Searching for the Beginning of *Tsukuba no Michi*

— A Study on the Discourse of Renga Origins —

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連歌起源論説考 —「つくばの道」をめぐって—

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要 旨

『花絵波集』（1356年）が二条良基と教時に編纂される以前から、連歌は既に広く定着していたが、さらに『花絵波集』が「准剣撰集」と見做されたことが契機となり、短歌の勃興和歌集に準ずる公的な歌体としての地位を確立した。この地位確立には、『日本書紀』の記述にある、筑波山におけるヤマトオケルの伝説的問答歌が連歌の起源であるという主張を行うレトリックの変化も寄与した。この論文はまず連歌の歴史的発展を追、それから、その起源に関する人々の想像・推定が連歌にどのように正統性を付与し、それを宫廷詩歌の一つにしたかを調査し、それにより、『日本書紀』の神話の日本文学における有意義性も考察する。

Abstract

Renga (linked verse) had already been established as a popular form of poetry before Nijō Yoshimoto and Gusai compiled the *Tsukubashū* in 1356. With the anthology’s subsequent designation as an “honorary” imperial anthology (*junchokusenshū*), renga was elevated in status to a form of official court poetry. This was accompanied by a change in rhetoric, which claimed Yamato Takeru’s legendary poetic exchange at Mt. Tsukuba in the *Nihon Shoki* to be the origin of renga. This paper traces the historical development of renga, and then shows how imagined origins of renga helped legitimize it as court poetry. In doing so, it also shows the importance of the *Nihon Shoki* mythology within Japanese literature.

キーワード：連歌・つくばの道・和歌・『花絵波集』・創造（想像）された伝統、言説

Key words: Renga, linked verse, Tsukuba no michi, waka, *Tsukubashū*, invented tradition, discourse

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The compilation of the Tsukubashū (1356) by Nijō Yoshimoto (1320-1388), and its establishment as the first official court anthology of renga created a new designation and a new precedent: the junchokusenshū, or “honorary” imperial anthology, which the emperor made equal (jun) to the traditional imperial anthologies (chokusenshū) after its compilation, rather than ordering it beforehand as was the case with the previous imperial anthologies. Reference to Mt. Tsukuba1 in the title of the anthology is based on the claim made by Yoshimoto that renga originated with the following poetic exchange as Yamato Takeru was returning from subduing the unruly Emishi in the east.

At this time, they lit a fire and proceeded to eat. That night, Yamato Takeru asked his attendants in song,

Niibari Since passing Niibari
Tsukuba o sugite and Tsukuba,
iku yo ka netsuru how many nights have I slept?

His attendants were unable to answer. At that time, the man who kept the fire was there.

Continuing on the end of the prince’s poem, he sang,

kaga nabete Counting day by day,
yo ni wa kokonoyo the nights are nine,
hi ni wa tooka o2 the days are ten!

Then, praising the cleverness of the fire keeper, Yamato Takeru richly rewarded him.

Yoshimoto’s ingenious selection of this poem as the beginning of renga added validity to the practice in three ways. First, Yoshimoto chose to strengthen the reputation of renga through placing it in opposition to waka (Yamato uta, or “Japanese poetry”). In the broad sense, waka could refer to any Japanese poetry, but the word had come to refer almost exclusively to the tanka (“short poetry” 5-7-5-7-7) form. Imperial poetry anthologies, primarily collections of tanka, had -wakashū attached to the end of their names, as in the first imperial anthology, the Kokin waka shū (hereafter, Kokinshū, ca. 914). Thus, Yoshimoto avoided using the word waka, as it might imply that only the tanka form was the official form of Japanese poetry. One way in which he was able to do this was by associating renga with Tsukuba, while traditional tanka-style waka was associated with the word Shikishima, another geographical name which had become associated specifically with traditional waka. The two honorary imperial anthologies of renga were called the Tsukubashū and the Shinse Tsukubashū, not -rengashū.

Second, the use of Tsukuba brought to mind Yamato Takeru, the mythological unifier of Japan. Ever since

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1 Niibari is in the eastern portion of present-day Ibaraki-ken, Makabe-machi. Mt. Tsukuba is to the south, height 876m. That the Tsukubashū 鍛冶波集 comes from the Nikon shoki tradition is evidenced by the orthography of Tsukuba in this poem in the Nikon shoki 鬼雄記. The Köbō uses different phonographs for Tsukuba.

2 Kaga is the repetition of ku 日, as in tooka 十日, “the second day.” It may alternatively appear as ke, as in the following poem. Nabu, like narabu in the following poem, means to line up. MYS 3:263 真父妻 打是行 氣重而 見得毛和我報 志賀島安良七国 Uma na taku / uchite na yuki so / ke narabu te / mite mo waga yuka / Shiga ni aramakuni. Do not severely / whip your horse onward! / For this is not Shi- ga, / to which one may go and see / in just a few days. (A song composed by Osakame no Tarimaro when he came up from the province of Ōmi.) Satake, 1:204
the creation of an ancient tradition of Japanese poetry in the Kokinshū, which saw the origin of the thirty-one syllable tanka form in a poem by the deity Susano-o, the mythological legitimacy of poetry was indispensable. Since the deities, who gave the emperor his legitimacy, composed poetry, it was natural that the emperor and his subjects should compose poetry. The imperial anthologies embodied this metaphysical understanding of reality, since they were compiled under authority of the emperor for his glorification.

Third, Tsukuba contained additional connotations due to the underlying intertextual nuances of Mt. Tsukuba. Just as the Yamato hegemony was beginning to construct frameworks of government to include provinces in the hinterlands such as Hitachi, texts such as the Shoku Nihongi and Hitachi no kuni jidoki recorded a tradition of dialogic poetry gatherings on Mt. Tsukuba. This association remained through the use of Tsukuba as an ula makura, a poetic landscape with various intertextual connotations. This is not to say renga became a form of court poetry solely as a result of its namesake.

Although renga does not seem to have existed as an independent form until close to the tenth century, poetic treatises began looking for renga origins, as if the deities or the ancient poets would have founded a new “way” of poetry out of nowhere. In the poetry of the early period, particularly in the Nihon shoki and Man'yō-shū (759), several renga-like poems were available that could have been considered the origin of renga. Since traditionally earlier poems were overlooked in favor of the Tsukuba example, the earliness of the exchange was not the sole criterion for the selection of an origin. The Tsukuba poem was selected from among these options, I believe, for the reasons described above.

Various factors contributed to the legitimization of renga, of which Yoshimoto’s rhetoric and his political position were indispensable. Renga masters of commoner status helped spread the popularity of renga, such as Gusai (also read Kyōsei, ca. 1284-1378), who assisted Yoshimoto in making the Tsukubashū and the Renga shinshiki (or Ōan shinshiki, 1372), a set of guidelines for renga. Other professional renga masters and waka poets alike joined in the creation of earlier rulebooks for renga. Most of all, renga had a growing following, and by the early Kamakura period, even emperors were sponsoring renga gatherings. Supported by the poets and the court, the position of renga rivaled that of waka.

However, private popularity—even among the upper classes—did not necessarily equate to official recognition, as was awarded waka through the imperial anthologies. Before renga would be regarded as highly as waka, it would be re-envisioned, as was the case with waka in the Kokinshū. Indeed, without widespread popular support, renga probably would not have reached the point where it could be given the honor of imperial anthology status. However, without the perception of an ancient, mythological tradition that would compare to waka, renga would have remained a mere pastime. The ancient origin of renga, therefore, was purely an imagined one, serving the purposes of poets in later generations, which through Yoshimoto legitimized renga as a form of court poetry.

This paper will trace the origin of renga in two parts.

The first half will look at the history of renga discourse. Japanese poetry exhibited dialogic tendencies from the outset, so the question of when and how renga emerged genealogically is not so much the issue here. What is most important is the way in which poets began envisioning renga as first a type of waka, and then as a form distinctly different. As there are few existing studies that consider the emergence, development, and legitimization of renga discourse, this study first traces the history of such discourse through Yoshimoto, and
then looks specifically at the symbolic significance of connecting renga to Tsukuba as it became an official form of Japanese court poetry.3

Heian Renga

The first appearance of the title "renga" as a genre of poetry is seen in the fifth imperial anthology, the Kin’yōwakashū (1127). The more widely disseminated second draft (nidoshon) contains seventeen pairs (poems 648-664) in chapter ten (miscellaneous 2), and the third and final draft (sansōbon), approved by Retired Emperor Shirakawa in 1127, cut the last six pairs, leaving a total of eleven (poems 640-650).4 In the second draft, eleven are of the form 5-7-5/7-7, and eight are 7-7/5-7-5; and in the official version, eight are 5-7-5/7-7 while three are 7-7/5-7-5. Only in these renga are the order of these two "halves" reversed, indicating that these poems were not merely conceived of as tanka written in two parts.

In other words, by the twelfth century, poets were consciously composing renga as a form differing from tanka. The designation of "renga" seen in the Kin’yōshū can, therefore, be seen as the beginning of renga discourse. As renga discourse developed, a search for the "origins" of renga becomes fundamental. Naturally, renga did not appear out of nowhere. Thus scholars began to look for poems that could be designated renga earlier than the designation for "renga" appeared.

The third imperial anthology, the Shūiwaikashū (1005-7?), proves this point. It contains six pairs of poems (poems 1179-1184) that have the same form as the poems labeled renga over one hundred years later in the Kin’yōwakashū.3 Two of these six pairs began with 7-7 and end 5-7-5. Just as the renga in the fifth imperial anthology were considered miscellaneous poems, those in the Shūiwaikashū categorized as "miscellaneous celebratory" (zōka). Like other miscellaneous poems, the renga in these two anthologies were often much less serious than poems in other categories, and even included Chinese loan-words, normally forbidden from the vocabulary of Japanese poetry. In this sense, these Shūiwaikashū poems, though they are not explicitly labeled as renga in the Kin’yōshū, may have been the beginning of the form which would come to be called renga.

Determining the evolution of renga prior to the Kin’yōshū poses difficulties, and modern Japanese scholarship has produced a number of works dealing with the development of Japanese poetry. Such research could plausibly identify “proto-renga” by finding early poems which are similar to renga in terms of exhibiting a spontaneous, dialogic nature. For example, the earliest instances of folk songs (kayō), such as those in the Kojiki and Nihon shoiki, exhibit a spontaneous nature. Many folk songs contain the repetition of phrases, and the narratives and contexts in which they were said to be written suggest spontaneity. More significantly, many of these poems are dialogic, such as in the exchange of two kata-uta, or “half-poems” (5-7-7 or 5-7-5), as will be


seen in some poems which are later designated as early renga. In addition, even poetry which was written by a single author often contains contrasting phrases, much like the dialogic nature of renga. For example, the Man’yōshū contains 61 poems called sedōka, “head-repeating poems,” divided into six lines of 5-7-7-5-7-7 syllables. In these poems, the second three lines are formed as a response to a topic or question posed by the first three, with the two halves sometimes containing repetition. Another technique which allows a comparison between two phrases in a single poem is the jo, or preface, where the beginning phrase provided an image which introduced the main subject of the poem, and the two could be connected by a verbal repetition, pun (kakekotoba), or metaphor. One more technique allowing for comparative juxtaposition was the shorter makura kotoba, or pillow word/phrase, which served as an epithet for the following word, linked attributively or through repetition. These techniques found in early poetry seem to have the same characteristics that later define renga.

