Prefaces as Sino-Japanese Interfaces:

The Past, Present, and Future of the Mana Preface to the Kokin wakashū

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I. Heian Poetic Prefaces

This study pivots around the Sino-Japanese preface to the Kokin wakashū (hereafter called "Mana Preface"), the neglected double of the most influential statement of Japanese poetics, the Kana Preface. However, the pivot will not be the main focus; rather, the prehistory and aftermath of this text will be under examination. I argue that the Mana Preface appropriated the authority held by the prefaces to previous imperial kanshi anthologies and created a genre of waka prefaces [wakajo 和歌序] which not only carried on the legacy of the Mana Preface, but succeeded in creating a hybrid space, in which poets would write about waka poetries in kanbun style.

Prefaces can be anything from a hasty note on the date, place, and authorship of a poem or poetic collections all the way to weighty statements about the function of poetry in the cosmos, as we see in the Kokinshū Prefaces. To use Gérard Genette's term, prefaces are "paratexts" or "peritexts", part of a textual apparatus that surrounds the main text and can only exist in symbiosis with it.² Since they accompany a main text grammarians would call them "enclitic". This fact has certainly not inhibited compilers from collecting prefaces in their own right.³ Yet, the tension between the literal "marginality" of prefaces and

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1 There are two major types of "poetic prefaces": "Shijo" [詩序] are poetic prefaces to kanshi poems or poetry collections, "wakajo" preface waka poems, but are written in kanbun style. "Wakajo" are also called "jodai" [序題] or "shijo" [小序]. The latter appellation is based on the fact that wakajo are generally shorter than shijo; since wakajo are believed to derive from shijo they are considered the "small" sibling of shijo. In the following I will use "kanshi preface" and "waka preface" for "shijo" and "wakajo" respectively.


3 It was common practice in traditional China and Japan to preserve prefaces independent from the works they preface. Pleasant modern collections that assemble prefaces in their own right are A Book of Prefaces, edited and glossed by Alasdair...
their occasional rise to extraordinary prominence belongs to the fascinating characteristics of the genre. We will see how Heian waka prefaces grapple with their role as “small” prefaces of marginal function, while carrying on the legacy of the great Mana Preface that along with the Kokinshu had advanced to a central statement of waka poetics.

The earliest prefaces in Japan introduce the first historical and literary compilations of the eighth century, such as the Kojiki 古事記 (712) and the Kaifuso 懸風藻 (751). Yet, starting in the ninth century, prefaces make their appearance as a genre collected in their own right. We know that the Keikokushu 経国集 (827), the third imperial kanshi anthology, contained a whole volume of kanshi prefaces, but unfortunately only the volumes with poetic expositions [賦 fu], poetry [詩 shi], music bureau poetry [楽府詩 gafushii], and examination essays [対策 taisaku] survive. Kanshi prefaces became an increasingly popular prose genre towards the mid-Heian period and are preserved in Fujiwara no Akihira’s (989-1066) Honcho monzu 本朝文粹, its mid-12th century successor Honcho zoku monzu 本朝続文粹 and in the Late Heian preface collection entitled Shijoshu 詩序集. Waka prefaces were preserved in similar venues like kanshi prefaces. They appear in the Honcho monzu and Honcho zoku monzu after the kanshi prefaces. There are also two independent preface collections, the Fusoh kobunshu 扶桑古文集 and the Honcho shijoshu 本朝小序集.

II. The Pivot: the Mana Preface


4 The Shijoshu contains 46 prefaces Satoh Michio attributes it to Fujiwara no Atsumitsu (1063-1144), a son of the above-mentioned Akihira, and dates it to around 1132. For his assessment see the article “Shijoshu seiritsu kō,” in: Satoh Michio. Heian kōki Nihon kanbungaku no kenkyū (Tokyo: Kasama shoin, 2003): 149-172.

5 The collection is also known as Waka manaji joshu and was assembled by an unknown compiler between 1144 and 1162. It contains 33 prefaces by 27 authors. A third of the pages are not preserved in other collections. A photostatic and a typescript version of the only surviving manuscript is published in Tōkyō daigaku shiryō kensanjo hō no 2 (1968.3).

6 The collection is alternatively known as Waka manaji jō, and comprises 53, which mostly overlaps with pieces preserved elsewhere. That it also features seven prefaces from the Man’yoshu is probably due to the generous hand of the compiler, who may simply have looked for any type of kanbun text introducing a waka.
Two types of approaches have dominated the voluminous scholarship on the *Kokinshū* Prefaces. First, the *Kana* Preface has been extensively researched as the single most important statement of *waka* poetics. This approach has largely disregarded the *Mana* Preface. We could call such studies of the history of *waka* poetics in the aftermath of the *Kokinshū* Prefaces “vertical.” In contrast, a “horizontal” approach that compares both prefaces has been the second focus of study. Ki no Yoshimochi (-919), son of the famous *kanbun* writer Ki no Haseo (845-912), has traditionally been regarded as the author of the *Mana* Preface. Although this attribution has been questioned, the major bone of contention regarding the prefices is still the question of relative chronology. Since Late Heian times theories that gave precedence to the *Kana* Preface as a model for the *Mana* Preface competed with claims that credited the *Mana* Preface with an earlier date. Another scholarly focus has been the identification of “Chinese influences” on both prefences. The list of identified sources ranges from the obvious, such as the “Great Preface” to the *Classic of Poetry* for the opening or also the *Categories of Poetry* [*Shipin* 詩品] by Zhong Rong (465-518) for the appraisal of the Six Poetry Immortals. But it also extends to more risky claims, such as Takeoka Masao’s conviction that the entire *Mana* Preface vaguely mimics the structure of Liu Xie’s (ca. 465-522) *A Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* [*Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍].

The arguably most interesting question in the comparison of the two prefaces is to determine what exactly is the difference between them and how to properly assess that difference. In other words, the question is how to straddle the hermeneutic gap between the host of minute or less minute variations and an overarching pattern of difference. Take for example the formulation “That all things have their song is a natural principle” in the *Mana* Preface, which reads “among all creatures, what would not make songs?” in the *Kana* Preface. Does this difference illustrate a radical difference between a Sino-Japanese focus on pattern in a Confucian cosmos versus a Japanese emphasis on the personal joy of creaturely expressivity?

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Or is it merely a matter of stylistic caprice? The linguistic difference between the prefaces invites projection onto ethnic categories and unfortunately encourages explaining difference in diction as cultural difference.

To avoid explanatory paralysis that comes with the impossible assessment of countless differences, some scholars have proposed suggestive master tropes to describe the difference between the prefaces, keeping the hermeneutical gap in check from a bird’s-eye view. Thomas LaMarre has projected onto the prefaces the complementary modes of hare 貴れ [in its most basic sense “bright”, “shining towards the outside”, thus official, solemn] and ke 幸 [“intimate”, “hidden”, thus private and sentimental]. To introduce Heian terms to describe Heian literature is an important step forward⁸ and the couple of hare and ke allows LaMarre to translate his perception of difference between the prefaces into various spheres of Heian reality: it functions as a bipolar model in “formal” and “informal” writing style, in fashion and clothing, for the type of occasion of composition and even as to mark the diurnal cycle of “day” versus “night”. However, this master trope bears a striking resemblance to the cliché that equates kanbun literature with the official, male, and Chinese, and wabun literature with the private, female, and Japanese, although LaMarre constantly emphasizes that he argues on aesthetic, not social or ethnolinguistic, grounds. Moreover, the master trope does little to explain concrete differences. Why does the Mana Preface not quote poems as the illustration of the “Six Principles” [rikugi 六義] as the Kana Preface does? Or why does only the Mana Preface mention that the first commission for what later became the Kokinshū was called Shoku Man’yōshū? These are surely questions quite beyond the explanatory power of master tropes.

