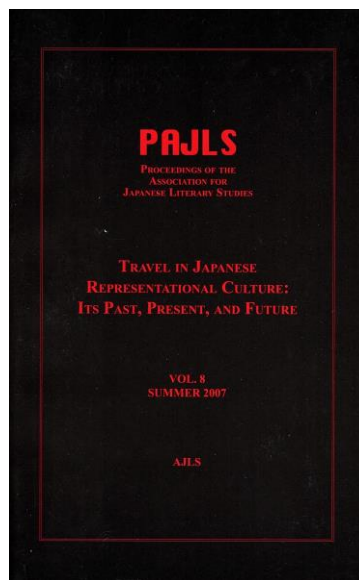


“Poetic Imagination and Place Names: Women Travelers and the Creation of the Utamakura ‘Shiga Mountain Pass’”

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**POETIC IMAGINATION AND PLACE NAMES:  
WOMEN TRAVELERS AND THE CREATION OF THE UTAMAKURA  
“SHIGA MOUNTAIN PASS”**

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*The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds* (Ropyyakuban utaawase, 六百番歌合) is regarded as a monumental match of the medieval period for its scale and variety of poems. The match was organized by the court poet Fujiwara no Yoshitsune 藤原良経 (1169–1206) in 1193. Twelve poets participated in the endeavor, each composing one hundred poems on set topics, for a total of twelve hundred poems in six hundred two poem rounds. One of the set topics was “Shiga no yamagoe” or “Shiga Mountain Pass,” and a striking feature of the twelve poems composed on this topic is that all of them include the word *hana*, or flower 花.<sup>1</sup> Yet the question of how flowers came to be associated with Shiga Mountain Pass remains an unanswered one. To answer this question, first I will examine how Fujiwara no Shunzei 藤原俊成 (1114–1204), the organizer and judge of the *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds*, supported the practice of combining Shiga Mountain Pass with spring flowers in poetry composition. Secondly, I will show how some of the poems pair flowers with female pilgrims traveling to Shiga Temple. I will argue that narratives about female pilgrims going to Shiga Temple supported the relationship between Shiga Mountain Pass and women, even though the pilgrimage to Shiga Temple no longer took place in Shunzei’s time. Lastly, I will examine Shunzei’s association of Shiga Mountain Pass with flowers in order to suggest that it developed from narratives of female pilgrims set in the past.

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<p><sup>1</sup> 袖の雪空吹く風も一つにて花に匂へる志賀の山越え          嵐吹く花の梢に跡見えて春も過ぎ行く志賀の山越え          花散れば道やはよけぬ志賀の山うたて梢を越ゆる春風          誘われて志賀の山路を越えぬれば散りゆく花ぞ標なりける          散りつもる花をば踏まじと思ふ間に道こそなけれ志賀の山越え          春はただ雲路を分くる心地して花こそ見えぬ志賀の山越え          匂はずばふぶく空とぞ思はまし花敷きまよふ志賀の山道          道もせに花の白雪降り閉ぢて冬にぞかへる志賀の山越え          昔誰志賀の山路を踏みそめて人の心を花に見すらん          故郷に思ふ人ある家づとは花にぞ見ゆる志賀の山越え          遠方やまだ見ぬ峯は霞にてなほ花思ふ志賀の山越え          春深み花の盛りになりぬれば雲をわけける志賀の山越え</p>	<p>七番・左・定家          右・家隆          八番・左・有家          右・経家          九番・左・兼宗          右・隆信          十番・左・季経          右・信定          ・左・顕昭          右・寂蓮          番・左・良経          右・家房</p>
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In 1116, *The One Hundred-Poem Sequence of the Eikyū Era* (Eikyū hyakushu, 1116) was organized by order of Emperor Toba 鳥羽(1103-56, r. 1107-23) to honor the memory of Emperor Horikawa 堀河 (1079-1107, r. 1086-1107) and Empress Atsuko 篤子 (1060-1114). Seven poets, including Fujiwara no Nakazane 藤原仲実 (1057-1118) and Minamoto no Toshiyori 源俊頼 (1055-1129), participated in the poetry gathering. Scholars have argued that *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds* was influenced by the *The One Hundred-Poem Sequence of the Eikyū Era*, since they share some of the same set topics, including Shiga Mountain Pass.<sup>2</sup> However, in the case of Shiga Mountain Pass, poems in *The One Hundred-Poem Sequence of the Eikyū Era* include a variety of primary motifs, such as “kasumi” (haze 霞) and “sakura” (cherry blossoms 桜)<sup>3</sup>, whereas all of the poems in *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds* use “flower” as the primary motif.

