In the outer storehouse there were piles of weaves imported from the continent ages ago, incense stacked like firewood, innumerable celadon implements, Asukagawa tea jars and other such wares tumbled on their side – no matter how many get broken, brine-pickled mermaids,[[1]](#footnote-1) agate-crafted pails, a rice-polishing mallet from Handan village,[[2]](#footnote-2) Urashima’s knife box,[[3]](#footnote-3) Benten’s coin pouch,[[4]](#footnote-4) Fukurokuju’s shaving blade,[[5]](#footnote-5) Tamonten’s pillow-side spear,[[6]](#footnote-6) Daikokuten’s rice sifter,[[7]](#footnote-7) Ebisu’s cheque book,[[8]](#footnote-8) hard to remember it all.

1. A reference to the legend of *The Nun that Lived Eight Hundred Years* 八百比丘尼 (Yao bikuni) that attained longevity by eating mermaid meat. See Kuzumi Kazuo九頭見和夫. “Nihon no ‘Ningyo’ Densetsu – ‘Yao Bikuni densetsu’ wo chūshin to shite日本の「人魚」伝説--「八百比丘尼伝説」を中心として.” Fukushima daigaku ningenhattatsu bunka gakurui ronshū福島大学人間発達文化学類論集 (Bulletin of the Faculty of Human Development and Culture, Fukushima University) 13 (2011): 65-73.Available from: <http://ir.lib.fukushima-u.ac.jp/dspace/handle/10270/3561> [Accessed 2nd July 2017]. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Reference to the legend of Lú Shēng盧生 (jp. Rosei) dreaming of becoming an immortal emperor while napping at an inn in Handan 邯鄲 (jp. Kantan) village as his meal of yellow millet was being cooked. See Katz, Paul. *Images of the Immortal: The Cult of Lü Dongbin at the Palace of Eternal Joy*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999, pp. 183-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The fisherman Urashima catches a turtle that turns out to be a beautiful young princess. She takes him to Mount Penglai where they live happily for three years, until Urashima becomes homesick. The princess entrusts him with a box under strict prohibition against opening it. Here the box is trivialized to refer to the knife Urashima would have used to cook the turtle. See McKeon, Midori. The Urashima Legend: Changing Gender Representations in a Japanese Tale. Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, **1996.** [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. One of the Seven Gods of Luck along with the following four deities in the text, Benzaiten 弁財天 is a syncretic female deity associated, among others, with financial gain in connection with the character for wealth財 included in her name. See Schumacher, Mark. “Benzaiten, Benten.” In *A to Z Buddhist Dictionary: Japanese Buddhist Statuary: Gods, Goddesses, Shinto Kami, Creatures and Demons*. Available from: http://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/benzaiten.shtml [Accessed 2nd July 2017]. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This deity associated with longevity is usually depicted with an elongated bald skull, hence the need for a shaving blade. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The reference to this fierce Buddhist guardian deity is trivialized by the diminution of his attribute. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Usually shown sitting on top of two bales of rice. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This refers to the association with merchant prosperity which is only one facet of this complex deity. See Law, Jane Marie. *Puppets of Nostalgia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)