

大国主神 “O-kuni-nushi-no-kami”

4. 沼河比売求婚 “Courting Nunakawa-hime”

This Ya-chi-hoko-no-kami¹ (that is, O-kuni-nushi-no-kami), whom we have been talking about, traveled all the way to the province of Koshi to court Nunakawa-hime.² When he visited her palace, he sang thus.

(Song . . .)

Then Nunakawa-hime, without opening the door, replied from within with this song.

(Song . . .)

They did not meet that night, but the next day they spent the night together.³

Notes | 注釈

#1 Ya-chi-hoko-no-kami:

This is another name of O-kuni-nushi. As we have seen so far, O-kuni-nushi has various names, because he is an aggregate of various deities.

#2 Nunakawa-hime:

In Itoigawa, Niigata prefecture, there is a shrine called Nunagawa Shrine. It is said that Nunakawa-hime is the deity of green jade. She is, so to speak, the embodiment of green jade. The Himekawa (river) that runs through the city is famous for green jade.

Interestingly enough, you can see comma-shaped beads of green jade from the Himekawa (river) in the treasure museum of Izumo Taisha, which were found around Izumo Taisha. It is often said that myths are pure fiction, but I would like to suggest that this courting and marriage story of O-kuni-nushi and Nunakawa-hime is actually based upon or set against historical commercial exchanges between Izumo and Koshi, which are now confirmed by archaeological findings.

#3 they spent the night together:

What happened then? The Kojiki's account stops here, but the Izumo (no kuni) Fudoki (*The Topography of Izumo Province*) tells us more. They got married and they had a baby daughter named Mihosusumi-no-mikoto. It is said that O-kuni-nushi brought her to Izumo. Mihonoseki in Matsue has its name because there is a shrine that enshrine Mihosusumi-no-mikoto. Miho shrine used to enshrine Mihosusumi-no-mikoto.