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Once Again About the "Miraculous Power of *Waka*": *Setsuwa* Tales About Poets in the *Jikkinshō*

N.N. TRUBNIKOVA

Abstract. The article deals with the approach to the interpretation of Japanese *waka* poetry presented in the *Jikkinshō* collection of *setsuwa* tales (mid-13th century). The conception of *waka* in this text proceeds from the words about the miraculous power of poetry in Ki no Tsurayuki's preface to the *Kokinshū* anthology (early 10th century). On many examples from the life of Heian poets, the compiler of the *Jikkinshō* discusses the role of poetry in such spheres as human communication and shintō worship. The compiler examines the relation between various "ways" of realizing one's talent (*waka* and *kanshi* poetry, music, etc). He demonstrates the usefulness of poetic skills in private and public life, the importance of the ability to understand other people's poetical works and evaluate them judiciously. Relevance and compliance with current circumstances turn out to be the main condition for success in everything that concerns *waka*, as well as in other worldly affairs.

Keywords: Japanese philosophy, *setsuwa* tales, *Jikkinshō*, Buddhism, Confucianism, *waka* poetry.

In this article, I would like to return to the topic of *katoku* (歌徳), or the miraculous power of Japanese *waka* songs, as it is portrayed in collections of *setsuwa* didactic tales. In my previous article, I discussed the Buddhist view of the *waka* poetry in the *Shasekishū* (沙石集, "Sand and Pebbles", 1279–1283) [Trubnikova 2013], [1] and now I am going to discuss another

[1] See Russian translation in [Muju Ichien (without date)].

approach to interpreting the "native songs", which can be named secular and, provisionally, Confucian. I will focus on the *Jikkinshō* (十訓抄, "Ten Maxims", 1252)[2] – an earlier text, which, probably, had some influence on Muju Ichien, the compiler of the *Shasekishū*.[3] Many tales about poets coincide in the two collections.[4] However, all of these can be found in other monuments as well. As is generally the case with *setsuwa* collections, it is usually impossible to determine the source of a particular tale (one can only say in which of the texts available to us it appears for the first time).

Following the division of *setsuwa* collections into religious and secular ones, which is common for many academic works if not exactly strict,[5] the *Shasekishū* undoubtedly belongs to the former group, while the *Jikkinshō* can be attributed to the latter. Compared to the *Shasekishū*, the *Jikkinshō* refers to the books of the Buddhist canon less frequently,[6] while it has more quotations from the Chinese classics, works by Chinese historians and poets,[7] as well as monuments of Japanese literature, including chronicles, poetic collections, *monogatari* tales, etc.

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[2] I use the following edition: [Jikkinshō 1997]. Available also at: http://yatanavi.org/text/jikkinsho/index.html. (accessed: 10 December 2019). On the history of this compilation and the approaches to its study see: [Trubnikova 2015a].

[3] The *Jikkinshō* is not mentioned in the *Shasekishū*, but, generally speaking, among all the *setsuwa* collections, Muju Ichien mentions only one, the *Hosshinshū* ("Collection on the Awakening of the Heart", early 13th century, composed by Kamo no Chomei), though, most likely, he was familiar with other collections. I have no knowledge of works that compare the *Jikkinshō* and the *Shasekishū* in general. For comparison by one of the topics see, for example, the following article: [Hirakawa 2006].

[4] The *Jikkinshō* and the *Shasekishū* are comparable by volume. The number of tales in the *Jikkinshō* is 282, and it is 152 in the *Shasekishū.* In both cases, the number is provisional, as the division of each of the collections into tales differs in various manuscripts and editions. As a rule, in the *Jikkinshō*, one "tale" is one story, while in the *Shasekishū*, a "tale" with a subtitle often contains several stories, each of which can be considered a *setsuwa* tale. According to [*Jikkinshō* 1997], 15 tales from the *Jikkinshō* found their way into the *Shasekishū*, and all of these are about poets.

[5] About the classification of the setsuwa collections and their relation to other genres see: [Sviridov 1981, p. 7–51; Konishi 1991, p. 117–136, 314–331; Li 2009, p. 14–30; Eubanks 2011, p. 62–96].

[6] The list of Buddhist sources of the *Shasekishū* includes more than a hundred texts, while, in the case of the *Jikkinshō*, there are only twelve. Most frequently, both books quote the "Lotus Sutra" (*Hokke-kyō*) – there are 29 quotations in the Shasekishū and 11 in the *Jikkinshō* (the numbers are according to my commentaries to the translations of both compilations; other approaches to determining quotations could produce other results, but I believe that the ratio would remain approximately the same).

[7] For example, the "Analects" by Confucius are quoted four times in the *Shasekishū* and 11 times in the *Jikkinshō*; the "Records of the Grand Historian" by Sima Qian are quoted six times in the *Shasekishū* and 29 times in the *Jikkinshō*.

The two collections' goals, stated in their respective prefaces and afterwords, also differ. In the *Shasekishū*, the main goal is to show that the "Way of the Buddha" can be threaded differently: "There is not just one method for entering the Way, the causes and conditions for enlightenment being many. Once a person understands their general significance, he will see that the purport of the various teachings does not vary. And when he puts them into practice, he will find that the goal of the myriad religious exercises is the same." [Morrell 1985, p. 70–71]. Bidding farewell to his readers, Muju Ichien writes: "If a person reads these stories… he will see people who appreciated the profound intentions of the gods, trusted in the encompassing grace of the Buddhas, respected the exalted virtues of men of religious conviction, learned from the honesty and simplicity of householders, understood the operation of moral causation, discriminated between the wise and the foolish, became aware of the marvelous goal of the various doctrines, and entered the blessed path of the anchorite." [Morrell 1985, p. 266]. Among other ways to liberation, the "way of native songs" is the best for a beginner: the *waka* songs help both a poet and merely an admirer of poetry to proceed from an active life to one of contemplation, and after it is done, it is no great difficulty to master the Buddhist teaching.

The goals stated by the compiler of the "Ten Maxims" are different: "In this world people differ greatly, having a huge variety of interests, but there is one thing that all have in common, whether they are mighty or humble: the wise gain much and the foolish lose much. […] This is meant to be a help for the formation of good character in young people who have not yet had proper instruction of this type." The author almost does not speak of liberation, be it during one's life or in the afterlife, or of "entering the blessed path of the anchorite", focusing instead on life in this world, among people [Brownlee 1974, p. 133]. Here, one's fate after death is not so much rebirth in a new human or animal body, in hell or in the paradise of the Pure Land, but rather fame in the memory of descendants: "Since their bodies lie moldering beneath the moss, and only their names remain on record, one cannot help but feel sad when thinking of them." [Brownlee 1974, p. 161]. In this sense, the entire *Jikkinshō* collection can be viewed as a book not only about how to live a happy life, but also about how to leave good memory after oneself. Many ways lead to this purpose: the *setsuwa* tales speak of people who are kind, patient, persevering in their studies, faithful in friendship and in love, loyal to their master, witty in society, valiant in war, and, of course, of poets, musicians,

dancers, artists, and all those who in some way revealed talents inherited from one's ancestors and knowledge received from one's teachers. In the *Shasekishū*, Muju Ichien mainly addresses mature people, who have already understood that life is short and, therefore, it is time to focus on the important. Meanwhile, the target audience of the *Jikkinshō* are young people, who are still searching for their way in life.

