

Yoshino and the Politics of Cultural Topography in Early Japan

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Yoshino 吉野 is portrayed in early Japanese texts as a place full of power, beauty, and magic. In the *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (c. 720), *Kojiki* 古事記 (c. 712), *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 (c. eighth century), and *Kaifūsō* 懷風藻 (c. 751), it appears as a symbolic center of imperial authority, as a poetic landscape of manifold mountains and clear rivers, and as a mysterious site associated with immortal beings (*shinsen* 神仙). Although much work has been done on these various aspects of Yoshino from different disciplinary perspectives—historical, literary, and religious—little attention has been paid to the specific contexts in which Yoshino appears in each of these early texts, or to the relationship between Yoshino as a political symbol, as a numinous site, and as a literary topos. In this article I examine the portrayal of Yoshino in its various contexts in order to clarify the process through which it came to be represented as a significant place in the historical narratives and poetry anthologies of the eighth-century Japanese state.¹

Today the name “Yoshino” is primarily associated with Mt. Yoshino, well known as the most spectacular cherry-blossom-viewing area in Japan, and with the northern edge of the World Heritage Site that stretches from Mt. Yoshino to Ōmine 大峰, through the modern district of Yoshino, which occupies the southern two-thirds of Nara prefecture, and down to the Kumano 熊野 shrines in Wakayama.² Mt. Yoshino and its cherry blossoms have been famous since at least the mid-Heian period, and the temples and shrines in the area have multiple historical associations.³ In the Asuka and Nara periods, however, the region known as Yoshino was mostly limited

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¹ For scholarship on Yoshino, in Japanese, see Ōhama 1969; Kanbōri 1980; Shimode 1986; Wada 1995, pp. 5–17, 129–252; and more recently, Kuramoto 2009, pp. 127–32. In English, see Bialock 2007, pp. 65–108; Como 2009, pp. 59–83; Ooms 2009, pp. 132–53; Duthie 2014, pp. 243–74.

² The official UNESCO name is “Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range and the Cultural Landscapes that Surround Them.”

³ Perhaps most notably with Minamoto no Yoshitsune 源義経 (1159–1189) and Emperor Go-Daigo 後醍醐 (1288–1339).

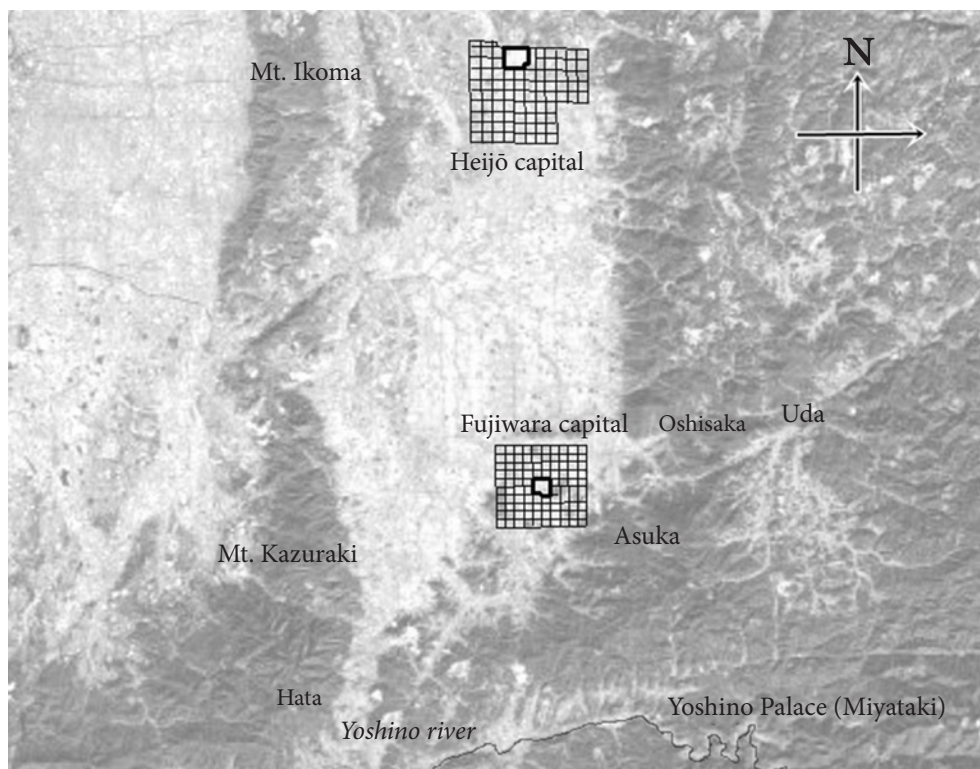


Figure 1. Topography of the Nara basin; map image by Kana Kudo.

to the area along the banks of the Yoshino river and the surrounding moors and hills, and it was associated primarily with the river rather than the mountain.⁴ Archaeologists have discovered the remains of a small palace on the northern bank of the Yoshino river, several kilometers away from all the hubbub and tourist attractions of Mt. Yoshino, in a place known now as Miyataki 宮滝 (see figure 1).⁵ There are traces of at least three rebuildings on the same site: the first is believed to be from the reigns of Tenmu 天武 (d. 686, r. 672–686) and Jitō 持統 (645?–702, r. 687–696) in the late seventh century,⁶ the second from Shōmu’s 聖武 (701–756, r. 724–749) reign in the mid-eighth century, and the last from Uda’s 宇多 (867–931, r. 887–897) reign in the late ninth century. It is this older “Yoshino” that is the subject of this article.

⁴This is reflected in the fact that the *Man’yōshū* includes twenty examples of the phrase “Yoshino river,” but only four of “Mt. Yoshino.”

⁵Miyataki is about six kilometers away from Yoshino station. It houses the Yoshino Historical Archive (Yoshino Rekishi Shiriyōkan 吉野歴史資料館), which has a small exhibition on the history of the Yoshino Palace.

⁶The reign dates of early sovereigns are given as counted in the *Nihon shoki*.

In both the *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki* the earliest mention of Yoshino is as a place inhabited by earthly gods (*kunitsukami* 国神) who submit to the legendary first emperor, Jinmu 神武. Yoshino reappears briefly during the reign of Ōjin 応神, and then later as a hunting destination in the accounts of the semilegendary fifth-century reign of Yūryaku 雄略. This is the last mention of Yoshino in the “Account of Ancient Matters” of the *Kojiki*, which contains only genealogical information after the reign of Kenzō 顯宗 in the late fifth century and ends with the reign of Suiko 推古 (554–628, r. 593–628). In the later annals of the *Nihon shoki* Yoshino appears briefly during the sixth-century reign of Kinmei 欽明 (d. 571, r. 539?–571) in connection with the arrival of Buddhism at the Japanese court; in the mid-seventh-century reign of Kōtoku 孝德 (d. 654, r. 645–654), as the place where the rebel prince Furuhi no Ōe 古人大兄 (d. 645) takes up residence; and in the reign of Saimei 斉明 (594?–661, r. 655–661), as the site where a detached imperial palace is built.⁷ In the last volumes of the *Nihon shoki*, Yoshino is strongly associated with Tenmu, who is described as leaving the Ōmi capital in 671 to “go to Yoshino and practice the way of the Buddha” (*Yoshino ni makarite butsudō o okonai semu* 之吉野修行仏道).⁸ Yoshino then becomes the starting point of Tenmu’s military campaign against his older brother Tenchi’s 天智 (626?–671, r. 662–671) son Prince Ōtomo 大友 (648–672) in the Jinshin Rebellion (Jinshin no ran 壬申の乱, 672), which leads to his accession to the throne (this is also described in the preface to the *Kojiki*).⁹ Tenmu returns to Yoshino on one other occasion in 679 for a ritual pledge in which he makes his consort, sons, and nephews swear never to engage in a conflict over succession.¹⁰ But it is in the last volume of the *Nihon shoki*, dedicated to the reign of Tenmu’s consort and successor Jitō, that Yoshino figures most prominently: the *Nihon shoki* reports Jitō as visiting the Yoshino Palace a staggering thirty-one times during the ten years of her reign, an average of four times a year.¹¹

The strong association of Yoshino with Tenmu and Jitō seen in the *Nihon shoki* is also a feature of the *Man’yōshū*, where Yoshino is the setting of several poems anthologized under the reigns of Tenmu and Jitō in volume 1. Many of the over seventy poems on Yoshino that appear in subsequent volumes of the *Man’yōshū* similarly refer back to Tenmu as the divine founder of a new age.¹² The treatment of Yoshino in the *Kaifūsō*, on the other hand, is very different. Most of the seventeen poems on Yoshino in the *Kaifūsō*, including the two earliest, which are attributed to Fujiwara

⁷ As seen below, Saimei reigned twice. For her first reign, 642–645, she is known as Kōgyoku 皇極.

⁸ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 292–93. The *kundoku* 訓読 readings of graphs and phrases from the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* provided in this article generally follow the SNKZ editions of both texts, but readers should note that it is the graphs that have priority, not the readings. The four graphs 修行仏道 (*shugyō butsudō*) have traditionally been read simply as *okonai semu*. I have modified this slightly to *butsudō o okonai semu*.

⁹ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 302–307.

¹⁰ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 388–89.

¹¹ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 473–561.

¹² I discuss this in chapter 7 of Duthie 2014.

no Fubito 藤原不比等 (659–720), describe it as a realm of immortals.¹³ None, however, allude to Tenmu.

Much of the existing scholarship in English has tended to group these various images of Yoshino together as a set of “traditional” associations. In Japanese scholarship, a higher degree of specialization has meant that, at least as far as poetry is concerned, the late seventh-century portrayal of Yoshino as an “eternal” landscape in the vernacular poetry of Kakinomoto no Hitomaro 柿本人麻呂 (active late seventh century) in the *Man'yōshū* is regarded as belonging to an entirely different historical moment and genre from the mid-eighth-century references to Yoshino as an immortal realm in the Sinic-style poems of the *Kaifūsō*. In the case of Yoshino’s treatment in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, however, neither Japanese- nor English-language scholars have paid sufficient attention to the effects that the circumstances of the period of compilation of these texts might have had on the shaping of narratives that describe earlier times. In particular, there has been a tendency to assume that the legendary stories involving Yoshino in the sections on Jinmu and other early rulers are based on narratives of older provenance than the episodes about Yoshino set during periods closer to the time when the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were compiled. In this article I argue that the “earlier” narratives are not necessarily older than those describing more recent events and that the various representations of Yoshino in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, including the tales from legendary reigns, were shaped by a historiographical politics centered on the significance of Tenmu’s legacy.

To make this argument I historicize the various fragmentary references to Yoshino in the extant eighth-century texts by examining the role that the place called “Yoshino” plays in the specific narrative and poetic contexts in which it appears. The first part of this article explores how Yoshino is represented throughout the imperial narratives of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* that culminate (implicitly, in the case of the *Kojiki*) with the new imperial order established by Tenmu and Jitō. In the latter half of the article, I look at the representation of Yoshino in poetry and discuss what the remarkable contrast between the treatment of Yoshino in the *Man'yōshū* and in the *Kaifūsō* reveals about different attitudes toward Tenmu’s reign in the eighth century and the ways in which places such as Yoshino take on different associations.

The Significance of Yoshino for the Jitō Court

The starting point of my inquiry is the section of the ancient text in which Yoshino features most prominently: the last volume of the *Nihon shoki*, which is dedicated to the reign of Jitō. I begin at the end, so to speak, because the plot of the *Nihon shoki* is teleological. It is a myth-history of the imperial realm of Nihon that is destined to culminate in the new imperial order established by Tenmu and Jitō after the Jinshin Rebellion of 672. The first step in a critical reading of the *Nihon shoki*, therefore, is to

¹³ The name is also written as 史人; hence my preference for reading it as “Fubito” (a contraction of *fumibito*) instead of “Fuhito.”

follow its plot in reverse. The *Nihon shoki* narrative suggests that what happens in its early volumes leads to developments in later reigns. But in many cases, it is the events that occur toward the end of the text that shape what is included earlier in the narrative. In a similar way, my contention is that the part Yoshino plays in the imperial history of the *Nihon shoki* is determined primarily by its role in the last volume, which records thirty-one imperial visits to Yoshino. There is no other place in Jitō's reign that came close to being visited as frequently, and there are no other examples in the *Nihon shoki* of any ruler visiting a single place so often.¹⁴

Why did Jitō visit Yoshino so frequently?¹⁵ Historians may differ over the details, but the consensus is that her most likely purpose was to commemorate her husband and predecessor's victory in the Jinshin Rebellion.¹⁶ This is strongly suggested by the fact that the Tenmu and Jitō volumes of the *Nihon shoki* portray the Jinshin Rebellion as the foundation of the Tenmu-Jitō order and Yoshino as the starting point of Tenmu's Jinshin campaign to the east. As I have noted in my previous work, the sheer number and periodic nature of the imperial visits during Jitō's reign suggest something akin to a "cult" of Tenmu at Yoshino.¹⁷

Scholars interested in religion tend to take a somewhat different view. They acknowledge the historical importance of Tenmu's association with Yoshino, but argue that there must have been something intrinsic to the site itself that attracted Jitō, and indeed Tenmu before her. This is the approach favored by Wada Atsumu 和田萃, who suggests that Jitō may have been participating in rainmaking rituals and cults of immortality in the Yoshino area.¹⁸ Influenced by Wada, Michael Como has also emphasized that Yoshino "was from an early date a prominent center for those who wished to pursue immortality through the performance of austerities and the consumption of drugs as prescribed in various Chinese medical and cultic traditions."¹⁹

Both Wada and Como are interested, in somewhat different ways, in the possibility of recreating a religious history of early Japan that is not centered exclusively on the imperial lineage and includes the activities of locales and peoples who were peripheral to the court. This leads them to try to make Yoshino itself their subject of inquiry rather than simply follow the imperial narrative in which it appears. Como, in particular, is seeking to counteract what he sees as a prevailing narrative about

¹⁴ For a chart showing Jitō's visits to Yoshino compared to other locations, see Duthie 2014, p. 244.

¹⁵ Wada Atsumu 和田萃 estimates that, depending on the route, it would have taken Jitō's entourage about half a day to make the journey to the Yoshino Palace from the capital in Asuka 飛鳥, or later from Fujiwara 藤原. See Wada 1995, pp. 175–76.

¹⁶ See Kanbōri 1980; Kuramoto 2009.

¹⁷ See chapter 7 of Duthie 2014.

¹⁸ Wada 1995, pp. 5–17, 129–252.

¹⁹ See Como 2009, p. 57. This is also noted by Ooms 2009, p. 148: "The purpose of [Jitō's] frequent excursions is unknown. Participation in a Daoist practice, either medicinal or ritual, is a reasonable explanation."

early Japan in which “Japanese rulers from the ancient period have almost invariably been presented as sponsors of technological and cultic changes/innovations to which local elites then responded.”²⁰ His contention is that many of these changes actually followed a reverse route: continental technologies and cults from the continent were brought by immigrant kinship groups to “local cultic centers” far from the Imperial Domain, or Kinai 畿内, and then eventually made their way to the Yamato capital. In the case of Yoshino, both Wada and Como emphasize that, as with other cult centers, the court turned to it as a preexisting *source* of power, which the Yamato rulers then proceeded to utilize for their own purposes. In Como’s words, the court was “as much a consumer as a producer of new ideological and cultic forms.”²¹

One way that Wada, and Como after him, attempt to move outside the framework of the official imperial narrative is by defining Yoshino in broad geographical terms as the “topographical/botanical region” that stretches along both banks of the Yoshino river, from southern Kazuraki 葛城 in the west to southern Uda 宇陀 in the east.²² Como remarks, for instance, that this broader “Yoshino area” appears to have been a popular destination for “medicine hunting” (*kusurigari* 薬獵),²³ as suggested by references in the *Nihon shoki* during the reign of Suiko to annual medicine hunts on the fifth of the fifth month in Uda, the area to the northeast of Yoshino, and in Hata 羽田, which lies to the northwest of Yoshino, toward Kazuraki.²⁴ The case for thinking of a broader topographical Yoshino region is persuasive, given the Yoshino river’s prominent position in the southern part of the Nara basin and the fact that both Uda and Kazuraki, as we shall see, shared various associations with the specific place called “Yoshino” in early texts. Just as significant, however, is the counterpoint to this argument: the regional distinctions marked by the names “Yoshino,” “Uda,” and “Kazuraki” in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* are cultural and political ones that do not necessarily reflect natural topographical areas. In my view, what is most useful about the focus on the larger topographical region of Yoshino is that it allows us to pose the question of how and why the specific place that Tenmu and Jitō visited came to be distinguished from similar neighboring areas in the broader topographical region along the Yoshino river.

