

THE HAUNTED LOG-PALACE

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF A PASSAGE
IN THE *HÔJÔKI*

BJARKE FRELLESVIG

Introduction

The *Hôjôki* (方丈記 'An Account of My Hut', c. 1212)¹ by Kamo no Chômei 鴨長明 is among the best-known Japanese classics. It is fairly short, its language epitomizes the Classical Japanese that served as a standard written Japanese until the end of the 19th century, and it has also been influential for its pervasive Buddhist sentiment. No one will have gone through Japanese high school without reading at least some of it and it is also part of the Classical Japanese syllabus in the Japanese courses of many foreign universities. It might therefore be expected that every passage and word in the *Hôjôki* has been exhaustively scrutinized and properly understood. In this contribution to the celebration of Christoph and his inspirational scholarship and person, however, I examine the meaning of a passage in the *Hôjôki* in detail, and propose that the traditional interpretation is entirely - and on inspection appreciably - wrong, and hope more generally to show that a critical reading can offer us new insights even on texts as well known and widely read and studied as the *Hôjôki*. As is appropriate for the occasion of this volume, it is a text written in Classical Chinese, namely the *Nihon Shoki*, which yields the final clue to the interpretation of the passage in question.

¹ I am grateful to James McMullen, Lone Takeuchi, Alexander Vovin, Asa Yoneda, and Akiko Yuba Frellesvig for comments on earlier drafts and for technical assistance with the manuscript.

The imperial palace

The following description of the new imperial palace appears in the section of the *Hôjôki* about the move of the capital from Kyôto to Fukuhara (福原, in the present-day Hyôgo Ward of Kôbe City) in 1180.

- (1) ^{だいり}内裏は山の中なれば、かの木^{どの}の丸殿もかくやと、なかなか
^{やう}様かはりて、い^{はべ}うなるかたも侍り。(NKBZ, vol. 27:32)

This passage may be parsed and is traditionally interpreted as follows.²

- (2) *dairi wa yama no naka nareba,*
imperial.palace Top mountain Gen middle is.as

ka no ki-no-maro--dono mo kaku ya to,
that Gen tree-Gen-round--palace Foc this.way Q Comp

nanakana yaû kavarite,
all.the.more appearance being.different

iu-naru kata mo paberi
elegance-is point Foc exist.polite

'As the imperial palace is in the mountains, it even has some elegant points, all the more so for its different appearance; perhaps that log-palace was like this'

Such a positive description of the new palace in the section dealing with the unpopular, unsuccessful, and soon-to-be-aborted move of the capital from Kyôto to Fukuhara in 1180 is remarkably out of tune with the preceding and

² The transcription used here is phonemic, reflecting the phonology of 13th century central Japanese (with (a) Old Japanese /p/ retained as /p-/ in initial position (following Kiyose 1985), but having changed to /-w-/ in medial position; (b) initial and medial /(-)w-/ further being lost phonemically before /o/ (but /o/ pronounced as [ʷo]) and medial /-w-/ lost before /i, e/; (c) phonemically nasal, high post-peak vowels, /-û, -ĩ/), and it is thus different from both Modern Japanese and from the so-called 'historical kana usage' (歴史的仮名遣い *rekishi-teki kanazukai*), which is generally used in editions of Classical Japanese texts, and which is in fact etymological and a-historical. The following abbreviations are used in interlinear glosses: Acc = Accusative; Comp = Complementizer; Dat = Dative; Emph = Emphatic; Foc = Focus; Gen = Genitive; Q = interrogative; Top = Topic.

following text:³ Kamo no Chômei disapproved strongly of the move of the capital and explicitly criticized both the move itself and the new capital in no uncertain terms in this section of the *Hôjôki*. The move of the capital is included in the *Hôjôki* as an example of very bad things, on a par with earthquakes, fires, and famines. Given this background, the traditional interpretation of the description of the palace is both counterintuitive and implausible, and in this paper I argue that it is wrong in several respects due to mistakes both in identification of words and in the choice of word meaning, and that the description of the new imperial palace in fact is anything but positive.