This paper takes a step away from either “vertical” inquiries into the reception history of the Kana Preface or “horizontal” analyses of the differences between the two prefaces. Instead, it attempts to put the Mana preface in historical perspective. After all, unlike the Kana Preface, the Mana Preface had a

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⁸ For the wide range of meanings of this conceptual couple see Ōchōgo jiten, ed. by Akiyama Ken (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai, 2000): 355. In the realm of poetry, it appears that the terms were used in judgements of uitaawase since the Late Heian period.
precedent in the prefaces to the earlier *kanshi* anthologies. Also, the *Mana* Preface lived on in the genre of *waka* prefaces, whose popularity seems to have peaked in the Late Heian period.

Several goals can be achieved by retracing the prehistory of the *Mana* Preface and then tracing its afterlife in the genre of *waka* prefaces. This inquiry will contribute to the scholarship on the *Mana* Preface, which has been deplorably rare compared to scholarship on the *Kana* Preface. Second, it will allow us to shift the insolvable question of differences from the prefaces themselves to their history of reception. This may be an ignominious escape from a major challenge, but it will be an instructive one. Third, it will reflect on the linguistic disjunction between a *kanbun* preface and its accompanying *waka* poem that places the genre of *waka* prefaces among a number of hybrid genres that mix Sino-Japanese and vernacular Japanese units in intriguing ways.

III. The Past of the *Mana* Preface: the *Kaifūsō* and the Three Imperial *Kanshi* Anthologies

Since the compilers of the *Kokinshū* intended to produce a collection that could put public composition of *waka* on a par with the flourishing tradition of *kanshi* composition at court, it is a disarmingly simple conclusion that the *Mana* Preface should be seen not just in relation to the *Kana* Preface, but also as a successor and rival to the prefaces of the *kanshi* anthologies. Surprisingly, this line of thought is rarely pursued. What does the *Mana* Preface respond to? How does it follow and outdo the prefaces of the preceding *kanshi* anthologies?

III a. Preserving Past Writing: The Preface to the *Kaifūsō*

The *Kaifūsō*, compiled in 751 by an unknown compiler, contains the earliest extant preface to a Japanese literary anthology. It is the first compilation that faces the crucial question of how to invest the young tradition of *kanshi* composition with historical depth, and it therefore uses the venerable preface to
the Wenxuan 文選 [J. Monzen] as a blueprint. In other words, in writing a history of writing and literature since the beginning of the world, it had to delicately handle the “historical flatness” of Japanese tradition compared to Chinese precedent. The author of the preface solves this problem ingeniously with a suggestive double-voiced narrative that couples Japanese history with highlights of Chinese history. The advent of writing through tribute documents presented by the Korea envoys Wani and Shinni is implicitly compared to the invention of writing by the mythical hero Fu Xi, who is said to have invented the hexagrams of the Book of Changes [Yijing 易經] by looking at bird tracks. The age of Emperor Tenji (626-671), who is presented as an illuminated sovereign and patron of learning and the arts, parallels the splendid court of Xiao Tong, Crown Prince Zhaoming of the Liang Dynasty (501-31), the compiler of the Wenxuan. It is intriguing that the preface is always moving within a world of literacy, even when talking about pre-literate times. It is therefore hardly surprising that it begins with the compiler’s reading about the time before the advent of writing:

遨聽前修
遨觀載籍
龜山降蹤之世
相關建邦之時
天造革創
人文未作

I have heard of sages from the remote past
and surveyed the written records of yore.
In the age when the Heavenly Grandchild’s chariot descended on
Peak Takachiho
and when [Emperor Jimmu] founded our state at Kashihara,
the workings of Heaven had barely begun
and human pattern was not yet created.

In the same way as the preface is narrated through the eyes of an archival bookworm, the main motivation for compiling the collection is the reverence for the writings of “past sages” [sentetsu 先哲] and the anxiety of their loss. The destruction of written documents during the Jinshin war is described as another “burning of books” that the First Emperor of the Qin ordered in 213 B.C. The compiler-archivist

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10 “Jinbun” covers a broad semantic spectrum ranging from everything considered human as in “human pattern” (as opposed to the patterns of Heaven and Earth) and “civilization” to the more specific connotations of “writing” and “literature”.

has two things in abundance: Leisure, which he spends in the archives perusing books, and the reverence for a lost past, from which he feels painfully separated. He confesses: “Since I am a humble official with time at my hands, I have been roaming at heart in the Garden of Letters.”

With this statement of devotion to Letters he directly echoes Xiao Tong’s remark in the Wenxuan Preface: “During spare moments from my duties supervising the state and tending the army, I have spent much leisure time reading through the Garden of Letters, extensively perusing the Forest of Literature.”

The pleasure of reading is in uneasy tension with the past and present threats of textual destruction. The preface is a requiem for the Jinshin war; while providing a suggestive timeline for a history of kanshi composition in Japan, it is a praise of reading and preserving rather than of writing and composition.

III b. Celebrating Present Production: The Three Imperial Kanshi Anthologies of the 9th Century

The first imperially commissioned anthology was the Ryōunshū 雲騫集 compiled in 814 under the auspices of Emperor Saga (786-842). As an imperial anthology, it served as a model for the two kanshi anthologies to come. Unlike the Kaifūsō, it does not take the sketch of literary history in the Wenxuan Preface as its model, but opens with the famous statement of Cao Pi (187-226), Emperor Wen of the Wei dynasty, from his “Discourse on Literature” [Lunwen 論文]:

“Your subject Minemori states: ‘King Wen of the Wei dynasty (i.e. Cao Pi) once remarked: ‘I would say that literary works are the supreme achievement in the business of state, a splendor that does not decay. A time will come when a person’s life ends; glory and pleasure go no further than this body.’”

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12 Kojima, Kaifūsō, Bunka shūreishū, Honchō monzui: 61
The compiler-subject, in this case Ono no Minemori, is no longer an archivist of a lost past but the subject of the glorious present of ruling Emperor Saga. He is part of the imperial coterie with Saga at its center. Kojima Noriyuki has pointed out close parallels between the preface and the language of court petitions [hyō 表] that shows the close connection between the imperial court and literary composition characteristic of Saga’s age.\(^{15}\) Not the leisure and eccentric passion of the archivist drives the compilers, but their participation in the “supreme achievement in the business of the state”—the term “ye 業” [j waza] signifies “achievement” as well as actual employment in that “enterprise”—that is not completely of either Saga’s or Cao Pi’s invention, but ultimately goes back to the civilizing enterprise of King Wen of the Zhou dynasty (ca. 11\(^{th}\) century BC). The preface explains: “[Emperor Saga] lamented how easily times would turn and he regretted that our cultural heritage [shibun 斯文] might decline. Thus he summoned his subjects and [ordered them] to assemble recent compositions.”\(^{16}\) [敟光業之易暮 惜斯文之將墜 愛詔臣等 選集近代以來篇什]

