

JUXTATWO

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP IN HAIKU

2016

THE *Haiku* FOUNDATION

JUXTATWO

Research and Scholarship in Haiku

2016

THE *Haiku* FOUNDATION

JUXTATWO

ISBN 978-0-9826951-3-5

Copyright © 2016 by The Haiku Foundation

JUXTATWO is the print version of *Juxtapositions* 2.1.

A journal of haiku research and scholarship,

Juxtapositions is published by The Haiku Foundation.

The Haiku Foundation

PO Box 2461

Winchester VA

22604-1661 USA

www.thehaikufoundation.org/juxta

SENIOR EDITOR

Peter McDonald

GENERAL EDITORS

Stephen Addiss

Randy M. Brooks

Bill Cooper

REVIEW EDITOR

Ce Rosenow

HAIGA EDITOR

Stephen Addiss

MANAGING EDITOR

Jim Kacian

TECHNICAL MANAGER

Dave Russo

PROOFREADER

Sandra Simpson

Contents

Snapshots: Haiku in the Great War	Sandra Simpson	7
Haiga: “Christmas Eve”	Pamela A. Babusci	47
<i>Jo Ha Kyū</i> and <i>Fu Bi Xing</i>	Judy Kendall	49
Haiga: “first snow”	Ion Codrescu	85
Masaoka Shiki and the Origins of <i>Shasei</i> . . .	Charles Trumbull	87
Haiga: “coloring”	Terri L. French	123
Deconstructing Haiku	Ian Marshall & Megan Simpson	125
Haiga: “the first dip”	Ron C. Moss	149
<i>a stick over the falls</i> : A Juxta Interview of	Cor van den Heuvel	151
Haiga: “on my own”	Marlene Mountain	183
Do We Know What a Haiku Is?	Melissa Allen	185
Cor’s Cores: Interpretations	Various Authors	205
Unfolding Destiny	Michael Dylan Welch	217
Intertextual Poetics	Ce Rosenow	233
Haiga: “Montauk IXX”	Ellen Peckham	241
Haiku Theses and Dissertations	Randy M. Brooks, Ph.D.	243
Haiga: “willow fluff”	Stephen Addiss	281
Juxta Haiga Commentary . . .	Stephen Addiss & Jim Kacian	283
	Juxta Contributors	287
	Juxta Staff	291

EDITOR'S WELCOME

Welcome to *JUXTATWO: Research and Scholarship in Haiku*. As with any new venture in scholarship, we have been heartened by a worldwide response to our inaugural issue of the journal in the realization that *Juxtapositions* clearly fills a critical role in the evolution of haiku scholarship in English.

In this issue, authors from New Zealand and the U.K. respectively tackle diverse subjects: the former, Sandra Simpson, examining the role haiku played in the poetry of the First World War; the latter, Judy Kendall, how viewing haiku (Japanese script) as opposed to reading it (Latin alphabets) differ under the aesthetic concept of *jo ha kyū*. Two further scholarly articles round out this issue's selection: Ian Marshall and Megan Simpson ask the question, Can haiku be deconstructed?; and Charles Trumbull makes the case for Shiki's practice of *shasei* to be taken as more than the simple "sketch from nature" that has characterized it in the West.

This issue also is dedicated to, and celebrates, the life in haiku of poet, scholar, anthologist and publisher Cor van den Heuvel. Editor of the seminal *The Haiku Anthology* now in three editions and still in print after forty years, van den Heuvel's contribution to haiku, and haiku in America in particular, are undisputed. Haiku Foundation founder Jim Kacian provides an insightful interview, focusing on the poet's early chapbooks of the 1960s, and van den Heuvel's life dedication to haiku. In addition, Melissa Allen offers a retrospective review of *The Haiku Anthology* and its place in the canon.

Editor Randy Brooks builds on his exemplary bibliography of monographs on haiku literature provided in *Juxta* 1.1, with a comprehensive list of theses and dissertations related to haiku in English. The lost art of fine bibliography is obviously alive and well here. And Juxta editors Stephen Addiss and Jim Kacian offer their commentary on this issue's haiga.

We do hope you enjoy this new issue of the journal. This effort would not be possible without the tireless work of the editors, nor without the full support of The Haiku Foundation. If you find these scholarly articles worthy, please consider becoming a submitting author.

Warm regards,

Peter McDonald
Senior Editor
pmcdonald@csufresno.edu



Snapshots:¹

Haiku in the Great War

SANDRA SIMPSON

ABSTRACT: Amid the death and destruction of the World War 1 battlefields, amid the mud, blood and chaos young men in the trenches were writing poetry, including haiku. How had haiku moved from Japan to western Europe and how established was it in the early years of the 20th century? And in this centenary year of the battles on the Gallipoli peninsula (in Turkey in 2015, with the Somme in 2016 and Passchendaele in 2017), it is timely to consider the way haiku can be used as tool for remembrance and honouring.

1. Although the word 'snapshot' was already in use before World War 1, it became one of the words and phrases used in the trenches that passed into common use: *Snapshot – from a quickly aimed and taken rifle shot*. Accessed July 13, 2015. <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/taneda3.html>.

young men march away —
 the mountain greenness
 is at its peak

— Santōka Taneda (1882–1940) tr John Stevens²

INTRODUCTION

June 28 marks the anniversary of the First Battle of Kosovo in 1389, in which Serbia was defeated by the Ottoman Turks (the Sultan was, however, assassinated in his tent) and although Serbia did not truly lose its independence until the Second Battle of Kosovo in 1448, June 28 is a day of great significance, not to say sorrow, to Serbian nationalists.

In 1914 there was added fuel on that day as Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire and all waxed moustaches, feathered helmet and gleaming medals, inspected imperial armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The annexation of Bosnia in 1908 had outraged Serbian nationalists, who believed the country should have become part of the newly independent and ambitious Serbian nation.

After the inspection, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie – with minimal security – went to Sarajevo, Bosnia’s capital, to open a museum. June 28 was also Franz Ferdinand’s wedding anniversary and this too has some bearing on why he was in Sarajevo that day. His beloved wife was denied royal status in Austria due to her birth as a poor Czech aristocrat, and their children were treated poorly at court. She could never sit by his side on any public occasion, except in a place where royal etiquette was unclear – a place such as annexed Bosnia.

Waiting for the royal pair were six assassins from the Young Bosnia group, which wanted a pan-Serbia (pan-Yugoslavia), all young men who were “walking dead” as they all had tuberculosis. However, the assassins weren’t up to much, missed the royals a couple of times and seemed to lose interest.

2. *Mountain Tasting* by John Stevens.



Heading for their car at the Sarajevo Town Hall, moments before the assassination, from the Europeana 1914-1918 collection, via *Wikipedia*.

“We see a pleasant couple on a sunny morning. They are a little plump, perhaps, and well into middle age. Clearly they are people of wealth and consequence. They are sitting in an expensive open car, a rarity at the time. She is elegant in a white dress and hat. Although the photograph is black and white, we know from other sources that the flowers she carries are roses, blood-red ones. He is wearing a military uniform. As she looks on approvingly, he shakes the hand of a local dignitary.³

“The man leaning down from the car is Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, that vast and ancient empire at the heart of Europe. By his side is his wife, Sophie. As it happens, they are about to celebrate their wedding anniversary. By all accounts the marriage has been a very happy one. Nevertheless, the old emperor and his court disapprove of her because she comes from the wrong social class and they humiliate her at every opportunity. But today Franz Ferdinand and Sophie are in Sarajevo, far from Vienna and its rigid etiquette, and she is being received with full honours as his equal.

