

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

1. Monk Myōe Arrives in the Village of Kasuga

Monk Myōe has made up his mind to sail across the ocean, travel through China, and visit India in order to study Buddhism. He therefore leaves his temple in Toganoo in Kyoto and comes to the village of Kasuga.

Monk Myōe and His Attendant

Go to the west where the moon sets, go to the west where the moon sets. We will visit the land where the sun sets (China and India).

Myōe I am Myōe, a monk from Toganoo. I intend to go to India via China to study Buddhism. In order to bid farewell, I decided to visit Kasuga Grand Shrine and offer my prayers. I am heading to Nara now. / In order to bid farewell to Myōjin, the principal god of Kasuga, I am going to Nara now.

Myōe and Attendant

We leave Shikimi-ga-hara in Mount Atago, we leave Shikimi-ga-hara in Mount Atago, and enjoy the view of lush green pines on the hills of Narabi-ga-oka, illuminated in the moonlight. Leaving behind us the peaceful blue skies and mountains of Kyoto, we travel on the road from Kyoto toward Nara, the ancient capital in the southern region. We pass Narazaka and arrive the village of Kasuga, nestled on the slopes of Mount Mikasa. We have arrived in the village of Kasuga.

Myōe Since we made haste, we have already arrived in the village of Kasuga. I will still my heart and pay a visit to the shrine.

春日龍神

かすがりゅうじん

* は流儀によって異なる場合を示す。

一 明恵上人、春日の里に着く

入唐渡天（唐に入り、天竺に渡る。仏法を学ぶため、諸国留学すること）を志した明恵上人は、京都・
 梶尾の寺を出て、春日の里に着く。

明恵上人
 一行

月の進む西方へ、月の進む西方へ、日の入る国（唐、天竺）を訪ねよう。

明恵

私は、梶尾の明恵法師です、私は入唐渡天を志しておりますが、そのお暇乞いのため春日明神へ参詣しようと思ひ、唯今、奈良の都へ参ります。／春日明神に暇乞いのため、ただいま参詣いたします。

明恵一行

愛宕山の櫛しきみが原を出立して、愛宕山の櫛が原を出立して、月影に並び映ゆる双ヶ岡の松の緑を眺めやり、空も長閑な都の山を後にして、南都の奈良への都路を進み、奈良坂を越えて、三笠山の懐の春日の里に着いた、春日の里に着いた。

明恵 急いで参りましたので、早くも春日の里に着きました。心を鎮めて参詣しますよ。

Monk Attending on Myōe
Yes, certainly.

2. An Old Shinto Priest of the Kasuga Shrine Appears and Talks to Myōe

An old Shinto priest of the Kasuga Grand Shrine appears before Myōe. When the old man learns that Myōe is visiting the shrine in order to bid farewell to the God of Kasuga before leaving Japan to study Buddhism in India, he tries to persuade Myōe not to go.

Old Shinto Priest

Looking up the clear blue sky, the divine light of the gods shines down auspiciously upon us. Not only the sky but the immobile form of the mountains expresses how the Way of the gods has been fixed throughout all ages, from ancient times until today. The world is governed peacefully and so in the village the people enjoy living long lives filled with happiness. Truly, the name of Kasuga Myōjin has been passed down to us for a very long time and has flourished since as long ago as the age of the gods, when Myōjin was called Amenokoyane no Mikoto.

Looking at the two pillars of the torii gate standing in the moonlight, we understand that one thing that has never been changed is the vow made by the four enshrined gods, the vow made by the four enshrined gods in ancient times. Even the god enshrined at the lower-ranked shrine, Mizuya Myōjin, is still engaged with the living beings of this region. So peacefully governed is the world that even the branches of the pine trees / the grasses in this grove in Mikasa do not rustle in the wind and everywhere is calm. They do not rustle in the wind and everywhere is calm / in this imperial era.

Myōe Hello, hello. I would like to talk to that priest of this shrine.

従僧

もつともなことでございます。

二 年老いた宮守の老人が現れ、明恵と語る

明恵の前に宮守の老人が現れる。老人は、明恵の参詣の理由を、入唐渡天の暇乞いのためだと聞き出すと、思いとどまるように説得する。

宮守の老人 晴れた空に向かえば、神の靈光があらたかに注がれているよ。いや、空ばかりではない、山は動かないかたちを現すことで、古今を通して定まった神の道を示す。里は天下泰平で、人々は長生きで幸福に暮らす喜びに満ちている。まことに、この明神の御名は長らく伝えられ、神代の昔に天兒屋根命と言われた頃から、幾久しく栄えているよ。

