HAGOROMO
(Feather Robe)

INTRODUCTION

Hagoromo belongs to the kazura-mono or 'female-wig' group. It is a vivacious play animated by the horizontal drum in addition to the usual instrumental and contains a jo-no-mai dance.

The play consists of one act. A framework with a pine-branch fixed to it is placed in the front of the stage. This represents the pine grove on the sandy beach of Mio in Suruga Province and we can picture in our mind the soaring peak of Mt. Fuji in the distance. The pine grove borders a tranquil bay, where, at the opening of the play, arrive a fisherman Hakuryo and his two companions. They are the waki and waki-zure, but the music that accompanies their entrance is the graceful issei, which also accompanies the entrance of the shite. Their first speech is sung in sashi instead of in nanori and this is followed by the sage-uta and age-uta which are usually sung by the shite. Though they carry fishing-rods on their shoulders, they wear broad divided skirts of noble texture and their manner of entrance is dignified, all of which adds to the gracefulness of the play.

In Scene Two Hakuryo finds a feather robe on the pine-tree. Seeing that it is a very rare robe, he is about to carry it home, when he is stopped by a heavenly maiden. She has been bathing in the sea. She wears a painted gold-patterned under-kimono and an embroidered outer-kimono tied round her lower body, which indicates that she has no upper robe and is therefore regarded as being naked.

When the fisherman refuses to return the robe, the heavenly maiden, going to the Bridgeway, is overcome with grief. In the scene that follows, the fisherman, moved by her pathetic figure, tells her that he will return the robe, if she will perform the celebrated dance of heaven - a dance which she used to perform at the Palace of the Moon. The maiden is delighted. But he hesitates, fearing that she will not keep her word. The maiden replies, "Doubt is for mortals, in heaven is no deceit." The fisherman is ashamed and at once returns the robe. The maiden retires to the Stage-attendants' Seat and puts on the robe.

Wearing the robe, the maiden now stands near the Shite Pillar. When the shidai by the chorus is over, she dances to the kuri, sashi and kuse, which form the most essential part of the play, and makes an obeisance to the Bodhisattva Seishi, Prince of the Moon. She then performs the jo-no-mai, the waka and the ha-no-mai, the latter continuing till the end of the play. The horizontal drum joins in after her obeisance and beats on to the end.

Author: Sources:

Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443)
The Tango Fudoki2, the ami Fudoki and the Suruga Fudoki, of which only fragments remain, mention a descent of some heavenly maidens to earth to bathe in a-lake or sea. The plot of the present play is entirely different from the stories in these
books. Though Zami avails himself of much material in the *Tango Fudoki*, he locates his story on the seashore of Mio following the tradition in the *Suruga Fudoki*.

1 Buddhism assigns the moon as the domain of the Prince of the Moon, who together with his consort lives in a magnificent palace attended on by numerous heavenly maidens.

2 *Fudoki* means 'Record of Local Matters.' They were compiled in each province and submitted to the Central Government by Imperial order in the 8th century. With the exception of that of Izumo Province, none of these numerous records remain in their complete form. Besides geographical matters indicated by the title, a *Fudoki* contains local history and tradition.
HAGOROMO

Persons

RAKURYO, A FISHERMAN
Two OTHER FISHERMEN
HEAVENLY MAIDEN

Waki
waki-zure
Shite

Place

Pine Grove of Mio, Suruga Province

Season

Spring

Stage-attendants bring in a framework pine-tree and place it in the front part of the stage. They hang upon it a dancing chōken robe which represents the feather robe.

While the entrance music issei is being played, HAKURYO, wearing a striped kimono, broad-sleeved robe and white broad divided skirt, followed by two OTHER FISHERMEN similarly dressed, appears, crosses the Bridgeway and enters the stage. They carry fishing-rods on their shoulders.

HAKURYO and OTHER FISHERMEN

issei
"Clamorous the fishermen
Who ride their boats on Mio Bay
Through sea-paths swept by wind."1

1 Quotation from a poem in the Manyoshu (Bk. VII, 1228;
HAKURYO
I am Hakuryo, a fisherman,
Who dwells among the Mio pines.