Iu-naru

The meaning of the passage overall can be seen to hinge on the word *iu*. This is clearly a Sino-Japanese word, here followed by *naru*, the adnominal form of the copula, and thus functioning as a nominal adjective. In the copy on which the main editions (NKBT, NKBZ, SNKBT) are based,⁴ *iu* is written in *kana*, but other copies, which have interpolated Chinese characters into the text, present two possibilities: 優 or 幽, each represented in different copies (cf. NKBZ, vol. 27:32, n. 5; see below). (3) and (4) show for these two characters the basic glosses and the reconstructed Early Middle Chinese (EMC) shape given in Pulleyblank 1991 (followed by Baxter's reconstruction (online), separated by '/'), their Sino-Japanese *on*-readings and a short list of their meanings (gleaned from Morohashi, the *Kôjien*, and a standard Sino-Japanese dictionary (Kobayashi 1981), focussing on their meanings in Sino-Japanese (SJ), rather than in Chinese proper).

- (3) 優 'abundant, excellent', EMC *ʔuw / *ʔjuw
 Go-on: *u*, Kan-on: *iu*.
 SJ meanings: (a) 'abundant, plentiful'; (b) 'gentle, graceful, elegant';
 (c) 'superior'; (d) 'courteous'; (e) 'tranquil'; (f) 'clever'; (g) 'actor'

³ The immediately preceding text reads (NKBZ, vol. 27:32): その時おのづから事のたより
 ありて、津の国の今の京に至れり。ところのありさまを見るに、南は海近くて下れ
 り。なみの音つねにかまびすしく、汐風ことにはげし。 (*Sono toki onodukara koto*
no tayori arite, Tu-no-kuni no ima no kyaū ni itareri. Tokoro no arisama o miru ni, minami
wa umi tikakute kudareri. Nami no oto tune-ni kamabisusiku, siokaze koto-ni pagesi.) 'About
 this time I happened to have business which took me to the new capital. To the south the land
 sloped down to the sea. The roar of the waves made a constant din, and the salt winds were of
 terrible severity.' (adopted from Keene's translation (1955:200)).

⁴ The *Daifukkô-Ji* 大福光寺 copy, from the middle of the Kamakura period (1185-1333).

- (4) 幽 'deep, secluded, hidden, dark, obscure', EMC *ʔjiw / *ʔjiw
 Kan-on: *iu*.
 SJ meanings: (a) 'dark, deep and dark'; (b) 'lurking, secluded'; (c) 'underworld, world of the dead' (ant. 明 *mei* 'bright, land of the living'); (d) 'ghost, demon'; (e) 'soul of the dead'; (f) 'Yin (of Yin and Yang), the dark, negative, feminine'

It is clear from (3) and (4) that these two Sino-Japanese words have very different meanings. Simply and generally put, 優 is positive, ranging from somewhat to very positive, whereas 幽 is negative, ranging from neutral (at a stretch) to very negative. As already mentioned, it is conventional to interpret *iu* as 優, in the meaning 'graceful, elegant' (as reflected in (2) above), but I argue that it is 幽, in the senses of 'secluded', 'desolate', 'gloomy' and even 'haunted', which is the appropriate interpretation.

Editions, notes, and translations

The main editions and translations of the text uniformly come down on the side of elegance and grace. NKBT and SNKBT include the character 優 in the text, reducing the original *kana* to *furigana*, see (5)-(6). Both editions amplify this interpretation by supplying translations in notes: '[the palace] has some refined points, all the more for its unusual appearance' (NKBT *ibid.*),⁵ '[the palace] has some elegant aspects, all the more for its uniqueness' (SNKBT *ibid.*),⁶ using 風雅な *fûga-na* 'refined' and 優雅な *yûga-na* 'elegant', respectively, to translate *iu-naru*.

