DIOGENES

"Mind" in ancient Japanese: The primitive perception of its existence

Diogenes 57(3) 3–19 57(3) 3–19 Copyright © ICPHS 2011 Reprints and permission: sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav DOI: 10.1177/0392192110415763 dio.sagepub.com



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Raising the problem

The title of this paper is faulty. However, I chose it with a view to giving an easier grasp of the subject to most readers. In fact, I am here going to try to elucidate what the Japanese word *kokoro* originally meant, and this is not a matter of the English notion of "mind". However, this approximate way of presenting the subject is based upon the fact that most Japanese philosophers believe *kokoro* is equivalent to the English "mind"; for example, "philosophy of mind" is translated as "philosophy of *kokoro*". This use, however, strikes me as somehow dissonant. I am dubious about translating "mind" with *kokoro*: I think they are essentially different, hence my decision to inquire into the original meaning of the Japanese word *kokoro*.

I am not, of course, questioning the rightness of what is called "philosophy of mind". Rather, I am concerned here with the status of the philosophical term *kokoro*. To understand this, we must first look at how philosophical terms are constituted in Japanese and, indeed, the very structure of Japanese vocabulary.

A Japanese text is, most generally, written in a mixture of Chinese characters and particular phonograms called *kana* (meaning "provisory/private letters"). Although Japanese belongs to a different linguistic family from Chinese, we learnt the means of writing from Chinese. As is well known, Chinese characters are ideograms. To use them to write a different language, it was necessary to use these ideograms as pure phonograms. Borrowing Chinese ideograms and using them as phonograms was a wonderful innovation: it still dominates the basis of Japanese expression. For very long time, in Japan, official documents were written in a Chinese called *kanbun* ("Chinese sentences"), which, being written Chinese, was pronounced directly in Japanese, but used, in writing, as a means of international communication with the Chinese and the Koreans¹. At the same time, attempts to write the Japanese language as Japanese started as early as the late 7th century. These consisted in adopting Chinese characters as a means of transcribing Japanese phonetics. The most ancient Japanese texts are written in a mixture of Chinese characters and so-called *Manyō-gana* (*kana* of the *Manyō*, which is the name of the oldest anthology of Japanese

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poems). The latter were in fact Chinese characters used as pure phonograms. Modern Japanese keeps this basic structure: the only difference being that we use *kana*, peculiarly Japanese phonograms, instead of *Manyō-gana*, or Chinese characters used as phonograms². We use mainly *kana* for functors (auxiliary words, endings, etc.), and Chinese characters for content words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc.).

The Japanese pronounce every Chinese character in two ways, or rather every character has two pronunciations: *on* (sound) and *kun* (meaning). *On* is the pronunciation based on the ancient Chinese sound, and *kun* the way of reading Chinese characters when they mean Japanese words. As described above, in ancient times, when we began to transcribe Japanese sentences with Chinese characters, besides their use as phonograms, they were also adopted to substantial words according to similarities in meaning. In these cases, they are used as ideograms, but pronounced in the Japanese way: this is the *kun*.

Thus we have described the Japanese writing system in a simplified way, though it may still seem complicated to readers without any background knowledge of Japanese. However, in order to analyze the notion of *kokoro*, it is only necessary to keep in mind the fact that Chinese characters are used in Japanese in two ways. I have presented this as two ways of pronunciation, but now, more precisely, we should conceive of it as two ways of using. On the one hand, *kun* is the way to read the Chinese characters adopted to original Japanese words, which we call "the language of Yamato" (Yamamoto being the ancient name of Japan). In such cases, the Chinese characters express Japanese words according to their meaning, and are pronounced in the Japanese way. On the other hand, the words that are pronounced in *on* came originally from Chinese. To fill in the empty spaces in Japanese vocabulary, we borrowed Chinese words as new concepts. While on the level of pronunciation there are two ways of reading Chinese characters in Japanese, there are two kinds of word. Some are pronounced in *on*, the other in *kun*; the former being original Chinese words, and the latter words from "the language of Yamato" (that is, pure Japanese).

This structure of writing profoundly determines the nature of Japanese and Japanese culture. Japanese has defined itself, since the time it acquired its own notation, as a language that is willing to adopt foreign words. This enabled Japanese culture to acquire the advanced thoughts and political system of China, and the concepts of Buddhism. Or perhaps it was an eagerness to assimilate a high culture that oriented the nature of the language. Even now, Japanese is very open to foreign words, which are phonically transcribed with *kata-kana* to be incorporated easily into Japanese sentences. Thanks to this linguistic flexibility, Japanese culture was and is essentially open to other cultures.

We have thus arrived at the threshold of the *kokoro* problem. However, this is a matter not just of the Japanese language, but also of the nature of philosophy in Japan. The basic fact is that philosophy is a discipline imported from the West in the second half of the 19th century, along with many other constituents of modern Western civilization. To call Confucianism and Buddhism Chinese or Indian philosophy is to conceive of Asiatic thought through the category of Western thought. What is important for us here is the fact that this adoption of the heterogeneous culture that was Western philosophy demanded the invention of a lot of technical terms. They were forged from combinations of Chinese characters as ideograms, and only standardized after half a century of trial and error. Philosophical language thus deliberately keeps a certain distance from ordinary language. For example, while "form" is ordinarily translated as かたち (*katati*, Yamato language) or 形式 (*keishiki*, a word of Chinese origin), the same word in philosophical use (in its Aristotelian sense) is 形相 (*keisō*), which can only be understood by those who have received a philosophical education³. This style of translating philosophical words comes from a desire to contrast them with words in ordinary use and implant philosophical concepts as they exist in the Western context. As

a result, philosophical terms exist in an abstract context, separated from the fertile soil of Japanese, and philosophy itself gives the impression of being an exoteric closed field⁴.

Let us now consider the word *kokoro*. We usually adopt a Chinese character to it, so that many Japanese believe, I fear, that it comes from Chinese, though it is in fact pure Japanese. It was, to a certain extent, a matter of translation to adopt a Chinese character to this Japanese word, and this had the effect of coloring the word with a Chinese conception. As we are accustomed to the concept with a Chinese coloration, we need a peculiar investigation to recapture its original concept. This is the task I wish to undertake here. As suggested above, my starting point was the perception of the heterogeneity of *kokoro* as a philosophical term in Japanese. While philosophical vocabulary in Japanese is an artificial language based on the translation of Western words, *kokoro* as a pure Japanese word is far from being artificial. While the created terms should be understood in reference to their original contexts in Western philosophy, *kokoro* is rooted in Japanese language and Japanese sensibility. From this difference of nature derives the dissonance I felt with *kokoro* as philosophical term. In other words, *kokoro* is a live word, different from ordinary philosophical terms. This small word might be a clue to a different way of thinking. That is my incentive for the present investigation.