Another example of the Shiga Mountain Pass topic appears in the *The Poetry Match at Shigeie’s Residence* (Chūgūsuke Shigeie asonke utaawase 中宮亮重家朝臣家歌合 1151). Shunzei, who would later judge *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds*, presided over this match as well. This is his commentary on a poem containing Shiga Mountain Pass.

Snow, Round 8, Left, Victory (Michiyoshi 通能, 99)	
At Takasago	<i>Takasago no</i>
even the upper-most peak	<i>onoe mo yuki ni</i>
is buried in snow—	<i>uzumorete</i>
the road must have disappeared	<i>michi taenuramu</i>
over Shiga Mountain Pass.	<i>Shiga no yamagoe</i>

In the poem on the left, the total effect (*sugata* 姿) and phrasing are outstanding; however, I wonder if autumn and

<sup>2</sup> “Since one-half of the fifty seasonal topics coincide with those of the *Horikawa Jirō hyakushu* (=Eikyū Hyakushu), *Ropyyakuban utaawase* seems to have been strongly influenced by *Horikawa Jirō hyakushu*.” Matsuno Yoichi 松野陽一, “Ropyyakuban utaawase no seiritsu jōkyō: Kenkyū yonen ni nattaka” 六百番歌合の成立事情について, *Kokubungaku kenkyū*, 国文学研究, 20 (1959), 89.

<sup>3</sup> まだしらぬ人と共にぞ越えにける志賀の山路の跡もなければ 顕仲  
 春霞たなびく山の山の井に影みるさへもあさましきかな 仲実  
 志賀の山心はれにぞ越えつれど霞にさへもまよひぬるかな 俊頼  
 家づとにをれる桜をちらさじといそぎぞしつる志賀の山越え 忠房  
 立ち渡る峯の霞はもろともに志賀の山越えするにやあるらむ 兼昌  
 峯つづき花に心のとまりつつゆきもやられず志賀の山越え 常陸  
 中空はゆきもやられずおぼつかな霞はれせぬ志賀の山越え 大進

winter qualify as seasons for crossing Shiga Mountain. In the past, people generally traversed Shiga Mountain in the spring when flowers were in bloom, and this was treated as a pleasant outing. Thus I am uncertain as to the appropriateness of describing the Shiga Mountain crossing as a snow scene.<sup>4</sup>

Shunzei's point is clear: poetic usage of Shiga Mountain Pass should be restricted to referencing flowers in spring. Scholars agree that the *utamakura* was linked to springtime flowers in medieval times,<sup>5</sup> even if the early development of this pairing remains unclear.<sup>6</sup> However, Shunzei's contemporaries, disputed this seasonal limitation. For example, the writer Kenshō (1161–1207) argues as follows in *Treatise in the Sleeves* (Shōchūchō 袖中抄 [ca. 1187]).

I do not think that the season for passing over Shiga Mountain is restricted to spring when flowers are in bloom. One can make the journey during the season of autumn leaves or winter snow. People who make pilgrimages to Shiga Temple of travel to Ōmi use the mountain pass. This might be the reason why we can find poems describing the Shiga Mountain Pass on the set topic of spring in *The Second Hundred Poem Sequence* (Jirō hyakushū, also known as *The One Hundred Poem Sequence of the Eikyū Era*, or *Eikyū hyakushū*). Even so, I have my doubts.<sup>7</sup>

Kenshō claims that, since it is possible to cross over Shiga Mountain at any time of the year, including winter, the deployment of Shiga Mountain Pass need not be restricted to spring flowers. Autumn leaves and winter snow are also acceptable. Judging by Kenshō's opinion, there appears to have been no intrinsic reason for a strict rule about the season

<sup>4</sup> My translation is based on Hagitani Boku 萩谷朴, *Heian chō utaawase taisei* 平安朝歌合大成, revised and corrected edition, vol. 7 (Kyoto: Dōhōsha Shuppan, 1996), 206.

