

*On Gaining an Immediate Cure of a Bad Disease for
Being Ordained and Practicing Good¹*

Kose no Asame 巨勢砦女² was a woman from the village of Haniu, Nagusa district, Kii province 紀伊國名草郡埴生里.³ In the eighth year of the ox, the fifth year of the Tenpyō hōji era,⁴ she contracted a serious disease, which caused a growth as big as a melon on her neck. The pain almost killed her, and it was not cured for years. She thought to herself, "This disease was brought to me by my deeds not only in this life, but also in previous lives.⁵ In order to be healed, I had better atone for my sins by practicing good." Thus, she shaved her head, was ordained, put on a surplice, and lived in Ōtani-dō 大谷堂⁶ in the village, reciting the *Shin-gyō*⁷ and practicing the path intently.

When fifteen years had passed, an ascetic named Chūsen 忠仙⁸ came to the temple to live with her. In sympathy with her, he tried to cure her disease by reciting a formula, making a vow, and saying: "In order to cure this disease, I will recite the *Yakushi-gyō*⁹ and the *Kongō hannya-kyō*¹⁰ three thousand times, the *Kanzeon-gyō*¹¹ ten thousand times, and the *Kannon sanmai-kyō*¹² one hundred times."

Fourteen years later, he finished reciting the *Yakushi-gyō* two thousand and five hundred times, the *Kongō hannya-kyō* one thousand times, and the *Kanzeon-gyō* two hundred times. He was constantly chanting the Senju dharani.¹³ Twenty-eight years passed from the time she contracted the disease, but the scriptures had not yet been recited as many times as had been vowed. About eight o'clock in the morning, on the twenty-seventh of the eleventh month, in the winter

1. The motif is miraculous healing; similar to I.8; III.11, 12, 21.

2. The Kose family is listed in the *Shinsen shōjiroku* as descendants of the imperial family.

3. Present Kaisō-gun, Wakayama-ken. Haniu is unidentified.

4. 761, in the reign of Emperor Jun'nin.

5. 宿業; see I.8, n. 4.

6. A small private temple unidentified.

7. *Hannya haramitsu shin-gyō*; see Chap. II(1)a, n. 19.

8. Unknown.

9. *Yakushi rurikō nyorai hongan kudoku-kyō*, 1 vol. (*Taishō*, XIV, No. 450).

10. *Kongō hannya haramitsu-kyō*, 1 vol.; see II.24, n. 20.

11. Chap. xxv of the *Hoke-kyō* (*Taishō*, IX, 56c-58b).

12. *Kanzeon bosatsu juki-kyō* 觀世音菩薩授記經, 1 vol. (*Taishō*, XII, No. 371).

13. See III.14, n. 11.

of the sixth year of the Enryaku era,¹⁴ her growth opened and discharged the pus of its own accord, and it was healed as she had prayed.

Indeed, we learn that it took place owing to the miraculous power of the Mahayana divine formula and the accumulated merits of the sick person and the ascetic. This is what people mean when they say that the all-embracing compassion¹⁵ brings a miraculous sign to the pious, and mysterious knowledge of the ultimate principles of voidness¹⁶ reveals a clear manifestation to men of deep faith.

*On Being Penalized for Abusing an Official's
Authority and Ruling Unrighteously¹*

In the reign of Emperor Shirakabe, a man by the name of Hi no kimi 火君² of Matsura district, Hizen province in Tsukushi 筑紫肥前國松浦郡,³ died suddenly and reached the land of Yama. When the king checked, it turned out that his death was premature, and he was sent back home.

On his way back he saw a hell which looked like a boiling kettle in the ocean. In it something black like a stump that was sinking and rising as the water boiled called to him, saying, "Wait! I have something to tell you." It sank as the water boiled, and then it came again to the surface, saying, "Wait! I have something to tell you."

After this had happened three times, the object spoke a fourth time, saying "I am Mononobe no Komaro 物部古丸⁴ from Harihara district in Tōtōmi province 遠江國榛原郡.⁵ During my life I worked as an official⁶ for many years in charge of transporting hulled rice and took other people's property unrighteously. Because of this sin, I have been suffering here. I pray that you will copy the *Hoke-kyō* for me so that I may be excused from my sin."

14. 787, in Emperor Kanmu's reign.

15. 無緣大悲 the great mercy of Buddha and the bodhisattvas, Kannon in particular.

16. 無相妙智 as expounded in the *Hannya-kyō*.

1. Cf. *Genkō shakusho* (XXIX).

2. Probably of the local gentry. See *Nihon shoki*, XIX (Kinmei 17:1): "The Lord of Hi no Tsukushi was sent to escort a prince of Paekche."

3. Matsuura-gun is now divided into two parts, one in present Saga-ken, the other in present Nagasaki-ken.

4. Unknown.

5. Present Harihara-gun, Shizuoka-ken.

6. 網丁 *gōchō*, a transportation master.