- (5) 内裏は山の中なれば、かの木^{まろどの}の丸殿もかくやと、なかなか
 やう^{やう}かはりて、^{いう}優なるかたも侍り。^{はべ} (NKBT vol. 30:28)
- (6) 内裏ハ山ノ中ナレバ、彼ノ木^{マロドノ}ノ丸殿モカクヤト、ナカナカ
 ヤウ^{ヤウ}カハリテ、^{イウ}優ナルカタモハベリ。 (SNKBT vol. 39:9)

NKBZ keeps *iu* in *kana*, see (1) above, but in the accompanying translation into modern Japanese says '[the palace] could be considered nice, all the

⁵ かえって様子が変わっていて風雅な点もある。 (*Kaette yôsu ga kawatte ite fûga na ten mo aru.*)

⁶ かえって一風変わって、優雅な面もある。 (*Kaette ippû kawatte, yûga na men mo aru.*)

more for its uniqueness' (NKBZ, vol. 27:31),⁷ and furthermore gives a note on the word *iu*, see (7). This note is remarkable, for in addition to being the only main edition to problematize slightly the word meant by *iu*, it shows that what really drives the interpretation is a preconceived notion that the gist of the passage is positive, for as was seen above, (4), 幽 is basically a far from positive word.

- (7) '[*iu* is] either 優 or 幽. [...] In fact, it can be taken as either. If it is 幽, it has the meaning of 幽閑 *yûkan* 'quiet'.' (NKBZ vol. 27:32, n. 5).⁸

Published translations into English are also positive,⁹ following Japanese editions and commentaries.

- (8) The imperial palace struck me as unexpectedly novel and interesting, situated in the hills as it was, and I asked myself whether Empress Saimei's log house might not have been rather similar. (McCullough 1990:383)
- (9) The palace was in the mountains and, suggesting as it did the log construction of the ancient palaces, was not without its charms. (Keene 1955:200)

As mentioned above, these positive descriptions of the new palace are wholly out of tune with the rest of this section of the *Hôjôki*. A simple contextual reading, then, invites a negative rather than positive interpretation of *iu-naru*, suggesting 幽 rather than 優. It is possible, however, to be far more specific, based on concrete philological evidence.

⁷ かえって、一風かわっていてこれもいいかもしれないな、と思えるようなものだった。(Kaette, *ippû kawatte ite kore mo ii ka mo shirenai na, to omoeru yô na mono datta.*)

⁸ 「優」か、「幽」か。[...] 実際どちらとも取れる。幽なら幽閑の意。(「優」*ka*, 「幽」*ka*. [...] *Jissai dochira tomo toreru. 幽 nara 幽閑 no i.*)

⁹ This also holds for what seems to be the first translation into English of this part of the *Hôjôki*, by Kumagusu Minakata and F. Victor Dickins: "the Palace right among the hills reminded one of the Round Timber Palace, though it was not without design and elegance" (1905:241). However, the 'though' here shows that the connotations of the 'Round Timber Palace' were not positive, bringing Minakata and Dickins' translation a bit closer to the proposal in this paper than are later translations.

Heike Monogatari

It is well-known that a number of passages in the *Hôjôki* are found in an identical or near-identical form in the much longer *Heike Monogatari* (平家物語 'Tale of the Heike', c. 1220-40). Several such passages occur in the Heike chapter in book 5 about the move of the capital to Fukuhara in 1180, but it is in book 8 of the *Heike*, where the Taira 平 in 1183 consider building an imperial palace in Tsukushi (Kyûshû), that we find a passage used to describe that new palace, very similar to the one in the *Hôjôki*, viz. (10), which is shorter, not including なかなかやうかはりて,¹⁰ and which, in addition to other small differences, has the *iu* of the *Hôjôki* in the contracted shape *yuu*. Also here, NKBT and other editions impose 優 on the text and a note translates '[the palace] had some elegance and grace',¹¹ using 風流な *fûryû-na* 'elegant, tasteful, graceful' to translate *yuu-naru* (NKBT vol. 33:128, n. 5). (11) and (12) are two published translations into English.

