

Analysis of Cinderella Motifs, Italian and Japanese

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INTRODUCTION

The Japanese Cinderella cycle is a unique phenomenon. It is found in the medieval literary genre known as *otogizōshi* 御伽草子 (popular short stories that proliferated from the 14th to the mid-17th centuries). These are literary works which are distinguished from transcribed folk tales by their substantial length and scope; sophistication in plot structure, characterization, and style; gorgeous appearance in binding and illustration; and wide circulation. The origin, date, authorship, readership, means of circulation, and geographic distribution of the *otogizōshi* tales, which include some four hundred, remains largely nebulous. Particularly elusive among them is the Cinderella cycle, which has no traceable predecessors or apparent progeny within the indigenous or Oriental literary traditions.

In my own previous article, "Cinderella and the Jesuits" (1979), I have established a hypothesis based on analysis of the tales and a comparative study of the Western Cinderella cycle. Its salient points are as follows:

1. The Japanese tales show an overwhelming affinity to the Italian cycle.
2. The Western influence is traced to the Japanese-speaking Italian Jesuits stationed in Japan during the heyday of their missionary activity between 1570 and 1614; and actual authorship is attributable to Japanese Brothers who were active in the Jesuit publication of Japanese-language religious and secular texts.
3. Their primary motive in writing the Cinderella tales seems to have been to proselytize Christianity and to glorify exemplary Japanese

Christians, just at a time when official persecution was mounting, inexorably leading to the expulsion of the Western clergy in 1614.

4. The tales contain internal evidence pinpointing possible models, who were all aristocratic Japanese Christians involved in sensational political incidents affecting the welfare and the ultimate fate of the Catholic Church in Japan.

5. The initial inspiration for the adoption of the Cinderella motif-complex is ascribable to Lady Hosokawa Tama 細川たま (1563-1600), christened Gracia, whose tragic romantic life and spectacular death have been fictionalized in many literary works, including the recent American bestseller *Shōgun* (1975) by James Clavell, although in most cases the story has been grossly altered.

The Japanese Cinderella cycle consists of three basic types. The four most significant tales are outlined below:¹

Hanayo no hime 花世姫 (Princess Blossom): gift child of Bodhisattva Kannon (a bodhisattva commonly known as the Goddess of Mercy); noble heroine abducted but spared death by assassin; aided by a mountain ogress; disguise as old woman; menial heroine as fire-tender at a nobleman's mansion; youngest prince in love; bride test; magic cornucopia; rencontre with father; stepmother exiled; happy marriage with many children.

Hachikazuki 鉢かづき (The Bowl-Bearer)—Mikanagi 御巫 variant: heroine disfigured by the bowl and box placed over her head by dying mother as stipulated by Kannon; magic adhesion; outcast heroine; bath-fire attendant at a nobleman's mansion; befriended by the heir; cast into river by his father but retrieved by the love-sick heir; bride test; the bowl yields treasures; rencontre with father; happy marriage and great longevity.

Hachikazuki—Otogibunko 御伽文庫 variant: noble heroine bearing the bowl placed by dying mother as pledged to Kannon; outcast as a monstrosity; throws herself into river but saved by the bowl; bath attendant at the governor's mansion; youngest son in love; bride test; magic cornucopia; rencontre with repentant father; stepmother and stepsister abandoned in poverty; many children and prosperity.

Ubakawa (The Bark Gown): samurai's daughter runs away from home; refuge under Kannon's altar; Kannon bestows a bark gown and directs her to a warrior's house; fire-tending disguised as old woman; young son in love; happy marriage and many children.

THE ITALIAN CINDERELLA CYCLE

In her *Cinderella* (1892), a remarkable collection of three hundred and

forty-one variants, Marian Roalfe Cox classifies the tales into three groups by specific differentiating incidents: A—Cinderella (ill-treated heroine, recognition by means of shoe); B—Catskin (unnatural father, heroine flight); C—Cap o'Rushes (King Lear judgment, outcast heroine). Regardless of the presence of other "common" incidents, the variants that lack these essential incidents are classed as D—Indeterminate, while those with a hero instead of a heroine are given the designation of E—Hero tales.

Group A—Cinderella is the well-known rags-to-riches success story featuring a persecuted stepdaughter aided by a fairy godmother and identified by a shoe. This is just one type of Cinderella, which was made famous by Charles Perrault's literary version of 1697. In groups B—Catskin and C—Cap o'Rushes, which are larger in number and older in history, the heroine is neither a poor girl nor a stepdaughter, and the shoe and fairy are never mentioned. It is to Catskin and Cap o'Rushes types that the Japanese Cinderella cycle shows a strong affinity.

Among the common incidents listed by Cox, the Japanese cycle is conspicuous in the frequent occurrence of the following motifs: aid (old woman, deity), heroine disguise (old-woman robe, wooden covering), outcast heroine, and menial heroine. Survey of the Cox variants in regard to geographical distribution revealed distinct concentrations of these particular motifs in the Italian cultural sphere.² Statistical analysis further resulted in some interesting observations.

The Italian cycle alone accounts for 24.3% of the entire Cox collection, which covers all of Europe, India, Africa, South America, and some of Asia. At least within the European tradition itself, Cinderella seems to have been a dominant and popular fairy tale type in Italian culture. Even more significant is the curious tendency of the Italian cycle to gravitate noticeably away from the Cinderella tale proper (with ill-treated heroine and recognition by shoe; corresponding to AT-510A) and heavily toward Catskin and Cap o'Rushes (AT-510B), both of which revolve around incidents relating to father and outcast heroine in flight. 510A comprises a mere 19.3% of the Italian cycle as against a hefty 39.3% of the others. As for aid and disguise, their occurrence in the non-Italian area exceeds 50% only in the Catskin group, which takes its name from the essential motif of "covering" for the heroine disguise during flight. The Italian cycle by contrast exhibits an overwhelming preference for aid and disguise in all groups, with the concentration of as much as 90% disguise and 47% aid in Catskin, except in 510A-Cinderella proper, which offers no disguise and the lowest rate of aid instances. Disguise and aid are, therefore, motifs attendant primarily to the non-Cinderella-proper, and prevalent in the Italian cycle.

Aid occurs in 65.1% of Italian variants, while the figure for the rest of the world is a mere 27.2%. Of those aid incidents, 33.3% involve an old woman and 30% some supernatural creatures in the Italian cycle, while the others show diverse choices in addition to the old woman (17.1%) and supernatural (20%). In the case of disguise, the contrast is even more pronounced: Italian 65.1% vs. others 19.4%; wooden covering (51.9%) and old-woman skin (13%) dominate the Italian cycle, whereas the other countries prefer animal skin (72%) rather than wooden cover (a mere 16.8%) or old-woman skin (2%, or one instance).

In short, the salient features of the Italian cycle are aid in the form of an old woman or supernatural being and disguise in wooden cover or old-woman skin. These findings are borne out by Anna Birgitta Rooth in her book, *The Cinderella Cycle* (1951) based on the Cox collection plus her own acquisition of as many variants (not transcribed or tabulated, unfortunately). In regard to disguise, Rooth (1951: 124) concludes:

It would seem most likely that the motif of the wooden skirt as a disguise has been evolved in Southern Europe from the motif of the hiding-box which was confined originally to the Southern European tradition. . . . In the Southern European tradition of B1 [Catskin], the hiding-box has been confused with the disguise and has become a wooden covering.

Rooth also notes that "the skin of an old woman or human skin generally features in the Italian tradition. Whether the *ubakawa* (bark gown) in the Japanese cycle is a wooden covering (as in *Ubakawa*) or an old-woman skin (literally, *uba*=old woman, *kawa*=skin), its origin is in all probability Italian (Southern European). Hachikazuki's bowl is more clearly a hiding-box, which not only disguises the heroine but often yields treasures as well in the Italian tradition. Kannon's aid in the three Japanese tales and the old woman of the mountain in *Hanayo no hime* signify supernatural help, typical of the Italian cycle; as is the distribution of money or presents at the feast.

Even though the Japanese Cinderella cycle exhibits such Italian features, these motifs might be suspected of deriving directly from or by way of Oriental sources. Any possibility along this line has already been dismissed by Nai-Tung Ting's *The Cinderella Cycle in China and Indo-China* (1974), in which he establishes the following: There seems no definite connection between the Sino-Indo-Chinese and the Japanese oike-types classified in Hiroko Ikeda's *Type and Motif Index of Japanese Folk-Literature* (1971); the world's earliest-known Cinderella story in writing is a Chinese version included in *Yuyan Tsatsu* 西陽雜俎, a book of supernatural and historical tales by Tuan Ch'eng-shih 段成式, who died

in 863 A.D., and its origin is not Chinese but possibly Viet; the Cinderella type neither proliferated nor found wide popularity in China. The twenty-one Chinese and nine Indo-Chinese variants collected by Ting, moreover, bear no resemblance to the Japanese tales: sibling rivalry is a driving factor; aid is fish, bird, or animal; heroine is never a noble lady but usually a rags-to-riches lucky bride; and the shoe incident is frequent. As for India, whence some secular folklore as well as a body of Buddhist lore found their way into Japanese collections as early as the ninth century, Rooth offers a helpful list of motifs common to the Oriental tradition (by which term she means India, Egypt, Babylon, China, etc.): 1) Brothers and sisters as principal characters; 2) Food on the grave or from the tree; 3a) Oriental spy motif (hostile sibling reporting to mother); 3b) The borrowing of the animal; 4) The series of distinctive actions (Rooth 1951: 53) She also attributes the motif-complex of the object lost and found to the Oriental tradition. None of these motifs are present in the Japanese cycle, ruling out any so-called oriental influence on it.

