

invoking our names, so that we may escape whipping for the sin of accepting your offer of a cow. The first name is Takasamaro 高佐麻呂; the second, Nakachimaro 中知麻呂; the third, Tsuchimaro 槌麻呂.” With this, they left him at midnight.

The next morning Iwashima found one of his cows dead. He went to Nantōin 南塔院<sup>22</sup> of Daian-ji and asked Novice Ninyō 仁耀<sup>23</sup> (at that time not yet ordained) to recite the *Kongō hannya-kyō* one hundred times. On his request Ninyō spent two days in reciting it. After three days the fiend messengers came to Iwashima, saying, “Owing to the power of the Mahayana scripture we escaped one hundred whipping strokes; besides, we were given half a bushel<sup>24</sup> more rice than the usual ration. How happy and grateful we are! Please be virtuous and hold services for our sake hereafter on every holy day.”<sup>25</sup> Then all of a sudden they disappeared.

Iwashima was over ninety when he died.

As Te-hsüan 德玄<sup>26</sup> of T'ang China escaped the messenger of King Yama owing to the power of the *Hannya-kyō*, so did Iwashima of Japan because he was engaged in business with a loan from the temple fund. The same moral will be found in the story of a flower vendor who was born in Tōriten 切利天,<sup>27</sup> or of Kikuta 掬多 who had once wanted to poison Buddha but whose good heart was restored by Buddha's omniscience.<sup>28</sup>

## 25

### *On the Fiend, Messenger of King Yama, Who Accepted the Hospitality of the One for Whom He Had Been Sent and Repaid It<sup>1</sup>*

In Yamada district, Sanuki province 讃岐國山田郡,<sup>2</sup> there lived a

22. Unidentified.

23. 沙彌仁耀 (d. 796) (Shiban, *Honchō kōsoden*, LXVI). He must have been in his late teens then, before ordination.

24. 一斗, 1 to.

25. 節 *sechi*, equal to 齋 *sai*; see I.24, n. 3.

26. Tou Te-hsüan 賀德玄, a high minister who lived in the reign of Kao-tsung (650-683) (*Kongō hannya-kyō jikkenki*, I).

27. Transliteration of Skt. *Trāyastriṃsa* meaning thirty-three heavens above Mt. Sumeru.

28. *Daishōgonron-kyō* 大鞋巖論經, XIII (*Taishō*, IV, 327c-333a).

1. Cf. *Myōhōki* (III, On Ma Chia-yün 馬嘉運), *Konjaku monogatarihū* (XX, 18), *Hōbutsushū* (VI).

2. Present Takamatsu-shi, or Kita-gun, Kagawa-ken 香川縣高松市, 木田郡.

woman whose name was Nunoshiki no omi Kinume 布敷臣衣女.<sup>3</sup> In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, she suddenly fell ill. Therefore, she laid all kinds of delicious offerings on both sides of her gate to give the deity of plagues a banquet as a bribe.<sup>4</sup>

There came a fiend, a messenger of King Yama, to seize her. Exhausted from searching for her, the fiend cast a covetous look at the offerings of delicacies and accepted them. Then he said to her, “As I have accepted your hospitality, I will repay your kindness. Do you know anyone of the same name as yours?” Kinume answered, saying, “Yes, there is another Kinume in Utari 鵜垂 district<sup>5</sup> of the same province.” Thereupon, he took her to the other Kinume's home in Utari district to see her, and, taking out a one-foot chisel from his red bag, drove it into the latter's forehead and arrested her. The former Kinume of Yamada district went home in secret.

When King Yama, who had been waiting for them, examined her, he said, “This is not the Kinume I sent for. You have got the wrong person. Kinume, will you stay here for a while? Go and get the Kinume of Yamada district.”

As he had failed in trying to conceal her, the fiend again went to Kinume of Yamada district to arrest her and came back with her. King Yama saw her and said, “This is the Kinume I sent for.”

Meanwhile, Kinume of Utari district went home only to find her corpse had been cremated during her three-day absence. She came back and appealed to the king in grief, saying, “I have no body to enter into.” Then, the king asked, “Is there the body of Kinume of Yamada district?” There was, whereupon the king said, “Go and take her body as yours.”

In this way Kinume of Utari district came back to life in the body of Kinume of Yamada district. She said, “This is not my home. My home is in Utari district.” At that her parents said, “You are our daughter. Why do you say such a thing?” She would not listen to them, however, and visited her own home, saying, “This is my real home.” Her real parents disclaimed this, saying, “You are not our daughter. We have already cremated her.” Thereupon, she explained in detail what King Yama had told her. Having heard her story, both sets of parents believed her and allowed her to inherit both fortunes. This is why the present Kinume had four parents and two inheritances.

There is sometimes merit in making offerings to a fiend as a bribe.

3. The Nunoshikis is a native family in Kinai.

4. This practice of making offerings of delicacies at the gate is also found in II.16. Its purpose is to bribe the fiends, executioners, or deities not to kill.

5. Present Ayauta-gun, Kagawa-ken 香川縣綾歌郡.

If you have anything, you should offer it.<sup>6</sup> This is another of the miraculous events.

