

* は流儀によって異なることを示す。

一 遊行上人と従僧の登場

仏法を広めながら諸国をめぐるている遊行上人と従僧が、上総から奥州へ向かう。白川の関を越えると、分かれ道にさしかかる。

遊行上人・
いつ帰るとも決まっていないう旅ではあるが、仏法を広めるためと思うと心が急がれる。

上人
私は諸国をまわっている遊行僧です。私は一遍上人の教えを受けて、遊行の利益りやくを日本全国六十余州に広め、すべての人が必ず往生できるといいう御札を広く衆生に与えています。ここ最近上総の国にいましたが、これから奥州の方へと向かっています。

上人・従僧
日本の国々をめぐるて仏法を広めて歩いていると、

従僧
国々をめぐるて仏法を広めて歩いていると、

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

1. Yugyō Shōnin and Accompanying Monks Appear

Yugyō Shōnin (an itinerant holy man) who is traveling around the provinces to disseminate Buddhist teachings, departs from Kazusa Province with his accompanying monks. They are headed for Mutsu Province. After they pass through the Shirakawa Barrier, they come to a fork in the road.

Yugyō Shōnin and Accompanying Monks

Although we are traveling without any particular schedule to return home, we feel that we must make haste whenever we recall that our mission is to disseminate the teachings of the Buddha.

Yugyō Shōnin

I am a monk traveling around the provinces. I received the teachings from Ippen Shōnin and am disseminating the merits of itinerant preaching by visiting all of Japan's more than sixty provinces. I have been giving talismans to people everywhere that ensure they will, in the afterlife, reach Amida's Pure Land. For a while I have been staying in Kazusa Province, but now I will set out for Mutsu Province.

Shōnin and Accompanying Monks

As we travel around Japan, disseminating the teachings of the Buddha,

Accompanying Monks

As we travel around Japan, disseminating the teachings of the Buddha,

Shōnin and Accompanying Monks

the moon shines upon us, its pure light making us feel as though the delusions buried deep in our minds have been completely cleared away. Traveling like this, we have arrived at the Shirakawa Barrier, which withstands autumn winds and evening mists. As usual, we shall inquire about a lodging for tonight. Evening has come.

Shōnin Since we made haste, we have already passed through the famous Shirakawa Barrier. Now I start to see where the road ahead of us branches off. I choose to proceed along the wider road.

Accompanying Monks

Yes, we will do so.

2. Old Man Appears

An old man appears and suggests that Yugyō Shōnin take the old path, instead of the wide road. He suggests that Shōnin offer invocations of the name of Amida Buddha to the Withered Willow.

Old Man Excuse me, may I talk to the companions of Reverend Yugyō Shōnin?

Shōnin As you are calling for an itinerant preacher, would you like to receive a talisman? I do understand that it's hard for an old man like you, but would you mind hurrying up a bit and coming here?

Old Man What a blessing. Yes, I would like to receive a talisman. However, another reason I called out to you is that when the last *yugyō shōnin* made a sacred pilgrimage through this area, he chose to travel on the ancient road, since that old path was better. That is

上人、徒僧 曇りない月の光が照って、心の奥の迷いを取り払うようである。こうして着いた白川の関では、秋風が吹き、夕霧が立ち込めている。どこかで今晚も宿を借りましょう。夕暮になってきました。

上人 急いでいるうちに、有名な白川の関も過ぎてきた。ここに多くの道が見えてきました。広い方の道へ行こうと思います。

徒僧 そうしましょう。

二 老翁の登場

老翁が現れ、広い道ではなく古道を通るように上人に勧め、朽木の柳に念仏を唱えるように頼む。

老翁 もしもし、遊行上人の御供の人に申し上げることがございます。

上人 遊行僧をお呼びになるとは、御札を所望なさるのでしょうか。老人の足で仕方がないとは思いますが、いまま少し急いで来てください。

老翁 ありがたいことです。御札をいただきます。それもそうですが、先代の遊行上

why I came all the way over here to tell you about / to guide you toward the ancient road.

Shōnin How interesting. The last *yugyō shōnin* did not travel on this road, but on the old path, did he?

Old Man That's right. This wide road did not exist in the past and therefore, he traveled on the road running in front of the grove over there, the highway continuing along the river. Furthermore, a famous tree named Withered Willow grows by the old path. Reverend Yugyō Shōnin, if a holy man like you offers your recitation of Amida's name to a tree, even trees and plants like it will be able to make a karmic connection leading them to attain buddhahood.

