“Place of Poetry, Place in Poetry: On Rulers, Poets, and Gods”

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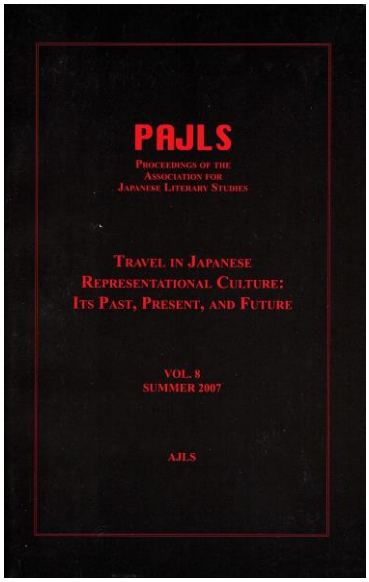

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PLACE OF POETRY, PLACE IN POETRY: ON RULERS, POETS, AND GODS

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Today I am going to talk about a poem from the *Man'yōshū* (Ten Thousand Leaves, 759) which commentators have traditionally associated with one of the thirty-one journeys that Empress Jitō (r. 690-697) made to her beloved detached palace in Yoshino, the southern part of the Yamato province (*Man'yōshū* 1:38). The poem is attributed to the revered Kakinomoto no Hitomaro about whom we know very little—no more than what we learn from the poems which have been attributed to him. Following the interpretation of the seventeenth–century scholar Keichū (1640-1701), this poem has been traditionally read as a panegyric to the empress whose virtues are compared to those of a heavenly deity—a divine sovereign who has built a palace in Yoshino from the top of which she can survey the land. The argument goes that the poet sings the beauty of the surrounding nature, a bountiful nature that provides the imperial table with proper offerings.[1]

My contention is that the poem is less about the sovereign's journey towards asserting her authority than about the journey of poetry towards securing its authority. In my remarks I will follow the statement that the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) made at the University of Freiburg in the summer of 1942 when, commenting on Hölderlin's hymn "The Ister," he pointed out that what is closest to us is the most far away from us. Nothing is more difficult to fully understand than what one feels to be his home. To be at home, or to be homely, is a deceiving concept, unless one takes the word "existence" in its etymological sense of exiting from the homely and be thrown into a world, a language, a culture that one must struggle to possess in order to make it his own. This does not mean that man is destined to remain homeless forever; it simply indicates that comfort is the result of a dialectical process in which the alleged "homely" must be exited in order to be reached through the unhomely. Together with the Rhine, the Donau (Danube) is the river most familiar to Germans—a river whose slow

[1] Keichū makes this comment in his commentary of the *Man'yōshū*, the *Man'yō Daishōki* (A Stand-in Chronicle of the Man'yōshū, 1690). The text appears in Hisamatsu Sen'ichi, ed., *Keichū Zenshū*, Vol. 1 (Toyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973), p. 343.

currents from the Swabian Alps make the German people feel at home. And yet—Heidegger argues in his summer semester course—were it not for its eastern lower progress (Ister is the Donau's Greek name), the Donau would be incomplete and, therefore, un-understood by the people who felt so close to it. The Ister brings from the land of Hercules what the German Donau lacks: the fire of Dionysian intoxication that must complement the cold rationality of the German Donau. On the other hand, the Donau brings to Hercules, the courageous traveler from the sultry isthmus, much needed shelter and coolness. Both Donau and Ister make the land arable and homeliness possible by incorporating the other into itself, even if this means that the Ister must flow backwards, back to the Alps. Once a true homeliness is achieved, the river clings to the mountain, unwilling to leave the home that it has finally succeeded in making its own— not without a long journey back to its origin in the remotest regions.

> The law of being homely as a becoming homely consists in the fact that historical human beings, at the beginning of their history, are not intimate with what is homely, and indeed must even become unhomely with respect to the latter in order to learn the proper appropriation of what is their own in venturing to the foreign, and to first become homely in the return to the foreign. This historical spirit of the history of humankind must first let what is foreign come toward that humankind in its being unhomely so as to find, in an encounter with the foreign, whatever is fitting for the return to the hearth.[2]