3. *A Picture Before Dying: Franz Ferdinand and Sophie, Sarajevo, 1914* by Margaret MacMillan, *Time magazine* (July 16, 2014).

“The photograph was taken . . . on June 28 1914, and they have less than three hours to live. Young assassins, backed and armed by shadowy forces in Serbia, are waiting among the onlookers. Even then, the couple so nearly escape their fate. One bomb misses and others among the plotters lose their nerve. Then, while trying to flee, the driver of the car takes a wrong turn. As he fumbles with the gears to back up, the last of the assassins steps up and shoots the passengers, point blank.”

The assassin is a 19-year-old loitering on a street corner after having given up on the plot. Seeing his chance, Gavrilo Princep steps forward to enter history and for a century afterwards credited with being the tinder that started World War 1. But the tensions in Europe that year were such that the fabric was likely to ignite anyway – and there were plenty of other sparks waiting to fly.

On July 28, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and the tenuous peace between Europe’s great powers collapsed. Within a week, Russia, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Serbia had lined up against Austria-Hungary and Germany, and World War 1 had begun.

Over the course of four years (1915–18) New Zealand lost the most men per capita of any of the British Empire countries – 18,166 out of a population of just 1.1 million – although other Allied countries had much greater numerical and relative losses, including France, Romania, Greece and Serbia.⁴

So what gladness and sadness must have been felt privately and publicly all around the world on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, the first Armistice Day. One of the deadliest conflicts in human history had finally come to an end, leaving more than 16 million people dead and more than 20 million wounded.

But grief has a habit of following us down the years – mothers who lost sons and husbands and grieved the rest of their lives, women widowed, women whose husbands returned traumatised (and

4. *Wikipedia*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I_casualties. Accessed April 18, 2015.

divorce wasn't an option), children who lost the men in their lives, women and children who struggled to keep farms and businesses going (it wasn't until 1916 that the New Zealand government created 'reserved occupations' for men), women who remained unmarried, men too damaged to rejoin 'normal' life, the abuse of alcohol and the violence. Black-edged letters and telegrams – one from the King and one from the Governor-General – began to be delivered the length and breadth of New Zealand with alarming regularity from the moment of the landing at Gallipoli in Turkey on April 25, 1915.

In this year, the centenary of the mess that was Gallipoli, it's an opportunity to look at the war through a haiku lens, and assess how the form was used during World War 1 and since to bear witness and to remember.

SCENE-SETTING: ALL THINGS JAPANESE

In the early years of the 20th century Europe and America couldn't get enough of Japanese art and culture, even coining a term for the fashion, Japonisme. The fad was tied to the "re-opening" of Japan after the 1853 arrival of American gunboats in Tokyo Bay. Widespread importing – and exporting – once again became possible, and although porcelain had been relatively well known outside Japan during its "closed" years, the country's refined aesthetics and "exotic" art took the world by storm when it began to arrive en masse.

The craze began with woodblock prints or ukiyo-e (ukiyo means "the floating world" and depicted the hedonistic lifestyle of Japan's wealthy merchant class). On the crest of the tidal wave of imports flooding Europe, these prints transformed European art, influencing, among others, Monet, Degas, Tissot and Van Gogh. It is said that James Whistler discovered Japanese prints in a Chinese tearoom near London Bridge and that Claude Monet first came upon them used as wrapping paper in a spice shop in Holland.⁵

5. Metropolitan Museum's timeline of art history: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jpon/hd_jpon.htm Accessed May 7, 2015.

Japan had its own pavilion at the Paris International Exhibition of 1867, the first formal exhibition in Europe of Japanese art. After the exhibition several Japanese art dealers based themselves in Paris, and French collectors, writers, and art critics travelled to Japan in the 1870s and 1880s.

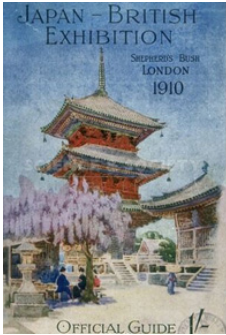


Image: Wikimedia.

But the largest exhibition in which Japan participated was in 1910 in London – attracting more than 8 million visitors (in 1911 greater London had a population of 7 million) and including more than 2000 artefacts, as well as acrobats, sword dancers, sumo wrestlers and two authentic Japanese gardens.⁶ The influence of Japanese art was soon evident in fashion, ceramics, glass, furniture, architecture, jewellery and textiles produced throughout Europe, with the impact on the fine arts especially potent.

For example, New Zealand-born writer Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923) visited the exhibition and “took to wearing a kimono at home, read the poems of Yone Noguchi and *The Book of Tea* (1906) by Kakuzo Okakura, and invested in Japanese clothes and soft furnishings”.⁷

Noguchi eventually became a contributor to *Rhythm*, the magazine Mansfield co-edited with John Middleton Murry in 1912–13, thanks to Mansfield’s influence, “and the influence of Japonisme would be a feature of both her fiction and her personal writing for the rest of her life”. In 1914 Middleton Murry published Noguchi’s *The Spirit of Japanese Poetry*, largely a collection of lectures he gave in Britain.

6. Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan%E2%80%93British_Exhibition. Accessed April 21, 2015.

7. “A Child of the Sun: Katherine Mansfield, Tea and Japonisme” by Gerri Kimber, a paper presented to *Shaping Modernism: Katherine Mansfield and her Contemporaries*, University of Cambridge, 2011.

Mansfield's family home in Wellington has yielded evidence of the far-flung taste for Japonisme – her father was well-to-do banker Harold Beauchamp (Mansfield was born Kathleen Beauchamp) with a recognised “place” in society. Finds have included a netsuke mouse in porcelain and ceramics, including a piece of a china mug with a design featuring cherry blossom and a bird, “a typical example of Japonisme”.⁸ The restored building (now a museum) features an interior décor “inspired by Japonisme and the Aesthetic Movement”.⁹ Mansfield, who had returned to New Zealand from London in 1906, left for good in 1908.

The literary arts were, however, one of the lesser strands of Japonisme and apparently didn't have much of a following outside literary circles.

HAIKU IN EUROPE: VIVA LA FRANCE!

Early, if stilted, translations of haiku and tanka from Japanese into French were available in 1871 and 1885, although were little known outside Japoniste circles.¹⁰ Instead, it was the work of Paul-Louis Couchoud, a medical doctor, that saw France in the early years of the 20th century at the forefront of producing haiku poets and understanding the form.

Couchoud almost single-handedly drove interest in haiku – and carefully spread the ‘virus’ throughout Europe. He visited Japan in 1903–4 and fell in love with the culture, beginning to write haiku

8. ‘Archaeology of the Katherine Mansfield Birthplace, Wellington, New Zealand: “It’s all memories now. . . .” ’ by Kevin L. Jones, published in *New Zealand Journal of Archaeology*, 1992, Vol. 14. Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://nzarchaeology.org/cms/NZJA/Vol%2028%202006/NZJA28.109-141Jones.pdf>.

9. *New Zealand* by Laura Harper, Tony Mudd, Paul Whitfield (Rough Guides, 2002).

10. ‘Haiku as a Western Genre’ by Jan Walsh Hokenson, a chapter in *Modernism Vol 1*, edited by Ástráður Eysteinnsson and Vivian Liska (John Bejamins Publishing, 2007).



A watercolor believed
to show Paul-Louis
Couchoud in Japan.

and translating Japanese poets, particularly Buson, into French.

In 1905 Couchoud and two friends published a limited-edition collection of 72 haiku, *Au Fil de l'Eau* (*Going with the Flow*), which they wrote while on a canal holiday. There are several variations of the story behind this book, both on the internet and in print, with different details of the trip, including the names of the other two authors, where the boating holiday took place (France or Japan), and even if it was a boating holiday. Commonsense leads me to believe it took place in France.

