

* は流儀によって異なることを示す。

一 旅僧の登場

諸国をめぐる寺社に経巻を納めている僧が、紅葉で名高い龍田川へと辿り着く。

旅僧・徒僧 仏教が流布しているこの日本で、諸国の寺社をめぐる多くの経巻を納めてまわり

ましよう。^{※1}

旅僧 私は六十余州に経を納める僧です。この度は奈良にいて、霊仏霊社を残りなく拝ん

でめぐりました／御経を納めて回りました。これから龍田山を越えて、河内の国へと急ぎます。

旅僧・徒僧 古くは都であった奈良を立ち出でて、雲間に有明の月が残る西大寺を傍に見て、夕

暮を過ぎる頃には早くも秋篠の里を通って、紅葉が有名な龍田の川に着いた。

旅僧 急ぐうちに、早くも龍田川に着きました。この川を渡って龍田明神に参ろうと思

ます。

*Sections highlighted in represent variations in phrasing according to different schools.

1. Itinerant Monk Appears

A monk travelling around Japan in order to dedicate copies of sutras to shrines and temples arrives at Tatsuta River, which is well-known for its beautiful scenery with crimson foliage.

Itinerant Monk and Attendant Monks

In Japan, where Buddhism is well practiced, we visit shrines and temples in the provinces and dedicate many copies of the sutras to them. ^{*1}

Itinerant Monk

I am a monk who is dedicating copies of sutras in over sixty provinces. Now I am in Nara where I have finished visiting all of the sacred shrines and temples to offer prayers / dedicated copies of the sutras. From here, I am going to cross Mount Tatsuta and hasten toward the province of Kawachi.

Itinerant Monk and Attendant Monks

We are leaving this ancient capital city, Nara. Looking to the side of us, we see Saidaiji Temple under the morning moon that hangs low between the clouds. Around the time that the sun sets, we have already passed the village of Akishino and arrive at Tatsuta River, a famous spot for beautiful crimson foliage.

Itinerant Monk

Since we made haste, we have already arrived at the Tatsuta River. Let's cross this river and visit Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine.

Attendant Monks

Yes, let's do so.

*1 According to “manifestation theory,” which was popular in Japan at that time, Shinto gods were considered to be incarnations of Buddhist deities. Therefore, it was common to dedicate copies of Buddhist sutras to Shinto shrines.

2. Dialogue Between Itinerant Monk and Shrine Maiden

A shrine maiden appears and stops the itinerant monk from crossing the Tatsuta River by reciting old poems that serve as a warning.

Shrine Maiden

Excuse me, but you should not cross this river. I must tell you something.

Itinerant Monk

How interesting. When I look in the direction from which someone is calling out to tell me not to cross this river, I see a woman standing there.

Maiden Just a moment, please. I must tell you something.

Itinerant Monk

I am a monk travelling to more than sixty provinces in order to dedicate copies of the sutras. I am going to cross this river to visit Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. Why would you stop me from crossing it?

Maiden That is precisely the reason why—your intention is to visit the shrine in order to fulfill the wishes of the gods. However, if you cross this Tatsuta River without understanding the wish of the gods, how can you fulfill their wishes? That is the reason why I advise you not to do so. This is the famous Tatsuta River. If you cross this river without understanding the wishes of the gods,

従僧

そういったしましょう。

※1 当時は本地垂迹説が広まっていたため、神社に経巻を納めることは普通であった。

二 巫女と旅僧の会話

巫女が登場し、古歌を引き合いに出しながら、旅僧が龍田川を渡るのを引きとめる。

巫女 もしもし、その川をお渡りになつてはいけません。お話しすべきことがございます。

旅僧 不思議なことだ。「この川を渡るな」と呼ぶ方を見ると、向かいに女性がいる。

巫女 しばらく留まりください、申すべきことがございます。

旅僧 私は六十余州に経を納める僧ですが、この川を渡つて龍田明神に参ろうと思つてい
るのに、どうして川を渡るなどおっしゃるのですか。

巫女 さればこそです。神にお参りになるのも、神の思し召しに叶うためでしょう。し
かし、心得もなくこの龍田川を渡つたならば、神の思し召しはどうなつてしま
うかと思つので、このように申しているのです。これは有名な龍田川です。心得も

your action might destroy the relationship between the gods and humans. Therefore, you should think carefully before crossing the river.