Despite all the differences of the two collections, there are also noteworthy similarities. For instance, in the prefaces, both Muju Ichien and the compiler of the *Jikkinshō* mention the *kyōgen kigo* (狂言綺語, illusory words and florid language). In both cases, this unflattering definition refers to *setsuwa* tales, but, originally, in the writings of Bo Juyi (772–846), it meant secular poetry as compared to righteous Buddhist literature [Trubnikova 2013, p. 293–297]. Besides, both prefaces contain the word *moshiogusa*, which dates back to ancient Japanese poetry of the *Man'yōshū* (万葉集, "Collection of Ten Thousand Generations", 8th century). This is "seaweed by burning which salt is made", and the compilers use the word *moshiogusa* to refer to the material with which they work and which they offer to the reader. From the plethora of worldly tales, old legends and other stories, one is to extract the "salt", a certain didactic meaning – which is what makes these stories the *setsuwa* tales they are. Hence, the connection of the tradition of collecting didactic tales with the poetic traditions of China and Japan turns out to be a defining feature of both collections.

Both in the *Shasekishū* and in the *Jikkinshō*, the *waka* songs are to be found across the entirety of the text. In the *Jikkinshō*, out of 282 tales, there are songs in 104, while the total number of songs is 138.[8] In the *Shasekishū*, out of 152 tales, songs are included in 25, and there 112 songs in total.[9] The distribution of songs in the *Shasekishū* is less uniform: most of the *waka* are placed in scroll Vb,[10] which is devoted to poets and where a single tale sometimes contains up to two dozens of songs. Some scrolls of the *Shasekishū* contain no songs at all, while the *Jikkinshō* has songs in each of the ten chapters.

[8] Not counting the songs from which only one line is quoted. Besides, in 65 stories of the *Jikkinshō* there are Chinese poems composed both by Chinese and Japanese poets (88 poetic fragments in total).

[9] There are ten stories with poems and 20 poetic fragments (including the repetition of several poems from the Buddhist canon, which are particularly important to Muju Ichien).

[10] Here and elsewhere, the references to the collections are given according to the following system. When referring to the *Shasekishū*, a Roman numeral denotes the scroll, and an Arabic numeral denotes the number of the tale; scrolls V and X have two parts each: "a" and "b". When referring to the *Jikkinshō*, Arabic numerals denote the number of the chapter and the number of the tale in it.

The selection of songs in the two collections differs substantially. In the *Shasekishū*, Muju Ichien includes several *waka* of his own authorship, both pious and joking, as well as songs by his acquaintances, songs by unknown authors, songs by poets of the Eastern lands, who gained fame in Kamakura and its surroundings, but not in the capital. Together with *tanka* pentastichs, the *Shasekishū* contains "songs following the examples of the *Man'yōshū*" – Muju calls so all songs in the Japanese language which do not fit the *tanka* form. A whole tale (Vb-7) is devoted to the *renga*, or "song chains". Here, this word denotes such a way of composition, wherein three lines of the pentastich are composed by one poet, and two – by another (chains consisting of a larger number of tristichs and distichs are not mentioned). As for the *Jikkinshō*, the *waka* contained in this collection are exclusively the time-tested *tanka* composed by famous poets of the Heian era and included in anthologies, from the *Kokinshū* (古今集, "Collection of Old and New Songs", 905) and up to the *Shinkokinshū* (新古今集, "New Collection of Old and New Songs", 1205/1210). Several songs in the *Jikkinshō* are taken from "The Tales of Ise", "The Tale of Genji" and other Heian-era *monogatari*. Incidentally, the gentleman from the *Ise Monogatari* is confidently identified as poet Ariwara no Narihira, and about Prince Genji the author says that though he is a fictional character, his songs are brilliant (tale 6–14), which means that he can be put on par with real poets.

As a rule, songs are introduced in the text of the *setsuwa* in two ways. First, a song can be included in the part of the tale where its "moral" is expressed, it can support the narrator's conclusions or argue with them. Second, a song can be a part of action: when, following the plot, in some circumstances a certain character makes a song by themselves or quotes another person's one – receiving the response to it in the form of a song or some other reaction from other people. To the second type belong the "stories about the virtuous power of songs", *katoku setsuwa*, where the response to the song not merely concludes the action ("all who heard it were wiping their tears", etc.), but develops it further, in a certain way changing the life of the poet, the listener, or the reader. The *katoku setsuwa* are present in both collections (as they are, generally speaking, in most collections of didactic tales). In the *Shasekishū*, such tales describe how gods answer poets and fulfill their wishes (V6-1); the dead use songs to communicate with the living (V6-5); in response to a song, a criminal receives forgiveness, a simple fisher girl gets married to a nobleman, the emperor frees a villager from taxes, unfaithful husbands return to their wives, and students – to

their teachers (V6-2, VII-1). In all these cases, a *waka* song acts like an incantation of a sort. In Tale Va-12, Muju Ichien argues that songs are, essentially, the "true words", mantras, only composed not in Sanskrit, but in the Japanese language [Trubnikova 2013, p. 299–303].

Similar tales can be found in the *Jikkinshō* as well. In the ten chapters of the collection, among the examples of each of the ten discussed virtues and vices, there are tales with songs. I will give the titles of the chapters and summarize some of the stories from them.

1. "Some Rules for a Chaste Mind and Virtuous Conduct". Before her death, Empress Teishi (977–1001) left in her quarters a note with a farewell song about love, and the emperor found bitter consolation in her words (1–11). Fujiwara no Ietaka (1158–1237), when the regent himself asked him who the best poet currently was, took from within his robe a sheet of paper with a song – not his, but that of his competitor, Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241). This act speaks not only of magnanimity, but also of foresight, as Ietaka was carrying the sheet with him (1–36).

2. "Being Without Pride". Since her younger years, the proud beauty Ono no Komachi (ca. 825–900) dreamed of becoming the emperor's concubine, but eventually remained single, wrote a song about "floating grass without roots" and married an old acquaintance of hers, also a poet (2–4).

3. "On Not Despising Humanity". Female poet Koshikibu no naishi (d. 1025) entered palatial service as a girl. A young courtier was mocking her, but she made an excellent song, and the mocker was put to shame (3–1). Similarly, a young poet Ooe no Masafusa (1041–1111), when court ladies were haughtily making fun of him, responded with an exquisite and witty song, and since then he became respected (3–2).