"Mind" has a similar problem. "Philosophy of mind" seems to be opposed to the philosophy of *Geist* in the Hegelian style. The difference between "mind" and "spirit" (or *Geist*) is already delicate. I have in mind the French expressions *la belle âme* (or Schiller's *die schöne Seele*) and *les beaux esprits*. Generally, "mind" seems to be translated by *âme* or *esprit* in French and *Seele* in German, but the correspondence between them is already problematic: *âme* is *anima* rather than *animus*, while the core meaning of "mind" is memory, intellect and arbitrary decision. *Kokoro* seems to me to be near in meaning to *âme*.

In any philosophical research on universal concepts this filter of the particularity of culture and language intervenes. The early Husserl, for example, was fond of using red as the typical case of the intuition of an essence. I wonder however whether red would be of the same "essence" for a German at the beginning of the 20th century and for the ancient Japanese, who distinguished only four colors in their language. This case suggests to me that our study of the notion of *kokoro*, though the word is peculiar to ancient Japanese culture, can procure universality: we cannot conceive of universality in any other way.

Kokoro in dictionaries and the orientation of our research

I mentioned above only my impression that *kokoro*, as it is used in philosophy to translate "mind", is rather similar to *âme*. In order to orient ourselves in the following investigation, I wish to consult the definition and description that dictionaries give to the word *kokoro*. The *Grand Dictionary of Japanese* (hereafter *GDJ*), currently the most copious and systematic of Japanese dictionaries, gives three Chinese characters for this word: 心情意⁵. These are the characters that have traditionally been read as *kokoro*, and it is suggestive that they are not 知情意⁶, only the first character (meaning intellection or knowledge) being different from the three characters meaning *kokoro*. This indicates that *kokoro* is a narrower notion than "spirit" or Cartesian *âme*, because it lacks the moment of intellection. After giving these Chinese characters, the *GDJ* defines it as follows: "The human organ specified in intellectual and emotional functions, and its operations. It is used in opposition to 'body' and 'thing', and signifies figuratively what corresponds to human mind in things. Spirit. Soul." I have the impression that this definition was formulated by an author who is familiar with Western concepts and believes that *kokoro* is identical to "mind", to the extent that he/she wished to define *kokoro* through the notion of mind. Probably regarding *kokoro* as a philosophical

term, he/she believed that a philosophical term should be defined according to its original sense in Western languages. This definition contains two problems. In the first place, as mentioned above, *kokoro* seems to lack an intellectual moment. In the second place, *kokoro* is not an "organ", in the sense of a bodily part executing peculiar functions. More basically, this definition is very poor and betrays the basic idea of this dictionary: to define Japanese words according to how they are used in classical texts.

The *Iwanami Dictionary of Ancient Japanese* (hereafter *IDAJ*) defines *kokoro* as the functions that ancient people attributed to the heart as an organ. This is a much more reasonable view, because the heart is designated by Chinese characters as "the organ of *kokoro*", and most people even now represent *kokoro* as seated in the left breast. But this is an understanding based on the Chinese L, and we are not sure whether *kokoro* in Yamato language (original Japanese) was associated with the heart as an organ.

So, the authors of the entries for kokoro in these dictionaries regard it either through the filter of Western languages or Chinese, and do not try to define it in its concept in Yamato language. By contrast, I wish to consider kokoro as a Japanese concept. To do so, it will be necessary to track it back to ancient times, and to interpret what people understood by this word. I will consult the $Many\bar{o}$ - $sh\bar{u}$ in order to find out on what occasions, and as what, they perceived $kokoro^7$. At the end of the ancient era, reflection and speculation on kokoro became more and more intense, and in the context of Buddhist philosophy and Confucianism in Japan a particular history of this idea began to form. Our task here is a preliminary for such a study.

The primitive perception of Kokoro

Before the existence and functions of *kokoro* became known and its cognition became, so to speak, commonplace, on what occasions did people first notice its existence? Was it my *kokoro* or some other's? It is a difficult conjecture. We are easily inclined to believe that we firstly perceived our own *kokoro*, and then project it onto others, recognizing that others have it too. But we can equally well imagine that someone's strong opposition to our own wish first awoke the idea of *kokoro*. In both cases, it is improbable that *kokoro* in its usual state was noticed in the first place: the recognition of its existence must have needed a somewhat extraordinary situation. So we should pay attention to rare experiences that might bring it out. Thus we encounter a kind of experience that we can call the dialectics of seeing and suffering.

み熊野の浦の浜木綿百重なす 心は思へど直に逢はぬかも

Flourishing as a hamayū plant on the beautiful shore of Kumano,

Though my kokoro aspires, I cannot see her in person.

(Kakinomoto no Hitomaro [mid 7th century, possibly beginning of the 8th], No. 496)

As the foliage of $hamay\bar{u}$ plants, growing in clusters on the shore of Kumano, spread their foliage and bloom⁸, I multiply in my kokoro feelings for her, though I cannot see her directly. The poet talks about what we now call "pleats of kokoro": every pleat contains his love. He notices this because he cannot see his lover directly; his thorny feeling of suspense makes him perceive the existence of his kokoro suffering. We should recognize, however, that the spatial representation (with many pleats) attests to a certain coolness. We have the impression that the poet already entertains the concept of kokoro as a spatial image. What we can call a discovery of kokoro must be such an experience as follows:

...天雲の外に見つつ言問はむ縁の無ければ情のみ烟せつつあるに...

... like clouds in the sky, looking at her as outer being, without any means of talking to her, only my *kokoro* choking ...

(Kasa no Kanamura [active at the beginning of the 8th century], No. 546)

雨雲の外に見しより吾妹子に 心も身さへ寄りにしものを

Since looking at my girl as outer being, like clouds in the sky, My *kokoro* and even body have slid up to her.