HAKURYO and OTHER FISHERMEN
"Far on a distant range of lovely hills
Clouds suddenly climb;
And on a tower the bright moon shines
From heavens cleansed of rain."1
So soothing is this vernal tide!
About the pine grove which long, long
Has waited for the spring's advent,
The morning mists arise and" trail
Across the swelling crests of I waves;
The faint moon lingers in the
sky.
A sight as sweet as this
With rapture overflows the minds
Of even lowly souls like us.

sage-uta
"Unforgettable," people say,
"After the journey through the hills,
The pines of Mio seen afar
Across Kiyomi's2 noble bay."3
Come, together let us go there,
Come, together let us go there.

1 Quotation from the Chinese poet Ch'en Wen-hui. There is a mistake in the text of the play, which makes the quotation unintelligible. Corrected it reads in translation:
A distant range of lovely hills Suddenly clears of clouds, And as the rainfall ceases
The tower is flooded with moonbeams bright.

s That part of the Bay of Suruga, which is adjoined by Okitsu Town. A distant view of Mio can be seen from its shore.

s Quotation with adaptation from Lady Nakatsukasa in the .'oku Kokinfhii (1265).
"Look! The fishermen believing
The wind-swept clouds to be the rising seas,
The wind-swept clouds to be the rising seas,
Draw in their lines and hasten back to shore."

Wait, I call, it is the spring,
And through the pine-trees blows
The sweet and gentle wind of morn
Singing its everlasting song;
The waves the morning calm rocks still,
And many are the fishing-boats riding in
the bay
And many are the fishing-boats

The FISHERMEN sit down in front of the Chorus.
HAKURYO re-riding in tires to the Stage-attendants' Seat and puts down his fishing-rod.

HAKURYO I come to the pine grove of Mio and view
the beauty of the bay, when suddenly from the
empty sky flowers begin to rain, sweet melodies are heard, and heavenly perfumes
blow everywhere. These things are all uncommon. Ah! here I see upon this pine-tree
a beautiful robe. Drawing near, I marvel at its colour and fragrance. This is no
ordinary robe! I shall take it home and show it to the elders. It shall be a treasure of my

The HEAVENLY MAIDEN, wearing a 'Zo woman' mask, heavenly crown, long-hair wig, painted gold-patterned under-kimono and
embroidered outer-kimono in koshimaki fashion, appears from under the raised Curtain

1 Quotation from a poem by Fūjiwara-no-Tamesuke (1263-1328), founder of the Reizei school of poetry, one of the three which claimed authority on poetical matters
throughout the middle ages. The other schools were Kyogoku and Nijo.
HEAVENLY MAIDEN
That robe is mine! Why are you taking it?

HAKURYO I found it lying here. I am taking it home.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN. It is a heavenly maiden's feather robe. No mortal man may have it. Return it where you found it.

HAKURYO Is the owner of this robe, indeed, a heavenly maiden? It is a marvel never seen in these days. It shall be kept a treasure of the land. Never will I return it.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
Alas! Without my robe I cannot soar along the pathways of the sky nor climb the air to reach my heavenly home. Oh, I pray you, give it back to me.

HAKURYO Now at the heavenly maiden's words Hakuryo grows more resolute.
He is a thoughtless fisherman and hides the robe behind him.
"No, I will not," he says and turns away.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
Now am I a wingless bird!
Born on high, to there I would ascend,
But robeless, my flight is dead!

HAKURYO On earth your purity is soiled.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
I am in despair;
I know not what to do,

HAKURYO Unless Hakuryo her feathered robe returns.

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HEAVENLY MAIDEN

Powerless I am,
HAKURYO
Help there is none.

CHORUS
Tears of falling grief form jewels On her flowing hair,
And in her coronet the flowers Fade and wither fast.
0 piteous to the human eye
To see the five-fold signs of wasting1
Seize her fair celestial form!

HEAVENLY MAIDEN

“I look towards the fields of heaven,
Mist on mist envelops all,
The paths that climb the clouds are lost,
Where shall I seek my way?”2

CHORUS

With longing eyes I gaze upon the clouds
sage-uta
That freely wander to and fro;
The call of stray wild-geese that go
Soft winging to their native shore
Brings to my ears the melodies
age-uta
The sweet-voiced kalavinka sing,3
Ethereal birds I used to see,
Ethereal birds I used to hear.
Oh, you, I envy, gulls and plovers,
Gliding outwards to the sea,
Sweeping inwards to the shore.
I envy with my aching heart

1 Heavenly beings are subject to further transmigration of soul. When their good karma has spent itself they have a new abode assigned among the six worlds. The approaching end of their heavenly life foreshadows itself in five signs: (1) their clothes gather dust; (2) their flower-coronets fade; (3) their arm-pits exude sweat; (4) their bodies emit odour; (5) they feel ill at ease while sitting.

