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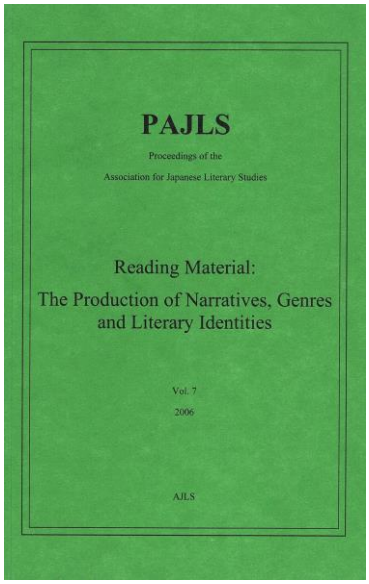

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Willful Copyists and the Transmission of Suspect Narratives of Literary Production

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Literary history is more than the study of the contents of works that we identify as literary in nature. The history of pre-modern Japanese poetry, to choose one example, is more than the formal characteristics of poems and poetry collections. These poems and collections are the fruit of personalities, of poetry events, of rivalries and friendships, of economics and politics, of rank and lineage and obligations. In addition to the study of the characteristics of literary works, literary history includes, at least, the study of the people who made these works, and the environment in which they did so.

In fact because composition of the 31-syllable *waka* – the dominant form of pre-modern Japanese poetry – had, as a formal practice, become remarkably stable by the turn of the 13th century, the history of poetic production in the Kamakura and Muromachi Periods is less the study of how poems were made, and much more the study of personalities and relationships, of connections and patronage, of persons with a valued cultural expertise striving to render service to people in a position to grant benefice for such service. The actual differences between the *poetry* written by poets we identify as belonging to various groups, such as the Rokujō 六条 poets, the Mikohidari 御子左 poets, the Nijō school 二条派, and the Kyōgoku school 京極派, were slight, even in the relatively small number of works that display the stylistic elements we have come to identify with such groups. In contrast, the differences between the careers such persons pursued within the larger courtly social economy, an economy of which formal poetic composition was but one part, were great.

Personalities are central to our sense of the history of waka at the time of the *Shinkokin wakashū* 新古今和歌集 (1205), in the first years of the 13th century, especially those of Retired Emperor Go-Toba 後鳥羽院 (1180-1239) and the people who populated, or were allowed to populate, the poetic circle centered upon him. Why did the Rokujō poets, who had been so influential, fail to maintain their position? Why did so many young, relatively unknown men find a place? Why the sudden increase in the number of women participating, and where did they come from? How did the misanthropic Fujiwara no Teika 藤原定家 (1162-1241) manage to succeed, and what was his relationship with the former emperor like? Why was a committee

of compilers named for the *Shinkokinshū*, after 250 years of single compilerships?[1] These are questions of poetic history, but not of poetry itself: even in cases where issues of poetic style are involved, they are never quite the whole story, as in the case of the Rokujō poets of this time, who did not fall out of favor because the Rokujō style of poetry fell out of favor; it was rather the other way around.

As a result we mine without mercy any source that can tell us who the people involved were, and what the environment was like. Teika's *Meigetsuki* 明月記. Minamoto no Ienaga's 源家長 (?-1234) diary. The headnotes (*kotobagaki* 詞書) that precede poems we find compiled in personal collections, privately compiled anthologies, and the imperially commissioned ones as well. We want to know who exchanged poems with whom, who went to which poetry events, and on and on. The picture that has been painstakingly developed is our narrative of literary production at this important moment in the history of pre-modern Japanese poetry.

Which raises another issue. The sources from which we develop our narrative, our history, come to us as the content of texts, some very old, some with complicated histories of their own. In most cases, when we study works of pre-modern Japanese literature, especially those dating from before the printing of literary texts, we come to understand that there is no such thing as a perfect transmission. We recognize that when we look at such works, we are most often addressing material transmitted to modern readers as the content of several individual texts, both manuscript and printed. We accept that when this is the case, the content that survives this journey of transmission will reach us via flawed texts missing a chapter or a page, eaten into illegibility in places by insects, and marred by copyist and printer errors.

All the same, the *desire* for a perfect transmission is apparent, in the field of pre-modern Japanese literature as in many others. Particularly in modern literary scholarship produced in Japan, this desire is expressed in attempts to get as near as possible to what is imagined, in terms of content, to be an *original state*; to approach the original state is to approach the original moment of composition, and the original intent of the author. We can see that this is the case because of the value placed upon the *jihitsu* 自筆, the holograph, a value inseparable from the desire to have, literally, an authoritative version of a work, one in the hand of its creator (or creators), one that comes to us unchanged from the very moment of creation, or at least as close to it as it is possible to get.