Group Reciters

Please come this way. So saying, although this is not the story of how Guan Zhong's old horse led him in the right direction, this old man guides Yugyō Shōnin to the path. Traveler, hurry up. Even though this road is called the old highway, no one takes this road and so it has fallen into disrepair. It is covered in frost-laden vines, sagebrush, and tall grasses that grow thick and randomly. When we walk on the path wet with the autumn frost and dew, we find the Withered Willow growing on an old mound that looks as though it has been there since ancient times. Its branches are weak and withered. The old path stretches far under trees, its only traveler the wind.

人が先年お下りになった時にも、古い道がよいといって昔からある街道をお通りになったのです。それで昔の道を教えよう／道案内しようと思つて、はるばるここま
で参つたのです。

上人 不思議なことだ。先代の遊行上人も、この道ではない古い道を通つたことがあるの
ですね。

老翁 その通りです。昔はこの道はなくて、あそこに見えるひとまとまりの森の手前の、
川岸の街道をお通りになったのです。その上、あちらには朽木の柳という名木があ
ります。あなたのような尊い上人様に念仏を唱えて頂ければ、草木までも成仏の縁
を結ぶことができます。

地 こちらへ入りなさいと言つて、管仲の老いた馬が道案内をしてくれるという故事で
はないが、この老翁が道案内をする。どうぞ旅の人、お急ぎなさい。本当に古道と
言われているような所であつて、人の通つた跡もなく荒れ果ててしまつていて、葎
や蓬や刈萱が乱れ生え、一面に秋の霜が降りている。霜や露を分けて進んで見て
みると、昔からの面影を残す古塚に朽木の柳があつて、枝は力なく枯れている。木
陰の道は果てしなく、風だけが吹き渡つていく様子である。

3. Old Man Tells the Story of Withered Willow

The old man tells Yugyō Shōnin the story of the Withered Willow and the poem by Monk Saigyō. He then disappears.

Old Man Here it is. Here is the old highway. Also, the tree growing on the old mound is the Withered Willow. / the famous willow tree. Please take a good look at the willow. / fully enjoy the view of the willow.

Shōnin The tree growing on this mound / This is the famous / Withered Willow. I see. The water has receded from the dry river shore, leaving the willow to wither at the bank. Creeping ivy and vines thickly cover the old tree, making it difficult to identify. The green moss covering its branches attest to the expanse of time that the willow tree has spent on this mound. Since when has this willow tree been famous? Please tell me, in detail, its story.

Old Man According to an old legend, Satō Byōe Norikiyo was a warrior in the service of Retired Emperor Toba, stationed in the north room of the imperial palace. After he renounced the world, he changed his name to Saigyō and became a poet. When Monk Saigyō traveled to this province in the middle of June, he stayed for a while under a tree on this river bank, where he composed a poem.

Shōnin What an intriguing story. Well, then, what was the poem Monk Saigyō wrote there?

Old Man I assume, Reverend Yugyō Shōnin, you must be busy all day reciting sutras, but perhaps you have heard this poem from the *Shin-Kokin-wakashū* (New Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern)?

三 朽木の柳のいわれを語る老翁

老翁は朽木の柳に関するいわれや西行の歌について上人に語ると、姿を消してしまふ。

老翁 これが昔の街道です。また、この古塚の上にあるのが朽木の柳です。／名木の柳です。よくよくご覧／眺めてください。

上人 この塚の上にあるのが／これが名木の／朽木の柳ですか。なるほど、川岸の水も枯れてしまつて、川辺には柳が朽ちて残っている。老木には、それとは見分けることができないほど蔦や葛かすろが這いかかっている。緑色の苔が梢を埋めている様子からは、誠に年月を経たことがわかる。この柳はいつの頃からの名木なのですか。詳しく語ってください。

老翁 昔の人が申し伝えたことによると、鳥羽院の北面の武士であつた佐藤兵衛憲清さとうへいゑのりきよ、出家してからの名を西行と申す歌人がこの国にお下りになったのが水無月の半ば、この川岸の木陰にしばらくお立ち寄りになつて一首の和歌を詠まれたのです。

