君, Fangzhu qingtongjun 方諸青童君 and Qingzhen xiaotongjun 青真小童君 are all manifestations of Sukuna-bikona-no-kami. I have investigated this issue in the *Sekiken taikoden* 赤縣太古傳 (The Legend of Ancient China), *Sango hongokukō*, *Kōkoku ishō kō* 皇國異稱考 (An Investigation of Different Names for Japan), and *Shunjū meirekijo kō* 春秋命歷序考 (A Study of the *Chunqiu minglixu kō*). Read them and you will understand.²⁵

²² Hirata Atsutane, *Sango hongokukō*, in National Diet Library of Japan, Request number 839-28, vol. 1, p. 1.

²³ Hirata Atsutane, *Taiko koekiden*, in Hirata Moritane 平田盛胤 and Miki Ioe 三木五百枝, eds., *Hirata Atsutane zenshū* 平田篤胤全集 (Complete Works of Hirata Atsutane) (Tokyo: Hōbunkan, 1935), vol. 6, p. 2.

²⁴ Hirata Atsutane, *Tama no mihashira*, in Tahara Tsuguo 田原嗣郎, ed., *Nihon shisō taikei* 50: *Hirata Atsutane, Ban Nobutomo, Ōkuni Takamasa* 日本思想大系 50 平田篤胤 伴信友、大國隆正 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1973), pp. 33-34.

²⁵ Hirata Atsutane, *Kōshi seisetsukō*, in National Diet Library of Japan, Request number

Fuxi was the first of the Three Sovereigns (*sanhuang* 三皇), also named Taihao 大昊 and Mixi 宓戲. According to tradition, Fuxi created trigrams, Chinese characters, and music and also taught people how to fish and hunt. Atsutane did not explain why he associated Fuxi with Ōmono nushi no kami. These two figures have little in common, except that both are serpent gods.

Why did Atsutane believe that Fuxi was indeed a Japanese deity? First, by citing Han Chinese texts such as the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (The Master of Huainan) and *Yiwei ganzaodu* 易緯乾鑿度 (Chiseling Open the Regularity of Heaven in the Apocrypha of the *Yijing*) that associated Fuxi with the elements of wood, he employed the *wuxing* 五行 (five phases) theory to argue that Fuxi came from Japan as the element of wood represents the East:

Fuxi lived in the East and he came to cultivate the foolish people with the virtue of wood. Hence, he was also called *chunhuang* (King of Spring) and *muhuang* (King of Wood).²⁶

Baihunagshi 柏皇氏 and Fuxi belonged to the virtue of wood. They came from the East, showing the images of the rising sun. This can be seen in the [*Da*]fusō kokukō [大]扶桑國考 (An Investigation of the Nation of Fusō).²⁷

Second, he cited Chinese texts to show that Fuxi also named Fusang dadi (Great Emperor of Fusō). In the *Dafusō kokukō*, he was fully convinced that Fusō was Japan and thus Fuxi was a Japanese deity:

Taiho Fuxi shi is called Taidi 太帝 in such texts as the *Huainanzi* and *Fengshanshu* 封禪書 (Book of the Ceremony of Heaven Worship) in the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian). It is also written as Taidi 泰帝. The *Shiji zhengyi* 史記正義 (Correct Meanings of the *Shiji*) and [*Shiji*] *suoyin* 史記索隱 (Seeking Hidden Meanings of the *Shiji*) also refer to Taiho Fuxi shi as Taidi 太帝. Daoist texts refer to him as Fusang dadi or Taizhen dongwangfu (Father of the Eastern Emperor). I have discussed this in my *Sango hongokukō*.²⁸

Likewise, Fuxi's other names including Donghua dashen (Great God of the Eastern Land) and Donghai xiaotong 東海小童 (Child of the Eastern Sea) were also used by Atsutane to uphold his assertion.²⁹

In regards to this question, "Why a Japanese deity had to go to China in antiquity?" he explained: "[Fuxi] was actually Ōmono nushi no kami, a deity of our divine nation of Fusō. He exploited that land [China] and taught its foolish people the

848-143, vol. 1, p. 1-2.