But holograph copies are rare. In most cases we have one or more copies of a given work, the oldest of which will typically post-date the origin of its contents by hundreds of years. In such cases, the desire to come as close as possible to the original state of a work is apparent in the tremendous amount of effort invested, again in Japanese scholarship in particular, in analyzing the genealogy of textual transmissions (the *keitō* 系統). Scholars take special note of the oldest copies, and copies made by persons who we think bear some privileged relationship to the contents (for example a copy of the *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集 [905] made by a well-known waka poet). Scholars also undertake an exhaustive comparative analysis of the contents of all known texts, and by mapping the differences that they find, seek to track the history of the

[1] These issues and many others concerning this period are addressed in numerous works of scholarship; for an accessible and detailed study, see Huey 2002, especially pp. 17-141.

contents over time, and to understand the relationship of one copy to another. Which text is oldest? Who made it? What text did that person base his copy upon, and who made *that*? Never is satisfaction more apparent than when a textual lineage can be traced, hopping from text to text, back to the author, or back to a text that dates almost to the origin of the work itself. This is the point from which all authority derives.

Of course many works defy such happy conclusions. Detailed textual genealogies depend in large part on colophons (*okugaki* 奥書) and postscripts (*shikigo* 識語), containing dates and names, and such treasures are often hard to come by. Textual lineages fizzle out, ending in copies about which only broad conclusions can be drawn: they are from the late-Muromachi Period, or from the early Edo Period, or something similar. A manuscript may be tentatively attributed, on the basis of calligraphic style perhaps, to a particular person, but the business of attribution is a very tricky one. Often it is only much later, printed copies that survive, and usually nothing is known about what these were based upon.

When hopelessly cut off from the original state of a work, authority is located in the *zenpon* 善本, or the best of all extant copies. Or, especially for modern scholars, it is located in the *kōhon* 校本, the collated edition, pieced together from what seem to be the best bits of those copies that survive. When we look at the process of selecting a *zenpon*, we find that there is a strong bias in favor of whichever text can be proven to be the oldest. The oldest text will in almost all cases be considered best, unless it is unmistakably flawed, marked either by losses or incomprehensibility. The oldest text is presumed authoritative until proven unstable. When we look at the process of constructing a *kōhon*, we find that it usually involves looking at all extant texts, identifying those that seem generally cohesive and intelligible, and then choosing the oldest of these to serve as the primary text. Where this primary text seems incomplete or flawed, content from newer copies is grafted in. In both of these processes, we can see that in the absence of obvious sources of authority such as a holograph or a genealogy beginning at or near the original moment of composition, authority in textual transmission is located first in *age*, second in *accuracy* (to the degree that this can be judged), and third in *comprehensibility*, or comparative intelligibility. Most of the sources we study in typeset editions today, both the literary works themselves as well as other kinds of documents that inform us about the environment in which these literary works were produced, come to us as a result of these processes.

Returning to the question of the kinds of sources that scholars of Japan's literary history mine for the information that serves to develop our narratives of literary production, we note that in addition to the diaries and poetry collections described above, records of poetry contests (*utaawase* 歌合) that preserve judgments (*hanshi* 判詞) are seen as being especially useful for the insight they provide into certain communities of poets. In some cases, the judgments that survive seem to allow us to understand something about the personalities involved, and the tenor of their interaction. A good example is the *Sengohyakuban utaawase* 千五百番歌合 of 1201, the huge scale of which required ten people to serve as judges: the differences in language and style that we find in the judgments tell us a good deal about the personalities of those poets who served in this capacity. For example, the reputation of the Rokujō poets of this period, especially

Kenshō 顕昭 (ca. 1130-1210), as aggressive and cranky derives in large part from this and other comparable sources.[2]

Utaawase like the *Sengohyakuban utaawase* are a good source for information about the history of waka during the years leading up to the compilation of the *Shinkokin wakashū*, in 1205, particularly because there were so many of them. The following quote from one contemporary scholar sums up the value placed upon such contests in modern Japanese literary scholarship: "Among the large and small scale poetry gatherings (*utakai* 歌会) and poetry contests that were held so frequently during the Shōji and Kennin eras [1199-1204] under the auspices of the poetry circle (*kadan* 歌壇) surrounding Retired Emperor Go-Toba, those contests that include poetic judgments, inasmuch as they are *materials that convey the atmosphere within this poetic circle*, are particularly valuable in terms of *waka* history and the history of poetics (*karonshi* 歌論史)."[3] The *Shingū senka awase* 新宮撰歌合, an 'edited poetry contest' in thirty-six rounds (containing seventy-two poems) that took place in the Ninth Month of 1201, is a good example.[4] Although the judge for the contest was Fujiwara no Shunzei 藤原俊成 (1114-1204), in many cases it is actually the poets of the two teams, the Left and the Right, who debate the poems matched in each round, with the judge coming in only at the end to render his decision.[5] We get to hear more voices than usual, and have the opportunity to witness the two teams interact, arguing their points of view, defending their poems and finding fault with those of the opposing side.

There are, however, several extant copies of the *Shingū senka awase*, none of which are exactly alike. Some are manuscript, some are printed. While none are exactly the same, no one example is so different from the others that it deserves to be considered a variant text, representing a separate textual lineage. If we wish to investigate this work today, the edition that

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[2] The fullest study of the *Sengohyakuban utaawase* is Ariyoshi 1968. For an excellent overview of the event, and of the different temperaments of the judges, see Huey 2002, pp. 193-221.