月影に立つ鳥居の二本の柱を見れば、御社みやしろに鎮座される四柱の祭神のお立てになつたご誓願も、四柱の祭神のお立てになつたご誓願も、神代から変わらないものと思われる。末社の水屋明神まで、この地にて衆生との交わり給うのだから、まことに天下泰平で、この三笠の森の松風／草木も枝を鳴らさず、穏やかな様子だよ、枝を鳴らさず、穏やかな様子／御代だよ。

明恵

やあやあ、そちらの宮守のお方にお話ししたいことがあります。

- Priest Oh, you must be Monk Myōe from Toganoo (a few schools include this phrase). Kasuga Myōjin must be very pleased that you have come today to offer prayers. / Kasuga Myōjin has been displeased as you have not visited him for a while. We are very grateful that you have come to see him today.
- Myōe Yes, today I have come to offer my prayers and bid farewell to him, because I decided to travel across China to India in order to study Buddhism.
- Priest I understand why you intend to do so, but that is not acceptable. Monk Myōe, you frequently visit Kasuga Myōjin in every season, from the beginning of the year. Even with such regular visits, Myōjin still longs for you to come here. I heard that Myōjin therefore named you Tarō (first son) and calls Monk Gedatsu, in Kasagi, Jirō (second son) and loves both as much as his own eyes and hands and therefore, he is always protecting you and him. If you leave Japan now and travel across China to India in order to study Buddhism, you will be going against the wishes of Kasuga Myōjin. Please, by all means, refrain from doing so. / I heard something fortuitous. When a buddha has appeared in this world, one can gain benefits from visiting that buddha's holy sites. But this Mount Kasuga (the shrine in Kasuga) is actually the present era's Vulture Peak. I heard that Myōjin named you Tarō (first son) and calls Monk Gedatsu, in Kasagi, Jirō (second son). He loves you both as much as his own eyes and hands and therefore, he protects you and him all the time with the greatest fondness. It is out of the question that you would leave Japan and travel across China to India in order to study Buddhism. Were we not to stop you, we too would go against Myōjin's wishes. Please, by all means, reconsider your plan.

宮守の老人

おお、これは梅尾の（一部流儀にあり）明恵上人ではありませんか。このたびの御参詣は、さぞかし明神様もお喜びのことでしょう。／しばらくご参詣もなく、明神様も心許なく思っておいででしたので、このたびの御参詣は、返す返すも有難いことでございます。

明恵

はい、こうして私が参詣いたしますのは、ほかでもございません、私は入唐渡天を志しまして、そのお暇乞いのために、御参詣に来たのでございます。

宮守の老人

おっしゃることはわかりますが、それは受け入れがたいことです。上人は、年始から四季折々の季節ごとに、少しも時節を違えずに御参詣なさいますが、それでさえ、明神様は上人の御参詣をお待ちかねになつていらつしやいます。それで、明神様は上人を太郎と名づけ、笠置の解脱上人を次郎と呼び、両の眼、両の手のように思召し、片時の隙もなくお護りなさつていと、承っております。今、上人が日本を去り、入唐渡天をなさつては、神慮に適わなくなります。ぜひとも思い止まりください。／これは思いがけないことです。仏の在世の時ならば仏跡見聞の御利益もあるでしょうが、今はこの春日山（春日の宮寺）が霊鷲山ですよ。明神様は上人を太郎と名づけ、笠置の解脱上人を次郎と呼び、両の眼、両の手のように思召し、片時の隙もなくお護りなさり、いとおしく思つていらつしやると、承っております。上人が日本を捨て、入唐渡天をなさるなど、もつてのほかでございます。お引き止めしなくては、私たちまでもが神慮に背きます。ぜひとも思い止まりください。

Myōe Truly, I understand what you are saying, however, I am determined to go India to visit the holy sites of Buddhism and doing so should not go against the divine wishes of Kasuga Myōjin.

Priest I cannot believe what you just said, Monk Myōe. In an era in which a buddha has appeared in the world, you would receive benefits by visiting his holy sites. However, in this era, long after Shakyamuni Buddha has passed away, Mount Kasuga here is actually Vulture Peak. In addition, when Monk Myōe paid us his first visit to offer prayers before Kasuga Myōjin, not only people put their hands together reverently as a sign of respect for you, but also things without hearts,

Reciters the trees and grasses growing in the grove in Mikasa, the trees and grasses growing in the grove in Mikasa, bowed before Monk Myōe, although no wind was blowing. Even all of the deer walking on Mount Kasuga came to welcome you. They bent their knees, lowered their antlers, and paid homage to you, Monk Myōe. Even after witnessing such amazing miracles, you question where the Pure Land truly is, and say that you want to travel across China to India to seek it there, an ambition that knows no limit. Simply follow the wishes of Kasuga Myōjin, in whom we have faith, and refrain from going to China and India. Please, you must honor the wishes of the god. Please, you must honor the wishes of the god.

