Wixted, John Timothy, "Chinese Influences on the *Kokinshū* Prefaces," in *Kokinshū: A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, Laurel Rasplica Rodd, with the collaboration of Mary Catherine Henkenius, tr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984; rpt. Boston: Cheng and Tsui Company, 1996), pp. 387-400. [古今集の序]

(An abridged version of idem, "The *Kokinshū* Prefaces: Another Perspective," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43.1 (June 1983), pp. 215-238.)

CHINESE INFLUENCES ON THE *KOKINSHŪ* PREFACES

by John Timothy Wixted

In what respects is early Japanese critical theory dependent on Chinese models?[1] Considerable light can be thrown on Japanese literature—at least the Japanese poetic tradition—by delving into this question. Chinese critical theory was adopted by early Japanese critics in such a way that the expressive function of literature was stressed. Chinese critical discourse, sometimes in truncated form, was used to give intellectual legitimization to the unprecedented undertaking of an anthology of poetry in Japanese being compiled by imperial commission. At the same time, much of the critical vocabulary used to characterize Japanese poets, unlike the theory that was propounded, was decidedly non-Chinese in cast.

This essay will discuss the two prefaces to the *Kokinshū* (completed between A.D. 905 and 917),[2] the one in Chinese, the manajo, attributed to Ki no Yoshimochi, the other in Japanese, the kanajo, by Ki no Tsurayuki. In examining the Chinese sources for and influences on these prefaces, one must look to the corpus of Chinese critical opinion familiar to a ninth-century Japanese educated in Chinese. Such works would include the following:

[1] The text of this chapter is a shortened version of an article by the author entitled "The *Kokinshū* Prefaces: Another Perspective," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43.1 (June 1983), pp. 215–38. Please consult that article for considerably fuller bibliographical citation of relevant secondary scholarship, especially Western-language articles, on the texts and themes treated in this chapter.

Discussion of critical theory here follows the terminology devised by M. H. Abrams to distinguish orientations of literary theory. The expressive, pragmatic, mimetic, and objective refer respectively to theories concerned with the artist, the audience, the subject (or universe), and the work itself; see *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (1953; rpt. London, Oxford, New York, 1976), pp. 3–29. (The didactic, although subsumed under the pragmatic, is noted so as to stress that area of pragmatic concern.)

[2] See discussion in the Introduction.

The "Major Preface" to the *Book of Songs*, formerly attributed to Pu Shang, but in more likelihood written by Wei Hung in the first century A.D.
The "Essay on Literature" written by Ts'ao P'i early in the third century
The "Rhymeprose on Literature" by Lu Chi, composed nearly a century later
And a series of works composed in the first half of the sixth century:
Poetry Gradings by Chung Hung. Its three prefaces offer comments on literary theory and outline the history of Chinese poetry; the body contains characterizations and evaluations of more than 120 earlier poets, ranking them according to categories roughly equivalent to A, A−/B+, and B gradings.
The preface to the *Wen hsüan*, or *Literary Selections*, by Hsiao T'ung. It is clear that this anthology was popular in Japan. It contains all the above-mentioned works on criticism, except *Poetry Gradings*.
The preface to the *New Songs from the Tower of Jade*, written by Hsü Ling.

One is tempted to add to this list the greatest work of Chinese criticism, one also written in the sixth century, the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, or *The Heart of Literature: Elaborations*, by Liu Hsieh.[3] However, that work seems to have been overlooked in Japan, just as it was in China for over eight hundred years, even though short passages from it do appear in the *Bunkyō hifuron* (A Literary Mirror: Discussions of Its Secret Store) by Kūkai (774–835).