Actual comparisons of the Japanese tales with possible Italian precedents will help further establish their correlation. First, to look into the most peculiar of the motifs, the old-woman skin seems to have functioned originally as a disguise to elude the pursuing father, which then became generalized to conceal the heroine's identity and beauty. Four instances of this motif involve an unnatural father (Cox's Victorian euphemism for a father who wants to marry his own daughter): "Father and Daughter" (Cox 155), "The Story of the Hairy Belle" (147), "The Screw of Salt" (217), "Blair-Eye" (215). Three other tales without the unnatural father motif are "La Georgia" (141—skin of a corpse), "L'Isabelluccia" (281), and "The Geese" (285—dead mother's skin). Common to this group are old-woman skin as protection during flight or journey, discovery by son of the master, happy marriage, and the absence of a persecuting stepmother (except the one in "L'Isabelluccia," who pulls out the heroine's eyes). All these features fit the *Ubakawa* plot, which is further reinforced by other incidents found in "Mona Caterina" (140) and its variants: fairy aid, old-woman dress, heroine sits opposite palace, king watches her (bathing) and falls in love, but everyone is critical of king's choice until they see her.

The most popular motif occurring in the greatest number in the Italian tradition is wooden covering as disguise. It could be a hiding-box: "The Little Gold Shoe" (134), "The Story of the Three Dresses" (148), "The Wooden Top" (165, 179), "Faith and Creed" (187), "The Bear" (269). But the majority of cases are described simply as a wooden dress or sheath.³ A considerable number of Italian

variants even have names referring to wood. "La Margofa di Legno" (136, with a heroine called Wooden Lady), "La Donnina di Legno (The Little Wooden Lady)" (139), "Lu Zòcchele de Légne" (159), "Marie Robe de Bois" (272), "Maria Intaulata (Wood)" (142), "Maria Intauradda (Wainscotted)" (143). A series of at least five Italian tales are called "Maria Wood": 150, 260, 261, 157, 142. While the variants with old-woman skin motif are equally divided between Catskin and Cap o'Rushes, the wooden covering appears only in Catskin and the Indeterminate group (260, 261, 272). That is to say, the wooden covering is definitely related to the unnatural father and heroine flight.

The old-woman robe of *Hanayo no hime* and the bark gown of *Ubakawa* correspond to the combination of old-woman skin and wooden dress motifs, as is the case in "Mona Caterina" (140—old-woman dress) and "Loving Like Salt" (209—a wand placed in the bosom makes the heroine look like an old woman). Hachikazuki of the Otogibunko variant has her own counterpart in "Fair Maria Wood" (157), who throws herself into the river in a wooden dress, floats, and gets rescued by a gentleman who takes her home as his servant. Similarly, the Mikanagi Hachikazuki resembles "Dame Cork" (183), who gets thrown into the sea in her cork dress, is found by prince, and taken to palace. There is little doubt that these Italian variants are the sources for certain motif-complexes which distinguish *Hachikazuki* from *Hanayo* and *Ubakawa*, namely: heroine's drowning averted thanks to the covering that causes her to float; her humiliation as a monstrous freak; and treasures emerging from her hiding box. Incidents particular to *Hanayo no hime* appear in an even greater number of Italian tales. The sparing of the heroine's life by the assassin appears in: "Loving Like Salt" (209), "Johnny of the Bark" (210), "The Cruel Stepmother" (286), and "The Three Daughters of the King" (313). The old woman aiding and directing heroine appears in: 209, 296, and "The Princess Who Would Not Marry Her Father" (184), whose name is Maria do Pau. Life-sustaining liquor drops (equivalent to Hanayo's sacred rice in function) appear in: 200. The prince spying on heroine appears in: 209, 210, and 184 (the king watches and hears the heroine sing that she is a royal princess, and later through a key hole sees her doing embroidery; Hanayo's prince hears her chant a sutra and compose a poem while watching through a curtain opening). The bestowal of gifts on heroine by supernatural beings for services rendered appears in: "The Step Daughter" (245) and "Marion de Bosch" (247).

Three of these variants pose uncanny parallels to *Hanayo no hime*. In "Marion de Bosch," the Madonna appears in the form of old woman. The heroine cleans the old woman's hair, and the Madonna asks, "What

have you found?" "Lice and nits; a nice old woman you are!" "When you get to the top of the mountain, turn around." The heroine does so and is rewarded with a star on her brow. (Hanayo cleans the ogress's hair and picks out little worms, which the ogress eats with relish. Hanayo's rewards are an old-woman robe, a pouch, and three grains of sacred rice.) Caterina in "The Cruel Stepmother" is taken to the forest by assassins in king's absence but spared death and aided by old woman. The stepmother kills the assassins, feigns mourning, and when informed that the heroine has been sighted, offers reward for anyone killing her. All these perils are suffered by Hanayo. In "The Three Daughters of the King" (313), the king orders servant to kill the heroine in woods, but sympathetic servant leaves her in woods. Terrified of wild beasts, heroine follows a light in the distance and reaches the house of an ogre. Warning that the husband will eat her, the ogress hides her and pacifies the husband, exactly as in *Hanayo no hime*.

The Japanese cycle is obviously related to, or more precisely, derived from the Italian tradition, AT-510B (Catskin and Cap o'Rushes) in particular. Rooth warrants that the Catskin type containing the motifs of the deathbed promise, unnatural father, tasks, (hiding box), flight, menial heroine at king's palace, visits to the feast or church, happy marriage, etc., belongs to the European tradition (Rooth 1951: 115).

THE JAPANESE CYCLE: ABSENCE OF UNNATURAL FATHER AND SHOE

The Japanese cycle's one glaring departure from the Italian sources is the absence of the unnatural father theme. The deathbed promise, which forces the father to marry a woman who either fits the dead wife's ring or is her exact image—the best and only candidate being the daughter—is replaced by mother's deathbed supplication to Kannon in *Hanayo no hime* and *Hachikazuki*, and rather obliquely in *Ubakawa*. Eliminated along with this central theme is an attendant motif of counter tasks (as a delaying tactic, the Western heroine requests her father to provide magic dress, usually cosmic dresses with sun, moon, star, or gold, silver, copper, etc.) This motif is combined with aid and disguise in the Japanese cycle, resulting in Kannon, who provides a covering; heroine flight from unnatural father is changed to the outcast heroine motif from Cap o'Rushes, which also supplies King Lear judgment in a modified form for Hachikazuki (whose father believes stepmother's slander) and Hanayo (who is expelled allegedly on father's orders) as well as Value of Salt (Hachikazuki) and surprise rencontre (Hanayo, Hachikazuki).

In regard to the elimination of the crucial motif of unnatural father,

the deliberate choice of authors seems a strong possibility. It is in fact rather surprising that instances of father-daughter incest do not appear in Japanese literature, especially of the Heian period (794–1185), when children of the polygamous aristocratic class saw their father not as a parent figure, but only on his occasional visits to their mother as her suitor, and when neither age difference nor blood relation imposed social or moral restraints on love or marriage. The incomparably handsome hero of the *Tale of Genji* (early 11th century, by Lady Murasaki; perhaps one of the world's earliest and longest novels), Prince Genji at age forty is ordered by his emperor brother to marry his own niece Princess Nyosan aged fifteen. And love between brother and sister with the same mother does occur in Heian literature.

Many a modern scholar has wondered why stepdaughter tales were so popular in Japan when Japanese social environment was not conducive to persecution of stepchildren, or even stepmother's free access to them, at least in the upper-class circles (the all but exclusive setting for pre-Muromachi literature). Is it perhaps because the probability of real-life incest between father and daughter was so imminent that the literary taboo against it was absolute, while the implausible persecution by stepmother was a permissible motif? There is virtually no instance of a father persecuting his stepchild in Japanese literature, but the instance of a stepson persecuted by his stepmother does appear early in *Utsubo Monogatari* 宇津保物語 (The Tale of the Hollow Tree, late tenth century). In one subplot, a young man called Tadakoso receives the brunt of his stepmother's wrath, although he is not even living in the same house, and suffers exile and mental anguish. Her motive, however, is not the usual stepmother's hatred of her stepchild but the fury of a lady spurned. This theme is later dramatized into the Phaedra-Hippolytus tragedy in "*Aigo no Waka*" 愛護の若 (Master Aigo), a *sekkyōbushi* 説教節 (didactic musical tale) of the Edo period (1600–1867). A gift child of Kannon, Aigo repulses his stepmother's amorous advances, is outcast by his father through her machinations, and after a period of wandering drowns himself and becomes a mountain deity. Greek mythology and drama aside, the stepmother as a desirable or undesirable object of sexual love seems to be a motif peculiar to Japan and also quite preponderant in Japanese literature, as attested by Prince Genji, his son Yūgiri (who is attracted to stepmother Murasaki), and others; but it is a motif utterly non-existent in the Western Cinderella Hero-tales (AT-511B).

Removal of the unnatural father motif, at any rate, may be motivated by a number of factors: Concession to the Japanese taboo (rather unnecessary in the late sixteenth century, when social mores were

practically "anything goes"); consideration for the sensibilities of the genteel readership (but other *otogizōshi* tales boasted such an inelegant motif as the art of breaking wind in *Fukutomi sōshi* 福富草子 and a gruesome sight such as a severed head flying through the air in *Shuten Dōji* 酒吞童子); or a more insightful realization that Japanese daughters of noble families were in no position to reject any sort of parental wishes, let alone fleeing from the house to wander alone in the war-torn countryside. Similar speculation might apply to the treatment of the old-woman skin motif, which is not only gross but distinctly pagan, deriving from the belief in the magical power of animal skins. Hanayo's disguise is specified as *ubaginu* (old-woman robe), and *Ubakawa's* is described as tree bark. Such careful qualifications, nevertheless, do not necessarily bespeak an effort to adapt pastoral motifs to the agricultural civilization, for animal skins were highly valued and enjoyed in the Japanese elite circles.⁴ More plausible reasons for the removal of the unnatural father and the modification of old-woman skin may simply be that the Japanese Cinderella cycle was from the beginning *moderu shōsetsu*, that is, stories with real-life models, most of whom happened to be Christian nobles to be glorified and that the Jesuit moral sense could not tolerate such extreme motifs of obviously primitive and pagan origins.

