

Selections from the Taiheiki: The Chronicle of Great Peace

Translated by Kyoko Selden and Joan Piggott

From Chapter 13

13.5 Minister of Defense Prince Moriyoshi Dies.

Appended: The Matter of Kanchiang and Bakuya

Boston. Available [here](#).



Utagawa Yoshikazu, “Imperial Prince Moriyoshi, the Prince of the Great Pagoda” (Ōtō no Miya Moriyoshi Shinnō), from the series *Mirror of Famous Generals of Our Country* (Honchō meishō kagami), 1858. Museum of Fine Arts

After Ashikaga Tadayoshi (1306-52), Chief of the Royal Left Stable, had passed Yamanouchi,¹ he summoned Fuchibe, provincial Governor of Iga, and said to him, “We have withdrawn from Kamakura due to lack of troops, but if we raise enough troops in Mino, Owari, Mikawa, and Tōtōmi, and, if we then quickly attack Kamakura, we can destroy Sagami Jirō Tokiyuki easily. But Prince Moriyoshi (1308-35) will always be an enemy of the Ashikaga family.² Although there has been no royal edict to execute him, I want to seize this opportunity. Rush back to Yakushidō Valley and stab him to death.”

Fuchibe responded, “Yes, sir,” to Tadayoshi’s command and, with his followers, seven in all including the commander, he rode back to the cave where the Prince was being held. Confined in an earthen prison that always seemed dark regardless of the time, the Prince was reading sutras by candlelight, unaware that it was morning. Fuchibe told him that he had come for him. Seeing the carriage placed in the garden, the Prince said, “I know you have been sent to take my life.” He ran toward Fuchibe to seize his *tachi* sword.³ Fuchibe gripped the sword firmly and struck the Prince hard on the knees. Having been stooped for half a year in jail, it seemed that the Prince could not stand upright as he wished, and, although his spirit was brave, he fell face down. Fuchibe sat astride the Prince, pinning him down as he struggled to rise. And drawing the short sword he wore at his waist,⁴ he tried to cut off the Prince’s head. But the Prince turned his head and firmly caught the tip of the sword

between his teeth. Now Fuchibe, a man of considerable strength, pulled back on the sword to prevent the Prince from seizing it, leaving about one inch of the tip broken off [in the Prince's mouth]. So Fuchibe threw away the short sword and, pulling out his *wakizashi* sword,⁵ pierced the Prince twice in the chest. When the Prince appeared to be weakened from the stabs, Fuchibe grabbed his hair and sliced off his head. When Fuchibe ran out of the cell to inspect the head in the light, he saw that the Prince's mouth was still biting the tip of the sword, and his eyes looked alive. Fuchibe thought, "Precedent would suggest I not show a head like this to my master." So he threw it away in a nearby thicket and rejoined [Tadayoshi's] troops.

The Lady of the South Wing,⁶ who had served the Prince, witnessed these events. She sat there with her body frozen from fear and sorrow, and she was unable to stand up. After a while she regained composure and picked up the head left in the thicket. Its skin was not yet cold, its eyes not yet closed, and its complexion no different than before. "Could this be a dream?" she wondered with tears and grief. "If so, let there be a reality to awaken to!" Much later, an elderly monk at Richikōin⁷ said that he had heard about what had happened and performed the funeral rites. The Lady of the South Wing had her hair cut right away and,⁸ shedding tears incessantly, she headed to Kyoto.

Now there was a reason why Fuchibe left the Prince's head in the thicket instead of presenting it to [Ashikaga] Tadayoshi.⁹ Long ago late in the Chou Dynasty,¹⁰ the King of Ch'u, aspiring to take All Under Heaven by force, accustomed himself to the ways of battle and cherished his sword for many years. One day, his wife Moyeh, while cooling off by leaning against an iron pillar, felt strange and suddenly became pregnant. After ten months, she went into painful labor and gave birth to an iron ball. The King of Ch'u did not see this as

abnormal. "It must be the spirit of iron," he declared. So he summoned a blacksmith named Kanchiang and ordered him to forge a treasure sword out of the iron ball. Kanchiang went to the Wu Mountains with his wife Bakuya,¹¹ and after three years of tempering the iron with the waters of Lungch'uan,¹² he forged a pair of swords, one male and the other female. Before the swords were presented to the King of Ch'u, his wife told Kanchiang, "These swords communicate spiritually with each other and can destroy the enemy without even moving. I am pregnant now. I know our baby will become a strong valiant man. You may give one sword to the King of Ch'u, but hide the other one to give to our child."

