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# *Kinuginu* – Dawn Songs in the Japanese Court Society of the Middle Ages Some Aspects on Reality and Fiction

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## Key words

*Kinuginu* dawn songs reality and fiction comparative literature

## Abstract

Dawn songs, in which a man visits a woman, spends the night with her, and the next morning they sing of the pain of separation, are a form of literature that exists in many cultures around the world. They have always been a popular genre in the German-speaking world as well, but it is almost impossible to find a connection with the real world in the earlier surviving songs from the 12th to 15th centuries.

In contrast, in Japanese court society historical records show that dawn songs, referred to as *Kinuginu*, were a phenomenon rooted in real customs. Not only were the poems exchanged between real people, but they were also sung on themes given in singing contests in court society. The exchange of these poems was part of the wedding ritual. It should be noted, however, that much of what is considered common knowledge today is based on descriptions in literary works. Cases are also known from historical sources in which the woman visits the man, contrary to the generally accepted idea that the man visits, and the woman waits.

While these examples do not directly change the study of the dawn songs, we argue that it is worthwhile to look at the society that produced these literary works from a different angle.

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Just as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is popular today in both the East and the West, dawn songs were an important part of the medieval repertoire of popular songs and entertainment. The origins of this genre, as Alois Wolf notes,<sup>1</sup> must have been diverse, and the voluminous guide *EOS* shows that it can be found in many cultures of the world.<sup>2</sup>

The German *Tagelieder* of the Middle Ages are almost regarded as fiction. Following a typical pattern, a man (usually a knight) enters the bedchamber of a lady of high rank and spends the night with her. However, he must leave the lady before dawn breaks and other people begin to wake up, because otherwise he will not only lose his honor but his life will be endangered.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the *Tagelied*, which tells a story of grief over the separation of man and woman, is hardly to be regarded as a song in which those affected presuppose their own action as facts. There are *Tagelieder* that have been passed on to us by the names of noblemen, but no one has evidence whether they are based on real experiences of their authors. Not even a hint of the occasion on which they were sung is found, nor do we know whether these songs were really due to the men of rank.

In the real world, it would not have been unusual for a man and a woman to spend the night together without being married. It must also have happened countless times that powerful men had mistresses in addition to their wives, who were often married for political reasons. But a documentation of actual love affairs, which would suggest the origin of a *Tagelied*, can nowhere be found. Even in the case of poets such as Ulrich von Liechtenstein or Oswald von Wolkenstein, for whom so many life testimonies have become known to us and who also sang many *Tagelieder*, one finds no verifiable connection at all between their real lives and their literary activities.<sup>4</sup> In medieval society the logic of male supremacy was not questioned. Therefore, it is unlikely that the wives of powerful men would have had the same 'freedom'. Occasional cases of women's wielding power are documented or are subject of literary works precisely because they were the exception. Most wives of powerful

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<sup>1</sup> Alois Wolf: *Einleitung*. In: *Tagelieder des deutschen Mittelalters*. Ausgewählt, übersetzt und kommentiert von Martina Backes. Einleitung von Alois Wolf. Stuttgart: Reclam 1992. p. 9–81, here p. 11. Wolf speaks of 'polygenesis'.

<sup>2</sup> *EOS. An Enquiry into the Theme of Lover's Meetings and Partings at Dawn in Poetry*. Edited by Arthur T. Hatto. London/The Hague/Paris: Mouton 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Joachim Bumke: *Courtly Culture. Literature and Society in the High Middle Ages*. Translated by Thomas Dunlap. Woodstock/New York/London 2000, p. 392–394 [J. B.: *Höfische Kultur. Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag 1986, p. 551–553].