Itinerant Monk

I see. Now I recall an ancient poem. “Tatsuta River— / The scattered crimson foliage floating in your stream / Looks like a brocade scroll. / Were I to cross you, / That beauty would be destroyed.” Are you suggesting I bear this in mind?

Maiden

Yes, that’s right. This poem describes crimson maple leaves, floating on the surface of the river, looking like a scroll of brocade and how, if one were to cross it, that would be like cutting that beautiful brocade. Furthermore, this poem actually has a deeper meaning. The crimson foliage is associated with the goddess Tatsuta, who is enshrined in Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. This poem therefore indirectly warns people to show their respect to the goddess.

Itinerant Monk

That certainly makes sense, but the season of crimson foliage is already over. The river is covered by thin ice and there are not even waves on its surface. Would you please allow us to cross this river?

Maiden

No, I cannot. You would still be reproached for doing so. “Destroying its beauty” is not necessarily limited to the flow of crimson foliage. If you crossed the frozen Tatsuta River, you will still be breaching the prohibition against destroying the river’s icy surface.

Itinerant Monk

What you say is quite interesting. The warning against destroying the river’s beauty refers not only to crimson foliage floating upon it but also to ice when it freezes over. Would you explain what this means?

なくこの川を渡れば、神と人との仲が絶えてしましましょう。よくよく考えて川をお渡りなさい。

なるほど、今思い出しました。「龍田川紅葉乱れて流るめり 渡らば錦中や絶えなん」という古歌の心を思えというのでしょうか。

おっしゃる通りです。この歌は、紅葉が水に散り浮いて、錦を張ったようなので、渡ったならば錦を途中で絶つことになるであろう、ということを行っています。しかしこの歌にはさらに深い心があるのです。紅葉というのは龍田明神のご神体である龍田姫を示すもので、神への恐れもあるだろうと戒めた心も、この歌には含まれているのです。

確かにそれはもつともな事ですが、今は紅葉の時期も過ぎて、川の面にも薄氷が張り、立つ波も見えません。ここは許していただいて、川を渡って行きましょう。

いやいや、まだ咎めがあります。渡れば中が絶えてしまうというのは、紅葉の錦に限ったことではありません。凍った時も龍田川を渡るならば、水にもまた「中が絶えてしまう」ことへの戒めがあるのです。

不思議なことだ。紅葉の錦ではなくて、水にもまた「中が絶えてしまう」というわれがあるとは、いったいどういうことですか。

旅僧

巫女

旅僧

巫女

旅僧

Maiden The poem about crimson foliage that we were talking about was composed by an emperor who governed the country from the capital of Nara, but Fujiwara no Ietaka also wrote a poem that alluded to that earlier poem: “Tatsuta River— / Crimson leaves / Are enclosed in your thin ice. / Were I to cross you, / Your beauty would be destroyed.”*2 As this second poem tells us, we should avoid crossing the river, even though this not the season of autumn foliage.

Group Reciters

The Tatsuta River has been described in the poem saying that if you cross the river, you will ruin the brocade-like flow of crimson foliage, even during the season when the river is covered in ice. Even during the winter of October, the crimson foliage captured in the thin ice looks like woven brocade. Walking on the ice mercilessly is such an unrefined, uncouth act. Walking on thin ice is a common metaphor for a dangerous act and now, we have a better understanding of its meaning.

*2 This poem is based on a poem anthologized in Mini-shū. The wording of the poem varies according to the manuscript cited.

3. Shrine Maiden Reveals Her Identity

The shrine maiden guides the itinerant monk to Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. While visiting the halls in the precinct of the shrine, she tells the monk that she is the goddess Tatsuta who is enshrined there and then goes inside the altar.

Itinerant Monk

Well, may I ask who you are?