- (10) だいり やま き まるどの
内裏は山のなかなれば、かの木の丸殿もかくやとおぼえて、
なか (優) かた
中々ゆうなる方もありけり。
dairi wa yama no naka nareba, ka no ki-no-maru--dono mo kaku ya to oboete, nakanaka yuu-naru kata mo arikeri. (NKBT vol. 33:128)
- (11) The Emperor's mountain residence did not lack a certain elegant interest: people wondered if the famous log dwelling might have been rather similar. (McCullough 1988:262)
- (12) The Heike nobles recalled the temporary country palace of Empress Saimei that had been built of logs. They soon began to enjoy the rustic beauty of their new place. (Kitagawa and Tsuchida 1977:467)

Both translations follow the conventional interpretation of elegance and even beauty, as do Japanese annotated editions and translations. But again here, there is nothing in the actual text to suggest elegance or any other positive interpretation of *yuu-naru*. Nor is there anything to contradict the interpretation of the passage proposed below.¹²

¹⁰ It is likely that the *Heike Monogatari* passage is derivative from the *Hôjôki*.

¹¹ 風流な一面もあった。(Fûryû-na ichimen mo atta.)

¹² It should be borne in mind that the *Heike Monogatari* is a composite and accumulative text with nothing like the single authorial voice of the *Hôjôki*, and therefore too close a textual/compositional analysis may be unwarranted. However, if anything, the preceding text

Ka no ki-no-marō—dono

The main concrete contextual clue to the meaning of *iu/uyu-naru* is the phrase *ka no ki-no-marō--dono* 'that well-known log-palace', (13). In anaphoric reference, the distal demonstrative *ka* refers to what is (presented as being) of common, shared knowledge; it is by extension often used for literary or scriptural references; hence 'that well-known'.¹³ In the following sections I shall take a closer look at the reference and valuation of this log-palace and its contribution to the overall meaning of the sentence.

- (13) *ka no ki-no-marō--dono*
 that Gen tree-Gen-round--palace
 'that round-tree--palace, that well-known log-palace'

Shin-Kokinshū

(13) is generally thought to refer to the palace which Empress Saimei (斉明, 594-661) according to legend built in Asakura (朝倉, in present-day Fukuoka Prefecture in Kyūshū) in 661. A reference given in almost all annotated versions of the *Hōjōki* is poem 17.1687 in the poetry anthology *Shin-Kokin(waka)shū* (新古今 (和歌) 集 'New Collection of (Japanese Poems of) Ancient and Modern Times', compiled c. 1216), see (14) (cited from NKBT vol. 28). This poem is attributed to Emperor Tenji (天智, 626-671), who was the son of Empress Saimei whom he succeeded when she died in 661, and it contains the phrase *ki-no-marō--dono*. This is agreed to be the *proximate* reference for the *ka no ki-no-marō--dono* of the *Hōjōki* (and the *Heike Monogatari*). (15)-(17) are three published translations into English.

seems to disapprove of the move and the new location and also to establish a sombre mood (with mention of *asa no koromo* 'hemp robes', customarily used as funeral wear, and with allusions to a poem (*Shin-Kokinshū* 5.485) with similar reference). Both the fact that the passage is used in the description of a move to Kyūshū and the (oblique) reference to death may be significant, cf. below.

¹³ Note here the interesting compositional structure [*ki-no-marō*]-*dono* where the modifier, *ki-no-marō*-, is a nexus ('tree/wood [is] round'), but with the adjective *marō*- 'be round' in its stem rather than an inflected form.

