



INVITATION TO THE PLACES AND POETS OF A JAPANESE CLASSIC, “MAN-YO-SHU”

Those Provinces are closely related to the collection of ‘waka’ poems called Man-Yo-Shu. Man-Yo-Shu is the oldest remaining collection of ‘waka’ poems. It includes 4,500 poems, beginning with the one by the Empress Nintoku in the 5th century through to a celebration of the New Year in 759 by Ōtomo-no Yakamochi, who is said to be the compiler of the collection.

The collection contains sad poems by a soldier who was sent to Kyushu to guard the area, those of hard work by common people, or romantic poems, all of which are reflections of people’s sincere attitude of life.

In those times, the provinces were also gateways to Japan from the Eastern countries of Asia. They must have been regarded as important areas by the then central government of Japan. For that reason, the government officials sent there to govern the areas were carefully selected. Some of them assigned for the job were poets noted for their fine pieces in the Man-Yo-Shu, such as Ōtomo-no Yakamochi for the Province of Inaba, Yamanoue-no Okura for the Province of Houki, Kadobe-no Ōkimi for the Province of Izumo, and Kakinomoto-no Hitomaro for the Province of Iwami. While they were in office there, they wrote ‘waka’ poems of the areas and the people included in the Man-Yo-Shu.

Why not visit the places of the old spirit of Japan and feel the literary ambience of the Man-Yo-Shu?