Following his wife's advice, Kanchiang presented the male sword to the King of Ch'u and hid the female sword deeply away for the child still in his wife's womb. When the King of Ch'u opened the box and gazed at the sword, he sensed a spirit in it. So he decided to keep the sword encased. But the sword cried out constantly in a mournful voice. Suspicious, the King of Ch'u asked his ministers if they knew why the sword was wailing. They answered, "This sword must be one of a pair. It cries because they are not together in one place." Enraged, the King of Ch'u summoned Kanchiang and had the chief jailer behead him.

Later, Kanchiang's wife gave birth to her child. The child's appearance differed from that of ordinary people: he grew fifteen feet tall, and his strength was that of five hundred men. Since his eyebrows were a foot apart on a three-foot-long face, people nicknamed him "Meichiench'ih (One-Foot-Between-the-Eyebrows)." And when the boy was fifteen, he saw the words his father had written before his death:

The sun rises over the north door. On the southern mountain stands a pine. The pine grows on a rock. A sword is inside it.

The boy realized that the sword must be inside

the pillar of the northern gate. He broke the pillar, and, as expected, there was the female sword. Meichiench'ih grasped it with a poignant desire to seek revenge on the King of Ch'u for his father's death.

Hearing of Meichiench'ih's desire for revenge, the King of Ch'u thought that he could not rest as long as the boy lived. So he sent several tens of thousands of soldiers to attack him. But Meichiench'ih himself overcame tens of thousands—they were wounded or killed by his bravery and by the female sword's blade.

Then Tseng Shanjen, Kanchiang's old acquaintance, approached Meichiench'ih and advised, "Your father Kanchiang and I were friends for many years. To repay his friendship, I will help you plot to defeat the King of Ch'u. If you wish to avenge your father's death, bite off three inches of the tip of your sword and die with it in your mouth. I will present your head to the King of Ch'u. And as he looks at your head with glee, spit the tip of the sword at him, and the two of you will die together." Greatly pleased with this plan, Meichiench'ih bit off three inches from the tip of the female sword and then slit his own neck. He had ordered it [his head] placed before the visitor [Tseng Shanjen], who then presented it to the King of Ch'u.

Now the King of Ch'u was delighted and had Meichiench'ih's head hung from the jail gate. For three months the head did not decompose—rather its eyes glared and its teeth clenched and gnashed constantly. Terrified, the King of Ch'u dared not approach, and he ordered the head to be placed in a metal cauldron and boiled for seven days and seven nights. When the head had cooked over a strong fire and started to disintegrate—its eyes finally closed—the King of Ch'u thought the problem was solved. But when the King opened the lid to take a look, the head spit out the sword tip, and with sure aim it cut through the King's neck and his head fell instantly into the

cauldron. Therein the heads of the King and Meichiench'ih bit at each other in the boiling water—one now on top, then the other. Meichiench'ih's head was often on the bottom and when it seemed it might lose, Tseng Shanjen cut off his own head and tossed it into the cauldron. It joined Meichiench'ih's head in biting into the King's head, and people heard Meichiench'ih proclaim, "In death, I have avenged my father." Tseng Shanjen added, "In death, I have repaid my friend's favor." All three heads boiled until nobody could recognize which head was which, and then they disappeared.

The three-inch sword tip that had been in Meichiench'ih's mouth remained in the state of Yen and came into the possession of Crown Prince Tan.¹³ When Tan ordered Ching'ko and Ch'in Wuyang to attack Emperor Ch'in Shih Huang-ti,¹⁴ a dagger leapt out of a case containing charts and chased the Emperor.¹⁵ Dodging a medicine bag thrown at it, the dagger pierced a copper pillar six feet in diameter to a depth of three feet. Then it broke into three pieces. That dagger was none other than the Kanchiang-Bakuya sword.