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Franz Viktor Spechtler: *Die Urkunden-Regesten zu Ulrich von Liechtenstein*. In: Franz Viktor Spechtler/Barbara Maier (ed.): *Ich – Ulrich von Liechtenstein. Literatur und Politik im Mittelalter*. Klagenfurt: Wieser 1999, p. 441–493; Anton Schwob/Ute Monika Schwob (ed.): *Die Lebenszeugnisse Oswalds von Wolkenstein. Edition und Kommentar*. Bde. 1–5. Wien/Köln/Weimar: Böhlau 1998/2001/2004/2011/2013.

husbands were expected to produce legitimate children. At least, this is the prevailing opinion today.

## 2

The medieval Japanese dawn song *Kinuginu* is also a genre in which a man and a woman, who have spent the night together, sing of their pain as they say goodbye to each other. Here, however, we find a major difference from the German *Tagelied*: it is a historical fact that men and women in medieval court society exchanged songs after spending the night together. The term *Kinuginu* originated from the practice of men and women using their clothes as bedding when they slept together during the night. Sometimes they even exchanged parts of their clothes as they parted.

Unlike in the German-speaking world, no single poet is known to have sung songs under his own name as both a man and a woman. The songs essentially have the form of a dialogue, with a distinction made between the man's song and the woman's song. However, there are also a number of songs that have been passed down anonymously. Since each song generally consists of only 31 Japanese characters (roughly 31 syllables), many of them are based on metaphors, allusions, or on classical knowledge. It would be fair to say that the *Tagelieder*, which are in stanzaic form, are more descriptive and concrete than their Japanese counterparts.

If a man and a woman, who do not live together want to spend a night together, they must agree on this beforehand. This should be done in the following way: First, the man sends the woman he likes a love song in which he expresses his love and passion for her in a refined way. If the woman (or, if she is young and inexperienced, her family and helpers) appreciates the poem positively, she sends a reply.<sup>5</sup> After the successful song exchange, the man may come in to the woman's house late at night.

But how did a man fall in love with a woman in the first place? In court society, women did not bare their faces to strangers. In other words, it was definitely not the women's appearance which led men to take further action. Jin'ichi Konishi elaborates on this as follows:

Sometimes a man fell in love with a woman because of her very good reputation, sometimes the beautiful appearance of her brother was the reason. More often it was the case that a man became enthusiastic about a woman's beautiful handwriting. So, a lady with

<sup>5</sup> This exchange was obviously complicated. It occurred that a woman felt addressed by a man's letter but did not reply immediately because she feared being considered a fallen woman. The man knew this, and so he wrote her again and again. If the woman was still not interested, she ignored his letters, but possibly she sent a rejection letter. Even if the letter was a rejection, it was a response, and this could mean that the woman intended to continue negotiations. I sincerely thank Ms. Tomomi Yoshino for her personal clarifications. My acquaintance was made possible by the kindness of Mr. Yuji Nawata.

bad handwriting would not find a good match. It was not merely a hobby that made women eagerly practice writing. Even when man and woman began to exchange songs, they did not always achieve happiness. A woman often ignored a man's letter on the grounds that he was too uneducated to suit her. However, if the man's poem was excellent but the woman's reply was poor, the man could simply end the relationship. This is one of the reasons why court men and women were very interested in poetry.<sup>6</sup>

### 3

There are two types of *Kinuginu* songs, the Japanese Dawn songs.<sup>7</sup> The first type is a song meant to express regret over the dawn separation, and the second type is a song to be written in the *kinuginu* letter and sent to the lover. The former is often seen as expressing the pain of parting and probably has more in common with other cultures than the latter. As an example, there is a scene in the *Ukifune* chapter of *the Tale of Genji* in which the man (Niou no Miya) and the woman (Ukifune) part in the morning without an end to their sad feeling.

