

TRADITIONS

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## TRADITIONS

The characters 傳統 that appear on the front cover were written by Hui Tsung (r. 1100–1125), the 8th emperor of the Northern Sung Dynasty. Among the Chinese emperors, he was a most distinguished man of letters, skilled at calligraphy, painting, and poetry.

# TRADITIONS

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CONTENTS

Hagakure (1)..... 7

Hitachi Fudoki..... 23

Towazu-gatari (2)..... 49

The World of *Engi* in Buddhism ..... 69  
by *Dr. Hirakawa Akira*



Part 1

Hagakure

葉隱

Introduction

Yamamoto Jinuemon Tsunetomo, the author of *Hagakure*, was a retainer of the Nabeshima feudal clan in Saga, Kyūshū. He served Lord Mitsushige for 33 years, beginning in the 7th year of the Kanbun Era (1667). When Mitsushige died in the 13th year of the Genroku Era (1700), he abandoned his decision to follow his lord in death because this practice had been prohibited by the Tokugawa Shogunate, took the tonsure, and lived in seclusion in Kanatachi village in the suburbs of the castle town. Ten years later, Tashiro Matazaemon Tsuramoto, his junior in the same clan, visited the secluded residence of Tsunetomo and wrote down Tsunetomo's words. This work continued for seven years. Tsuramoto arranged what he had heard and collected it into the 11 volumes of *Hagakure*.

The book can be divided into four parts: the introduction, entitled "Yain-no-kandan" (Idle Talk in the Darkness); the first two volumes, which contain didactic sayings; the third through the tenth volumes, which contain the history and deeds of the Nabeshima lords and retainers; and the eleventh volume, a supplement. Since the origin of this book lies in its having been collected from Tsunetomo's talks every now and again with Tsuramoto, the articles are disordered and lack unity. Furthermore, the words of people other than Tsunetomo are also contained in the book.

Tashiro Tsuramoto's original handwritten manuscript is no

longer extant. However, several copies transcribed by Nabeshima retainers still exist. Referred to as the *Nabeshima Rongo* (the Nabeshima Analects), it has been read from generation to generation, both within and without the clan, but this book became widely known to the public only around the time of World War II.

During the war, it was popular to freely interpret the theme written in the initial part of the book to be, "The way of the samurai is to die." What must be primarily realized about *Hagakure* is that it was written in the middle of the Edo Period, during the Genroku Era (1688–1703), which was particularly known for peace. The true value of this book lies in the fact that it taught the mental attitude proper to a samurai living in a peaceful era, when there was no premonition of war. It would be a complete misinterpretation to read into the theme of the book the sense that even in peaceful times, the samurai must always be in a state of readiness for war. The uniqueness of this book cannot be said to lie in this interpretation.

Since *Hagakure* is a book based on conversations, one would expect it to be easy to understand, but on the contrary, peculiar turns of phrase and sentences full of various nuances make the book difficult to comprehend. Emotional rather than logical expressions abound. Even with the book's many contradictory passages, we feel as though the author is speaking of a very familiar way of life.

However, as we are reading this book, we can gradually grasp what Tsunetomo was ardently trying to get across. No matter how petty and unknown a man is, if he is a samurai, he must perfectly embody the life of a samurai. What kind of life is necessary? This is not difficult. It is in fact the core of what Tsunetomo is talking about so ardently. Sometimes, he speaks in a very down-to-earth way about how to live in the world, but his goal is neither conventionality nor vulgarity. *Hagakure* might well be called a book replete with the essence of human life.

Mishima Yukio, one of Japan's most famous writers, who once pointed to *Hagakure* as his right-hand source book, said that it represents the nucleus of his corpus of literature, a powerful drug

that cures the human mind of its ills. He wrote that he knew of no other book that had morally set free his self-respect. He came to believe in the existence of the legitimacy of insanity through this book.

**Translator's Note:** The translation of *Hagakure* in TRADITIONS will consist of all 11 volumes. Some sections have been deleted when the significance is not clear or the meaning of Tsuramoto's telegraphic notes is indecipherable. These sections will be noted in the text. This translation was made from *Hagakure* (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1940), edited by Dr. Watsuji Tetsuro and Dr. Furukawa Tetsushi. The other source used for annotations is *Hagakure* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsu Oraisha, 1971), edited by Dr. Jōjima Masayoshi.

Text

Yain-no-Kandan  
Idle Talk in the Darkness

A retainer should attach importance to Kokugaku.<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, Kokugaku is being neglected. Its general purpose is to understand the origin of the clan and comprehend the fundamentals of the everlasting benevolence and painful labor of the ancestors. The merciful mind and bravery of Gōchu<sup>2</sup> and the good works and piety of Riso<sup>3</sup> gave rise to Takanobu<sup>4</sup> and Nippo,<sup>5</sup> whose powerful patronage made possible the long continuity of the clan to its present position as unique in the world.

We cannot understand the people of today who have forgotten the ways of the past and respect the Buddha of a foreign land. Since Gautama, Confucius, Kusunoki Masashige,<sup>6</sup> and Takeda Shingen<sup>7</sup> had no experience in the service of the lords Ryūzōji and Nabeshima, they do not conform to the family traditions of this family. We should respect our ancestors in both times of peace and war and

<sup>1</sup> The wisdom derived from the customs, history, and traditions of a domain. Here it refers to the learning of the Nabeshima family.

<sup>2</sup> The name of Ryūzōji Iekane (1454–1546) after he received the tonsure. He was the founder of the Ryūzōji family, the feudal clan that preceded the Nabeshima as lords of Saga Province.

<sup>3</sup> Another name by which Nabeshima Kiyohisa (1468–1552) is known. He was a trusted retainer of Ryūzōji Iekane (see footnote 2) and fought for him in many battles.

<sup>4</sup> Ryūzōji Takanobu (1529–1584), a feudal lord during the Warring States Age. He was adopted by the Ryūzōji family in his youth.

<sup>5</sup> Another name for Nabeshima Naoshige (1538–1618), who took the place of his masters, the Ryūzōji, as the lord of Saga Province in 1588.

<sup>6</sup> A high ranking samurai during the Northern and Southern Courts Period (1336–1392), Kusunoki Masashige was extremely loyal to the Southern Court and served as one of Emperor Go-Daigo's leading generals.

<sup>7</sup> A famous samurai from Kai Province (Yamanashi Prefecture) during the Warring States Age.

study the guidance they left us regardless of social position. In the ways [of seeking truth], we must give respect to various images. However, knowledge imported from foreign lands is of no use in the service of a lord.

Once we have mastered Kokugaku, we may listen to other teachings for pleasure. When we serve with the best intentions, there is no deficiency, not a single one, with Kokugaku. Today, when some people of various areas say that the origin of the Nabeshima was the Ryūzōji and that the Ryūzōji fief became that of the Nabeshima, or when they ask, "How great were the military exploits of the Nabeshima and Ryūzōji in Kyūshū," people who do not know Kokugaku cannot give even one word as an answer.

There is nothing else [for a retainer] but to serve diligently in various ways. Perhaps one who dislikes his own duty and finds the duty of other people interesting makes major mistakes by confusing the means for the ends. The best models of men who performed their duties well were Lord Nippo and Lord Taiseiin.<sup>8</sup> Retainers of those days performed their duties diligently. The superiors searched for useful men, and the subordinates wished to be useful. Since their intentions complemented one another perfectly, the family steadily improved.

Lord Nippo's painstaking labor is beyond description. Although he had been covered with blood and had decided several times to commit seppuku [ritual suicide],<sup>9</sup> he prevented the downfall of his clan.

Taiseiin also encountered several situations involving seppuku and then became a lord of a fief. He expended great efforts in pursuing his role on the battlefield, administering clan affairs, controlling

<sup>8</sup> The honorific title used by Nabeshima retainers to refer to Nabeshima Katsushige, the eldest son of Nabeshima Naoshige and the first Nabeshima lord of Saga. Although his father founded the Nabeshima as lords of Saga, his son is considered to be the first feudal lord of the Nabeshima.

<sup>9</sup> Because he had lost some battles during the Shimabara Rebellion (1637–1639) in December, 1637.

## Traditions

the fief, and planning various works in strategic areas here and there [throughout the fief]. He worshipped Buddha and the deities, praying:

May we not be careless, nor can we be aimless in the way we think of this house established by our Lord Nippo. May the house prosper forever to the remotest generation. Living in peace, people are gradually becoming gorgeous and gay; martial arts are being neglected; people have become proud, and degeneracy abounds; upper and lower classes are confused; people are shamed both externally and internally. It seems as though the clan is being destroyed. Of the retainers in our clan, the old are dying and the young are immersing themselves in the fashions of the times. In view of these tendencies, in order to hand down [the family customs] to the remotest generation, if these family customs are written in a book assigned to the house, people will see it and become conscious [of our family customs].

So saying, Taiseiin sat among scraps of paper during his entire life and wrote books. Even though I do not know the secret contents, according to the tales of old people, it is said that they related a strategy, called *kakuchiku*, for giving oral instructions to the new lord, generation upon generation. In a box were books like *Shichokakuchi-shō* [Extracts of Visual and Auditory Senses] and *Senkōsan-iki* [Three Documents Written by a Deceased Father] which were also directly transmitted at the time of the inheritance [of the headship of the clan]. Furthermore, there was a notebook made of light-yellow Japanese paper with the myriads of procedures [for running the fief] and for dealing with the Tokugawa Shogunate, and with the political system as far as the customs of the retainers and domestic details. It also included an elaborate code of rules for each official duty to the most minute detail. Such painstaking labor seems beyond description.

Therefore, I pray that our lord understand the painstaking labor of Lord Nippo and Lord Taiseiin, sufficiently discern the writings they conferred on him, and examine his own resolution. Since his birth, he has been flattered as a young lord, and as a result, he has

never experienced any difficulty, nor has he studied Kokugaku. He only does the things he likes to do, neglecting his official duties. Accordingly, many new methods have been introduced and the clan has become weakened. At a time like this, arrogant, clever men, proud of their insipid wisdom, invent new methods and pamper the master. When they are in attendance, everything deteriorates. Examples of new methods and other things tried at the beginning of each generation, things that are wasteful mistakes, include: the willfulness of the three branch clans, the establishment of the post of *chakuza* [a rank that permits participation in clan administration], the employment of persons from other clans, the reshuffling of the heads of the *te-aki-yari*,<sup>10</sup> the relocation of residences, the revision of chief-retainer ranks from among the relatives, the dismantling of the Ohigashi,<sup>11</sup> the revision of regulations, the establishment of a ranking for Buddhist temples, the construction of the Nishi-oyashiki,<sup>12</sup> the complete reorganization of the foot soldiers, the arrangement of moveables, and the dismantling of the Nishi-oyashiki. However, since the work and system established by our ancestors were sound, the foundation is firm. Even though there is carelessness, when the penalties and instructions of Lord Nippo and Lord Taiseiin are observed by both high and low, the various people understand, and the clan will be governed with strength and harmony.

The fact that wicked or foolish men have never been discovered among our domain's lords from generation to generation and that none of our lords for generations has been lower than the second or third rank among Japanese lords indicates that our clan is truly marvelous. This should be attributed to the assiduous devotion to the buddhas and gods observed by the ancestors. Furthermore, they did not transfer those of the domain to other clans, nor did they accept those

<sup>10</sup> Samurai that have retired but are on call in times of war.

<sup>11</sup> Katsushige's villa after he had retired as head of the Nabeshima family. It was located east of the Nishi-oyashiki (see footnote 12).

<sup>12</sup> The Nabeshima family's villa within Saga Castle.

from other clans. Even retainers no longer attached to the clan—those ordered to be *rōnin* [masterless samurai]—were allowed to stay in the domain. Even the descendants of retainers ordered to commit seppuku were allowed to stay in the domain. Not only the retainers but also the tradesmen and farmers who have been born into this marvelous clan with its profound pledge between master and servant should not abandon their deep thoughts about the lords from generation to generation.

After a person understands this, when he thoroughly investigates how to repay his master's favors and truly employs himself to these ends, he will wholeheartedly serve his lord, disregarding his own selfishness. Our true spirit, whether we be *rōnin* or those ordered to commit seppuku, is to enter into the recognition of ourselves as Nabeshima retainers who think of the family which has lasted from generation to generation—both those members in the ground and those in the depths of the mountains—as one lord.

Even though it does not conform with my present status as a Buddhist priest, I have no desire to attain Buddhahood. The sincere resolution deeply engraved on my mind is to be reborn for as many as seven times as a Nabeshima samurai and administer our clan. Ability does not enter [into the picture]. In a word, the determination to bear the burden of the clan alone is necessary. How can human beings, who are essentially the same, be inferior to one another? Generally speaking, if a person's studies are not conducted with great pride, they are useless. If a person does not devote himself to managing the whole clan by himself, he is not successful.

A person's determination can easily become heated, but it just as easily cools. However, there is a way to prevent resolution from becoming cool. That is our preeminent four oaths:

- (1) One shall not be defeated in the ways of the samurai.
- (2) One shall be useful to the master.
- (3) One shall perform the filial duty owed to one's parents.
- (4) One shall render service to others with great compassion.

If these four oaths are remembered before the buddhas and gods every morning, you will have the strength of two and never retreat. You will advance steadily step by step like an inchworm. Even the buddhas and deities invoked oaths [when they first set out on their paths].

### Kiki-gaki I (Dictated Notes I)

(1)<sup>13</sup> It is not strange that a samurai should endeavor to master the martial arts; however, everyone seems to be negligent. When people are asked the easy question, "How do you understand the fundamentals of the martial arts," few can answer. This is because they have not reached a precise decision beforehand. It is known that they do not consciously consider the martial arts. This is negligent to the highest degree.

(2) I have found that the way of the samurai is to die. When in the throes of a life-or-death dilemma, we should immediately choose dying. There is nothing particularly difficult about this. Once the mind is made up, we can proceed. Dying a dog's death without reaching an objective is but an artificial display in the Kamigata style.<sup>14</sup> When confronted by the two [living or dying], we are not able to make the proper choice. We prefer living. We invent reasons for living. If we survive the situation only to find that our decision is off the mark, we are cowards. This feeling is very difficult to attain. If we die without reaching our goal, our dog's death is that of a mad man. We are not deserving of dishonor. This is certainly the proper way of life for a samurai. If, every morning and evening, we repeatedly think of dying, and if we are always prepared to die at any time, we can attain complete freedom in the martial arts and discharge our duties faultlessly throughout our lives.

<sup>13</sup> The numbers in parentheses were not a part of the original *Hagakure*. We have numbered sections in accordance with the Iwanami edition for easier reading.

<sup>14</sup> The Kyōto-Ōsaka area. Here it corresponds to customs in urban areas as opposed to those in the countryside.

(3) A retainer shall only think of his master with great care. This is a superior retainer. A retainer should harbor single-minded gratitude, be willing to sacrifice himself, and be deeply cognizant of the honor of being born into a clan that has had respect for generations. It is far better if a retainer has wisdom or talent and uses it fittingly. Even a retainer who is useless and cannot accomplish anything satisfactorily is trustworthy if he has the will to devote himself earnestly [to his lord]. Useful service based only on wisdom or talent is, in truth, service of a low grade.

(4) There are those whose wisdom flashes instantly and those who deliberate thoroughly and later come up with a good idea. Considering this matter deeply, marvelous wisdom materializes when a man deliberates without self-interest and keeps the four oaths in mind, whether he be blessed with superior or inferior ability from birth. People believe that thinking deeply results in abstruse ideas. However, when people think of things with their own self-interest at the core of their thoughts, the result can only be evil because of the influence of evil wisdom. The attachment of foolish men can hardly be to anything else but their own self-interest. When you want something, if you first put it aside for a moment, recall the four oaths to mind, and then continue thinking without self-interest, you will probably never make great mistakes.

(5) Because a man does things by depending only upon his own wisdom, private interest is mingled in his thinking, his thinking veers away from the heavenly way, and evil materializes. When viewed from another angle, his work is dirty, feeble, and narrow-minded. If he cannot think his way to true wisdom, he should confer with a man of wisdom. A wise man's thinking will accord with the path because it is based on wisdom without self-interest, since the thing is of no concern. When viewed from another angle, the foundation appears firm and certain, like a gigantic tree with many roots. The wisdom of only one man is like a single tree [without the support of many roots].

(6) We listen to and remember the wise words and deeds of the

ancients to depend on their wisdom and abandon our self-interest. When we abandon our egoism and pride, rely on the wise words of the ancients, and consult with others, we will never make mistakes or do evil deeds. Lord Katsushige borrowed wisdom from Lord Naoshige. This was written in *Ohanashi Kiki-gaki* (Book of Sayings Heard by Others). It was a valuable attitude. Furthermore, it is reported that a certain person never failed, because he took his younger brothers into his service as retainers, took them with him when he traveled to Edo or Kamigata, and conferred with them almost daily on public and private matters.

(7) Sagara Kyūma<sup>15</sup> was a man who was one in body and soul with his master and selflessly devoted himself to serving his master. He could be called a match for a thousand. A council was once held at Lord Sakyō's<sup>16</sup> Mizugae residence, where the decision was that Kyūma should commit seppuku.<sup>17</sup> In those days, there was a three-story teahouse in Lord Takunui's<sup>18</sup> villa in Ōsaki. He engaged this teahouse; there, pranksters from Saga District gathered and planned a puppet show in which Kyūma was to manipulate the puppets. They held drinking bouts and made merry every day and night; they made a great uproar overlooking Lord Sakyō's residence. Consciously advancing this great uproar and willingly committing ritual suicide was truly pure behavior.

