

ficial in charge of vagrants.³ He hunted for them and made them work on temporary projects, forcing them to pay production and labor taxes. At that time there was a man registered in the capital of Nara, whose name was Ono no asomi Niwamaro 小野朝臣庭麿.⁴ He became a lay brother and recited the dharani of the Thousand-armed Kannon. He led a life of self-discipline, wandering in the mountains in that district.

In the spring of the sixth year of the cock, the third year of the Jingo keiun era,⁵ on the twenty-seventh of the third month, the official⁶ was in the village of Mimakawa 御馬河里⁷ in that district about noon. He came across the ascetic and said to him, "Where do you come from?" The man replied, "I am practicing the path; I am not a layman." In anger the official accused him, saying, "No, you are a vagrant. Why didn't you pay your taxes?" Though the official bound and hit him to force him to work, the ascetic refused and sorrowfully quoted a proverb to him, saying, "There is a proverb that says: 'When lice from the clothes climb up to the head, they turn black; when lice from the head go down to the clothes, they turn white.' I carry the dharani on the top of my head and scriptures on my back so that I may not be persecuted by lay people. Why did you hit and humiliate one who upholds Mahayana teachings? They have a miraculous power, as I will now demonstrate."⁸

The official bound the scripture called the *Senju-kyō* 千手經⁹ with a rope and dragged it along the ground. His house was about half a mile¹⁰ from the spot where he had hit the ascetic. When he reached his house and wanted to get down from the horse, he was immobilized and could not dismount. At that instant he flew through the sky with his horse until he was suspended over the spot where he had hit the

3. 浮浪人 *ukarebito*; those who left their registered place of birth to evade taxation; no longer under the control of the *ritsuryō* government, they sought the protection of powerful nobles and local gentry or pretended to be monks and nuns. The first prohibition against the practice is recorded in 709. See *Shoku Nihongi* IV (Wadō 2: 10: 14); VI (Reiki 1: 5: 1 and Yōrō 1: 5: 17, 4: 3: 17, 4: 5: 21). See Naoki, "Nara jidai ni okeru furō ni tsuite," *Shirin*, XXXIV (No. 3, 1951), 19-39.

4. The Ono family is descended from the imperial family, according to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*. See *Nihon shoki*, XXIX (Tenmu 13: 11: 1); Aston, "Nihongi," II, 366.

5. 769.

6. The official who hunted vagrants was often of the local gentry, and he made them work for him.

7. Present Mima-machi, Kanazawa-shi 金澤市三馬町

8. This may also be translated as follows: "If you have a miraculous power, please demonstrate it now." In this case, it is addressed to the scriptures and not to the official.

9. See n. 11, below, and also Chap. II(3)b, n. 138.

10. 一里; 1 *ri* was 0.41 mile, although 1 *ri* equals 2.45 miles according to the present standards of measurement.

ascetic. About noon on the following day he fell to the ground after having been in the air for one day and one night. His body was broken into pieces, just like a bagful of scattered needles. Everyone who witnessed it was filled with terror and awe.

The *Senju-kyō*¹¹ gives a relevant passage: "Great divine dharani¹² can bring branches, blossoms, and fruit even to a dead tree. To speak ill of this dharani means to speak ill of Buddhas as numerous as the grains of sand of the River Ganges. . . ." A Mahayana scripture¹³ has a passage to the same effect: "The sin of speaking ill of wise men is equal to that of destroying temples and pagodas in eighty-four thousand counties."¹⁴

15

On Receiving an Immediate Penalty of Violent Death Because of Hitting a Begging Novice

Inukai no sukune Maoyu 犬養宿禰真老¹ lived in the village of Saki, north of the Imperial Mausoleum of Ikume 活目陵北之佐岐村² in the capital of Nara. Innately evil-minded, he hated mendicants. In the reign of Empress Abe, a novice went to Maoyu's door to beg food. Far from making an offering, Maoyu robbed him of his surplice and accused him, saying, "What kind of monk are you?" The mendicant replied, "I am a self-ordained monk."³ Maoyu chased him away, and the mendicant left, filled with ill will.

That evening Maoyu cooked some carp in soup and chilled it until it was set.⁴ The next morning at about eight o'clock he awoke and tasted the carp while still in bed. When he was about to drink some rice wine, however, he vomited black blood and fell on his side as

11. 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經 (*Taishō*, XX, 111).

12. 大神咒 *daishinju*; in this case, *Senju dharani* or *Daihishin dharani*.

13. 方廣經 *Hōkō-kyō*.

14. Unlocated.

1. The Inukai family was originally in charge of hunting and guarding public granaries.

2. Emperor Suinin's mausoleum was located on the Third Street, Third Avenue, on the West Side of Nara, and the Village of Saki is at present Saki-machi, Nara-shi 奈良縣佐紀町, not far from Yakushi-ji.

