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Rites of Blind Biwa Players

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Abstract: Not much is known about the past activities of blind biwa players from Kyushu. During the twentieth century a number of researchers and folklorists, such as Tanabe Hisao, Kimura Yūshō, Kimura Rirō, Nomura (Ga) Machiko, Narita Mamoru, Hyōdō Hiromi and Hugh de Ferranti, collected data on blind biwa players in various regions of Kyushu, made recordings of their performances and conducted detailed research on the history and nature of their tradition. However, despite these efforts to document and publicize the tradition of blind biwa players and its representatives and their repertory, it ended around the end of the twentieth century. The most extensively documented individual was Yamashika Yoshiyuki 山鹿良之 (1901–1996), one of the last representatives of the tradition of blind biwa players, who was known among researchers and folklorists for his skill in performing and an abundant repertory that included rites and a great many tales. Yamashika was born in 1901 in a farmer family in Ōhara of Tamana District, the present-day Kobaru of Nankan, Kumamoto Prefecture. Yamashika lost the sight in his left eye at the age of four. At the age of twenty-two Yamashika apprenticed with a biwa player named Ezaki Shotarō 江崎初太郎 from Amakusa. From his teacher Yamashika learned such tales as *Miyako Gassen Chikushi Kudari* 都合戦筑紫下り, *Kikuchi Kuzure* 菊池くづれ, *Kugami Gassen* くがみ合戦, *Owari Sōdō* 尾張騒動, *Sumidagawa* 隅田川 and *Mochi Gassen* 餅合戦. After three years Yamashika returned home. He was not capable of doing much farm work because his eyesight had deteriorated further by then. Yamashika decided to become a professional *biwa* player and dedicate his life to storytelling. However, in order to do so he had to increase the number of pieces in his repertory. For about a year Yamashika followed a performer named Mori Yoichi 森与一. Yamashika learned from him such tales as *Ichi no Tani* 一の谷, *Ko-Atsumori* 小敦盛, *Azekakehime* あぜかけ姫, *Shuntokumaru* 俊徳丸 and *Oguri Hangan* 小栗判官. Yamashika learned *hashira-date* 柱立て, which is performed during the *Watamashi* わたまし, from a performer named

Original Title: Watamashi わたまし, by Yamashika Yoshiyuki 山鹿良之

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Kyōbutsu 教仏, and *sanjū-butsu* (or *sanjū hotoke*) 三十仏 from Sakamoto Saichi 坂本さいち. Yamashika kept learning stories and pieces for ritual performances from other biwa players and ritualists throughout his early performing life. From around 1970, he became one of the most popular biwa players from Kyushu due to his many public performances organized by local and central organizations, and publications that elucidated some aspects of the performer's life and the tradition he represented and practiced throughout his life. The translation of one ritual piece from his repertory, *Watamashi* わたまし, is presented in this paper.

Keywords: biwa, building, purification, buddhas and bodhisattvas, deities, pacification

1 Introduction to *Watamashi*

Blind biwa players from Kyushu performed rites, such as *Watamashi*, *Jijin-barai* 地神祓い (rite for the earth deity) and *Kōjin-barai* 荒神祓い (rite for the fire or oven deity). These rites were performed in order to pacify a deity or spirit, and in the past played an important role in the life of rural society.^{1,2,3}

Watamashi is the rite for new houses and buildings. The origin of *Watamashi* is not clearly understood. Some blind biwa players have given an explanation that *Watamashi* should be written with the second character of the name of the instrument they use, *bi-wa* 琵琶, followed by the character *tamashi* 魂, meaning the spirit.⁴ The narrative part of the rite is comprised of the following elements: Three short narratives, *misogi-harai* 禊祓い, *rokkon-barai* 六根祓い and *kan no maki* 剣の巻, are recited at the beginning of the rite. They are followed by a threefold recitation of the *Heart Sutra*. The section of the *Watamashi* rite after the recitation of the *Heart Sutra* can be divided into four parts, *iwato-biraki* 岩戸開き, *yashiki no ji-gatame* 屋敷の地固め, *hashira-date* 柱立て and *sanjū-butsu* 三十仏 (also called *getsu-wari hi-wari* 月わり日わり).⁵ Unlike the *Heart Sutra*, which is chanted in Sino-Japanese, *misogi-*

¹ In 1973 the tradition received designation as an Intangible Cultural Asset.

² For more detailed information on Yamashika's life and repertory, see Nomura (Ga) 1972, 2007; Hyōdō 1991, 1993, 1999, 2000, 2009; de Ferranti 1997, 2009.

³ For a more detailed description of the rites, see de Ferranti 2009; Ga 1972; Kimura 1994; Nomura 2007.

⁴ de Ferranti 2009: 13; Kimura 2007: 12, 51.

⁵ Ga 1972: 30.

harai, rokkon-barai, kan no maki, iwato-biraki, yashiki no ji-gatame, hashira-date and *sanjū-butsu* are in Japanese.

Watamashi starts with the myth of creation of the Japanese islands, and is followed by the myth about Amaterasu-ōmikami⁶ and the heavenly cave. These two stories are well known from the *Kojiki*⁷ and *Nihon Shoki*.⁸ Significantly, the myth about Amaterasu-ōmikami and the heavenly cave is reinterpreted in *Watamashi*: the instrument used by the biwa players plays a significant role in this version of the story. Amaterasu-ōmikami is lured out of the cave with the help of the biwa brought by Benzaiten.⁹ The myth is followed by a description of the biwa: each part of the instrument is interpreted in relation to the myth and its role in the ritual performance. The mythological part of the performance ends with a short passage, a sort of blessing. The part of the performance up to this point is referred to as *iwato-biraki*. This part is followed by *yashiki no ji-gatame* and *hashira-date*. The former describes the process of building the house from the initial steps, and the latter introduces all the deities and bodhisattvas who protect houses. The next part is known as *sanjū-butsu*. It names the protectors of all the days and months of the year. The *Watamashi* performance ends with a prayer for protection from all possible misfortunes, and the recitation of a mantra for accomplishment, *on kenba ya kenba ya sowaka* (Skt. aum kenba kenba svāhā).

The translation presented in this paper is based on a text transcription of *Watamashi* as performed by Yamashika Yoshiyuki in 1963.¹⁰ The recording was made in July 1963 under the supervision of Kimura Yūshō and Tanabe Hisao for the Kumamoto Municipal Museum, and was transcribed by Kimura Rirō for the 2007 Japan Traditional Cultures Foundation CD.