S Poem in the Tango Fudoki. a Kalavinka is an Indian bulbul, which is admired for its exquisite song. In Buddhism the kalavinka is an imaginary bird put in Western Paradise. It is pictorially represented as having a human face and the body of a bird.
The spring breeze blowing through the sky,
The HEAVENLY MAIDEN weeps.

HAKURYO I speak to you. Now I see you in such sorrow, my heart yields. I will return to you your robe.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
Oh, how deep is my happiness!
' Please give it to me !

HAKURYO Wait! I have been told of the dances that you dance in heaven. Dance for me now and I will return the robe.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
Oh my joy, my joy! Now can I climb once more the sky, and in return to show my gratitude I will bequeath to the world of man a dance to celebrate the memory of this hour, a dance which, of all the ones performed in heaven, is danced around the Palace of the Moon. I will dance it here and now and leave it to all mortals racked with sorrow. But first you must return the robe; I cannot dance without it.

HAKURYO No, not yet. If I give you back the robe, no dance will you perform, but fly with it at once to heaven.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
Doubt is for mortals, in heaven. Is no deceit.

HAKURYO I am ashamed. Here is your robe. He returns to her the robe.

1 The sentence originally occurs in the Tango Fudoki.
HEAVENLY MAIDEN

The heavenly maiden wears the robe
And to ethereal strains she dances
'The Robe of Feathers and the Rainbow Skirt.!

HAKURYO
In the wind her garment streams,

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
Like rain-wet flowers the long sleeves flutter,

HAKURYO A wondrous dance

HEAVENLY MAIDEN I dance with all my joy.

CHORUS Thus first was danced the heavenly dance,

shidai The Eastern Suruga dance2 of old,
The Eastern Suruga dance of old.

jidori Thus first was danced the heavenly dance,
The Eastern Suruga dance of old.

kuri Why 'call the sky the ever-stretching?
When Two Great Gods3 appeared of old,
Ten directions' to the universe they fixed,
Infinite the void of blue was set,
And thus was named the ever-stretching sky.

1 Name of a musical composition attributed to the Emperor Hsu'n-tsung (~*: 685-762) of the T'ang Dynasty. It is said that on the night of August 15th one year, he ascended to the moon with the help of a wizard, and saw a number of heavenly maidens clothed in white raiment dancing round the immense laurel-tree in the courtyard of the palace and on returning home he composed the music. Here the title is applied to the dance about to he performed by the heavenly maiden.

2 This is a contraction of the original phrase, 'The Suruga dance among the Eastern dances.' The latter is the general name of dances which were in the first instance folk-dances in the Eastern provinces, but were later adopted by the nobility in Miyako in the Heian period and finally came to be performed at the festivals of Shinto temples. Now they are performed at the Imperial Ancestors' Shrine at the court, the ToshogU at Nikko, the Kamo Shrine in Kyoto and several others. These dances are performed by four or six dancers to songs accompanied with a flute, pan-pipes and a zither.

3 I.e. the God Izanagi and the Goddess Izanami who, according to Japanese mythology, were the creators of the Islands of Japan.

4 The eight quarters of the compass, and the upward and downward directions.
HEAVENLY MAIDEN

sashi
The Palace of the Moon they built
Eternal with a jewelled axe.

CHORUS
Their service¹ the heavenly maids perform,
Each clad in dresses white or black,
Fifteen in line on either side,
And each night of the changing moon
One fair celestial duly robed Performs her ritual task.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN
I, too, am of the numbered maids.

CHORUS
I, of the moon, a heavenly girl,
Dance the Eastern Suruga dance,
An offering to the world of man.

kuse
"The spring mist trails across the sky,
And in the moon in valleys sweet
The laurel may have burst in bloom."²
The glory of my coronet flowers returns.
Is it the sign of spring? Though not in heaven,
How wonderful the sight!
"Blow, blow, celestial winds,
And close the path between the clouds;
The maiden of the heavenly form
May linger for a while on earth "³
To view the pine grove fresh in spring.