3. Old Priest Successfully Persuades Myōe to Refrain from Going to China and India

The old priest does his best to persuade Monk Myōe. He explains that there are holy places in Japan, comparable to the holy sites in India, where people can receive many benefits and therefore, Myōe can perform his pilgrimage in Japan without going other countries. Myōe accepts what the old priest says and decides to abandon his plan to travel to China and India. The old priest is pleased by Myōe's decision and disappears after revealing that his name is

明恵
まことに、仰せになることはわかりませんが、入唐渡天の志は、仏跡を尋ねるためですから、神慮に背くはずはないでしょう。

宮守の老人
これはまた上人の言葉とも思えませんね。仏陀がこの世におわします時ならば、見聞する御利益もあるでしょうが、釈尊入滅後の今日では、この春日山が、すなわち靈鷲山にあたるのです。その上、上人が春日明神へ初めての御参詣の時には、道すがら、人々が合掌して上人を礼拝するばかりではなく、心のない

地
三笠の森の草木も、三笠の森の草木も、風もないのに上人の前では枝を垂れますし、春日山の野辺を歩く鹿までも、皆お出迎えをして、膝を折り角を傾けて、上人を礼拝していますよ。これほど不思議な靈験を見ながら、なおまことの浄土はどこにあるのかと、入唐渡天をし、お尋ねになるとは、果てしない欲と申すものです。唯々、私どもの信仰する明神様の思召しに従って入唐渡天を思い止まり、神の御心を崇めなさいませ、神の御心を崇めなさいませ。

三 宮守の老人の説得を受け、明恵は入唐渡天を思いとどまる

宮守の老人は、言葉を尽くして明恵の説得にあたる。日本には、仏跡と同じような御利益のある場所がすでに存在し、他国に行かずとも日本ですべての礼拝は事足りると語る。明恵もその言葉を受け入れ、入唐渡天を思いとどまる。宮守の老人は喜び、明恵に釈迦の一生を見

Tokifū (or Tokikaze) Hideyuki and promising that he will show Myōe events in the life of Shakyamuni Buddha.

Myōe Tell me the details of this Kasuga Grand Shrine. (A few schools include this phrase)

Reciters Over centuries, the teaching of the Buddha gradually spread to the east and in more recent eras, was disseminated to many lands. Today, Buddhism has thoroughly permeated Japan. (A few schools include these phrases)

Priest / Myōe

People cross the ocean to China and visit India in order to

Reciters Myōe

visit the ancient sites well-known for playing important roles in disseminating Buddhism.

Reciters If you want to pray to Mount Tiantai*1, go to Mount Hiei. If you wish to gaze up to Mount Wutai*2, gaze up at Mount Kimpu in Yoshino*3 or Mount Tsukuba.

Priest In the past, he did so at Vulture Peak,

Reciters and in present, on this mountain, Shakyamuni Buddha transformed himself into Myōjin, Great Kasuga Myōjin, to save all living beings. He is enshrined in this mountain.

Priest Therefore, consider this to be Vulture Peak,

せると言つて、時風秀行と名を明かして消え去る。

明恵 当社のことを詳しく語って下さい。(一部流儀にあり)

地 仏法は時代を追うごとに東へ広まり、後の時代には、さまざまな国に行き渡り、今、日本で浸透している。(一部流儀にあり)

明恵 宮守の老人 / 明恵 そもそも入唐渡天とは、仏法の流布でその名を知られた

地 明恵 古跡を訪ねるためであろう。

地 天台山※1を拝みなければ、比叡山にお参りすればよい。五台山※2を望みたいならば、吉野金峰山※3、筑波山を拝すればよい。

宮守の老人 昔は霊鷲山で、

地 今は衆生を救おうと、釈尊は大明神に示現なさり、この山に鎮座されているのだから、

宮守の老人 霊鷲山だと思つて、

Reciters and pray to this Mount Kasuga.

“I am an incarnation of Shakyamuni Buddha and have appeared again in this world in order to shine forth a bright light on this deluded world and save living beings, so please understand me very well.” Kasuga Myōjin clearly mentioned this in his poem. This poem clearly expresses the vow of the Bodhisattva of Thousands of Compassionate Deeds, Kasuga Myōjin, to completely save all deluded living beings through his divine blessings. Furthermore, Shakyamuni Buddha lamented that preaching profound Buddhist principles through the Flower Garland Sutra is hardly enough to save selfish, ordinary beings. He therefore removed his splendidly adorned robes, put on wretched, ragged clothes, and in the Deer Park, stayed together with ordinary men, he used the easily comprehensible Agama Sutra to preach the Law of the Four Noble Truths. That Deer Park exists here. This Kasuga, where deer live day and night, is indeed the Deer Park.