Emperor Saga commissions an anthology because he is afraid that King Wen’s “cultural heritage” might decline. His worry matches Confucius’s prophetic confidence that the civilization created by the early kings of Zhou is protected by Heaven:

“When surrounded in Kuang, the Master said, ‘With King Wen long dead, is not this culture/\textit{wen}\(^{17}\) residing here in me? If Heaven intends to destroy this culture of ours, those who come after me will not have any part of it. If Heaven does not want to destroy it, then what can the people of Kuang do to me!’”\(^{18}\) [子畏於匡 曰 文王既没 文不在兹乎 天之將喪斯文也 後死者不得與於斯文也 天之不喪斯文也 匡人其如予何]

King Wen, Confucius, Emperor Saga—they all symbolize the care for “this culture of ours” [斯文]. The \textit{Wenxuan}, and with it the \textit{Kaifūso} Preface, had sketched the history of “\textit{wen}\(^{17}\) [pattern, culture, writing, literature], and although the \textit{Ryōunshū} Preface chooses Cao Pi’s “Discourse on Literature” and not the

\(^{15}\) Kojima Noriyuki \textit{Kokufu ankoku jidai no bungaku}: 1324 and 1328.
\(^{16}\) Kojima, \textit{Kokufu ankoku jidai no bungaku}: 1328, 1332-33.
\(^{17}\) “Si wen” is a pun on the name of King Wen, the embodiment of the virtuous rule of the Zhou dynasty mentioned later in the passage.
Preface as a guiding motto, it reconfirms King Wen's enterprise and the political function of literature in Japan.

The preface to the second imperial kanshi anthology, the *Bunka shureishū* 文華秀麗集 (818), picks up what the *Ryūunshū* had left out and celebrates the literary fecundity of its age. The compiler of the preface highlights the superior power of the emperor. In response to the increase in literary production, selection becomes necessary and is based on the ultimate authority of the emperor, who decides, when compilers are undecided, and takes the lead.

The last imperial kanshi anthology, the *Keikokushū* 經國集 (827) constitutes a great leap in scale and ambition; it consists of 20 books—14 of them unfortunately lost—and introduces for the first time major prose genres, such as "poetic expositions" [fu], the royal genre of the *Wenxuan*. It combines Cao Pi's vision of literature as of greatest importance to governance from the first two anthologies imperial anthologies with the *Kaifūsō*’s efforts to give a grand narrative of the history of civilization and literature. Unlike the *Kaifūsō*, the *Keikokushū* preface does not give a double-lined historical narrative, where Japanese developments and Chinese corresponding events appear in conjunction, but provides a story of kanbun composition entirely populated with Chinese characters. At the same time, however, the preface provides early evidence of a particular competitiveness towards things Chinese that became a standard theme throughout the Heian period. Typically, Chinese personages, place-names or events would be matched implicitly or explicitly with Japanese realities, just to claim superiority or at least delight in a position of stalemate.

寶軒染筆
無勝負於八體
翡翠開匣
不優劣於六書

When [Emperor Junna] wets his preciously inlaid brush
he is not outdone by the "Eight Calligraphic Styles"19,
and when he opens his kingfish feather writing case
he measures up to the "Six Character Types"20.

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20 The six types of characters are also from the preface to the *Shuowen jiezi*. Since Xu Shen argued for the correspondence between writing and cosmological patterns that is claimed in the *Xicizhan* 繫辭傳, one of the commentaries to the Book of
Although the only explicitly Japanese subject in the passage is Emperor Junna (786-840), the claim that the former and later sages are of the same caliber compares the sages of high antiquity, Yao and Shun, to Retired Emperor Saga and Emperor Junna, to whom Saga had abdicated in 823. By implication the two sets of Chinese and Japanese emperors are not just matching up to each other—with the younger Shun equal to Yao and Emperor Junna equal to Retired Emperor Saga—but the Japanese emperors are also measuring up to their older Chinese models and are “of the same caliber.” They are also up to the Chinese standards of calligraphy, the “Eight Styles,” and philological expertise, the “Six Character Types.” In Heian Japan, the agonistic comparison between things Japanese and Chinese often provided a wonderful occasion to show off expertise in Chinese culture, because, as in this case, the message was stated in purely Chinese terms and the reader had to know how to match the Chinese examples with the parallel Japanese phenomena.

The “Six Character Types” [rikusho] is also an alternative name for the “Six Principles of Poetry” [rikugi], but it is evident that in this passage they refer to calligraphic expertise, not to poetic tropes, because the Emperor is pictured in the moment of dashing off a literary piece. It may seem a random coincidence that the Keikokushū preface uses the “Six Character Types” to show its high regard for technical and philological mastery while the Mana Preface mentions the “Six Principles” as rhetorical devices and styles of poetry. However, the move from a history of writing and literature as a civilizing
craft to a psychology of actual poetic composition is precisely characteristic of the shift in poetics that occurs between the prefaces of the kanshi anthologies and the Kokinshū Prefaces.

IV. The Present of the Mana Preface: Introducing a Psychology of Composition

The Mana Preface, composed some eight decades after the completion of the Keikokushū, succeeded the kanshi anthologies as a kanbun preface to an imperial anthology. The preface can roughly be divided into four parts, which respectively discuss the psychological root of poetry, its historical origin and development, the state of the art in the recent past and present, and previous compilation enterprises. It closes with an auspicious invocation of a bright future for waka poetry.

The Kokinshū Prefaces open on a powerful plant metaphor to retrace the psychological origin of poetry: "Waka takes root in the soil of one's heart and spreads its flowers into a forest of words" [大和歌者 託其根於心地 發其華於詞林者也] The Kana Preface reads: "The Songs of Yamato, settling as seeds in the heart of the people, become leaves of ten thousand words" [倭歌は人の心を種としてよりつの言の葉とぞなれりける]

Both prefaces rely on the unfolding from latency to manifestation described in the "Great Preface" to the Classic of Poetry, which states: "Poetry is the endpoint of one's intention. In the heart it is (mere) intention, when put into words, it becomes poetry." 詩者 志之所之也 在心為志 發言為詩.

The choice of the image of organic growth to convey the process of how a poem becomes manifest, grows from a seed into flowers, leaves, and forests, is crucial because it facilitates a convenient figural flow between nature and the mind, and enables the "interiorization" of nature into psychological processes, but also the "exteriorization" of thoughts and emotions into natural landscapes.

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24 Katagiri Yōichi. Kinokawashu zenbyoshaku: 95
The opening of the *Kokinshū* Prefaces constitutes a radical reformulation of the Chinese “Great Preface,” which introduced a new potential for poetological imagery. True, it merely takes the “Forest of Words” from the *Wenxuan* preface back to its organic “roots,” but it does so in a radically new and successful way, by placing these roots into the “soil of the heart.” This move psychologized the plant imagery for a powerful definition of the *nature* of poetry—stated in what we may call an eternal “poetic present.” The *Mana* Preface introduces one more step of organic growth, namely the “flowers,” whereas the *Kana* Preface moves more promptly from seed to leaves and evokes with the “ten thousand leaves of words” an image of textual production of the *waka* world—not the least insinuating its first instantiation, the “ten thousand leaves” of the *Man'yōshū*.