<sup>5</sup> “We must admit that “Shiga no yamagoe” was strongly associated with the idea of spring flowers in medieval times.” Kamijō Shōji 上條彰次, “Shiga no yamagoe kō: Shunzei kakan e no hitotsu no apurōchi” 志賀の山越え考—俊成歌観への一つのアプローチ, *Kokugo kokubun* 37 (1968), 43.

<sup>6</sup> “I cannot give a cogent reason why Shiga Mountain Pass was connected only with flowers.” Tajiri Yoshinobu 田尻嘉信, “Shiga no yamagoe shōkō” 志賀の山越小考, *Atomi gakuen kokugoka kiyō* 21 (1968), 35.

<sup>7</sup> My translation is based on Kawamura Akio 川村晃生, *Karon kagaku shūsei* 歌論歌学集成, ed., vol. 5 (Tokyo: Miyai Shobō, 1999), 173. The translation here has been refashioned by Edwin Cranston.

in which the *utamakura* could be used in poetic composition, even in Shunzei's time. To explain how the *utamakura* came to be so closely associated with flowers, I will outline its usage in poetry before Shunzei's time.

Well before Shunzei articulated his opinion on the matter, several poems including Shiga Mountain Pass had been composed to describe seasons other than spring, such as the following poems in *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (Kokinwakashū, 905).

Poem 303 by Harumichi no Tsuraki (Book 5: Autumn 2)  
Composed on Shiga Mountain Pass

The autumn leaves are	<i>Yamagawa ni</i>
unable to resist the	<i>kaze no kaketaru</i>
current flowing past	<i>shigagami wa</i>
the weir built by the wind	<i>nagare mo aenu</i>
in the deep mountain river. <sup>8</sup>	<i>momiji narikeri</i>

Poem 324 by Ki no Akimine (Book 6: Winter)  
Composed on Shiga Mountain Pass

When buried in this	<i>Shirayuki no</i>
layer of snow that unites	<i>tokoro mo wakazu</i>
all the white landscape	<i>furishikeba</i>
even the barren crags and rocks	<i>iwao ni mo saku</i>
seem to put forth blossoms. <sup>9</sup>	<i>hana to koso mire</i>

Harumichi no Tsuraki's poem describes autumn leaves falling into the river on Shiga Mountain, while Ki no Akimine's poem features winter snow. These examples clearly demonstrate that poems composed on the topic Shiga Mountain Pass were not restricted to a seasonal association with spring flowers.

The seasonal flexibility with which Shiga Mountain Pass was described stems from the longstanding practice of pilgrimage to Shiga. In particular, the dates upon which rituals were held at Shiga temple

<sup>8</sup> Laurel Rasplica Rodd, *Kokinshū: A Collection of poems Ancient and Modern*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 134. I have changed the original translation of "Shiga no yamagoe," which reads "Shiga Pass", into "Shiga Mountain Pass".

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 139. I have changed the original translation of "Shiga no yamagoe", which reads "Shiga Pass", into "Shiga Mountain Pass".

encouraged people to undertake pilgrimages in both spring and autumn. The following quotation from *The Tale of Flowering Splendor* (Eiga monogatari, ca. 1092) makes it plain that rituals at Shiga Temple took place in springtime.

In the Third Month, he [Fujiwara no Michinaga] went to the Maitreya Service at Shigadera [Shiga Temple], founded by Emperor Tenji [626–71], where the first such ritual was sponsored in the eighth year of Tenpyō Shōhō [756] by the War Minister Tachibana Nakamaro of senior Fourth Lower Rank.<sup>10</sup>

*The Tale of Flowering Splendor* also describes Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道長 visiting Shiga Temple in the Third month to participate in a *miroku-e* 弥勒会 ceremony. In slightly different language, *The Illustrated Interpretation of the Three Important Concepts of Buddhism* (Sambōe kotoba 三法絵詞 [ca. 1004]) calls attention to the fact that rituals at the temple took place in autumn in addition to spring.

The Service of the propagation of the teaching at Shiga begins on the fourth day of the third month and ninth month.<sup>11</sup>

*The Illustrated Interpretation of the Three Important Concepts of Buddhism* also mentions a religious ceremony (the *Denpōe* 伝法会) held at Shiga Temple in both the third and ninth months, thus offering evidence that strengthens the claim that pilgrims had a clear reason to go to Shiga Temple in spring and fall.