*Sur le bord du bateau
Je me hazarde à quatre pattes
Que me veut cette libellule?*
— Paul-Louis Couchoud

on the boat's deck
I venture on all fours
what does this dragonfly want?
— tr. Bertrand Agostini¹¹

Couchoud defined haiku as “a brief amazement”, like a musical note whose harmonies linger with the reader.¹² Couchoud’s *Au Fil de l’eau* is believed to be the first volume of haiku written in a European language,¹³ although the first haiku known to have been written by a European was considerably earlier, penned by Dutchman

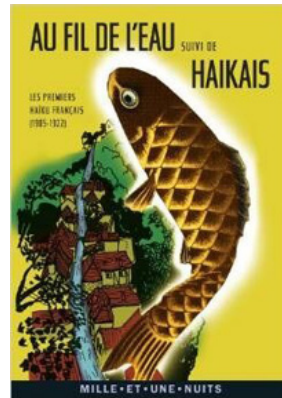
11. ‘The Development of French Haiku in the First Half of the 20th Century: Historical Perspectives’ by Bertrand Agostini, *Modern Haiku* 32.2 (2001). <http://www.modernhaiku.org/essays/frenchhaiku.html>

12. ‘Haiku as a Western Genre’ by Jan Walsh Hokenson.

13. *The Unexpected Import: A disquisition on the days of protohaiku* by Brett B Bodemer, California Polytechnic State University, 1999: http://digital-commons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1051&context=lib_fac.

Hendrik Doeff, who lived in Japan between 1799 and 1813 and who composed the two haiku that have come down to us through the years in Japanese.¹⁴

In 1906 Couchoud had an essay on haiku (which he called lyric epigrams) published in the journal *Les Lettres*. The editor of *Les Lettres*, Fernand Gregh, soon published *Quatrains à la Fonn des Haikai japonais*, while Albert de Neville said that Couchoud's essay gave him the impetus to write *163 Haikais et Tankas, Epigrammes à la japonaise*. In 1910 Michel Revon published an anthology of Japanese literature in a pocket-size edition. In this anthology, Revon, who had been a professor at the Law School of Tokyo and was adjunct professor of the History of Far Eastern Civilisations at the Sorbonne, used the word "haiku" for the first time in France.¹⁵



Au fil de l'eau.

Couchoud made two more trips to Japan and China, resulting in his 1920 volume *Sages et poètes d'Asie* (published as *Japanese Impressions*).¹⁶

The French influence – Couchoud's work in particular – on haiku in Europe cannot be overstated. The enthusiasm for haiku and the understanding of the form radiated out from Paris to Germany, Poland, Romania, Hungary and Britain. People such as Juan Jose Tablada (Mexico/Spain), Ezra Pound (US/Britain), Arno Holz and Rainer-Maria Rilke (both Germany) and Miloš Crnjanski (Yugoslavia) all came into contact with Couchoud or his work and helped spread haiku further.

14. *Haiku in The Netherlands and Flanders* by Max Verhart (undated): <http://kulturserver-nds.de/home/haiku-dhg/Netherlands.htm>. Accessed April 19, 2015.

15. Agostini.

16. *Wikipedia*: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul-Louis_Couchoud. Accessed August 11, 2015.

SCENE-SETTING: THE FIRST HAIKU IN ENGLISH

Who wrote the first haiku in English and when is something that in 2016 is impossible to pin down. Theories abound and arguments are made but – even given the debate about what comprises a haiku in English – at this remove the records are simply not there.

Jim Kacian speculates that three hokku found in the *Grammar of the Japanese Written Language* (1877) by Ireland-born British diplomat WG Aston and unattributed to an author were, in fact, written by Aston – and so would be the first haiku in English. “Whether the poems are originals or translations, we can be relatively certain they are the first of their kind to appear in English.”

Fuji Concealed in a Mist.
Into a sea of mist whither hath Mt Fuji sunk?¹⁷

Japanese poet Yone Noguchi (1875–1947) lived in the US and England from 1893 to 1914 and in 1902 published *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl*, the first novel in English by a Japanese, and the first to include an original haiku given both in Romanji Japanese and English, but unlikely to have been composed in English.

remain, oh, remain,
my grief of *sayonara*,
there in water sound!
— Yone Noguchi¹⁸

17. ‘Overview of Haiku in English’ by Jim Kacian, contained in *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*, editors Jim Kacian, Philip Rowland and Allan Burns (Norton, 2013). In turn, Kacian is quoting from *Research Note: W G Aston* by Charles Trumbull: <http://www.thehaikufoundation.org/omeka/files/original/5fddae8ffb891ab70591e6d8e28f15f9.pdf>. Accessed by Simpson April 18, 2015.

18. *The American Diary of a Japanese Girl* by Yone Noguchi, published 1902.

Noguchi left the US for England in November 1902, and composed what were probably the first haiku in English to be written in Britain. In *My London Experience*, published in 1911, he quotes his own diary entry from November 4, 1903, and offers one of his own 'hokku'.¹⁹

"What a parade of frock coats! . . . How many hundred thousand people in that immortal coat pass by Charing Cross every day? It is here that I wrote one seventeen-syllable hokku poem, which appears, when translated, as follows:"

Tell me the street to Heaven.
This? Or that? Oh, which?
What webs of streets!

So this haiku was apparently was composed in Japanese and translated by the author. However, in a 1912 article, reprinted the next year in *Rhythm*, Noguchi included the following hokku and a description of its composition.

My love's lengthened hair
Swings o'er me from Heaven's gate:
Lo, evening's shadow!

"It was in London, to say more particularly, Hyde Park, that I wrote the above hokku in English, where I walked slowly, my mind being filled with the thought of the long hair of Rossetti's woman as I perhaps had visited Tate's Gallery that afternoon; pray, believe me when I say the dusk that descended from the sky swung like that lengthened hair. I exclaimed then: What use to try the impossibility in translation, when I have a moment to feel a hokku feeling and write about it in English? Although I had only a few such moments in the past, my decision not to translate hokku into English is unchanged. Let me wait patiently for a moment to come when I become a hokku poet in my beloved English."²⁰

19. Bodemer.

20. 'What is a Hokku Poem?' published in *Rhythm* (1912) and contained in *Through the Torii* by Yone Noguchi (E. Mathews, London 1914).

In 1913 Noguchi gave a lecture at Magdalen College in Oxford, ‘The Japanese Hokku Poetry’, which became a key chapter in his March 1914 book *The Spirit of Japanese Poetry*. He left Britain in April 1914 returning to the United States via Paris, Berlin and Moscow (war broke out in August).²¹ In New York Noguchi made a serious effort to reform American poetry through the use of hokku and in an article in *The Reader* magazine described hokku as like a slightly-open door, inviting one to come in, in contrast to an English poem which is like a mansion with the windows wide open, so that one could see what was inside without being tempted to go in.²²



Yone Noguchi. Wikimedia.

In ‘The Unexpected Import’, his thesis on the origins of haiku in English, Brett D Bodemer suggests that Noguchi’s most important contribution to English-language haiku may have been the direct influence his haiku criticism had on American poet Ezra Pound (1885-1972), who arrived in London in 1908 from France.