Critical concepts introduced in the *Kokinshū* prefaces become clearer when explicated in terms of antecedent Chinese models. The Chinese preface opens as follows:

Japanese poetry takes root in the soil of one's heart, and blossoms forth in the forest of words. While a man is in the world, he cannot be inactive. His thoughts and concerns easily shift, his joy and sorrow change in turn. Emotion is born of intent; song takes shape in words. Therefore, when a person is pleased, his voice is happy, and when frustrated, his sighs are sad. He is able to set forth his feelings to express his indignation. To move heaven and earth, to affect the gods and demons, to transform human relations, or to harmonize husband and wife, there is nothing more suitable than Japanese poetry[4]

Poetry is said to find its origin in the heart. The source for this statement is the "Record of Music" chapter of the *Book of Rites*:

Emotion stirs within, then takes form in sound.... Poetry gives words to one's intent. Songs give music to one's voice. Dance gives movement to one's manner, and all three originate from the heart.[5]

In the "Major Preface" to the *Book of Songs*, poetry is described in similar terms:

[3] This work may be more familiar by its translated title, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (Vincent Yu-cheng Shih, tr.), New York 1959.

[4] This and other citations from the Chinese preface to the *Kokinshū* are from the translation by Leonard Grzanka.

[5] Unpublished translation by Donald Gibbs (cited with permission here and elsewhere in this chapter).

Poetry is the outcome of intent. In the mind it is intent; expressed in words, it becomes poetry. Emotion stirs within and forms into words. As the words are inadequate, one sighs them. As the sighing is inadequate, one sings it aloud. As the singing is inadequate, without knowing it, the hands start to dance, and the feet beat in time.[6]

The Chinese preface to the *Kokinshū* combines elements that are pragmatic (poetry can move heaven and earth, affect gods and demons, transform human relations, and harmonize husband and wife), as well as expressive (the poet sets forth his feelings and expresses his excitement). What is stated as simple fact by Ki no Yoshimochi concerning the pragmatic end of literature is presented in a more carefully argued form in the "Major Preface" to the *Book of Songs*. There, as noted above, emotion is said to be expressed in sound: in sighing, humming, and the dancing of hands and feet. Wei Hung develops his argument from this point:

When sounds are accomplished with artistry, they become a theme. The theme heard in a well-ordered time is one of contentment, whereby joy is expressed at the government being in harmony. The theme heard in a disordered time is one of resentment.... The theme heard in a state of ruin is mournful.... Therefore, to give proper recognition to success and failure, to move the powers of Heaven and Earth, to promote responses amongst ghosts and supernatural spirits, there is nothing like poetry.[7]

Here the implication is that a poet responding to external stimuli cannot but reflect those stimuli; he cannot but reflect the environment in his poetry. (It was for this reason that the *Book of Songs* is said to have been collected, as a record or mirroring of the feelings and concerns of the people.) A good environment produces songs of contentment, just as elsewhere in early Chinese critical theory it is stated that the music of a disordered state expresses disaffection and anger.

The further implication, unstated in the "Major Preface," but found in the *Book of Changes*, and beautifully elaborated in the opening chapter of *The Heart of Literature: Elaborations*, "On Tracing the Tao," is that patterned words, i.e. poetry or literature, are a manifestation or correlate of a cosmic Tao (or Way), a correlate that acts in sympathetic harmony, or mutual resonance, with the cosmos. Hence the "Major Preface" states there is nothing like poetry to give proper recognition to success and failure, to move the powers of heaven and earth, and to promote responses among ghosts and supernatural spirits.

[6] Translation by Donald Gibbs, "M. H. Abrams' Four Artistic Co-ordinates Applied to Literary Theory in Early China," *Comparative Literature Today: Theory and Practice*, Proceedings of the 7th Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, Montreal and Ottawa, 1973 (Budapest, 1979), p. 678 (with modifications).

[7] Translation by Donald Gibbs, "M. H. Abrams' Four Artistic Co-ordinates," p. 678.

Chung Hung in the opening section of *Poetry Gradings* presents a similar formula:

> Life-breath (ch'i) moves the external world, and the external world moves us. Our sensibilities, once stirred, manifest themselves in dance and song. This manifestation illumines heaven, earth, and man and makes resplendent the whole of creation.

That is to say, poetry, the extension of song and dance, is a cosmic correlate that reflects and adumbrates the manifold glory of the cosmos.

> Heavenly and earthly spirits depend on it to receive oblation, and ghosts of darkness depend on it for secular reports.