“What shall I do? These tears run on ahead / And plunge the road I must go into utter darkness.” (Niou no Miya)

“So narrow my sleeves, they cannot take my tears. / How then shall I make bold to keep you with me?” (Ukifune)<sup>8</sup>

The song of Niou no Miya laments the sadness of parting and says that the tears make it impossible to keep the way home in sight. This conforms to the typical formulaic pattern of male songs. Ukifune sadly replies, her tight sleeves cannot stop the goodbye, for she cannot hold back her tears. It is also a lament about Ukifune's low status. It is important to note that the poem is followed by the following report: “A high wind roared through the trees and the dawn was heavy with frost. Even the touch of their robes [ *'kinuginu'* (T. T.)], in the moment of parting, seemed cold.”<sup>9</sup>

This is unmistakably based on the anonymous song (no. 637) in *Kokinshū*, the oldest imperial anthology of Japanese poetry:

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<sup>6</sup> Jin'ichi Konishi; *Kobun no dokkai*. Tokyo: Chikuma shobo 2010 [小西甚一『古文の読解』東京：筑摩書房2010年], p. 91-92.

<sup>7</sup> In the following account, I owe much to the contribution of Tadaharu Fujioka: *Kinuginu no uta*. In: *Murasaki* 41 (2004) [藤岡忠美「きぬぎぬの歌」『むらさき』41 (2004年)], p. 82-86.

<sup>8</sup> Murasaki Shikibu: *The Tale of Genji*. Translated with an Introduction by Edward G. Seidensticker. Boston/Rutland/Tokyo: Tuttle 1978 [First published 1976], p. 985.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

“When brightly, brightly, the first light of a new day appears in the sky, with what feelings of sadness we don our separate robes!”<sup>10</sup>

A great achievement of Tadaharu Fujioka was to show that the word *kinuginu* is not found in any other poem from the Heian period (894–1185) except this one.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, he was able to show convincingly that the expression *kinuginu no uta* originated from this poem. This emotional expression did not exist at that time, but arose from the increased tendency toward poetic embellishment in the later period.<sup>12</sup> This type of song seems to have more in common with the German *Tagelieder* than the other type, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

#### 4

In the surviving anthologies, in the most common type of song a man and a woman both send a poem to each other from home after spending the night together. It thus belongs to the latter of Fujioka’s classifications. A woman’s response is less often included in the collections. Perhaps one – editors rather than authors – refrained from including her song for reasons that were not obvious.

An intimate relationship, as was and is common between a man and a woman, was often strained as well. In Chapter 143 of *The Pillow Book*, a collection of essays by Sei Shōnagon (966? – 1025?), who lived at the same time as Murasaki Shikibu (after 970? –after 1019?), the author of *The Tale of Genji*, the author describes the feelings of a woman who is anxiously awaiting a man’s writing after they have spent their first night together.

“[Indeed the heart is a creature amazingly prone to lurching.] It even lurches in sympathy with another woman when the next-morning letter from a man who stayed with her for the first time the night before is late in arriving.”<sup>13</sup>

Yūko Kawamura presents the constellation as follows: The man leaves the woman’s house around four o’clock in the morning. It is desired that the man’s love song be delivered to the

<sup>10</sup> *Kokin Wakashū. The First Imperial Anthology of Japanese Poetry*. Translated and annotated by Helen Craig McCullough. With *Tosa Nikki* and *Shinsen Waka*. Stanford: Stanford University Press 1985, p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> ‘*Kinuginu* (衣衣)’ actually means ‘robe-robe’. On the other hand, however, the word ‘*gochō* (後朝)’, which means the morning after an important ceremony, existed very early. Originally, this word was read as ‘*kōchō/gochō*’, but it is assumed that it was transferred to denote the dawn after a man and a woman spent the night together, so ‘*kinuginu*’ became the reading of the word (後朝).

<sup>12</sup> Fujioka, p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> Sei Shōnagon: *The Pillow Book*. Translated with Notes by Meredith McKinney. London: Penguin 2006, p. 149.

woman by a messenger by eight o'clock and no later than noon. If the man's letter does not arrive by noon, it means that he is no longer interested.<sup>14</sup>

In chapter 181 of *The Pillow Book*, we see a man who has just returned from his lover and immediately writes a song:

"It's delightful to see someone who's a great ladies' man, and is pursuing numerous love affairs, arriving home at dawn from who knows what night-time tryst. Sleepy though you can see he feels, he nevertheless sits down and draws the inkstone up to write his next-morning letter to her. See how carefully he grinds the ink to a fine consistency, and how tenderly he bends to the task of writing, not merely dashing off whatever springs to mind but putting himself heart and soul into what he writes."<sup>15</sup>

Sei Shōnagon describes the seriousness of the man with humor. It is difficult to say how much of this is true since it is unlikely that Sei Shōnagon wrote what she actually saw with her own eyes. However, there is no doubt that it reflects upon the customs of the time.