旅僧

さて、あなたはどのような人でいらつしやるのですか。

巫女は旅僧を龍田明神へと案内する。宮めぐりをしていっているうちに、巫女は自分がご神体の龍田姫であることを旅僧に明かし、社壇の中へと入っていく。

三 正体を明らかにする巫女

※2 『壬二集』にある歌「龍田川もみぢば閉づる薄氷 渡らじそれも中や絶えなん」をもとにしている。諸本により相違あり。

地

氷の張る季節でも、川を渡れば錦を断つと詠まれてきた龍田川。十月の冬川、錦を織ったように紅葉を閉じ込めている薄氷の上を、情けもなく渡っていくのは心なことだ。ただでさえ危険なことの喩えとして「薄氷を踏む」と言われるが、今はいつそうよくその意味が分かる。

巫女

先ほどの「紅葉」の歌は奈良の帝の御歌ですが、またその後の藤原家隆の歌に「龍田川紅葉を閉づる薄氷 渡らばそれも中や絶えなん（龍田川は紅葉を閉じ込めたまま薄氷を張る。今は紅葉の季節を過ぎたけれど、やはり川を渡れば紅葉の錦を断つことになってしまっただろ）」※2というものがあります。このように重ねて詠まれているので、川を渡らないのは紅葉の季節だけではないのです。

- Maiden I am a shrine maiden in the service of Tatsuta Myōjin. If you are visiting the shrine, I will take you there.
- Itinerant Monk
What a pleasure. I will follow you and visit the halls in the precinct of the shrine. / I will come with you now.
- Maiden Please enter here. This is the shrine of Tatsuta Myōjin. Please enter and sincerely offer your prayers.
- Itinerant Monk
How interesting. / Oh, this is the Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. How impressive! Now it is November and trees have lost their leaves. In the midst of this dreary sight, there is one tree, full of crimson foliage, growing by the hedge in front of the main hall. Is this the sacred tree of this shrine?
- Maiden That's right. This is the sacred tree of this shrine. The sacred tree of Miwa Myōjin Shrine in Yamato Province is cryptomeria but ours is a Japanese maple tree. Crimson foliage is much cherished here, so we worship the Japanese maple as our sacred tree / icon.
- Itinerant Monk
I have been traveling around the provinces and today I finally managed to visit this goddess / shrine. What a blessing! To quote from scripture, "The Buddha softens the glorious light of his halo in order to interact with people living in this defiled world and so living beings begin to form a bond with the teachings of the Buddha. Showing the eight stages that Shakyamuni Buddha followed from his birth to death is one method of leading living beings to enlightenment and the last way to bring them the benefits of the Dharma." Similarly,

巫女 私は龍田の明神の巫女です。龍田明神へお参りなさるならば、ご案内いたしますよう。

旅僧 これはうれしいことです。お供して、宮めぐりをいたしましょう。／それではお供いたしましょう。

巫女 こちらへお入りください。これこそ龍田明神です。入ってよくよく拝んでください。

旅僧 不思議なことです。／なんとこれが龍田の明神でございますか、趣深いことだ。頃は十一月で木々の梢も冬枯れて、気色も寂しい社殿の前の御垣に、勢いよく紅葉した木が一本見えます。これはご神木ですか。

巫女 そうです。これはご神木です。大和国の三輪明神のご神木は杉ですが、当社は紅葉がご神木です。／紅葉を愛でているので紅葉をご神木／ご神体とあがめているのです。

旅僧 諸国をめぐり、今日またこの御神／御社に参ることができたのはありがたいことだ。経文に「和光同塵は結縁の始め。八相成道は利物の終わり（仏が光を和らげて塵の世に住む人と交わることは、衆生が仏道に縁を結ぶ始めである。釈尊が生まれて成仏するまでの八つの段階を示して悟りに導くのは、衆生に利益をもたらす最後の手段である）」とあるように

塵の世に住む人間と交わるといふ御神よ、和らげた光を照らして、我々をお守りください。特にこの度は、神に捧げる幣ぬきも持つてきていないので、嵐よ葉を散らさぬよう心して吹きなさい。紅葉を幣として神に捧げるのだから。ここは神々しく心も澄み渡るようだ。龍田の峰は夕暮で霞んでいて、川音もますます冴さえている。さあ宮めぐりを始めようと、巫女は神楽の舞で乙女子が髪飾りにする榊さかき葉はを手に持つて、裳裾を美しく輝かせて長く引き、袖をかざす。宮めぐりするのを見ていると、不思議なことに、ただの巫女に見えていたものが、「私は本当はこの神、龍田姫である」と名乗り、御身より光を放つて、紅の袖を頭上に載せて社壇の扉を押し開き、御殿の中へと入っていった。

