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the pillow hook
(*the pillow book* as an "open work")

Tzvetana KRISTEVA

Sofia University, Bulgaria

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This paper is an attempt to unfold the many-layered text of Sei Shōnagon's *Makura-no sōshi* and to promote further the pleasure of its reading. On the one hand, the paper is based on Sei Shōnagon's major issue, that of *wokashi*, interpreted, following its etymology and its dictionary meanings, as *a desire to fascinate the readers and to involve them in the joyful search for something beautiful, lovely, refined and sometimes even strange and non-conventional*.

On the other hand, the theoretical frame of the paper is Umberto Eco's concept of an *open work* (*opera aperta*), although quite often the reading has had to protrude outside of this frame in order to accomodate the text of the *Makura-no sōshi*. In this process it has turned out that, the opening of Eco's concept towards other, non-occidental literary traditions does not emerge from his literary analysis, but rather through his examples from the most "expression-oriented" art, i.e. from music, thus indirectly leading to the general problem of "text- (expression-) oriented cultures" and "grammar- (content-) oriented cultures".

The paper deals successively with Sei Shōnagon's narrative technique in the different groups of episodes: the strategy of naming and re-naming in the *wa-dan*, the effect of the wave in the *mono-dan*, the displaced "typical situations", the "autobiographical" episodes as "games of riddles"; claiming that they are but various manifestations of Sei Shōnagon's strategy of involving the readers in the process of text-making itself.

The "close" reading of *Makura-no sōshi* concludes with an attempt to reconcile the two "opposite" groups of manuscripts, the "orderly" and the "loose" ones, suggesting that their existence is another argument in favour of the *open work* interpretation of this text, i.e. as a "to be completed" work, as an "open" situation *in movement*.

The final remarks open the reading for the next movement, namely from *a text in movement* to *a context in movement*, reminding us that, although the *open work* provides *a chance for a choice*, the choice is always "pillowed" in the cultural context.

Keywords: *WOKASHI*, *TAWABURE*, "TEXT- (EXPRESSION-) ORIENTED CULTURES" VS. "GRAMMAR- (CONTENT-) ORIENTED CULTURES", METAPOETICAL LEVEL, STRATEGY OF NAMING AND RE-NAMING, NARRATING NAMES, DISPLACEMENT, *OPERA APERTA* REVISITED.

"I wrote these notes at home, when I had a good deal of time to myself and thought no one would notice what I was doing. Everything that I have seen and felt is included. Since much of it might appear malicious and even harmful to other people, I was careful to keep my book hidden. But now it has become public, which is the last thing I expected...

I now had a vast quantity of paper at my disposal, and I set about filling the notebooks with odd facts, stories from the past, and all sorts of other things, often including the most trivial material. On the whole I concentrated on things and

people that I found charming and splendid; my notes are also full of poems and observations on trees and plants, birds and insects. I was sure that when people saw my book they would say, 'It's even worse than I expected. Now one can really tell what she is like.' After all, it is written entirely for my amusement and I put things down exactly as they came to me. How could my casual jottings possibly bear comparison with the many impressive books that exist in our time? Readers have declared, however, that I can be proud of my work. This has surprised me greatly..." (1)

This is the well-known explanation which Sei Shōnagon herself gives for her *Makura-no sōshi* at the end of the text. (2) We can't be sure about the concrete reasons which have forced her to supply her notes with this additional information, neither could we know how long 'afterwards' she has added it. But there is no doubt whatsoever that it is the pretext for her text, which in turn suggests the possibility of its literal reading, i.e. as a *pre-text*, or guidelines to the text itself.

It seems quite obvious that the connotation in the opening lines, "I wrote these notes at home...", is opposite to their denotative meaning. Like the authors of the lyrical diaries *nikki bungaku* Sei Shōnagon had to pretend that she was writing for herself (3) and thus pay tribute to the norms of "good behavior", which could tolerate everything in a *tsukuri-monogatari*, but would hush each manifestation of a personal voice.

Apart from the fact that the very nature of writing presupposes reading as a concomitant process, there is no doubt whatsoever that the *open space* of Heian life left no "space" for any privacy or secrecy. The lack of walls and barriers facilitated the free flow of information, including "secret" love affairs, rumours, sighs and any other signs. In addition, all members of this rather "closed" aristocratic society seemed to be closely tied by blood bonds, which blurred even further the ambiguous lines of demarcation between the individual spaces. These facts, though "insignificantly" obvious, seem to be of great significance for the reading of the Heian texts. It could be argued that neither the disguise of Ki-no Tsurayuki as a woman in *Tosa nikki*, nor the claim of the *joryū nikki* writers after him to have been writing only for themselves, have any direct meaning. Both of them are devices to adjust the texts to the cultural requirements of the society, which means in turn that they can be used in the analysis of the existing norms, and in the "close" reading of the texts themselves.

This seems to be true for Sei Shōnagon's *Makura-no sōshi* as well, so that her statement that the last thing she has expected was publicity, fulfills an opposite function: it is not supposed to *mislead* the readers but to *lead* them.

This effect is strengthened by the repetion of the initial statement at the end, "I still regret that it ever came to light" (ただ人に見えけむぞ、ねたき), which comes after a brief explanation of her artistic credo, and even more important, after a survey of what is supposed to be *the first readers' response*.

Since these explanatory notes, framed by the repetitive statement, have the value of guidelines for the reading of the text, in accordance with Sei Shōnagon's will I shall try to draw the basic orientation of my reading from them.

Here are some of the problems which could be extrapolated from the explanatory text.

I shall start with the only manifestation of *oratio recta* (apart from the related dialogue with Her Majesty), for it is well known that direct speech and dialogue perform the emotive function of luring the readers into the text. The lines run as follows: "I was sure that when people saw my book they would say, 'It is even worse than I expected. Now one can really tell what she is like.'" The key-word here is *expected* (思ふほど). It brings forth the question of why people should bestow any expectations on her, or at least what has made her think so, or write so.

Then she poses a very important question, "*How* could my casual jottings *possibly* bear comparison with the many impressive books that exist in our time?", which could be read literally and be interpreted as a signal to search for the possibile "*how*"-s.

She gives the clue herself by naming her basic artistic credo, i.e. *wokashi* (世の中にをかしきこと), and by pointing at its unusualness, i.e. non-conformity with the prevailing views (人なみなみなるべき耳をも聞くべきものかはと、思ふしに、"I didn't expect any approval of the usual sort.").

The remark that in spite of this some people have liked her book (「はづかしき」なんどもぞ、見る人はしたまふなれば、lit. "It is so impressive that makes us feel ashamed of ourselves"), is not only an expression of wounded pride, but a further stress on the unusualness of the text. This is explicated in the lines to follow, "After all there are always people who would approve of what others abhor and would detest the things they like" (4) (げに、そもことわり、人のにくむをよしと言ひ、ほむるをあしと言ふ人は、心のほどこそ、おしはからるれ), which do not only characterize the few benevolent contemporaneous readers, but call for the attention of any future readers, as well.

And one more hint suggested by the explanatory notes: the word *tawabure*, "play; fun; flirting". Sei Shōnagon uses it in its second meaning, i.e. to explain that she has written *Makura-no sōshi* for her own amusement, but at least two more interpretations could be added (let it be for the sake of amusement!). First, it could be expected that *tawabure* as "a play on/of words" would be one of her major stylistic devices, and second, it could be speculated that Sei Shōnagon invites the readers to join her in the game and thus to enjoy not only the pleasure of the text but of the text-making, as well.

I am afraid that my own explanatory notes on the explanatory notes of Sei Shōnagon have become somewhat long and boring thus threatening to destroy the pleasure of her text, but before proceeding with the quest for amusement I would like to make one more introductory remark, a remark on the remark on the character and poetic talent of Sei Shōnagon, given to her by one of her contemporaries.

"Sei Shōnagon, for instance, was dreadfully conceited. She thought herself so clever, and littered her writings with Chinese characters, but if you examined them closely, they left a great deal to be desired. Those who think of themselves as being superior to everyone else in this way will inevitably suffer and come to a bad end, and

people who have become so precious that they go out of their way to be sensitive (*aware*) in the most unpromising situations, trying to capture every moment of interest (*wokashi*), however slight, are bound to look ruidiculous and superficial. How can the future turn out well for them?" (5)

It is well-known that these words belong to Murasaki Shikibu and have been written in her *Diary* among the many praising words for other court ladies (6). The attitude of Murasaki Shikibu towards Sei Shōnagon has been discussed in many research works, ranging from psychoanalytical descriptions of rivalry to political speculations. It could be argued, however, that the most significant reason for Murasaki's dislike of Sei Shōnagon comes from the opposition between *aware* and *wokashi*, both words being mentioned in her text.

It goes beyond questioning that as a fervent apologist of *mono-no aware* Murasaki should detest the frivolous and playful spirit of *wokashi*. But even more interesting is the question *why* did she dare to write about it in her *Diary*. The explanation that she belonged to the stronger political clan of Akiko, whereas Sei Shōnagon was related to the fallen Sadako, takes into consideration only one of the possible reasons. After all, both, Murasaki and Sei Shōnagon were not political figures but ladies of letters (7).

It could be argued that Murasaki who was already famous by that time for her *Genji monogatari*, functioned as a cultural authority and felt it to be her duty to reprobate any diviations from the accepted norms. And though Sei Shōnagon herself was also a representative of the norms, for the texts of both of them were equally governed by the Heian poetics, the openness of her *Makura-no sōshi* threatened the already 'closing' poetic convention.

It is this curse from the cultural authority which has turned out to be more tragic, than the usual references to Sei Shōnagon's death. Like Ono-no Komachi she supposedly died in poverty and misery, but unlike Komachi her death didn't become a legend to be revived in later Nō or Kabuki plays (8). Why?

Strangely enough, this curse, "How can the future turn out well for them?", seems to cast a shadow even on present-day critique. On the one hand, Sei Shōnagon is most highly praised and her *Makura-no sōshi* is considered to be equal even to the *Genji monogatari* itself, but on the other, there seems to exist an unspoken rule among the *kokubungakusha* that every important study on Heian poetics and cosmology should be based on *Genji*, rather than on the 'fragmentary' jottings of Sei Shōnagon (9).

This somewhat biased critique seems to be counterbalanced by the preferences of the readers. To be sure, the textual length is in a diverse proportion to the interest of the rather busy modern readers, who cannot enjoy the leisure time of the Heian aristocrats. But in my reading of *Makura-no sōshi* I shall try to argue that this fact is predetermined by the text itself, which is *open* for readers in the sense that it needs readers to be completed.

Before proceeding with the 'close' reading of *Makura-no sōshi* as an 'open work', I would like to turn back to Murasaki Shikibu and to explain, though my humble opinion might not bother her at all, that by the quotation from her *Diary* I haven't

meant to turn my back on her, neither have I been aiming at a rewakening of the rivalry between the two ladies. It could be said after Ki-no Tsurayuki's appraisal of Hitomaro and Akahito (10), *murasaki shikibu wa sei shōnagon ga kami-ni tatamu koto kataku, sei shōnagon wa murasaki shikibu ga shimo-ni tatamu koto kataku namu arikeri*, "Murasaki Shikibu cannot be ranked above Sei Shōnagon, nor Sei Shōnagon ranked below Murasaki Shikibu." And this finally brings me close to the question *why*, why cannot Sei Shōnagon be ranked below?

How to "open" a text?

The notion of an *open work* (*opera aperta*) is closely related to the name of Umberto Eco, who has dedicated a great deal of his inexhaustible research energy to the problems of the interrelations between the text and its readers (11). In his essay *The Poetics of the Open Work* (12) he develops this concept—from pieces of instrumental music to the texts of James Joyce. In his movement towards the definition of an *open work* he draws lines of differentiation between it and modern novels which are "open" to any readers (Ian Fleming's novels, for instance), on the one hand, and the readings of the Scriptures in the Middle Ages according to the theory of allegory, on the other. Whereas the first type of texts do not imply any specific readers and in this sense provide "indefinite" freedom, the "free" reading of the second type is bound within the limits of three prescribed strategies, namely the moral, the allegorical, and the analogical.

Let me mention in passing, though my aim is not to discuss Eco's concept in detail, that the reference to the Scriptures reveals an inconsistency in Eco's theory, because the prescribed readings of the Scriptures in the Middle Ages deal with interpretation, rather than with the texts themselves. Even such unquestionably "open works" as the texts of James Joyce, for instance, can be "closed" within restrictive social and political systems.

Although Eco recognizes the possibility of "two kinds of openness" (13), his empirical material, derived from the Western literary tradition, restricts him within the limits of the "plane of content". This might be considered the major reason why he "closes" his "open work" in the frame of modern art.

Subsequently, the opening of his concept towards other, non-occidental literary practices does not come out from his literary analysis, but rather through his examples from the most "expression oriented" art, i.e. from music. Or, in other words, due to the sound of music in it Eco's definition of an *open work* becomes broader than the suggested literary implications, and this in turn opens the possibility to apply it to "non-prescribed" texts, as well. Here are some of the major points in his definition:

"The author offers the interpreter, the performer, the addressee a work *to be completed.*" (p. 19)

"'Open' works, insofar as they are *in movement*, are characterized by the invitation to *make the work* together with the author;... there exist works which, though organically completed, are 'open' to a continuous generation of internal relations

which the addressee must uncover and select in his act of perceiving the totality of incoming stimuli." (p. 21)

"In short, it (the *open work*) installs a new relationship between the *contemplation* and the *utilization* of a work of art.

In short, it is an 'open' situation, *in movement*. A work in progress." (p. 23)

This "open" definition seems to define definitely enough the characteristics of an *open work* and provides a reliable theoretical basis for further concrete investigations. It should be added, however, that like any other text the "open text" is also contextually bounded, i.e. it is preconditioned by the context. That is why I shall start with some brief remarks on the specific pattern of Heian culture, which has made possible the appearance of such "open texts" as *Makura-no sōshi*.

It could be argued that one of the basic characteristics of Heian culture is in its orientation towards the "plane of expression" rather than the "plane of content" (14). The actual annihiliation of the outer space achieved by the restriction of the contacts with the continent, on the one hand, and by the concentration of cultural life in the capital Heian, on the other, resulted in the "closedness" of Heian culture. Literature, especially the *kana* literature, was still further "closed" by the politically and socially sanctioned bilingual system, according to which official affairs were carried out in Chinese language and Chinese *kanji* (*mana* being the "official, true writing"), whereas the Japanese language and its "provisional writing" *kana* (*karina*) were restricted within the limits of non-official matters, such as everyday life and feelings.

The "closedness" of Heian culture was counterbalanced by the "openness" of its inner lines of demarcation—between inner and outer spaces of the houses, between everyday life and art, between different types of artistic expression, between prose and poetry, and even between text and reality. The major means for "non-official" communication became poetry, hence the importance of the poetical language and the establishment of its norms.

That is the reason why in the beginning of the Heian period (maybe even in the first two centuries) one of the leading trends in the cultural development was towards conventionalizing of the poetic language. It is probably best of all exemplified by *Ise monogatari*, which could be justly called a text-book on the Heian poetics (15). Compared to it *Makura-no sōshi* is a kind of a test-book, or maybe better an experimental book on poetic imagination. On the one hand, it came after a long movement towards the establishment of the poetic norms, when the mechanisms of poetizing had already been fixed and there existed long chains of conventionalized poetic associations, but on the other, it could still enjoy some freedom in dealing with the poetic forms and norms alongside with the freedom not to be strictly instructive.

But since the best argument seems to be the text of *Makura-no sōshi* itself, next I shall try to apply Umberto Eco's concept of the *open work* to it, which would be also an attempt to "open" the very concept of the *open work*.

Strangely enough, the idea of an *open work* is directly suggested by the text of *Makura-no sōshi*, and not in some 'random' phrase, but in its central issue named *wokashi*.

According to the dictionaries of the classical language, etymologically *wokashi* comes from the verb *woku*, which means "to welcome somebody, to invite, to lure (*manekiyosetai*) somebody" (16).

The meanings of the word are: 1) interesting, appealing; 2) beautiful, fascinating; 3) lovely, sweet; 4) refined, recherche; 5) curious, provoking a smile; 6) strange, odd. The second, the third and the fourth meanings are illustrated with examples of *Makura-no sōshi*, although there could be found in it traces of the other meanings, as well.

Thus the broader meaning of *wokashi* could be interpreted as *a desire to fascinate the readers and to involve them in the joyful search for something beautiful, lovely, refined, and sometimes even strange and non-conventional*.

In the choice of the title of my paper I have followed quite literally the desire of Sei Shōnagon to "open" her text. I have opened the "*b*" in the *book* and it became an "*h*" in a *hook*, the hook, which Sei Shōnagon casts for her readers. I hope that she won't mind this little joke.

The dissemination of the challenge

Although Sei Shōnagon was a typical representative of the aesthetic values of her time, or maybe because of that, she would allow herself the freedom to be somewhat non-conventional in the manifestations of her personal taste.

She belonged to a family with poetic traditions and both, her father and her great-grandfather (17), were not only good poets, but had the reputation of connoiseurs of current poetic taste, and even of "lawgivers" of the poetic norms. Forty-one poems by her great-grandfather Fukayabu had been included in the imperial anthologies (seventeen of them in the first and exemplary one, the *Kokinshū*), whereas her father, Kiyowara-no Motosuke, had even been represented by one hundred and six poems. In addition, Motosuke had participated himself in the compilation of the second imperial anthology, the *Gosenshū*, and belonged to the so-called *Nashitsubo-no gonin* group ("the five connoiseurs of the Pear Tree Chamber"), whose task was the decoding of *Man'yōshū*, which by that time (the mid-tenth century) had already become a source of many *man'yōgana* riddles.

The poetic family background of Sei Shōnagon was a sufficient reason for her contemporaries to expect her to continue the family tradition (as mentioned in the opening of the paper). It should be also added that for about eight years Sei Shōnagon had been in the service of Empress Sadako, which means that she belonged to one of the spaces of extremely vigorous poetic communication, where poetic ability was not only desirable, but normative. Furthermore, Sei Shōnagon joined the court life at the age of nearly thirty, i.e. she had had enough time to master the poetic tradition, even if she were not endowed with any talent at all.

Taking into consideration these facts one cannot help being surprised by the rather controversial *hototogisu*-episode in *Makura-no sōshi* (18), which relates the story of the unfortunate visit to Kamo Shrine. Although the purpose of the journey undertaken by Sei Shōnagon and her companions was to hear the *hototogisu*, which meant,

according to the rules, that they were supposed to demonstrate their adequate poetic reaction, neither of them could produce a single poem. Sadako was scandalized by their outrageous behavior, and especially by Sei Shōnagon. This irritated Sei Shōnagon so much that she gave way to her anger, as well: "I have decided to give up poetry for good and all. If each time there is a poem to be composed you call on me to do it, I don't see how I can remain in Your Majesty's service. Well, it is true that I can count the syllables correctly, and that I would not make such a mistake as to compose a winter poem in the spring, or to mention the plum blossoms in an autumn poem! It is also true that there have been many poets in my family, so that people often say, 'Sei Shōnagon's poem on such and such occasion is really good. But this could be expected from the daughter of such a famous person!' Why should people expect me to be as gifted as my father?! I cannot help feeling that, if I push myself forward and turn out some doggerel as though I thought it were a masterpiece, I will disgrace the memory of my ancestors." (19)

Among other things, this shameful episode from a conventional point of view raises the question of why Sei Shōnagon has included it in her book. After all, even the writers of *nikki bungaku* had the freedom of choice. Of course, it could be explained by her desire to boast of her famous ancestors, but this doesn't seem to be the only reason. The *hototogisu*-episode seems to have yet another extremely important dimension for the assessment of the whole text, i.e. it functions as an invitation to the readers to search for the manifestation of Sei Shōnagon's poetic talent *elsewhere*, namely "outside" of the poems.

The problem of the "poetic legitimacy" of Sei Shōnagon occupies an important place in every critical reading of her *Makura-no sōshi*. Thus, for instance, the author of the first English version of the text, Arthur Waley, makes the follwing felicitous remark: "As a writer she is incomparably the best poet of her time, a fact which is apparent only in her prose and not at all in the conventional *uta* for which she is also famous... She gives back in her pages, with apparently as little effort of her own as a gong that sounds when it is struck, the whole warmth and glitter of the life that surrounded her." (20)

I think that Waley's declaration that the poetic talent of Sei Shōnagon is not at all apparent in her poems, should be interpreted rather as a challenge than as a judgement, for her poems share the same quality of novelty as her prose. But in order to understand her poetry one should investigate first the poetic legitimacy of her prose (and not vice versa, which is the conventional way).

This spirit of challenge must have also guided another well-known critical reader of *Makura-no sōshi*, Ikeda Kikan, in his remark that, "Sei Shōnagon was, rather than an artist, a researcher." (21) Far from minimizing Sei Shōnagon's poetic talent, this remark seems to disclose another dimension of her poetic legitimacy, i.e. the metapoetical level of her text.

It could be said that the challenges of the two scholars echo the challenge of the text itself, for Sei Shōnagon does not only represent the poetic convention but presents it *in movement*, as well. And in her own creative movement she combines the search for new aesthetic variants with a re-search in the already established ones.

In my reading of the text I shall follow Sei Shōnagon's challenge to the reader's knowledge and imagination successively in the different groups of episodes, and finally shall try to challenge myself the contradiction between the two types of the existing manuscripts of *Makura-no sōshi*—the *zassanteki* (雑纂的 'randomly ordered') and the *bunruiteki* (分類的 'classificatory'), which has been the source of many discussions and disappointments. (22)

Wa-dan I: the strategy of naming and renaming

> "Did you think there was nothing but two or three pronunciations in the sound of your name?"
>
> Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

Traditionally the episodes *dan* (altogether about 300) are classified into three groups: 1) *ruijuteki* (類聚的 'catalogues'), which comprise the so called *wa-dan* and *mono-dan*; 2) *zuisōteki* (随想的 'essayistic'), which reveal 'typical' situations; and 3) *nikkiteki* (日記的 'diary-type'), based on the retrospections of Sei Shōnagon's life in Sadako's palace. (23)

Let me mention in passing that, though his classification seems to be quite adequate, it could be somewhat misleading in comparative studies of the essayistic tradition. Since the *mono-dan* episodes correspond to the idea of an essay at least as much as the "essayistic" typical situations, I would like to suggest the following change in the traditional classification: 1) nominative-descriptive episodes (*wa-dan*); 2) essayistic (*mono-dan* and typical situations); 3) autobiographical. The aim of this change is also to single out the *wa-dan* episodes, which, on the one hand, are the most unique characteristics of this text, and on the other, serve as a clue to the general strategy of writing of Sei Shōnagon, i.e. "the strategy of naming and re-naming". (24)

The *wa-dan* episodes themselves can be further divided into the following subgroups: geographical names, names of flora and fauna; names from the life of people, some of which stand very close to the second group of episodes, the *mono-dan*.

There is no doubt whatsoever that from these three sub-groups it is the one of geographical names, which provides the greatest challenge to the "horizon of expectations" of modern readers, not only the non-Japanese, but also in Japan itself. This is why the two English translations have omitted the geographical *wa-dan*, sacrificing them in the name of the "readability" of the text (25). But although there seems to be a good reason for such decision, it could be argued that, those readers who can enjoy the "squashed quotatoes" of James Joyce will rejoice themselves with Sei Shōnagon's lists of geographical names, as well.

The toponymical catalogues provide an "inlet" into the Heian poetic convention, for they could be justly qualified as an *exemplum of the poetic process in motion*. On the one hand, they are based on the already acknowledged poetic tradition, which has fixed the rules for the standardization of poetic usages. But on the other, at that time there has been still some freedom of improvisation according to those rules,

whih are also *the rules of the game* of the whole text as an *open work*.

The process towards the standardization of the poetic language, the language of communication of the Heian aristocracy, was stimulated by the poetic practice, which established precedents, which in turn were summed up in different normative texts, that paved the way for more sophisticated poetic activity and new poetic precedents, and so on, and so on.

The practice of composing poems on set topics *daiei* (題詠) and the poetry contests *uta-awase* (歌合わせ) were important links in this poetic chain. The first developed the standards for *selection*, whereas the second promoted the rules for *combination*.

A further step towards the formalization of the poetic practice were the *byōbu-uta* (屏風歌) and the *shōji-uta* (障子歌), i.e. poems to the paintings on the screens and on the sliding doors. (26)

The development of the poetic practice was accompanied by the appearance of normative texts, which aimed at the classification of the poetic names and their usages, i.e. at the establishing of the "poetic grammar". These texts ranged from dictionaries such as the lexicon of Japanese names *Wamyō-ruijushō* (倭名類聚抄, the beginning of the 10-th C.), to systematized collections of poetry.

This activity towards classification and systematization was guided by the Chinese poetic tradition, which played a double function: on the one hand, the Chinese standards were *adopted* directly, as in the poetic anthology *Kokinrokujō* (古今六帖, the 2-nd half of the 10-th C.); whereas on the other, they were *adapted* to the Japanese poetic practice, i.e. they served as models for the creation of the Japanese poetic norms, as in the exemplary anthology *Kokinshū* (the beginning of the 10-th C.). (27) Let me point out that, the very fact that these two tendencies (of adopting and of adapting) developed in parallel during the tenth century, shows that at that time the poetic convention was still *in movement*.

Even the *belles-lettres* texts were governed by this movement towards the creation of a "grammar of poetry", which functioned as a kind of an *over-all code* in the first half of the Heian period. *Ise monogatari* provides the best example for that with its *meta-poetical* level, and could be justly included in the list of the "precedents" which made possible the appearance of *Makura-no sōshi* (28).

To sum up, the quest for naming and re-naming, which underlies both, the toponymical *wa-dan* and the general strategy of writing of Sei Shōnagon, is rooted in the vigorous activity of poetic codification during the first half of the Heian period, hence the rules of the game suggested by Sei Shōnagon to her readers should be extrapolated from this activity.

Thus, to participate in the *tawabure* of the geographical *wa-dan* means to know the already established *uta-makura*, one of the oldest categories of 'poetic words' *kago*, as well as the principles of their poetization, i.e. the 'word-play' *kakekotoba*, the 'associated words' *engo*, and the poetic practice and tradition, both in China and Japan.

Speaking of names and games, one cannot help wondering at the fact that *Makura-no sōshi* and the practice of classification of *uta-makura* have been con-

nected by one name, that of Nōin: the *Nōin bon* manuscript (能因本) of *Makura-no sōshi* and the collection of *uta-makura Nōin uta-makura* (能因歌枕). (29) Let it be but a game, it could be also interpreted as a signal rendered to us through the ages to read *Makura-no sōshi* as *uta-makura-no sōshi*.

The series of the geographical *wa-dan* opens with the mountains (*yama wa*) *dan*, which is one of the longest, for it fixes the rules. The episode runs as follows:

山は、小倉山。鹿背（かせ）山。三傘（みかさ）山。このくれ山。いりたちの山。忘れずの山。末の松山。かたさり山こそ、いかならむとをかしけれ。いつはた山。かへる山。後瀬(のちせ)の山。朝倉山、よそに見るぞをかしき。おほひれ山もをかし。臨時の祭りの舞人などの思ひ出でらるるなるべし。三輪の山、をかし。手向(たむけ)山。待ちかね山。たまさか山。耳成（みみなし）山。(30)

Since the levels of poetization are differentiated in this list by the usage of *kanji* and *kana*, it allows to follow the very process of poetization, i.e. the *uta-makura* "in movement".

The first three names are well-known *uta-makura*, which can be illustrated by their usage in the exemplary poetic anthologies.

The fourth one, *Konokure-yama*, provides an explicit example of a *potential uta-makura*. On the one hand, the expression *konokure* ("shaded by the trees") has been widely used since the time of the first poetic anthology *Man'yōshū*, whereas on the other hand, its *uta-makura* possibility is suggested by the preceding three names.

As pointed out by Mark Morris in *Sei Shōnagon's Poetic Catalogues* (31), *Konokure-yama* is related to *Ogurayama* by analogy, for *Ogurayama* itself could be interpreted as "slightly dark, dim, dusky" (小＋暗し). It could be further argued that the two toponyms between them, *Kaseyama* and *Mikasayama*, show the way for *Konokure-yama* to become a poetically sanctioned *uta-makura*, because according to the *kakekotoba* rules the first one means "Lend it to me!" (貸せ), whereas the second can be read as "ceremonial umbrel la" (御笠), i.e. "the ceremonial shade held above the emperor or other exalted personage when in procession". Let me also add that the *Kase-* (mi) *kasa* play seems also to promote the rules of the game.

The next name, *Iritachi-yama*, has an interesting sound image, for it means "deeply cut; deeply rooted". It could also be read as "deeply engraved (in one's heart)", which links it with *Wasurezu-yama* ("I'll never forget you".).

It is followed by another famous *uta-makura*, *Sue-no matsuyama*, which is a symbol of faithful love.

The meaning of the next toponym, *Katasari-yama*, is revealed directly in the text: "The 'shy' mountain *Katasari*. What does it look like? (I would like to know it better.)" The question here plays an important function. On the one hand, it is a direct invitation to the readers to participate in the search for *wokashiki* (interesting, curious) names, whereas on the other, it breaks the routine of listing and signals the next episode, in which the toponyms tell a story. Here it is:

"The *Itsuwata* mountain— 'Oh, when?' The 'I'll be back' mountain of *Kaeru*. The mountain of 'the future rendez-vous' *Nochise*."

This short love romance is followed by *Asakurayama*, a "store-house of mem-

ories" of one's beloved, who is far away (*yoso-ni miru zo*) like the remote clouds over the *Asakura* mountain. It could be further argued that this toponym is a key-word not only on a diegetic level, but on a meta-poetical, as well, for the words *yoso-ni miru zo* allow another possible interpretation, i.e. "search (for the meaning) elsewhere!"

On the other hand, *Asakurayama* can be associated with the first mountain in the list, *Ogurayama*, for the meaning of both of them derives from "dim light" (*Ogurayama* is "slightly dark", whereas *Asakurayama* means "morning dusk"), the "dim light" of the indefinite chain of possible readings. This means in turn, that the list can sotp here, or at least, that its continuation suggests something new, which is marked in the text itself by the use of *mo* ("also"), accompanying the next toponym: "*Ōhireyama* is also appealing." And since it is the only *mo* used in this *dan*, it shouldn't be ignored.

The name おほひれ山 is "playful" in a double sense. First, it is explicitly connected with the *Azuma asobi-no uta*, which were quite fashionable at that time and were performed during different festivals (臨時祭り ... "It reminds of the dances and songs performed during the Iwashimizu and other festivals"). And second, it alludes to one concrete playful song: 大ひれや、をひれの山は ... ("Big or small, distant or close, this mountain...").

The next one, *Miwayama* ("three rings"), is referred to in several *Kokinshū* poems (780, 982), in which it symbolizes the longing for one's beloved (三輪 and 身は).

It is followed by *Tamukeyama* (手向け山), which appears also in the *Kokinshū* (poems 420, 421) as "the mountain of offerings", but its literal meaning is "give me your hand", "hold out a hand".

The longing for one's beloved is explicated in the next name, *Machikane-yama* ("to wait impatiently for somebody"), which in turn is connected in an *engo* ("associated words") way with *Tamasaka-yama* ("the mountain with slopes of pearls"), because in the poetic tradition *Machikane-yama* is usually accompanied with tears, and tears are associated with dew-drops or pearls.

The last mountain is the "earless" *Miminashi-yama*. Its name can be considered as a play on/of words *par excellence*, for in the poetic tradition it is associated with the "mouthless" flowers *kuchinashi* (cape jasmine or *Gardenia florida*), which cover the slopes of this mountain (poem 1026 in *Kokinshū*).

It seems to me that it is not by mere chance that this toponym comes last in the list. The expression *miminashi* is repeated in one of the few poems in the text (about the "earless" grass *miminagusa* 耳無草), where it adopts additional meaning (see p. 34); "The text cannot be appreciated by 'earless' people."

By this "close reading" of the names of the mountains, based on different comments to the text, I have tried to reveal some of the reasons for the selection of the names and the rules for their combination. Now, as a further step I would like to argue, that this list is very strictly organized in accordance with the general strategy of Sei Shōnagon "to involve the readers in the text".

The list opens with famous *uta-makura*, which serve as a signal to the readers and as a challenge to their poetic knowledge. Or, in other words, they specify the game

(*uta-makura* game) and the sphere of the possible participants (those interested in *uta-makura*).

With the name *Konokure-yama* the players are invited to discuss together the rules of *uta-makura* (*utamakura*-hood), which are at the same time the rules of the game itself. The climax is the short love story narrated by the three toponyms: *Itsuwata*, *Kaeru*, and *Nochise*. At this point the readers are involved entirely in the game and their position merges with the position of the author.

The next four names exemplify the unified position of all the participants, for they refer to the current poetic practice (*Kokinshū* and *Kokinrokujō*).

The last one, *Miminashi*, could be interpreted as an announcement of the final results of the game: "Those, who have failed to enjoy it, are simply *earless*."

These rules can be traced in all the geographical episodes. The toponyms speak to each other, thus speaking to the readers, as well: "your lake" *Omae-no ike* and the "mirror lake" *Kagami-no ike*, which reflects your secret feelings; the "soundless" water-fall *Otonashi* and the "rattling" one, *Todoroki*; the "well-known" river *Natori* and the *Yoshino*-river, known since the old times; the village *Fushimi* ("to drop one's eyes") and the village of "the morning face" *Asagao*; the shore of "departure" *Uchiide* and the shore of "reunion after a long parting" *Moroyose*; the forest *Tareso*, "Who?", and the forest *Kurubeki*, "should come"; the river fords *Shikasuga*, "Indeed!", and *Korizuma*, "my love suffering didn't make me wiser"; and many, many more.

Wa-dan II: the narrating names

Sometimes the infinite chain of dialogues between the toponyms in the *wa-dan* episodes even takes the form of short stories, which are narrated either directly by the toponyms themselves, or with the mediatory role of the author:

"The village *Hitozuma*, 'another's wife'. The 'Trust me!' village *Tanome*. The village *Yuhi*, 'the light of the setting sun'. The *Tsuma dori* village, 'to take one's life'. I wonder who is from this village—the seducer himself, or the husband whose wife has been seduced?" (*K.*, vol. I, p. 80)

"The *Yoshiyoshi* barrier—'All right! Let it be so!' Oh, if I could know who has taken this decision and what is it about! I have heard that this barrier is called also *Nakoso*, 'Don't come!'. It would have been too sad, if this name was attached to the barrier of the 'meetings' *Ausaka*!" (*K.*, vol. I, p. 151)

And here is another story narrated by the names of the abysses (*fuchi* 淵), which makes one shiver and thus conveys the feeling of fear and despair, aroused by the deep darkness of the abysses:

"The abyss of 'horror' *Kashiko*. I wonder how deep into the human heart could see the person who has called it so and what has caused his horror?

The abyss *Nahairiso*—'No! Don't go in!' For whom is this warning? From whom does it come?

The 'blue-coloured' abyss *Aoiro*. The noble colour of the clothes of *kurōdo*.

The abyss *Kakure*—'Hide yourself!'

The abyss *Ina*—'Oh, no!'" (*K.*, vol. I, p. 30)

The first name defines the theme of the story: "Horror". The question which accompanies it suggests the referential basis, i.e. "the abyss of the human heart" (let me mention paranthetically that this is the reason why I have chosen the word abyss instead of the literal translation, "a river pool").

The succeeding warning refers to both, the geographical abyss and the abyss of the human heart, whereas the questions after it are directed to the possible personages of the story.

The next toponym names the possible personage, *kurōdo*, and at the same time qualifies the attempt to prevent one from entering into the "abyss of horror" as noble.

Then comes a shorter and more imperative sentence, "Hide yourself!", which escalates the tension to the degree of physical awareness of horror: "Oh, no!".

I am perfectly aware of the fact that this reading might be considered as too exaggerated, but I am not trying to impose it. My aim has been to show that the text of *Makura-no sōshi* allows for many different interpretations, and even more than that: it presupposes them as a major condition for its own existence. (32)

I would also like to argue that the traditional views on *Makura-no sōshi* as an encyclopedic books of sketches are too narrow for this text, which like the other Heian works of *belles-lettres* is based on *narration*. But the narrative technique of Sei Shōnagon differs from the so-called *tzukuri-monogatari* ("pure fiction"), for it doesn't deal with the diegetic (story) level, but rather with the metapoetical one. Or, in other words, it could be specified as the narrative technique of an *expression-oriented text*. (33)

On the basis of the quoted examples it could be said that, on the one hand, Sei Shōnagon discloses in a linear projection the vertical levels of the process of poetization, i. e. she unfolds the paradigm of the 'poetic names' *kago* in a syntagmatical chain, thus exemplifying the poetic convention *in movement*. On the other hand, the stories formed by these syntagmatical chains not only serve to involve the readers in the process of text-making, but convey the cultural tradition, as well. (34) And this in turn could be one of the explanations why *Makura-no sōshi* attracts the attention of modern readers, for whom the products of the traditional code might be "little more than objects of archeological speculation". (35)

In Sei Shōnagon's text this narrative effect can be traced on many levels. Thus, for instance, the names not only talk with each other, or form narrative chains, but they speak directly to the readers narrating their own stories. This brings forth an association with the ancient Shintō myths related in *Nihonshoki*, according to which "in that Land there were numerous deities and spirits which shone with a lustre like that of fireflies, and evil deities which buzzed like flies. There were also trees and herbs which could speak." (36)

Let us just listen to some of their stories:

"The large-leaved cypress *asuwahinoki* (あすはひの木). It is rare to come across it and not much is said about it; but I understand that pilgrims returning from Mitake

often bring back branches of the tree as souvenirs. These branches are said to be rough and disagreeable to touch. Yet the name of the tree means 'tomorrow I'll become a cypress'. What can be the point for such a promise, and for whom was it made? I should really like to know."

"The heron is an unpleasant-looking bird with a most disagreeable expression in its eyes. Yet, though it has nothing to recommend it, I am quite surprised to hear that the females fight among each other, because 'the herons never nest alone in the *Yurugi* wood', the poem says."

"The water plant with a rather 'haughty' name: arrowhead. It seems to have a very high opinion of itself."

"The 'endangered' grass *aya(f)ugusa* (あやふくさ). Its life is marked with uncertainty, for it grows at the very edge of the rocks. Yet the fate of the 'till when' stonecrop herb *itsumade-gusa* (いつまで草) seems to be even more ephemeral, for it grows on cracking stones. It is a pity that it avoids the white-painted walls."

"The name of the *kotonashi* (ことなし草) grass, 'No problems!', is so promising. Could it mean that it can fulfil any wish?!" (37)

And here is one of the most moving stories in the text, the story of the basket worm *minomushi* (lit. "the worm with a straw raincoat"), abondoned by his mother:

"I feel very sorry for the basket worm. He was begotten by a demon, and his mother, fearing that he would grow up with his father's frightening nature, abandoned the unsuspecting child, having first wrapped him in a dirty piece of clothing. 'Wait for me,' she said as she left. 'I shall return to you as soon as the autumn winds blow.' So, when autumn comes and the wind starts blowing, the wretched child hears it and desperately cries, 'Milk! Milk!'" (I. M., pp. 69-70)

All these portrayals of herbs, trees, birds, insects, bring to mind one of the 1977 Massey Lectures of Claude Lévi-Strauss (38), *'Primitive' Thinking and the 'Civilized' Mind*, in which he points out that, "Today we use less and we use more of our mental capacity than we did in the past; And it is not exactly the same kind of mental capacity as it was either. For example, we use considerably less of our sensory perceptions... It is exactly the same with our knowledge about plants or animals. People who are without writing have a fantastically precise knowledge of their environment and all their resources... I feel that, with the potential they have, they could have changed the quality of their mind, but it would not be needed for the kind of life and relationship to nature that they have. You cannot develop all the mental capacities belonging to mankind all at once. You can only use a small sector, and this sector is not the same according to the culture. That is all.".

Alongside with the great significance which these lines have for the study of different cultures, I am fascinated by the use of the 'non-academic' word *feel* in them. It is exactly through the *feelings* that the ancient Japanese developed the potential of their mental activity, which allowed them to preserve and develop their sensory perception even after they got to know such a 'dangerous supplement' as *writing*. It could be further argued that, rather contrary to Lévi-Strauss's observation, writing stimulated the sophistication of the sensory perception, for there was one writing system for "concepts", the Chinese characters *mana*, and another for "feelings", the

Japanese syllabic alphabet *kana*. This enabled the people to trace out not only their own voices, but the voices of the numerous herbs, trees, birds and insects, as well.

This sophisticated sensory perception was extended from the sphere of things to the realm of words, who were believed to have their own souls *kotodama*. And this is one of the sources of Sei Shōnagon's inexhaustible curiosity about the names of the things and the tradition of naming itself, because for her and her contemporaries the names seem to have been transitory steps in the process of knowledge about the things, rather than a final stage. Or, in other words, they were a means to get intimate with the things, rather than to intimidate them.

This might be considered one of the reasons why Sei Shōnagon not only traces out the stories of the names, but also enters into a dialogue with the existing tradition of naming. Sometimes she would agree, and sometimes—not.

Here are two examples of her dialogue with the tradition. The first one is affirmative:

"The blossom of the pear tree is the most prosaic, vulgar thing in the world. The less one sees this particular blossom the better, and it should not be attached to even the most trivial message. The pear blossom can be compared to the face of a plain woman; for its colouring lacks all charm. Or so, at least, I used to think. Knowing that the Chinese admire the pear blossom greatly and praise it in their poems, I wondered what they could see in it and made a point of examining the flower. Then I was surprised to find that its petals were prettily edged with a pink tinge, so faint that I could not be sure whether it was there or not. It was to the pear blossoms, I recalled, that the poet likened the face of Yang Kuei-fei when she came forth in tears to meet the Emperor's messenger—'a spray of pear blossom in spring, covered with drops of rain'—and I realized that this was not idle figure of speech and that it really is a magnificent flower." (I. M., p. 63)

And here is an example of her debate with the tradition, which has the same structure as the previous one, i.e. the tradition is first intrduced, and then it is questioned:

"The poets have extolled the *uguisu* as a splendid bird, and so indeed it is; for both its voice and its appearance are most elegant and beautiful. Alas that it does not sing in the Ninefold Enclosure of the Palace! When I first heard people say this, I thought they must be mistaken; but now I have served for ten years in the Palace, and, though I have often listened for it, I have never yet heard its song. The bamboos in the Palace gardens and the plum trees with red blossoms should certainly attract these birds. Yet not one of them comes here, whereas outside the Palace, in the paltry plum tree of some commoner's house, one hears the *uguisu* warbling joyfully.

At night the *uguisu* is silent. Obviously this bird likes its sleep, and there is nothing we can do about that.

In the summer and autumn the *uguisu*'s voice grows hoarse. Now the common people change its name to 'insect eater' or something of the kind, which strikes me as both unpleasant and unseemly. I should not mind if it were an ordinary bird like the sparrow; but this is the magnificent *uguisu*, whose song in the spring has moved

writers to praise that season in both poetry and prose. How splendid it would be if the *uguisu* would sing only in spring. Yet it is wrong to despise this bird just because its voice deteriorates in the later seasons. After all, should we look down on men or women because they have been ravaged by age and scorned by the world? There are certain birds, like the kite and the crow, that people disregard entirely and would never bother to criticize; it is precisely because the *uguisu* is usually held in such high regard that people find fault with it when they can." (I. M., p. 68)

This episode is extremely interesting not only because of the dialogue with the tradition of naming. It also exemplifies the horisontal structure of the Heian cosmology, which places the human beings next to the plants and animals, and not above them. The portrayal of the *uguisu* does not aim at the revealing of some characteristics of human beings as in the allegorical stories about animals. It is rather an 'inverted allegory', in which the human sketches play a subsidiary function for the depiction of the *uguisu*.

On the other hand, this episode sounds even more autobiographical than the presumably "autobiographical" *nikkiteki-dan*, which do not reveal much personal information. The fate of the *uguisu* seems to echo the fate of Sei Shōnagon herself and the words "It is precisely because the *uguisu* is usually held in such high regard that people find fault with it when they can," could well enough refer to her. She must have been aware of the sad fact, that the people who lived in accordance with the conventions disliked her for her constant attempts "to capture every moment of interest, however slight". "To feel that one is disliked by others is surely one of the saddest things in the world, and no one, however foolish, could wish such a thing on herself" (39), she confesses in another 'objective' episode, as if regretting that she is not sufficiently foolish or commonplace like the kite or the crow, for instance.

It could be argued that the possibility of an autobiographical reading of the *uguisu* episode is further justified by the 'spontaneous' occurrance of one of Sei Shōnagon' s aesthetic challenges in it: the red plum blossoms 紅梅.

The red plum blossoms, or the poetic legitimacy of Sei Shōnagon

The significance of the red plum blossoms 紅梅 has been pointed out by many critical readers of *Makura-no sōshi*. It goes beyond any doubt, that only a person guided by an inexhaustible creative impulse could start her list of "Flowering Trees" (木の花は) with the 'red plum blossoms, whether light or dark', in spite of the fact that since the *Man'yōshū* the poetic tradition has been unanimously favouring the white ones. (Let me add even though paranthetically, another insult to the poetic tradition—the ignoring of the already famous *sakura!*)

It might be further argued that this "blossoming challenge in purple" works on some other levels, as well. Thus, for many non-Japanese readers the very existence of the dark red plum blossoms is striking, and the bright purple colour is a signal for attention not only in the traffic lights but in the natural environment, as well. (40)

From this point of view, the red plum blossoms in *Makura-no sōshi* could be

interpreted as a signal for Sei Shōnagon's non-conventional approach to another important group of poetic words, the "seasonal words" *kigo*.

The selection of the "seasonal words" *kigo* has been accompanying the process of formalization of the poetic language from its very beginning. Like the other classes of poetic words the *kigo* were initiated by Chinese poetic norms, but they corresponded so perfectly well to the sensory perception of the Japanese and to their "seasonal" concept of the flow of time, that in the process of development of poetry they acquired the status of *poetical words par excellence*. Suffice it to mention, that the *kigo* are considered to be the major generic characteristics of *haiku*.

By the time of Sei Shōnagon the "seasonal words" *kigo* have been already acknowledged as a poetic category, although the sets of normative *kigo* for each season have not yet been firmly fixed. Or, in other words, it was *a poetic category in movement*, and Sei Shōnagon didn't miss this chance.

The normative basis for the "seasonal words" *kigo* can be traced in the Japanese Preface *Kanajo* to the exemplary anthology *Kokinshū*, in which the author, Ki-no Tsurayuki, uses "seasonal metaphors" to describe the origins of Japanese poetry, its major themes, and the ways of expressing them:

"Japanese poetry ought not to be thus. Consider its origins: Whenever there were blossoms at dawn in spring or moonlit autumn nights, the generations of sovereigns of old summoned their attendants to compose poetry inspired by these beauties. Sometimes the poet wandered through untraveled places to use the image of the blossoms; sometimes he went to dark unknown wilderness lands to write of the moon..."

"We have chosen poems on wearing garlands of plum blossoms, poems on hearing the *hototogisu*, on breaking off branches of *momiji* autumn leaves, on seeing the snow." (41)

Thus the set of normative *kigo* according to Ki-no Tsurayuki is:

spring—plum blossoms;
summer—the *hototogisu* (cuckoo);
autumn—the red maple leaves *momiji*;
winter—snow (which mingles with the white plum blossoms).

All of them, but for the snow, are *absent* in Sei Shōnagon's opening episode, devoted to the beauty of the four seasons, and it is a significant absence, for it could be interpreted as *deliberately neglected presence*:

"In spring—the dawn. As the light creeps over the hills, their outlines are dyed a faint red and wisps of purplish cloud trail over them.

In summer the nights. Not only when the moon shines, but on dark nights too, as the fireflies flit to and fro, and even when it rains, how beautiful it is!

In autumn the evenings, when the glittering sun sinks close to the edge of the hills and the crows fly back to their nests in threes and fours and twos; more charming still is a file of wild geese, like specks in the distant sky. When the sun has set, one's heart is moved by the sound of the wind and the hum of the insects.

In winter the early mornings. It is beautiful indeed when snow has fallen during the night, but splendid too when the ground is white with frost; or even when there

is no snow or frost, but it is simply very cold and the attendants hurry from room to room stirring up the fires and bringing charcoal, how well this fits the season's mood! But as noon approaches and the cold wears off, no one bothers to keep the braziers alight, and soon nothing remains but piles of white ashes." (I. M., p. 21)

This episode fits so perfectly well each season's mood, that it has ever since been praised in Japan as an unsurpassed poetic exemplum. Children learn it by heart at school, scholars investigate its magical impact on generations of readers.

But in spite of the many pages written on it, it is so complete, that it has reached the level of incompleteness, when there always remains an opening for more interpretations, so that I shall try to sneak in.

It could be said, that this episode sets into motion all the senses and mobilizes them in the search for the sense of beauty. The shades of colours, the grades of light, the gleams of the charcoal or the fireflies nearby, the file of wild geese in the distant sky, the voice of the wind, the hum of the cicadas, the sound of the footsteps, the feeling of cold.

The episode is framed in "white": "the whitening sky" (やうやう白くなりゆく) and the "white ashes" (白き灰がちなりて). To the many possible interpretations of the white—its symbolic value in the *Shintō* rituals, its function in the poetic language (the white *sleeves* しろたへ, the white gems of *tears* しらたま), there could be added the *white paper*, on which Sei Shōnagon wrote her notes. There are many passages in the text, which suggest the significance of the white paper as an aesthetic impulse for the process of writing. Like this one: "Things which move one's heart (心ゆくもの): To write a letter on a snow-white paper from Michinoku with an extremely thin brush, so thin that one is surprised to see that it leaves traces." (*K*., vol. I, p. 47) But maybe the best argument is the explanation, which Sei Shōnagon gives at the end of her book: "I now had a vast quantity of paper at my disposal, and I set about writing until I used up the last leaf (尽くきせず多かる紙を書き尽くさむとせしに)." (*K*. vol. II, p. 175)

After the "opening" and "framing" white colour comes the "signal" purple of *murasaki* ("wisps of purplish cloud", むらさきだちたる雲). It signals both, Sei Shōnagon's artistic taste ("Anything purple is splendid, be it flowers, thread, or paper." (I. M., p. 111), and the unusualness of this taste, which stands for the "unusualness" of the text itself.

This unusualness is further displayed not only by the absence of the conventional seasonal words, but even by such playful detail as the crows flying back to their nests "in *threes* and *fours* and *twos*", thus disrupting the routine order.

Then comes the "explanatory" white of the snow, which reveals Sei Shōnagon's strategy of writing.

The snow is the only one of the prescribed "seasonal words" which Sei Shōnagon uses in this episode. It could be argued that her choice is guided by the fact, that in contrast with the other normative *kigo* (the plum blossoms, the cuckoo, the red maple leaves), which are too definite and "closed", the snow is "open" both in time and space. Maybe this is the reason why Sei Shōnagon was particularly fond of the snow and devoted to it many pages of her book (from the episode about the "snow

mountain" to descriptions of beautiful winter mornings and nights: "It is delightful when there has been a thin fall of snow; or again when it has piled up very high...", I. M., p. 184). At any rate, the snow could be included in the list of *Makura-no sōshi*'s key-words together with the red plum blossoms, or the absent *sakura*.

On the other hand, the description of the snow in this episode sets up the model of Sei Shōnagon's approach to the tradition, which corresponds to one of the basic narrative principles: initial equillibrium (the existing poetic practice); disruption of the equillibrium (usually by a shift from the norms); creation of a new equillibrium, i.e. extension and opening of the poetic norm. It is the last stage, the creation of a new equillibrium, rather than the restoration of the disrupted initial one, which is of crucial importance for the understanding of Sei Shōnagon's narrative strategy. It could even be argued that by this she exemplifies one of the leading narrative principles of Heian culture as an "expression-oriented" culture. (42)

These three stages are clearly marked in the description of the snow, and the reader is already ready to differentiate them due to the *murasaki* signal and the provocations of the crows:

1) "It is beautiful *indeed* when snow has fallen during the night," 雪の降りたるは、言ふべきにもあらず (initial equillibrium: the snow as a poetic norm of winter);

2) "but splendid *too* when the ground is white with frost;" 霜のいと白きも、 (disruption of the normative equillibrium by adding a new poetic form; the linkage is not simply analogical, but it is based on the evaluation of the conventionalized poetic form, the *whiteness* of the snow);

3) "or *even* when there is no snow or frost, but it is simply very cold...", またさらでも、いと寒きに (extension of the poetic norm, i.e. creation of a new aesthetic equillibrium).

The fact that all these stages are given in one sentence thus forming a flow, and "with apparently as little effort as a gong that sounds when it is struck" (43), contributes greatly to the aesthetic impact of this passage. Let me also mention that Ivan Morris's translation fits perfectly well the mood of this flow of words and associations, and that is why it manages to "disclose" the other levels of meaning in this passage, as well.

To sum up, this opening episode of *Makura-no sōshi* can be justly considered as an "opening" in the literal meaning of the word. It is not only an exemplum of Sei Shōnagon's poetic style, but an "opening" into her strategy of writing, i.e. an "opening" into an "open work". Or, in other words, it is her poetic legitimacy, for though she didn't answer the standard requirements for a good poet, she represented the Heian ideal of a poet, defined by Ki-no Tsurayuki in the Japanese Preface to the *Kokinshū* as a "wanderer through untraveled places" (たよりなきところにまどひ).

Mono-dan: the effect of the wave

The principles of the narrative technique in *Makura-no sōshi* as an "open work", announced in the opening episode and displayed in the geographical and the other *wa-dan* episodes, can be followed in the rest of the groups, as well. In each of them

Sei Shōnagon sets a "hook" for the readers, although the shape of the "hooks" is different according to the material.

The movement from the *wa-dan* to the autobiographical episodes *nikkiteki-dan* can be characterized as a movement from the "plane of expression" to the "plane of content". The tension of the metapoetical level is *dan* by *dan*, step by step, dissolved into the intention of the diegetical level. The readers may take a breath and relax, but only for a while, because with an unpredictable "crook" like Sei Shōnagon one should always be on the alert. (44)

The *mono-dan* episodes are the link between the *wa-dan* episodes and the *zuisōteki*-episodes, which narrate typical situations. This is justified by the polyvalency of the word *mono* itself, which can represent practically everything from a leaf of paper or a leaf of grass to the human beings and their feelings (45).

The opening episode of the *mono-dan* series deals with the so-called *susamajiki mono* (すさまじきもの), i.e. unsuitable, untimely things, which disrupt the established practice, and this in turn is very typical for Sei Shōnagon's strategy of displacement.

The episode starts with several short statements: "A dog howling in the daytime. A wickerwork fish-net in spring." (Being designed for catching whitebait during the winter, these nets were useless in spring-time.) "A red plum-blossom dress in the Third or Fourth Months." (Too hot! "Everything purple is splendid", but—in the right time!) "An ox-driver whose oxen have died. A lying-in room when the baby has died. A fire-place without a fire. A scholar whose wife has one girl child after another." (46)

These statements, though quite different in content, are united by the feeling of a loss and of unfulfilled plans and desires. This links them with the next series of eight situations, which in turn deal with unfulfilled human contacts:

"One has gone to a friend's house to avoid an unlucky direction but the friend is not at home..."

"A letter arrives from the provinces, but no gift accompanies it..."

"One has written a letter, taking pains to make it as attractive as possible, and now one impatiently awaits the reply. 'Surely the messenger should be back by now', one thinks... 'Not at home,' announces the messenger, or else, 'They said they are observing a day of abstinence and would not accept it.' Oh, how depressing!"

"Again, one has sent one's carriage to fetch someone who had said he would definitely pay one a visit on that day... 'The person was not at home,' replies the driver, 'and will not be coming.'..."

"With much bustle and excitement a young man has moved into the house of a certain family as the daughter's husband. One day he fails to come home, and it turns out that..."

"The nurse who is looking after a baby leaves the house, saying that she will be back presently. Soon the child starts crying for her... Then comes her reply: 'I am afraid that I cannot be back this evening.' This is not only depressing..."

"Yet how much more distressed must be the young man who has sent a messenger

to fetch a lady friend and who awaits her arrival in vain!"

"It is quite late at night and a woman has been expecting a visitor. Hearing finally a stealthy tapping, she sends her maid to open the door and lies waiting excitedly. But the name announced by the maid is that of someone with whom she has absolutely no connexion. Of all the depressing things this is by far the worst." (I. M., pp. 40-41)

It could be said that these eight snaps register different instances of *one-way messages*, i.e. of disrupted communication. It could be further argued that the order in which they are arranged functions to escalate the tension of waiting.

First, there is just the disappointment of not finding one's friend at home (the act of communication is not well prepared). Then comes an inadequate message from the provinces—the rules of communication have not been observed, in contrast with the next letter, which has been made "as attractive as possible", although there comes no answer, because of "a day of abstinence", i.e. there is a rather objective reason.

From then there is a shift in the *non-response pattern* from a "no answer" to a "no visit" situation. Or, in other words, the grade of expectation goes up, which serves to increase the tension of waiting and the feeling of disappointment. One sends a carriage to fetch a friend, who has promised to pay a visit, but it turns out that the expected person has gone somewhere else; a husband abandons his wife because of a high-ranking Court lady; a nurse fails to carry out her obligations; a young man is betrayed by his lady friend. The more fixed are the rules, the more definite is the assessment of their violation. The breach of promise escalates to a breach of the socially-sanctioned rules, thus increasing the feeling of a disrupted communication.

The last situation is an embodiment of the notion of displacement *par excellence*. After a long night of longing and anxiety there is a knock on the door... But the visitor has been *displaced*: "the name announced by the maid is that of someone with whom she has absolutely no connexion."

This series of "unfulfilled communication" is followed by two episodes, which narrate short stories: about an exorcist who fails to expel an evil spirit from his patient; and about a "hopeful candidate who fails to receive a post during the period of official appointments". They follow the established pattern: expectation, failure to satisfy it, disappointment; but it could be argued that their function is not only to reinforce the pattern. They mark the next stage in the process of the involvement of the readers in the text: the readers may pause to rest and to respond, which in turn leads to the merging of their position with the position of the author.

The order of the succeeding passages is a mirror image of the series preceding the two story-episodes: from situations to short statements. The feeling of *betrayed expectations* (no reply to a verse which has turned out fairly well; an old-fashioned and dull letter sent to a bustling, fashionable household; an inappropriately painted fan for an important occasion; a messenger, who arrives with a present at a house where a child has been born, gets no reward) culminates to a feeling of *absence*: "A man has moved in as a son-in-law; yet even now, after some five years of marriage, the lying-in room has remained as quiet as on the day of his arrival."

The *last* three statements are brief and peremptory, but in spite of that they are not

imperatively instructive, because of the already achieved "reader-author" union (except for the "earless" readers, of course):

"Someone who has been sleeping for many hours during the *last* day of the year, wakes up suddenly late in the evening and decides to take a hot bath."

"Persistent rain on the *last* day of the year."

"One has been observing a period of fast, but neglects it the *last* day." (47)

The composition of this episode, which sets up the pattern for the rest *mono-dan* resembles a wave: it slowly approaches the spectators on the shore becoming more and more visible, then it engulfs them and sweeps them off into the spectacle itself.

The displaced "typical situations"

The dialogue-structure of Sei Shōnagon's narrative discourse becomes even more visible, palpable and tangible in the next category of texts, relating typical situations. Most of them have a clearly defined double structure: display of the set of norms for a given situation or a pattern of behaviour, and playful displacement of the norms, usually by concrete examples from the everyday practice. One of the best examples is episode No. 60 (the *Kadokawa* edition), which discusses the norms of good behaviour after a love-visit. It starts with an explanation of the rules: "When a gentlemen parts with his beloved as the day breaks, he should not take too much care of his clothes... He should try his best to convince the lady that he is reluctant to leave her alone and that he will miss her during the day...". The second half is a negation of the norm: "But most gentlemen do not behave in this way. They suddenly jump up, as if something has startled them, or they have extremely important business to do, and start putting on their clothes, making a great fuss...". It should be also added, that this negation is very precise, for it follows the first half detail by detail: the cords of the trousers, the lacquered hat, the appropriate/inappropriate words, etc.

Under the spell of this dialogue-structure the readers become accomplices in such dangerous statements as this one, for instance:

"A preacher ought to be good-looking. For, if we are properly to understand his worthy sentiments, we must keep our eyes on him while he speaks; should we look away, we may forget to listen. Accordingly an ugly preacher may well be the source of sin..." (I. M., p. 53)

But each time when Sei Shōnagon makes a more categorical statement and there is a danger that the readers might not follow her, she relates some very typical or appealing situation, with which everyone may identify oneself, so the result is again the merging of the positions. Especially when she is dealing with such delicate matters as men's pride:

"Men really have strange emotions and behave in the most bizarre ways. Sometimes a man will leave a very pretty woman to marry an ugly one... I do not understand how a man can possibly love a girl whom other people, even those of her own sex, find ugly."

At this point Sei Shōnagon must have felt that her verdict may seem too severe, so

that she offers some concrete evidence:

"I remember a certain woman who was both attractive and good-natured and who furthermore had excellent hand-writing. Yet when she sent a beautifully written poem to the man of her choice, he replied with some pretentious jottings and did not even bother to visit her. She wept endearingly, but he was indifferent and went to see another woman instead."

This heart-breaking evidence about the abandoned ideal woman, "who furthermore had excellent hand-writing"!, will no doubt move even the hardest hearts, not only of women, but of men, as well. And Sei Shōnagon is quick enough to strengthen the provoked feeling of sympathy:

"Everyone, even people who were not directly concerned, felt indignant about his callous behaviour, and the woman's family was much grieved."

The final sentence: "The man himself, however, showed not the slightest pity.", register the restored merging of the positions and justifies the opening statement: "Men *really* have strange emotions and behave in the most bizarre ways." (48)

Since the chosen examples may seem somewhat biased, let me mention another one, which is an embodiment of Sei Shōnagon's strategy of displacement in the literal sense. This is the story about a young gentleman (49), who decided to keep the rules for good behaviour prescribed in the *dan* No. 60, i.e. he was reluctant to leave the lady of his heart and hid himself in the nearby bushes, eagerly waiting for a chance to tell her once again how much he will miss her during the day. Needless to say, the lady was very sad, as well. She stood on the veranda of the house gazing at the pale moon and whispering the well-known verses: "If you would keep on visiting me night by night, I shall be yours forever...". Being overcome by emotions she didn't notice that her wig was *displaced* and her baldish head was shining under the moon light with the lustre of many candles. The 'normative' lover quickly lost his lust and left the lady, forever. (50)

The spontaneous dialogue between this episode (No. 175) and the episode No. 60 reveals another characteristics of Sei Shōnagon's narrative technique: the dialogue between the names and the sentences within the episodes is extended to a dialogue between the episodes themselves. But sometimes they talk from such a great distance (No. 60 with No. 175), that it is very difficult to hear them (even though one might not be "earless").

The "autobiographical" episodes as games of riddles

In the last group of episodes, the "autobiographical" *nikkiteki-dan*, the dialogue-structure of the narrative discourse gives way to the narrated dialogues, which are the next "hook" used by Sei Shōnagon.

It has been widely acknowledged in recent literary studies that the dialogue form serves to involve the readers in the text, for it creates a feeling of intimacy and opens the possibility for self identification with the text. In *Makura-no sōshi* the potential energy of the dialogue form is activated to a high degree of tension, because, first, the dialogues are shaped as chains of questions and answers (51), and, second, the

questions themselves function as ordeals. Or, in other words, the readers are not just invited to participate in the text, but they are *challenged* to do so. Like in the books of puzzles.

Let us follow some of the degrees of dramatic tension in these episodes, which exemplify the operation of the "hook".

Thus, for instance, many of the episodes deal with different disputes between Sei Shōnagon and representatives of high authority, including Her Majesty herself. This calls for a variety of interpretations, based on the characteristics of the society, or of the personality of Sei Shōnagon. (52) There is no doubt, that the mere fact that these episodes have been included in the book, and then preserved in the later manuscripts, is of great significance. But here I would like to discuss their function in the text, rather than their social or psychological connotations.

It could be argued that their major function is to create tension, and the degree of tension is proportionate to the status of the participant in the dispute. Consequently, the personages in these episodes function as *actants*, rather than as concrete individuals.

One of the best examples is the "snow mountain" episode (53), which combines both, the detective genre and the fairy-tale. The opening of the intrigue is the conversation between the Empress and her ladies-in-waiting about the snow-mountain, which they have built in the garden:

"'Well,' said Her Majesty, 'how long is that mountain likely to last?'

Everyone guessed that it would be ten days or a little more.

'And what do you think?' the Empress asked me.

'It will last till the fifteenth of the First Month', I declared." (I. M., pp. 102-103)

The bet of Sei Shōnagon creates great tension, because first, it is extremely risky (three times as big as that of the other ladies), and second, because it is made with the highest authority, which means in turn that there is no way back. That is why it acquires the status of an ordeal for Sei Shōnagon, which in turn is a challenge to the readers, as well.

The importance of the ordeal is explicated in the following words:

"Even Her Majesty found this hard to believe, and the other women insisted that it would melt before the end of the year. I realized I had chosen too distant a date: the mountain would last until the first of the year at the outside, which was the latest day I should have given. Yet there was no taking back what I had said: though I knew the mountain was unlikely to survive till the fifteenth, I stuck to my original prediction." (I. M., p. 103)

These words serve to strengthen the significance of the ordeal and to arouse the curiosity of the readers. They reveal also the great care with which Sei Shōnagon sets for the readers her "hooks", trying to keep them "invisible". The explanation that she has made her bet, in spite of her awareness of its impossibility, allows the readers to remain neutral and to follow it just as a story.

The next passages narrate events from the everyday life in the Palace, and the snow mountain is rarely mentioned. However, the flow of the narration represents the flow of time, thus intensifying the tension of expectation. This is marked directly by

occasional information about the snow mountain (for coordination of the positions), which serves to sustain the tension: "On the first day of the year it again started snowing heavily. I was happily thinking how the snow would gather on the mountain when Her Majesty said, 'This has come at the wrong time. Leave what was there before and brush away the new snow.'" (I. M., p. 104)

At this point the neutrality of the readers is shattered by the decision of Her Majesty, but soon after it is restored by her elegant reply to an important letter. (54)

When the day of the bet came, there was no trace of the snow mountain, and maybe no regret in the readers, who had been carefully kept neutral. But all of a sudden the truth leaks out: Her Majesty has ordered that the mountain be destroyed, thus destroying the ordeal itself. This results in the displacement of the function of the ordeal, which in turn is a disruption of the "horison of expectations" of the readers. And the text is "open" again.

The last words of the Emperor, "The fact is that she probably didn't want you to win", not only restore the prestige of the Imperial Institution, but function to convey the very excitement of the game, thus arousing the desire to participate in it. (55)

The reason why I have undertaken this rather extended reading is that the "snow mountain" episode is representative of Sei Shōnagon's technique in the so-called "narrative episodes" of the text. It shows among other things that Sei Shōnagon is an extremely skilful story-teller (I bet that she would have been able to write a very good *monogatari*!), which in turn is an argument in favour of the "story-telling" reading of the rest of the episodes, including the geographical *wa-dan*.

The rules of the game in the other "autobiographical" episodes are approximately the same, although the games themselves might be different.

Thus, for instance, several episodes (*K*., No. 95, No. 102, No. 78) suggest to play *renga*, thus inviting the readers into the process of text-making itself. An important detail of these games is that they suggest the "reversed order", i.e. they start with two lines, to which one should add three more. This means that they do not limit the text-making within the frame of a single poem, but rather open an infinite chain of verses. Here is an abridged quotation of one of them (No. 102), in which the verse making is accompanied with the explanation of the most important rules, i.e. quick poetic reaction and appropriateness to the season:

"On the last day of the Second Month, when there was a strong wind, a dark grey sky, and a little snow, a man from the Office of Grounds gave me a note from Kinto, the Imperial Advisor. It consisted of a sheet of pocket-paper on which was written:

And for a moment in my heart
I feel the spring has come.

The words were most appropriate for the weather; but what concerned me was that I was bound to produce the missing lines...

I realized that if, in addition to bungling my reply, I was slow about it, I should disgrace myself. 'It can't be helped,' I thought and, trembling with emotion, wrote the following lines:

As if a fall of cherry-blossoms
The snow flakes scatter

In the wintry sky." (56)

The only exception from the "reversed order" model is episode N. 78, because the game itself is much more complicated. The first three lines are given in Chinese, to which Sei Shōnagon attaches the missing two. This in turn could be interpreted as a hint for another dialogue in the text, the dialogue between the poetic traditions of Japan and China.

Some of the games in the "autobiographical" episodes resemble the *wa-dan*, i. e. they are governed by the playful, but extremely 'serious' quest for *naming* and *re-naming*. This is yet another proof for the dialogue-structure of the relations between the different groups of episodes, which shows in turn that this book is not a mosaic of random jottings, but a complete and neatly organized text with a common aesthetic message.

The game of naming and renaming includes the discussion of the clothes (episode No. 129), the musical instruments (No. 89), the terminology of *go* (No. 105) and many others (57). But even in the episodes which are not directly involved in this game Sei Shōnagon will not miss the chance to offer some name-riddle, as the one about "this gentleman" (58), for instance.

The word *riddle* (*nazo*) itself appears in one of the "autobiographical" episodes (59), and significantly enough it is *a game of riddles*. Since the text of Sei Shōnagon could also be interpreted as "a game of riddles", it should be assumed that the rules of the "game of riddles" *in* the text might be applied to the "game of riddles" *of* the text itself. And they are the following:

"Some people were organizing a game of riddles (謎々合はせ) when one of them, a clever man and a good player, said that he would like to set the first riddle presented by the team of the left, to which he belonged. His team-mates cheerfully agreed, feelng confident that he would produce something good...

Finally he came out with 'A bow drawn in the sky' (60), which delighted the members of the opposing team. His partners were dumb founded and disgusted by him. Surely, they thought, he must be working for the other side and trying to make his own team lose.

Meanwhile his opponent on the team of the right was laughing at him. 'Dear me!' he said, beginning to pout. 'I haven't the slightest idea.' And, instead of answering the riddle, he began making jokes.

'I've won!' cried the man who has posed the riddle. 'A point for our side!' A token was duly given to the team of the left."

The final remark of Sei Shōnagon is: "In fact the team of the right was defeated not because they had forgotton the answer, but rather because they knew it *too well*, so that they didn't consider it worth mentioning" (これは忘れたることかは。ただ皆知りたることとかや。).

This could be interpreted as a signal for the critical readers not to ignore the seemingly 'conspicuous' and 'simple' things in the text of *Makura-no sōshi* itself, and maybe as a warning against too 'complicated' investigations (I should keep it in mind!). On the other hand, however, it is an invitation to follow the game of the text and the play of the words in it, without any prejudice. Which means also to

enjoy it. So,

Let us play a poem

The play on/of words is the leading principle in most of the poems, as well. And this is exactly what makes them *unusual* from the standpoint of the traditional poetics, which in turn is the reason for the unfavourable opinion of Sei Shōnagon' s poems.

The poems are neither good nor bad, they are just *different*, and that is all. Some of them are such complicated games of riddles, that it is extremely difficult to translate them. Quite like the *mono-no na* ("the names of things") poems in the poetic anthologies.

Maybe the most typical example is the exchange of poems between Sanekata and Sei Shōnagon in episode No. 86 (unfortunately, not included in the English translations), which bewilders even the audience inside the text (61).

But even when the game is conspiciously simple and everyone knows it too well, there is always a significant clue. Like in the "commonplace" episode No. 126 about the "earless grass" *miminagusa* (fortunately, included in Ivan Morris's translation, No. 85, pp. 148-149):

"On the sixth of the month people come in throngs carrying young herbs for the festival on the following day. One year, when some children were spreading out the herbs, I asked them to tell me the name of a particular plant that I had never seen before. 'Come on,' I said. 'What is it called?' The children looked at each other and one of them replied, 'It's called *miminagusa* (耳無草, "earless grass").' 'That stands to reason,' I said with a laugh. 'It certainly doesn't look as if it could hear anything. 'The children had also brought some pretty chrysanthemums (きく), and the following poem occurred to me:

Pluck them or pinch them as you may,
Indifferent they remain,
These earless plants who hear not what I say.
Yet, since there are so many blossoms here,
Surely some chrysanthemums must hear.

I should have liked to recite the lines to them, but, being children, they would not have understood."

The playful effect which these lines produce in the readers, inviting them to play themselves, is perfectly well exemplified by Ivan Morris's translation. He must have enjoyed the game. (62)

But it seems to me (let it be nothing more than my own part in the game), that like many other "too obvious" lines in *Makura-no sōshi*, this poem could be interpreted as an instruction for the strategy of reading, as well. Those who are "earless" are not likely to hear the message of the text at all. But even those who can "listen" (first, 聞く!), should know how to "ask" (second, 聞く!), in order to be able to "hear" (and third, 聞く!) more.

From *zassanteki* VS. *bunruiteki* towards *zassanteki* AND *bunruiteki*

One of the most controversial points in the discussions of *Makura-no sōshi* is the arrangement of the episodes in it. This is "a riddle in movement", for it has been developing long after Sei Shōnagon's death, taking the form of different manuscripts: the *zassanteki* (雑纂的, "randomly ordered") and the *bunruiteki* (分類的, "classificatory") variants. (63)

It could be said that with the diminishing of the supervisory role of "formal logic" in literary studies the opinion of scholars has unanimously changed in favour of the "randomly ordered" manuscripts, because of their emotional and artistic impact on the readers, including the scholars thermselves. Thus, for instance, Ivan Morris explains his own choice in the Introduction to his translation as follows: "The structural confusion of *The Pillow Book* is generally regarded as its main stylistic weakness; yet surely part of its charm lies precisely in its rather bizarre, haphazard arrangement." (p. 13)

What should be further discussed, somehow, is whether the "randomly ordered" episodes are really randomly ordered. Even if we assume that neither of the two "random" manuscripts follows the proto-text, it is still hard to believe that they are not "organized" at all. The best argument seems to be the mere fact of their existence, which shows that they have been made by someone. "Everything which exists is correct", this is, according to Lotman and Eco (64), one of the basic principles of the so-called "text-oriented", or "expression-oriented" cultures, which is the governing model of Classical Japanese Culture, as well.

Or, in other words, the question *whether* these manuscripts are ordered should be replaced by the question of *how* they are ordered.

Since the thorough discussion of this problem requires close readings of the manuscripts themselves, rather than of the printed modern editions, I shall confine myself to some random remarks on the "randomly ordered" *Kadokawa* edition, which is based on the revised *Sankanbon* variant.

It can be argued that the composition of the book follows the basic narrative principles of Sei Shōnagon in the different groups of episodes, i.e. it is guided by the 'over-all' mode of the text as an *open work*.

These principles can be summed up as follows:

1) Gradation of the levels of tension and a linear projection of the vertical layers of meaning,exemplified in the *wa-dan* episodes, particularly in the geographical ones;

2) The "wave" narrative effect, which underlines the structure of the *mono-dan* episodes.

As became clear in the process of random analysis of the various groups of episodes, the major difference between them is not the number of pages, but rather the degree of "narrative" tension, which in turn corresponds to the gradation in the efforts of the readers. The *wa-dan* episodes are the greatest challenge, for they require the utmost concentration of knowledge and associative thinking. They explain the rules of the game. The *mono-dan* episodes let the readers get accustomed to these rules. The "typical situations" offer different models of the game,

suggesting to give it a try. And the "autobiographical" episodes are played together.

The arrangement of the episodes follows the narrative gradation repeating on a larger scale the effect of the wave. The mosaic of the first nine episodes introduces the game itself, so that the readers might decide whether they would like to play it. Then there are two big blocks of *wa-dan* (10-19) and of *mono-dan* episodes (22-28), which introduce the rules. This is followed by a long chain (over 100) of episodes, in which prevail the "typical situations" and the "autobiographical" episodes, i.e. the game is on. The random bundles of *wa-dan* and *mono-dan* episodes (they are always more than one) serve to remind of the rules and to coordinate the game, i. e. they have a *control function*. This long chain is followed by a "mirror repetition" of the first stage of the game: big concentrations of *mono-dan* (142-155), and of *wa-dan* (163-171). It "mirrors" the new function of these episodes, namely that they register the merging of the reader's position with that of the author.

This first cycle of the game is followed by a group of exercises (*wa-dan*, 193-204), which serve to activate the readers for the next round. This is marked by the repetition of the "forests" episode (森は、No. 108 and No. 196) on a higher and more complicated level (a new selection accompanied by a new combination of the already mentioned toponyms), as well as by the direct invitation to continue the game: No. 203 "Games should be played. ." (遊びは), and No. 204 "The most interesting games are ..." (遊びわざは).

This opens the way for a new wave (*wa-dan* 228-229, 234-235, 237-240; *mono-dan* 242-250), which is not so clearly defined, because it follows a familiar pattern. And in addition it is not complete, i.e. it may *be continued* (65).

It could be further argued that the episodes in this seemingly "loose" and "randomly ordered" text are very firmly linked according to the leading poetic principle, i.e. the *renga*-type linking. Each episode is connected with the previous one and with the following one, either in a *kakekotoba/engo* way, or by broader associations, thus representing the very principle of linking *in movement*. (66)

Let me mention again that this rather "loose" interpretation is nothing more than my part in the game. There can be many others, and each of them equally "true", for this is the major issue of the "open work": the interpretation is *never one, but many*. (67)

From this point of view there is no contradiction between the two groups of the manuscripts. On the contrary, the fact that they exist is an extremely significant argument in favour of the "open work" interpretation. (68) The appearance of the controversial versions is predetermined by the text. As for the versions themselves, it could be argued that they exemplify the two main classificatory tendencies in the traditional Japanese poetics: the *Kokinrokujō* one, which follows the imported Chinese model, and the *Kokinshū* one, based on Japanese poetry itself. Or, in other words, they represent the development of the traditional poetics *in movement*.

And this brings us back to the introductory lines of *The Poetics of the Open Work*:

"A number of recent pieces of instrumental music are linked by a common feature:

the considerable autonomy left to the individual performer in the way he chooses to play the work. Thus, he is not merely free to interpret the composer's instructions following his own discretion (which happens in traditional music), but he must impose his judgement on the form of the piece, as when he decides how long to hold a note or in what order to group the sounds: all this amounts to an act of improvised creation. Here are some of the best known examples of the process... (69)

Henri Pousseur has offerd the following description of his piece *Scambi*: '*Scambi* is not so much a musical composition as a *field of possibilities*, an explicit invitation to exercise choice. It is made up of sixteen sections. Each of these can be linked to any two others, without weakening the logical continuity of the musical process...'.

In Pierre Boulez's *Third Sonata for Piano*, the first section is made up of ten different pieces on ten corresponding sheets of music paper. These can be arranged in different sequences like a stack of filing cards, though not all possible permutations are permissible." (pp. 1-2)

The text of *Makura-no sōshi* fits surprisingly well this definition up to such details as that, each of the sections "can be linked to any two others" (the *renga*-type linking), or that the different pieces have been written on different sheets of paper like "a stack of filing cards" (the hypothesis that the sheets of the proto-text had been scattered by the wind and then piled up at random).

This closes my reading of *Makura-no sōshi* as "a field of possibilities, an explicit invitation to exercise choice", and opens a discussion on the degree of limitation of the choice. For although the *open work* provides *a chance for a choice*, the choice cannot be made by chance. After all, each text, including *The Pillow Book*, is "pillowed" in its context, so that the next movement should be from *a text in movement* to *a context in movement*. Thus it is still a story without

an ending (70)...

Unlike Sei Shōnagon my random jottings are not limited by the quantity of paper at my disposal, but by the severe limits of time, exemplified by the "killing" word *dead*-line. And this reminds me of another important condition which has made possible the appearance of such "open texts" as *Makura-no sōshi* during the Heian period: both, Sei Shōnagon and her readers, did not have only a vast quantity of paper at their disposal, but plenty of time, as well. No wonder that one of the later *zuihitsu* was called *Tsurezure-gusa*, "Essays in Idleness".

Notes

1 I am using the paperback edition of *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon*, trans. and ed. by Ivan Morris (Penguin, 1987), pp. 263-264. The other quotations from Ivan Morris will be marked in the text (I. M., p.).

2 In spite of the differences between the manuscripts, it is widely accepted that this episode (dated about

1000) has been written postscriptum as an epilogue (*batsubun*) to the text.

3 The traditional Japanese criticism used to follow literally the claim of the authors of the *nikki bungaku* that they had written their texts "for themselves" up to the point of defining it as one of the major generic characteristics of the *nikki bungaku*. This delusion has been overcome due to both, the development of narratology and the "discovery" of such later texts as *Towazu-gatari* (late Kamakura period) which explicates the existing norm by opposing it: "That all my dreams might not prove empty I have been writing this useless account—though I doubt it will long survive me." (*The Confessions of Lady Nijō*, transl. by Karen Brazell, California: Stanford Univ. Press, 1973, p. 264). The acknowledgement of this socio-cultural norm, however, calls for further investigations of the devices used by each of the authors in order to reconcile her/his "personal voice" with the requirements of a "disguised identity", which in turn can overturn the principles for diferrentiation between "personal" and "non-personal" narratives propounded by Barthes, Genette and others. But this is already another text, though in the same context.

4 Here I am not following closely the translation of Ivan Morris, "I am the sort of person who approves of what others abhor an detests the things they like", since my own interpretation of these lines is different ("After all there are always people who would approve of what others abhor and would detest the things they like"), and this difference seems to be important for the appreciation of the text as an "open work". This is the reason why I have ventured some other deviations from the "normative translation" in the further process of citing (each time explained in the Notes), as well. After all every translation is already an interpretation, which means in turn that a different interpretation may call for a different translation. In fact this paper is a result of my "reading" of the *Makura-no sōshi* published in 1985 (i.e. the Bulgarian translation, *Zapiski pod vazglavkata*, based on the *Kadokawa's bunkobon* edition). Being under the spell of Sei Shōnagon's eloquence, for a long time I didn't dare to write anything in a "foreign" language. My only excuse for the present undertaking is that my own "displacement" might have made me more sensitive to the displacements in Sei Shōnagon's text. But, unfortunately, quite often I had to deal with passages omitted in the English translation.

5 *Murasaki Shikibu. Her Diary and Poetic Memoirs*, a transl. and study by Richard Bowring, Princeton Univ. Press: 1982 (cited from the 1985 paperback edition, pp. 131, 133).

6 The judgement of Murasaki Shikibu seems to be in an inverse proportion to the poetic talent of the ladies in her list. Suffice it to mention that the other victim of her severe criticism is Izumi Shikibu. The cultural tradition has solved this problem by putting the three of them, Murasaki Shikibu, Izumi Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon, at the top of the Heian cultural achievements, although the negative remarks of Murasaki Shikibu are still a source of "academic gossip".

7 Without ignoring the political background of Murasaki's criticism, I would like to argue that this can hardly be the main reason for it. It might be natural that our contemporary politicized society should attach such a great importance to the opposition between the fallen political party (Sadako—Michitaka) and the victorious one (Akiko—Michinaga). But this explanation seems to be "too narrow" for the author of the *Genji monogatari*. Rather than a reason, the political power is a condition, a condition which has enabled Murasaki Shikibu to state her opinion. (Maybe the attitude of Izumi Shikibu and Sei Shōnagon towards Murasaki hasn't been less aggressive, but we cannot trace it.) The opinion itself seems to be rooted in the poetical norms and conventions, which in turn is a stimulating starting point for the exploration of the norms following the differences between these three outstanding ladies of letters (the "personal voice" of Izumi Shikibu, the "unusualness" of Sei Shōnagon's poetical experiments, etc.).

8 The only reference, I have found, is in a *jōruri* play entitled *Genji monogatari-no kuyō*, which is based on a well-known Nō play with the same title. Both of them describe the tortures of Murasaki caused by the fact that she hadn't accompanied the text of *Genji* with the appropriate Buddhist services, which might be interpreted, among other things, as an indirect punishment for her aggresive attitude towards Sei Shōnagon (as a representative of the "poetic authority"). This is explicated in the *jōruri* play, in which Murasaki's husband steals Sei Shōnagon's *Makura-no sōshi* and tries to smuggle it as a product of Murasaki, although eventually Murasaki manages without it. For this hint I am obliged to Kasaya Kazuhiko, who has mentioned to me the Nō play.

9 This question is mentioned, for instance, in one of the most interesting discussions on *Makura-no sōshi* which I have recently read, the discussion between the anthropologist Yamaguchi Masao and the *kokubungakusha* Takahashi Tōru entitled "Makura-no sōshi—the Hidden Circuit" (*Makura-no sōshi* —mienai kairo) published in *The Poetics of Japanese Classics. Yamaguchi Masao's Discussions on Japanese Literature* (*Koten-no shigaku*, Tokyo, Jinbun shoin, 1989). Both, Yamaguchi and Takahashi, are representatives of the "non-conventional" thinking in Japanese criticism, but whereas Takahashi (one of the founders of the *monogatari kenkyūkai*) is "placed" in the literary tradition and in addition is a well-known specialist on *Genji*, Yamaguchi (one of the most famous Japanese semioticians) is rather "displaced", which gives him the freedom to challenge the tradition. This makes it a real discussion in the process of which many interesting ideas emerge. Here is one of them expressed by Yamaguchi: "Since you have mentioned cultural anthropology, it has come to my mind that we can find a common point, i.e. the "mandala structure" of *Makura-no sōshi*. A paradigmatic diagram interwoven by "central" and "provisional" aesthetic categories—if we approach *Makura-no sōshi* in this way, we shall be able to grasp the "cosmos" in it. Or, in other words, *Makura-no sōshi* is not just a "sketchbook", and it is not only the *Genji monogatari*, which develops a cosmology." (p. 105)

10 I am referring to Ki-no Tsurayuki's famous remark in the *kana* Preface to the *Kokinshū*: 人麿は、赤人が上に立たむことかたく、赤人は人麿が下に立たむことかたくなむありける, "Hitomaro cannot be ranked above Akahito; Akahito cannot be ranked below Hitomaro."

11 It could be said without exaggeration that the problem of readers, reading and interpretation (decoding, encoding, etc.) occupies a central place in all the theoretical works of Umberto Eco, starting from *The Open Work* (*Opera aperta*, 1962, and other texts), Harvard Univ. Press, 1989, and *The Role of the Reader. Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (*Lector in Fabula*, 1979, and other texts), Indiana Univ. Press, 1984, up to his most recent English publication, *Misreading*, London, 1993.

12 This essay is published in both, *The Open Work* and *The Role of the Reader*, but I am citing it from *The Open Work* (pp. 1-24).

13 Eco's differentiation between the "two kinds of openness" (in "Analysis of Poetic Language", *The Open Work*, pp. 39-43) is based on the *intentionality*, but indirectly it could be referred to "the plane of expression": "A study of contemporary open works nevertheless reveals that, in most cases, their openness is intentional, explicit, and extreme—that is, based not merely on the nature of the aesthetic object and on its composition but on the very elements that are combined in it." (pp. 39-40) Should his concept be tested on another referential basis (for instance, the Heian Culture), it will become evident that this kind of "intentional openness" is not a prerogative of contemporary literature. The best proof is that the text of *Makura-no sōshi* fits perfectly well his definition of "a contemporary open work".

14 The two planes, the plane of expression and the plane of content, have been differentiated by Louis Hjelmslev, and later the Tartu semioticians Yuri Lotman and Boris Uspenskii have developed on this basis a most stimulating concept in cultural semiotics, i.e. the concept of "text-oriented" and "grammar-oriented" cultures ("O semioticheskom mehanizme kulturi", "About the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture", *Trudi po znakovim sistemam*, 284 (VI), 1971). I am not going to discuss this concept in detail here, but I would like to mention at least some of the characteristics of the two types of culture, for I have found them extremely helpful in my work on Heian literature. According to Lotman and Uspenskii, the "text-oriented" cultures consider themselves as an assemblage of precedents, usages and texts", whereas the "grammar-oriented" cultures are based on "sets of norms and principles". In the "text-oriented" cultures "everything that exists is correct", whereas in the "grammar-oriented" cultures "everything that is correct exists". Thus the first type of cultures is oriented towards the expression, and its most natural offspring is poetry, whereas the second type is oriented towards the content, exemplified best by "scientific" texts.

Although I cannot judge about the sphere of application of this concept on a larger scale, one can hardly deny that Heian culture seems to be a perfect example of a "text-oriented" culture. Among other things, this could help to evaluate the function of the *Genji monogatari* as a model-text (I have attempted it in a book entitled *Following the Traces of the Brush*, in Bulgarian, trying to "defend" *Towazu-gatari*), or to understand the "freedom" of Sei Shōnagon in dealing with the poetic practice in

her *Makura-no sōshi*.

15 I would like to mention in passing (though it is a question of surpassing interest) that one of the weak points in the already introduced concept of Lotman and Uspenskii is their claim that, in the text-oriented cultures "there is no tendency towards a meta-level". The meta-level produced by the "text-oriented" cultures is the metapoetical level. One of the best examples before *Makura-no sōshi* is *Ise monogatari*, which sets in the first *dan* the "rules of the game", fitting perfectly well Roman Jakobson's norms of the aesthetic message, i.e. the courtier and the two ladies (selection), his poetic reaction (combination), the evaluation of the reaction as *miyabi*; and then after a long series of exercises puts a direct question to the readers (in the penultimate *dan*): "When and under what circumstances could a courtier have written the following poem...".

16 Another theory relates *wokashi* with *woko* (愚) in its meaning of "ridiculous, absurd, grotesque", but this meaning was introduced in later times, whereas in the first half of the Heian peroid *woko* meant just "stupid". However, it doesn't seem "stupid" to speculate about the possible role of *Makura-no sōshi*'s wokashi for the later change in the meaning of the word *woko*.

17 This poetic lineage has initiated a rather ridiculous explanation that the poetic talent in the family was inherited over one generation, i.e. from Fukayabu to Motosuke and then to the poetess Koma (presumably Sei Shōnagon's daughter), thus excluding Sei Shōnagon from the family poetic tradition.

18 It could be argued that this episode (No. 65 in Ivan Morris's translation, No. 95 in the *Kadokawa*'s edition) performs an important function in the text, for it has been analyzed by many researchers. Thus, for instance, Mitamura Masako regards it as an evidence of Sei Shōnagon's originality and her desire to break out from the limited "mundane"space of the aristocratic society ("*Makura-no sōshi-no uchi to soto*", "Mundane vs. Alien in *Makura-no sōshi*", in *Nihon bungaku kōza*, vol. 7, Tokyo, 1989, pp. 195-218).

19 I have taken the liberty to change Ivan Morris's translation (pp. 123-124), because I strongly disagree not only with the general negative tune of his interpretation, but with the translation of one particular phrase, as well, namely, いといかがは、文字の数知らず、春は冬の歌、秋は梅の花の歌などを詠むやうは(春は冬の歌をよみ、秋は春のをよみ、梅のをりは菊などよむこと)はべらむ. Although *haberamu* refers to both, the number of syllables and the poetic themes, Morris's translation is: "After all I don't even know how to count the syllables correctly. How can I be expected to write winter poems in the spring and spring poems in the autumn and poems about chrysanthemums when the plum blossoms are in bloom"?

20 *The Pillow-Book of Sei Shōnagon*, transl. by Arthur Waley, London: 1928, p. 150.

21 清少納言は芸術家というよりも、むしろ学者である, in *Kenkyū makura-no sōshi*, Tokyo: 1967, p. 60.

22 There could be written a long history of the discussion on the two types of the manuscripts, the "orderly" and the "loose", which will be a history of modern (*kindai*) thought and ideas in Japan, rather than a literary one, for alongside with Ikeda Kikan in this discussion participated such famous philosophers like Watsuji Tetsuro, for instance.

23 This classification goes back to Ikeda Kikan and seems to be widely accepted even nowadays. Although Ikeda used it to back up the "orderly" manuscripts, in its broader interpretation as a *typology* of the episodes it can be applied to the "loose" manuscripts, as well.

24 Yamaguchi Masao defines the essence of the 'catalogues' as follows:.枕草子は、基本的には類従的なものの中に、そういう名づける行為、名づけ直す行為です, "Basically the catalogues in *Makura-no sōshi* aim at naming and re-naming" (Cf. *Koten-no shigaku*, p. 81). I would like to enlarge upon it claiming that the strategy of naming and re-naming exemplified in the *wa-dan* and the *mono-dan* is the general strategy of writing of Sei Shōnagon.

25 The question of the "re-presentation" of classical texts for modern readers is extremely complicated. For me it is a question of transmission of energy—from the original text to the translation. And although there are no universal principles for all languages and cultures, what seems to be most important is to preserve the initial energy. I can't help feeling that some of the energy has been lost with the geographical *wa-dan*, and it cannot be measured only with their absence. But, after all, every translation is a matter of choice.

26 In his study entitled "Sei Shōnagon's Poetic Catalogues" (in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol.

40: No. 1, 1980, pp. 5-55) Mark Morris mentions that, "there is enough to show that place-names, *utamakura*, recorded as having appeared in *byōbu-uta*, reappear in nineteen of Sei's lists" (p. 31).

I would like to say that I feel greatly indebted to Mark Morris's paper—not only for the concrete hints I've got from it, but also for the "energy of scrutinizing", which has stimulated me for my own paper.

27 The fact that *Kokinrokujō* appeared after *Kokinshū* is a sufficient proof for the rivalry between the two tendencies.

28 One of the guiding principles in a "text-oriented" culture (see Notes 14 and 15) is the chain-formation of "precedent-texts" leading to the creation of a "model-text", which starts functioning as a normative set of poetic conventions, usages and principles.

29 Nōin (988-≈1058) is a famous Heian poet included in the honorary list of the "36 great poets" (三十六歌仙).

30 Following the advice of my Japanese colleagues I have been using for my translation and for the further research the *Kadokawa bunkobon* edition (vol. I, 1979; vol. II, 1980), which is based on the *Sankanbon* (三巻本) "loose" manuscripts. The *yama* episode is No. 10, pp. 29-30. (The further citations will be marked in the text, as follows: *K.*, vol., p.)

The main reason why I am citing this episode in Japanese is the "classificatory" usage of *kanji* and *kana* in it: the conventionalized *uta-makura* are written in *kanji*, whereas the *uta-makura* "in movement" are related in *kana*.

In my further transcriptions I am using the modern principles of romanization, although they fail to convey the different value of the sounds of Heian Japanese. This is the "sacrifice" I am doing for the "readibility" of my own text as an *open work*. In addition, I would like to avoid the discussion about the correct ways of the historical transcription, for which I am not well prepared.

31 Cf. Mark Morris, *Sei Shōnagon's Poetic Catalogues*, pp. 13-14.

32 My first reader, Paul McCarthy, was quick enough to provide a proof for this by offering his own interpretation of the *fuchi* episode (disconnecting it from the meaning of the *fuchi* itself). On the basis of another possible meaning of *kashiko* (the pious *osore ōi*) he has interpreted the first toponym as an "Imperial Sanctum", thus suggesting a religious ceremonial reading of the whole episode, which in turn reveals his own sphere of interest and research.

I would like to express my gratitude to Paul McCarthy also for the fact that while reading my paper he has kindly corrected some of my stylistic mistakes.

33 As I have already argued in Note 15, the meta-level in a "text-oriented" culture with "expression-oriented" texts is the metapoetical one, which in the case of Heian literature is exemplified not only by *Ise monogatari* and *Makura-no sōshi*, but by such "theoretical" texts as the *kana* Preface to the *Kokinshū*, as well.

34 It could be further argued that the linear display of the vertical layers of meaning is a typical characteristics of the self-reflective and self-explanatory Heian culture, which in turn reflects also the "horizontal" structure of its immanent Shintō matrix (the coexistence of *kami*, human beings, animals, plants, objects, etc. in one "horizontal" plane). Thus, for instance, another interesting example is the *sleeve* of the many-layered clothes, which displays in a linear projection the vertical layers, thus functioning as a significant channel of information. (I have further discussed this problem in the paper "A sleeve is not just a sleeve (in early Japanese culture), in *Semiotica* 97-3/4 (1993), pp. 297-314.)

35 Mark Morris concludes his analysis of the toponymical *wa-dan* with the following remark: "Sei presents a discourse with poetry, a metapoetic. For all its potential, it inherits all the weaknesses of the allusive, self-reflective aspects of the larger poetic tradition: when readers are no longer willing or able to learn the traditional code, its products become little more than objects of archeological speculation." (opt. cit. pp. 19-20)

I would like to argue that, although this remark seems to be perfectly correct as far as the intricacies of the Heian poetic tradition are concerned, it is exactly the metapoetical level which makes the text interesting and "alive" even for modern readers. On the one hand, the metapoetical level is "a discourse with poetry", but on the other, it is a narrative discourse on its own based on the major poetic device in the Heian tradition, the "play on/of words".

36 *Nihongi. Chronicles of Japan*, transl. by W. G. Aston, London: 1986, vol. I, p. 694.

37 All these episodes are included in Ivan Morris's translation, which I am following as close as possible. But since I have made some slight changes (some of them come from the different Japanese editions used in the translation), I am obliged to mention them:

—*the large-leafed cypress* (p. 66); I. M. explains the literal meaning of the name (*asuwahinoki*) in a note, but doesn't mention it in the text and this disrupts the narrative flow. But even more important for me is the translation of the name itself, because the chosen variant "tomorrow he will be a cypress" (istead of "tomorrow I'll be a cypress") deprives the tree from "its own speech";

—*the heron* (p. 67); here I. M. is closer to the original, for I have introduced some of the comments (hidden in the cultural code) in order to promote the narrative effect;

—*the herbs and shrubs* (p. 80); this episode raises the extremely complicated problem of the translation of botanical names (too many of them not only in *Makura-no sōshi*, but also in the *Genji* and in other Heian texts). Maybe the only guiding principle is the poetic function of each of the names (colour, blossom, the season, or a word-play). The four names I am citing are *narrating names*, whose stories are further explicated by the author. I. M. preserves this effect, but somewhat 'unequally': the "endangered grass" *ayafukusa* is not specified; the explanation of the stonecrop *itsumade-kusa* is given in a note; whereas the meaning of *kotonashi-kusa* is mentioned at the bottom of the page. In addition, I would rather interpret Sei's speculations on the name of *kotonashi-kusa*, 思ふことをなすにやと思ふも、をかし, as a dialogue, i.e. "Could it mean that it can fulfil any wish?", rather than as a statement, "Either it has no worries, or whatever worries it did have are now gone". And as for the first cited name, that of the water-plantain, I couldn't help admiring the fact that it seems to have a rather 'haughty' name not only in Japanese (おもだか：沢瀉 and 面高), but also in English, arrowhead.

38 Claude Lévi-Strauss *Myth and Meaning*. London: 1978, p. 19.

39 Cited from I. M. (p. 214) with a single change: replacing "himself" with "herself". The reason is not as much Sei Shōnagon herself, as the problem of "self-identification", which for Ivan Morris is "himself", and for me— "herself".

40 It is interesting to mention that the natural colour of the "red plum blossoms" *kōbai*, imported in Japan from China, is neither red, nor purple, but dark pink. However, Sei Shōnagon herself refers to it as *murasaki* (purple, rather than pink), which in turn shows the cultural meaning of the *kōbai*, as opposed to the "white plum blossoms" *hakubai*. It could be further argued that the *kōbai* reaches its full blossom as a "cultural flower" in the famous two-folded screen of the Genroku painter Ogata Kōrin (*hakubai* and *kōbai*), where it is bright purple.

41 From the two English translations I have chosen the one made by Laurel Rasplica Rodd with Mary Catherine Henkenius (*Kokinshu-. A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, Princeton Univ. Press: 1984) because I liked very much one phrase in it, namely "the poet wandered through untraveled places", p. 40 (たよりなきところにまどひ), which I am using in its figurative meaning further in the text to describe Sei Shōnagon's poetic challenge. However, I cannot understand the reason why the two translators have preferred to introduce the *hototogisu* (in the second cited passage, p. 47) as a "nightingale" rather than as a "cuckoo", so that I have decided to leave it as *hototogisu*.

42 This analysis of the function of the *white colour* is a playful attempt to apply on *the level of expression* the strategy of reading used by Tzvetan Todorov for Boccaccio's *Decameron* (*Grammaire du Decameron*. The Hague: Mouton, 1969), on the "story-level", i.e. *the level of content*.

43 Cf. Arthur Wailey's *The Pillow-Book of Sei Shōnagon*, p. 150.

44 I would like to point out again that the gradation of the tension is one of the greatest merits of Sei Shōnagon's text and a skillful device to involve the readers. This gradation is different according to the readers and their knowledge. Thus, for instance, for the Heian Japanese and for the researchers of the classical poetics the highest point of tension is on the level of the *wa-dan* (especially the toponymical ones), whereas for the modern readers, who are not acquainted with the traditional poetic convention, the *wa-dan* episodes seem to function rather as a *pause*, i.e. as a chance to take a breath and relax. The last remark has been suggested to me by some of the Bulgarian readers of my translation. And what makes it extremely interesting is that this observation hasn't come from the literary critics, "poisoned" by the occidental bias towards the story-level, but from representatives of other, "expression-oriented" arts, i.e. from musicians and painters.

45 The polyvalency of *mono* can be traced back to the beginning of *belles lettres* in Japan, i.e. to the first *monogatari*, which have developed on the opposition *kami* vs. *mono*, i.e. in the space, which is adjacent to the *kami-* space and which accomodates all the non-*kami* elements.

46 This citation is based on I. M.'s translation (p. 40), but there are some changes in the order (I am following the *Kadokawa* edition), and in one of the interpretations: 牛死にたる牛飼, "An ox-driver whose oxen have died."). In addition, I have added some of the explanations in brackets.

47 This citation (*K.*, I, p. 42) could be argued to reveal the "explicit" function of translation. In this case it is the repetition of *the last day* in the last three sentences, which marks literarily *the end* of the episode, although in Japanese the three variants of "the last day" are different: 師走のつごもり (*shihasu-no tsugomori*), 師走のつごもり、一日ばかりの精進解斎 (*syōjin gesai*).

48 Cited from I. M. (pp. 214-215). I would like to mention here that the connexion between this episode and the next one can be considered as an examplum of the associative *renga*-type linkage between the episodes in the so-called "loose" manuscripts (for further details see the last section of this paper). The last words, "The man, however, showed not the slightest pity", lead "naturally" to the opening statement in the next episode: "Sympathy is the most splendid of all qualities. It is especially true when it is found in men, but it also applies to women." (よろづのことよりも、情あるこそ、男はさらなり、女も、めでたくおぼゆれ)

49 Episode No. 175 in the *Kadokawa* edition (II, p. 63), which starts with the words: ある所に、なにの君とかや言ひける人のもとに、公達にはあらねども、そ o ころいたう好いたる者に言はれ、心ばせる人の、九月ばかりに行きて、"Once during the ninth month a famous lover, who was widely admired for his sensitive heart, though his rank was not very high, visited a certain lady at a certain place..."

50 I would like to mention that this episode (one of my favourite ones) reveals also Sei Shōnagon's exquisite sense of humour (at least for the modern readers), which in turn is still another universal "hook", disconnected from the rigid limitations of the poetic convention.

51 The dialogue structure of Sei Shōnagon's narrative discourse has been also discussed by Mitamura Masako in her paper 枕草子の〈問〉と〈答〉, "The *question-answer* structure of *Makura-no sōshi* (in *Kokugo to kokubungaku*, 1987, No. 11).

52 Some scholars are inclined to interpret Sei Shōnagon's disagreement with the "authoritative" opinion as an expression of her quest for freedom and independence. I wonder whether we are justified to impose our "modern" quest for independence on Sei Shōnagon, but there is no doubt, I think, that this "dispute" structure of the text functions to involve the readers. This could be defined even as a 'multiplying effect', whose importance increases with the development of the concept of the *ego*.

53 Episode No. 56 in I. M. translation (pp. 99-109), No. 83 in *K.* (I, pp. 104-115).

54 "As I watched the Empress writing her reply to this letter (which turned out to be the begnning of a regular correspondence between her and the High Priestess), I was full of admiration." (I. M., p. 105)

55 On the one hand, this remark can be interpreted as Sei Shōnagon's victory in her competition with the Empress (see note No. 52), but on the other (should the participants be taken as *actants*, rather than as concrete personages), this remark serves to stimulate a feeling of dissatisfaction (with the unjust play), which in turn activates the zeal to continue the game.

56 Cited after I. M. (p. 135) with some abbreviations and with a rearrangement of Sei Shōnagon's answer in three lines instead of the two in order to suggest the *tanka-* form.

57 It is virtually impossible to mention all the examples, because of their "disseminated presence" in the whole text, but let me add at least two more: episode No. 99 (I. M., No. 69) about Nobutsune (the *senzoku* word play, 氈褥 and 洗足) and the old story about the girl Enutaki (ゑぬたき, "dog's vomit") and the courtier Tokikara (時柄, "depending on the weather"); and episode No. 104 (I. M., No. 72) about one of the most unsuccessful "players" in *Makura-no sōshi*, Masahiro, who was really a 'laughing-stock'.

58 The episode (*K.*, No. 132; I. M., No. 90), in which Sei Shōnagon demonstrates her knowledge of the Chinese Classics by referring to a branch of bamboo (呉竹, *kuretake*) as "this gentleman".

59 *K.*, No. 138; I. M., No. 94.

60 The answer, "The Moon", is *too obvious* even for the modern reader.

61 In this episode a young lady asks somebody to fasten the red laces of her *obi*, and Sanekata, who

happens to be nearby composes a very tricky poem, based on a comparison between the tightened laces and a mountain lake "tightened" by ice (the reason is the pun on the pillow-word for a mountain, *ashihiki*, and the verb *hiku*, " to fasten"), referring indirectly to the lady's "cold heart". Since nobody else can compose an appropriate answer, Sei Shōnagon offers herself a poem, in which she preaches that, should the laces be fastened like a frozen lake, they'll be loosened by the sun-glow, which will melt the ice, thus suggesting that Sanekata himself has a "cold heart". Sei Shōnagon's flow of associations turns out to be too difficult to follow not only for Lady Ben-no Omoto who can hardly read the poem, but even for Sanekata, who fails to understand it (え聞きつけずなりぬるこそ).

62 This episode seems to have really an irresistable playful effect on the readers, for not only Ivan Morris, but the Russian translator of *Makura-no sōshi* (*Zapiski u izgoloviya*, Moscow: 1975), Vera Markova, a rather reserved and well-balanced lady, has also translated it in the style of playful children's poems. It makes me think even that, this poem exemplifies the playful spirit *par excellence*, for it awakens in us nostalgic memories of the light-hearted children's games.

63 The *zassanteki* manuscripts (or groups of manuscripts) are the *Nōin-bon* (能因本) and the *Sankanbon* (三巻本), which is considered as "most reliable" by most of the Japanese scholars; and the *bunruiteki* manuscripts are the *Maedake-bon* (前田家本) and the *Sakai-bon* (境本).

64 For Lotman's concept of "text-oriented" cultures see Note 14. In *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1979) Umberto Eco extends this concept in terms of a theory of codes, based on the two different ways in which cultures may organize their codes, namely *undercoding*, which "proceeds from *non-existant codes* to *potential codes* "; and *overcoding*, which "proceeeds from *existant codes* to *more analytic subcodes*" (p. 136). Let me mention that his "extension" of the concept would have been quite vulnerable to criticism but for the two significant reservations he makes: first, that "undercoding and overcoding, on the one hand, and grammar- and text-orientation on the other, are not to be considered as coincident categories" (p. 139); and second, that "in many instances it seems difficult to establish whether one is over or undercoding", so that "it would be wiser to speak of *extra-coding* (such a category covering both movements at once)" (p. 136). The last category of *extra-coding* seems to be most relevant to the poetic development during the first half of the Heian period, exemplified by *Makura-no sōshi*, which could be defined as a movement from "potential codes" to "conventional modes".

65 It could be further argued that this "to be continued" principle exemplifies the asymmetrical organization of the Heian texts, which is typical even for the longest novel *Genji monogatari*. The loose (from occidental point of view) composition of *Genji* makes also one wonder what keeps all the pages together. It often reminds me of the wooden grid of *Kiyomizudera*'s foundation, constructed without a single nail, or any other "solid" metal pin.

66 To the example of a *renga-type* linkage mentioned in Note 48, I would like to add that elsewhere (in the book *Following the Traces of the Brush*) I have attempted to string a randomly chosen group of episodes (from No. 86 to No. 95). The result is really exciting. The flow of the episodes resembles the movement of a camera: the dancers during the Gosechi Festival, the ceremonial procession of the courtiers (No. 86), a close up snap of one of the possible participants in the procession (No. 87), a shift of the point of view—the servants, who push away the guard and break into the hall eager to see the dances, amusing very much His Majesty (No. 88), another amusing story about His Majesty concerning the strange names of his musical instruments (No. 89), a group of senior courtiers playing the *koto* and flute... Following this "natural" flow of images and associations I was really surprised to find out that, the "randomly ordered" episodes are very "neatly ordered", though the principles of their organization derive from the visual arts and music, rather than from the "traditional" concepts of literature. Or, in other words, these are the governing principles of an "expression-oriented" culture and of an "expression-oriented" literature.

67 Let me mention once again that, from the standpoint of a theory of interpretation *every* text allows for many different readings, but, as pointed out by Umberto Eco, an *open work* presupposes a variety of interpretations and associations as a major condition for its existence. 'The openness is intentional', he says. But I wonder whether the "openness" might not be considered as an immanent characteristics of every "expression-oriented" text, provided that we consider the "plane of expression" at least as

important for the generation of new meanings as the "plane of content".

68 From this point of view I have found Arthur Wailey's translation extremely interesting. Rather than a translation, it is "a pillow-book" on *The Pillow Book*. Or, in other words, it is an *open work* interpretation *par excellence*. His comments mingle in a flow of associations and impressions with abstracts from the text, thus forming a mosaic of images and evaluative observations. It even seems to be a very modern and appropriate way for the critical reading of *Makura-no sōshi*. One cannot imagine any other Heian text (but for poetry, of course) being approached in such a way. And this indirectly justifies the existence of the different manuscripts, each of them being equally "true".

69 This comment many not be connected directly with *Makura-no sōshi*, yet... I cannot help mentioning that, while dealing with this last citation from Umberto Eco, I have come across quite unexpected difficulties. I wanted to "open" his statement, so that I could identify myself with the 'individual performer' in it, i.e. to make it valid not only for a *he*, but for a *she*, as well. It has turned out to be extremely difficult, unless one changes the text. On the one hand, there are so many *he-his*-s in it, that the usual way of adding *she* or *her* will make the text too heavy and artificial. On the other, should the *he* be substituted with a *one*, the text will lose its self-identificational impact on the 'individual performer'. This has reminded me once again of the "too simple and obvious" fact that in Japanese language there are no gender differentiations. In the old language there was no differentiation even on the *he-she* (彼と彼女) level. But even nowadays one can express *his* and *her* with a unifying word: *jibun (jishin)-no*, 自分 (自身) の. There is also an analogous word in the Slavonic languages, the reflexive possessive pronoun *svoj* (*swoj*, *svuj*), which may take different gender forms, but in accordance with the gender of the thing possessed, regardless of the possessor him/her-self. However, this is already a different research theme.

70 One of the referees of my paper has justly pointed out that, it is without a proper ending, and has recommended to me to sum up the conclusions at the end. Since I have found it impossible to cut off the conclusions from the flow of evidence I have decided to express my agreement with the opinion of the referee by explicating the fact that this paper is "without an ending".

マクロの草紙
(「開かれた作品」としての『枕草子』)

ツベタナ・クリステヴァ

要旨：この論文は、清少納言の『枕草子』の面白さを追究したものである。その出発点となっているのは、テキストの跋文に出てくる「をかし」と「たはぶれ」の二つのキー・ワードである。「をかし」というのは、清少納言の美学的な価値観を象徴しているとともに、読者をテキストに「招きよせたい」という作者の執筆のストラテジーの意味もはらんでいるように思われる。一方、「たはぶれ」というのは、歌枕や掛詞や縁語などの当時の詩学のカテゴリーを表しながら、時代を越える「あそび」の方法でもあると思える。付け加えると、このあそびが当時の言葉づかいの表面にとどまらず、その意味の深層をつらぬくメタポエティックであるので、意味を生じる言葉のはたらきとして、平安朝の詩学を知らない現代の読者にさえも、それを十分に楽しめる結果をもたらしているのである。あるいは、「たはぶれ」的に言えば、『枕草子』は、当時の詩学に閉じこもった「真っ暗の草紙」というよりも、普遍性を持つ「マクロ (macro) の草紙」のように見えてくる。

『枕草子』の以上のような特徴はウンベルト・エコーの「開かれた作品」(opera aperta)

の概念を連想させる。つまり、「作者は享受者に完成さるべき作品を提示する」という概念である。しかしながら、西洋の文化と文学を背景に開かれているエコーの概念は、現代文学に集中して、それ以前の作品を取り扱っていない。一方、挙げられた音楽の作品の方が、『枕草子』との共通点を持っているように思われる。

以上のような「パラドックス」が、「表現、ないし表情向きの文化」と「内容、ないしコンセプト向きの文化」との問題に関連していることを論じ、次に「表情向きの文化」としての平安朝文化の特徴に簡単に触れる。それは、エコーの「開かれた作品」の概念を一層開こうとする試みでもある。

次に、『枕草子』を「段」的に読みながら、それらの読者への「開き方」を段階的に取り扱う。つまり、「は」段における「名づける」行為とストーリーを語る名のこと、「もの」段における読者をまきこむような「波の語り」のこと、エッセイ的な段における「見立て」と「ずれ」のあそびのこと、日記的な段の「謎のゲーム」としての構造のこと等である。その視点から、清少納言の歌の問題に触れて、歌も清少納言のディスクールに表れている、詩的言語への行動的な態度の結果であると論じる。

最後には、『枕草子』の分類的な伝本と雑纂的な伝本との対立を取り上げて、それを調和させようとする。つまり、「完成させるべき作品」としての『枕草子』のテキスト自体が異なった伝本の発生を条件とするのであり、また、アーサー・ウエイリーの解釈的な英語訳も、その異なった「読み」のつながりの一つである、と論じる。