⁶ Amaterasu-ōmikami 天照大神 or 天照大御神, also known as Tenshō-kōtaijin 天照皇大神, is the major deity of the Shinto pantheon, the goddess of the sun.

⁷ The *Kojiki* 古事記 is the oldest extant chronicle in Japan, recorded from oral histories by Ō no Yasumaro 太安麻呂 (?–723) at the request of Empress Genmei 元明天皇 (661–721), and completed in 712.

⁸ The *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀 is the second oldest chronicle of classical Japanese history. The *Nihon Shoki* was finished in 720 under the editorial supervision of Prince Toneri 舍人親王 (676–735).

⁹ Benzaiten 弁財天 (Skt. Sarasvati; Ch. Biancaitian) is the Buddhist goddess of literature, music, eloquence, wealth and femininity. She is often depicted holding the biwa.

¹⁰ Another text of *Watamashi* based on the recording of Yamashika made by Nomura (Ga) between 1970 and 1972 was used for reference. The recording was transcribed by Nomura (Ga) and included in her 2007 *Higobiwa katari-shū*.

2 Translation

In the old days Japan was called Ashihara-no-kuni.¹¹ Standing on the heavenly bridge of Ama-no-ukihashi,¹² Izanagi¹³ churned the sea with a white spear. One of the drops congealed and was called Great Japan. Awaji-shima¹⁴ is the first of all the islands, Yamato¹⁵ is the first of all the provinces, Yamato is the first of all the counties. There were sixty-six provinces and five hundred and twenty-eight counties back then. In those days, in the seventh generation of the heavenly gods and the fifth generation of the earth gods, a great disaster occurred. Amaterasu-ōmikami hid herself in a cave of Hyūga Province¹⁶ in Tsukushi.¹⁷ And the sixty six provinces plunged into complete darkness. Time passed by, and three years and three months in complete darkness flew by like an arrow. All the gods and bodhisattvas of all the shrines gathered there on the heavenly bridge of Ama-no-ukihashi, starting with Izanagi and Izanami,¹⁸ Ame-no-koyane,¹⁹ Tenshō-kōtaijin of Ise,²⁰ Kasuga-daimyōjin, Kamo-myōjin,²¹

11 Ashihara-no-kuni 葦原国 is an ancient name for Japan which appears in Japanese mythology.

12 Ama-no-ukihashi 天の浮橋 is a bridge between Earth and Heaven which appears in Japanese mythology.

13 Izanagi 伊邪那岐 or 伊弉諾, is a male deity in Japanese mythology. With his spouse and sister Izanami he created the islands of Japan and gave birth to numerous deities. The name of the deity is not mentioned in this part of the original text. However, the name was added here, since the scene of creation of the islands is commonly known.

14 Awaji-shima 淡路島 is an island in the eastern part of the Seto Inland Sea between the islands of Honshu and Shikoku.

15 Yamato Province 大和の国 was an old province located in the present-day Nara Prefecture.

16 Hyūga Province 日向の国 was an old province located in the present-day Miyazaki and Kagoshima Prefectures.

17 Tsukushi 筑紫 is one of the old names of Kyushu.

18 Izanami 伊邪那美 or 伊弉冉 is a female deity in Japanese mythology. With her spouse and brother Izanagi she created the islands of Japan and gave birth to numerous deities.

19 Ame-no-koyane 天兒屋 is a male deity in Japanese mythology, one of the deities of Kasuga Grand Shrine in Nara. He is also known as Kasuga-gongen 春日権現 (Avatar of the Buddha of Kasuga Grand Shrine) or Kasuga-daimyōjin 春日大明神 (Great Deity of Kasuga Grand Shrine). According to the myth, when Amaterasu-ōmikami hid herself in the heavenly cave he recited a *norito* 祝詞 (words or a prayer addressed to a deity).

20 See footnote 6. Ise 伊勢 is a city in Mie Prefecture. Ise is home to Ise Grand Shrine, Ise-jingū 伊勢神宮, a Shinto shrine dedicated to Amaterasu-ōmikami. Tenshō-kōtaijin is one of the names of Amaterasu-ōmikami. Apparently, the appearance of the name among other deities in this part of the narrative is a mistake made by the performer.

21 Kamo-myōjin 加茂明神 or 賀茂明神 (Deity of Kamo Shrine), could refer to Kamowakeikazuchi 賀茂別雷, a deity of thunder. Kamo Shrine, Kamo-jinja 賀茂神社, is a Shinto sanctuary complex

Tajikarao-no-mikoto²² and Sarutahiko-daimyōjin.²³ They performed *chiyo-no-mikagura*²⁴ for three days and three nights, but still the cave did not open. At that time Benzaiten brought an instrument from the heavens. Using this instrument she played twelve melodies. The sound of it was heard in the cave. Amaterasu-ōmikami thought: “Such a rare timbre. What could that be?” And when she opened the heavenly cave a little bit and peeped out, Tajikarao-no-mikoto moved forward carrying on his shoulders a stringed instrument and welcomed her, taking her hand and saying: “Please, save our country again!” Enticing her out Sarutahiko-daimyōjin forced the heavenly cave open, and she had no choice but to surrender. All shining, she came out of the cave holding the sun and the moon, with Gattenshi²⁵ to the left and Nittenshi²⁶ to the right.

The cave was successfully opened. The instrument that had descended from heaven was called the biwa. The biwa is an embodiment of Amaterasu-ōmikami with the symbol of Gattenshi on its left side and that of Nittenshi on its right side. The five finger positions represent the twenty five virtues of Kannon.²⁷ The tuning pegs are a representation of the heavenly gods, and the lower bridge

in Kyoto centered on two shrines, Kamigamo Shrine, Kamigamo-jinja 上賀茂神社 also known as 賀茂別雷神社, Shrine of Kamowakeikazuchi), and Shimogamo Shrine, Shimogamo-jinja 下賀茂神社, also known as 賀茂御親神社, Shrine of the Parents). The former is a sanctuary of Kamowakeikazuchi, while the latter is that of his mother Tamayori-hime 玉依姫 and her father Kamotaketsumi 賀茂建角身.

