

shelter from the shower filled it, and the copier and the women were sitting in the same place. Then the scripture copier, driven by strong lust, crouched behind one of the girls, lifted her skirt, and had intercourse with her. As his penis entered her vagina, they died together embracing each other. The girl died foaming at the mouth.

Indeed, we learn that this was the punishment given by the Guardian of dharma.<sup>5</sup> However intensely your body and heart may burn with the fire of lust, do not, because of the promptings of a lewd heart, commit a filthy deed. A fool indulging in lust is just like a bug jumping into a fire. Therefore, a preceptive scripture<sup>6</sup> says, "A thoughtless youth easily feels lust."<sup>7</sup> Or the *Nehan-gyō*,<sup>8</sup> expressing the same idea, says: "If you know what the five kinds of desire<sup>9</sup> are, you will not find any pleasure in them. Nor will you remain a slave to them even momentarily. It is just like a dog chewing on a meatless bone, never knowing satisfaction."

## I9

### *On a Girl Born of a Flesh Ball Who Practiced Good and Enlightened People<sup>1</sup>*

The wife of Toyobuku no Hirogimi 豊服廣公,<sup>2</sup> in the village of Toyobuku, Yatsushiro district, Higo province 肥後國八代郡,<sup>3</sup> became pregnant, and, about four o'clock in the morning on the fifteenth of the eleventh month in the winter of the eighth year of the boar, the second year of the Hōki era,<sup>4</sup> she gave birth to a flesh ball.<sup>5</sup> It looked like an egg. Not taking this as a good omen, the man and wife put it in a vessel and stored it in a cave in the mountain.<sup>6</sup> After seven days

5. 護法 *gohō*; see II.1, n. 11.

6. 律 *ritsu*, a translation of Skt. *vinaya*.

7. *Konpon sabatabu-ritsu-sho* 根本薩婆多部律攝. See Haraguchi, "Nihon ryōiki shutten goku kanken," *Kuntengo*, No. 34 (December 1966), 53-54.

8. *Daihatsu nehan-gyō*, XXII (*Taishō*, XII, 496), *Bonmō-kyō koshakki* (*Taishō*, XL, 705). See Haraguchi, "Nihon ryōiki," 54.

9. 五欲 *goyoku*, five kinds of desire which arise out of attachment to the five objects: color/sound, smell, taste, and touch.

1. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 4); *Hoke kenki* (III, 98); *Genkō shakusho* (XVIII).

2. Present Toyobuku-mura, Shimomashiki-gun, Kumamoto-ken 熊本縣下益城郡豊服村.

3. Unknown. Hirogimi may be the first name, although *kimi* is originally an honorific title such as Lord.

4. 771.

5. 肉團 *shishimura*; see Chap. II(2)b, n. 96; also, nn. 21, 22, below.

6. "A cave in the mountain" may signify the womb of mother earth to which the dead go back and from which new life comes out.

they returned to the cave and discovered that a girl had been born of the flesh ball, breaking through its covering. The parents took her home, and her mother nursed her. There was no one in the province who did not wonder at this.

After eight months had passed she suddenly grew very large, but her head and neck were joined without any chin, in a form different from other people, and she was three and a half feet high. Endowed with wisdom, she was by nature brilliant. Before she was seven, she recited the *Hoke-kyō* and the Eighty-volume *Kegon-gyō* 八十花嚴.<sup>7</sup> She was reserved and never boasted. Eventually she decided to renounce the world, shaved her head, and wore a surplice. Prompted by her faith, she practiced good and enlightened people. She had such a good voice that it could lead her audience to become merciful. In her deformed body there was no vagina but only an opening for urine. Foolish laymen mocked her, calling her Saru-hijiri 猴聖,<sup>8</sup> False-sage.

On one occasion a monk of the provincial temple in Takuma district 託磨郡,<sup>9</sup> and a monk of Daijin-ji 大神寺 at Yahata, Usa district, Buzen province 豊前國宇佐郡矢羽田,<sup>10</sup> became envious of the nun, and said to her, "Your teachings are false."<sup>11</sup> They looked down at her, mocking and making a fool of her. A divine man<sup>12</sup> flew down from the sky and made as though to impale them with a halberd. They screamed in terror and eventually died.

When the Most Venerable Kaimyō 戒明<sup>13</sup> of Daian-ji<sup>14</sup> was appointed as a superior provincial preceptor<sup>15</sup> of Tsukushi province 筑紫國<sup>16</sup> about the seventh or eighth year of the Hōki era, Sagano kimi Kogimi 佐賀君兒公,<sup>17</sup> of the Senior Seventh Rank, Upper Grade, a governor of Saga district of Hizen province 肥前國佐賀郡,<sup>18</sup> held a

7. There are two major texts of *Avatamsakasūtra* in Chinese: *Daihōkōbutsu kegon-gyō* (60 vols.) (*Taishō*, IX, No. 278) and *Daihōkōbutsu kegon-gyō* (80 vols.) (*Taishō*, X, No. 279).

8. See Chap. II(2)c.

9. Present Izumi-chō, Kumamoto-shi 熊本市出水町.

10. Or Miroku-dera which was once located in the precincts of Usa Hachiman Shrine, in Usa-machi, Usa-gun, Ōita-ken 大分縣宇佐郡宇佐町.

11. 外道 *gedō*; originally refers to non-Buddhists and their teachings, but it is also used in a pejorative sense, meaning followers of the wrong teachings.