Poetry is said to be an instrument whereby man communes with his two complements in the universe, heaven and earth. He does this by deferentially reflecting their manifold interworkings in his poetry; in so doing, he communicates with the supernatural, just as in the "Great Preface" eulogies are said to be a "means whereby successes are reported to supernatural intelligences."[8] To this, Chung Hung then adds:

> For moving heaven and earth and for stirring ghosts and spirits, there is nothing better than poetry.[9]

Heaven and earth, and the spirits, each in turn, react to literary patternings in sympathetic harmony.

These sources—the "Record of Music," the "Major Preface," the *Book of Changes*, and *Poetry Gradings*—form the background to Ki no Yoshimochi's statement:

> To move heaven and earth, to affect the gods and demons, to transform human relations, or to harmonize husband and wife, there is nothing more suitable than Japanese verse.

Interestingly enough, of the functions of poetry that he enumerates, the latter pair, the transforming of human relationships and the harmonizing of husband and wife, are more indebted to the didactic/pragmatic attitude toward literature found in Confucius' *Analects* than to the "Major Preface." Ki no Tsurayuki in his kana version of the preface adds an interesting twist to the formula:

> It is poetry which, without effort, moves heaven and earth, stirs the feelings of the invisible gods and spirits, smooths the relations of men and women, and calms the hearts of fierce warriors.[10]

[8] Unpublished translation by Donald Gibbs.

[9] Ch'en Yen-chieh, *Shih-p'in chu* (1927; rpts. Peking, 1958, Taipei, 1960), p. 1.

[10] This and other citations from The Japanese Preface are from the translation by Laurel Rasplica Rodd.

The concept that poetry is able to calm fierce warriors' hearts, one might add, is quite un-Chinese.

E. B. Ceadel argues the Chinese preface to the *Kokinshū* was written before and served as the basis for the Japanese preface.[11] Pointing to several passages from Chinese critical sources that appear in the *Kokinshū* prefaces, with but slight modification in the Chinese version and with greater change in the Japanese text, he argues that Tsurayuki wrote the kana version by modifying the manajo text (the latter being the mediator of Chinese critical principles). This view is open to question. Tsurayuki himself wrote a Chinese preface of his own to the *Shinsen wakashū* (*An Anthology of Japanese Poems, Newly Selected*). Although he was not the master in the writing of Chinese prose that Yoshimochi was, it is likely they were both familiar with the same Chinese sources. Moreover, there is one passage in particular that appears in the Japanese preface to the *Kokinshū* (with no counterpart in the Chinese preface) and seems clearly indebted to a Chinese model. I refer to the listing (virtually a litany, in a nonreligious sense) of circumstances under which the anthology's poets are said to have expressed themselves; the opening paragraph in the following passage from the kanajo has its equivalent in the manajo,[12] but not the listing that follows:

> Whenever there were blossoms at dawn in spring or moonlit autumn nights, the generations of sovereigns of old summoned their attendants to compose poetry inspired by these beauties. Sometimes the poet wandered through untraveled places to use the image of the blossoms; sometimes he went to dark unknown wilderness lands to write of the moon. The sovereigns surely read these and distinguished the wise from the foolish.
>
> Not only at such times, but on other occasions as well:
>
> the poet might make comparison to pebbles
> or appeal to his lord by referring to Tsukuba Mountain;
> joy overflowing, his heart might be filled with delight;
> he could compare his smoldering love to the smoke rising from Fuji,
> turn his thoughts to friends when he heard the voice of the pining cricket,
> think of the pine trees of Takasago and Suminoe as having grown up with him,
> recall the olden days of Otoko Mountain,
> or protest the swift passage of the maiden flowers' beauty;
> seeing the blossoms fall on a spring morn, hearing the leaves fall on an autumn evening, he sighed to see the drifts of snow and ripples in the mirror increase with each passing year;
> he was startled to realize the brevity of his life when he saw the dew on the grass or the foam on the waters;
> he who yesterday had prospered lost his influence;

[11] "The Two Prefaces to the Kokinshū," *Asia Major* N.S. 7 (1959), pp. 40–51.