In order to find references to reality in the *Kinuginu* songs, we should select the poems that indicate that the author returned from a woman or that he met a woman and sent her a song the next day. Fujioka counts a total of 40 poems of this type, which are included in the most famous collections commissioned by the emperors: *Kokinshū* (913–14), *Gosenshū* (957–59), *Shūishū* (1005–07), *Goshūishū* (1086), *Kinyōshū* (1126), *Shikashū* (1151), *Senzaishū* (1188), and *Shinkokinshū* (1205).<sup>16</sup> Among these, the *Gosenshū* is the most extensive with 13 poems. According to Fujioka, this poetry was popular during the period of the first *Kokinshū* and the second *Gosenshū*, but in the following period from the *Kinyōshū* to the *Shinkokinshū*, it experienced a decline and had passed its prime.<sup>17</sup> The question arises whether this decline also means a real decline in men's attendance to women. Fujioka, however, does not pose this question.

As mentioned earlier, many of these songs have become known to us through the men's names, and most of the women's responses, which were probably written in return, have been omitted. Fujioka cites an example of the *Gosenshū*: a man and a woman exchange the *Kinuginu* song, which he assumes is due to the nature of the event.<sup>18</sup>

After visiting a woman:

"If there was no dawn, I wouldn't have gotten up and had a hard time farewell in the midst of morning dew." (Ki no Tsurayuki [866? – 945?]) No. 862

<sup>14</sup> Yūko Kawamura: *Ōchō no koi no tegami tachi*. Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan 2009 [川村裕子 『王朝の恋の手紙たち』 東京：角川学芸出版 2009年], p. 105–107.

<sup>15</sup> Sei Shōnagon: *The Pillow Book*, p. 176.

<sup>16</sup> Fujioka, p. 84.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

Answer song by an anonymous woman:

“I don’t know your true intention to get up and go home, but before the morning dew disappears, the sadness of parting makes me lose my mind and feel depressed.” No. 863<sup>19</sup>

Tsurayuki’s poem is also found in the *Tsurayukishū* (anthology of Tsurayuki’s poems: middle of the 10th century) and the *Shūishū*, but the response song is not documented in either collection. According to Tomomi Yoshino, two explanations are possible for this:

(1) The editors of the *Gosenshū* discovered the answer song on their own and included it in their collection.

(2) The editors of the *Gosenshū* wrote this response song themselves.

It would not be surprising if the song were actually the woman’s response to Tsurayuki’s song because there is a close relationship between Tsurayuki’s poem and the response (such as the motif to ‘get up’ and the reading of ‘morning dew’ as *shira-tsuyu*). However, since the song is found only in the *Gosenshū*, despite its excellent technique, we cannot exclude the possibility that it was composed by the editors.

Since ancient times, song poetry was considered a form of education that nobles acquired at court. So, there was a lot of work on using old known poems to create new ones. Sometimes, two songs that were unrelated to each other, were put together and then turned into a song exchange between a man and a woman. For example, in paragraph 25 of the *Tales of Ise*, two songs by Ariwara no Narihira (825 – 880) and Ono no Komachi (? – ?), which happen to be next to each other in the *Kokinshū* (nos. 622, 623), are presented as if they had exchanged these songs.

“Once a man sent this poem to a rather coy lady who seemed unable to make up her mind about meeting him:

On nights when I sleep without meeting you, / My sleeves are wetter / Than when of a morning / I have pressed through bamboo grass / Crossing the fields in autumn.