Known as such, this pair of male and female swords was treasured by generations of monarchs but suddenly disappeared in the time of the Ch'en state.¹⁶ Then for a time an evil star appeared in the sky, foretelling disaster under Heaven. And just as two important ministers, Changhua and Leihuan, climbed a turret to view the sky, a flash of light from a sword rose from the old jail gate to battle the star. Changhua, curious about the sight, ordered the area from which the light emanated excavated and found that the Kanchiang-Bakuya swords had been buried five feet below. Changhua and Leihuan took the swords and tied them to their bodies to take them to the monarch (Son of Heaven). But when they passed the edge of a marshy area called Yen'ing Landing,¹⁷ the swords unfastened themselves and slid into the water. As the men looked on, they turned into

male and female dragons and sank beneath distant waves.

Fuchibe recalled these ancient events when he saw Prince Moriyoshi bite off the tip of the sword and clench it in his mouth. This is said to be the reason why Fuchibe threw Prince Moriyoshi's head in a thicket, to avoid presenting it to Ashikaga Tadayoshi.

From Chapter 14

14.4 The Battle at Hakone Takenoshita



Katsukawa Shuntei, "Ashikaga Tadayoshi Fording the River at Kawanaka-jima," circa 1770-1820. [British Museum](#). Also at [Wiki Commons](#).

On the eleventh day of the twelfth month of the

same year [1335], the Ashikaga brothers divided their army into two forces. They decided that Tadayoshi would hold the Hakone Road while the Shogun [Takauji] headed for Takenoshita.¹⁸ But their troops, who had been defeated in various battles, had not recovered and did not feel up to fighting. While the soldiers that had gathered over the previous few days awaited the commanders' arrival and wondered what to do, the enemy captured the Izu provincial headquarters [at Mishima]. It was rumored that Nitta's troops had traveled miles that very night. Ashikaga Takatsune of Owari, head of the Right Royal Stable, and his brother, the Minister of Personnel; the Miura Governor of Inaba; the censor Toki Yoritō with his younger brother Dōken; the Sado fourth-level official Sasaki; and the second-in-command of the Bureau of Chinese Dance, Akamatsu Sadanori, all agreed, "It won't do for us just to look around at each other like this, all gathered in Kamakura. Regardless of what others decide to do, let's head for Takenoshita. And if the enemy attacks before our rear force arrives, we will engage them in battle and die."

So at twilight, they set out for Takenoshita. They had very few men—it was a wretched-looking group. But being brave warriors concerned with their honor, they thought that they must not depend on numbers alone. They climbed up to Takenoshita and looked down over the enemy in the distance. From the Izu headquarters to the east and for some miles to the west, how many tens of thousands of fires they saw burning was beyond anyone's guess. It was as if stars had fallen to the seaside. Saying, "Let's burn fires, too," they brushed aside the snow and gathered grass from here and there, which they lit by blowing on it. But those fires were just like the torches [to attract deer] under which hunters spend the night in the summer foliage. The warriors' luck held—the enemy did not approach that night. And at dawn the Shogun [Takauji] left Kamakura for Takenoshita, with 180,000 men including the Niki, Kō, and Uesugi. Tadayoshi

led 60,000 men to the Hakone Pass.

Around eight in the morning on the twelfth day, the Kyoto forces that were camped at the Izu provincial headquarters divided. To Takenoshita went the Prince-Minister of Palace Affairs together with sixteen royal intimates.¹⁹ Minister of Civil Affairs Wakiya Yoshisuke was second-in-command (*fukushōgun*), accompanied by the second-in-command of the Right Royal Stable Hosoya, the Tsutsumi third-ranking prelate, fourth-in-command of the Left Royal Guards Ōtomo, and the enforcer Sasaki En'ya Takasada.²⁰ In all, some 7,000 troops followed them. Meanwhile, at the forefront of the royal force on the Hakone Road were Nitta Yoshisada along with other leaders of his family and some twenty relatives. They were flanked by thirty famed warriors from various provinces including the Chiba, Utsunomiya, Ōtomo Chiyomatsumaru, the Kikuchi Governor of Higo called Takeshige, and the Matsuura League. They comprised the main force of 70,000 men.

The fighting began around noon with everyone making war cries—they were enough to shake mountains, agitate rivers, and move Heaven and Earth as friend and foe fought for victory. Kikuchi Takeshige of Higo led the Hakone battle and chased three thousand enemy troops to a distant peak. Midway to the top, the enemy put up their shields and stood shoulder to shoulder to catch their breath. Seeing this, the Chiba, Utsunomiya, Kawagoe, Kōsaka, Aso, and Atsuta Daigūji troops formed a single force and, shouting to encourage each other, attacked with deafening war cries.