Not only did this regular flow of pilgrims provide the occasion and rationale for associating Shiga Mountain Pass with fall, but this association itself was the basis for choosing Shiga Mountain Pass to represent the ninth and tenth months for poems in *tsukinami byōbu-e*, or screen panels selected by month. Here is one such example, taken from *Collection of Minamoto no Shitagō* (Minamoto no Shitagō shū).

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<sup>10</sup> William H. and Helen Craig McCullough, *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese aristocratic life in the Heian period*. vol. 2 (California: Stanford University, 1980), 510.

<sup>11</sup> Edward Kamens, *The three jewels: a study and translation of Minamoto Tamenori's sanbōe*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan 1997), 232–3. This translation is based on Maeda-ke bon. The Tōji Kanchiin bon reads “the ninth and fourth days.”

Poem 234 by Shitagō

In the ninth month, people passing over Shiga Mountain

A wind blowing down	<i>Yamaoroshi no</i>
Shiga Mountain	<i>kaze ni momiji no</i>
scatters leaves,	<i>chiru toki wa</i>
rippling waves then	<i>sazanami zo mazu</i>
take on the first colors. <sup>12</sup>	<i>irozuki ni keru</i>

As with this example, the headnote to another poem by Shitagō (Book 17: Miscellaneous Autumn, 1139) in *The Collection of Gleanings* (Shūiwakashū 拾遺和歌集, ca. 1007) confirms the connection between Shiga Mountain Pass and fall: “In the tenth month, people are passing over Shiga Mountain.”<sup>13</sup> In keeping with these headnotes, Shiga Mountain Pass constitutes the setting for the ninth and tenth months in the *tsukinami byōbu-e*, thus indicating that an exclusive connection between Shiga Mountain Pass and spring flowers did not exist prior to Shunzei.

Nevertheless, many poems prior to Shunzei did, in fact, associate the *utamakura* with flowers, and here I will offer a perspective on the significance of this association. The following poem by Ki no Tsurayuki (872–945) in *The Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* offers evidence for an early usage of Shiga Mountain Pass<sup>14</sup>.

Poem 115 Tsurayuki (Book 2: Spring 2)

Sent to the many lovely women he met as he traveled to  
Shiga Mountain Pass

Crossing the mountains	<i>Azusayumi</i>
in spring when days grow long as	<i>haru no yamabe o</i>
the catalpa bow	<i>koekureba</i>
the drifts of petals deceive	<i>michi mo sariaezu</i>
me onto paths I should shun. <sup>14</sup>	<i>hana zo chirikeru</i>

Tsurayuki’s poem describes blossoms scattering on the path over Shiga Mountain, but the headnote suggests a particular significance for these

<sup>12</sup> My translation is based on Wakashi kenkyukai 和歌史研究会 ed. *Shikashū taisei* 私家集大成, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin 1973), 429 and 445. The translation here has been refashioned by Edwin Cranston.

<sup>13</sup> My translation is based on Satake Akihiro ed. *Shūi Wakashū (The Collection of Gleanings 拾遺和歌集)* in *Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 日本古典文学大系*, vol. 7 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990), 326.

<sup>14</sup> Rodd, *Kokinshū*, 81.

flowers. According to the headnote, the poem was composed in connection to women he met while crossing over the mountain, thus implying that the flowers represent the women mentioned in the headnote. This is the first link to be noted between women and flowers in the case of Shiga Mountain Pass.

Tsurayuki's poem seems to have had a strong influence on poets over time, as can be observed in the following poem from the *Poetry Match at the Residence of Princess Yūshi* (Yūshi naishinnō-ke utaawase, 1041).

Cherry Blossoms, Round 6, Right, (Poem 12 by Nōin 能因)	
Oh, cherry tree in bloom,	<i>Harugasumi</i>
I feel as if I were meeting	<i>Shiga no yamagoe</i>
someone crossing	<i>seshi hito ni</i>
misty Shiga Mountain Road. <sup>15</sup>	<i>au kokochi suru</i>
	<i>hana zakura kana</i>

Kenshō's *Treatise in the Sleeves* explicitly compares this poem to the poem by Tsurayuki.