[3] Yamamoto Hajime, in his introduction to a photo-reproduced edition of a text containing manuscript copies of three poetry contests. See Yamamoto 1989, p. 133. The italics are mine, and emphasize the original "*kadan no fun'iki o tsutaeru shiryō* 歌壇の雰囲気を伝える資料."

[4] To say that this contest was 'edited' means that it was a more managed affair than was often the case. Near the end of the Third Month of 1201 Go-Toba instructed twenty-six poets to compose ten poems, one on each of ten supplied topics. These were to be submitted by the 28th. On this date, ten of the more prominent poets were called in to begin shaping the initial 260 poems into contest form. Two teams were formed, and each team began an extended process that led to the selection of the thirty-six poems that would represent them. The following day a larger group of participants assembled for the formal prosecution of the event. This entailed one poet from each team serving to read out each round's poems, followed by a period during which the merits of each poem were discussed by the group, after which the judge made his decision. For a description of this event, see Huey 2002, pp. 101-108. The *Shingū senka awase* was thus just what its title indicates: a poetry contest in which selected poems were matched against one another. Other contests would not incorporate the selection process outlined above, requiring only that invited poets come to the formal event with the poems that they had composed in response to topics distributed earlier; their poems would at that time be matched against the opposing poet's efforts. The *Shingū senka awase* was, all the same, a contest that actually 'took place,' inasmuch as the formal meeting described above was in fact convened: many other *senka awase* only took place on paper.

[5] The *Shingū senka awase* is thus an unusual combination of a poetry contest judged, on the one hand, by a single person, and on the other hand by a group made up of some or all of the participants (*shūgihan* 衆議判).

comes most readily to hand is unquestionably that contained in *Shinpen kokka taikan* 新編国歌大観, the massive compendium of pre-modern waka.[6] The copy of *Shingū senka awase* that we find typeset here is an Edo Period woodblock edition from 1685. While this is a fairly late example, there is nothing inherently unusual about the fact that a later text might be considered the best available (the *zenpon*), inasmuch as this choice almost always turns on the question of accuracy, or intelligibility, as discussed above. The editorial notes in *Shinpen kokka taikan* indirectly indicate that the Edo Period woodblock was chosen on the basis of just these criteria, in that reference is made to a different copy, a manuscript whose date and source text are unknown: although this example seems to predate the 1685 woodblock edition, and despite the fact that manuscripts are generally privileged over printings, this copy is judged unfit to serve as the *zenpon* due to the many inaccuracies and incomprehensible passages it contains.

However there is a text that is not mentioned in *Shinpen kokka taikan*, one that is the oldest of all known copies.[7] This is a late-Muromachi Period manuscript, dating from the end of the 15th century. Held by the Kyōto Prefectural Library and Archives (京都府立総合資料館), this must have been unknown or unavailable to the *Shinpen kokka taikan* editor. Because of its age – and thus because of its relative proximity to the date of the *Shingū senka awase* – the Kyōto text is automatically in the running to be considered the best available text. But as noted, age is not everything, and we must also see if we can judge this copy to be *more* accurate, *more* intelligible, than texts that come later.

This is a lot of work, with any text. One must look carefully at as many copies as one can find, noting every small difference. The results of this kind of investigation are everywhere visible in studies by Japanese scholars of pre-modern works: pages of textual variations (*kōi* 校異), listed with great care. In all but the rarest cases, however, the data produced by this painstaking effort is presented in such a way that it can tell us no more than that several texts exist, and that these are different in many small (but, one supposes, significant) ways. In very few cases are any conclusions drawn about *why* the copies are different, *how* they came to be so, and *what* can be understood from the nature of the differences that exist.

Generally speaking, this is due to the simple fact that differences are assumed to be accidental. Errors just creep in, over time. There is a great deal of trust in the idea that – excepting variously-motivated forgeries – extant materials will have survived, in terms of content, as true to their original form as the various technologies of transmission have allowed. We operate with the belief that the many people involved in transmission, from 13th century philologists to 18th century merchants, understood that it was not their place to purposely alter the contents of the texts they copied, carved, printed, lent, gave, or sold. The manner in which the results of comparative textual analyses are usually presented, particularly in studies produced in Japan, leads one to infer that most literary historians believe that while differences between extant texts may exist, and must be noted by scholars to whom the idea of an authoritative text is important, they cannot really *mean* anything.

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[6] *Shinpen kokka taikan* henshū iinkai 1983-1992. *Shingū senka awase* is in Vol. 5 (No. 186), pp. 391-394.

[7] By which is meant that it is the oldest of all copies of *Shingū senka awase* listed in Chūsei utaawase kenkyūkai 1991 (pp. 57-59) for which at least approximate dates are available.