Priest Furthermore, speaking of this Kasuga Grand Shrine,

Reciters The clear moonlight shining on Mount Mikasa and the spring sun—the literal meaning of “Kasuga”—appearing from behind the mountain, together embody Kasuga Myōjin’s divine vow to illuminate every corner of this world. His light shines on the entire area surrounding Kasuga. Saidaiji Temple and the other six temples in Nara are bathed in his light, and how truly peaceful is the view of Kasugano in Nara, which became the capital city in which the Buddha’s teaching flourished just like double-flowered cherry blossoms.

Myōe How truly grateful I feel. I take this to be an oracle from Kasuga Myōjin and so I shall refrain from going to India via China. By the way, may I ask who you are? Please give me your name. / As you have tried so hard to stop me from going, I have decided not to go to India via China. By the way, may I ask who you are?

地 春日の山を拝みなさい。

「我を知れ、釈迦牟尼仏世に出でて、さやけき月の世を照すとは（自分は釈迦牟尼仏の化現で、世の迷いを照らし、衆生を救うために、再び現れ出たのだ、よくよく理解なされよ）」と春日明神のご詠歌に明らかにされている。これは、慈悲万行菩薩春日明神の神徳により、迷える衆生を普く照らそうというご誓願の現れである。さらにまた、釈尊が華嚴経をよりどころに深遠な仏理を説くだけでは、利己的な凡夫を救えないとお悲しみになり、きらびやかで立派な衣を脱ぎ捨て、粗末な破れ衣を身に纏い、凡夫の中に分け入って、分かり易い阿含経で、四諦の法理を説かれた鹿野苑も、ここである。鹿の起き伏す春日野は、まさに鹿の園（鹿野苑）だ。

宮守の老人 そのほか当社の有様は、

地 三笠の山に曇りなき月影がさし、春の日がその山陰から現れて四方を照らし出して神の誓願を示し、春日野の宮路のすみずみまで行き渡らせている。西大寺はじめ奈良の七大寺まで光り輝き、八重桜の咲くように仏法の栄える都となった春日野の春景色は、実に長閑だ。

明恵

誠にありがたいことです。ではこれを明神のご神託と思ひ定めて、このたびの入唐渡天は思い止まります。さて、あなたは一体どういう方なのですか、お名前を名乗って下さい。／あまりにお引き止めなさるので、入唐渡天は思い止まります。さて、

Priest If you refrain from visiting China and India to study Buddhism, I will move India to Mount Mikasa, and show you many scenes of the life of Shakyamuni Buddha. I will show you his birth from Maya,*3 / If you are still suspicious, wait until tonight. I will move India to Mount Mikasa, and show you many scenes of the life of Shakyamuni Buddha. I will show you his birth from Maya,*4

Priest / Myōe

his enlightenment in Bodhgaya,

Priest his lecture at Vulture Peak,

Reciters and his death in the grove of sala trees. Stay here and wait a while. My name is Tokufū (or Tokikaze) Hideyuki, who came here to deliver this oracle. Having revealed this, the old man instantly disappears. He vanishes in thin air.

*1 Mount Tiantai: A sacred mountain in Zhejiang Province, China, the birthplace of Tiantai (Japanese: Tendai) Buddhism.

*2 Mount Wutai: A sacred mountain in Shanxi province in China.

*3 Mount Kimpu in Yoshino: According to legend, a part of Mount Wutai in China flew here on a cloud.

*4 Maya: Mother of Shakyamuni Buddha.

あなたは一体どういう方なのですか。

宮守の老人

入唐渡天を思い止まるならば、三笠山に天竺を移し、摩耶※4のもとでの誕生から
／なおも不審に思われるなら、今夜一夜をお待ちください。三笠山に天竺を移し、
摩耶のもとでの誕生から

宮守の老人
明恵

仏陀伽耶での成道、

宮守の老人 霊鷲山の説法、

地

沙羅双樹の林の中での入滅まで、釈尊の一生をことごとくお見せしよう、しばらくここに待たたまえ、との神託を告げに来た、ときふう時風／ときかぜ時風秀行という者である、そう明かして老人は、即座に姿を消した、即座に姿を消した。

※1 天台山…天台宗の開かれた中国・浙江省の霊山。

※2 五台山…中国・山西省にある霊山。

※3 吉野金峰山…中国の五台山の片端が雲に乗って飛来したとの言い伝えがある。

※4 摩耶…釈尊の母。

4. Speech of a Lower-ranked God

A god enshrined in a lower ranking shrine in Kasuga appears and narrates the story of Monk Myōe paying a visit to Kasuga Myōjin and being persuaded by Tokifū Hideyuki to abandon his decision to travel to China and India in order to study Buddhism. He furthermore says that Kasuga Myōjin will perform the miracle of moving India to Mount Mikasa and showing scenes from the life of Shakyamuni Buddha. He says that an auspicious sign is now appearing in the sky, encourages people to offer prayers, and takes his leave.