As a transition from the “poetic present” to the history of poetry, the second part of the *Mana* Preface expands on the natural impulse of poetry composition. Not only are humans inspired by songs of the spring warbler, but they are only a special case of the general natural principle that living creatures bring forth song [*kayō* 歌譜]. As the first instance of this impulse, already in astonishing formal perfection, Susanō’s divine 31-syllable verse is evoked, as the “Ur-*Waka*.” As with poetic composition the history of poetry develops from a single root into a forest of forms such as *chōka*, *tanka*, or *sedoka*. The poems presented to Emperor Nintoku at Naniwa Ford and to Prince Shōtoku at Tomi-no-o River illustrate this second stage of development, the diversification of form of the *waka* tradition, which is here called “local custom or local airs” [*fu* 風]. The increasing diversification of *waka* is blocked and forced to retreat by the advent of Chinese characters and the beginning of *kanshibun* composition [*shifu* 詩賦] around the time of Prince Ōtsu, a son of Emperor Temmu who was later executed by Temmu’s wife, Empress Jitō. The prince, whose famous deathbed poem is preserved in the *Kaisōsō*, is accused of ushering in the decline of *waka*, of Japanese customs in general, and this reproachful connection between the introduction of Chinese writing and literature and the decline of *waka* poetry is only mentioned in the *Mana* Preface. The *Kana* Preface, not by coincidence, does not refer to the introduction of the technology of writing at all. The author of the preface is painfully aware that the greatest *Man’yō* poets such as Kakinomoto no
Hitomaro were approximate contemporaries of Prince Ōtsu and therefore—if we are to believe the proposed narrative—witnesses of the decline of *waka* rather than proponents of its Golden Age. Perhaps to avoid the collision between chronology and evaluation, Hitomaro is withheld from historical time altogether and described as “unparalleled in past and present”\(^ {25} \) [獨步古今之間] within an unbroken lineage of *waka* “officials.” And yet, so continues the preface, the decline into the trivial, described as a lapse from substance to superficiality, from fruit to flower, ensued quickly. The preface laments that poetry came to be abused as a messenger between lovers, for trite subjects such as flowers and birds, and poems were thus only presentable to women, no longer in male aristocratic circles.

The *Mana* preface states that in the recent past and immediate present only a few poets are left who compose in the good old style [kofū 古風] of the period preceding the advent of Chinese writing. The tradition of *waka* is again described as a local style of composition, but already alienated from its “old” practice that did not know the use of Chinese graphs. To illustrate the present state of the art, the “Six Poetry Immortals” are praised and criticized in the fashion of the Chinese poetic handbook *Categories of Poetry* [Shipin 詩品], which orders poets by artistic rank and lineage and judges them based on mood and technical skill. To conclude the historical survey of *waka* poetry on a note that immunizes it against time, *waka* is contrasted with mundane occupations such as official civil or military appointments and it is singled out as the only profession that guarantees immortality. Cao Pi’s praise of poetry’s immortalizing power in his “Discourse of Literature”, which was so crucial for the three imperial *kanshi* anthologies, is here untied from the business of the state, from its ministers and generals, and instead grafted onto the mystique of the art itself.

Part four of the *Mana* Preface, however, brings *waka* composition back to the courtly arena. It relates previous compilation projects, such as the “Heizei Emperor’s” alleged compilation of the *Man’yōshū*, an otherwise unconfirmed assumption that may only derive from the author’s desire to name a precedent for the present imperial commission. The last section of the preface is significant, because it

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introduces another expression for the enterprise of waka, which has hitherto been described as a “local custom” [ふ 風] of Japan. The newly introduced term is “our way” [waga michi 吾道] and has fascinating implications. The preface ends on a reformulation of Analects 9.5, in which Confucius confirmed the immortality of “this our cultural heritage.” The preface to the Ryōunshū had alluded to this passage and stated Emperor Saga’s commitment to the preservation of “this our heritage” on the model of Confucius’s preservation of the heritage of King Wen of Zhou with the help of Heaven. When the Mana Preface closes on the formula “Alas, with Hitomaro long dead, is not [the art of] waka here in this/here with us!” [嘆嘆人丸既没 和歌不在斯哉] 26, the “Way” and its most noteworthy practitioner Hitomaro has replaced both the “cultural heritage” that Confucius attributed to King Wen of Zhou and the “cultural heritage” that Emperor Saga committed himself to in ordering the compilation of imperial kanshi anthologies. In the light of the unmistakable allusion to Analects 9.5, “our Way” [吾道 waga michi] of waka in the preface to the first imperial waka anthology becomes an indirect challenge against the “culture heritage” of kanshi composition in the prefaces to previous imperial kanshi anthologies.

In conclusion, the Mana Preface constituted a radical step away from the prefaces to the kanshi anthologies in three areas.

First, the different emphasis on reading versus writing of poetry is revealing. Most notably, the Kaifūsō preface begins with the act of reading. The Mana Preface, in contrast, opens on a vision of the psychology of writing. Only after sketching the timeless nature of poetry does it proceed to give a history of waka. There are certainly great masters, like Hitomaro, who are known because their works were transmitted in writing, but the Kokinshū Prefaces reflect in no way the desire to preserve or the anxiety of loss of the textual record that inspired the “archivist-compiler” of the Kaifūsō. Quite to the contrary, in the midst of its lamentations about the decline of the way of waka, the Mana preface not only expresses the hope for revival, but declares that the cause of poetry is quite beyond the mortality of any of its practitioners, even the great Hitomaro. With the gesture of “the king is dead, long live the king!” poetry

has become an institution independent of the fate of the state, unlike in the preface to the *Ryūunshū*, for which poetry is bound up with the court and its authority to preserve King Wen’s cultural heritage. True, this declaration of independence is ironic, if we consider that the *Kokinshū* was the first imperially commissioned *waka* collection. But we may therefore call it an all the bolder gesture of the preface’s author, who apparently didn’t want to content himself with a reduction of the Way of *waka* to a recognized state enterprise.

This leads us to the second fundamental difference between the *Mana* Preface and the prefaces to the *kanshi* anthologies: They inhabit different temporal spaces, *chronotopes* in Mikhail Bakhtin’s words. While the prefaces to the *kanshi* anthologies hover between a lost past and a glorious present, the *Mana* preface does indeed bemoan a lost past, but it also decidedly laments the decadent present, and ultimately directs its attention towards the hope for a glorious future. And besides the introduction of the chronotope of future—not in the guise of Cao Pi’s immortality, but as a wish for further generations of practitioners of the “Way of *waka*”—the *Mana* Preface introduces another dimension of time. The eternal “poetic present” constitutes a universal psychology of the creaturely drive to expression through song; and it is this chronotope that allowed the author to place Hitomaro beyond time and put the longevity of poetic practice out of the reach of historical coincidence. Although the *Kokinshū* marks the moment when *waka* enters the imperial stage, its proponents lodge its power and future life into something that is less susceptible to the vicissitudes of the imperial enterprise. *Kanshi* composition needed the spiritual tutelage of an exemplary Confucian monarch who continues King Wen’s enterprise. In contrast, Emperor Daigo (885-930) is virtually left out of the picture in the *Mana* Preface and King Wen is replaced with the emblematic embodiment of the poetic present, the great Hitomaro, who exists beyond time and moves freely between past and present.