Yet when enough texts survive from various points in a work's journey to make comparison possible, we find that transmission was not always the respectful, leave-it-as-you-found-it act that is often assumed. Having looked at the differences that exist between five copies of *Shingū senka awase*, both manuscript and printed, I have come to believe that very specific changes have been made, ones that alter not only the words and characters that make up the textual record of the event, but also our sense of the personalities involved, and the tenor of their association. As a result, these different texts tell us different stories about the history of literary production, a fact we should note when we consider what it means to be the best text, the most accurate text.[8]

As it happens, the Kyōto Prefectural Library and Archives' manuscript copy of the *Shingū senka awase* is not only older, but in the aggregate is also more accurate and more intelligible than any of the others studied, including the Edo Period woodblock edition that we find reproduced in *Shinpen kokka taikan.* Of these three things, accuracy is the most difficult to judge, because one can't simply compare different copies of the same work. If one copy says a particular line goes one way, and another text has something slightly different, who is to say which is correct? There must be some external measure. Fortunately, because forty-eight of *Shingū senka awase*'s seventy-two poems occur in other collections of verse, we do have a means of judging relative accuracy.

Individual examples reveal only small changes between the different texts of the poetry contest. One comes in the Eleventh Round, where in the Kyōto text the fourth line of the poem of the Right is *matsu ni akikaze*. All other texts have *matsu wo akikaze*. A tiny, seemingly insignificant difference, but this poem also occurs in the *Sanbyaku rokujūban utaawase* 三百六十番歌合, an artificially constructed poetry contest put together in 1201, the same year that *Shingū senka awase* took place. There, the poem reads just as the Kyōto text has it. Because we have a very early manuscript copy of *Sanbyaku rokujūban utaawase*, one made in 1206, we can say that the Kyōto text accurately reflects the form of the poem that was known and circulated in the early 13th century, whereas later texts of *Shingū senka awase*, with their *matsu wo akikaze*, record some change that took place later, either because of later revisions to the poem or because of copyist error. By locating such differences in the way the *Shingū senka awase* texts record their poems, then looking at how these same poems occur in early copies of other collections that include them, we can judge which of our texts most accurately transmits the poems in the form

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[8] The five texts examined, three manuscripts and two woodblock printings, are as follows: 1) *Kyōto furitsu sōgō shiryōkan-bon* 京都府立総合資料館本. Item number 478 in the Kyōto Prefectural Library and Archives rare book catalogue. Late Muromachi Period manuscript. Reproduced in Yamamoto 1989. 2) *Momijiyama bunko-bon* 紅葉山文庫本. Currently held in the Cabinet Library (内閣文庫), catalogued under the number 210:209. Manuscript of unknown date. 3) *Shimane daigaku toshokan kuwahara bunko-bon* 島根大学図書館桑原文庫本. Item number 911.18: Sh62. 1647 manuscript. 4) *Gunsho ruijū-bon* 群書類従本. Late-Eighteenth/ Early-Nineteenth century woodblock print. (This does not refer to the later typeset edition of *Gunsho ruijū*, which is notoriously inaccurate.) 5) *Utaawase burui jōkyō ninen kanpon* 歌合部類貞享二年刊本. Multiple copies exist, but the one used in this study is item number 201:99 in the Cabinet Library (内閣文庫). 1685 woodblock print. This text is reproduced in *Shinpen kokka taikan*, although for this study only the original woodblock was considered. I am deeply indebted to Ishizawa Kazushi, of Tsurumi University in Yokohama, for providing me with copies of numbers 2~5 above; without his help this study would not have been possible.

that was known at or around the time of their composition. When all the small variations are added up, the Kyōto text without question performs the most accurate transmission.[9]

The problem of relative intelligibility or coherence is easier to address, simply because this can be done by comparing the language contained in the different *Shingū senka awase* texts themselves. None of the examples I looked at were flawless; all contained passages, located in the language of the judgments, or *hanshi*, where it became difficult or impossible to understand the meaning, or where the logical flow of the argument had clearly broken down. However, as in the case of relative accuracy, the Kyōto text again emerged as the copy marked least by such impediments. To present just one simple but significant example, in the Kyōto text the team of the Left is awarded a victory in Round Eleven, while in the other texts the round is judged a draw. In all texts, the judgment begins with both the Left and the Right praising one another's poems. The judge, Shunzei, then goes on in the Kyōto text to say, "some expressions in the Right's poem, such as 'cool are the evening waves,' are very good. Accordingly, I declare it the winner." In the other texts, however, Shunzei says "some expressions in the Right's poem, such as 'cool are the evening waves,' sound very good. Accordingly, I declare the round a draw." Clearly Shunzei's decision here is at odds with his statement, whereas in the Kyōto text, and the Kyōto text alone, the judgment is completely intelligible. A small thing in itself perhaps, but in a poetry contest of only thirty-six rounds, a mistake in transmission that records a draw where there should be a win is not insignificant. And this is one of many such examples. There are at least twenty-four other instances where parts of the judgments are more intelligible in the Kyōto text than in some or all of the others, as opposed to just five cases where it is the Kyōto text that is less clear (and in two of these the confusion arises from what is unambiguously copyist error). Overall, the Kyōto text is not only the oldest extant copy of *Shingū senka awase*, it is also the most accurate to the original form of the work it transmits, and the most cohesive, comprehensible text. As these are the criteria all-but-universally applied in the selection of a *zenpon*, there would seem to be no reason that it shouldn't be considered the best available copy, the most trustworthy transmission.