上人 いわれを聞けば面白い。さてさて、西行上人の詠んだ歌はどのようなものだったのですか。

老翁 上人様は一日中お勤めで忙しいとは思いますが、『新古今和歌集』のこの歌をご存

Reciters “A short rest in the shade of a roadside willow, / Near a clear running stream / Somehow turned into a lengthy stay.” (Poem attributed to Saigyō). Monk Saigyō wrote this poem while he enjoyed the cool air under the tree. I am deeply impressed that while this poem has been appreciated by generation after generation, the old willow tree is still standing today. Then, Yugyō Shōnin recites the invocation of Amida Buddha ten times for the old man's sake, so that in the afterlife, he will be able to reach Amida's Pure Land. The old man stands before Yugyō Shōnin and seems to draw near the old mound with the Withered Willow. He then vanishes into thin air.

4. Narration by Villager [Interlude]

A villager appears and, upon Yugyō Shōnin's request, talks about the Withered Willow and Saigyō's poem about it. He goes on to surmise that the old man whom Shōnin met was the spirit of the willow tree and suggests that Shōnin transfer the merits of his recitation to the tree so that he might be able to see something wondrous.

5. Yugyō Shōnin and Accompanying Monks Offer Prayers

Yugyō Shōnin and accompanying monks offer prayers by invoking Amida's name. They then take a nap at the site.

じでしようか。

地

「道のべに清水流るる柳陰しばしとてこそ立ちとまりつれ（道のほとりにある、清水の流れていくこの柳陰に、しばしの間だけと思いついでいたが、気持ちよかつたので思わず時を過ごしてしまった。西行の歌とされる）」という涼んでいた時の歌がある。この歌が長く後世に伝わること、また、今に残る柳の老木にも心が惹かれる。こうして老人は、上人から極楽往生ができるという十念を授かった。老翁は上人の前を立って、朽木の柳がある古塚に立ち寄るように見えたかと思うと、姿を消してしまった。

四 所の者の語り（中入）

所の者が現れ、遊行上人の求めに応じて、朽木の柳と西行の歌のいわれについて語る。所の者は上人の会った老翁が柳の精であったと推量し、上人に回向してなおも不思議な有様を見るように勧める。

五 上人と従僧による弔い

上人と従僧は、念仏を唱えて弔いをして、その場で仮寝をする。

Shōnin How mysterious. The Withered Willow was having a conversation with me.

Shōnin and Accompanying Monks
Holding our Buddhist prayer beads,

Accompanying Monks
We hold our Buddhist prayer beads and

Shōnin and Accompanying Monks
we offer various prayers and recite Amida's name. Now, we hear the evening bell tolling eight o'clock. No clouds cover the moon, which shines clearly. We shall sleep here tonight, using our sleeves, wet with dew, as pillows.

6. Spirit of the Willow Appears

The Spirit of Willow appears and thanks Yugyō Shōnin for offering prayers. He reveals that he is the old man whom Shōnin met earlier in the evening and expresses his gratitude for Amida Buddha and Shōnin's invocations of Amida's name.

Willow Spirit
There is a poem about a willow that says, "In spring when the water of the Yuan River (in China) / Ripples like a pattern woven into thin silk, / The petrels fly home. / But now you are leaving for far-off Jingtai (in Hubei Province). / My regret for being apart from you / Will grow long as a willow branch and reach Jingtai." Today this decrepit old willow tree had the rare opportunity

Reciters to encounter the teachings of the Buddha, thanks to the prayers offered by Yugyō Shōnin.

地

上人の回向を受けて御法に逢い

柳の精

柳に関しては、詩にも「沅水けんすい（中国の川の名）の水が、薄絹に織り出した紋様のよう
に小波を立てる春の頃に、海燕は戻ってきたが、あなたは遠い荆台けいたい（中国・湖北省に
ある地名）に赴く。惜別の恨みは柳の枝のように長く荆台へと届くだろう」とありま
す。ただはかなく朽ちていたこの老いた柳は、この度良い時機にめぐりあい、

柳の精が現れて上人の回向に感謝すると、自身が夕暮に会った老翁であることを上人に明か
し、阿弥陀如来や念仏のありがたさについて語る。

六 柳の精の登場

上人 不思議なことだ。なんと朽木の柳が自分に言葉を交わしたのかと
上人・従僧 数珠を持ち、数々の

従僧 数珠を持ち、数々の

上人・従僧 弔いをして念仏を唱えていると、初夜の鐘が聞こえてきて、月は曇ることなく照つ
ている。今夜は露に濡れる袂を枕にして、仮寝をすることにしよう。

Willow Spirit

The willow was immediately guided by the teaching of Amida Buddha.