12. 神人 *shinjin*; guardian of dharma in a human form.

13. A monk of Daian-ji who specialized in the *Kegon-gyō*, studied in China in the Hōki era (770-780), and died in the Enryaku era (782-805).

14. See I.32, n. 6.

15. 大國師 *daikokushi*; *kokushi* is a provincial preceptor who is in charge of the samgha in the province. See Chap. I(1)a, n. 21; d, n. 79. Since Tsukushi (see below) is a big province, *da* is added to the title.

16. Formally includes Chikuzen and Chikugo 筑前, 筑後, but often means present Kyūshū as a whole.

17. Unknown. Probably of the local gentry.

18. Present Saga-gun, Saga-ken 佐賀縣佐賀郡.

retreat with Dharma Master Kaimyō to lecture on the Eighty-volume *Kengon-gyō*. The nun was seated in the audience, never missing a lecture.

Seeing her, the lecturer said accusingly, "Who is that nun unscrupulously seated among the monks?"<sup>19</sup> In reply she said, "Buddha promulgated the right teaching out of his great compassion for all sentient beings. Why do you restrain me in particular?" Then she asked a question by quoting a verse from the scripture, and the lecturer could not interpret it. In amazement, all the famous wise men questioned and examined her, but she never failed. In that way they could not interpret it. In amazement, all the famous wise men questioned and examined her, but she never failed. In that way they learned that she was an incarnation of Buddha, and named her Bodhisattva Sari.<sup>20</sup> Clergy and laymen revered her and made her their master.

In Buddha's lifetime, ten eggs born from Sumanā, a daughter of Sudatta, a wealthy man of Śrāvastī, opened to produce ten men, all of whom renounced the world to become arhats.<sup>21</sup> The wife of a wealthy man of Kapilavastu became pregnant and gave birth to a flesh ball, which opened after seven days to bring forth one hundred children, all of whom renounced the world to become arhats.<sup>22</sup> Even in a country as small as ours, there is an excellent example which is similar. This is also an extraordinary event.

## 20

### *On Immediately Getting a Twisted Mouth by Speaking Ill of a Woman Copying the Hoke-kyō<sup>1</sup>*

In the village of Hani, Nakata district, Awa province 粟國名方郡  
壇村,<sup>2</sup> there was a woman whose surname was Imbe no obito 忌部首.<sup>3</sup>

19. Although the *Sōni-ryō* allows monks to visit a nunnery and nuns to visit a monastery on occasions of religious ceremonies or lecture meetings, this passage is an indication that Buddhist studies were generally confined to monks and institutions were dominated by men.

20. See Chap. II(2)b, n. 98.

21. See *Kengū-kyō* 賢愚經, XIII (*Taishō*, IV, 440).

22. *Senjū hyakuen-gyō* 撰集百緣經, VII (*Taishō*, IV, 237ab).

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XIV, 27). Similar to I.19; II.18.

2. Present Ishii-chō, Myōzai-gun, Tokushima-ken 徳島縣名西郡石井町.

3. The Awa Imbe 阿波忌部 families, which lived in present-day Oe-gun, were originally in charge of traditional religious affairs.

(Her name was Tayasuko 多夜須子.)<sup>4</sup> In the reign of Emperor Shirakabe,<sup>5</sup> she was copying the *Hoke-kyō* at Sonoyama-dera 苑山寺<sup>6</sup> in Oe district 麻殖郡<sup>7</sup> when Imbe no muraji Itaya 忌部連板屋<sup>8</sup> of the same district spoke ill of her, pointing out her mistakes. Immediately he was inflicted with a twisted mouth and a distorted face, which never returned to their normal state.

The *Hoke-kyō* says: "If you speak ill of a devotee of this scripture, none of your organs will work well, and you will be dwarfed, ugly, feeble limbed, blind, deaf, and hunchbacked." Speaking to the same effect, it also says: "If you reveal the mistakes of a devotee of this scripture, you will contract leprosy in this world, whether what you say is true or not."<sup>9</sup> Therefore, be reverent and have faith in the *Hoke-kyō*. Praise its power. Do not speak ill of others' faults, for you may incur a great disaster if you do.

## 21

### *On a Monk Whose Blind Eye Was Cured by Having the Kongō hannya-kyō Recited<sup>1</sup>*

The Venerable Chōgi 長義<sup>2</sup> was a monk of Yakushi-ji on the West Side of Nara. In the third year of the Hōki era,<sup>3</sup> Chōgi lost the sight in one of his eyes. Five months elapsed. Day and night he was ashamed and grieved, and he invited many monks to recite the *Kongō hannya-kyō*<sup>4</sup> for three days and nights. His eye was then cured, and he could see as distinctly as before.

How great is the miraculous power of the *Hannya*!<sup>5</sup> For, if a vow is made with profound faith, it will never remain unfulfilled.

4. Kyōkai's note. Tayasuko is her first name.

5. Emperor Kōnin.

6. Unlocated.

7. Present Oe-gun, Tokushima-ken.

8. Unknown. See *Shoku Nihongi*, XXIX (Jingo Keiun 2:7:14).

9. *Myōhōrenge-kyō* (*Taishō*, IX, 62). See also I.19, n. 7.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XIV, 33). Similar to I.8; III.11, 12, etc.

2. Unknown.

3. 772, in the reign of Emperor Kōnin.

4. See II.24, n. 20.

5. Refers to the above scriptures.