The existence of these similarities does not necessarily mean that renga formed directly out of ancient katauta, such as the Tsukuba exchange by Yamato Takeru. Rather, the textual evidence, as in seen in the Shūishū and Kin’yōshū, suggests that renga grew out of a tanka tradition. One indication of this is seen in the emergence of the strong caesura after the third phrase (sankugire) of a tanka during the mid-Heian period, breaking it into the upper 5-7-5 phrase (kami no ku) and the lower 7-7 phrase (shimo no ku). This clear division of tanka into two “halves” of fixed lengths of 5-7-5 and 7-7, at least, points to an evolutionary genealogy of renga postdating tanka. While the dialogic techniques seen in alternate poetic forms such as sedōka continued to exist in both tanka and renga, the other forms did not.

Rather than attempt to map poetic genealogies, I will examine discourse on the origins of renga through the creation of the honorary imperial renga anthologies in the fourteenth century which claimed to have found renga that predates the Shūishū and Kin’yōshū. The earlier the appearance of renga, and the more prominent its originators, the more prestige was granted renga as a poetic form.

The compiler of the Kin’yōwakashū, Minamoto no Toshiyori (1055?-1129?), was the first to offer a clear explanation of renga in his poetic treatise, the Toshiyori zuinō (Essentials of Toshiyori, ca. 1115). After his preface, Toshiyori enumerates ten “forms of poetry” (uta no sugata): tanka, sedka, kompon uta (mixed poems), oriku (acrostic poems), kutsugaeshi (reversing acrostic poems), kaibun (palindromic poems), chōka (long poems), haikai uta (humorous poems), renga, and kakushidai (hidden topic poems). About renga, he says,7

次に連歌といへるものあり。例の歌のならをいふなり。本来心にまかすべし。そのからがうちに、言ふべき事の心を、いひ果つなり。心残りて、付くる人に、言ひ果てするはわろしとす。たとへば、

夏の夜をみづかきものと言ひ始めし

といひて、

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人は物をや思はざりけむ

と末に言はせむはわろし。この歌を、連歌にせむ時は、

夏の夜をみちかきもののと思ふかな

といふべきなり。さてぞかなふべき。

さばがはのみづをせきあげてうゑしたを

かるわせひはひとりたりなるべし

これは、万葉集の連歌なり。よくわろからじと思へど、こころ残りて、末に付けあらずはせり。いかなる事にか。

しらつゆのおくにあたのこそすなり

はなのいろいろありとしかなむ

これは、後撰の連歌なり。

ひとところうしみついまはたのまじよ

ゆめにみゆやとねぞすぎにける

これは、拾遺抄の連歌なり。これ二つはあひかなへり。古今には連歌なし。

The next form is called renga, where half of a usual poem is composed, either the upper or lower phrase, as desired. The expressed content should be completed within the first half. It is improper to leave the meaning incomplete and make the person who responds complete the expression. For example, it is improper to start,

Natsu no yo o
mujikaki mono to
issomeshi

“The summer nights
are so short.”

Having first said that,

and make the other person complete the expression in the lower phrase,

hito wa mono o ya
omowazarikemu

does he not now
think of them longingly?

When this poem is made into renga, one should say,

Natsu no yo o
mujikaki mono to
omō kana

“The summer nights
are so short,”

I (he) felt.

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8 This poem seems to be a variation of the following poem attributed to Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (active 7th c.) in the Wakan reiki shū (ca. 1012), which is not originally a renga. Natsu no yo o / nenu ni akenu to / isi kuki / hito wa mono o ya / omowazarikemu. “Does the person who said, ‘The summer night became dawn without sleeping,’ not feel lovesick?” I have translated the attributive isi kuki (who) first said as a particle in order to keep it in the third line and stress the unnatural division. If it were translated directly into English, it would become a relative clause: “... the person who first said ...” The subject of the third line of the suggested version, omō kana, is ambiguous. Independently, it suggests that the composer is speaking in first person, with the emphatic particle kana. With the tuakeku added, it could then be reinterpreted as third person in the voice of the composer’s lover. Compare to Sugino Hiroyuki. Wa-Kan reisikū. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshu; 19. Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1999.
and complete the first expression. In this way it becomes renga.

Saogawa no
mizu o seki agete
ueshi ta o
karu wasei wa
hitori naru beshi
The field I planted
by damming up the water
of the Sao River—
The one who eats its harvested young rice
should be you alone.

This is a renga from the Man'yōshū. It doesn't seem that bad, but the content is left incomplete to be expressed in the second phrase. Why should this be so in the Man'yōshū?

Shiratsuyu no
oku ni amata no
koe su nari
Hana no iroiro
ari to shiranamu
When white dew forms—
from within comes
the sound of many voices.
I want to know that there
are many colored flowers.

This is a renga from the Gosenshū. This is a renga from the Shūishō. These two poems are both renga. There are no renga in the Kokinshū.

Hito kokoro
ushi mitsu ina wa
tanomaji yo
Yume ni miyu ya to
ne zo suginikeru
I see your feelings as cold
now in the first quarter of the second hour,
I will trust you no more.
Hoping I would dream of you,
I overslept the first hour.

This is a renga from the Shūishō. These two poems are both renga. There are no renga in the Man'yōshū (ca. 759), Gosenwakashū (951), Shūishō (ca. 1005), and makes a point of noting that there are no

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9 Gosenshū ch. 6 (autumn vol. 2), no. 293. Composer unknown. Shiratsuyu no is a makura kotoba for oku. The word oku is a kakekotoba meaning both "interior" and "to be on." Katagiri Yolchi. Gosen wakashū. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei; 6. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990.
10 The Shūishō is a private anthology of Fujiwara no Kintō, which was expanded into the Shūinwakashū. This poem is in ch. 9, miscellaneous vol. 1, no. 450 in Shūshō and ch. 18, miscellaneous celebratory, no. 1184 in the Shūinwakashū. The notes introducing the poem read, "On a night when a woman serving in the court had promised to meet Munesada and he arrived late. When the woman heard someone cry out the third quarter of the second hour (approx. 2:00 - 2:30 a.m.), she sent him this poem. Ushi mitsu is a kakekotoba referring to the second hour (cow), third quarter, while it also carries the nuance "saw [your] heartlessness." Ne also carries the double meaning "to sleep" and "first hour" (rat), which is roughly 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.
renga in the *Kokinshū*. Clearly, he wants to establish that renga existed more-or-less continuously from the first waka anthologies, and was not just something which emerged during his generation with the *Kin'yōshū*.

The first and third sets above are interesting in that they have been adapted from their original forms in the *Wakan rōei shū* (ca. 1012) and *Gosenshū*, in order to satisfy Toshiyori’s requirement that each half be an independent expression. The suggested improvement of the third line of the first poem, from the *Wakan rōei shū*, *omō kana*, leaves the subject ambiguous. Prior to the addition of the *tsukē*, the subject of this phrase might have otherwise been interpreted as first person, with the emphatic particle *kana*. With the second poem added, it could alternatively be reinterpreted to be the voice of the composer’s lover.

In fact, though it was not called renga in the *Gosenwakashū*, the third poem may be regarded as such, according to the note (*kotobagaki*) that introduces it: “In the autumn, in a certain place there were a number of women behind a screen. When a man spoke the upper phrase of a poem through the screen, the lower phrase came from inside.” However, the original poem in the *Gosenshū*, the third line reads, *koe sureba*, “since from within comes the sound of many voices, ...” Toshiyori amends this phrase to *koe su narī*, causing the sentence to end with a full stop, literally, “from within seems to come the sound of many voices.” Unlike the final form (*shūshikei*) of the suppositional *narī*, the conjunctive particle *ba* causes the sentence to continue. In using *ba*, the upper phrase is not independent. Still, the *Gosenshū* version of the poem was created cooperatively, and along with the *Man’yōshū* poem, Toshiyori calls it an example of renga. Interestingly, Toshiyori does not consider the *Wakan rōei shū* poem to be a renga, and lists its original form before changing it to make it satisfy his definition. However, in the case of the *Gosenshū* poem, Toshiyori changes the dependent first half of the original poem, making it seem to have been a renga according to his definition from the start.

The last poem was taken from the renga section of the *Shūshū*, the private anthology of Fujiwara no Kintō (966-1041), which is thought to have been the draft for the *Shūshū*. In the *Shūshū*, it is attributed to Yoshimine Munesada (816-890), who is listed as one of the Six Poetic Geniuses in the *Kokinshū* by his Buddhist name, *Henjō*. Of the poems of known authorship included in the imperial anthologies (excluding the *Man’yōshū*), this poem is the oldest, since Henjō lived earlier than any of the other poets. Most likely this poem was selected because it helped construct a tradition of renga during the period of the *Kokinshū*, though no examples are found in the *Kokinshū* itself.

Still, the poem from the *Man’yōshū* (8:1635), between Ōtomo no Yakamochi (717?-785) and a nun, is certainly the oldest exchange that Toshiyori lists, and as will be seen, purportedly the oldest 5-7-5/7-7 poem written by two people. The *Man’yōshū* includes it in a group entitled, *aki no sōmon* 秋相聞, or autumnal salutational poems. In the *Man’yōshū* the poem begins with a title note, and lists the composers, as follows.

One poem, where a nun composed the top phrase, and Ōtomo no Sukune Yakamochi, petitioned by the nun, continued the final phrase and responded.

| Saogawa no | The field I planted |
| mizu o sekiagete | by damming up the water |

11 Satake Akihiro, et al. *Man’yōshū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taisei; 1-4. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999. Ōtomo no Sukune Yakamochi 大伴宿祢家持 (717?-785) was of the Ōtomo kinship group (*ujit_), which was bestowed the rank (*kabane*) of *Sukune*, the third highest in the royally appointed *kabane* ranking system.
うえしをと  おのの川
(The nun composed)

かれらつついわ  がはれのうとるげのはいぬ。

ひとりなりもし  最もすべき。
(Yakamochi continued)\(^{12}\)

In fact, this poem is open to several possible interpretations, but I believe the field is the daughter of the nun. The planting and damming of the river probably refers to the nun’s careful rearing and protection of her daughter. The first rice in the second half, then, would also refer to the daughter, as she reaches maturity. Yakamochi seems to be placing words in the nun’s mouth, then, suggesting quite boldly that the girl should be his.\(^{13}\)

In attempting to grasp the practice of renga in the 12th century, an important counterpoint to the Toshiyori zuinô is the Fukuro zôshi, written by Fujiwara no Kiyosuke (1104-1177) around 1157.\(^{14}\) A section on the etiquette of renga critiques a “recent renga rulebook” (kindai no wakashiki), perhaps the Toshiyori zuinô, which requires that the first phrase of renga be complete.