Third, the prefaces differ in their manipulation of powerfully ambivalent key terms. Much more than the prefaces to the *kanshi* anthologies, the *Mana* Preface plays with semantic puns to make its case. First, there are examples, which play only a limited role in the *Mana* Preface, but became influential later
such an example is the pivoting meaning of “wa 和” The preface reads, “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.”

poetics constituted the backbone of the *Kokinshū* Prefaces—Japanese *waka* represented metaphorically
the particular local customs and poetic tradition of one of the locales of the Kingdom of Zhou. Although
this was certainly historically and politically wrong, there is some cultural and poetic truth to it.

To these three differences between the prefaces to the *kanshi* anthologies and the *Mana* preface we
could add as a fourth the different choice of Chinese master narratives about the nature and history of
literature. As already emphasized, the *kanshi* prefaces had preferred a history of “wen”: of writing,
literature and also King Wen of Zhou’s cultural heritage. They had also adopted Cao Pi’s view of
literature as crucial to the enterprise of the state and cherished the “Discourse on Literature” as a veritable
model for the Saga court. One may argue that the decision of the *Mana* Preface’s author to evoke the
“Great Preface” was nothing too unexpected, because the text had probably been available in Japan from
early on since it was part of the “Five Confucian Classics.” Yet, it was not the quoting of the “Great
Preface” in and of itself that was the radical innovation, but the specific way its textual potential was
mobilized for the cause of Japanese poetry. More than the *Wenxuan* and the “Discourse on Literature,” the
“Great Preface” relied, as Stephen Owen has put it, on a “theory of manifestation and perfect
correspondence between inner and outer.” This theory allowed for a psychologization of the writing
process, accounting for the stimulus to write poetry, not its historical instantiations, that had been at the
heart of the history of “wen” in the *Wenxuan* and *Kaifūsō* Preface. I argue that the further fate of
fundamental differences between *waka* and *kanshi* poetics was vastly influenced by the way in which the
*Mana* Preface mobilized the “Great Preface” for its purpose and filled a spot that had—curiously
enough—not yet been claimed by its *kanshi* anthology predecessors.

V. The Future of the *Mana* Preface: Heian *Waka* Prefaces [*wakajo* 和歌序]

V a. *Waka* Prefaces in the *Fukurozōshi* 袋草子

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29 Timothy Wixted has made this argument for the *Kokinshū* Prefaces in general. “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


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Prefaces as Sino-Japanese Interfaces

Claims of the *Mana* Preface had a vivid afterlife in the genre of *waka* prefaces -- prefaces written in *kanbun* to either *waka* anthologies or *waka* composed at seasonal banquets or ritual occasions. The genre became important enough for the Late Heian poet Fujiwara no Kiyosuke 藤原清輔 (1104-1177) to devote two subchapters to it in his poetic manual *Fukurozôshi*. Kiyosuke relates the words of Ōe no Masafusa's son about the challenges of and suggestions for writing *waka* prefaces:

"Ōe no Koreyori [once] remarked, 'My late father Masafusa said that there was a certain way of writing *waka* prefaces and that one has to learn how to write them. Yet, the theory is that there are no prescriptive rules or patterns, but that one just has to write them based on memorization [of precedents]. Learning [how to write *waka* prefaces] consists precisely of understanding this method.' How much more does this apply to [the writing of] *Kana* prefaces! One should just jot them down following one's whim and tongue ( . . . ) Taira no Kanemori's (-990) *preface* composed at Murasaki no of the Rat is written too stiffly. The genre of diary records [of poetry gatherings] is different in that its phrases concretely recall events at hand. Thus, one has to read through a lot of old prefaces, but nothing more specific can be stated [about the writing of prefaces]. In writing prefaces one has to be particularly familiar with the Japanese readings of official titles."^35

Kiyosuke emphasizes that one can only become accomplished in the composition of *waka* prefaces by internalizing skillful samples of the genre. His pronounced reluctance to spell out explicit rules is striking, especially considering that *kanshi* poetical manuals such as the Late Heian Ōtaku *fuketsushō* 不渇抄 prescribe the structure and rhetoric of *kanshi* prefaces meticulously. The internalization of models that warrant a "secondary" spontaneity of composition in the case of *waka* prefaces stands in sharp

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32 Ōe no Masafusa's (1041-1111) son He served as governor of Higo and also headed the State Academy for some time.
33 Kiyosuke discusses here the difference between prefaces to *waka* poems written in *kana* and prefaces to *waka* poems written in *kanbun*, the "*waka* prefaces" we are concerned with in this paper.
34 Mid-Heian *waka* poet and one of the thirty-six poetry immortals. He has a personal collection entitled *Kenjôshu*.
35 Fujiwara Tadaharu et al. (ed.) *Fukurozôshi* SNKBT vol. 29 (Iwanami shoten, 1995): 31-32
36 Ōsone Shōsuke. "Wakako shōkō," 595-96
contrast to the prescriptive poetics of the twin genre of *kanshi* prefaces. In addition, the genre of *waka* prefaces is suspended in the hybrid space between Masafusa’s “ways of composition” [*kakiyō* 書様]—a trace of the prescriptive—and outbursts of emotions—the allegedly spontaneous that still has to be cultivated and acquired through the internalization of precedents. It is a genre that is less definable than genres such as the “ritual diary,” but Kiyosuke does not discuss the precise nuance of difference other than just emphasizing it.

That the *waka* preface seems to be a generic and stylistic hybrid is certainly also due to its bivalent diction, as Kiyosuke explains:

Already the ancient worthies thought that prefaces are a difficult matter. Why are they so difficult? When leaning towards vernacular custom by using many Japanese terms [*wago*], the style will be too weak, but when [preferring] *kanbun* flavored style it will be overly strong. Not too weak, nor too strong, neither too little nor too much, with beginning and end in agreement, and rhetorical flourish and substantial content in equal measure, these are the issues why the ancients deemed [prefaces] difficult. Moreover, although the preface might be appropriate, it is utterly regrettable if the poem itself turns out amateurishly. How should it then be composed? [I say] it calls for rare beauty. Also, it is not customary that the one who has been selected [to write the preface] refuses the task. Even if one cannot win golden fame [with one’s preface], it is still better to avoid the shame of leaving one’s sheet blank.37

序代は古賢なほもつてこれを難となす。難の故は、何となれば、備に風俗によって和語を用うればその態弱く、また風情の漠事なるはその態強し。弱からず強からず、少からず、首尾相反兼ね、花実共に備ふ。故にもって難となすのみ。また序題宜しといへども和歌抜きに至りては、遺恨第一なり。詠吟如何となれば、いはゆる珍美なり。また序題はその撰に当りては、辞退は習ひなきの事なり。たとひ黄絹の誉れに非ずとも、宜しく白紙の恥を免るべきのみ。

As with their suspension between prescribed and spontaneous composition, *waka* prefaces have to navigate between many other poles, such as the use of *kanbun*-flavored versus vernacular expressions, between weak and strong diction, “substantial” and “ornamental” expression, which means content and rhetorical flourish. The genre was challenging in practical terms: It demanded an adroit preface written in *kanbun* for equally adroitly written *waka* poems. This disjunction apparently caused distress to those poets who were not equally good at both *waka* and *kanshibun* composition. Kiyosuke laments the cases where an elegant preface is followed by a botched poem, and in turn encourages those who are good at *waka*, but

37 Fujioka Tadaharu *Op cit.*, 32
dread the *kanbun* preface, to nevertheless write spiritedly in order to tackle the *horror vacui* of the empty page. Apparently a good number of people desired to get around the preface, since otherwise Kiyosuke would not have urged poets to face the task once chosen. That the poets writing the pref ("e* at public occasions were often outstanding academicians with a facility in *kanbun* composition, as Ōsone Shōsuke points out,\(^\text{38}\) was probably an attempt to avoid failures that must have been humiliating for both author and audience.