Nōin's poem was created based on Tsurayuki's. In Tsurayuki's poem, women are represented by flowers; thus, this poem refers to these women by describing flowers.<sup>16</sup>

It is interesting to note that Kenshō interprets the word "people" (*hito* 人) as women, even though Nōin's poem does not specify gender. It is likely that Kenshō's comment set a precedent for linking flowers to female pilgrims, with flowers thereafter representing women in poetry featuring Shiga Mountain Pass, such as in the following poem from the *Later Collection of Gleanings* (Goshūi wakashū, 1086).

<sup>15</sup> My translation is based on Hagitani Boku 萩谷朴, *Heian chō utaawase taisei* 平安朝歌合大成, revised and corrected edition, vol. 3 (Kyoto: Dōhōsha Shuppan, 1995), 946. The translation here has been refashioned by Edwin Cranston.

<sup>16</sup> My translation is based on Kawamura Akio 川村晃生, *Karon kagaku shūsei* 歌論歌学集成, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Miyai Shobō, 1999). The Japanese original reads as follows: kono uta (=Tsurayuki's poem) ni onna wo hana to yomitareba kono uta wa kano Shiga no yamagoe seshi onna ni au kokochi su toyomeru ni ya (此歌に、女を花と詠みたれば、此歌はかの志賀の山越せし女にあふ心地すと花を詠めるにや).



Poem 137, Tachibana no Narimoto (Book 2: Spring 2)  
 Composed on the notion of flowers scattering on a mountain  
 road  
 I don't know *Sakurabana*  
 what to do with *michi mienu made*  
 blossoms scattered *chirinikeri*  
 over the Shiga Mountain Pass,<sup>17</sup> *ikaga wa subeki*  
 until the path is barely seen. *Shiga no yamagoe*

Although the poem does not contain a clear reference to women, as in the poem by Nōin, the association between Shiga Mountain Pass and women found in Tsurayuki's poem makes it reasonable to interpret the description of scattering blossoms here in this poem as a metaphor for women.

Rose Bundy has examined the influence of Tsurayuki's poem on medieval poets, especially Shunzei, with particular focus on poems that describe Shiga Mountain Pass in *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds*. She writes,

The Mikohidari poets regard “Shiga no yamagoe” as an established item in their poetic vocabulary, one with associations that have been fixed in past poems. More than just a description of a place, ‘Shiga no yamagoe’ is a poetic image that conjures up a cluster of associations—the beauty of the blossoms, the pageantry of the passing crowds, and the possibility of love—all of which hearken back to the past of Tsurayuki's verse and that of screen illustrations.”<sup>18</sup>

Bundy's claim that Tsurayuki's poem influenced medieval poets is indisputable, but why did the poem have such an impact, especially among those poets, like Shunzei, who belonged to the Mikohidari school 御子左家? To account for this, I will excavate the relationship between women, flowers and Shiga Mountain Pass and thereby show what motivated medieval poets to pair this *utamakura* with flowers.

<sup>17</sup> My translation is based on Kubota Jun 久保田淳 and Hirata Yoshinobu 平田喜信 ed. *Goshūi waka shū (Later Collection of Gleanings 後拾遺和歌集)* in Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku 新日本古典文学大系, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994), 52.

<sup>18</sup> Rose Bundy, “From painting to poetry: “Shiga no yamagoe” in the *Ropyyakuban utaawase*”, *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. 43 (1995), 377.

There was, in fact, a close relationship between Shiga Mountain Pass and women, which grew out of devotion to the statue of Maitreya enshrined in Shiga Temple. In *The Pillow Book* (枕草子), Sei Shōnagon 清少納言, lists Shiga Temple as a famous pilgrimage site along with Ishiyama Temple 石山寺 and Kokawa Temple 粉河寺,<sup>19</sup> which further suggests that Shiga Temple held wide appeal among women. Several poem headnotes that mention women crossing over Shiga Mountain confirm this strong interest, such as the following by Henjō in *The Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*.