“It may or may not be deemed mere coincidence that the poem often cited as the first published English-language haiku, ‘In a Station of The Metro’, by Ezra Pound, appeared only three months [after Noguchi’s article in *Rhythm*] ... but to my knowledge no one has drawn attention to a rare and identical error of fact, found both in Noguchi’s article and in one written shortly afterward by Pound. Though in earlier and later works Noguchi says the hokku consists of seventeen syllables, in ‘What is a Hokku Poem?’ he refers to it as being made of sixteen syllables. And so does Ezra Pound in ‘How I Began’, an article that appeared in June of 1913.

21. Introduction to *Selected English Writings of Yone Noguchi*, Vol 2, edited by Yoshinobu Hakutani (Associated University Presse, 1992).

22. ‘The Origins of English Haiku’ by Prof. Edward Marx, a talk given to The Asiatic Society of Japan in Tokyo on June 18, 2007: <http://www.asjapan.org/web.php/lectures/2007/06>. Accessed April 19, 2015.

“It is a strange error for Noguchi, but less so for Pound, whose knowledge of haiku could not be first hand; in misstating this fact it seems as though Pound has unwittingly revealed one of his sources.”

In September 1914 Pound offers another genesis of his ‘Metro’ poem, Bodemer continues, this time referring to it as a “hokku-like sentence”. Both the poem and Pound’s description make it clear that he recognises the principle of association as earlier explained by Noguchi.



Ezra Pound. *Wikimedia*.

“Pound writes: The ‘one-image’ poem is a form of superposition, that is to say, it is one idea set on top of another. . . . I wrote a thirty-line poem, and destroyed it because it was what we call work of ‘second intensity’. Six months later I made a poem half that length; a year later I made [a] . . . hokku-like sentence.”

Pound had written his “In a Station at the Metro” poem by 1911²³ with publication in 1913 in *Poetry* magazine. It is often considered to be the first haiku written in English, although one might consider Noguchi to have a better claim, whatever the quality of either piece.

In a Station of the Metro

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough
— Ezra Pound

Earl Miner offers an explanation for the tendency on the part of many Imagists – a movement in which Pound was a leading light – to be “over-visual” in their poetry: “Europe was excited about Japanese prints, lacquer ware, and pottery long before it knew anything about the poetry. Almost always the poet came to know the prints before

23. *The Idea of a Colony: Cross-culturalism in Modern Poetry* by Edward Marx (University of Toronto Press, 2004).

the poetry, and this priority meant that his ideas about the nature of Japanese poetry were shaped, probably unconsciously, by his previous impressions of the wood block print.”²⁴

Pound was also being introduced to the art of the Far East through the 1909 lectures of poet Laurence Binyon and to haiku through Imagist F S Flint (1885 – 1960), the latter inspired by the writing of Couchoud.

“Flint later recalled how the proto-Imagist group [in London] . . . rebelled against the poetry of the day; ‘they proposed at various times to replace it by pure vers libre; by the Japanese tanka and haikai; we all wrote dozens of the latter as an amusement’.”²⁵

Flint, while not publishing any of his own poems, was writing about haiku, and in a 1908 review of recent verse for *The New Age* magazine lamented the quality of translation into English – which may have been a reason for the English-speaking world lagging behind France in the embrace of haiku – but concludes: “To the poet who can catch and render, like these Japanese, the brief fragments of the soul’s music, the future lies open.”²⁶

In a 2004 essay John Gilliver²⁷ posits that the Imagists, led by Pound, were searching for a style altogether harder. “Clarity, precision, brevity were what they emphasised, and an astringent directness that could face the urban. They seized upon vers libre, haiku and tanka as brusque, unconventional forms, with metaphor – the concentrating, focusing lens of a concrete image – as the primary vehicle of expression. Coming from a faster-paced, ‘shove-or-be-shoved’ America, as most of the Imagists did, they turned away from a soft England to the

24. ‘Haiku in English’ by Barbara Louise Ungar, *Simply Haiku* 5.3, 2007. <http://simplyhaiku.com/SHv5n3/features/Ungar.html>

25. *The Idea of a Colony*, Marx.

26. *The Road from Paris: French Influence on English Poetry, 1900–1920* by Cyrena N. Pondrom (Cambridge University Press, 1974).

27. “Tanka, Imagism and War” by John Gilliver, reprinted in *Simply Haiku* 5.2, 2007: <http://simplyhaiku.com/SHv5n2/reprints/Gilliver.html>. Accessed May 1, 2015.

intellectually harder-edged French, and to what they saw as a clearer-eyed Japan. They wanted an intellectual hardness that could engage the modern, an emotional hardness that could look upon the ugly, and a sophisticated, stylistic hardness that could capture both a brilliant visual reality and an inner reality or idea.”

Another with a claim to having composed the first haiku in English is the larger-than-life half-German half-Japanese (Carl) Sadakichi Hartmann (1867–1944).

Hartmann was born on the island of Dejima where Doeff (1764–1837) had lived, although this was less of a coincidence than it appears as for 200 years the artificial island in Nagasaki harbour was the only place Europeans were allowed to reside in Japan. Hartmann’s Japanese mother died shortly after his birth, and his father arranged for Carl to be raised in Germany. But the boy ran away from a naval training academy and in 1882 was sent to distant relatives in Philadelphia where he promptly befriended Walt Whitman.²⁸



Sadakichi Hartmann.
Wikimedia.

Hartmann made four long visits to Europe where he was taken up by the bohemian set, sending journalism and art criticism back to America. He is mentioned in Pound’s writing several times.

Unable to speak Japanese, Hartmann nevertheless had an interest in the art of his birthplace. *Japanese Art* (which included literature) is a nearly 300-page volume published in 1903 and he also wrote articles about Japanese literature. The first and most lengthy, ‘The Japanese Conception of Poetry’, appeared in *The Reader* in 1904.²⁹ Part of the article delineates the essential as well as the formal differences between haikai and tanka. Amazed at how much confidence the Japanese poet places in the reader, Hartmann writes:

28. Bodemer.

29. Ibid.

“He simply depicts a crow sitting on a withered branch, and leaves it to the reader to complete the poetic thought. If he wants to dwell upon the fugitiveness of all earthly things he simply says, “a joint of bamboo is floating down the river”; if he wants to compare the sorrows of mankind with fading autumn leaves that cover the ground, he exclaims, “There are far more of you than ever I saw growing on the trees!” . . . The symbolism of Japanese poetry is unique. It has nothing in common with our Western emblematic signs and forms. It is rather a spiritual idea, a subtile [*sic*] speculation, a unison of the external beauties of nature and the subtleties of the human soul, which has its origin in tradition and a continual association with flowers, with animals, trees, mountains and the ever-changing elements.”

Hartmann included several tanka in his 1904 book of poetry, *Drifting Flowers of the Sea*, and in 1915 published his *Tanka and Haikai*. Hartmann reworked and reissued these images for much of his life.

White petals afloat
 On a winding woodland stream —
 What else is life's dream!
 — Sadakichi Hartmann³⁰

This poem appears with the footnote: “The Haikai is a Tanka minus the concluding fourteen syllables. It was favored in the sixteenth century. Frequently it is purely poetical and the association of thought produced too vague to be conveyed in English with such exaggerated brevity.”

Hartmann's first collection, *Poems*, appeared in 1889 but there is no knowing if it contained haiku. *Japanese Rhythms, Tanka, Haikai and Other Forms Translated, Adapted or Imitated* was published in 1926.³¹

30. *Tanka and Haikai, Japanese Rhythms* by Sadakichi Hartmann (author's own edition, San Francisco, 1916).

31. *Asian-American Poets: A Bio-bibliographical Critical Sourcebook* by Guiyou Huang and Emmanuel Sampath Nelson (Greenwood Publishing, 2002).

Jim Kacian, in a 2005 essay,³² describes Hartmann's haiku as "truly poetic renderings".