Having arrived at this conclusion, through the kind of exhaustive (and exhausting) comparative analysis that is invariably a part of Japanese scholarship on any particular literary work, or indeed any pre-modern material, we find there is an opportunity to go further. Patterns discernable in the massive list of *kōi*, or textual variations, produced by this exercise show that the Kyōto text of *Shingū senka awase* is not only different in many ways from other texts that transmit the same content, it is different from them in various suggestive ways, various potentially meaningful ways; there seems to be something we can learn about the poetic community of the early Kamakura Period from the unique story that the Kyōto text can tell us, that we don't learn from the very-slightly different stories told by other copies. Further, there seems to be something we can learn about the kinds of changes that get made to texts over the course of their transmission.

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[9] A list of all of the variations that illustrate this point would take up several pages, even in footnote form, and is not feasible here. In a small number of other examples the situation is similar to that given above, where the Kyōto text alone transmits poems in exactly the same form as other early copies of non-*Shingū senka awase* texts, while the other *Shingū* texts have something slightly different. In most cases, the Kyōto text is among one or two other *Shingū* texts that maintain the forms of poems that we also see in early examples of other anthologies or collections, while the remaining *Shingū* texts have something else. Finally, we see that the Kyōto text most consistently transmits the poems of this poetry contest as they were likely known at or near the time of their composition.

The value of poetry contests such as *Shingū senka awase* to scholars hoping to get some sense of the tenor of associations between poets, particularly those active in Go-Toba's poetry circle, was described above. In relation to this point, it is of interest that participants in this 1201 poetry contest behave less formally with one another in the Kyōto text than they do in other copies, inasmuch as they speak to one another in a more direct, more aggressive manner. As for other patterns of variation that seem to be meaningful, in later copies of this poetry contest we find elements that we don't for the most part find in the Kyōto text, ones that seem to serve an expository function: passages are fleshed out with information that makes them clearer, and points are made explicit that one would otherwise need to infer. Also, in later copies we see the insertion of certain language formulas that distinguish reported speech; in the case of the judgments in this poetry event, this amounts to a kind of narrative distance.

I'll give brief examples, although again the individual examples seem quite insignificant, and it is only in the aggregate that they become truly convincing. As an illustration of the more informal nature of the Kyōto text, in Round Two we find a passage where the Right accuses the Left's poem of committing a particular error, a 'poetic illness' in the terminology of the time, in this case one whereby the poet includes two words that are in essence synonymous. In Kyōto the Right says *onaji kokoro no yamai ni ya*, a much more direct, much less polite statement than the one we see in all of our other texts, *onaji kokoro no yamai ka ikaga*. Also in Round Two, we have the Left alleging that the Right's poem includes a figure that has no precursor in the poetic tradition, and asking facetiously if there can possibly be a *shōka* 証歌, or a 'proof poem,' that the Right could point to as a valid precedent. In Kyōto this is *shōka no aru ni ya obotsukanashi*, whereas in our other texts it is *shōka no haberu ni ya obotsukanashi*. Even though the only difference is between an *aru* and a *haberu*, the change in tone is marked, and the atmosphere of the discussion is considerably altered.

As an example of an expository urge that we can locate in later copies of the work, in Round Nineteen the Left's poem is about how the kudzu vine resents the frost that will cause it to wither. In the judgment the Right complains that the kudzu should really be said to resent the frost only after it has been well and truly withered, not before. In the Kyōto text this line begins *kuzu no urami nado wa*, but in our other texts it is *kuzu no ha no urami nado ha*; for some reason it has been found necessary to make explicit the fact that when we talk about a kudzu vine withering, we really mean just the leaves, not the vine itself. While this is good to know, and we might even say that the *ura* of *urami* calls to mind the underside of leaves, leaves do not in fact appear in the poem under discussion. The Kyōto text, in which the language of the judgment is a direct, unaltered citation of the language that appears in the poem itself, not only seems more natural, but more importantly maintains the standard practice in poetry contest *hanshi* when language from the poems being discussed is incorporated into the judgment.

As for the accretion of a kind of narrative distance, this in almost all cases entails nothing more than the insertion of formulas like *to te* or *unnun* into the judgments after comments made either by one of the two teams or by the judge. Because it is such a concrete, consistent change I'll refrain from giving particular examples.[10] As in the case of the other patterns of difference

[10] By consistent I mean that where we do see the insertion of such language, the form of the language inserted is consistently the same. I do not mean to suggest that the judgments of non-Kyōto texts consistently include such

discussed, however, many small changes produce, over the work as a whole, a significantly different sense of the poetry event that these texts all serve to record and transmit.