(Kasa no Kanamura, No. 547)

A basic, and probably the original, form in ancient poetry is a combination of a long epic poem with short lyrical poem(s) as counter poem(s). Those above are an example of such a combination (I have quoted only the relevant part of the long poem). This time, *kokoro* is perceived in contrast with language rather than seeing: lacking real contact, the poet becomes sensitive to the existence of *kokoro*. In the long poem, *kokoro* is written with the Chinese character 情 (emotion), which concerns feeling rather than organ as substance. The poet underwent only a certain feeling of something swirling⁹. He added *kokoro* as its subject in order to suggest that 'choking' is used as a metaphor, so that this subject appeared to represent a substance.

This generative process in which an intensive emotion needs a subject in order to be uttered, and where this subject is regarded as representing a substance, is more noticeable in the short poem, where the character 心 (heart) is used: it sounds more substantive. It appears that people began to learn, through Chinese characters, to distinguish two existences of *kokoro*. The phrase 心も身さへ ("My *kokoro* and even body") is a primitive form of the idiom 身も心も ("body and *kokoro* [soul]"), and suggests the existence of the idiom. Its locution is realistic. In reality, one has no means other than looking from a distance, but in that moment of attraction his *kokoro* has already slid up to his girl. *Kokoro* is a dynamic state noticed in oneself, which can be as strong as physical motion and gives a sense of even the body moving. Here the dynamics of *kokoro* pass to the body. Or should we rather say that this dynamic state proves the substantial existence of *kokoro*? It is indeed ambiguous, and this ambiguity seems essential to the primitive experience of *kokoro*.

今更に何をか思はむうちなびき 情は君に寄りにしものを

At this stage, without speculation, inclined already My *kokoro* has slid up to you.

(Abe no Iratsume, No. 505)

This is a reply from the poetess to a man who has been paying court to her. Here we find the same locution — "kokoro slides up to" — in which, however, the word kokoro is written with the Chinese character 情 (emotion), suggesting the difficulty of distinction. While Kanamura uses "the heart slides", Abe no Iratsume has "the emotion slides". The distinction between substance and emotional state is ambiguous, or, more exactly, irrelevant. "Emotion slides" is not, however, an incorrect expression. Once kokoro has "slid up to you", a scission comes about within the "I". The "I" that wonders what to speculate (this subject is not expressed in Japanese) is distinguished from the kokoro, and this "I" is in a position of control over kokoro. Kokoro, in other words, probably constitutes a natural part of "I". Consequently its dynamics can easily move his/her body. But such

"kokoro sliding up to" becomes more and more autonomous, escaping from the control of "I". In fact, our poetess gives herself over to a vehement passion in the next piece (No. 506): "you need not languish, I am ready to plunge, at the last moment, even into fire or water". Before such a dynamics of kokoro, which moves even the body, the intellectual aspect of "I", as the consciousness of having to control it, emerges. It is the original case of the Japanese mind–body problem. But kokoro is located here on the side of the body vis-à-vis the "I" as consciousness.

はろはろに思ほゆるかも然れども 異しき情を吾は思はなくに

Though I feel your existence at a distance, I won't have any different *kokoro*.

(Anonymous, No. 3588)

The poet does not undergo a real scission. Foreseeing its eventual possibility, he believes that he can control his *kokoro*. But we have seen in the above case of Abe no Iratsume a real scission, where it seems to be not the intellectual "I" but rather the *kokoro* that is real. If our poet happens to have a real "different *kokoro*", would that still be a "different *kokoro*"? *Kokoro*, as dynamic state, is always changing, and its change is autonomous, beyond any controlling will, and belongs to nature according to the Sino-Japanese notion of 自然 "becoming by itself". The Japanese mentality accords true being to things and phenomena that are or come into existence in a "natural way" in this sense¹⁰. In the same sense, we say even now "from my *kokoro*"¹¹, which corresponds curiously to the English "cordially". We had a similar locution in ancient times:

真野の浦淀の継橋情ゆも 思へか妹が夢にし見ゆる

As the joint bridges on the shore Mano no Ura, I see my wife in dreams, one after another; It is because I think of her from my *kokoro*.

(Fuki no Toji, No. 490)

As far as it concerns affection, *kokoro* (emotion) that arises by itself is true feeling. But such a feeling "from *kokoro*" is far from constant and certain. The utterance of the vow not to have "different *kokoro*" bespeaks the anxiety of change. Now I feel, or believe I feel, her from my *kokoro*. But the feeling (*kokoro*), as part of nature, is in fact changing. Once changed, this feeling can no longer be judged to be true. Therefore a proof of trueness is postulated. Such a natural phenomenon as a dream supplies such proof. Even now, we are accustomed to the locution and to the idea of "seeing even in dreams".

心 (heart), 情 (emotion), 意 (interior movement)

The three Chinese characters in the title of this section are those that were read, in kun, as kokoro in ancient times. We have developed our interpretation so far under the assumption that people distinguished two basic meanings of kokoro according to the respective sense of the character expressing this concept: while \dagger is an emotive state, \dot{l} is a substantial organ. We have now to establish, through considering the actual use of these characters in the $Many\bar{o}$ - $sh\bar{u}$, whether this assumption is correct.

Beside the three Chinese characters above, *kokoro* was also written in *kana* (phonograms)¹². It appears as such only in Volumes V and XIV of the $Many\bar{o}$ -sh \bar{u} . The authors writing *kokoro* in *kana*

can be classified into two groups: unknown poets from different provinces (folkloric poems) and poets belonging to the last generation of authors in the anthology. As for the folkloric poems, the use of *kana* appears to represent the naivety of the authors, who lacked knowledge of Chinese characters. But it also depends on who wrote them down, and this may have been the poets of the last generation, who were responsible in one way or another for the editorial work of the anthology. The six examples of the use in Volume V are by Yamanoue no Okura (c.660–733). In a passage of Chinese prose included in this anthology (entitled *Lament on my own illness*), he shows his consciousness of the distinction between mind and body, in opposing $\dot{\psi}$ to "body". By contrast, in his Japanese poems, he always writes *kokoro* in *kana* (phonograms). We cannot tell what distinction he made between the Chinese $\dot{\psi}$ (heart, mind, etc.) and the Japanese *kokoro*, but it appears certain that he did distinguish them.