As to why the shoe incident is missing from the Japanese folk tradition, there has been much speculation. The shoe test occurs in but one variant of *Komebuku Nukabuku* 米福・糠福 (Rice Rich, Talc Rich; Ikeda 510A) from Nagasaki. For the greater part of the Edo period (1601–1867), Nagasaki was under the influence of Dutch and English cultures, which belong to the primarily AT-510A Cinderella-proper tradition instead of Catskin or Cap o'Rushes. The loose fit of Japanese footwear has been cited as an obvious reason to rule out the shoe test, but it is not a fully satisfactory explanation in view of the fact that Chinese variants make use of their handmade, embroidered, cloth shoes. If necessary, moreover, any number of other items can be substituted for the recognition object, as indeed occurring in many Western variants—a tress of hair, comb, bauble, ring, and such.

Seemingly more profound theories resort to Freudian psychology in maintaining that Japanese authors of *otogizōshi* and folk tales intended for women and children deliberately eliminated the shoe which is associated with female sexual symbolism. Some Western scholars in the past have ventured wild guesses at the possible origins of the shoe motif, and tried to trace it to the Orient, citing Mideastern luxury in footwear, footbinding in China, etc. The shoe, however, is not always described as elaborately decorated, nor is its small size crucial in Chinese versions. In the Chinese tale "Yang P'a and Yang Lang" (Ting, Ch.

16), the shoe "fitted her foot perfectly, not a bit too long, nor a bit too large," implying that her foot was large (not small) enough to be acceptable (Ting 1974: 60). Neither by birth nor by marriage are Chinese heroines aristocratic. When menial tasks involved physical labor such as farm work and carrying water (nothing so sedentary as tending fire as in Japanese variants) and the future husband by no means belongs to the leisure class, a girl with dainty feet would be no bargain as a bride. The truth is, says Ting, that the word "shoe" was assonant with "harmony," "success," or "intimacy" in ancient Chinese and that lack of enthusiasm for the 510A Cinderella type in China may have been due to general disapproval of a young girl's indiscretion in losing such a precious and intimate object. The purpose of the shoe test in Chinese versions is, then, not to find a girl with the smallest foot but rather to identify the girl for whom the shoe has been made, or who made the shoe. So Rooth seems correct in her opinion that "the nature of the object which is lost and found by chance has been chosen without reference to sexual symbolism or betrothal ceremonial. . . ." (Rooth 1951: 105).

If the sexual symbolism of the shoe was not intended or recognized by the pre-Freudian authors, the absence of the shoe motif in the Japanese cycle cannot very well be attributed to deliberate omission by reason of the moral scruples of its presumable Jesuit authors. Nor is it fair to assume that the authors lacked the ingenuity and imagination to find suitable substitutes, when they did work wonders in transmitting other motifs such, as deathbed promise, aid, disguise, and marriage test. The simplest and most plausible answer may be just that the Japanese cycle has no shoe incident or its substitute because the cycle itself was derived directly from the Italian cycle, which consisted primarily of the 510B Catskin and Cap o'Rushes types without the shoe motif.

These particular types, moreover, served the purpose of the Japanese cycle very well in a number of ways. As indicated by the King Lear judgment, the heroine is usually high-born and endowed with beauty and moral fortitude, a character ideal for glorifying the model of similar social standing and religious faith. Significantly, all Japanese heroines, including Ubakawa (daughter of a local samurai), are called *hime* (lady or princess). Absence of sibling rivalry is convenient in transplanting the 510B type into Japanese high society, where each child was insulated from her siblings by a host of personal attendants led by her nurse. By the same token, Type 510A Cinderella-proper, in which the setting for the conflict between stepmother and stepdaughter is restricted to the family and the home, is less realistic than 510B. Catskin and Cap o'Rushes place the outcast noble heroine in the palace

where, away from her attendants, she must endure menial work and derision as a servant in an ugly covering made of skin or wood until discovered by the prince. The lack of a role, or the minor nature of the role assigned to the "persecuting" stepmother in 510B further accommodates the Japanese family situation, which has no manifest history of such persecution.

The earliest Japanese novel concerning a stepchild is considered to be *Ochikubo Monogatari* 落窪物語 (Lady in the Hollow, late tenth century), but the persecuted party in this tale is actually not the stepdaughter, who is merely removed to a cellar-like room and rescued away by a gallant suitor Shōshō early in the story, but rather the stepmother who is humiliated and tormented mercilessly by the avenging Shōshō through the rest of this long novel. Perhaps the most famous stepchild is Prince Genji, who is hounded by the jealous Kokiden (his father's powerful consort, and therefore his setpmother), but the author Lady Murasaki makes it clear in no uncertain terms that his political downfall under Kokiden's pressure is actually a divine retribution for his adultery with his other stepmother, Empress Fujitsubo. Throughout the *Tale of Genji*, the stepmother is not conceived as a threat to the stepchild, and Genji shows no apprehension in letting his childless wife Murasaki take charge of his only daughter by the less highly-born wife Akashi. By all indications, in Japan the persecuted stepchild as such is a motif-complex that appeared toward the end of the Muromachi period (1333-1600) and the early Edo period.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER ROBE

Now to come to the essential motif in *Hanayo no hime*, the old woman of the mountain looks nothing like a Japanese woman, however aged or wizened. She is a creature with a tray-like face (square rather than predominant Japanese oval or oblong), deep-set bulging eyes, a wide mouth, a pointed beak-like hooked nose, a gigantic head, and curly red hair. A look at what is known as *nanban-e* 南蛮絵 (Southern Barbarian Painting) would confirm the striking resemblance of her appearance to the pictorial representation of the Southern Barbarians (Westerners) in this Muromachi art genre. Granted "delousing" is a folklore commonplace both in the West and Japan (Japanese mythology in *Kojiki* 古事記, compiled in 714, has Ōkuninushi delousing the storm god of agriculture Susanoo as a courtship task in order to earn the hand of his daughter). But whence derived the idea of "hornlike wens" on the scalp found in Hanayo's old woman? The Jesuit chronicler Louis Frois (1532-1597) has an astounding entry in reference to Japanese religious beliefs in his letter of February 20, 1565: "Those who belong to

another sect by the name of *enki* (or *zenki*—good ogre) are said to . . . have small hornlike protuberances on their head and dwell in ghastly mountains . . . They believe that if they climb a tall peak and wait in great faith for a certain period of time, an ogre called Amida [Buddha] will pass before the devotees or manifest himself on another mountain ” (Murakami 1966). Hanayo’s cave incident is obviously a combination of the delousing motif (Cox 247) and the endemic religious myth as understood by the Jesuits.

The old woman and her ogre husband, moreover, are meat-eaters. He exclaims, “ What a smell of living creatures! ” at the scent of Hanayo in hiding, but the old woman dismisses it as the odor from the head that she threw away into the valley. Significantly enough, the head is not specified as human, nor does the old woman warn the princess that her husband will *eat* her as does the ogress in Cox 313. The word used is “ seize you; ” it is only Hanayo who repeatedly expresses her relief over her narrow escape from “ the fate of falling prey to an ogre.” Another change from Cox 313 seems intentional: the Italian ogre’s exclamation, “ What a smell of Christians! ” signals that the ogre and his wife represent a pagan or alien religion in the predominantly Christian civilization. (The ogre, Uorco, is derived from the ancient god of the lower world—Cox.) If *Hanayo no hime*’s setting is undoubtedly the Japan of non-Christian religions, the alien ogre may very well stand for Christianity. Despite his eyes flashing lightning, the ogre is in fact a benevolent benign creature who looks after the old woman, takes her explanation on faith, and goes away laughing. This ogre and the old woman have been generally associated with agricultural religion on the grounds that they live in the vicinity of the Shinto-revered Mt. Fuji and she is in possession of sacred rice. But no scholar has ever explained how the meat-eating pair can be construed as a god and his priestess wife in the indigenous Shinto religion, which abhors contamination through contact with the dead above all else, even if it were possible to discount the historical fact that since the Heian period, Shinto had been amalgamated with the strictly vegetarian Buddhism.

Furthermore, the ogre in *Hanayo no hime* can hardly be an indigenous god served by the old woman, for it is unthinkable for a Japanese male deity to perform such menial tasks as cutting and stacking firelogs for his priestess to make fire in his honor. It would be more reasonable to assume that both are in service of some deity, obliquely associated with Mt. Fuji in this case. Though the ogre is called “ my husband ” once, the old woman seems to be a wife in name only, for the narrative dwells on the fact that the ogre comes during daylight hours instead of cohabiting with her; and in more realistic terms, she is “ much too

old even to be human." In short, the ogre and the woman are celibate but capable of love ("he loved me deeply"), not Shinto but sacerdotal in their capacity, and alien in their appearance and habits. The three grains of rice that would ward off hunger for sixty days (reminiscent of the Miracle of the Loaves) need not be an agricultural symbol but an apt substitute for the life-sustaining liquor drops (three) of Cox 200 (in which, incidentally, the heroine's old nurse plays a crucial role in providing the liquor, hiding the heroine in a magic wardrobe, and rescuing her when she is buried alive; devouring is also a prominent motif, for the evil unnatural father is quartered by horses and fed to rabid dogs.)

The cave in which the old woman tends the fire also has a religious connotation. The single most popular medieval *sōshi* (short story booklet) is believed to have been one called *Fuji no Hitoana sōshi* 富士の人穴草子 (The Human Cave of Fuji). A warrior Nitta Shirō ventures into the cave, where a Bodhisattva gives him a tour of Paradise and Hell, illustrating the karmic law of cause and effect. Yet the terrifying implication of the cave is such that Shirō's failure to keep the vow of silence about the cave leads to the instant loss of his own life and that of Shōgun Yoritomo, who forced him to break the taboo. This tale itself may be related to the classic theme of a journey into the lower world (such as in the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*, and *Kojiki*), but apparently, this extremely popular *sōshi* did not escape the attention of the Jesuits in Japan. After mentioning Yoritomo's famous hunt for wild animals in the field at the foot of Mt. Fuji and the religious pilgrimages prevalent in the area, Ioão Rodrigues (1561-1634; author of many books on Japanese language and history) reports: "There is a long cave running into one side of the mountain and nobody knows where it ends; it is called *Fuji-hito-ana* and they say that inside there are temples and altars with statues" (Cooper 1965: 9).