"I call them renderings rather than original poems, despite the fact that Hartmann published them as original, because I think it is obvious these poems were cribbed from other sources. Surely the butterfly poem is Moritake's, and the spring bells belong to Bashō. I've been unable to find the original to the third of these [quoted below], though I know I've read it before . . . One other interesting point is that this third poem is more senryū than haiku, and might possibly be the first such poem to appear in English."

At new morn we met
Two weeks I've waited in vain.
Tonight! Don't forget.
—Sadakichi Hartmann³³

HAIKU AND THE GREAT WAR

Lining up on one side in World War 1 as the "Allies" were countries including Russia (taking in Finland and part of Poland), France (and its colonies), Japan, and the United Kingdom, whose colonies and dominions included Canada, Newfoundland (at the time not part of the dominion of Canada), Australia, New Zealand, India, Kenya and South Africa. Italy (and its colonies) entered the war in 1915, Portugal (and its colonies, although fighting was taking place in Africa in 1915) and Romania in 1916, and the United States, Greece, China and Brazil in 1917. Japan secured sea lanes in the Pacific and quickly occupied Germany's lease territories in east Asia and colonies in the Pacific, while its naval vessels were also stationed in Cape Town and Malta.

On the other side was the 'Central Powers' – the German empire (including part of the Jutland Peninsula that is today Denmark and part of Poland) and its colonies, Austria-Hungary (including what

32. 'When Haiku was Poetry' by Jim Kacian (*bigsky*, Red Moon Press, 2006).
33. *Tanka and Haikai, Japanese Rhythms* by Sadakichi Hartmann.

later became Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia) and the Ottoman Empire, with Bulgaria entering the war in 1915. In 1913 the Ottoman Empire comprised what is today Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, south to Saudi Arabia and Yemen, plus Syria, Iraq and Kuwait. By the start of World War 1 it had lost its eastern European lands, including Bulgaria which had been occupied for almost 500 years.

You will be home before the leaves have fallen from the trees.

— Kaiser Wilhelm II, watching German troops march off to war in August, 1914.

In February 1915, Katherine Mansfield made a trip to the front in northeast France, apparently posing as a sick aunt to access the restricted zone, spending four nights with her lover, the French writer Francis Carco. Her story, *An Indiscreet Journey*, written in his Paris apartment in May 1915, is an account of this episode and one of the earliest fictional accounts of the Great War written in English, by a woman, with first-hand experience of the scenes she is describing.³⁴

And now we were passing big wooden sheds like rigged-up dancing halls or seaside pavilions, each flying a flag. In and out of them walked the Red Cross men; the wounded sat against the wall sunning themselves. At all the bridges, the crossings, the stations, a petit soldat, all boots and bayonet. Forlorn and desolate he looked, like a little comic picture waiting for the joke to be written underneath. Is there really such a thing as war? Are all these laughing voices really going to the war?

— Katherine Mansfield, from “An Indiscreet Journey”³⁵

34. ‘Notes from the Front: Katherine Mansfield’s literary response to the Great War’ by Dr Gerri Kimber, a chapter in *The Great Adventure Ends: New Zealand and France on the Western Front* (John Douglas Publishing, NZ) 2013.

35. ‘An Indiscreet Journey’ by Katherine Mansfield, published in *Katherine Mansfield, the Complete Stories* (Golden Press, NZ, 1974).



Katherine Mansfield, with a parasol, at the door on to the terrace at the Villa Isola Bella, Menton, France. Photograph taken by Ida Baker in 1920. Collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library.

Mansfield's much-loved younger (and only) brother Leslie Heron Beauchamp (Chummie) joined the South Lancashire Regiment and was a 21-year-old Second Lieutenant when he was killed by a malfunctioning hand grenade during training on October 6, 1915. He is buried in the Messines war cemetery in Belgium. Chummie had just spent two weeks with Mansfield and Middleton Murry in London while on an army course, ironically, on the use of hand grenades, and had met his sister as soon as he had arrived in London in February 1915 – she borrowed money from him to make her trip to Carco in France.

Chummie's death had a significant impact on Mansfield's writing, unleashing memories of New Zealand and their shared childhood, which she turned into some of her best work,³⁶ including *Prelude*, the time before his birth in February 1894, and its sequel, *At the Bay*.

36. NZ *Herald* report of the anniversary of Leslie Heron Beauchamp's death, September 26, 2015. Read more at: A call for papers for CFP: Katherine Mansfield, Leslie Beauchamp & World War One, an international symposium in Messines, Belgium, September 26-27, 2015: <http://bams.ac.uk/2015/03/01/cfp-katherine-mansfield-leslie-beauchamp-world-war-one/>. Accessed May 7, 2015.

French poet Julien Vocance (1878–1954), born Joseph Seguin, had been introduced to haiku by Couchoud. When war was declared Vocance enlisted in the French army and, while serving in the trenches, wrote *Cent visions de guerre* (*One Hundred Visions of War*),³⁷ the title a sardonic play on *One Hundred Views of Edo*, Hiroshige's famous series of woodblock prints, or *One Hundred Views of Mt Fuji* by the artist Hokusai, or both.

*Des croix de bois blanc
Surgissent du sol,
Chaque jour, ça et là.*
— Julien Vocance³⁸

white wooden crosses
bursting from the soil,
each day, here and there³⁹

Cent Visions de Guerre, published in May 1916, immediately brought poetic Japonisme into mainstream French traditions, Jan Hokenson writes.⁴⁰ “Vocance was terrorised by the flames and mud of the trenches, the relentless shelling, the explosions of bodies and of the earth itself, the blood and rotting bandages, the boredom, and the grief. Opting not for the epic frescoes of the novel . . . to convey the enormity of war, Vocance returned to the haiku form for another ‘vision’ of war.”

Cent Visions established a new audience for this “poetic ‘presque rien’ (next to nothing)”, Hokenson says, which succeeded, where other genres were often failing, to evoke the war’s feelings, sights and sounds. “For Vocance . . . haiku was not a conventional genre laden with moribund traditions, but an outlaw form . . . It interprets nothing.”

37. Terebess Asia Online website: <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/jvocance.html>. Accessed April 18, 2015.

38. Ibid.

39. Translations of French haiku in this section by the author unless stated.

40. *Japan, France, and East-West Aesthetics: French Literature, 1867–2000* by Jan Hokenson (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004).

In 1917 Vocance published another ninety war haiku in *La Grande Revue*.⁴¹

*Dans un trou du sol, la nuit,
En face d'une armée immense,
deux hommes*

—Julien Vocance⁴²

in a hole in the ground, at night,
facing an immense army
two men

*Les cadavres entre les tranchées,
Depuis trois mois noircissant,
Ont attrapé la pelade*

—Julien Vocance⁴³

between the trenches
the bodies blackening for three months
have contracted alopecia

Couchoud, meanwhile, believed his friend wrote in the trenches because a haiku is a “naked sensation”. Haiku serves the new, Couchoud said, so it perfectly served the terrible experience of this new, mechanised war.⁴⁴

*Les rafales de nos canons
D'une ville à l'horizon
Allument la vision brève*

—Julien Vocance⁴⁵

41. Agostini.

42. Terebess Asia Online website.

43. Haiku from <http://varvillages.perso.sfr.fr/haiku/page-htm/4-6%20Julien%20Vocance%20et%20les%20haiku%20de%20guerre.htm>. Accessed April 18, 2015.

44. ‘Haiku as a Western Genre’, Hokenson.

45. Terebess Asia Online website.

bursts from our guns
 the town on the horizon
 a brief vision of light



Cheshire regiment, The Somme, July 1916. Image: *Wikimedia*.