四 里人が龍田明神と紅葉のいわれについて語る（中入）

旅僧が、龍田明神を訪れていた龍田の里に住む男と出会う。旅僧の求めに応じて、里人は龍田明神と紅葉のいわれについて語り、出会った女が龍田姫の化身であることを示唆して、旅僧に奇特を見るように勧める。

五 龍田明神の登場

旅僧が神のお告げを得ようと法要を行っていると、神殿から龍田明神が現れる。

Reciters may the goddess who interacts with people living in this defiled world please shine forth her softened light and protect us. At such a time as this, I ought to have brought a *hei* wand as an offering to the goddess. Gustly winds, be careful not to blow the crimson leaves away, because we will make an offering of foliage instead of a wand. This place is filled with such serene atmosphere that I feel as though my heart has been purified. The peak of Mount Tatsuta is covered in evening haze. The sound of the river can be heard even clearer. Now we shall start visiting the halls within the shrine precincts. The shrine maiden takes a twig of sacred *sakaki* leaves in her hand; it is used to decorate her hair when she performs a *kagura* dance for the gods. The long, trailing hem of her robe shines beautifully and she holds up her sleeves. As we watch her move around the halls, something mysterious happens—although she looked like a mere shrine maiden, now she reveals that “I am actually the goddess of this shrine, Goddess Tatsuta.” She emits light from her body, holds a crimson sleeve to her head, opens the door of the altar in the shrine, and goes inside.

4. Villager Narrates the Story of Tatsuta Myōjin and its Crimson Foliage (Interlude)

The itinerant monk encounters a man living in the village of Tatsuta, who just visited the Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. Responding to the monk's request, the villager tells the story of Tatsuta Myōjin and her association with crimson foliage, implying that the woman the monk met is a manifestation of Goddess Tatsuta. He encourages the monk to stay a while longer and witness something extraordinary.

5. Goddess Tatsuta Appears

The itinerant monk performs sutra recitation in order to receive an oracle from the goddess, after which Goddess Tatsuta appears from within a hall of the shrine.

Itinerant Monk and Attendant Monks / Itinerant Monk Throughout the night, we performed sutra recitation in front of the shrine, waiting to receive a divine oracle from the goddess we met. Now we lie down to nap on our *kimono* sleeves.

Goddess Tatsuta Myōjin

If someone makes an inappropriate request of the gods, they will refuse it. Just like such a pure mind, the Tatsuta River flows clear and clean.

Reciters A rumbling comes from within a hall of Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. The sound of a hand drum, beaten by a Shinto priest, resonates in the air.

Goddess The moon in the morning, the flame of a burning torch,

Reciters and the light of a god who saves living beings shine brightly. The scarlet sacred fence shines as the divine goddess appears before us.

Goddess I have been residing here in Japan since the beginning of this world / the era in which the gods governed this land, protecting the Ame-no-sakahoko (Reverse Spear of Heaven) that safeguards the reign of emperors. As such, the light of blessings bestowed by emperors shines to the heavens. A Japanese maple leaf splits into eight tips because it mimics the point of the sacred spear. Beckoned forth by the sutra recitation performed by this monk who has accumulated many merits, in the middle of the night I show my true form under the holy light / sunshine.

6. Goddess Narrates the Story of Tatsuta

Goddess Tatsuta Myōjin narrates the story of the Ame-no-sakahoko spear and old poems associated with Tatsuta. She again requests the itinerant monk not to cross the Tatsuta River.