Reciters Thanks to the generous benefits conferred by Amida Buddha upon all living beings, who need only invoke Amida's name to surely reach Amida's Pure Land, even grasses and trees are able to attain buddhahood. So saying, an old man with bushy grey hair suddenly appears. His hair is tangled like old willow branches and the wrinkles on his *eboshi* headdress resemble willow leaves.

Shōnin How interesting. From the base of the Withered Willow growing in the bushes on the aged, ancient mound, there appears a peculiar old man, wearing an *eboshi* headdress and *kariginu*-style *kimono*. How strange.

Willow Spirit

What do you think is strange? I have already shown myself to you earlier. I am the old man who guided you to the right path this evening.

Shōnin What a surprise! The old man who guided us to the old road is the spirit of the Withered Willow.

Willow Spirit

Without the opportunity to receive the teachings of the Buddha, trees and grasses like us, who have no mind or emotions, are unable to attain buddhahood and be reborn upon a lotus dais in Amida's Pure Land.

Shōnin You are right. Even if you only recite the name of Amida Buddha once or ten times,

Willow Spirit

even if you only once recite the name of Amida Buddha, you will be reborn in Amida's Pure Land.

柳の精

すぐに阿弥陀如来の教えに導かれ

地

念仏を唱える衆生はみな必ず往生できるといふありがたい阿弥陀如来の功力によって、草木までもが成仏できる。そう言うとき老木の柳の枝のように乱れた白髪の老人が忽然と現れ出た。かぶっている烏帽子のしわも、柳のような有様である。

上人

不思議なことだ。いかにも古びた古塚の、草深い中にある朽木の柳の木のもとから、異様な姿をした老人が烏帽子と狩衣を着て現れたのは不審なことだ。

柳の精

何を不審に思っているのでしょうか。私の姿はすでにあなたの前に見せたはずですが、私は夕暮に道を案内した老人なのです。

上人

なんと、昔の街道を案内してくれた老翁は朽木の柳の精だったのですね

柳の精

仏の教えを受けることがなかったならば、感情がない無心の草木などは、極樂の蓮の台の上に成仏することはないでしょう。

上人

その通りです。一度でも十度でも念仏を唱えれば

柳の精

ただ一度念仏ただけで極樂に生まれることができるという

Shōnin That is the teaching of Amida Buddha

Willow Spirit
that I have received.

Reciters “Every time that someone in this world recites the name of Amida Buddha, a lotus grows in the Amida’s Pure Land in the west. If you diligently continue to recite Amida’s name throughout your whole life, at your final moment, lotus flowers will come to this world to take you away to Amida’s Pure Land.” Indeed, how splendid that I can be reborn in the highest position at the highest level, a supreme form of birth in the Pure Land.

7. Spirit of the Willow Talks

The spirit of the willow tells episodes of willow trees appearing in ancient Chinese stories and *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji).

Willow Spirit
The last buddha to appear in this world, Shakyamuni Buddha, has passed away, and the next buddha to appear in this world, Bodhisattva Maitreya, has not yet arrived. In this world with no buddha, it seems that the only way we can attain buddhahood is to rely on the profoundly compassionate vow of Amida Buddha.

Reciters Having cleansed our bodies with pure water, we place deep faith in the teachings of the Buddha, and with our bodies and souls, take refuge in them. Amida’s profound compassion is genuine, and therefore we rely on Amida’s vow to save us, which far surpasses the vows taken by the buddhas in the ten directions. Just like a boat carrying me across the water, let Amida Buddha’s vow transport me to the Pure Land.

上人 阿弥陀如来の教えを

柳の精 身に受けて

地 「この世界で一人が一度、念仏を唱えて阿弥陀仏の名を口に出すと、その度に西方浄土に一本の蓮が生える。一生のあいだ常に怠らず念仏を唱えていれば、臨終に際して蓮の花がこの世に迎えに来て、極楽浄土に連れていく」というように、極楽浄土の階位の中で最上位である上品上生じょうほんじょうしょうへ行くことができるのは、うれしいことです。

七 柳の精の語り

柳の精は、中国の故事や『源氏物語』にみられる、柳についての様々ないわれを語る。

柳の精

前の仏の釈迦如来は既に滅し、後の仏の弥勒菩薩は未だ現れていない。仏のいない今の世では、阿弥陀如来の慈悲深い悲願を頼りとする以外に、どうして成仏することができのでしょうか。

地

浄水で我が身をすすぎ清めて、仏の教えを深く信じ、身命を投げ出して帰依しよう。阿弥陀如来の悲願に偽りはなく、十方諸仏の誓願をはるかに超えた弥陀の悲願に

Willow Spirit

We are able to reach the shore of the Pure Land, thanks to the power of a single boat.