5. Dragon Gods Appear

In the bright light sparkling on the fields and mountains of Kasuga, the dragon gods appear. The Eight Great Dragon Kings appear, leading their families and retainers, and seat themselves in the proper posture to listen to the preaching of Shakyamuni Buddha. When female dragons perform a dance, the scenes of the life of Shakyamuni Buddha appear on Mount Mikasa in front of people's eyes. Myōe is dissuaded from visiting China and India to study Buddhism and the dragon gods disappear into Sarusawa Pond.

Myōe and His Attendant

An oracle from a god truly has miraculous powers, truly has miraculous powers. Immediately after the pronouncement of the oracle, rays of light shone forth, entirely illuminating the mountains and fields of Kasuga and turning them into a golden realm. The trees and grasses have become buddha-bodies, which is truly miraculous. The trees and grasses have become buddha-bodies, which is truly miraculous.

Reciters Now, the shaking of the earth must surely be a sign that the dragon gods living under the ground have come to form as assembly and listen to the preaching of the Lotus Sutra. / The earth is shaking now. People are making a great fuss, wondering if this means the dragon gods living under the ground have appeared.

四 末社の神の口上

末社の神が現れ、明恵上人が春日明神にお参りしに来てから、時風秀行の説得で入唐渡天を思いとどまるまでの話を語る。さらに明神が三笠山に天竺を移して、釈尊の一生を見せるといふ奇瑞を示すので、空に変化が現れたといつて皆に拝むように勧めて去っていく。

五 龍神の登場

春日野の野山が光り輝くなかに、龍神が登場する。八大龍王が眷属を引き連れて、釈尊の説法を聞く様子で座につく。龍女が舞を舞うと、三笠山では釈尊の一生が映じられる。明恵も入唐渡天を思いとどまり、龍神は猿沢池に消える。

明恵一行 神託はまさに靈驗あらたかである、まさに靈驗あらたかである、お告げがあったかと思うと、早くも光が射し、春日野の野山は金色世界となって、草も木も仏体となつたぞ、実に不思議なことだよ、草も木も仏体となつたぞ、実に不思議なことだよ。

地
今この時に、大地が震動するのは、下界の龍神が法華会座に連なるのだろうか。／
今この時に、大地が震動するのは、下界の龍神が出現したのかと人々は騒ぎ立てた。今この時に、大地が震動するのは、下界の龍神が法華会座に連なるのだろうか。

Surely, the shaking of the earth must mean that the dragon gods
beneath the ground will join the assembly to hear the Lotus Sutra.

Dragon God

Behold, the Eight Great Dragon Kings appear!

Reciters Dragon King Nanda.

Dragon God

Dragon King Upananda.

Reciters Dragon King Sagara.

Dragon God

Dragon King Vasuki.

Reciters Dragon King Taksaka.

Dragon God / Reciters

Dragon King Anavatapta. These dragon kings,

Reciters leading their families and retinues of thousands, are creating
waves on the surface of the fields. They have come to sit in the
assembly and hear Shakyamuni Buddha preach the Lotus Sutra.

Dragon Gods

In addition, King Wondrous Dharma Kinnara,

Reciters King Dharma-keeper Kinnara,

地

持法緊那羅王、

龍神

そのほか、妙法緊那羅王、

地

百千の眷属を引き連れて、平地に波を起し、
聞する。 釈迦説法の会座に連なり、法華経を聴

龍神／地

阿那婆達多龍王らが、

地

徳叉迦龍王、

龍神

和修吉龍王、

地

沙伽羅龍王、

龍神

跋難陀龍王、

地

難陀龍王

龍神

それ、八大龍王が現れたぞ。

Dragon Gods

King Gandharva,

Reciters King Enjoying the Sound of the Dharma Kendatsuba

Dragon Gods

Asura King Bali,

Reciters and Asura King Rahu also bring their families and retinues, numerous beyond calculation, to likewise join the assembly.

The sleeves of the dancing female dragons float like waves. White are the waves of the sleeves of the dancing female dragons. When the sleeves sweep over the ocean, the foam turns into pearls and scatters. From within the blue ocean that reflects the blue sky, floating over the Saho River that reflects the moon,

Dragon God / Reciters

the Eight Great Dragon Kings appear and manifest their dignified forms.

[*Hataraki*] (movements accompanied by music)

A short, powerful and upbeat dance performed by the Dragon God. The dance is performed accompanied by a Japanese flute, small and large hand drums, and a drum.