²⁶ Hirata Atsutane, *Sekiken taikoden seibun* (The Text of *The Legend of Ancient China*) (Tokyo: Ibukinoya, 1870), in National Diet Library of Japan, p. 1.

²⁷ *Sango hongokukō*, vol. 1, p. 13.

²⁸ Hirata Atsutane, *Dafusō kokukō* (An Investigation of the Great Nation of Fusō) (Tokyo: Ibukinoya, 1836), in National Diet Library of Japan, vol. 2, p. 14.

²⁹ Hirata Atsutane, *San'eki yuraiki* (Tokyo: Ibukinoya), in National Diet Library of Japan, vol. 1, p. 36.

way of human relations. He went [to China] for a short period and thus acquired a Chinese name.”³⁰

He elaborated this point further in the *San'eki yuraiki*:

Paoxishi is also called Taiho Fuxi shi. He was actually Ōmono nushi no kami, a deity of our divine nation of Fusō. He went to ancient China to exploit its land and became the emperor. He taught its foolish people the way of heaven, earth, and humanity. By observing the changes of the universe and everything, he created the trigrams. The *Sekiken taikoden* and this work have explained this idea implicitly.³¹

According to the *Kojiki*, Ōkuni nushi no kami had 180 children. Atsutane claimed that “Ōkuni nushi no kami travelled to foreign lands and his children went to foreign nations in the four corners.”³² Legendary emperors of the Xia dynasty were considered descendants of Fuxi:

Taiho Fuxi shi was actually our Ōmono nushi no kami who went to that country to rule and educate its people. I have heard that Yandi Shennongshi 炎帝神農氏 and Huangdi Youxiongshi 黃帝有熊氏 were descendants of Fuxi. Shaohao jintianshi 少昊金天氏 and Zhuanxu Gaoyangshi 顓頊高陽氏 were also his descendants. Owing to his great feats, his descendants flourished for many generations.³³

In the *Dafusō kokukō*, he added that founding gods (such as Nuwa 女媧), great emperors (such as Fuxi), and representative ministers (such as Yiyin 伊尹) of ancient China were mostly Japanese deities. Regarding the real identity of Fuxi, it reads: “Fuxi lived in the reign of Emperor Yan. In the early stage of civilization in that country [China], our Japanese deity descended from heaven to create a governance system and educate its people.... He sojourned there for a while. Wise men all came from Japan.”³⁴

In the *Shunjū meirekijo kō*, Atsutane, based on his own calculation, came to the conclusion that from the birth of Fuxi to the second year of the Tempō era (1833) when the book was written, 4892 years had passed.

Atsutane did not rate the *Zhouyi* highly as he saw it as a corrupt edition of the *Yijing*. He blamed King Wen for changing the order of the 64 hexagrams and the number of yarrow stalks used in oracles, and for adding the *Tuanci* 象辭 (Commentary on the Hexagram Statements) and *Yaoci* 爻辭 (Commentary on the Line Statements) in order to justify the revolution that overthrew the Shang dynasty:

Only the charts of the sixty-four hexagrams and the names of the hexagrams are correctly transmitted in the *Zhouyi*. The *Tuanci* and *Yaoci* were written by King Wen and his son to advocate their views. Hence, the rebellious idea of overthrowing the Yin regime was added into the hexagram and line statements implicitly. They saw this as an auspicious thing to do.³⁵

³⁰ *Taiko koekiden*, p. 6.

³¹ *San'eki yuraiki*, vol. 1, pp. 1-2.

³² *Sango hongokukō*, vol. 1, p. 24.

³³ Hirata Atsutane, *Seiseki gairon* 西籍概論 (An Introduction to Western [Chinese] Books, 1858), in National Diet Library of Japan, Request number: 838-20, vol. 1, p. 27.

³⁴ *Dafusō kokukō*, vol. 2, p. 30.

³⁵ *San'eki yuraiki*, vol. 1, pp. 15-16.

In particular, he condemned King Wen for writing in the *Tuanci* the line “Tang and Wu made revolution. They followed heaven and responded to the people.”