The coquettish lady responded,

In this bay / There is no seaweed. / Does he not know it – / The fisherman who persists in coming / Until his legs grow weary?”<sup>2021</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Own translation by T. T.

<sup>20</sup> *Tales of Ise. Lyrical Episodes from Tenth-Century Japan*. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by Helen Craig McCullough. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press 1968, p. 91.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Kokin Wakashū*, p. 140: “[Ariwara no Narihira] My sleeves were wetter that night when we failed to meet than when of a morn, I have parted bamboo grass traversing autumnal fields. [Ono no Komachi] There is no seaweed to be gathered in this bay. Does he not know it – the fisher who comes and comes until his legs grow weary?” Although the English wording differs, the original Japanese text of both the male and female poems is nearly identical in both works.

In the lyric poetry of medieval Japan, the manner of individual transmission can be traced to a certain extent, and there are quite different patterns. Perhaps this could provide an impetus for thinking about a comparative study.

## 5

As mentioned earlier, the number of *Kinuginu* songs in the imperial anthologies is not significant, and there are doubts as to whether it is a real exchange of songs. However, an example can be found in the *Diary of Izumi Shikibu*. The diary includes 147 songs exchanged between Prince Atsumichi (981–1007) and Izumi Shikibu (978? – ?), and describes the subtle ups and downs of their love affair. We learn that the exchange of poems was a regular part of their lives.<sup>22</sup>

[...] and at daybreak he returned. Next day's letter:  
 In what way are you thinking about me? I feel anxiety –  
 To you it may be a commonplace to speak of love, / But my feeling this morning –  
 To nothing can it be compared!  
 She answered:  
 Whether commonplace or not – Thoughts do not dwell upon it  
 For the first time I am caught in the toils.”<sup>23</sup>

However, it would have to be questioned whether this *Diary of Izumi Shikibu* was written by the author herself and to what extent its contents correspond to the facts.

## 6

The alternation of *Kinuginu* songs was an integral part of the wedding ritual. A man and a woman who were once strangers exchanged songs until the mood between them rose high enough. Then the man visits the woman. When this occurs three nights in a row, the marriage is considered consummated. The account of *The Kagerō Diary* in this regard is well known. First, Fujiwara no Kaneie (929 – 990) sends a poem to the woman whose name is unknown and who is therefore referred to only as 'Michitsuna's mother' (936? – 995). She replies with a song. This ritual is repeated several times, then goes as it will. The morning

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<sup>22</sup> Fujioka, p. 84, 85.

<sup>23</sup> *The Diary of Izumi Shikibu*. In: *Diaries of Court Ladies of Old Japan. Lady Murasaki Shikibu and Others*. Introduction by Amy Lowell. Translated by Annie Shepley Omori and Kochi Doi. Mineola/New York: Dover 2003 [First published 1920]. p. 149–196, here p. 153.

after their first night together, Kaneie sends a *Kinuginu* song.

“[...] and so on, these serious missives went back and forth until – what kind of morning was it?<sup>24</sup>

Waiting the while till evening flows in flowing tears enough to fill the Ōi River where the logs flow down.” (Kaneie)

“Brooding on many things, dusk falls on Ōi River where the logs flow, without being aware of it, my tears flow and fall.” (Michitsuna’s mother)<sup>25</sup>

According to Fujioka, Kaneie’s poem laments the long and painful wait for the night until they can meet again. But the expression was just a standard formula for when one liked the other. The representation of the second day is missing. On the third day, they exchange formulaic songs again. Kaneie’s visit on three consecutive days is described in terms of marriage.<sup>26</sup> On the third day, the woman presented her ‘husband’ to her family, thus the marriage was conventionally recognized.