Reciters Huodi was in the service of the Yellow Emperor, one of China's three ancient god-emperors. When Huodi was listening to the sound of the autumn wind, he saw a spider on a willow leaf be blown off by the wind and carried across a river, all the while emitting its silk. Having witnessed this, he came up with the idea for a boat. This is one of the virtues of the willow tree.

Willow Spirit

Furthermore, there is a Chinese poem describing the Huaqing Palace of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty. It says,

Reciters "The willow grows in front of the palace, / And the flowers bloom in front of a temple." That was another famous willow tree continuously enjoyed by generations of people. Furthermore, when we review the history of the construction of Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto, we find that when a monk climbed up a mountain in search of a waterfall that, from a distance, appeared to be in five colors, a golden light shined upon the water and the Withered Willow appeared as it instantly transformed itself into Yōryū Kan'on, one of the thirty-three incarnations of Kan'on Bodhisattva. Even today she bestows benefits on living beings, while the waterfall has become a sacred site that people keep visiting and praying to. Therefore, when cherry blossoms are in full bloom in Kyoto, a willow with hanging branches is planted at one of the four corners at the time when nobles play a *kemari* ball game at the court. In the evening I can hear the sound of balls hitting against their shoes as they play *kemari* here and there.

Willow Spirit

When people play *kemari*, they choose the colors of the willow and the cherry

柳の精

身を任せよう。船が我が身を運んでくれるように、阿弥陀如来の本願によって成仏しよう。

極楽の彼岸に到着することができるのは、一葉の船の力なのだが

地

古代中国の三皇の一人とされている黄帝には貨狄かてきという臣下がいた。貨狄が秋に吹く風の音を聞いていると、風で散った柳の一葉の上に蜘蛛が乗っついていて、その蜘蛛が糸を引いて岸辺に渡っていった。これを見た貨狄は船を作り出すことを考えた。これも柳の持つ徳といえよう。

柳の精

その他にも、唐の玄宗皇帝の離宮である華清宮をあらわした漢詩に

地

「御殿の前の柳、寺の前の花」とあるように、眺める人が絶えない柳の名木があった。また、京都の清水寺が作られた由緒をみると、ある僧が五色に見えた滝の水を尋ねて上っていくと、水上には金色の光がさし、朽木の柳がたちまち三十三観音の一つである楊柳観音ようりゅうくわんのんとなって現れ、今も衆生に利益りやくをもたらし、参詣人が絶えず歩みを運ぶ霊地となっている。それゆえ、都が花盛りの頃、殿上人が蹴鞠の遊びをなさる時にも、四方の木のうちの一つには枝の垂れた柳を植えるのだ。鞠を蹴くる杵きの音が夕暮に数多く聞こえてくる。

柳の精

蹴鞠で遊ぶときには柳や桜を織り交ぜた

Reciters for their costumes, which look gorgeous, like brocade. In the “Wakana” episode of *The Tale of Genji*, Kashiwagi was playing *kemari*, when his heart was caught by the fragrance of incense carried on the wind from between beautiful bamboo blinds. At that moment, a cat on a leash accidentally drew up the blind, allowing Kashiwagi to catch a glimpse of Princess Onna-san-no-miya inside the palace. For a long time, he was unable to forget the princess and suffered from unrequited love. My aged self wears shabby willow-colored *kariginu kimono* and *eboshi* headdress. My legs are so weak, I totter in the breeze, but I do not care. Although this old willow tree does not have much vigor, he will perform a dance, but weakly. I will appear to you in a dream, but how ephemeral is the belief that a dream is real.

8. Dance of Spirit of the Willow

The spirit of the willow performs a dance to express his gratitude to Yugyō Shōnin. After dancing, an autumn wind blowing from the west scatters the dew and leaves from the tree. The decrepit Withered Willow is left there, standing alone.