To reach the cave, Hanayo wades through a field of bamboo grass. One remarkable episode sheds a new light on this description. Sometime during the Meiji period (1868-1912), August L. Billing of Hamamatsu Church searched for *kurusu-jō* (site of the cross), the legend of which had been handed down through generations at a Christian hamlet in Mt. Ashitaka near Fuji. Guided *through a field of bamboo grass*, he found a cross carved into the rock wall. He tried to bring other people to see it later, but was never able to find the place again (Mita 1975: 82). Quite possibly, the hamlet was one of those Christian villages that originally sprouted in Suruga Province while its ruling lord Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616) was still amenable toward the Jesuits, and later survived as "hidden" Christian enclaves thanks to their topo-

graphical advantage throughout the prohibition period, which lasted from 1614 through the 19th century.⁵

If the cave has religious (Christian) significance, in what way is the old woman related to Christianity? The ogress says to Hanayo, "I let you have my robe (*kinu*). Please put on this *ubaginu*." In the extant text that uses virtually no diacritical marks to indicate voicing, this word, generally accepted as *ubaginu* (old-woman robe), is written *uwakinu*, literally upper garment or robe. If the reading *uba* is based on no more compelling reason than that the robe belongs to an old woman (the word for which could be read only as *uba* even without a diacritical mark), it could just as well be *uwa*. Similarly, the title of the tale *Ubakawa* is written *uwakawa* (outer layer of the skin), which is far more precise and descriptive of the robe made of tree bark in absence of any reference to an old woman.

To leave the material of the garment aside for the moment, the next question is what kind of robe would turn a young lady into an old servant. Bernardino de Avila Giron, a Spanish trader who stayed in Japan from 1594–1598 and from 1607–1619, provides a helpful insight. In his observation on women's custom of wearing cloaks outdoors to hide their heads and faces, he remarks: "This garment is made of fine linen according to age and social rank. If the robe is for a young woman, it is normally left white with some light and dark blues. . . . If it is for a girl of five to twelve years of age, then some red is allowed; but if it is for an old woman it must have large stitching and dark blues or blacks. A maidservant does not wear such a robe, unless she is an old woman or a deserving favorite or a wet nurse" (Cooper 1965: 208–209). Women's fashion of pulling a kimono robe over the head and letting it flow loose was called *kinukazuki*, a common sight in Muromachi paintings. A robe worn this way covering the glossy black hair and young face would obscure a girl's noble identity, beauty, and age. Hanayo (aged thirteen) and Ubakawa (eleven) are expected to wear a white robe with splashes of blue or red; but if for some reason such a young girl is wearing a dark-colored robe in the *kinukazuki* manner, she would surely be taken for an old woman by the rule of differentiating age by color scheme. Conversely, if a girl needs to survive as a servant while hiding her noble identity, her best choice is to masquerade as an old woman entitled to wear a robe. *Kinukazuki*, however, has at least two drawbacks in its use in the Cinderella tales: it is an outdoor fashion and it is not suitable for menial work, especially if the heroine is to retain the old woman disguise at all times, for she must hold the robe with her hands to keep it from slipping off. Where could the author have found a robe ample enough to cover a girl from head to foot, functional enough

to impede no body movement, and subdued enough in color to designate her as an old woman? The answer is again in the contemporary art works, more precisely the Southern Barbarian paintings, in which the most conspicuous figures are tall Westerners clad in flowing cloaks and cassocks of dark colors. A cowed soutane in particular would be ideal with its deep hood concealing the face, a sash binding at the waist, and long sleeves swallowing up the hands. Ubakawa's disguise suggests a dark-brown robe resembling tree bark color, while Hanayo's may be black.

Supposing Hanayo's disguise is of Western origin, whom does the old woman represent, and how did Hanayo's real-life model gain access to Westerners? The model Hosokawa Gracia herself made a furtive visit to the church only once in her life, when she pleaded with Gregorio de Cespedes to grant her baptism and conversed with Japanese Brother Cosme, before she was whisked away by the retainers. Quite possibly, this experience is reflected in the cave incident: the Japanese Brother may be the old woman who "used to be human (heathen)" but now in service of God alongside a loving but formidable alien, the Father Cespedes, who met Gracia only briefly and refused to comply with the precipitous request of the unidentified noble lady. And the spiritual food provided by Cosme's lecture on Christianity did sustain Gracia until she was at last baptised to find true happiness as a Christian. (Aid in the Italian cycle appears all but exclusively as old woman, unlike other countries where old man occurs frequently; and Christian nuns were unknown in Muromachi Japan.) The heroine disguise in the Japanese cycle is associated with convincing validity to Kannon, a Buddhist deity who is believed to function in an endless variety of earthly manifestations (disguises) to save souls. In Japanizing the Christian tradition, the authors may have made an inevitable and wise choice of Kannon as the Buddhist counterpart of the Virgin Mary; or Kannon was later substituted as a code name for Mary during the long prohibition period, while statuettes known as "Maria Kannon" were smuggled in from China or carved out by hidden Japanese Christian artists at the risk of death. After all, as a fairy tale essential, what better choice than Kannon (the best-known deity conceived as female in Japan) for the surrogate mother to a virtually orphaned girl?

The theory that the old woman stands for a Christian cleric and her gift a soutane can at least provide one explanation for a curious phenomenon: why did the *otogizōshi* painters miss such a prime opportunity to demonstrate their imagination and skill in rendering this key motif into a visual image? The printed booklets and *Nara-ehon* 奈良絵本 (illustrated storybooks) furnish no picture of Hanayo and Ubakawa

in disguise. Generally speaking, to be fair, the extant *otogizōshi* illustrations (which nearly equal the texts themselves in importance in this genre) are often not contemporaneous with the text and show many instances of anachronistic mistakes and discrepancies from the story. Hanayo is dressed in the Heian aristocratic style with voluminous layers of bulky kimono gowns even during her flight and menial period, though she is supposed to have been stripped of her original apparel by the abductor. The old woman is growing two distinct horns over her forehead, when there are supposed to be over a dozen hornlike wens on her scalp. In the Nara-ehon *Ubakawa*, the disguise is a dark robe of thick but soft material and the heroine's uncovered hair is shown as entirely grey—something not mentioned in the text.

When it comes to Hachikazuki's bowl, painters seem to have had no idea as to what shape it should take. The bowls in most versions are so shallow and wide, all but a large flat hat that would submerge the girl's face completely even if the bowl remained above water; and it would take a feat defying imagination to sleep with it, let alone consummate the nuptial vow. The Mikanagi text, which seems the earliest of the variants, has all its illustrations cut out, leaving no hint as to what the bowl looked like. All this confusion may have one plausible cause: initial pictures might have been deliberately destroyed or obscured at some time during the persecution period for fear of detection, because the disguises were of Christian or foreign origin. Hachikazuki's bowl was at least conceivable in terms of a mundane utensil, and that may explain why it was the only type that diffused the most in its time.

THE BOWL AND THE FIRE-TENDING

The Cox collection includes one unique Hachikazuki variant, "The Girl with the Wooden Bowl" (277). Cox's source is *Japanische Märchen und Sagen* (1885) by David Brauns, who seems to have taken the story from an unacknowledged source and altered it freely into a didactic plebeian lesson on the virtues of humility and labor. His version does not appear in any Japanese sources, literary or otherwise. The heroine is called *Hatschibime* (Bowl Princess), a distinctly *otogizōshi* type of name, but she is no noble lady, and this story lacks divine intervention, step-mother, and flight. The magic adhesion is graphically described only in this Brauns version and the Mikanagi variant (both heroines scream in pain at an attempt to force the bowl off their heads).

In Muromachi Japan, the bowl worn over the head like a hat was not an unusual sight by any means. The contemporary picture scrolls abound in examples of a deep *ichimegasa* 市女笠 (large-brimmed wooden hat) worn over *kinukazuki*, which can only be described as the *hachikazuki*

fashion. So what makes Hachikazuki a monstrosity is not the bowl-hat itself but the magic adhesion of a head cover, a motif peculiar to Japan. Being a fairy tale love story, the Japanese tale is naturally told from a child's point of view, and as such the bowl is subjectively conceived as a disfiguring, abnormal factor that causes the child enough shame to drive her to a suicide attempt, or to develop a persecution complex. Rooth has concluded that "B1 (AT-510B, Catskin and Cap o'Rushes) is of the same character as a novella or romantic tale, with a literary interest for the concept of sin and guilt, erotic deeds and incest. . . ." (1851: 117). If this type deals with the concept of sin and guilt from the child's viewpoint, a disguise or head cover is an answer to her urge to hide her real self or her face from prying eyes, but ironically in effect it serves as a sign of her guilt to brand her. It is no surprise, then, to find in the Mikanagi variant a passage associating the heroine's suffering with a sense of disgrace: "How sad that I must display my shame thus!" The word *haji* (shame, disgrace) written without a diacritical mark as in this text appears as *hachi*, exactly the same as the word for "bowl."

Nevertheless, the bowl is not the primary cause for the persecution of the Mikanagi heroine: the stepmother at first hates her for her withdrawn unsociable attitude; the people of Kyoto are kind to her; and the father-in-law orders her thrown into the Yodo River as a lowly woman unfit to be his heir's bride. It is only the heroine who is despondent over her abnormal appearance and her reduced circumstances with short kimono, crude bedding, and unaccustomed menial work. Her dying mother lamented, "What sins cause you to suffer such disfigurement?" Combined with certain incidents in the model Kiyohara Maria's life, the bowl seems to symbolize a Christian concept of sin implanted in a young Japanese girl. (Maria had made a vow of chastity in church but was later married at her feudal lord's command.) Only after her penance and expiation through nearly dying in the water, and when she is about to be accepted as a bride, does the bowl release her to pursue her feminine role under blessing. The heroines of the other Hachikazuki variants are likewise subjected to criticism and abuse after pledging their love in secret. Interestingly enough, all the suitors in the Japanese cycle are without exception fastidiously introduced as unmarried, a necessary precaution in Western folklore conventions as well as in the Christian moral cosmos, but not in the love story tradition or the polygamous aristocratic society of pre-modern Japan.