Having identified differences between the Muromachi Period Kyōto text and later copies of the *Shingū senka awase* that cannot simply be considered as the result of simple copyist error, we have an opportunity to consider the processes that may have given rise to these differences. However, because we do not know precisely how a social poetry event such as a poetry contest was transformed into the text (or texts) that would serve as its record, any number of possibilities occur. Since we know that records of poetry events would often join the body of texts that provided compilers of imperially-commissioned poetry anthologies with a pool of potential selections, sometimes very soon after the prosecution of the contest in question, we know that the need for a stable, representative textual record was recognized by the contest's sponsors and participants. An 'official' text would have to be produced. But while we might suggest, because of this text's role in transmitting the contest's poems into larger contemporary poetry venues, and because it would presumably be the record of the contest most widely circulated, that it would have been the primary, 'sanctioned' text, it would not necessarily have been the only one made, nor the most complete, or accurate, record.

One possibility is that all extant copies of the *Shingū senka awase* originate, finally, in the first 'official' record of the event. As to who would have been responsible for this copy, the likeliest candidate in the case of this particular poetry contest is Fujiwara no Teika. From an entry (for 3.29.1201) in Teika's diary *Meigetsuki* we learn that he was asked to serve on the day of the contest to write down the discussions that took place between the two teams after the poems were read out, and to note the judge's decisions.[11] While this does not mean that he would necessarily have been responsible for putting together a final text that arranged such notes in their proper place alongside the poems themselves, the names and titles of the participants, the poetic topics, and other such elements, it does seem clear that the words Teika took down – which were only a selection of the words actually spoken among the participants – would serve as the official record of the judgments.[12] Given that the poems and the topics would have already existed, on poem slips and the like, as a stable textual record some time before the poetry contest itself was convened, it is the language of the judgments that would have been most variable, most in play, at the time any 'official' copy was made. As a result, saying that Teika's transcript of the judgments was likely the recognized one is tantamount to saying that the most variable text of the contest was fixed, for 'official' purposes, by Teika. Whoever might have been responsible for actually piecing together the official copy would have used Teika's text for this crucial component, even if other people present were simultaneously taking their own set of notes.

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language. For the most part, the judgments of *Shingū senka awase*, as transmitted by all of the copies examined, do not contain markers like *to te* and *unnun*. However, these do appear sporadically in all of the later copies, whereas they never appear in the Kyōto text. In the most accessible *Shingū* text, the 1685 woodblock printing reproduced in *Shinpen kokka taikan*, some examples of this language can be found in the judgments appended to Round Six (*nagame koto ni kokoro yukazu to te ji to su*) and Round Nine (*tomo ni sutegataki to te ji to su*).

[11] Huey presents this information in his study: see Huey 2002, p. 104.

[12] Teika himself acknowledges in his diary that his transcription was by no means a complete record of everything that was said: "I only wrote down in outline what the Left and Right teams had to say; I did not go into the details." This translation of Teika's comment is given in Huey 2002, p. 104.

Copies of this first record would have been made, then copies of those copies, and so on over the centuries. This is the model of the textual lineage most commonly followed in Japanese scholarship. Differences creep in as copies are made by persons ever further in time from the original, first text, and while losses might make the relationships between extant copies unclear, the belief is that if all of the copies that originally populated the lineage could be examined, every deviation from the original text's language could in theory be identified and accounted for. It is this model that confers such great value upon the oldest extant copies, as discussed above. When it comes to poetry contests, the question of whether or not textual records of poetry contests accurately reflect the words that were actually spoken between poets, or whether they represent a complete record of what was done and said, is not addressed by this model. Rather, it is concerned with the idea of the text that was created, perhaps by consensus, to serve as the official record, and became as a result the only text sanctioned for use by such persons as the compilers of imperially-commissioned poetry anthologies. Given the importance of the imperial anthology to contemporary poets, it is not untenable to suggest that, however many textual records of a poetry contest like the *Shingū senka awase* might have been created immediately following its prosecution, the only one that would have seemed worth copying was the 'official' one. Given the importance of the imperial anthology to modern scholars of Japan's literary history, it is not surprising that this notion – that the 'official' text would be the only one copied – has achieved the widest currency.

If we follow this model for the moment and consider that all surviving examples of the *Shingū senka awase* must have originated in a single, sanctioned 'Ur text,' then we arrive at some interesting conclusions concerning the variations that we find. Because the intelligible and accurate Kyōto text currently occupies the position in the textual lineage closest to the anticipated first record, we can suggest that the poets in Go-Toba's poetry circle interacted quite freely with one another, without much reserve. They used relatively direct forms of speech, and did not couch their criticisms of one another's verse (and one another's mastery of the poetic tradition) in especially polite language. Further, we can suggest that later copiers of this contest's textual record for some reason felt the need or desire to alter the language of the text they transcribed, raising the level of decorum by inserting more formal constructions. What could have motivated them? Had the personas of such poets as Fujiwara no Teika and Kujō Yoritsune developed in such a way that by the time these transcriptors set to their task it seemed to them (or to those for whom they labored) somehow unfit to leave the text as it was? Whatever the motivation, it remains that we have to alter our understanding of copyists as persons whose primary desire was to transmit texts perfectly, just as they found them.