Despite the ominous tone of these words which were pronounced one year before Germany would bring its call for fire to the battlefields of southern, Mediterranean Europe, Heidegger's interpretation of what he calls the river's "enigma" reminds readers that the place determined by the poetic word is nothing but the "there" of being human—the Heideggerian notion of "human being," or, more precisely, "being-there" (*Dasein*). The "there" is a subtle trajectory that disabuses one of the familiar terms used to define the surrounding reality of material objects. Were it not for the notion of "ontological difference"—the difference between the material object "river" (*das Seiende* or being) and the fact that the river **is** (*Sein* or Being), the Ister would not make any difference

[2] Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister."* Translated by William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 125.

to the "there" that makes us humans. In other words, the river determines the dwelling place of human beings on earth, the place where they are homely, thus bringing human beings into their own and maintaining them in what is their own. However, without the poetic sign, no one would be able to respond to the calling that comes from the river—a calling to which the poet listens attentively, and which he articulates with a language that helps unconceal the truth of the river's Being. The poet makes one dwell in the place determined by the river--the place of poetry, where the dialectic of the unhomely bringing one to homeliness is at work.

I find this dialectic which disabuses readers of what is perceived as familiar to be a powerful tool in reading ancient Japanese poetry, especially the poetry that was created prior to the strict codifications put into practice in the tenth century with the compilation of the first imperial collection, the *Kokinshū* (Modern and Ancient Songs, 905). When we look at the songs from the *Man'yōshū*, we are immediately confronted by lines of Chinese characters that defy any possible effort to make this poetry sound somehow familiar. The text looks like classical Chinese, and yet it does not make any sense in the Chinese language. There is no indication of the sounds with which these characters should be associated—unless we rely on centuries of scholarly activities that have "translated" the characters into familiar sounds or, better to say, sounds that the poetry of the imperial anthologies has made familiar to us. The question remains whether these associations are acceptable or not. If they are not, how can we be so confident about extracting meaning from these poems? *Man'yōshū* 1:38 is preceded by the headnote, "composed by Kakinomoto no Hitomaro during the imperial progress to the Yoshino Palace." The following is the text in *man'yō* script:

> 安見知之 吾大王 神長柄 神左備世須登 芳野川 多芸津河内尓 高殿乎 高知座而 上立 国見乎為勢婆 畳有 青垣山 山神乃 奉御調等 春部者 花挿頭持 秋立者 黄葉頭刺理 一云、黄葉加射之 逝副 川之神母 大御食尓 仕奉等 上瀬尓 鵜川乎立 下瀬尓 小綱刺渡 山川母 依弖奉流 神乃御代鴨

The major series of the Japanese literary classics (Iwanami, Shōgakukan, and Shinchōsha) present a much more domesticated version of the poem, in which the alien text becomes a web of familiar expressions, immediately recognizable characters, and contemporary concepts:

> やすみしし 我が大君 神ながら 神さびせすと 吉野川 激つ河内に 高殿を 高知りまして 登り立ち 国見をせせば たたなはる 青垣山 やまつみの 奉る御調と 春へには 花かざし持ち 秋立てば 黄葉かざせり ＜一に云ふ、「もみち葉かざし」＞ 行き沿ふ 川の神も 大御食に 仕奉ると 上つ瀬に 鵜川を立ち 下つ瀬に 小網刺し渡す 山川も 依りて仕ふる 神の御代かも

The reconstruction above is based on the following transliteration of the *man'yō* text:

> *Yasumishishi/waga ōkimi/kamunagara/kamusabisesu*
> *to/Yoshinogawa/tagitsukōchi ni/takadono*
> *o/takashirimashite/noboritachi/kunimi o*
> *seseba/tatanawaru/aokakiyama/yamatsumi no/matsuru mitsuki*
> *to/haruhe ni wa/hana kazashimochi/aki tateba/momichi kazaseri*
> *(hitotsu ni iu, "momichiba kazashi")/yuki sou/kawa no kami*
> *mo/ōmike ni/tsukaematsuru to/kamitsuse ni/ukawa o*
> *tachi/shimotsuse ni/sade sashiwatasu/yamakawa mo/yorite*
> *tsukauru/kami no miyo ka mo*

Thanks to the song's domesticated versions, the poetic enigma can easily be deciphered as follows:

> My august sovereign,/a living god/who behaves like a god,/has built/a tall palace/inside the river by the surging rapids--/the Yoshino River, river of the Good Field,/she climbs,/and when she looks at the country,/the mountains building a green fence,/layers upon layers,/the gods of the mountain,/present their offerings,/in spring by crowning the mountains with blossoms,/in the fall,/by adorning the mountains with maples, (or "maple leaves," according to another version),/the gods of the river which flows along the Palace/make their offerings to the imperial table,/by placing cormorants/at the upper shallows,/and by spreading nets in the lower shallows,/even mountains and rivers/submit and serve,/this must indeed be the age of the gods![3]

[3] There is no disagreement between the editors of the Iwanami and Shinchōsha series. See, Satake Akihiro, et als., eds., *Man'yōshū,* 1, *SKBT* 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), p. 40, and Kojima Noriyuki, et als., eds., *Man'yōshū* ,1, *SNKBZ* 6 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1994), pp. 47–48.