4. "On Talking About People: A Caution". At a poetic meeting, a famous poet Fujiwara no Kinto (966–1041) heard the line: "Spring receded on the twenty-ninth day", and noted that the last month of spring has, in fact, thirty days. After these seemingly innocent words, the author of the song became deeply distressed, fell ill and died (4–17).[11]

5. "Choosing Friends". The former mentor of the crown prince was leaving for a new place of service in the provinces. Bidding farewell to him, the prince composed both a Chinese *kanshi* poem and a *waka* song. In the poem, he wished his mentor success, and in the song he asked: – If you do not forget me, look at the moon – the sky above us will be one and

[11] The same story is provided in the *Shasekishū* (Vb-6) as an example of extreme faithfulness to the "way of songs" and fatal passion for poetry. Unlike the *Jikkinshō*, Muju Ichien focuses not on the careless critic, but on the deceased poet.

the same.[12] This way, he made himself equal with his teacher as a friend, though the prince was higher by status, and the teacher was his senior in terms of age and experience (5–3).[13]

6. "On Loyalty and Devotion". When a master dies, the ones who served him loyally do not remain to serve his heirs, but compose farewell songs and become monks (6–8, 6–9, 6–10), or die (6–13). Notably, "straightforwardness", namely the readiness to contradict one's master when he is mistaken, is expressed not in *waka* songs, but in *kanshi* poems.

7. "On the Primacy of Discretion". Emperor Murakami (926–967, r. 946–967) sent several ladies the same song that sounded like a confession of love, and the ladies replied with gentle songs. Only one of the ladies, the real beloved of the sovereign, understood that the song was a *kutsukaburi* riddle in which a request to send incense was hidden, which the lady did (7–8).[14]

8. "Enduring Things". A husband brought home a new wife and had the old one live in the same house behind a screen. Once, in autumn, upon hearing a deer bellow, the husband called for the previous wife, and she responded with a song – without reproach, but with love – after which the husband returned to her (8–7).[15]

9. "Giving Up Desirable Things". Poet Kamo no Chōmei (1154–1216) came from a priestly family, but was not appointed a priest, became an hermit monk and, even if he regretted his lot, did not complain: when he was invited to participate in the compilation of the *Shinkokinshū*, he refused, but expressed his refusal with a song (9–7) [Kamo no Chōmei 2015, p. 36–37].

I will discuss the tenth chapter of the *Jikkinshō* in more detail, as it is here that the explanation of how the *waka* songs act and what constitutes their power is elaborated. In my opinion, summing up the above-stated examples, one can say that the general direction of the *katoku setsuwa* here is somewhat different than in the *Shasekishū*. The latter speaks about the miraculous power of songs as such, while the former – about the qualities

[12] *Translator's note:* here and elsewhere, unless otherwise specified, the translations from the Japanese texts are rendered from the Russian version of the article.

[13] The prince is the future Emperor Gosanjo (1034–1073, r. 1068–1073); the song and the tale about it can be found in the *Shinkokinshū* (No. 877). See: [Trubnikova 2015b].

[14] On riddle songs see: [Toropygina 2016]. In the *Jikkinshō*, another riddle connected to a song is given in Tale 7–6, where a tanka pentastich is written in kanji cipher.

[15] The story dates back to the *Yamato Monogatari* ("The Tales of Yamato", 158) and is included in the *Konjaku Monogatarishū* ("Collection of Tales from the Past", 12th century, Chapter 30, Tale 2), the *Shasekishū*, and other monuments. The song is also to be found in the *Shinkokinshū* (No. 1372).

of a person which can be realized through a song or in some other way, but it is these qualities that act upon people. The qualities themselves are usual, not "miraculous", and they can be good or bad. The song only allows to express them, heightens the probability of other people responding – and sometimes, in its efficiency, this method approaches a "miracle".

The list of virtues discussed in the first nine chapters of the *Jikkinshō* does not match exactly any of the schemes found in Japanese religious and philosophical traditions. It can be compared both to the ten Buddhist commandments and to the teachings of ancient Chinese sages [Trubnikova 2016b]. In some chapters, the narrator speaks like a Confucian: this is particularly so in the cases of "fidelity and rectitude" and, closely related to these, "filial piety" (Chapter 6) [Trubnikova 2016a], as well as of the choice of appropriate friends with whom a person becomes better (Chapter 3) [Trubnikova 2015b]. In all chapters of the *Jikkinshō*, one can trace other prescriptions which, I believe, can also be called Confucian. A person should exactly understand their place in the general hierarchy, follow their duty to their seniors and juniors. At the same time, the young reader of the *Jikkinshō* must learn to see the hierarchy as a whole and not to neglect anyone. Here, the examples to emulate are not only charitable Buddhist ascetics, for whom all people are equal, but also wise Confucian strategists, for whom people are different and everyone fits some purpose. The general rules of behavior are important, but what is much more important is the ability to act according to the situation, to use not only people, with their abilities and inclinations, but also circumstances, with their possible benefits and dangers. The worst thing that people do for themselves, for their close ones, and sometimes for the entire country, happens when they forget where they are and whom they are dealing with, when they act in an inappropriate and untimely manner.[16] In order to act according to the situation every time, one must develop "sensitivity" and "insight", learn to grasp hints, hear not only direct, but also implied

[16] The *Shasekishū* interprets the key idea of Confucianism in a similar way. For instance, in the story III-7, Confucius, when talking to the ruler of the state of Lu, speaks about people who "forgot themselves". Such were the last sovereigns of the Xia and Yin dynasties, who wallowed in vices and doomed their kingdoms. The disaster consisted not in their forgetting about their subjects' needs, but in their ceasing to realize their own position in the world, to comprehend what it means to be human and a king (the story goes back to the *Kongzi Jiayu*, "The School Sayings of Confucius", 3rd century AD). From this, Muju Ichien draws the following conclusion: we must not forget that we are mortal and subject to the law of retribution, for all woes stem from forgetting these main conditions of human existence. The *Jikkinshō* speaks mainly about the more concrete conditions in which a person acts, about the importance of not abandoning the ties of family, service, friendship, and other roles.

meaning in the words of others (and oneself). And in order to learn to "read between the lines", to understand the implications and context, the study of poetry, both Japanese and Chinese, is especially useful (Chapter 1 in particular says a lot about this) [Trubnikova 2017].