3. 自度 *jido*.

4. When the soup is chilled, it becomes gelatinous.

though in a trance, his breathing stopped; as though asleep, his life came to an end.

Indeed, we learn that an evil mind is a sharp sword which kills the bearer; an angry mind is an evil fiend which incurs calamities; greediness causes the suffering of a hungry fiend; avarice is an impenetrable bush to block the offering of compassion. When you see a mendicant, you should be merciful and happy and make spiritual and material offerings. Therefore, the *Jōbu-ron* 丈夫論⁵ gives this passage: "Those who are greedy value even mud more than gold and jewels, while those who are merciful offer gold and jade, caring less for them than grass and trees. At the sight of a mendicant they cannot bear to say they have no alms and wail in sorrow. . . ."

16

On a Licentious Woman Whose Children Cried for Milk, Receiving an Immediate Penalty

Yokoe no omi Naritojime 橫江臣成眉女¹ was from Kaga district, Echizen province 越前國加賀郡.² Innately licentious, she used to keep company with many men. She died before completing the best years of her life,³ and many years passed.

Dharma Master Jakurin 寂林,⁴ who was from the village of Noo, Nagusa district, Kii province 紀伊國名草郡能應里,⁵ left his home and traveled to other provinces, practicing the teachings and seeking the path. He came to the village of Uneda in Kaga district 加賀郡畝田村⁶ and stayed there for some years. In the reign of Emperor Shirakabe 白壁,⁷ who governed Ōyashima 大八嶋⁸ at Nara Palace, on the night

5. *Daijōbu-ron*, I (*Taishō*, XXX, 260). This quotation shows more identity with the *Shokyō yōshū* than the original text. See *Shokyō yōshū*, X (*Taishō*, LIX, 93). 又丈夫論云 若慳心多者 雖復泥土重於金玉 若悲心多者 雖施金玉輕於草木 若慳心多者 喪失財寶 心大憂惱 . . . 富慳貪者 生餓鬼中 受無量苦 . . . 菩薩心念 施無有財物 見人乞時 不忍言無 悲苦墮淚 . See also III.33, n. 21.

1. Unknown. Naritojime seems to be her first name.

2. See III.14, n. 2.

3. 丁齡; from twenty-one to sixty. See *Ryō no gige*, "Ko-ryō," Article 6.

4. Unknown.

5. Present Yamaguchi-mura, Kaisō-gun, Wakayama-ken 和歌山縣海草郡山口村.

6. Present Ōno, Ishikawa-gun, Ishikawa-ken 石川縣石川郡大野.

7. Emperor Kōnin 光仁 (r. 770-780).

8. See II.1, n. 3.

of the twenty-third of the twelfth month, in the winter of the seventh year of the dog, the Hōki era,⁹ he had a dream: He was heading toward the east along the path in front of Prince Shōtoku's palace at Ikaruga, Yamato province.¹⁰ The path was like a mirror, about half a furlong wide,¹¹ and as straight as a plumb line, with a grove of trees on one side. Jakurin stopped to look into the grove and found a large naked woman crouching there. Both her breasts were swollen as big as a mound oven and hanging down with pus oozing from them. Kneeling, she grasped her knees with her hands, looked at her sick breasts, and said, "How painful my breasts are!"

Jakurin asked her, "Who are you?" She replied, "I am the mother of Yokoe no omi Narihito 橫江臣成人 in the village of Uneda in Ōno, Kaga district, Echizen province. In the prime of life I was licentious and used to keep company with many men, abandoning my little ones so that I could lie with men. For days they were hungry for my breasts. Among them, Narihito was the hungriest. I received a penalty of this disease of swollen breasts because of my sin of letting my little ones go hungry for milk." He asked her, "How can you be released from this sin?" She answered, "If Narihito learns of it, he will forgive my sin."

Awaking from the dream, Jakurin was amazed; filled with wonder, he went round the village inquiring about the man. One man answered, "I am the very one you are seeking." Jakurin told him about the dream. On hearing it, he said, "I lost my mother at such a young age that I do not remember her. But I have an elder sister who may know the situation well." When he asked his sister, she said, "The story is true. Our mother had such good features that she was loved by men, kept company with them, and begrudged giving her breasts to us."

Thereupon, all the children grieved and said, "We don't bear her a grudge. Why does our loving mother suffer for this sin?" They made Buddhist images and copied scriptures in order to atone for her sin. After the ceremony was over, she appeared to Jakurin once more in a dream, saying, "I am now released from my sin."

Indeed, we learn that a mother's tender breasts, though capable of bestowing great benefit, can, on the contrary, become a source of sin if she begrudges offering them to her little ones.

9. 770.

10. See I.4, n. 7.

11. 1 *chō*; see II.24, n. 9.