

OKAZAKI, Yuki. A Study of *Kasuga Shrine Mandala* in Nezu Museum

Kasuga Shrine mandalas, or detailed representations of the Kasuga Shrine precincts, were often produced in the medieval period as demonstrations of faith in Kasuga Shrine. Due to its distinct style and composition, as well as its stylistic affinities with older landscape traditions, *Kasuga Shrine Mandala* housed in the Nezu Museum has been hailed as one of the earliest examples of these paintings.

Because of its older stylistic features, this painting has been deemed as a Kamakura period copy of a Heian period original, although a recent study suggesting a late Heian period has brought new attention to this painting. Its strong frontal orientation in comparison to other similar works has led scholars to suggest that this painting served as an object of worship. Past research has also elucidated the circumstances surrounding its production in relation to its motifs and composition. However, the *honjibutsu* figures, represented by large Sanskrit syllables above the shrines, have not been sufficiently investigated, especially in relation to the background of the paintings creation. This paper explores the circumstances of the painting's production through examining its creation date and by focusing on the *honjibutsu*.

I first analyze the depiction of elements such as trees and mist, as well as the lotus pedestals under the Sanskrit characters, in order to confirm that this painting was made in the first half of the Kamakura period. I then confirm that the composition combines old and new elements, with the main shrine (constructed in the early twelfth century) in the center of the painting, and the auxiliary and subsidiary shrines added later. Focusing on the Wakamiya shrine motif in the painting, I then infer that the latest possible production date is around the second year of Jōō era (1223), after this shrine was constructed.

Turning next to the *honjibutsu*, I examine historical records such as Gyokuyō (Diary of Kujō Kanezane) which states that the representation of Fukūkenjaku Kannon as the *honjibutsu* of the First Shrine in this painting was standard for the Fujiwara clan. At the same time, these documents also confirm that *honjibutsu* were not always depicted in works related to Kasuga Shrine and Kōfukuji Temple in the early days of Kasuga Shrine mandala production. In addition, I point out that the placement of Wakamiya Shrine at the edge of the composition conflicts with the stance of Kōfukuji Temple which produced many Kasuga Shrine mandalas.

Medieval-period *kishōmon* (religious petition statements) and *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* suggest that the locations of deities were important, and that at that time, shrines were identified with deities. This view of *honji-suijaku* theory is made manifest in the depiction of the *honjibutsu* directly above the shrines. Similar compositions are seen in other paintings related to Shingon Buddhism, such as those depicting Kariba Myōjin and Niu Myōjin. The origin of such configurations may be traced to paintings such as *Kujaku Myōō* housed in Daigoji temple.

In the early twelfth century, belief in the Fukūkenjaku Kannon sculpture enshrined in the Nanendō in Kōfukuji Temple was closely related to Kasuga Shrine, especially among the Fujiwara clan. Anecdotes about the creation of this building indicate that the sculpture was also important in Shingon Buddhism. Fujiwara no Tadazane venerated both Kasuga Shrine as well as the Nanendō sculpture, the production and rituals of which necessitated the support of Shingon monks. This environment influenced the production of this painting, since his descendants such as Kanezane and Michiie also inherited his faith.