The modern reading of the ancient text is a comfortable journey through the homely, in which the unhomely is excluded, and the rationality of a modernist explanation is brought forwards to the reader. A thick apparatus of footnotes and headnotes pinpoint to the exact historical circumstances in which the song was created—allegedly by Hitomaro during one of Empress Jitō's visits to her palace in Yoshino. The poet presents the sovereign as an embodiment of the *kami* (or Shintō gods), in the act of surveying the *kuni* (or country), so as to take possession of it, while the local deities of the mountains and rivers present their offerings (flowers and fishes) to the ruler, a human reminder that everybody is living in the age of the gods—an age in which the gods are actually the ruler's servants. If Hölderlin's appeal to the fire ("Now come, fire!) sounds ominous to readers familiar with the brown shirts, the godly ruler at the head of a nation-state (*kuni*) called Japan undoubtedly disquiets anyone with knowledge of the Pacific war, especially those who fought against an army led by a *kami*. And yet, the familiarity that everybody in Japan has with *kami* and *kuni* seems to make commentators embrace what the Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945) has called "discontinuous continuity" (*hirenzokuteki renzoku*): nothing is more the same than what seems to be different. As a matter of fact, nothing is more different than what seems to be the same, at least for the simple reason that the implications conveyed by the Chinese characters "*shen*" 神 and *guo*" 国 in seventh-century Yamato cannot be the same as what the same characters convey to us today. And yet, these familiar markers jump from the page of the poem's modern versions, together with an array of words still in use today, such as "*kawa*" (river), "*yama*" (mountain), "*hana*" (flowers), "*kami*" (above), "*shimo*" (below), "*waga*" (mine) "*miru*" (to see), "*noboru*" (to climb), "*motsu*" (to have), etc. It looks as if modern commentators have succeeded in making this song accessible to anyone with an elementary knowledge of the language. First-year students of Japanese should have no difficulty in recognizing the Chinese characters of this poem and their meanings. Of course, things would be different if the same student was given the original text in *man'yō* script. Then, four years of intensive training would not be enough to begin reading the first four characters.

The question is whether a way exists to get through the dense foliage of these ten thousand leaves by making the unfamiliar stand out from the page, and by allowing the unhomely to disrupt the comfort of reading. If such a possibility indeed exists, would this allow us to discern something about the act of poetic writing? In the remainder of this essay I will

follow another technique which was dear to Heidegger—the etymological path. It is true that, like philology, etymologies are a product of modernity and, therefore, cannot erase the distance between past and present. However, since there is no way to approach the past apart from the present, I will employ a technique that is extremely attentive to language, especially to poetic language, considering the fact that poetry and etymology share the same interest in probing the depth of language. I am not concerned with the charge that linguists—the scientists of language—have leveled against etymological practices, especially the practice of popular etymologies. I believe that poetry is a popular etymology, and that there are few alternatives once it comes to the business of paying attention to the voice of poetry. Moreover, Japanese linguists have listed various etymological theories about words, seldom assessing the acceptability of these theories. Maybe we should stop searching for "reliable" etymologies, since they are all reliable, inasmuch as they have been used (or misused) at some point in time.

My use of etymologies will not solve the first and most fundamental problem in reading the song's original text: are the current sounds associated with the Chinese characters the correct ones? I have a feeling that they are not, since all these sounds are shaped by metric rules used in later poetry, beginning with the courtly practice of *waka* (31-syllable poems). However, there is some truth in the present custom of seeing the text as a combination of characters used ideographically and other characters used purely phonetically (as in modern *kana*)—a combination which is at work in present-day readings of *Man'yōshū*. Therefore, my etymological reading will be based on the premise that the current transliteration of the song is acceptable. In other words, my reading is based on the same premises upon which modern commentators base their own readings. I might be even more biased than they are in following Motoori Norinaga's (1730–1801) call to interrogate the sound of words rather than the script—a capital grammatological sin. However, this method allows me to elicit from the poem what I believe to be its major concerns: the establishment of a hierarchical order, and the positioning of poets (and poems) within that order.

