

The basic objective of the project is to propose a new, interdisciplinary approach to the analysis and description of medieval Japanese travel literature with an emphasis on the agency / performativity of literary creativity in terms of place/space, and the influence of geographic space on literary *poiesis*, and also the interweaving of these relations in the broadly understood circulation of culture. The research project is to answer i.a. to the following questions: (1) How did pre-medieval place descriptions determine their image in medieval travel journals? How were the ancient *utamakura* poetry adapted in medieval travel journals? Have they been modified in any way and to what extent? (2) How (and for what reason) did *kikō* recreate such places, and how did this affect real space? It should be remembered that literature is characterized by a specific geography and literary spaces are never just a mimetic representation of reality, even if they indicate existing places. (3) To what extent are the places described and cited in the travel notes heterotopic? To what extent are that places of memory (*lieux de memoire*) and/or places of imagination (*lieux d'imagination*)? (4) What were the principles of dialogicality between earlier images of literary places and spaces and their redescription and recreation in medieval *kikō*? (5) If so, how and for what purpose did the authors of the travel notes recontextualize non-Japanese places and spaces (mainly known from Chinese tradition) into their native literary geography? (6)

What cultural practices were initiated under the influence of *utamakura*, especially in relation to medieval Japanese travel diaries?

The project focuses on textological research of 40 medieval travel diaries from the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, as well as field research. Based on modern methodological tools (geopoetics, mapping literary places/spaces, phenomenological typology of tourist/travel experiences), it will be possible to study not only the literary layer of *kikō*, but also the reference of this type of literary creativity to geographical space in accordance with the correlation between *geo* and *poiesis*. The author of the project expects that the results of the research in this area will have the following impact on the study of medieval Japanese literature, but also more broadly – knowledge about Japanese culture:

- The research results of the project will introduce the concept of geopoetics into the Japanese literary studies discourse. Currently, this research orientation is not applied by Japanese researchers who study literary works (both classical and contemporary) using mainly the philological methods. The geopoetic approach to medieval *kikō* opens up new possibilities of their analysis, interpretation and description, and allows to broaden knowledge about them, indicating potentially new research problems. It can be hoped that the research results will also encourage Japanese scholars of medieval prose to develop research on the *kikō*.
- The current state of knowledge on *utamakura* will be reviewed. The phenomenon of epigonization, through which poetic images of places (especially in medieval travel journals) have been duplicated over the centuries, was based primarily on *utamakura*. This view will be updated and enriched with new insights resulting from the research carried out in the project.
- The results of the research will be conclusive as to whether *kikō* has indeed become the most important medium for building the local and national literary geography of Japan, which was to constitute a continuum of repoesised images of places previously popularized mainly in *tanka*. Taking into account the changes that took place in the medieval Japanese literature, when the collaborative poetry *renga* was gaining increasing popularity, as well as travel diaries, demonstrating and discussing the main source of literary information about famous places will be a valuable contribution to the state of knowledge about the influence of geographic space on literary creativity in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods.
- Proving within the project that medieval Japanese *kikō* are both a product and a generator of the circulation of the relationship between geographical space and literary creativity will be important not only from the perspective of literary studies, but more broadly – the entire humanities. The fact that, in the spirit of geopoetic performativity, also nowadays the literary world is transferred to the real world, which results in the incorporation of old literature into the local and regional cultural circulation through various practices, will strengthen the literary (and cultural) value of medieval Japanese travel journals as interdisciplinary and intermedia creativity.