旅僧・從僧
／
旅僧

龍田明神

神の御前で通夜をして、先ほどの神のお告げを待とうと、片袖を下に敷いて寝る。礼儀に外れたことを願っても、神は受け入れない。そうした清々しい心のように龍田川は流れている。

地 龍田明神の神殿が鳴動して、神官の鼓の音も響きわたり

明神 有明の月も、燈火の光も、

地 衆生を救う神の光も明らかで、朱色の玉垣が光り輝いて、あらたかなご神体が現れた。

明神 私はこの世界の始まり／神が治めていた時代よりこのかた日本国にいて、御代を守る

天の逆矛を守護している。こうして御代の光も天に輝いている。紅葉の葉先が八つに分かれているのも、この矛の刃先と同じなのだ。功德を積んだ僧の法要に引かれて、この夜半、神灯／日の光のもとに姿を現したのである。

六 龍田のいわれを語る明神

明神は龍田にまつわる天の逆矛の逸話や古歌を語り、旅僧に龍田川を渡らないよう求める。

| Tatsuta | | Story |
|---------------------------|---|-------|
| Reciters | From the beginning, the god Takimatsuri, to whom is dedicated the Ame-no-sakahoko spear, is indeed enshrined here in this shrine. | |
| Goddess / Reciters | | |
| | In ancient times, Kuni-no-Tokotachi, an ancestor of the gods, gave the Ame-no-sakahoko spear to the gods Izanagi and Izanami and commanded them to govern this land. Ever since, | |
| Reciters | this country has continued to flourish throughout the ages. | |
| Goddess | And since Izanagi and Izanami visited these Katsuragi mountains in Yamato Province, | |
| Reciters | heaven and earth have been governed well and the successive eras of emperors have flourished. Thanks to this shrine, people are safe and secure and enjoy lives of plenty. | |
| Goddess | Looking at the crimson foliage spreading out to the end of the horizon, | |
| Reciters | the view invokes an image, appearing before my eyes, of the glorious reign of emperors, continuing for thousands of years. "Every year / Crimson foliage flows / On the Tatsuta River. / Could it be that autumn / Drops anchor at this river port?" As this old poem by Ki no Tsurayuki says, in this region, the mountains never shake and even the waves on the ocean are calm. The pleasing autumn scenery continues. Although Tatsuta is well-known for the God of Wind, we are located at a place where the winds blow gently over the mountain. That is why poets of every era have been struck by the color of the crimson foliage in Tatsuta. In spring, when morning haze covers the mountain in Tatsuta, although it is not the season of crimson leaves, the goddess prefers the color red. | |

地
そもそも天の逆矛を納めている瀧祭の御神とは、すなわち当社のことを言うのです。

明神／地

昔、天祖である国常立尊くにのとこたちのみことが、天の逆矛をイザナギとイザナミに与えて国を治めるよう仰せられてからは

地
末永く栄えているこの御国である。

明神
そうして、ここ大和国の宝山にイザナギとイザナミが訪れてからは

地
天地が治まり、御代は栄えた。民が安全で豊かに暮らしているのも、ひとえに当社のおかげである。

明神
紅葉が四方まで広がっているのを見てみると

地
何千年と御代が栄える様子が目前に広がるようである。「年ごとに紅葉葉流す龍田川 湊や秋の泊りなるらん（毎年、紅葉葉を流している龍田川。その河口には、秋がとどまつているのであろうか）」と紀貫之の古歌にもあるように、このあたりは山も動かず海辺の波も静かで、楽しい秋の景色が続く。龍田は風の神で有名であるが、実は山風も静かなところである。それ故に代々の歌人も、この紅葉葉に心を染められた。龍田の山に朝霞のたちこめた春、紅葉の季節ではなくても、神はただ紅色をお好みになる。「今朝よりも龍田の桜色ぞ濃き 夕日や花に時雨なるらん（今朝からは龍

“Since this morning / The hue of the Tatsuta cherry blossoms / Has grown deeper. / They were made so by the evening sun / Just as autumn drizzle reddens maple leaves.” This poem by Kinugasa Ieyoshi shows that his heart was also steeped in the color red.

Goddess “Sacred Mount Mimuro, / Your bluff must have collapsed, /

Reciters As the Tatsuta river is cloudy.” In this poem written by Takamuko no Kusaharu, although the river water has become cloudy, the protecting light of the goddess is not defiled and shines forth purely. The moonlight shines forth reflecting a clear heart freed from earthly delusions. The Tatsuta River is well-known for its scenes of crimson foliage falling and floating in the river. Although people used to only admire the floating crimson leaves that looked like an unfurling brocade scroll, nowadays they also appreciate seeing the leaves enclosed in the ice on the river. Just like the beautiful color of a kimono layer with a crimson foliage pattern, the Japanese maple leaves are enclosed in thin ice. If someone were to cross the river, he would destroy both the maple leaves and the ice. Who would dare to cross the river now?

