

I7

*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 伊豫國越知郡,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 Tsukushi 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 riyaku-shū* (*Kanazawa bunko*, 43).

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

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

7. 誓願 *seigan*; see I.6, n. 6.

8. Present Kyūshū 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 Taika Reform. District governors often came from the local gentry class. See I.10, n. 2.

11. Refers to a story in the *Hsiao-tzu 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.