22 Tajikarao-no-mikoto 手力男命 or 手力雄命 (Deity of Male Strength), is the deity of physical strength in Japanese mythology. He appears in *Watamashi* as Tajikarao-no-mikoto; however, his name often contains one more character *ama* 天 (heaven). Thus the deity's name is Ama-no-tajikarao-no-mikoto 天手力男命 (Heavenly Deity of Male Strength). In the myth about Amaterasu-ōmikami and the heavenly cave, Tajikarao-no-mikoto pulls Amaterasu-ōmikami out of the cave, when she peeps out intrigued by the sounds.

23 Sarutahiko-daimyōjin 猿田彦大明神 is one of the names of Sarutahiko-ōkami 猿田毘古大神 or 猿田彦大神 (Great Deity Field-monkey Prince). He is often viewed as a deity of crossroads.

24 *Chiyo-no-mikagura* 千代の御神楽 or *chiyo-no-kagura* 千代の神楽 refers to the rite described in the myth in which the goddess Ame-no-uzume 天鈿女命 performs the shamanic-possession dance in front of the Heavenly Cave. *Chiyo-no-mikagura* can be translated as “*kagura* of a thousand ages” or “eternal *kagura*.”

25 Gattenshi 月天子 (Skt. Candra) is one of the Twelve Devas, the gods of twelve directions (four quarters, four semi-quarters, up and down, and the sun and the moon) in Buddhism. Gattenshi personifies the moon.

26 Nittenshi 日天子 (Skt. Surya) is one of the Twelve Devas personifying the sun.

27 Kannon 観音 is a short form of Kanzeon 観世音 (Skt. Avalokiteśvara). In Buddhism Kannon is the bodhisattva (Japanese *bosatsu* 菩薩, an individual who postpones his own buddhahood until he helped others) of infinite compassion and mercy and is one of the most popular figures in Buddhist literature. Kannon is often depicted as both male and female, which is why Kannon can also be translated as “Goddess of Mercy.”

takes the form of the rock before the heavenly cave. The soundboard is in the shape of the Earth, and the four strings cleanse the impurities of the four seasons of the year. The first string purifies the three months of spring at the beginning of the year, the second string removes evil spirits from the three months of summer, the third string removes evil spirits from the three months of autumn, and the fourth string keeps away all the troubles of the months of winter. In the same way the twelve strings of the zither are a representation of the twelve months of the year. And the last string is for the leap month. The three picks for playing the zither represent the virtue of Dainichi-daishō-fudō-myō-ō,²⁸ Sanbō-daikōjin.²⁹ From the very beginning of the era of human sovereigns, successfully, acting in accordance with the ethics of the Three Relationships and the Five Constants,³⁰ they ruled properly, regarding everything and everyone under the heavens. The blessings of the sovereigns have shone on Yashima³¹ ever since. The capital of the Moon had a bright future. The era was blessed.

The spring is in the East. This is the beginning of all things. The summer is in the South, where the Sun travels and the fragrance of irises hanging from the eaves can be sensed. The autumn is in the Western sky, the Milky Way and the end post, *tsukiganna*³² that was shaped after the union of the Moon and the Sun.

28 Dainichi-daishō-fudō-myō-ō 大日大聖不動明王 or Fudō-myō-ō 不動明王 (Skt. Acala Vidyārājā, Immovable Wisdom King), is one of the Five Wisdom Kings (Japanese *myō-ō* 明王) in Buddhism. The Wisdom Kings are wrathful deities, guardians of Buddhism, and are manifestations of buddhas. Dainichi-daishō-fudōmyō-ō is a manifestation of Dainichi-nyōrai 大日如来 (Skr. Mahāvairocana), the Buddha of the sun and the origin of the universe. The name of the king was transcribed as 大日大小不動明王, presumably by mistake.

29 Sanbō-daikōjin 三宝大荒神, Sanbō-kōjin 三宝荒神 or Kōjin 荒神 (Rough Deity), is the deity who protects the Three Treasures (the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha) in Buddhism. Kōjin is venerated as the deity of fire and the hearth.

30 Kimura transcribed this part in katakana as *sankō gojō no ki* サンコゴジョウのキ. However, the proper Chinese characters for this part could be *sankō gojō no i* 三綱五常の意. *Sankō gojō* 三綱五常 (the Three Relationships and the Five Constants) is a term expressing the Confucian ethics. *Sankō* (the Three Relationships) denotes three of the five principle relationships people are involved in: ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife. *Gojō* (the Five Constants) denotes the five most important virtues in Confucianism: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity. Thus *sankō goshō no i o arawashi* 三綱五常の意を表し can be translated as “acting in accordance with the ethics of the Three Relationships and the Five Constants.”

31 Yashima 八島 or 八洲 (Eight Islands) is an ancient name for Japan.

32 *Kanna* 鉋 is a type of carpentry tool, a general term for different types of planes. Kimura transcribed *tsukiganna* as 月ガンナ. However, the proper characters for the tool could be 突鉋 where the character 突 reflects the tool's function. There are other tools, such as *dōtsukikanna* 導突鉋 and *koanatsukikanna* 小穴突鉋, with the same character 突.

May *yariganna*³³ disperse the clouds. The winter is in the North. May the water wheel keep spinning! The water is the true treasure of the house. At the very beginning the incantation for the building should be uttered, a site of the gods and a place of the Buddhist temple, seven treasures and eight buildings. There should be nine storehouses built. And the site should be roped off in all four directions, the permission of Jijin³⁴ and Kōjin should be received. The upper ground should be placed below and the ground below should be placed above, the foundation of the building should be laid very carefully in two layers. There should be firm stones placed at the bottom, the site should be roped off, and the ground should be leveled properly. The trees should be cut and brought to the place from the mountains. Then a master carpenter should be invited who should be received as Shōtoku-taishi³⁵ himself and worshiped as the god of building. Then the master carpenter should worship the god of trees. The master chooses a lucky day. If the day is lucky, then a lot of workers are invited. After *gohei*³⁶ are shaken in the lucky direction, and the rituals are performed, at once they set up the pillars. The scene is very impressive. The pillars, each already cut, are measured, and the lines are drawn. The pillars made with extreme care are set up then; the first pillar is the central one, *daikoku-bashira*.³⁷ It is protected by Gattenshi. The second one is protected by Nittenshi. The third one is protected by all the Buddhas of the three worlds. The fourth is protected by one of the Four Heavenly Kings, Jikoku-sansha-daigongen,³⁸ the guardian of the house and prosperity in trade. The fifth is protected by Gosha-nyorai.³⁹ The

33 *Yariganna* 槍鉋 (spear plane) is a type of plane with a long spear-like handle. A rhetorical device is used in *kumo wa sonata ni yariganna* 雲はそなたにヤリガンナ (“May *yariganna* disperse the clouds”). “Yari,” a part of *yariganna*, in this context can be translated as “disperse.”