- (14) 朝倉や *Asakura ya*
 Asakura Emph
 きのまろどのに *ki-no-maro--dono ni*
 tree-Gen-round--palace Dat
 わがをれば *wa ga oreba*
 I Gen am.as
 なのりをしつゝ *nanori o situtu*
 namecalling Acc doing
 行くはたがこそ *yuku wa ta ga ko zo*
 goes Top who Gen child Emph
- (15) Who are these I see
 Go calling loud my name
 Under this Asakura Palace
 Built of logs unbarked (Honda 1970)
- (16) Whose son might be calling his name on patrol, here where I reside
 in this dwelling made of logs -- this house at Asakura
 (McCullough 1988:262, fn.†)
- (17) Because I am in
 A round wooden noble hall
 In Asakura
 Whose child might that be, in fact,
 Going, who won't give his name (Richardson 2000)

None of these translations is a particularly helpful guide to the meaning of the poem,¹⁴ but it is clear that the poem itself gives us no clue as to the valuation of the log-palace. On the contrary, the interpretation of the poem depends entirely on the value of the log-palace.¹⁵

¹⁴ Minakata and Dickins translate: "In a rude palace, at Asakura, of round unbarked timber, dwell I, and as men pass shouting their names, I ask whose sons they be" (1905:241, fn.1), while also remarking that "[t]he meaning of this quintain is not apparent"; again their understanding of the texts is more in line with this paper than is other scholarship.

¹⁵ Note, however, a poem in the Sarashina Nikki (更級日記 '*Sarashina Diary*', c. 1060, by the Daughter of Sugawara Takasue) which is based on (14): 朝倉やいまは雲井に聞く物を猶木のまろが名のりをやする (NKBT vol. 20, 503) (*Asakura ya # ima wa kumoi ni # kiku mono-o # nao ko-no-maro-ga # na nori o ya suru*) "Oh you, who have now gone to dwell among the clouds, Do you still call yourself by my old name?" (Morris 1975:63). This mid-Heian poem shows that Tenji's poem, (14), and its reference (see immediately below) were well-known at that time and concretely suggests negative connotations of the phrase *Asakura ya*, used as a disdainful term of address to Sugawara Takasue's former wife. I am grateful to Lone Takeuchi for bringing this poem to my attention.

Nihon Shoki

Of more direct value for the interpretation and valuation is the reference of *Shin-Kokinshû* 17.1687, that is to say, the *ultimate* reference of *ka no ki-no-marō--dono*.¹⁶ This is the entry in the *Nihon Shoki* (日本書紀 'Chronicles of Japan', 720) about Empress Saimei and the temporary palace which she is said to have built in Kyûshû in 661 while preparing an incursion into the Korean peninsula. This reference is acknowledged, directly or indirectly, in several translations and annotated editions of the *Hôjôki*, the *Heike Monogatari*, and the *Shin-Kokinshû* poem, cf. e.g. (8) and (12) above, but its actual meaning and implications are never examined in the least. I suggest that if properly read for content, it holds the key to the valuation of the log-palace and to the correct interpretation of our passage in the *Hôjôki* (and the corresponding one in the *Heike Monogatari*), as well as the *Shin-Kokinshû* poem. (18) is the original Classical Chinese text,¹⁷ (19) is the rendition in the Classical Japanese through which Classical Chinese is usually 'read' in Japan,¹⁸ and (20) is Aston's English translation.

- (18) 五月乙未朔癸卯、天皇遷居于朝倉橘廣庭宮。
 是時、斲除朝倉社木、而作此宮之故、神忿壞殿。
 亦見宮中鬼火。
 由是、大舍人及諸近侍、病死者衆。
 [...]
 六月、伊勢王薨。
 秋七月甲午朔丁巳、天皇崩于朝倉宮。
 八月甲子朔、皇太子奉徙天皇喪、還至磐瀨宮。
 是夕於朝倉山上、有鬼、着大傘、臨視喪儀。
 衆皆嗟怪。 (NKBT, vol. 68:349-51)

¹⁶ Note that Kamo no Chômei as a contributor and an editor of the *Shin-Kokinshû* would have known about both the author and provenance of *Shin-Kokinshû* 17.1687 and its background and reference.

¹⁷ Book 26 of the *Nihon Shoki*, in which this passage appears, belongs in the so-called 'α-set' of *Nihon Shoki* books written in proper Classical Chinese by Chinese scribes (books 14-21 and 24-27), rather than in the 'β-set' (books 1-13, 22-3, 28-29) written in Classical Chinese with some Japanese interference or in Japanese disguised as Classical Chinese; see Mori 1999. (I am grateful to Satoshi Kinsui for bringing this reference to my attention).

