AN ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF
JAPANESE WAKA POETICS IN THE HEIAN PERIOD:
TRANSFORMATION FROM PRIVATE TO PUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

Waka, a Japanese verse form of five lines of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 7 moras, respectively, was once the most common form of Japanese poetry, but after the compilation in the eighth century of the first poetic anthology, the Man'yōshū, waka lost ground to poetry in Chinese until the beginning of the tenth century. Yet waka survived as an indispensable means of courtly communication, and with the compilation in the early tenth century of the first imperial anthology, the Kokinshū, waka regained popularity. In the process, poets tried to separate waka from private life so that it could gain status as a prestigious public art form, and by the early eleventh century waka had come to be composed by the aristocracy on public occasions such as excursions and parties. Behind this movement was a contrast between two ways of practicing waka: waka as the product of a socially oriented poetics, by which poems were judged in large part in relation to the situations in which they were actually composed, and waka as the product of a more artistically oriented poetics.

The characteristics of what we might call waka's social poetics are situational dependency and timing, or timeliness. Waka in its social mode was often used as a means of sending a message, in a larger communicative context. Such compositions were motivated by some aspect of the situation in which they were composed by the
Another characteristic of *waka*’s social poetics is a response that is timely, that is, composing a *waka* at the right moment. The ability to present, at the right moment, a poem that somehow fit a certain situation was highly admired. Sometimes this meant composing on the spot, and sometimes the poet had a bit of time to plan his or her lines for an anticipated opportunity. In either case, the point appreciated was the use of those lines at an apt time.

The more artistically oriented poetics, on the other hand, tended to approach *waka* expression as something that could be practiced at any time, in any place, not so much as a response to immediate social context as to an imagined context. It developed due to the prevalence of composing *waka* on pre-specified topics such as seasons, the moon, flowers, or love. This thematic focus tended to separate the content of the poem from the social circumstances in which it was composed, and typically gave the poet more time to contemplate while composing. Moreover, the timing of the poem's presentation was not part of its appeal. Of course, any courtly audience for the more artistic approach could be expected to be familiar with the tradition of *waka*’s social poetics. As the thematic treatments of the artistic approach became established, they in turn became fair game for the aptly timed occasional composition.

In these ways, *waka*’s socially oriented poetics and its artistically oriented poetics can be seen to differ. Nonetheless, the former survived alongside the latter, and continued to thrive as a means of discourse in court life. Indeed, the circumstances of composition were still considered a crucial element in a poem's effect on an audience even after poets came to regard *waka* as a vehicle for artistic expression.
The *karonsho*, treatises on composing *waka*, focus on poetry as an art form, with rules to be observed, effects to be evoked, and so on. As the more thematically oriented compositions and their artistic poetics came to be considered more important than the more socially oriented poetics, descriptions in *karonsho* of how to compose a skillful poem on a topic became more detailed and technical. However, many *karonsho* writers touch on the social side of *waka* poetics as well. In fact, they often take up socially oriented *waka* and evaluate them positively for their success as such. In more than one case, this was done to provide knowledge of the more social poetics and its masterworks to an audience that was relatively new to the practice of *waka* -- people from the class of provincial governors, military families, and their like.
Dedicated to my parents
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the early history of Japanese poetry, by the eighth century various forms of poetry with a set moraic\(^1\) pattern had been created, such as the *chôka* 長歌 'long poem,' which repeats a pattern of lines of five and seven moras and ends with a final seven mora line, the *tanka* 短歌 'short poem,' with five lines of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 7 moras, the *sedôka* 施頭歌 'head-repeated poem' (5, 7, 7, 5, 7, and 7), *bussokuseki katai* 仏足石歌体 :style of poems on the Buddha’s footprints’ (5, 7, 5, 7, 7, and 7) and *katauta* 片歌 ‘partial poems’ (5, 7, 7).\(^2\) Among these poems with a set moraic pattern, the *tanka*, which was also called *waka* 'Japanese poem,' became the most popular form of Japanese verse. While the other forms of early Japanese poetry came to be rarely seen, *waka* is found in various literary works of the classical cannon. Indeed, this form has survived throughout Japanese history, although today, the term *tanka* is more commonly used to refer to the form composed in modern periods. The fact that *tanka* became the representative form

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\(^1\) Mora refers to the relevant units of timing (*onsetsu* 音節 in Japanese). I will not use the term "syllable" to refer to *onsetsu*, primarily to avoid confusion over the status of long syllables like *kyô*.

\(^2\) The *bussokuseki* name refers to the twenty-one poems in this form that accompany the ‘Buddha’s footprint’ stones at the Yakushiji Temple in Nara. Imura Tetsuo 井村哲夫, "Katai 歌体" in Akiyama Ken 秋山虔, Jinbo Kazuya 神保五弥, and Satake Akihiro 佐竹昭広, eds., *Nihon koten bungakushi no kiso chishiki* 日本古典文学の基礎知識 (1975), p.25.
of Japanese poetry is shown by the fact that the term *waka* has a broader definition and a narrower definition. In its broader definition, it refers to all kinds of poems in Japan, as opposed to Chinese poetry. In its narrower definition, it is a *tanka*, or 'short poem,' or five lines and thirty-one moras.³

Today *waka* is composed by various poets, both professionals and amateurs, but in the Heian 平 安 period (794-1185), *waka* was mainly composed by courtiers, and it was in court circles that *waka* underwent the changes described in this thesis. In the early Heian period, evidence suggests that *waka* became a significant means of communication in the courtiers' social life. Many of the *waka* which we encounter in different genres of classical Japanese literature such as *tsukurimonogatari* 作り物語 'fictional tales,' *setsuwa* 説話 'collections of tales,' *zuihitsu* 随筆 'discursive essays,' and *nikki* 日記 'diaries,' fall into this category. On the other hand, *waka* gradually became an art form in its own right, and came to be composed for more general artistic purposes, as in poetry contests or one-hundred *waka* sequences. These two types of *waka* co-existed through the Heian period, although the latter eventually came to be considered more important. As *waka* gained recognition as a serious artistic pursuit, leading poets also became critics, in effect articulating a poetics to back up their practice. Still, *waka* were mainly composed and appreciated by courtiers, whether they wrote treatises or not. In this sense, *waka* at this stage in its evolution is an instance of what Barbara Ruch has called "practitioner-oriented canonical literature."⁴

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The quality of such literary arts is judged less by the intensity of emotional response elicited in an audience than by how fully the product represents a mastery by the practitioner of the aesthetic principles involved. Typical in the practice of such literary arts is the importance of a judge who is also a practitioner of the highest skill.\textsuperscript{5}

These leading poet-critics wrote various treatises on \textit{waka}, known as \textit{karonsho} 歌論書. \textit{Karonsho} are treatises on composing \textit{waka}-qua-\textit{waka}, so it is not surprising that they mainly address the genre's artistic side. The more artistically oriented \textit{waka} became, the more technical and detailed \textit{karonsho} became. However, many of these treatises also favorably assess \textit{waka} in its more social roles.

Central to this study will be two approaches to \textit{waka}: \textit{waka} composed for ends more personal and immediately social than artistic, and \textit{waka} composed primarily for artistic purposes, in settings publicly recognized as serving to present and/or respond to the poetry. I will discuss how \textit{waka} evolved from a more interpersonally oriented and largely tacit poetics to an artistically oriented poetics, which was quite aware of it as such. In doing so, it will be useful to examine how leading poet-critics evaluated these two kinds of poetics, mainly in the \textit{karonsho}. I will argue that these two kinds of poetics are not mutually exclusive, but coexisted throughout the Heian period in a balance that varied. Several major factors that influenced \textit{waka}'s evolution will be taken up, but I will focus my inquiry largely on the years leading to and including the early Kamakura 鎌倉 period (1185-1333). The main part of this thesis consists of three chapters. In Chapter II, I describe the history of \textit{waka} up to the early Kamakura period, in order to provide the

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., p.284.
reader with relevant background. Chapter III explains how *waka* was used for communicative purposes, and describes instances selected from various literary works in which *waka* are depicted being used for that purpose. As will be seen, if there were cases in which appropriate *waka* were applauded, there were also others in which unsophisticated people who struggled to compose a poem were ridiculed. In Chapter III, I attempt to outline, mainly by using materials from *karonsho*, how *waka* developed from a more interpersonally oriented kind of rhetorical praxis into a serious artistic pursuit. Throughout this thesis, I will use the term *waka* in its narrower sense, that is, to refer to a short poem of thirty-one moras in five lines of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 7 moras respectively.
CHAPTER 2

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WAKA POETRY

This section briefly outlines the history of waka in order to provide background information on the genre and the writers of karonsho discussed next.

The oldest Japanese poems can be found in two of the oldest extant Japanese documents, Kojiki 古事記 'Chronicle of Ancient Matters' and Nihon shoki 日本書紀 'Chronicle of Japan.' Kojiki, which was completed in 712, describes events from legendary times to the reign of Emperor Suiko 推古 (554-628, r. 592-628), and Nihon shoki, which was completed in 720, describes events from legendary times to the reign of Emperor Jitō 持統 (645-702, r. 690-697). These documents contain the earliest known Japanese poems, some of which appear in both with minor variations. According to Imura Tetsuo, the number of poems in these two documents after accounting for overlaps is about 200, half of which are in the 5-7-5-7-7 waka form.6

The first of poetry anthology in Japanese, the Man'yōshū 万葉集 'Collection for Ten Thousand Generations,' was compiled later in the same century. The Man'yōshū contains about 4,500 poems, ranging from the reign of Emperor Nintoku 仁徳 (5c) to that of Emperor Junnin 澤仁 (r. 758-764), and its poems were purportedly composed by

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6 Imura, et al., eds., p.25.
a wide variety of people, from emperors to farmers. Ariyoshi Tamotsu states that the
main characteristic of Man'yōshū poetry is "a strong style full of the vitality of real life." Even though the Man'yōshū contains different kinds of poems, a form of five lines, of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 7 syllables respectively, was the most common form represented in this anthology, and it became the most common form of Japanese poetry in the Man'yō period's (5c-8c) latter half.

After the compilation of the Man'yōshū, waka (i.e., poetry in Japanese, in the dominant five line form) lost ground to Chinese poetry from the eighth century to the beginning of the tenth century. Fujioka Tadaharu argues that during this time almost everything in the courtiers' lives was influenced by China, including the legal system, rituals, public ceremonies that were imported from China, and the courtiers' education and way of thinking. While Chinese poems were composed by courtiers on public occasions in the early Heian period, waka continued to be composed in the salons of female courtiers and in private communication. And it was apparently relevant that in the Heian period, the lives of upper-class women were extremely constricted. Hon'iden Shigeyoshi describes the life of upper-class women as follows:

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8 Hisamatsu Sen'ichi 久松浅一, Kagakushi no kenkyū: karon o chūshin to shite 歌学史の研究を
   中心としてー (1932), p.7.
9 Fujioka Tadaharu 藤岡忠美, "Kokinshū to sono zengo" 『古今集』とその前後, in Ōgihata Tadao
   扇畑信雄, et al., eds., Waka no sekai: sono shūhen to tenkai 和歌の世界 その周辺と展開 (1967),
   pp.172-173.
10 Suzuki Kazuo 鈴木一雄 and Hirata Yoshinobu 平田喜信, "Shakō, yūgi to bungaku 社交、遊
    戲と文学," in Yamanaka Yutaka 山中裕 and Suzuki Kazuo 鈴木一雄, eds., Kokubungaku
   kaishaku to kanshō bessatsu Heian jidai no bungaku to seikatsu: Heian jidai no shinkō to
   seikatsu 「国文学解釈と鑑賞」別冊 平安時代の文学と生活 平安時代の信仰と生活 (1991),
   p.264.