The title of the concluding and the largest chapter of the *Jikkinshō* is "On the Necessity of Artistic Talent and Accomplishment" (才芸を庶幾すべき事, *saigei o shoki subeki koto*, 79 tales). Here, once again, one can trace the influence of Confucian thought: a sage understands oneself, knows their abilities and develops them, and also discerns and values talents in other people. Ultimately, the best community is the one that singles out the gifted and relegates to each one the tasks with which they can cope better than others.[17] In the introduction to Chapter 10, the compiler of the collection writes:

> Unfortunately some of those born into the houses neglect the art and do not try to carry on the line; they should work hard to continue the tradition. As for the outsiders, they should realize that it is possible to attain the ultimate of perfection in the arts, so they should work hard to accomplish themselves. When people who are talented in the arts are mixed together in the ordinary affairs of life with those who are untalented, the difference between them is hardly noticeable. But when the talented are called upon to perform or even when they enjoy themselves at informal gatherings, they immediately come to the fore, doing everything well. The difference between the talented and the untalented becomes as obvious as the difference between the clouds in the sky and the mud-holes in the ground. They never fail to win admiration.
>
> When you place a handsome and high-born person with little talent beside a humble but talented person, the handsome face and lofty manner always appear inferior. There is an analogy in the case of the evergreen tree beside the spring blossoms. At first sight, the blossom is incomparably more colorful, but when spring is over and the mountain storms have come and gone there remains only the green of the tree. The transitory fragrance of the flower is gone. So it is said, 'The peach and the damson are the glories of but a single morning; the pine stands upright forever.'

[17] At the same time, it is not important whether the state has formally adopted the principle of meritocracy, whether civil service examinations are held, etc. On the Confucian "knowledge of people", the ability to discern others' talents and find use for them see: [Malyavin 2007, p. 241–259].

> [...] Ours is a changing world which has been going steadily downhill for a long time now. This is true of the arts too. Indeed, it is hard to be as accomplished as one's forefathers; it is like blue trying to be bluer than indigo.[18] Nevertheless it is a shame that they do not try to continue the ancestral arts in the same way as before, even in form alone[19] [Bronwnlee 1974, p. 158].

The first two tales of this chapter are about sons who were or were not inferior to their fathers in terms of gifts. Both examples deal with the "way" of Chinese literature, i.e. composing *kanshi* poetry. After that, an old custom is described: when emperors were resting by the waterside together with their subjects, authors of songs were seated in one boat, poets in another, and musicians in a third one, and thus each of these "ways" performed their own art. After such a festivity, Fujiwara no Kinto (see above, Tale 4–17) once belatedly regretted that, when asked to choose the boat, he joined the *waka* poets. He should have joined the authors of *kanshi*, as, on the way of songs, Kinto's fame was already great, and, on the way of poetry, it still had somewhere to grow (10–3). In old times, there also used to be such talented people as Minamoto no Tsunenobu (1016–1097). He could freely choose any of the three boats, and even when he was sitting with the musicians, his still composed both a poem and a song afterwards (10–4). In this way, the list of the three main "ways" is defined: *waka*, *kanshi*, and music.

Unlike Muju Ichien, the composer of the *Jikkinshō* does not offer his own particular theory of poetry. Discussing songs, poems, and other arts, he follows the plan set forth in the Kana Preface to the *Kokinshū* by Ki no Tsurayuki:

> ちからをもいれずしてあめつちをうごかし、めに見えぬおに神をもあはれとおもはせ、をとこをむなのなかをもやはらげ、たけきもののふの心をもなぐさむるは、うたなり.
>
> It is song that moves heaven and earth without effort, stirs emotions in the invisible spirits and gods, brings harmony to the relations between men and women, and calms the hearts of fierce warriors. [Kokin Wakashū 1985, p. 3].

By the time of compilation of the *Jikkinshō*, these lines had given birth to a whole tradition of interpretations. The Preface had already become the basis for Japanese poetological theory [Dyakonova 2016]. The author of the *Jikkinshō* links the words by Tsurayuki not only to *waka* songs,

[18] Cf. *Xunzi* 1–1.

[19] Cf. *Liezi* 5–15

but also to *kanshi* poems, music, and all arts in general. In this way, he emphasizes that, essentially, all "ways" are the same and, to a degree, interchangeable: whatever way a person chooses, they can employ their talents in it to their own and others' benefit.

The author begins his discussion about songs by analyzing cases when they should be composed. One of such important cases is the emperor's pilgrimage together with his courtiers to the Sumiyoshi shrine near the Naniwa Bay, as the local god patronizes not only sailors, but also poets [Toropygina 2013]. In Tale 10–5, Minamoto no Tsunenobu (cf. Tale 10–4) made a song in Sumiyoshi, everybody praised it, and he recalled another song about Sumiyoshi – one composed by Oshikochi no Mitsune at the turn of the 10th century and included in the *Kokinshū*. Tsunenobu humbly says that, at a feast, Mitsune's song would sit on the honorable place of a minister, but his would probably sit near the gates, among the servants of his entourage. His interlocutor, Minamoto no Toshiyori (1055–1129), replies: no, yours should be seated in the place of a senior counselor (*dainagon*), only slightly lower than a minister. Here we have one more "way", not yet clearly distinguished from the "way of native songs", but still special. This is the way of poetic criticism. One can see the importance of correct and considerate judgement about poetry just from Tale 4–17, which has been discussed above. Meanwhile, here Tsunenobu elaborates on the comparison of the *waka* with a person and gives a verbal portrait of Mitsune's song, describing it as majestic, as if an elder from a faraway land, wearing a brocade hat, were playing a flute or a zither, while leaning on an armrest of crimson sandal and reciting poetry. This is the look that befits it, Tsunenobu says (in this description, one can glimpse the image of god Sumiyoshi himself, as it would later be portrayed, for example, in the Noh theater).

Further on in the *Jikkinshō*, one finds several tales about how *waka* and *kanshi* poetry cause the response of "gods, spirits, and demons". On the island of Chikubu, where people worship the goddess of music and singing Benzaiten, poet Miyako no Yoshika (834–879) was making poems together with the goddess. And in the capital, while walking along the street, he composed a *kanshi* line, and the demon who lived on the Rajomon gate made its continuation (10–6). Another poet, Sugawara no Fumitoki (899–981), survived during an epidemic together with his entire family, for the plague gods valued his talent in the field of *kanshi* (10–7). Ooe no Masafusa (cf. above, Tale 3–2) and other poets were composing poems in the Anrakuji temple in the island of Kyushu, where disgraced

courtier Sugawara no Michizane, also known as god Tenjin, the protector of scholars, poets, and those who have been slandered, is worshipped (10–8, 10–9). These tales do not explain how exactly Tenjin helped the poets, merely noting that the god responded to the poems.

Quite a few tales describe gods reacting to *waka* poems. The following one which goes first in this series (10–10) can serve as a textbook example of the *katoku setsuwa* as a type of didactic stories.

Monk-in-the-world Noin,[20] together with Sanetsuna, governor of the Iyo province,[21] went to that land. In the beginning of summer, sunny days have continued for a long time, and the people's plight was not easy. But even gods favor native songs! One must try to compose one and offer it to the Mishima Shrine![22] So the governor decided, and, at his command, Noin composed: From the Heavenly river water to the rice paddies send down, if the gods truly are gods descending from Heaven! (*Ama no kawa nawashiro mizu ni sekikudase amakudarimasu kami naraba kami*). He wrote the song on a *mitegura* offering and asked the shrine acolyte to read it to the gods. And immediately the scorching sky became covered with clouds, heavy rain poured down and the dried rice sprouts turned green again.