連歌本末只任意詠之。雖然、至謂連歌發句ハ專ヲ不可詠末句。又や然ノ時、任口早達ニ不可詠。当座ノ主君若ハ女房事暫可待也。有遲黙時詠出之、尤宜叙。我等ノ時ハ非決険之限。近代和歌式云、連歌ノ不云切ハワロキ事也云々。案云、不可必然叙。万葉集云、

サホガハノ水ヲセキアゲテウヘシ田ヲ
又後撰云、

シラツユノオクニアマタコエスレハ
又伊勢物語云、

ヲクヤマニフケラヲトノキコユルハ

是等吉連歌也。又延喜御集云、菊宴ノ時、中務宮庭ニヲリテカサシノ花ヲ折テ奉り王フニ、只ニハト仰ケレハ、

ノベニユキテ折リツルコトハ

トテ、スエハナクテ奉リタマヘリケレハ、霧ノウチニツラヌ花ヲ哀トヤミトナト雲云。又箇宮

\(^{12}\) The original for the title note in full is 深作詠句井大伴宿休挙第里深作未句等和歌一首。The graph 并 translated “and” is a common graph in the Man'yō shū, used when hanka (envoys) 反歌，are added after a chōka, but may be used more generally, such as for the “and” in “The preceding poem was sent when a silk tree flower (njobu no kana) and a cogon grass flower (tsubana) were plucked” 右折參合花井茅花藤也。If the title note is trusted, then the nun asked Yakamochi to complete the second half of the poem, as indicated by the word よ I have translated “petition” 約。With the word “continue” 約, the note indicates that Yakamochi is continuing the same poem started by the nun, not starting a new poem. For biographical and bibliographical information on Yakamochi, as well as another translation of this poem, see Doe, Paula, and Ōtomo no Yakamochi. A Warbler’s Song in the Dusk: the Life and Work of Ōtomo Yakamochi (718-785). Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982. For a translation where a third party is the subject of the whole poem, see Cranston, Edwin A. A Waka Anthology. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993. While Toshiyori gives ます態き as a reading for 早頃，the earliest Man'yō shū manuscripts read it hatsui (hatshu). This difference does not significantly affect the meaning of the poem.

\(^{13}\) The verbal phrase of the last part is the copula naru, with the auxiliary verb of appropriateness, beshi, together meaning “should be.” To whom the “alone” 晝refers poses a problem. Structurally, the precedent of naru is the first rice, but it would be an uninteresting poem if Yakamochi were saying that the nun’s daughter should be alone.

女御集云，

サツキヤミオボッカナサノイトマサラン

ト。如此之句不可云事発。又詐実詐。唯臨時ナニタナク云出王ヲ事発。但於今者以之可為証跡発。若又集之辯事発。広可見之

Renga should be composed starting with upper or lower phrase, as desired. Though this is true, in chain (kusari) renga the starting verse (hokku) should not be the lower phrase. Also, in situations like this, one should not just blurt out a verse quickly, but should wait for the lord or lady of the gathering (tōza). It is best to wait for a pause, and then compose one's poem. Private gatherings should not be limited by formalities.

A recent waka rulebook said it is improper to not complete an expression in renga (etc). Considering this, I would say this is not necessarily the case. A poem in the Man'yōshū says,

Saogawa no The field I planted
mizu o seki agete by damming up the water
ueshi ta o of the Sao River — 15

Also a poem in the Gosenshū says, 16

shiratsuyu no When white dew forms —
oku ni amata no since from within comes
koe sureba the sound of many voices ...

Also, a poem in the Ise monogatari says, 17

oku yama ni To hear the sound
fune kogu oto no in the deep mountains,
kikoyuru wa of a boat rowing ...

These are good renga. Also, a poem in the Engi gosshū says, 18 “During a chrysanthemum banquet, the Central Affairs Minister broke off a flower used for hair ornamentation and sent it to a woman. Saying, ‘I couldn’t send only this,’ he attached a poem,”

nobe ni yukite Having gone to the fields
oritsuru koto wa and plucked a branch ...

Having sent it without the end, she replied,

shimo no uchi ni within the frost
utsuranu hana o the flower left unchanged

15 Man’yōshū 8:1635. See above.
16 Gosenshū 6:293. See above.
17 This poem is not in extant texts of Ise monogatari.
18 The poetry collection of Emperor Daigo (885-930), compiled shortly after his death. It contains two renga.
aware to ya miru appears pitiful indeed.

(etc.) Also, a poem in the Saigū no Nyōgo shū\(^{19}\) says,

satsuki yami ... the third month ends,
obotsukanasa no the feeling of longing
ito todomasaran really does not stop.

Perhaps one should not leave the third line of the first phrase incomplete like this. Or perhaps it is an old custom. Perhaps it was just recited based on the feeling of the occasion. Still, should we now use this as evidence of the custom? Or, is this just a mistake of the collections? This point should be examined more broadly.

This passage provides evidence for several developments in the practice of renga. First, Kiyosuke mentions kusari renga, or literally “chain” renga, where three or more phrases are linked together, a practice that seems to have been prevalent by this time, as will be examined below in a contemporary account from the Im-akagami (ca. 1170). Scholars now refer to this as long renga (chōrenga), as opposed to a single link of two phrases, which is called short renga (tanrenga). In addition, renga gatherings seemed to have been relatively popular, and Kiyosuke provides a few points of etiquette. Perhaps this popular appeal and the excitement of the situation had already caused the gatherings to become unruly, since as will be seen, the lack of propriety in renga gatherings was an issue that Yoshimoto continued to deal with in his Tsukuba mondō as he worked to bring prestige to renga as a form of court poetics.

Noting that Kiyosuke only lists half of all of the poems except one, his point here is to emphasize that it is not necessary that the first phrase contain an independent expression. Presumably, however, long renga would require every phrase except the first to be independent, since a phrase may act as an ending phrase and then become the starting phrase for the next link. However, since Kiyosuke does not provide any examples of long renga, he does not address this issue with long renga. Perhaps he regarded this too as a case by case issue, given that he also provides different rules for the starting verse in long (chain) renga, suggests the tightening of rules in private gatherings, and is equivocal regarding the ability to cut a poem after the second line.

To argue that the first phrase need not be self-sufficient, Kiyosuke gives five examples of renga, not only from imperial anthologies, but also from the Ise monogatari and two minor private anthologies. The first poem, from the Man’yōshū, is not criticized for not having an independent first phrase as it was by Toshiyori. The second poem, from the Gosenshū, was also in the Toshiyori zuinō, but has not been changed by Kiyosuke, leaving an incomplete expression. The third poem, though not included in extant texts of the Ise monogatari, does not begin with an independent starting phrase either.\(^{20}\)

In contrast to the first three examples, the poems from the Engi gyoshū and Saigū no Nyōgo shū, by Emperor Daigo and his granddaughter Kishi, respectively, both divide between the second and third lines (5-7/5-7-7). As in the Toshiyori zuinō, the Fukuro zōshi carries the expectation that poems be divided after the third phrase, and raises concerns about the quality of these poems. However, unlike Toshiyori, Kiyosuke hesi-

\(^{19}\) The poetry collection of Saigū no Nyōgo, Princess Kishi (929-985), the daughter of Emperor Daigo’s son Shigeru.
tates to criticize poems compiled by imperial edict, a status into which he includes the *Man'yōshū*.\(^{21}\) Instead, he applies broader aesthetic principles to be able to call these examples as "good renga." Still, such magnanimity does not extend to the poems by Emperor Daigo and Kishi, even with the latter's immortalization as one of the thirty-six poetic geniuses (*sanjūrokunen hasen*) selected by Fujiwara no Kintō.\(^{22}\)

While Toshiyori's treatise revised earlier renga to make them follow his rule that each half be independent, *Fukuro zōshi* takes a historically critical approach in recognizing that renga did not originally require a complete expression in the first phrase. Both are arguing for the legitimacy of the poetic form which has already gained popularity, but from different approaches. Toshiyori notes poems he calls renga from imperial anthologies, and Kiyosuke lists poems in other prestigious texts in addition to the imperial anthologies. Both approaches demonstrate that renga was practiced widely by prestigious poets of the past.

The earliest known example of what the *Fukuro zōshi* called chain renga is seen in the "Hana no aruji" chapter of *Imakagami*, which records that poetry exchanges such as the following were often composed at the residence of Minamoto no Arihito (known as the Hanazono Minister of the Left) around the year 1130.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nara no miyako o} & \quad \text{I am strongly reminded} \\
\text{Omohi koso yare} & \quad \text{of the Nara capital} \\
& \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{(Kimori)} \\
yaezakura & \quad \text{Double-petaled cherry blossoms} \\
\text{aki no momiji ya} & \quad \text{and autumn colored leaves} \\
\text{ikanaran} & \quad \text{I wonder how they fare} \\
& \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{(Arihito)} \\
\text{shigururu tabi ni} & \quad \text{The color deepens}
\end{align*}
\]

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\(^{20}\) Another section of the *Toshiyori zuinō* not quoted above, includes it with comments as follows:

這歌こそ、世の末にも、書にとらず見ゆるものなれ。言もありけるを、書きおかずりけるにや。

一恒
おく山に船木音のきこゆるは
貫之
なるのこのみやうみわたるらむ

これは、一恒貫之と貫之が、共してもへまかりけるに、おく山に、そま人の木ひく言の，ふね潜ぐに似たりければ、聞きてしめるとぞ。

Renga are not inferior to those of the past, even in this degenerate age. Though they existed in the past, the must not have been written down.

Mitsune
That the sound of rowing a boat can even be heard deep in the mountains,
Tsurayuki
must be that the fruit of the full-grown tree is ripening.

This exchange occurred when Mitsune and Tsurayuki where going somewhere together, and the sound of a woodcutter cutting a tree in the deep mountain sounded like the rowing of a boat. Hearing that, they composed this poem.

The phrase "umi wataru" is a kakekotoba meaning both "continually ripen" and "cross the ocean." Hashimoto, p. 189.

\(^{21}\) The *Fukuro zōshi* takes issue with the *Kokinshū*’s claim that Emperor Heizei (774-824, reign 806-809) ordered the *Man'yōshū*, instead arguing that it was ordered by Shōmu (701-766, reign 724-749) after his retirement. There is no evidence that the *Man'yōshū* was actually ordered by any emperor, however.

\(^{22}\) Kiyosuke’s positive evaluation of the poems from the *Man'yōshū*, *Gosenshū*, and *Ise monogatari* is suggestive of these works’ status, particularly within the conservative Rokujō school. Later in the *Fukuro zōshi*, Kiyosuke notes a debate between Kintō (966-1041) and Prince Tomohira (964-1009) over whether Ki no Tsurayuki (ca. 808-945) or Kaninomoto no Hitomaro (active 715 c.) was the better poet, and suggests that Kintō’s *Sanjūrokubun sen* came out of this debate. Anthologies of each of Kintō’s thirty-six poetic geniuses were subsequently collected within the *Sanjūrokubun sen* sometime prior to Kiyosuke’s lifetime. Fujitaka, p. 116. Kintō preferred Tsurayuki, the compiler of the *Kokinshū*, while Kiyosuke and the Rokujō school revered Hitomaro.
iro ya kasanaru with each winter rain.