Dragon God

The Eight Great Dragon Kings

Dragon God / Reciters

tilting their eight crowns,

龍神

がくけんだつばおう、
樂乾闥婆王、

地

がくおんけんだつばおう、
樂音乾闥婆王、

龍神

ばちあしゅらおう、
婆稚阿修羅王、

地

らごあしゅらおう
羅睺阿修羅王なども、数えきれないほどの眷属を引き連れて、これも同じく会座に
連なつた。

龍女が舞う波の袖、龍女が舞う波の袖は真白で、海原を払えば、水は白玉となつて
飛び散る。緑の空と互いに映る海原の沖の海中から、月影の映る佐保川に浮かび出
て、

龍神/地

八大龍王が威容を示す。

「ハタラクキ」

龍神の舞う短くも力強く、ノリのよい舞。笛、小鼓、大鼓、太鼓で奏される。

龍神

八大龍王は

龍神/地

八つの冠を傾け、

Reciters fly up to the clouds above moon-risen Mount Mikasa in this Kasuga and descend to the ground. The guardians of this field should also see this. The birth from Maya, the lecture at Vulture Peak, and the death under sala tree—all of these scenes from the life of Shakyamuni Buddha have been shown and with this, they have come to the end. Now, Monk Myōe, will you still make your trip to China?

Myōe No, I will not go.

Reciters What about going to India?

Myōe No, I will not go.

Reciters How about your plan to visit those holy sites of the Buddha?

Myōe No, I will not visit them.

Reciters No matter how much you might search, you could never find a place that surpasses this one, Kasuga. So saying, the female dragons ascend on clouds and fly away to the south. Kicking up the blue water of Sarusawa Pond, the dragon gods transform themselves into dragons thousands of miles long, spread themselves out as wide as the sky and the earth, and create large waves and disappear into the pond.

地

ここ春日野の、月の出た三笠山上の雲に上り、地に下る。さあ野守も見るがよい、摩耶のもとへの誕生、霊鷲山での説法、沙羅双樹下の入滅の様子など、釈尊の一生はことごとく示されて、もうこれで終わりだ。さて、明恵上人よ、入唐はどうするのか、

明恵

止めます。

地

渡天はどうか、

明恵

渡りません。

地

仏跡は

明恵

尋ねません。

地

いくら尋ねようとも、この上はもうないのだ、と雲に乗り、龍女は南方に飛び去って行き、龍神は猿沢の池の青波を蹴立てて、千尋の長さの大蛇となつて、天地に大きく広がって、池に大波を立てて消え失せた。

Kasuga Ryūjin (The Dragon God of Kasuga)

Synopsis

Monk Myōe who resides in a humble hut in Toganoo in Kyoto intends to travel to India via China and visit the holy sites of Buddhism. He goes to Kasuga Grand Shrine in Nara to make a farewell call. In the shrine, Myōe meets an old man who seems to be a priest of the shrine. He exchanges words with the old man and tells him that he is visiting the shrine to bid farewell to the god of Kasuga Myōjin. The old man then warns Myōe that leaving Japan would go against the divine wishes of the god and tries to hold Myōe back. Myōe makes the counter-argument that as he is going to worship the holy sites of Buddhism, he is not going against the god's wishes. Nevertheless, the old man vigorously persists in trying to persuade Myōe not to leave Japan. The old man recounts that as centuries have passed since Shakyamuni Buddha passed away, there is not much merit to visit India and China nowadays. Besides, Mount Kasuga here is considered to be Vulture Peak. Japan has Mount Hiei, which has been likened to Mount Tiantai, and Mount Kimpu in Yoshino, which has been likened to Mount Wutai. Thus the old man lists a number of sites in Japan considered to be the equivalents of Buddhist holy sites. The old man emphasizes that Buddhism has spread throughout Japan and therefore, Myōe need not leave his home country. While listening to everything the old man has told him, Myōe changes his mind and decides to accept the old man's words as an oracle from the god of Kasuga Myōjin and stops going to China. The old man promises Myōe that if Myōe decides not to go to China, he will move India to Mount Mikasa and show him the entire life of Shakyamuni Buddha, starting with his mother, Maya, giving birth to him, as well as the moment of his enlightenment in Bodhgaya, his sermon at Vulture Peak, and his death in the grove of sala trees. He mentions that his name is Tokifū Hideyuki and that he came to present this oracle to Myōe. He then vanishes into thin air.

The miraculous power of the oracle is immense. Myōe now witnesses divine light shining forth and illuminating, in gold, all of the mountains and fields of Kasuga. Before Myōe's eyes, the miracle of trees and grasses being transformed into buddhas is now revealed. Then, dragon gods appear. Because they want to hear Shakyamuni Buddha preach the Lotus Sutra, the Eight Great Dragon Kings, accompanied by their families and retainers, come and sit in an assembly. In addition, other gods appear and similarly sit together in the assembly. Next, female dragons perform dances as scenes from the life of Shakyamuni are reflected on Mount Mikasa. Myōe now firmly determines to abandon his plan to visit China and India to study Buddhism. No matter how many such places as those one might visit, none could surpass this place. So saying, the female dragons leave to the south and the dragon gods leap into Sarusawa Pond. They all vanish.

