

The *Ariakeshū* and Its Later Development

—Prolegomena to Its Thought—

Yoshikazu NAKANO

That the keynote of the poetic thought in the *Ariakeshū*, which contains the works of symbolist poet Kambara Ariake, is Buddhistic is well known. However, the process in which his poetry and thought developed thereafter is scarcely known. It was after the 4th year of Taishō that Ariake ceased composing poems, and during the period of less than 10 years since the appearance of the *Ariakeshū*, his poetry and thought sustained his artistic life, reflecting and interacting one upon the other. According to the classification in the *Ariakeshū*, his poetic life is divided into the following three periods: First was the period toward the end of the Meiji era when he composed a group of poems of major significance centering around his 'Kankaku no Seichō' (Balance of Apperception). This was the period when his poetry expressed a fascination with "the balance of apperception," while his Buddhistic thought deepened. The second was around the 3rd year of Taishō, when he wrote poems grouped under the theme of 'Shutsugen' (Appearance). In it he moved on to the thought in which his true Self perceived within a fragment of actual events the reality of both illusion and harmony. Here his Self asserted itself forcefully in his works. Finally, around the 4th year of Taishō he composed 'Kōmyō Yushutsu' (Outpouring of Light) which contains poems on the 'Maṇḍala.' Here the Self is enveloped by light; the Self is the light itself; the Self's expressions are its own testimony to its living within the light. Such thoughts could only derive from the Buddhist background in which Ariake had long been nurtured. It is in this 'Kōmyō Yushutsu' that his religious thought and art are found united most intimately.