6
Living in the inner part of a vast mansion, they did not appear in person unless meeting an extraordinarily special person. When they had to meet someone, they would put up a screen between the guest and themselves, and speak very faintly. They would go outside in an ox-driven carriage, the windows of which were covered with screens. People could only imagine the beauty of the women inside from the charming robes, which would be visible from a corner of the opening. When they alighted from the carriage, they would hide their face with a fan.\textsuperscript{11}

Hon'iden goes on to explain that in these constricted conditions, \textit{waka} was an indispensable tool for communication in the social life of aristocratic women.\textsuperscript{12} Letters, primarily consisting of \textit{waka}, became a normal means of communication with people outside since the women could not easily interact directly with such people. Aristocratic women expressed themselves in their letters by means of \textit{waka}, with or without accompanying prose. Through their \textit{waka} and their handwriting, they were able to display their character to others. This was particularly important in the process of finding a prospective husband. Until a relationship became intimate, the woman would know the man mainly through the exchange of letters, which usually included \textit{waka}. And even when women had an opportunity to talk with outsiders through a screen, they often exchanged \textit{waka} with that person. Hon'iden claims that under such circumstances, whether or not they could demonstrate skill at \textit{waka} and in their calligraphy might determine the course of their lives.\textsuperscript{13}

As time passed, \textit{waka} came to play a more and more prominent role in the lives of aristocrats. Fujioka attributes this phenomenon to Fujiwara no Yoshifusa 藤原良房

\textsuperscript{11} Hon'iden, Shigeyoshi 本位田重美, \textit{Kodai wakaron kō 古代和歌論考} (1977), p.64.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p.64.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p.64.
Yoshifusa became the first regent from outside of the imperial family, when his grandson was named Emperor Seiwa 清和 (850-880, r. 858-876). As Yoshifusa gained political power, the private matters of the Fujiwara family became increasingly intertwined with public matters, and among those private matters was Yoshifusa's love of waka. It was this turn of events, Fujioka argues, that helped waka begin to regain its status at court. For example, in 851 Yoshifusa held a ceremony to have the Lotus Sutra read for the deceased Emperor Ninmyō 仁明 (810-850, r. 833-850). At this ceremony, aristocrats mourned the death of the deceased emperor by composing Chinese poems or waka. Without Yoshifusa, waka, which at the time enjoyed less public use and appreciation than Chinese poems, would not have been composed on such a formal occasion.

Two other elements which helped raise the status of waka were poetry matches, or uta-awase 歌合, and poems on folding screens, or hyōbu-uta 屏風歌. In uta-awase, two poets from opposing teams would each present a waka on the same subject, which would then be analyzed by a judge, who would decide which waka was superior or equal in quality and state why. Shortly after the death of Yoshifusa, the oldest known poetry match, Minbukyō Yukiira no uta-awase 民部卿行平歌合 'Poetry Match Sponsored by Minister of Popular Affairs Yukiira,' was held some time between 885 and 887. As time went on, the rituals of uta-awase became more complex. An uta-awase was originally a recreation which enlivened the tedium of life at court. As they came to be

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14 Fujioka, p.174.
15 Ibid., pp.174-175.
16 Hashimoto Fumio 橋本不美男, Ōchō wakashi no kenkyū 王朝和歌史の研究 (1977), p.78.
17 Hisamatsu, Kagakushi no kenkyū, p.25.
considered aesthetic competitions, however, winning a round or rounds in an *uta-awase* became a way to distinguish oneself among one's peers. Fujioka argues that with the growth in importance of *uta-awase*, *waka*, which was originally a verse form for expressing personal or private feelings, evolved into a refined courtly performance genre.\(^{18}\)

*Byōbu-uta* are *waka* written on *byōbu*, or folding screens, to accompany paintings, known as *byōbu-e* 屏風絵. *Byōbu* screens were not only necessary to the aristocrats for shielding themselves from winds or preventing them from being seen by outsiders, but also important as part of the setting at public ceremonies or as private gifts on felicitous occasions.\(^{19}\) Folding screens with paintings are estimated by Katano Tatsurō to have first appeared just prior to the middle of the 9th century.\(^{20}\) Poets would compose *waka* to accompany paintings on subjects such as the four seasons, the moon, and landscapes. The poem would be written on a square piece of paper, which would then be mounted on the folding screen.\(^{21}\) *Byōbu* paintings thus influenced the development of *waka* topics. Composing *waka* for *byōbu* paintings also became an important opportunity for prestigious poets. For example, *byōbu-uta* constitute sixty per cent of the poems in the private anthology of Ki no Tsurayuki 紀貫之 (868?-945).\(^{22}\) In other words, *waka* had

\(^{18}\) Fujioka, p.175.
\(^{22}\) Hashimoto, *Ôchô wakashi no kenkyû*, p.86.
become a conversion of the forms of capital occurred as described by Bourdieu (1993). Bourdieu defines capital broadly, as a resource that yields power, such that it has not only fiscal, but also cultural, symbolic, and social manifestations, each of which can be converted into another form of capital. While byōbu certainly constituted economic capital, they also came to be seen as cultural capital, and all the more so when they featured a memorable waka by a known and talented poet.

It was under these circumstances that the Kokin wakashū 古今和歌集 (or Kokinshū 古今集) 'Collection of Ancient and Modern Times', the first imperial anthology of verse, was compiled (ca. 905), under the commission of Emperor Daigo 髙ta (885-930, r. 897-930). With the compilation of the Kokinshū, waka came to be recognized as a prestigious public art form, and its popularity as such consequently spread to the lower parts of the aristocracy -- again, as a form of cultural capital. Once used as a means of private communication by courtiers, for example, in love letters, by the early eleventh century, waka came to be composed by the aristocracy on public occasions such as excursions and parties.24

Of course, this change did not occur instantly. At the time of the compilation of the Kokinshū, there was apparently still resistance among some courtiers toward contributing waka, which was seen as a low-level form of poetry, to the Kokinshū. Murase Toshio compares the number of courtiers who were deceased at the time of the Kokinshū's compilation and those who were living. According to his list, there were fifty-six deceased courtiers and twenty-seven living courtiers among the poets

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represented in the Kokinshū. Murase argues that the reason that there were fewer living courtiers represented was that they felt that waka was not appropriate as a courtly art form. Murase further claims that at the time of the compilation of the Kokinshū, despite the Emperor's intent in commissioning it, the authority of an imperial anthology had not been fully established. According to Murase, in years prior to the compilation of the Kokinshū, high-ranking courtiers, who did not have to worry about their social standing, had the leisure to compose waka, unlike middle-class courtiers, for whom skill at composing Chinese poetry was a recognized means for social advancement. Below the middle ranks was another class of courtiers, but given the relatively fixed aristocratic society, courtiers of the lowest ranks did not have much hope for advancement through family or political connections. Nor was skill at composing Chinese poems a means of advancement for them, but skill at composing waka afforded these lowest courtiers some opportunity. Murase's account does not make clear why such differences obtained between middle-class and lower-class courtiers, but it seems that the educational system was one of the reasons. The court university (daigakuryō 大学寮) was originally open to low-class courtiers and even to sons of local minor officials. However, as the Fujiwara's influence in the court became stronger, personal ties and family backgrounds became more important, as Robert Borgen explains:

26 Ibid., p.79.
27 Ibid., p.81.
28 This claim of Murase is a conjecture, which is not warranted by research. Ibid., p.79.
29 Robert Borgen, Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court (1986), pp. 72-73, 87.
In the Bureaucracy, men with private connections to those in power were at an advantage, and, even within the scholarly community, personal ties became increasingly important as a means of assuring career success.\(^{30}\)

The ability to compose Chinese poetry was probably not as decisive in middle-class courtiers as Murase claims, though it is probable that such ability was of some import, because official documents were written in Chinese. Therefore competence in reading and writing Chinese was no doubt required to have the ability to function smoothly in this closed society.

The Ōkagami 大鏡 'Great Mirror' (ca. late 11c - early 12c), a historical tale (rekishi monogatari 歴史物語) illustrates such an episode, in which a low ranking courtier benefits from his skill at waka. On a certain New Year's day, Minister of the Right Fujiwara no Morosuke 藤原師輔 (908-960) found that the leather bag he wore on special occasions was broken. Without having it fixed, he could not visit the Imperial Palace. He notified his father, Chancellor Tadahira 忠平 (880-949), that he would be late. Surprised, Tadahira sent one of his own bags. Morosuke was deeply moved, and though he could have composed a waka as a letter of appreciation by himself, he decided to have Ki no Tsurayuki compose one. To this end, he visited Tsurayuki's house. Ōkagami points out that Tsurayuki, whose rank was Junior Fifth Rank at the time, was greatly honored to receive Morosuke.\(^{31}\) This episode happened a couple of years before Tsurayuki's death. Tsurayuki was politically a minor figure, who had become governor of Tosa 土佐 at around the age of sixty, but was a renowned poet and became one of the compilers of the Kokinshū. It was Tsurayuki's renown as a poet that led Morosuke to

\(^{30}\) Borgen, p.84.

visit him and have him compose a *waka*. Tachibana Kenji and Katō Shizuko explain that it would have been impossible for a high-ranking man such as Morosuke to visit the much lower-ranking Tsurayuki under ordinary circumstances.\(^3\)

In any case, until the prestige of the imperially commissioned *Kokinshū* has its effect, the status of *waka* had been considered to be much lower than that of Chinese poetry. By the time of the *Gosen wakashū* 後撰和歌集 (or *Gosenshū* 後撰集) 'Later Collection' (ca. 956, the second imperial anthology), however, about half of the living courtiers of the highest rank - third rank and above (*kugyō* 公卿) - contributed to the anthology. This contrasts with the *Kokinshū*, where, only two out of fifteen living *kugyō* made contributions.\(^3\) This fact suggests that the status of *waka* rose between the days of the *Kokinshū* and the *Gosenshū*, at least among the highest ranking courtiers.

A consciousness of standards for what made a *waka* an excellent composition and how one should be composed gradually developed in the days of the *Kokinshū* era, and that consciousness was firmly established by the time Fujiwara no Kintō 藤原公任 (966-1041) ruled poetic circles.\(^3\) Kintō associated with Emperor Kazan 花山 (968-1008, r. 984-986) and the politically dominant regent, Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道長 (966-1027). Kintō was involved in *uta-awase* hosted by these powerful figures, such as the *Kanna gannen hachigatsu tōka dairi no uta-awase* 寛和元年八月十日內裏歌合 'Poetry Match at the Palace on the Tenth Day of the Eighth Month of the First Year of Kanna' in 985 and the *Kanna ninen rokugatsu tōka dairi no uta-awase* 寛和二年六月十日內裏歌合 'Poetry Match at the palace on the tenth Day of the Sixth Month of the Second Year of

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\(^{3\text{2}}\) Tachibana and Katō, eds., p.169.

\(^{3\text{3}}\) Murase, "*Kokinshū*," p.81.

\(^{3\text{4}}\) Ozawa, *Heian no waka to kagaku*, p.79.
Kanna' in 986 hosted by Emperor Kazan. In both of these *utta-awase*, Kintō participated as one of the poets, and in *Sadaijin Michinaga no uta-awase* 左大臣道長歌合 'Poetry Match Sponsored by Michinaga Minister of the Left' in 1003 he was a judge. It was through such activities that he gained his reputation as a prestigious *waka* poet. In addition, he wrote two treatises on *waka*, *Shinsen zuinō* 新撰韻能 'Essence of Poetry Newly Selected' (1001?) and *Waka kuhon* 和歌九品 'Nine Types of Waka' (after 1009?), in which he described the nature of excellent *waka* as well as points to be avoided (*uta no yamai* 歌の病 'poetic ills').

At the same time, as Kubota Jun relates, the early eleventh century saw the rise of a new type of poet, whose lifestyle was different from that of the court aristocrats. The poet-priest Nōin 能因 (988-1050) and others who followed were low-ranking government officials or men in religious orders who had formerly been such officials. Because of their low rank, they had given up on advancement in court society and instead tried to devote their lives to *waka* as an artistic pursuit.³⁵

After the first three imperial anthologies, namely, *Kokinshū*, *Gosenshū*, and the *Shūi wakashū* 拾遺和歌集 (or *Shūishū* 拾遺集) 'Collection of Gleanings' (ca. 1006), *waka* style became somewhat more diverse. Brower and Miner argue that a characteristic of *waka* in those days was "controversy and factionalism between innovators and traditionalists which replaced the poetic homogeneity of the early classical period."³⁶ Different poets developed different styles, and debated with one

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another over the respective merits of those styles. Poetic "houses," or semi-hereditary "schools" of poetry, also began to be formed.