Willow Spirit

How grateful I am to have received the teachings of the Buddha.

Reciters I will ask the clear moon, which travels to the west without digressing from its course, to take me to Amida's Pure Land in the west.

[*Jo-no-mai*]

地

錦のような立派な装いをする。『源氏物語』の若菜の巻には、柏木が蹴鞠をしていたところ、華やかな御簾の隙間からもれてくる風が運ぶ薫物の香りに心動かされ、そのとき飼いが長い引綱を引いて御簾を上げ、中にいた女三の宮を見初めたのである。長く忘れることのできない、柏木の叶わぬ恋は、どうしようもないものなのであった。老いたこの私は、古びた柳色の狩衣と風折烏帽子を身に着けて、わずかな風にも漂うほどに足元が弱い。ままよ、気力もない老木の柳ではあるが、弱々しくも立ち舞おう。あなたの夢に現れ出でて、それを現実のものと思うのははかないことではあるが。

八 柳の精による舞

柳の精は上人への御礼に舞を見せる。舞い終えると、西方から秋風が吹き、柳の露や葉は散り果てて、もとの朽木の柳だけがそこに残っていた。

柳の精

仏の教えを受けるのはうれしいことだ。

地 心迷わずに西へ行く、曇りのない月に西方浄土へと連れていってもらおう。

〔序ノ舞〕

Willow Spirit

This dance, which reminds me of the fluttering sound made by a bush warbler as it flies from branch to branch of a fresh green willow,

Reciters seems to be a piece of court music called “Ryūkaen” (Willow Flower Garden).

Willow Spirit

I will perform a dance like a willow and then swirl my sleeves while performing a bodhisattva dance that gives praise to the Buddha with dancing to music, in order to repay Yugyō Shōnin, so much do I appreciate receiving the merits of his invocations. Now, I must conclude these dances performed to repay his kindness. As I am missing the monk, tears run down my face,

Reciters like pearls of dew pierced by a string made from spring willow.

Willow Spirit

Now I shall bid you farewell. A rooster is crowing at dawn.

Reciters For a farewell song,

Willow Spirit

it is a custom to send someone off with a willow branch bent into a circle, but

Reciters the branch broken off to make the hoop should be that of a fresh green willow

Willow Spirit

that is flexible and elegant.

Reciters This willow, which should create the hoop, is old and

柳の精

青柳の枝から枝へと飛び移っていく鶯の羽風のようなこの舞は

地 雅楽の一つである「柳花苑」と思われる。

柳の精

こうして舞う柳の曲、歌舞で仏を礼賛する菩薩の舞、袂を翻して舞っているが、返す返すも上人の念仏を受けたことを喜ぶ。恩に報いるための舞ももうこれまでと、名残惜しさに流れる涙は

地 春の柳の糸に貫かれた露の玉のようである。

柳の精

そろそろお暇いたしましょう、暁を告げる鶏も鳴いている。

地 別れの曲には

柳の精

柳の枝を輪にして送るのが習わし通りであろうが

地 手折って送るべきは青柳の

柳の精

姿もしなやかなものであつて

地 結ぶべきこの柳は老木で

Willow Spirit

has few branches.

Reciters I hope to live beyond this year, so let me avoid the wind. So saying, he totters on his weak legs, as though he were drifting in the wind, and feebly falls down and lies on the ground. It must be that a karmic connection from a previous lifetime led me to take a nap on a pillow of grass and spend a night together with Yugyō Shōnin, who recited invocations of Amida's name for me. When the spirit of the willow sweeps his arms to ward off the autumn wind from the west, leaves and dew scatter all around. Yugyō Shōnin wakes up from a dream and the decayed willow stands there, quietly, alone.