Whether or not people did distinguish between the three Chinese characters expressing *kokoro*, and, if so, in what way, we cannot tell. The character 意 is rather particular and apart, and we shall return to it later; the main problem consists in the relationship between 心 (heart, mind, etc.) and 情 (emotion, feeling), which seems to correspond to the opposition between substantial organ and dynamic and emotional state. Even a systematic examination of their uses does not reveal any precise distinction, since there are cases where authors use both characters in the same locution (for example, "from *kokoro*"). If we can conclude from this that people did not distinguish precisely between 情 and 心, I believe that the reason for this ambiguity lies not in ignorance of the meaning of these respective Chinese characters, but rather in the difficulty of distinguishing substance and states with regard to *kokoro*.

There are, however, a few cases where we can perceive consciousness of a distinction: as in the case of Kanamura above, where *kokoro* is written in two different ways in the same set of pieces, or even in the very same piece. No.3271 is a man's reply to a poem by a woman who is vehemently jealous and has visualized his love scene with a different woman: "It is myself who inflames my *kokoro* (情), and I love my dear sweet you from my *kokoro* (心)." Here the different use of two characters fits our assumption, and the fact that 心 is almost identified with "I" is harmonious with the idea that it is a substance.

Let us consider 意. This character is peculiar among the three we are considering. In the first place, it was also used as a phonogram: while we pronounce it now "i", ancient people read it as "o". In the second place, it was used in adverbial Chinese phrases such as 随意, 任意. In the third place, it was used to refer to the meaning or content of a poem 13 . The other two characters (情, 心) did not have these uses.

Moreover, and most significantly, 意 did not mean particularly the "will", contrary to our usual understanding. This common notion is mainly based on the phrase, which I mentioned at the beginning of this paper: 知情意. This phrase is glossed as "intellect, feeling and will. Three psychical elements of human beings"¹⁴. Hence the notion that 意 corresponds to will. Indeed we have several noun phrases that contain this character and indicate voluntary actions of mind, such as 意志 (will), 意欲 (wish), 意図 (intention). But to take 意 as meaning "will" is a rather distorted view. 意 means indeed "orientation" (*Koukanwa Chinese-Japanese Dictionary*), but lacks the moment of reasonable judgment, which is essential to the act of will in Western philosophy. Especially when we look for its basic semantic element, including the sense of the meaning of a poem¹⁵, we should rather consider it as a dynamic state latent in *kokoro*. As the actuality of *kokoro* is consciousness colored with emotions, particularly concerning affection, it contains a moment of inclination or wish.

Having thus examined the uses of Chinese characters meaning *kokoro*, we shall now return to the question of what *kokoro* was, particularly with regard to the distinction between substance and emotional state.

Kokoro of Mura-gimo (むらぎも, agglomerated internal organs)

Kokoro is the vehement dynamic state that the "I" perceives as its own. While simple knowing should be function not of kokoro but of "I", kokoro is a feeling state naturally born in an extreme situation such as not being able to see, or speak: for example, choking. It is very complex ("multiplying like a hamayū plant") and has already procured a certain autonomy ("kokoro and even body have slid up to her"), and consequently, despite the desire to be loyal to this state of feeling, a premonition is born that a change is possible ("I won't have any different kokoro"). On the one hand, being "natural" (in the sense of "born by itself") is proof of the trueness of the feeling, but, on the other hand, to resist the natural tendency to change is the sincerity of kokoro as human nature.

The first experiential fact is the feeling of a dynamic state. Wishing to talk about this state, we need a grammatical subject, which becomes necessarily substance-like. Was *kokoro* regarded as a substance, or as a mode of some substance?

In the above quoted poems, it is "I", rather than *kokoro*, that should be considered as the substance: so that *kokoro* is a mode of "I". When the poet says, "I won't have any different *kokoro*", *kokoro* is a state of feeling felt by "I": "I" as spiritual substance perceives its own mode as *kokoro* through its reflexive consciousness. Even in this conception, this substance is not like the Cartesian *âme*, exempt from any change. Rather it is born from the anxiety of change as the subject of this change.

On another interpretation, an expression such as "kokoro chokes" would seem to take kokoro as a substance: there exists kokoro, which is choking on its present mode. But we should ask whether it is appropriate to apply here ontological categories such as substance-mode, or even grammatical ones such as subject-predicate: in the Japanese phrase 情烟せる (kokoro chokes), the syntax of the juxtaposed words is not necessarily glossed as subject-predicate, but may be read as a simple verbal phrase. This expression only signifies the consciousness of "choking", and to utter that in precise way, the utterer added kokoro in order to show that the verb 烟せる (museru) is used here figuratively. This case concerns the great and fundamental problem in Japanese of how to know whether the concept "subject" may be appropriately applied to Japanese sentences, a question to be asked before we can determine the coincidence of subject and substance. As sentences in classical Japanese are based on the viewpoint of the utterer, we can say that it is always an unpronounced "I" that is the subject of all sentences (Sasaki, 1980). We can go further. Kitarō Nishida, generally considered the most original modern Japanese philosopher, rejected the idea of consciousness as subject/substance, positing it rather as place or field (Nishida, 1925). I believe that this view is determined by the structure of Japanese: what is apparently the grammatical subject is in fact an adverbial phrase and what is generally considered as conscious subject can indeed be considered as the place/field where changes emerge. Certainly ancient people did not consider that something called kokoro existed: it was rightly written with the Chinese character 情 (feeling).

However, when the place/field where a feeling state appears as *kokoro* is considered as being constant, must it not be at least based on a physical organ? The ancient Chinese considered 心 (*kokoro*, heart) as the function of the heart. People's conception of *kokoro* as substantial is well expressed in its relation to *kimo* (肝), which refers, according to dictionaries, to internal organs in general, and in particular to the liver. In ancient times, as there were those who were killed in battle or through accidents, people must have had some knowledge of anatomy, including the existence of the internal organs. Moreover, people had what we can call "*kimo* experience", though dating from later times, we have such expressions as 胆をつぶす ("break down *kimo*", be astonished), 肝を冷やす ("cool down *kimo*", be horrified), 肝にしみる ("penetrate into *kimo*", be deeply impressed). By relating these experiences to internal organs, they must have gradually formed the notion of *kimo*. The oldest phrase using this word, given by *GDJ*, is the advice, recorded in volume 22 of the

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Nihon-shoki, the oldest official history, given by Suiko Tennō to Prince Ose: "your kimo being young ...". According to the GDJ, the phrase means that "your ways of thinking are not yet mature", with kimo referring not to internal organs but here to mind and generally to "kokoro, spirit and mental toughness". Nowadays, ignoring anatomy but according to common usage, we distinguish kimo and kokoro from one another and assign them respectively to liver and heart, or at least we are aware of such a conception. In the case of the Nihon-shoki, we should consider kimo to be distinct from kokoro. Generally, kimo concerns willpower based on the total personality. When qualified with "young", kimo is substantial and going through maturation: we associate the experiential fact of maturation with the physical fact. By contrast, kokoro is a matter of momentary states, and we rarely acknowledge any substantiality, defined by a basic identity and duration, in it.