It [*Tuanci*] reads: “Heaven and earth revolve and the four seasons take shape. Tang and Wu made revolution. They followed heaven and responded to the people. The season of revolution is great indeed.” Claiming heaven’s mandate to uphold the idea that the revolts launched by King Tang and King Wu followed heaven’s will and the people’s wishes was indeed an act of disrespect to heaven and disloyalty to the emperor. Both the *Tangshi* 湯誓 (The Oath of King Tang) and *Taishi* 泰誓 (The Oath of King Wu) [in the *Shangshu*] have perfidious words.³⁶

In order to compare the three different editions of the *Yijing* in ancient China, Atsutane cited extensively from the *Yuhai* 玉海 (Jade Ocean), an encyclopedia written by Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296), among other Chinese sources in his writings on the *Yijing*. He came to realize that the order of the sixty-four hexagrams, the names of hexagrams, the divinational method, and the number of yarrow stalks were not the same. Taking the first hexagram as an example, they were *gen* 艮, *kun* 坤, and *qian* 乾 in the *Lianshan*, *Guicang*, and *Zhouyi* respectively. According to the *Zhouli* 周禮 (The Rites of Zhou), the imperial diviner (*taibo* 太卜) mastered the three early editions of the *Yijing* and used all their methods to divine. He added that the *Zhouyi* was promoted but further distorted in the hands of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius. The *Lianshan* and *Guicang* had lost their popularity and did not survive into the Han period. The so-called *Lianshan* and *Guicang* that reappeared in the Tang period were fakes.³⁷ By writing the *Koeki taishōkyō* 古易大象經 (Commentary on the Great Image in Ancient *Yijing*) and *Tanekiron* 彖易論 (Discourse on the Commentary on the Hexagram Text in the *Yijing*), Atsutane strove to restore the original *Yijing* through an examination of the *Daxiang* 大象 (Commentary on the Great Image) and *Tuan zhuan* 彖傳 (Commentary on the Hexagram Text), the two oldest commentaries of the *Yijing* that Atsutane believed to contain fragments of the lost *Lianshan* and *Guicang*. He alleged that the *Daxiang* was originally a commentary on the *Guicang* and thus preserved elements of ancient *Yijing*.³⁸ Using some Chinese commentaries and apocrypha on the *Yijing* as references, he reorganized the order of the sixty-four hexagrams and reduced the number of yarrow stalks from forty-nine to forty-five.³⁹ Many of his ideas were borrowed from Wang Yinglin’s *Yuhai*. For instance, Wang Yinglin held that they were only forty-five yarrow stalks used in the *Guicang*. Atsutane referred to his own divination of the *Yijing* as *fukko eki* 復古易 (restoration of the ancient *Yijing*), a term adopted widely by his students and many late Tokugawa diviners.⁴⁰

³⁶ Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 46-47.

³⁷ Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 8, 11, 19-20.

³⁸ Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 6-8.

³⁹ Muraoka Tsunetsugu, *Norinaga to Atsutane* 宣長と篤胤 (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1957), pp. 170-75.

⁴⁰ Regarding the divinational method suggested by Atsutane, see Amamoto Haruhi 天元春日, *Nenka hassakuhō: Hirata Atsutane no ekigaku kenkyū* 年卦八索法：平田篤胤の易学研究 (Eight Diagrams for Yearly Divination: The *Yijing* Scholarship of Hirata Atsutane)

Atsutane called the *Lianshan* and *Guicang* authentic *Yijing* (*shin'eki* 真易), ancient *Yijing* (*koeki* 古易), and divine *Yijing* (*shin'eki* 神易), but discredited the *Zhouyi* as fake *Yijing* (*gieki* 偽易). Applying the same logic to evaluate ancient Chinese sages, he praised the Three Sovereigns and the Five Emperors of the Xia and Shang periods as real sages (*shinsei* 真聖), but condemned King Wen, King Wu, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius of the Zhou period as fake sages (*gisei* 擬聖).⁴¹ Hence, he did not rate Confucius and Zhu Xi highly and paid less attention to their *Yijing* studies. Among the works of Confucius, he preferred the *Lunyu* because he believed that it contained elements of the ancient *Yijing*: “many dialogues of Confucius in the *Lunyu* were derived from the wording of the *Daxiang*.”⁴²