柳の精

枝の少ないものである。

地

今年だけの命とならないように、風を厭おう。そう言うと風に漂うように、足元もよろよろ弱々と倒れ伏した。草を枕に仮寝をして一夜を共に過ごし、上人の念仏を受けることができたのも、前世の因縁であろう。西から吹く秋の風をうち払うと、露も木の葉も散り散りとなり果てて、上人は夢から覚め、柳の朽木だけが残っていた。

Yugyō-Yanagi (Yugyō and the Willow)

Synopsis

Yugyō Shōnin (literally, “Itinerant Holy Man,” the honorary title of leaders of Ippen’s disciples), is traveling around the provinces to disseminate the teachings of Ippen Shōnin (Ippen). He passes through the Shirakawa Barrier on his way to Mutsu Province. When the road comes to a fork, he decides to travel along the wider road. Just then, an old man calls out to Yugyō Shōnin and guides him to the old path, upon which a former *yugyō shōnin* traveled. As they walk along the rough old path that has fallen into disrepair, the old man tells him that the willow tree growing on an old mound is a famous tree called the Withered Willow, which is even the subject of a poem composed by Monk Saigyō. When Yugyō Shōnin recites ten incantations of the name of Amida Buddha for the old man’s sake, the old man leans against the Withered Willow and then vanishes into thin air.

A villager appears and recounts the ancient story of the Withered Willow and Monk Saigyō. He surmises that the old man who Yugyō Shōnin just met was the spirit of the Withered Willow and suggests that Yugyō Shōnin hold a memorial service if he would like to see something wondrous. Yugyō Shōnin recites a prayer to Amida Buddha and while he is taking a nap, the spirit of the Withered Willow appears, having transformed itself into an old man with gray hair. He reveals that he himself is actually the old man who guided Yugyō Shōnin earlier that day. He gives thanks to Amida Buddha and the power of invoking Amida’s name and tells stories featuring willows, found in legends and *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji). When the spirit performs a dance to express his gratitude to Yugyō Shōnin, a wind blowing from the west scatters the willow leaves. After the wind blows, the Withered Willow is left standing alone.

Highlights

This is one of the final plays written by Kanze Nobumitsu. Unlike many of his other, flashy pieces, such as *Momijigari* (Viewing the Autumn Foliage) and *Funa-Benkei* (Benkei in a Boat), this unusual play has a tranquil atmosphere. Although the storyline develops around an old willow tree, it still has moments of splendor. This play makes reference to *Saigyō-zakura* (Saigyō and the Cherry Tree) written by Zeami. Although most third-group Noh plays have female lead characters, this piece is unique in that its lead character is the spirit of the willow, which transforms itself into an old man with gray hair.

In the second half of the drama, the spirit of the willow tree makes its appearance from within a stage prop. Although he is the same old man from the first half of the drama, he wears a dignified *jō* mask and formal attire that lend him a clean, polished atmosphere. One of the highlights of this drama is the *kuse* section, which mentions many stories featuring willows. Of particular interest are the descriptive performances of a *kemari* ball game and a cat on a leash drawing up a blind. The old man performs *jo-no-mai*, an elegant dance usually performed by a female character. The drum beat creates momentum in the tranquil, elegant atmosphere.

Schools	All five	
Category	The Third Group Noh	
Author	Kanze Nobumitsu	
Subject	<i>Shin-Kokin-wakashū</i> (New Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern) Volume 3 poem number 262, <i>Genji Monogatari</i> (Tale of Genji), etc.	
Season	Autumn	
Scenes	Shirakawa in Mutsu Province and the vicinity of Ashino in Shimotsuke Province	
<i>Tsukurimono</i>	A mound with a branch of willow, placed in front of the hand drum players	
Characters	<i>Mae-shite</i>	Old Man
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	Spirit of Willow
	<i>Waki</i>	Yugyō Shōnin
	<i>Waki-tsure</i>	Accompanying Monks (two)
	<i>Ai</i>	Villager
Masks	<i>Mae-shite</i>	<i>Sankajō</i> , <i>Akobujō</i> , <i>Asakurajō</i>
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	<i>Maijō</i> , <i>Shiwajō</i> , <i>Ishijōjō</i>
Costumes	<i>Mae-shite</i>	<i>Jō-kami</i> (wig for an old man’s character), <i>mizugoromo</i> (a type of knee-length <i>kimono</i> of middling quality), <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>kogōshi-atsuita</i> (thickly-woven <i>kimono</i> with small check patterns) <i>koshi-obi</i> (belt), Buddhist prayer beads, and a fan.
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	<i>Shiroji-kindan-hachimaki</i> (a white headband with golden brocade), <i>shirotare</i> (a type of wig made of white hair), <i>kuro kazaori-eboshi</i> (black <i>eboshi</i> -style headdress) or <i>yanagisabi kazaori-eboshi</i> (<i>eboshi</i> -style headdress having willow-like wrinkles), <i>hitoe-kariginu</i> (unlined long-sleeved <i>kimono</i> worn by male characters, especially gods and other dignified characters), <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>atsuita</i> (a type of short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> mainly worn by male characters), <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (scarlet), <i>koshi-obi</i> , and a fan.
	<i>Waki</i>	<i>Sumi-bōshi</i> (a hood for ordinary Buddhist monks), <i>mizugoromo</i> , <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>muji-noshime</i> (short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> with no pattern, worn as the innermost layer of the costumes of male characters of lesser standing) or <i>kogōshi-atsuita</i> , <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> , a fan, and Buddhist prayer beads.
	<i>Waki-tsure</i> (two)	<i>Sumi-bōshi</i> (a hood for ordinary Buddhist monks), <i>mizugoromo</i> , <i>kitsuke</i> / <i>muji-noshime</i> (short-sleeved <i>kimono</i> with no pattern, worn as the innermost layer of the costumes of male characters of lesser standing) or <i>kogōshi-atsuita</i> , <i>hakama</i> in <i>ōkuchi</i> -style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> , a fan, and Buddhist prayer beads.
	<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-noshime</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 and 50 minutes	