In the song, Noin provides a *kotowari*, the reason why gods can and should fulfill the wish of the people. As gods are styled *amakudari*, "descending from Heaven", it means that they can send down heavenly waters and water the rice paddies. It is by means of the *kotowari* that songs influence gods, and, in the *Shasekishū*, this quality makes them akin to incantations.[23] However, the narrator of the *Jikkinshō* notes: by the way, this is the Noin who, when living in the capital, once made a song about travelling to the far North, to the Michinoku country (where he has never been). Noin laid this song aside and published it only many years later (10–10). Interestingly, the story does not make it clear whether the poet in fact went to Michinoku, or whether he just waited until the listeners would certainly not remember where and when he had travelled. A similar case happened to a 12th century female poet, lady Kaga. In her youth, she made a sad song about love – and hid it away till the moment she meets a worthy man and falls in love. So it hap-

[20] Also known as Tachibana no Nagayasu (988–1032), he is considered one of the "Thirty-Six Immortals of Poetry" of the Heian era.

[21] Fujiwara no Sanetsuna (1012–1082).

[22] Also: Ooyamazumi jinja in the Iyo province on the coast of the Seto Inland Sea.

[23] About songs as prayers for rain, *amagoi*, see: [Trubnikova 2013, p. 301–302; Kimbrough 2005].

pened, and the song was included in one of the anthologies, as without a real love story the song would not have such success (10–11). Here we should note that the question of timeliness of songs is closely related to the issue of their miraculous power. Prayer songs are probably effective precisely because appropriate words are said at an appropriate time. But then, there may be no miracle at all: a poet just utters a song when it is about to rain, or, as it were, anticipating the gods' decision to send down rain.

Many miracles of the *waka* songs are connected to family issues. In songs, people express their spousal and parental feelings, fulfill the Confucian virtues of "piety" and "fidelity". God Hachiman in the Iwashimizu shrine, in response to a song, helped a poor girl to find a husband, so that neither she, nor her mother would be in need of anything (10–12).[24] Female poet Izumi Shikibu (late 10th – early 11th centuries), when her husband had lost his feelings for her, made a song about fireflies in the Kibune Shrine, and the god helped her to bring her husband back (10–13). The daughter of Izumi Shikibu, Koshikibu no naishi (see above, Tale 3–1), during a serious illness, made a song about how bitter it was for her to leave her mother, and got well (10–14).[25] Another female poet, Akazome-emon (956–1041), prayed with a song to god Sumiyoshi to take her life instead of the life of her sick son, and the son got well (10–15). Gods also help in the affairs of service: for instance, court lady Kodaishin was accused of the disappearance of the emperor's clothes. She prayed at the Kitano Shrine, and god Tenjin helped her to prove herself not guilty (10–16).[26]

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[24] The story also appears in the *Kokon chōmonjū* ("A Collection of Notable Tales Old and New", 1254, Tale No. 173), in the *Shasekishū* (Vb-1), and in the *Hachiman-gudōkin* ("Admonition for Stupid Children about Hachiman", 14th century). The following four tales from the *Jikkinshō* can also be found in the *Kokon chōmonjū* (Nos. 174–177) and in the *Shasekishū* (about Izumi Shikibu in the Kibune shrine – Vb-11; the rest – Vb-1). One can say that here we have several *katoku setsuwa* that are included in various collections as a set. On the relation between the *Kokon chōmonjū* and the *Jikkinshō* see: [Sviridov 1981, p. 44–46]. According to one version, these two collections were composed by the same expert in Heian antiquities, Tachibana no Narisue. In my opinion, another version is more persuasive, according to which, unlike the *Kokon chōmonjū*, the *Jikkinshō* does not belong to the palatial tradition of the capital, but constitutes an attempt to appropriate this tradition and adjust it to the needs of educating a young warrior [Trubnikova 2015a].

[25] The same stories about famous Heian female poets are included, for example, in the *Mumyō zōshi* ("Sketches Without a Name", early 13th century) [Mumyō zōshi 2008].

[26] This tale is included in the *Kokon chōmonjū* (No. 177), *Shasekishū* (Vb-1), and also the *Kitano Tenjin-engi* ("Legend about the Heavenly Deity from Kitano", late 12th century; see: [Fedyanina 2014, p. 258–259]) and in the *Shintōshū* ("Collection of the Way of Gods", 14th century, Scroll 9, Tale 49). Another story about god Kitano and the rehabilitation of an unjustly accused person is provided in the *Jikkinshō* in Tale 4–6.

Ending this tale, and, together with it, this series of *katoku setsuwa*, the compiler of the *Jikkinshō* directly quotes the Preface by Ki no Tsurayuki: "...moves heaven and earth without effort, stirs emotions in the invisible spirits and gods..." In addition to what has been said before, here the text describes the case when a court official, a talented singer, managed to heal his old wet-nurse with singing. He performed an *imayo*, "a new style song", and while here it is about the art of singing, and not poetry, the *imayo* lyrics are provided in the story; it is a Japanese rendition of several lines from the Buddhist Medicine Master Sutra.[27] According to the narrator, the *imayo* are not *waka*, but the situations are similar. "What an excellent man have I brought up!" – the old woman exclaims happily, and it is up to the reader to decide whether she was helped by a miracle of the Medicine Buddha, or by care and kindness of her pupil (10–17).

From the art of singing, the narrator moves on to music and dance. Some dances and plays, as well as some musical instruments were received by men from gods, from the spirits of the dead, or from demons (tales 10–18 to 10–20). Gods like to listen to music and watch dances, they respond to them with miracles (stories 10–21 to 10–23), help musicians and dancers (10–24, 10–25). The narrator compares these cases with how, in the Age of Gods, the "doors of the Heavenly Cave were opened" and how dance was used to call on the Sun goddess Amaterasu to return to the world (10–24). In the *Jikkinshō*, it is rather music and dance than poetry that has the power of incantation, and the miraculous response of gods to musicians sometimes looks even frightening: the shrine building is shaking, and so on. However, one musician was saved by his art from a bite of a poisonous snake (10–26), another one – from sea pirates (10–27). The narrator concludes: not only native songs, but also chants without words can "calm the hearts of fierce warriors"; here, he also speaks about the "virtuous power of music" (管絃の徳, *kangen no toku*).

