

*On Suffering War Damage and Gaining an Immediate Reward
for Faith in an Image of Bodhisattva Kannon¹*

Ochi no atae 越智直,² ancestor of the governor³ of Ochi district in Iyo province 伊豫國越智郡,⁴ was sent to Paekche in the Japanese expeditionary force⁵ and taken prisoner by Chinese soldiers and brought to T'ang China.

In China, he and some other Japanese, eight in all, came to live on an island. They acquired an image of Bodhisattva Kannon,⁶ worshipping it together with great devotion. They worked together cutting down a pine tree to make a boat, enshrined the Kannon image in the boat, and, meditating on the image, made their individual vows.⁷ Fortunately the boat drifted straight to T sukushi 筑紫⁸ with the help of the west wind.

At this news the court summoned them for an investigation. When the emperor⁹ heard them, he was so moved that he granted them a wish. Ochi no atae said, "I would like to serve you by establishing an estate,"¹⁰ and it was granted. Thereupon he established the estate and built a temple in which to consecrate the Kannon image. After that, his descendants followed his example in worshipping the Kannon. This is nothing but the work of Kannon, and the total maturation of faith. It is said that even a wooden image of Ting-lan's 丁蘭 mother¹¹ appeared to be alive, and the woman in a picture loved by a monk¹² responded with sympathy. How, then, can it be possible for the Bodhisattva not to respond?

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XV, 2); *Kannon ryaku-shū* (*Kanazawa bunke*, 43).

2. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, the Ochi family descended from kami.

3. 大領 *daiyō*; see I.7, n. 4.

4. Present Ochi-gun, Ehime-ken 愛媛縣越智郡.

5. There seem to be two possible dates for this: one is a war in 660, the sixth year of Empress

Saimei; the other is a war in 663, the second year of Emperor Tenchi. See I.7, n. 6.

6. See Chap. II(1)a, n. 12; Chap. II(3)b. Kannon is known for protecting devotees from calamities, and particularly for guarding navigators (See *Hoke-kyō*, XXXV).

7. 誓願 *seigan*; see I.6, n. 6.

8. Present Kyushū 九州.

9. Empress Saimei or Emperor Tenchi; see n. 5, above.

10. 郡 *kōri*; an administrative unit which was instituted at the time of the Taka Reform. District governors often came from the local gentry class. See I.10, n. 2.

11. Refers to a story in the *Hiso-tsu chuan* 孝子傳 (Biographies of Filial Sons), compiled by Liu Hsiang 劉向. When Ting-lan was fifteen years old, he lost his mother. He made a wooden image of her and cared for it as if it were alive. Out of jealousy, his wife burnt its face; after her hair fell out as if it had been cut, she repented her offense. (*Taishō*, LIV, 74).

12. See II.13, n. 7.

*On Recollecting and Reciting the Hoke-kyō and Gaining
an Immediate Reward to Show an Extraordinary Sign¹*

In Kazuraki upper district, Yamato province 大和國葛木上郡,² there was once a devotee of the *Hoke-kyō*.³ He came from the Tajimi 丹治比 family,⁴ and, even before he was eight years old, he could recite the *Hoke-kyō* with the exception of one character which always escaped his memory and continued to escape it even when he was in his twenties.

Once he prayed to Kannon, confessing his offenses,⁵ and had a dream.⁶ A man said to him, "In your previous existence you were the child of Kusakabe no Saru 日下部猿⁷ in Wake district, Iyo province 伊豫國別郡.⁸ At that time while reciting the scripture you burned one character with a lamp so that you could no longer read it. Now, go and see."

When he awoke, he was filled with wonder, and he said to his parents, "I want to go to Iyo on urgent business." They consented. Setting forth on his quest, he reached Saru's home at last and knocked at the door. A woman came and reported back to her mistress with a smile, saying, "There is a guest at the door who looks exactly like your deceased son." On hearing this, the mistress went to the door to see the guest, finding him the very image of her deceased son. In wonder, the master asked the guest, "Who are you?" And the latter answered by announcing the name of his home district and province. In turn, the

1. Cf. *Myōhōki* (II, On Ch'an (Yen)-wu 産(彦)武), *Hoke kenki* (I, 31), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (VII, 20; XIV, 6, 12), etc. The Prince Shōtoku cycle gives one legend on the *Hoke-kyō* which was said to have been brought from China by Ono no Imoko 小野妹子 and used by the prince. Dhyanā Master Hui-su 慧思, in his former life. See "Shichidaiki" 七代記 in *Nara ibun*, II, 860-895; *Jōgū Shōtoku taishi-den hoketsukai* (DBZ, 112). In the late Nara and early Heian periods this legend was formed and became popular. See Iida Mizuno, "Ono no Imoko *Hoke-kyō* shōrai setsuwa." *Nihon kodaiishi ronshū*, II, 435-478.

2. Present Minami-kazuraki-gun, Nara-ken.

3. 持經 *jiyō no hito*; a translation of Skt. *sīrāmadhātaka*; one who upholds, recollects, reads, recites, and expounds the scriptures.

4. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, the Tajimi family descended from kami.

5. He repented of his past karma, for he thought he could not remember the character because of his evil deeds in the past.

6. Dreams are often occasions for revelation in which the spirit is said to leave the body and travel to the abodes of deities or the land of the dead. See Alex Waymann, "Significance of Dreams in India and Tibet." *History of Religions*, VII (No. 1, August 1967), 1-12.

