

back to the court to make an image" was realized in the birth of ex-Emperor Shōhō-ōjin-shōmu 勝寶應眞聖武太上天皇,<sup>41</sup> who built a temple and Buddha statue.<sup>42</sup> The Most Venerable Gyōgi,<sup>43</sup> a contemporary of Emperor Shōmu, is an incarnation<sup>44</sup> of Bodhisattva Monjushiri. This is a miraculous story.

## 6

### *On Gaining an Immediate Reward for Faith in Bodhisattva Kannon<sup>1</sup>*

Elder Master Gyōzen 行善 came from the Katashibe 堅部 family<sup>2</sup> and was sent to Koryō 高麗 for Buddhist studies during the reign of the empress who resided at the Palace of Owarida.<sup>3</sup> When that country was invaded, he wandered from place to place. When he came to a river, he was at a loss how to cross it, for there was neither bridge nor boat. Sitting on a broken-down bridge, he was meditating on Kannon 觀音<sup>4</sup> when an old man came by in a boat to take him to the other side. Upon landing, he could see neither the old man nor the boat. Thus he learned that the old man was an incarnation<sup>5</sup> of Kannon, and on the spot he made a vow<sup>6</sup> that he would make an image to be venerated.

41. *Shoku Nihongi* (Tenpyō hōji 2:8:1, 9). Posthumous names were given to the former emperor (Shōhō-kanjin-shōmu 勝寶感神聖武) and the former empress (Chūdai-tenpyō-ōjin-ninshō 中臺天平應眞仁正). Kyōkai apparently confused these two names.

42. See Preface, n. 14, above.

43. For Gyōgi, see Chap. I(1)d. *Daitoku* 大德 is a transliteration of Skt. *bhadanta*, which means one who has great virtues, and is used as an honorific title for Buddhas, bodhisattvas, elder monks, etc.; in China and Japan the usage as an honorific title for eminent monks was added.

44. 反化 *henge*; see I.4, n. 18.

1. Cf. *Fusō ryakki* (VI, Yōrō 2:9), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XVI, 1), etc.

2. An immigrant family from Paekche. *Shoku Nihongi*, VIII (Yōrō 5:6:23) gives a decree: Monk Gyōzen studied abroad and, after ascetic practices, learned the miraculous art and eventually returned home. If he visits a temple to pay homage to the Buddha, entertain him as a samgha official.

3. Or Kogrō (traditionally 37 B.C.–668 A.D.); it was the most northern of the three Korean Kingdoms. Gyōzen went to Korea, probably in the reign of Empress Suiko (592–628). However, the *Fusō ryakki* and *Shoku Nihongi* date this story in the reign of Empress Genshō (715–724), even though Koryō was subjugated by the T'ang army in 668.

4. See Chap. I(1)a, n. 11, and Chap. II(3)b.

5. 應化 *ōge* (Skt. *nirmāṇa*), meaning transformation, incarnation; Kannon is known to appear in thirty-three forms.

6. 誓願 *seigan*, a translation of Skt. *Prāṇidhāna*; in this case the vow is addressed to Kannon as an expression of faith and to himself as a confirmation of commitment to disciplinary practice. Also see Preface, n. 13, above.

Eventually he reached Great T'ang China where he made an image to worship day and night. He was called Dharma Master Riverside 河邊法師. No one exceeded him in fortitude,<sup>7</sup> and he was respected by the emperor of the T'ang dynasty.<sup>8</sup> He returned home with the Japanese envoys to China in the second year of the Yōrō era.<sup>9</sup> He lived at Kōfuku-ji 興福寺<sup>10</sup> and never ceased performing services before that image until he died.

Surely we learn that the power of Kannon is beyond understanding. The note says: An eminent monk went to study abroad, fell into danger, and was unable to cross at the ferry. On a bridge he meditated on Kannon<sup>11</sup> and trusted holy power. Kannon, in the form of an old man, came to his rescue and disappeared after they had parted. The monk made an image of Kannon and worshiped it continuously until his last day.

## 7

### *On Paying for and Freeing Turtles and Being Rewarded Immediately and Saved by Them<sup>1</sup>*

Dhyāna Master<sup>2</sup> Gusai 弘濟<sup>3</sup> came from Paekche. When that country was invaded, an ancestor of the governor<sup>4</sup> of Mitani district in Bingo province 備後國三谷郡<sup>5</sup> was put in charge of reinforcements and

7. 忍辱 *nin'niku* (Skt. *kṣānti*), one of the six practices of bodhisattvas for attaining Buddhahood. The *Hoke-kyō*, XIII (*Taishō*, IX, 36c), advocates it as the most suitable for working among ignorant people in the age of the degenerate dharma. See Katō, trans., *Myōhō-rensō-kyō*, 266-268.

8. Probably Hsüan-tsung 玄宗 (713-755) of the T'ang dynasty (618-906).

9. *Shoku Nihongi*, VIII (Yōrō 2: 10: 20). An envoy to China, Tajihi no Mahito agatamori 多治比真人縣守, returned to Japan.

10. Originally founded in 669 at Yamashina and called Yamashina-dera 山階寺; next moved to Asuka, and then to Nara in 710.

11. 聖 Buddha or bodhisattva; in this case, Kannon.

1. The same motif of repaying kindness is found in tales II.5, 8, 12, 16, etc. See Chap. II(2)a. Cf. *Myōhōki* (I, On Yen-kung 嚴恭), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XIX, 30), etc.

2. 禪師 *zenji* is a title often used honorifically for monks in general.

3. Unknown.

4. 大領 *dairyō* is the first among the four high officials in the district, generally a man of influence from the local gentry.

5. Present Futami-gun, Hiroshima-ken 廣島縣三谷郡.