## 26

### *On the Miraculous Sign of the Unfinished Log Which Was Cut out for Buddha Images but Abandoned<sup>1</sup>*

Dhyāna Master Kōtatsu 廣達,<sup>2</sup> whose secular name was Shimotsuke no asomi 下毛野朝臣,<sup>3</sup> was a man of Muza district, Kazusa province 上總國武射郡.<sup>4</sup> (Some say he was a man of Ahiru 畔蒜 district.)<sup>5</sup> In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, he went to the mountain called Kane no take, in Yoshino 吉野金峯,<sup>6</sup> and recited scriptures while walking around under the trees<sup>7</sup> in pursuit of the Buddha's path.

Now there was a horse-chestnut tree in the village of Tsuki in Yoshino district 吉野郡桃花里.<sup>8</sup> It was cut down to be made into Buddha images, but this was abandoned for many years. In this area there was a river named Akikawa 秋河.<sup>9</sup> It happened that the log was laid over the river so that men and animals could cross it.

Once Kōtatsu went to that village on an errand, and, upon crossing the bridge, heard a voice from under the bridge saying, "Ouch! Don't step on me!" Hearing this, he looked around in wonder, but he could not find anyone. As he did not dare to pass, he wandered around for a while close to the bridge, and, when he lifted it up, he found that it was an abandoned log cut for Buddha images. Struck with awe, he enshrined it in a purified place, paid homage to it in tears, and made a vow,<sup>10</sup> saying, "I will carve you into Buddha images since we have

6. The closing remarks imply that even making offerings as bribes is better than offering nothing, but this does not fit the story, for it was Kinume of Yamada who offered bribes, and Kinume of Utari who got four parents and two fortunes.

2. A monk of Gangō-ji, of the Hossō School. See the *Shoku Nihongi*, XXXII (Hōki 3:3:6). He was appointed as one of the ten *dhyāna* masters.

3. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, the Shimotsuke family is descended from the imperial family.

4. Present Sanbu-gun, Chiba-ken 千葉縣山武郡.

5. Present Kimitsu-gun 君津郡.

6. See Chap. II(1)b; 1.28, n. 15.

7. 經行 *kyōgyō* or *kinhin*; after meditating in a sitting posture, ascetics walk around reciting scriptures.

8. Unlocated.

9. Present Shimoichi-gawa 下市川 which originates in Mt. Yoshino and flows into the Yoshino River.

10. 發誓願.

met by the work of interdependent causation.<sup>11</sup> He took the log to its appointed place, called upon the people to make offerings,<sup>12</sup> and directed the work of carving statues of Amida Buddha 阿彌陀佛,<sup>13</sup> Miroku Buddha 彌勒佛,<sup>14</sup> and Bodhisattva Kannon 觀音菩薩.<sup>15</sup> These are now enshrined in Oka-dō 岡堂,<sup>16</sup> in the village of Koshibe, Yoshino district 吉野郡越部村.<sup>17</sup>

Since a log does not have a mind, how can it cry? Doubtless this was nothing but the work of the Buddha's spirit.<sup>18</sup>

## 27

### *On a Woman of Great Strength<sup>1</sup>*

Owari no sukune Kukuri 尾張宿禰久玖利<sup>2</sup> was a governor of Nakashima district, Owari province 尾張國中嶋郡,<sup>3</sup> in the reign of Emperor Shōmu. His wife came from the village of Katawa in Aichi district 愛知郡片瀨里<sup>4</sup> of the same province (a granddaughter of the Venerable Dōjō of Gangō-ji).<sup>5</sup> She was faithful to her husband, and as gentle and delicate as glossed silk cloth. Once she wove fine hemp for her husband's robe. Its color and pattern were exquisite.

At that time the lord<sup>6</sup> who ruled that province was Wakasakurabe no Tau 稚櫻部任.<sup>7</sup> When the lord saw the beautiful robe on the district governor, he stripped him of it, saying, "It is too good for you to

11. 因緣 *in'en* or *imen*, the law of cause and effect.

12. He organized a *chishiki* or devotees' organization to carry out this project of making images. See Chap. I(1)d, nn. 110, 111.

13. See Chap. II(3)b, n. 132.

14. See Chap. II(3)b, n. 131. Doctrinally speaking, Maitreya is a bodhisattva, but there are many indications that he was considered a savior Buddha, much like Amida.

15. See Chap. I(1)a, n. 12.

16. Unlocated. See Fukuyama, *Narachō jin*, 316.

17. Present Koshibe, Ōyodo-chō, Yoshino-gun, Nara-ken 奈良縣吉野郡大淀町越部.

18. 聖靈 *shōryō*; see Chap. II(3)b.

1. One of the Venerable Dōjō cycle related to I.3, II.4. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XXIII, 18).

2. See the *Nihon shoki*, XXIX (Tenmu 1:12:2); Aston, "Nihongi," II, 367. The title of *sukune* was given to the Owari family.

3. Present Nakashima-gun, Aichi-ken 愛知縣中嶋郡.

4. See I.3, n. 3.

5. Kyōkai's parenthesis. For the Venerable Dōjō, see *ibid.*

6. 國守 a chief provincial magistrate.

7. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, Wakasakurabe is the name of a native family, but this provincial magistrate is unknown.