In this respect, the word *mura-gimo* is interesting. It literally means many agglomerated internal organs (*kimo*), but is used as *makura-kotoba* (pillow word) qualifying *kokoro*. In this usage, we recognize a basic difference between *kokoro* and *kimo*. A "pillow word" is a form of idiomatic adjective locution used mainly in poetry, and it functions as a comparative description¹⁶. That *mura-gimo* was used as the pillow word of *kokoro* means that *mura-gimo* represents a certain essential character of *kokoro*: they must be both different and similar. Let us consult two poems:

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村肝の情くだけてかくばかり
わが恋ふらんを知らずかあるらむ
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Muragimo no kokoro [kokoro of agglomerated internal organs] being crushed, so much I love you, without your knowing!

(Ōtomo no Yakamochi, No. 720)

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......恋ひしくに 痛きあが身そ いちしろく 身に染み透り 村肝の 心砕けて 死なむ命 急 (にはか) になりぬ......
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... The pain of love permeates my entire body; *Muragimo no kokoro* being crushed, my life is facing imminent death ...

(Girl surnamed Kurumamochi, No. 3811)

The second quotation is part of a long poem by a woman wasting away because her husband has become remote, in the context of the ancient custom of husband-visiting-wife marriage. In both poems, *muragimo-no* (of agglomerated organs) qualifies "*kokoro* being crushed", thus signifying a violent passion. This is based upon the association of a furious emotion with a physiological "organ experience": with the phrase "*kokoro* of agglomerated internal organs being crushed" the poets wished to express how the pain is felt bodily. This is particularly true in the second example.

In "kokoro of agglomerated internal organs", kimo and kokoro are differentiated. While kokoro, as feeling state, is only related to kimo, kimo is regarded as the locus of willpower.

Knot and adherence

To sum up, this relation of *mura-gimo* (agglomerated organs) and *kokoro* consists in violent emotion that is felt bodily. Analytically, this relation can be regarded bi-directionally. On the one hand, *kimo*, as a part of the body (an internal organ), can be considered as the agent of the violent emotion: *kokoro*, being a phenomenon, needed a substance to be situated in because of its powerful presence, and this substance was *kimo* (the organ). Conversely, however, *kokoro* can be considered

as something exercising an influence on the body – in the case of the girl surnamed Kurumamochi, it is her *kokoro* that fatally torments her body. We cannot judge from the locution which of these two is the case: we are only told of the association or coexistence of the emotive state that is *kokoro* and the pain of the substantial *kimo*. That is the meaning of the ambiguous expression "*kokoro* of *mura-gimo*". The ambiguity comes from the ambiguity of the concept of *kokoro*, which is purely and simply an experienced emotive state, but is represented as substantial because of its strength. This two-sidedness – being both state and substantial – can be understood if we interpret *kokoro* as a kind of node like a knot.

磐代の野中に立てる結び松 情も解けず古おもほゆ

The pine tree with a knot, standing in the field of Iwashiro! With non-raveled *kokoro*, I remember old days.

(Naga-no-imiki Okimaro, No. 144)

The first line refers to the tragic history of Prince Arima, who was killed through a cabal. Passing by this pine tree on his final journey, Prince Arima made a knot in a branch as a sign of his wish to return. Making a knot in a branch was "a form of ancient magic, probably the expression of a wish for safety and happiness, infusing the soul into it not to be raveled" Passing by the same pine tree, the poet remembers the Prince. By saying "with non-raveled *kokoro*", he means that the sentiment of the Prince is still alive, and also that his own sympathy for the fate of the Prince has not changed Ordinarily however, "non-raveled *kokoro*" means rather reciprocal love as follows:

黒髪の白髪までと結びてし 心ひとつを今解かめやも

Having united our *kokoro* into one up to the age of white hair, Why would I ravel it now?

(Anonymous, No. 2602)

We seem to understand this expression, which is still alive, in terms of the model of knotting threads. But we should interpret poem No. 144, not in the sense of knotting two minds like threads, but rather a "knotting feeling". There are not two minds, and the knotted branch is just one. *Kokoro* as feeling knots intransitively, just like a natural phenomena, such as the formation of ice¹⁹: in Japanese the noun and verb meaning "ice" derives from "to knot". We perceive this in the following poem:

この小川霧ぞ結べる激ちたる 走井の上に言挙げせねども

Above this brook a mist knots, without my pronouncing Words of grief over the gushing water.

(Anonymous, No. 1113)

According to an ancient viewpoint, a sigh of grief was associated with mist²⁰. Viewed in this connection, kokoro is a form of knot, or clot, or agglomeration as natural phenomena. We can see that such a knot or clot in myself is perceived as kokoro when it becomes conscious.

As a familiar instance of such a knot or clot, we can cite traffic jams. A jam may have begun with a car accident, but even after the disposal of the cars directly involved, the jam does not immediately disappear. As cars ahead slow down or stop, those following behind cannot but do the same. So, without any "substance", the traffic jam continues at this point. A knot or clot is like this. *Kokoro*, as a knot, accompanies the sensibility that a sentiment has "backed up" and consequently adheres. This is a basic element of Japanese sensibility²¹, and we notice one of its original expressions in the following poem:

紅に深く染みにし情かも 寧楽の京師に年の経ぬべき

May I have a *kokoro* deeply ingrained with red? Years have passed in the ancient capital of Nara.