One example of a poetic house is the Rokujo 六条 branch of the Fujiwara clan, which started with Fujiwara no Akisue 藤原顕季 (1055-1123). The name Rokujo was taken from the place where Akisue had his mansion (rokujō 'sixth avenue'). The active poets in those days were Fujiwara no Mototoshi 藤原基俊 (1060-1142), who tried to preserve tradition while being open to new styles, and Minamoto no Toshiyori, or Shunrai 源俊頼 (1055-1129). By the beginning of the 12th century, the first three imperial anthologies had come to be seen as canonical works, and Toshiyori created a new style not found in those canonical anthologies. He employed a diction that was more colloquial, and used what were, given the canonical precedent, startling metaphors.

In 1106, he even submitted such waka to Emperor Horikawa (堀河 1079-1107, r. 1086-1107) on the highly formal occasion of the Horikawa hyakushu 堀河百首 'Hundred-Poem Sequences Composed During the Reign of Emperor Horikawa' (ca.1105). This was the first hundred poem sequence presented to an emperor, and Toshiyori himself was a main promoter of the event.39

Despite his daring innovations, Toshiyori presents a sharp contrast with Sone no Yoshitada 曾禎好忠 (10c-?) who was also known for his unconventional poetic style. Yoshitada was "virtually ostracized by the Fujiwara aristocrats of his day" because of his poetic style and his eccentric personality.40 In Fukuro zōshi 袋草紙 'Bound Jottings'

38 Ibid., p.236.
39 Ibid., p.244.
40 Ibid., p.179.
(before 1159), there is an episode in which Yoshitada's contemporary, poet Fujiwara no Nagatō 藤原長能 (10c-11c) jeered at Yoshitada's choice of word, saying that he was "a man with a crazed way" (kyōwaku no yatsu nari 狂感のやつなり). On the other hand, Toshiyori enjoyed his status as a prestigious poet, and later became the compiler of the Kin'yō wakashū 金葉和歌集 (or Kin'yōshū 金葉集, 1126) 'Collection of Golden Leaves,' the fifth imperial anthology.

After the death of Fujiwara no Kiyosuke of the Rokujō family, the Mikohidari 御子左 branch of the Fujiwaras, led by Fujiwara no Shunzei 藤原俊成 (1114-1204), became the leading poetic group. Shunzei, a student of Mototsuki's, became the compiler of the seventh imperial anthology, the Senzai wakashū 千載和歌集 (or Senzaishū 千載集 1187) 'Collection of Thousand Leaves.' While the Rokujō family admired the Man'yōshū, Shunzei insisted that poets respect the Kokinshū. In addition, Shunzei was very clear about his highly respect for the Genji monogatari 源氏物語 'The Tale of Genji' (early 11c), an epic romance by Murasaki Shikibu 紫式部 (10c-11c). In the Roppayakuban uta-awase 六百番歌合 'Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds' in 1193, Shunzei, as the judge, stated that it was a pity if a poet did not read Genji monogatari (Genji mizaru utayomi wa ikon no koto nari 源氏見ざる歌詠みは遺恨の事也). Thus, Shunzei was a force behind the incorporation of another resource from which poets could draw allusions when composing waka, thus expanding the possibilities of the genre.

Shunzei's son, Fujiwara no Teika 藤原定家 (1162-1241), became one of the compilers of the eighth imperial anthology, the Shinkokin wakashū 新古今和歌集 (or

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42 Konishi Jin'ichi. 小西甚一. Shinkō Roppayakuban uta-awase 新校六百番歌合, (1976), p.188.
'New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times.' From Teika's days on, the Mikohidari family increased their status as the leading poetic family. In fact, out of thirteen imperial anthologies after the *Shinkokinshu*, eleven were compiled by descendants of Teika's.\(^{43}\) In Shunzei and Teika's time, the warrior class gained power through a series of skirmishes, such as that of the Hōgen 保元 era, in 1156, one in the Heiji 平治 era in 1159, the Gempei 源平 War (1180-1185), and another disturbance in the Jōkyū 承久 era in 1221. The long-term consequence was that the aristocrats' elegant way of life - the social matrix that had nurtured *waka* as a discourse of their own - lost its stable foundation. In such circumstances, both Shunzei and Teika tried to adhere to the traditions of the court, and to express their feelings while confining themselves topically to the nostalgic world of the Heian period.\(^{44}\) In this kind of context, *waka* became a "way of life" (*michi* 道 'path') under the influence of esoteric Buddhism, namely, Tendai 天台 (T'ientai) Buddhism.\(^{45}\) In *waka*, which might otherwise seem like superficial word play, Shunzei saw some of the profoundness of Tendai teachings.\(^{46}\) In this turn, *waka* gained a theoretical background which helped justify it as a serious and demanding art. I will return to this point below, after outlining the features of *waka* in its more private, interpersonal role.

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\(^{45}\) Brower and Miner, p.234.

\(^{46}\) Hashimoto, et al., eds., p.275.
CHAPTER 3

WAKA AS THE PRODUCT OF A SOCIALLY ORIENTED POETICS

The status of waka as social and cultural capital changed over time, as we might expect. In the early Heian period, it was not composed on public occasions but rather mostly on private occasions. As the status of waka gradually improved in the late 9th century, waka poets had increasingly more opportunities to practice in public venues. Behind such movement was the contrast between two ways of practicing waka. Waka as it figured in interpersonal matters, and thus in support of a situationally oriented poetics, was valued for its rhetorical potential in the situation in which the verses were actually composed. On the other hand, waka as an artistic pursuit gave rise to a more content/treatment-oriented poetics. These two ways of regarding and using the "same" verse form significantly differ in how the poet's world impinged on the waka s/he created.

The social poetics that underwrote so much pre-Kokin verse was largely a tacit body of conventions known more in practice than in analysis or discussion. The newer, artistic poetics tended to approach waka expression as something that could be practiced at any time, in any place, not so much as a response to immediate social context as to an imagined context. Of course, this division of waka into two types is not an all-or-nothing matter. Rather, at any point in the period, these two types are situated at both
ends of a continuum. Neither type existed independent of the other, although the nature of that relation changed over time. As noted earlier, even *waka* critics who devoted their life to the artistic side of *waka* often praised socially oriented *waka*, and also composed such *waka* in private life.

This chapter discusses the more interpersonally oriented *waka* and its poetics. For this purpose, I will also discuss *waka* from perspectives developed in several other literary genres, such as fictional tales (*tsukurimonogatari* 物語) namely, the *Genji monogatari* and the *Utsuho monogatari* 宇津保物語 'Tale of the Hollow Tree' (late 10c); a later collection of tales (*setsuwa* 說話), namely, *Jikkinshō* 十訓抄 'Notes on Ten Maxims' (ca. 1252), and an essay (*zuibutsu* 隨筆), *Makura no sōshi* 枕草子 'Pillow Book' (early 11c) by Sei Shōnagon 清少納言. Even though they differ from *karonsho* in various aspects, they have a common characteristic in that they all recorded episodes in which *waka* are featured.

3.1. Some Characteristics of the Early Heian Social Poetics

In the Chinese preface to the *Kokinshū* (Manajo 真名序), Ki no Yoshimochi 紀淑望 (?-919) discusses a time in the past when *waka* was composed mostly on private occasions.

As times grew frivolous and people came to desire luxury, meaningless words appeared like clouds, and extravagance gushed like a spring. After that, its [*waka*'] fruits all dropped, and only its blossom prospered. Licentious houses used it as the messenger of 'flowers and birds,' and beggarly guests used it as a means of life. Therefore, *waka* nearly became the handmaid of women, and it became embarrassing to present it to men.47

Apparent in this statement is the Kokinshū’s calculated departure from a poetics of socially occasioned response. Here, the interpersonally motivated uses of poetry are described in terms that were unmistakably negative, if rather reductionist. Thus, in their desire to present waka as serious art, the compilers of the Kokinshū took up an ideology that, on the face of it, clearly distanced the poetry from any social orientation. The tacit poetics of waka as practiced in this mode were never recognized as such, so the dismissal is short and simple. Indeed, after the compilation of the Kokinshū, waka did come to be considered an art form worthy of public display. However, this does not mean that socially motivated poetic practice died out after the appearance of the Kokinshū. The privately practiced social poetics survived alongside the newer emphasis on waka as publicly displayed art, and continued to thrive as a means of discourse in court life. In order to suggest how established the social uses of waka were, I will present illustrative evidence below.

3.2. Situation Dependency

Then what were the characteristics of waka’s tacit social poetics? One is what we might call situation dependency. Waka in its social mode was often composed on private occasions, and often used as a means of expressing a personal message. In such uses, waka had its meaning as a function of the situation in which it was composed by a poet, and read or heard by the receiver. As suggested earlier, this is a use of waka found

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48 There were four compilers of the Kokinshū: Ki no Tomonori 紀友則 (9c-10c), Ki no Tsurayuki, Mibu no Tadamine 壬生忠岑 (9c-10c), Ōshikōchi no Mitsune 凡河内躬恒 (9c-10c). All of them were low-ranking aristocrats.
in the process of a man's courting a prospective wife. Itô Kazuo describes a typical case of this process as follows. In aristocratic life in the Heian period, if a man's interest was captured by stories about a certain woman of marriageable age, he would send a note, through a go-between, containing a waka to express his interest. Then people close to the woman, such as her parents, brothers and nurses, judge whether the man is appropriate for the woman. In making a judgment, the woman's mother had a great deal of influence. If they decided that the man was appropriate for her, they would write a reply to him for her. After several exchanges, the woman herself would write a reply. Only after that was the man finally allowed to see the woman, and even then, only through a screen. At the meeting, the man and woman would exchange waka. After such several meetings, they would finally get married.\(^{49}\)

The importance of being able to compose waka when writing such messages is described in the Utsuho monogatari. In the Fujiwara no kimi 藤原の君 chapter, Shigeno no Masuge 滋野貞誉, the ex-governor of Dazaifu 大宰府 in Kyūshū 九州, has lost his wife on his way back to the capital, and having heard about the heroine Atehime あて姫, wishes to marry her. Masuge is described as a countrified fellow, who does not know how to use polite words appropriately. But even as such an unsophisticated man declares, "When a man is going to seek to marry a woman, if there is no waka in the love message, this will cause her to think little of him."\(^{50}\)

How the woman (or her family) should write a reply to the man's love message is described in the Suetsumuhana 未摘花 chapter of the Genji monogatari. Both the

\(^{49}\) Itô, p.120.
\(^{50}\) Kôno Tama 河野多麻, ed., Utsuho monogatari 字津保物語 (1959), p.205.
protagonist Genji and his friend and future political rival Tō no chūjō 頭中将 have heard about the daughter of a deceased prince, and sent her love messages. Being ignorant of the ways of the world, and without having a dependable family, the woman, Suetsumuhanaka, does not reply to either of them. Feeling upset, Tō no chūjō complains:

This is too deplorable! It would be much better for a woman who lives in such a [secluded] way if she would occasionally make her tastes known by treating elegantly ephemeral trees and grasses or the condition of the sky [by composing waka] with her sensitivity to the pathos in them. It's fine for her to be solemn, but being this shy is displeasing and bad.⁵¹

Abe et al. explain that torinasu ("treat" in the above translation) means to compose a waka making subtle reference to certain objects as a way of stating its theme.⁵² Of course, merely composing a waka on the nature around her is not enough in this case, because this is a reply to a love message. Expressing her feelings through the medium of waka, and elegantly couching them in terms of "trees and grasses or the condition of the sky" is the rhetorical skill that was valued on the part of the woman. In short, a woman was expected to compose a waka which would show her sensitivity to both feelings and nature. It was not enough merely to compose a waka which was good in terms of poetic techniques.

Another example of the situation dependency of the personally oriented waka is seen in waka of lamentation (Jukkai no uta 述懐の歌). This kind of waka took as a theme the poet's misfortunes or grievance. Minamoto no Shigeyuki 源重之 (?-1000?)

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⁵² Ibid., p.348, note # 10.
included jukkai no uta in his private anthologies, and thereafter it was composed by various poets in the Heian period. In setsuwa collections, there are several episodes that show how such waka benefited the poet. For example, Kohon setsuwashū ‘Collection of Setsuwa from Old Books’ describes Akazome no emon 赤染衛門 (11c-12c) whose waka benefited her son:

When [her son] Takachika 招周 was wishing for a promotion, Akazome no emon composed a poem, wrote it in a document requesting a promotion, and had it delivered to Rinshi 倫子, [wife of Fujiwara no Michinaga].