During this melee the scholar-monk Dōjōbō Jochūgi Yūgaku [of Mt. Hiei] arrived, accompanied by some thirty novices from his cloister.²¹ All wore armor with deep red lacing at the hem, and each novice had a branch of artificial plum blossoms in his helmet. They showed themselves from behind their shields and advanced together as the vanguard. Brawny warriors from Musashi and Sagami

called out, “Just shoot them, even if they are only boys!” With that, the warriors let loose a barrage of arrows in quick succession, and eight of the youths fell in no time and lay prostrate on the bamboo grass. Members of the Musashi Seven League swooped out with drawn swords to cut off their heads.²² How could Dōjōbō and his cohort allow the youths to be killed? With swords and halberds raised, some thirty of them jumped over the fallen, one after another, shouting, “Slash them diagonally, Sakamoto-style. Turn them into Buddhas!”²³ They chased the foe and cut them down. The warriors were overwhelmed and drew back rapidly toward a northern peak before taking a rest. Seizing this opportunity, Yūgaku and his fellows carried the wounded on their shoulders down to the camp below.

Among [Nitta] Yoshisada’s warriors there were sixteen who had made a pledge of mutual support. They were the Sugihara Governor of Shimōsa; the Takada Governor of Satsuma named Yoshitō; Ashihori Shichirō; Fujita Rokurōzaemon; Kawanami Shinzaemon; Fujita Saburōzaemon and Shirōzaemon; the Shinozuka Governor of Iga, Kuryūzaemon; the Nanba Governor of Bizen; the Kawagoe Governor of Mikawa; Nagahama Rokurōzaemon; the Takayama Governor of Tōtōmi; Sonoda Shirōzaemon; Aoki Gorōzaemon and Shichirōzaemon; and Yamakami Rokurōzaemon. With everyone utilizing a common helmet emblem, they advanced and withdrew as a unit, so they became known as the League of Sixteen. Neither shields nor armor were effective against their arrows—they never failed to strike down the enemy they faced. [Meanwhile] Nitta’s steward, the lay monk Funada, galloped here and there exhorting everyone he saw.²⁴ And when Commander Yoshisada surveyed his army from atop a hill, he saw how bravely the Utsunomiya, Kikuchi, and Matsuura were fighting, valuing their names and slighting their lives. In the face of such bravery, members of the Kamakura force were unable to control

their horses, and countless numbers withdrew.

The Prince-Minister's [Takayoshi's] forces headed for Takenoshita and, comprised of some five hundred warriors and palace guards, they must have decided foolishly that they should not allow their? warriors to spearhead the attack. Carrying the royal banner in front, they advanced on Takenoshita and, even before the enemy shot a single arrow, they shouted, "No one who draws a bow and shoots an arrow against the monarch will escape heavenly punishment. If you value your lives, take off your helmets and surrender."

Watching this, Head of the Royal Stables Owari [Ashikaga Takatsune] and his brother; Toki Danjō Shōhitsu Yoritō and his brother; the Miura Governor of Inaba; Sasaki Hangan; and the Akamatsu Governor of Chikuzen, all of whom had been in the same camp since evening, said, "From the look of their horses and banner emblems, they seem to be Kyoto aristocrats. Don't shoot your arrows from a distance. Just draw your swords and engage them in battle!" Three-hundred-odd horsemen advanced, their horses' bits lined up side by side. "Men born to houses of the bow and horse are concerned with their reputations, not with their lives! To see if this is true, let's fight." They let out battle cries in unison and attacked. And since the royal force was at the foot of the mountain while their enemies were further up the peaks, how could they hold out? Without a single bout the royal force retreated, whipping their horses on the rear.

Watching the battle, the Toki and Sasaki advanced, insulting those who retreated: "You are untrue to your own words. Return, you cowards!" Some five hundred warriors who were slow to retreat were captured alive or killed, with only a few remaining. Having made such a mistake in the first battle, the royal force seemed to lose heart. This emboldened the Niki, Hosokawa, Kō, and Uesugi, who advanced and attacked the Prince-Minister's

camp without hesitation.