[12] Cf. The Chinese Preface.

falling in the world, he became estranged from those he had loved;
he might invoke the waves on Matsuyama,
dip water from the meadow spring,
gaze upon the underleaves of the autumn bush clover,
count the flutterings of the wings of the snipe at dawn,
or bemoan the sad lengths of the black bamboo;
alluding to the Yoshino River, he complained of the ways of the world of love;
or he might hear that there was no smoke rising from Mount Fuji
or that the Nagara Bridge had been rebuilt—

At such times, it was only through poetry that his heart was soothed.

Each of the circumstances mentioned above refers to a specific poem or group of poems in the *Kokinshū*.[13] There is no such listing by Yoshimochi in the Chinese preface.

Chung Hung in *Poetry Gradings*, after making a somewhat different prefatory statement, had provided a similar listing of circumstances prompting poetic expression:

Vernal breezes and springtime birds, the autumn moon and cicadas in the fall, summer clouds and sultry rains, the winter moon and fierce cold—these are what in the four seasons inspire poetic feeling. At an agreeable banquet, through poetry one can make friendship dearer. When parting, one can put one's chagrin into verse.

When a Ch'u official is banished;
When a Han consort must leave the palace;
When white bones are strewn across the northern plain,
And souls go chasing tumbleweed;
When arms are borne in frontier camps,
And a savage spirit overflows the border;
When the frontier traveler has but thin clothing,
And in the widow's chambers all tears are spent;
When, divested of the ornaments of office, one leaves the court,
Gone, no thought of return;
When by raising an eyebrow a woman wins imperial favor,
And with a second glance topples the state—

These situations all stir the heart and move the soul. If not expressed in poetry, how can such sentiments be presented? If not expanded in song, how can these emotions be vented?[14]

Although Chung Hung's work was not an anthology, each of the situations he describes, beginning with "When a Ch'u official is banished," refers to a specific poet or group of poems that he treats in his critical scheme.[15] What

[13] For references, see footnotes to The Japanese Preface.

[14] *Shih-p'in chu*, pp. 4–5.

[15] For the putative poets being referred to here, see this passage as quoted by J. T. Wixted, "The Nature of Evaluation in the *Shih-p'in* (Gradings of Poets) by Chung Hung (A.D. 469–518)," in *Theories of the Arts in China*, ed. Susan Bush and Christian Murck (Princeton, 1983), sect. IV.

makes this so unmistakably the source of Tsurayuki's list is the latter's tag at the end: "At such times, it was only through poetry that his heart was soothed." He speaks of the same expressive catharsis referred to by Chung Hung at the end of his listing.

Both *Kokinshū* prefaces contain an important passage from the "Major Preface" to the *Book of Songs* which is incomprehensible without discussion of early Chinese critical theory. The excerpt is only slightly reworded in the Japanese preface (with sample poems appended), while being cited virtually verbatim in the Chinese preface:

Japanese verse embodies six principles. The first is the Suasive (feng 風) [principle of the Airs (feng) (of the States) section of the *Book of Songs*], the second is Description (fu 賦), the third is Comparison (pi 比), the fourth is Evocative Image (hsing 興), and the fifth and sixth are the principles exemplified in the Elegantia (ya 雅) and Eulogies (sung 頌) [sections of the *Book of Songs*].

Of the six terms, three refer to aspects or principles of poetry. Hsing, pi, and fu—Evocative Image, Comparison, and Description—are best thought of as specifying three rhetorical modes. Chung Hung in his work expounds succinctly on them:

Poetry has three aspects: Evocative Image (hsing), Comparison (pi), and Description (fu). When meaning lingers on, though writing has come to an end, this is an Evocative Image. When an object is used to express a sentiment, this is Comparison. And when affairs are recorded directly, the objective world being put into words, this is Description. If one expands these three aspects and uses them judiciously, backing them up with lively force and lending them beauty of coloration so that those who read from one's work find it inexhaustible and those who hear it are moved, this is the perfect poetry.