34 Jijin 地神, Kenrō-jijin 堅牢地神, Jishin 地心, or Jichin 地鎮 (Earth Deity) is the deity of all the earth.

35 Shōtoku-taishi 聖徳太子 (Prince of Sainted Virtues, 574–622) is a real historical figure, a regent and a politician of the Asuka period in Japan. He is an author of Japan’s first constitution, the Jūshichijō-kenpō 十七条憲法. Shōtoku-taishi is famous for establishing a centralized government and protection of Buddhism.

36 *Gohei* 御幣 are stripes of white, silver or golden paper used in purification rituals.

37 *Daikoku-bashira* 大黒柱 is the pillar set in the center of the traditional house.

38 Kimura transcribed this part as Jigoku 地獄. However, the name should probably be transcribed as Jikoku-sansha-daigongen 持国三社大権現 (Great Avatar of the Three Shrines, Jikoku). Jikokuten 持国天 (Skt. Dhṛtarāṣṭra) is one of the Four Heavenly Kings, protectors of the world and fighters of evil. Jikoku is the guardian of the East.

39 Kimura transcribed the word as Gosha-nyorai 五車如来, while Nomura transcribed it as Gosha-nyorai ゴシヤ如来. We suggest that it could be transcribed as Gochi-nyorai 五智如来 (Skt. Tathāgata) meaning the five buddhas, usually identified as Vairochana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, and Amoghasiddhi, representing the five wisdoms.

sixth is protected by the six-armed Kōjin. The seventh pillar is protected by Ōkuninushi-no-mikoto⁴⁰ and Yamatobyō-bosatsu⁴¹ The eighth is protected by Kannon of Hase Temple.⁴² The ninth is protected by Sansha-gongen of Kumano⁴³ of Kii.⁴⁴ The tenth pillar is protected by Seishi⁴⁵ and Kannon. The eleventh is protected by the eleven-headed Kannon who is deified at Aso Shrine⁴⁶ in Higo.⁴⁷ The twelfth pillar is protected by twelve Yakushi.⁴⁸ The thirteenth is protected by Sanbō-daikōjin. The fourteenth is protected by Imasato-no-kami. The fifteenth is protected by Suijin.⁴⁹ The sixteenth pillar is the *tokonoma*⁵⁰ pillar. It is protected by the gods of the Three Great Shrines,⁵¹ Tenshō-kōtaijin of Ise, Kasuga-daimyōjin. Besides that the lower pillars and middle pillars are protected by many other gods and bodhisattvas. Then the girders and ridgepoles are set, joints are fixed, in a prayer for the prosperity of future generations long ridgepoles are set, and the golden laths and rafters are nailed up. The joints, ridgepoles, laths and rafters, everything is protected by the

40 Ōkuninushi-no-mikoto 大国主命 (Great Land Master) is the deity of magic and medicine in Japanese mythology.

41 Kimura transcribed the name as Yamatobyō-bosatsu ヤマトビョウ菩薩, while Nomura transcribed it as Ōyama-fudō-myō-bosatsu 大山不動明菩薩. It is hard to identify the name in the recording. The only part of the name that can be clearly identified is “bosatsu” 菩薩.

42 Hase Temple, or Hasedera 長谷寺, is the main temple of the Buzan sect of Shingon Buddhism. The temple is located in Sakurai, Nara Prefecture.

43 Sansha-gongen 三社権現 (Avatar of the Three Shrines) could be referring to the deity or deities venerated in the Kumano Sanzan shrine complex 熊野三山 of Wakayama Prefecture. The shrine complex includes Kumano Hongū Taisha 熊野本宮大社, Kumano Hayatama Taisha 熊野速玉大社 and Kumano Nachi Taisha 熊野那智大社.

44 Kii, Kii-no-kuni 紀伊の国 was an old province located in the present-day Wakayama and Mie Prefectures.

45 Seishi 勢至 is a short form of Seishi-bosatsu 勢至菩薩 (Skt. Mahāsthāmaprāpta). Seishi-bosatsu is the bodhisattva who enlightens the world with wisdom.

46 Aso Shrine, Aso-no-miya 阿蘇の宮 or Aso-jinja 阿蘇神社 is a shrine in Kumamoto Prefecture.

47 Higo, Higo-no-kuni 肥後の国, was an old province located in the present-day Kumamoto Prefecture.

48 Yakushi, Yakushi-nyorai 薬師如来 (Skt. Bhaiṣajyaguru) is the Buddha of healing and medicine. Yakushi-nyorai is the lord of the eastern Lapis Lazuli Pure Land.

49 Suijin 水神 or Mizu-no-kami 水の神 is the deity of water, springs and wells.

50 *Tokonoma* 床の間 is a special built-in space in a Japanese style room in which items, such as flowers and hanging scrolls, are displayed.

51 The Three Great Shrines, Sansha 三社, is the general term often used for the three famous shrines: Ise Shrine, Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine (Iwashimizu-hachiman-gū 石清水八幡宮), and Kasuga Shrine (or Kamo Shrine).

big and small Tengu of Kurama.⁵² Then the roof is lined. Ten tiles turn into a hundred, a hundred tiles turn into a thousand, a thousand turns into ten thousand, in this way tiles are spread in all directions. And the construction is successfully completed. There are three ink pad treasures symbolizing peace, there is an uncountable quantity of saw dust and beach sand. How interesting this all is. *Muromuku* near *Murasan*,⁵³ from the East comes Fuku-no-kami⁵⁴ and protects the prosperity of the house. From the South comes Kōjin, who drives away all the evil spirits in a good direction and protects the safety of the family. From the West comes Imasato-no-kami and protects it from fire. From the North comes Suijin and protects the safety of the family. And in the middle Dainichi-daishō-fudō-myō-ō and Sanbō-daikōjin are present.