(Echigo Nurse)\textsuperscript{23}

As renga developed, the convention was that each link of two phrases contained a single unit. Parts A and B created one poem, and B and C another. This example demonstrates the value of independent expressions in each link, the issue which concerned Toshiyori and Kiyosuke. Poem B required the semantic flexibility to function in two independent poetic spaces. A large part of the growing popularity of renga was due to the excitement in finding a witty response. With the development from short to long renga, the increase in the number of poets and links as seen here significantly heightened the spontaneity of the composition. With short renga, one could hope for a clever answer from a known interlocutor, while in the communal context of long renga, since a response will introduce the next topic, one can say that it is not only the answers which are unexpected, but also the questions.

I mention this development of theory out of practice because it mirrors the unique imperial sponsorship of the \textit{Tsukubashū} as an imperial anthology. Unlike other imperial anthologies which were ordered first, and then compiled, the first official renga anthology had a ground-up birth, being compiled first and then recognized by the throne. Though renga still did not have the prestige of waka (i.e. tanka) or \textit{kanshi} (Chinese poetry), which both had imperially ordered anthologies, this passage shows that renga gatherings had permeated poetic practice at court, even into the estates of high-level aristocrats such as Arihito.

Even as renga emerged as a mainstream cultural practice in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, even being sponsored by court officials of the highest echelons, it still lacked the public prestige of waka. The \textit{Tsukuba mondō} and \textit{Fukuro zōshi} instituted early and prestigious precedents for renga, necessary to create a sense of tradition for the poetic form. At the same time, they tried to define specifically what constituted renga, and began to standardize its aesthetic principles. In the following period of development, poets continued to clarify the rules of renga, and unofficial renga gatherings would obtain even imperial sponsorship.

\textbf{Early Kamakura Renga}

By the early Kamakura period, it seems, long renga competitions became a popular pastime, even at court. This booming popularity, along with the gradual development of guidelines for composition, gave renga the potential to eventually receive imperial distinction. No matter how popular they were, however, these gatherings were no more than a pastime, and lacked the decorum of an official mode of poetry.

According to the diary of Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1242), the \textit{Meigetsuki}, Teika and other poets of the Wakadokoro, the office charged with compiling imperial waka anthologies, would gather with other court poets and engage in a competition between \textit{ushin} ("with spirit," serious) and \textit{mushin} ("lacking spirit," unorthodox, or careless) factions in composing renga.\textsuperscript{24} Before long, Retirec Emperor GoToba (1180-1239) was even sponsoring these gatherings.

\textsuperscript{23} Kuroita Katsumi. \textit{Imakagami: Masuhagami}. Kokuushi Taikei; Dai 21-Kan Ge. Shintei zōho. ed. Tokyo: Kokuushi Taikei Kan'zōkai, 1940, p. 205. Fujiwara no Kinnori (1103-1160) was promoted to junior fourth rank upper in 1129. Minamoto no Arihito (1103-1147) became Palace Master (Naidaijin) in 1122.

For renga to become an official, public form of poetry, though, it needed the same sort of prestige granted waka. The Shūishū and Kin'yōshū included renga, but with unconventional topics and diction unfit for formal waka, such as Chinese loan-words. While poets such as Teika were breathing new life into waka, renga was merely considered a pastime, and the association of renga with the mushin style contributed to this image. Later it was called “haikai no renga,” and such “comic” renga lacked the necessary decorum to allow the inclusion of renga in official anthologies.

Once the custom of long renga was introduced, it expanded into longer sequences, reaching a standard of one hundred phrases, as evidenced in the early thirteenth century Yakumo mishō (early 13th c.), by the Retired Emperor Juntoku (1197-1242). Juntoku writes,

昔は五十韻百韻とつくる事はなし。ただ上句にても下句にてもいひかければ、いまならからをつづけらる也。いまのやにくさる事は中比の事也。賦物なども中ごろよりの事敷。

In the past, renga did not continue for 50 stanzas or 100 stanzas. A person would say just an upper phrase or a lower phrase, and then someone would continue the remaining half. Chaining, as is done today, was something of the middle period. Fushimono and such also seem to be from the middle period.

Juntoku then quotes the poem from the Man'yōshū between Ōtomo no Yakamochi (717?-785) and a nun, about which he says, “This is the origin of renga” (是連歌根源也).

Juntoku's treatise demonstrates renga's growing level of standardization, as the preferred number of stanzas settled upon lengths of fifty or one hundred, known as gojū-in and hyaku-in. In addition, a rule system known as fushimono was established. Fushimono determined in advance types of words that had to be included in each phrase of renga. For example, a sequence might be limited by words that end in -me, requiring poets to include words such as matsume, kaname, sugime, and so on. Or, with iroha renga, each phrase should begin with each sequential kana syllable of the iroha poem. The clarification of these rules was a significant step towards making renga a more dominant poetic form.

Most importantly, this passage from the Yakumo mishō is the first time that a poetic treatise had established a single “origin of renga.” As mentioned above, the prefaces to the Kokinshū had first demonstrated the importance of poetic origins, seeing a thirty-one syllable poem by Susano, son of Izanagi and brother of the imperial tutelary deity Amaterasu, as the origin of waka. These prefaces established a theoretical foundation which established the legitimacy of the Japanese poetics. Claiming the Yakamochi poem as the single “origin” was an important step in the creation of more elaborate renga tradition that could compare to waka, foreshadowing Yoshimoto's search for the “origins” of renga and the establishment of a position of ancient authority, a subject which will be examined in the next section.

Another development occurring at this time was the creation of a number of renga shikimoku, or rule manuals for renga. A book catalogue belonging to the Reizei family lists renga shikimoku by Fujiwara no Takasuke (ca. 1190-ca. 1251), Fujiwara no Nobuzane (1176-1265), Kujō Yukiie (1223-1275), Fujiwara no Teika, Fujiwara

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25 Ōtomo no Sukune Yakamochi 大伴宿祢家持 was of the Ōtomo kinship group (uji), which was bestowed the rank (habane) of sukune, the third highest in the royally appointed habane ranking system.

no Tameie (1198-1275), and Dōshō (dates unknown).\textsuperscript{27} None of these rule manuals circulated widely, however, and they were likely sets of house rules created by those in positions of leadership in their various groups.

Yoshimoto writes about these various house rules in his Renri hishō (ca. 1349). “Renga kiraimono differed according to the rules (shiki) of each house, but at the time, Kenji no shinshiki was used for instruction.”\textsuperscript{28} Still, there seems to have been a gap between these first shikimoku and those used in Yoshimoto’s period, since in his Tsukuba mondō, he seems to not know of them, instead only mentioning later rules known as the honshiki (original rules) and shinshiki (new rules). In response to the question, “In which period did renga shikimoku emerge?” we are told, “Truly, no one made shikimoku in the early middle period, when people would link one or two phrases, or when there were solitary renga and ushin/mushin verses. However, from the Bun’ei (1264-1275) and Kōan (1278-1288) periods, things such as honshiki and shinshiki began to emerge.”\textsuperscript{29} Though the Tsukuba mondō records elsewhere that Teika participated in ushin/mushin renga gatherings, it is strangely silent about the sets of house rules created during that time, mentioning only “recent” shikimoku by Nijō Tameyo (1250-1338), Reizei Tamesuke (1263-1328), and Nijō Tamefuji (1275-1324).\textsuperscript{30}

The point here is that until at least the Kōan period, there were no universal guidelines for the composition of renga, and even after the Kōan period, more minor shikimoku continued to emerge. Even the Ōan shinshiki, written by Yoshimoto, gives the “Kenji shiki” as its precursor. Before Yoshimoto’s time, the renga poetics lacked an influential set of guidelines that could propel it into national prominence. In other words, the lack of continuity between the renga world in Teika’s day and renga poetics when the Tsukubashō was made an honorary imperial anthology is symptomatic of a larger issue. Though emperors had attended, joined, and even sponsored renga gatherings in the past, renga composition was considered a mere pastime in the thirteenth century.

In fact, the reputation of renga gatherings was quite contrary to the image of refined poetry. When describing the renga gatherings during the time of Teika in the Tsukuba mondō, Yoshimoto says that “In addition, various prizes were given, and countless gatherings held.”\textsuperscript{31} These prizes were a form of gambling, depicted humorously in the following accounts by the priest Kenkō (ca. 1283-1352).

Kenkō, who was actually acquainted with Yoshimoto,\textsuperscript{32} gives details about the popular side of renga twice in Tsurezuregusa (ca. 1310-1331). Chapter 89 tells of a certain priest, who when returning from a late-night renga session, thinks he is being attacked by a nekomata, a cat-like monster. When people living nearby answer his screams, they find that he had fallen in the stream and his renga prizes had become wet. Apparently,

\textsuperscript{27} Quoted in Kidō, 1961, p. 185-186.

\textsuperscript{28} “連歌の模は、家々の式ちまちに侍れども、当時建治の式を指差とする彿さ.” Kidō, 1971, p. 57. The shikimoku of the Kenji period (1275-1278), sandwiched between the Bun’ei (1264-1275) and Kōan (1278-1288) periods, may have been the prototype to the Kōan shikimoku. Kidō, 1961, p. 189.

\textsuperscript{29} “連歌の式目はいたるの比よりおくる事ざや。” “申仏まのは一・二句を進らね、或は独遊後有心無心の句などにてありしとこに、まことにより式目を作りたる事もなし。しかるに文永・弘安の比より本式・新式など何物いだろ可り。” Kidō, 1971, p. 101.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 78.

\textsuperscript{31} Kidō, 1961, p. 77

\textsuperscript{32} As I mention below, Kenkō, together with Ton’ia (1289-1372) and Keian (d. ca. 1369) scored Yoshimoto’s Gofukkōvin Sesshō Dono kyakusha (1352).
Kenkō quips, a dog had jumped out at him. It seems that the priest had left the renga gathering drunk, and mistaken the dog for a nekomata.

Chapter 137 of *Tsurezuregusa* also illustrates the vulgarity of the popular renga gatherings, and Kenkō takes the opportunity to make another sarcastic remark, this time aimed at country bumpkins.

Only country bumpkins tenaciously take interest in anything. Under the flowers (*hana no moto*) they snake forward to stare rather than viewing from the side. They drink wine and compose renga, and in the end inconsiderately break off a large branch to take with them.\(^{32}\)

With prizes becoming the focus of renga, it came to be associated with gambling, and, as seen in *Tsurezuregusa*, some gatherings became quite unruly affairs.\(^{34}\) Renga needed to become disassociated from such popular practices and associated with the elegant style of waka in order to become court poetry. Competition itself was not forbidden, as this was an important aspect of utaawase (poetry competitions) in the case of waka, but the disorder and vulgarity of renga needed correcting. To this end, Yoshimoto later urges poets to not be concerned with scoring points, but to compose poetry with elegance.

Yet the popular appeal of renga also added vitality to renga poetries, and was not just a liability to be overcome. These “under the flowers” gatherings were led by renga masters (*rengashi*) who were not of the high aristocracy and did not have the authority to enter the court.\(^{35}\) The role of this *jige* (literally “below the earth”) class of renga masters was indispensable, although they were limited to roles of advisors to poets of the highest class. The *Tsukuba mondō* records that there were many *jige* renga masters gathering “under the flowers,” such as Dōshō, Jyukumin, and Mushō, who gathered large numbers of people every spring under the flowers at Bishamondō and Hosshōji.\(^{36}\) Renga masters such as these, able to mix with the upper aristocracy because of their roles as priests, became renowned for their poetic abilities, and played a large part in the development of renga.