Omoe kimi Please understand, my lord
Kashira no Yuki o While I tear at my hair, white as snow,
Harai tsutsu The anxiety in my heart,
Kienu saki ni to Hoping that my wishes might come true
Isogu kokoro o Before my life is over.

The Novice [Michinaga] had a look at the poem, and felt pity for her, and made Takachika the governor of Izumi right away.53

Jikkinshō describes an episode from later days about the warrior poet Minamoto no Yorimasa 源賴政 (1104-1180), who held a low rank in court.

Although Yorimasa of the Third Rank, a descendant of Tada no Mitsunaka, inherited and carried on the family military tradition, he was inferior to no one in the composition of poetry. But though he had served in the Palace Guard for a long time, he had nevertheless remained an outsider, a stranger to those stairways to the realms above the clouds. Aggrieved at having spent so many years in this position, he set forth his feelings in a poem:

Hito shirenu Unknown to those
Ôuchiyama no Within that secluded palace
Yamamori wa The mountain guard
Kogakurete nomi Can only view the distant moon
Tsuki o miru ka na Hidden behind a screen of trees.

His verse was presented to the Emperor, and he was granted the privilege of entrance to the palace.  

Episodes like this show how waka could play an important role in changing an undesirable situation for the better. Thus, waka could serve as a useful tool in a courtier’s management of his circumstances.

If a waka is deeply integrated in the circumstances that prompted its composition, it may be difficult to interpret the poem without some knowledge of that situation. Of course, for people involved in the situation, interpretation might be more or less challenging, but not impossible, so long as the poem is to succeed at communicating its message. For readers "after the fact," detached from the circumstances of composition, there is not a problem if the waka is presented with a prose passage explaining the background, as in monogatari, setsuwa, or the headnotes (kotobagaki 詞書) so often included in the imperial anthologies. But when the situation in which the waka was composed is cut off from the waka, and the poem taken as an isolated entity, difficulties can arise. Hence, it is no surprise that kotobagaki often became inseparable from waka.

To see the difference a headnote can make, let us examine a waka by Fujiwara no

Tadahira 藤原忠平 (880-949) in the Shūishū 拾遺集, the third imperial anthology (ca 1006).

Teijiin 亭子院 [Retired Emperor Uda 宇田 (867-931, r. 887-897)] made a trip to the Ōi 大井 river, and he commented that it was a place where the emperor [Daigo 醴醐 (885-930, r. 897-930)] should make a trip, too. Composed in order to report this to the emperor.

Ogurayama O maple leaves
Mine no momijiba On Mount Ogura,
Kokoro araba If you have a heart,
Ima hitotabi no You'll wait for
Miyuki matanamu. Another imperial outing

From this waka alone, it would be difficult to tell what 'imperial outing' the poet is referring to, or why there ought to be another imperial visit to this particular place.

3.3. Timeliness

Another characteristic of waka's social poetics is a response that is timely, that is, composing and/or presenting a waka at the right moment. The ability to compose or perform on the spot a poem that fit the circumstances was highly admired, and episodes in which someone responded in verse aptly and extemporaneously were often preserved, written down as relatively lengthy kotobagaki. One example is Ise no Tayū's waka in the Shikashū 詞花集, the sixth imperial anthology (ca. 1151).

Composed during the reign of Emperor Ichijō 一条 [980-1101, r. 986-1101] when some eight-petaled cherry blossoms were presented to the

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emperor and Ise no Tayû was ordered to compose a poem on the topic of cherry blossoms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inishie no</th>
<th>The eight-petaled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nara no miyako no</td>
<td>Cherry blossoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yae zakura</td>
<td>From the ancient Nara capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyô kokonoe ni</td>
<td>Dazzle us on a new level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nioinuru ka na</td>
<td>Here at court today!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This poem is also included in Ise no Tayû's private anthology, *Ise no Tayû shû*.

There is a more detailed account in the *kotobagaki* in this anthology.

When the Imperial Lady was Empress, I was at court. Cherry blossoms were presented by a monk from Nara. Murasaki Shikibu declined the role of accepting the blossoms, saying that the person who accepted them should be a newcomer. The novice [Fujiwara no Michinaga] heard about this, and he told me that I should not accept the blossoms for nothing [i.e., without giving the monk a poem of gratitude], so [I composed this *waka*].

As the *kotobagaki* explains, this is an impromptu poem composed in front of Emperor Ichijô. The memorable point of this episode was that Ise no Tayû managed to compose a *waka* so rich in poetic technique and word play on the spot. There is contrast between *inishie* (past) and *kyô* (today), *Nara* (no longer the site of the capital), and *kyô* (capital), and between *yae* (literally 'eight layers') and *kokonoe* (literally 'nine layers'). *Kokonoe* was also a standard epithet for referring to things associated with the emperor, a use

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based on a sentence found in the *Chuci* (楚辞) that the gate of the imperial court should be 'nine-layered'.  

Another example that illustrates composing *waka* extemporaneously is found in the *Kin'yooshū* 金葉集, the fifth imperial anthology (ca. 1126).

When Izumi Shikibu 泉式邯 [10C-11C] was with her husband in the province of Tango 丹後, there was an *uta-awase* in the capital, and Koshikibu no Naishi 小式部内侍 [?–ca. 1025] was chosen one of the poets to compete. Fujiwara no Sadayori 藤原定頼 [995-1045] visited her room, and jokingly asked her, "What are you going to do for your *waka*? Have you sent a messenger to the province of Tango? Hasn't the messenger returned yet? You must be very anxious." When he was about to leave, Koshikibu no Naishi stopped him and intoned:

| Óeyama | Since the way to Ikuno Village is far away |
| Ikuno no michi no | far away |
| Tôkereba | From Mt. Ôe |
| Fumi mo mada mizu | I have not set foot in |
| Ama no hashidate. | Ama no hashidate there. |

Izumi Shikibu was both Koshikibu no Naishi's mother and a renowned poet. What Sadayori implied was that Koshikibu no Naishi needed her mother's help as a ghostwriter. The fourth line *fumi mo mada mizu* includes a pun, which, in addition to 'have not set foot,' can mean 'I have not seen any letter [from her] yet,' implying that she does not need her mother's help. Thus, Koshikibu no Naishi instantly and adroitly replied to Sadayori's teasing. These episodes became famous as examples of timely composition

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59 Ikuno 生野 village was in the province of Tango 丹後.  
of waka that were not only skillful in poetic technique but also in adroitly meeting a communicative need in a given situation.

In personally motivated love poems, too, timeliness was valued, although this did not always demand impromptu composition. After the marriage ceremony was over, for example, the man would finally visit the woman and spend the night with her. Early the next morning, the man would leave the woman’s house and go back to his house, and after that, he was supposed to send a waka (a kinuginu no uta 後朝の歌) to the woman. It was essential for the man to send the waka in the morning. Otherwise, he would be considered to be uninterested in the relationship with the woman. We find an illustration of this convention in the “Suetsumuhana” chapter of the Genji monogatari, when, after Genji spent the night with Suetsumuhana, he was disappointed with her and sent his waka in the evening. The go-between waited for Genji’s waka at Suetsumuhana’s residence, and felt depressed and sorry for Suetsumuhana, though Suetsumuhana, because of her ignorance of the world, felt glad that Genji’s waka came at all.61 Murasaki’s readers would have been expected to see the irony, too.

3.4. Knowledge of Waka Precedent in Social Life

For aristocrats or lower court officials, knowledge of the imperial poetic anthologies became essential for everyday life because poems in such anthologies were often quoted, implied or alluded to in court life. Evidence of this status as cultural capital is abundant in the Genji monogatari. In the Yūgao 夕顔 chapter, for example,

when Genji sees some unfamiliar flowers, he mutters, *Ochikatabito ni mono mōsu* 'I ask you, the person over there.' Hearing this, an attendant immediately comes up to Genji and answers that they are 'evening faces.' It is not possible to understand the interaction between Genji and the attendant without knowledge of the rest of the poem from which Genji chanted the second and third lines. It is part of a *sedōka* 'head-repeated poem' in the *Kokinshū* (# 1007).

Uchiwatasu
Ochikatabito ni
Mono mōsu
Ware sono soko ni
Shiroku sakeru wa
Nan no hana zo mo.
The person
over there--,
I ask you,
The white flowers
blooming over there,
What flowers are they?

In addition, when Genji is exiled to Suma, he meets a Buddhist novice, who had been the governor of Akashi. This novice is determined to have his daughter marry Genji. One night, the Novice of Akashi visits Genji and just speaks the words 'atarayono.' This has the effect of Genji going with him to meet his daughter, although Genji feels that the Novice is pretending to be elegant. The phrase is the first line of a *waka* found in the second imperial anthology, *Gosenshū.*

On a night when the moon shone beautifully I looked at the blossoms and
[composed:]

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64 Abe Akio et al., eds., *Genji monogatari II* 源氏物語二 (1972), pp.244-245.
Atara yo no  The moon and the flowers
Tsuki to hana to o Of this splendid night,
Onajiku wa If possible
Aware shireramu I'd like to show them to
Hito ni misebay. One who might know the pathos of things.65

Genji instantly understood that the novice of Akashi was alluding to this waka, and that by "the moon and the flowers" he was referring to his daughter, since the Novice had already mentioned his wish to Genji.

From episodes like these - and there are many- it can be assumed that in the 11th century, not only high ranking aristocrats but also lower ranking officials such as attendants and provincial governors were well advised to be well versed in the precedent of the imperial anthologies, since such knowledge could help them communicate successfully with aristocrats in private life.

Another interesting and well known example is found in the Makura no sōshi. In this account, the poet creates new puns by chanting an old waka. As the episode has it, when Emperor Murakami 村上 (926-96, r.946-967) sees smoke in a brazier, he tells Hyôe 兵衛, a female chamberlain, to look and see what it is. She goes to the brazier, checks it, returns to the Emperor, and recites:

Watatumi no When I looked at
Oki ni kogaruru What was rowing out
Mono mireba On the ocean
Ama no tsuri shite It was a woman diver
Kaeru narikeri.66 Going home after fishing.

65. Shinpen kokka taikan henshû iinkai, ed., p.35.
This _waka_ is found in a private _waka_ anthology called _Tōrokushū_ 藤六集 by Fujiwara no Sukemi 藤原輔相 (early 10c). All of Sukemi's _waka_ in the _Tōrokushū_ include the name of a thing which has nothing to do with the content of the _waka_, a technique called _mono no na_ 物名, as in _mono no na no uta_ 物名歌 'poems with the names of things.' The above poem has _kaeru_, which, in addition to 'return,' can also mean 'a frog.' What she saw in the brazier was a burning frog, so she chanted this _waka_. In doing so, she - or, rather, the circumstances - created new puns in an old _waka_. _Oki_, 'deep water' can also mean 'brazier;' and _kogaruru_ 'being rowed' can also mean 'burned.' Thus, _oki ni kogaruru_, which in the original poem meant 'being rowed out at sea,' is now taken to mean 'burned in the brazier,' which exactly matched the situation Hyōe faced.

### 3.5. Unskillful Composition or Presentation of _Waka_

Needless to say, not all extemporaneous _waka_ were rhetorically successful. What happened if someone composed a _waka_ that was not appropriate or was untimely? There was a good chance s/he would be ridiculed, often in direct proportion to the degree of effort or the height of pretension. _Monogatari_ describe lower ranking people who try too hard to assume an air of elegance, only to appear comical to all but themselves. The former governor of Dazaifu Shigeno no Masuge, described earlier, is one example. Another example is seen in the "Tokonatsu" 常夏 chapter of _Genji monogatari_. The palace minister, Genji's political rival, is taking care of an illegitimate daughter of his, Ōmi no Kimi 近江の君, who is not at all used to aristocratic life. Before going to see her half-sister, who was a lady-in-waiting, Ōmi no Kimi writes a message to her, in a
prose full of allusions from old waka, and on the back of the same page, she explicitly states her intention to visit her. Abe et al. point out that one usually did not write the explicit intention of one's message, but rather would leave it more or less obliquely expressed in waka. In addition, Ômi no Kimi's waka, which was included in the message, falls far short of accepted standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kusawakami</th>
<th>Parted grass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hitachi no ura no</td>
<td>of Hitachi bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikagasaki</td>
<td>of Cape Ikaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ika de amin</td>
<td>How can I see you,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tago no uranami.</td>
<td>The waves of Tago</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Famous place names which are used in waka are called utamakura 歌枕 'poem pillows.' Some utamakura are related to certain natural settings such as snow or maple leaves, and others are used simply in order to introduce, by some kind of association, a certain word, which is often a pun. In Ômi no Kimi's waka above, there are three unrelated utamakura, Hitachi, Ikaga, and Tago. They are unrelated even geographically, and there is no other connection among them, either. It is as if Ômi no Kimi is simply boasting that she knows these names. For all of her efforts, the Ika de amin 'How can I see you?' that Ikaga(saki) introduces is the only meaningful part. Reading this letter, the lady-in-waiting and her nurse discuss it sarcastically.