²⁰ Como 2009, pp. xiii–xiv.

²¹ Como 2009, p. xvii.

²² See Como 2009, p. 252, n. 7. Although known as the Yoshino river in Nara prefecture, the river’s proper modern name is the Kinokawa 紀の川. It is 136 kilometers long, from its source in Mt. Ōdaigahara 大台ヶ原 in southern Nara on the border with Mie prefecture to its mouth in the Inland Sea at Wakayama city. The modern district of Yoshino extends far further south toward Kumano. See Wada 1995, pp. 131–41.

²³ See Como 2009, p. 58. The “medicine” refers to medicinal herbs, as Como notes, but also to the “velvet” of the regenerating antlers of young deer.

²⁴ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 564–65, 566–67. In this case Uda is written 菟田. There is another occasion, in the twenty-second year of Suiko’s reign (614), where the destination is not mentioned. See *ibid.*, pp. 570–71.

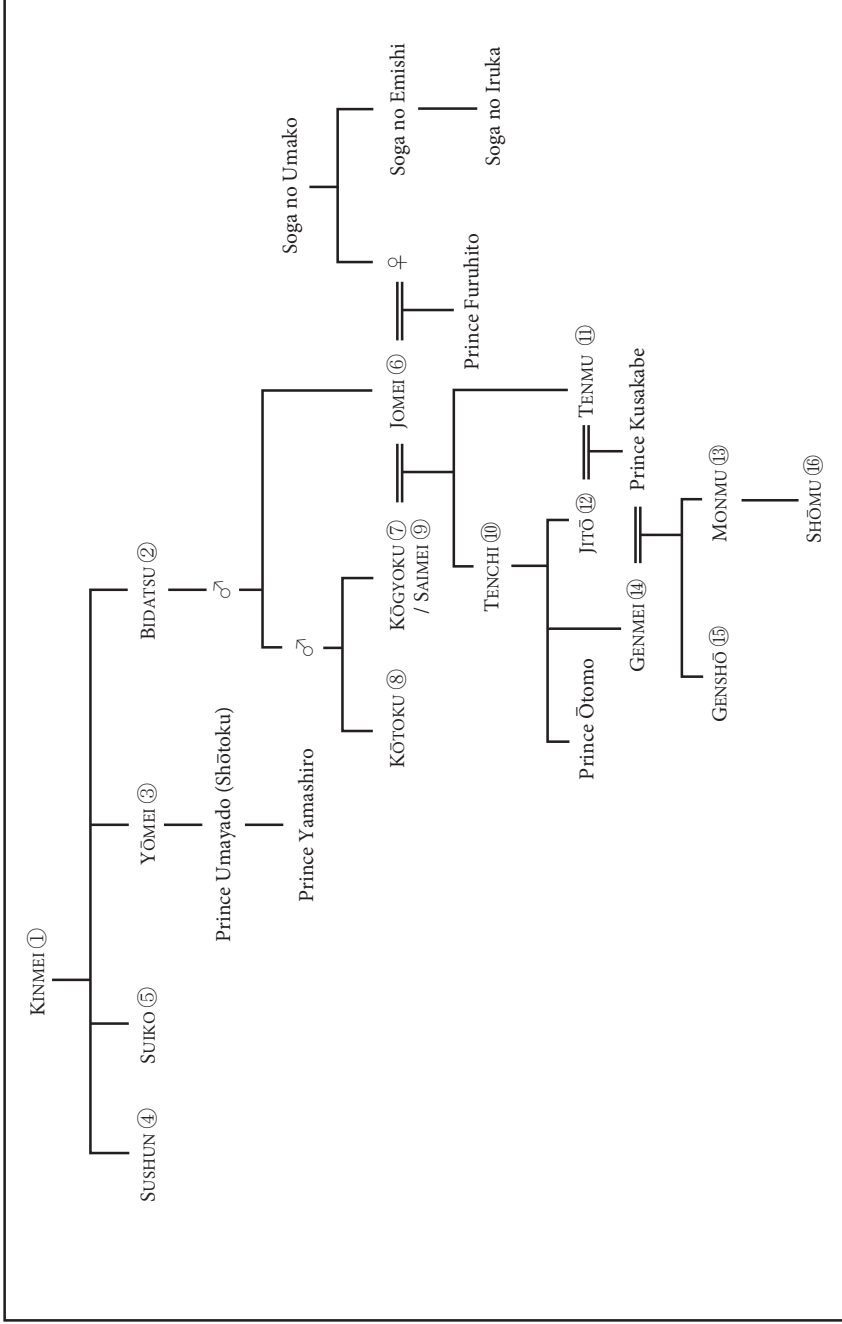
As both Wada and Como are well aware, attempting to look beyond the imperial narrative to make Yoshino itself the main focus of inquiry presents a tricky methodological problem. In the *Nihon shoki* Yoshino makes no appearance except as the destination of an imperial visit. All references to Yoshino are thus circumscribed by the ritualized framework of imperial historiography, in which places are only mentioned in relation to the acts (visits) and words (commands) of the sovereign and his or her imperial court.²⁵ To a certain degree, by reading between the lines of the *Nihon shoki*, it may be possible to trace the process by which the court not only dispensed influence to the broader realm but was also a “consumer” of useful knowledge. But such an attempt is severely constrained by a historiographical framework that is focused on the imperial capital and that describes peripheral regions exclusively in relation to its main focus. A genuine Yoshino-centered narrative would be one in which Yoshino interacted with multiple other areas, one of which would be the capital. But this Yoshino-centered history is not one that is recoverable, given the nature of the textual sources and the lack of archaeological evidence.

What is possible, however, is to complicate the *Nihon shoki* narrative of the relationship between the court and Yoshino by thinking of the sovereign’s “imperial journey” itself as a ritualizing act. As Nitō Atsushi 仁藤敦史 has argued, within the symbolic spatial framework in which the imperial palace and capital represent the center of imperial authority as defined by the sovereign’s presence, the sovereign’s movements to specific places outside the capital are in themselves “dynamic” representations within the geography of sovereignty that transform the places that are visited by marking them with a special significance.²⁶ In the context of the imperial chronicle, the narrative describing the sovereign’s movement brings these significant destinations into the space of historical discourse. Whatever Jitō’s reasons were for traveling to Yoshino, her repeated visits transformed it into an important site within both the newly defined imperial landscape and the space of imperial history.

Perhaps, then, the question to pose when reading the Jitō volume of the *Nihon shoki* is not simply why Jitō went to Yoshino so often, but also what the Jitō court was attempting to represent by undertaking so many visits to Yoshino. Within the *Nihon shoki* Jitō volume, the phrase “The Heavenly Sovereign visited the Yoshino Palace” stands out as a constant refrain among the variety of the sovereign’s other activities (in a modern *Nihon shoki* edition it appears on almost every other page). One can surmise that just as the references dominate the Jitō volume, the actual imperial journeys were designed to monopolize the court ritual calendar from the time of Tenmu’s final burial in the eleventh month of 688 until Jitō’s abdication in the eighth month of 697 in favor of her grandson Prince Karu 輕, better known as Monmu 文武 (683–707, r. 697–707). Each of Jitō’s journeys to Yoshino, as well as their continuous repetition, increased Yoshino’s ritual and political significance in the Yamato court’s geography

²⁵ On the ritualized framework of imperial historiography, see Duthie 2013.

²⁶ See Nitō 1999, p. 3.



Note: Capital letters indicate names of rulers; circled numbers indicate their order of accession; double lines indicate marriage. For a more detailed chart distinguishing half-siblings by different mothers, see Duthie 2014, pp. 158–59.

Figure 2. Imperial succession, c. 550–750.

of sovereignty (and consequently in the historical record). To adapt a phrase from Herman Ooms, it is not simply that Jitō visited Yoshino because Yoshino was thought to be sacred; Yoshino also became sacred because it was visited repeatedly by Jitō.²⁷

This is the point that is missing from Wada Atsumu's argument that Jitō may have been going to Yoshino to worship the god of the Mikumari 水分 peak (believed to be Aonegamine 青根ヶ峰, a little over three kilometers south of the Yoshino Palace site) in order to pray for rain and a bountiful harvest. It is an intriguing theory, since rainmaking rituals were indeed closely connected with political legitimacy,²⁸ and, as Wada points out, the Niu Kawakami 丹生川上 shrine, which was just a few kilometers away from the Yoshino Palace and close to the origin of the Yoshino river, was associated with rainmaking later in the Nara period.²⁹ Wada's main evidence for his rainmaking-ritual hypothesis is a famous entry in the *Shoku Nihongi* 続日本紀 (compiled in the course of the eighth century) for the fourth month of the second year of Monmu's reign (698) noting that horses were offered to the god of Mikumari peak in Yoshino in order to pray for rain. An entry for the fifth day of the fifth month of the same year records that prayers for rain were offered to "famous rivers and great mountains"; another on the twenty-eighth of the sixth month notes that "horses were offered to the various shrines to pray for rain."³⁰ This sequence suggests that Yoshino had indeed become central to rainmaking rituals by Monmu's reign. What it does not do is establish a clear link between visits to the Yoshino Palace and rain cults prior to Monmu's reign,³¹ nor does it explain why Jitō visited Yoshino several times a year when both her predecessor (Tenmu) and successor (Monmu) visited only once or twice in their entire reigns.³² (For an overview of imperial succession, see figure 2.) Surely, as Kobayashi Shigefumi 小林茂文 has suggested, the fact that Yoshino became a preeminent center for rain cults in the Nara and Heian periods is likely to have been the *result* of—as opposed to the reason for—Jitō's visits.³³

This brings us to the question of whether Yoshino was a traditional symbol of Yamato sovereignty prior to the reigns of Tenmu and Jitō, which is certainly what

²⁷ The original phrase is: "Rulers were not rulers because they were thought to be sacred. It is much simpler. They were sacred, many times over, because they were rulers." Ooms 2009, p. 59.

²⁸ This is illustrated by the episode in Kōgyoku's reign in which the sovereign's prayers to the gods of heaven and earth prove effective in bringing rainfall after the great minister Soga no Umako's 蘇我馬子 (d. 626) prayers to the Buddha have failed—a story that does not illustrate, as is commonly assumed, the superior power of the gods of heaven and earth over the Buddha, but that of the sovereign over her minister. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 62–65.

²⁹ See Wada 1995, pp. 151–52; Como 2009, pp. 63–64.

³⁰ See *Shoku Nihongi*, vol. 1, pp. 10–11.

³¹ While a reference to one of Jitō's visits to Yoshino sometimes accompanies the various mentions of prayers for rain during the summer months recorded for her reign, this is merely coincidental, given the fact that she visited Yoshino at some point during the summer months every year of her reign.

³² This point was made prior to Wada 1995 in Kanbori 1980.

³³ See Kobayashi 2006, pp. 35–59.

the chronological narratives of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* suggest.³⁴ In both texts, Yoshino figures in the legendary narratives of Jinmu's conquest of the Yamato plain and in a number of episodes from Yūryaku's reign, one of which portrays Yoshino as the symbolic center of the realm. It later reappears in the *Nihon shoki* as the setting for two important events during Tenmu's lifetime: first, as the place to which his elder half-brother Prince Furuhiro escaped with the intention of mounting a rebellion, and second, as the location where his mother, Saimei, built a palace. As I will show, however, there are clear indications that these earlier stories about Yoshino have been shaped by a later perspective. In what follows, I analyze the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* narratives to trace how Yoshino gradually became a significant site through a complex political and historical process. I distinguish between legendary episodes about Yoshino and events that occurred within the living memory of Tenmu's contemporaries. But I evaluate both types of narrative, recent and legendary, in terms of their relation to the larger context of the *Nihon shoki* as a text that culminates in the reigns of Tenmu and Jitō and strongly associates Yoshino with their political legitimacy. The history of Yoshino, like that of other areas bordering the imperial capital such as Uda and Kazuraki, is part of the history of the cultural topography that developed around the early capitals of Asuka 飛鳥 and Fujiwara 藤原. As such it is intertwined with the politics and political narratives of the capital: its story is that of a "wild" area outside the civilized capital that is eventually brought within the ritual space of sovereignty as an imperial palace retreat.

Yoshino in Legendary Narratives of Conquest and Submission

Yoshino figures prominently in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* narratives of the arrival in Yamato of the first emperor, Jinmu, but it plays a somewhat different role in each story. In both texts Yoshino appears as a place where earthly gods—figures with tails said to be the ancestors of the Yoshino no obito 吉野首, a title held by late seventh-century local chiefs,³⁵ and another local group called the Kunisu 国巢—emerge from caves and submit to the descendant of heaven.³⁶ Yoshino is distinguished as the only area of Yamato that recognizes Jinmu's divine right to rule and submits without military resistance. By contrast, Jinmu's army has to fight at Uda and Oshisaka 忍坂 (in the *Kojiki*) and at Uda and Kazuraki (in the *Nihon shoki*). In both texts, Jinmu ini-

³⁴ See Wada 1995, pp. 142–50. Michael Como notes that "even before Tenmu first raised his banner at Yoshino, Yoshino already occupied an important place in the Yamato imaginary. . . . Jitō's desire to inscribe her own presence on the Yoshino landscape may have been related to legends from the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* that suggest that the region and its deities played a profoundly important role in the evolving mythologies of the ruling house." See Como 2009, p. 63.

³⁵ According to the *Nihon shoki*, the Yoshino no obito received the *kabane* 姓 title of *muraji* 連 in the twelfth year of Tenmu's reign (683), probably as repayment for their support before the Jinshin Rebellion. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 430–31.

³⁶ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 208–10. In Wada's view, this suggests that the inhabitants of Yoshino were regarded as an alien people, and he argues that this may have led to Yoshino being portrayed as a realm of immortals.

tially arrives at Naniwa 難波 and tries to approach Yamato from the west. After losing a battle at Naniwa to a chieftain called Nagasunehiko (長髓彦 in the *Nihon shoki*, 那賀須泥毘古 in the *Kojiki*), Jinmu surmises that as a descendant of the sun goddess it is unfitting he should face the sun in battle. He therefore decides to travel south round the Kii peninsula to Kumano in order to approach Yamato from the east. It is at this point that the two accounts differ. In the *Nihon shoki* story, Jinmu goes from Kumano straight north to Uda, makes a detour to Yoshino (southwest of Uda), and then returns once more to Uda before advancing on the Yamato plain. In the *Kojiki* version, Jinmu goes from Kumano northwest to the lower reaches of the Yoshino river and from there goes upriver (to the northeast), going through Yoshino until he reaches Uda and then turning back westward toward the Yamato plain.

Wada argues that the *Nihon shoki* version makes more sense in terms of the natural topography of the region, whereas the route in the *Kojiki* version is inexplicably tortuous. In my view, what is significant is that the different routes produce different narratives of Jinmu's foundation of the realm. Both stories place Yoshino close to this foundation, but they do so to different degrees. In the *Nihon shoki* most of the action takes place in Uda, and Jinmu's visit to Yoshino is little more than an interlude. There is a sense that the whole Yoshino episode might even be an interpolation.³⁷ In the *Kojiki*, on the other hand, Yoshino has a more prominent position as the first point of entry into Yamato. And yet even in the *Kojiki* narrative, Uda is still as important as, or more so than, Yoshino. Both stories contrast with the highly elliptical account in Ō no Yasumaro's 太安万侶 (d. 723) preface to the *Kojiki*, in which Uda is not mentioned at all and the whole Yoshino-Uda sequence of episodes is synthesized into the phrase "those with tails blocked the road and the great crow led the way to Yoshino."³⁸

In a sense, we can think of these three different versions of the story of Jinmu's conquest as representing three different "narrative maps" of the foundation of the realm, each of which assigns the places called "Yoshino" and "Uda" a somewhat different role. Although the exact reasons for these differences are unclear, they indicate that at the time the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* were compiled there was no single established narrative regarding Yoshino's place in Jinmu's expedition of conquest and foundation of the realm. They further suggest that Uda, which marked Tenmu's first stop after Yoshino on his journey to the east in the Jinshin Rebellion, also was a significant site. Uda also seems to have been closely associated with male succession in both

³⁷ This is partly because it breaks up the plot—Jinmu makes a tour of Yoshino after winning his first battle at Uda and before returning to Uda for more battles—and partly because the Uda episodes are dated, whereas the Yoshino episode is not (it is introduced as "after this," *kono nochi ni* 是後). In contrast to the *Nihon shoki*, the *Kojiki* tends to structure its narrative around places, and it almost never includes cases of a protagonist arriving first at place A, visiting place B, and then returning to place A. The *Nihon shoki* can do this easily because it is structured chronologically by calendar dates, but the *Kojiki* has no calendrical order and instead structures its narrative spatially.

³⁸ *O oitaru hito michi o saete, ōki karasu Yoshino ni michibikimatsuriki* 生尾遮徑、大鳥導於吉野. See *Kojiki*, p. 18. In the accounts of the main text of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*, by contrast, the people of Yoshino are the only ones that *do not* "block the road" and try to resist Jinmu.

Tenmu's and Jitō's reigns, as suggested by poems in the *Man'yōshū* that refer to hunting journeys to Uda by Tenmu's son Kusakabe 草壁 (662–689; MYS 2: 191) and grandson Prince Karu, the future sovereign Monmu (MYS 1: 45–59).³⁹

The significance that Yoshino and Uda assume in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* Jinmu narratives should be evaluated in light of the fact that certain details of the story of Jinmu's "subjugation of the east" in both texts seem to have been written or adapted to resemble Tenmu's "journey to the eastern lands" (his Jinshin military campaign) from Yoshino.⁴⁰ Both Jinmu and Tenmu go east first in order to attack from that direction, and Tenmu is explicitly associated with Jinmu when a god instructs him through a possessed man to make offerings of horses and weapons at Jinmu's tomb, thereby suggesting that Tenmu is a latter-day "first emperor."⁴¹ This is one of only two occasions in the *Nihon shoki* text outside of Jinmu's reign or that of Jinmu's son Suizei 綏靖 that Jinmu's name (Kamu Yamato Iwarebiko) is mentioned.⁴² It is not unreasonable to speculate, therefore, that the prominence of Yoshino and Uda in the various narratives of Jinmu's foundation of the imperial realm reflects the symbolic importance that they acquired during the reigns of Tenmu, Jitō, and Monmu.⁴³

³⁹ See Duthie 2014, pp. 372–86.

⁴⁰ Wada argues that the Jinmu chronicle was based on the historical invasion of Yamato from the Ōmi and Koshi areas (by the ruler known as Keitai 繼体) and then further overlaid with parallels to Tenmu's Jinshin victory. Wada 1995, pp. 143–44.

⁴¹ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 340–41. The *Nihon shoki* implicitly compares Tenmu to the first emperors of the Han and Later Han dynasties.

⁴² The name is written in the *Nihon shoki* as 神日本磐余彦 and in the *Kojiki* as 神倭伊波礼毘古. The other mention of the first emperor Kamu Yamato Iwarebiko occurs in Keitai's reign. The name "Jinmu" is a Sinic-style posthumous name for the first emperor that was created together with all the other Sinic-style names (Yūryaku, Tenmu, Jitō, Monmu, etc.) in the late Nara period. It does not appear in the *Kojiki* or *Nihon shoki*. The specific Sinic-style names that were chosen for each sovereign seem to have been designed to reflect the accomplishments and character of the ruler in question. Thus Kamu Yamato Iwarebiko was called Jinmu 神武 (Divine Martial) because he conquers Yamato with divine assistance and is semigodlike himself. Mimaki Iribiko (御間城入彦 in the *Nihon shoki*, 御真木入日子 in the *Kojiki*) was called Sujin 崇神 (Revering the Gods) because he is described in the *Nihon shoki* as having "revered and honored the gods of heaven and earth" (*amatsukami kunitsukami o agametamau*, or *sūchō jingi* 崇重神祇) and established the cult of Mt. Miwa 三輪. Okinaga Tarashihime (氣長足姬 in the *Nihon shoki*, 息長帶比売 in the *Kojiki*) was called Jingū 神功 (Divine Accomplishment) because she conquers the Korean kingdoms after being inspired by a divine oracle. Among the last rulers in the *Nihon shoki*, Ōshiyama 大海 (previously read mistakenly as "Ōama") was called Tenmu 天武 (Heavenly Martial) to emphasize his military victory in the Jinshin Rebellion as well as his parallel status to Jinmu as a latter-day "first emperor." Tenmu's consort and successor Uno 菟野 was given the name Jitō 持統 (Maintaining Rule) to reflect her role in transferring the lineage from Tenmu to their grandson Karu, whose posthumous name Monmu 文武 (Cultured Martial) celebrates his establishment of the Taihō 大宝 civil code, while also echoing that of his grandfather. Monmu's son Obito 首 was given the name Shōmu 聖武 (Sagely Martial), also in memory of Tenmu and probably in recognition of his establishment of Tōdaiji 東大寺.

⁴³ The *Kojiki* preface mentions Yoshino twice: the first time in a brief description of Jinmu's reign as the place through which the heavenly sent crow guided him to his conquest of Yamato, and the second time as the origin of Tenmu's victory in the Jinshin Rebellion. See *Kojiki*, pp. 17–20.

Yoshino's second appearance in both the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* occurs during the reign of Homuda,⁴⁴ better known by his late Nara-period posthumous name of Ōjin, the first ruler to govern a completed realm of “all under heaven” after Jingū's 神功 subjugation of the Korean kingdoms.⁴⁵ When the sovereign visits Yoshino, the Kunisu people—the human descendants of the earthly gods with tails who submitted to Jinmu—reaffirm their submission by offering Ōjin wine and entertainment. The *Nihon shoki* depicts the Kunisu as a wild, unsophisticated people who eat mountain fruits and toads, and it describes their habitat as being hard to access in spite of being relatively close to the capital:

Their land is to the southeast of the capital. They live there on the other side of the mountains by the upper reaches of the river Yoshino, amid sharp peaks and deep valleys, where roads and paths are narrow and steep.⁴⁶

As was the case with Jinmu's visit to Yoshino, the Kunisu performance of submission to the sovereign has larger resonances. In the *Kojiki* their offerings are described as “great gifts” (*ōnie* 大贄), which a later episode suggests are symbolic of the submission of the entire natural realm. Moreover, both the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* stories connect the ancient customs of the Kunisu with their performances of submission at court “today” (*ima* 今), when they continue to bring their native products—according to the *Nihon shoki*, chestnuts, mushrooms, and *ayu* 年魚 fish—and sing in the same manner as they did in entertaining Ōjin. The explicit link suggests once more that the depiction of Yoshino in the Ōjin narrative has been shaped by the contemporary circumstances of the courts of Tenmu, Jitō, and their immediate successors.

Yūryaku at Yoshino and Kazuraki

Yoshino next appears in both the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* during the reign of the late fifth-century ruler Ōhatsuse Wakatakeru,⁴⁷ more commonly known by his late Nara-period posthumous name of Yūryaku. Here, too, Yoshino is closely associated with imperial sovereignty, but it has to compete with Kazuraki, which Yūryaku also visits on more than one occasion. Moreover, the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* each treat the tension between Yoshino and Kazuraki in different ways, which suggests that the status of Yoshino as a symbol of imperial sovereignty was not uncontested.

⁴⁴ Homuda is written as 誉田 in the *Nihon shoki* and 品太 in *Harima fudoki* 播磨風土記 (c. 713). In the *Kojiki* his name is Homuda Wake 品陀和氣, and a similar name, Homutsu Wake 凡牟都希, appears in a genealogy from a fragment of *Jōgūki* 上宮記 (date unknown).

⁴⁵ On the *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki* narratives of the different stages of the conquest of “all under heaven,” see Duthie 2014, pp. 112–18.

⁴⁶ *Sono tokoro wa, miyako yori tatsumi no sumi, yama o hedatete Yoshinogawa no hotori ni ori, mine sagashiku tani fukaku shite, michi saku sagashi* 其土自京東南之、隔山而居于吉野河上、峰嶮谷深、道路狭巖。See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 486–87. In the *Kojiki*, the Kunisu submission is actually directed at Ōjin's son, the crown prince Ōsazaki 大雀 (written as 大鷄鷄 in the *Nihon shoki*), more commonly known as Nintoku 仁德。See *Kojiki*, pp. 265–67.

⁴⁷ Written as 大長谷若健 in the *Kojiki* and as 大泊瀨幼武 in the *Nihon shoki*.

Unlike the case of Jinmu, an entirely legendary figure for whom no historical evidence exists, both archaeological and textual sources suggest that the “Wakatakeru” of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* is probably a semilegendary version of a historical figure. A famous inscription dated to a “younger metal boar year” (probably 471) on a sword from the Inariyama 稲荷山 tomb in Saitama prefecture credits a “Great King Wakatakiru 獲加多支鹵” with “ruling all under heaven,”⁴⁸ and the volume on “eastern barbarians” from the Chinese dynastic history *Song shu* 宋書 (c. 492–493) cites a memorial to the Liu Song court in 478 from a Yamato ruler called Wu 武 (which can be read in the vernacular as *takeru*), in which he claims to have conquered lands to the east and to the west, as well as the lands “crossing the sea to the north”—i.e., parts of the Korean peninsula.⁴⁹

While the “Wakatakiru” of the inscription, the “Wu” of the memorial, and the Yūryaku of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki* may all be depictions of the same historical figure, each of the representations is quite different. The *Nihon shoki* Yūryaku chronicle describes events relating to the Korean kingdoms of Paekche, Silla, and Koguryō, but is just as concerned with episodic legendary anecdotes that illustrate the sovereign’s exemplary behavior and character (both positively and negatively) and are often centered on the reciting of poetry. The *Kojiki* focuses almost exclusively on such episodes and hardly mentions the Korean kingdoms at all. Neither the *Kojiki* nor the *Nihon shoki* describes Yūryaku’s reign as a period of conquest. The subjugation of the peoples of the four directions is attributed primarily to the earlier Prince Yamato Takeru (written in the *Nihon shoki* as 日本武尊, and in the *Kojiki* as 倭健命).

Wakatakeru’s Sinic-style posthumous name of Yūryaku 雄略, in which the first graph means “male” and “heroic,” and the second “aggression” or “strategem,” reflects his portrayal in both the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* as a charismatically violent ruler and lover. In this sense he is the foil for his grandfather Ōsazaki, who was given the posthumous name Nintoku 仁德 (Benevolent Virtue) to reflect his portrayal as a humane sage-king. Following the assassination of his older brother, Yūryaku becomes sovereign by killing his two remaining brothers and two of his cousins who are sons of former rulers. Both the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* include numerous episodes in which he becomes enraged with his subjects and either kills them or is only barely prevented from doing so (usually by a female figure). Although this portrayal is at times intended to be critical, Yūryaku’s violence is by no means a purely negative force. The *Nihon shoki* notes that “when he was born a divine brightness filled the palace,” and that “when he grew up his strength was superior to other men.”⁵⁰ This description

⁴⁸ The name appears as part of an inscription on a sword that records the past seven generations of the lineage of a man claiming that “when Great King Wakatakiru was at the Shiki 斯鬼 palace, I assisted in the ruling of all under heaven.” For a detailed account of the inscription, see Lurie 2011, pp. 94–97.

⁴⁹ For a full translation of the memorial, see Duthie 2014, pp. 29–30.

⁵⁰ *Aremashite shinkō ōtono ni miteri* 産而神光満殿; *hito to narite kōken ni mashimasu koto hito ni sugitari* 長而伉健過人. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 140–41.

recalls that of Prince Yamato Takeru, another violent heroic figure who murdered his brother and who is said in his youth to have had a “manly and aggressive disposition” (*ōshiki iki* 雄略之氣),⁵¹ and in adulthood to have been “ten feet tall and so strong he could lift a tripod.”⁵² Yūryaku thus exemplifies a type of ruler that I will refer to as “virile and martial,” the two other examples of which are also associated with Yoshino: the first emperor, Jinmu, and of course the victor of the Jinshin Rebellion, Tenmu, who is said to have been “manly and vigorous” (*yūbatsu* 雄拔) and possessed of “divine martial abilities,” i.e., *jinmu* 神武.⁵³

Because the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* narratives of Yūryaku’s visits to Yoshino and Kazuraki are rather different, I will discuss each of them separately. As a general rule the *Kojiki* makes no reference to calendar dates and tends to organize its narrative spatially. It thus first describes two episodes in which Yūryaku visits Yoshino and then follows these with accounts of two visits to Kazuraki. In the first Yoshino episode, Yūryaku encounters a beautiful young woman and marries her. He later returns and has a dais built for him to play the koto while the young woman dances.⁵⁴ Yūryaku is so pleased by her dance that he composes the following poem:

Held in the hands of the god on the dais,	<i>agurai no</i> 呉床居の	<i>kami no mite mochi</i> 神の御手持ち
the koto plays and so the woman dances	<i>hiku koto ni</i> 弾く琴に	<i>mai suru omina</i> 舞する女
in this eternal realm!	<i>tokoyo ni mo gamo</i> 常世にもかも ⁵⁵	

The dancing woman is often interpreted to be an immortal being, but such a reading overlooks the main point of the poem (I discuss Yoshino’s association with immortality more fully below). The young woman’s marriage to the sovereign represents Yoshino’s political submission. The “eternal realm” evoked in the poem is one in which the sovereign is the god and the woman dances for the sovereign’s pleasure. There is also a gendered hierarchy: the male sovereign commands, plays the koto, and watches; the woman obeys, dances, and is a pleasurable sight. If the woman is portrayed as an immortal, it is only in the context of the male sovereign’s vision of himself as a god in heaven surrounded by beautiful maidens.

⁵¹ Note that *ōshiki* (manly) is written as 雄略 (*yūryaku*).

⁵² *Mi take hito tsue ni shite, chikara yoku kanae o agetamau* 身長一丈、力能扛鼎焉。See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 342–43.

⁵³ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 300–301.

⁵⁴ Strictly speaking this constitutes two different visits, but the *Kojiki* treats them as part of the same episode because it is not organized according to calendric chronology.

⁵⁵ See *Kojiki*, pp. 344–45. Throughout this article, poems quoted from the *Kojiki* and *Man’yōshū* have been translated into *yomikudashi* 訓み下し style using modern orthography, accompanied by Hepburn-style romanized readings. See the appendix for an original all-kanji text and a modified *kunreishiki* 訓令式 romanization that represents the *ha-gyō* は行 consonant as “p” for Nara-period texts, and as “f” for Heian texts.

The *Kojiki* narrative reaffirms Yoshino’s “eternal” submission—and by extension that of the entire realm—in the second Yoshino episode, in which a horsefly bites Yūryaku while he is on a hunting trip. Before he even has time to react, a dragonfly appears and devours the horsefly. Yūryaku interprets this as a marvelous omen and composes a poem in praise of the dragonfly:

On Mt. Omuro in beautiful Yoshino, who announces before his majesty that beasts lie in hiding?	<i>mieshino no</i> み吉野の <i>shishi fusu to</i> 猪鹿伏すと <i>ōmae ni mōsu</i> 大前に奏す	<i>Omuro ga take ni</i> 小室が岳に <i>tare so</i> 誰そ
Our mighty lord ruler of the eight regions, as he crouches in waiting for the game, to his forearm that is dressed in sleeves of fine white cloth a horsefly comes to bite.	<i>yasumishishi</i> やすみしし <i>shishi matsu to</i> 猪鹿待つと <i>shirotae no</i> 白袴の <i>takomura ni</i> 手舂に	<i>waga ōkimi no</i> 我が大君の <i>agura ni imashi</i> 呉床に坐し <i>sode kisonau</i> 袖着そなふ <i>amu kakitsuki</i> 虻描き着き
But the horsefly a dragonfly then eats and so it is that the name has been given and the Sky-Seen Land of Yamato is called Dragonfly Island	<i>sono amu o</i> 其の虻を <i>kaku no goto</i> 斯くの如 <i>sora mitsu</i> そらみつ <i>Akizushima tou</i> 蜻蛉島とふ ⁵⁶	<i>akizu hayagui</i> 蜻蛉早昨ひ <i>na ni owamu to</i> 名に負はむと <i>Yamato no kuni o</i> 倭の国を

The prose text following the poem notes that “Thus it is that from that time the fields were given the name of Akizu (dragonfly) fields.” This juxtaposition of the name Akizu being given to the “land of Yamato” in the poem and to the hunting fields in the prose text suggests that the “Akizu fields” in Yoshino represent the land of Yamato and therefore that the dragonfly’s submission symbolizes that of the entire realm.

Following these two stories that celebrate imperial authority at Yoshino are two episodes in which Yūryaku goes to hunt on Mt. Kazuraki. In the first, a huge boar attacks Yūryaku after he shoots it with an arrow, forcing him to climb a tree to save himself. The narrative concludes with a somewhat comical poem summarizing the episode in which the narrative voice shifts from third-person praise of Yūryaku to a first-person statement in which Yūryaku expresses fear of the boar. In the second Mt. Kazuraki episode, Yūryaku meets a man whose dress and attendants look exactly like

⁵⁶ See *Kojiki*, pp. 344–46.

his own. The man answers Yūryaku's questions by echoing them, and his men mimic the movements of Yūryaku's courtiers when they threaten to attack. He then reveals himself to be the Great God of the Single Word of Kazuraki (Kazuraki no Hitokotonushi no ōkami 葛城之一言主之大神). Yūryaku submits and makes offerings to the god, who accompanies him back to the imperial palace in Hatsuse 長谷.⁵⁷ In contrast to Yoshino, which is represented as a place that loyally submits to Yūryaku (in the stories of the dancing maiden and the dragonfly), these two stories portray Kazuraki as a powerful place over which Yūryaku does not have full authority. In the context of the *Kojiki* narrative, the Mt. Kazuraki stories appear to be functioning as a political allegory for Yūryaku's tense relations with the Kazuraki lineage.⁵⁸

The *Nihon shoki* treatment of the contrast between Yūryaku's visits to Yoshino and Kazuraki is rather different. First of all, because the *Nihon shoki* organizes its narrative chronologically instead of spatially, it intersperses the stories. Moreover, while the *Nihon shoki* includes its own versions of the stories of the dragonfly at Yoshino and of Hitokotonushi and the wild boar at Kazuraki, the story of Yūryaku's first visit to Yoshino is a completely different one from that of the dancing maiden in the *Kojiki*. In the *Nihon shoki*, Yūryaku first goes to Yoshino in the winter of the second year of his reign. After a successful day of hunting, he asks his ministers if they would like to prepare and cook the meat themselves. When they are too confused by the request to answer, he kills one of them in a fit of rage.⁵⁹ Later, after the imperial party has returned to the capital, the empress dowager (his mother) and his empress consort try to mollify him by sending him a tribute maiden (*uneme* 采女) to offer him wine, and the empress dowager suggests that he establish a butcher guild (*shishihitobe* 宍人部). The entry following this episode notes:

The Heavenly Sovereign, taking his heart as his guide, killed many men in error. All under heaven censured him and said "this is a heavenly sovereign of great evil."⁶⁰

The *Nihon shoki* thus represents Yoshino initially as the setting for Yūryaku's portrayal as a wicked and tyrannical ruler who can barely be mollified by his mother and consort. This first Yoshino episode functions as a foil to the account of Yūryaku's subsequent first visit to Kazuraki and his encounter with the god Hitokotonushi. In this version, unlike that in the *Kojiki*, Yūryaku knows from the start that he is dealing with a god. After each of them reveals his name, they hunt together, and the text notes that the god treats Yūryaku with great respect, "as if he were meeting an immortal"

⁵⁷ *Kojiki*, pp. 346–49.

⁵⁸ Unlike their predecessors (Richū 履中, Hanzei 反正, and Ingyō 允恭) and successors (Seinei 清寧, Kenzō, and Ninkei 仁賢), Yūryaku and his short-lived older brother Ankō 安康 were not the sons of a Kazuraki consort.

⁵⁹ In the second year, tenth month, third day. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 152–57.

⁶⁰ *Sumeramikoto mikokoro o mochite shi to shi, ayamariite hito o koroshitamau koto ōshi. Ame no shita, soshirite mōsaku*, "hanahada ashiku mashimasu sumeramikoto nari" 天皇以心為師、誤殺人衆。天下誹謗、言大惡天皇也。See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 156–57.

(*hijiri ni au gotoki koto ni mashimasu* 有若逢仙).⁶¹ The god then escorts Yūryaku back to the Kume 来目 river, and the episode concludes with the statement, “At this time the hundred subjects all said, ‘This is a heavenly sovereign possessed of virtue!’”⁶²

The *Nihon shoki* thus transforms the image of Yūryaku as a wicked tyrannical ruler at Yoshino into that of a virtuous sagely sovereign at Kazuraki. This transformation is immediately followed by Yūryaku’s second visit to Yoshino, in which the dragonfly represents the submission of the entire realm and gives name to both the plains of Akizu and to the land of Yamato. The Yoshino-Kazuraki sequence then concludes with the account of Yūryaku’s second visit to Kazuraki, in which Yūryaku is warned beforehand by a supernatural bird (*ayashiki tori* 靈鳥) that a wild boar is about to attack the imperial party. In this version, Yūryaku kills the boar and it is his attendants (not, as in the *Kojiki*, Yūryaku himself) who leap into trees in terror. Yūryaku—who in spite of his transformation into a virtuous sovereign still has a violent streak—wants to put his attendants to death for their cowardice, but his empress remonstrates with him and notes that if he does so he himself will be no better than a wolf. Yūryaku is pleased by his consort’s good advice and returns cheerfully to his palace.⁶³

Although the *Nihon shoki* shares the *Kojiki*’s positive representation of Yoshino as a symbol of imperial sovereignty, here it is clearly Kazuraki that plays the more prominent role as a territory that endows the sovereign with legitimacy. In connection to this, there is an interesting aspect of the *Nihon shoki* version of the Yoshino dragonfly episode that also suggests a connection to Kazuraki. Whereas the *Kojiki* dragonfly poem firmly locates the episode in Yoshino by explicitly mentioning it in its first line, the *Nihon shoki* poem does not. In fact, the only reason to assume that the *Nihon shoki* episode is set in Yoshino is that it is described as taking place on the occasion of a visit to “the fields upriver” two days after Yūryaku makes a journey to the Yoshino Palace. The absence of an explicit reference to Yoshino in the poem has led Kobayashi Shigefumi to argue that the place-name “Akizu” in the *Nihon shoki* poem may have originally referred to a place in Kazuraki.⁶⁴ It is a convincing thesis, in light of the fact that the Yūryaku tale is actually the *Nihon shoki*’s second explanation of the origin of the name Akizushima 秋津洲 (Dragonfly Island) as an epithet for Yamato. The first occurs in the Jinmu volume, when after his conquest of Yamato, Jinmu climbs Hohoma 嘸間 hill at Wakigami 脇上 in Kazuraki and names Yamato

⁶¹ The hierarchy between Yūryaku and Hitokotonushi is also indicated by the fact that Yūryaku refers to himself with the graph 朕 (read as *ware*), a first-person pronoun used exclusively by the emperor, whereas Hitokotonushi refers to himself with the first-person term 僕 (also read *ware*), the literal meaning of which is “servant.”

⁶² *Kono toki ni ōmitakara mina mōsaku*, “*toku mashimasu sumeramikoto nari*” 是時百姓咸言、有德天皇也。See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 160–62.

⁶³ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 162–65.

⁶⁴ This would make the *Nihon shoki* Akizu poem an earlier version than that in the *Kojiki*. See Kobayashi 2006, pp. 61–114. As Kobayashi notes, the relationship between Akizu and Kazuraki was explored in an earlier article by Ueno Osamu 上野理. See Ueno 2000.

Dragonfly Island because of its shape.⁶⁵ Further evidence for Kobayashi's thesis comes from the fact that the fifth of the eight legendary emperors after Jinmu, Kōan 孝安, is said to have reigned from the Akizushima Palace in Kazuraki.⁶⁶

If there was an "Akizu fields" that was a symbol of Yamato sovereignty before Tenmu's time, it would certainly make sense for it to be in Kazuraki, the home of the Soga lineage, which dominated court politics throughout the sixth and first half of the seventh century, as well as of their (purported) ancestors the Kazuraki, whom the *Nihon shoki* represents as the most powerful lineage at court during the fifth century (including the reign of Yūryaku). In the face of such circumstantial evidence, it does not seem far-fetched to speculate that the Yūryaku episode of the dragonfly, and the explanation of how the name Akizu became an epithet for Yamato, may have been transplanted from Kazuraki to Yoshino. Kobayashi suggests that although scholars have assumed that the reference to the "fields of Akizu" in Hitomaro's poetic sequence on Jitō's visits to Yoshino in the *Man'yōshū* (MYS 1: 36–39) is a reference to the (supposedly traditional) Yūryaku story, the reality may well have been the reverse: the Yūryaku dragonfly story may have been rewritten to "gerrymander" Akizu from Kazuraki into the Yoshino area and thus conform to Jitō's choice of Yoshino (not Uda and not Kazuraki) as a symbolic site of imperial sovereignty.

One can only speculate as to why the *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki* portrayals of Yūryaku and Yoshino differ in this way. One possible factor could be the manner in which the *Nihon shoki* was compiled. Most scholars agree that the *Nihon shoki* appears to have been compiled by two different committees, one of which was responsible for volumes 3–13 (Jinmu to Ingyō 允恭/Ankō 安康), 22–23 (Suiko and Jomei 舒明), and 28–29 (the two Tenmu volumes), and the other for volumes 14–21 (Yūryaku to Yōmei 用明/Sushun 崇峻) and 24–27 (Kōgyoku 皇極 to Tenchi).⁶⁷ This would mean that the Yūryaku volume compiler was also the author of the volumes that chronicled the rise and fall of the Soga lineage, as well as that of Tenchi's reign, when Nakatomi no Kamatari 中臣鎌足 (614–669), the ancestor of the dominant *uji* 氏 lineage at the time that the *Nihon shoki* was being compiled, was supposedly first given the name "Fujiwara." In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that the Yūryaku volume should focus on Kazuraki as the territory of the dominant court lineage of ancient times and portray a sovereign whose mother was from within the imperial family in negative terms up to the point when he is transformed into a virtuous ruler by Hitokotonushi at Kazuraki. Conversely, the negative depiction of Kazuraki in the *Kojiki* account of Yūryaku's reign may be due to a desire to affirm the authority of so-called "double royal" sovereigns over those with mothers from *uji* lineages. In other words, it would appear that the places called "Yoshino" and "Kazuraki" are employed in the accounts

⁶⁵ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 234–37.

⁶⁶ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 1, pp. 254–55.

⁶⁷ See Mori 1999. According to Mori Hiromichi 森博達, the first two volumes show signs of having been edited by both committees, whereas the final Jitō volume may belong to a third compiler, who would have been the final editor.

of Yūryaku's reign in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* as allegorical topoi to represent different styles of political authority.

Whatever the exact truth of the matter, by now it should be clear that the magical and supernatural aspects of Yoshino and other areas are not simply “traditional” associations. They take place in the context of a sometimes contested portrayal of Yoshino as a symbol of imperial authority that links the foundational rulers of ancient times—Jinmu, Ōjin, and Yūryaku—to Tenmu, the founder of the new imperial state who began his victorious Jinshin campaign at Yoshino, and through Tenmu to his consort and successor, Jitō.

Rebellion and Immortality at Yoshino

Yūryaku's reign is the last mention of Yoshino in the *Kojiki*. This is not surprising given that the *Kojiki* stops including narrative episodes soon after Yūryaku's reign and provides little more than genealogical information for the rulers of the sixth century until it concludes with Suiko's reign. What is more striking is that the *Nihon shoki* includes increasing amounts of information after Yūryaku's reign, and yet throughout its record of the sixth century, it hardly refers to Yoshino at all. The exception is a brief mention during Kinmei's reign in the context of the narrative of Buddhism's arrival at the Yamato court. There are reports from Naniwa of “Buddhists chants” resounding like thunder with a sun-like radiance, and the source turns out to be a log of luminous camphor wood floating in the bay of Naniwa. Kinmei orders the log to be made into two images of the Buddha, which are described as being “the images of radiant camphor wood now in the Yoshino temple.”⁶⁸

Yoshino's next appearance in the *Nihon shoki* is not until the mid-seventh century during Kōgyoku's reign (r. 642–645), only three decades before Tenmu's victory in the Jinshin Rebellion. The context is a succession struggle after the so-called Isshi Incident (Isshi no hen 乙巳の変, 645), in which Kōgyoku's son Naka no Ōe 中大兄 (more commonly known as Tenchi), assassinates Soga no Iruka 蘇我入鹿 (d. 645), son of the great minister Soga no Emishi 蘇我蝦夷 (d. 645), who commits suicide the following day.⁶⁹ This was a very significant historical incident for the early eighth-century compilers of the *Nihon shoki*, since it chronicled the beginning of Naka no Ōe's alliance with Nakatomi no Kamatari, father of Fujiwara no Fubito (who was minister of the right from 707 to 720). The day after Emishi's suicide a complex succession negotiation takes place between Naka no Ōe, Kōgyoku's brother (i.e., Naka

⁶⁸ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 420–21. In this case, “now” refers to the time of the *Nihon shoki* compilation. According to a version of this story in *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記 (c. 824) this “Yoshino temple” is Hisoji 比蘇寺 (or 比曾寺), which was located north of the Yoshino river, just east of the modern town of Ōyodo 大淀. See *Nihon ryōiki*, pp. 39–46. Ōyodo is on the west side of Mt. Yoshino, some eleven kilometers from Miyataki.

⁶⁹ On the twelfth and thirteenth days of the sixth month of the fourth year (645). See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 98–105. Historians writing in English tend to refer to this incident as the “Taika coup d'état.”

no Ōe's maternal uncle) Prince Karu 輕, and Naka no Ōe's half-brother Furuhiro no Ōe, who as Soga no Emishi's nephew has now lost all support.⁷⁰ First Naka no Ōe is offered the throne by his mother, but on Kamatari's advice, he declines and recommends his uncle Prince Karu, who in turn recommends Furuhiro to the throne.⁷¹ Furuhiro also declines and declares that he intends to leave the capital to become a monk (*shukke* 出家) and support the sovereign by "practicing the way of the Buddha" (*butsudō o tsutomeokonaite* 勤修仏道) at Yoshino.⁷² Three months later, following Karu's ascension to the throne as Kōtoku, Furuhiro is reported to be plotting a rebellion, which is quickly put down by Naka no Ōe, after which Furuhiro and his children are killed and his wives commit suicide. Several notes and variants in the *Nihon shoki* text describe the rebellion in brief and slightly divergent versions, in which they variously record that Furuhiro was known as "the Yoshino prince successor" (*Yoshino no hitsugi no miko* 吉野太子), "the Yoshino prince" (*Yoshino no miko* 吉野皇子), and "Prince Furuhiro of Yoshino" (*Yoshino no Furuhiro no miko* 吉野古人皇子).⁷³

According to the *Nihon shoki*, when Tenmu was offered the throne some twenty-five years later by his dying brother Tenchi (Naka no Ōe), he declined with exactly the same pretext as his half-brother Furuhiro by stating—in very similar language—his intention of going to Yoshino to become a monk.⁷⁴ Unlike Furuhiro, however, it was Tenmu who emerged victorious after the subsequent succession struggle between him and Tenchi's son Prince Ōtomo. The *Nihon shoki* account suggests that Furuhiro's move to Yoshino was an important precedent for Tenmu's choice of the same

⁷⁰ These events are recorded at the beginning of the Kōtoku volume. This Prince Karu, who subsequently ascends the throne as Kōtoku, is to be distinguished from the later Prince Karu who reigns as Monmu.

⁷¹ The *Nihon shoki* claims that Naka no Ōe was crown prince from the time of Jomei's reign, but this is highly suspect since he is referred to anachronistically as "the eastern prince" (a title that otherwise only appears in the *Nihon shoki* to describe a Tang crown prince, Prince Umayado 麿戸—better known in later ages as Shōtoku Taishi 聖德太子—Tenmu, and Monmu). An entry in Kōgyoku's reign suggests that the agreed-upon successor in Jomei's reign was actually Yamashiro no Ōe 山背大兄 (d. 643), who was destroyed by Soga no Iruka. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 78–83. The *Nihon shoki* does not record who Yamashiro no Ōe's father was, but the fact that his residence was in the Ikaruga 斑鳩 palace suggests that he was the son of Prince Umayado (d. 622). Further evidence comes from the text called "Explanation of Dharma King Shōtoku of the Upper Palace" (*Jōgū Shōtoku hōō teisetsu* 上宮聖德法王帝説; date unknown), which notes that Yamashiro no Ōe was Shōtoku's son. See *Shōtoku taishi shū*, p. 357. The description of the scene with the Koguryō embassy in which Naka no Ōe kills Iruka suggests that the crown prince in Kōgyoku's reign was in fact Furuhiro no Ōe. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 98–105.

⁷² The Kōtoku volume dates this to the fourth year of Kōgyoku's reign (645), sixth month, fourteenth day. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 110–13.

⁷³ On the third day of the ninth month of the first year of Taika (645). See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 124–25.

⁷⁴ There are two accounts of this in the *Nihon shoki*: one at the end of Tenchi's reign and another at the beginning of Tenmu's reign. See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 292–93, 300–303. The volumes were edited by different compilers, and there are significant differences between the two accounts. I discuss this issue in Duthie 2013.

locale. But what was it that made Yoshino an attractive place from which to mount a rebellion, and what is the connection between Buddhism and succession struggles?

In recent decades, a number of researchers have proposed that what the *Nihon shoki* refers to as the “way of the Buddha” was in fact most likely an eclectic mix of various cults and magical practices and that it was Yoshino’s association with such magical practices that attracted Tenmu.⁷⁵ Several recent studies in English have picked up this hypothesis. David Bialock, for instance, has argued that “Tenmu’s choice to cultivate longevity at Yoshino can also be read as the beginning of his training in various Daoist and yin-yang techniques, including the arts of invisibility and astrology for which he was later celebrated and which arguably helped him achieve victory in the Jinshin Rebellion.”⁷⁶ Or, as Herman Ooms has noted, “Yoshino was a site for tapping Daoism’s legitimizing potential to secure political futures.”⁷⁷

How much evidence is there for this? It is clear that the *Nihon shoki* portrays Tenmu, the once usurper of the throne who became a divine ruler, as being interested in immortality and magic practices. The opening of the first Tenmu chapter describes him as having “divine martial abilities” and being “skilled in astronomy and elusion techniques.”⁷⁸ Tenmu’s interest in transcendence is also reflected in his use of the name “perfected man” (*mahito* 真人) for the highest of the *kabane* 姓 ranks instituted in the thirteenth year of his reign (684), as well as for his posthumous name Perfected Man of Oki (Okino Mahito 瀛真人).⁷⁹ He was probably the first ruler to adopt the title of “heavenly sovereign” (*tennō* 天皇), which is a name for the north star and its representation as a supreme deity in Daoist mythology,⁸⁰ and when he was on his deathbed, envoys were sent to Mino to search for the plant *okera* 白朮 (Ch. *bai zhu*), which was believed to have life-prolonging properties.⁸¹

However, the only reference pertinent to Tenmu’s interest in immortality that is specific to Yoshino occurs in the *Kojiki* preface, where Tenmu is described as having “molted like a cicada in the southern mountain” (*minami no yama ni semi no*

⁷⁵ A key proponent of this argument is Shinkawa Tokio 新川登亀男. See Shinkawa 1999, pp. 59–66.

⁷⁶ See Bialock 2007, p. 100.

⁷⁷ See Ooms 2009, pp. 148–49.

⁷⁸ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 300–301. Elusion techniques (*tonkō* 遁甲, Ch. *dunjia*) were a form of yin-yang divination used for military strategy.

⁷⁹ Oki 瀛 suggests Yingzhou 瀛州, one of the Chinese three sacred mountains of immortals. The term “perfected man” first appears in the *Zhuangzi* and later becomes roughly synonymous with *shinsen* 神仙, lit. “spirit wizard,” often translated as “immortal.”

⁸⁰ See Tsuda 1920. In English, see Bialock 2007, pp. 75–76; Ooms 2009, pp. 154–56. I discuss the title *tennō* at length in Duthie 2014, pp. 87–93.

⁸¹ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 450–51. *Okera* (also read *ukera*; White Atractylodes, *Atractylodes japonica*, *Atractylis ovata*) is a variety of chrysanthemum commonly used in Chinese medicine together with ginseng as a tonic for digestive problems; it is popularly believed to prolong life. See David Bialock’s extensive discussion in Bialock 2007, pp. 76–84; see also Herman Ooms on “recipes for immortality” in Ooms 2009, pp. 146–47.

gotoku monukemashiki 蟬蛻於南山).⁸² “Molting” in this context can be interpreted as a reference to “shedding” the secular world and becoming enlightened, but it can also be read as suggesting “corpse liberation” (*shikai* 尸解), a magical transformation in which a recluse pretends to die and “molts” into an immortal transcendent.⁸³ Although this is a plausible reading, in itself the passage does not constitute much in the way of evidence, particularly in light of the fact that other than the reference to practicing “the way of the Buddha” there is nothing in the *Nihon shoki* that explicitly suggests Tenmu learned magic arts at Yoshino, or that Yoshino was associated with immortality.

On the other hand, in the late seventh or early eighth century, when the *Nihon shoki* was compiled, “Buddhist priests” were clearly involved with a wide variety of forms of knowledge and practices. The *Nihon shoki* notes, for example, that when Paekche sent the Buddhist priest Kwallük 觀勒 to Japan in the tenth year of Suiko’s reign (602), he brought as tribute books on calendars (*rekihon* 曆本) and on astronomy and geography, as well as books on “elusion techniques” and “magic arts” (*hōjutsu* 方術, Ch. *fangshu*).⁸⁴ It is surely reasonable, therefore, to think of “Buddhism” at Yoshino in Tenmu’s time as a variegated cult of reclusion that may well have included magic practices and the pursuit of longevity and immortality.⁸⁵ But it is also important to bear in mind that there are other places mentioned in the *Nihon shoki* with clearer links to immortality and magic than Yoshino. For instance, Kōgyoku’s reign includes an entry about a man and his son who find what looks like a mushroom on Mt. Uda and after eating it become free from disease and live for a long time.⁸⁶ And at the beginning of Saimei’s reign (Saimei is the posthumous name used for Kōgyoku after she resumed the throne in 655) a sighting is reported of a man dressed in Tang-style clothing mounted on a dragon flying from Mt. Kazuraki to hide on Mt. Ikoma 胆駒 and then later disappearing over the Suminoe 住吉 pines to the west.⁸⁷ It was to this

⁸² *Kojiki*, pp.18–20.

⁸³ A description of this process from Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283–343) encyclopedia of human knowledge *Baopuzi* 抱朴子 (The Master who Embraces Simplicity) is cited in *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 73:4; see *Yiwen leiju*, p. 1255.

⁸⁴ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 538–39.

⁸⁵ I have nothing to add to existing debates over whether it is appropriate or not to use the term “Daoist” to describe the kind of “magic arts” and other elements introduced by Kwallük and practiced by Tenmu. As Herman Ooms himself notes, however, “the symbolic in action is always promiscuous, within and among traditions” (Ooms 2009, p. 28). “Heavenly sovereign” may have been a term inspired by Daoist cosmology, but Tenmu was referred to posthumously as the “monk heavenly sovereign” (*shamon sumeramikoto* 沙門天皇). See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 474–75.

⁸⁶ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 88–89.

⁸⁷ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 202–204. The significance of this episode is unclear. The *Sumiyoshi taisha jindaiki* 住吉大社神代記 (supposedly compiled in 731—although this is highly doubtful), identifies the man flying on top of the dragon as the Sumiyoshi god, who is surveying the area. See Tanaka 1985, pp. 122, 200. As there is nothing in the *Nihon shoki* text to suggest this, however, the attribution should be seen as an attempt by the *Sumiyoshi jindaiki* text to rewrite the *Nihon shoki* episode to suit its own narrative of the origins of the Sumiyoshi shrine. The *Fusō ryakki* 扶桑略記

same Mt. Ikoma that, three years before Furuhiito fled to Yoshino, another potential heir to the throne, Yamashiro no Ōe 山背大兄 (d. 643),⁸⁸ escaped before he was killed by Soga no Iruka. It is perhaps only in retrospect, with the knowledge of its importance in the later reigns of Tenmu and Jitō, that Yoshino has come to be singled out as having a particular link to cults of immortality and succession struggles.

The Establishment of the Yoshino Palace

Above all, the main precedent for Tenmu's choice of Yoshino in 672 was the building of a palace there by his mother Kōgyoku/Saimei ten years earlier.⁸⁹ The building of the Yoshino Palace was part of a series of architectural projects undertaken during Saimei's reign that included the Later Okamoto Palace (Nochi no Asuka no Okamoto no Miya 後飛鳥岡本宮), an enclosure on Tamu 田身 peak (to the northeast of Asuka) with a lookout tower (*kan* 觀) called the Palace of Two Zelkovas (Futatsuki no Miya 兩槻宮) or the Heavenly Palace (Amatsu Miya 天宮), and a canal from Mt. Kagu 香 to Mt. Isonokami 石上.⁹⁰ In light of the fact that the name "heavenly palace" for the tower suggests a Daoist belvedere and other evidence, such as the archaeological discovery of a turtle-shaped basin at Asuka,⁹¹ some scholars have argued that Saimei was attempting to transform Asuka into a Daoist cosmological capital.⁹²

To my mind, however, this is a rather one-sided reading of what was clearly a varied group of building projects. Saimei's reign also records the building of three models of Mt. Sumi (Sumisen 須弥山, i.e., Mt. Sumeru), the mountain that stands at the center of the world according to Buddhist cosmology: one to the west of the Asuka temple, another on the riverbank east of the Amakashi 甘檮 hill, and yet another near the Isonokami pond.⁹³ Rather than seeing Saimei's building spree as specifically "Daoist," it might be more accurate to characterize it as contributing to the creation of an eclectic ritual space of sovereignty that also included her son Naka no Ōe's building of a

(a history of Japan compiled in the late eleventh or early twelfth century) notes that "the people of the time said it was the spirit of the Soga Toyoura 蘇我豊浦 great minister," i.e., Soga no Emishi. See *Fusō ryakki*, p. 56. This interpretation has the virtue of corresponding more closely to the *Nihon shoki* plot (Emishi and his son Iruka had been destroyed by Naka no Ōe ten years earlier), but also probably has more to do with the *Fusō ryakki* retelling of events than with the *Nihon shoki* narrative. The timing of the episode, the westward direction in which the dragon-rider flies, the explicit description of the man as having a "Tang appearance," and the fact that the Sumiyoshi gods are the deities of naval warfare suggest that "the Suminoe pines" is a reference to the imminent naval war assisting Paekche against Tang and Silla.

⁸⁸ For Yamashiro no Ōe, see above, note 71.

⁸⁹ At the end of the second year of Saimei's reign (656). See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 208–209.

⁹⁰ Mt. Kagu lay several kilometers northwest of Asuka. The location of "Mt. Isonokami" is unclear. If close to the Isonokami shrine, it would be more than eight kilometers north of Mt. Kagu, but this is extremely unlikely. It was probably within or near Asuka, like the Isonokami pond.

⁹¹ See Kadowaki 2002.

⁹² For a discussion of this, see Bialock 2007, pp. 70–74.

⁹³ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 208–209, 220–21, 230–31.

water clock in the sixth year of her reign (660).⁹⁴ In fact, it makes sense to contextualize Saimei's building works in even broader terms as one stage in a long-term series of majestifying architectural projects that had begun with the establishment of great Buddhist temples in the early 600s and developed in tandem with the imagining of new forms of sovereignty throughout the seventh century.⁹⁵

The primary purpose of these building projects was to create ritual spaces for the representation of sovereignty over an imperial realm of "all under heaven." Prior to Saimei, during Kōtoku's reign, 645–655, the site of the capital had been moved to Naniwa (believed by archaeologists to be an early attempt at a Chinese-style cosmological capital), before Naka no Ōe brought the court back to Asuka, which the *Nihon shoki* then describes for the first time as the "Yamato capital" (*Yamato no miyako* 倭宮).⁹⁶ After Saimei died, there was a significant expansion of the imperial framework during Tenchi's reign, with the building of major military fortifications and the establishment of a governor's outpost to receive foreign envoys in Tsukushi. The move of the capital to Ōmi, however, meant that the development of Asuka as a capital city was interrupted until after the Jinshin Rebellion, when Tenmu moved the capital again back to Asuka. Tenmu built his palace of Asuka Kiyomihara 飛鳥浄御原 on the same site where Jomei and Saimei's palaces had stood while at the same time planning a large-scale Chinese-style capital city, just a few kilometers northwest of Asuka. This became the Fujiwara capital to which his consort and successor Jitō moved in 694.

The Saimei chronicle in the *Nihon shoki* begins with an architectural crisis. After her Asuka Itabuki 明日香板蓋 palace burns down, there is no suitable building to receive the envoys from Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla, so a makeshift court with purple curtains is set up around the site where a new palace is to be built.⁹⁷ Following the erection of the Later Okamoto Palace on this site, the court continues to build in and around the capital, culminating in the construction of a palace at Yoshino. Saimei's building projects are thus represented as responding to a need to create an imperial court capable of hosting subjects coming to pay homage from the remote corners of the archipelago and from beyond the seas. The Saimei volume details numerous instances of "hosting and entertaining" (*kyō* 饗) foreign visitors. The three Mt. Sumi models mentioned above serve as settings for banquets to entertain Emishi 蝦夷 and Michihase 肅慎 peoples from Michinoku and Koshi,⁹⁸ and people from Tukhara who

⁹⁴ *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 230–31.

⁹⁵ The temples included Asukadera 飛鳥寺 (a.k.a. Gangōji 元興寺, Hōkōji 法興寺) in the late sixth century, Kudaradera 百濟寺 (a.k.a. Daianji 大安寺, Daikandaiji 大官大寺) in the mid-seventh century, Kawaradera 川原寺 (a.k.a. Gufukuji 弘福寺) in the 660s, and Yakushiji 薬師寺 in the last two decades of the seventh century. See McCallum 2009.

⁹⁶ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 194–96. This is at the end of Kōtoku's reign. The term appears again in Tenchi's reign, after the move of the capital to Ōmi, and on three occasions in the first Tenmu volume.

⁹⁷ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 206–207.

⁹⁸ Emishi is a common name in *Nihon shoki* to refer to barbarian peoples from northeastern Japan. Michihase is a less-common term that first appears in classical Sinic texts referring to

had been marooned off Tsukushi.⁹⁹ In the case of the Emishi and Michihase, these banquets follow the conclusion of military expeditions, thus suggesting unequivocally that barbarian peoples are coming to court to pledge submission.

The new ritual spaces created by such an architectural transformation made it possible for the Yamato state to represent itself as an imperial court not only to its foreign visitors, but also to its own constituent members. It is in this light that I would like to interpret the reference to Saimei holding a banquet at the Yoshino Palace on the first of the third month of the fifth year of her reign (659).¹⁰⁰ The relative novelty of this can be seen by examining the usage of the term “banquet” (*toyo no akari* 宴) in the different volumes of the *Nihon shoki*. The term appears most often in the last volumes (those dedicated to Tenchi, Tenmu, and Jitō), where it usually refers to a banquet offered by the sovereign to the court in the New Year on the seventh day of the first month, but also on other nodal dates (3.3, 5.5, and 7.7). Although the term appears as well in earlier volumes, it disappears entirely between the reigns of Ninken 仁賢 and Suiko, a period spanning eight rulers and corresponding to the entire sixth century, which suggests that the early references are anachronistic interpolations. Prior to Saimei’s Yoshino Palace visit, there is a single early seventh-century reference in the context of a poem exchange between Suiko and her great minister Umako at a banquet on the seventh day of the New Year, no references in the Jomei volume, a single reference in the Kōgyoku volume to a banquet for Paekche envoys, and another in the Kōtoku volume as part of a set phrase.¹⁰¹ Since Saimei’s banquet at Yoshino occurs two days before the so-called Festival of Winding Streams, on the day of the upper snake (*jōshi* 上巳; 3.3), there is perhaps some basis for interpreting it as involving a purification ritual at the Yoshino river. But more significant is the fact that just as Saimei’s building of a palace brings Yoshino within the new architectural order of sovereignty centered on the capital, her “banquet” brings Yoshino within the new ritual space created by that architectural order. Yoshino thus becomes a symbolic center that lies outside of the capital—what would later be called a “detached palace” (*rigū* 離宮).

The Yoshino to which Tenmu went from Ōmi in 672 to “practice the way of the Buddha” was thus not simply the site associated with Furuhi’s reclusion and rebellion in 645, but also the place that Saimei had brought within the Yamato capital’s ritual space of sovereignty in 661. Another crucial difference between Furuhi and Tenmu was that Furuhi went to Yoshino from Asuka, whereas Tenmu traveled

Tungusic peoples. The *Nihon shoki* appears to have adopted the term to refer to a group of north-easterners different from the Emishi.

⁹⁹ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 208–209, 220–21, 230–31. Tukhara (Tokharistan) was a central Asian region that corresponded to modern northern Afghanistan and southern Uzbekistan. The region was under Tang control, but it is unclear what these “Tukhara people” were doing off the coast of Kyushu.

¹⁰⁰ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 220–21.

¹⁰¹ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 564–65; vol. 3, pp. 62–63, 182–83. The phrase is “banquets and costumes in good measure” (*enshoku ifuku setsu areba itaru* 宴食衣服有節則至).

from Ōmi to occupy what was by then in essence an outpost of the Asuka capital. Indeed, in the *Nihon shoki* account of the Jinshin Rebellion, while the opposing Ōmi side describes Tenmu as “the great sovereign’s younger brother, resident at Yoshino” (*Yoshino ni mashimasu mōke no kimi* 所居吉野大皇弟),¹⁰² the narrative refers to Tenmu’s side as the “Yamato capital” (*Yamato no miyako* 倭京) in contradistinction to Ōtomo’s “Ōmi capital” (*Ōmi no miyako* 近江京).¹⁰³ The site of reclusion where Tenmu went to “practice the Way of the Buddha” in 671 was in effect part of the “Yamato capital.”