The fact that all the Japanese heroines in this cycle serve as fire-tenders has generally been considered reason enough to place these tales in the Western tradition of AT-510A Cinderella-proper with hearth

abode. Yet, the implication of the Japanese fire-tending is the opposite of the Western hearth abode. As their names indicate (Basile's *La Gatta Cenerentola*—the Hearth Cat, 1636; Perrault's *Cendrillon*, 1697; Grimm's *Aschenputtel*, 1812), the Western Cinderellas are "cinder girls," with the emphasis on ashes that obscure their beauty and cause humiliation. In the Christian context, hearth abode marks a period of bereavement, during which the ash-covered girl mourns her dead mother, just as ashes are sprinkled over the head on Ash Wednesday as a sign of bereavement (Bettelheim 1976: 254).

In the Japanese cycle, no mention is made of the defiling aspects of hearth abode. The heroines are called *hitaki* 火焚き (fire-tender) rather than *haikaburi* 灰かぶり (ash-covered), which is a more literal translation of "Cinderella." In *Hanayo no hime*, the first of the series, fire is clearly associated with a sacramental and purifying function, for only after drying her clothes by the fire is the heroine assigned the duty of offering food (vermin) to the old woman and accorded the privilege of wearing her cast-off robe. In ancient Rome, the Vestal Virgin, who was also guardian of the hearth, was one of the most prestigious ranks available to a female child; after serving five years or so, she would enjoy a prestigious marriage (Bettelheim 1976: 254). Fire and water, of course, are two agents of ritual purification in Shinto, making fire-tending the least objectionable of menial tasks for a noble Japanese lady. While the kitchen was perhaps the messiest room in the Western house, the Japanese kitchen of the Muromachi period seems to have greatly impressed the Westerners. The Spanish trader Avila visiting Japan "went to see the kitchen, which in truth looked more like a silver cup than a kitchen, for all the pots (which are of iron), the grid for roasting fish and the spits shone like steel mirrors. . . . Everything was hung up neatly in its place; the hearths and braziers were so neat and clean that they were a joy to behold" (Cooper 1965: 222). As for the bath that Hachikazuki must attend, Rodrigues marvels, "But the Japanese seem to excel everybody else in this matter (of taking a bath), not only in the frequency with which they bathe during the day, but even more so in the cleanliness and dignity which they observe in that place, and in their use of most precious and medicinal wood in the construction thereof" (Cooper 1965: 221). Even aside from such a positive implication of fire-tending, what better place can be found for a delicate lady reduced to a lowly status to spend a winter in a totally open-structured Japanese house than beside the fire in the kitchen or the bath? To the medieval Japanese readers, this motif served to render the heroine's survival plausible.

CONCLUSION

Bruno Bettelheim has observed that "since fairy tales deal imaginatively with the most important developmental issues in all our lives, it is not surprising that so many of them center in some way on oedipal difficulties" (1976: 194). Despite its conscious rejection of the unnatural father motif-complex, the Japanese Cinderella cycle is proven no exception by the abundant presence of oedipal themes. The Japanese stories show an uncanny agreement with the sequence of human developmental phases propounded by Erik Erikson and, in fact, their plot developments closely parallel Erikson's "phase-specific psychological crises." Detailed analysis has been provided in my previous article, "Japanese Cinderella as the Pubertal Girl's Fantasy" (1980).

For the present, I have identified the influence of the Italian Cinderella type on the Japanese cycle, traced the transposition of Italian motifs into Japanese settings, and speculated on the presence of Christian elements veiled in Buddhist and Shinto imagery. Rooth suspects that B1 (AT-510B, Catskin and Cap o'Rushes) is a typical medieval product arising in civilized worlds such as medieval Byzantium and Rome (1951: 117). The Japanese cycle also exhibits the same character as a novella or romantic tale, replete with fully-developed plot, mature characterization, elaborate description, and a certain psychological depth, all of which differentiate this cycle from the style of chimerical stories and folk tales. The fact that no one has ever suspected a possible foreign origin of these tales attests to the literary sophistication of the Japanese and Italian Jesuit authors.

This paper may invite some nagging questions such as, "Did the Jesuits have the inclination to write fairy tales?" and "Did the Jesuits of the sixteenth century know the Cinderella tale type?" The answer is yes on both counts. Cinderella is a very old tale type. In India, a 5th-century play features a bark-clad girl, whose story in turn resembles the heroine disguised with a clay mask in a folktale of 510B type, "Hanchi." A Chinese Cinderella tale is recorded in a 9th-century book. (For both see Dundes 1982).

The oldest variant in Cox's collection, moreover, is a romantic version of a folktale by Straparola printed in his "*Tredici Piacevoli Notti*" (i. 4). This Italian story belongs to 510B type. Since its publication date is 1550, Italian Jesuits stationed in Japan had access not only to folktales with Cinderella motifs already popular in Europe but also to a literary version well before 1600, the presumed date of *Hanayo no hime*. The Jesuit Christian Press active in Japan from 1590-1614 did publish the still extant Japanese translation of Aesop's fables (1593) as well as originally written short stories in Japanese, from

which Ião Rodrigues quotes examples in his *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* (1604–1608). The man who was most instrumental in starting Christian publication in Japan, Valignano, was the highest ranking Jesuit in the Orient, whose official capacity was the Visitator to the Jesuit Missions in India and Japan. It would not be surprising that he had come into the knowledge of “Hanchi” tales in India and Cinderella stories in China as well, though this point needs further study. The priest who had most contact with the presumed models and the possible Japanese authors was Organtino Gneccchi-Soldo. Back in Italy, he had been actively involved with the Madonna Association, the primary objective of which was moral edification and education of children and youth. The Jesuit use of fairy tales and plays in sermon in medieval Europe will be discussed in detail by professor Ingrid Schuster of McGill University in her article which is soon to be published.

Philip Ariès has established through his book *Centuries of Childhood* that at least in Europe, children as a separate entity were discovered in the 16th century. Much of the peculiar Cinderella motifs and the perplexing overtone of incest can be explained better in the light of various corroborative evidence found in Ariès' book. Royal courts in 16th-century Europe, moreover, were known for the literary vogue and keen appetite for travelogs and fairy tales for adult entertainment. Jesuits were some of the most widely travelled people, and possessed both the privilege of access to court circles and literary talents in weaving sophisticated tales. Nothing would have been more natural for them than to continue entertaining the local nobility and proselytizing by means of literary tales while stationed in Japan.

APPENDIX: Two translations

1. HACHIKAZUKI (The Bowl-Bearer)

Mikanagi-bon 御巫本 variant

Tale No. 65 in Yokoyama and Matsumoto 1962, vol. III

Long ago at Katano in the province of Tsu, there lived a man called Yukikata, the Lord of Tsu. Blest with all manners of treasure, he was a fortunate man who lacked for nothing. His wife was a daughter of Ietaka in the same province. They were well-known for their harmonious marriage.

One spring when the Lord of Tsu was nearing thirty years of age and his wife twenty, they stood together viewing the halcyon scene

graced by the charming seasonal flora visible through the wisps of mist—willows, plums, peaches, pears, and green leaves on the tree tops. The Lord of Tsu said to his wife:

“It is the way of life even with the bird to take on a wife and raise their young. As a human, how I crave to have a child of my own before I turn thirty, be it boy or girl! Oh, I envy that little bird over yonder who has his children to love and cherish. I hear that not only in the olden days but even in our own time, there have been people who appealed to gods and buddhas and succeeded in having their wishes granted. There may be such a thing as the divine gift child after all. I just hope there is! Let us go and appeal to the Kannon of Kiyomizu Temple, who is so popular these days. We should seclude ourselves in devotion at the temple for one hundred days, make contributions to the priests, take prayer walks, donate pagodas and halls, and pray from the bottom of our hearts as ardently as we can. Then our wish cannot possibly fail to be granted. Let us have faith and be on our way.”

Greatly encouraged, his wife went off with him to Kiyomizu Temple early in the second month. They poured their hearts out in supplication, exhausting their words in prayer. On the hundredth dawn, an octogenarian priest appeared before the Lord of Tsu, Kiyohara no Yukikata, in his dream and said to him:

“I feel sorry for your plight, but I have been unable to locate a single soul in all the Three Thousand Great Realms who is destined to be born as your child. The reason why you have no children is that in your former life you not only broke off a blooming bush but caused its death by uprooting it. Furthermore, your wife in her previous existence was a snake who devoured birds, parents and nestlings alike, that nested under the eaves of temple halls and on the boughs of aged trees. It is also for that sin that you have no offspring. Your request is beyond my power to grant. Go and make your supplication to the Kannon of Hase Temple in Yamato province.”

Astounded by the miraculous apparition, Yukikata conveyed the divine message to his wife. She was overjoyed. Trusting in the dream, they went to Hase and made their prayers and supplications for another hundred days. On the final night, Kannon appeared in the form of a beautiful lady and bestowed on the Lord of Tsu and his wife some unexpected gifts: a heavily-laden gold-lacquered box in a large bag of Chinese-fabric; and a Chinese-looking bowl, delicate, exquisite, and unusually large. In presenting the box, Kannon said, “There is no seed to grant you as a gift child, but you shall have a baby girl, nevertheless. When she is seven years old, her mother will fall ill. Then you must place the box on the girl’s head and cover it with the bowl.

Even if her mother's life is lost, she will achieve distinction as a filial daughter through her dutiful devotion to her father and to the memories of her mother."

In wonderment and increasing joy, they awoke from the dream to find before them a metal bowl and a box. They lost no time in making their thanksgiving prayers. Once back at their lodging, they selected suitable sutras and *dharanis* [mystic incantations], and duly held a service in honor of Kannon with offerings of gold, silver, and gems. Soon afterwards they returned home.