In other words, the question is not whether Kakinomoto no Hitomaro wrote this poem as an encomium for Empress Jitō—a fact that might be difficult to ascertain and, maybe, not even a relevant one. The question is how the poet establishes a set of hierarchical positions within a place called poetry, and how he positions himself (and the poetic voice) in this hierarchy. There is no doubt that the poem addresses the ruler: it begins with one of those "pillow-words" (*makurakotoba*), or poetic epithets,

which scholars like to ignore and set aside as untranslatable. The reason is that translations of *makura-kotoba* can only be based on hypothetical readings which are based, in turn, on hypothetical etymologies. The ruler is addressed with the epithet, "*yasumishishi*," which has been recorded with different sets of characters: 安見知し, which literally means, "to govern, or to rule, over the land peacefully," and 八隅知し, which means, "to govern, or to rule, over the myriad corners." Our song follows the first set of characters, thus emphasizing the peaceful nature of the sovereign's act of governing, as well as the pacified nature of the land over which he/she is ruling. The second set identifies the land over which the sovereign rules as a land made of numerous islands—Ōyashima 大八洲, a term commonly used in ancient times to refer to the archipelago. The epithet refers to "*waga ōkimi*" (venerable great king). "*Waga*" is an expression of reverence for the ruler; it does not necessarily mean "mine," as in the contemporary usage. It would be risky to see in this expression the self-portrait of a poet who presents himself as a "subject" in the etymological sense of the word, someone who is subjected to somebody else. This might not be the right marker to establish the position of the poet within the hierarchy of the poem itself. What we can say is that the following "*ōkimi*" 大王 (great king) is recorded in modern editions with the character used today to indicate "you" (*kimi* 君)—*ōkimi* 大君 (big you). However, this is a very special "big you," one in which *kimi* is associated with the notion of "public" (公)—a connotation which is diametrically opposite of the one that modern readers associate with the character "*kimi*" (the very private "you"). An etymological analysis of the word "*kimi*" lends the following explanations:[4]

1. A communication with what is above (*kami* 上).
2. Owner of a palace (*kimochi* 城持).
3. Protector of the land (*kunimori* 国守).
4. My darling girl/boy (*ko/ki*, or child 子 + *mi*, or body 身).

The fourth and last explanation refers to the current use of the word "*kimi*"—a usage that is also present in ancient times, although in a reversed order from the present one in which men address women (or professors address students) with the less formal "*kimi*." In the *Man'yōshū*, most of the time women use "*kimi*" to address their beloved, Beginning with the Heian period, this homely form came to be used

[4] The etymologies are based on Maeda Tomiyoshi, *Nihon Gogen Daijiten* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2005).

equally by men and women. However, this is not what out poet meant. He was more concerned with establishing a form of communication with someone who was well above him, the sovereign, who was in charge of a palace from which he/she ruled the land.

The poet positions the ruler at the highest point of the hierarchical structure, as we can see from the etymologies of words in the song's first three verses. The sovereign is described as someone who is like a *kami*. The question is not whether this *kami* refers to a Shintō god, or, more likely, to a deity from the pantheon of popular Taoism. This difference would not be as big as the fact that the word introduces a series of descriptions of the sacred, which can be summarized by listing the word's etymologies:

1. Above, the top (*kami* 上).
2. Hidden body (*kakurimi*陰身).
3. Mirror (*kagami*鏡).
4. Light (*akami* 明見).
5. Fragrance (*kami* 香見).

The ruler governs from the top of the world, as a body which is not fully disclosed. A device is needed to bring him/her into view, in order to catch the light that is reflected in a mirror—the very body of the sovereign. Poetry provides the device by actualizing with words the disclosure of the sacred enigma, which is too bright to stare in the face. Poetic words articulate a presence that, otherwise, might only be perceived through the sense of smell—the fragrance that comes from above. It is not by chance that the poet chose the character "fragrant" (*kaguwashi* 芳) to write the name of the river where the Empress built her palace, the Yoshino River 芳野川, usually recorded with the characters, "good field" 吉野. The palace is "lofty" (*takadono* 高殿), like a mountain rising far in the distance, as the etymologies of "high" (*taka* 高) indicate:

1. Peak (*take* 岳).
2. Height (*take* 丈･長).
3. Far (*tōki* 遠).
4. To rise (*tatsu* 立).

The detached palace rises in the sky like a mountain—a metaphor which is not left to chance when we think of how rulers in ancient Japan used to take possession of their land by surveying it from the top of a mountain (*kunimi* 国見, looking over the land). This particular ruler does not even

need to make the effort of "climbing" (*noboritatsu* 登立) a lofty mountain, since her residence already incorporates the mountain etymologically; the palace is lavishly decorated—layers and layers of partitions like the mountainous green fences (*aokakiyama* 青垣山) surrounding it. She needs only to be in her residence in order to possess the land. The equation between the construction of the palace and the possession of the land is also established by the word "*takashiru*" (高知, to build a lavish and beautiful building). "*Shiru*"—which in modern Japanese is related to knowledge (*shiru* = to know)—is etymologically associated with the following explanations:

1. Possession, occupied territory (*shiru* 領).
2. Clear, white (*shiro* 明・白).
3. Clear understanding (*shiro* 思慮).

By building a lofty palace the sovereign has taken possession of the land—a country (*kuni* 国), if one wishes, as long as one does not read a nation-state in it. However, once again, country is not what is at stake here. The poet is concerned with the space occupied by the ruler, a space which is hierarchically positioned below the lofty residence of the august presence, as we can see from the etymologies of the word "*kuni*:"

1. Land below (*ku* = below and *ni* = land).
2. Land covered with trees (*ku* = tree 木 and *ni* = land 土).
3. Huge land (*ku* = big大 and *ni* = land).
4. To assemble (*kumu* 組む).

The sovereign has assembled a lofty palace from which she rules over an extended land, filled with life. From this life the sovereign receives her spiritual and physical nutrition. At this point the poet sets up a completely different space which is totally subjected to the imperial glare surveying the land below. This lower space is inhabited by the gods of the mountains (*yamatsumi* 山神) and the gods of the river (*kawa no kami* 川之神), who provide the sovereign with offerings (*mitsuki* 御調) and food for the imperial table (*ōmike* 大御食). The gods of the mountains make the mountains adorn themselves with spring flowers and autumn maple leaves; the gods of the river supply the imperial kitchen with a steady flow of fish. All gods are portrayed as servants following their ruler from behind or, to be more correct, from below, since below is the place from which they present their offerings. The etymologies of the verb "*tsukau*" 仕, which applies to all deities, are eloquent:

1. To follow, to come behind (*tsuku* 着).
2. To belong to (*tsuku* 属).
3. To toss up from below, to offer (*tsukiau* 突合).

It goes without saying that the realms of the deities (mountains and rivers) also "submit to" (*yoru* 依) and "follow" (*tsukau*) the imperial command.

This poem has built a poetic space dominated by the sovereign at the top and the deities, producers of nature, at the bottom. In other words, the ruler is positioned in the Heavenly Plain of Heaven (Takama-no-hara) which we know from the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) to be the place where the heavenly deities operate. On the other hand, the earthly deities of mountains and rivers inhabit the human land which the heavenly deities have occupied, conquered, and pacified. Historians have explained the structure of this mythology in terms of clans competing for power—clans which tried to find means of political legitimation by relating their families to specific deities. Obviously, the victorious Yamato clan established the most sought after genealogy by claiming direct descent from the Sun Goddess. However, the poem does not go into any historiographical or mythological details. It simply sets up a series of spaces organized hierarchically. The two spaces mentioned above are mediated by the space of poetry that the author reserves for himself. This space is midway between the lofty position of the ruler and the humble position of the conquered deities (nature submitting to a more powerful creator). The poet is not as modest as one would expect from a courtly jongleur. He does address the sovereign with all the due respect by using proper honorifics: "*kami sabi**sesu***" (to behave like a kami) incorporates the polite form "*sesu*" for "*su*" (to do something). The same polite expression is used to indicate the imperial survey of the land (*kunimi o **seseba***). However, there is no verb or particle indicating that the poet is actually serving the empress. The level of honorifics employed to express the poet's position and the gods' position towards the ruler is completely different. The deities are in total awe of the ruler (*tsukaematsuru*, and *yorite tsukauru*), as if their eyes could not reach the loftiness of the ruler's position, her lofty palace. The poet is not. In order to describe the imperial apotheosis the poet must be part of it; he must participate in the imperial acts, since he must record them. He sees the mountain from the same viewpoint as the ruler, from the top of a mountain (or, maybe, the top of the palace). It does not matter whether he was actually there, next to the empress. What matters is the imperial position that he takes in order to describe the unfolding events. His poem