7. Tatsuta Myōjin Performs a Kagura Dance

As the night grows late, Goddess Tatsuta Myōjin performs a *kagura* dance. As dawn arrives, she prays for peace in the land and disappears into the heavens.

Goddess So, the night with *kagura* dance

明神

「神南備の御室の岸やくづるらん
かみなみ

田の桜の色が濃くなってきた。時雨が紅葉の色を濃く染めるように、夕日が桜の色を濃くさせたのだろう」と衣笠内大臣も歌に詠んでいるが、これも紅色に心を染めた歌なのだ。

地

龍田の川の水は濁れる（龍田川の上流、神霊が鎮座する御室山の岸が崩れたのであろうか。龍田川の水が濁っている）と高向草春は詠んでいるが、たとえ川は濁っていても、神の加護の光は濁ることなく明らかで、煩惱がなくなり晴れわたった心を現す月が照っている。龍田川は紅葉が乱れ流れる名所である。昔は紅葉の錦ばかりが賞賛されていたが、今では氷の下に閉じ込められた紅葉葉も称揚されている。美しく色づいた紅葉襲もみじがさねの着物のように、紅葉が閉じ込められて薄氷が張っている。これを渡れば紅葉も氷も、同時に絶つてしまうことになる。どうして今、この川を渡ることができ
るでしょうか。

七 神楽を舞う明神

夜が深くなる中、龍田明神は神楽を舞う。夜が明けていくと、龍田明神は国土の安泰を祈って天上へと消えていく。

明神

こうして夜神楽の

| Tatsuta | Story |
|----------|--|
| Reciters | So, we have been passed the night enjoying <i>kagura</i> dance. To the echoing of a hand drum repeatedly beaten by a Shinto priest, the moon fades and day starts to break. White frost forms on the ground. The goddess shakes a white <i>hei</i> wand and in a clear voice, recites: |
| Goddess | “Reverentially, |
| Reciters | I offer prayers.” As she prays, she performs a <i>kagura</i> dance. |
| Goddess | Just like waterdrops in a waterfall, the moon sets to the west, and the night grows late. At Takimatsuri, |
| Reciters | where waves ripple on the Tatsuta River, and |
| Goddess | in front of its goddess, |
| Reciters | in front of its goddess, crimson foliage is falling here and there. |
| Goddess | They become a <i>hei</i> wand offered to the goddess. |
| Reciters | The winds blow over the mountains in Tatsuta. The sound of drizzling rain |
| Goddess | becomes the refreshing sound of the jingling bells used in a <i>kagura</i> dance. |

地 こうして夜神楽の時間は過ぎていった。神官が打つ鼓の音が重なるうちに、月も白くなつて更けていき、白い霜も降りてきた。明神も白い和幣にぎてを振つて声を澄ます。

明神 「謹上

地 再拜」と拝んで神楽を舞う。

明神 滝が落ちるように、月が西に傾き夜が更けていく。瀧祭に

地 波打つ龍田の

明神 神の御前に

地 神の御前に散るのは紅葉葉

明神 それは神への幣ぬきとなつて

地 龍田の山風が吹き、時雨が降る音は

明神 神楽の爽やかな鈴の音となり

- Reciters When waves rise on the river,
 Goddess they look like the white cotton cloth used for *hei* wands.
- Reciters Divine winds in the pine trees blow gustily and scatter the crimson foliage. The sacred bird of Tatsuta Myōjin, used for purification, is a rooster, which crows at dawn. The *hei* wand and sacred garment worn for the *kagura* dance are fluttering. “Reverentially, I pray, and pray again. I pray again.” With such prayers, the mountains, rivers, grasses and trees of this land are all governed well and so the goddess ascends to the heavens.