7. Kusakabe is the name of a large group in the service of the emperor who were descendants of kami; they were probably first organized in Kawachi 河内 and later posted throughout the country. Saru means "monkey"; the name might be given because he was born in the year of the monkey according to the traditional Chinese calendar.

8. Present Onsen-gun, Ehime-ken 愛媛縣温泉郡.

guest asked the same question, and he was given a detailed answer. It became evident to him that they were his parents in his former life. He knelt down to pay respect to them. Saru affectionately invited him into the house, and, staring at him as he sat in the seat of honor, said, "Aren't you the spirit of my deceased son?" Their guest told them in detail about his dream and announced that the old couple were his parents. Saru, after some reminiscing, motioned to him, saying, "My late son, so and so, lived in this hall, read this scripture, and used this pitcher." The son entered the hall, opened the scripture, and found that the character which he could never remember was missing, for it had been burned with a lamp. When the young man repented of his offense and repaired the text, he could recite it correctly. Parents and son were amazed and delighted, and the son never lost the parent-child relationship and his sense of filial piety.⁹

The note says: How happy is this member of the Kusakabe family who, in pursuit of the path through Buddhist scriptures, recited the *Hoke-kyō* in two lives, present and past, and served two fathers to be renowned in posterity.¹⁰ It is an extraordinary phenomenon, and not commonplace. Indeed, we are sure it is due to the divine influence of the *Hoke-kyō* and the miraculous power of Kannon. In the same spirit, the *Zen'aku inga-kyō* 善惡因果經¹¹ says, "Look at present effects if you want to know past causes. Look at present deeds if you want to know future effects."¹²

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On Ridiculing a Reciter of the Hoke-kyō and Getting a Twisted Mouth as an Immediate Penalty¹

In Yamashiro 山背 province² there was once a self-ordained novice³

9. 孝養 *kyōyō*; cf. Michihata, *Tōdai Bukkyōshi*, 271-380.
10. He who remembers his previous births succeeds in freeing himself from the world of *samsara*, according to Buddhist tradition. See Chap. II(2)c.
11. *Taishō*, LXXXV, No. 2881. The quotation is not found in this scripture.
12. Quoted from the *Shōkyō yōshū*, XI (*Taishō*, LIX, 53c). 欲知過去因 見其現在果 欲知未來報 見其現在業。

1. Cf. *Sanhō ekitōka* (II, 9), *Hōke kenki* (III, 96), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XIV, 28).
2. Southern part of present Kyoto-fu.
3. 自度 *jido* or 私度 *shido*; a novice or monk without an official permit 度牒. Although the *Sōni-ryō* prescribes punishments for lay people who pretend to be monks and nuns (Article 22), a number of people left home and attempted to obtain immunity from taxation. See Chap. I(1)d; Tsumoto Ryōgaku, "Nihon ryōkei ni mienu shido no shāmi ni tsuite," *Ryūkoku daigaku ronshū*, No. 348 (December 1954), 37-46.

whose name is unknown. He used to play *go* 碁⁴ all the time. One day when he was playing *go* with a layman,⁵ a mendicant came to recite the *Hoke-kyō*⁶ and beg for alms. The novice laughed at him, mimicking his accent with a twisted mouth. The layman was greatly shocked at this and exclaimed, "How awful!" at each turn in the game. The layman won the game every time, and the novice lost. Meanwhile the novice's mouth became twisted, and no medicine could cure it. The gist of this story is stated in the *Hoke-kyō* as follows: "Those who laugh at and slight this scripture will lose many teeth and get a twisted mouth, a flattened nose, crippled limbs and squint eyes."⁷ It is better to be possessed by evil spirits and talk in a daze than to abuse the devotees of the *Hoke-kyō*. Remember that evil comes from one's mouth.⁸

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On a Monk Who Gave away the Firewood Provided to Heat the Bath and Was Reborn as an Ox for Labor, Showing an Extraordinary Sign¹

Saka Eshō 釋惠勝² was a monk³ of Engō-ji 延興寺.⁴ Once he gave away a bundle of firewood to be used for boiling water for the bath,⁵ and then he died.

At that time the temple kept a cow which gave birth to a calf. When the calf grew into an ox, it was continually made to draw a cart filled with firewood. One day, as it entered the temple precincts

4. The *Sōni-ryō* (Article 9) prohibits monks and nuns from performing music or games of chance, but they are allowed to play the *keio* 琴 (a string instrument) and the game of *go*. See Sanson, "Early Japanese Laws," Part Two, 129.
5. 白衣 *byakuue*, meaning literally "white robe," in contrast to the saffron or black robes of monks.
6. *Hoke-kyō-hon*.
7. *Hoke-kyō*, XXVIII (*Taishō*, IX, 62a). 若有輕笑之者 當世世牙齦蹙 醜唇平鼻 手脚齜 眼目角睨. See Karō, trans., *Myōhō-rensō-kyō*, 438.
8. 惡鬼 *akuki*; when one is possessed by an evil spirit, one's mouth becomes the channel for its message. There was a belief that illness or madness was caused by evil spirits.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 20).
2. For Saka, see I.14, n. 2. Eshō is unknown.
3. 沙門 *shamon*; see Chap. I(1)a, n. 4.
4. Unidentified.
5. The practice of taking a steam bath was introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks during the Nara period, and a special room for taking a hot bath, which was almost a luxury, was built in many temples. Cf. *Onjitsu senyoku shū-ryō* 溫室洗浴樂傳經 (*Taishō*, XVI, No. 701).