How often these acts of marriage took place is not known and probably cannot be determined. However, as we have seen so far, it cannot be denied that in Japanese court society, relationships between men and women were initiated by the exchange of songs, even if this was only one of several possibilities. It happened, moreover, not infrequently that a man had a marriage relationship with several women at the same time. As for the women, it is only natural that they waited for the next man because the (marital) relationship was lost if the man did not visit them anymore. This was a *de facto* divorce. It was not considered reprehensible to marry more than one man or to be with more than one man during one’s lifetime. This was very different from the European view on chastity of the same time period – and later, occasionally until the first half of the 20th century.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *The Kagerō Diary. A Woman’s Autobiographical Text from Tenth-Century Japan*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Sonja Arntzen. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan 1997. Arntzen’s comment on the spot (p. 60): “*what kind of morning* – With this indirect phrase she indicates that this is the morning after they have first slept together. It is the content of his poem that answers her rhetorical question. He is no longer pleading for admittance to her presence; now he is smitten and cannot wait to see her again.”

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61, 63.

<sup>26</sup> Fujioka, p. 85.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *The First European Description of Japan, 1585. A Critical English-language edition of Striking Contrasts in the Customs of Europe and Japan by Luis Frois, S.J.* Translated from the Portuguese original and edited and annotated by Richard K. Danford, Robin D. Gill, and Daniel T. Reff. With a critical introduction by Daniel T. Reff. London/New York: Routledge 2015, p. 58–82; Tsuneichi Miyamoto: *The Forgotten Japanese. Encounters with Rural and Folklore*. Translated by Jeffrey S. Irish. Berkeley: Stone Bridge 2010, *passim*; Robert J. Smith & Ella Lury Wiswell: *The Women of Suye Mura*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press 1982, *passim*.

This custom also influenced the rituals of the court aristocracy. The 49th chapter *Yadorigi* of *The Tale of Genji* contains a detailed account of the wedding ceremony between Prince Niou no Miya and Roku no Kimi (Yūgiri's daughter). Beginning with the first night the two lovers spent together and the morning after, the writing of the *Kinuginu* song, the sending of the messenger, and the girl's response, the story continues with the second and third nights. In the wedding ceremony, the *Kinuginu* song occupies an indispensable place as an essential part of elegant manners. The poem written by Niou no Miya is not mentioned, but it is noteworthy that the lady's response was actually written by her foster mother, Ochiba no Miya. In each case, if the man and/or woman who were to be married were still young, a suitably experienced person wrote the poem on their behalf. *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes* tells of the wedding night of Fujiwara no Nagaie (1005 –1064), 14 years old, the sixth son of the most powerful man at the time, Fujiwara no Michinaga (966 – 1028), and the daughter (1007? – 1021) of Fujiwara no Yukinari (972 – 1028), 12 years old. The tale tells us the following:

“Afraid that something might go wrong, Yukinari and his wife spent the night near the bridal chamber in sleepless agitation.

Nagaie's poem arrived shortly after his departure at dawn:

Why did I lie abed this morning, / Unwilling to get up, / And once arisen / Why do I  
await nightfall, / Impatient to go to bed?

Yukinari thought it was clearly Michinaga's style.

[...]

The young bride was much embarrassed, but her parents thought that the reply ought to be in her hand, and her mother kept after her until she set down a few bashful lines.

I have indeed heard / That twilight / Gathers but slowly / On tranquil spring days /  
When the sky is pale blue.

When Michinaga saw the poem, he thought it might have passed for a specimen of Yukinari's own writing, altered just enough to suggest a youthful brush; and his admiration was beyond description.”<sup>28</sup>

The poems of Nagaie were written by his father Michinaga, those of Yukinari's daughter by her mother. As mentioned earlier, a man's visit to a woman three nights in a row brought about the marriage. It is subsequently assumed that the exchange of *Kinuginu* songs among the higher nobility was considered part of a ritual, or at least that there was such a practice.

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<sup>28</sup> *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes. Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period.* Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by William H. and Helen Craig McCullough. Stanford: Stanford University Press 1980, p. 483.