If only Comparison and Evocative Image are used, writing will suffer from density of thought; and when ideas are dense, expression stumbles. If only Description is employed, writing will suffer from superficiality; and when thought is superficial, language becomes diffuse. Further, if one carelessly drifts back and forth among these, his writing will be without anchoring and will suffer from prolixity.[16]

The other three terms—feng, ya, and sung, here translated as the Suasive principle of the "Airs of the States" section and the principles exemplified in the "Elegantia" and "Eulogies" of the *Book of Songs*—had a different import before the writing of the "Major Preface" and are sometimes understood differently by later Chinese critics as well. As they appear in their earliest usage, in the *Rites of Chou*,[17] these terms refer to music, where they differentiate melodic tempos, and by extension, poetic rhythms.[18] In the

[16] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 4.

[17] *Chou li* (Shih-san-ching chu-su ed. [Nanchang, 1815; rpt. Taipei, n.d.]) 23.13a & 18b.

[18] C. H. Wang, *The Bell and the Drum*: Shih Ching *as Formulaic Poetry in an Oral Tradition* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1974), p. 3.

"Major Preface," however, they are used to stress primarily the pragmatic, and secondarily the mimetic, functions of literature. The aim of the Suasive is oblique criticism: "the one who speaks out does so without incriminating himself, and the one who is criticized hears enough to be warned." The Elegantia songs serve the mimetic and didactic purposes of "tell[ing] of the causes for the decay or the rise of the Royal Government." And the Eulogies are also mimetic and pragmatic, for they "are descriptions of flourishing virtue and are the means whereby successes are reported to supernatural intelligences."[19]

If these latter three terms are taken in their original sense of melodic tempos and hence poetic rhythms, all six terms form a nuclear technical vocabulary for poetry—one according with a technical orientation that is objective (or work oriented). Three of the terms, in any case, are so oriented. Alternatively, the other three can be seen to serve more pragmatic/didactic ends—a view which is to be preferred, for that is the way they were traditionally understood.

An attempt at the application of these critical terms was made by Yoshimochi and Tsurayuki. Variously interpreted and inconsistently applied by Chinese commentators to the *Book of Songs*, the terms had become a formula which, being sacrosanct, was invoked for the purposes of legitimizing one's stand. Yoshimochi and Tsurayuki employed them in much the same way.

There is another theme in the *Kokinshū* prefaces that deserves attention because of its Chinese model: the view that it is literature that brings one immortality. As Yoshimochi writes:

> The vulgar contend for profit and fame, and have no need to compose Japanese poetry. How sad! How sad! Although one may be honored by being both a minister and general, and though his wealth may be a bounty of gold and coin, still, before his bones can rot in the dirt, his fame has already disappeared from the world. Only composers of Japanese poetry are recognized by posterity.

The same theme is developed by Tsurayuki in his preface.

The celebrated locus classicus in Chinese criticism for discussion of the immortality of letters is the "Essay on Literature" by Ts'ao P'i (187–226), in which he says:

> Our life must have an end and all our glory, all our joy will end with it. Life and glory last only for a limited time, unlike literature (wen-chang) which endures for ever. That is why ancient authors devoted themselves, body and soul, to ink and brush and set forth their ideas in books. They had no need to have their biographies written by

[19] Unpublished translation by Donald Gibbs.

> good historians or to depend upon the power and influence of the rich and mighty: their fame transmitted itself to posterity.[20]

There are other areas in which comparison between the *Kokinshū* prefaces and antecedent Chinese critical works may be fruitful. One is the general structuring of the works. If one compares the prefaces by Yoshimochi and Tsurayuki with those by Chung Hung, in each of these essays a few general formulations of critical theory are stated, a history of antecedent poetry is outlined, and each (including Chung Hung's first preface) ends with a beautifully worded but rather forced encomium for the reigning Chinese or Japanese sovereign.