Before long the wife's monthly flux ceased. Nine months of discomfort led into the tenth, and she untied her maternity-belt. As predicted by Kannon, the baby was a beautiful princess. Carefully tended by sixteen attendants and a nurse, the princess grew up looking more beautiful by the day. Then in the spring when she was seven years of age, her mother was suddenly taken ill. Day after day her condition continued to worsen until she seemed on the verge of death. Her husband spared no cost in hiring high priests of proven spiritual powers to perform great rituals and secret rites. All the countless prayers and supplications had no effect, however, in this ephemeral world where each life can claim no more than its own ordained span of time. On the thirtieth day the mother drew the princess to her side and said:

"I think my end is near. Ladies, I will leave my princess in your care. Now I must give her the Kannon's bowl and box in accordance with the pledge."

The ladies-in-waiting took the bowl and box out of the Chinese-fabric bag, placed the gold-lacquered box upon the princess's head, and lowered the bowl over it until her eyebrows looked crowded. Thereupon the mother composed a poem:

This is the box blessed
With Kannon's pledge.
So I let my princess
Wear it now.

Then she ordered the divine gifts taken off the princess's head. The Lord of Tsu tried to remove the box, but both the bowl and the box were firmly adhered to the girl's head. Alarmed attendants joined forces in pulling at them despite the princess's wails of pain. At last she screamed in agony, "Are you trying to kill me?" They had no choice but to leave the bowl and box alone.

"I may be mortally ill, but I have never heard of such a strange occurrence," the mother lamented tearfully. "To be born only to

die is the human fate, so you should not grieve over me. I love you no less than I do my own life, but I keep telling myself that parting is the way of this world. Nevertheless, what sins have accumulated to cause you to suffer such disfigurement and the loss of your mother at such a tender age? How cruel that you should be born so hapless as to be subjected to all this! You would be well advised to seek the help of gods and buddhas. Hase is our family temple. Go there and pray to Kannon. Please don't grieve overmuch." The mother tried to comfort the princess, hugging her closely. A pitiful sight it was.

For the repose of his wife's soul, the Lord of Tsu held a series of memorial services on the seventh, thirty-fifth, forty-ninth, and hundredth day of her death. Pining for her mother, the princess went to the tomb and prayed with her palms pressed together.

"Please send for me, Mother," she implored in tears. "I will be happy to share with you even the torments at the bottom of a burning hell, so please take away this disfigured body of mine."

As days piled upon days, the Lord of Tsu languished for his wife and composed a poem:

Deep as our pledge
Has proven to be,
How useless is my waiting
Now that we are truly separated.

Just as aggrieved, the princess expressed her immeasurable emotion in a poem:

Even the blooming wild pinks
Never let me forget—
My mother is gone!
Oh, the autumn wind in the field.

Thus they passed their days. At the third anniversary memorial service, friends gathered together and said to the father: "No use grieving any longer. You ought to take on a new wife to look after your daughter so that the deceased can rest in peace." The Lord of Tsu gave in to their insistent urging. He married a neighbor's daughter and loved her. Thereupon the princess found herself sinking deeper into misery and sorrow. Her clothes no longer had the quality she had been accustomed to, and there was no one to wait on her any more. Day and night she was shunned by the gentlefolk and the lowborn, who called her by a nickname, Hachikazuki.

In vain did the princess wish herself to dissolve like frost and snow. Not knowing where she belonged, she could do nothing but weep day

in day out. If she tried to seclude herself in her grief, the stepmother sneered, "What a laugh! Behaving as if she were a normal girl!" She exposed the girl to people's ridicule. Every day Hachikazuki went to her mother's grave and lamented: "I beseech you to send for me. I am desolated by my stepmother's loathing of me, so please let me join you soon."

Learning of this, the stepmother said: "You carry on so before your mother's grave, gazing up to heaven and prostrating yourself on the ground. It could only mean that you are calling down curses upon me. From now on, you are forbidden to visit shrines, temples, and graves. If you defy my order, I will have you wrapped in a rattan mat and thrown into the water to drown."

Not that the princess held her own life dear, but only for her father's sake, she refrained from visiting shrines and temples. All day long she chanted the Buddha's name in her mother's behalf and prayed for her afterlife.

One day the stepmother said to the Lord of Tsu: "It may not seem proper for me to say this, but I cannot hold back what is in my mind. Hachikazuki stole things to pay diviners and had them lay curses on me. As a result I am unwell and haunted by bad dreams. My heart is so troubled that I no longer wish to remain in this house. Will you banish Hachikazuki immediately, or should I throw myself into a deep river to end my life?"

The Lord of Tsu stalled for time at first, but he was pressed so relentlessly that at last he promised to do as he was asked. Upon leaving the wife's quarters, he sent for the princess and said to her:

"I called you here today for a particular reason. Ever since I parted from the lady who was your mother, I loved you more than anything else, so much so I could not bear to be away from you even for a moment. But my excessive love may have spoiled you until you became unconscionable. I was told that you hated your stepmother more than anything else in the world, and paid diviners and priestesses with stolen valuables to place curses upon her. But you are my only child. I managed not to listen to such tales until today. To my grief, however, people are already accusing and calling us terrible names. Your stepmother schemed to banish you to a strange faraway place or sink you in a deep river. But I refused to give her permission, and she had to leave you alone so far. The Capital [Kyoto] is a big city. If you are left at the Fourth Ward crossroads, someone may take pity on you. I will leave you in the Capital tomorrow."

At the father's tearful words, the princess made no reply but collapsed onto the floor weeping. "I am innocent," she thought, "and

it would be a pity to fall a victim to my stepmother's false charges." The princess summoned her nurse, Jijū, and sent her to the father to plead her innocence. Meanwhile, the stepmother persuaded someone to take Hachikazuki to Kyoto and abandon her on the Fourth Ward street corner. Not even dreaming of this, the Lord of Tsu agonized over his daughter through days and nights. One day, in a moment of great longing for her, he looked for the princess only to learn that she was missing. When he questioned the nurse, he was informed:

"In mid-autumn some dreadful men came and claimed that they were under Lord Yukikata's orders to take the princess to the Capital and dispose of her there. We protested but could not stop them by force."

"How tragic that she should have been cast away by my wife's treachery without my knowledge!" Yukikata sobbed out, choking with grief and tears. "Where on earth did they leave her—a deep river, a distant island, a wild field, or a deserted place where no one ever passes?"

In the meantime, Hachikazuki wandered aimlessly about the Fourth Ward. A crowd gathered around her and asked, "What are you wearing on your head? Close up, you don't really look like a hobgoblin." More curious people rushed over and tried in vain to pull at the bowl for a closer look. "What is this all about?" they demanded to know. "When I was seven years old, I happened to put on this bowl. It has been stuck even since," Hachikazuki told them. They lifted the bowl just to be certain, and her body came up off the ground with it. Men and women, the highborn and the lowborn, all hastened to peer under the bowl. What they found was a girl about fourteen years of age, fair-skinned, clear-eyed, beautiful from the hair and brows down to the shape of her mouth.

"Where are you from?" they asked.

"My mother passed on when I was seven. My father is still alive, but since I became thus disfigured, both he and my stepmother loathed me so much that they cast me out of the house. That is why I am wandering about like this."

Kindhearted people of the Capital befriended her, calling out, "Hachikazuki, Hachikazuki," all day long so that she would not be lonely. Some fed her and others clothed her.

In the Capital at this time there lived an influential man who was Kanpaku [Chancellor] with the rank of Taishō [Commander of the Imperial Guards]. He summoned Hachikazuki to his palace. When she presented herself at the hall door, he questioned her.

"Where are you from? To whom do you belong?"

"I am from the Katano area of Tsu province."

"Do you have parents?"

"No, I have not."

"Why are you wearing the bowl?"

"Well, when I was seven, I tried it on for a certain reason, and it adhered itself to me."

"Your eyes are exquisite and your skin is fair," observed the ladies in attendance. "Your hands, hair, feet, even nails—everything about you indicates that you are more than a daughter of a common man. What special skills have you to offer?"

"I am in such a state now, but while I was under my parents' loving care, I read storybooks and played the *biwa* [Japanese lute]. I know not what particular talent I might possess nor what kind of work I can do."

"Even so, name something."

"Well, perhaps I shall tend the fire."

"In that case, we will put you in charge of firewood to heat water in the kitchen."

Provided with brushwood and undergrowth from the western and eastern hills, Hachikazuki heated water in the kitchen every day, drawing water from the well and breaking twigs with her unaccustomed hands. She was disconsolate.

"When I was a normal person, I used to have others heat the water for my bath. Now, I must do it for women, children, and lady's maids who are always clamoring, 'Hachikazuki! Hachikazuki!' Clad in a knee-length kimono and begrimed from the soot, I sleep at night in a veritable dog bed on the worn-out tatami mat laid wrongside up in the storage room. How sad it is that I must display my shame like this, ordered about and laughed at by so many people day in and day out."

Once she felt so lonely while tending the fire that she composed a poem:

Breaking the twigs and
Feeding the brush fire
That consumes me,
I am in tears,
Smothered by the smoke.

Now Kanpaku had a number of sons. The eldest was Chūjō [second in command of the Imperial Guards]; the second son was Saishō; the third was New Shōshō; and the fourth was Jijū. Chūjō the heir found Hachikazuki quite companionable and dear. He summoned her to the bath and talked of the past and future just to pass the

time. He found it so enjoyable that he continued to meet her at the bath day after day. Before long he was welcoming the nightfall to summon her to his bedchamber. Learning of this, all the ladies-in-waiting at the Kanpaku's palace were intrigued by his unseemly conduct.

"It is said that long ago one of Japan's greatest warrior generals, Shōgun Tamura, loved a woman called Akutama [Fierce Jewel] and fathered a great general. What a pity that Chūjō should favor one so ignoble and lie pillow by pillow with her!"

Hearing them snicker thus, Kanpaku said, "Something must be done. Throw Hachikazuki into the Yodo River." His henchman tricked Hachikazuki out to the river and cast her into its swollen waters. As Hachikazuki drifted down the deep river, now sinking now floating, an oncoming merchant boat spotted her bowl and fished it out of the water. Finding a young thing under the bowl, they exclaimed, "What a bizarre creature!" and tossed her up onto the riverbank. She expired from the impact but somehow revived to continue in her harsh life.