¹⁸ The Classical Japanese here is even further archaicized in order to approximate 8th century Japanese.

- (19) さつ き きのとのひつじ みづのとうのひ あさくらのたちばなのひろにはのみや
五月の乙未の朔癸卯に、天皇、朝倉橘廣庭宮に遷
りて居ます。
おはし
是の時に、朝倉社の木を断り除ひて、此の宮を作る故に、
かみいか おほとん こほ
神忿りて殿を壊つ。
また うち おに びあらは
亦、宮の中に鬼火見れぬ。
これ よ とね り およ もろもろ ちかくはべるひと や まか ものおほ
是に由りて、大舍人及び諸の近侍、病みて死れる者衆
し。 [...]
みなづき いせのおほきみ みう
六月に、伊勢王、薨せぬ。
あきふみづき きのえうま ひのとのみのひ すめらみこと あさくらのみや かむあが
秋七月の甲午の朔丁巳に、天皇、朝倉宮に崩りまし
ぬ。
はつき きのえね ついたちのひ ひつぎのみこ みも ゐ
八月の甲子の朔に、皇太子、天皇の喪を奉徙りて、還
り磐瀬宮に至る。
いはせのみや いた
是の夕に、朝倉山の上に、鬼有りて、大傘を着て、喪の
よそほひ のぞ
儀を臨み視る。
ひとびとみなあやし
衆皆嗟怪ぶ。 (NKBT, vol. 68:348-50)

- (20) 5th month, 9th day. The Empress removed her residence to the Palace of Asakura no Tachibana no Hironiha.
At this time trees belonging to the Shrine of Asakura were cut down and cleared away in order to build this Palace. Therefore the Gods were angry and demolished the building.
Some were also struck [by a curse from the deities], and in consequence the Grand Treasurer and many of those in waiting took ill and died. [...]
6th month. Prince Ise died.
Autumn, 7th month, 24th day. The Empress died in the Palace of Asakura.
8th month, 1st day. The Prince Imperial, in attendance on the Empress' remains, returned as far as the Palace of Ihase.
That evening, on the top of Mount Asakura, there was a demon [or spirit] wearing a great hat, who looked down on the funeral proceedings.
All the people uttered exclamations of wonder.
(Aston 1972, vol. 2:271-272)

As may be seen, this passage feeds directly into the description of the imperial palace in the *Hôjôki*. First of all, there was a move of the capital. This was routine in and characteristic of pre-Nara Japan, but was in Kamo no Chômei's time thought of as something to be avoided in the absence of compelling reasons, as he admonishes in the *Hôjôki*.¹⁹ Second, the palace was built in the mountains (Mount Asakura), like the imperial palace in the *Hôjôki*. Third, the palace was built by clearing away and using trees, hence the log-palace, but these were sacred trees belonging to a shrine, and the gods/spirits became very upset about this.²⁰ So upset that they wrecked the palace and killed off many officials and courtiers. This was followed by the death of Prince Ise and, a bit later, the Empress herself. It is abundantly clear that Empress Saimei's log-palace was anything but elegant, graceful, or refined. On the contrary, it was a doomed place, desolate and haunted. Certainly this must inform our reading of poem 17.1687 in the *Shin-Kokinshû*, and for our purposes here, all of this suggests compellingly that those are the connotations of 'that well-known log-palace' in the *Hôjôki* (and the *Heike Monogatari*), and that the word *iu* in our passage is not 優, but 幽. I suggest further that 幽 here is not simply 'dark' but incorporates at once the senses of 'secluded', 'desolate', 'gloomy' and most likely even 'haunted'. Apart from the many fatalities there are two explicit mentionings in the *Nihon Shoki* passage of ghosts/demons (鬼火 and 鬼), providing strong reference points for 幽 (one of whose synonyms is 鬼 'demon').