The royal force having already been forced to retreat, seemed powerless. Its second-in-command Wakiya Uemon-no-suke declared, "It is a shame that unworthy men carelessly advanced to the front and caused our side to lose strength. We must disperse the enemy!" He gathered seven thousand-odd troops and arranged them like a flight of wild geese. Their banners streamed through the air like dragons, and they deliberately attacked from the side. But their enemy, now feeling victorious, did not flinch. They advanced into the attackers, scattering them. Ashikaga and Nitta banners clashed again and again, in the east and west, then separated and then to the south and north. All the warriors fought face-to-face as if it were their last chance to die valiantly. Of course, the warriors on both sides were well known, so no one could escape—it was kill or be killed. A veritable flood of blood drenched the horses' hooves, and the places where dead bodies were heaped were like slaughterhouses. The cruelty was too awful to express in words.

Wakiya's son, [whose title was] Shikibu-no-taifu, was only thirteen years old.²⁵ When the foe separated friends (how it happened no one knows), he found himself in the enemy's midst with three retainers (*rōdō*). Being young but quick-witted, he tore off the battle insignia from his helmet and mussed his hair so that it covered his face, making him unrecognizable. Throughout, he remained calm and collected.

His father Yoshisuke knew nothing of this. "Yoshiharu is missing," he lamented. "Was he killed or taken alive? One or the other must be the case. If I do not know if he is alive or dead, what is the use of living even a moment longer? A warrior can throw away his life thinking of the glory to be enjoyed by his descendants. Although my son is still young, I could not bear to part with him, so I brought him to the battlefield. How can I continue without knowing his fate?" Tears fell on the sleeve

guards of his armor as he galloped into the enemy throng. “No matter how many times we have seen it, a father’s concern for his son is always deeply moving. Let’s go with him!” Saying this, some three hundred of Yoshisuke’s mounted warriors rushed to protect him.

At the time of Yoshisuke’s second attack, the enemy force, however great, was weary of battle and retreated. Yoshisuke took advantage and continued to chase them. Just then, the son recognized his father and turned his horse back [towards him]. At this, four of the horsemen—followers and the master—tried to gallop toward Lord Wakiya [the son]. Two riders with *katahiki* emblems, not recognizing the boy, also turned their horses, thinking friends were returning to the fight.²⁶ They exclaimed, “You are brave. We will go with you and die in battle!” So at the moment when the boy, Yoshiharu, galloped straight into Yoshisuke’s troops, he winked at his retainers, and they cut down the two enemies who had turned with him, taking their heads and holding them high. The sight delighted Yoshisuke—it was as if his son had returned from the dead. Eager to show his valor once more, he told his son, “Rest your men and horses.” Then they all returned to the battle.

Since the entire [royal] force was fatigued from fighting, they considered replacing their troops with fresh ones. But just then the Ōtomo and Sasaki, who had been waiting in back with about one thousand horsemen, shot a single arrow, rolled up their [royal] banners, and galloped to join the Shogun’s side. Then they turned a barrage of arrows on the royal force.



Utagawa Yoshitora, “In the *Taiheiki*, the Great Army of Ashikaga Takauji Is Defeated by the Small Force of Kusunoki Masatsura” (*Taiheiki Ashikaga Takauji no daigun o Kusunoki Masatsura kozei ni te uchiyaburu zu*), 1847-52. [Museum of Fine Arts Boston](#).

The Prince-Minister’s troops, which had suffered numerous casualties in the first battle, would not fight again. [Wakiya] Uemon-no-suke’s troops, men and horses alike, were tired from two mounted battles, and had too few men left to fight. And since those [Ōtomo and Sasaki’s] forces that were to be used as fresh troops had suddenly turned traitor and shot at the Prince-Minister and Yoshisuke, there was no way for the royal force to put up a fight. “Before the enemy cuts us off, we should join the main force,” they decided, and withdrew to Sanohara.²⁷

The Niki, Hosokawa, Imagawa, Arakawa, Kō, and Uesugi, as well as troops from the provinces of Musashi and Sagami—thirty thousand men—gave chase. As a result, Nijō Chūjō Tamefuyu, a key retainer to the Prince-Minister, was killed; and Yoshisuke’s men suffered some three hundred casualties when they turned back to fight. Nevertheless, the troops from Kyoto, now on the run, paid scant attention and vied with each other to flee. They could not put up a fight at Sanohara or defend the Izu headquarters, and some three thousand men in the rear force escaped westward along the Eastern Sea Road (Tōkaidō).²⁸

(Anthology of Japanese Classical Literature),
vols. 1-3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960-62).