This is true also when we consider the question of the other two types of variations that were described earlier, the insertion of expository additions and of elements that announce narrative distance. If the Kyōto text is closest to the original record of the *Shingū senka awase*, then we can suggest that later copyists found this original record too spare, and felt permitted to flesh out the account in a way that they believed made the text more comprehensible. Also, perhaps because they themselves were so removed from the actual vocalizations transcribed in the text they were copying, or perhaps because a different sense had developed of the relationship between a recorder of an event and the event itself, we can suggest that later copyists felt uncomfortable with the lack in the original text of such formulas as *to te* and *unnun*, and took it upon themselves to insert them where they felt they should be. In all cases, we find that the

copier of a text seems to have taken a much more active role in determining the *content* of the material he transcribed.

The model of the textual lineage described above does allow, however, for a much different analysis of the Kyōto text's place on the *Shingū senka awase* 'family tree.' Because it dates only to the late 15th century, there is of course the possibility that later copies differ from the Kyōto text not because they are imperfect derivations of it, but because they exist on a different branch (or branches) of the lineage, originating in even earlier texts, ones closer to the original, 'official' record of the poetry contest. In this conception of the contest's transmission, the later texts, despite being less ancient than the Kyōto text, can still be more accurate transcriptions, because it can be suggested that their branch of the textual lineage was more faithfully transcribed. Here the overall importance of the differences between the Kyōto text and the other redactions becomes less, but are still of interest when considering textual transcription as a practice.

The Kyōto text's importance decreases in this conception of events because the associations between poets that it describes cannot be posited as the 'actual,' contemporary state of affairs; it decreases too because its other features – sparser descriptions and lack of narrative distance – no longer represent qualities found in the first official text, but only variations introduced by some later copyist. Yet even if it is the case that it is the other *Shingū senka awase* copies that more faithfully preserve the original record, then it remains to be considered why a later copyist would feel the need to make the language that he encountered *less* formal, why he would make the descriptions and exchanges *less* obviously clear, and why he would want to *remove* markers of narrative distance. Whatever the motivations may have been for this unusual copyist (or continuum of copyists), we find much more here than a single-minded desire for exact reproduction.

There is yet another possibility, one that is not suggested by those models of textual transmission that are commonly encountered in (primarily Japanese) scholarship. This is the possibility that the Kyōto text does not necessarily derive from the sanctioned, official record of the *Shingū senka awase*, the copy that would have circulated among such persons as compilers of imperially-commissioned anthologies, but rather from another copy, essentially similar but significantly different, that was made at more-or-less the same time as the official record. While this would have been made as a record of what was recognized at the time by the contest's sponsors and participants as the central content of the poetry contest – it is after all essentially similar in most respects to other copies – its maker would not necessarily have had to trouble himself with certain niceties of decorum and protocol that likely would have conditioned the final form of the official record.

Some notations found in the larger text that contains the Kyōto-bon manuscript of *Shingū senka awase* offer some tantalizing clues about who might have made the copy of the poetry contest that the Kyōto text ultimately derives from, clues that in turn suggest some interesting possibilities concerning the nature of the differences we find between it and other *Shingū senka awase* copies. The Kyōto manuscript of this poetry contest is not a stand-alone text, but is one of three poetry contests copied out by a single person, probably at the same time, and bound

together into one book.[13] The first notations of interest are found on the reverse of the front flyleaf (前遊紙) of this book: one is a signature (*shomei* 署名), the other a freehand seal (*kaō* 花押), both of which belong to Nakanoin Michikatsu 中院通勝 (1556-1610), a poet and scholar of poetry well known in Japanese literary history for being the teacher of Hosokawa Yūsai 細川幽斎 (1534-1610) and the author of *Mingō nisso* 岷江入楚 (1598), an annotated copy of *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語. Also, on the inside of the rear cover (後表紙見返し) there is a postscript (*shikigo*) written by Nakanoin Michishige 中院通茂 (1631-1710), in which he identifies the copyist of the text contained in the book as Nakanoin Michiyo 中院通世 (1465-1520).

What we have then is a text that was made and owned by the Nakanoin branch of the Murakami Genji 村上源氏, a high-ranking aristocratic house that was prominent in the political and literary circles of the Japanese Court. The eleventh head of this lineage was Michiyo, our copyist; Michikatsu, the person who put his mark of ownership on the text, was Michiyo's great-grandson; Michishige, who noted the provenance of the text lest this information be lost, was in his turn Michikatsu's great-grandson. All of these men were active as poets, and born to a lineage that maintained a reputation for poetic mastery as one of its valuable characteristics, and it is not at all unusual that they should be making and maintaining copies of Go-Toba-era poetry contests.