The Unfolding of *Yijing* Studies in the Hirata School

The *Yijing* scholarship of Hirata Atsutane was succeeded by a number of disciples, making the *Yijing* one of the areas of specialization in the Hirata School.⁴³ Ikuta Yorozu 生田萬 (1801-1837) and Ōkuni Takamasa 大國隆正 (1791-1871) were the two major successors who made a significant contribution in the intellectual discussion of the *Yijing*. Other students of Atsutane who studied the *Yijing* included Arai Morimura 新居守村 (1808-1893), Aratame Michishige 新田目道茂 (1800-1856), Izumi Ietane 泉家胤 (1819-1875), Hirata Kanetane 平田鐵胤 (1799-1880), and Midorikawa Yoshihisa 碧川好尚 (b. 1807).⁴⁴ Konishi Atsuyoshi 小西篤好 (1767-1837) and Tamura Yoshishige 田村吉茂 (1790-1877) applied the theories of the *Yijing* in agriculture.⁴⁵

Ikuta Yorozu was a faithful disciple of Atsutane, following the teachings of his teacher about the *Yijing* closely. He was also influenced by the Kimon School 崎門學 founded by Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇齋 (1618-1682) and the Wang Yangming School (*Yōmeigaku* 陽明學) in Confucianism and thus was familiar with the Confucian classics. His *Koeki taishōkyō den* 古易大象經傳 (Commentary on the

(Tokyo: Bungeisha, 2005).

⁴¹ *Kōshi seisetsukō*, vol.1, pp. 3-4.

⁴² *San'eki yuraiki*, vol. 2, p. 10.

⁴³ Furukawa Tetsushi 古川哲史 and Ishida Ichirō 石田一良, eds., *Nihon shisōshi kōza 4: Kinsei no shisō I* 日本思想史講座4 近世の思想1 (Lectures on Intellectual History of Japan 4: Early Modern Thought 1) (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1976), p. 235.

⁴⁴ Morimura, a retainer of the Akita domain, specialized in the divination and numerology of the *Yijing*. Morimura studied under Atsutane in Akita. He wrote extensively on the *Yijing*, including the *Ekiden seigiben* 易傳正疑辯 (Debating the Right and Suspicious Things in the *Yizhuan*), *Eki koshin* 易故新 (The Old and New Things about the *Yijing*, 1864), *Ekisen mondō* 易占問答 (Questions and Answers about the Divination of the *Yijing*), *Fukko hakka hōi ben* 復古八卦方位辯 (Debating the Position of the Eight Trigrams in Original *Yijing*, 1865), and *Hakka kō* 八卦考 (An Investigation of the Eight Trigrams). Michishige, a town magistrate (町奉行 *machi bugyū*) of the Akita domain, was the author of the *Koekimei zukai* 古易命圖解 (Illustrative Explanation of Fate in Ancient *Yijing*), *Sanzu shin'ekiben* 三圖神易辯 (An Explanation of Divine *Yijing* in Three Diagrams), and *Shin'eki ben ōbi* 神易辯奧秘 (An Explanation of the Ultimate Secret of Divine *Yijing*). Inetane, a Confucian-turned-*kokugaku* scholars from Akita domain, wrote the *Ekigaku shikō* 易學私考 (My Own Investigation of the *Yijing*). Kanetane, Atsutane's adopted son and his younger brother Midorikawa Yoshihisa did not leave any specific writings on the *Yijing*.

⁴⁵ See Ng, *The I Ching in Tokugawa Thought*, pp. 85-88.

Koeki taishōkyō) and the *Taneki seigi* 象易正義 (The Correct Meanings of the *Tanekiron*) were commentaries on Atsutane's *Koeki taishōkyō* and *Tanekiron* respectively. Endorsed and proofread by Atsutane, these two commentaries promoted and elaborated Atsutane's views of the ancient *Yijing*. For instance, he agreed that the *Yijing* was written by Ōkuni nushi no kami who travelled to China in the ancient past to cultivate the Chinese:

Alas! What is the so-called divine *Yijing*? In the time before the establishment of human relations and borders, our deity, Ōkuni nushi no kami, also known as Fuxi, went across the ocean to China and taught its foolish people about morality. The *Yijing* was written for this purpose. This happened four thousand and eighty some years ago.⁴⁶