The source text is *Nihon koten bungaku taikai*

SPECIAL FEATURE

Japan in Translation I In Honor of Kyoko Selden

Edited by Alisa Freedman

Alisa Freedman, Introduction to the Special Issue in Honor of Kyoko Selden: Japan in Translation

Joan Piggott, Introduction to the *Taiheiki*: The Chronicle of Great Peace

Kyoko Selden, Introduction to the *Hinin Taiheiki: The Paupers' Chronicle of Peace*

Hinin Taiheiki: The Paupers' Chronicle of Peace, translated by Kyoko Selden with Joshua Young

Renga by Sasaki Dōyo: Selected from the *Tsukubashū* (Tsukuba Anthology), translated and annotated by Kyoko Selden, edited by Lili Selden

The Takarazuka *Concise Madame Butterfly*, translated by Kyoko Selden and Lili Selden

Joan R. Piggott is Gordon L. MacDonald Professor of History and Director of the Project for Premodern Japan Studies, a graduate program at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. She is the author of *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship*, editor of *Capital and Countryside in Japan 300-1180*, and co-editor of *The Dictionary of Sources of Classical Japan* (with Ivo Smits, Michel Viellard-Baron, Ineke Van Put, and Charlotte von Verschuer) and *Teishinkōki: The Year 939 in the Journal of Regent Fujiwara no Tadahira* (with Sanae Yoshida). A volume of selections concerning the birth of Toba Tennō (1103-56) from the *Chūyūki* journal of the courtier Fujiwara no Munetada (1062-1141) is almost ready for submission to the press (co-edited with Sanae Yoshida and Christina Laffin), as is a volume of essays on estates in the society and economy of the medieval age (co-edited with Jan Goodwin). She is also completing an annotated translation and contextualizing research on Fujiwara Akihira's *New Monkey Music* (Shinsarugakuki), which depicts the urban world of the Heian capital in the mid-eleventh century, when court leadership by retired monarchs was emerging.

Kyoko Selden (1936-2013) taught Japanese language and literature as a senior lecturer at Cornell University until her retirement in 2008. Author, translator, artist and calligrapher, she was the translation coordinator of the Asia-Pacific Journal. Her major works as translator centered on Japanese women writers, the atomic bomb, the Ainu and the Okinawans. Her major translations included [Japanese Women Writers: Twentieth Century Short Fiction](#), [More Stories By Japanese Women Writers, An Anthology](#), Kayano Shigeru's [Our Land Was a Forest](#), Honda Katsuichi's [Harukor: Ainu Woman's Tale](#), [The Atomic Bomb: Voices From Hiroshima and Nagasaki](#), Shin'ichi Suzuki's [Nurtured by Love](#), and Cho Kyo's [The Search for the Beautiful Woman, A Cultural History of Japanese and Chinese Beauty](#).

Notes

¹ Yamanouchi is the mountainous area to the west and northwest of Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine in Kamakura. Tadayoshi is heading westward. The date is the Twenty-third of the Seventh Month, 1335.

² Prince Moriyoshi, also known as Prince Morinaga, was a son of the monarch Go-Daigo and Minamoto no Chikako. He was appointed by his father as the head abbot of the Enryakuji Temple on Mount Hiei in 1327, and according to the *Taiheiki*, he fought on his father's behalf while Go-Daigo was in exile from 1332 to 1333. Later, perhaps because he feared Moriyoshi's intentions, Go-Daigo turned him over to the Ashikaga, and after some time, he was executed by order of Ashikaga Tadayoshi in 1335, as related here.

³ *Tachi* is a type of sword hung from the waist with the blade pointing down, unlike the *katana* sword, which is shorter and worn thrust through the belt. For a useful discussion, see Karl F. Friday, *Samurai, Warfare, and the State in Early Medieval Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 78-88.

⁴ *Koshi no katana*, literally, "waist sword." The *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Anthology of Classical Japanese Literature) (subsequently NKBT) headnote suggests that this was probably a *sayamaki*, a dagger worn for self-defense. It had no sword guard and was worn with a long string wound around the sheath.

⁵ *Wakizashi*, or "sideworn," is a sword worn with the edge facing up, thrust through the belt. Also called *katana* or *uchigatana* (striking sword).

⁶ Perhaps Fujiwara no Yasufuji's daughter, who served Go-Daigo.

⁷ Richikōin: A temple in Kamakura.