At the very beginning here gather the whole family starting with the carpenter. And when the sake cup is brought, and the framework of the house is set up, Shichifukujin⁵⁵ enter. First enters Daikokuten⁵⁶ with Ebisu⁵⁷ by his side, then Jurōjin⁵⁸ dances in, then Hotei,⁵⁹ Fukurokuju⁶⁰ and Bishamonten.⁶¹ Benzaiten appears in *jūnihitoe*⁶² and red *hakama*,⁶³ playing the biwa as she drives away the

52 *Tengu* 天狗 are mountain spirits. There are two types of *tengu* described: *karasu-tengu* and *konoha-tengu*. *Karasu-tengu* has a beak and crow feathers, and *konoha-tengu* has a bright red human face and long bulbous nose. Kurama-no-tengu 鞍馬の天狗 (Tengu of Kurama) is worshipped on Mt. Kurama, Kyoto.

53 Kimura transcribed this part as *murasan chikaku muromuku* ムラサン近くムロムク, and Nomura transcribed it as *sorasan chikaku moromoku* ソラサンー近くモロモク。The meaning of the words cannot be identified in either case.

54 Fuku-no-kami 福の神, Fukuten 福天 or Fukujin 福神 is the deity of wealth.

55 Shichifukujin 七福神 (the Seven Gods of Good Fortune) are often represented travelling together in the ship *takarabune* 宝船 (treasure ship). The seven are: Benzaiten, Bishamon, Daikoku, Ebisu, Fukurokuju, Hotei, and Jurōjin.

56 Daikokuten 大黒天 (Skt. Mahākāla) is the deity of prosperity depicted as a jolly man with a wooden mallet. Daikokuten evolved from the Buddhist deity Mahakala and is the father of Ebisu.

57 Ebisu 恵比寿 or 夷 is the deity of luck and good fortune, patron of fisherman. He is often depicted holding a fishing rod and a large red sea bream.

58 Jurōjin 寿老人 is the deity of longevity. He is often depicted as an old man with white hair.

59 Hotei 布袋 is the deity of good fortune, serenity and generosity. He is depicted as a fat, jolly, bald priest.

60 Fukurokuju 福祿寿 is the deity of longevity and wisdom. He is often depicted as a jolly small-statured man with a long head.

61 Bishamonten 毘沙門天 (Skt. Vaiśravaṇa) is one of the Four Heavenly Kings, the protector of the Buddhist law. It is believed that by protecting the Buddhist law he brings happiness. He is often depicted as an armored warrior carrying a halberd and a small pagoda.

62 *Jūnihitoe* 十二単 is an extremely elegant multi-layered type of traditional Japanese clothing worn by court-ladies in Japan starting from the Heian period (794–1185).

63 *Hakama* 袴 is a skirt-shaped piece of traditional Japanese clothing.

evil spirits. This spreads to the world so that even the evergreen pine becomes more vivid in color. The unfolded fan is wide, and if you look at the gathering, in the direction of the North West there can be seen the dance of a crane and a tortoise. The crane and tortoise bring rice, gold and treasures from the sky. The treasure that has fallen will be stored in a storehouse for the prosperity of future generations, of the house and of the trade.

At the very beginning the evil spirits were driven away, and the prayer was offered. From the very beginning, at the beginning of a year, at the beginning of a month, the purification ritual is held in the direction of twenty-eight heavenly mansions against misfortunes of the twelve months and hardships of the three hundred and sixty-five days. From the very beginning the first day is protected by a Japanese local deity, the manifestation of Tenshō-kōtaijin of Ise. The second day is protected by Nentō-butsu,⁶⁴ Hachiman-daibosatsu,⁶⁵ the third by Tahō-butsu,⁶⁶ Kama-no-gongen,⁶⁷ the fourth is protected by Ashuku-butsu,⁶⁸ Kasuga-daimyōjin. The fifth is protected by Miroku-bosatsu,⁶⁹ Gosha-daimyōjin,⁷⁰ the sixth by Nimantōmyō-butsu,⁷¹ Matsunoo-daimyōjin,⁷² the seventh day by Sanmantōmyō-butsu,⁷³ Gion-no-ōyashiro,⁷⁴ the eighth day by Yakushi-nyorai, Yahagi-daimyōjin⁷⁵

64 Nentō-butsu 燃灯仏 (Skt. Dīpaṃkara) is one of the buddhas of the past.

65 Hachiman-daibosatsu 八幡大菩薩 (Hachiman Great Bodhisattva) or Hachiman-jin 八幡神 (God Hachiman) is the Japanese deity of archery and war.

66 Tahō-nyorai 多宝如来 (Skt. Prabhūtaratna) is the Buddha residing in the World of Treasure Purity in the East.

67 Kama-no-gongen was transcribed by Kimura as カマノ権現 and by Nomura as 釜の権現. However, it could be Kamo-no-gongen 賀茂の権現 referring to Kamo-myōjin 賀茂明神.

68 Ashuku-butsu 阿闍仏 or Ashuku-nyorai 阿闍如来 (Skt. Akṣobhya) is one of the Five Wisdom Buddhas residing in the Land of Joy, Abhirati, located in the East.

69 Miroku-bosatsu 弥勒菩薩 (Skt. Maitreya) is the future Buddha, the bodhisattva residing in the Tushita heaven. It is believed that he will appear when the law is completely forgotten and become a successor of the present Buddha.

70 Gosha-daimyōjin 五社大明神 could be referring to the deity worshipped in Gosha Shrine (Gosha-jinja 五社神社) located in Shizuoka Prefecture.

71 Nimantōmyō-butsu 二萬燈明仏 (Buddha of Twenty Thousand Lights) is one of the buddhas, the one who radiates the light of wisdom.

72 Matsunoo-daimyōjin 松尾大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Matsunoo Great Shrine (Matsunoo-taisha 松尾大社) located in Kyoto.

73 Sanmantōmyō-butsu 三萬燈明仏 (Buddha of Thirty Thousand Lights) is one of the buddhas, the one who radiates the light of wisdom.

74 Gion-no-ōyashiro 祇園の大社 refers to the deity worshipped in Yasaka Shrine (Yasaka-jinja 八坂神社) or Gion Shrine (Gion-jinja 祇園神社) in Kyoto.