As Kiyosuke’s remarks indicate, the genre of *waka* pref ("e was seen as challenging due to its hybrid linguistic form. The *Fukuroozōshi* contrasts the internalization of precedents with written rules of technical poetics, and I will show below how such a poetics is reflected in the peculiar relationship between the *Mana* Preface and the genre of *waka* pref ("es: many *waka* pref ("es are creative elaborations on particular claims from the *Mana* Preface. I argue that *waka* pref ("es recreated parts of the *Mana* Preface using two main strategies: First, intertextually, by further elaborating on passages or expressions from the *Mana* preface, and second, pragmatically, by punning on poetologically pregnant expressions—such as “wind” or “flowers”—that helped conflate the nature of poetic composition with the natural scene of composition. This clever move, which reinstated the essence of poetry in every single one of its compositions, also made the working of poetic craft disappear into the self-evident workings of nature.

V b. The *Mana* Preface as Precedent for *Waka* Prefaces: Recreation and Elaboration

An interesting example of how an element from the *Mana* Preface could be elaborated or adapted is the following piece that Fujiwara no Nochiō 藤原後生(909-70)*\(^\text{39}\) wrote during celebrations for Emperor Murakami’s fortieth birthday:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>夫和歌之興</th>
<th>The rise/stimulus of <em>waka</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>來専矣</td>
<td>Goes far back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>自神代至聖朝</td>
<td>From the age of the Gods until our sagely court</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{38}\) Ōsone Shōsuke. “Wakajo shōkō,” 592

\(^{39}\) He was a son of Fujiwara no Fumisada. In addition to a *waka* in the *Shūishō* some *kanshi* as well as two *waka* pref ("es and two votive prayers [願文 gammon] are attributed to him. Emperor Murakami’s birthday celebration took place in 965.
春花開時
詠歌之思不結
秋月良夜
謳吟之聲猶忙
行基菩薩
臨難波津
贈於婆羅門僧正
達磨和尚
至富緒河
寄於班鳩宮太子
況上古有奉賀帝王之嘉什
當今何無奉祈寶算之詠音哉
敢獻四首其辭云
at the time when the spring flowers are blooming,
longings for composing poetry never cease
during nights when the autumn moon is bright
voices of poetry recitation are ever busy.
The monk Győki
when approaching Naniwa Ford
dedicated a poem to Bodaisenna;
And Bodhidharma
upon reaching the Tomi-no-o River
gave a poem to Prince Shōtoku
Since in high antiquity there where already beautiful stanzas
celebrating emperors and rulers,
how could there not be songs recited today to pray for His Majesty’s
precious old age?
I dare to present four poems, which go as follows...

The preface sketches a vast historical timeline of poetry from the Age of Gods to the human
present. The multiple meaning of “okorifō 興” as “tise”, but also as “stimulus” to poetic composition—
and in its most technical meaning the rhetorical figure of “evocative image” from the “Six principles”
[rikugi]—suggests a historical, but also psychological, timeline. Thanks to the multiple meanings of a
single word, poetry is summarized as a practice with historical pedigree, as a timeless human instinct, and
as its concrete manifestation in the particular rhetorical trope that is part of the “Six Principles”

As in the Mana Preface, Naniwa Ford and Tomi-no-o River are evoked simultaneously as seminal
locations for early poetic exchanges. However, this waka preface exchanges some of the actors and gives
the practice of poetry a more Buddhist, possibly particularly auspicious, slant for an imperial birthday
celebration. In the Mana Preface, the scenes at Naniwa Ford and Tomi-no-o River had embodied the

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40 The itinerant monk Győki (668-749), popularly considered a reincarnation of Mañjuśrī, is particularly known for his
charitable care for the common people. After refusing the honor to perform the eye-opening ceremony for the Great Buddha at
the Tōdai-ji, he set out for the seashore to welcome Bodaisenna (704–60), an Indian monk who reached Japan via China in 736
and to whom he entrusted the ceremony. Upon their first encounter at Naniwa Ford they exchanged waka, confirming that their
meeting had been determined by fate. Győki is considered a descendant of the Korean envoy Wani mentioned in the Kaifū
Preface. He is a popular figure in setsuba stories. Waka attributed to Győki appear in the Shūshū, in the ShinKokinshū, and in the
ShinChokusenshū.

41 Prince Shōtoku (574–622) allegedly covered a man who was suffering from hunger and cold with his fine robe. This man
turned out to be an incarnation of Daruma (Bodhidharma), the founding figure of Chan Buddhism. They addressed and
thanked each other in waka. The story of Győki and Bodaisenna, and of Prince Shōtoku and Bodhidharma appear together, like
in this poem, in the 13th century setsuba collection Shasekishū 沙石集. See NBTK 85, ed. by Watanabe Tsunaya (Tokyo:

exchange of poetry between a ruler and his subject, namely between Emperor Nintoku and the Korean envoy Wani and Prince Shôtoku and the monk Daruma respectively. Nochiô replaces Emperor Nintoku and Wani with Gyôki and Bodaisenna. The substitution is especially apt, since Gyôki was considered a descendant of Wani. The disposal of the Confucian subject-ruler dynamics from the Mana Preface in favor of a Buddhist rhetoric of expedient conversation between foreigners in the universal tongue of waka may appear minor, but it imposes a significant change on the enterprise of waka as a whole, and in particular on the waka composed for Emperor Murakami on his birthday.

This adaptation of elements from the Mana Preface to a Buddhist cause could go much further. The Honchô monzui contains a preface that Fujiwara no Arikuni 藤原有國 (943-1011) wrote for a set of poems on the Lotus Sutra. For a waka preface it is a remarkably long piece. Followed by a second part that gives examples of compositions on Buddhist themes, the first part is—quite surprisingly—a partial rearrangement of the Chinese “Great Preface” with some variations:

讃法華經廿八品和歌序

“On praising the 28 chapters of the Lotus Sutra”

和歌者志之所之也
A waka poem is that to which what is intently on the mind goes.

用之鄉人焉
It is used in smaller communities

用之邦國矣
as well as larger states.

情動於中
When emotions are stirred inside,

言形於外
words take form on the outside 43

遊讃歌娛之辭
Phrases of happy roaming and banqueting

樂且康
are joyful and serene,

哀傷詭詭之詠
while chants of mourning and exile

愁且悲
are sorrowful and sad.

行旅醛別之句
Expressions for travels and parting banquets

惜而怨
are pitiful, even resentful,

鶯花飛藻之思
While longing for warblers, blossoms, happy ducks and water cress

态44以橋
is arrogant and full of conceit.

上自神代下誇人俗
From the age of the Gods to human usages,

國風之始也
[waka] are the beginning of our local customs.