⁸ Cutting off her hair implies that she was renouncing the world and becoming a nun.

⁹ Tadayoshi (1306-52) was the younger brother and lieutenant of Ashikaga Takauji (1305-58).

¹⁰ Lasting from around 1030 to 223 B.C., Ch'u was a state in the Yangtze Valley that became especially powerful and annexed other states in the late Chou Dynasty. The epoch of the late Chou Dynasty, 770-221 B.C., is also known as the Eastern Chou Dynasty. It was a time of the total collapse of Chou royal power, and it saw the increasing influence of the kings of various territorial states. The events described here most likely took place in the Spring and Autumn

Period (771-476 B.C.), the first half of the later Chou Dynasty.

¹¹ Wu Mountains in Chechiang Province formed the southern border of the state of Wu in the Spring and Autumn Period.

¹² Literally, “Dragon Spring.” Its waters were used for tempering iron.

¹³ According to the NKBT editors, no Japanese or Chinese source explains how the sword came into Tan's possession. The state of Yen (in northeast China, covering the area of present-day Hopeh and Liaoning provinces) was one of the last contending states of the Warring States Period. It survived the fall of the Chou Dynasty.

¹⁴ First emperor of the Ch'in Dynasty, known simply as the “First Emperor,” Ch'in Shih Huang-ti (259-210 B.C.), is famous for burning books, standardizing measurements and money values, and constructing the Great Wall.

¹⁵ Sources vary between measurement charts (*sashizu*) and maps (*chizu*).

¹⁶ A state in the Spring and Autumn Period that was destroyed by Ch'u around 479.

¹⁷ Located at present-day Chien Ch'i in Fuchien Province.

¹⁸ A site along the Hakone Road in the Hakone Oyama vicinity—see the map. The exact place is uncertain, but it was east of Mishima. Shizuoka Prefectural Library locates it between Susono and Hakone. See [here](#), accessed February 8, 2014. *Nokureyamakure* means “seven *ri* over fields, seven *ri* over mountains.”

¹⁹ The Prince-Minister was Prince Takayoshi (?-1337), one of Go-Daigo's sons.

²⁰ Sasaki Enya Hangan Takasada (?-1341) served as a member of the Royal Police (*kebiishi*) and as a third-level official (*jō*) in the Left Royal Guards, among other postings. He helped Go-Daigo during the fight for Kyoto that preceded the monarch's retaking the throne in 1333. Originally, he fought against the Ashikaga, but later he joined their side at the Battle of Hakone Takenoshita. He subsequently served as provincial constable (*shugo*) of Izumo and Oki—the “*hangan*” frequently used as his title referred to his enforcement duties as a royal police officer.

²¹ Monasteries like those on Mount Hiei had many child residents. Some were servants; others were oblates (young boys pledged to become monks). During the medieval age many boys went to study at monasteries, which were the educational institutions of the time. According to the index for the *Taiheiki* prepared by Ōsumi Kazuo, the monk Dōjobō Yūgaku appears numerous times in the second volume, and he is also mentioned in the *Baishōron*, ca. 1349, another chronicle of events surrounding the founding of the second Shogunate by Ashikaga Takauji. There is an English translation of the latter by Uenaka Shuzo, in his dissertation *A Study of the Baishōron*, which was completed at the University of Toronto in 1978.

²² The “Musashi Seven League” (Musashi Shichi Tō) was an alliance of lesser warrior families from Musashi that made their reputation during the Gempei War (1180-85) and remained active during the medieval age. They included the Yokoyama, Kodama, and Inomata families. They were important vassals of the Kamakura Shogunate.

²³ Sakamoto is a town on the eastern side of Mount Hiei where many monks lived.

²⁴ Funada Yoshimasa was Nitta's house steward (*shitsuji*), just as Kō Moronao served as the Ashikaga house steward.

²⁵ Normally, this would mean a fifth-ranker in the Ministry of Personnel. At this time, however, such postings were honorary, especially given this boy's age.

²⁶ This was possibly the crest (*mon*) of the Akamatsu, according to the NKBT gloss, vol. 2

(Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961), 62, note 8.

²⁷ Sano, in the vicinity of Susono City (Shizuoka Prefecture) today.

²⁸ The Tōkaidō was one of the seven official circuit roads. It followed the eastern seaboard, linking Kyoto and Kamakura.