75 Yahagi-daimyōjin 矢作大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Yahagi Shrine (Yahagi-jinja 矢作神社) in Aichi Prefecture.

of Mikawa,⁷⁶ the ninth day by Daichōchi-butsu,⁷⁷ Tachikawa-daimyōjin⁷⁸ of Wakasa.⁷⁹ The tenth day is protected by the manifestation of Nikkō-butsu⁸⁰ and Gakkō-butsu,⁸¹ Kehi-daimyōjin⁸² of Echizen,⁸³ the eleventh day by Usa-hachiman-daibosatsu⁸⁴ of Buzen,⁸⁵ the twelfth day by Nanshō-butsu,⁸⁶ Ōkama-daigongen⁸⁷ of Hōki,⁸⁸ the thirteenth day by Kokūzō-bosatsu,⁸⁹ Onitake-daigongen⁹⁰ of Inaba,⁹¹

76 Mikawa (Mikawa-no-kuni 三河の国) was an old province located in the present-day Aichi Prefecture.

77 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Daichōchi-butsu ダイチョウチ仏. Nomura transcribed it as Daitsūchishō-butsu 大通智勝仏. Daitsūchishō-butsu 大通智勝仏 (Skt. Mahābhijñā-jnānābhīhū) is the Buddha who appears in the *Lotus Sutra*. All of his sixteen sons preached the *Lotus Sutra* and eventually became buddhas.

78 Tachikawa-daimyōjin 立川大明神 refers to the deity worshipped at some shrine in Wakasa. However, the shrine has not been identified.

79 Wakasa (Wakasa-no-kuni 若狭の国) was an old province located in the present-day Fukui Prefecture.

80 Nikkō-butsu 日光仏 or Nikkō-bosatsu 日光菩薩 (Skt. Suryāprabhā) is the bodhisattva who illuminates the world as sunlight.

81 Gakkō-butsu 月光仏 or Gakkō-bosatsu 月光菩薩 (Skt. Candraprabhā) is the bodhisattva who illuminates the world as moonlight.

82 Kehi-daimyōjin 気比大明神 refers to the deity worshiped in Kehi Shrine (Kehi-jingū 気比神宮) in Fukui Prefecture.

83 Echizen (Echizen-no-kuni 越前の国) was an old province located in the present-day Fukui Prefecture.

84 Usa-hachiman-daibosatsu 宇佐八幡大菩薩 is the Hachiman worshipped in Usa Shrine (Usa-jingū 宇佐神宮) in Ōita Prefecture.

85 Buzen (Buzen-no-kuni 豊前の国) was an old province located in the present-day Fukuoka and Ōita Prefectures.

86 Nanshō-butsu 難勝仏 is one of the buddhas.

87 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Okama-daigongen オカマ大権現 and as Okama-daigongen お釜大権現 by Nomura. However, it could be Ōgamiyama-daigongen 大神山大権現 the deity worshipped in Ōgamiyama Shrine (Ōgamiyama-jinja 大神山神社) in Tottori Prefecture.

88 Hōki (Hōki-no-kuni 伯耆の国) was an old province located in the present-day Tottori Prefecture.

89 Kokūzō-bosatsu 虚空蔵菩薩 (Skt. Ākāśagarbha) is the bodhisattva whose wisdom and virtue are limitless as space itself.

90 This part was transcribed by both Kimura and Nomura as Onitake-daigongen オニタケ大権現. However, it could be Ōe-daigongen 大江大権現 the deity worshipped in Ōe Shrine (Ōe-jinja 大江神社) in Tottori Prefecture.

91 Inaba (Inaba-no-kuni 因幡の国) was an old province located in the present-day Tottori Prefecture.

the fourteenth day by Fugen-bosatsu,⁹² Torisu-hachiman-jinja⁹³ of Suwa.⁹⁴ The fifteenth day is protected by the manifestation of Amida-nyorai,⁹⁵ and his manifestation Kumano-sansha-daigongen of Kii, the sixteenth day by Darani-butsu,⁹⁶ Takahashi-hachiman-gū⁹⁷ of Kai,⁹⁸ the seventeenth day by Jūki-butsu,⁹⁹ Itsukushima-daimyōjin¹⁰⁰ of Aki,¹⁰¹ the eighteenth day by Kanzeon-bosatsu,¹⁰² Chichibusenge-no-daimyōjin of Musashino,¹⁰³ the nineteenth day by Nikkō-butsu, Sumiyoshi-gosha-daimyōjin¹⁰⁴ of

92 Fugen-bosatsu 普賢菩薩 (Skt. Samantabhadra) is the bodhisattva symbolizing virtue of practice.

93 This part is transcribed by both Kimura and Nomura as Torisu-hachiman-jinja トリス八幡神社. Torisu-hachiman-jinja refers to the shrine where the deity is worshipped. However, it was impossible to identify the shrine.

94 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Suwa 諏訪 and as Suō 周防 by Nomura. Suwa-no-kuni 諏訪の国 was an old province located in the present-day Nagano Prefecture, while Suō-no-kuni 周防の国 was an old province located in the present-day Yamaguchi Prefecture.

95 Amida-nyorai 阿弥陀如来 or Amida-butsu 阿弥陀仏 (Skt. Amitābha) is the Buddha of the Pure Land.

96 The name was transcribed by Kimura as Daramuni-butsu ダラムニブツ and as Daramuni-butsu 陀羅牟尼仏 by Nomura. The name of the Buddha could be Darani-butsu 陀羅尼仏. *Dharani* is a term for a type of ritual speech in Buddhism.

97 This part is transcribed by Kimura as Takahashi-hachiman-gū 高橋八幡宮 and as Takahashi-hachiman-gū タカハシ八幡宮 by Nomura. Takahashi-hachiman-gū refers to the deity worshipped in some shrine. However, it was impossible to identify the shrine.

98 Kai (Kai-no-kuni 甲斐の国) was an old province located in the present-day Yamanashi Prefecture.

99 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Jūki-butsu ジュウキ仏. Nomura transcribed it as 龍樹仏, however, adding the same reading. Ryūju-butsu, Ryūju, or Ryūju-bosatsu 龍樹菩薩 (Skt. Nāgārjuna) was one of the followers of the Buddha Shakyamuni. He is considered to have contributed to the development of Mahayana Buddhism.

100 Itsukushima-daimyōjin 厳島大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Itsukushima Shrine (Itsukushima-jinja 厳島神社) in Hiroshima Prefecture.