68 Cape Ikaga in the province of Ômi 近江.
69 Tago is in the province of Suruga 駿河.
70 Abe et al., eds., Genji monogatari III, p.240.
71 Ibid., pp.241-242.
... Chunagon [nurse of the lady-in-waiting] glanced curiously at the minister's [Tô no chûjo's] daughter, who smiled as she put it down. "It looks like a most stylish sort of letter."

"I do not seem to be very good at the cursive style," said the lady, handing it to her. "I can't somehow quite get the thread of it. But she will look down upon me if I do not answer in a similarly sophisticated and literary vein. Work up a draft for me, if you will, please."

The younger women were giggling.

"It was not easy," said Chunagon, presenting her draft, "to maintain the graceful, poetic tone. And we would not wish to insult her with anything from the hand of a scrivener."72

Another comical figure is described in the "Tamakazura" 玉鬘 chapter. Yugao, the deceased lover of Genji, had a daughter named Tamakazura. At age four, Tamakazura moved to the province of Higo 肥後 with her nurse. When she turned twenty, the Junior Lieutenant of the fifth rank at Dazaifu, son of a powerful family in Higo, heard about Tamakazura and tried to marry her. One day he came to visit her, but was persuaded by Tamakazura's nurse that it was not a good day:

When he was leaving, he wanted to compose a waka, so he mused to himself for a rather long time.

Kimi ni moshi If I break
Kokoro tagawaba My vow to you, ... Matsura naru I'll swear
Kagami no kami o On the God of the Mirror Kakete chikawamu In Matsura.

"I think this waka is a good piece," he smiled. But didn't this show how inexperienced and amateurish he was at [composing] waka?73

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73 Abe, et al., eds., Genji monogatari III, p.91.
Taking too much time to compose a love waka was considered to be inelegant. Furthermore, the above waka does not make much sense, unless a consequence such as "I will be punished" follows the condition stated in the first two lines.\(^{74}\) Tamakazura's nurse composes a waka that replies, in effect, that she would bear a grudge against the God of the mirror if her wish of many years to take Tamakazura back to the capital were not fulfilled (i.e., she does not want Tamakazura to marry him). The Junior Lieutenant reads the answer, is suspicious about the meaning of her reply, and pays her a sudden visit, but the nurse's daughters, who are afraid of the Junior Lieutenant, give a brave laugh and cover up the true meaning skillfully. Then the Junior Lieutenant continues:

"There are rumors that I am rustic, but I am not a despicable man. What in the world makes the people in the capital so great? I know everything about waka. Do not despise me." Having said this, he tried to compose another waka, but it seemed that he could not finish it, so he left.\(^{75}\)

Common to these episodes is the comical nature of this behavior from the viewpoint of the relater and readers. They look down on the "rustic" characters as unsophisticated "wanna-be" mimics of courtly style. Such stories suggest that one of the surest signs of courtly sophistication was the ability to compose a waka easily, elegantly, and in a timely manner. Such ability, then, served the function of giving the courtiers pride and identity.

\(^{74}\) Ibid., p.91.
\(^{75}\) Ibid., pp.92-93.
3.6. Solidarity Created with Waka

One of the main reasons waka were used so often in the conduct of one's affairs was its expressive efficiency. Although the composers of waka had to expend much effort on the waka itself, they did not have to spend time deciding what form they should use since waka provided a ready-made mode of expression, with known precedents, topics and treatments. Since there were set phrases and techniques used in waka, once these phrases and techniques were mastered waka could be composed in much less time than it would take to write out one's intentions in prose, starting from scratch. Like any genre, waka gives the composer a form with which the composer is "invited to match experience and form in a specific yet undetermined way," as Alastair Fowler claims.76 Fowler admits that accepting a form does not solve the problem of expression on the part of the composer, yet he argues that the form "gives him access to formal ideas as to how a variety of constituents might suitably be combined."77 Of course, as the humorous accounts of "wanna-be" and would-be poets suggest, there was more to a successful composition than stringing together some formulae or place names. In addition, the feeling of togetherness created by sharing the same knowledge, which was never expressed in ways simple or blunt, seems to have been another factor in the popularity of waka. Considering these facts, even though waka as the product of a social poetics was officially looked down on, it was still an indispensable skill in aristocratic life since courtiers often could not function respectably without it.

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77 Ibid., p.31.

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3.7. Waka and Other Literary Genres

As shown so far, waka as a special means for communicating in a courtly manner, can be found in various literary genres to varying degrees. In monogatari, waka appears regularly in the service of romantic communication. In uta monogatari (歌物語) 'poem tales,' waka is given even more frequent focus than in monogatari. That is, the composition, usually apt and quick, of a waka is the climax of each episode. In some collections, each of these little stories stands on its own, while in the Ise monogatari, they combine in the aggregate to tell the story of 'a certain man's' poetic exploits. When waka was taken up in zuihitsu, it was often depicted being used as in correspondence, i.e., to social ends. As in the episode of Hyôe, waka was used as a means whereby one could show one's wit. Diaries (nikki 日記) written in Japanese, which were authored mostly by women, regularly include waka and accounts of their use in personal communication. Setsuwa collections include waka, too, but waka is not the only form collected there. In Book X of Jikkinshô, for example, there are episodes that show the utility of variety of performance skills, such as Chinese poetry, the biwa lute, the flute, and so on. Setsuwa collections often take up stories in which a timely and/or particularly apt waka helps the protagonist in the episode. In setsuwa collections, the poem in this role was often one of lamentation, a jukkai no ua.
CHAPTER 4

WAKA AS A SERIOUS ART FORM

While waka was used in courtiers' social life as a special mode of communication in the Heian period, as described in the last chapter, it also gradually became a serious art form. The focus shifted from composing waka appropriate for communicative contexts to those appropriate for artistic contexts. Thus, this chapter will also examine the nature of these latter contexts, in which poetry was publicly presented and appreciated.

In the process, this chapter will outline how such a change occurred, and will discuss topics (dai 题) as the major factor in this makeover of waka. It seems that prevalence of composing waka on topics helped an artistically oriented poetics waka to emerge from waka's socially oriented poetics. Behind this evolution are a separation from the communicative circumstances in which waka were composed, and more time for composition. As long as waka is used as a means of communication, it inevitably has to convey or evoke the information to be communicated. A predetermined topic relieves the composer from the challenge that this involves in part. In addition, while poets had to compose waka in a timely manner if they were composing for communicative purposes, they were given more time to compose waka when given a topic. In both cases, poets were able to concentrate on the artistic perspective of their
poems. I will also discuss how leading poets, who were also leading critics, tried to elevate *waka* artistically, mainly from their claims in *karonsho*, or *waka* treatises, as well as how they regarded the more communicatively oriented poetics. As stated in the last chapter, *waka's* more communicatively oriented poetics and its more artistically oriented poetics were not an either/or kind of matter. In fact, *karonsho*, the primary purpose of which may appear to be to address the artistic side of *waka*, also take up *waka* in its communicative role, with evaluations that are clearly positive.

4.1. Topics

In the early Heian period, recognized topics were probably based on certain types of circumstances in which *waka* were typically composed. Imperial excursions were such occasions, as with the following *Kokinshū* poem (#919):

On the day the retired Mikado [Uda] went to the west river, Tsurayuki was ordered to compose this poem on the topic, "cranes standing in the shallows."

| Ashitazu no | To my eyes it seems |
| Tateru kawabe o | The waves driven by the wind |
| Fuku kaze ni | To the river banks |
| Yosete kaeranu | Approach but do not return - |
| Nami ka to zo miru | Cranes standing among the reeds |

In this case, the topic was closely related to the circumstances in which the *waka* was composed, even as the poem was a response to a topic verbally stipulated. In addition,

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in such circumstances, the poets were probably required to compose a poem within a limited amount of time. In this way, such compositions on topics were at the same time occasional, in that they shared several features that we also find in more communicatively motivated contexts of composition.

The nature of topics changed as they were employed in **uta-awase** and **byōbu-uta**, which, according to Fujioka, transformed **waka** into an art form appropriate for the court.79 These activities not only raised the status of **waka**, but also moved **waka** towards being regarded as an object of artistic appreciation. One common characteristic of **uta-awase** and **byōbu-uta** is that they both involve topics. **Byōbu-uta** never involved large numbers of poets, and the topics were constrained by the paintings on the screens. **Uta-awase**, on the other hand, involved a large number of poets, both prestigious and novice, and constituted a public forum for the display of skill at composition. For those who attended **uta-awase**, how to deal with topics was an important issue. They participated as composing poets, as well as in the capacity of **katōdo** 方人 'side persons,' who stood by the poet of their side of the two-team competition. In order to have the poem of their side win, **katōdo** were required to criticize the poem of the opposite side and defend the poem of their side if it was criticized by the opposite side. For that purpose **katōdo** needed to be well versed in rules of composing **waka**, including points to be avoided when treating a topic. On the other hand, only a handful of prestigious poets would have had the opportunity, by invitation, to write a poem for use on so precious an object as a decorated screen.

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79 Fujioka, p.175.
The development of rules for the treatment of topics created the concept of hon'i/hoi (本意), or the 'real nature' of the lexical resources used in waka. Ariyoshi argues that as topics became artistically complex, the images that waka materials created came to be fixed and restricted poets' ideas about those materials.\(^{80}\)

Itô Yoshio explains that it is easier for beginners to compose waka on a given topic than to choose waka material by himself/herself from the real world, because they do not have to worry about what constitutes a topic, how it might be treated, and so on. In addition, they can improve their skill quickly when composing on a topic by referring to precedent poems composed on the same topic. He also notes that a poet could improve her/his skills by referring to poems composed on a similar topic.\(^{81}\) Thus, composing on a topic for an uta-awase meant that given a topic, one had to spend considerable time in contemplation to compose a poem that treated the topic in a manner that echoed known precedent while revealing something new about it.

There are two ways in which topics were presented in an uta-awase: kenjitsu 兼日 and tōza 当座. In the former, the topics were presented before the uta-awase. In the Tentoku yonen dairi uth-awase 天徳四年內裏歌合 'Poetry Match at the Palace in the Fourth Year of Tentoku' of 960, which became the model for subsequent formal uth-awase, topics were given to the poets about a month before the date of the uth-awase. In a tōza competition, the topics were presented on the day of the uth-awase. I will return to kenjitsu and tōza below.

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\(^{80}\) Ariyoshi, ed., p.389.

Among other things, topics constitute a departure from the demands of timeliness in composition. If the poet was given a topic with which s/he had no experience, s/he would have had little to depend on but his/her imagination and knowledge of how that topic had been treated in the *waka* tradition. This way of composing *waka* is quite different from composing *waka* in response to some communicative need or opportunity.