Another interesting similarity lies in the nature of the critiques of individual poets. In the *Kokinshū* prefaces, as in Chung Hung's work, writers are given a pedigree that is forced and formulaic: "The poetry of Ono no Komachi is of the school of Princess Sotōri of antiquity,"[21] or "The poetry of Ōtomo no Kuronushi follows that of the Illustrious Sarumaru."[22] This is like Chung Hung's saying that "Hsieh Ling-yün's poetic origins go back to Ts'ao Chih,"[23] or "T'ao Ch'ien's poetry derives from that of Ying Chü."[24]

Furthermore, in both of the *Kokinshū* prefaces and in Chung Hung's *Poetry Gradings*, a writer's style is often first described in a short, terse phrase that is then sometimes followed by a concrete analogy meant to sum up the writer's work. For example, Ono no Komachi's poetry is first said to be "seductive and spiritless";[25] to this is added the analogy that it "is like a sick woman wearing cosmetics." The form of Ōtomo no Kuronushi's poetry is said to be "extremely rustic"; it is "like a field hand resting before flowers."[26] And of Fun'ya on Yasuhide it is said, he "used words skillfully, but the expression does not suit the content. His poetry is like a tradesman attired in elegant robes."[27] Compare Chung Hung's description of Fan Yün and Ch'iu Ch'ih: "Fan Yün's poems are bracingly nimble and smooth-turning, like a flowing breeze swirling snow. Ch'iu Ch'ih's poems are quilted patches charmingly bright, like fallen petals lying on the grass."[28]

Another area of similarity between these works is their authors' penchant

[20] Translation by Donald Holzman, "Literary Criticism in China in the Early Third Century A.D.," *Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques* 28.2 (1974), p. 131.
[21] From the manajo; cf. the kanajo.
[22] From the manajo.
[23] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 17.
[24] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 25.
[25] From the manajo; cf. the kanajo.
[26] From the manajo; cf. the kanajo.
[27] From the kanajo.
[28] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 29.

for setting up a hierarchy of greats. Thus, Tsurayuki calls Hitomaro the "sage of poetry," which is like Chung Hung's terming Ts'ao Chih and Liu Chen "the sages of literature."[29]

Women writers fare poorly in these critical treatises. Speaking of Li Ling and Lady Pan, Chung Hung states that "together they spanned roughly a century; but discounting the [one as a] woman, there was only one poet for the period."[30] When Yoshimochi describes the decline of earlier Japanese poetry, he states pejoratively, "it became half the handmaid of women, and was embarrassing to present before gentlemen." And Tsurayuki says of Ono no Komachi, "Her poetry is like a noble lady who is suffering from a sickness, but the weakness is natural to a woman's poetry."

It had been common in the Chinese critical tradition to make the "fruit" (or substance) of literature stand in opposition to its "flower" (or beauty of expression). Yoshimochi adopted the terminology whole, using it to decry the decline of poetry after Hitomaro, "who was unrivaled in ancient and modern times":

> Then when the times shifted into decline and men revered the lustful, frivolous words arose like clouds, and a current of ostentatiousness bubbled up like a spring. The fruit had all fallen and only the flower bloomed.

The idea of decline (especially in recent times) from some antique ideal is a pervasive one in Chinese thought. It had been used by Chung Hung,[31] and is echoed in the *Kokinshū* prefaces. In the following passage, Tsurayuki uses somewhat different language to couch the thought expressed above by Yoshimochi:

> Nowadays because people are concerned with gorgeous appearances and their hearts admire ostentation, poems poor in content and related only to the circumstances of their composition have appeared.

The critical orientations of the *Kokinshū* prefaces differ in emphasis. Yoshimochi's Chinese preface is more explicitly pragmatic than is Tsurayuki's kana piece. Both prefaces supply a similar listing of the pragmatic functions of poetry (those of moving heaven and earth, transforming human relations, etc.), and both prefaces state that it is through poetry that the feelings of sovereign and subject can be seen, the qualities of virtue and stupidity distinguished, and so forth. But Yoshimochi has an additional passage unparalleled in the Japanese preface. He says approvingly of the poems of high antiquity: "They had yet to become amusements of the eye and ear, serving only as sources of moral edification."

[29] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 8.
[30] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 2.
[31] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 5.

More significantly, there is no counterpart in the Chinese preface to Tsurayuki's list of the circumstances which give occasion to the writing of poetry in general and which, in fact, gave rise to specific *Kokinshū* poems. The expressive orientation of the Japanese preface is explicit here;[32] when Tsurayuki delineates pragmatic ends, he does so more to illustrate poetry's hallowed origins than to prescribe its goals.