Yoshino’s significance as the origin of Tenmu’s Jinshin campaign was consolidated by his return there for the succession pledge in 679, and the association was strengthened further in Jitō’s reign, when, as a consequence of her repeated visits, Yoshino became the site of a “Tenmu cult” celebrating her predecessor as the divine founder of the new political order that she had inherited. With the completion of the Fujiwara capital in 694, situated on a north-south axis with the hills of Kagu, Unebi 畝傍, and Miminashi 耳成 located within the capital city to the east, west, and north, respectively, Yoshino became a fourth sacred Yamato mountain, “in the distance” to the south.¹⁰⁴ And in Monmu’s reign (r. 697–707), it became a center for the rainmaking rituals intended to secure the economic foundations of the state. It was these developments that were the background for the early eighth-century imperial historiographies, the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, to portray Yoshino as readily submitting to the legendary Emperor Jinmu and as the symbolic center of the realm in the dragonfly episode in Yūryaku’s reign.

After the move of the capital to Heijō in 710, imperial visits to Yoshino ceased, for reasons that were probably in part political and genealogical but also geographical: Yoshino was no longer only a half-day’s journey away; it was now some twenty kilometers south of Heijō. Shōmu’s renewed visits to Yoshino in 723 and 736 were thus to a place that was even farther south than the “old capital” of Asuka Fujiwara, the symbol of the imperial order built by his great-grandfather Tenmu and great-grandmother Jitō to which he was heir.

Poetry and Immortality at Yoshino

Having examined how Yoshino is depicted in eighth-century imperial historiography, I will now turn to its portrayal in the vernacular poetry of the *Man’yōshū* and in the Sinic-style poetry of the *Kaifūsō*. In both anthologies Yoshino is associated with temporal transcendence, but the expression and the form that this association takes in each case are very different. Just as the overall plots of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* affect the specific ways in which they portray Yoshino, the *Man’yōshū* and *Kaifūsō* anthologies are also structured by genealogical and political arguments that shape how Yoshino is represented in the poems they include. The *Man’yōshū* is organized

¹⁰² See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 318–19.

¹⁰³ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 3, pp. 306–307.

¹⁰⁴ See MYS 1: 52, in *Man’yōshū*, vol. 1, pp. 55–56.

explicitly as an imperial history in its first two volumes, and implicitly thereafter. Its historical narrative is one that emphasizes Tenmu's legacy and culminates in the reign of his great-grandson Shōmu. The *Kaifūsō*, by contrast, is a collection whose preface and title allude nostalgically to “yearning for the styles” (*kaifū* 懷風) of the Ōmi court, and its opening poems are attributed to Tenmu's defeated enemy, Tenchi's son Prince Ōtomo. Moreover, unlike the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Man'yōshū*, which glorify the Jinshin Rebellion as the origin of Tenmu's new imperial order, the *Kaifūsō* depicts the Jinshin Rebellion as a tragic event of “disorder and chaos” (*ranri* 乱離) and refers to Tenmu as a “cunning giant” (*kyokatsu* 巨猾)—a clear allusion to Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE–23 CE), the usurper of the throne of the Former Han Dynasty.¹⁰⁵ As I will show, the political sympathies of each text have a strong bearing on the sharp differences between the representation of Yoshino in vernacular poetry and in Sinic-style poetry.

The *Man'yōshū* includes more than seventy poems on Yoshino. The oldest are three poems (out of a total of six) attributed to Tenmu and anthologized in the Tenmu-reign section of volume 1 (MYS 1: 25–27). The third of these includes a command in Tenmu's voice to “look well upon Yoshino” (*Yoshino yoku miyo* 芳野吉見与).¹⁰⁶ This command is taken up in the most famous Yoshino poems in the *Man'yōshū*: Hito-maro's two long poems with envoys on the topic of Jitō visiting the Yoshino Palace (MYS 1: 36–39).¹⁰⁷ They celebrate her choice of Yoshino “among the many lands under heaven” and her desire to “unceasingly return” to Yoshino and act “in divine accordance” with Tenmu's will. Yoshino is described as the site of eternal rivers and manifold mountains—a conventional binary metaphor for the entire realm—surrounding a lofty palace that is the center of a “divine reign.”¹⁰⁸ This voice of universal praise for Yoshino reappears subsequently in poems composed during the reign of Jitō's great-grandson Shōmu, 724–749, and anthologized in volume 6 of the *Man'yōshū*. Most of these poems draw upon Hitomaro's Yoshino poems by using similar formulaic language to describe its “unceasing” river and the “unceasing” desire to return, and they implicitly refer back to Tenmu as the origin of divine political authority.

While the Yoshino poems in the *Man'yōshū* contain frequent expressions of eternity and timelessness, they are completely devoid of any explicit reference to “immortals” or practices that might be identified as “Daoist.”¹⁰⁹ The main source of almost all early

¹⁰⁵ “Giant” (*ju* 巨) was Wang Mang's style name. The preface to the *Kaifūsō* also compares the destruction of the Ōmi capital with the First Qin Emperor's “burning of the books.” See Duthie 2013, pp. 312–14.

¹⁰⁶ See *Man'yōshū*, vol. 1, pp. 40–41.

¹⁰⁷ *Man'yōshū*, vol. 1, pp. 46–49.

¹⁰⁸ I have analyzed these poems in detail in Duthie 2014, pp. 243–74.

¹⁰⁹ Herman Ooms has argued that the reference in Hitomaro's Yoshino poems to a “tall tower” (*takadono*) might refer to a tower used for Daoist star cults. See Ooms 2009, p. 148. This is indeed a possibility, since the graph 楼, which can refer to a belvedere, is sometimes read *takadono*. But the graphs read *takadono* in the Yoshino poems are 高殿, meaning “lofty hall” (see MYS 1: 38, in

references to immortals at Yoshino is the *Kaifūsō*, where thirteen out of a total of seventeen poems on Yoshino describe it as a realm of immortals. Yoshino is referred to as “the home of immortal spirits” (*senrei no ie* 仙靈宅; KFS 73), the Yoshino Palace is described as a “divine dwelling” (*shinkyō* 神居; KFS 80), and courtiers visiting Yoshino are said to “want to follow in the traces of immortals” (*shinsen no ato o towamaku hori* 欲訪神仙迹; KFS 48).¹¹⁰ Many references are allusions to places and episodes associated with immortals in Sinic texts.¹¹¹ Mt. Yoshino is described as the “southern peak” (*nangaku* 南岳, Ch. *nanyue*) and compared to Mt. Gushe 姑射 (KFS 73, 102), and to the three islands of immortals said to be located in the eastern sea: Fang Zhang 方丈 (KFS 45), Yingzhou 瀛州 (KFS 11), and Mt. Penglai 蓬萊 (Jp. Hōrai; KFS 11). They also allude to the legend of Wang Qiao 王喬, who rode upon a crane to heaven (KFS 11, 32), to the legend of Zhang Qian’s 張騫 raft journey on the Yellow River up to the river of heaven (KFS 32, 47, 92), and to Tao Yuanming’s 陶淵明 (365–427) *Record of the Peach Blossom Spring* (*Taohuayuan ji* 桃花源記; KFS 45). Evocations of Yoshino as a realm of immortals are thus superimposed onto journeys into immortal landscapes from the Sinic literary tradition. It is through their composition in the cosmopolitan Sinic-style of *shi* 詩 that the poetic travelers from the Japanese court are able to “follow in the traces of immortals” (KFS 48) of distant lands.¹¹²

The two earliest poems on Yoshino in the *Kaifūsō* are probably those attributed to Fujiwara no Fubito (KFS 31 and 32). If it was indeed Fubito who composed them, they would have to date from before his death in 720.

*Pentameter. Two poems on
sojourning at Yoshino*

Tracing verses over the hills and streams,
calling for cups among the vines and ivy,
where the lacquer princess flew away on a crane
and the mulberry maiden came by with the fish,
where the bright haze is green above the crags
and the sunlight is scarlet by the shore,
I know we must be close to that mystery grove
as we enjoy the wind blowing through the pines.

五言遊吉野
二首

飛文山水地
命爵薜蘿中
漆姬控鶴拳
柘媛接魚通
煙光巖上翠
日影澗前紅
翻知玄圃近
對翫入松風

Man'yōshū, vol. 1 pp. 47–48), and they are usually interpreted as referring simply to the Yoshino Palace itself. I would suggest that Ooms’s reading of Hitomaro’s poem is somewhat colored by the portrayal of Yoshino in the *Kaifūsō*. As I argue below, however, the *Kaifūsō* treatment of Yoshino is very different from that of the *Nihon shoki*, *Kojiki*, or *Man'yōshū*.

¹¹⁰ *Kaifūsō*, pp. 137, 142, 114.

¹¹¹ In this regard, some modification is needed of Herman Ooms’s description of the phrases quoted above as “Daoist material, no doubt, but without explicit textual referents.” See Ooms 2009, p. 148.

¹¹² David Bialock notes that “Yoshino is recast as a site of ritualized play (*asobi*) that unfolds in a Daoist landscape of legend and myth.” See Bialock 2007, p. 90.

As the summer colors at Natsumi grow old,¹¹³
 and the autumn airs at Akitsu are renewed;¹¹⁴
 long ago we hear it was the Fen sovereign,
 and now here we see our excellent guests:
 the sage immortal who rode away on a crane,
 the star traveler who sailed forth on a raft.
 Many thoughts gaze upon the flowing waters,
 The single mind opens to calm benevolence.¹¹⁶

夏身夏色古
 秋津秋氣新
 昔者聞汾后¹¹⁵
 今之見吉賓
 靈仙駕鶴去
 星客乘查遼
 諸性臨流水
 素心開靜仁¹¹⁷

The first poem contains two references to what are usually regarded as local legends about female immortals: the lacquer princess who flew away on a crane and the mulberry maiden who came by with the fish. The second alludes to two male immortals from the classical Sinic tradition, Wang Qiao and Zhang Qian. The two sets of immortals share common sky/water associations: the “lacquer princess” and the “sage immortal” Wang Qiao both flew away on a crane, whereas “the mulberry maiden” who came by with the fish provides a parallel to the “star traveler” Zhang Qian and his raft.

The poems contain multiple other allusions to Sinic texts. The “mystery grove” (*genbo* 玄圃) mentioned in the first is a magical realm on the legendary mountain of Kunlun 崑崙. The line in the second poem “long ago we hear it was the Fen sovereign” echoes a poem by Xie Liengyun 謝靈運 (385–433) in the classic literary anthology *Wenxuan* 文選 (Jp. *Monzen*) titled “In Attendance on a Journey to Mt. Beigu 北固 in Jingkou 京口: In Response to Imperial Command”:

Long ago we hear was the journey to Fen river,
 and now here we see these horses beyond the dust . . .

昔聞汾水游
 今見塵外鑣¹¹⁸

The “Fen river journey” and “Fen sovereign” are allusions to a story in the *Zhuangzi* about the sage king Yao giving up the rule of the world after going to visit the four

¹¹³ Natsumi is the name of a place along the Yoshino river, close to where the Yoshino Palace was. *Natsu* is written with the graph for “summer.”

¹¹⁴ Akitsu, or Akizu, as discussed earlier, is the name of a place in Yoshino. It can sometimes refer to the Yoshino Palace itself. *Aki* is written with the graph for autumn.

¹¹⁵ Here I follow the NKBT edition’s emendation of the graph 同 (same) to 聞 (hear), because 同 makes no sense and 聞 parallels 見 (see) in the following line.

¹¹⁶ The last two lines are difficult to interpret but appear to be a conventional allusion to the *Analects* 6:23, “The wise find joy in the waters, the benevolent find joy in the mountains.” See *Lunyu zhushu*, p. 87. Extant manuscripts of the *Kaifūsō* have the graph 渚 (shore) instead of 諸 (many). Since “shore” makes no sense here, I have followed the NKBT text’s alternative emendation: 諸 (many) as a contrast to 素 (single, simple). Another possibility is 清 (pure), which would make sense as a parallel to 素. I have departed from the NKBT text in choosing the graph 臨 as one of several possibilities in different manuscript variants. The NKBT text has 捫 (pull, pour). For a different discussion of this second poem, see Bialock 2007, p. 91.

¹¹⁷ For an annotated text of the poems, see *Kaifūsō*, pp. 100–101.

¹¹⁸ See *Monzen (shihen)*, vol. 1, pp. 167–69. For a discussion in English of the *Wenxuan* poem, see Wu 2008, pp. 84–86.

masters who lived on Mt. Gushe north of the Fen river.¹¹⁹ The phrase “beyond the dust” in the *Wenxuan* poem is a reference to a different episode in the *Zhuangzi* about those masters who “roam aimlessly beyond the dust and the dirt and wander freely in their task of non-action.”¹²⁰ Through the allusion to the well-known *Wenxuan* poem, the *Kaifūsō* poem is implicitly comparing Yao to Fubito himself, the master statesman posing as a recluse who has transcended the dirty world of court politics. Yet before Fubito arrives to meet his “wonderful guests,” the male immortals Wang Qiao and Zhang Qian, it is the two legends of female immortals in the first poem that serve to transport the sojourning party to a place “close to that mystery grove” in the distant and legendary mountains of Kunlun.

Who are these female immortals? The only other reference to a name similar to “lacquer princess” appears in a legend collected in the *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記 (c. 824) about a woman called Nuribe 漆部 from Uda, who in the fifth year of the Haku-chi era (654) “went out into the spring fields to pick herbs, ate an herb of immortality, and flew away to heaven.”¹²¹ The story has varied somewhat, since the *Nihon ryōiki* makes no mention of a crane (a common trope in legends about immortality) and the location has shifted between Yoshino and Uda (a common move, as I discussed earlier). But insofar as the albeit later text *Nihon ryōiki* presents itself explicitly in its preface as a record of “weird and strange” (*ryōi* 靈異) events that happened in “the realm of Japan” (*Nihonkoku* 日本国), it is perhaps reasonable to conclude that the Nuribe/Nurihime woman, in spite of the continental flavor of both the “lacquer” and “crane” motifs, was regarded as a “local” immortal.

The figure of the “mulberry maiden,” by contrast, appears in several other *Kaifūsō* poems.¹²² By piecing these together with a later reference in a *chōka* 長歌 composed in the early ninth century,¹²³ it is possible to reconstruct elements of a legend about a fisherman named Umashine 美稻 who fishes a mulberry branch out of a river, which subsequently transforms into a woman immortal whom he then marries. With the exception of Fubito’s poem, all other references to the mulberry maiden in the *Kaifūsō* suggest the perspective of a male visitor to Yoshino fantasizing about meeting a female immortal in the same way as the fisherman Umashine did long ago. A clear example of this is KFS 102 by Takamuko no Asomi Morotari 高向朝臣諸足 (dates unknown):

¹¹⁹ “Yao ruled over the people of all under heaven and pacified the government of all within the seas. Then he went to see the four masters of the distant mountain of Gushe, and north of the Fen river he became dazed and forgot about all under heaven” (堯治天下之民、平海內之政。往見四子藐姑射之山、汾水之陽、窅然喪其天下焉). See *Sōshi* (*naihen*), p. 22.

¹²⁰ 茫然彷徨乎塵垢之外、逍遙乎無為之業。See *Sōshi* (*naihen*), p. 269.

¹²¹ See *Nihon ryōiki*, pp. 62–64.

¹²² KFS 72, 98, 99, 100, 102.

¹²³ See below, p. 226, for a discussion of this poem.

*Pentameter. Accompanying the
imperial carriage to Yoshino*

Long ago there was a man who caught fish
and now here arrives the Lord of the Phoenix¹²⁴
to pluck the zither and play with immortals,
to reach the river and speak to the goddess.
The mulberry song drifts to the cold shore
as hazy scenes float by on the autumn wind:
who dares to mention the peak of Gushe,
when we rest at this palace of immortals?

五言
從駕吉野宮

在昔釣魚士
方今留鳳公
彈琴與仙戲
投江將神通
柘歌泛寒渚
霞景飄秋風
誰謂姑射嶺
駐蹕望仙宮¹²⁵

Here the sovereign (the Phoenix Lord) and his traveling party identify with the subject position of the fisherman Umashine. The sovereign plays music while the immortal women dance (a scene reminiscent of Yūryaku's first Yoshino visit in the *Kojiki*), and he speaks to the immortal goddess who sang the “mulberry song” that still echoes over the shore of the Yoshino river while the autumn wind brings back the hazy scenes of long ago.