The rise of presenting compositions on topics in public competitions thus altered the "ecology" of *waka* composition in Heian society, but even if just hinted at or imagined, the circumstances of composition were still considered a crucial element in a poem's effect on an audience, and even when *waka* did not serve any immediate communicative need. As the artistic perspective gained momentum, the circumstances remained important enough so that they were adjusted in order that a poem had a context to bring out its best. The *Jikkinshō* recounts two such episodes:

Among the ladies in the service of Taikenmon-In [待賢門院, (1101-1145)] there was a poetess called Kaga [加賀 (12c?)].

```plaintext
Kanete yori
Omoishi koto yo
Fushishiba no
Koru bakari naru
Nageki sen to wa

Something
I have always known would be mine:
Vain regrets,
Like worthless brushwood
Cut and burnt and thrown away.
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After writing this, she kept it for several years, thinking that as long as she had composed it, if it appeared in the context of having been loved and then neglected by the right sort of person, the poem might well make it into an imperial anthology, which would certainly make her appear the elegant one. Somehow or other, she became intimate with the Hanazono 花園 Minister [Minamoto no Arihito 源有仁 (1103-47)]. Could it be? Just as she had hoped, when she sent these verses to the Minister, he was
deeply moved. The poem was then included in the Senzaishū, a fitting reward for her efforts. It is said that people called her "Kaga of the Brushwood."\textsuperscript{82}

Another episode is the famous story about Nōin:

Nōin's devotion to poetry was rather single-minded.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
  Miyako o ba & From the capital \\
  Kasumi to tomo ni & With the rising of the spring haze \\
  Tachishikado & I too arose, setting out, \\
  Akikaze zo fuku & But now the autumn wind blows chill \\
  Shirakawa no seki & Here at White River Barrier. \\
\end{tabular}

Thinking that it would be a shame to let this poem out while actually still in the capital, Nōin, unknown to anyone, shut himself up at home for some time and sat in the sun, getting a tan. He then made his poem public, saying that he had composed it while on a pilgrimage to the Northern Provinces.\textsuperscript{83}

As shown in these episodes, while waka as a means of communication were composed to appropriately fit their circumstances, waka poets with artistic ambitions also utilized circumstances - even if fictitious - in order to make the waka more memorable. In this way they were putting tradition to work in a new context.

4.2. Some Representative Karonsho

Today most critics of literature do not write literature themselves. In the world of classical and neoclassical waka, however, critics were also renowned poets.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{82} Quinn, p.64, pp.115-116. \\
\textsuperscript{83} Quinn, p.63.
\end{flushright}
Describing the times that they call the Mid-Classical period (1100-1241), Brower and Miner point out that:

To be a poet in this new period meant to be a critic and a scholar as well, and our historical sketch of poetic developments must include a discussion of the esthetics and poetics, and occasionally the Court politics, adhered to by the major poets - who were often at loggerheads with each other.  

It is not surprising, then, that the writers of karonsho were also renowned poets. We have already referred to Fujiwara no Kintô, the leading poet in the tenth to eleventh centuries, who wrote the Shinsen zuinô. Minamoto no Toshiyori, who wrote the Toshiyori zuinô 俊頼随能 'Toshiyori's Essentials of Poetry' (ca. 1112) was famous for his new style, as noted earlier. The treatise was presented to the daughter of Regent Fujiwara no Tadazane 藤原忠実 (1078-1162). Fujiwara no Kiyosuke 藤原清輔 (1104-1177), who wrote the Fukuro zôshi, was a leading poet of the prestigious Rokujô house, and the Fukuro zôshi was presented to Emperor Nijô 二条 (1143-1165, r. 1158-1165). Korai fûteishô 古来風詩抄 'Notes on Poetic Style through the Ages' (1197), which was presented to Princess Shokushi (also called Shikishi 式子 (?-1201), was written by Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114-1204), who became the leading waka poet after the death of Kiyosuke. Shunzei's son Teika, who succeeded his father as the leading poet of the Mikohidari house, wrote the Kindai shûka 近代秀歌 'Superior Poems of Our Time' (1209), which was presented to Minamoto no Sanetomo 源実朝 (1192-1219), the third shôgun of the Kamakura warrior government, and the Maigetsushô 毎月抄 'Monthly Notes' (1219), which was also said to be presented to someone of high status, though the

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84 Brower and Miner, p.231.
name is not specified. Even though these writers were all aristocrats, their political influence was minimal. Fujiwara no Kintō eventually became a Major Counselor (dainagon 大納言), but considering the fact that he was born to a family that had had five regents including his father, this rank was by no means all that high. In fact, his disappointment in this domain may have led to his devotion to art. Kintō was also well versed in Chinese poetry and musical instruments. In general, these karonsho were written for other poets and, mainly courtiers, who were not as skillful at composing waka as the writers. In addition, it is often the case that the karonsho were presented to someone who held a higher rank than the writers. This fact suggest that in addition to artistic pursuit, the writers of karonsho had political intentions, such as gaining patronship or fame by having connections with high-ranking courtiers.

In the early Kamakura period, the situation changed somewhat. Retired Emperor Gotoba 後鳥羽 (1180-1239, r. 1184-1198) wrote his treatise Gotoba no In gokuden 後鳥羽院御口伝 (1221?) and Kamo no Chômei 鴨長明 (1155-1216), who was

85 There have been controversies about the authorship of Maigetushô, which is said to have been written in 1219. For example, Yashima Nagahisa questions Teika's authorship on the ground that the Maigetushô is not quoted or mentioned in other treatises until it was quoted in the Seiushô 井蛙抄 (ca. 1360) by a poet-critic Ton'a 頼阿 (1289-1372), more than one hundred years after the Maigetushô is said to have been written. Tanaka Yutaka also questions Teika's authorship claiming that there are questionable claims in its content. On the other hand, Fujihira Haruo explains that it may be regarded as Teika's work, though there are some problems left in the details. As of 1998, Tanaka Hiroki explains that the view that the Maigetushô is Teika's work is influential. For the purpose of this paper, I will treat Maigetushô as Teika's work. Tanaka Yutaka 田中裕, "Maigetushô ni tsuite" 毎月抄について in Hisamatsu Sen'ichi, 1976, p.554. Yashima Nagahisa 八島長寿, "Maigetushô Zongi - Maigetushô wa gisho ka" 毎月抄存疑－毎月抄は偽書か in Hisamatsu Sen'ichi 久松晴一. Nihon bungaku hyôronshi shiikaronhen 日本文学評論史诗詩歌論篇, (1976), pp. 554-559. Tanaka Hiroki 田仲篤己, "Maigetushô" 毎月抄, in Ōsone Shôsuke 大曾根昌介, et al., eds., Nihon koten bungaku daijiten 日本古典文学大事典 (1998), p.1169.

not even an aristocrat, wrote the *Mumyōshō* 無名抄. Despite their different backgrounds, both Gotoba and Chômei were themselves poets. As retired Emperor, Gotoba commissioned the eighth imperial anthology, the *Shinkokinshū*, and Chômei, in spite of his plebeian status, once held a post at the Poetry Office (*Waka-dokoro* 和歌所), which was established by Gotoba.

4.3. What Karonsho Illustrate

Not surprisingly, *Karonsho* often discuss at great length how to compose *waka* for *uta-awase*. They also discuss directly how to compose *waka* on topics. However, no composition methods for communicative purposes or *byōbu-uta* are mentioned in *karonsho*. The former, as we have seen, represented a use of *waka* that was far more private than public. The latter presumably goes unaddressed because of the needs of the readers of *karonsho*, who would not have had the opportunity to write a poem for a screen, but did have opportunities to attend *uta-awase*, as explained earlier.

The importance of topics is discussed as early as in the *Toshiyori zuinō* (ca. 1112):

> In general, you should take care and understand the topic. Whether the topic consists of three letters, four letters, or five letters, you should understand that there are letters which must be included in the poem, those which are not necessarily included in the poem, those whose heart should be included without directly expressing it, and those which must be included explicitly.\(^{87}\)

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It is clear from the above statement that there were various rules about composing on a topic in the days of Toshiyori. At the same time, however, topics in his day were still related to circumstances of composition. That means that a keying to context remains a constant for *waka*, even as it becomes more of an artistic pursuit:

> Such a skill [composing a successful poem on a topic] is not something that can be learned from someone else. Such a skill is to be gained by oneself. Composing a poem on a topic which fits the occasion is not an easy matter at all (*Dai o mo yomi, sono koto to naru ranu ori no uta wo, omoeba yasukarinu beki koto nari* 題をもよみ、その事となるらむ折の歌は、思へばやすかりぬべき事なり). 

If topics had nothing to do with the circumstances in which a poem was composed, a poet would not have to compose one 'on a topic which fits the occasion.' Thus, as in the communicative case, appropriate response to the occasion was required in *uta-awase* poems as well.

As time went on, ways of treating a topic became complex, and the explanations in *karonsho* inevitably became more technical and detailed. In 1219, Teika describes in some detail how to incorporate a topic into a *waka*:

> ... in regard to distributing the words of the topic, in the case of a one-word topic, the word should always be placed in the lower lines of the poem no matter how many times it is done. With topics of two, three, or more words, they should be distributed between the upper and lower lines. For a compound topic, the worst possible thing is said to be to group it all in one place. It is also unfortunate when a poem reveals the words of the topic in the very first line. Although examples of this kind of thing

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88 Hashimoto, et al., eds. p.83.
can be found, to be sure, among the superior poems of old, they should not
be taken as models. Indeed, this must absolutely not be done.  

As the prevalence and, consequently, the importance of composing waka on a pre-
specified topic increased, poets began to spend more time composing and revising waka,
in times and places removed from their audiences. An audience was no doubt imagined,
even if it was not present and awaiting a response. As mentioned earlier, there are two
types of topics in uta-awase, namely, kenjitsu and tōza. One might expect that some
measure of extemporaneousness was preserved in tōza, but that was not the case, at least
in Teika’s days:

... one must take pains, both when the poetic topics are announced in
advance [kenjitsu] and when they are given out at the time of the gathering
[tōza], to compose one’s poems with extreme care reciting them over and
over aloud to oneself.  

In addition to "reciting over and over," when the waka is to be presented in public to
others, Kamo no Chômei suggests showing one’s compositions to someone to ask for
advice. He continues by saying that a poet will make a mistake if s/he checks the waka
only by himself/herself, and relates examples of such cases.  

Gotobô makes reference to the virtues of composing waka quickly, but this has
nothing to do with impromptu response in a communicative setting. Rather, he
discusses it as a useful training method:

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p.418.
91 Hisamatsu Sen'ichi and Nishio Minoru 西尾実, eds., Karonshů Nôgakuronshû 歌論集 能楽論
As a person's fondness for the poetic art increases, it is good for his training to try unusual feats, such as composing a certain number of poems in the time it takes the lamp wick to burn down an inch, or completing a sequence of a hundred poems in two hours; but the best discipline of all is simply to compose a hundred-poem sequence and then when it is finished to begin afresh, sometimes doing a sequence without fixed topics, sometimes chanting the topics from one category to another, over and over again.92

Such training at composing waka seems to have aimed at developing a readily deployable artistic sophistication in response to pre-given topics, rather than in response to issues arising in communicating with other people.

The karonsho discussed above focus on waka poetry as it had evolved by that time, with recognized topics, conventions to be observed in treating those topics, effects to be evoked, and so on. Since karonsho were treatises on composing waka for readers living at the time, it is not surprising at all that they address these parameters. However, this does not mean that the writers of karonsho ignored waka in its more social and communicative roles. For example, Koshikibu's Mt. Ōe poem and the circumstances of its composition are taken up in Minamoto no Toshiyori's treatise Toshiyori zuinō. In addition to the accounts given in the kotobagaki of the Kin'yōshū, the Toshiyori zuinō also relates Sadayori's reaction to Koshikibu's display of virtuosity: 'He stayed there for a while and tried to make a reply, but since he was not able to come up with a good poem, he removed her hand from his garment and fled.'93 This episode contrasts Koshikibu no Naishi's ability to respond by composing an apt waka on the spot and Sadayori's inability

to do so. The same episode is also recounted in the *Fukuro zōshi*. In addition, the
poem by Ise no Tayū discussed earlier with its *yaelkokonoe* 'eight/nine-fold' word play, is
also related there. Kiyosuke praises Ise no Tayū, noting that other people would not be
able to compose such a wonderfully apt *waka*. Thus, even though Kiyosuke provides
in the *Fukuro zōshi* detailed accounts of the etiquette of the poetry meeting (*utakai* 歌会)
and *uta-awase* as formal events, he does pay some attention to the poetics of *waka* at
work in courtly communication. This suggests that even as *waka* was coming to be
regarded among poets as a challenging art form, practiced in public, the more personal
and private kinds of occasional verse remained an appreciated variety of the genre.

Fujiwara no Shunzei, compiler of *Senzai shū*, the seventh imperial anthology, and
one of the poets most responsible for making *waka* a serious artistic pursuit, also
considered situation-responsive *waka* favorably. Matsuno Yōichi, for instance, argues
that Shunzei did not look down on *waka* composed on current events. In the *Senzai shū*,
he included *waka* composed on political incidents after the Hōgen Disturbance of 1156,
albeit with cautious camouflage (e.g., #1125). Indeed, the oblique imagery available in
*waka* may have been the only way to address such matters in public. He also included
*waka* by the Heike 平家 clan, which had once controlled the court but who were
designated imperial enemies during time of the compilation, labeling them *yomibito
shirazu* 詠み人知らず 'anonymous' (#66, 199, 246, 520). It would be wrong to think

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95 Ibid., p.128.
97 Ibid., p.13.
that Shunzei's views on quality in *waka* were restricted to poems composed on the established topics of the genre, for the purposes of art alone.

In addition, Shunzei appreciated and actively advocated the creation of new meaning by bringing an old *waka* into a new context. This can be observed in an episode which is recorded by both the *Toshiyori zuinō* and the *Korai fūteishō*. Fujiwara no Hōshi (9c-10c), a consort of retired emperor Uda 宇田 (867-931, r. 887-897), visited the Shiga 志賀 Temple. While she was looking out from inside an ox-drawn carriage, her eyes met with those of a frightening old priest. Taken aback, she hid herself. After she returned from the Shiga Temple, the priest visited her. When Hōshi met him with a screen between them, he explained that he had devoted himself to the practice of Buddhism in hopes of entering Nirvana, but once he saw Hōshi, he could think of nothing but her. Feeling sad that his years of practice might prove futile, he came to her, hoping that she might help him. Hōshi had the screen raised a little and showed herself to him. Then the priest asked her to let him hold her hand for a while. When Hōshi did so, the priest put her hand to his forehead, and burst into tears. With joy, he chanted a *waka*:

```
Hatsuharu no  The spirit-gathering-bloom,
Hatsune no kyō no Used on the first Day of the Rat
Tamabahaki Of the New Year,
Te ni toru kara ni Just taking it in hand,
Yuragu tama no o Secures the life wavering on this thread.
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Toshiyori explains that *yuragu* in this *waka* means 'for a while,' and *tama no o* 'life.' Thus, according to Toshiyori, by holding Hōshi's hand, the priest's life was lengthened for a while. Toshiyori wonders if this episode was fictitious, because he had heard that
the Priest Nōin, another well known poet, had told Toshiyori's father Tsunenobu 経信 (1016-1097) that this waka was in the *Man'yōshū*.* This waka is indeed in the *Man'yōshū* (#4493), but this fact does not necessarily mean that the above episode is fictitious. Even if it was not true, the fact that the poem came to be remembered and preserved in this kind of social context reminds us of how the waka was seen as a special mode of responding in personal interaction. Shunzei discusses the episode, and asserts: "Aren't there cases in which one brings up an old waka when it fits the present situation?"* In other words, Shunzei looked favorably on bringing new meaning out of an old waka by applying it in a new situation. Interestingly, the *Fukuro zōshi* discusses Toshiyori, who also approved of chanting an old waka in a new situation:

"Toshiyori said, 'To chant a waka which fits the situation appropriately is better than to compose one. Several years ago, when the former Ise Priestess was returning to the capital, I accompanied her. When people were sleeping on a boat at the Yodo 淀 Ferry, a cuckoo chirped in the distance. People felt deep interest. A nurse in the Priestess's boat chanted sleepily:

Yodo no watari no Still midnight
Mada yobukaki ni At the Yodo Ferry, . . .

The nurse is an extraordinary person [who chanted the verse] in a timely manner. People were moved, and it is hard for them to forget it even now."*100

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99 Ibid., eds. p.366.
The quoted *waka* is from the *Shūishū* and by Mibu no Tadami; the first three lines are *Izukata ni / yukite yuku ramu / hototogisu* 'O chirping cuckoo, where is it that you are going?'

At the same time, Shunzei worked constantly to elevate the status of *waka* to that of a serious art. In doing so, he related *waka* to Tendai Buddhism. In *Korai fūteishō*, Shunzei compared the Tendai teachings called *shikan* 止観 'calm contemplation,' to *waka*, and argued:

... this [shikan] has profound meanings which came out from the mouth of Buddha. That [waka] looks like decorative words without real sense, but it does describes profound content ... . I am now writing about the profound way of *waka* because its way resembles the emptiness, provisionality, and middle of the Tendai shikan.\(^{101}\)

Shunzei further argues:

Those who devote themselves to the way of *waka* ... will realize, by means of the profound meanings of *waka*, that Buddhist teaching are inexhaustible, [they will] be reborn in paradise, saved by the prayers of Bodhisattvas, and by utilizing *waka*,\(^{102}\) they will praise Buddha, listen to the Buddhist teachings, visit Buddha's land, and lead people in the secular world.\(^{103}\)

Shunzei also emphasizes the profoundness of the way of *waka* in the Preface to the

*Senzaishū*,

\(^{101}\) Hashimoto, et al., eds., p.275.
\(^{102}\) *Waka* was considered to go against the teachings of Buddha.
\(^{103}\) Hashimoto, et al., eds., pp.277-278.
Indeed, the way of *waka* is like something hard which becomes even harder if you try to cut it, and something lofty which becomes even loftier if you look up at it.\textsuperscript{104}

In this view, Shunzei’s son Teika too reacted against empty word play and struggled to elevate the status of *waka*.

At the same time, Shunzei put his *karonsho* to use in a non-artistic, political way, even though he skillfully hid such intentions. With *Korai fûteishô*, he tried to establish his Mikohidari house as a locus of poetic authority. This is apparent in his attitude toward the *Man’yôshû* and the *Kokinshû*, which I will touch on briefly here. In *Korai fûteishô*, Shunzei stated that a poet should respect *Kokinshû*. According to Konishi Jin’ichi, this was the first explicit statement that an old anthology should be respected:\textsuperscript{105}

Since the good poems were differentiated from the bad ones from those days [the *compilation of the Kokinshû*], you should intently respect and believe in the *Kokinshû* as the ideal model of *waka*.\textsuperscript{106}

On the other hand, Shunzei did not consider *Man’yôshû* poems to be suitable models for his contemporaries:

It has been a long time and the world has changed since the compilation of the *Man’yôshû*. It is difficult to learn its style and words as they are. No one poem in the *Kokinshû* is ordinary, so it is the *Kokinshû* which you should respect and believe in as the ideal model of *waka*, . . . \textsuperscript{107}

\textsuperscript{104} Katano and Matsuno, p.8.
\textsuperscript{105} Konishi Jin’ichi, *Michi - Chüsei no rinen Nihon no koten no.3.*, p.30.
\textsuperscript{106} Hashimoto, et al., eds., p.288.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p. 395.
Shunzei was doubtful as to whether the *Man'yōshū* was a text without flaws:

> Up to those days [i.e. the compilation of the *Man'yōshū*] I wonder whether or not [the *Man'yōshū* compilers] differentiated good poems from bad ones.\(^{108}\)

Thus, Shunzei had a more critical view of the *Man'yōshū* than did Toshiyori, though he shared the latter's views on the *Kokinshū*, as his comment above clearly indicates. However, his critical view toward the *Man'yōshū* might have been politically motivated. In Shunzei's time, his Mikohidari house was not the only renowned poetic family. The Rokujō house, which also belonged to the Fujiwara clan, had a longer history as a poetic family with powerful political figures as court their patrons, and they held the *Man'yōshū* to be a paragon of excellence in *waka*. According to Hosoya, when, with the death of Fujiwara no Kiyosuke, the leading poet of the Rokujō house, the Mikohidari house became the more respected authority on poetic matters, Shunzei needed a poetics of his own, in keeping with his family's status as the leading poetic house. As a result, Shunzei chose the *Kokinshū* as the premier model for *waka* poets, in marked - and calculated - contrast to the Rokujō house's emphasis on the *Man'yōshū*.\(^{109}\)

Shunzei further uses the *Senzaishū* to belittle the Rokujō house. In the *Korai fūteishō*, Shunzei humbly claims that he selected the *Senzaishū* poems only from an artistic point of view and did not consider who the composers were:

> I chose the poems for the *Senzaishū* based on my poor discrimination. I chose good poems without thinking about allotting a certain number of

\(^{108}\) Ibid., p. 287.  
poems for certain poets, so it became a blunt anthology without consideration for poets.\textsuperscript{110}

I chose the poems with my foolish mind, so I only thought of the quality of \textit{waka}, and it seems that I forgot about their composers.\textsuperscript{111}

In this way, he tries to emphasize the artistic virtue of those \textit{waka} he selected for inclusion. However, that was hardly the case. Matsuno lists the \textit{uta-awase} from which Shunzei chose poems for the \textit{Senzaishū} and explains that Shunzei rarely chose poems from \textit{uta-awase} held by the Rokujō house members, nor did he often choose poems composed by them.\textsuperscript{112} As the artistic pursuit of \textit{waka} as a \textit{michi} 'way,' came to be emphasized and accordingly the status of \textit{waka} rose as a literary form, the status of poet-critics who dominated the field also gained importance. In such a situation, it is little wonder that Shunzei was not only motivated by his artistic preferences but also by pursuit of reputation.

Teika, Shunzei's son, further worked to elevate the status of \textit{waka} as art. In fact, Teika sometimes struck a pose to suggest that poetry was his only concern. In his diary \textit{Meigetsuki} 明月記, he makes the following brief mention of the Gempei War of 1180-1185:

\begin{quote}
The news of sending armed forces [of the Heike] to kill rebels [of the Genji] are abundant, but I will not write down such news. Punishing the rebel is no concern of mine.\textsuperscript{113}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{110} Hashimoto, et al, eds. p.295.\
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p.465.\
\textsuperscript{112} Katano and Matsuno, p.449.\
\textsuperscript{113} Imagawa Fumio 今川文雄, tr., \textit{Kundoku Meigetsuki Daiikkan} 聴聞明月記第一卷, (1977), p.19.
\end{flushright}

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The Gempei War between the Genji and the Heike clans involved virtually all the courtiers. They had to be careful which clan they sided with, and were anxious about how the war should turn out, since their allegiance could end up in promotion or in being purged. In such an environment, Teika struck the pose of a determined artist. Unlike his father, Teika did not pay much attention at all to waka as a mode of situated personal response, least of all in playful and/or romantic interaction. First, in his treatises, Teika explicitly argues that waka is something to be taken with the utmost seriousness. In Maigetsushō, he states:

Those who are seriously interested in this Art of Poetry must never even for a moment compose in a casual manner without concentrating their minds.¹¹⁴

Evident is this remark is a view that the practice of waka is a discipline to which one should devote oneself wholeheartedly. Similar remarks are also made by other poets, such as Gotoba, who practiced composing waka quickly, and Shunzei, who reframed waka in some constructs central to Tendai Buddhism, but this view is stated most explicitly by Teika. As waka became a serious quasi-religious artistic pursuit, poets' identification with their compositions became stronger and stronger. Teika wrote of such examples as follows:

... I have heard of a man who, having brought criticism upon himself [with an inferior composition], pined away and died of chagrin. Or again, it would appear that someone else, having had a fine poem expropriated by another person, after death appeared to the malefactor in a dream,

weeping and lamenting and demanding the return of his poem, with the result that it was expunged from an imperial anthology.\textsuperscript{115}

Teika further insists that a poem be judged in its own right. In judging poems at an \textit{uta-awase}, he suggests that one must detach the \textit{waka} from the composer when judging it.