She had had a glimpse of her native Katano area in passing, and it had made her all the more lonely. She thought longingly of Chūjō, to whom she had become quite attached. Sobbing in tears, she composed:

My sleeves are drenched
 With the Yodo River water and my tears.
 I miss my husband so very much
 That they have no time to dry out.

As a castout, she should have died, but she was rescued to prolong her sad life. She wished to throw her weary body into the river to rest at the bottom of the water, but being a female, she was unable to make such a drastic decision. "How wretched of me," she lamented in tears of incomparable anguish.

As for Chūjō, he mourned the loss of Hachikazuki through days and nights. At last he summoned an attendant and ordered a search:

"She must be somewhere. Go search in the far reaches of the field, in the depth of mountains, and even among the rocks, wherever human feet can possibly tread."

"I have heard people whispering," the attendant said, "that Kanpaku had her dropped into the river."

"Where did he leave her? How cruel of him to have condemned her to a deep river! She might have been washed up somewhere to be devoured by such birds as kites and crows. I want to see for myself what had become of her. I shall collect her mortal remains to place in a grave on the hallowed ground. For the repose of her soul, I shall

erect a marker and regard it as her likeness. Come with me."

Accompanied by a few of his close attendants, Chūjō slipped out of the palace. As he searched up and down along the Yodo River, he spotted someone on the opposite bank wearing a bowl-hat. He sent an attendant to see who it was. To his great joy, it turned out to be Hachikazuki. Brought across the river to him, she wept, unable to speak, pressing her face into the sleeves. Chūjō dressed her in fresh clothes and took her back to the Capital. Deep into the night they returned furtively to the palace.

Since such a matter is impossible to keep secret, soon even maid-servants were whispering until the Kanpaku's wife heard about it. The younger princes and the relatives found the situation deplorable. Some of them counseled:

"Chūjō should be given permission to keep Hachikazuki, but just so you can invite all your daughters-in-law to a bride contest, ostensibly to acknowledge Chūjō's love. The rule should be announced that whichever son presents a wife who is inferior in dress, looks, and personal grace will be disowned."

This suggestion was found fitting and accepted. Hearing of this, Chūjō lamented: "There is nothing else I can do but go into hiding with her anywhere possible." The days dwindled down until, to his distress, there was only one day left. The wives of Saishō, Jijū, and Shōshō were preparing floral gowns, each more precious and impressive than others, all gorgeous beyond the power of imagination or description. They took all this trouble solely to humiliate Hachikazuki. The distraught Chūjō was planning to steal away with her at dawn.

Hachikazuki was engrossed in religious devotion, bowing to east, west, south, and north, praying to the Three Buddha Bodies. Then she invoked Hase Kannon of her family temple and Tenjin of Tenman Shrine. She implored, "If my karma [fate] is so poor that I am destined to die soon, you might as well take my life this instant." As she bent forward in prayer, the box and bowl fell off from her head. Chūjō rejoiced with her. Struck with a sense of wonder, he was grateful that the deities had responded to her religious devotion. They promptly opened the bowl and box to examine them.

Apparently not Japanese in origin, they seemed to be from India of the days when Gautama Buddha had been alive. They found a mountain of treasures in their eighty-two compartments: Chinese mirror, five-foot-long ceremonial hair piece, ritual sash, Chinese-fabric gowns, brocade male clothes; orange blossoms in gold, silver saké bottle and tray, lapis lazuli cup, agate belt; lion's teeth, elephant's tusk, tiger and leopard skins; crystal rosary, the string instrument of the

Goddess Myōonten [Exquisite Sound], its bone picks; stork's gem stone, and fiery-mouse skin. The fallen bowl proved to be the lapis lazuli bowl of the Sixteen Great Divine Kings, and the box was that of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in the Spirit-pacifying Boat.

Such precious items were outshone, however, by the princess herself, who was the recipient of Hase Kannon's divine grace and Tenman Tenjin's patronage. She was so beautiful that it was hard to believe she used to wear a bowl over her head. She looked even more sublime as she stood ready for the bride contest set for the next day.

When the time came, Chūjō sent the message that he and his lady would present themselves shortly. Those in charge of audience appointment said to one another in disgust: "Lord Chūjō must have been driven mad by something that bewitched him. He really means to bring the ignominious Hachikazuki into the presence of his father the Kanpaku, his mother the ladyship, and his sisters-in-law who will be competing in their beauty like so many flowers." Some people were appalled, and some others were offended. Even down to the noblemen's children, people lined up, waiting with their clapper blocks ready.

Kanpaku had issued his command: "Gather a great crowd. As soon as Hachikazuki comes in, clap hands and beat clappers to scare her, shake her up, and jeer her. Prepare her seat at a lower level and make it like a dog bed. She does not rate tatami mats; simple straw sheets will do. Find saké cups as worn as can be, and arrange everything as inelegantly as possible down to the food. Grace her and Chūjō with nothing more than sidelong glances, and just hold your noses up in the air."

Now it was the day at last. The arrival of the advance guard was promptly announced, but the procession was delayed. The three sisters-in-law, who had time to prepare for the occasion, were dressed impeccably in assorted robes and gossamer gowns of various colors. Now they took to their respective seats accompanied by ladies-in-waiting, amidst admiring looks from all those within sight. Since Chūjō and Hachikazuki were late, people waited all ready, their noses turned up, their eyes haughty, and their faces full of snicker. Chūjō and his lady were in no great hurry. Leading the way were twelve women attendants clad in impressive Chinese-hued kimonos, Chinese-sheer robes, and scarlet skirts. They carried the box, the lapis lazuli bowl, and the official gifts. At the palace the government officials and the noblemen of the clan were lined up to take a look at Hachikazuki. The crowd of other spectators, highborn and lowborn alike, lay in wait impatient to jeer at her.

Chūjō was handsomely attired in Chinese ceremonial cap, Chinese

formals of the Sixth Rank, agate belt, dress socks, down to a snow-white fan. He came bustling merrily with his fourteen attendants. In their wake entered his wife, arrayed in a set of twelve gowns and a robe of Chinese-silk double-dyed in leek green on plum-red. She was followed by a quiet orderly procession of sixteen ladies-in-waiting, holding a fan over her head and carrying the train of her finery. It was a sight so unexpected that the spectators were caught by surprise.

"Is this really Hachikazuki the Bowl-Bearer?" People whispered to each other. "She looks like a manifestation of the heavenly maiden. Such a person cannot be found in all of the Capital. What a sublime beauty!"

The princess was invited to the honored seat at the left of her mother-in-law. Kanpaku and his wife were busy thinking:

"Why was such a beautiful noble lady wearing a bowl to disguise herself? She has the looks to rival the legendary beauties, such as Yang Kue-fei of Tang China, Madame Li of Han China, Princess Sotōri of ancient Japan, and probably even the heavenly maidens themselves, or at least those who have ever come down to live on earth. Her forehead, brows, mouth, robe train, figure, and cascade of hair—her every feature defies the power of the painting brush. We used to think our other daughters-in-law were wonderful each in her own way, but in this noble lady's presence, they seem all but wretched monkeys right out of the mountain." The mother-in-law blushed in her shame.

Gifts were spread out. Before the Lord Kanpaku lay elephant's tusk, lion skin, tiger skin, leopard skin, golden bottle and saké carrier. His wife was presented with a set of twelve Chinese-silk gowns, three golden oranges, and a lapis lazuli cup on a silver tray. All these were rare treasures that had never been seen or heard of in the past or present. The wives of the other three princes had prepared many gifts such as plum-red fabric, silk brocade, and undergarments the colors of autumn leaves, but they suffered so much in comparison that the ladies were too ashamed to present them in their turn. In acute embarrassment, the shamefaced three younger princes took each his own wife and left the part in a hurry.

"I am most curious to know," said the Lord Kanpaku. "What kind of father have you?"

"Now I have no more reason to keep it secret," answered the princess. "I am the daughter of the Lord of Tsu, Kiyohara no Yuki-kata, who is the sixteenth descendant of the emperor Kiyohara. He has become a commoner and now resides in the Katano area of Tsu province. Because my parents had no children, they secluded themselves for a hundred days in supplication to Hase Kannon of Yamato province.

On the hundredth night they had a divine dream in which Kannon herself handed them a bowl and a box. When they awoke, they found the very same bowl and the box before them. Kannon had said to them, 'Although you have no progeny ordained by your karma, I am so moved by the sight of your grief that I have decided to grant you a girl child. When she is seven years old, her mother will fall ill. Let the girl put on these at that time.' In accordance with that divine instruction, the bowl and box were put on my head, and they just adhered to me. I became an unsightly freak, was abandoned at the Fourth Ward cross-roads, and brought to your palace. That is how I have come to meet you today."

"You proved to be a Kannon's protégée. How auspicious! Let me make you a gift."

Kanpaku gave the princess 250,000 acres to the east of Kyoto and another 250,000 to the west. He also gave Chūjō a wedding gift of 250,000 acres. In all, he became the master of a 750,000-acre estate.

The emperor also heard about the story of Chūjō and his wife and invited them to the Court. In addition to many imperial gifts, Chūjō received appointment as Minister of the Center [third-ranking minister], and his wife was accorded the appellation, Tonomo no Yū-hime [Princess Evening of the Bureau of Bath, Firewood, Lighting, and Ablution]. Her father the Lord of Tsu was appointed Minister of the Left [top-ranking minister] and designated as Commandant of the five provinces in the Capital region.

The Minister of the Left lived to be one hundred and thirty-six years old. Both the Minister of the Center and the princess enjoyed prosperity, he for a hundred and twenty years and she for eighty some years. Later the bowl and box were donated to the nation. They are now in the Treasure Museum at Uji, known as the box of the eight-stemmed rare crest.

This is an auspicious storybook which ensures its faithful readers long life and prosperity through generation of their descendants.