地

川波が立てば

明神

それは幣の白木綿しらゆわのようである。

地

神風松風が吹き乱れ、紅葉葉が散る。龍田明神の神鳥であり禊みそぎにも用いられる鶏が鳴いて夜明けの時を告げる。幣も神楽の小忌衣おみころもも翻り、「謹上再拜再拜再拜」と言う。山河草木も国土も治まって、神は天へと上っていった。

Tatsuta

Synopsis

An itinerant monk is traveling to shrines and temples all over Japan in order to dedicate copies of Buddhist sutras. One winter, he comes to visit temples in Nara and arrives at the Tatsuta River, well-known for its beautiful views with crimson foliage. When he is about to cross the river to go to Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine, a woman appears and recites ancient poems as a warning to the monk not to cross the river. She identifies herself as a shrine maiden of Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine and guides him to a different route to get to the shrine. At the shrine, the monk finds a maple tree full of crimson foliage, although it is midwinter. When the monk asks the shrine maiden about the mysterious tree, she replies that it is a sacred tree of this shrine. While they are visiting halls in the precinct of Tatsuta Shrine, the shrine maiden reveals that she is the goddess Tatsuta and then vanishes into the shrine altar.

A villager who has stopped by Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine tells the monk the story of Tatsuta Myōjin and the crimson foliage, implying that the woman the monk met must be a manifestation of the goddess Tatsuta. He goes on to suggest that the monk stay and witness an extraordinary event. At night, when the monk is performing sutra recitation, the goddess Tatsuta appears from a hall of the shrine. She narrates the history of Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine, recites ancient poems about the beauty and sanctity of Tatsuta and once again asks the monk not to cross the river. The goddess Tatsuta waves a Shinto *hei* wand decorated with white cloth while performing a dance and then gracefully dances her way upward, ascending to the heavens as dawn breaks.

Highlights

The poems introduced in the first half of the play—one anthologized in *Kokin Waka-shū* (Collection of Japanese Poems of Ancient and Modern Times) and another composed by Fujiwara no Ietaka—laud the beauty of the crimson foliage that is also an object of veneration at Tatsuta Myōjin Shrine. Many poems are also cited in the second half, while the *kuse* section describes the beautiful scenery and crimson foliage in Tatsuta that provide the visual and musical climax of this play. The spectacular *kagura* dance performed by the lead character in the second half is said to preserve an ancient style of *kagura*, which is performed with music played in a dignified tone.

This play uses a stage prop, an *ichijō-dai* platform with a small shrine placed on top of it. The lead character uses this prop effectively—she enters the shrine at the interlude and in the second half of the play, reemerges from it as the gorgeous goddess Tatsuta.

Unlike other plays such as *Miwa* and *Kazuraki*, in which a woman is transformed into a goddess and then performs a *kagura* dance, this piece avoids depictions of human suffering and focuses solely on the sophisticated elegance of the goddess.

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Schools | All five | |
| Category | The Fourth group Noh, the First group Noh in ryaku category | |
| Author | Komparu Zenchiku | |
| Subject | <i>Kokin Waka-shū</i> , <i>Mini-shū</i> , <i>Jinnō Shōtōki</i> volume 1 | |
| Season | Winter | |
| Scene | Tatsuta in Yamato Province | |
| <i>Tsukurimono</i> | <i>Ichijō-dai</i> (a wooden frame covered with gorgeous fabric), small shrine | |
| Characters | <i>Mae-shite</i> | Shrine Maiden |
| | <i>Nochi-shite</i> | Goddess Tatsuta Myōjin |
| | <i>Waki</i> | Itinerant Monk |
| | <i>Waki-tsure</i> | Attendant monks (two) |
| | <i>Ai</i> | Villager |
| Masks | <i>Shite</i> | <i>Zō-onna</i> , <i>Fukai</i> , <i>Kōomote</i> , etc. |
| Costumes | <i>Mae-shite</i> | <i>Kazura</i> (wig), <i>kazura-obi</i> (band for a wig), <i>karaori</i> (a short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> outer robe) worn in <i>kinagashi</i> -style, <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>surihaku</i> (short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> , worn as the innermost layer of the costume of a female character) and a fan. |
| | <i>Nochi-shite</i> | <i>Kuro-tare</i> (a type of wig made of black hair), <i>Kindan-hachimaki</i> (a golden headband), <i>tengan</i> (a crown for celestial bodies and female court ladies), <i>chōken</i> (an unlined, long-sleeved elegant garment worn by dancing female characters) or <i>maiginu</i> (a wide-sleeved <i>kimono</i> worn by female gods), <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>surihaku</i> , <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (scarlet), <i>koshi-obi</i> (belt), and a fan. Holding a <i>hei</i> wand for <i>kagura</i> dance. |
| | <i>Waki</i> | <i>Sumi-bōshi</i> (a hood for ordinary Buddhist monks), <i>mizugoromo</i> (a type of knee-length <i>kimono</i>), <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>kagōshi-atsuita</i> (thickly woven <i>kimono</i> with small check patterns), <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> , a fan, and Buddhist prayer beads. |
| | <i>Waki-tsure</i> | Similar to <i>Waki</i> . <i>Kitsuke</i> / <i>muji-nashime</i> (short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> with no pattern, worn as the innermost layer of the costumes of male characters of lesser standing). |
| | <i>Ai</i> | <i>Naga-kamishimo</i> (long-sleeved <i>kimono</i> worn with a sleeveless robe and a pair of <i>hakama</i> trousers with trailing hems), <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>dan-nashime</i> (short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> with very wide stripes, worn as the innermost layer of the costumes of male characters of lesser standing), <i>koshi-obi</i> , a small sword, and a fan. |
| Number of Scenes | Two | |
| Length | About 1 hour 30 minutes | |