あらすじ

一遍上人の教えを広めようと諸国をめぐる遊行上人が、奥州に向かう途中で白川の関を越えます。分かれ道があるので広い道を行こうとすると、老翁が上人を呼び止め、先代の遊行上人が通った古道を教えて案内します。荒れ果てた古道を歩いていくと、老翁は古塚にある柳が、朽木の柳という名木であることを上人に教え、西行法師の和歌にも詠まれていることを語ります。老翁は上人による十度の念仏を授かると、朽木の柳に身を寄せるように消え入ります。

所の者が現れて朽木の柳と西行の歌のいわれについて上人に語り、上人が会った老翁が柳の精であったと推量し、上人に回向して不思議な有様を見るように勧めます。上人が念仏を唱えて仮寝をしていると、柳の精が白髪の老翁の姿で現れ、先程道案内をした老翁が自身であったことを明かします。柳の精は阿弥陀如来や念仏に感謝をして、故事や『源氏物語』にみられる柳に関するいわれについて語ります。柳の精が上人への御礼に舞を舞うと、西方から風が吹き、柳の葉は散り果てて、後には朽木の柳だけが残っていたのです。

みどころ

本作は観世信光の最晩年の作品で、「紅葉狩」や「船弁慶」などの派手な作品が多い信光には珍しく、老いた柳を中心としたもの静かな趣の曲ですが、随所に華やかさも見受けられます。世阿弥の「西行桜」をならった作品でもあります。三番目物の多くは女性を主人公としていますが、柳の精である白髪の老翁が主人公であるのも特色です。

後場では作り物の中から柳の精が登場し、前場と同じ老翁ではあっても、品格ある尉面に変わって正装に身を包み、清楚で垢抜けた雰囲気をもっています。柳尽くしの「クセ」はみどころで、鞠を蹴る型や猫が引綱を引く型などの写実的な演技にも注目です。女性が舞うことの多い「序ノ舞」を老翁が舞い、静かで優美な雰囲気の中、太鼓が入ることでゆったりとしたなかにも動きが感じられます。

流儀 五流にあり
分類 三番目物
作者 観世信光
題材 『新古今和歌集』巻三・二六二番歌、『源氏物語』など
季節 秋
場面 陸奥国・白川、下野国・芦野付近
作り物 大小前に柳の枝を付けた塚

登場人物
前シテ 老翁
後シテ 柳の精
ワキ 遊行上人
ワキツレ 従僧 (二人)
アイ 所の者

面 前シテ 三光尉、阿古父尉、朝倉尉
後シテ 舞尉、皴尉、石王尉

装束 前シテ 尉髪、水衣、着附・小格子厚板、腰帯、数珠、扇
後シテ 白地金緞鉢巻、白垂、黒風折烏帽子 (柳鏑風折烏帽子)、単狩衣、着附・厚板、色大口、腰帯、扇
ワキ 角帽子、水衣、着附・無地熨斗目 (小格子厚板にも)、白大口、腰帯、扇、数珠
ワキツレ 角帽子、水衣、着附・無地熨斗目 (小格子厚板にも)、白大口、腰帯、扇、数珠
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50分

遊行柳 (ゆぎょうやなぎ)
Yugyo-Yanagi (Yugyo and the Willow) ©2021 the-noh.com

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