UBAKAWA (The Bark Gown)

. Tale No. 63 in Yokoyama and Matsumoto 1963, vol. III

In the Ōei Era [1394–1428], there lived a man called Naruse no Saemon Kiyomune in the village of Iwakura in the province of Owari [present Nagoya area]. His wife of many years had died, leaving a princess as a keepsake. Since it was a proper thing to do, Kiyomune took a second

wife when the princess was ten years old. Before he set out on a journey to the Capital to tend to his duties at the Shogunal spring banquet, he said to his wife, "The princess is so young. Please take kind care of her by all means and see to her upbringing." After giving her detailed instructions, he hastened toward the Capital, worrying over the beloved princess, who would surely miss him.

In his absence, the stepmother took an aversion to the princess. "If only my father were here," bewailed the princess, pining for him in the morning and weeping over her dead mother in the evening, her tears never ceasing. The more she lamented, the more her stepmother loathed her, scarcely providing her with daily meals.

In her eleventh spring, the princess stole out of Iwakura Village in the dark of night and wandered on aimlessly until she found herself before the Kannon Hall of Jimoku Temple. "This is the very Kannon that my late mother is said to have worshiped. Her constant prayer was all for my future. Please take me out of this misery and send me on to my mother in the Pure Land," she supplicated with all her heart. Hoping something would happen eventually, she hid herself in the crawl space under the altar.

"I have been taught that your Great Vow of Mercy and Compassion is at once your sacred promise to bring us peace in this life and paradise in the next. I have no more to wish for this life, so please grant me a better afterlife." Without pausing, she continued to recite the Kannon Sutra as her mother had taught her. On the third dawn, Bodhisattva Kannon stood in a golden glow at the head of her prone form and said, "How pitiful to find you so lost despite your late mother's ardent prayers on your behalf. Since you are incomparably beautiful, you are likely to get abducted by someone somewhere. You had better wear this." Kannon handed the princess something looking like a tree bark and said, "This is called *ubakawa* [literally, "old-woman skin"]. Put this on and follow my instructions: go and stand at the gate of one Sasaki no Minbu Takakiyo in the province of Ōmi." Then, Kannon vanished into space. Paying her obeisance in sincere gratitude for the divine message, the princess emerged from the crawl space at dawn dressed in the bark gown. "My, what a horrible-looking old woman," sniggered everyone who saw her.

As instructed, she proceeded toward Ōmi in the guise of a horrid old woman, which protected her from harrassment while she slept in the mountains and open fields. At last she stumbled across the Sasaki mansion and rested by the gate all the while chanting the sutra. One of Takakiyo's children, Jūrō Takayoshi aged eighteen, happened by and halted at the gate. Summoning a warrior, he said, "I have just noticed

a strange thing. The old woman reciting the sutra over there has a voice as beautiful as the kalavinka [a bird of paradise with an exquisite voice and a beautiful woman's face] belying her appearance. I have never seen such a mysterious creature. Take her into the house and let her tend the fire under the pot." Accordingly, the samurai said, "Old woman, stay in this house and attend to the stove fire." Obedient to the bodhisattva's instructions, the poor princess went to make fire under the pot.

Around the tenth day of the third month, the south garden was full of flowers. As cherry blossoms scattered, other flowers bloomed. The willow by the water's edge trailed its light green withies, and the moon sinking over the mountain at dawn competed with the floral glow.

In the quiet of night, the princess stood in the garden viewing the moon and flowers. Her surging emotion over the bygone days and the future prompted her to compose a poem:

The glory of the moon and flowers
Is unchanged since bygone days.
It is my fortune alone
That has declined so.

Takayoshi, a man of sensibility accomplished in the ways of poetry and music, happened at this time to be in the flower observatory with its shades rolled up to afford the last glimpse of the setting moon. Suddenly catching sight of a weird figure in the floral garden, he snatched up his tie-on sword and stole closer until he recognized the old fire-tender. "How suspicious! What is she up to?" he thought to himself. As he checked himself and observed her stealthily, the unsuspecting princess took off her bark gown in the moonlight and recited another poem:

Oh, lone moon, behold me in pity.
When can I ever be divested of
This bark gown to give back?

Her exposed face betrayed her to be a shining beauty. "What does this mean?" wondered Takayoshi. A man of dauntless spirit, he loosened the sword catch and swept up to her. "I thought I saw the old fire-tender, but you turned into a beautiful young lady before my very eyes. You must be an evil spirit. I shall not let you slip away," he said fiercely. Quite unperturbed, the princess said, "Calm yourself. I am not an evil spirit. I shall explain."

As she told him everything exactly as it had happened, Takayoshi listened attentively and folded his palms together in tearful thanksgiving

to Kannon. Takayoshi had been leading the lonely life of a bachelor. Now he took the princess by the hand and went to the flower observatory. He helped the bark gown off her, lit a lamp, and contemplated her. A veritable heavenly maiden, her dazzling beauty was beyond compare in this world, lighting up the room. "You must be the celebrated daughter of Naruse no Saemon Kiyomune. A direct proposal is uncustomary, but why stand on ceremony? Please tie the matrimonial knot with me this very night," Takayoshi said, ardently pledging his eternal love. "If you become involved with an unworthy woman such as myself," said the princess, "your parents will be terribly angry. Please just let me stay in your house, and I will tend the fire as an old woman." "Now that I have met you, I shall not leave your side. I will follow you to the end of the wilderness and the depth of the mountain, even if my parents disowned me." Takayoshi pleaded, lying close beside her. In the end, the princess yielded, and they consummated their connubial vow under the nuptial cover. Soon the next day dawned, but they were reluctant to part, unable to suppress tears.

As scullery maids arose and began to bustle about, the princess pulled the bark gown over her head once more and tried to make fire under the stove. Catching her sleeve, Takayoshi recited a poem:

With full faith in our future,
I shall help you off with the bark gown
Bearing the Grace of Kannon.

The princess answered in impromptu verse:

But for you,
Who else is there to help me off
With this bark gown?

And she returned to tending the fire. How pitiful!

In the meantime, his father and mother had decided to marry Takayoshi to the princess of Sa-Daishō (Commander of the Left Imperial Guards) residing at Imadegawa in the Capital, as had been arranged between the parents. They informed Takayoshi that they were about to send his nurse Saishō to the Capital with a formal letter. Small wonder, rather than offering excuses or explanations, he simply said, "Please forgive me for disobeying the parental command, but I am unable to comply this time because my only wish is to take the tonsure." The parents were surprised and perplexed, but said to the nurse Saishō, "As is often the case with young men, he may be in love with someone. Ask him questions and find out."

The nurse promptly came to Takayoshi and said, "It is sinful to

worry one's parents. Since you are young, there is no problem if you are in love. As is the custom with a man of high station, you ought to fetch the woman you love, regardless of how humble her birth, and present her to your mother. This is one of those things that happen frequently, and it will not hurt your parents over much." "Well, there is no reason to keep my secret now," said Takayoshi. "It must surprise everyone, but I shall send for the old fire-tender." Struck speechless with astonishment, the nurse rushed back in tears and reported it to the parents. "What is this? Has our son taken leave of his senses?" Both parents dissolved in sobs.

Presently, the father Takakiyo said, "My son Takayoshi is not a man to make up a fanciful story. Is this his pretext to take the tonsure? How distressing! No, on second thought, I think we should accept the old fire-tender as the bride and see what his real intentions are." He sent a messenger with an invitation: "Since tomorrow falls on an auspicious day, you may wed the old woman." Greatly elated, Takayoshi had a cypress-bark covered palanquin prepared in a hurry and ordered necessary arrangement made for the happy occasion. In disbelief, his attendants carried out the master's orders nonetheless.

On the following morning, Takayoshi fetched the old woman to his own quarters, where they secluded themselves to dress properly. Into the light of the day issued the princess with a silk robe pulled over her head. She rode to the main building in the palanquin which was carried all the way into the audience room. To the astonishment of the parents and all present, the person who alighted from the palanquin looked nothing like the familiar old woman. As she came closer to the in-laws, she proved to be an unworldly creature. Heavenly maiden or bodhisattva descended on earth, she was a vision of beauty unheard of even in the olden times. Aged thirteen or fourteen, with exquisite and noble features, and a face well-defined and genteel—she was a figure defying words or pictures. The unexpected happiness of the parents was so boundless that their wedding gift was the family estate itself.

The story about Takayoshi's acquisition of his wife through Kannon's intercession spread widely until it impressed the emperor. Takayoshi was summoned directly to court and appointed Uhyōe-no-kami (Commander of the Right Palace Guards) endowed with Echizen, in addition to his own inherited Ōmi. This is another auspicious example of estate piled upon estate. Over the years, many children added to their prosperity and happiness. This is what is known as the Great Mercy.

All who read this tale ought to repeat three times, "O, Merciful Bodhisattva Kannon!" Without a doubt, then, peace in this life and

paradise in the next will be yours.

NOTES

1. These tales range in length from 44 manuscript pages (*Hanayo no hime*) (yet to be published) to 7 pages (*Ubakawa*) in this writer's own English translation. For *Ubakawa* and *Hachikazuki* see the appendix to this article.

2. For the present discussion, ten Spanish and five Portuguese variants are included in the Italian cycle due to their affinities in terms of motifs and Southern European features. The Jesuit clergy and Western traders in late sixteenth-century Japan were almost exclusively Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian.

3. Unlike the tree bark type of material in the Italian tradition, the four non-Italian variants consist of a Slavic wooden figure (133) and three Norwegian wooden cloaks of lath strips (38, 85, 181). In addition, a Scottish variant, "The King Who Wished to Marry His Daughter," (151) has a hiding-box, but the chest functions as a boat rather than as a disguise or protection.

4. The Jesuit Luis Frois mentions in his report dated June 1, 1569, that the powerful ruler Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) wore tiger skin around his hips during the construction of Nijō Castle and was promptly emulated by his vassals.

5. Rodrigues had been an interpreter and advisor to Ieyasu until he fell out of his grace and was expelled to Macao in 1610.

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