Highlight

In order to fully appreciate "Kasuga Ryūjin," it will be helpful to have some knowledge about the *waki* character, Myōe Shōnin (Monk Myōe), a very high-ranking, ordained Buddhist priest of the Kamakura era (1185-1333) who devoted his entire life to ascetic training and the study of Buddhism. He is well-known for his diary, *Yume Nikki* (A Diary of Dreams), which he continuously wrote from his teenage years to his death at the age of sixty. He was a morally upright man with unparalleled knowledge, deep wisdom, and fine temperament. He did not pander to or curry favor with secular society but who treated everyone with compassion and therefore, many people had great respect for Myōe. He also showed real courage and did not shrink before the powerful, such as when he gave shelter to defeated warriors during the Jōkyū War of 1221. History recognizes Myōe as the restorer of Flower Garland School of Buddhism in Japan. Many books have been published about him. (Some examples are *Myōe – Yume wo Ikiru* (Myōe – Living a Dream) by Hayao Kawai and *Myōe Shōnin* (Monk Myōe) by Masako Shirasu.) Please refer to those books to learn more about him.

Kasuga Ryūjin is a story in which a god stops Myōe from going abroad. It is quite a simple story that does not involve much drama. However, it portrays the strong desire to prevent an important man, akin to a national treasure, from leaving the country. In the play, Kasuga Myōjin is described as an incarnation of the Buddha, and therefore Myōe accepts what the old man says as an oracle and refrains from leaving Japan. The story conveys a lesson to all people about the importance of finding your own way in the place you now live, rather than searching for it somewhere else. Deeply experiencing the message of this play gives us the chance to reconsider how we are living our own lives.

The highlight of this piece is the scene in the second half in which the Eight Great Dragon Kings appear. The scene in which each Dragon King is called by name and then manifests his dignified appearance—while the melody is rather simple—is imbued with many entertaining aspects.

Schools	All five
Category	The Fifth-Group Noh, <i>Oni-mono</i>
Author	Unknown (According to traditions, Komparu Zenchiku or Zeami)
Subject	<i>Kokon Chomonjū</i> (A Collection of Notable Events, Old and New), Volume 1
Season	Spring (March in the lunar calendar)
Scene	Village of Kasuga in Yamato Province

Characters	<i>Mae-shite</i>	Old Priest of Kasuga Shrine
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	Dragon God
	<i>Waki</i>	Monk Myōe
	<i>Waki-tsure</i>	Monk Attending Myōe
	<i>Ai</i>	A God of a Lower-Ranked Shrine / Shinto Priest
Masks	<i>Mae-shite</i>	<i>Kojō</i> , <i>Koushi-jō</i> , <i>Akobujō</i> , etc.
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	<i>Kurohige</i>
	<i>Ai</i>	<i>Noborihige</i>
Costumes	<i>Mae-shite</i>	<i>Jō-kami</i> (wig for an old man), <i>okina-eboshi</i> (<i>eboshi</i> -style headdress worn by an old man or a Shinto priest), <i>kariginu</i> -style <i>kimono</i> , <i>kitsuke / kogōshi-atsuita</i> (thickly woven <i>kimono</i> with small checked pattern), <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> (belt), and a fan.
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	Long red wig, <i>ryūdai</i> (crown worn exclusively by dragon gods), <i>happi</i> -style <i>kimono</i> , <i>kitsuke / atsuita</i> (a type of short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> mainly worn by male characters), <i>hangire</i> (a type of <i>hakama</i> worn by strong characters such as demons, gods and warriors), <i>koshi-obi</i> , a fan, and a stick for beating.
	<i>Waki</i>	<i>Sumi-bōshi</i> (a hood for regular Buddhist monks), <i>mizugoromo</i> (a type of knee-length <i>kimono</i>), <i>kitsuke / kogōshi-atsuita</i> , <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> , Buddhist prayer beads, and a fan.
	<i>Waki-tsure</i>	<i>Sumi-bōshi</i> , <i>mizugoromo</i> , <i>kitsuke / kogōshi-atsuita</i> or <i>kitsuke / muji-noshime</i> (a short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> without a pattern that is worn as the innermost layer of the costumes of male characters of lesser standing), <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> , Buddhist prayer beads, and a fan.
	<i>Ai</i>	<i>Massha-zukin</i> (a type of hood worn by lower-ranking priests), <i>mizugoromo</i> , <i>kukuri-bakama</i> (a style of wearing <i>hakama</i> trousers by tucking up the bottoms at the knee with string), and a pair of gaiters.
Number of scenes	Two	
Length	About one hour	