Other lower aristocratic poets of significance were Ton’a (1289-1372), Zenna (late Kamakura), and his student Gusai (Kyūsei, ca. 1284-1378). Ton’a had revived Nijō waka poetries during Tameji’s time, and Zenna and his disciple Gusai were instrumental in the development of renga. Gusai joined Yoshimoto in compiling the *Tsukubashū*, though the preface to the *Shinsen Tsukubashū* (1495), the second honorary imperial renga anthology, only refers to Yoshimoto:

A certain minister, publicly not forgetting his oath to aid in government, and privately having quite a desire to enjoy the way, studied widely and searched afar, gathered renga of past and present into an anthology, named it *Tsukubashū*, and it was imperially declared equal to an official anthology.\(^{37}\)

In addition, Zenna most likely contributed to the creation of the honshiki and shinshiki. Kaneko Kinjirō, citing

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33 Kidō, 1961, p. 90
35 Kidō, 1961, p. 78
Shinkei's *Shiyōshō* (1471), even argues that Zenna was the actual author of the *Kenji shinshiki*, even though the *Tsukuba mondō* says “The shinshiki used at this time was probably written by Major Counselor Tameyo (1250-1338).” 38 If this is the case, then one could even wonder how much Yoshimoto depended on Gusai. The possibility exists that renga masters of the lower aristocracy were more responsible for the work, and upper class poets such as Tameyo or Yoshimoto looked over the texts and provided the name of authority.

It is impossible to say that renga poets outside of the highest strata of the aristocracy could not have written an influential renga treatise such as the *Tsukuba mondō*, or rules for renga that would gain more widespread circulation, such as the Ōan shinshiki. However, despite the popularity of renga, it needed greater authority and stateliness, and the one to grant that would be Yoshimoto.

**Ascribing Authority to Renga**

The rhetoric and energy of Yoshimoto's public promotion of renga brought about the creation of the first honorary imperial renga anthology, but he might never have succeeded except for the authority afforded by his political position. Widespread practice alone would not allow renga to be received as a form of official court poetry as we have seen in earlier sections. However, Yoshimoto through his special position was able to add political authority to the renga craze which had permeated the upper and lower strata of society. While part of this authority was gained through Yoshimoto's position and his efforts to validate renga, part was also due to Yoshimoto renaming the practice of renga as “Tsukuba no machi” and the mythological associations attached to Mt. Tsukuba itself.

Born in 1327 to Regent and Minister of the Left Michihira (1287-1335) and the daughter of the Minister of the Right Imadegawa Kinaki, Yoshimoto first served Emperor GoDaigo (1288-1339), but after the division into the Northern and Southern courts, he served Emperor Kömyō (1321-1380) in the Northern court as Regent (Kanpakšu). When the Southern army entered the capital, he was forced to resign the post of Regent, but when Ashikaga Yoshikira (1330-1367) placed Emperor GoKōgon (1338-1374) on the Northern throne, he resumed his post. In 1382, he became Grand Minister under Emperor GoEnyō (1358-1393), and the following year became Regent (Sesshō) for the infant Emperor GoKomatsu (1377-1433). In 1388, he became Kanpakšu for the third time, but died thereafter in the same year. He studied waka under Ton'ā, with whom he wrote the *Gumon kenchū* (1363) as a series of questions and answers about waka. He also wrote another waka treatise, the *Kinin fūtei shō* in 1387, was active in many utaawase, had sixty poems included in imperial waka anthologies beginning with the *Fugawakashū* (1349), and wrote the kana (phonographic) preface for the *Shin goshūi wakashū* (1384). He studied renga under Gusai, with whom he compiled the *Tsukubashū* (1356), wrote the renga treatises, *Renri hishō* (1349) and *Tsukuba mondō* (unknown, between 1357-1372), and created the Ōan shinshiki, or Renga shinshiki (New Rules for Renga, 1372), among other works. As Regent, and with his talent in both waka and renga, Yoshimoto was in a unique position to gain imperial recognition for the *Tsukubashū*, and ultimately renga, in general.

Only by becoming an honorary imperial anthology (*jūn caokusenshū*), that is, by literally being named

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38 Ibid., p. 101. The difficulty in comparing these accounts is that different names seem to be used for the same sets of rules. For a general history of renga and details about Kamakura renga, see Kōdō, 1971.
equivalent (jun) to an imperial anthology (chokusenshū) after it was compiled and presented to the emperor, did the Tsukubashū gain the prestige of becoming a form of court poetry. The authority of court poetry, of course, was not merely in the quality of the poems or in the position of poets, but in that it was officially ordered by the emperor, beginning with the Kokinshū.\footnote{Consider, for example, the extent to which Kiyosuke studies the date of compilation of the Man'yōshū in his Fukuro zōshi in order to determine which emperor could have ordered it. Conversely, the Shōku shihō wakashū was ordered by Emperor Nijo (1143-1165), but not presented before his death, and thus not considered an imperial anthology.} Yoshimoto was in the perfect position to bring about something which had not been done before: attribution of imperial anthology status after a poetic anthology was compiled and presented to the emperor.

In order to receive the same recognition for renga as was given to waka in the previous anthologies, the Tsukubashū needed a preface that formalized and legitimized renga in the same way that the Kokinshū prefaces had legitimized waka. As Steven Owen has noted in a study of the Great Preface of the Book of Songs (Mao shih), "Literary theory arises because a need is felt to justify poetry."\footnote{Owen, Stephen. Readings in Chinese Literary Thought. Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series; 30. Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1992, p. 42.} Though the Man'yōshū existed as a precedent for a waka anthology on the national scale, the Kokinshū was the first imperial waka anthology. It set the standard for imperial anthologies to come, even though it drew from the tradition of the Great Preface, validating waka theoretically through the six theoretical bases for poetry as identified in Chinese literature by James Liu: the aesthetic, metaphysical, pragmatic, deterministc, technical, and expressive.\footnote{For explanations of theories of literature that I describe in this paper, see Liu, James J. Y. Chinese Theories of Literature. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975. In an unpublished paper, I identified the use of Liu's six theories of literature within the Kokinshū prefaces, most significantly the metaphysical. This itself is worthy of a more extensive study, but it is not the purpose of this paper.}

Of these theories, the metaphysical concept was most prominent in establishing a foundation of legitimacy for Japanese poetics with respect to Chinese poetics. Relevant excerpts from the Kokinshū kana preface, written by Ki no Tsurayuki (ca. 868-945), are seen below.

Such songs came into being when heaven and earth first appeared. However, legend has it that in the broad heavens they began with Princess Shitateru, and on earth with the song of Susano-o no mikoto. ... In the age of the awesome gods, songs did not have a fixed number of syllables and were difficult to understand because the poets expressed themselves directly, without polish. By the time of the age of humans, beginning with Susano-o no mikoto, poems of thirty-one syllables were composed. ... Now, there are six poetic principles. This is true of Chinese poetry as well. ... Suasive. ... Description. ... Comparison ... Evocative Imagery. ... Elegance. ... Eulogy.

Since the Kokinshū prefaces were clearly conscious of Chinese traditions, and borrowed the six principles, or styles of poetry, from the Great Preface, the emphasis on the metaphysical is significant in that it was a concept of minor importance in the Book of Songs. Liu defines the metaphysical concept of literature as "a manifestation of the principle of the universe and a configuration of embellished worlds."\footnote{Ibid., pp. 24-25.} In Japan, the principle of the universe, perpetually reestablished through each successive imperial anthology, was an emperor-centered one: all things glorified the emperor and the Yamato government, including the imperial waka antholo-
gies, which were compiled by the emperor’s command. Since the authority of the emperor was based on his descent from Amaterasu and the heavenly deities, this same mythological base provided the legitimacy for Yamato poetry. This cultural framework placed the Nihon shoki in a position of strong authority, as it was the basis of the Japanese mythological tradition. For this reason, the prefaces to the imperial anthologies invariably refer to the ancient tradition of Japanese poetry. This is the kind of tradition that renga needed to achieve. References to poetic sages also added to the validity of the poetic tradition, but the sages too were responding to the principles of the universe. Therefore, Yakamochi could add clout to renga, but not validate it in the same way as a poem from the mythological tradition.

Writing in a slightly different context, Jurij Lotman and Boris Uspensky observe that changes in culture are “accompanied by a sharp increase in the degree of semiotic behavior (which may be expressed by the changing of names and designations).” The kana and mana prefaces to the Kokinshū both begin with the words, “Japanese poetry...,” clearly conscious that the concept of Japanese poetry was unique vis-à-vis Chinese poetry. In a footnote to the words “Japanese poetry” in his translation of the mana preface, Leonard Grzanka says, “The two probable models for the opening statement, the Maw-shih cheng-i preface and the ‘Major Preface’ to the Classic of Songs, both begin simply with the word ‘poetry.’” In order to distinguish it from Japanese poetry, the kana preface refers to Chinese poetry as “kara no uta,” and the mana preface uses the term “shifu” (詩賦). The creation of new designations for not only the new form of poetry, but also for the existing form will also be seen with the establishment of renga by Yoshimoto.

The Kokinshū kana and mana prefaces differ in their classification of poetic genres. More specifically, the kana preface only refers to “Yamato uta,” or Japanese poetry, which in its Sino-Japanese form is read “waka.” The kana preface merely describes the culmination of “Yamato uta” into thirty-one syllable poetry (miso moji amari hito moji) beginning with Susano-o. On the other hand, the mana preface describes a diversity of poetic forms:

But in the Seven Generations of the Age of the Gods the times were unsophisticated and people were simple. The realm of emotions was not distinguished and Japanese poetry had yet to arise. Later, when the god Susano-o arrived at Izumo, the thirty-one syllable song first appeared. This was the creation of the modern hanka. ... Later, in the Age of Man, this practice flourished tremendously. With such types as the chôka, tanka, the sedôka, and konpon, the diverse forms were of more than one kind, and the lines of development gradually grew profuse.

The poetic treatises, such as the Toshiyori zuinô had first introduced renga as one form among many types, including the chôka, tanka, sedôka, and konpon. This exclusiveness of the kana preface and the inclusiveness of

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43 The Kokinshū refers to Kakimoto no Hitomaro, Yamabe no Akahito, and the Six Poetic Geniuses. Rodd, p. 42-46, 381-383
44 Lotman and Uspensky are writing about the relationship between culture and nonculture. Chinese poetry, though in an antithetical relationship to Japanese poetry, was still a respectable form of poetry in the Japanese court. Yet waka was viewed as originating from the court’s ancestral deities, while Chinese poetry was not, and this adds a new aspect of validity to Yamato poetry. Lotman, Yu. M., and B. A. Uspensky, “On the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture,” New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation 9, no. 2 (1978 Winter): p. 211-32
45 Rodd, p. 379.
46 Hanka is used here in the sense of tanka, rather than in its usual sense as an envoy responding to a chôka. Ibid., pp. 379-380
the mana preface provide two different methods of theorizing and legitimizing poetry.

