

Gakuzuka Sacred Stone

This stone predates the building of Kasuga Taisha Shrine, and was left untouched as a symbol of the ancient worship of nature when the shrine was built. It is said that a sign board (shagaku) bearing the name of Takemikazuchi no Mikoto, the god of thunder, was buried beneath this stone. The board is thought to have fallen when it was struck by lightning in 772. The name Gakutsuka means “burial mound of the (sha)gaku.”

The fence both protects the stone and delineates the area around it as sacred space, and is one of the features of Shinto belief. The fence here is proof that the stone has been an object of veneration since before the building of the Kasuga Taisha Shrine.