However, because the Nakanoin derive both as a lineage and as a poetry house from Minamoto no Michichika 源通親 (1149-1202), who was one of the highest-ranking and most active poets who took part in the *Shingū senka awase*, there emerges an extremely appealing possibility: that the later Nakanoin heirs were transmitting a copy of this poetry contest not simply because it was an important *Shinkokin wakashū*-era event, and not simply because their exalted forbearer had been involved, but rather because the record of the event transmitted in the Nakanoin house was based on a first copy *made by Michichika himself*. If this were the case, then all of the patterns of variation described above could be convincingly accounted for: there would be no need for the high-ranking Michichika to couch his record of the discussions that took place between poets in polite language, especially if he knew that his text was only for himself, and would not become part of the official record of the event. There would be no need for him to make the judgments as comprehensible as possible, since for him, having been a participant, the text would have been abundantly clear. Similarly, we would not expect narrative distance, or expressions that explicitly mark text as reported speech, from a recorder who was himself a participant present at the event in question. The value of the Kyōto text would in this instance lie not only in its preservation of a privileged view upon Go-Toba's poetic circle, but also in its ability to destabilize ideas about textual lineages, 'original' copies, and the origin of textual variations.

Unfortunately, as appealing as this notion is, there is nothing like enough evidence to support it. If the Nakanoin text of *Shingū senka awase* – that is, the Kyōto text – truly had its origin in an 'unofficial' record kept by Michichika himself, we would expect it to exist not as one part of a larger book, but as its own fascicle, with a postscript or colophon that made its

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[13] *The first of the three poetry contests is the Sentō jūnin utaawase* 仙洞十人歌合 (9.1200), the second *Shingū senka awase* (3.1201), and the third *Minase sakuranomiya jūgoban utaawase* 水無瀬桜宮十五番歌合 (9.1202).

provenance clear. Or barring this we would expect that all of the three texts included in the larger book would have a similar provenance. Not only does the postscript that we do have make no mention of this (and it surely would), it would in fact not be possible in any event: the third of the poetry contests included in the larger book took place after Michichika's death, and it featured none of Michichika's sons or relatives as participants. On the level of content as well, it is difficult to support the idea of the Kyōto text as representing an 'unofficial' branch of the *Shingū senka awase* textual lineage, one originating in a copy made by Michichika: despite a large number of small variations, and the existence of interesting patterns of difference, the content of the Kyōto text is fundamentally the same as that contained in later copies of this poetry contest. This remains true even when we consider only the judgments, where we would expect a much larger degree of variation between two sets of notes meant to convey the essence of extended spoken exchanges.

Given the essential similarity of the Kyōto text and the other copies, we are forced to return to a more conservative picture of its place in the larger textual transmission of the *Shingū senka awase*. Perhaps the most interesting suggestion that can be made about the Kyōto text's origin in the Nakanoin house is the possibility that this copy, transmitted within a lineage that included a high-ranking participant such as Michichika, by heirs who felt connected to Michichika by ties of both blood and poetry, may bear marks of a certain attitude towards the poets of the past, one taken by those who felt they had a privileged relationship to poetry's history. This is to say that whereas the origins of the Kyōto text may well be in some 'official' copy of the *Shingū senka awase*, the same copy that gave rise to later texts, the first Nakanoin person to make a copy for the family storehouse may have felt it unnecessary or unfitting to maintain some features found in the original from which he worked, given the fact of Michichika's participation and his position among the other poets that took part.

Whatever the case, it remains that the Kyōto text – which appears to be the most accurate, most intelligible surviving copy of the Kamakura Period poetry event it records – not only contains many differences, but is also *different*. The story it tells us about a particular moment in literary history is different, in small but significant ways, than the story we get elsewhere. Famous poets of the period are shown aggressively challenging one another, without some of the decorum that we may have come to expect; decorum that we would associate with this event if we only had the narrative presented in *Shinpen kokka taikan*. Also, the hands through which the record of this poetry event passed, the hands of copyists and printers, seem to have left different marks than we may have come to expect. Yes, there are mistakes and missed lines and other inevitable errors, but there are other indications that later persons felt free to expand, to clarify, and to otherwise make a contribution. Its case illustrates the fact that the lists of variations produced when multiple copies of a single work are compared can tell us more than simply the fact that these copies *are* different: they can support analyses that address the question of *why* they are different, and what this might mean for our understanding of literary history.

We are fortunate that so many copies of *Shingū senka awase* survive. In many, many other cases, we are not nearly as fortunate. If we begin to suspect that the transmitters of texts have had more to do with the content of the works these texts contained, then how do we view the enormous number of works of the pre-modern Japanese literary tradition that survive today in only a single, relatively recent copy? Since our understanding of the people that produced the literature of the pre-modern period, and our sense of the environment in which they did so, is in

fact part of a narrative conveyed to significant degree by such lonely transmissions, it could be that the world we picture is not, in many small but important ways, the world that was.

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