The brief references to the legend in other *Kaifūsō* poems suggest a similar perspective: KFS 72 closes with the line “we stop in this land where Umashine met the raft” (留連美稻逢槎洲),¹²⁶ KFS 99 ends with the phrase “we come to visit Umashine's ford” (尋問美稻津), and KFS 100 refers to Yoshino as the place “where Umashine met the immortal” (美稻逢仙).¹²⁷ The *Kaifūsō* poets consistently adopt a male subject position: when referring to the male immortals Wang Qiao and Zhang Qian, they describe themselves as “following in the traces of immortals,” while in the mulberry branch story, they identify with the human fisherman Umashine who meets the female immortal. In the *Kaifūsō*, the references to the legend of the mulberry maiden thus function as an erotically tinged fantasy of immortality for the highly literate mid- to high-ranking aristocratic elite.

The numerous *Kaifūsō* references to immortals at Yoshino contrast strikingly with the lack of any such references in the more than seventy poems on Yoshino in the *Man'yōshū*. Neither Hitomaro at the late seventh-century court, nor the court poets active in the 720s and 730s during Shōmu's reign—Yamabe no Akahito 山部赤人, Kurumamochi no Chitose 車持千年, and Takahashi no Mushimaro 高橋虫麻呂—nor the poetic circle at Dazaifu 太宰府 linked to Ōtomo no Tabito 大伴旅人 (665–731) made a single reference to immortals (male or female) at Yoshino, and when they did write about immortals, they wrote about them in relation to other areas, *not* Yoshino.¹²⁸ Wada Atsumu remarks that this absence of any references to immortals in the

¹²⁴ The emperor. The graph for “phoenix” 鳳 has been amended in the NKBT edition from “wind” 風.

¹²⁵ See *Kaifūsō*, pp. 162–63.

¹²⁶ *Kaifūsō*, p. 136. The poem is by Ki no Asomi Ohito 紀朝臣男人 (682–738).

¹²⁷ *Kaifūsō*, pp. 161–62. Both are attributed to Tajihi no Mahito Hironari 丹墀真人広成 (d. 739).

¹²⁸ One famous example is the Matura river sequence (MYS 5: 853–63) by Ōtomo no Tabito and Yamanoue no Okura 山上憶良 (dates unknown) who drew inspiration from Zhang Zhuo's 張鸞 (660?–740?) *You xian ku* 遊仙窟.

Man'yōshū Yoshino poems is puzzling.¹²⁹ But that is so only if one refuses to draw the obvious conclusion: Yoshino was not really associated with immortals in the eighth century outside of specific textual contexts, of which the only extant example is the Sinic-style cosmopolitan poetry of the *Kaifūsō*.

The twelve post-Fubito *Kaifūsō* poems on Yoshino can be dated (according to the age of the poets) to the reigns of Genshō 元正 (680–748, r. 715–724) or Shōmu (r. 724–749). Their treatment of Yoshino as a land of immortals may be fittingly contrasted with contemporary poems on Yoshino from Shōmu's reign in volume 6 of the *Man'yōshū*. The two share some clear commonalities: mountains and rivers, beautiful sights, and the theme of the everlasting. But they are fundamentally different conceptions. While Akahito and Kurumamochi's Yoshino poems look back to Hitomaro as a literary model and depict Tenmu as a source of everlasting divine authority without ever making recognizable references to immortals, the *Kaifūsō* Yoshino poems depict Yoshino as a local version of a Chinese realm of immortals that has nothing to do with Tenmu.

As Kanbōri Shinobu 神堀忍 and others have argued, the *Kaifūsō* superimposition of Yoshino on Sinic landscapes of immortals was probably a deliberate (and somewhat successful) attempt to dilute the Yoshino-Tenmu connection and create a different set of associations between Yoshino and sources of legitimacy—literary, religious, and political—that *did not* depend on Tenmu, a narrative that furthered the political interests of Fujiwara no Fubito and his sons in the early and mid-eighth century. In this regard it should be noted that Fubito's Yoshino poems, for instance, are mainly intent on celebrating his own authority, as opposed to that of the present or past sovereigns.¹³⁰

These two different portrayals of Yoshino as the foundation of Tenmu's authority and as a realm of immortals do eventually blend together in the early Heian period, when there appears a legend tracing the origin of the Gosechi 五節 dances to the performance by an immortal maiden who danced before Tenmu at Yoshino.¹³¹ However, far from being evidence of immortal cults at Yoshino during or before Tenmu's reign,¹³² this legend is a Heian-period patchwork made up from the *Kojiki* episode in which Yūryaku meets a maiden at Yoshino and later makes her dance to the sound of his koto, Tenmu's traditional association with Yoshino due to the Jinshin Rebellion, and the attribution of the inauguration of the Gosechi dances to Tenmu's reign on the occasion of the performance of the dances on the fifth day of the fifth month

¹²⁹ See Wada 1995, p. 250.

¹³⁰ See Kanbōri 1980, p. 145. Ijitsu Michifumi 井実充史 observes that the portrayal of imperial authority in the Yoshino poems in the *Kaifūsō* is remarkably muted in comparison to poems composed at other locales. In fact, in both of Fubito's poems (KFS 31, 32) the emperor is not portrayed at all: the main protagonist of the poems is Fubito himself. See Ijitsu 1998, pp. 15–27.

¹³¹ The Gosechi dances were a ceremony performed when a new sovereign acceded to the throne. The legend of the maiden dancing before Tenmu appears for the first time in *Honchō gatsuryō* 本朝月令, an early or mid-tenth-century text describing the origins and development of important calendric festivals. It also appears in *Seiji yōryaku* 政事要略, an early eleventh-century collection of political and administrative precedents. See Mitsuhashi 1990.

¹³² See Como 2009, p. 62.

of 743 by Crown Princess Abe 阿倍, the future sovereign Kōken 孝謙 (718–770, r. 749–764).¹³³ How exactly these various elements were recycled and woven together is unclear, but the answer to that question lies in an examination of the politics of Yoshino's cultural topography in the early Heian period, a topic that lies outside the scope of this article.

Popular Tales of Immortality: The Legend of the Mulberry Branch Maiden

In arguing that the image of Yoshino as a land of immortals was largely a creation of the *Kaifūsō* poets, I do not mean to subscribe to what Michael Como refers to as “the widespread tendency to dismiss . . . references to Chinese cults and conceptions of immortality . . . as mere literary ornamentation.”¹³⁴ To the contrary, I would emphasize that, far from being “mere” ornamentation, literary writing in the broad sense is the basic fabric of cultural representation. Where I differ from Como and others is that I see literary writing not simply as drawing material from a stable foundation of popular stories or beliefs, but rather as participating in the constant transforming of popular tales, and indeed, in the very definition of what might be regarded as “popular” or “elite.”

A good case study of this is the figure of the mulberry maiden that appears so frequently in the *Kaifūsō*. Shimode Sekiyo 下出積与 has argued that the presence of references to the mulberry branch maiden legend in a poetic sequence in the *Man'yōshū* (3: 385–87) is evidence that, at least by the Nara period, the poetic association between Yoshino and immortality was well established and had spread to the lower ranks of the aristocracy and beyond to more popular contexts. Referring to the same sequence, Michael Como has posited that “the fact that not all poetic references to female immortals at Yoshino were composed in Chinese-style verse” shows that “continental tropes related to . . . immortality had penetrated into the literary and cultic discourses of the period.”¹³⁵ Like the story of the fisherman Uranoshimako 浦島子 and other similar legends about female immortals being captured by a male human in the water and then flying away, the *Man'yōshū* reference to the mulberry branch legend indicates, in Como's view, that “even before the Nara period female immortals had already become integrated into the ancestral cults of local lineages that ranked far below the inner circles of the court.”¹³⁶

To explore this point, let us take a closer look at the *Man'yōshū* sequence in question. It reads as follows:

¹³³ For Princess Abe's dance and the attribution to Tenmu, see *Shoku Nihongi*, vol. 2, pp. 418–21. Although in *Honchō gatsuryō* and *Seiji yōryaku*, the maiden who dances before Tenmu is clearly an immortal, this is not the case, as noted above, in the *Yūryaku* tale. Nor does the *Shoku Nihongi* description of Princess Abe's Gosechi dance link it to performances by an immortal. For a different view of Abe's performance and its relationship to Tenmu, see Como 2009, pp. 80–81.

¹³⁴ See Como 2009, p. 257, n. 63; Shimode 1986, pp. 10–14.

¹³⁵ See Shimode 1986, pp. 97–157; Como 2009, p. 76.

¹³⁶ Como 2009, p. 75.

*Three Poems on the Mulberry
Branch Immortal*

Where the hail falls
on the peak of Kishimi
it is so steep
I lose my grip on the grass
and take my sister's hand¹³⁷

仙柘枝が歌三首

arare furi *Kishimi ga take o*
霰降り 吉志美が岳を
sagashimi to *kusa tori kanawa*
険しみと 草取りかなわ
imo ga te o toru
妹が手を取る

*Of the poem above, another [text] says
the poem was given to the mulberry
branch immortal maiden by Umashine,
a man from Yoshino. However, upon
examining the "Legend of the Mulberry
Branch," this poem is not there.*

右の一首、或は云はく、
吉野の人味稲、
柘枝仙媛に与ふる歌なり。
ただし、柘枝伝を見るに、
この歌あることなし。

If this evening
one such mulberry branch
were to float by,
having not set the traps
I will perhaps not catch it

kono yūbe *tsumi no saeda no*
この夕 柘の小枝の
nagarekoba *yana wa utazute*
流れ来ば 梁は打たずて
torazu ka mo aramu
取らずかもあらむ

Above, a poem

If it were not
for the man long ago
who set the traps,
there might now still be here
such a mulberry branch.

右の一首
inishie ni *yana utsu hito no*
古に 梁打つ人の
nakariseba *koko ni mo aramashi*
なかりせば ここにもあらし
tsumi no eda wa mo
柘の枝はも

*The poem above was composed
by Wakamiya no Ayumaro*

右の一首、若宮年魚麻呂が⁸作¹³⁸

The note to the first poem is somewhat cryptic, but nevertheless one can surmise the following: first of all, it seems that *elsewhere* (presumably in another poetry collection) the first poem is attributed to a man from Yoshino called Umashine; second, a written text existed called the "Legend of the Mulberry Branch," which the compilers of the *Man'yōshū* had access to and were able to "examine"; third, this specific poem does not appear in the "Legend of the Mulberry Branch." Such an absence is understandable, since the poem itself does not mention Yoshino, Umashine, or the

¹³⁷ "My sister" in this context means "my girl," or "my wife."

¹³⁸ This is the *yomikudashi* text in *Man'yōshū*, vol. 1, pp. 222–24. For an original all-kanji text and a modified *kunreishiki* romanization representing some of the phonological particularities of Nara-period Japanese, see the appendix.

mulberry branch maiden. Given that it appears in almost identical form in a fragment of the early eighth-century *Hizen fudoki* 肥前風土記 (where it is introduced as an *utagaki* 歌垣 courtship song) and that the only place-name mentioned in the poem, “the peak of Kishimi” (or “Kishima” 耆資熊 in the *Hizen fudoki* version), refers to a place in Hizen (present-day Saga prefecture in northwestern Kyushu), it appears that the poem has been recycled or repurposed in the context of the collection and composition of poetry on the topic of the mulberry branch immortal and may not originally have been directly related to that topic or to Yoshino.¹³⁹ The second and third poems in the sequence are composed from a male perspective similar to that of the *Kaifūsō* poems, in the latter-day voices of those imagining that “this evening” (*kono yūbe*) or “here now” (*koko ni mo*), they might perchance meet the mulberry branch immortal just as the “man who set the traps long ago” did.

Significantly, neither the headnote to the sequence nor any of the three poems mentions Yoshino. The headnote and endnote to the first poem can certainly be taken as evidence that a “mulberry branch maiden” legend existed, and that by the Nara period the “Legend of the Mulberry Branch” had become a topic of waka composition. What they do not demonstrate is that “prior to the Nara period the configuration of Yoshino as a site frequented by female immortals was a commonplace in the literature of the period.”¹⁴⁰ Neither the *Man'yōshū* “mulberry branch” sequence, whose only named poet, Wakamiya no Ayumaro, was active in the 720s, nor indeed the *Kaifūsō* Yoshino poems, whose oldest author is Fubito (659–720), can tell us much about literary activity “prior to the Nara period.”

Como's theory that even before the Nara period local lineages of minor rank had integrated female immortals into their ancestral cults is part of a larger argument that seeks to counteract the conventional view of cultural imports from the continent as “elite” and native customs as “popular.” His contention is that continental imports such as conceptions of yin-yang, “the Chinese festival calendar” (the nodal festivals), and elements of “Chinese popular religion” such as female immortals were “commonly held cultic forms that had taken root throughout the Japanese islands.”¹⁴¹ There is a side to this argument that I find both refreshing and convincing: people of continental origin clearly did more than simply bring written texts and other material objects with them. They also brought technological knowledge—sericulture is one area that Como emphasizes—as well as various kinds of customs and practices. It is reasonable to imagine that immigrants

¹³⁹ The fragment, which is cited in Sengaku's 仙学 commentary *Man'yōshū chūshaku* 万葉集註釈 (1269) reads as follows: “Every year in spring and autumn the young men and women from the village, carrying wine and zither, climb up hand in hand and gaze out. They play music, drink, [sing, and dance?], and when they have finished singing they return. The words of the song are: Where the hail falls / on the peak of Kishima, / it is so steep / I lose my grip on the grass / and take my sister's hand [This is a Kishima song].” See Sengaku 1926, p. 119. For a complete English translation, see Cranston 1993, pp. 143–44.

¹⁴⁰ See Como 2009, p. 77; Shimode 1986, p. 117.

¹⁴¹ See Como 2009, p. xvi.

from the continent would have brought their everyday beliefs and practices not just to the Yamato court but also to various other areas under its administrative sway, and that these beliefs and practices would have become part of the fabric of everyday life.

On the other hand, Como surely does not mean to argue that a continental “popular culture” spread across the Japanese islands *at all levels*; among other things, such a proposition would simply substitute an essentialized “continental” folk for a “native” one. Rather, the term “popular” should perhaps be understood in this context as referring to a cultural sphere that involved court officialdom and regional bureaucracies: people without the advanced literary skills to read difficult texts but who would still have been influenced by the cultural and religious practices of officials of immigrant origin. The immigrants who arrived in Yamato were people who were important enough to go, be taken, or be sent there. Insofar as they were often the bearers of valuable technologies, belonged to a kinship group, and had names, the immigrants themselves were either part of an “elite” or were employed by them.

How “popular,” in this sense, was the mulberry branch legend? It is in regard to this question that the emphasis on topographical/botanical regions that Wada and Como recommend can be useful. As Mekada Sakuo 目加田さくを noted over fifty years ago, unlike the far more common graph for “mulberry” 桑 (*kuwa*), the graph 柘 (“wild mulberry”), which is read *tsumi* in the *Man'yōshū*, is common in Sinic texts but appears only very rarely in Nara texts. If the “Legend of the Mulberry Branch” were genuinely a popular tale with an ancient connection to Yoshino, Mekada argues, one would expect the “mulberry” in the title to be a commonplace lexical term. But while 桑 appears often in place-names and personal names, 柘 never does.¹⁴² Mekada also notes that among the numerous botanical lists of the various regions included in the extant *fudoki*, 柘 is only listed in three districts in the *Izumo fudoki* 出雲風土記 (c. 733). Given Izumo’s location on the Japan Sea coast directly across from the kingdom of Silla on the Korean peninsula, Mekada suggests that the plant itself may have been imported into Japan at a fairly late date in the seventh or eighth century and that the mulberry branch legend probably originated as a story from the continent.