(Anonymous, No. 1044)

For various reasons, the ancients changed the capital rather often. In one instance, the capital removed from Nara for five years during the 740s. The poet mourns over the deserted scenery of the ancient capital, wondering whether this sentiment comes from his *kokoro*, which is full of memories of prosperous days. *Kurenai* (ﷺ), the Japanese word meaning red, originally designated safflower, which was used as a dye. It is evident that the expression "deeply ingrained" derives from this: the mechanism of memory and impression is compared to dyeing.

Kokoro, as something that dyes, naturally shows durability. Indeed, we have already encountered the acknowledgement of "different kokoro" (changing mind), concerning a sentiment that has lasted for a substantial period: kokoro is not something like stream of consciousness. Being a dynamic state, kokoro must know change, but as it is presupposes that it endures. In the paradox peculiar to what, lasting by its nature, is yet not exempt from change, is rooted the anxiety expressed in the vow that "I would not have different kokoro". The following two pieces express such durability and change:

稲日野も行き過ぎかてに思へれば 心恋しき可古の島見ゆ

Regretting to pass Inabino, I see Kako Isle, dear to my *kokoro*.

(Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, No. 253)

梓弓引かばまにまに依らめども 後の心を知りかてぬかも

Like a catalpa bow, if you draw strongly, I will follow you, Without knowing your after-*kokoro*.

(Ishikawa no Iratsume, No. 98)

Hitomaro, the poet of the first piece, is traveling on a boat. "Dear to my *kokoro*" refers to his feeling toward this isle, which he keeps in his *kokoro*. The second is a piece in a series of poems exchanged between the poetess and a priest who courts her. The "after-*kokoro*" means the being of *kokoro* that might change hereafter.

Kokoro of others

So far we have been preoccupied with perceiving *kokoro* in ourselves. There is still the matter of perceiving *kokoro* in others. The "after-*kokoro*" in the last piece is that of the partner. The will of another may threaten violently, or the other's sentiment may not be what we wish; thus we learn that there is *kokoro* in others. Cognition of our *kokoro* and recognition of other's *kokoro* are probably related to each other. I notice in the would-be lover a different *kokoro* counter to my love, or have a premonition that this may be so, giving birth to a self-consciousness of the knot that is my *kokoro*. The philosophical problem of the cognition of others is as follows: while the ego is known evidently through reflexive self-consciousness, like the Cartesian cogito, we have no means of immediate cognition of others' minds. How, then, can we learn of them? I think this problem is built upon an excessive emphasis on ego, and we should be suspicious of its rationality. Let us consider some other poems that take the other's *kokoro* as subject. The piece that immediately comes to mind is a famous poem by Princess Nukada (7th century), in which *kokoro* means compassion or a favourably-disposed will:

三輪山をしかも隠すか雲だにも 情あらなむ隠さふべしや

Even clouds cover Mount Miwa! At least the clouds should Have *kokoro* in order not to cover it.

(Princess Nukada, No. 18)

It has been decided to move the capital from Nara to Ōmi. The princess is leaving Nara and, wishing to be able to see Mount Miwa close to the ancient capital, demands that the clouds hanging on the mountain slope have kokoro (情). This kokoro is compassion rather than passion or emotion, and seems to define the limit of the voluntary aspect of kokoro. In other words, we find in the $Many\bar{o}$ - $sh\bar{u}$ no use of the word kokoro meaning a determinate will²². We find a similar use in the following piece:

潜する海人は告るとも海神の 心し得ずは見ゆといはなくに

Although the fishing diver pronounces, Without the *kokoro* of the sea-god, we cannot see her.

(Anonymous, No. 1303)

Scholars believe that ancient fishing divers customarily pronounced some words when they dived. In this piece the verb *noru* (pronounce) refers to this custom as well as the declaration of love: however strongly a boy may declare his love, he cannot see his girl without obtaining the favour (*kokoro*) of the sea-god. Interestingly the favour (*kokoro*) to be obtained is attributed not to the girl herself but to the sea-god, who must represent her parents allegorically. In being compared to that of the sea-god, this *kokoro* is made natural, and becomes similar to the disposition of clouds on Mount Miwa. It is as if *kokoro* is a natural phenomenon like wind, which was also sign of fate, or at least a movement as its reflection. We take the words of Princess Nukada, who asked the clouds to have *kokoro*, as figurative, but we may also wonder if this was the normal mode of being of *kokoro* for ancient people. The next piece, although not using the word *kokoro*, expresses clearly a worldview based on a free communication between nature and *kokoro*:

梯立の倉椅山に立てる白雲 見まく欲りわがするなへに立てる白雲

White clouds upon Mount Kurahashi in Hashidate, White clouds generated by my wish to see her.

(Anonymous, No. 1282)

Clouds rise because I wish to see her: "since ancient times, clouds and mist were identified with breath and regarded as equivalent to soul". A correspondence between *kokoro* and nature would be too analytical a formulation, and in fact they must be moving almost as one. Watching the clouds rising, our poet felt his own *kokoro* appearing there. In *kokoro* growing together with nature, there is no distinction of self and other. As for the rising cloud, I see it now as the phenomena of my feeling, but in a different situation, it might be that of my girl (cf. No. 3515).

As for such a movement of *kokoro*, we have already discussed the expression 心寄る ("*kokoro* slides up to"). We have also 心行く ("*kokoro* goes"), 心遣る ("send *kokoro*"), and 心に乗る ("ride on *kokoro*"). It is appropriate to take them literally.

あしひきの山き隔りて遠けども 心し行けば夢に見えけり

Though distant beyond mountains, My *kokoro* having been to you, I have dreamed of you.

(Yamanoue no Okura, No. 3981)

東人の荷先の篋の荷の緒にも 妹は心に乗りにけるかも

Just like the rope binding the royal gift from the eastern province, You have ridden on my *kokoro*.

(Kume no Zenji, No. 100)

As for the first piece, we might consider, according to our common notion, that if my *kokoro* visited you, you should dream of me. Our poet says instead that it was he that dreamed of his lover. This means that his *kokoro* went to her and returned. The second piece belongs to the same series as one by Ishikawa no Iratsume (No. 98) quoted above. The poet says that she has tightly fixed on (as the rope on the royal gift) his *kokoro*. For the moment, it is he not she who feels love and pays court. He is feeling his *kokoro* as a knot, and believes this has happened because her feeling was fixed on his *kokoro*. This reveals that there was no clear distinction between my feeling about the other and the other's feeling about me.