<sup>15</sup> Sagara Kyūma was employed as a playmate for Mitsushige when he was very young. As he grew older, he was promoted to *ontoshiyori* and then *karo*, the highest title other than daimyō in any domain. He died in 1680 at the age of 50.

<sup>16</sup> Katsushige's son, Naonaga.

<sup>17</sup> Apparently Mitsushige had been involved in some infractions. In order not to reveal them publicly, Sagara Kyūma thought up this solution. Once ordered to commit ritual suicide, he acceded, but other retainers knew that he had instigated this whole scene in order to remonstrate against his lord's misconduct. Therefore, by appealing to the lord, they could have the sentence of seppuku recalled.

<sup>18</sup> Takunui Yasuhide, the son of Taku Shigekatsu, who was the head of the Taku, a branch family of the Ryūzōji.

(8) According to the words of Ittei,<sup>19</sup>

Sagara Kyūma probably appeared due to Lord Taisei-in's prayer. He was the most perspicacious of men. Lord Taisei-in [Nabeshima Katsushige] wrote a prayer every year in his record of prayers. The prayer written the year before his death may yet remain in the Buddha hall. Kyūma behaved rather badly in his last moments. He should have said: "I could not require [my master's] favor of giving a fief that was too large to fit my ability. My son Sukejirō's ability is not yet known, so I wish to return my fief. If the headship of my family is inherited by my son, may he receive a fief that exactly corresponds with his own capability." A person like Kyūma would not ordinarily have overlooked any of this. It is supposed that he forgot because of his illness. It is regretful that the house [of Sagara] will collapse within three years. The master's favor has become too heavy to bear.

Ittei also said:

Mr. So-and-so is clever. He is a servant like the wind that can neither proceed nor stand still. He will be in bankruptcy within four or five years.

He saw things with a strange clairvoyance that did not depart even slightly from what happened. Since then, I have carefully observed a large enough number of people to be able to say how many years a good-for-nothing can continue his service.

Sukejirō<sup>20</sup> (later he changed his name to Kyūma) was a *rōnin*. There was a paper posted on the door of Ometsuke<sup>21</sup> Yamamoto Gorozaemon's gate. It read that Kyūma's treatment of farmers was not good. As a result of the investigation that confirmed that things were not good, some retainers were blamed, and Kyūma was ordered to become a *rōnin* because he was a landed retainer.

<sup>19</sup> The name of Ishida Hiroyuki (1629–1693) after he received the tonsure. The foremost Confucian scholar in Saga Domain, he was the teacher of Yamamoto Tsunetomo, his adopted son.

<sup>20</sup> Sagara Kyūma's son.

<sup>21</sup> The title of the head of the police within a domain.

(9) Retainers who take their master's side, trust their master both for the good and the bad, and relinquish themselves [for their master's sake], disregard all matters [except their master]. If there are two or three [retainers such as these], the clan will be stable. From my extensive viewing of the world, I understand that the majority of people offer their service in terms of wisdom, evaluations, and artistic talent while everything is going well. However, I saw many people turn their backs upon their former master and insinuate themselves into the favor of newly-rising men when their master retired from active life or died. These things are very ugly to recall. Persons of high birth or low birth, men of wisdom, and persons with artistic talent, who are in the service of a master, waver when they reach the stage of sacrificing themselves for their masters. They cannot do anything even slightly creditable.

These people who are not useful for anything become a match for a thousand men when they devote themselves bodily to their master, for whom they willingly sacrifice themselves. An example is when our master died. I was the only man who determined to follow the master in death. Later, others followed my example [and became priests]. Distinguished persons who stuck out their chests and spoke glowingly of the master almost daily turned their backs upon him after he had closed his eyes. When we speak of the pledge between master and servant and the heavy responsibility [it implies], it seems like a very distant [difficult] thing, but we should know it as something before our very eyes. If one makes up his mind at this moment, then the best retainer is born.

(10) The master's utensils and the things he left behind, which he put his soul into, are too valuable for us to use as our own utensils in our homes.

(11) Yamazaki Kurando did not take of what is called things left behind during his lifetime. He also did not visit merchants' houses during his lifetime. This is the type of behavior desirable for a retainer. Ishii Kuroemon did not use the things left behind either. People today expose their greed as soon as they hear of things left behind.

## *Traditions*

They barge into merchants' houses, demand unreasonable entertainment, and enjoy themselves by purchasing things off the shelves in stores. Such evil habits should never exist in the true mental attitude of a samurai.

(12) While I was staying in Kamigata before the death of our lord, I did not know why, but a longing to return entered my mind. Accordingly, I asked Kawamura Gonbei to get me a messenger to head hastily for my home province by night and day. It seems to be quite marvelous. This is because the news that my lord had been taken ill had not yet reached Kamigata. I thought that the gods and buddhas had informed me, because, since my young days, I of all our master's retainers had been completely devoted to him. I have never done any remarkable service to my lord, neither am I a man of virtue, but the rumor that reached me at that time was as I predicted because, I thought, of my being the most preeminent retainer. Having not even one retainer to follow his lord when he dies is a lonely thing. This was well known to me. There was no one who would fling his life away for his master. It is good to fling away one's life for the master. However, the majority of people, those who are timid, white-livered, and greedy, think only of their own advantage. It is said that Tsunetomo spent years in a bad temper.

(13) [Deleted: instructions of uncertain significance]

(14) The most important element in service [to a lord] is giving advice compassionately and carefully, explaining how people can correct their faults. However, the way of giving advice is very difficult. It is easy to discover both good and bad in a person. It is also easy to give advice. However, people generally think that it is considerate to tell someone disagreeable and despicable matters. If this advice is not taken to heart, they say that it is beyond their capacity. Such advice is not good for anything. It becomes the same as shaming a person or speaking ill of him. They are speaking only to clear their own minds.

When giving advice, first of all, see through to whether he will take your advice to heart or not, become friends with him, and

prepare a method so that your words are trusted. Then, begin with something that interests him, think of various ways to give advice, consider the time and situation, point out you own failures when parting from him or in correspondence, make him recollect his failure without directly referring to it, praise his good points at first, elaborate a plan to cheer him up, and make him follow the advice as a thirsty man drinks water. If he corrects his defects, the advice was true. This method is especially difficult. Since he has had this defect for several years, it is generally not easy to correct. I can remember such things. There is compassion in service when people make friends with those of the same rank, correct each others' faults, become one in mind, and wish to be useful to their master. If giving advice shames a person, how can the defects be corrected?      *(To be continued.)*



Part 1

Hitachi Fudoki

常陸風土記

Introduction

During the reign of the Empress Genmei (r. 707–715), in May of the 6th year of Wadō (713), the Imperial Court issued the following decree to the provincial offices, which are estimated to have existed in 62 provinces at that time:

Put two good Chinese characters to the names of the villages; make a catalogue of silver, copper, grasses, trees, birds, fish, insects, etc.; describe the conditions of the earth, how fertile it is; explain the origin of the names of the mountains, rivers, and plains; report interesting events and traditions being told by the elders in the form of written literature.

In response to this imperial decree, reports were turned in to the Imperial Court from many provinces. These reports were the local topologies that were later called “Fudoki.” Fudoki originally contained more than 60 local topologies, but the topologies of only five provinces are now extant. They are *Izumo Fudoki* (about the eastern part of Shimane Prefecture), *Harima Fudoki* (southwestern Hyōgo Prefecture), *Bungo Fudoki* (most of Ōita Prefecture), *Hizen Fudoki* (Saga Prefecture), and the report translated here, *Hitachi Fudoki* (Ibaraki Prefecture). The other Fudoki are lost literary works transmitted only as fragmentary quotations in various books.

Although Fudoki are reports made at imperial decree, they do not resemble the ordinary literature of official reports. *Hitachi*

*Fudoki*, especially, is full of legends. Here and there, local songs or poems with an antique flavor were inserted. These ancient songs already had a specified syllabic form as a base, and through the use of metaphors, they even emit a kind of literary flavor. It can be said that these songs, together with the songs found in the two oldest historical documents, the *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters, compiled in 712) and the *Nihonshoki* (Chronicles of Japan, compiled in 720), transmit the prototypical songs that were later to reach fruition with the oldest anthology, the *Manyōshū* (Collection of Myriad Leaves, compiled in the 8th century). In a sense, *Hitachi Fudoki* finds a place as the first literary work by the people of the eastern districts of Japan. Moreover, the simple customs of the people found in ancient legends are quite interesting in their own right and are also valuable as historical records. We have decided to introduce *Hitachi Fudoki* as a classical work indispensable, together with the *Kojiki*, *Nihonshoki*, and *Manyōshū*, for studying the literature, religion, and customs of ancient Japan.

We would like to explain briefly the historical context in which this kind of *Fudoki* was produced. When the Imperial Court decreed the *Fudoki* be turned in, the new policy of centralization under imperial rule was being established and modified. This followed the great strengthening of the emperor-centered system of national government by means of the Taika Reform (646). At this time, it was an important task for the Imperial Court as the central government to bring the outlying districts under its control. The need may have been the greatest reason for the decree demanding an unprecedented large-scale gathering of topological records. This period was also a time when compilation of national history became quite active. Already, in the 5th year of Wadō (712), one year before this decree was issued, the compilation of the *Kojiki*, the oldest historical literature now extant, had been completed. Seven years after the decree, in the 4th year of Yōrō (720), the *Nihonshoki*, a more detailed and voluminous history, was completed. Rightly so, this period can be called a “period of recording.”

Now, of the five items to be recorded in compiling the Fudoki, it is obvious that the first three items, that is, the recording of village names, local products, and land conditions, derived from administrative needs. The last two items, the recording of the origin of place names and of old traditions about various things related to each locality, did not necessarily derive from that same need. Nevertheless, the part that is most substantial and complete concerns the last two items. There is a theory that the emphasis placed on the collection of local oral traditions indicates that the purpose of the imperial decree lay not only in administrative needs but also in the desire to satisfy ceremonial requirements. In some agricultural ceremonies, the emperor surveyed certain districts from atop high mountains. Such investigations could now be performed by using the Fudoki.

The original *Hitachi Fudoki*, like the other Fudoki, was written almost entirely in Chinese; some parts, especially the poems, were written in Japanese by using Chinese characters phonetically. The compilation of this work is estimated to have been in the five-year period between the fifth month of the 6th year of Wadō (713), when the imperial decree was issued, and the fifth month of the 2nd year of Yōrō (718). But it is also believed that, because literary figures of speech are prominent in its expressions, Fujiwara no Umakai (d. 737), who was governor of Hitachi Province from spring of the 3rd year of Yōrō (719) to the 7th or 8th year of Yōrō (723 or 724) and was also quite noted as a man of letters, and Takahashi no Mushimaro, a poet of the *Manyōshū* who served under Umakai as a recording officer, may have embellished the already-existing text.

Two appendices will be found at the end of the text:

Appendix 1: Place-names in *Hitachi Fudoki*

Appendix 2: Weights and Measures

**Translator's Note:** This translation was made from the text copied by Matsushita Kenrin (1637–1703), a Confucianist and classical scholar of the mid Edo Period (1603–1867), as published in Volume II of the Nihon Koten Bungaku series as *Fudoki* (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1967). The text was annotated by Dr. Akimoto Kichirō.

## Text

The official report by the governor of Hitachi Province on its ancient traditions as transmitted by the elders.

When asked about the traditions of the province and counties, the elders answered by saying, "In ancient times, all of the prefectures<sup>1</sup> lying east of Mt. Ashigara in Sagami Province were, as a whole, called Azuma Province. At that time, the district was not called Hitachi. It was divided into counties called Nihibari, Tsukuha, Ubakaki, Naka, Kuji, and Taka. A *miyatsuko*<sup>2</sup> and a *wake*<sup>3</sup> were charged with governing. Afterwards, during the reign of the emperor who ruled the land under heaven from his great palace Nagara-no-Toyosaki<sup>4</sup> in Naniha, the government sent Takamuko-no-omi and Nakatomi-no-hatorida-no-muraji to govern the area east of Mt. Ashigara. At that time, the area of Azuma was divided into eight provinces, of which the province of Hitachi was one.

<sup>1</sup> The term "prefecture" that is used here is of an earlier land tenure system than that which was used at the time of the compilation of the *Hitachi Fudoki*. It was called *agata* in Japanese and written 縣, the same character used for modern-day prefectures.

The land tenure system at the time of the writing of the *Hitachi Fudoki* was as follows: the country of Japan was divided into approximately 62 provinces (國, *kuni*) consisting of from about 10 to 15 counties (郡, *kohori*) which correspond to the older *agata*. These counties were in turn divided into from 2 to 20 villages (里, *sato*) of about 50 households. Although there was no smaller official classification, the people in these villages would distinguish their area by calling it a "hamlet" (村, *mura*).

<sup>2</sup> The title used to designate the leader of various clans within an area. He was born locally and appointed by the emperor.

<sup>3</sup> The title used to designate officials sent to govern a particular area whose ancestors were members of the Imperial Family.

<sup>4</sup> The 36th emperor, Kōtoku (r. 645–654). The area in which his palace was situated is now in Higashi Ward, Ōsaka.

The origin of its name lies in the fact that the roads leading to and from the area are not cut by the sea or lakes, that if you continue as far as the mountain valleys and rivers within the borders of this district, it is a direct land route through this district. The name Hitachi was taken from this "direct [land] route."<sup>5</sup>

According to some people, Emperor Yamatotakeru<sup>6</sup> once visited the untamed land in the east for hunting, and when he passed the prefecture of Nihibari, he sent the county governor, Hinarasu-no-mikoto,<sup>7</sup> to dig a new well. The spring flowed with crystal-clear water, which was much admired. Then he stopped his carriage. While he was admiring the water and washing his hands, the sleeves of his garment dipped into the spring and got wet. The name of this district was taken from the expression "dipping the sleeves." This is also the district referred to in folklore as the district where the sleeves of a garment easily get soaked<sup>8</sup> by dark clouds hanging over Mt. Tsukuha.

Hitachi Province has a large land area, and its boundaries are widely distant. It has fertile, cultivated land; even the fields are fertile and should be cultivated for farming. It is blessed with rich harvests from both the sea and the mountains; the people are peaceful, and families wealthy. If the men devote themselves to cultivating the fields and the women exert their energies weaving, they should immediately obtain wealth, and they should naturally avoid poverty.

<sup>5</sup> In ancient Japanese, "*hita* (direct)" "*ichi* (route)." This was corrupted to Hitachi.

<sup>6</sup> According to the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, an imperial prince during the reign of the 12th emperor, Keikō, who probably lived in the 4th century. He appears in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* as the pacifier of the eastern provinces. He died at an early age, was transformed into a swan, and ascended into the heavens.

<sup>7</sup> A descendant of Ame-no-hohi-no-mikoto, a god that appears in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* as a messenger to Izumo Province from the Plain of High Heaven. It is claimed that he was the ancestor of the governors of Izumo and six other local clans.

<sup>8</sup> The verb *hitasu* in ancient Japanese means "to soak." This form was later changed into *hitachi*, "becoming soaked."

If they are looking for the taste of fish or salt or want to gather from the sea, the sea is on the right with mountains on the left. If they want to plant mulberries and sow flax, they have fields in the back and a plain in the front. In other words, this province has rich resources of both the land and the sea. I wonder if this land might be what the ancients referred to as the "country without death or old age." However, few of the paddy fields are of the first quality; the majority are of medium quality. In the years when they have long periods of rain, you hear the lamentation that seedlings do not prosper, but in the years when they have a lot of sunshine, you can witness the people's joy over the rich rice crop. [unabridged]<sup>9</sup>

### Nihibari County

(There is a big mountain to the east on the border with Naka County. Shirakabe County lies to the south and the Kenu River to the west. Mt. Hada on the border between the provinces of Hitachi and Shimotsukeno lies to the north.)<sup>10</sup>

According to the elders, in olden times when Emperor Mimaki<sup>11</sup> erected his sacred villa, he sent a man called Hinarasu-no-mikoto, the ancestor of the governor of Nihibari, to suppress the savage people (people called them *araburu-nishimono* [savage people]) who were causing disturbances in the backward land in the east. He reached the area, and when he dug a well (it is still found in Nihibari and people hold a festival about it), the water that flowed was very clear.

<sup>9</sup> The *Hitachi Fudoki* was edited about the time of the Kamakura Period (1192–1332). Some sections were omitted, and the original is no longer extant. At the end of certain sections, it was indicated whether editing had taken place. We have included that indication in this translation.

<sup>10</sup> Material enclosed in parentheses in this translation is part of the text of the *Hitachi Fudoki* edited about the time of the Kamakura Period (1192–1332) Most scholars think that these comments were included in the original *Hitachi Fudoki*.

<sup>11</sup> The 10th emperor, Sujin, who probably lived in the early 4th century.