Both authors supply additional kindred statements about the expressive nature of poetry. Yoshimochi says of Japanese verse:

> It is like an oriole in spring warbling among the flowers, or like a cicada in autumn humming high in a tree. Though they are neither harassed nor disturbed, each one puts forth its song. That all things have a song is a principle of nature.

And there are the similar opening words of Tsurayuki's preface:

> The seeds of Japanese poetry lie in the human heart and grow into leaves of ten thousand words. Many things happen to the people of this world, and all that they think and feel is given expression in description of things they see and hear. When we hear the warbling of the mountain thrush in the blossoms or the voice of the frog in the water, we know every living being has its song.

But the expressive orientation of Tsurayuki's view is underscored by other passages of a sort which do not appear in the Chinese preface. After ascribing the beginning of thirty-one syllable verse to Susano-o no mikoto, he remarks:

> Since then many poems have been composed when people were attracted by the blossoms or admired the birds, when they were moved by the haze or regretted the swift passage of the dew, and both inspiration and forms of expression have become diverse.

And Tsurayuki says of the poems being anthologized:

> We have chosen poems on wearing garlands of plum blossoms, poems on hearing the nightingale, on breaking off branches of autumn leaves, on seeing the snow. We have also chosen poems on wishing one's lord the lifespan of the crane and tortoise, on congratulating someone, on yearning for one's wife when one sees the autumn bush

[32] Although inspired by the example of the *Shih-p'in*, Tsurayuki's list differs from its model in that it omits reference to the *Analects* quotation (17/8) which immediately follows the long passage by Chung Hung cited above: "Poetry teaches the art of sociability; it shows how to regulate feelings of resentment" (translation by James Legge, *Confucian Analects*, in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 1 [rev. ed. Oxford, 1893; rpt. Hong Kong, 1960], p. 323). The *Analects* citation modifies the expressive thrust of the original statement by Chung Hung.

Both Tsurayuki and Chung Hung couch their arguments in terms of the affective (and hence pragmatic) benefit that the expression of feeling has on the one giving such expression. Thus, both speak of poetry in terms which are genetic (i.e. the occasions that prompt it) and affective (i.e. the effect at least on the author), as well as expressive.

clover or the grasses of summer, on offering prayer strips on Ōsaka Hill, on seeing someone off on a journey, and on miscellaneous topics that cannot be categorized by season.

What one should note in reference to these two passages, as well as the important list cited earlier, is that the writing of poetry is linked to an occasion. This suggests much about Japanese attitudes toward the social function of poetry. An occasion which initially may have prompted poetry of an expressive nature became a *de rigueur* demand for versification serving the more pragmatic end of social display. Notwithstanding the development of this tendency in the Japanese poetic tradition, it is important to keep in mind that Tsurayuki's words came to be taken as the classic statement legitimizing the expressive nature of poetry. The earliest critical statement written in Japanese, the kanajo later served as the revered source for this view of poetry.

If Tsurayuki's approach is more obviously expressive, Yoshimochi's is more subtly or circuitously so. One can point to the fact that Yoshimochi makes more references to the pragmatic ends (including the didactic) of literature, or that he offers no counterpart to Tsurayuki's list of occasions that prompt poetic expression, but Yoshimochi, like Tsurayuki, was writing a statement to introduce and justify an anthology of poetry written in Japanese—not poetry written by Japanese in Chinese, as had been the vogue.

A preface like the manajo, written in Chinese out of regard for the custom in Japan of writing prefaces to important works in that language, could scarcely avoid the accrued referential baggage of classical Chinese. Its argument is couched in terms of Chinese cultural values; Yoshimochi says all the right things about the nature and function of poetry, as he understood the Chinese critical tradition. But for which poets does he express the highest admiration in his preface? They are Hitomaro and Akahito,[33] authors said to be without peer in all poetic history. Their work scarcely embodies the pragmatic ends of literature repeatedly paid lip service in the manajo.