Yorozu's commentaries focus on divination based on the images of the hexagrams. He claimed that "the fortune based on the images of the hexagrams can be told from the [*Koeki taishōkyō den* and the *Taneki seigi*]." ⁴⁷ The *Koeki taishōkyō den* became the divination manual of the Hirata School. In the preface to the *Koeki taishōkyō den*, Atsutane openly acknowledged Yorozu as the successor of his *Yijing* scholarship:

We can know it from the *Taiko koekiden*, *San'eki yuraiki*, *Kinmei roku* 欽命籙 [also known as *Koeki taishōkyō*], and *Taneki hen* 象易編 [also called *Tanekiron*]. There are many people who have studied under me. When I taught these books and shared my views, only Sugawara 菅原 [Yorozu] could know all after hearing one point and accumulate knowledge little by little.... I believed that he could make his career, and I asked him to comment on the *Koeki taishōkyō*.... He stated what I taught and elaborated on things that I did not teach.⁴⁸

Yorozu developed Atsutane's historical views in the *Koeki taishōkyō den* in his explanation of sixty-four hexagrams. For example, *The Great Image* of the hexagram *bi* 比 (holding together) reads: "Water on the earth is [the image of] *bi*. Ancient kings, based on this principle, established thousands of states and maintained a close relationship with the nobles." Atsutane praised feudalism of the Xia dynasty as a divine system created by Japanese deities:

Early emperors of the Xia dynasty established thousands of states and maintained a close relationship with the nobles. From the *Yugong* 禹貢 (The Tribute of King Yu), we can understand this system. Feudalism was the system adopted in the Three Dynasties. In antiquity, our deities taught [the Chinese] this system. Having destroyed the six nations, the Qin regarded the entire territory as its own and thus launched the system of prefectures and counties.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ikuta Yorozu, *Taneki seigi*, in Haga Noboru 芳賀登, ed., *Ikuta Yorozu zenshū 3* 生田萬全集 3 (Complete Works of Ikuta Yorozu, Vol. 3) (Tokyo: Kyōiku shuppan sentaa, 1986), p. 469.

⁴⁷ *Taneki seigi*, in National Diet Library of Japan, Request number 848-128, vol. 2, p. 30.

⁴⁸ *Koeki taishōkyō den*, in National Diet Library of Japan, Request number 847-103, vol. 1, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 19-20.

Like Atsutane, Yorozu criticized King Wen, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius for distorting the meanings of the *Yijing*, stressing that the only way to restore the original *Yijing* was to study *The Great Image*. He was confident that the Hirata School was making a major breakthrough in *Yijing* studies:

When people talk about the *Yijing*, they all refer to King Wen, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius. Diviners and the like often only read books written by a few scholars, including Hirasawa 平澤 [Zuitei 隨貞, 1697-1780], Baba 馬場 [Nobutake 信武], Arai 新井 [Hakuga 白蛾, 1715-1792], and Mase 真勢 [Chūshū 中洲]. Only two or three of us strive to study the ancient *Yijing* by Fuxi. How great our endeavors are!⁵⁰

Like the *Koeki taishōkyō den*, the *Taneki seigi* was another commentary that Atsutane asked Yorozu to write. Its aim was to restore the divination of the *Guicang*. Arakawa Hidetaka 荒川秀高, another of Atsutane's student from Akita domain 秋田藩, wrote in the preface: “[My master] asked his student Sugawara Dōman 菅原道満 [Ikuta Yorozu] to write a commentary on the [*Koeki*] *taishōkyō*. Having finished this assignment, my master then asked Dōman to comment on his *Tanekiron*.”⁵¹ This commentary uses the theories of the *Yijing* to explain the Age of the Gods and introduces his alleged ancient method of divination. Yorozu maintained that the *Yijing* oracle is applicable to all nations because it is based on the universal principle of nature:

Ōkuni nushi no kami, also called Taiho Fuxi shi, went to that country and became its emperor for a short period of time. Based on our Shinto, he created the eight trigrams.... The eight trigrams of the *Yijing* follow the natural principle of change. Out the fifty yarrow stalks, only forty-five are used. The practice that repeats between six to twelve times to acquire *bengua* 本卦 (original hexagram) and *biangua* 變卦 (changed hexagram) also follows the numerology of the universe.⁵²