## Traditions

So, the name of this district is based on *nihibari* [the digging of a new well]. From then to now the name has not been changed. (According to a tradition, Nihibari County is called the region that is *shiratohofu*.<sup>12</sup>) [slightly abridged]

The hamlet of Kasama lies about 50 *sato* from the county office. The route from the office to the hamlet is called Mt. Ashiho. According to the elders, in ancient times, there were bandits who were indigenous people of the mountain. Their leader [a woman] was called Abura-okime-no-mikoto. Even today, the stone cave [in which she lived] is inside a shrine. There is a song of the people of this area:

*Kochitakeba Wohatsuse-yama no  
ihaki ni mo wite komoranamu  
nakohiso wagi mo*

If people are noisy  
Let us go and enter the stone cave  
in Mt. Wohatsuse  
My dear beloved girl

[slightly abridged]

## Tsukuha County

(Ubaraki County is to the east, Kafuchi County to the south, the Kenu River to the west, and Mt. Tsukuha to the north.)

According to the elders, Tsukuha Prefecture was called the land of Ki in ancient times. During the reign of Emperor Mimaki, a man named Tsukuha-no-mikoto, a man from the same tribe as Unemeno-omi,<sup>13</sup> was sent to the governor of the land of Ki. At that time, Tsukuha-no-mikoto said, "I would like my name affixed to this land and transmitted to posterity." So, they abolished the former name,

<sup>12</sup> The meaning of *shiratohofu* is not known.

<sup>13</sup> The clan established by Nigihayashi-no-mikoto, who, in the *Kojiki*, followed and paid homage to the first emperor, Jinmu (probably legendary).

and finally named this land Tsukuha. (According to a tradition, this region was also referred to as the land of Nigiri-ih-tsukuha.) [slightly abridged]

According to the elders, in ancient times, Mioya-no-mikoto, an ancestral god, traveled around with various other gods, and when he reached Mt. Fuji in the province of Suruga, it was beginning to get dark, so he asked for a place to stay. At this time, the god of Fuji answered, "Right now, it is the period for the dedication of the new crop, and my family members are observing the purification rite.<sup>14</sup> So, I am sorry, but today we cannot accede to your request." Crying with hatred because of this, Mioya-no-mikoto cursed and said, "I am your parent! Why do you forbid me lodging? As long as you live, may the mountain where you live be covered with snow and frost both winter and summer. May it be that, because of the bitter cold, no one will climb up this mountain to offer food and drink." Then he went up Mt. Tsukuha, and once again he asked for lodging. This time, the god of Tsukuha responded, "Even though we are celebrating the dedication of the new crop this evening, I could not dare refuse your request." So he showed much respect, paid homage, and served him with a great abundance of food and drink. Mioya-no-mikoto was so pleased that he made the following poem.

My dear descendant, your shrine shall be grand  
With heaven and earth, with the sun and the moon,  
Generation upon generation without end,  
People will congregate here with abundant offerings  
of food and drink  
Day by day for thousands and ten thousands of  
autumns, your prosperity will continue

Because of this, snow falls incessantly on Mt. Fuji, and it is impossi-

<sup>14</sup> In ancient Shintō, people would purify themselves before the rites in which gods descended to the land by secluding themselves in special buildings and not meeting anyone. This is called *imi* or *mono-imi*.

## *Traditions*

ble to climb, but gatherings with songs, dances, food, and drink have continued to the present on Mt. Tsukuha. [slightly abridged]

Mt. Tsukuha rises above the clouds. Its western peak, steep and high, is called the male divinity and is not to be climbed. The eastern peak is truly rock in all directions. The ways up and down are steep and high, but beside the paths, streams flow without ever ceasing both in summer and in winter. When spring flowers bloom or autumn leaves are dyed various colors, the men and women in the lands east of this slope ride on horses or come on foot to gather for food and drink and to play together, thoroughly enjoying themselves. This is sung in songs.

*Tsukuha-ne ni ahamuto*  
*ihishi ko ha tagakoto kikeba*  
*kamine asubakemu*

The girl who promised to meet me on Mt. Tsukuha  
Whose words did she hear?  
And with whom does she enjoy herself on the sacred  
mountain?

*Tsukuha-ne ni ihorite*  
*tsuma nashi ni waga nemu yoro ha*  
*hayamo akenu kamo*

The night I spent alone without my wife  
on Mt. Tsukuha  
How soon the heavens brighten

So many other songs are sung that it is impossible to record them here. According to a saying of the people, "Unless you receive the treasure of wooing on Mt. Tsukuha, you cannot be called a real girl."

Lake Toba (2,900 *ashi* long and 1,500 *ashi* wide) lies 50 *sato* west in this county. The county lies to the east of the lake; the Kenu

River lies to the south, Nihibari County to the west and north, and Shirakabe County to the northeast.

## Shida County

(Shida Inlet lies to the east, Enoura Inlet to the south, the Kenu River to the west, and Kafuchi County to the north.)

Usuwi spring is 10 *sato* to the north in this region. According to the elders, when Emperor Ohotarashihiko<sup>15</sup> visited the temporary palace at Ukishima, there was no water for him to drink. Immediately, he had a diviner determine where he should dig. The spring is still in the hamlet of Woguri. The village of Takaku is to the west in this region. According to the elders, at the beginning of the creation of the heavens and earth, when even grass and trees spoke, a god called Futsuno-ohokami descended from heaven and came to the land of Ashihara-no-nakatsu-kuni.<sup>16</sup> There he tamed the savage gods of the mountains and rivers. After completing his peacemaking, he thought of returning to heaven. At that time, he threw away his weapons, armor, halberds, shields, swords, and all other accessories made of jewels he was carrying, left them in this land, and riding on a white cloud, went back up to heaven. [slightly abridged]

According to the sayings of the people, deer in the grasslands are tender. When deer are eaten, the taste is quite different from that of mountain deer. Grand hunts by the people from two lands (Hitachi and Shimotsufusa) cannot exhaust the deer.

Ihina Shrine is to the west of this village. This is a branch for the Ihina divinity on Mt. Tsukuha. There is a port at Enoura. There they have a relay station.<sup>17</sup> This is on the main road, Umitsu-michi,<sup>18</sup> and

<sup>15</sup> The 12th emperor, Keikō, who probably lived in the 4th century.

<sup>16</sup> Literally, "Central Land of Reed Plains." One of the names by which Japan was known by the gods in the heavens.

<sup>17</sup> The word "relay station" was written 驛家 (*umaya*), which literally means "stable." It was used to indicate posts along the major land and sea routes.

the beginning of the road into Hitachi. Therefore, people, such as officials using post horses, first wash their mouths and hands and then face the east to worship the Great God Kashima<sup>19</sup> when they come here for the first time. Then, they can enter this region. [slightly abridged]

According to the elders, while Emperor Yamatotakeru was walking along the shore, he came to Norihama. At that time, much *nori*<sup>20</sup> was being dried on the beach, and so the village was called Norihama [beach of *nori*]. [slightly abridged]

The village of Ukishima (2000 *ashi* long and 400 *ashi* wide) lies to the east of Norihama. It is surrounded by sea in all directions and penetrates the mountains and the fields. There are 15 households, and the [tillable] land is only 7 or 8 *tokoro*. The farmers there live by heating [sea water to make] salt. They have nine shrines and behave themselves both in words and deeds. [slightly abridged]

## Ubaraki County

(Kashima County lies to the east, Saga Inlet to the south, Mt. Tsukuha to the west, and Naka County to the north.)

According to the elders, there were two natives who disobeyed the Imperial Will (they were commonly called Tsuchikumo and Yatsukahagi), Yama-no-saheki [rebel of the mountains] and No-no-saheki [rebel of the fields], in olden times. They usually dug caves and lived in them. When people came, they went into their caves to hide, and when they left, they came out and walked in the fields. Having the nature of a wolf and the emotions of an owl, they used to secretly spy and plunder. They had never been admonished, so their customs

<sup>18</sup> Literally "sea route." The old Tokaidō Road, which passed through 15 provinces along the Pacific Ocean, starting in Shima Province (now part of Mie Prefecture) and ending in Hitachi Province.

<sup>19</sup> Kashima has been known as a martial deity since ancient times.

<sup>20</sup> *Nori*, a kind of laver (seaweed), is dried and then eaten by Japanese.

became more and more different. At this time, Kurosaka-no-mikoto<sup>21</sup> from the tribe of Oho-no-omi discovered when they would be walking in the fields and put thorns in the caves. Soon thereafter, he set his cavalry free to chase them quickly into the caves. The rebels ran back into the caves as usual, but they were caught on the thorns, injured, and died. The name of this region is thus taken from these thorns [*ubara*]. (What is called Ubaraki County here is now the western part of Naka County. In ancient times, the county office was located in this area, and so it must have been part of Ubaraki County. In the sayings of the people, there is an expression: "the land of Ubaraki where the cormorants [*u*] dive under water.") According to some people, Yama-no-saheki and No-no-saheki each called themselves the leaders of the native rebels. They went throughout the land together, acting unreasonably, plundering, and murdering. But Kurosaka-no-mikoto, in order to trick and destroy them, built a wall of thorns. From this, the land is called "Ubaraki" [wall of thorns]. (The first ancestor of the governor, Takekoro-no-mikoto<sup>22</sup> served at the palace in the time of Empress Okinagatarashi-hime<sup>23</sup> until Emperor Homuda<sup>24</sup> was born. Takekoro-no-mikoto had eight children. The middle son, Tsukuha-omi, was the first ancestor of the Yue-no-muraji tribe in Ubaraki County.)

There is a river not far to the southwest in this region. This is the Shizuku River. Its source is on Mt. Tsukuha, and it flows from west to east through the county and into the sea at Takahama. [slightly abridged]

In the spring of flowers and in the autumn of maple leaves, the people enjoy themselves on palanquins on the land and on ships on

<sup>21</sup> The descendant of Kamu-yai-mimi-no-mikoto, who was the son of the first emperor, Jinmu, and founder of the Oho clan.

<sup>22</sup> The descendant of one of the children born of Amaterasu, the sun goddess, and Susano-o-no-mikoto, her brother who was banished from the heavens and ruled over Izumo Province.

<sup>23</sup> The Empress Jingu, who was the wife of the 14th emperor, Chūai (probably lived in the 4th century), and leader of an invasion of Korea.

the sea. In the spring, flowers around the sea become colorful, and in the autumn, maple leaves on the seashore turn red. One hears the voice of the singing bushwarblers in the fields and sees the dancing cranes on the shore of the sea. Boys from the farming villages and girls from the fishing villages gather and chase one another along the shore. Merchants and farmers frequent this place to fish from small boats. Moreover, in the hot mornings in the summer and in the dry, hot evenings, people invite friends and bring servants to stand on the shore and enjoy the scenery of the sea. As the waves get higher and the evening breeze comes up, people who want to avoid the heat can get rid of the unpleasant worries troubling them; as the shadows of the hills gradually get longer, those who are seeking coolness become excited with happy thoughts.

One poem reads:

*Takahama ni kiyosuru nami no  
okitsu nami yosutomo yoraji  
koranishi yoraba*

Just as waves approach the Takahama shore  
I will always approach you  
Even if another girl approaches me  
I will not approach her

Another poem reads:

*Takahama no shitakaze sayagu  
imo wo kohi tsuma to ihabaya  
shiko to meshitsumo*

As the lower breeze stirs at Takahama  
My heart is stirred with love for you  
I wish I could call you "my wife"  
But I am an "ugly man"

<sup>24</sup> The 15th emperor, Ōjin, who probably lived in the 4th century.

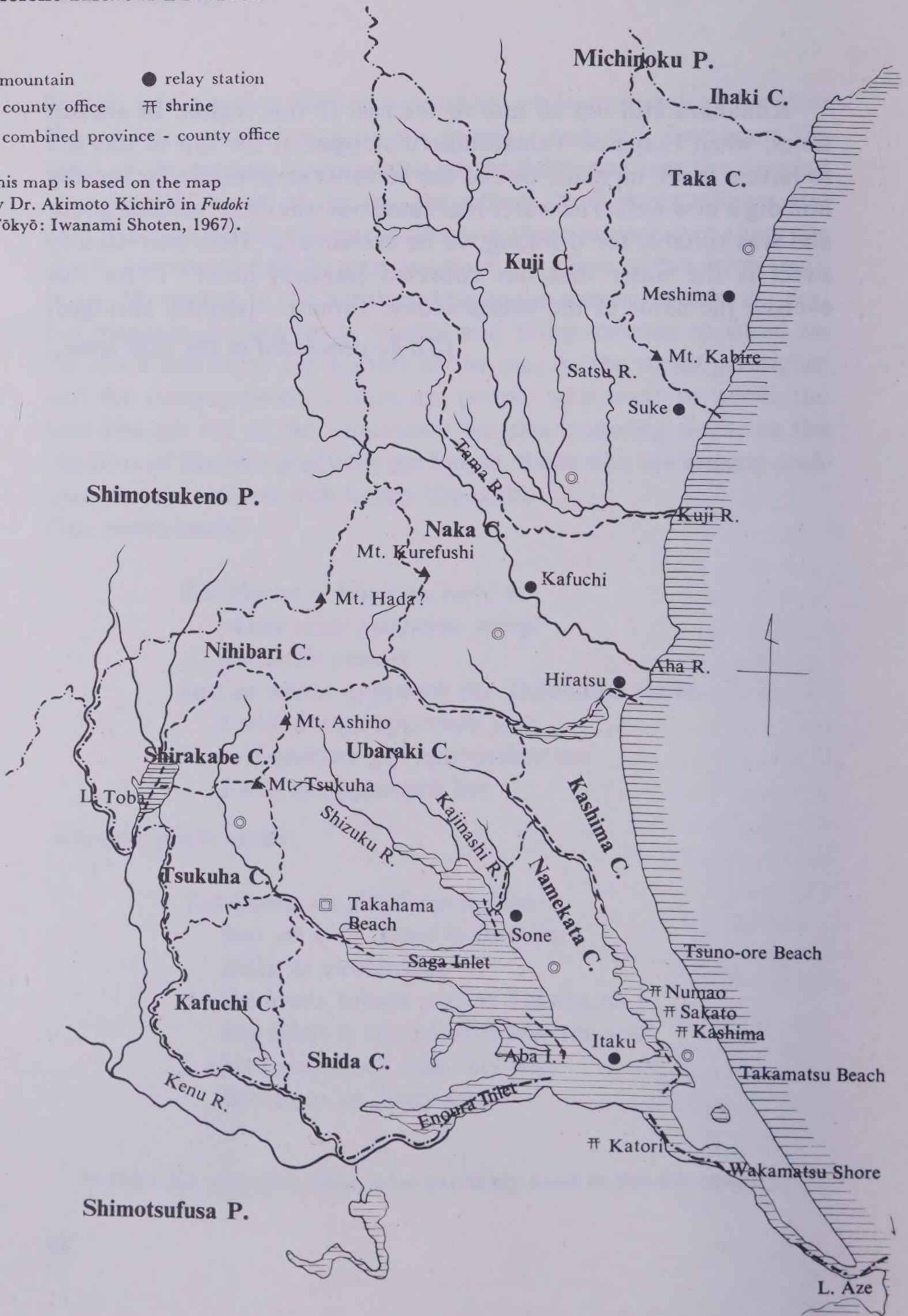
Kuhahara Hill lies 10 *sato* to the east in this region. In ancient times, when Emperor Yamatotakeru stopped at the top of this hill to have a meal, he made one of the servants responsible for serving him dig a new well. The water that came out was clear, smelled good, and was suitable for drinking, so he exclaimed, "How marvelously sweet is the water that has collected [*tamaru*] here!" From this evolved the name of the village today, Tamari. [slightly abridged]

*(To be concluded in the next issue.)*

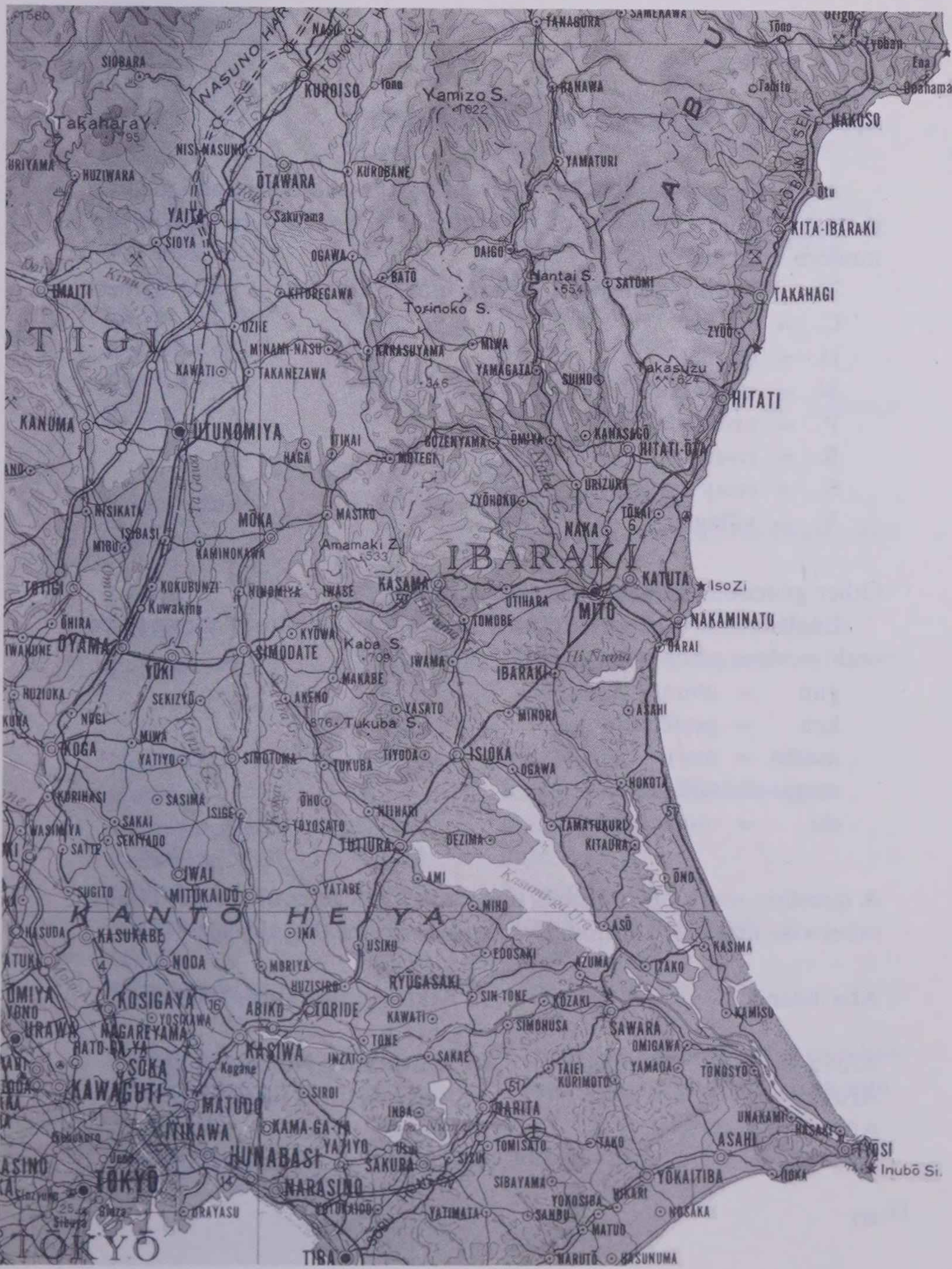
# Ancient Hitachi Province

- ▲ mountain                      ● relay station
- ◎ county office                卍 shrine
- combined province - county office

This map is based on the map by Dr. Akimoto Kichirō in *Fudoki* (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1967).