Many of his *Cent Visions* haiku were reprinted, particularly in 1920 – the year the editors of *Nouvelle Revue Française* decreed “the year of haiku” in their special ‘japoniste’ issue of September 1.⁴⁶

*Dans les vertebres
 Du cheval mal enfoui
 Mon pied fait: floch*
 —Julien Vocance, 1916⁴⁷

46. ‘Haiku as a Western Genre’, Hokenson.

47. *Ibid*.

among the vertebrae
 of the badly buried horse
 my foot goes: floss
 — tr Bertrand Agostini

*Je l'ai reçu dans la fesse
 Toi dans l'oeil
 Tu es un héros, moi guère*
 — Julien Vocance⁴⁸

I've taken a hit in the bum
 you in the eye—
 you're a hero, me not so much

Vocance lost his right eye during the war and suffered from blinding migraines for the rest of his life.⁴⁹ However, fellow French writer Georges Sabiron (1882–1918), who originally trained as a lawyer, lost his life, dying in the trenches of northern France in May 1918, just 2 months after having his haiku published in *La Vie*.⁵⁰

*L'obus en éclats
 Fait jaillir du bouquet d'arbres
 Un cercle d'oiseaux.*
 — Georges Sabiron

shrapnel
 brings from the grove of trees
 a circle of birds

The Italian poet Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888–1970) included haiku about his war experiences in the collection, *The Buried Seaport/The War*. He had been in Paris before the war and “undoubtedly” knew

48. Temps Libres website: <http://www.tempslibres.org/tl/fr/action/vocance.html>. Accessed July 13, 2015.

49. Ibid.

50. Terebess Asia Online: <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/nrf.html>. Accessed April 24, 2015.

Couchoud's book, Hokenson says, adding that Ungaretti began keeping a diary in haiku and eventually wrote 'haiku-like' forms of his own invention.

Although his parents were Tuscan, Ungaretti was born in Alexandria (Egypt) with the large Italian community there tending to be bilingual in French. When the 24-year-old poet went to study in Europe in 1912, he went to Paris, and had hardly lived in Italy when he joined the army.⁵¹



Giuseppe Ungaretti in Italian infantry uniform during World War I.

Image: *Wikimedia*.

Ungaretti was a self-professed anarchist who saw the war as Germany's fault. He identified with the art and liberty of France, despite its hostility to anarchists, and when he went to Italy, was swept up by a rising nationalistic fervour. Ungaretti saw the war as a vehicle for bringing liberty and victory to the ordinary people. His regiment was shipped to the

Italian-Austrian front. As he said later:⁵²

"It was one of the most stupid wars that one can imagine, aside from the fact that war is always stupid: but that one was particularly stupid. The people that commanded that war . . . very well, we'll let that go . . . that's another story. Well, stuck there with death, among those deaths, there wasn't time: I needed to speak in decisive words, absolute words, and there was this necessity of expressing myself with very few words, of honing them, of not saying what was not necessary to say, that is, in language bare, nude, extremely expressive . . . I had before me a landscape of desolation, where there wasn't anything; it was a little like the desert: there was mud, then there was the rubble . . . The mud, the mud . . . one of the worst things one can imagine: a mud smooth,

51. Clive Wilmer review of a translated edition of *Collected Poems* by *Giuseppe Ungaretti*. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2003/may/31/featuresreviews.guardianreview6>.

52. *Armistice Day: On the Blindness of War*, Washblog website: <http://www.washblog.com/story/2006/11/11/16720/096>.

TWO

red – one fell down in that mud and remained stuck: I was completely, totally dressed in mud . . .”

In mid-December 1916, after a year in the trenches, Ungaretti spent a leave in Naples before going back to the front on January 17. A month later he wrote:

*Lontano lontano
come un cieco
m'hanno portato per mano*
— Giuseppe Ungaretti⁵³

far, far away
like a blind man
by the hand they led me⁵⁴

English reviewer Clive Wilmer says of this poem of Ungaretti's:⁵⁵

*M'illumino
d'immenso*

“To Italians, it's perhaps the most famous poem of modern times: a tiny piece just seven syllables long, four shorter than a single line of Dante. The title is ‘Mattino’ (‘Morning’), and you don't need to know Italian to catch the beauty of its sound.”

A rough translation, Wilmer says, would be: “I flood myself with the light of the immense”, though the vagueness of that is alien to the poem's terse musicality. The open vowels and the repeated *ms* and *ns* create a mood of wonder, evoking the light of a new day starting to flood the sky.

53. Terebess Asia Online website: <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/ungaretti.html>. Accessed April 22, 2015.

54. Translation from Washblog.

55. Wilmer review.

“But the most surprising thing about ‘Mattino’ is the circumstance of its writing. Like most of Ungaretti’s first collection, it was written in the trenches during World War 1 [in 1917]. In its extreme brevity and its depth of affirmation, it epitomises all his war poetry. It is no accident, and it is not merely ironical, that the book is called *L’Allegria* (Joy).”

Umberto Saba (1883–1957) was born in Trieste, then the fourth-largest city in the Austria-Hungary empire. Destitute, in 1914 he and his wife and young family moved to Milan, where Saba worked first as a secretary, then as a nightclub manager. In early 1915 he began writing for Benito Mussolini’s *Il popolo d’Italia* newspaper, but in June was drafted into the Italian army. He was hospitalised with depression, an illness that dogged him all his life, and saw no active service.

Milano 1917

*Per ogni via un soldato – un fante – zoppo
va poggiato pian piano ul suo bastone,
che nella mano libera ha un fagatto*
— Umberto Saba

Milan 1917

In every street a solider – infantry – limps
slowly, leaning on his stick,
in his free hand carrying a bundle.
— tr George Hochfield & Leonard Nathan⁵⁶

Rene Maublanc (1891–1960), a French Marxist historian and teacher, wrote many haiku, his major work being *Cent Haikais* (100 *Haiku*, published in 1924). Although I can find no record of his having served in World War 1, a number of his haiku are about the war.

56. *Songbook: The Selected Poems of Umberto Saba* (Yale University Press, 2008).

Surgit de l'herbe verte,
 Des coquelicots à la main,
 Le major ventru
 — Rene Maublanc⁵⁷

rising from the green grass
 poppies in his hand,
 the portly major
 — tr Bertrand Agostini

Nuit d'alerte.
 le projecteur à l'horizon
 Ouvre et ferme son éventail.
 — Rene Maublanc⁵⁸

sirens in the night
 the spotlight on the horizon
 opens and closes her fan

Maublanc, a friend of Couchoud, lived in Reims where he started a regional review of literature and art, *Le Pampre*, which Agostini says was instrumental in propagating haiku among French speakers.

By 1911 the English poet, and later also novelist and biographer, Richard Aldington (1892–1962) was attending Imagist gatherings in London with Pound and others, meetings where Japanese poetry was much discussed and tanka and haiku written. Aldington used *ukiyo-e* in the British Museum as inspiration, copied and kept translations of Japanese poems and songs and, according to Earl Miner, carried to the battlefields of France a notebook for recording his own 'hokku'. Although Aldington later wrote no poetry at all, he seemed to retain an interest in Japanese poetry all his life.⁵⁹

57. Terebess Asia Online: <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/maublanc.html>. Accessed April 21, 2015.

58. Ibid.

59. *Richard Aldington and Japan: A Critical Bibliography* by David Ewick (1996).

Aldington enlisted in the British Army in 1916 and was wounded on the Western Front. By the end of the war he had a captain's commission, had been gassed and was suffering from severe shell-shock.