A look at the opening lines of the kana preface to the Tsukubashū quickly makes its similarities with the Kokinshū evident.

Although the poetry of Yamato began with the opening of heaven and earth and was transmitted from the turbulent age of the gods, it became an endeavor of man, who ordered its verses and fixed the number of letters. From the time that men divided poetry into the six types, suasive, description, comparison, evocative imagery, elegantia, and eulogy, and fixed its appearance into the various forms, chōka, tanka, sedōka, and kompon, they competed over the colors of the flowers of words, and there was never a time when they did not shine light on the dew of their emotions. This being so, renga is short in diction but generous in purport, and its poetic form is fitting unto its written meaning. Yamato Takeru no Mikoto pacified the disorder of the Emishi and revealed the dissension of Tsukuba Peak; and Middle Counselor Yakamochi expressed the depth of meaning of the waters of the Saho River.47

This preface follows the custom of the Kokinshū mana preface by referring to the variety of forms, but quickly turns the subject to renga. However, by not elaborating on the various forms, Yoshimoto relegates tanka to just one type among many, while positioning renga as the dominant form. In other words, the exclusive approach is used to define renga in opposition to the hitherto dominant tanka form, and to establish it as a high form of court poetry in the manner of tanka. In the Toshiyori zuinō or Yakumo mishō, for example, renga had been just one of the lesser forms, but according to the Tsukubashū preface, it is the primary poetic form, above the status of other minor forms such as the sedōka.

In addition to making use of this rhetorical technique, the Tsukubashū kana preface also takes advantage of semantic ambiguities to redefine traditional designations of poetry. Departing from the phrase “Yamato uta,” which can alternately be interpreted as “waka,” Yoshimoto opens the preface with the phrase, “Yamato koto no ha,” literally, “The leaves of words of Yamato,” a term broad enough to include any form of poetry.

Also, in contrast to Tsurayuki’s account that thirty-one syllable poetry began in the age of humans with Susano-o, Yoshimoto merely mentions this development as an “endeavor of man,” and refrains from mentioning Princess Shitateru or Susano-o, as to do so would elevate tanka at the expense of renga. Instead, the first name that Yoshimoto cites is Yamato Takeru, who is said to have composed renga after pacifying the Emishi in the east.

In the Nihon shoki, Yamato Takeru’s pacification of the east appears to have been a primarily persuasive one, using words, not military strength. When Emperor Keikō commands Yamato Takeru to journey to the

east to pacify the Emishi, he first depicts in detail their cultural depravity, then asks his general to rely on virtue and not military force to subdue them, and "with skillful words pacify the unruly deities and with a display of your might repel the wicked spirits." The preface to the Tsubukashū echoes this sentiment, describing how Yamato Takeru quiets the "dissension" of Tsukuba Peak in the east. It is as if the very creation of renga were the means by which the realm was pacified. Thus, renga is viewed as having a particularly pragmatic value as a tool for government, as the goal in renga is to harmonize with the preceding verse.

The ability of renga to harmonize the government receives special attention in Yoshimoto's Tsukuba mondō. Not bound by the formality of writing a preface for an anthology to be presented to the throne, Yoshimoto here stages his discourse as a series of questions by a nobleman to an old man who lived near Mount Tsukuba in the province of Hitachi. Writing in an unofficial, indirect narrative, Yoshimoto takes more liberties to make a stronger defense of renga vis-à-vis waka.

I asked, "From which age did renga begin? I would like to hear in detail about how it has been transmitted."

He answered, "The Ebisu poem at the Heavenly Floating Bridge that Tsurayuki wrote about in the Kokinshū kana preface is renga. First, when the Male Deity composed in a hokku,

ana ureshi eya  
Ah, how lovely,

unashi otome ni ainu  
I have met a fine young woman.

the Female Deity added,

ana ureshi eya  
Ah, how lovely,

unashi otoko ni ainu  
I have met a fine young man.

When two people compose a poem together, it is called renga. Isn't this a hokku and wakiku of the two deities? Because this verse is not thirty-one letters but is short, I think it undoubtedly must be renga. When I asked the masters of the past, they said that this was truly a reasonable view.

Also, regarding renga, I mentioned before that in the Nihongi during the reign of Keikō Tennō, when Yamato Takeru no Mikoto went to subdue the Ebisu of Azuma, he passed Tsukuba, where I have been living recently, and stayed at the palace of Sakaori in the province of Kai. In the verse of Yamato Takeru

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50 The term "Ebisu poem" is probably a misreading of the character 玉, which is properly read "hina." The "Heavenly Floating Bridge" exchange is more precisely referred to as the "Heavenly Pillar" exchange, as it took place around the pillar on the island of Ōnozora, which had concealed after stirring the waters from the Heavenly Floating Bridge.

51 In long renga, a hokku is the starting phrase, which is followed by the wakiku.

52 Previously, the narrator asked the old man, "By the way, in which province were you born and raised? Did you learn the way of waka and renga?" The old man responded, "I am from the area of Tsukuba in Hitachi. The tradition of Yamato Takeru no Mikoto, passing the district of Nibari, and composing renga at the palace of Sakaori in the province of Kai still remains."
no Mikoto, he said,

Niibari  Since passing Niibari
Tsukuba o sugite  and Tsukuba,
ikiyo ka netsuru  how many nights have I slept?

When there was not anyone who could add to this phrase, a young boy who was tending the fire added,

kaga nabete  Counting day by day,
yo ni wa kokono yo  the nights are nine,
hi ni wa toka o  the days are ten!

and the Mikoto praised him. After that, to Yakamochi's poem in the Man'yōshū. 53

Saogawa no  The field I planted
mizu seki irete  by damming in the water
ueshi ta o  of the Sao river—

a nun added,

karu wasaine wa  The one who eats its harvested early rice
hitori naru beshi  should be you alone.

Things such as this gradually increased, and from the Shūiwaŝū and Kin'yōwašū, entered into the imperial anthologies. However, they only left just one phrase at a time, and did not reach 50-phrase or 100-phrase renga. 54

When asked about the origin of renga, the old man begins by reinterpreting the mythological origin of poetry as it had been defined since Tsurayuki's time. Speaking through the old man, Yoshimoto suggests that the exchange between the Izanagi and Izanami was actually renga, since it was in the form of a dialogue. If this view is accepted, then Yamato poetry began as renga by the two deities just before they gave birth to the land and other deities. This questions the established hierarchy of Yamato poetics, implying that the thirty-one syllable poetry described by Tsurayuki was a later development, originating from Susano-o, who was later created by Izanagi. After recounting this exchange, the old man then gives the exchanges of Yamato Takeru and Yakamochi. Basically, the Tsukuba mondō reaffirms the two progeritors of renga provided by the Tsukubashū preface, but then adds one more earlier dialogic exchange. Here, Yoshimoto suggests that the sacred intercourse of the two deities who created the Japan islands was initiated by a renga exchange. If such an assertion had caught on, it would have completely discounted the mythological basis of waka as defined by all previous

53 Note that this version of the poem has, sekiirete, “damming in,” instead of sekiagete, “damming up.” Also, hutsui is read wasainae instead of hutsui, and the authors of each half are reversed here.

54 Kisō, 1961, p. 76-77. Note that the passage in the Kōbinashū kara preface referring to the exchange between Izanaki and Izanami, which is now thought to be commentary interpolated at a later time based on its absence from the oldest manuscripts, was considered by Yoshimoto to be of Tsurayuki's authorship.
imperial anthologies. However, this hypothetical statement in the *Tsukuba mondō* remained the fanciful speculation of a fictional old man.

As in the *Tsukubashū* preface above, since the term "waka" had also come to be used more narrowly to define tanka, Yoshimoto avoids calling renga one form of waka (in the broader sense), for to do so would be to subjugate renga below the poetics of the oppositional form of tanka, the primary poetic form in the so-called "waka anthologies" (*wakashū*). Instead, he speaks of poetry more generally as *uta*, which is inclusive of renga. Through a kind of semantic acrobatics, Yoshimoto is able to restructure the hierarchy of Japanese poetics. By only indicating that the "Heavenly Floating Bridge" exchange was not thirty-one syllables and therefore must be renga, Yoshimoto only implies that it was not waka as Tsurayuki had defined it. This way, he avoids the semantic conundrum of saying that if a poem was not thirty-one syllables (waka in the narrow sense) then it was not Japanese poetry (waka). Interestingly, one renga link was also made up of thirty-one syllables, and by this argument, the exchange between the male and female deities should not be considered renga either. However, Yoshimoto defines renga as any form of dialogic poetry, and a definition broad enough to include both the "Heavenly Floating Bridge" exchange as well as the Tsukuba exchange. A definition of renga focusing on meter would be detrimental to establishing an ancient, or mythological, origin of renga. This allows Yoshimoto to have it both ways: he excludes the Heavenly Pillar exchange from Tsurayuki’s definition of waka, but includes it within renga based solely on its cooperative composition. Despite the revolutionary claim in the *Tsukuba mondō* that the Izanaki/Izanaami exchange could have been renga, Tsukuba continues to be regarded as the origin of renga.

A third text which demonstrates Yoshimoto’s changes to poetic designations is the *Shin goshū wakashū*, presented in 1384. Written by Yoshimoto, the preface begins, “Shikishima Yamato mikoto no uta wa...” Originally, Shikishima referred to a location in the province of Yamato, or present-day Nara prefecture. It later began to be used as a makura kotoba, or epithet, for Yamato. Eventually, “Shikishima no Yamato” began to refer to the country as a whole, and later, the name Shikishima alone could signify the country.

The word was first used in an imperial anthology preface as an epithet in the *Goshūwakashū* (or *Goshū-wakashō*, 1086) as *Shikishima no Yamato uta*. Then, the phrase *Shikishima no michi* (the Way of Shikishima) appears in the *Tenjikwakashū* (1187):

> At certain times, people competed in the poetry, the leaves of words, of Yamato and Morokoshi (China). The Way of Shikishima also prospered. The fountain of poetry was deeper than of old, and the forest of

55 For example, the noble has his servant boy ask, “Now, which province were you born in? Have you studied *uta* and *renga*?” (Kdō, 1961, p. 74) Or after explaining that renga exists outside of Japan, the old man says, “In our country, when poetry (*uta*) is linked (歌を連ねれば), is it not called *renga* (連歌)?” (p. 75) And, as I mentioned above, when explaining the value of renga for government, he says, “And in our country, the poetry (*uta*), (歌) of the *Nihongi* are all *waazuta* (童謡) left innumerably for all to see (otoshimini nite haberu nari).” (p. 81)


57 According to the *Nihon shoki*, the sixth century Emperor Kinmei’s palace was at Shikishima (see Kinmei 1.7.14). In addition, the legendary Emperor Suinin’s palace is said to have been in Shikui (Suinin 3.9). Shiki, or Shikishima, seems to have been the domain (*agata*) of an influential family group (led by an *agata-nushi*) subordinate to the Yamato sovereign. A note in Suinin 25.3.10 of the *Nihon shoki* indicates that Amaterasu was first enshrined by Princess Yamato at Shiki before the shrine was moved to Watarai in Ise. It was Princess Yamato who had given the sword Kusanagi to Yamato Takeru to aid him in subduing the east.


poetry was denser than before. In the Senzaishū, the phrase "the Way of Shikishima" is preceded and followed by the phrase kono uta no michi, "the Way of this poetry," which refers to the preface's opening appellation for Japanese poetry: Yamato mikoto no uta, "the poetry of the Yamato language."

This expression, which had begun as an epithet for the province of Yamato, present-day Nara, eventually began to refer to the whole country of Yamato, or Japan. When contrasting tanka (waka) and renga, it was convenient to refer to the Way of Shikishima and the Way of Tsukuba, since it avoided using the traditional word "waka," a term which Yoshimoto would prefer to include renga. Where the opening word in the Kokinshū was more specific than the word "poetry" in the Book of Songs, and called Chinese poetry "Kara uta," in the same way, the traditional "Yamato uta" became "Shikishima Yamato mikoto no uta," allowing renga to fit within the broader definition of "Yamato uta."

As seen in the preface to the Tsukubashū and in the Tsukuba mondō, Yoshimoto used his political power to promote renga to the distinction of an honorary imperial anthology by creating new terminology and giving new meaning to old designations, when compared to the prefaces of the Kokinshū and other imperial anthologies. The use of Tsukuba as a name for renga was particularly beneficial because it carried additional connotations, as was already seen in the mythological past of Yamato Takeru.

Additional Connotations of Tsukuba

The use of "Tsukuba" and "Tsukuba no michi," in addition to simply allowing Yoshimoto to avoid the use of words which had become narrow in meaning, carried other nuances which added a positive aura to renga. The first was the association with Yamato Takeru's pacification, or harmonization, of the realm. In addition, Mt. Tsukuba itself was a well-known topic in Japanese poetics, as seen in the phrase from the Kokinshū kana preface, "The boundless waves of [the present sovereign's] benevolence flow beyond the boundaries of the Eight Islands; his broad compassion provides a deeper shade than Mount Tsukuba." According to Yoshimoto's rhetoric, the Way of Tsukuba became opposed to the Way of Shikishima, with two official forms of Yamato poetry being ascribed to mountains and islands, common representations of Japan as seen in this passage.

In poetry, "Tsukuba" also served as an uta makura, a geographical location which could carry additional layers of meaning ascribed by the intertextual poetic tradition. The Tsukuba mondō ends with the old man saying, "Now, I must say good-bye and go. I feel sad to leave, but as I said I am from Tsukuba, and want to enter, affectionately, even the foothills and deep forest." This refers to the following poem (11:1013, Love,

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61 Elsewhere in the Senzaishū, Japan is referred to as Akitsushima, the traditional name for Japan seen in the Jinmu chapter of the Nihonshoki (Jinmu 31.4). Also called Oyashima, such apppellations referring to islands (shima) are common for the Japanese archipelago in the earliest texts, suggesting its insularity compared to the continent. In the Kojiki, Akitsushima-miya is the palace of Emperor Kōan in the province of Yamato, corresponding to the present-day city of Gose in Nara. As with Shikishima, it is possible that Akitsushima also came to refer to Japan metonymically, but Ōyamato-toyo-akitsusima and Ame-no-mi-sora-toyo-akitsusima are given as alternate names. Yamaguchi Yoshinori, and Kōnosuke Takamitsu. Kojiki. Shimpai Nihon koten bungaku zenshū; 1 Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1997, p. 169 n. 10, also 349 n. 1. And, Sakamoto Tarō, et al. Nihon shoki. Nihon koten bungaku taikei; 67-68. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965, v. 1 p. 31 n. 8. Akitsushima is sometimes spelled akidusima instead of akitusima.
62 Rodd, p. 46
63 Kidō, 1961, p. 105
Topic unknown) by Minamoto no Shigenori (late 10th century), included in the Shin kokinwakashū (1205).

Tsukuba yama
hayama shigeyama
shigekereko
omoiru ni wa
sawarazarikeri

On Mount Tsukuba—
the foothills and deep forest
are thick like onlookers.
Still, they do not keep me from
advancing in my love.\(^64\)

This poem makes use of two common associations of Mt. Tsukuba, expressing both thriving vegetation and love.

These connotations can be seen in an earlier poem from the Gosenshū (11:776, Love 3) by Retired Emperor Yōzei (868-949), which was further immortalized by its inclusion in the Hyakunin isshu, the famous collection of one hundred poems by one hundred poets selected by Fujiwara no Teika.

A poem sent to Princess Tsuridono.

Tsukuba ne no
mine yori otsuru
Mina no gawa
koi zo tsumorite
fuchi to narikeru

The Mina river,
flowing from the crest
of Tsukuba Peak—
My love has grown,
becoming a deep pool.

(Imperially composed [by Retired Emperor Yōzei])\(^65\)

Mt. Tsukuba comprises two peaks, Nantai-san (Male Peak) and Nyotai-san (Female Peak), which are suggestive of a man and woman, and was famous as a sight of amorous poetry matches. As seen in the above two poems, it maintained its romantic connotation into later generations.\(^66\) These poetry matches at Tsukuba, known as kagai or utagaki, are recorded in the Man’yōshū in two poems by Takahashi no Mushimaro (active late 8th c.), and are also noted in the Shoku Nihongi (797).\(^67\) The record in the Hitachi no Kuni Fudoki is the most detailed of any description of an utagaki. It reads,

Behold, Mt. Tsukuba rises higher than the clouds. The western peak of the summit is steep and craggy. It is called Male Deity,\(^68\) and does not allow people to climb to the top. However, the eastern peak has

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\(^66\) This belief continued into the Edo period, by when Mina no gawa was also written with the graphs for man and woman: 男女の河, as seen in the Hyakunin isshu Mino shō: “Mina no gawa is written Nanryo (i.e. 男女) no kawa.” Quoted in Tanaka, p. 38.


\(^68\) Wo no kami 藤神
rocks in four directions, but the people who climb it are unending. The spring that flows from its side does not cease in the winter or summer. When the spring flowers bloom and in the season of the yellowing autumn leaves, men and women from the provinces to the east of its slopes hold each others’ hands and congregate. They bring food and drink and climb to the top mounted or on foot, delight themselves and relax. Their songs say,

Tsukubane ni The girl who said,
awamu to “I will meet you
iihi ko ha On Tsukuba Peak,”
ta ga koto kikeba ka To whose words did she listen,
mine awazukemu That she did not meet on the peak?

Tsukubane ni Lodging on
iorite Tsukuba Peak,
tsuma nashi ni Will not the night I sleep
wa ga nemu yoro wa Without a wife
haya mo akenu kamo Pass more quickly?

The songs sung are very numerous, too many to write down. A local proverb says, “Whoever does not get a betrothal present at the meeting at Tsukuba Peak is not a son or daughter.”

The most significant elements common to all extant textual examples of utagaki are that men and women eat and drink, sing and dance, and meet in some sort of sexual or matrimonial union. Though utagaki were not included in court literary practice, the remnants of such customs can be seen in the underlying poetic tradition, and the use of the title “Tsukuba no michi,” would naturally carry with it connotations stemming from Tsukuba’s legendary utagaki. Indeed, as seen in the above Gosenshū and Shinkokinshū poems, the use of Tsukuba as a symbol of fecundity and love was a practice remembered well into Yoshimoto’s time which added a secondary layer of significance to the selection of the Yamato Takeru poetic exchange as the official origin of renga.

Overlooked Origins for Renga

In poetic discourse so far, three poetic exchanges have been referred to as the “origins” of renga. The most prominent is seen in the titles of the Tsukubashū, as the first anthology of renga, and Yoshimoto’s Tsukuba mondo, as the first full-fledged renga treatise. Both draw attention to Yamato Takeru’s poetic exchange with the fire-tender about Tsukuba. The second proposed origin of renga, that of the poetic exchange between Izanaki and Izanami, is limited to a suggestion by the old man from Hitachi in Tsukuba mondo. The third example is the exchange between Yakamochi and the nun from the Man’yōshū. Yoshimoto’s selection of the Tsukuba

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70 Tsuchihashi extends his study to ethnographic field studies, which he finds correspond with early textual examples. He notes several modern regional festivals that have the same basic characteristics of utagaki, suggesting that the practice did not completely die out. See Tsuchihashi Yutaka. Kodai kagii to girei no kenkyū. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965. For commonalities between tanka and utagaki, see Shinoda Yoshikazu, “Tanka scoritsu no zenshi: shiron: utagaki to ‘uta’ no kōshū.” Bungaku (Jan. 1988).
exchange for the origin of renga was not merely because it was the chronological first example in the mythological and poetic tradition, but also due to the meanings associated with Tsukuba, as seen in the previous section.

Upon further examination, there are other exchanges which would predate the Niibari Tsukuba exchange according to the narrative chronology of the early mythologies. This was noted by Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) in the Kojikiden (1798).

さて此邇比羅理都久波の御問答の御歌を以て，連歌の初として，後世に，其道を筑波の道としも云り，押三句の歌を以て問答へたる例は，既に神武御段にもあるを，彼を取らずして，此を取る時は，書記のみを知って，此記の歌をば知らざるにや，但し未を続とある語に依て，此を初とせむもさることとなるべし。

This Niibari Tsukuba poetic exchange is considered the origin of renga, and later generations called this way the Way of Tsukuba. In fact, there was already a case of a dialogue with poems of three phrases in the Jimmu section. Perhaps they did not choose that one but chose this one because they only knew the Nihon shoki and didn’t know this poem in the Kojiki. However, it may be that this is considered the origin because it says that the end was “continued.”

Norinaga is referring to a poetic exchange in book two of the Kojiki, where Emperor Jimmu sends Ōkume no Mikoto to ask Isukeyori-hime to wed him.

Then, when Ōkume no Mikoto announced the emperor’s proclamation to Isukeyori Hime, he saw her tattooed eyes, and thinking them strange, sang,

*ame tsutsu*  Swallow, wagtail,
*chidori ma shitoto*  plover and bunting—
*nado sakeru tome*  Why your gaping eyes?

Ōkume no Mikoto responded and sang,

*otome ni*  Only that I may meet
*tada ni awamu to*  a young maiden—
*wa ga sakeru tome*  These my gaping eyes.

Then the maiden agreed to serve the emperor.

When compared with the Niibari Tsukuba exchange, this would seem to be another viable candidate for an “origin” of renga. However, as Norinaga mentions, the Kojiki was not considered an official history, and was perhaps unknown to earlier renga scholars, in contrast to the Nihon shoki, which was the first of the six national histories referred to as the Rihkokushi. As he is prone to do when a definitive answer is not evident,

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Norinaga offers an alternative hypothesis, suggesting the possibility that later generations overlooked the Jimmu poems and selected the Niibari Tsukuba dialogue because of the graph 続, meaning “continued.” Indeed, this graph is unusual in other dialogic poems in the Kojiki, Nihonshoki, or Man'yoshū, with the notable exception of the Yakamochi poem. Elsewhere, as in the above exchange, the graphs 答, 和, or 報 are used, all generally meaning “respond” (kotō, kotoatsu).