On this background, we can now revisit the full passage. It must first of all be noted that the phrase *yama no naka nareba* strongly reinforces the proposed reading, for in the native Japanese *gedankenwelt*, *yama* is a secluded and dark place. This is well captured by the basic, overall explanation of the sense of *yama* given in Ohno's (1974) dictionary of pre-modern Japanese: 'opposed to 'field (open wide space)' and 'village'; a place where people do not live'.²¹ *Yama* is the realm of the spirits and somewhere you can go and hide, as Kamo no Chômei does in the *Hôjôki*; it is not somewhere to build a palace. Furthermore, as we no longer need to make allowances for grace and elegance, the meaning of other words in the passage becomes more straightforward: (a) *Nakanaka* means 'completely',

¹⁹ ことなるゆゑなくて、たやすく改まるべくもあらねば、... (NKBZ, vol. 27:31) (*Kotonaru yue nakute, tayasuku aratamaru beku mo araneba*). "The site of the capital was not a thing lightly to be changed without sufficient reason" (Keene 1955:199).

²⁰ See Rambelli 2001 about the sacredness of trees and the negative consequences of cutting them down within the native *kami* worship; the incident adduced here is mentioned on p. 55 and further contextualized. Moreover, a sacred zelkova tree "had been a central element in the origin myths of the deities of the Kamo shrines" (Rambelli 2001:53), for which Kamo no Chômei's family had furnished wardens for generations (Minakata & Dickins 1905:256), so the significance of tree cutting would not have been lost on him.

²¹ 「野」「里」に対して、人の住まない所. 'No' 'sato' ni taishite, hito no sumanai tokoro.

not 'all the more, all the better' (J. *kaette*). It was always in an odd position in the sentence if it were to have the latter meaning; instead, it simply modifies *yaū kawarite*. (b) *Kawarite* (lit. 'having changed') is 'being strange', but may further imply that the palace had already changed from the way it was built into a state of disrepair, paralleling the destruction wrought on Empress Saimei's palace by the gods.²² (c) Of the several Japanese words *kata*, the one meant by Kamo no Chōmei must be 'shape, appearance' (形), not 'point, side' (方). This then picks up on the preceding, almost synonymous, *yaū* (様).

(21) shows the passage supplied with Chinese characters to illustrate the proposal here (that is to say, the way editions of the text should have it) and (22) is a tentative translation. Such a characterization of the palace is far more in line with the attitude towards the move of the capital and the capital itself in the *Hōjōki*. It also finds strong concrete inter- and intra-textual support, as opposed to the conventional reading.

(21) 内裏は山の中なれば、かの木の丸殿もかくやと、なかなか様かはりて、幽なる形も侍り。

(22) The imperial palace - being in the mountains and reminiscent of that ill-fated log-palace of old – looked, with its very strange appearance, haunted and desolate.

Conclusion

It remains an interesting question how the traditional implausible and counterintuitive interpretation of the word *iu* and of the full passage originated, and why subsequent scholarship, editions and translations of the *Hōjōki* have adopted it uncritically. It may be that part of the answer is simply that an imperial palace, no matter how inappropriately established, is after all still an imperial palace and therefore should be elegant.²³ Whatever the answer may be, I hope in this paper, first, to have improved our understanding of a single passage in the *Hōjōki* (and the *Heike Monogatari*),

²² It is also tempting to interpret *yaū* as 陽 'sunshine, southern side of a mountain; Yang (of Yin and Yang), the bright, positive, masculine', rather than the conventional 様 'appearance'. If so, *kawarite* would mean that there was something wrong with the 陽, and we would have a neat juxtaposition of 陽 and 幽 (which can have the meaning of 陰, the antonym of 陽). But in this case it is probably safer to go with tradition and convention.