Living Sepulchres

One frosty night when the guns were still
 I leaned against the trench
 Making for myself hokku
 Of the moon and flowers and of snow
 But the ghostly scurrying of huge rats
 Swollen with feeding upon men's flesh
 Filled me with shrinking dread.
 — Richard Aldington⁶⁰

In his foreword to *Love and War* (1919), addressed to fellow Imagist



Richard Aldington.
 Image from *Poets of the Great War*

poet F S Flint, Aldington writes: “[The poems] represent to some degree the often inarticulate feelings of the ordinary civilised man thrust suddenly into these extraordinary circumstances – feelings of bewilderment, bitterness, dumb revolt and rather piteous weakness. Poor human flesh is so easily rent by the shattering of explosive and the jagged shear of metal. Those of us who have seen it will never be quite happy again.”⁶¹

60. *Emerging from Absence: An Archive of Japan in English-language Verse*: <http://themargins.net/anth/1910-1919/aldingtonsepulchres.html>. Accessed April 18, 2015. The poem appeared in the collection *Images of War* published in 1919.

61. *Richard Aldington: Poet, Soldier and Lover 1911–1929* by Vivien Whelpton (Lutterworth Press, 2014).

Three soldiers huddled on a bench
Over a red-box brazier,
And a fourth who stands apart
Watching the cold rainy dawn.

—Richard Aldington, from the longer poem, *Picket*

Insouciance

In and out of the dreary trenches
Trudging cheerily under the stars
I make for myself little poems
Delicate as a flock of doves.

They fly away like white-winged doves.

—Richard Aldington

As a footnote to this section are the wartime experiences of two other figures who later came into the orbit of haiku, one in a peripheral way and the other a major scholar.

American poet, playwright, novelist and painter ee cummings (Edward Estlin Cummings, 1894–1962), briefly dabbled in haiku. A pacifist, Cummings volunteered as an ambulance driver in France in 1917 but was arrested on suspicion of treason for comments he'd made in letters home and was interned in France for almost four months. The charges were dropped (after some political pressure from his father) and he returned to the US on January 1, 1918 whereupon he was drafted into the US Army, serving at home. His account of his time in the internment camp, *The Enormous Room*, was published in 1922 to widespread praise.

Reginald Horace Blyth (1898–1964), later a renowned translator of haiku and author on the subject, was in 1916 imprisoned as a conscientious objector at Wormwood Scrubs in London before working on a Home Office scheme in the former and future Dartmoor Prison in southeast England. He moved to Korea (then under Japanese rule) in 1925 and to Japan in 1936, living there for the rest of his life.



Masaoka Shiki.
Wikimedia.

HAIKU IN JAPAN 1902–1914

In the teen years of the 20th century in Japan haiku was in upheaval after the death of Masaoka Shiki in 1902, the man who had done so much to reform and revitalise haiku, but who had also written that he thought “haiku has already played itself out”, adding an emphasis to the words.

“Even assuming that the end is yet to come,” Shiki wrote, “we can confidently expect it to arrive sometime during the Meiji period”. [1868–1912] He believed the problem stemmed from a lack of mathematical opportunity, given that only 17 sound units could be employed.⁶²

Kawahigashi Hekigodo (1873–1937) succeeded Shiki as haiku editor for *Nippon* newspaper and was, briefly, the most important figure in Japanese haiku. One of Shiki’s innovations had been to abandon all the rules for haiku – except for 5-7-5 and the season word. Hekigodo then decided to drop the count of 17 *onji* (sound units) in favour of “free verse” haiku. He retained the *kigo* because he felt it was an essential connection to the natural world.

Hekigodo’s students, led by Ogiwara Seisensui (who actually had been playing with free verse before Hekigodo), broke with him and began more radical experiments, including abandoning *kigo*. Takahama Kyoshi, who had left haiku to write novels, came back and advocated a return to traditional haiku in the once-radical *Hototogisu*. Caught between these two groups, Hekigodo became an increasingly isolated figure.⁶³

will the town
throw a festival
for those brought back as bones?
— Santoka Taneda, tr John Stevens⁶⁴

62. *Masaoka Shiki: His Life and Works* by Janine Beichman (Cheng & Tsui, 2002).

63. everything website: http://everything2.com/index.pl?node_id=978050.

64. *Mountain Tasting* by John Stevens.

The Russia-Japan War (1904–05) is a landmark in military history, and was seen so at the time. It was a war of unprecedented scale, producing more casualties, costing more money and keeping more soldiers fighting than any previous “modern” war. Large numbers of journalists, observers and experts from Russia, Japan and non-belligerent countries accompanied the military throughout the war.⁶⁵

After the war the term ‘commoner literature’ was again applied to haiku, although in a positive sense, according to Robert Tuck.⁶⁶ “Scholar Haga Yaichi’s preface to Iwaki Juntarō’s *Meiji bungakushi* (*A History of Meiji Literature*, published in 1906) states that ‘commoner literature’ (which included *haikai*) had played an instrumental role in spreading the ‘Bushidō’ and ‘patriotism’ that had contributed to Japan’s victory.

“However, for Shiki, ‘commoner literature’ was a contradiction in terms, and popularity and ease of access were synonymous with vulgarity. This would remain a keynote for the Nippon group, even after his death. Writing in early December 1902, Nippon group member Ueno Sansen (Ryōzaburō, 1866–1907) stressed . . . that haiku was not an easy form of poetry that anyone could do. Much like *kanshi* and *tanka*, Ueno argued, one needed the right kind of background and training; haiku may have been a ‘commoner literature’ under the old *haikai* masters, but under the new school it definitely was not.”

Undoubtedly, the most famous Japanese haiku on the theme of war – in English, at any rate – is:

natsukusa ya
tsuwamonodomo go
yume no ato

65. *The Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective, 1904–05*, edited by David Wells and Sandra Wilson (Palgrave Macmillan, 1987).

66. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan, 1870–1900* by Robert James Tuck (Columbia University, 2012): academiccommons.columbia.edu/download/.../ac.../Tuck_Dissertation.pdf. Accessed May 7, 2015.

summer grasses —
 all that remains
 of soldiers' dreams

— Matsuo Bashō (1644–99), composed on July 29, 1689

Jeffrey Sean Huo offers a scene-setting commentary:⁶⁷

“The death of [the legendary military leader] Yoshitsune was as spectacular as his life. He calmly committed *seppuku* (samurai ritual suicide) while his oldest friend, the giant warrior-monk Benkei (Japan’s ‘Little John’) single-handedly held the door against an overwhelming number of enemy troops. The place where Benkei and Yoshitsune made their final stand was Hiraizumi, and it was here that Bashō composed a number of haiku, including the one above.

“Bashō is believed to have chosen the Japanese word ‘natsukusa’, in reference to the muggy, slimy, rank muck that summer’s oppressive humidity and heat turn the grasses of spring into, an appropriate vision, perhaps, of the chaos and treachery of war. By the time Bashō visited Hiraizumi centuries later, those dank overgrown weeds were all that remained of the fortress in which Yoshitsune made his final stand.

“As Bashō himself comments in the *Narrow Road to the Deep North*:

“The select band of loyal retainers who entrenched themselves here in this High Fort and fought so desperately – their glorious deeds lasted but a moment, and now this spot is overgrown with grass . . . We sat down upon our straw hats and wept, oblivious of the passing time.”

Tuck notes “in passing” that Shiki may have been the first person to translate Bashō into English. “Shiki’s own translation and commentary on the above verse was: ‘The summer grasses! A trace of the soldiers’ dreams. This was composed when he looked at the barren state of an ancient battle field’.”