It is particularly important to exercise discrimination in judging poetry, and to distinguish the good from the bad - although it seems that actually everyone just does it by guesswork. The reason would appear to be that a poem by someone who is said to be a good poet will be praised even though it is nothing out of the ordinary, whereas if it is by someone not thought to be of any particular account, people will criticize and go out of their way to find some fault in the poem, although it may in fact be an unusually good one. In short, it seems that people judge a poem to be good or bad depending upon who the poet happens to be - a deplorable state of affairs in my opinion.\textsuperscript{116}

Selecting good poems regardless of the composer's identity recalls what Teika's father Shunzei had to say of his editing of the \textit{Senzaishū}, quoted earlier. In the case of Teika, however, he made no apologies. Teika also was not hesitant to express a difference of opinion on poetics with other poets, including Retired Emperor Gotoba. In such cases, he harshly criticized them. As a result, Teika was criticized by Retired Emperor Gotoba in his \textit{Gotoba no In Gokuden}:

In general, the tenor of his Lordship's critical viewpoint was that he would never take into consideration any extenuating circumstances of time or occasion in his judgment of a poem, and because he himself was incapable

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p.413.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., pp.421-422.
of a relaxed, casual attitude toward poetry, he would scowl angrily even when people praised on of his poems, if it happened to be one of which he was not particularly proud.\textsuperscript{117}

\textit{Gotoba no in Gokuden} starts with comments on how to compose good poems, but the majority of the treatise is allotted to comments on poets of Gotoba's day, especially Teika. Gotoba continues:

Once many years ago, when the cherry tree at the Palace was in full bloom, a group of courtiers, reminded by its beauty of springs of old, gathered informally at the foot of this tree and composed poems which they presented to me. Teika, who was Middle Commander of the Palace Guards of the Left, composed the following.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
Toshi o hete & Through many familiar springs \\
Miyuki ni naruru & Have I come like this and sighed \\
 & to see your blossoms \\
Hana no kage & Scatter like falling snow- \\
Furinuru mi o mo & O cherry tree whom royal favor blesses, \\
Aware to ya omou & Do you not in turn feel pity for my state.
\end{tabular}

He had been all of twenty years an under officer in the Palace Guards of the Left. In addition to expressing with gentle refinement the significance of "Personal Grievances," the poem takes on a wonderful appropriateness from the special circumstances of the poet and the occasion. It seems to me a poem of which he could be justly proud. The masters of old were always especially fond of their own poems in which the particular circumstance of the occasion were handled with gentle refinement and effectiveness, without any special regard for whether they were objectively good or bad in themselves. On the very day that Teika composed this poem, I put some of the cherry petals that had fallen in the palace courtyard into the lid of a writing box and sent them to the Nakanomikado Regent. The poem he sent in reply - "These

\begin{flushright}
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cherry blossoms. Have they lingered in compassion. For him who was not called? - was not such a great masterpiece, and yet he requested that it be included in the Shinkokinshū, and I recall hearing him express his fondness for it many times. "It is the best of all my poems that are being considered for this new anthology," he said. Such has always been the way of viewing these matters. On the other hand, no matter how splendid a poem may be, if its circumstances of composition are not suitable - as in the case of a love poem composed for some scandalous affair - it is never sent to those responsible for compiling an imperial anthology. Is it possible that anyone can be unaware of these ancient practices and precedents? Notwithstanding, Teika insisted repeatedly during the deliberations of the compilers of the Shinkokinshū that his own poem on the cherry tree in the palace courtyard was unacceptable.\textsuperscript{118} Ietaka and the others were right there and heard him. It should be evident from this specimen of his intransigence how he behaved on all such occasions.\textsuperscript{119}

Apparent in this long comment on Teika is the fact that the circumstances in which a poem was composed were generally considered important in Gotoba and Teika's day. \textit{Waka} were usually evaluated not only as "single expression," but also in relation to the circumstances of composition. That explains the many episodes of aptly composed \textit{waka} that were recorded in \textit{setsuwa} collections, \textit{tsukurimonogatari}, and \textit{nikki}, as well as the entries described in the aforementioned stories about Kaga and Nōin. As seen in Gotoba's comments, these attitudes toward \textit{waka} were very much alive in the early Kamakura period.

While Teika was a major poet of the day, and quite determined to separate \textit{waka} from its circumstances, so as to focus more sharply on the poem itself, he himself also

\textsuperscript{118} Both of these poems were eventually included in the Shinkokinshū (#1454, #136).
composed *waka* of 'Personal Grievances,' as the above episode illustrates. Such poems are of course very much a personal response to one's circumstances, and presented with the communicative intent of improving those circumstances. In addition, prior to the above incident, one poem, though not composed by Teika himself, helped regain Teika's political status at court. This episode is included in the *Jikkinshō*:

During the reign of ex-Emperor Go-Toba, when Lord Sadaie [Teika] was among those admitted to Court, for some reason he was censured and confined to his home by imperial command. Although he assumed this would be but for a short while, the year came to an end and nothing had changed. So it was that his father, Toshinari of the Third Rank, lamenting this fact, composed the following and sent it off to Sadanaga, the Vice-Director of the Emperor's Secretariat:

- Ashitazu no                  The year in which it lost its way
- Kumoi ni mayou               To that Land Above the Clouds
- Toshi kurete                 Has come to an end;
- Kasumi o sae ya              Must the reed-crane be kept away
- Hedate hatsu beki            From even the haze of the new spring?

The Vice-Director made the poem known to the ex-Emperor, who, greatly moved, had Sadanaga-ason reply to that effect:

- Ashitazu wa                  The reed-crane
- Kumoi o sashite              Is taking wing for the heavens,
- Kaeru nari                   Homeward bound,
- Kyō ōzora no                  For today the celestial countenance
- Haruru keshiki ni             Has cleared like the broad sky.

Sadaie was at once reinstated at Court.\(^{120}\)

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\(^{120}\) Quinn, p.76.
It would thus seem that even Teika could not deny the value of composing *waka* for the purpose of personal communication, however much he might wish to disbar such poems from inclusion in imperial anthologies. He himself composed and benefited from such *waka*. When evaluating *waka* artistically, he insisted on evaluating only the poem itself and excluding elements related to the circumstances of composition. This point set him apart from most of his predecessors and contemporaries, who invariably included such elements when evaluating *waka*.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1. SUMMARY

Evidence from texts that recount aristocratic life in the early Heian period suggests that waka were composed by courtiers on a variety of private occasions for personal purposes, in the service of some communicative need. Since waka was a common means of communication in the closed community of the courtiers, one was likely to be evaluated by his/her fellow courtiers in terms that included the composition of waka. In so far as waka were used as a means of communication, they were related to the circumstances in which they were composed, in both their composition and in their effects. In addition, in order to compose a waka that accomplished one's intended effect in given circumstances, it was often necessary to compose the poem in a timely manner. Episodes in which a skillful and timely waka responded to the circumstances in which it was composed were appreciated and recorded in various literary genres, as we have seen. On the other hand, being so embedded in private life, the public status of waka was not very high. As poetry, it was considered inferior to Chinese poetry, which was composed on public occasions, preserved in publicly used documents, and so on.
This situation gradually changed after the compilation of the *Kokinshū*. *Waka* too came to be increasingly composed in public, as in *uta-awase* and *utakai*. *Byōbu-uta*, which were seen in public places or high-ranking courtiers' houses, also became increasingly popular. Behind this change was the practice of composing *waka* on a topic, which meant that compositions were less circumstance-dependent and less extemporaneous. Topics were first closely related to the circumstances, as on an imperial excursion, but they came to be independent from circumstances. Accordingly, *waka* which were composed on such topics came to be composed for more artistic purposes and went on to develop in ways that served few, if any, communicative needs of a personal sort. *Waka* were still composed as a response, but they became the response to topics, not to people for whom one wanted to create a certain impression or make a certain point. In a sense, *waka* remained related to circumstances, but a different quality of the circumstances came to be emphasized, that is, from life-related circumstances to art-related circumstances. At the same time, when given topics, poets were usually allowed to spend more time in composing *waka*. Thus, socially oriented poetics and artistically oriented poetics are located at the extreme ends of the same continuum. They both existed in the Heian period, with a varying degree of emphasis, and as time went on, the emphasis shifted from the socially and communicatively oriented poetics to a more deliberately artistically oriented poetics, though the characteristics of socially oriented poetics continued to be praised.

Behind such changes were leading poets who devoted their lives to the way of *waka*, and countless poets who were influenced by such leading figures. Leading poets,
who were also the leading critics of waka, wrote karonsho and promoted the awareness of waka as a genuine art form. These karonsho influenced their readers, in many cases high-ranking courtiers, which further helped waka become recognized as a genuine art form.

On the other hand, many karonsho writers admitted the values of skillfully composed waka appropriate for a given circumstance in a timely manner. Even Fujiwara no Teika, who stressed the "stand alone" artistic approach of waka more than any previous poet-critic, was the beneficiary of waka's efficacy in interpersonal matters. At the same time, it is true that from Teika's time on, waka existed more as a serious art form than as a genre of use in the course of personal dealings with other people.

In addition, karonsho were sometimes used in a political way. As described in Chapter 3, Fujiwara no Shunzei implicitly belittled his rival Rokujō house by means of his karonsho and his selections for the Senzaishū, skillfully disguising such acts as devotion to quality in pursuit of the art. His son Teika did not seem to as concerned to establish hegemony in these ways, but that is probably because the authority of the Mikohidari house had been already established by the time he succeeded to its leadership.

5.2. FUTURE STUDY

In this thesis I have reported research on the waka poetry largely on the years leading to and including the Kamakura period. In the future I would like to continue research into this period, while extending my work to the Kamakura period and thereafter. While waka became an art form to be practiced seriously, other art forms which derive
from *waka*, such as *renge*, or linked verse, and later *haikai*, or seventeen syllable verse, gained popularity. They started as entertainment, which were composed in a relaxed manner, but they themselves eventually came to be considered serious art forms. The proper understanding of *waka* in those days would not be properly gained without understanding of these art forms, too. In addition, I would like to research the use of *karonsho* and other artistically oriented documents to solidify the authority of poets and/or their faction. In the Kamakura period, three houses, Nijō 二条 Kyōgoku 京極 and Reizei 冷泉, all of which derived from Shunzei and Teika's Mikohidari house, became the leading poetic families. They struggled with one another on poetic issues, until the Nijō family survived the struggle. During the struggle, various 'false books' (*gisho* 偽書) appeared, the authorship of which was falsely and intentionally accredited to earlier, prestigious poets, such as Shunzei and Teika. Furthermore, I would like to research how political intentions were concealed in the guise of artistic intentions. Finally, I would like to explore whether *waka* lost its function as a means of communication in some sense, and if so, when and how it happened.
APPENDIX:  ENGLISH GLOSSES FOR JAPANESE LITERARY WORKS

Waka Anthologies

Man'yōshū (8c) 'Collection for Ten Thousand Generations'
Kokin wakashū (ca. 905) 'Collection of Ancient and Modern Times'
Gosen wakashū (ca. 956) 'Later Collection'
Shūi wakashū (ca. 1006) 'Collection of Gleanings'
Kin'yō wakashū (1126) 'Collection of Golden Leaves'
Senzai wakashū (1187) 'Collection of a Thousand Years'
Shinkokin wakashū (1205) 'New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times'

Waka Treatises

Shinsen zuinō (1001?) 'Essence of Poetry Newly Selected'
Toshiyori zuinō (ca. 1112) 'Toshiyori's Essentials of Poetry'
Waka kuhon (after 1009?) 'Nine Types of Waka'
Fukuro Zōshi (before 1159) 'Bound Jottings'
Korai fūteishō (1197) 'Notes on Poetic Style through the Ages'
Kindai shūka (1209) 'Superior Poems of Our Time'
Maigetsushō (1219) 'Monthly Notes.'

Waka Events

Minbukyō Yukihira no uta-awase (some time between 885 and 887) 'Poetry Match
Sponsored by Yukihira the Minister of Popular Affairs'
Tentoku yonen dairi uta-awase (960) 'Poetry Match at the Palace in the Fourth Year of
Tentoku'
Kanna gannen hachigatsu tōka dairi no utaawase (985) 'Poetry Match at the Palace on
the Tenth Day of the Eighth Month of the First Year of Kanna'
Kanna ninen rokugatsu tōka dairi no uta-awase (986) 'Poetry Match at the palace on the
tenth Day of the Sixth Month of the Second Year of Kanna'
Sadaijin Michinaga no uta-awase (1003) 'Poetry Match Sponsored by Michinaga the
Minister of the Left'

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Horikawa hyakushū (ca. 1105) 'Hundred-Poem Sequences Composed During the Reign of Emperor Horikawa'
Roppuyakuban utaawase (1193) 'Poetry Match in Six Hundred Rounds'

Other Literary Works

Kojiki (712) 'Chronicle of Ancient Matters'
Nihon shoki (720) 'Chronicle of Japan'
Utsuho monogatari (late 10c) 'Tale of the Hollow Tree'
Genji monogatari (early 11c) 'The Tale of Genji'
Makura no sōshī (early 11c) 'Pillow Book'
Ôtagami (ca. late 11c - early 12c) 'Great Mirror'
Kohon setsuwashū (12c - 13c) 'Collection of Setsuwa from Old Books'
Jikkinshō (ca. 1252) 'Notes on Ten Maxims'
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