Ōkuni Takamasa provided original ideas regarding the origins of the *Yijing* in his writings, although he did not leave specific works on the *Yijing*. Takamasa was a broad-based scholar influenced by *kokugaku*, Confucianism, *rangaku*, and *bongaku* 梵學 (Sanskrit learning). His knowledge of Confucian and Chinese studies was superior in the Hirata School, and his representative work, *Koden tsūkai* 古傳通解 (An Explanation of the *Kojikiden*), cites extensively from Chinese and Japanese sources to discuss ancient Japanese history. Compared with Yorozu, Takamasa offered some new ideas based on Atsutane's teachings. Among Atsutane's writings on the *Yijing*, he preferred the *Taiko koekiden* for outlining the history of the transmission of the *Yijing* in antiquity, listing it as one of the four greatest works of Atsutane.⁵³ He himself added something new in this regard. Although he accepted

⁵⁰ “Preface,” *Koeki taishōkyō den*, *Ikuta Yorozu zenshū* 2, pp. 412-13.

⁵¹ *Taneki seigi*, in National Diet Library of Japan, Request number 848-128, vol. 1, p. 3.

⁵² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 38-39.

⁵³ See Fujii Sadafumi 藤井貞文, *Edo kokugaku tenseishi no kenkyū* 江戸国学転生史の研究 (A Study of the History of the Transformation of National Learning in the Edo Period) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1987), p. 37.

Atsutane's view that Fuxi and other ancient Chinese sage-kings were Japanese deities, he changed their names. Fuxi was no longer Ōkuni nushi no kami, but Yashima Jinumi no kami 八島篠見神; Huangdi was the manifestation of Ōkuni nushi no kami.⁵⁴ Takamasa further alleged that the great ministers of the Chinese sage-kings were also Japanese deities:

Our fourth-generation master Mr. Hirata associated Fuxi with Ōkuni nushi no kami. I have made the following changes: Yashima Jinumi no kami was Fuxi, Unonomitama-no-kami 宇賀之御魂神 was Shennong, and Ōkuni nushi no kami was Huangdi. These three emperors were manifestations of our deities in that country. Later, having read the ancient texts of that country, I came to realize that the assistants of Huangdi were also our Shinto deities. Manifested in human form, they helped Huangdi cultivate the Chinese. Qibo 岐伯 was the temporary manifestation of Funado no kami 岐神.⁵⁵

Besides the history of the transmission of the *Yijing*, Takamasa's view of the writing system was equally significant and stimulating. Hirata Atsutane believed that Japan possessed its own writing system in the Age of the Gods that he called *jindai monji* 神代文字 (script of the Age of the Gods). Scholars of the Hirata School basically accepted this view and Takamasa was no exception. Takamasa further alleged that *jindai monji* was developed from divinational images in the Age of the Gods that became the origin of all languages in this world, including the trigrams and hexagrams of the *Yijing*, Chinese, Sanskrit, and Dutch. He used the characters for heaven, earth, water, and fire as examples to demonstrate how the hexagrams and Chinese characters derived from the divination images in the Age of the Gods.⁵⁶ To a certain extent, Takamasa's idea was inspired by Atsutane who alleged that all languages were gifts from Shinto deities: "Languages of all nations were granted by Ohonamuchi 大名持 and Sukunami no kami 少名御神 (Kusunabikona no kami 少名毘古那神) of Tokoyo no kuni 常世國 (the Eternal Land)."⁵⁷

Seeing the *Yijing* as a Shinto text, Takamasa thus could comfortably employ the *wuxing* theory in his writings. He cited some Japanese sources to claim that this theory existed in ancient Japan before the importation of Chinese texts. While condemning the Chinese Confucians for turning *wuxing* into an armchair theory, he praised Atsutane for restoring its original meaning.⁵⁸ In order to argue that the Japanese was the most elegant language in the world, he applied the *wuxing* (in the order of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water) to match the five basic vowels of the Japanese language (in the order of a, i, u, e, o あ、い、う、え、お). In addition, he used *Yijing* divination and *yinyang wuxing* to explain the Age of the Gods.