is a survey of the land (*kunimi*), a taking possession of the means to record the sovereign's conquest of the land with poetic signs. The poet affirms his monopoly over expression—a process of representation over which the gods have no claim. The deities have control only over the reality at hand (flowers and fishes), but no control over words. The poet allots to poetic expression a loftier position than the one assigned to the earthly gods. Poetic expression has the power to articulate the dialectic of heights and hierarchies which constitute the kernel of the song. The poetic word definitely transcends the reality of the gods that would go un-expressed without the intervention of the poet. The poet establishes expression as the foundation of transcendence—a transcendence that has nothing to do with any specific religious system, but that is inherent in the nature of language and expression: the referent is always beyond and above what it refers to. This should give pause to anyone who still embraces the myth of Japanese immanence, according to which the Japanese world is confined to the here and now.

Let's listen once again to the song and all its etymological echoes:

> Ruling over the land peacefully,/ the venerable great king,/owner of the palace, protector of the land,/a hidden body,/a mirror of fragrant light he is,/he behaves like what is above and at the top,/inside the river by the surging rapids--/the Yoshino River, river of the fragrant field,/he has built a lofty palace/as high as a peak,/ rising into the sky like a mountain,/he has built a lavish and beautiful building,/taking possession of it,/he has climbed the lofty mountain and palace,/and has looked down on the land below,/a land covered with trees,/ a huge land,/layers upon layers/of mountains like green fences,/offerings are served/by the gods of the mountains,/who make the mountains adorn their peaks with flowers/in spring,/and maples ("maple leaves," according to another version)/in the fall,/the gods of the river/which flows along the Palace/serve/the imperial table/the bounty caught by cormorants/in the upper shallows,/and by nets/in the lower shallows,/even mountains and rivers/bow, submitting and serving,/tossing their offerings from below,/following the ruler/to whom they belong,/this is indeed the age of the gods!

As soon as the author of this song was associated with the name Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, the name became the object of the same dialectic of hierarchies which the poet applied to his song. Hitomaro

became the transcendent signifier of all poetic compositions in the land, rising to the rank of "saint of poetry" (*uta no hijiri*), to be worshipped by anyone with poetic aspirations. His portrait was hung on walls during poetic matches, and revered as the effigy of the founder of the poetic cult. This was no small achievement for someone whose existence is barely recorded, and, if he indeed existed, whose ranking at the court was too humble for the chronicler to bother including his name in the imperial records. The process of Hitomaro's beatification began with the famous *kana* preface to the *Kokinshū* which lauded Hitomaro's ability to guarantee poetry a dignified position in the order of things. Ki no Tsurayuki (868?–945?) did not hesitate to give the poet a fictional rank by promoting him to the third, upper rank (*ōkimitsu-no-kurai* 正三位)—a rank which was reserved for ministers of the highest station. Tsurayuki even attributed to Hitomaro the composition of a poem on the cherry blossoms on the Yoshino mountains, which was actually written by Tsurayuki's colleague, Ki no Tomonori (d. after 905).[5] Evidently, poets, like rulers, needed some form of legitimation in order to establish proper credentials. Many scholars noticed the mistakes, including Keichū (1640–1701) and Kamo no Mabuchi (1697–1769). However, aside from the issue of whether they were intentional or not,[6] these "mistakes" bespeak the concerns that Hitomaro (and his loyal followers) felt for poetry: to dignify the poetic word by not confining it to the space of simple entertainment, popular song, or play on words. This was no small achievement on the part of "Hitomaro" who, with a single poem, had placed poetry not too far from the imperial seat, and had gotten away with it unscathed.

[5] "[Yamato-songs] have been composed since ancient times, but the practice spread beginning with the reign of the Nara Emperor. That emperor must have understood the heart of poetry! At that time lived Kakinomoto no Hitomaro of the third, upper rank: he was the saint of poetry. This must have been the result of a perfect union between ruler and people. To the emperor's eyes the maple leaves flowing in the Tatsuta River on an autumn night looked like brocade. In Hitomaro's heart the cherry blossoms on the Yoshino Mountains on a spring morning appeared like clouds." Okumura Tsuneya, ed., *Kokin Wakashū*, *SNKS* 19 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1978), p. 19.

[6] This issue is discussed in Oda Shōkichi, *"Kokinwakashū" no Nazo o Toku* (Tokyo Kōdansha, 2000), pp. 11–78.