²³ It should also be noted that 幽 is used in Sino-Japanese compounds which are neutral or even positive, such as 幽閑 *yūkan* 'quiet' or 幽玄 *yūgen* 'quiet beauty, elegant simplicity'. This may have served to perpetuate the mistaken positive interpretation of the description of the palace, but cannot be what caused it in the first place.

as well as pointing towards a better appreciation of the meaning of a poem in the *Shin-Kokinshû*, and second, more generally to have exemplified why it is important that we continue to be critical in our reading of even the best-studied texts.

Bibliography

- Aston, W.G. (tr.) 1972 [1924/1896]: *Nihongi*: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697. 2 vols. Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo, Tuttle.
- Baxter, William online: An Etymological Dictionary of Common Chinese Characters. <http://www-personal.umich.edu/%7Ewbaxter/etymdict.html>.
- Honda, H. H. (tr.) 1970: *The Shin Kokinshu*. Tokyo, The Hokuseido Press.
- Keene, Donald 1955: *Anthology of Japanese Literature from the earliest era to the mid-nineteenth century*. New York, Grove Press.
- Kitagawa, Hiroshi and Bruce T. Tsuchida (tr.) 1977: *The Tale of Heike: Heike Monogatari*. Volume II: Books 7-12 and Epilogue. Tokyo, Univ. of Tokyo Press.
- Kiyose, Gisaburô N. 清瀬義三郎則府 1985: "Heian-chô ha-gyô shiin P-onron 平安朝波行子音 p 音論 [Evidence that Modern Japanese *h-* was *p-* in the Heian Period]." In: *Onsei no kenkyû* 21:73-87.
- Kobayashi, Shinmei 小林新明 (ed.) 1981: *Shinsen Kanwa Jiten, Shinpan 新選漢和辞典、新版* [Newly Compiled Sino-Japanese Dictionary, New Edition]. Tokyo, Shôgakkan.
- [Kôjien =] Shinmura, Izuru 新村出 (ed.) 1991: *Kôjien 広辞苑*. 4th edition. Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten.
- McCullough, Helen Craig (tr.) 1988: *The Tale of Heike*. Stanford, Stanford Univ. Press.
- McCullough, Helen Craig (ed.) 1990: *Classical Japanese Prose - an Anthology*. Stanford, Stanford Univ. Press.
- Minakata, Kumagusu and F. Victor Dickins 1905: "A Japanese Thoreau of the Twelfth Century." In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* for 1905: 237-264.
- Mori, Hiromichi 森博達 1999: *Nihon Shoki no nazo o toku: Jussakusha wa dare ka. 日本書紀の謎を解く：述作者は誰か* [Solving the Enigma of the *Chronicles of Japan*: Who Were the Writers?]. Tokyo, Chûkô Shinsho.
- Morris, Ivan 1975: *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams*. London: Penguin Books.
- Morohashi, Tetsuji 諸橋轍次 (ed.) 1955-60: *Dai-Kanwa Jiten 大漢和辞典* [Great Sino-Japanese Dictionary]. 13 vols. Tokyo, Taishûkan Shoten.
- [NKBT =] *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 日本古典文学大系* [Anthology of Classical Japanese Literature] 1957-1969. 101 vols. Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten.
- [NKBZ =] *Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshû 日本古典文学全集* [Complete Collection of Classical Japanese Literature] 1970-1976. 51 vols. Tokyo, Sanseidô.
- Ohno, Susumu 大野晋 et al. (ed.) 1974: *Kogo Jiten 古語辞典* [Dictionary of Earlier Japanese]. Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten.
- Pulleyblank, Edwin G. 1991: *Lexicon of Reconstructed Pronunciation in Early*

- Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese, and Early Mandarin. Vancouver, UBC Press.
- Rambelli, Fabio 2001: *Vegetal Buddhas - Ideological Effects of Japanese Buddhist Doctrines on the Salvation of Inanimate Beings*. Kyoto, Italian School of East Asian Studies.
- Richardson, Donald M. 2000: *A new Collection of Japanese Poems Past and Present*. 2 vols. Winchester, Virginia.
- [SNKBT =] Shin Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 新日本古典文学大系 [New Anthology of Classical Japanese Literature] 1989- . [Presently] 105 vols. Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten.