

Selections from NDL collections

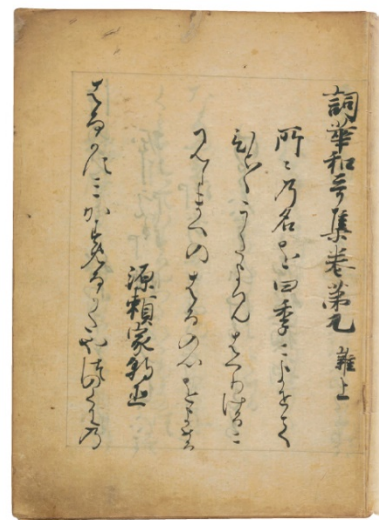
Material recently designated as a rare book: *Shika wakashu*

This article is a partial translation of the article in Japanese of the title

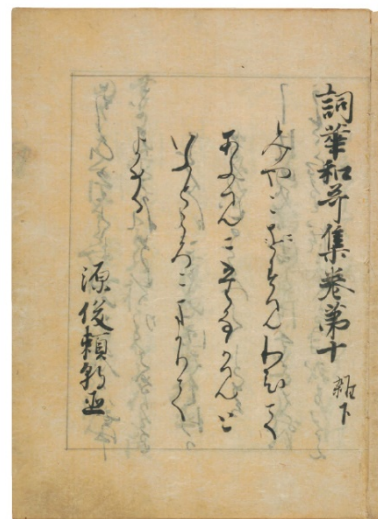
"52nd Committee on Designation of Rare Books: Materials recently designated as rare books" in *NDL Monthly Bulletin* No. 675/676 (July/August 2017).

The National Diet Library (NDL) designates materials which are considered particularly significant as rare books and semi-rare books.¹ On February 15, 2017, one Japanese book and two foreign books were designated as

rare books, and a Japanese book and a Chinese book as semi-rare books. In total, the NDL holds 1,295 rare books and 796 semi-rare books.



Cover and front page of volume 9 of *Shika wakashu*



Cover and front page of volume 10 of *Shika wakashu*

¹ The Committee on Designation of Rare Books of the NDL determines whether a material should be designated or not according to the National Diet Library Rare Books Designation Criteria (<http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/aboutus/laws/pdf/a4116.pdf>) and National Diet Library Semi-Rare Books Designation Criteria.

Shika wakashu (volumes 9-10) NDL Call No. WA15-23

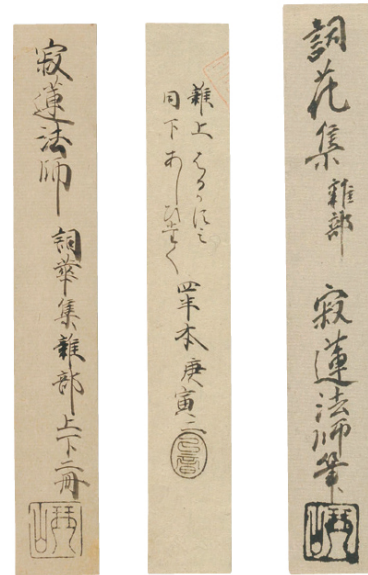
*Available in the NDL Digital Collections: [Volume 9](#); [Volume 10](#);

Poems compiled by Fujiwara Akisuke; Created between the end of the 12th to the beginning of the 13th century; Handwritten copy; Two books; 22.2 cm × 15.8 cm in size; Bound in an old Japanese style called *tetchoso* style. The size of the text block varies from 15.9 cm to 16.4 cm. Each side of the leaves contains five to seven lines, and one poem is written in two lines, excluding the last poem written in three lines. The cover is made of light indigo blue fabric woven in damask style with checkered patterns. The titles are attached to the cover of each book. Along with the material, two *kiwame fuda* (certificates of authenticity) by both Kohitsu Ryosa and Kohitsu Ryo'on and a letter of Okura Kosai are attached. In the last part of volume 10, there is a handwritten note which reads "Keiyumaru" (supposedly the name of a previous owner). It was previously part of the private collection of the Sekido family.

Shika wakashu is the sixth Imperial anthology of Japanese poetry collected at the end of the Heian period. Fujiwara Akisuke (1090-1155) compiled it under the decree of the cloistered emperor Sutoku which was passed in 1144. It was completed and presented to Sutoku in 1151.²

This material is assumed to be the oldest existing copy of the *Shika wakashu*, created between the end of the 12th to the beginning of the 13th century.

It used to be said that this copy was handwritten by Jakuren (?-1202, a waka poet), but today, they are not recognized as so. Four lines in thin black ink surround the text block of the pages. Since it resembles the [Emon gire \(Emon edition\) of Kokin wakashu \(Emon gire\)](#), it is sometimes called the *Emon rui gire* (the edition which resembles *Emon gire*). Of the total of ten volumes, only the eighth,³ ninth, and tenth volumes exist in considerable amounts. Although several leaves from the other volumes exist as *kohitsu gire* (古筆切, a leaf or part of a leaf including prominent works of calligraphy taken apart from manuscripts generally before the Keicho era (1596-1615) for purposes such as decorating the *tokonoma* (Japanese-style alcoves), giving to someone as a gift, etc.), they have been dispersed.



From left to right: *kiwame fuda* (certificate of authenticity) by Kohitsu Ryo'on (front and back) and the certificate of authenticity by Kohitsu Ryosa

The designated materials are the ninth and tenth volumes. Of the eight sections of *Shika wakashu*: spring, summer, autumn, winter, felicitation, parting, love, and miscellaneous, these two books contain poems on miscellaneous themes. They used to be held by the wealthy Sekido family of Nagoya. The certificates of authenticity (*kiwame fuda*) by Kohitsu Ryosa (1572-1662) and Kohitsu Ryo'on (1674-1725) have been donated together with the materials. Although it had been rebound, there are no pages that have been lost. Not only is it significant in studying the text of *Shika wakashu*, it is also valuable as an example of manuscripts written in *kana* from this period.

(Translated by Shihoko Yokota)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

- [Material recently designated as a semi-rare book: Yama no sachi \(No.202, October 2015\)](#)

² It was presented to the Imperial Palace for the first time in 1151, but the cloistered emperor pointed out that several poems should be removed. It was then brought to the Palace for the second time in the same year; thus, two different versions exist. Since the designated material does not include the poems which were removed after it was examined the first time, it is probably based on the latter version.

³ The book was converted into a scroll book. Part of a private collection.

Komatsu Shigemi, *Kohitsugaku taisei* volume 26 (Kodansha, 1989) p.634 NDL Call No. KC626-E179