## 7

I have shown that there are two kinds of *Kinuginu* songs: First, those composed by a man and a woman on occasion of their separation, and second, those composed by a man after his return home and sent to his lover (and to which the woman responds). A third type of *Kinuginu* song was composed during a poetry contest. All participants were given a topic and competed against each other on the spot, so that one could watch to see who would do better or worse. This type of poetry competition was very popular in the aristocratic society of medieval Japan. From the diaries of many nobles that have survived to the present day, it is clear that such poetry contests were frequent. It is therefore assumed that many of the poems that remain were sung at such events. That these songs were sung was therefore a reality, but it is questionable whether the contents of the songs reflect reality. Rather, the content should be regarded as fiction although it is not impossible that a participant sang his poem at the poetry contest in memory of an actual experience.

Since the *Kokinshū*, the four seasons, festivals, separation, love, and sorrow have always been the themes of poems. It is easy to imagine that songs sung on these themes were more likely to be recorded and then passed on, since the singing festival was an official event. It is also known that songs were sung in private gatherings. In any case, these poetry contests were not just private exchanges, but they had a ritual character and were important in court society. This might suggest that there is perhaps a commonality to be found in the transmission of poetry that transcends cultural differences.

## 8

In the situations described so far, men were always the main actors. The women were the ones who waited. But there are nevertheless records of women who acted ‘actively’, whereby it remains unknown whether this activity was based on their own will. The following account is based on the research of Hideki Takahashi.<sup>29</sup>

Fujiwara no Tsunemitsu (1212–1274), who was born into a high-ranking noble family, began keeping a diary *Minkeiki* at the age of 15, when he was allowed to enter the palace.

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<sup>29</sup> Hideki Takahashi: *Kamakura jidai no ren'ai jijou*. In: *Nihon rekishi*. Bd. 860 (January 2020) [高橋秀樹「鎌倉時代の恋愛事情」『日本歴史』860号(2020年1月)], p. 42–48. Cf. also Yōsuke Onoe: *Minkeiki to rekiki hinamiki*. In: Fumihiko Gomi (ed.): *Nikki ni chūsei wo yomu*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan 1998 [尾上陽介「『民経記』と暦記・日次記」五味文彦(編)『日記に中世を読む』東京: 吉川弘文館1998年], p. 51–83; Yōsuke Onoe: *Chūsei no nikki no sekai*. Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha 2003 [尾上陽介『中世の日記の世界』東京: 山川出版社2003年]; Hitoshi Matsuzono: *Nikki ni miurareta hitobito*. Kyoto: Rinsen shoten 2017 [松蘭斎『日記に魅入られた人々』京都: 臨川書店2017年].

The woman in question first appears on the fourth day of the first month in 1233.<sup>30</sup> On that day Tsunemitsu did not feel well and did not go to duty. It was such a rainy night as if the clothes would also get damp, but the fragrance of plum blossoms outside his window stirred him. When he woke up in the morning to cold air, the woman was about to leave. The next day he still stayed at home, and Tsunemitsu's feelings became more intense. Late at night she came to see him, but the next morning she left. There were no more visits, so on the 20th day of the first month he complained that he could not see her for a long time. When he received a letter from the woman the next day, he was so happy that tears wet his sleeves.

It was not until the seventh day of the second month that he was able to see her again. From that day on, the relationship between Tsunemitsu and the woman is written on the back of the diary in the form of paper roll. He will have written on the back what he could not or would not write on the front.<sup>31</sup> The woman visited him six nights in the second month, seven nights in the third month, and 13 nights in the fourth month. On the days he did not see her, he wrote about his painful feelings. Sometimes they arranged to meet again. On the second day of the third month, she came together with another woman.

A change occurred on the fourth day of the fifth month: Tsunemitsu asked her to stay with him for a while, and she stayed with Tsunemitsu until the seventh day of the fifth month. During that time, she had a bedroom to herself. From that time on, she kept coming to stay with him for one or more days and spent more than half of all the nights in a month with him, 20 nights in the fifth month and 17 nights in the sixth month. However, he also fulfilled his official duties: He went on duty for 21 days in the fifth month. On some days he could hardly talk to her, even though she lived with him.