Mekada also notes in this regard that the term “mulberry branch” is used as shorthand to refer to a “mulberry branch dance” (*zheqiwu* 柘枝舞), which Tang-period texts describe as a type of “vigorous dance” (*jianwu* 健舞) of central Asian origin performed by young women who spin and swirl their sleeves. Several Tang poems

¹⁴² See Mekada 1961. The graph does not appear at all in the *Kojiki*, and in the *Nihon shoki*, it appears only once as part of the place-name Tsubaki-ichi 海柘榴市, written elsewhere as 海石榴市. In the *Man'yōshū*, other than in the headnote, endnote, and poems from the “mulberry branch” sequence mentioned above, it appears only once (MYS 10: 1937), in the expression “on the small branches of the wild mulberry,” contrasted with the phrase “the young tips of the small pines,” a combination that suggests an association with longevity. It is unclear exactly what plant the graph refers to. The modern definition identifies it with a type of mulberry (*Moraceae*) called *Cudrania tricuspidata*, commonly known as “silkworm thorn” or “Chinese mulberry.” In classical Chinese texts it appears frequently and is often associated with silkworms. This is also how the Heian-period dictionary *Wamyōshō* 和名抄 identifies it. The same graph is used to refer to the Chinese dogwood tree.

describe the charms of such “mulberry dancers.” Such connections might easily have led, Mekada holds, to an association with legends about flying female immortals. It is an intriguing theory (if somewhat speculative), but whatever its merits, Mekada’s argument draws attention to the possible ways in which “natural” and “cultural” topography can be implicated with each other.

Yet even if its origins may have been continental, there is little doubt that in the course of the eighth century the story of Umashine and the mulberry branch maiden came to be regarded as a “local” legend and to be associated with Yoshino, at least in certain contexts. This is confirmed by a reference to a different version of the story in a ninth-century *chōka* presented by the abbot (*daihosshi* 大法師) of Kōfukuji 興福寺 to Emperor Ninmyō 仁明 (810–850, r. 833–850) on the occasion of the latter’s fortieth birthday. The prefatory statement to the *chōka* notes that the abbot presented forty carved sacred images, forty copied volumes of the *Vajra Long Life Dharani Sutra* (*Kongōjūmyō darani kyō* 金剛壽命陀羅尼經), and forty-eight thousand recitations of the sutra to pray for the emperor’s longevity. In addition he presented various paintings of famous legends about men achieving immortality. Among these the preface mentions the two cases of “the Uranoshima lad” (Uranoshimako) and “the Yoshino maiden” (*Yoshino no otome* 吉野女), both of which also appear in the *chōka*. The version of the Uranoshimako legend that appears in the *chōka* is one in which the protagonist meets a heavenly maiden who later flies away, but he himself gains immortal life by staying seven days in the eternal land (*tokoyo no kuni* 常世之國). The “Yoshino maiden” story is depicted as follows:

Kumashine	<i>Miyoshino ni</i>	<i>arishi Kumashine</i>
who lived in fair Yoshino	三吉野に	有し熊しね
was visited	<i>amatsu otome</i>	<i>kitari kayoite</i>
by a heavenly maiden	天つ女	来たり通ひて
who afterwards	<i>sono nochi wa</i>	<i>semekagafurite</i>
when she was summoned up	其の後は	蒙め謹ふりて
both scarf and robe	<i>hire koromo</i>	<i>kite tobiniki to iu</i>
she donned and flew away.	ひれ衣	着て飛にきと云ふ
This image here	<i>kore mo mata</i>	<i>kore no shimane no</i>
they say is of that same	是もまた	此れの島根の
very person	<i>hito ni koso</i>	<i>ariki to iu nare</i>
who lived here on these islands.	人にこそ	有りきと云ふなれ ¹⁴³

Here the man is called “Kumashine” 熊志祢, which seems to be a corruption of “Umashine” (味稻 or 美稻). There is no mention of a “mulberry branch,” but an earlier section of the *chōka* does refer somewhat cryptically to “seeking the meaning of the mulberry branch.” The two legends/images of Uranoshimako and Kumashine

¹⁴³ See *Shoku Nihon kōki*, p. 224. This is a very difficult text. It is written in *senmyō* 宣命 style, with smaller graphs used phonographically to indicate pronunciation (for the original version, see the appendix). My reading follows the *kundoku* reading in Kondō 2009. A complete translation of this *chōka* may be found in appendix D of Heldt 2008, pp. 309–18.

serve to introduce the central figure of the *chōka*, the bodhisattva Kannon, as the guarantor of the “myriad ages” of Ninmyō’s reign.¹⁴⁴

The fact that Uranoshimako and Kumashine are presented as specific examples of men who achieved immortality “here on these islands” indicates that, at least in the early Heian period, the story of (K)umashine and the Yoshino immortal maiden, like that of the Uranoshima lad, was regarded as a native legend. From there on, however, the two tales had very different fortunes: while numerous versions of the Uranoshima lad story proliferated throughout the medieval and early modern periods, the Ninmyō *chōka* is the last extant reference to a “mulberry branch” legend. This in itself suggests that it may not have had much of a popular distribution in the first place.

At the same time, the multiple versions of the more popular Uranoshimako tale suggest a possible approach to further considering the association between Umashine and Yoshino. Like the Umashine story, the different versions of the Uranoshimako tale incorporate motifs indicative of a continental origin. They also situate the story’s locale in very different regions. In the *Nihon shoki* and *Tango fudoki* 丹後風土記 (c. 713) versions, for instance, the locale is set on the Japan Sea coast. A protagonist called “the island-lad of Mizunoe bay” (*Mizunoe no ura no shimako* 水江浦嶋子 or 水江浦嶼子) meets a turtle who turns into a woman, and the two go off together to the island of Hōrai (Penglai).¹⁴⁵ The *fudoki* version is more detailed than that of the *Nihon shoki*, but the main outline of the story in both accounts is similar, except for the minor fact that the *Nihon shoki* has the protagonist’s village of Tsutsukawa 管川 as being located in Tanba province, while the *Tango fudoki* puts it in the neighboring Tango province.¹⁴⁶ The slight discrepancy probably reflects an adjustment of the provincial borders between Tanba and Tango that was made in 713.

By contrast, a version of the story found in the *Man’yōshū* (MYS 9: 1740–41) sets it in the completely different location of “Suminoe” on the Inland Sea.¹⁴⁷ In this version by the poet Takahashi no Mushimaro of a “story of long ago,” Uranoshimako does not become immortal, but returns to his village and dies as a foolish human. The relocation to Suminoe cannot be dismissed as simply an idiosyncratic aspect of Mushimaro’s poem, since this is also the location of the tale in the *chōka* for Ninmyō’s fortieth birthday cited above, in which Uranoshimako does achieve immortality, and indeed in other later versions of the legend as well. The radical relocation of the Uranoshimako story was presumably in part facilitated by the similarity of sound between “Mizunoe” and “Suminoe.”¹⁴⁸ It also suggests the perspective of courtiers at the Nara (and later the Heian) court refashioning legendary tales about different

¹⁴⁴ To little effect, since Ninmyō died the following year.

¹⁴⁵ See *Nihon shoki*, vol. 2, pp. 206–207.

¹⁴⁶ See *Fudoki*, pp. 473–83. For a full summary in English of the *Tango fudoki* version, see Como 2009, pp. 72–73.

¹⁴⁷ See *Man’yōshū*, vol. 2, pp. 414–17.

¹⁴⁸ In fact, both names appear in Mushimaro’s poem: the location is “Suminoe,” and “Mizunoe” seems to be part of Uranoshimako’s name.

coastal areas outside of the capital and modifying them according to different purposes and contexts.¹⁴⁹

If the location of the Uranoshimako legend could shift in this way, was the Umashine mulberry branch legend similarly imported into Yoshino from somewhere like Kishima in Hizen, as suggested by the *Man'yōshū* sequence examined earlier? There is not sufficient evidence to say, but as Como has observed, there does seem to be a pattern of stories with continental motifs originating in the provinces and then “traveling” to places closer to the Yamato court. At the same time, however, the court appears to have been equally active in filtering and reshaping the stories that it was collecting from (and attributing to) the provinces, as illustrated by the telltale fact that both the Uranoshimako tale in the *Tango fudoki* and the “Kishima hill” poem in the *Hizen fudoki* include vernacular court poetry in perfect five-seven measures. This suggests that the explicit marking of tales of female immortals as having taken place in “this land” that we see in the *Kaifūsō* poems and in the *chōka* for Ninmyō’s birthday is not the reflection of contrast between a “popular” tradition of tales with naturalized continental motifs versus an elite literature full of allusions from classical Chinese texts, but rather suggests the conscious literary creation throughout the Nara period of a popular tradition of legends about immortals “in this land” that both distinguishes itself from and at the same time is coterminous with the Sinic literary tradition.

In the case of the tale of Umashine and the mulberry branch, it is impossible to know when and to what extent it became associated with Yoshino. As I have demonstrated, the near absence of references to the tale in the Yoshino poems anthologized in the *Man'yōshū* indicates that the association was clearly not a universal one. On the other hand, it is evident from the numerous references in the *Kaifūsō* that, after Fubito’s poems, the mulberry branch became an almost obligatory topic of Sinic-style poetry composed on Yoshino. In light of this, it is not unreasonable to conclude that, rather than drawing upon a pre-existing tradition of popular tales of immortals at Yoshino, the *Kaifūsō* poems themselves may have contributed to defining the tale of the mulberry branch as a local and popular legend that could compare to the literary legends about immortals in Sinic texts.

¹⁴⁹ This kind of “geo-alliterative” transfer is not limited to legends, as the story of Lord Omi’s 麻績 exile during Tenmu’s reign illustrates: the *Nihon shoki* gives the location of exile as the province of Inaba (far to the west of the capital), the *Hitachi fudoki* 常陸風土記 (c. 713–721) as the village of Itaku 板来 (far to the east), and the *Man'yōshū* as the island of Irago 伊良虞 in Ise (a lesser distance to the east). Such geographical variation contrasts with the similarity between the three-syllable place-names that all begin with “I,” suggesting that the sound of the place—at least for those in the capital who retold and rewrote this story—was at least as, if not more, important as where it was actually located. See Duthie 2014, pp. 358–59.

Conclusion

The “Yoshino Palace” that Jitō visited thirty-one times during the ten years of her reign was at once a numinous site, a political symbol, and a literary topos. Its significance took shape within a ritual geography that was formed within the historical process—it was shaped by contemporary politics—and also within historiography as part of the narrative of the establishment of an imperial realm of “all under heaven.” Tenmu’s original choice of Yoshino was informed by the precedents of Furuhiito’s rebellion and Saimei’s founding of a palace. After the Jinshin Rebellion, Yoshino came to symbolize the foundation of Tenmu’s new political order. At the Jitō court, Yoshino became the object of a “Tenmu cult” that served to represent her reign as a continuation of that of her husband. In the eighth century, the political faction at court that did not trace its legitimacy to the Jinshin Rebellion—the Fujiwara—attempted to reinvent Yoshino as a Sinic-style realm of immortals that lay beyond the old capital of Fujiwara to the south of Heijō.

Once Yoshino had become a central symbol in the cultural topography of the Yamato region, all political factions had a stake in its poems, legends, and histories. Thus in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* we see a variety of positive and negative depictions of legendary sovereigns at Yoshino, as well as signs of the importation to Yoshino of stories that were perhaps originally associated with other locales, such as Kazuraki. It is in this way that, to borrow a term from David Bialock, Yoshino was shaped as a contested “eccentric space” that could be represented as both a symbolic center of imperial authority and a place of transcendent seclusion for emperors and ministers to play at retreating from the political world.¹⁵⁰

In his discussion of what he refers to as Daoist or “Daoisant” symbols in early Japan, Herman Ooms suggests treating both archaeological and textual evidence as “deposits,” which have been “left buried in the ground or embedded in texts,” usually by accident in the case of the former and by design in the latter.¹⁵¹ To extend this analogy between the archaeological and textual fields, we might compare the specific narratives and sequences in which such “deposits” of textual evidence are embedded to the strata of an archaeological site. Just as archaeological findings need to be contextualized within the “narrative” of the site, textual references lose much of their informational value if they are not contextualized within their various narrative strata. It is through careful examination of the differences between those contexts and strata within historical accounts, poetry collections, and other literary writings that ancient texts allow us a glimpse into the historical process in which they were produced.

¹⁵⁰ See Bialock 2007.

¹⁵¹ See Ooms 2009, p. xix.

APPENDIX

Original Kanji Texts of Poems from Kojiki and Man'yōshū

1. Yūryaku “dancing woman” poem, *Kojiki*, p. 344 (see above, p. 203)

Held in the hands of the god on the dais,	<i>agurawi no</i> 阿具良韋能	<i>kami no mite moti</i> 加微能美豆母知
the koto plays and so the woman dances	<i>piku koto ni</i> 比久許登爾	<i>mapi suru womina</i> 麻比須流袁美那
in this eternal realm!	<i>tokoyo ni mo gamo</i> ¹⁵² 登許余爾母加母	

2. Yūryaku “Dragonfly Island” poem, *Kojiki*, pp. 344–46 (see above, p. 204)

On Mt. Omuro in beautiful Yoshino, who announces before his majesty that beasts lie in hiding?	<i>miesino no</i> 美延斯怒能 <i>sisi fusu to</i> 志斯布須登 <i>opomape ni mawosu</i> 意富麻弊爾麻袁須	<i>Womuro ga take ni</i> 袁牟漏賀多氣爾 <i>tare so</i> 多禮曾
Our mighty lord ruler of the eight regions, as he crouches in waiting for the game, to his forearm that is dressed in sleeves of fine white cloth a horsefly comes to bite.	<i>yasumisisi</i> 夜須美斯志 <i>sisi matu to</i> 斯志麻都登 <i>sirotape no</i> 斯漏多閉能 <i>takomura ni</i> 多古牟良爾	<i>waga opokimi no</i> 和賀 淤富岐美能 <i>agura ni imasi</i> 阿具良爾伊麻志 <i>sode kisonapu</i> 蘇豆岐蘇那布 <i>amu kakituki</i> 阿牟加岐都岐
But the horsefly a dragonfly then eats and so it is that the name has been given and the Sky-Seen Land of Yamato is called Dragonfly Island	<i>sono amu wo</i> 曾能阿牟袁 <i>kaku no goto</i> 加久能碁登 <i>sora mitu</i> 蘇良美都 <i>Akidusima topu</i> 阿岐豆志麻登布	<i>akidu payagupi</i> 阿岐豆波夜具比 <i>na ni opamu to</i> 那爾於波牟登 <i>Yamato no kuni wo</i> 夜麻登能久爾表

¹⁵² I have not indicated the Nara-period so-called *kō/otsu* sound distinctions for the syllables *ki*, *hi*, *mi*, *ke*, *he*, *me*, *ko*, *so*, *to*, *no*, *mo*, *yo*, *ro*, and *e*. An edition of the *Man'yōshū* that indicates these distinctions is Ide and Mōri 2008.

3. “Mulberry Branch Immortal” poems, *Man'yōshū*, vol. 1, pp. 222–24 (see above, p. 223)*Three Poems on the Mulberry
Branch Immortal*

仙柘枝歌三首

Where the hail falls
on the peak of Kishimi
it is so steep
I lose my grip on the grass
and take my sister's hand

arare puri *Kisimi ga take wo*
霰零 吉志美我高嶺乎

sagasimi to *kusa tori kanawa*
險跡 草取可奈和

imo ga te wo toru
妹手乎取

*Of the poem above, another [text] says
the poem was given to the mulberry
branch immortal maiden by Umashine,
a man from Yoshino. However, upon
examining the “Legend of the Mulberry
Branch,” this poem is not there.*

右一首、或云、
吉野人味稻、
与柘枝仙媛歌也。
但、見柘枝伝、
無有此歌。

If this evening
one such mulberry branch
were to float by,
having not set the traps
I will perhaps not catch it

kono yupupe *tumi no saeda no*
此暮 柘之左枝乃

nagarekoba *yana pa utazute*
流来者 樑者不打而

torazu ka mo aramu
不取香聞将有

Above, a poem

If it were not
for the man long ago
who set the traps,
there might now still be here
such a mulberry branch.

右の一首

inisipe ni *yana utu pito no*
古尔 樑打人乃

nakariseba *koko ni mo aramasi*
無有世伐 此間毛有益

tumi no eda pa mo
柘之枝羽裳

*The poem above was composed
by Wakamiya no Ayumaro*

右一首、若宮年魚麻呂作

4. Fragment from *Ninmyō chōka*, *Shoku Nihon kōki*, p. 224 (see above, p. 226)

Kumashine
who lived in fair Yoshino
was visited
by a heavenly maiden
who afterwards
when she was summoned up

Miyosino ni *arisi Kumasine*
三吉野尔 有志熊志祿

amatu wotome *kitari kayofite*
天女 来通豆

sono noti fa *semekagafurite*
其後波 蒙譴天

both scarf and robe she donned and flew away.	<i>koromo</i> 毘礼衣	<i>kite tobiniki to ifu</i> 着弓飛尔支度云
This image here they say is of that same	<i>kore mo mata</i> 是亦	<i>kore no simane no</i> 此之島根乃
very person who lived here on these islands.	<i>fito ni koso</i> 人尔許曾	<i>ariki to ifu nare</i> 有岐度云那礼

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