

# Searching for the Beginning of *Tsukuba no Michi*

— A Study on the Discourse of Renga Origins —

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連歌起源言説考 —「つくばの道」をめぐる—

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## 要 旨

『菟玖波集』(1356年)が二条良基と救済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、『菟玖波集』が「准勅撰集」と見做されたことが契機となり、短歌の勅撰和歌集に准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タ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辿り、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、それを宮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・『菟玖波集』・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. Tsukuba<sup>1</sup> 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
Tsukuha 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 o <sup>2</sup>	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 *Shinsen Tsukubashū*, not *-rengashū*.

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

<sup>1</sup> Niibari is in the eastern portion of present-day Ibaraki-ken, Makabe-machi. Mt. Tsukuba is to the south, height 876m. That the *Tsukubashū* 菟玖波集 comes from the *Nihon shoki* tradition is evidenced by the orthography of Tsukuba in this poem in the *Nihon shoki* 菟玖波. The *Kojiki* uses different phonographs for Tsukuba.

<sup>2</sup> *Kaga* is the repetition of *ka* 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 馬莫疾 打莫行 氣並而 見旦毛和我婦 志賀尔安良七国 *Uma na itaku / uchite na yuki so / ke narabe te / mite mo waga yuku / Shiga ni aranakuni*. Do not severely / whip your horse onward! / For this is not Shiga, / to which one may go and see / in just a few days. (A song composed by Osakabe 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 fudoki* recorded a tradition of dialogic poetry gatherings on Mt. Tsukuba. This association remained through the use of Tsukuba as an *uta 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 Kyūsei, 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.<sup>3</sup>

### 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 (*nidobon*) 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).<sup>4</sup> 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 *Shūiwakashū* (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*.<sup>5</sup> 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 *Shūishū* 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 *Shūishū* 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 shoki*, 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

<sup>3</sup> The most extensive history of the development of renga and renga discourse is Kidō Saizō. *Rengashi ronkō*. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1971. Another historical survey, studying issues that Kidō does not, is Okuda Isao. *Rengashi — Sono kōdō to bungaku —*. Nihonjin no kōdō to shisō. Ed. Kasawara Ichio. Vol. 41. Tokyo: Hyōronsha, 1976. For an English study of the history of renga, see Carter, Steven D. *The Road to Komatsubara: a Classical Reading of the Renga Hyakuin*. Harvard East Asian monographs; 124. Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University; Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1987. An older study is Miner, Earl. *Japanese Linked Poetry: An Account With Translations of Renga and Haikai Sequences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979. Also, Keene, Donald. *Seeds in the Heart: Japanese Literature from Earliest Times to the Late Sixteenth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, chapter 24.

<sup>4</sup> Kawamura Teruo, Kashiwagi Yoshio, and Kudō Shigenori. *Kin'yō wakashū; Shika wakashū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei; 9. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989. The second draft of the *Kin'yōshū* circulated more widely than the final draft.

<sup>5</sup> Komachiya Teruhiko. *Shūi wakashū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei; 7. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990.

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*).<sup>6</sup> 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*, *konpon uta* (mixed poems), *oriku* (acrostic poems), *kutsugaeshi* (reversing acrostic poems), *kaibun* (palindrome poems), *chōka* (long poems), *haikai uta* (humorous poems), *renga*, and *kakushidai* (hidden topic poems). About renga, he says,<sup>7</sup>

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

夏の夜をみぢかきものと言ひ始めし  
といひて、

<sup>6</sup> Kidō Saizō addresses the development renga in the poetic tradition in detail in Kidō Saizō. *Rengashi ronkō*. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1971.

<sup>7</sup> Hashimoto Fumio, Ariyoshi Tamotsu, and Fujihira Haruo. *Karonshū*. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū; 87. Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2002.

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、

夏の夜をみぢかきものと思ふかな

といふべきなり。さてぞかなふべき。

さほがはのみづをせきあげてうゑしたを

かるわせいひはひとりなるべし

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

しらつゆのおくにあまたのこゑすなり

はなのいろいろありとしらなむ

これは、後撰の連歌なり。

ひとこ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	"The summer nights
mijikaki mono to	are so short."
iisomeshi	Having first said that,

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

hito wa mono o ya	does he not now
omowazarikemu	think of them longingly?

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

Natsu no yo o	"The summer nights
mijikaki mono to	are so short,"
omō kana	I (he) felt. <sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> This poem seems to be a variation of the following poem attributed to Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (active 7<sup>th</sup> c.) in the *Wakan rōei shū* (ca. 1012), which was not originally a *renga*. *Natsu no yo wo / nenu ni akenu to / iiohishi / 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 *iisomeshi* ([who] first said) as a participle 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 *tsukeku* added, it could then be reinterpreted as third person in the voice of the composer's lover. Compare to Sugano Hiroyuki. *Wa-Kan rōeishū*. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū; 19. Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1999.

and complete the first expression. In this way it becomes renga.

Saogawa no	The field I planted
mizu o seki agete	by damming up the water
ueshi ta o	of the Sao River —
karu waseii wa	The one who eats its harvested young rice
hitori naru beshi	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	When white dew forms —
oku ni amata no	from within comes
koe su nari	the sound of many voices.
Hana no iroiro	I want to know that there
ari to shiranamu	are many colored flowers.

This is a renga from the *Gosenshū*.<sup>9</sup>

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

This is a renga from the *Shūishō*.<sup>10</sup> These two poems are both renga. There are no renga in the *Kokinshū*.

Basically, Toshiyori is concerned with two issues. First, he provides a definition of renga. It is a “usual poem” (*rei no uta*, 例の歌) composed in two halves, the upper, or beginning (*moto*, 本), and the lower, or end (*sue*, 末), and each half must be an independent expression. Apparently, he expects these terms to be understood by his readers and require no explanation: the usual poetic form is the *tanka*, and the division of the halves is between the third and fourth phrases. Second, he identifies poems which he calls renga in the *Man'yōshū* (ca. 759), *Gosenwakashū* (951), *Shūishō* (ca. 1005), and makes a point of noting that there are no

<sup>9</sup> *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 Yōichi. *Gosen wakashū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 6. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990.

<sup>10</sup> The *Shūishō* is a private anthology of Fujiwara no Kintō, which was expanded into the *Shūiwakashū*. This poem is in ch. 9, miscellaneous vol. 1, no. 450 in *Shūishō* and ch. 18, miscellaneous celebratory, no. 1184 in the *Shūiwakashū*. 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 *tsukeku*, 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 nari*, 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 *nari*, 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 *Shūishō*, the private anthology of Fujiwara no Kintō (966-1041), which is thought to have been the draft for the *Shūishū*. In the *Shūishū*, 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.<sup>11</sup> The *Man'yōshū* includes it in a group entitled, *aki no sōmon* 秋相聞, or autumnal salutation 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

<sup>11</sup> Satake Akihiro, et al. *Man'yōshū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 1-4. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999.

Ōtomo no Sukune Yakamochi 大伴宿祢家持 (717?-785) was of the Ōtomo kinship group (*uji*), which was bestowed the rank (*kabane*) of *Sukune*, the third highest in the royally appointed *kabane* ranking system.





女御集云、

サツキヤミオボツカナサノイトマサラン

ト。如此之句不可云事歟。又故実歟。唯臨時ナニトナク云出玉フ事歟。但於今者以之可為証跡歟。若又集之僻事歟。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 — <sup>15</sup>

Also a poem in the *Gosenshū* says,<sup>16</sup>

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,<sup>17</sup>

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 gyoshū* says,<sup>18</sup> “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

<sup>15</sup> *Man'yōshū* 8:1635. See above.

<sup>16</sup> *Gosenshū* 6:293. See above.

<sup>17</sup> This poem is not in extant texts of *Ise monogatari*.

<sup>18</sup> 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*<sup>19</sup> 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 *Imakagami* (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 lightening 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.<sup>20</sup>

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-

<sup>19</sup> The poetry collection of *Saigū no Nyōgo*, Princess Kishi (929-985), the daughter of Emperor Daigo's son Shigeakira.

tates to criticize poems compiled by imperial edict, a status into which he includes the *Man'yōshū*.<sup>21</sup> 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 (*sanjūroku kasen*) selected by Fujiwara no Kintō.<sup>22</sup>

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.

Nara no miyako o	I am strongly reminded
Omohi koso yare	of the Nara capital
	(Kinnori)
yaezakura	Double-petaled cherry blossoms
aki no momiji ya	and autumn colored leaves
ikanaran	I wonder how they fare
	(Arihito)
shigururu tabi ni	The color deepens

<sup>20</sup> Another section of the *Toshiyori zuinō* not quoted above, includes it with comments as follows:

連歌こそ、世の末にも、昔におとらず見ゆるものなれ。昔もありけるを、書きおかざりけるにや。

躬恒

おく山に船こぐ音のきこゆるは

貫之

なれるこのみやうみわたるらむ

これは、躬恒と貫之とが、具してものへまかりけるに、おく山に、そま人の木ひく音の、ふね漕ぐに似たりければ、聞きてしけるとぞ。

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 were 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.

<sup>21</sup> 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 (701-756, reign 724-749) after his retirement. There is no evidence that the *Man’yōshū* was actually ordered by any emperor, however.

<sup>22</sup> 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. 868-945) or Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (active 7<sup>th</sup> c.) was the better poet, and suggests that Kintō’s *Sanjūrokkasen* came out of this debate. Anthologies of each of Kintō’s thirty-six poetic geniuses were subsequently collected within the *Sanjūrokunin sen* sometime prior to Kiyosuke’s lifetime. Fujiwara, p. 116. Kintō preferred Tsurayuki, the compiler of the *Kokinshū*, while Kiyosuke and the Rokujō school revered Hitomaro.



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 13<sup>th</sup> c.), by the Retired Emperor Juntoku (1197-1242). Juntoku writes,

昔は五十韻百韻とつづくる事はなし。ただ上句にても下句にてもいひかけつれば、いまなからをつづけられる也。いまのやうにくさる事は中比の事也。賦物なども中ごろよりの事歟。

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)<sup>25</sup> and a nun, about which he says, “This is the origin of *renga*” (是連歌根源也).<sup>26</sup>

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 Izanaki 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

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

<sup>26</sup> Katagiri Yōichi, et al. *Yakumo mishō no kenkyū honbun hen, kenkyū hen, sakuin hen*. Shohan. ed. Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2001.

no Tameie (1198-1275), and Dōshō (dates unknown).<sup>27</sup> 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.”<sup>28</sup> 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.”<sup>29</sup> 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).<sup>30</sup>

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 *Tsukubashū* 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.”<sup>31</sup> 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,<sup>32</sup> 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,

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Kidō, 1961, p. 185-186.

<sup>28</sup> 「連歌の嫌物は、家々の式まぢまぢに侍れども、当時建治の新式を指南とする也。」 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.

<sup>29</sup> 「連歌の式目はいづれの比よりおこる事ぞや。」 「中古までは一・二句を連らね、或は独連歌有心無心の句などにてありしほどに、まことに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・新式などいふ物いでき侍り。」 Kidō, 1971, p. 101.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>31</sup> Kidō, 1961, p. 77

<sup>32</sup> As I mention below, Kenkō, together with Ton’a (1289-1372) and Keiun (d. ca. 1369) scored Yoshimoto’s *Gofukōonin Sesshō Dono hyakushū* (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.<sup>33</sup>

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.<sup>34</sup> 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 poetics, 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.<sup>35</sup> 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, Jyakunin, and Mushō, who gathered large numbers of people every spring under the flowers at Bishamondō and Hosshōji.<sup>36</sup> 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 poetics during Tameuji'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.<sup>37</sup>

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

<sup>33</sup> Satake Akihiro and Kubota Jun. *Hōjōki. Tsurezuregusa*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei; 39. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989.

<sup>34</sup> Kidō, 1961, p. 90

<sup>35</sup> See Okuda Isao. *Rengashi — Sono kōdō to bungaku —*. Nihonjin no kōdō to shisō. Ed. Kasawara Kazuo. Vol. 41. Tokyo: Hyōronsha, 1976.

<sup>36</sup> Kidō, 1961, p. 78

<sup>37</sup> Okuda Isao. *Shinsen Tsukuba shū zenshaku*. Tokyo: Miyai Shoten, 1999.



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)."<sup>38</sup> 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 michi" 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 Kōmyō (1321-1380) in the Northern court as Regent (*Kanpaku*). When the Southern army entered the capital, he was forced to resign the post of Regent, but when Ashikaga Yoshiakira (1330-1367) placed Emperor GoKōgon (1338-1374) on the Northern throne, he resumed his post. In 1382, he became Grand Minister under Emperor GoEnyū (1358-1393), and the following year became Regent (*Sesshō*) for the infant Emperor GoKomatsu (1377-1433). In 1388, he became Kanpaku for the third time, but died thereafter in the same year. He studied waka under Ton'a, with whom he wrote the *Gumon kenchū* (1363) as a series of questions and answers about waka. He also wrote another waka treatise, the *Kinrai 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 (*jun chokusenshū*), that is, by literally being named

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<sup>38</sup> 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 Kidō, 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*.<sup>39</sup> 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 shi*), "Literary theory arises because a need is felt to justify poetry."<sup>40</sup> 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, deterministic, technical, and expressive.<sup>41</sup>

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. ... Elegantia. ... Eulogies.

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."<sup>42</sup> 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-

<sup>39</sup> 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 *Shoku shika wakashū* was ordered by Emperor Nijō (1143-1165), but not presented before his death, and thus not considered an imperial anthology.

<sup>40</sup> 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.

<sup>41</sup> 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.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

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.<sup>43</sup> 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).”<sup>44</sup> 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 *Mao-shih cheng-i* preface and the ‘Major Preface’ to the *Classic of Songs*, both begin simply with the word ‘poetry.’”<sup>45</sup> 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 “shi-fu” (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 chōka, tanka, the sedōka, and konpon, the diverse forms were of more than one kind, and the lines of development gradually grew profuse.<sup>46</sup>

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

<sup>43</sup> The *Kokinshū* refers to Kakimoto no Hitomaro, Yamabe no Akahito, and the Six Poetic Geniuses. Rodd, p. 42-46, 381-383

<sup>44</sup> 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

<sup>45</sup> Rodd, p. 379.

<sup>46</sup> Hanka is used here in the sense of tanka, rather than in its usual sense as an envoy responding to a chōka. 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.

やまと言の葉は、天地ひらけしよりおこりて、ちはやぶる神代につたはれりといへども、人のしわざとなりてぞ、句をとゝのへ文字の数定まれりける。風賦比興雅頌の六くさをわかち、長短旋頭混本のさまざまのすがたを定めしより、言の葉の花色をあらそひ、思ひの露光をそへずといふことなし。しかあるに連歌は言つゞまやかに旨ひろくして、文の心にわたり、歌のさまにかなへり。日本武尊は夷のみだれをやはらげて、つくばねのとしげきわざをあらはし、中納言家持は佐保川の水に浅からぬこゝろをのべ…

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, elegancia, and eulogy, and fixed its appearance into the various forms, *chōka*, *tanka*, *sedōka*, and *konpon*, 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.<sup>47</sup>

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

<sup>47</sup> Kaneko Kinjirō. *Tsukubashū no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1965.

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.”<sup>48</sup> The preface to the *Tsukubashū* 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*.<sup>49</sup> 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<sup>50</sup> 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,  
umashi otome ni ainu              I have met a fine young woman.

the Female Deity added,

ana ureshi eya                      Ah, how lovely,  
umashi 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*<sup>51</sup> 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<sup>52</sup> 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

<sup>48</sup> Keikō 40.7.16. Sakamoto Tarō, et al. *Nihon shoki*. Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 67-68. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965. v. 1, p. 302. The concept of pacification using words is particularly prominent in the *Kojiki*, which uses the word *koto-muke*, or to persuade, in the special context of subjugation. Saijō Tsutomu, “Kotomuke to wa nani ka,” *Kokubungaku: Kaishaku to kyōzai no kenkyū*. Gakutōsha, Vol. 42, No. 8. 7/1997, p. 75

<sup>49</sup> Steven Carter also notes this pragmatic use of renga, in reference to James Liu’s theories of literature. Carter, Steven D. *The Road to Komatsubara: a classical reading of the renga hyakuin*. Harvard East Asian monographs; 124. Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1987. p. 213, n. 9.

<sup>50</sup> The term “Ebisu poem” is probably a misreading of the character 夷, 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 Onogoro, which had congealed after stirring the waters from the Heavenly Floating Bridge.

<sup>51</sup> In long renga, a *hokku* is the starting phrase, which is followed by the *wakiku*.

<sup>52</sup> 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 Niibari, 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,
ikuyo 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 tōka o	the days are ten!

and the Mikoto praised him. After that, to Yakamochi's poem in the *Man'yōshū*,<sup>53</sup>

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 *Shūiwakashū* and *Kin'yōwakashū*, 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.<sup>54</sup>

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 Izanaki 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 Izanaki. After recounting this exchange, the old man then gives the exchanges of Yamato Takeru and Yakamochi. Basically, the *Tsukuba mondō* reaffirms the two progenitors 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

<sup>53</sup> Note that this version of the poem has, *sekiirete*, "damming in," instead of *sekiagete*, "damming up." Also, 早稲 is read *wasaine* instead of *hatsuii*, and the authors of each half are reversed here.

<sup>54</sup> Kidō, 1961, p. 76-77. Note that the passage in the *Kokinshū* kana 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.<sup>55</sup> 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/Izanami 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 goshūi wakashū*, presented in 1384.<sup>56</sup> 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.<sup>57</sup> 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.<sup>58</sup>

The word was first used in an imperial anthology preface as an epithet in the *Goshūiwakashū* (or *Goshūiwakashō*, 1086)<sup>59</sup> as *Shikishima no Yamato uta*. Then, the phrase *Shikishima no michi* (the Way of Shikishima) appears in the *Senzaiwakashū* (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

<sup>55</sup> For example, the noble has his servant boy ask, “Now, which province were you born in? Have you studied uta and renga?” (Kidō, 1961, p. 74) Or after explaining that renga exists outside of Japan, the old man says, “In our country, when poetry (uta) is linked (歌を連ねたれば), 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 *wazauta* (童謡) left anonymously for all to see (otoshibumi nite haberu nari).” (p. 81)

<sup>56</sup> Kokka taikan. *Shinpen Kokka taikan*. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1983.

<sup>57</sup> 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 Sujin’s palace is said to have been in Shiki (Sujin 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.

<sup>58</sup> For further examples, see Katagiri Yōichi. *Utamakura Utakatoba Jiten*. Zōteiban. ed. Tokyo: Kasama Shoin, 1999. p. 194-195.

<sup>59</sup> Kokka taikan. *Shinpen Kokka taikan*. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1983.

poetry was denser than before.<sup>60</sup>

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.”<sup>61</sup>

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.”<sup>62</sup> 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.”<sup>63</sup> This refers to the following poem (11:1013, Love,

<sup>60</sup> Katano Taturō and Matsuno Yōichi. *Senzai wakashū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 10. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993.

<sup>61</sup> Elsewhere in the *Senzaishū*, Japan is referred to as Akitsushima, the traditional name for Japan seen in the Jimmu chapter of the *Nihon-shoki* (Jimmu 31.4). Also called Ōyashima, such appellations 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-akitsushima and Ame-no-mi-sora-toyo-akitsushima are given as alternate names. Yamaguchi Yoshinori, and Kōnoshi Takamitsu. *Kojiki*. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū; 1. Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1997, p. 169 n. 10, also 349 n. 1. And, Sakamoto Tarō, et al. *Nihon shoki*. Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 67-68. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965, v. 1 p. 31 n. 8. Akitsushima is sometimes spelled akidusima instead of akitusima.

<sup>62</sup> Rodd, p. 46

<sup>63</sup> Kidō, 1961, p. 105



Topic unknown) by Minamoto no Shigenori (late 10th century), included in the *Shin kokinwakashū* (1205).

Tsukuba yama	On Mount Tsukuba —
hayama shigeyama	the foothills and deep forest
shigekeredo	are thick like onlookers.
omoiiru ni wa	Still, they do not keep me from
sawarazarikeri	advancing in my love. <sup>64</sup>

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	The Mina river,
mine yori otsuru	flowing from the crest
Mina no gawa	of Tsukuba Peak —
koi zo tsumorite	My love has grown,
fuchi to narikeru	becoming a deep pool.

(Imperially composed [by Retired Emperor Yōzei])<sup>65</sup>

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.<sup>66</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup> c.), and are also noted in the *Shoku Nihongi* (797).<sup>67</sup> 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<sup>68</sup>, and does not allow people to climb to the top. However, the eastern peak has

<sup>64</sup> Tanaka Yutaka and Akase Shingo. *Shin kokin wakashū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 11. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992, pp. 38-39.

<sup>65</sup> Princess Tsuridono (d. 925) was the daughter of Emperor Kōkō (830-887) and consort (*nyōgo*) of Yōzei. Katagiri Yōichi. *Gosen Wakashū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 6. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990, p. 227. Modern versions of the *Hyakunin isshu* end in “narinuru,” but the oldest manuscripts end in “narikeru.” See Shimazu Tadao. *Hyakunin Isshu*. Kadokawa Bunko; 2618. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1974.

<sup>66</sup> 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 Nannyo (i.e. 男女) no kawa.” Quoted in Tanaka, p. 38.

<sup>67</sup> Poems 9:1759-1760 in the *Man'yōshū*, and Shōmu Tennō (Hōki 1.4.5) in the *Shoku Nihongi*. The *Ruijū kokushi* (892), which includes excerpts from the earlier histories categorized by topic, contains the passage from the *Shoku Nihongi* about Mt. Tsukuba under the heading “Utagaki.” This shows that the practice of utagaki was still remembered in a ninth century text. Satake Akihiro, et al. *Man'yōshū*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 1-4. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999, v. 2, p. 372-373. Aoki Kazuo, et al. *Shoku Nihongi*. Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikai; 12-16. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989, v. 2, p. 278-281. Kokushi Taikai Henshūkai. *Ruijū kokushi*. Shinsōban. ed. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1998, p. 399-400.

<sup>68</sup> Wo no kami 雄神

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
iishi 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."<sup>69</sup>

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.<sup>70</sup> 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 mondō*, 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 mondō*. The third example is the exchange between Yakamochi and the nun from the *Man'yōshū*. Yoshimoto's selection of the Tsukuba

<sup>69</sup> Under "Tsukuba no kōri." Uegaki Setsuya. *Fudoki*. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū; 5. Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1997, 362-363.

<sup>70</sup> 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 kayō to girei no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965. For commonalities between tanka and utagaki, see Shinada Yoshikazu, "Tanka seiritsu no zenshi: shiron: utagaki to 'uta' no kōtsū." *Bungaku* (Jun. 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).

さて此邇比婆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、抑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、此を取るは、書紀のみを知て、此記の歌をば知らざるにや、但し末を続とある語に依て、此を初とせむもさることなるべし。

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."<sup>71</sup>

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.<sup>72</sup>

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 *Rikkokushi*. As he is prone to do when a definitive answer is not evident,

<sup>71</sup> Motoori Norinaga. *Motoori Norinaga zenshū*. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1968, v. 11, p. 247-248.

<sup>72</sup> Yamaguchi Yoshinori and Kōnoshi Takamitsu. *Kojiki*. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū; 1. Dai 1-han. ed. Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1997, p. 159. Various theories exist regarding the enigmatic bird names here.

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'yōshū*, with the notable exception of the Yakamochi poem.<sup>73</sup> Elsewhere, as in the above exchange, the graphs 答, 和, or 報 are used, all generally meaning “respond” (*kotō*, *kotafu*).

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'yōshū* 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'yōwakashū* and *Shūi-wakashū*. 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 Ōkume no Mikoto and Isukeyori-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*.<sup>74</sup>

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 Hohoderi no Mikoto and Toyotama-hime (sent via Tamayori-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、號曰拳歌). This dialogic exchange and another between Emperor Jimmu and Ōkume no Mikoto—both 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.<sup>75</sup> 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.”<sup>76</sup> 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 poetics

<sup>73</sup> One other example of 続 used in notes in the *Man'yōshū* is in the expression, “Following brocade with wisteria,” (以藤続錦), 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.

<sup>74</sup> The only poem in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* explicitly labeled a *kata-uta*, is composed by Yamato Takeru just before he dies.

<i>Hashikeyashi</i>	From the direction
<i>wagie no kata yo</i>	of my beloved home
<i>kumoi tachi ku mo</i>	come the rising clouds.

<sup>75</sup> The *Kojiki* includes two even earlier exchanges between Yachihoko no Mikoto (Ōkuni-nushi) and two of his wives.

<sup>76</sup> Incidentally, Yoshimoto was not the first to call the Niibari Tsukuba exchange an example of renga. In the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, Urabe Kane-kata, wrote about this exchange in the *Shaku Nihongi* 釈日本紀, book 24, “Waka 2.” “The intent of all renga is to be like a greeting. This is the fountainhead of renga.” (対連歌意者如辞是者連歌之濫觴也) Kuroita Katsumi, et al. *Nihon shoki shiki; Shaku Nihongi; Nihon isshi*. Shinsōban. ed. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 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 *Shinsen 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, "Nūbari Tsukuba," of Yamato Takeru. The ordering of its letters into five and seven began from when Ōtomo no Yakamochi linked, *karu 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,<sup>77</sup> 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,<sup>78</sup> and Kintō left his beautiful brushstrokes on a sheet of paper.<sup>79</sup> 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

<sup>77</sup> The capital of Nara (here written 橿) 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*.

<sup>78</sup> The *Tsukubashū* contains an exchange between Ariwara no Narihira 在原業平 (825-880) and a woman in which he writes his poem on a cup platter (Love renga 2:826). 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 *Ise monogatari* (mid-10<sup>th</sup> century).

<sup>79</sup> Fujiwara no Kintō (966-1041) was a prolific poet and critic. He wrote *Shinsen zuinō* 新撰髓腦, 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 *Shūiwakashū* 拾遺和歌集 (1005-7?) and the highly regarded *Shūishō* 拾遺抄 (996-7?), a probable early draft for the *Shūiwakashū*. 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), *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* 紫式部日記 (ca. 1009), *Eiga monogatari* 榮華物語 (ca. 1092), *Ōkagami* 大鏡 (ca. 1025), and *Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語 (early 12<sup>th</sup> century?), giving him fame, like Narihira, beyond that his poetic works. The paper described here is kaishi 懷紙, used for the transcription of *waka* and *renga*. The *Tsukubashū* contains the following anecdote (Spring renga, 1:13): "The 1<sup>st</sup> month, sometime after the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 the office of Sei Shōnagon.

sukoshi haru aru	It feels a bit
kokochūi koso sure	like spring is here
(Fujiwara no Kintō)	(Fujiwara no Kintō)
sora samumi	The sky is clear,
yuki wa hana niya	and I confuse the snow
magōran	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 (7/7) was supplied before the upper (5/7/5). Ikeda Kikan, et al. *Makura no sōshi; Murasaki Shikibu nikki*. Nihon koten bungaku taikei; 19. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958, pp. 165-166.

have been linked together and written down on four sheets of paper.<sup>80</sup> 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 *Tsukubashū*, and it was imperially declared equal to an official anthology.<sup>81</sup> 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 *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 Nūbari Tsukuba exchange, was written by Yakamochi in the *Man'yōshū*, and was included in two waka anthologies. Like the prefaces of earlier imperial anthologies, the *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 *Shinsen Tsukubashū* was certainly a result of the success Yoshimoto saw in establishing renga as a court poetics.

## 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 *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 *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-

<sup>80</sup> One hundred phrase 百韻 renga was written on four sheets of *kaishi*.

<sup>81</sup> 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 uta 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.

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