After that, for the duration of twelve tales, the narrative returns to poets. Officials used *kanshi* poems to get to their superiors and received good appointments (stories 10–28 to 10–33). Their poems shared not only goals, but also contents: there, the authors described travelling to the island of Penglai and other abodes of immortals. In this way, the poets recognized the ambitiousness of their intentions and simultaneously wished longevity to the emperor and the

[27] The song is included in the *Ryōjin Hishō* ("Songs to Make the Dust Dance", 12th century). Its source is a work by Korean scholar Taehyung (8th century), *Hongan Yakushi-kyō koshaku* ("Old Traces of the Sutra of the Main Vows of the Medicine Master", Taishō Tripitaka 38, No. 1770, 258a-b), where the vows of the Medicine Master (*Yakushi*, Sanskr. Bhaisajyaguru) from the "Sutra of the Medicine Master" (*Yakushi-kyō*, Taishō Tripitaka 14, No. 450) are discussed.

higher officials by comparing them to immortals. Cases appropriate to compose such petition poems included not only service examinations, but also, for example, friendly gatherings of courtiers. Other people received promotions by means of *waka* songs in which the names of their desired positions or some features of these were encrypted (10–34).[28] Songs helped an exile to gain forgiveness (10–35), and a disgraced one to return the emperor's favor (10–36). When a young courtier sneaked on a date with a recluse lady from the entourage of the future priestess of the Ise Shrine, a song saved him from punishment for the unrighteous act (10–37). In China, Bo Juyi once rode a horse into someone's estate without invitation in order to admire some flowers, and he could justify himself by making a poem (10–38). In Japan, a certain provincial official used a song to soften the heart of the governor who had started investigating the official's wrongdoings (10–39). The narrator says that songs serve poor people as a bridge helping to cross the sorrowful world.[29]

Further on, the *Jikkinshō* once again returns to the usefulness of songs in private life and to how they "soften relations between a man and a woman", but here the participation of gods in family life is not assumed. Proceeding to the new topic, the narrator discusses a case which is difficult to interpret: when a song is widely known, but there are several tales about it, and, depending on the context, the meaning and the "moral" of the song vary (10–40).

For example, the *Gosenshū* ("The Later collection", 955–957, No. 209) tells how, one summer night, princess-priestess Katsura (d. 958) asked her maid to catch some fireflies. The girl brought them to her mistress by wrapping them in the sleeve of her dress, and the light visible through the fabric caused somebody to utter:

Tsutsumedomo	Although I try to conceal it,
Kakurenu mono wo	The love in my heart,
Natsumushi no	Like the glow
Mi-yori amareru	Of the summer fireflies,
Omoi narikeri	Cannot be hidden.

[Tahara 1980, p. 23; Yamato monogatari 1982, p. 112–113].

[28] This story includes five tales, and two of them are present in the *Shasekishū* (Vb-2).

[29] The paraphrase from the preface to the *Kokinshū* by Ki no Yoshimochi (d. 919). Unlike the preface by Ki no Tsurayuki, this one was written not with *kana* (*Kanajō*), but with kanji (*Manajō*). In the preface by Yoshimochi, the quoted words describe the age of decay of mores, when poetry has lost its educational function and became to many just a tool of seducing beauties, or a source of income. But it seems that, in the *Jikkinshō*, these words are given in a positive meaning.

The song speaks about love with unusual sincerity, but the anthology does not state whose words these are. As the narrator notices, in ancient times, even "Song Yu's neighbor"[30] was not in love so passionately. Probably this means that the author is a woman, the priestess herself or her maid. But it is not clear who they were in love with (though the priestess is known to have been the object of passion of many men). The same song can be found in the *Yamato Monogatari* (episode 40), where it is said that the song was composed by the maid and that she was in love with a prince, the priestess's brother, and it was him who ordered to catch the fireflies when he was visiting his sister. And in the *Korai fūtai shō* ("Concise Treatise on the Classical Styles in Poetry"), Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114–1204) writes that a servant boy, who was in love with his mistress, both collected the fireflies for the priestess and made the song. The narrator does not attempt to decide which interpretation is true, giving the names of several more people named Katsura, and also a song by Shunzei's nephew, monk Jakuren (d. 1202) from the *Shinkokinshū* (No. 1032), where there is a reference to this song.

Songs help lovers, "calming" not only the hearts of a man and a woman themselves, but also the circumstances unfavorable to their love. In the *Ise Monogatari* (episode 95) a gentleman used a song to confess his love to the empress herself – and managed to meet with her (10–41). Sometimes, with a song a commoner gained the love of a noble lady (10–42), or even of a famous female poet Izumi Shikibu (10–43);[31] both of these men broke the established custom by delivering their message personally, without an intermediary, but this did not hinder them. However, when love and marriage proposal are the issue, *kanshi* poems are also sometimes delivered without an intermediary – not to the lady herself, but to her father (10–44). And, vice versa, when a nobleman falls in love with a common woman, a song comes to help again: it touches the heart of her master, so he lets his maid go to another man (10–45).[32] Songs help a woman to bring her husband back after he became indifferent to her (10–46, here,

[30] Song Yu (ca. 319–298 BC) was famous as a poet and as a handsome man. In the poem "Dengtu, the Lecher" he confesses: my neighbor, a women of exceptional beauty herself, has been peeping at me over the fence for three years, but I do not respond to her. That is why I cannot be called a lecher, but courtier Dengtu, who accuses me of lechery, can, as he is married to an extremely ugly woman, but is happy with her, and they have five children [Kitaiskaya klassicheskaya proza… 1959, p. 66–70].

[31] The story about Izumi Shikibu and the peasant can be found in the *Shasekishū* (Vb-2).

[32] Same in *Shasekishū* (Vb-2).

the wife did not pray to gods, but just expressed her feelings in a song); with a song delivered in an unusual way, one can attract the attention of an unapproachable beauty (10–47, what acted here was the fact that the lady could not find the song immediately, rather than the song itself).

Monks use songs to ask for alms for a temple (10–47, 10–49), and, under certain conditions, a song can bring a person to the Way of the Buddha. So it happened to Ooe no Sadamoto (d. 1034).[33] When he became widowed and was mourning his wife, a poor woman knocked on his door and offered to buy a mirror from her. On the back side of the mirror, a sorrowful song was written:

Kefu nomi to	Tears fall today as I gaze into my mirror
Miru-ni namida no	For the last time
Masukagami	Oh, My Mirror,
Narenishi kage-wo	Do not tell others
Hito-ni kataru na	About my intimate reflections.

[Buddhist tales of India, China, and Japan…2015]

Eventually, Sadamoto became a monk and went to China. He died during a pilgrimage to the Buddhist holy places of Mount Wutai. The narrator cites his deathbed *kanshi* poem about rebirth in the Pure Land – noting, however, that its authorship is debatable (the same poem is attributed to another Japanese poet). Furthermore, according to legend, Sadamoto was the rebirth of one of the famous Chinese monks, and when he arrived to China, the locals would recognize him (10–48).

Tale 10–50 contains the following short reflection. Even if a person is lowly, due to art (芸能, *geinō*) they can fulfill their wishes and obtain a reward. There are many such examples both in ancient times and in our days, and they are innumerable. Even such wretched and lowly creatures as women of pleasure (遊女, *asobime*), puppets-for-sale (傀儡, *kugutsu*), if they excel at singing and music and love native songs, can be received by noble people, and their works are selected for collections.