We do not know the identity of this woman, but she is repeatedly described as a beauty. She was not an entertainer but a noblewoman, which is suggested by a statement in the entry for the 19th day of the third month: "There comes a woman from the northern neighborhood." Her parents even owned several mansions. In addition, in the entry of the 21st day of the second month, there is the description praising the woman's ability to compose poetry.

On the 19th day of the sixth month, the tone of the description changes again. His entry repeats itself with the expression "as before", his passionate feelings are thus no longer read. The diary for this year ends in the sixth month, so we do not know what happened after that.

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<sup>30</sup> *Minkeiki*. Edited by the Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten [『民経記』東京大学史料編纂所(編)東京:岩波書店]. Vol. 6 (1992) and vol. 7 (1995). The date corresponds to February 21, 1233 in the Gregorian calendar. (In Japanese society, the lunar calendar was followed until the 1st day of the twelfth month in 1873). The following dates are to be designated according to the lunar calendar.

<sup>31</sup> It was known that the diaries would be read later, at least by their descendants. The ritualized nature of government and events led the authors to take detailed notes of what was to be done on each occasion.

In 1239, when Tsunemitsu was 27 years old, his first son Kaneyori (1239 – 1280) was born. The child's mother was the daughter of Fujiwara no Chikazane (? – ?), who may have been the same woman who had visited him six years earlier. Takahashi suspects that it was more likely someone else, since marriages were usually arranged between the woman's father and either the man's father or the man himself. Their relationship, recorded for six months, always took the form of a 'visiting lady' and a 'waiting man'. The older relationships between Tsunemitsu and two other women were also recorded in the *Minkeiki* (1230)<sup>32</sup>, and in both cases the women visited Tsunemitsu (12th and 14th day of the fourth month, second day of the fifth month, 10th and 15th day of the sixth month). He was a man who always waited for a woman.

It is no longer possible to know how many such men there were. However, as Takahashi points out, it is clear that not all forms of love are based on the 'visiting man' and the 'waiting woman' as the image is formed from the depictions in the narrative works and the songs since the Heian period and is considered a communis opinio. This woman's behavior is also very different from the image of a nobleman's daughter who spends her time without showing her face to others and who marries a man chosen by her parents. Even when her parents decided whom she would marry, there were daughters who enjoyed love during their single life.

The example of Tsunemitsu and the woman will not change the research of *Kinuginu* songs. However, we should look at the social context around the dawn songs from a new perspective. Perhaps, it is worthwhile to review the prevailing theories about the German *Tagelieder* and the social context in which they were created.

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<sup>32</sup> *Minkeiki*. Edited by the Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten [『民経記』東京大学史料編纂所(編)東京:岩波書店]. Vol. 3 (1981).

## 「後朝の歌」－中世宮廷社会における 文芸ジャンルの事実と虚構

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【要旨】 男が女を訪れて一夜を共に過ごし、翌朝別れの辛さを歌う dawn songs は、世界中の多くの文化圏で見られる文芸である。ドイツ語圏でも古くから好まれたジャンルであるが、最も古い12世紀から15世紀頃の場合、作品自体は残されているものの、現実世界との接点を見出すのは困難である。いつ誰がどこでいかなる機会に歌われたかなど、不明な点が多い。これに対して日本の宮廷社会では、「後朝の歌」が現実の習慣に根ざす現象だったことが史料的にも明らかにされている。実存の人物どうしが通い通われ交わした作品だけでなく、盛んに催された歌会で題を与えられて歌ったものまでである。後朝の歌を交すことは婚姻儀礼の一部でもあった。しかし、今日常識とされることの多くが、主として文芸作品の記述に基づくことには注意も必要である。史料からは、「男が通って女が待つ」という通念に反する例、すなわち「女が男の許に通う」例も知られている。こうした事例が dawn songs の研究をすぐに変えるわけではない。しかし文芸作品を生んだ社会を異なる視点でとらえなおすことには十分意義がある、と主張したい。

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