Poem 119 by Henjō (Book 2: Spring 2)

Sent to some ladies who had paused to admire the wisteria at  
Kazan on their way back from Shiga

If the blowing winds	<i>Yoso ni mite</i>
and effervescent streams were	<i>kaeramu hito ni</i>
gone then I'd never	<i>fuji no hana</i>
see the hidden mountain blooms	<i>haimatsuware yo</i>
come drifting before my eyes. <sup>20</sup>	<i>eda wa oru tomo</i>

There are several other examples of headnotes about women returning from pilgrimages to Shiga Temple, such as that accompanying Minamoto no Shitagō's poem 源順 in the *Collection of Gleanings* (*Shūiwakashū*) (Book 3: Autumn, 198), which describes women, dressed in travel clothing (*tsubo shōzoku* 壺装束) crossing Shiga Mountain surrounded by autumn leaves.<sup>21</sup> Another example is the headnote to a poem by Yoshinobu (140) in *Yoshinobu shū*, which describes a man encountering a woman crossing Shiga Mountain Pass in the ninth month. As these headnotes demonstrate, women were known for actively undertaking pilgrimages to Shiga Temple.

Other similar examples that illustrate the same point can be found in Heian period narratives. Section 137 of *The Tale of Yamato* (Yamato monogatari 大和物語 [ca. 951]), begins as follows:

His Highness, the late Minister of War, had a magnificent mansion built at Iwae on Shiga Mountain Pass and occasionally

<sup>19</sup> Sei shōnagon 清少納言, "Makura no sōshi", in Watanabe Minoru 渡辺実 (ed.), *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai* 新日本古典文学大系 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1991), 244.

<sup>20</sup> Rodd, *Kokin Wakashū*, 36.

<sup>21</sup> "Shūi Wakashū" (The Collection of Gleanings 拾遺和歌集) in Satake Akihiro 佐竹昭広 ed. *Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikai*, 57.

visited the place. There were also times when he made his way to the mansion in utmost secrecy and watched the women go by on their way to worship at the Shiga Temple.<sup>22</sup>

In a different part of the tale, the importance of Shiga Mountain as a destination for female pilgrims is again demonstrated when a man encounters a carriage carrying many women to Shiga Temple. The pilgrimage to Shiga becomes a fully realized pretext for romance in Section 25 of *The Tale of Heichū* (Heichū monogatari 平中物語, ca. 923), when a gaze at a woman on her way to Shiga Temple results in a tryst. This episode shows how the pilgrimage to Shiga Temple, and even the actual temple grounds, provided people with the opportunity to pursue romantic relationships.<sup>23</sup> And if it is true that the narrative of *The Tale of Heichū*, as a poem tale, or *uta monogatari* 歌物語, prioritizes poetry above the narrative, then it is reasonable to think that the narrative of this episode was based on poems about lovers at Shiga Temple—a claim that would place the Shiga Temple and its romantic connotations at the structural core of this tale. In any case, one general point can be made: the *uta monogatari* uses the image of female pilgrims to Shiga Temple as a narrative device to initiate and develop romantic encounters between men and women. Further, this dynamic sheds light on the headnote to the poem by Tsurayuki quoted above, insofar as a poem “composed and sent to a large party of ladies encountered on the Shiga Mountain Pass” can be situated within this larger discursive tendency to depict female pilgrims to Shiga Temple in a romantic light.

By Shunzei’s time, the relationship between Shiga Temple and female pilgrims had already become obsolete. The pilgrimage itself was no longer a common practice, since the temple had succumbed to several fires and was in a state of permanent disrepair. The temple was abandoned and made into a new temple in 1230. Medieval poems attest to Shiga Temple pilgrimages as a thing of the past, as in the following poem from *The Tsunehira Collection* (Tsunehira shū, date of completion unknown).

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<sup>22</sup> Mildred Machiko Tahara, *Tale of Yamato: a Tenth-Century Poem-Tale*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1980), 83.

<sup>23</sup> “So obsessed was Heichū with fond memories of the happy day at Shiga that he rode along trolling the poem first composed by the ladies, set to the melody of a Kai folk song.” Suzan Downing Videen, *The Tale of Heichū* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1989), 63.

Poem 61 by Tsunehira

In autumn some courtiers crossed Shiga Mountain Pass  
 Making their ways through piles of *Chiri tsumoru*  
 fallen leaves *kono ha wakete zo*  
 they came calling, *tazune tsuru*  
 but their traces have vanished *ato taenikeru*  
 at Shiga Mountain Pass.<sup>24</sup> *Shiga no yamagoe*

The poem evokes the Shiga Mountain Pass, but the pilgrims themselves are described as already having disappeared from the scene—they are nothing more than vanished traces. Pilgrimages to Shiga Temple must have ceased by the time Tsunehira died, which was the year 1072 according to *The Record of Families from the Low to the (Sonpi bunmyaku 尊卑文脈, late fourteenth century?)*. Moreover, in *Treatise in the Sleeves*, Kenshō refers to a poem in the *Collection of Gems* (Ryōgyokushū 良玉集, late eleventh century) that describes the abandoned pilgrimage to Shiga Temple.<sup>25</sup> While the *Collection of Gems* is not extant,<sup>26</sup> this reference strengthens the point made with Tsunehira's poem—that pilgrimages to Shiga Temple were no longer taking place in Shunzei's lifetime. Yet if there were no longer any female pilgrims, then why did Shunzei insist on the association between flowers and Shiga Mountain Pass?