This theory, focusing on the word “continued,” suggests that the Niibari Tsukuba exchange and the Yakamochi poem may have been considered to be different from other dialogic poems that harmonized. Considering the predominance of the 5-7-5-7-7 form by the period that Yakamochi was active, the Man'yoshū poem was most likely thought of as an unusual example of one poem composed by two people, which was clearly the case with the renga in the Kin'yōwakahashū and Shitawakashū. The Niibari Tsukuba poems, however, are no different from other dialogic poems in their structural development, such as the above exchange from the Kojiki between Ōkune no Mikoto and Isukkeyori-hime. Like the Niibari Tsukuba poems, the poems that Norinaga mentions from the Kojiki, in three lines of 5-7-7 (or 4-7-7) syllables, are also of the form known as kata-uta, or half-poems. These short poems are common in poetic exchanges, but not all kata-uta are dialogic, and not all dialogic exchanges are kata-uta.

Perhaps, as Norinaga suggests, Yoshimoto (and other scholars of poetry) overlooked these poems because the Kojiki was not regarded as high as the Nihon shoki in the classical tradition during the fourteenth century. There were still other dialogic poems that Yoshimoto bypassed when he chose Tsukuba as the origin of renga. The first poems in the Nihon shoki where the narrative notes one poem in response (答) to another are between Hoboderi no Mikoto and Toyotama-hime (sent via Tanayori-hime). The Nihon shoki includes a note after this exchange which states, “All of these exchanges of two poems are called age-uta” (凡此贈答二首、號曰挿歌). This dialogic exchange and another between Emperor Jimmu and Ōkune no Mikoto—one appearing in the Nihon shoki as well as the Kojiki—appear before the exchange that Norinaga mentions, and long before the Niibari Tsukuba poems, but are also ignored as origins of renga. In other words, even ignoring the Kojiki examples, the word “continued” alone is problematic in deciding the Niibari Tsukuba exchange to be a form of poetry different enough from earlier poems in the mythological narratives to call it the sole “origin of renga.” The Tsukuba exchange was selected as the origin of renga based on factors other than it merely being the first example of a dialogic poetic exchange.

Therefore, the prominence Yoshimoto gives to Tsukuba in establishing renga as a legitimate court poetic

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73 One other example of 続 used in notes in the Man'yoshū is in the expression, “Following brocade with wisteria,” (以縞結縦), in a letter from Ōtomo no Ikenushi with poems 17:3967-3968, and then again in the response from Ōtomo no Yakamochi with poems 3969-3972. Both times the authors use the expression self-deprecatingly. See Satake, v. 4, p. 124-127.

74 The only poem in the Kojiki and Nihonshoki explicitly labeled a kata-uta, is composed by Yarato Takeru just before he dies.

Hashakiyashi From the direction
sagie no kata yō of my beloved home
kimoi tachi ka mo come the rising clouds.

75 The Kojiki includes two even earlier exchanges between Yachiboto no Mikoto (Okuni-nushi) and two of his wives.

76 Incidentally, Yoshimoto was not the first to call the Niibari Tsukuba exchange an example of renga. In the late 13th century, Urabe Kane-kata, wrote about this exchange in the Shaku Nikongi (歌日記), book 24, “Waka 2.” “The intent of all renga is to be like a greeting. This is the fountainhead of renga.” (対遠離者如詩是者遠歌之葩騁也) Kuroita Katsumi, et al. Nihon shoki shishi: Shaku Nikongi; Nikon isshi. Shinshōkan. ed. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1999, p. 304.
was aimed at creating a mythological past by referring to Yamato Takeru’s pacification of the east. Yamato Takeru’s heroic status in Japan’s mythological past gave validity to the Tsukuba exchange not available from other poetic exchanges. In addition, Mt. Tsukuba carried additional symbolic authority, since it was first reminiscent of its famous utagaki, and then continually rewritten in each generation of poetry as an uta makura suggesting love and fecundity.

Tsukuba as Continuing Symbol of Renga

Yoshimoto and renga poets could have used other poems considered earlier in the Nihon shoki’s mythological narrative, such as the Heavenly Floating Bridge exchange that the Tsukuba mondō refers to. Though this earlier origin for renga might have seemed more substantial, Tsukuba remained the symbol of renga, as seen in the title and preface for the Shinsei Tsukubashū, the second honorary imperial renga anthology, completed in 1495 with Sōgi (1421-1502) as a principal compiler.

Now, renga, as one form of Yamato poetry, has been transmitted from antiquity and flourished in this age. The division of its phrases into upper and lower began with the words, “Niibari Tsukuba,” of Yamato Takeru. The ordering of its letters into five and seven began from when Ōtomo no Yakamochi linked, kara wasaine. From such times until now, the way of renga has gradually spread, and its flow is without ceasing. It has come to express the heart of flowers and birds and state the thoughts of the wind and moon. Thus, beginning with the Man’yōshū of the emperor with the name of Nara,77 and even twice in imperial anthologies have renga been mixed in. Never have the leaders of the various poetic houses not amused themselves with renga. Narihira left the heartfelt flowers of his words on a cup platter,78 and Kintō left his beautiful brushstrokes on a sheet of paper.79 Until then, one person would read a phrase to the other, with two people composing one poem. From the middle period until now, one hundred phrases

77 The capital of Nara (here written 平城) was also called Heijō 平城, and became associated with Emperor Heizei 平城 (774-824, reigned 806-809), who was thought to have been involved in the compilation of the Man’yōshū.

78 The Tsukubashū contains an exchange between Ariwara no Narihira 平泉井白雉 (825-880) and a woman in which he writes his poem on a cup platter (Lance renga 2:286). Narihira is known as one of the Six Poetic Geniuses 六歌仙, and though criticized in the Kokinshū for his excessive emotionalism, Narihira is a strong model of Japanese poetry due to the many legendary accounts and poems of his contained in the popular Eise monogatari (mid-10th century).

79 Fujiwara no Kintō (966-1041) was a prolific poet and critic. He wrote Shinsegumi 新撰総集, a poetic treatise, and compiled the Wakan rōeishū 和漢朗詠集 (ca. 1013), a collection of Japanese and Chinese verses. He is the probable compiler of the Shūiwaakashū 水華和集 (1005-77) and the highly regarded Shūiwa 水華抄 (996-77), a probable early draft for the Shūiwaakashū. His personal collection, the Kintōshū 公任集 contains a number of renga. Kintō makes appearances in the Makura no sōshi 枕草子 (ca. 1000), Murasashi Shikibu nikki 留袖廻記 (ca. 1000), Eiga monogatari 今昔物語 (ca. 1092), Okazaki 大鎌 (ca. 1025), and Konjaku monogatari 今昔物語 (early 12th century?), giving him fame, like Narihira, beyond that his poetic works. The paper described here is kaishi 創紙, used for the transcription of waka and renga. The Tsukubashū contains the following anecdote (Spring renga, 1:13): “The 1st month, sometime after the 20th day, on a day when the wind was cold and the snow falling, Kintō entered the court, wrote a poem on a slip of paper (kaishi), and left it in the office of Sei Shōnagon.

sakoshi haru aru  It feels a bit
kokochā kōso sure  like spring is here
(Fujisawa no Kintō) (Fujisawa no Kintō)
sora samanai  The sky is clear,
yuki wa hana niya  and I confuse the snow
magorōn  for the flowers.
(Sei Shōnagon) (Sei Shōnagon)

This anecdote is also in Makura no sōshi, section 106. Here is a case when the lower phrase (77) was supplied before the upper (57/5). Ikeda Kikan, et al. Makura no sōshi, Murasashi Shikibu nikki. Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 19. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958, pp. 165-166.
have been linked together and written down on four sheets of paper.\textsuperscript{80} The flowers of spring, the leaves of autumn, the night moon, the morning snow—the sentiment of the moment and the feelings of the seasons have been expressed. So, just as the small branches on a verdant mountain will never run out no matter how many are gathered, and as the seaweed in the bay will never end no matter how much is taken, so is the way of renga. However, with the passing of generations, there was no trace of renga being compiled in particular. A certain minister, publicly not forgetting his oath to aid in government, and privately having quite a desire to enjoy the way, studied widely and searched afar, gathered renga of past and present into an anthology, named it \textit{Tsukubashū}, and it was imperially declared equal to an official anthology.\textsuperscript{81} From that time, this way has further expanded, prospered, and been organized. ... 

Unlike the Tsukubashū, this opening makes no reference to the six principles seen in Tsurayuki’s \textit{Kokinshū} preface, and does not argue that Japanese poetics contained a variety of forms such as chōka and sedōka. But it does reiterate other themes introduced by Yoshimoto: renga began in antiquity with the Niihari Tsukuba exchange, was written by Yakamochi in the \textit{Man’yōshū}, and was included in two waka anthologies. Like the prefaces of earlier imperial anthologies, the \textit{Shinsen Tsukubashū} describes the value of renga as expressive and pragmatic, but it does not begin with a reference to the beginning of heaven and earth and the original composition of poetry by the deities. Now established as a poetic form in its own right, renga did not require any positioning vis-à-vis waka. The preface did not need to redefine poetry as a broader pursuit including both renga and thirty-one syllable tanka, which had been the assumed form of Japanese poetry since Tsurayuki's preface. The decrease in rhetoric in the preface of the \textit{Shinsen Tsukubashū} was certainly a result of the success Yoshimoto saw in establishing renga as a court poetics.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Renga emerged as an alternate poetic form in the early imperial waka anthologies as a thirty-one syllable poem composed by two people. By the twelfth century, poets had begun composing long renga with groups of three or more individuals. As it gained in popularity to the extent that even emperors were joining in on the new national pastime, the rules for renga became more developed. Regardless of its extreme popularity, these elements alone could not bring renga the authority long held by tanka. Without Yoshimoto’s rhetorical positioning, linked verse might never have reached the level of an imperial poetic. Indeed, renga was unique in that its popular appeal thrust it into imperial recognition, as the \textit{Tsukubashū} was honorarily named an imperial anthology after its compilation.

A large part of the prestige granted renga was due to its designation, Tsukuba no Michi. This title separated renga from a head-on conflict with tanka, which had gradually become the established form of waka, or Japanese poetry. Unlike the poem between Yakamochi and the nun in the \textit{Man’yōshū}, which had previously been regarded as the origin of renga, the poem between Yamato Takeru and the fire-tender held a special authority. Since the prefaces to the waka anthologies justified poetry through its mythological origins, Yoshimo-

\textsuperscript{80} One hundred phrase 百紙 renga was written on four sheets of \textit{kaishi}.

\textsuperscript{81} The author expresses his respect for Nijō Yoshimoto by pretending to be uncertain of his name.
to's renga anthology also needed an origin taken from the tradition of the *Nihon shoki*. Mt. Tsukuba gave additional value as a symbol of renga in that it was once the site of dialogic poetry matches known as utagaki, a practice which influenced the establishment of Tsukuba as a makura denoting fecundity and love. Despite other earlier options for the origin of renga, Tsukuba provided the ideal poetic landscape for boosting the prestige of the practice of renga and its first imperial anthology, with its embedded symbolism of legendary dialogic poetry. Therefore, through the political authority of Yoshimoto and the symbolic use of Tsukuba as a designation, renga became recognized and appreciated as a form of poetry worthy of the imperial court.

**Works Cited**