# Modern Ibaraki Prefecture



This map is reproduced with the approval of the Geographical Survey Institute. 昭51総複, 第1483号

**Appendix 1: Place-names in *Hitachi Fudoki***

Ancient place-names are followed by the characters assigned by the 8th-century compilers of *Hitachi Fudoki* and, where known, the modern location.

The following abbreviations are used with ancient place-names:

- C = county
- H = hamlet
- M = mountain
- P = province
- R = river
- S = relay station
- V = village

Other generic terms are written out in full.

English equivalents for the Japanese geographical terms used with modern place-names are:

- gun = county
- ken = prefecture
- machi = town
- mura = village
- shi = municipality

A question mark (?) indicates uncertain modern equivalents. Unless otherwise marked, all modern locations are in Ibaraki-ken.

Aba Island	安婆	in Sakuragawa-mura, Inashiki-gun ?
Afuka S	相鹿	in Asō-machi, Namegata-gun
Afuka V	遇鹿	in Asō-machi, Namegata-gun
Afumi P	淡海	Shiga-ken
Aha R	粟	Naka River

Akita H	飽田	part of Hitachi-shi
Arahara Hill	現原	Arahara, Tamatsukuri-machi, Namegata-gun
Asafu v	麻生	Asō, Asō-machi, Namegata-gun
Ashigara M	足柄	Mt. Ashigara, Kanagawa-ken
Ashiho M	葦穂	Mt. Ashio
Asuka capital	飛鳥	Asuka-mura, Nara-ken
Atakana Lake	阿多可奈	mouth of Naka River
Aze Lake, R	安是	mouth of Tone River
Azuma P	我姫	Kantō region; part of Tōhoku region
Enoura Inlet	榎浦	in Ryūgasaki-shi ?
Esaki H	吉前	Esaki, Itako-machi, Namegata-gun
Fuji M	福慈	Mt. Fuji, Shizuoka-ken
Futagami M	二所	Mt. Takachiho, Miyazaki-ken ?
Futsuna H	布都奈	Futsutaka, Itako-machi, Name- gata-gun
Hada M	波太	Mt. Butchō
Hama v	濱	Kamisu-mura, Kashima-gun
Hazumu Field	波須武	unknown
Hikitsune Hill	引津根	unknown
Himuka	日向	Miyazaki-ken
Hiratsu S	平津	mouth of Naka River
Hitachi P	常陸	Ibaraki-ken
Hotoke Shore	佛	Tajiri Shore
Ihaki C	石城	part of Iwaki-shi, Fukushima-ken
Ihato riverbank	石門	Iwate, Kanasagō-mura, Kuji-gun
Ihina Shrine	飯名	unknown

*Traditions*

Inami C	印波	in Inba-gun, Chiba-ken
Itaku H, S	板來	Itako, Itako-machi, Namegata-gun
Kabire M	賀毗禮	Mt. Kamimine
Kafuchi S	河内	in Mito-shi
Kafuchi C, V	河内	Kanasagō-mura, Kuji-gun ?
Kajinashi R	無梶	Sonobe River ?
Kamono Field	鴨野	Kamono, Tamatsukuri-machi, Namegata-gun
Karuno V	輕野	Kamisu-mura, Kashima-gun
Kasama H	笠間	in Kasama-shi
Kashima C	香島	Kashima-gun
Kashima Shrine	香島	Tamatsukuri-Taigū-Myōjin Shrine
Kasumi V	香澄	Ushibori-machi; part of Asō- machi
Katawoka H	片岡	in Kasama-shi
Katori Shrine	香取	Katori Shrine, Tamatsukuri- machi, Namegata-gun
Kenu R	毛野	Kinu River
Ki	紀	parts of Tsukuba-gun and Niibari- gun
Kitsu V	藝都	in Kitaura-mura, Namegata-gun
Kiyomihara	淨御原	in Asuka-mura, Nara-ken
Koko V	古々	Kanasagō-mura, Kuji-gun ?
Komomakura-Taka		see Taka C
Kuhahara Hill	桑原	unknown
Kuji C	久慈	Kuji-gun; parts of Naka-gun and Hitachi-shi
Kuji R	久慈	Kuji River
Kuma H	苦麻	in Ōkuma-machi, Fukushima-ken
Kurefushi M	哺時臥	Mt. Asabō
Kuriya Pond	栗家	Odaka, Asō-machi, Namegata-gun

Masu Pond	枅	Masu Pond, Tamatsukuri-machi, Namegata-gun
Matsuzaha	松澤	unknown
Meshima s	藻島	in Jūō-machi, Taga-gun
Michinoku p	陸奥	Fukushima-ken, Miyagi-ken, Iwate-ken, Aomori-ken
Michinokuchi v	道前	in Hitachi-shi
Mino p	三野	Gifu-ken
Mitsuki v	密筑	Mizuki, Hitachi-shi
Nagahatabe Shrine	長幡部	Nagahatabe Shrine, Hitachi-ōta- shi
Naka c	那賀	Naka-gun; part of Higashi- ibaraki-gun
Namekata c	行方	Namegata-gun
Namekata Sea	行方	Lake Kasumi
Namekata v	行方	in Namegata-gun
Namekuhashi c	行細	Namegata-gun
Naniha	難波	Ōsaka-fu
Nigiri-ihi-tsukuha		see Tsukuha c
Nihibari c	新治	parts of Nishi-ibaraki-gun and Makabe-gun
Nihibari sandbank	新治	in Asō-machi, Namegata-gun
Norihama v	乘濱	in Inashiki-gun
Numao Pond	沼尾	Numao, Kashima-machi, Kashima-gun
Numao Shrine	沼尾	Numao Shrine, Kashima-machi, Kashima-gun
Ohofu v	大生	Ō, Itako-machi, Namegata-gun
Ohokushi Hill	大櫛	Ōkushi, Tsunozumi-mura, Higashi-ibaraki-gun

*Traditions*

Ohosaka M	大坂	Mt. Futagami in Nara-ken and Ōsaka-fu ?
Ohota V	太田	Ōta-chō, Hitachi-ōta-shi
Ohotomo H	大伴	unknown
Ohowi spring	大井	in Mizuki, Hitachi-shi
Ohoya R	大益	Sonobe River ?
Ohoyashima	大八洲	Japan
Saga Inlet	佐我	Lake Kasumi
Sagami P	相模	Kanagawa-ken
Sakato Shrine	坂戸	branch of Kashima Shrine, Kashima-gun
Samuta H	寒田	part of Kamisu-mura, Kashima- gun
Samuta Swamp	寒田	Kōnoike Pond, Kamisu-mura, Kashima-gun
Sarashi-wi Spring	曝井	Takisaka Spring, Mito-shi
Satsu R	薩都	Sato River
Satsu V	薩都	in Hitachi-ōta-shi
Shida C	信太	Inashiki-gun
Shida Inlet	信太	Lake Kasumi
Shidori V	靜織	Shizu, Urizura-machi, Naka-gun
Shiga	斯我	part of Shiga-ken
Shihiwi Pond	椎井	unknown
Shiki	斯貴	Sakurai-shi, Nara-ken
Shima V	之万	in Kamisu-mura, Kashima-gun
Shimotsufusa P	下總	Chiba-ken
Shimotsukeno P	下野	Tochigi-ken
Shirakabe C	白壁	in Makabe-gun
Shirotori V	白鳥	in Taiyō-mura, Kashima-gun
Shizuku R	信筑	Koise River
Sone H	曾尼	unknown

Sone s	曾尼	unknown
Suke R, s	助	Sukekawa, Hitachi-shi
Suruga P	駿河	Shizuoka-ken
Ta v	田	in Asō-machi, Namegata-gun
Tagima v	當麻	Tōma, Hokota-machi, Kashima-gun
Tagitagishi		See Tagima v
Taka c	多珂	Taga-gun
Takahama Beach	高濱	Takahama-chō, Ishioka-shi
Takaku v	高來	Takaku, Ami-machi, Inashiki-gun
Takamatsu Beach	高松	Kashima Beach
Takechi v	高市	in Hitachi-shi
Tama R	玉	Tama River
Tamari v	田餘	Tamari-mura, Niibari-gun
Taniahi M	谷會	unknown
Tega v	提賀	Tega, Tamatsukuri-machi, Namegata-gun
Toba Lake	騰波	near the Kogai River, Makabe-gun
Tomi Hill	鳥見	in Motono-mura, Chiba-ken
Toyoashihara-no-mizuho-no-kuni	豊葦原 瑞穂國	Japan
Tsukino Spring	槻野	Inoue, Tamatsukuri-machi, Namegata-gun ?
Tsukuha c	筑波	parts of Tsukuba-gun and Niihari-gun
Tsukuha M	筑波	Mt. Tsukuba
Tsukushi P	筑紫	Kyūshū
Tsuno-ore Beach	角折	Tsuno-ore, Ōno-mura, Kashima-gun

*Traditions*

Ubaraki c	茨城	Ishioka-shi, Niihari-gun; parts of Higashi-ibaraki-gun and Nishi-ibaraki-gun
Ubaraki v	茨城	in Nishi-ibaraki-gun
Ukishima v	浮島	Sakuragawa-mura, Inashiki-gun
Unakami c	海上	Unakami-gun, Chiba-ken
Unawi pine field	童子女	unknown
Uruhashi Field		See Wonukino v
Usuwi Spring	碓井	in Miho-mura, Inashiki-gun
Yakatano	屋形野	unknown
Yamada v	山田	Kanasagō-mura; Suifu-mura, Kuji-gun
Yamato p	大和	Nara-ken
Yasukiri v	安伐	unknown
Wakamatsu Shore	若松	Hasaki-machi, Kashima-gun
Woguri H	雄栗	unknown
Wokazaki H	丘前	Oka, Asō-machi, Namegata-gun
Wonukino v	小抜野	Onuki, Kitaura-mura, Namegata-gun
Wotaka v	男高	Otaka, Asō-machi, Namegata-gun

**Appendix 2: Weights and Measures**

Name	Character	Metric	English Customary
ashi	歩	1.8 m	6 ft.
saka	尺	30 cm	1 ft.
sato	里	535 m	1,755 ft.
tokoro	町	9.9 km <sup>2</sup>	2.45 acres
tsue	丈	3 m	10 ft.



Part 2

Towazu-gatari

とはずがたり

Introduction

*Towazu-gatari* is the story of a former court lady, Nijō, penned by her own hand as she recollects her vicissitudes and life of passion in the court of 13th-century Japan. To properly appreciate the story requires some knowledge of the time and background of this story as well as of her own family background.

After the Jōkyū Revolt, the Kamakura Shogunate took over the national government from the courtiers and acquired a decisive say in raising and deposing emperors. Cloistered Emperor Go-Saga, enthroned by the shogunate, put the nation under what is called the “cloistered government,” rule by a former emperor who had taken priestly vows, for the 26 years from 1246, when his son became Emperor Go-Fukakusa at the age of four, through the reign of his younger son, who became Emperor Kameyama in 1259 at the age of 11. During this politically and socially less turbulent period, the writer of this story spent peaceful days in the court. Although at peace, the court, deprived of actual power, lived in a cloud of decadence.

After Go-Saga's death, the empress, who loved Kameyama more than her elder son, Go-Fukakusa, urged the shogunate to agree to set up a cloistered government by Kameyama. Go-Fukakusa's dissatisfaction developed into a conflict between the two lines of the Imperial Family. Determined to renounce the world, Go-Fukakusa approached the shogunate, and as a result, his cloistered government took shape.

However, the rivalry between the successors of both cloistered governments persisted and, with occasional pauses and intertwined with various political and economic factors, the feud involved both the court and the shogunate. It later developed into a major confrontation between the Northern and Southern Courts.

The first half of *Towazu-gatari* coincides with the later years of Go-Saga's cloistered government and the reigns by the cloistered emperors Kameyama and Go-Uda, while the latter half of the story witnessed continued veiled enmity between the two cloistered governments, the Mongol invasions of the Bun'ei (1264–1275) and Kōan (1278–1288) eras, and the slow breakdown of the system of retaining *gokenin* (immediate vassals of the shōgun). Although these social incidents do not appear explicitly in this story, the atmosphere of decadence and lust strongly reflects the times.

It cannot be overlooked that a prohibited sect of esoteric Buddhism called the Tachikawa School, which sanctioned man's carnal desires, was at its height and that this fact had some impact on the unusual human relations in the court. (This interesting aspect of the period will be touched on at another time.)

Nijō's father, Minamoto no Masatada, was from the Genji Koga, which was descended from Emperor Murakami. The family produced the prime minister, the minister of the right, and the lord keeper of the privy seal. Nijō's Great-grandfather Michichika especially wielded such great power that he was called "*kampaku*," chief advisor to the emperor. Emperor Go-Saga's mother, Michiko, and his grandmother, Lady Shōmeimon, also came from the Koga's.

Nijō's father was the chief councillor to Emperor Go-Saga. Since he was a cousin of Go-Saga's mother, Michiko, he was on good terms with Go-Saga from childhood. After Go-Saga became emperor, he received favor as his close vassal. This relation lasted even after the days of Go-Fukakusa.

The Koga's also produced many people of literary talent. Their high cultural attainment was the pride of the family, and Nijō was no exception. Nijō's mother was from the Shijō's and was called the

Dainagon no Suke. After Go-Fukakusa became emperor at the age of four, she served him. The mother's father, Shijō Dainagon Fujiwara no Takachika, had a sister, Teishi, who married Saionji Saneuji, the most influential man of that day. Teishi gave birth to Ōmiyain Kisshi and Higashi-Nijōin Kinshi. The former married Go-Saga and gave birth to Go-Fukakusa and Kameyama, and the latter married Go-Fukakusa. This background shows that Nijō was a very high-ranking noble, closely related to the Imperial Family on both her father's and mother's sides.

Nijō was born when her father, Masatada, was 33. Since her mother died in the following year, she had no memory of her. When she became four, she was taken to and raised with affection by Go-Fukakusa for what may be called an unusual fate, despite the tradition of prohibiting the girls of the Koga's from court service. Her later tragic fate was predetermined as early as her very young girlhood.

As she grew under the wing of Go-Fukakusa, Nijō cultivated herself in many ways. Blessed with intelligence and good looks, she already had a man who had given his heart to her when she became Go-Fukakusa's lover at the age of 14. The reason why she came to be loved by Go-Fukakusa is explained by an incident that probably shocked her, and this incident is confessed by her in this story.

What deserves attention in this second installment of the story is her father's admonition for her future given on his deathbed. He instructed her to love only one man and never give her heart to other men, and that if she wanted to enjoy amorous delights, she should do so only after renouncing the world. This is an unusual instruction. However, the way Nijō responded to her father's dying wish is most interesting. She did not say how in particular, but the whole story makes an answer to this question. For she had many lovers and finally renounced the world of love and passion by retiring into Buddhism.