[33] This story is one of the most popular *setsuwa*. It can be found in the *Konjaku Monogatarishū* ("Anthology of Tales from the Past", 12th century, Chapter 24, Tale 48), in the *Kohon setsuwashū* ("Collection of Old Setsuwa Tales", 34), in the *Hōbutsushū* ("Collection of Treasures", second half of the 12th century, 7), in the *Kokon chōmonjū* (No. 197), in the *Shasekishū* (Vb-2), and other monuments.

Courtesan Shirome (10th century), whose songs were enjoyed by higher officials and even the emperor, is an example of this. The compiler of the *Jikkinshō* names other beauties from pleasure houses whose songs were included in anthologies. Besides, among poets and even compilers of anthologies there were commoners and even *hinin* outcasts (10–50). And about one courtesan it is known that, having been badly wounded by sea pirates, she sang an *imayo* song before her death and was reborn in the Pure Land (10–51).[34]

If an *imayo* song had such an effect, then real *waka* songs are even more beneficial for future life; they help to die in a right state of mind. Poet Sugawara no Fumitoki (see above, Tale 10–7) was told by a certain monk: when you feel that you are dying, make a song! Fumitoki did exactly this and was reborn in paradise (10–52). Fujiwara no Ietaka also made songs about the Pure Land before he died (cf. Tale 1–36). Here, the narrator says that the poet "turned his merits" (廻向, *ekō*) obtained from making songs towards rebirth. Thus, making *waka* songs is also thought of as a virtuous deed in the Buddhist sense of the word (as it gives merit), though the *Jikkinshō* does not state it directly (10–53).

Proceeding to the topic of "fierce warriors" whose hearts are calmed by song, the narrator poses the question more broadly: human fierceness is calmed not only by *waka*, but also by *kanshi* and "literature" (文, *mon*/*fumi*) in general. The examples are Japanese warriors who were well-versed in Chinese poetry, such as Kiyohara no Shigefuji, who lived in the 10th century (10–54). The first and the third Kamakura shoguns, Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147–1199) and his son Sanetomo (1192–1219) were excellent *waka* poets, and their songs were included in anthologies (10–55).[35] Minamoto no Yorimasa gained renown as an archer, and he shot monster Nue, which was flying above the palace and disturbing the emperor's sleep. The courtier who was awarding the warrior uttered the initial lines of a song, and Yorimasa managed to continue it skillfully (10–56).

Further tales in this chapter of the *Jikkinshō* are devoted not to poetry, but to other arts. Monastic skills (first of all, the performance of rites) can be considered an art of a kind, and Tale 10–57 names the famous monks

[34] One more story about a girl from a pleasure house can be found in Tale 3–15: while she is singing an *imayo* song, an ascetic monk sees in her Bodhisattva Fugen from the "Lotus Sutra" [Trubnikova 2016b].

[35] Interestingly, Yoritomo's song (*Shinkokinshū*, No. 1785) seems warrior-like, even "barbaric" – and at the same time reveals the author's mastery of *waka* techniques. All of it is composed of words behind which the names of places in the faraway Eastern lands are hidden: Shinobu, Iwate, etc.

of the Heian era. After that, the text once again speaks of musicians, both Chinese and Japanese, and of how people's hearts respond to music (tales 10–57 to 10–67, 10–70 to 10–72). Calligraphy (10–68) and the game of ball *kemari* (10–69) are also said to belong to arts.

The text returns to people's responses to "native songs" in Tale 10–73. In a capital temple of Daigoji, during the season of cherry blossoms, "dances of youths" (*warawamai*) were once held. Monk Sojun, a "teacher of sacraments", was amazed at the beauty and skill of one of the dancers. The story calls this youth the "Junior General" (*shōshō no kimi*). The monk sends him a song: Yesterday, I saw a reflection in the Sugata pond, and my sleeves became wet. How shall I let know the one who could wring them out? (*Kinofu mishi Sugata no ike ni sode nurete shiborikanenu to ika de shirasemu*). [36] The youth replies: In the Sugata pond, one can see many reflections: because of whom did you have to wring out your sleeves? (*Atama mishi Sugata no ike no kage naraba tare yue shiboru tamoto naruramu*).

The text proceeds to describe the reaction of other people to these songs:

> …The community elder from the Middle Cloister[37] also watched these dances. Having heard about the teacher's correspondence with the youth, he thought: beautiful! – and once spoke about it in the presence of the Minister of the Right, who had embarked on the way of the Buddha and was residing in the same cloister.
>
> – This is elegant, I think!
>
> The lord, who had embarked upon the Way, asked:
>
> – So, do you remember their songs?
>
> – How could I not! – replied the elder. – Teacher of sacraments Sojun sent a song to the house of the Junior General: "Have the sleeves not soaked because of what I saw yesterday?" So he wrote, and the Junior General replied: "Indeed, they have soaked terribly!"[38]
>
> So he was speaking, and it was difficult to refrain from laughter. But it was not without reason that the lord was honored as a living Buddha (*ikibutsu*): he replied politely and was obviously restraining himself. Yes, it was awkward…

[36] The song is based on the consonance of words 姿, sugata, "image", and 菅田, *Sugata*, "Sedge Field", the name of the pond.

[37] Monk Shohen (1133–1185).

[38] *Kinofu mishi-ni koso sode wa nureshi ka; kōryō-ni koso nurekere*. Neither phrase fits a song line.

> That worthy monk, who was well-versed in the seen and the unseen and who was proficient in the Law of the Buddha, had no relation to the way of native songs. And yet he felt something! This is precious.

Here, *waka* acts even upon a stranger, but its action is "miraculous" in an unusual sense: the songs touch the monk's heart, but he is unable to memorize them.

Tales 10–74 to 10–78 touch upon the topic of rewards and punishments: "… If you are not quite sure of the guilt of someone who is alleged to have committed a crime, you should be lenient and deal lightly with him, unless you believe that punishing him will serve a purpose for his lord or for society. This is the principle of truly virtuous government. You must be universally compassionate." (10–76) [Brownlee 1974, p. 160]. And the reward can be given even in a case of doubt, as the books say so (10–78). Here, the main focus are punishments for rebellion and rewards to those who pacified the rebels, but *waka* poets also appear here. When a new appointment of Ooe no Kin'yori (d. 1040) was discussed, one of the courtiers said: this man is in love with a lady named Sagami (995–1061?), and not without mutuality; he is good as a writer, but he will most likely neglect his service. As the text states, Kin'yori and Sagami were not particularly upset by this severity; they got married and both of them became famous as *waka* poets (10–78).