あらすじ

京都、梶尾に庵を結ぶ明恵上人は、入唐渡天（中国、インドに渡り、仏跡を巡ること）を志し、暇乞いのため、奈良の春日大社に参詣します。春日大社で、明恵は一人の神官と思われる老人に出逢います。明恵は老人と言葉を交わし、このたびの参詣が、入唐渡天のための暇乞いであることを明かします。すると老人は明恵に、日本を去ることは神慮に背くことになると言い、引き止めました。明恵が仏跡を拜むためだから、神慮に背くはずがないと反論しますが、老人はさらに引き止めました。今や仏も入滅されて時が経ち、天竺や唐に行くのも御利益がありません。今や春日山が霊鷲山と見なされ、天台山を擬した比叡山があり、五台山になぞらえられる吉野金峰山もある、というように日本に仏跡と見なされる場所がたくさんあって、仏教も広まっている、と他国に行く必要のないことを強調します。ここまで言われて、明恵も心を改め、これを神託と受け止めて、入唐渡天を思いとどまりました。老人は、入唐渡天をやめるならば、三笠山に天竺を移して摩耶（釈迦の母）のもとでの誕生から仏陀伽耶での成道、霊鷲山での説法、沙羅双樹の林での入滅まで、釈尊の一生を見せようと告げ、神託を授けに来た時風秀行という者だと言って消えていきました。

神託の靈験はあらたかであり、早くも光が射し、春日野の野山は。あたり一面、金色の輝く世界となりました。草も木も仏に変わる不思議な光景が現れたのです。そこに龍神が姿を見せました。釈尊の説法を聞こうとやってきた八大龍王が、眷属を引き連れて法華の会座に座りました。そのほか多くの神々も現れ、同じく会座に座りました。やがて龍女が舞を舞い、三笠山では釈尊の一生が映じられ、明恵も入唐渡天をすっかり思いとどまりました。どれだけ尋ねようとも、この上はないと、そう言って龍女が南へ去ると、龍神は猿沢池に飛び入り、消え去りました。

みどころ

「春日龍神」を楽しむには、ワキとして出てくる明恵上人のことを少しでも知っておくとよいでしょう。明恵は鎌倉時代の僧で、修行に励み仏道を追究する一生を送りました。十代の頃から六十歳で死ぬまで、したため続けた夢日記が有名です。彼は知識も人柄も知恵もすぐれた清廉な人物で、世俗におもねることなく、慈悲の心をもって人々に接し、多くの人々から尊崇されました。承久の乱（1221年）では、敗者の武士たちを匿うなど、権力者にも臆さない行動力を示しました。明恵は一般には華嚴宗の中興の祖と目されています。その生涯や人となりを知るには、さまざまな書物が出ていますので、ご参考になさってください。（河合隼雄「明恵 夢を生きる」、白洲正子「明恵上人」ほか）

「春日龍神」は、物語そのものは、明恵が海外に行くのを神が引き止めるという、非常にシンプルなストーリーで、大して起伏はありません。ですが、彼のような国の宝ともいべき人物の、海外流出を防ぎたいという強い思いのこもった曲です。曲の中で、春日明神は仏の示現であるとされ、それゆえ明恵も神託を受け入れて、海外へ行くのを思いとどまります。どこか別の場所に道を求めるのではなく、今、自分のいる場所で道を求めることの大切さを教えるようなところもあり、よく味わうほどに、人の生き方について考えさせられる曲です。

曲の中での面白い場面を挙げますと、やはり、八大龍王の現れる後半部分でしょうか。龍王の名前が紹介され、威容を示す姿も見せて、簡素な曲想に、観て楽しめる要素を織り込んでいます。

流儀 五流にあり
 分類 五番目物、鬼物
 作者 不明（一説・金春禅竹、世阿弥とも）
 題材 『古今著聞集』巻一
 季節 春（旧暦三月）
 場面 大和国春日の里

登場人物	前シテ	宮守の老人
	後シテ	龍神
	ワキ	明恵上人
	ワキツレ	従僧
	アイ	末社の神／社人
面	前シテ	小尉、小牛尉、阿古父尉など
	後シテ	黒髭
	アイ	登髭（のぼりひげ）
装束	前シテ	尉髪、翁烏帽子、狩衣、着付・小格子厚板、白大口、腰帯、扇
	後シテ	赤頭、龍台（龍戴）、法被、着付・厚板、半切、腰帯、扇、打杖
	ワキ	角帽子、水衣、着付・小格子厚板、白大口、腰帯、数珠、扇
	ワキツレ	角帽子、水衣、着付・小格子厚板／着付・無地熨斗目、白大口、腰帯、数珠、扇
	アイ	末社頭巾、水衣、括袴、脚絆
場数	二場	
上演時間	約1時間	

春日龍神 (かすがりゅうじん)
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