## Text

### Cloistered Emperor Go-Saga's Illness

Although the empress had given birth to a girl this time, the cloistered emperor especially loved her and celebrated the fifth and seventh nights<sup>1</sup> [after her birth] in a splendid manner. On the evening of the seventh day, the retired emperor and the emperor were in Go-Fukakusa's rooms talking when, at about the time of the ox<sup>2</sup> [2:00 a.m.], a strong wind blew up in the inner courtyard with mandarin trees, and a fierce sound like waves breaking on a rocky shore was heard. I was called and told, "Go and see what that is." When I went to see, there were ten bluish-white objects ranging from the size of a sake cup to that of pottery utensils, each with its head shaped like a fish monster, flying up and down with their tapering tails casting a strong light. "How scared I am!" I said as I fled inside. The courtiers on the veranda asked, "Why are you making such an uproar?" then said, "They are the spirits of the dead."

Someone said loudly, "Something like seaweed is scattered under the big willow trees." Divination was promptly held. The soothsayer proposed that the ritual of long life be performed for the cloistered emperor, and from that night on services were held for such gods as Taizan.<sup>3</sup>

Around the ninth month, the cloistered emperor was said to have

<sup>1</sup> In the Kamakura Period, people held celebrations on the fifth and seventh nights after a child's birth by inviting their relatives and friends to their homes. The custom of celebrating on the seventh night after a birth (called *oshichi-ya*) is still observed.

<sup>2</sup> From ancient times through the Edo Period, the Japanese referred to time by the signs of the Chinese zodiac, as follows: *ne* (mouse)—midnight; *ushi* (ox)—2:00 a.m.; *tora* (tiger)—4:00 a.m.; *u* (rabbit)—6:00 a.m.; *tatsu* (dragon)—8:00 a.m.; *mi* (snake)—10:00 a.m.; *uma* (horse)—noon; *hitsuji* (sheep)—2:00 p.m.; *saru* (monkey)—4:00 p.m.; *tori* (cock)—6:00 p.m.; *inu* (dog)—8:00 p.m.; and *i* (boar)—10:00 p.m.

<sup>3</sup> The Taoist god who has the power to prolong life. The god is believed to dwell on Tai Shan (Taizan), a mountain in Shantung Province, China.

fallen ill. People who said that it was beri-beri and applied moxa<sup>4</sup> to him made quite a fuss. But it had little effect, and his illness seemed to worsen day by day. The year drew to a close.

## Darkness Under Heaven

Even when the New Year came, he was still ill, and celebrations were not worth holding.

Toward the end of the first month, Go-Saga's condition was said to show no sign of recovery, but he visited the Saga Palace.<sup>5</sup> He was taken in a palanquin. Go-Fukakusa followed at once. I accompanied him in the same carriage. Both dowager empresses, Lady Ōmiya<sup>6</sup> and Lady Higashi Nijō,<sup>7</sup> shared another carriage, accompanied by Lady Mikushige.<sup>8</sup>

Medicine prepared by [his physicians] Tamenari and Moronari [for the cloistered emperor to take on the way] was put into two water jugs and placed in his presence. Then, Tsunetō<sup>9</sup> ordered Nobutomo, a junior guard of the northern side, to carry the jugs. However, when they reached Uchino,<sup>10</sup> they found that both jugs were empty. It was very strange. Since this incident, the cloistered emperor must have become more and more depressed, because I heard that his illness had become more serious.

Go-Fukakusa stayed at the Ōi mansion<sup>11</sup> and both day and night,

<sup>4</sup> A treatment that originated in Chinese medicinal practice. Special herbs were put on certain parts of the body and then burned.

<sup>5</sup> The residence of Cloistered Emperor Go-Saga, located in Kyōto on the Ōi River.

<sup>6</sup> The principal wife of Go-Saga.

<sup>7</sup> The principal wife of Go-Fukakusa.

<sup>8</sup> One of the concubines of Go-Fukakusa.

<sup>9</sup> Yoshida Tsunetō, a high-ranking court official with the title of *chū-nagon*, the 6th rank in the Daijō-kan, the main office in the court.

<sup>10</sup> The area where the Imperial Palace was situated in the Heian Period, now in the southwestern part of Kamigyō-ku, Kyōto. The ancient palace was destroyed by fire in 1227. The area was a desolate wilderness during the days of Lady Nijō.

<sup>11</sup> A mansion within Saga Palace facing the Ōi River.

continually sent men and women, high and low, to inquire about the state of his father's illness, saying to them, "What is my father's condition?" When I was crossing the long corridor as a messenger, I thought that the sound of the waves of the Ōi River was very dreadful.

By the beginning of the second month, the cloistered emperor's condition was such that we were waiting for the time [of his death]. It was probably on the ninth that the South and North Rokuhara<sup>12</sup> came to inquire about his illness. Dainagon Saionji<sup>13</sup> conveyed the fact that all were in mourning, and this was made public. Then, Emperor Kameyama made an imperial visit here from Kyōto on the eleventh day of the month and stayed on the twelfth. After he returned on the thirteenth, the inside of the palace was quiet and gloomy, and no special sounds were heard. The former emperor met the emperor, and both wept continuously. The sight was so moving that tears of sympathy were brought to others' eyes.

About the time of the cock [6:00 p.m.] on the fifteenth, columns of smoke were seen rising in the direction of the capital. I asked whose residence was burning and was told that Shikibu no Taifu<sup>14</sup> of the South Rokuhara was dead and that his residence was being burned. It made me feel how ephemeral life was. The very person who had come to inquire about the cloistered emperor's illness on the ninth had now passed away before the cloistered emperor, whose death was imminent, probably today or tomorrow. The fact that life was ephemeral was not new to anyone, old or young. Nevertheless, it was poignant. Since His Majesty Go-Saga had uttered not a single

<sup>12</sup> Also called Rokuhara-Tandai, the office and the head officers in charge of guarding the capital and governing the provinces around Kyōto. It was established in Kyōto by the Kamakura Shogunate. The Rokuhara was divided into two offices, one for the southern and one for the northern part of Kyōto.

<sup>13</sup> Saionji Sanekane (1249–1322). He was a court noble of the 5th rank, *dainagon*, in the main office of the court.

<sup>14</sup> Hōjō Tokisuke, the high commissioner of the South Rokuhara.

word since the evening of the thirteenth, he of course knew nothing of this ephemeral incident of life.

On the morning of the seventeenth, people gathered together, lamenting because the cloistered emperor's condition had suddenly changed for the worse. The learned prelates, Keikai<sup>15</sup> and the head priest of Ōjō-in temple,<sup>16</sup> came to offer prayers. They said, "Since you have been in [the imperial position of] the ten virtues<sup>17</sup> and served by hundreds of civil and military officers, you will be assured of good fortune on your way to and during your sojourn in the nether world. Please promptly take your seat on the throne of lotus flowers, and look back upon the people left behind in this world and guide them [to the Pure Land<sup>18</sup>]." Thus, they persuaded and exhorted him, but the cloistered emperor did not appear to change his worldly heart, despite the priests' words, since he set his heart on man's three worldly affections,<sup>19</sup> spoke only of love or worldly things, and lost his way to Paradise. At the time of the cock [6:00 p.m.] on the seventeenth, in the second month of the ninth year of Bun'ei (1272), he died, at the age of 53. The distant sky was clouded with sorrow; everyone sank into sorrow, and the colorful dress of the New Year was exchanged for black clothes of mourning.

On the eighteenth, the body was removed to Yakusō-in.<sup>20</sup> From the Imperial Court, Fujiwara no Sanefuyu, director of the Imperial archives, [Go-Saga's three sons, a cousin, and a brother, who were chief priests of] the Omuro, Ema, Shōgō, Bodai, and Shōren temples, came to attend the funeral. The sorrow at the ceremony that night was beyond description. Everyone thought, "Tsunetō has received

<sup>15</sup> A high priest of Enryaku-ji temple on Mt. Hiei.

<sup>16</sup> In Saga, Kyōto.

<sup>17</sup> Literally, "Ten Good [deeds]." This is a Buddhist term originally referring to such deeds as not killing, not stealing, and not telling lies. Later, this phrase was also used to refer to the position of the emperor.

<sup>18</sup> The ideal land of Jōdo Buddhism.

<sup>19</sup> In Buddhism, affection between husband and wife, parent and child, and lord and subject.

<sup>20</sup> A temple to the west of and near Saga Palace.

such great favors from the cloistered emperor. He will not fail to renounce the world as a gesture of following him." So, it was quite a surprise to see that very person dressed in a soft, formal silk robe carrying the urn of ashes on his way to the charnel.

His Majesty's grief was so great that his tears never dried, day or night, and the people attending on him also wept in sympathy. During the period of mourning, regular announcements of the time and shouts to clear the way for processions of important people were suspended. It was as if the cherry trees on the mountain would blossom in black. My father wore especially deep mourning and proposed that I should do the same. However, His Majesty disagreed, "She is still a child, and she need not wear deep mourning. Ordinary mourning clothes are sufficient."

### The Grief of the Dainagon

Although my father asked Dowager Empress Ōmiya and His Majesty time and again for permission to renounce the world, they turned down the requests, saying that they had a plan in mind. Perhaps because of sorrow deeper than the others', my father visited the grave every day. At the same time, he appealed to His Majesty through his cousin, Minamoto no Sadazane, for permission [to renounce the world].

"Since I made my bow before the late cloistered emperor at the age of nine, I received continuous favor from him. Even after my father died and my mother disinherited me, he treated me as before, and I continued to faithfully serve him. Therefore, my promotion has been more rapid than usual. On the mornings when promotions were announced, I was pleased each time. Since I had no discontent about anything, I fulfilled my court duties without neglect. I have enjoyed the life at court where I could watch the moon and attend the annual parties and dances. At extraordinary festivals, I wore the white formal robe, and my image was reflected in the *mitarashi* river.<sup>21</sup> I am now a *dainagon* in the first grade of the second rank<sup>22</sup> and con-

<sup>21</sup> The generic term for a river flowing near a shrine.

currently the head of my family. I was once offered the post of minister,<sup>23</sup> but I declined it because the general of the Guard of the Right<sup>24</sup> wrote that this post should be given only to those who have held the position of general of the guard, and I had not yet experienced that position. However, now that the cloistered emperor has passed away, I have no tree to rely on and no place to turn to for help, even if I continue to serve at court. No matter what position I may assume, it seems useless to me. I am now fifty years of age and do not have many years left to live in this world. To renounce all of the obligations and affections of this world and enter a religious life is the way for me to repay my obligations. So, with your permission, I would like to carry out my intention and pray for the soul of the cloistered emperor.”

Nevertheless, my father's plea was turned down, and His Majesty directly dissuaded him. Although the seed of forgetfulness was not planted in my father's heart, he spent the passing days observing Buddhist services and other ceremonies for the late cloistered emperor. Soon it was the forty-ninth day after the death of the cloistered emperor. On the day that the religious ceremonies ended, the people all returned to the capital.

From then, government affairs became complicated, with His Majesty sending envoys to the Kamakura Shogunate.<sup>25</sup> And in time, the fifth month arrived.

### The Dainagon Is Struck by Illness

Probably because the rains generally drench even the sleeves in the fifth month, Father seemed more full of tears in his grief than on

<sup>22</sup> In the Heian and Kamakura periods, there were two grades within each of the three high ranks. Therefore, Nijō's father ranked behind the two grades of the first rank.

<sup>23</sup> The generic term for the four ministers (*daijin*) in the Daijō-kan, the main office in the court.

<sup>24</sup> One of the two generals in the court in charge of guarding the Imperial Palace and escorting the emperor during processions.

<sup>25</sup> The court was less powerful than the shogunate at that time and had

the damp days of autumn. Although he had never spent a night alone, he gave up the practice. He even stopped enjoying drinking parties. People said, "That is probably why he is so thin and worn."

On the night of the fourteenth of that month, Father took his meal in the carriage on his way home from a Buddhist service held in Ōtani, and his face looked yellow. People wondered, "What has happened to him?" Sensing something unusual, they summoned the doctor, who diagnosed it as jaundice. I was told that the cause was excessive worry.

Although moxa treatments were continued, we were very worried about what would become of him. His condition gradually worsened, and I was completely at a loss over what to do. Then, in the sixth month, I began to feel something unusual within myself, and I was still more perplexed. Yet, in such an emergency, I could not possibly mention my own condition.

Father said, "I feel that I shall never recover, so I would like to go and accompany His Majesty as soon as possible." And he did not pray for his recovery at all. For a while, he stayed in the house at Rokkaku Kushige,<sup>26</sup> and on the night of the fourteenth of the seventh month, he returned to his own residence in Kawasaki. He left his younger children behind so that he could quietly prepare for his own final day. I regarded myself as his adult daughter among my sisters and brothers, so I moved with him to the Kawasaki residence.

At first, Father seemed to have attributed my unusual condition to distress over his illness and irregular meals, and so he tried to comfort me in many ways. However, he must have noticed some sign, and said, "You are pregnant, aren't you." After that, he suddenly began to wish to live longer at this time. For the first time, he had prayers said for the prolongation of his life and recovery from his illness: a seven-day service to the God of Taizan in the central hall

to consult with the shogunate about who should be promoted to the official post of cloistered emperor after the death of Go-Saga.

<sup>26</sup> The home of his mother-in-law.

of Enryaku-ji temple, seven series of *dengaku* dances at the seven shrines of Hie,<sup>27</sup> a one-day recitation of the Great Wisdom Sutra at Hachiman Shrine,<sup>28</sup> and the erection of a stone monument on the dry bed of the Kamo River.<sup>29</sup> All of this seemed to have come from Father's concern for my future rather than his own desire to live longer. I felt guilty for disturbing the quiet of his last days.

### The Dew Waiting for the Wind

Since Father's condition showed no sign of immediate danger, I returned to the [Tominokōji] palace around the twentieth. After he learned of my pregnancy, Go-Fukakusa was especially considerate to me. I wondered how long his kindness would last. The death of Lady Mikushige during childbirth in the sixth month came as a warning to me at this time. I was worried about my own fate, and Father's condition seemed hopeless after all. While I lamented over my uncertain future, the seventh month drew to a close.

It must have been on the evening of the twenty-seventh, when there were fewer people in attendance than usual, that Go-Fukakusa asked me to come to his quarters. I followed him there. There was no one else present. He quietly spoke about bygone days and said, "How weary I am of living in this ephemeral world." He then consoled me with tears in his eyes, "It seems your father will not survive. In that event, you will have no one to rely on. Who will take pity on you but me?" His consolation made me feel all the more sad.

The moon had not yet risen. In the darkness within the palace, with only a dimly-lit lantern, we were talking alone late into the night when a noise arose and someone came to see me. "Who is it?" I asked, and discovered that it was a messenger from Kawasaki to inform me of Father's critical condition.

<sup>27</sup> The Hie shrines, at the eastern foot of Mt. Hiei in Sakamoto, Ōtsu city, Shiga Prefecture, had been respected by the court from ancient times.

<sup>28</sup> Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine in Yawata town, Kyōto Prefecture.

<sup>29</sup> A river flowing through the eastern part of Kyōto.

I lost no time in leaving, and on my way, I feared that I might find Father already dead. Although I knew that I was hurrying, the distance seemed enormous, as if I were trodding the dense undergrowth along a path in the wild eastern provinces. However, when I arrived at last, I found to my great joy that Father was still alive.

“Like dew waiting for the wind to make it fall, my life still lingers. I am sorry for having caused everyone trouble. I hate leaving you behind.” Father wept feebly. Then, as the bell was tolling the late hours, Go-Fukakusa’s visit was announced. It was quite an unexpected arrival, and even the sick man became excited.

As I heard Go-Fukakusa’s carriage being drawn up, I hurried to meet him and found that he had come in secret, accompanied only by two junior guards and a courtier. His Majesty was dressed in a light-colored robe with a woven pattern of burnet flowers. Under the light of the moon of the twenty-seventh night that had just risen over the rim of the mountains, his attire suggested a sudden visit, which made us feel very honored.

Father sent word. “Now that I do not have the strength to put on a robe, I cannot have an audience with Your Majesty. However, it will be my happy memory of this world that I learned of the honor of your visit.”

Go-Fukakusa soon slid open [the door] and stepped into the room. Father tried to sit up, but in vain. “Stay as you are,” said Go-Fukakusa, and he took his seat on a cushion laid by Father’s pillow. Promptly, shedding tears uncontrollably on his sleeves, he said, “We have been on familiar terms since we were children. I am sad to hear that the end is near, and I came here to see you once again.”

Father said between tears, “I am pleased with the royal visit. The honor is more than I deserve. But my greater concern is over my daughter, who was left motherless when she was only two. Since I was the only one to look after her, I have raised her myself. Now I have to leave her behind in her unusual condition, and my regret, grief, and pity are beyond description.”

Go-Fukakusa said kindly, “I will take care of Nijō as she grieves

over her separation from her father. Do not allow your worry to hinder you on the road to the nether world. I would like to rest for a while," he said, and left [the room].

When dawn broke, Go-Fukakusa hurried to leave, saying, "It may be awkward if my informal attire attracts the attention of the people." Then, Father had a biwa [lute] and a sword presented to him in the carriage. The biwa had been bequeathed to him by my grandfather, Chief Minister Michimitsu, and the sword had been presented to my grandfather by Emperor Go-Toba at the time of the emperor's exile to Oki Island.<sup>30</sup> Attached to the sword string was a poem on light-blue paper:

わかれてもみよの契のありときけば  
なほ行末をたのむばかりぞ

*Wakaretemo miyo no chigiri no aritokikeba  
naho yukusuhe wo tanomubakarizo*

Master and follower are tied over three worlds  
So, even if we now part  
Please grant me your favor in the future

Go-Fukakusa said, "I was greatly moved to see it. Do not worry about anything." After he returned to his palace, he sent Father a poem written in his own hand:

このたびはうき世のほかにもめぐりあはむ  
まつ暁の有明の空

*Kono tabi wa ukiyo no hoka ni meguriahamu  
matsu akatsuki no ariake no sora*

Next time we shall meet  
outside this weary world  
under the sky of a long-awaited dawn<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Emperor Go-Toba (r. 1183–1198) was exiled to Oki Island in the Sea of Japan by the Kamakura Shogunate after his defeat in the Jōkyū Revolt of 1221.