The final tale of the *Jikkinshō* (10–79) also speaks of punishment, but a posthumous one, in hell. Fujiwara no Arikuni (943–1011) uses the art of magic to bring his dying father back to life. He performs a rite directed to the god of Mount Tai (*Taizan-fukun* in Japanese, worshiped in the tradition of *Ommyōdō*, "The Way of Yin and Yang"). Upon waking up, the father says that he has been to hell and there heard a dispute of the "servants of darkness". Some said that the old man should be let go, and the son punished for using magic, though he was not "a man of this way", namely, not an *ommyōji* sorcerer. Others objected: Arikuni can be forgiven, as he lives in a "remote country", where hardly anyone is knowledgeable in magic, and, besides, he acted as a pious son. In the end, it was decided to let both of them go. Here we have another example of how art acts: Arikuni could not, in fact, put an incantation on anyone, but his effort, bravery, and care for his father impressed the servants of hell. The narrator concludes by stating that one should hurry forward in rewards, restrain oneself in punishments, and put mercy to the fore. Thus the narrative goes full circle, as the collection began with stories about mercy.

Therefore, if they are good, *waka* songs, as well as *kanshi* poems and music, help one to get what one wants: in service and family, in relations

with people and gods. This has to do both with preserving what one already has and with obtaining something more. And vice versa: if one managed to express a wish with a good song worthy of being recorded in history, it means that the wish itself was good and appropriate, and because of this it came true. Such view of poetry is dominant in the *Jikkinshō*, and Muju Ichien in the *Shasekishū* largely thinks the same way. The difference is that, in the *Shasekishū*, the narrator divides wishes into silly and clever ones, shallow and deep ones, and eventually considers worthy only those which are aimed at liberation in the Buddhist sense of the word. The *Jikkinshō* lacks this external evaluation by the author. The narrator relies on the judgment of tradition, by which some songs and tales related to them have already been chosen as exemplary. At the same time, Muju Ichien readily says which songs he likes or dislikes, discusses the cases when someone was praised or condemned for a song, but almost does not touch upon poetic criticism as a special skill. But in the *Jikkinshō*, the narrator finds it important not only to help the reader to learn to understand and to appropriately quote *waka* songs – but also to show how one should react when songs are uttered by someone else. In my opinion, this goes contrary to the usual understanding of *katoku setsuwa*. If the power of poetry is miraculous and irresistible, then the listener seemingly has no choice about how to react to a song. But if we assume that a wrong reaction is indeed possible, then one is at least partially free in their perception of poetry.

In the *Jikkinshō*, various critics of poetry (who are not necessarily thoroughly knowledgeable in it) appear not only in the chapter on talents, but in other chapters as well. Here, the rules for composing poetry are almost not discussed as such. Rather, the text focuses on how a critic justifies his opinion by giving examples from the *waka* tradition (4–12, 4–13). When a son of Ki no Tsurayuki criticized others' songs made to be written on screens and, in his opinion, not quite fitting the painting, he was given the example of his father's song, which also served as a caption to a painting and was not exactly fitting (4–11). For songs, as well as for actions, appropriateness is most important, but it should be evaluated with caution. For example, songs in anthologies are mostly linked to particular seasons, as matching the season is extremely important for *waka*. However, several songs are known where the words seemingly do not match the season, but the general impression is excellent (4–14, 4–15). Songs in which inappropriate words make a bad omen, are indeed deserving of condemnation, though criticism is unable to ward off the disaster (1–47). However, there are more complicated cases in terms of appropriateness/inappropriateness. In Tale 1–30, a critic father condemns his poet son for

an excessively good song: it was a New Year wish for a prince, and now, if one has to make a similar congratulation for the emperor, the poet will hardly be able to compose a better one. And in Tale 7–15, men, taking a scene from the *Genji Monogatari* as an example, hold a "comparison of letters": each of them writes a letter to his lady, so as to select the best reply afterwards. The woman who saw through it and supported the game won, and the one whose feeling was sincere lost.

The general impression of a song is more important than strict observance of rules. Even in song contests, victory is sometimes given to songs with obvious mistakes (1–10). However, making songs in a contest is harder than in any other situation, and responsibility is not the only reason for this. Sometimes participants willingly or unwillingly obstruct each other (7–18, 7–19), and judges are not always fair. For example, a famed poet and master of literature Minamoto no Shitago (911–983) was a biased judge: every time, he gave victory to ladies. Gentlemen found a way to delicately point it out to him: they recalled a *kanshi* poem, wherein Shitago described the love of an old man to a "girl flower" *ominaeshi* (plant *Patrinia scabiosifolia*), and rendered these lines into a *tanka* song (1–22). When critics sometimes evaluate not the song, but the poet, neglecting them due to lowly origins, etc., this is bad (1–52), and often these critics present themselves as fools (3–4, 3–6, 4–14). But sometimes a poet and one of their songs become intertwined so tightly that, both in the opinion of society and in the memory of posterity, the poet forever remains as the author of some famous line (1–48).

In a sense, everyone who hears or reads a song and decides whether to respond to it, and if so, then how to do it, has to be a critic. Of high importance here is the role of intermediaries, who have already been mentioned. Sometimes, it is better not to deliver a good, but inappropriate song (1–42), and sometimes it is the intermediary who responds, deciding which of the feelings that they have been entrusted with to express, and which to conceal (1–18). Generally speaking, the best way to reply is to make a song in response to a song (1–3, 6–23, 7–24, 8–5, 9–8, etc.). Sometimes, the original song and the reply are divided by many years (1–18, 5–2). Unfitting song replies can be found even in the *Ise Monogatari* (1–54); here, the narrator refers to the opinion of an expert, Minamoto no Toshiyori (1055–1129). Sometimes, the reply follows the original song almost verbatim, changing only one word in it ("a parrot's reply"); in Tale 1–26, the poet does not write a reply, but only crosses out one word in the message and writes another one next to it. A *kanshi* poem can serve as reply to a *waka* song, and vice versa; of note here is the introduction to Chapter 8, where a quote from the "Lotus Sutra" is given in two renderings – to the languages of Chinese poetry and Japanese songs.

It is always bitter when a song is berated, justly or not. Sometimes one has to comfort and talk sense into a poet who turns out to be too severe a critic to their own work (7–20). But praise can also offend: one poet decided to stop composing after his song was condescendingly approved by a universally recognized *waka* connoisseur (1–57). Yet, the same tale describes how a song by a poet named Norinaga was shown to Fujiwara no Kinto, and he wrote on the same sheet of paper: "Who is this Norinaga? He understands the essence!" Norinaga was not offended, but, vice versa, asked to return the sheet and kept it like a treasure.

The compiler of the *Jikkinshō* does not give his readers advice on how to succeed on the way of "native songs". His instructions focus on how one should treat songs, which of them to quote, how to use them to solve various life problems, and what to do if the problem is a song awaiting reply.

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TRUBNIKOVA Nadezhda Nikolaevna – Doctor of Sciences (Philosophy). Leading researcher, School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration. Professor, Institute of Asian and African Studies (IAAS), Lomonosov Moscow State University.

ORCID 000-0001-6784-1793
E-mail: trubnikovann@mail.ru
Personal web-site: https://trubnikovann.wixsite.com/trubnikovann

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