To return to the commentary on *The Poetry Match at Shigeie's Residence*, Shunzei writes: "In the past, people generally traversed Shiga Mountain in the spring when the flowers were in bloom, and this was treated as a pleasant outing." He claims that the crossing of Shiga Mountain, which evoked spring flowers, was a trip conducted in the past. He emphasizes this perspective in a comment made in *The Poetry Match at the Minbukyō Residence* (Minbukyō utaawase, 民部卿家歌合, 1195).

Mountain Flower, Round 3, Left (Poem 45 by Shunzei)  
 I am bewildered by the blossoms *Kaze kaoru*

<sup>24</sup> My translation is based on *Wakashi kenkyukai 和歌史研究会 ed. Shikashū taisei 私家集大成, vol.2* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin 1975), 290. The translation here has been refashioned by Edwin Cranston.

<sup>25</sup> Japanese original reads as follows: *Ryōgyokushū ni taenishi shiga no yamagoe zo suru* (良玉集に、絶えにし志賀の山越ぞする) "Shūchū shō" (Treatise in the Sleeves) in Kawamura Akio 川村晃生 ed, *Karon kagaku shūsei 歌論歌学集成, vol. 5* (Tokyo: Miyai Shobō, 1999), 173.

<sup>26</sup> According to *Waka genzai sho mokuroku 和歌現在書目録, Ryōgyokushū* was compiled by Fujiwara no Akinaka 藤原顕仲 (1059–1129) in 1126.

scattering in brocade, scenting all the wind, in the season of flowers over Shiga Mountain pass.	<i>hana no nishiki ni          magau kana          hana chiru koro no          Shiga no yamagoe</i>
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As for the poem of the left, the activity of crossing Shiga Mountain is an old custom undertaken at the time of spring flowers. The feeling (*kokoro*) that people were probably bewildered by the scattering blossoms is also something of which I am not entirely certain. This is one of my own worthless poems.<sup>27</sup>

Conceptualizing Shiga Mountain Pass as a site for activity in the past, rather than the present, is key to understanding how the connection between Shiga Mountain Pass and flowers operated for him. Taking his cue from the *uta monogatari* cited above, Shunzei can be summed up as follows: Shiga Mountain Pass should not be thought of as a present-day place, but as a site for fictional experience located in the poetry of the past.

The function of Shiga Mountain Pass in poetry found in *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds* is now clear. All of the poems feature references to flowers, and Shunzei insists that the restriction of the topic to spring flowers is based on past precedent. He views the act of crossing over Shiga Mountain Pass and the association of this activity with spring flowers as something that has disappeared from the world. By contrast, Kenshō argues that crossing over Shiga Mountain can take place at any time of the year and considers the Shiga Mountain Pass to be a site for enjoying scenery in the present. For Shunzei, the flowers can be interpreted as referring to female pilgrims traveling to Shiga Temple. Shiga Mountain Pass is therefore characterized in terms of travel in the past, a necessarily fictional activity that later became a major poetic theme. In specific, this past travel refers to a defunct pilgrimage undertaken by women. The narratives of female pilgrims are woven into the poetry of *The Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds* not merely as references to Shiga Mountain, but also as references to a lost practice. It would then seem that Shunzei wished to restrict the *utamakurato* springtime motifs, not because fall and winter were intrinsically

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<sup>27</sup> My translation is based on Hanawa Hokiichi 塙保己一 ed., *Gunsho ruijū* 群書類従, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Naigai Shoseki, 1930), 16. The translation here has been refashioned by Edwin Cranston.

inappropriate, but rather because he wished to make poetic composition on the topic an occasion for refining a specific literary idea that possessed a discernable yet not entirely fixed history in literary practice.