故以和爲首
Because we use “responses” as stanzas,

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43 This is the first part that paraphrases ideas from the “Great Preface” to the Classic of Poetry such as the “intention” in the mind that comes out as a poem, the use of poetry on various levels of society, the possibility to understand the life reality of the poet from the tones of the poetry.

44 The text has Morohashi. Dai Kan-Wa jiten no. 10385 († +大).
they are the ultimate in the recitation of poetry;
and since they are called “songs,”
they have the beauty of “songs responding to each other.”
Their origin goes far back.
Some time later somebody responded to the imperial order to collect
[poems] old and new
and at some point the idea arose to compile poetry of present and
past,
starting from the Man'yōshū to the various House collections,
a good number of scrolls.
Ever since its beginnings [poetry] thrived:
The monks Gyōki and Baramon, both reincarnations at [Emperor
Shōmu’s] court,
were authoritative exemplars of foreign [Buddhist] customs.
Their longings for Spirit Mountain45 turned into poems
and they thus left behind their promises to stay truthful.
Monk Kazan was a teacher of the people in the Gangyō era [877-885],
priest Sosei an itinerant scholar of the Engi era [901-923].
Many of the poems they composed still survive in people’s oral
memory.
Yet, although they were stirred [to write] on [natural scenes] of wind
and clouds,
They never chose the “Flower of the Law” as a poetic topic (…)46

The preface unfolds in three stages. First, it offers a medley of almost literal quotations from the
Chinese “Great Preface”. The plant metaphor from the opening of the Kokinshū Prefaces is replaced with
the “Great Preface’s” famed statement “[Waka] poetry is that to which what is intently on the mind goes.”
This crucial dictum of Chinese poetics had not been included in the Mana Preface, but Arikuni
nevertheless pounds on this weighty formula in his opening line. Also, Arikuni’s piece puts a greater
emphasis on poetry as a “local” Japanese custom [kokufu] “used in smaller communities and larger
states,” and the Mana Prefaces’s explanation of the relation between poetry and the psychological state of
its author at the moment of composition is further developed. The “Great Preface” had claimed that—

45 This refers to the Indian mountain where the Buddha preached the Lotus Sutra. “Ryōzen” is an abbreviation for “Ryōjuzen”
[鶴驚山], an appellation that evoked the eagle-head shape of the mountain.
lives and composes. But the *Mana* Preface had eliminated the diagnostic and critical potential ascribed to poetry in the “Great Preface” and had instead toned it down to a general interdependence between stimulus and response, between circumstances of composition and corresponding poem. Arikuni’s emphatic description of poetic moods that go with particular circumstances such as mourning or exile, travel and parting or seasonal stimuli such as warblers or blossoms is an expansion on the *Mana* Preface’s simplified stimulus-response theory. Thus, the first part of Arikuni’s preface harks back to claims of the Chinese “Great Preface” that had been left out in the *Mana* Preface; it also consolidates some of the alterations the *Mana* Preface had boldly imposed onto the “Great Preface.”

The second section of the preface evokes the historical origin of poetry in the Age of the Gods and adds interesting twists to the account of the *Mana* Preface; however, the text returns immediately to the timeless psychology of composition by offering an analytic etymology of the term “waka” that the *Mana* Preface had not capitalized on: “songs” [utaka] sung “in response” [kotae/wa] is a welcome shorthand for the art of *waka* as a vocal outpouring of emotion as well as communal enterprise. Then, in an interesting return to the discussion of the origins of poetry, the preface silently skips over the *Mana* Preface’s claim that Susanō ought to be credited with the first poem in Japanese history and jumps instead to Gyōki and Bodaisennō, who had replaced Emperor Nintoku und the Korean envoy Wani in Fujiwara no Nochō’s preface discussed above. Again, the *waka* tradition is connected to Buddhist progenitors. Unlike their secular poetry colleagues who would have been moved to write poetry by flowers and birds, they find inspiration in their longings for “Spirit Mountain,” in remembrance of the Buddha’s teaching. Accordingly Arikuni’s preface calls for a new era in poetry which should emanate from allegorical “flowers,” such as the “Flower of the Law,” the Lotus Sutra. Arikuni suggests replacing the nature enjoyed at excursions and banquets with a poetic search for the “nature” of Buddhist truth.

The preface is a *tour de force*. It starts with a weighty and vague gesture from the “Great Preface,” worshipping a literalness that almost reprimands the *Mana* Preface for its omissions. It then continues to declare *waka* the discharge of religious yearning and finally proposes to literally “transplant” the practice
of writing *waka* into the Buddhist landscape of the *Lotus Sutra*. Arikuni’s preface beautifully illustrates that the genre of Heian *waka* prefaces not just regurgitated stock phrases from the *Mana* Preface, but put its rhetoric to astonishing new uses. Arikuni’s piece speaks vividly to the *Mana* Preface’s potential for translation into radically different contexts; though still basing himself on the rhetoric of the *Mana* Preface Arikuni abducts poetry into Buddhist realms by allegorizing its textual surface. His remark that nobody has so far chosen the “Flower of the Law” as a poetic topic shows his awareness of the novelty of his preface and the accompanying poems.

In the Late Heian period, the rhetoric of the *Mana* Preface was also twisted into amusingly secular directions. A preface by the Late Heian poet Fujiwara no Munemitsu 藤原宗光, composed in the fourth month of 1104, is an entertaining illustration of this tendency.

早夏於鳥羽院同詠郭公詩和歌一首并序

Composing together on “Voices of cuckoos are few” at the Toba Palace in early summer: A *waka* with preface

夫郭公者自古以来好事之輩

The cuckoo has since ancient times been the companion of “great things,”

以之為翰墨之謀

whether you take him as go-between with brush and ink

以之抽雅頌之義

or in order to instantiate the principles of the “Odes” and “Hymns”.

愛一聲纔聞

Thus, when finally hearing its voice,

望雲端兮顧思

one gazes to the end of the clouds with galloping longings,

餘情未飽

and if the lingering desires are not yet satiated,

倚林間兮傾耳

one turns to the woods and pricks up one’s ears.

于時侍射山者

At such a time we, a dozen fellows

十有餘輩

in the service of Retired Emperor [Shirakawa],

屬九牧之無事

belonging to those Kyûshû officials with time on our hands,

展五華而考槃

deployed the “five blossoms” [mats] and set up a hermit residence.

初命燕飲

First a drinking banquet was ordered,

唇染荆南之露

during which lips were moistened with wine-dew from Southern Regions,

後詠倭語

then we chanted poems of Yamato;

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47 This probably refers to the 鳥羽殿, the Toba Palace that Emperor Shirakawa built in the Fushimi area South of Kyoto after becoming Retired Emperor in 1086.

