

returning with the bonds,<sup>9</sup> burnt them all in the yard. Then he went into the mountains where he wandered about not knowing what to do, ran wildly this way and that with disheveled hair and a bleeding body, and could not stay in his home. Three days later a fire broke out suddenly, and all of his houses and storehouses in and out of the premises burned. Eventually Miyasu turned his family into the streets, and he himself died of hunger and cold without any shelter.

Now we cannot help believing that a penalty will be imposed, not in the distant future, but in this life.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, a scripture says, "The unfilial are destined to hell; the filial, to the pure land."<sup>11</sup> This is what Nyorai 如來<sup>12</sup> preaches, the true teaching of Mahayana tradition.<sup>13</sup>

## 24

### *On an Evil Daughter Who Was Negligent in Filial Piety to Her Mother and Gained an Immediate Penalty of Violent Death<sup>1</sup>*

In an old capital<sup>2</sup> there lived a wicked woman whose name is unknown. She had no sense of filial piety and never loved her mother.

On one fasting day<sup>3</sup> her mother did not cook rice and visited her

9. 出舉 *suiko*; a system whereby the public granary lent rice to farmers in spring and allowed them to repay it after harvest with an interest of 1/16 per month within a limited period of one and a half years. In addition to the public system, various private arrangements for lending rice, rice wine, cloth, money, etc., with interest are documented for the period covered by the *Nihon ryōiki*, as well as several government orders against high interest rates. This story indicates that a bond was in use even in the family. See Sonoda Kōyū, "Suiko," *Ritsuryō kokka no kiso kōzō*, ed. by Ōsaka rekishi gakkai, 397-466; Yoshida Akira, "8, 9 seiki ni okeru shisuiko ni tsuite," *ibid.*, 467-514.

10. 現報 *genpō*, immediate karmic retribution. See Chap. I(2)a.

11. 不孝衆生必墮地獄 孝養父母往生淨土. This quotation cannot be located in the scripture, but one possible source is the *Kan muryōju-kyō* (*Taishō*, XII, 341c). 欲生彼國者當修三福 一者孝養父母 奉事師長 慈心不殺 修十善業.

12. A translation of Skt. Tathāgata.

13. 大乘, Mahayana Buddhism. The virtue of filial piety is particularly emphasized in scriptures forged in China. See I.18, n. 9.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 32).

2. See I.1, n. 15.

3. 齋日 *sainichi*; particular days are set aside for the laity to observe the eight precepts instead of the usual five and to participate in ceremonies at temples. See above, Chap. I(1)d, n. 88, for the ten precepts, the first eight of which were observed on these days. Since the eight precepts include a prohibition against eating after mid-day, *sajiki* 齋食 means the meal taken during designated hours, and hence, the vegetarian meal offered in Buddhist ceremonies.

daughter for the ceremonial meal. Her daughter said, "My husband and I are going to have our meal. We have nothing else to offer you."

Carrying her young child with her, the mother went home and lay down. Looking outside, she saw a package of boiled rice left by the roadside. She filled her empty stomach with that and fell asleep exhausted. Late that night someone knocked at the door, saying, "Your daughter is screaming that she has a nail stuck in her chest. She is about to die. You must go and see her!" The mother, however, was sleeping so soundly from exhaustion that she could not go and help bring her daughter back to life. The daughter finally died without seeing her mother.

It is better for us to give our portion to our mother and starve to death than to die without serving her.

## 25

### *On a Loyal and Selfless Minister Who Gained Heaven's Sympathy and Was Rewarded by a Miraculous Event<sup>1</sup>*

The late Middle Councillor 中納言,<sup>2</sup> Lord Ōmiwa no Takechimarō 大神高市萬侶,<sup>3</sup> of the Junior Third Rank<sup>4</sup> awarded posthumously, was a loyal minister of Empress Jitō 持統.<sup>5</sup> According to a record<sup>6</sup> in the second month of the ninth year of the dragon, the seventh year of the Akamidori era,<sup>7</sup> an imperial order was given to the officials, telling them to prepare for the empress' visit to Ise 伊勢 on the third of the third month. The Middle Councillor, fearing that the proposed visit would interfere with agricultural work, presented a memorial to dissuade the empress. She did not yield to his remonstrance and demanded to have her own way. Thereupon he took off his official cap<sup>8</sup> and returned it to the empress, saying, "When farmers are most busy in the fields, you should not make a trip," reiterating his remonstrance.

1. Cf. *Nihon shoki* (XXX, Jitō 6:2:11), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 41).

2. *Chūnagon*, one of the high ranking officials under the prime minister.

3. Or 大三輪高市麻呂 (*Nihon shoki*).

4. When he died in 706, his rank was the Upper Junior Fourth Rank.

5. (686–697) Emperor Tenmu's consort.

6. A possible source of the *Nihon shoki*, but not clearly identified. According to the *Nihon shoki*, he resigned his position as the empress eventually proceeded to Ise on a two-week trip.

7. As the era of Akamidori (or Akemidori) ended in one year, its seventh year falls on the sixth year of the reign of Empress Jitō, 692.

8. The cap signifies his court rank, and removing it is a gesture of resignation.