And what of Yoshimochi's discussion of poets of modern times? He echoes a Chinese view of history: alas! poetry has fallen from an earlier ideal state. Yoshimochi enumerates poets' strengths and weaknesses in pithy fashion, but, interestingly enough, not in terms of the abstract normative statements about the nature and functions of poetry made elsewhere in his preface. Bunrin, Ono no Komachi, and Ōtomo no Kuronushi, he says, are among the few who understand the poetry of the past. They may not be perfect, but they are acceptable.

[33] There is some question as to whether the inclusion of Akahito here is a later interpolation. See notes to The Chinese Preface.

Although Yoshimochi earnestly repeats Chinese views (be they of literature or of the nature of things), in the final analysis the message behind his words is that Japanese poetry not only has its sages, but a few greats as well. All of them partake in the immortality that goes with outstanding writing. Ultimately, the Chinese preface is an exercise in verbal bowing to venerable Chinese concepts, and a polite statement of collective self-deprecation for imperfect, yet immortal, Japanese verse. The message is clear: "Only composers of Japanese poetry are recognized by posterity.... Alas! Hitomaro has died! But is not the art of Japanese poetry contained here?"

In terms of critical theory, the expressive elements of literature are stressed in Japan, the pragmatic/didactic elements being given a place that is definitely secondary. Chinese theorists of the third through sixth centuries who were seriously interested in literature, such as Ts'ao P'i, Lu Chi, Chung Hung, and Liu Hsieh, were far more concerned with grounding that interest in a theoretical framework that encompassed the universe and legitimized a pursuit that still seemed to serious-minded men perilously close to being frivolous. The backdrop to all Chinese consideration of literature, from earliest times until today, has been the primacy of its pragmatic ends. In contrast with this, the *Kokinshū* prefaces, especially the Japanese preface, while paying homage to pragmatic ends, pointed the direction to a more expressively oriented literature. These in turn became the classic earliest source for later Japanese views of poetry. With such a venerable authority as the Japanese preface behind them—its recondite Chinese references misunderstood or ignored—later Japanese writers and theorists (unlike their Chinese counterparts) were spared having to concern themselves with justifying the expressive/lyrical function of literature. This has had profound implication for the later course of Japanese literature.

Notwithstanding their borrowings from Chinese models, the *Kokinshū* prefaces have a remarkable integrity of their own. The creative part of the Japanese transformation of the Chinese critical tradition, however, lies in the area of a different sensibility, a different way of looking at the world, which is reflected in the ways critical views are expressed in concrete language.

One example is the analogies devised by Yoshimochi and Tsurayuki to embody, as it were, the work of the writers they were commenting upon. It is curious how little overlap there is with the Chinese tradition in this regard. Chung Hung, for example, quotes with approval the characterization of two writers: "Hsieh Ling-yün's poetry is like lotus flowers coming out of the water; Yen Yen-chih's is like a mix of colors with inlays of gold."[34] Yoshimochi, on the other hand, could say of Ōtomo no Kuronushi's poetry that it "is like a field hand resting before flowers." And Tsurayuki said of the

[34] *Shih-p'in chu*, p. 26.

same poet's songs: "they are like a mountaineer with a bundle of firewood on his back resting in the shade of the blossoms."[35] There are simply no similar analogies used in earlier Chinese criticism. And few earlier Chinese metaphors characterizing writing are adopted by the Japanese, even in the Chinese-language preface by Yoshimochi. The same difference in sensibility is apparent in the lists of contrastive examples used by Tsurayuki and Chung Hung to make concrete the circumstances or occasions that prompt poetic composition.

In sum, one can say there is no new critical theory in the *Kokinshū* prefaces; it is all based on Chinese models, but with an emphasis that highlights the expressive function of literature. Fundamentally, Chinese critical discourse is used to legitimize in intellectual terms the compilation of an imperially sponsored anthology of poetry in Japanese. At the same time, the concrete vocabulary used to characterize Japanese verse is decidedly non-Chinese in cast—a subject one might delve into, the better to understand the contrast between Chinese and Japanese perceptions of both the written word and the world.

[35] Note the two additional examples cited above.