¹ There are thirty maidens in this particular service, fifteen of whom are robed in white and the others in black. On the first night of the month a white maiden enters the actual service, while a black one retires, so that there are one white and fourteen black, resulting in the crescent phases of the moon. On the second night another white one enters, while another black one retires, the process going on till there are fifteen white ones in the service on the night of a full moon. The next night a black one replaces a white one, the process going on to the end of the month, when the moon is invisible.


³ Poem by the Abbot Henjō in the Kokinshu.
In vernal beauty of the dawn,
What can compare with Mio Point,
Kiyomi when the moon is fair,
Eternal Fuji robed in snow?
The pine-trees whisper and the waves
Are lovely on the tranquil bay.
Heaven and earth in one unite
In these our sacred isles,
Where the offspring of the Goddess,l
Enthroned within the Holy Shrine,
This Land of Sunrise rules,
Where shines the moon in cloudless splendour!

HEAVENLY MAIDEN

"To what shall I compare my sovereign's reign?
If only rarely by the sweeping
Of an angel's feather robe

Is an adamantine rock erased,
Still longer may his glory last!" 2
Oh, what joy to hear
The Eastern Song!
But oh, more joyous still when joined
In harmony with instruments,
Harp and zither,
Pan-pipe and the bamboo-flute,
Swelling the void with music sweet!
The sunset crimsons Mount Sumeru's crest,3

1 L.e. Goddess Amaterasu (Heaven-Illuminating Goddess), to whom the Grand Shrines at Ise are dedicated, and who is regarded as the first ancestor of the Imperial line.
2 Anonymous poem in the Shuishu (1001).
3 Mt. Sumeru is a metaphor to describe Japan's highest mountain, Fuji. In ancient Indian cosmography, Sumeru is a mountain of immense proportions rising from the centre of the universe; its base is fixed in the bottom of the ocean, and its mid-height is circled round by sun and moon, and its upper
Whose azure form the rising sea reflects.
The wind that sweeps the Ukishima Plain1
The flowers make fall and ever fall,
While she dances with her pure white sleeves
Like snow-flakes fluttering in the breeze.
How wonderful! Oh, how wonderful!

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HEAVENLY MAIDEN

Thee I do adore,
0 Prince of the Moon,
Thine be glory and praise, 0 Bodhisattva Seishi!2

CHORUS This is the dance of the East.

The HEAVENLY MAIDEN performs a jo-no-mai dance.

HEAVENLY MAIDEN

waka

Now in the empty blue of heaven,
CHORUS Now in the mist of early spring,

HEAVENLY MAIDEN

Wondrous fair in hue and fragrance
The maiden's heavenly robe.

CHORUS

She dances to the left and right,
Now to the right and left,
Her coronet of flowers are swaying,
Her robe of feathers rustles loud,

parts are inhabited by deities presided over by Indra. In the surrounding ocean there are four continents in the four quarters; the one lying to the south is called Nan Embudai (South Jambu dvipa), which origi- nally meant India and its neighbouring countries, but afterwards came to mean the whole earth.1 Plain extending along the seashore to the south of Mt. Ashitaka, behind which soars Mt. Fuji. 2 Seishi is a major bodhisattva, who together with Kwannon is a satellite in the trio of the Buddha Amida in Western Paradise, and represents wisdom. The Prince of the Moon is an incarnation of Seishi.
Her heavenly sleeves flow out in waves,
And now turn back again.

The HEAVENLY MAIDEN performs a ha-no-mai dance.

CHORUS

In many dances of the East,
In many dances of the East,
The beauteous Maiden of the Moon,
In bright beams of the Perfect Truth,
Through the mid-September night
Upon the land of mortals showers
The glories of the wondrous land
Rich with seven treasures rare.
The Bodhisattva's vow's fulfilled.
But as the flowing hours speed on,
The maiden in her feather robe
In the gentle sea-breeze streaming,
Soars above the pines of Mio,
And upwards to the trailing clouds
On Ukishima Plain, and thence ~
To lovely Ashitaka's brow;
Still higher wings the aerial maiden
Over Fuji's towering peak;
And fainter still she soars away,
And now is lost amid the mist of heaven.

The HEAVENLY MAIDEN continues to dance while
the following lines are being chanted.