48 Together with the “Airas” [風], the “Odes” [雅], and “Hymns” [頌] are the three parts of the *Classic of Poetry* and belong to the “Six Principles” of poetry [rikagetsu]

49 [Ch. kaopan, J. kōhan]. The meaning goes back to a poem in the “Airs of Wei” 衛風, of the *Classic of Poetry*. The poem relates a hermit’s happy life in reclusion; According to the authoritative Mao interpretation, it was intended as critique of Duke Zhuang of Wei, who ruled less wisely than his father and caused many a worthy official to retire into reclusion.
and our diction followed the “airs” of Hitomaro.
Since voices of cuckoos were few,
We ended up taking that as our topic.
To entertain ourselves
we did not just record the excursion of our bunch of “phoenixes of the Immortals’ Cave”
but also had two types of “stimuli”50: poems and wine.
Also we wanted to get to know the Toba Palace in Yamashiro
and had indeed a merry time among benevolent mountains and wise waters 51
The lyrics say.”52

Munemitsu joyfully contradicts the Mana Preface’s lament that waka poetry is abused as a facilitator of “good affairs” and amorous exchanges.53 Here the cuckoo, known for its voice that calls forth inescapable yearning, is the incentive to composition. In the same situation the “stimulus” of the “Six Principles” is watered down to wine—though not women—and song. Also, as tongue-in-cheek name-dropping, three other of the “Six Principles” are mentioned—“odes”, “hymns” and “airs”—whose high-minded pretenses stand in comic contrast to the consciously casual scene. The party is pleasurable and spontaneous; the partygoers, posing under the comical pseudonym of “phoenixes of the Immortals’ Cave,” have a good time writing waka and decide to write a preface only on the spur of the moment. Not only is the topic somewhat randomly chosen—they take what is at hand; but the scarcity of the voice of cuckoos is in itself an undeniably anticlimactic topic. Longing to write poetry comes from the call of the cuckoo, not from the perception of its absence. In line with the comical tone that enjoys blending the cultured with the vulgar, the preface closes on a slapstick move. The moral geography of the wise who enjoy streams and the righteous who rejoice in mountains is a kanbun cliché from the Analects, which already in the Kaifūsō had become an idiomatic expression for an ideal landscape contemplated by refined Confucian gentlemen, most often the participants of the very imperial outings eulogized in the Kaifūsō poems.

50 Also one of the “Six Principles” [rikugi] of poetry.
51 See Analects 6.23.
52 Fusō kobunshū: 6.
53 See the Mana Preface: “Those infatuated with love affairs, used [waka poems] as ‘messengers of flowers and birds’ [to their beloved] and those begging for food used them as a go-between for their daily subsistence” 有好色之家 以此為花鳥之便 乞食之客 以此為活計之媒介 Katagiri Op. cit., 292-3
Munemitsu, however, adopts a less solemn tone so that for once, Confucius is pleasantly abused for having a truly good and merry time.

Again, echoes from the Mana preface—such as "love birds," the joking evocation of the "Six Principles," Hitomaro as the guiding spirit of waka poetry—populate a narrative of merry intoxication and adjust aptly to the venue. In Arikuni’s and Munemitsu’s prefaces, pieces from the Mana Preface are fitted into new semantic environments. Arikuni twists them to make waka into the mouthpiece of Buddhist devotion, while Munemitsu styles them into the unbridled side-effects of a drinking party of idle officials.

V. The Mana Preface as Precedent for Waka Prefaces: Puns and Poetics

Apart from the creative adjustment of passages from the Mana Preface, some claims of the Mana Preface lived on in the genre of waka prefaces as metaphors and puns. Metaphors such as the plant metaphor in the beginning of the preface provided a tempting opportunity to conflate landscape and season with poetics and composition. An example by Fujiwara no Aritsuna (-1082)\(^4\) can illustrate this gesture:

暮春詠落華埋路和歌
治曆之年
陽春之侯
蓬薦侍臣二十許輩
忽乘禁掖之休假
遙指郊外而歷覽
蓋屬諸憂之無為
賞三春之可樂也
于時
和風動枝落花埋路
宿雪封而難過
訪去跡於歌篳之聲
濃霧鏡以易迷
任前程於管馬之智者也

"Composing on 'Fallen blossoms cover the path’ in late spring"

During the Jiryaku era (1065-69),
at the time when spring was at its brightest,
some twenty Palace attendants
spontaneously took advantage of a day off from the Palace
and headed for the far outskirts of the city for an excursion.
They refrained from giving themselves to all kind of sorrows
and could rejoice in the joys of the three months of springtide.
At that time
the gentle breeze [or: our Japanese custom of writing waka] moved
the branches, and fallen blossoms [or: poems] covered the path.
When remaining snow blocked the way and it was difficult to pass,
we inquired about the traces we had left behind with the voice of the
song-singing warbler;
and when dense fog closed in on us and it was easy to get lost,
we entrusted the road ahead to the instinct of our harnessed horses.

\(^4\) Aritsuna came from a family of Confucian officials. He reached the position of Head of the State Academy. The preface is preserved in the mid-12th century Honchō zoku monzui.
Inspired by the precedent of Hitomaro’s secret matters, 
we wanted to record the overwhelming vista of the blossoming trees
The lyrics read:"$^{55}$

On one level, the preface talks about the charms of spring and about natural instincts: Spring is at its best, a bunch of palace officials take off on an improvised excursion and end up writing poetry about the marvelous scene. They are led on by the superior instincts of other living creatures that are more receptive to the vernal landscape: The singing warblers and the horses make sure that the party does not get lost on its way. However, at second sight, the preface superposes a poetological landscape on its natural counterpart. The “gentle wind” can also be read as the “custom of Japanese poetry”, which moves the branches, so that “blossoms”—which according to the plant metaphor of the *Mana* preface are manifested poems—fall on the path. Although the horses have truly no place in the superimposed poetic landscape, the song-singing warbler is both the creature sharing the same landscape with Aritzuna’s company, but it is also the bird from the *Mana* Preface$^{56}$, which both sings its own “poetry” and inspires humans to do the same. When the party records the “overwhelming vista of the blossoming trees,” the blossoms on the trees are, again, both the flowers in immediate sight and also the recorded poems themselves, as they sprout from the “soil of the heart”—in the words of the *Mana* Preface. To continue the double architecture of the scene, the natural warblers and horses help out the humans’ lack of instinct to move through the natural landscape, but the poets are also guided by one particular human instinct through the poetic landscape, namely the teachings of Hitomaro. Horses and warblers guide by natural instinct, whereas Hitomaro guides by precedent and inspiration, producing the summation of a cultivated, educated instinct of poetic creativity moving through its own subject matter—landscape.

VI. Conclusion and Outlook

We have used what we might call the “back door” to the Kokinshū prefaces to get insight into a very particular part of the reception history of Kokinshū poetics by focusing on the Mana Preface and the Heian genre of waka prefaces it engendered. As I have argued, waka prefaces did not just repeat expressions from the Mana Preface, but constantly mobilized their original significance to claim waka variously as embodiment of sacred speech, as revered Japanese custom in proud awareness of its Chinese counterpart, or just in order to have a good time in a landscape that houses a double architecture of nature and waka poetics.

The early Japanese textual record is replete with interfaces between Chinese, Japanese and Sino-Japanese phrases and concepts, but the genre of waka prefaces occupies a very peculiar spot. As a genre cast in kanbun diction prefaceing a waka poem that required the adaptation of its diction and poetics to both the waka poetic world and kanbun diction, it constitutes a hybrid niche among the various literary idioms of Heian Japan. Put differently, the genre was nothing more than an artificially created interface that reflected on waka from its linguistic outside and was always caught, as Fujiwara no Kiyosuke emphasized, in the tension between the flavor of wabun content and the façade of kanbun diction. Tracing the Mana Preface’s afterlife in Heian waka prefaces has provided a rare opportunity to reflect on a thought-provoking genre, which by its linguistic constellation was forced to be much more hybrid than other Heian genres, in which the wabun and kanbun decorum were kept more strictly apart.