101 Aki (Aki-no-kuni 安芸の国) was an old province located in the present-day Hiroshima Prefecture.

102 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Chichibusenge-no-daimyōjin 秩父セングの大明神. Nomura transcribed it as Chichibushinge-no-daimyōjin 秩父シングの大明神. Chichibusenge-no-daimyōjin refers to the deity worshipped in Chichibu Shrine (Chichibu-jinja 秩父神社) in Saitama Prefecture.

103 Musashi (Musashi-no-kuni 武蔵の国) was an old province located in the present-day Tokyo, Saitama and Kanagawa Prefectures.

104 Sumiyoshi-gosha-daimyōjin 住吉五社大明神 refers to the deity or deities worshipped in Gosha Shrine (Gosha-jinja 五社神社) in Osaka Prefecture. Sumiyoshi 住吉 is the generic name

Settsu.¹⁰⁵ The twentieth day is protected by Gakkō-butsu, and his manifestations Shiogama-gosha-ōgama-rokusha-daimyōjin¹⁰⁶ of Mutsu,¹⁰⁷ the twenty-first day by Mujin'i-butsu,¹⁰⁸ Hagurosan-daigongen¹⁰⁹ of Dewa¹¹⁰ province, the twenty-second day by Semui-butsu,¹¹¹ Ama-no-hashidate-daimyōjin¹¹² of Tango,¹¹³ the twenty-third by Tokudai-seishi-bosatsu,¹¹⁴ Rokusha-roku-myōjin¹¹⁵ of Mutsu, the twenty-fourth day by Jizō-bosatsu,¹¹⁶ Keba-no-ōyashiro¹¹⁷ of Shimōsa.¹¹⁸ The twenty-fifth day is

for Uwazutsu-no-o-no-mikoto 表筒男命, Nakazutsu-no-o-no-mikoto 中筒男命, and Sokozutsu-no-o-no-mikoto 底筒男命. The three deities are regarded as the deities of the sea and sailing.

105 Settsu (Setsu-no-kuni 摂津の国) was an old province located in the present-day Osaka and Hyōgo Prefectures.

106 Shiogama-gosha-ōgama-rokusha-daimyōjin 塩釜五社大釜六社大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Shiogama Shrine (Shiogama-jinja 塩竈神社) located in Mutsu, the present-day Miyagi Prefecture.

107 Mutsu (Mutsu-no-kuni 陸奥の国) was an old province located on the territory of the present-day Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima and Akita Prefectures.

108 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Mūjinni-butsu ムウジンニ仏. Nomura transcribed it as Mujin'i-butsu 無盡意仏. Mujin'i-butsu or Mujin'i-bosatsu 無盡意菩薩 is one of the buddhas.

109 Hagurosan-daigongen 羽黒山大権現 could be referring to the deity worshipped in Dewa Sanzan Shrine (Dewa Sanzan-jinja 出羽三山神社) on Mt. Haguro in Yamagata Prefecture.

110 Dewa (Dewa-no-kuni 出羽の国) was an old province located on the territory of the present-day Yamagata and Akita Prefectures.

111 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Senui-butsu セヌイ仏. Nomura transcribed it as 施無畏仏. Semui 施無畏 is the term meaning salvation or protection from fear brought by the Buddha or bodhisattva. Semui is also one of the names of Kannon-bosatsu.

112 Ama-no-hashidate-daimyōjin 天の橋立大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Ama-no-hashidate Shrine (Ama-no-hashidate-jinja 天橋立神社) in Kyoto Prefecture.

113 Tango (Tango-no-kuni 丹後の国) was an old province located in the present-day Kyoto Prefecture.

114 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Tokudai-seishi-bosatsu トクダイ勢至菩薩 and as Fukūdai-seishi-bosatsu 不空大勢至菩薩 by Nomura. However, the name in this case should be transcribed as Tokudai-seishi-bosatsu 得大勢至菩薩, since this is one of the names of Seishi-bosatsu.

115 Rokusha-roku-myōjin 六社六明神 refers to a deity worshiped in Mutsu. However, the name of the shrine has not been identified.

116 Jizō-bosatsu 地藏菩薩 (Skt. Kṣitigarbha) is the bodhisattva known for his vow to spread the teachings to all beings between the death/accession to nirvana of the Buddha Shakyamuni and the arrival of Miroku-bosatsu.

117 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Keba-no-ōyashiro ケバの大社 and as Kima-no-ōyashiro キマの大社 by Nomura. It is hard to identify this part in the recording. We may suggest that it could be Kemigawa-no-ōyashiro 検見川の大社. Kemigawa Shrine (Kemigawa-jinja 検見川神社) is a shrine located in Chiba Prefecture. And Keba-no-ōyashiro refers to the deity worshipped in the shrine.

118 Shimōsa (Shimōsa-no-kuni 下総の国) was an old province located in the present day Chiba and Ibaraki Prefectures.

protected by Monju-bosatsu¹¹⁹ and his manifestation Susaki-daimyōjin¹²⁰ of Awa,¹²¹ the twenty-sixth day by Rushana-butsu,¹²² Nishishima-daimyōjin¹²³ of Izu,¹²⁴ the twenty-seventh by Dainichi-nyorai and Akagi-daimyōjin¹²⁵ of Kazusa.¹²⁶ The twenty-eighth day is protected from fire by Dainichi-daishō-fudō-myō-ō and Sanbō-daikōjin, the twenty-ninth day by Yakuō-butsu,¹²⁷ Chikubushima-daimyōjin¹²⁸ of Ōmi.¹²⁹ The thirtieth day is protected by Japanese local deity Mashike-dōji,¹³⁰ the manifestation of Aso-no-miya-jyūni-kuma-daimyōjin¹³¹ of Higo. From the very beginning the first month is protected by Ashuku-bosatsu.¹³² The second month is protected by Miroku-bosatsu. The third month is protected by Suiten¹³³ and Amida-

119 Monju-bosatsu 文殊菩薩 (Skt. Mañjuśrī) is the bodhisattva of wisdom.

120 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Suzaki-daimyōjin スザキ大明神 and as Susaki-daimyōjin 須崎大明神 by Nomura. It could be transcribed as Susaki-daimyōjin 洲崎大明神. Susaki Shrine (Susaki-jinja 洲崎神社) is located in Awa, the present-day Chiba Prefecture. Susaki-daimyōjin refers to the deity worshipped in the shrine.