In wishing to consider the *kokoro* of others, we have arrived at the idea of it circulating in the universe, rather than belonging separately to me or to others. Regarding this non-differentiated state we should consider *mi-kokoro* ("*kokoro* to be respected") as the typical other mind. In the whole of the *Manyō-shū* there are only four examples of this, all in long poems and referring to Tennō or Tennō's relatives. The following is the beginning of a long poem by Hitomaro:

やすみしし わご大君の 聞し食す 天の下に 国はしも 多にあれども 山川の 清き河内と 御心を 吉野の国の 花散らふ 秋津の野辺に 宮柱 太敷きませば……

Under the Heaven widely ruled by our Great Mistress, there are many countries; Her *mi-kokoro* enjoys Yoshino as the region with clear mountains and river, where in the field of Akitsu after the season of flowering, with massive pillars of place ...

(Hitomaro, No. 36)

Hitomaro, unanimously considered one of the greatest poets in Japan, was a court poet, and composed this piece on the occasion of a royal visit by Suiko Tennō to Yoshino (c. 689–90). It demonstrates an official character in all respects, including style, locution, and subject. The *mi-kokoro* of Tennō, sung here, is not her personal mind: it does not designate her particular feelings and will at that very moment and place. Our poet praises, through *mi-kokoro*, the realm²⁴. Tennō as the subject of *mi-kokoro* is not an individual but an official persona. A piece sung by Yakamochi (No. 4094) says that at the news of the production of gold, Tennō (this time masculine) rejoiced his *mi-kokoro*. It concerns indeed a reaction at that moment to that particular news, but we can recognize in it something like *raison d'état* in its literal sense.

Okura describes the legend about the two stones poised on a hilltop facing the sea in the Chikuzen province (No. 813). The passengers dismount from their horses to pray. The poet adopts the traditional view reported by old men living in the place, relating this custom to the legendary expedition of Jingū Kōgō (Empress Jingū) to Korea. It concerns the tradition that before the expedition the Empress put the stones in her sleeves in order to calm down her *kokoro*.

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…足日女 神の命 韓国を 向け平らげて 御心を鎮め給ふと い取らして 斎ひ給ひし
真珠なす 二つの石を 世の人に 示し給ひて...
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...Blessed Hitarashi-hime [Jingū Kōgō], willing to conquer Korea and calm down *mi-kokoro*, took in her hand and consecrated two beautiful stones, which she showed to the people...

I think this *mi-kokoro* signifies not only the *kokoro* of Jingū Kōgō, but also that of the gods, because the notion of "calm down" (鎮める) consists in "tranquilizing the activities of divine spirits" and "settling the country"²⁵.

It seems, then, that the presumption we had about other's *kokoro* – that its perception arises from a conflict with another's will – was mistaken. In poetry, the type of the other's *kokoro* that is beyond our wish is that of the love-partner, especially his/her "after-*kokoro*", which is not, however, a primitive perception of *kokoro*, but rather a mutation of a *kokoro* that has already been noticed. In figurative understandings such as "*kokoro* of the sea-god", *kokoro* is naturalized and fused into the phenomena of nature. The other's autonomous will is grasped as a natural process and becomes equivalent to the *kokoro* (favour) expected from Mount Miwa. The typical case is the *mi-kokoro* of Tennō, which, far from being an individual will or feeling, rather resembles a *raison d'état*, and is, in its last phase, fused into the animistic will of the gods. When we represent the movement of *kokoro* in natural phenomena, a circular communication is established in which my dream is my lover's dream and *vice versa*.

Conclusion: The concept of Kokoro in the Manyō-shū

Let me now summarize the results of the preceding research into the concept of *kokoro* in ancient times.

1. As for the symbols applied to the Japanese word *kokoro*, we have three Chinese characters: 情, 心, 意 and several instances of *Manyō-gana* (Chinese characters used as phonograms

of Japanese). Especially among the poets belonging to the last period, we perceive an intentional preference given to phonograms. Yamanoue no Okura, uses the character 心 in his Chinese poems and prose, but consistently adopts the phonogramic notation in his Japanese poems. This can most probably be interpreted as reflecting his consciousness that *kokoro* is different from any of the Chinese concepts 心情意. We can hardly find out the decisive distinction between these three characters. In using them as ideograms, poets must have known their respective meanings. 情 means emotional state, and 心 primarily the substantial organ that is the heart. 情, the most frequently used character, can be interpreted in this sense in most cases. But such a distinction is not completely applicable. 意 is a little peculiar in three points: it was not used so often; it was also used as a phonogram; it appears also in short and fixed Chinese phrases. When it was used to mean *kokoro*, we do not find any distinction from the other two Chinese characters, and it does not particularly emphasize the volitional aspect of *kokoro*, contrary to our presumption.

- 2. The original being of *kokoro* is affection²⁶: the emotional state that is perceived in a frustrating situation, such as being unable to see or speak to a loved one. As affection or sympathy, *kokoro* is naturally inclined to other persons, but it is not something like free will. *Kokoro* is already involved when it is perceived, and in this sense it is passive.
- 3. *Kokoro* is already affective when it is noticed, and in this sense it is subject to change. Knowing that, and according to the essence of affection, the subject of *kokoro* wishes to resist such change and vows constancy.
- 4. *Kokoro* is related to the internal organs (*mura-gimo*). Such a view comes from what we can call "organ experiences", that is, the bodily feelings that accompany strong emotions. Although this relation between *kokoro* and body must be reciprocal, and indeed we have examined a poem in which a furious passion is posited as fatal, people generally conceived that *kimo* was the substantial cause and *kokoro* the phenomenal result. *Mura-gimo* must cover heart, but people did not particularly distinguish organs, and therefore they did not take the Chinese character i (*kokoro* as heart) in its strict sense.
- 5. *Kokoro* was used like a subject of utterance, but that does not mean that it can be considered as a substance. What is now regarded as the grammatical subject in Japanese can also be considered as an adverbial phrase designating the place where something happens, rather than the agent of an action. This is exactly the case with *kokoro*, which might have been regarded as the place of feeling. Such a phenomenon, powerful enough to be uttered and become a subject in the utterance without actually being substance, can be conceived as a knot or clot in a stream.
- 6. There were, however, cases where *kokoro* was considered as circulating in and with nature. As experience, the limit case was found in the dynamic state of "*kokoro* sliding up to someone": *kokoro* as the place of feeling cannot leave its own body. As interpretation, however, a poet said that he dreamt of his lover, because his *kokoro* had gone to her. Such an understanding was related to the world view in which a sigh bearing a feeling became mist and circulated in the universe as clouds, with the result that *kokoro* became inherent in nature: this probably cannot be taken exactly as anthropomorphism.
- 7. *Mi-kokoro* (*kokoro* to be respected) was only used with regard to Tennō and his/her relatives. It does not refer to his/her individual feelings but is rather attributed to his/her official persona as governor, and coincides with the gods' *kokoro*. It is not dissimilar to God's will in Christianity, and in fact words "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" (Mathew 6:10) is translated into Japanese with this word *mi-kokoro*. It seems that this custom is one reason why people believe that *kokoro* contains a volitional moment. In fact, however, *mi-kokoro* in the *Manyō-shū* is not a will aiming at a precise object, but the target of "calming down": it

must derive from the concept of *kokoro* as the feeling state. This feeling state was the origin of pleasure, but also awful, and we perceive in the custom of calming down a mentality preferring peace in life.

8. The fact that *kokoro* was in the first sense affection and state of feeling is probably also related, through the meaning of the Chinese character 意, to the concept of the *kokoro* of a poem in traditional Japanese poetics, that is, the meaning or content of the poem based on the poet's feeling.

Those are the concepts of kokoro in my interpretation. It is now clear that kokoro is largely different from the English "mind", which is based upon the cogito's subjectivity. A similar study should examine in detail what precisely mind is. As for Japanese philosophy, it is important to note that we did not have any other word equivalent to the Greek nous, and I am sure that this absence has for a long time determined the character of thought and culture in Japan. In the above inquiry, we have noticed the act of apperception about this state of feeling, which should be attributed to "I", but was not taken as such and did not become a subject of reflection. This absence is all the more remarkable, because our poets showed from the last phase of ancient times (10th century) a reflective self-consciousness about what they felt or thought, and even what they felt or thought at such and such a time; even in the $Many\bar{o}$ - $sh\bar{u}$, we have met something of such a consciousness in, for example, anxiety about change.

Notes

- Thanks to the common use of Chinese characters, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Taiwanese can communicate by writing.
- 2. There are two forms of *kana*, both deriving from Chinese characters. One is based on graphic transformation, the other on abstraction (using only a part of a character).
- 3. Literally, it means "being of form" or "aspect of being form".
- 4. The attempt to do philosophy in and according to Japanese has not been completely neglected. Recently there has been a stronger recognition of its importance. I limit myself to mentioning the name of Megumi Sakabe, who died in June 2009, and his early but important work (Sakabe, 1976).
- 5. Because of the nature of the subject, we cannot but quote Chinese characters. However, I will attempt to make the argument comprehensible to readers who do not have any knowledge of Chinese characters.
- 6. We are accustomed to use these three characters as a set, covering, we believe, all human faculties: intellect, emotion, and will. We will discuss this phrase later.
- 7. The Manyō-shū is the oldest anthology of Japanese poems (called waka and defined in contrast to Chinese poems), including more than 4500 pieces in various forms in 20 volumes. The oldest pieces date from the beginning of the 7th century, and it was once completed in the mid 8th century, and then more volumes added at the end of that century.
- According to dictionaries and picture books, hama-yū has manifold leaves as well as flowers. Moreover, it agglomerates on the shore.
- 9. This does not in fact concern the poet's own experience. Kanemura was a court poet and is believed to have written this piece in place of Tennō, on the occasion of his visit. Even so, the poet sung the love feeling according to his own experience (he had no other means!), and we notice a delicate spirit in his reflective observation.
- 10. The Japanese word meaning "nature" was formerly and originally an adverb meaning "by itself" or "without artifice". About the importance of this form of being in Japanese thought, see Sasaki (2000).
- 11. We had the expression こころゆも (kokoro-yumo, corresponding to the modern kokoro-kara, meaning "from the heart", or "cordially"), in Nos. 609 and 794.
- 12. I have counted five forms of writing kokoro in kana: 許己呂, 己許呂, 許々呂, 己々呂 and 去々里.
- 13. In his correspondence with Ōtomo no Ikenushi (in Chinese), we find an expression used by the latter that suggests the double meaning of 意: at the same time *kokoro* (sentiment) and language.

14. *GDJ*. We do not know who invented this phrase. The oldest example *GDJ* quotes is its use by Doppo Kunikida (1871–1908).

- 15. There are some Japanese philosophers who wish to interpret the French word *sens* in a way that multiplies its two basic meanings of "direction or orientation" and "meaning", although these two are derived from two different words. I wonder if this interpretation is not suggested by the semantic construction of 意.
- 16. We find similar idiomatic formulae in different cultures. For example, in Greek epics we find such expressions as "swift-footed Achilles", "owl-eyed Athena", etc. An important difference is that we have no pillow words for personal beings, including gods.
- 17. *GDJ*. The poem sung by Prince Arima is No.141. His "rebellion" happened in 658, and our piece by Ikimaro dates from 690.
- 18. In the Japanese version of this piece, the person to whom the *kokoro* in question is attributed is not determined. So we read it as it applying both to the slain prince and to the poet.
- 19. Ice is called 氷 (koori) in Japanese, which etymologically means "knot".
- 20. Cf. No.799 (Yamanoue no Okura).
- 21. I have published a book on Japanese sensibility (Sasaki K, 2010). I have published its outline.
- 22. IDAJ quotes two pieces from the Manyō-shū that use kokoro with the meaning of "will". However, No.3507 sings only a vow of love and therefore of something not so active as will. No.1366 concerns compassion, which, likewise, we cannot call willed or intended.
- 23. Note on No.3515 given by Susumu Nakanishi (1978).
- 24. We find a slightly personal nuance in the *mi-kokoro* of No.478, which comes from the basic tone of this elegy, dedicated to a young prince.
- 25. IDAJ. As for the god's function of settling the country, cf. No.319.
- 26. It is probably not by chance that poets used the character 情 most often. Among the first one thousand pieces of our anthology, there are 53 examples of 情 against 45 of 心.

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