Father was glad that his presents pleased His Majesty, and the sight of his joy made me sad.

### The Last Lesson

On the second day of the eighth month, Dainagon Zen-shōji brought me a maternity sash earlier than usual. He wore formal robes and explained, "I was instructed not to wear mourning [for the late emperor] when I paid this visit." He was also accompanied by outriders and guards. All this suggested Go-Fukakusa's consideration in arranging the ceremony so that Father would be able to see it. He was greatly delighted and ordered sake served to the emissary. I felt sad to think that it would be my father's last memory. In reply, Father presented the *dainagon* with a highly-treasured ox called Shiogama, which he had received from the chief priest of the Omuro [Ninna-ji] temple.

Since Father looked somewhat better that day, I wondered if he might begin to recover. As the night advanced, I only wanted to rest, but I fell asleep beside him. I was awakened by Father, who started to speak at greater length than usual. "How empty it is. Forgetting my own grief at setting out on the journey that may come tomorrow or even today, I feel sorry and worried about you. To see you sleeping innocently made me anxious. Ever since your mother departed when you were two, I alone have looked after you, and among my many children, I feel that I have poured all my love only on you. When I saw you smile, I thought that you were thoroughly charming, and when I saw you looking sad, I shared your grief. Thus we have seen fifteen springs and autumns, and now we are parting. When you serve His Majesty, unless you have any complaint, make the utmost efforts in your service. But if you have complaints with the lord and

<sup>31</sup> "A long awaited dawn" implies the arrival of the Bodhisattva Maitreya (the Future Buddha), who will preach to bring all sentient beings to salvation 5,670,000,000 years after the death of the historical Buddha, Gautama.

the world, and if you lose financial power, as is often the case in life, you should immediately enter the True Way [of the Buddha], where you will further your life in the next world, repay your obligation to your parents, and pray that we may have a chance to be together in Paradise. Should you serve another lord or enter any other house to live because you have been foresaken, you must consider yourself renounced, even after my death. Nothing can be done about the relation between husband and wife, because it is not limited to this world only. It was established in the former life. It would be a thousand pities if you were not to renounce the world and were to leave a reputation for licentiousness on the name of our family. Only after you renounce the world may you live the way you like." The thought that these might be Father's last instructions saddened me.

As the bell tolled the dawn, Nakamitsu [a retainer] brought the steamed herbs to spread under Father and said, "Shall I replace the old herbs?" Father replied, "My end seems to be near. There is no use doing anything. Rather, serve Nijō some food." How could I eat anything, I thought, but Father insisted. "Be quick, while I am watching." I felt sad as I wondered what would become of him, even though he could watch me now. When Nakamitsu brought *imomaki*<sup>32</sup> in earthenware, Father looked very displeased. "This is not proper food for her in her condition." As I did not care for it, I, too, made some excuse to get rid of it.

## The Sea of Tears

At daybreak, Father said, "Call for the priest." In the seventh month, he had summoned the chief priest of the temple at Yasaka, had his head shaven, and taken the vows of the five Buddhist Commandments.<sup>33</sup> He had also received the religious name of Renshō. He had decided that this priest would be the one for his last rites, but

<sup>32</sup> Perhaps a kind of yam dish.

<sup>33</sup> The five Buddhist precepts: not to take life, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to tell lies, and not to drink intoxicating beverages.

for some unknown reason, the “Nun of Sanjō” [his stepmother] urged Father, “Ask Shōkōbō, the chief priest of the temple at Kawara.” Although the priest [Shōkōbō] was informed of the change in Father’s condition, he did not appear.

Meanwhile, Father said, “My last moment seems to have arrived. Sit me up.” He summoned Nakamitsu, the eldest son of Nakatsuna, whom Father had raised from childhood and kept in his service. Father had Nakamitsu lift him up and sat with Nakamitsu supporting his back. There was no one else except a lady-in-waiting in front of the priest’s chair. Since I was by his side, Father said, “Hold my wrist.” While I was holding his wrist, he said, “Bring me the surplice the priest gave me.” He put on a silk robe with the surplice over it, and then began to recite the invocation. He told Nakamitsu to join him, and together they prayed for about an hour. About the time that the sun began to shine, Father slept awhile and seemed to lean over to the left. I wanted to awaken him so that he could continue the recitation. As I shook him by the knees, he woke up and opened his eyes. I looked at his eyes. “What will happen?” Hardly had he asked when he breathed his last, at the time of the dragon [8:00 a.m.] on the third day of the eighth month of the ninth year of Bun’ei [1272], at the age of 50.

If he had died in the midst of prayer, his later life would have been assured. But I awoke him unasked, and so he died with words other than prayer. I had nothing in my mind but regret and looked up to the heavens. I felt as if the sun and moon had fallen to the earth and as though I could see nothing. I lay on the floor and wept. I felt as if my tears flowed like a stream.

I was too young to realize the meaning of my mother’s death when I was two, and the sorrow passed before I knew it. I was first held on Father’s lap on the forty-first day of my life. Since then, I had lived fifteen springs and autumns. In the morning, when I looked at myself in the mirror, I thanked Father for my existence, and when I went to sleep at night, I thought of my debt to Father for the night’s sleep. My obligation to him for my normal body and normal position

[in society] was greater than the peak of Mt. Shumi,<sup>34</sup> and my gratitude to him for the affection that had been so generously accorded me on behalf of my mother was deeper than the deepest sea.<sup>35</sup>

How could I ever repay the debt? As I thought, I recalled the words that I had heard from time to time while he was alive. My lamentations at parting were so great that they could not have been soothed even if I had died in his place.

Although I wished to keep his remains as they were and watch them decay, I sent his body according to the custom to the mountain called Kaguraoka<sup>36</sup> on the evening of the fourth. I wished to enter the lifeless smoke to join him, but in vain, and with my sleeves wet because of my memories of him, I returned home. As I looked around his empty room, I felt with sorrow that I would not be able to see him again, except in a dream, and remembered him with renewed affection. When I recalled his consideration, I was filled with emotions that are beyond description.

わが袖の涙のうみよみつせ河に  
ながれてかよへかげをだにみむ

*Waga sode no namida no umiyo mitsusegawa ni  
nagarete kayohe kage wo danimimu*

Tears from my sleeves!  
Flow into the River of Death  
I will see the figure of my father  
mirrored on your surface

<sup>34</sup> In Sanskrit, Mt. Sumeru, believed in Buddhist cosmology to rise in the center of the cosmos.

<sup>35</sup> Literally, "Four (directions') Great Sea." The deep sea around Mt. Sumeru. (See footnote 34.)

<sup>36</sup> A mountain in the northern suburbs of Kyōto where cremation was performed.

## After a Person's Passing

On the evening of the fifth, Nakatsune came, dressed in a black monastic robe. Should Father have become a minister, Nakatsune would have become a steward of the fourth court rank. I imagined how he felt. The unexpected sight of him in such a black robe made me sad. He asked, "I will be visiting the grave. Do you have any message?" As he wept and thoroughly wet his sleeves, everyone was moved to tears.

On the ninth, the first seventh-day after Father's death,<sup>37</sup> his wife, two of his ladies-in-waiting, and two of his retainers renounced the world. As I watched the chief priest from Yasaka giving them the tonsure in the midst of the recitation of the text, "In the vicissitudes of past, present, and future . . .," I felt profound sorrow tinged with a sense of envy. I wished to follow their example, but that was impossible in my present condition. I only wept, but to no avail.

On the occasion of the third seventh-day, when the services were held in an especially grand manner, Go-Fukakusa expressed his heartfelt condolences. We received his envoys every day or two. How excited Father would have been, I thought with sorrow, to be alive and see His Majesty's consideration.

About that time, Empress Kyōgoku, Lord Sanewo's daughter, Emperor Kameyama's greatest favorite, and the mother of the crown prince, became ill. Since she had suffered from an evil spirit many times in the past, everybody thought that these were the same symptoms. However, despite her high position and age, which was still young, I heard of her untimely death. I felt deep sorrow because I could understand her father's lamentations and the emperor's heart-ache from my own experience with the loss of my father.

On the fifth seventh-day memorial, Go-Fukakusa sent me a rosary

<sup>37</sup> Buddhist services were held at least on the first seventh-day, the second seventh-day (i.e., fourteenth day), and seventh seventh-day (i.e., 49th day) after a person's death. Services for important officials were held every seventh day until the 49th day.

of quartz beads as well as a branch of artificial silver- and gold-colored flowers as gifts for the priests after the services. The poem attached to the flowers read:

さらでだに秋は露けき袖の上に  
昔をこふる涙そふらん  
*Saradedani aki wa tsuyukeki sode no uhe ni*  
*mukashi wo kofuru namida sofuran*  
Adding much dew in autumn  
Your tears for the past days  
will drop over your sleeves

I wrote that if my father was living, he would be very grateful for such a kind letter, and even though he was under the moss, my father would feel obliged.

And I sent a poem in reply:

思へたださらでもぬるる袖の上に  
かかるわかれの秋のしら露  
*Omohetada sarademo nururu sode no uhe ni*  
*kakaru wakare no aki no shiratsuyu*  
My already wet sleeves  
Are dampened even more  
With white autumn dewdrops  
From parting with the empress

Everything was a cause of sorrow in the long, wakeful nights. As I lay on my tear-soaked sleeves in my solitary bed and heard people constantly beating their winter clothes [to air them out], I thought of Father.

On the morning of Father's death, all of the members of the court, including Their Majesties and the courtiers, had come themselves or sent messengers to express sympathy and condolences, with the strange exception of Senior Councillor Mototomo. (*To be continued.*)



# The World of *Engi* in Buddhism

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## Introduction

The theory of *engi* (dependent origination) is a conception of the world peculiar to the basic teaching of Buddhism in all its forms since the early period. The Buddhist conception of both life and ethics can be said to be rooted in the aspects of dependent origination. How do suffering and confusion arise? How can mankind overcome suffering and confusion to attain the realm of peace known as nirvana? Dependent origination in Buddhist thought confronts these major human problems and pierces through to a unique way of extinguishing them and the cause of the creation of suffering. It is with the concept of the world born from the profound wisdom of the Buddha and the primary teaching that those who are interested in Buddhism must become familiar.

What is this theory of dependent origination, which has continuously remained at the core of Buddhism for the more than two thousand years since Gautama lived? The following article, written by Dr. Hirakawa Akira, should clarify this important issue. Dr. Hirakawa, a professor emeritus of the University of Tōkyō, is an authority on Indian and Buddhist philosophy.

**Translator's Note:** This article was translated from: "Engi no Sekai" (The World of Engi) in *Gendai-jin no tame no Bukkyō* (Buddhism for the Modern Man) (Tōkyō: Kōdan-sha, 1976). When two foreign words related to Buddhism appear parenthetically in the text, the first is Japanese, and the second is Sanskrit. When only one word appears, it is Japanese unless otherwise noted.

## Views on Dependent Origination Origin of the Self

Dependent origination (緣起 *engi*, *pratītya-samutpāda*) means causation based on conditions. It is also called the combination of causes and conditions (因緣 *innen*). There is nothing that can come into existence simply by its own will or power. Without exception, everything originates by borrowing power from some other source. Therefore, the world has materialized through interdependence.

For instance, we think that we exist by our own free will, but when we consider the origination of the self, we realize that this is not the case. Why? Our parents gave us our original life force. If we look further into the past, each of our parents had two parents, making four individuals; those four had eight parents in all, before that sixteen, before that thirty-two, before that sixty-four. If we trace our history in this way, we find that a very large number of ancestors have contributed to our lives. We owe our very existence to all of those previous lives.

After we are born, we grow up with the devoted love of our mothers. In time we stand alone. However, even though we stand alone, what is unified into the unique entity we call "I" is a collection of various factors—our physical self with its basic needs of breathing and nourishment, and our spiritual self that matures by being influenced by such social and educational impressions as those imparted by newspapers and television. Therefore, the substance of the ego is derived predominantly from sources outside of ourselves; the substance of our own power is due primarily to other influences.

We should consider our life in this light. That which we call the self or the ego can be thought of as an amalgamation of various physical and spiritual powers. This self is in continual motion; one transformation follows another. Our soul can function under its own power only after constantly supplied external sources of activity are converted into internal power. Once we begin to fathom the nature

of the self correctly, we can know the real soul, or rather the reality of the soul. An unchanging self, a soul independent of other forces, does not exist. This viewpoint illustrates dependent origination in terms of the self.

Is it necessary to abandon your attachment to the self?

As we have seen, our ego does not truly belong to us. As our ego absorbs from outside itself, it clings to self-centeredness. This self-centeredness combined with self-consciousness results in the actual ego. It stresses its own unique existence in opposition to other things. The world immersed in controversies—the world of competition—begins, and the existence of suffering enters our lives. Even though this kind of self-centered ego is not intrinsic, we cannot abandon our attachment to the self. Why not? Since the consciousness of our ego has become identified with the attachment to our self, abandoning our self-centeredness would mean abandoning our very existence. In other words, if we decide to guard our ego, we must protect our own selfish interests. If we do not protect our selfish interests, our ego will never come into existence. The behavior or the attitude that can be called protecting one's own interests arises inevitably. Based on the reality that we can live only if we are attached to our selves, problems—lives of hardship and struggle—naturally evolve. If we decide to preserve our ego, we must, at the same time, retain our attachment to the self. As long as the human race continues to exist, this basic inconsistency must be borne. Solving this problem is one of the major themes of Buddhism.

It is generally said that when we abandon our egoism—attachment to our self—we can reach enlightenment. However, can we continue to exist once attachment to the self has been abandoned? Or might there be a way that releases man from suffering without abandoning his attachment to the self? In Buddhism, there are two paths to pursue: the way to reach enlightenment by means of abandoning the attachment to the self and the path to release mankind from suffering without abandoning the attachment to the self.

### Interrelationships of Dependent Origination

Let us delve a little deeper into the problem of dependent origination. The fact that our lives come into existence based on dependent origination or cooperation can be viewed from many perspectives. Take, for example, the relationship between a couple. For a couple to exist, the wife must have a husband, and the husband, a wife. If only one exists, you cannot call someone a wife or a husband. At the same time that the couple comes into existence because of each partner, the self of each partner defined by this relationship also comes into existence; in other words, this is a relationship that arises out of reciprocity. This basic interdependent relationship, this mutual cooperation, is a basic element that gives rise to society as we know it.

If we look at the example of parents and children, we find that we call people who have children, "parents." The very existence of children establishes the relationship that makes people parents, but this does not mean that the children are superior by any means. Even in the relationship between students and teachers, we can call people "teachers" only after they have students studying under them. If there are no students, then the teacher as such does not materialize. Even those students who become private tutors can be called teachers. Looking at the relation between students and teachers, each is dependent on the other for existence, but it is still not possible to say, "If there were no students, then there would be no teachers; therefore, students are superior to teachers."

In any case, our world materializes based on reciprocal relationships; this is one meaning of the word "dependent origination." Whenever we do anything, we must think about the other parties involved. If we do not do so, we can never succeed.

When this exists, that exists.

Our self exists by originally being helped by supports. For example, since "you" exist, the consciousness that "I" exist arises; the existence of "you" is naturally included within the consciousness I have of myself. That which is called a husband can be defined only in

relation to a wife; the meaning of the word "husband" includes "a man with a wife." One as a child of his parents, one as the younger brother of an older brother, one as the student of a university, one who is poor or rich, one who is a chauffeur, one as a wife (of a husband), each person is conscious of his individual existence based on social positions. One does not exist apart from these social relationships. In other words, when we retain the consciousness of a separate and distinct ego, it is nothing more than a self defined by social position. In this way, everything within society exists because of mutually dependent relationships: this evolves into that and that evolves into this. This reciprocity is one of the forces behind dependent origination. The law of the relation of mutual dependence is written as follows in sutras of early Buddhism: "When this is, that is; when this comes into existence, that comes into existence; when this is not, that is not; when this ceases to exist, that ceases to exist."

### Origination of the Combination of Causes and Conditions

The word "dependent origination" (*engi*) has many meanings. The relation of mutual dependence mentioned above corresponds to conditions, the *en* (*pratyaya*) of *engi* (*pratītya-samutpāda*). In addition, dependent origination also means "cause." There is also an interpretation that emphasizes causes produced by conditions as the meaning of dependent origination.

In brief, dependent origination means that after many conditions accumulate, something comes into existence. In other words, whenever something evolves, there are various conditions behind it. For example, when a shoot appears out of the ground, there is, of course, no doubt that it grows from a seed. However, it is impossible to say that the shoot can sprout only because a seed exists. While in the ground, the seed obtains the necessary moisture from water and the necessary heat from sunlight. In short, various conditions accumulate before the shoot can begin to grow. These conditions can be thought of as an essential factor in the evolution of the shoot. From among these various conditions, the one which is the most vital is called

“the cause” (因 *in, hetu*). For example, although water and heat are indispensable for a shoot to sprout, the most important condition is the existence of the seed itself. However, the true essence of dependent origination is that nothing can come into existence from only a single cause. From this arises the thought that our very existence today is due to the myriads of conditions surrounding us.

What if we strive to succeed in society? Certainly we must exert our own efforts, but from another point of view, success can be attained only if we take advantage of materials and spiritual aid from society and have the good luck that is behind any success. In this way, mindfulness (恩 *on, krtajña*) is the experiencing of that aid which is invisible to society as a whole. The gratitude owed society and that owed our fellow man arises naturally from a deep understanding of dependent origination. In other words, putting dependent origination into practice involves conducting our lives with gratitude toward society and other people.

Happiness consists of realizing appreciation. Of course, it is important to pursue and value personal profit, but if you exert all your efforts toward making personal profit the guiding principle of your life, won't you discover in the end that all has come to naught? People hope to be intrinsically useful to society. This hope naturally arises when we consider the fact that the self comes into existence because of various conditions and that the self depends on mutually dependent relations within society. Without doubt, it is important to protect one's personal profit. However, at the same time, it is even more important that we immediately return our profits to society. We should think of this as the guiding principle of our lives.

### **Inexhaustible Layers of Relations in the Cosmic Law**

Our world is everywhere joined together by that which helps and that which is helped. In terms of time, the far distant past is connected to the far distant future. In terms of space, this entire world is connected to the far reaches of the universe. The world, which is thus related to each and every thing in the universe, has come into

existence according to mutually dependent interrelationships. This is the very essence of our world. This is called the “inexhaustible layers of relations in the cosmic law.”

### Two Systems of Dependent Origination

There are many explanations of dependent origination, but these can be generally divided into two major classifications: (1) the view that stresses the conditions of dependent origination (the dependent relations that come into existence by means of cooperation), and (2) the view that clarifies the foundation of existence, provisional reality, by extracting the most important condition, the cause, from among the many existent conditions and by pursuing the relationships inherent in the chain of cause and effect.

The first, the view that stresses conditions, can be called the logical relationship inherent in dependent origination; it developed as the Mahāyāna Buddhism<sup>1</sup> interpretation of dependent origination. For example, this is the view of emptiness (空 *kū*, *śūnyatā*) in the Prajñāpāramita (Hannya) Sutra<sup>2</sup> of Early Mahāyāna Buddhism. Later, such teachings as Tendai Buddhism's<sup>3</sup> “the real manifestation of

<sup>1</sup> Literally, the great vehicle (to enlightenment). One of the two most fundamental schools of Buddhism. It was probably founded after the beginning of the Christian era, and its attitude is in contrast to that of the Theravāda and Nikāya schools of Ceylon and Southeast Asia. Its scriptures have been written in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese. The school produced a great amount of philosophical speculation. Today, the Buddhists in Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet, China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan are Mahāyānists.

<sup>2</sup> *The Wisdom Sutras*, a group of sutras setting forth the doctrine of *śūnyatā* (*kū*).

<sup>3</sup> The Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) Sect is one of 13 Chinese Buddhist sects. It was founded by the Chinese Buddhist philosopher Chih-i (538–597), based upon the teaching of the Lotus Sutra (Hoke-kyō, Saddharma Puṇḍarīka). It is one of the Mahāyāna Buddhist sects which upholds the following important doctrines: (1) the classification of five periods and eight teachings, (2) the identity of the threefold truth, and (3) the attainment of Buddhahood through meditation. This sect was transmitted to Japan in 805.

all existence” (諸法実相 *shohō-jissō*, *tattvasya lakṣanam*) or the Kegon School’s<sup>4</sup> “the truth of interdependent relationships in the cosmic law” (法界縁起 *hokkai-engi*, *pratīya-samutpāda* of the *Dharmadhātu*) were incorporated.

As for the view that interprets dependent origination as the relationship between cause and effect, the 12-link chain of dependent origination of Early Buddhism, the theory of causation based on karma of Nikāya<sup>5</sup> Buddhism, the theory of causation through the storehouse consciousness of the Yogacara (Yuishiki) School<sup>6</sup> of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and the theory of causation based on the Buddha nature in all sentient beings all think of the world of dependent

by Saichō, the founder of the Japanese Tendai Sect. The Chinese and Japanese Tendai Sects cannot be regarded as the same sect, because Japanese Tendai includes various doctrines, including esoteric Buddhism and meditation (*zen*, *dhyāna*), together with the Tendai doctrine proper.

<sup>4</sup> The Kegon (Chinese Hua-yen) Sect is founded upon the doctrines of the Avatamsaka Sutra (Chinese Hua Yen Ching, Japanese Kegon). This sect was first founded in the Sui Dynasty (589–618) and organized during the T’ang Dynasty (618–907). The sect teaches the doctrines of *jūgenmon* (ten profound gates) and *rokusō-enmyū* (identity of six specific natures of all existence). It also stresses the doctrine that all beings have the Buddha-nature. The Kegon Sect was brought to Japan by Tao-hsuan (Dōsen) and Shen-hsiang (Shinjō) in the Nara Period (710–793). Although the doctrine of this sect greatly influenced Japanese Buddhism after the Heian Period and also was studied widely by priests of various sects, the sect did not prosper as a living religion. About thirty temples, including Todai-ji, its headquarters, at present belong to the sect in Japan.

<sup>5</sup> Nikāya Buddhism (School Buddhism or Sectarian Buddhism), which is today represented by the Theravāda (Way of the Elders) tradition in Ceylon and Southeast Asia, is the other of the two main schools of Buddhism. Its formation as an organized school is commonly traced back to the early councils after the Buddha’s death. Its scriptures are written in Pali.

<sup>6</sup> A school characterized by the doctrine of *yuishiki* (consciousness only), the doctrine that all phenomena are produced from seeds (*shūji*) stored in the *ālayavijñāna* (*arayashiki*). This doctrine constituted the core of the Yogācāra School (Yugagyō-ha) in India and was also taught in China and Japan.

origination as the essence of time and the relation between cause and effect.

However, even though this is called the chain of cause and effect, it does not mean that a cause entails a result. Rather, we can pursue the cause by observing the results that appear in what is called provisional reality. In other words, there are many, varied causes that produce any one effect. By pursuing what is the most intrinsic situation among various conditions, we can invariably fathom the "cause." This is the meaning of the relationships between the chain of cause and effect. This pursuit of the basis of why reality as we know it has come into existence is the logical cause-and-effect philosophy behind dependent origination.

The cause-and-effect philosophy behind the interpretation of dependent origination does not descend from cause to effect but can be thought of as retracing the cause from the effect. In other words, it has the meaning of pursuing provisional relationships. However, since, in the practical sense, we explain the relation between cause and effect as a cause leading to an effect, the cause-and-effect relationship inherent in dependent origination is often confused.

### The Four Noble Truths Two Effects and Two Causes

A very simple teaching that explains human illusion in terms of the relation between cause and effect is that of the Four Noble Truths. One of the oldest teachings of Buddhism, this teaching is expounded in the *Āgama* (Agon) Sutra<sup>7</sup> of early Buddhism. After Gautama attained enlightenment, he preached these truths first, and as such, they are tenets essential for understanding Buddhist thought. For those pursuing the cause of human illusion by means of the relation between cause and effect, this is also the teaching of the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination. Since, when Gautama was awakened to

<sup>7</sup> The *Āgama* sutras. In the Chinese *tripitaka*, there are four *Āgama* sutras which are Chinese translations from Sanskrit originals and correspond, more or less, to the Pali *Nikāyas*.

the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination cited in the Āgama Sutra, he became the Buddha, this, too, is an essential tenet of Buddhism.

The Four Noble Truths are two causes and two effects that are combined to make four precepts. In other words, a cause and an effect in the world of illusion are fused together with a cause and an effect in the world of enlightenment to make four truths. These four truths are:

- (1) The world is immersed in *suffering*;
- (2) The cause of suffering is *attachment*;
- (3) Suffering can be *extinguished*;
- (4) The *way* to enlightenment is the Eightfold Path.

### The Truth of Suffering (*Kūtai, Duḥkha-satya*)

It is essential to have the proper understanding of the point that all existence is, in reality, suffering. For example, no matter how much we long for peace throughout the world, wars never end. Human beings base their lives on a struggle for existence; we cannot even imagine life without this competition. Therefore, the basis for existence can be nothing but suffering. This is further clarified by viewing the actual world around us, in which animals maintain themselves by killing weaker animate beings. Therefore, no matter what pleasure people have (we can certainly claim that human beings experience pleasure), if they attach themselves to pleasure, there is no doubt that this pleasure will be transformed into suffering.

### Life: Four Hardships; Eight Hardships

In Buddhism, we call the suffering man endures “Four Hardships, Eight Hardships.” The four hardships are birth, old age, sickness, and death; the eight, in addition to the four above, are: the suffering caused by parting from a loved one, the suffering caused by meeting someone you dislike, the suffering caused by unfulfilled desire, and the suffering caused by the five aggregates (*goonjōku, skhandā*). No one can ever escape from the “Four Hardships, Eight Hardships.” They constitute the foundation of human existence.

People cannot understand why birth entails suffering, but if we consider the pain that women endure bearing children, we can probably say that those who are born also experience a great deal of suffering. As for the hardship of old age, the physical power of those who are advanced in years dissipates, and people cannot work as much as they think they can. People cannot understand this while they have the strength of youth, but some time or other every young man cannot help but know the suffering of old age. The hardship of old age is serious, and no one can ever escape it. After that comes the hardship of sickness. Healthy people cannot understand this suffering, but if we look at it from the perspective of man's attachment to his own life, we realize that the suffering of the sick must be serious. How much more so the suffering endured by those with an incurable disease like cancer. Lastly, we come to the hardship of death. There is nothing that man dreads more than death. Thus, birth, old age, sickness, and death constitute the foundation of human existence. Existence as we know it can only materialize based on birth, old age, sickness, and death. Even though man experiences pleasure, we must think of it as something that comes into existence within the context of birth, old age, sickness, and death.

We also cannot escape from the suffering caused by having to part from a loved one. No matter how much we try not to part, sometime or other loved ones will be snatched from us by death. The suffering caused by meeting someone we dislike cannot be avoided because of our very lifestyles. As members of society, it is impossible to say that we will not meet someone because we dislike them. This, too, must be a great cause of suffering in our lives. The suffering caused by unfulfilled desire must always be experienced because of man's infinite greed.

The last one, the suffering caused by the Five Aggregates, indicates man's existence which arises out of the five elements<sup>8</sup> [that compose the physical and mental aspects of man]. Simply speaking, the Five Aggregates mean the suffering with which man must live.

In this way, the four types of suffering and the eight hardships

constitute man's foundation and his metaphysical existence. Consequently, suffering is the first truth.

**The Cause of Suffering: The Truth of Attachment**  
(*Jittai, Samudaya-satya*)

If we examine what causes the universal suffering of mankind, we find it is the second truth based on attachment (*katsuai, taṇhā*). We can thus discover that the basis of human suffering is attachment. Since many causes accumulate to produce a result, these accumulated causes are called *shu* (accumulation). In Pali,<sup>9</sup> this is called *samudaya*, origin. The origin of suffering—the cause of man's suffering—arises from man's desires and his attachment to the self.

It is clear that if men abandoned their thirst for things, suffering would disappear, but various levels of anguish and suffering will continue to exist because men have decided to advance themselves in life or because they yearn for money. If men could ever give up these things, suffering would disappear. But men can hardly abandon their attachment to their selves and their desires. This is the problem and conflict that has no real human solution.

The most basic of all our desires is attachment to our selves. This basic desire, which can never be satisfied no matter how much we try, is exemplified by a thirsty man's greed for water. In other words, the root of all desires in existence can be reduced to this basic one, which is called "attachment to the self" or ignorance (*mumyō, avidyā*).

<sup>8</sup> *Goun, pañca skandhāh*. All physical, mental, and other elements in this phenomenal world are classified into five kinds of aggregates in Buddhist philosophy: (1) *shikiun (rūpa-skandha)*, a generic term for all forms of matter, (2) *juun (vedana-skandha)*, perception, (3) *soun (saṃjñā-skandha)*, mental conceptions and ideas, (4) *gyōun (saṃskara-skandha)*, volition, (5) *shikiun (vijñāna-skandha)*, consciousness of mind.

<sup>9</sup> An Indo-European language spoken in northern India at the time of Gautama, Pali is the language in which the entire canon of Nikāya (Theravāda) Buddhism is written.

In this way, we call the reality of illusory existence, the noble truth of suffering, and that which causes suffering to arise, the attachment to self. This is cause and effect; if we clearly grasp the reality of the effect, then we can trace it back to its causes. This very easy system is a good way to indicate how the truth of dependent origination can be applied to the reality of our lives.

We must, therefore, try to destroy our attachment. The questions which arise are: how should we try to destroy this attachment to self; should we completely destroy our deep-rooted attachment to self; and once the individual destroys this attachment to self, can mankind continue to exist?

### The Serene Realm: The Truth of Nirvana

The third noble truth (*mettai, nirodha sattya*) explains the destruction of suffering. The tranquil realm in which all craving and attachments have completely disappeared is called nirvana (*nehan*). The actual composition of nirvana is very difficult to explain, but the Sanskrit word "*nirvāṇa*" is derived from the verb which means "to extinguish." It describes the state in which man's desires and passions disappear completely. Man's most basic attachments are his passions and ignorance. These are also called the three poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance. When the fires of greed, anger, and ignorance are extinguished, a peaceful world is revealed. This is nirvana.

### The Way to Nirvana: The Eightfold Path

In what way is nirvana realized? The truth that reveals it is the fourth noble truth of the way (*dōtai, mārga satya*). The Eightfold Path is the true way that realizes the destruction of suffering. It consists of: proper view, proper representation, proper words, proper action, proper livelihood, proper endeavor, proper presence of mind, and proper meditation.

#### Proper View: What is the right way of seeing things?

Proper view means the correct philosophy of life. In Buddhism,

it is understanding the world from the point of view of dependent origination. However, there are certain problems inherent in this. Even if you believe that your philosophy of life and your opinions are right, how far should you go in urging them on other people? We should be committed to what we regard as the truth, but how strongly should we assert what we believe? This problem is an integral part of proper view. Ideological antagonism in the real world can become quite violent. Moreover, it is impossible to acknowledge the truth in what someone else believes if you are firmly committed to what you think is the truth. If this is carried to the extreme, people will resort to violence in order to have an opinion accepted. And in the end, the truth of the strong, violent individual will be adopted. This results in conflict carried to an extreme. While carefully advancing one's own truth, we must assume a tolerant standpoint that respects the point of view of others.

### Proper Representation

Proper representation means correct contemplation. For example, a man in ancient China named Liu Hsia Hui, upon seeing starch syrup, thought that he could nourish old men with it. However, when a thief named Tao Chih saw the syrup, he thought about how he could insert the syrup in locks and then pick them without making any noise.<sup>10</sup> This story illustrates how important right contemplation is. Mistaken contemplation leads to mistaken conclusions. The meaning of proper representation is the need to reflect on whether one's speculation about the self is right or wrong.

### Proper Words

The third stage is using proper words and language. Basically it includes not lying, not defaming other people, not using language that would sever friendships, not flattering people, and not putting on airs, but at the same time, it implies using language that corresponds

<sup>10</sup> This story is found in the ancient Chinese book of moral tales written by a scholar named Chun Nan Tzu (d. 122 BCE).

with each given situation. For example, it means consoling those who are sad with gentle words, being happy with those who are happy, pacifying fierceness whenever people are violent, in short, using appropriate words, words which represent the truth.

### Proper Action

Proper action means correct behavior. While living as members of society, we must build a world with harmonious surroundings by fulfilling our responsibilities, not being lazy, and not interfering with other people. In order to do this, proper activity based on proper efforts are necessary.

### Proper Livelihood

Proper livelihood signifies to be engaged in an occupation that contributes to society, to respect diligence, and not to acquire property or belongings in a dishonest manner. Incidents involving corruption appear in the newspapers daily, but in order to achieve proper means of subsistence, people should never fall into these habits.

### Proper Endeavor

The sixth stage, proper endeavor, means the right effort. If a person runs to extreme, drastic behavior, he will never realize his desired end, however much effort is expended. That kind of one-sided effort is, in the end, counterproductive. Since what is truly important for us is correct effort, we must continually reflect on whether our efforts are appropriate, on whether we have rectified our minds in accordance with truth.

### Proper Presence of Mind: The Gatekeeper for the Heart

The seventh stage, proper presence of mind, means the proper power of attention. We can call this the "gatekeeper for the heart." If the proper presence of mind does not guard the heart well, people become careless and negligent. Evil thoughts will enter the mind at will. In addition, people will, in the end, advance along the wrong

path. When we have money snatched from us by pickpockets, our minds are totally oblivious to it. Therefore, since our hearts will proceed on the wrong path if they are not guarded by the proper presence of mind, we should reflect positively on that presence of mind.

### Proper Meditation

The last stage is proper meditation, which can be equated with the calm mind achieved in Zen meditation. Since proper knowledge is created out of the unity of the psyche and mental concentration, proper meditation should be esteemed in order to give rise to the wisdom inherent in enlightenment.

### What is meant by “proper”?

By following the Eightfold Path, mentioned above, a proper life can be realized, and nirvana can be simultaneously attained, but the problem of the exact meaning of “correct” or “proper” remains. “Proper” is often explained in the teaching of the Four Noble Truths as the middle path between joy and suffering. The middle path between joy and suffering does not simply mean a halfway point between the two concepts. Since man can never escape either joy or suffering, we must realize a harmonious world in which we do not flee from suffering when suffering assails us and we do not attach ourselves to joy when joy has been achieved. This is the meaning of the middle path.

### Discovering the Middle Path

The middle path is the knowledge that realizes harmony. The center of one meter is 50 centimeters, but in order to find this point, it is first necessary to carefully survey the entire meter. In other words, the proper perception of the whole is the premise on which discovering the middle is based. In order to find the middle path for a multitude of problems, we must penetrate through to the innermost core of the problems, knowing the full scope of each and every one. This

panoramic view of the whole is the first step toward realizing the mean. In other words, the first step toward the middle path is correctly penetrating the problem, sufficiently recognizing the nuances of the problem, and comprehending the whole.

The second step is the need to grasp the mean in terms of the whole. In other words, both correct knowledge of the whole and critical appraisal are essential. The problem of finding the center of one meter is relatively easy to solve, but finding the mean in terms of more difficult situations is not as easy. In these other cases, it is necessary to abandon one's attachment to the self to find the middle path. Let us take the problem about the reality of "us" as an example. We are beings that have evolved in the world of "I" and "you," we each value our own unique selves, and we are attached to the self to such a degree that we cannot abandon it; therefore, it is almost completely impossible to find the mean between you and me. We must abandon our attachment to the self if we want to discover the mean between us. We might say that this mean can be born only from a completely impartial psyche. The mean is something that must be selected from among many choices, and to select it, correct analysis is required. The mean is knowledge based on analytical choice.

### **The Middle Path in Constant Motion**

If we discover the mean, we encounter the following problem when we try to put it to practical use. Our reality is limited by the sphere of time. We can never make time stand still. Since time is always in motion, we can also never make the mean stand still. The mean must be realized naturally. The mean is the middle path, the path that moves along the middle. The mean is not something that can ever be stationary.

In reality, situations change unceasingly, and the whole is constantly moving. Even if there is a proper mean at a particular point in time, we cannot say absolutely that this will always be the mean. The mean changes according to time and situation. Therefore, even if we correctly perceive the mean once, we cannot become attached to

that perception. The mean also intends the meaning of non-attachment. The wisdom of the mean is that it is void, without an unchanging absolute, and thus, we cannot become attached to it.

Although the mean is in constant motion, the character of the mean—its being the middle or the reality of harmony—does not change. Thus, the point of view that realizes the middle path comes into existence.

### The Distance to Nirvana

The truth of suffering, the truth of attachment, the truth of the extinction of suffering, and the truth of the Eightfold Path are called the Four Noble Truths, but among them, suffering and attachment actually indicate the reality of the existence of suffering and its cause, while extinction and the path indicate the world of enlightenment, which is the extinction of suffering and the path leading to it. We human beings are by definition immersed in suffering. However, suffering does not exist for all eternity. A path that destroys suffering lies before us. If we destroy our illusions about reality, a life of peace without suffering can be attained. This is nirvana. Nirvana is an extremely distant and complex state to attain, but it can be realized by setting out on the Eightfold Path. Therefore, it is not so far away that we could never hope to reach it. For example, even such joys of this world as indulging ourselves become suffering if we become attached to them, but if there is no attachment, we can enjoy happiness for what it is. If we can realize harmony within our daily lives, then that, in itself, is nirvana. In other words, nirvana is actually practicing the middle path in our daily lives.

There are various angles from which the middle path is explained: the middle path between suffering and joy, that between existence and nonexistence, and that between extinction and continuation. It is most important to realize that nirvana can be attained within our daily lives. Nirvana is absolute truth and, as such, is at rest and stationary. However, at the same time, it is silence within movement; it is the unmoving footing within our constantly changing daily lives;

it is that which reveals the immutable guiding principle of our lives.

## On the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination The Twelve Aspects

The teaching of the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination illustrates the actual existence of illusion and the world of enlightenment from the viewpoint of cause and effect. The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination clarify the root of the existence of illusion by tracing conditional and dependent relations and by revealing the important points of our existence. If we look at them from a different angle, they are the relationships that naturally denote the world of enlightenment. That which traces the foundation of the existence of illusion is called the doctrine of transmigration. That which indicates the origin of the world of enlightenment is called the doctrine of annihilation. Our existence has come into existence based on the accumulation of various conditions. The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination are the twelve points singled out about existence which cull the most important from among these many conditions, delve into the root of illusion by tracing the links between the conditions, and pursue the means to destroy the root of illusion.

These twelve points are: old age and death, birth, existence, attachment, thirst or craving, feeling, contact, the six sense spheres, name and form, consciousness, sense impressions, and ignorance. Usually, these are taught in the order that extends from ignorance to old age and death. However, the problematic point is the last one: old age and death, namely death that occurs in old age. If we look at our own daily lives, we find ourselves growing continually older; each day brings us one day closer to our death. In the end, we finally reach our death. Reality reveals that each and every cause of suffering is related to old age and death. However, human beings fear death and constantly try to avoid it. The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination delve into the problems of where the suffering of old age and death arise from and what we should do to emancipate ourselves from this suffering.

### **The Action of Birth: Existence**

There are many conditions and causes for the existence of old age and death, but the most basic condition is that of being born. From the time we are born, our existence becomes an actuality; in other words, we will, as a result, grow old and die at some time. This is called, "In dependence on birth, arise old age and death."

People are born to specific parents and into a specific family. Everyone would like to be born to magnificent parents in a rich house with beautiful furnishings, but this does not occur very often. We would like to be born with superior intelligence and with perfect bodies, but people cannot choose their own birth. When we first become aware of existence, we have already been born. That which establishes our responsibilities in life already exists, since at birth we are endowed with such attributes as the character of a thief or inherited mental illness. Human birth is neither fair nor just. What our birth is based upon and originated in can be thought to be karma or our past life. In other words, our birth is determined based on the karma accumulated in previous existences. This karma is called existence (form of rebirth). The self materializes from our birth; it did not exist before our birth. The self has its start with our birth, but even before the self comes into existence, karma decides our birth. Our birth is determined by various types of karma. Because of these relationships, when we delve into what existed when we were born, we discover that, "In dependence on existence, arises birth." That is, we can posit existence as the cause of birth.

### **The Creation of Karma: Attachment**

Existence is the cause of birth, which is based on the three worlds of desire, form, and absence of form, all three of which constitute existence. But why is karma created? The condition that creates karma is grasping or attachment. We are all born bearing various, different kinds of karma, but all karma is created by mankind's attachment. There are four different attachments. Basically, attachment is the very basis of our daily lives. That which causes the creation of

karma is our attachment to objects; in other words, our deeds themselves are based on attachment. And thus, karma is created. When we trace the conditions of existence, what existed when becoming arose, we find, "In dependence on attachment, arises existence."

What is man's attachment based on? From what does it originate? If we trace back the root of attachment in various ways, we discover desire. The heart is moved by various feelings: the passion of desire and that of hatred. Desire is the heart's seeking an object; hatred is the power of rejecting an object. Since hatred is the power to dislike an object, it is the opposite of desire. Therefore, the heart should not be able to harbor both emotions at the same time. Even though we think we should not let anything get on our nerves, if our anger is strong enough, we will lose our composure. So, at the same time, there are two hearts, one that becomes angry and the other that pacifies anger. Even if we think that we should not want anything that we see on display in a beautiful showroom window, the feeling of desire naturally arises in our hearts. That which moves the heart in this way has its root in passions, and the most basic passion is desire.

**In dependence on craving, arises attachment; in dependence on feeling, arises craving.**

What existed when attachment arose? If we trace the roots of the existence of attachment, we find that desire is the root of attachment: "In dependence on desire, arises attachment."

Next, if we ask why desire arises, we discover that the condition that causes desire is feeling. Feeling is partiality based on recognition. We can divide this into three categories: feeling suffering, feeling joy, feeling neither suffering nor joy. Since there is partiality for a particular object, desire for that object arises. The feeling of wanting something never arises when we know nothing about that object. While walking along the street, someone drops a lot of money. When another pedestrian sees that amount of money, he is immediately overcome by a desire for it. Since he has this impression, on this

occasion desire arises. If we search for the condition that gives rise to desire—what exists when desire arises—we find that it is feeling. “In dependence on feeling, arises desire.”

**In dependence on contact, arises partiality.**

If we were to be asked what causes the existence of feeling, we would have to answer “contact.” Feeling arises when we become conscious of something that contacts both the external world and the heart. For example, in the case of the money, we have the feeling that it is valuable as soon as we see it. This feeling is close to an emotional response, but it is our perception that establishes the contact between the heart and the object itself. Our judgements are based on feelings. Feelings—our partiality—arise without any clear recognition of the object. When we walk along the street at night, we may suddenly jump aside after only glancing at something out of the corner of our eyes. We may feel nervous or anxious even if we do not know exactly what it is. On the contrary, even before we clearly recognize that we desire something, we may subconsciously want it. Aversion and partiality are instinctive feelings. If we take a longer look after we have instinctively jumped aside, we will know whether it was a snake or just a rope that caused our response. Therefore, feeling exists before judgement. Before feeling, there is contact. If we were to trace the basis of what is called feeling—what exists when feeling arises—we would realize that when there is contact, there is feeling. In other words, feelings of suffering, feelings of joy, feelings of neither suffering nor joy arise when there is contact between the outside world and the heart.

**The Six Sense Spheres: The Six Entrances**

If we ask what causes the realization of this contact with the external world, the answer is the sensory organs, sensory capability, the six sense spheres. These are the six entrances. They are also called the six functions, but this means that our senses exist in six spheres. The first, the eye, is the sphere of seeing. The next, the ear, is hearing. Then

smelling odors, the nose. Tasting is the tongue. Knowing if something is hot or cold, smooth or rough, is the sphere of touch, the body. Last of all is mind or consciousness. The contact between the heart and the external world is based on the six sense spheres (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind). If we search for the basis of contact—what exists when contact arises—we discover the reason for contact is the six entrances.

Why do these six sense spheres exist? The six sense spheres exist within our physical body and mental state. If we trace the basis of the six entrances—what exists when the six entrances arise—we discover name and form. Name and form mean that the mental and the physical form indicates the body and name indicates the heart. Since the six entrances exist based on the heart and the body, the six sense spheres exist only when name and form exist.

### Consciousness and Name and Form

What exists when name and form arise? In our world of recognition, we are conscious of the spiritual and the physical. Furthermore, either the physical or the spiritual is the object of our understanding. Name and form exist based on the condition of recognition or consciousness. That which causes our understanding to evolve is called consciousness. In terms of consciousness, and also of name and form, we can claim that consciousness depends on name and form, since it comes into existence within the mental and physical world, but epistemologically speaking, we must assert that the existence of name and form is dependent on consciousness, since we detect and become aware of the mental and physical worlds by means of our consciousness. In this way, we can understand the interdependent relationship inherent both in consciousness and in name and form.

However, behind the very workings of the heart—decisions, motives, determination, and desire—is karma. Our heart is shaped individualistically because of karma, because of our particular character and heredity. If we pursue the relationship that conditions

consciousness, we find that when there are sense impressions, there is consciousness. Sense impressions are equivalent to karma. They are the power that characterizes our understanding as unique.

### The Core of Humanity: Ignorance

Why do sense impressions and karma exist? Why do human beings create karma at all? Our understanding is formed out of illusion. In other words, ignorance is the basis of consciousness. In Buddhism, it is said that “in dependence on ignorance, arises sense impressions”—we find ignorance the basis of sense impressions. Ignorance is equivalent to illusion.

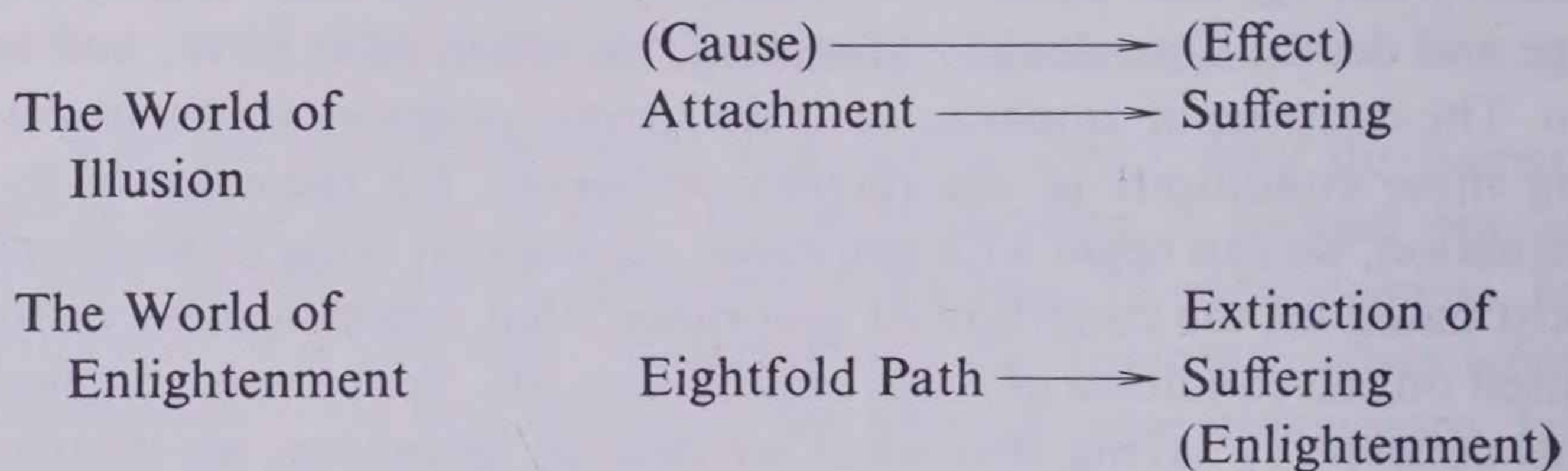
However, illusions, upon being detected, disappear completely. For example, we may see a man suffering in a dream. While we are dreaming, the suffering seems real, but once we become aware of the fact that it is only a dream, the suffering of the dream disappears. In other words, once we become aware of our dream as a dream, the only alternative lies in the disappearance of the dream. In the same way, if we understand that our very existence is illusory, our lives based on illusion will disappear.

The very act of discovery causes ignorance to disappear. Looking at it from the opposite perspective, we can say that as long as ignorance is not recognized as such, it will continue to exist. When we are trying to deceive people, they will be overcome by deception as long as they do not know that they are being deceived. However, once they understand that they have been deceived, they are no longer ruled by that deception. This is the same as ignorance disappearing once it has been discovered. Accordingly, there can be no deep examination of the basis of ignorance. It is not necessary to delve into the basis of ignorance. Ignorance can, therefore, be said to be the foundation of all suffering. Moreover, although ignorance is quite difficult to uncover, when we finally discover why ignorance exists in terms of conditional relations, we find the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination.

Thus, the doctrine of transmigration, which reaches ignorance by

tracing the order of causation back from old age and death, reveals the existence of illusion. What do we need to destroy in order to destroy old age and death? If we destroy birth, we will destroy old age and death; if we destroy becoming, we will destroy birth; and so on. The doctrine of annihilation is the arrival at ignorance by pursuing these conditions of destruction. However, for the sake of explanation, we can begin with ignorance, saying that sense impressions exist based on the condition of ignorance, that consciousness exists based on the condition of sense impressions, etc. We can also explain this concept by saying that when we destroy ignorance, we destroy sense impressions; when we destroy sense impressions, we destroy consciousness; and so forth. However, from the object of the law of dependent origination, which delves into the root of the existence of illusion, old age and death are our point of embarkation.

**Figure 1: The Four Noble Truths**



**Figure 2: The Four Hardships/Eight Hardships**

- Birth
- Old Age
- Sickness
- Death
- Parting from a loved one
- Meeting someone disliked
- Unfulfilled desire
- The five aggregates

**Figure 3: The Eightfold Path**

- Proper Meditation
- Proper Presence of Mind
- Proper Endeavor
- Proper Livelihood
- Proper Action
- Proper Words
- Proper Representation
- Proper View

**Figure 4: The Law of Dependent Origination**

- In dependence on Ignorance (*mumyō, avidyā*), arises Sense Impressions (*gyō, saṃskāra*)
- In dependence on Sense Impressions, arises Consciousness (*shiki, vijñāna*)
- In dependence on Consciousness, arises Name and Form (*myō-shiki, nāma-rūpa*)
- In dependence on Name and Form, arise the Six Sense Spheres (*rokunyū, ṣaḍ-āyatana*)
- In dependence on the Six Sense Spheres, arises Contact (*shoku, sparśa*)
- In dependence on Contact, arises Feeling (*ju, vedanā*)
- In dependence on Feeling, arises Craving (*ai, tṛṣṇā*)
- In dependence on Craving, arises Attachment (*shu, upādāna*)
- In dependence on Attachment, arises Existence (*u, bhava*)
- In dependence on Existence, arises Birth (*shō, jāti*)
- In dependence on Birth, arises Old Age and Death (*rōshi, jarā-marāṇa*)
- In dependence on Old Age and Death, arises Suffering