121 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Awa 阿波. Awa (Awa-no-kuni 阿波の国) is located in the present-day Tokushima Prefecture. The correct transcription could be Awa 安房. Awa-no-kuni 安房の国 was an old province located in the present-day Chiba Prefecture.

122 Rushana-butsu 蘆遮那仏, or Birushana-butsu 毘蘆遮那仏 (Skt. Vairocana) is one of the names of Dainichi-nyorai.

123 Nishishima-daimyōjin 西島大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Izu, the present-day Shizuoka Prefecture. However, the shrine has not been identified.

124 Izu (Izu-no-kuni 伊豆の国) was an old province located in the present-day Shizuoka Prefecture.

125 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Akagi-daimyōjin アカキ大明神, but Nomura transcribed it as Akagi-daimyōjin 赤城大明神. Akagi-daimyōjin refers to the deity worshipped in Akagi Shrine (Akagi-jinja 赤城神社) located in Chiba Prefecture.

126 Kazusa (Kazusa-no-kuni 上総の国) was an old province located in the present-day Chiba Prefecture.

127 Yakuō-butsu 薬王仏 or Yakuō-bosatsu 薬王菩薩 (Skt. Bhaiṣajya-rāja) is the bodhisattva known for his vow to cure the illnesses of all beings.

128 Chikubushima-daimyōjin 竹生島大明神 refers to the deity worshipped in Chikubushima Shrine (Chikubushima-jinja 竹生島神社). Another name of the shrine is Tsukubusuma Shrine (Tsukubusuma-jinja 都久夫須麻神社).

129 Ōmi (Ōmi-no-kuni 近江の国) was an old province located in the present-day Shiga Prefecture.

130 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Mashike-dōji マシケドウジ and as Mashige-dōji マシゲドウジ by Nomura. The exact name of the deity has not been identified.

131 Aso-no-miya-jyūni-kuma-daimyōjin 阿蘇の宮十二クマ大明神 could refer to the deity worshipped in Aso Shrine (Aso-jinja 阿蘇神社) located in Kumamoto Prefecture.

132 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Mashuku-bosatsu マシユク菩薩, but Nomura transcribed it as Ashuku-bosatsu 阿閼菩薩.

133 Suiten 水天 (Skt. Varuṇa, Deva of Water) is one of the Twelve Devas. Suiten is the deity of water.

nyorai. The fourth month is protected by Kūzō-fugen-bosatsu. The fifth month is protected by Tenkō-dōji.¹³⁴ The sixth month is protected by Sendanhakō-butsu-nyorai¹³⁵ and Marishiten-bosatsu.¹³⁶ The seventh month is protected by Jizō-bosatsu.¹³⁷ The eighth month is protected by Tenkōtatsudo-jin.¹³⁸ The ninth month is protected by Daiō-yakushi-nyorai.¹³⁹ The tenth month is protected by Batō-kanzeon.¹⁴⁰ The eleventh month is protected by the eleven-headed Kannon. The twelfth month is protected by Shakyamuni-butsu.¹⁴¹

This is the prayer for the building of this new house, purification from the evil spirits and pacification of the fire. Twelve scrolls for the twelve Buddhas, thirty scrolls for thirty Buddhas, the deities and buddhas from sixty provinces of Japan have gathered here ... Twelve scrolls for the twelve Buddhas, thirty scrolls for thirty Buddhas ... May misfortunes of the twelve months, all the big difficulties become small, and the small difficulties disappear. Starting with Tenshō-kōtaijin of Ise, Hachiman-daibosatsu, Kasuga-daimyōjin, Jijin, Kōjin, Sanbō-daikōjin all are in the hall of the house. With this instrument I pacify Konjin¹⁴²

134 This part was transcribed as Tenkō-dōji テンコウドウジ by Kimura and as Tenko- dōji 天鼓童子 by Nomura. It refers to one of the deities, but the deity has not been identified.

135 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Sendanhakō-butsu-nyorai センダンハコウ仏如来 and as Sendan-wa-kō-butsu-nyorai センダンはコウ仏如来 by Nomura. It refers to one of the deities, but the deity has not been identified.

136 Marishiten-bosatsu 摩利支天菩薩 (Skt. Marīci) is the deva or the bodhisattva associated with light.

137 Jizō-bosatsu is preceded by dainichi-no-miya 大日の宮 in Kimura's transcription and by daiichi-no-miya 第一の宮 in Nomura's transcription. This could refer to a certain deity or could be an attribute of Jizō-bosatsu.

138 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Tenkōtatsudo-jin テンコウタツド神 and as Tenko-wa-tatsuzō-jin テンコウはタツゾウジン by Nomura. The deity has not been identified.

139 This part was transcribed by Kimura as Daikūyu-yakushi-nyorai ダイクウユ薬師如来 and as Daitsūyū-yakushi-nyorai 大通ユウ薬師如来 by Nomura. However, we could suggest that the name of the deity should be written as Daiō-yakushi-nyorai 大医王薬師如来, since one of the names of Yakushi-nyorai is Daiōbutsu 大医王仏 (Great King of Medicine Buddha).

140 Batō-kanzeon 馬頭観世音 or Batō-kannon 馬頭観音 (Skt. Hayagrīva), is one of the representations of Kannon. Batō-kannon is depicted either as a human with horse head or with a miniature horse head as her hair ornament. In this form she was worshipped as a patroness of horses, and also protector from smallpox.

141 Shakyamuni-butsu 釈迦牟尼仏 (Skt. Śākya-muni), Gautama Buddha, or the Buddha, is the primary figure of Buddhism, its founder. Shakyamuni was a prince of the Shakya clan in what is now Nepal. After achieving the state of enlightenment he became the Buddha, the "Awakened one." He shared his insights concerning morality and salvation with others. The teaching of the Buddha and accounts of his life are believed to have been memorized and transmitted by his followers.

142 Konjin (金神, Deity of Metal) is the Japanese deity of directions.

of the eight directions, Konjin of the four directions, Konjin of the Moon, Konjin of the Sun, Konjin of the surroundings, Konjin of the back gate and of the unlucky northeast direction. I pray so that all the deities will be pacified, the evil spirits will go away, and fire will be pacified. Aum kenba, kenba svāhā! Aum kenba, kenba svāhā! Sanbō-daikōjin!

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