⁵⁴ He wrote: "All nations in this world were founded by Susa-no-onomikoto 須佐之男神 and his descendants. This view is supported by ancient texts. Huangdi in ancient China was indeed the visiting spirit of Ōkuni nushi no kami." Ōkuni Takamasa, *Koden tsūkai* (Tokyo: Yao shoten, 1897), vol. 3, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Ōkuni Takamasa, *Gakutō benron* 學統辯論 (Debating the Intellectual Lineage), *Nihon shisō taikai* 50: *Hirata Atsutane, Ban Nobutomo, Ōkuni Takamasa*, p. 487.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 489.

⁵⁷ *Tama no mihashira*, vol. 2, p. 84.

⁵⁸ Ōkuni Takamasa, *Koden tsūkai*, in Nomura Denshirō 野村傳四郎, annot., *Ōkuni Takamasa zenshū* 大國隆正全集 (Complete Works of Ōkuni Takamasa) (Tokyo: Yūkōsha, 1938), vol. 7, pp. 1-12.

Concluding Remarks

The *Yijing* scholarship in *kokugaku* was significant in Japanese intellectual history and in the history of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange. It deepens our understanding of the nature and transformation of *kokugaku*, the relationship between *kokugaku* and Confucianism, and the cultural appropriation of the *Yijing* in the Tokugawa period.

Kokugaku was an intellectual discourse that advocated nativist ideologies through the study of early Japanese literature and history. Early *kokugaku* scholars focused on the Japanese classics and thus paid less attention to foreign texts. In the time of Hirata Atsutane, the worldview of the Japanese had undergone a dramatic change. *Kokugaku* scholars could no longer ignore that fact that Japan was only a tiny piece of land in the world. They had to give *kokugaku* and Japan a place in the new world order. Scholars of the Hirata School no longer limited the scope of their scholarship to the Japanese classics, but strove to examine Japan from a more global perspective. Hence, they also investigated China, India, and the Western world.⁵⁹ The transformation of *kokugaku* in the mid- to late Tokugawa period provided the conditions favorable to the growth of *Yijing* studies.

Kokugaku contained an anti-Confucian and anti-Chinese ideology. Early *kokugaku* scholars either looked down upon (such as Motoori Norinaga) or ignored (such as Kada no Azumamaro and Kamo no Mabuchi) Confucian and Chinese studies. Nevertheless, the Confucian classics and Chinese proficiency were included in Tokugawa basic education for intellectuals and samurai, and thus *kokugaku* scholars were not unfamiliar with things Confucian and Chinese. The relationship between *kokugaku* and Confucianism were complicated and thus should not be defined as two irreconcilable intellectual forces. Some early *kokugaku* scholars did not reject Confucianism. Mid- to late Tokugawa scholars of the Hirata School were well versed in the Confucian classics and in classical Chinese. They were particularly interested in the *Yijing* and tried to include it in the *kokugaku* system. Likewise, Tokugawa Confucians demonstrated national sentiments and cultural pride in the study of the classics of Chinese thought. Many also studied Japanese history and literature and believed in Shinto and thus they were tolerant of nativist currents.

The *Yijing* scholarship of the Hirata School showed a high level of localization. The *Yijing* was modified, naturalized, and appropriated to advocate nativist ideas. In order to justify the uses of the concepts and divination of the *Yijing*, scholars of the Hirata School identified the ancient Chinese sage-kings as the manifestations of Shinto deities. In the history of the *Yijing* in East Asia, the scholarship of the Hirata School was bizarre and far-fetched, but unique and creative at the same time. Seeing the Xia and Shang editions of the *Yijing* as the authentic text and the *Zhouyi* as the corrupt revision was a breathtaking idea. The same logic was applied to the evaluation of medical and calendrical studies in ancient China. The *Yijing* scholarship of the Hirata School should be deeply investigated and fairly evaluated in the context of the localization of Chinese learning.

⁵⁹ Okino Iwasaburō 沖野岩三郎, *Hirata Atsutane to sono jidai* 平田篤胤とその時代 (Hirata Atsutane and His Times) (Tokyo: Kōseikaku, 1943).