あらすじ

冬、日本全国の寺社をめぐる経巻を納めてまわる旅僧が、奈良の寺社を訪れ、紅葉で有名な龍田川へとやってきます。川を渡って龍田明神に参ろうとすると、一人の女が現れ、古歌を引いて旅僧が川を渡らないように忠告します。女は自分が龍田明神の巫女であると言って、別の道から旅僧を龍田明神へと案内します。冬にもかかわらず紅葉した一本の木を不思議に思った旅僧が巫女に尋ねると、それが龍田のご神木であると語ります。龍田の宮めぐりをするうちに、巫女は自分が龍田姫の神霊であることを明かして、社壇の中へと入っていきます。

龍田明神を訪れた里人は明神と紅葉のいわれを旅僧に語り、出会った女が龍田姫の化身であったことを示唆し、旅僧に奇特を見るよう勧めます。旅僧が通夜をしていると、龍田姫が神殿から現れ、龍田明神の縁起について語ります。さらに龍田の美しさや神妙さを伝えている古歌について語り、川を渡らないようにと再度旅僧に告げます。龍田姫は、白い和幣を振って神楽を舞うと、夜明けとともに天へと舞い上がっていくのでした。

みどころ

本作の前場では『古今和歌集』や藤原家隆の和歌が引かれ、龍田明神のご神体でもある紅葉の美しさを讃えています。後場でも多くの古歌が引用されており、龍田の風景や紅葉の美しさを語る「クセ」はみどころ、聞きどころです。後シテが舞う華やかな神楽は、比較的位のしっかりした囃子で、古い形の神楽をとどめているといわれています。

一畳台の上に小宮を乗せた作り物も効果的に用いられます。シテは中入りの際、この作り物に入り、後場では龍田姫の美しい姿となって宮の中から現れます。

女性が神となって舞う神楽物には「三輪」「葛城」などがありますが、これらの作品とは異なり、本作では人間的な苦悩は描かれず、昇華された優美さが感じられます。

流儀 五流にあり
 分類 四番目物、略初番目物
 作者 金春禅竹
 題材 『古今和歌集』、『壬二集』、『神皇正統記』巻一
 季節 冬
 場面 大和国・龍田
 作り物 一畳台、小宮

登場人物 前シテ 巫女
 後シテ 龍田明神
 ワキ 旅僧
 ワキツレ 従僧（二人）
 アイ 里人

面 シテ 増女、深井、小面など

装束 前シテ 鬘、鬘帯、唐織着流、着附・摺箔、扇
 後シテ 黒垂、金緞鉢巻、天冠、長絹または舞衣、着附・摺箔、緋大口、腰帯、扇。神楽の時幣（へい）を持つ
 ワキ 角帽子、水衣、着附・小格子厚板、白大口、腰帯、扇、数珠
 ワキツレ ワキに準じて、着附・無地熨斗目
 アイ 長上下、着附・段熨斗目、腰帯、小刀、扇

場数 二場
 上演時間 約1時間30分

龍田 (たつた)
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