67. Commentary by Jeffrey Sean Huo, *The Wondering Minstrels* blog: <http://wonderingminstrels.blogspot.co.nz/2003/05/untitled-matsuo-basho.html>. Accessed May 7, 2015.

Shiki himself had had a taste of war-time conditions, if not any actual fighting. After many requests to his editor, he was sent to China in March 1895 to cover the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) although he already had the tuberculosis that would eventually kill him. Arriving too late to witness any actual hostilities, Shiki nevertheless almost died from the rigors of military life and the unsanitary conditions in which he was forced to travel.⁶⁸

With more than 4,600 “German” soldiers interned in Japan after being captured in China during World War 1,⁶⁹ it is an intriguing thought that haiku could have been a “mass inoculation” into Germany and eastern Europe after the war – especially as it seems cultural exchange went the other way with locals being shown how to bake bread, make pastries and sausages, play soccer, brew beer, etc.⁷⁰ Most of the POWs remained in Japan for 5 years and it is reported that some 500 chose not to return to Europe, instead heading to China and Indonesia with some 150 staying in Japan.⁷¹ The prisoners consisted of not only soldiers from Germany and the Austro-Hungarian empire, but also Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Yugoslavians, some northern Italians and even Russians (Russia and Japan were part of the Allies).

THE ANZAC EXPERIENCE

On April 25, 1915 New Zealand and Australian soldiers landed at a small bay on the Gallipoli peninsula in southwestern Turkey to mount a campaign devised by Winston Churchill that began badly

68. Tuck.

69. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*: http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/prisoners_of_war_japan. Accessed April 20, 2015.

70. *The Free Library*: <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/German-POW+camp+reveals+little-known+history+of+Japan.-a059198009>. Accessed April 20, 2015.

71. *Rio Imamura* blog: <http://riosloggers-riodan.blogspot.co.nz/2010/12/world-war-i-pow-camp-in-japan.html>. Accessed April 20, 2015.

and continued worse.⁷² By the end of the year evacuation was ordered, ironically efficient and organised – and not one man lost.

The smell of death floated over the ridge above and settled down upon us, tangible, it seemed, and clammy as the membrane of a bat's wing.

— Capt. Compton Mackenzie, Scottish writer and officer, April 1915



Lone Pine cemetery and memorial, Gallipoli. Image: *Wikipedia*.

Gallipoli was a costly failure for the Allies . . . and a costly victory for the Turks. Among the dead were 2,779 New Zealanders (5,221 wounded), about a fifth of those who fought on the peninsula, and 8,709 Australians (19,441 wounded) – while the Ottoman Empire lost 86,692 men dead with 164,617 wounded.⁷³

waiting for dawn
the bugler's breath
 rising
— Ross Clark⁷⁴

72. *Wikipedia*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landing_at_Anzac_Cove. Accessed April 6, 2015.

73. *New Zealand History* website: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/interactive/gallipoli-casualties-country>. Accessed May 8, 2015.

74. *Haiku Dreaming* website: <http://users.mullum.com.au/jbird/dreaming/ozku.html>. Accessed April 14, 2015.

Anzac parade
 shoulder to shoulder
 headless shadows
 —André Surridge⁷⁵

But lest we forget there were other nationalities fighting at Gallipoli too and their blood has also fed that barren land – 21,255 dead from Britain and Ireland and 52,230 wounded; 10,000 dead from France, 17,000 wounded; 1358 dead from India, 3421 wounded; 49 dead from Newfoundland, 93 wounded.

You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

—Kemal Mustafa Atatürk, 1934, inscribed on a memorial at Gallipoli

In New Zealand there is a tendency to see the Anzac landing at Gallipoli – which on April 25, 2015 marked its centenary – as the most important battle for our soldiers in World War 1. But Gallipoli was blighted by poor command and ended in defeat, and isn't regarded as a major offensive by military historians.

There were plenty of other killing fields waiting for Anzac soldiers – Ypres, Messines and Passchendaele in Belgium, the Somme in France – among them, as well as action in Palestine and Syria. The battles in Europe from 1916-18 were some of the bloodiest in New Zealand's history. By the time the New Zealand Division was finally withdrawn from the Ypres front line in February 1918, there were more than 18,000 casualties – including some 5000 deaths – and three Victoria Crosses had been won for bravery.⁷⁶

75. *still heading out*, a trans-Tasman anthology (paperwasp, Australia, 2013).

76. NZ History website: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/passchendaele-the-battle-for-belgium>. Accessed April 6, 2015.

knitting poppies
for the fallen—
18,166

—Julie Adamson⁷⁷

Ypres—
the tree shadows
bone shaped

—Sandra Simpson⁷⁸

But all that my mind sees
Is a quaking bog in a mist – stark, snapped trees,
And the dark Somme flowing.

—Vance Palmer (1885-1959) from the longer poem,
The Farmer Remembers the Somme



Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, National War Memorial
Pukeahu, Wellington, New Zealand. Image: Andy Palmer,
Manatū Taonga (Ministry of Culture and Heritage website).

77. *Kokako* 22 (New Zealand, April 2015). The haiku refers to the project initiated by the National Army Museum, a patriotic ‘call to yarn’, to produce one hand-crafted poppy for each person lost by New Zealand in the Great War (18,166 poppies). In the end some 30,000 were sent.

78. *Kokako* 22. For Rifleman Private John Owen. He left New Zealand in June 1917, completed basic training in the UK and died of his wounds on December 9, 1917, aged 38. He is buried at Lijssenthoek military cemetery in Belgium. His medals were returned to my widowed great-grandmother, his “friend” and next-of-kin.

TWO

The New Zealand Division joined the Battle of the Somme in mid-September 1916 when 15,000 men went into action. Nearly 6,000 were wounded and 2,000 lost their lives. Over half the New Zealand Somme dead have no known grave. One was returned to New Zealand in 2004 and his remains now lie in the tomb of the Unknown Warrior outside New Zealand's National War Memorial in Wellington.⁷⁹

even the names
in the shade have faded —
memorial park
— Lorin Ford⁸⁰

war
memorial
no higher
than
a boy
— Sandra Simpson⁸¹

war memorial —
the silence in a hand
saluting
— Carole Harrison⁸²

The Great War inspired much poetry both from poets and from men who were simply touched by the shock and awe – and a century later we still know the lines.

79. *NZ History* website: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/the-battle-of-the-somme>. Accessed April 18, 2015.

80. *a wattle seedpod* by Lorin Ford (Post Pressed, Australia, 2008).

81. *breath* by Sandra Simpson (Piwakawaka Press, Tauranga, NZ, 2011).

82. *still heading out*.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
 Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
 At the going down of the sun and in the morning
 We will remember them.

—Laurence Binyon (1869–1943), from *For the Fallen*⁸³

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
 Between the crosses, row on row,
 That mark our place; and in the sky
 The larks, still bravely singing, fly
 Scarce heard amid the guns below.

—Major John McCrae (1872–1918), from *In Flanders Fields*⁸⁴

With haiku relatively unknown in the English-speaking world at the time, it has been left to modern haiku poets to write on the theme of World War 1 with, consequently, most of the poetry in New Zealand about memorial services, particularly Anzac Day (April 25). The country's national day of commemoration now encompasses all servicemen and women from the Boer War to Afghanistan and Iraq and so haiku about "Anzac Day" may be about any or all of these conflicts – but as our "old soldiers" fade away the sentiments and experiences remain largely the same through the generations.

half light —
 the whispers of soldiers
 on Anzac Day

—Anne Curran⁸⁵

83. Laurence Binyon composed his best-known poem while sitting on a cliff-top and looking out to sea from the north Cornish coastline. He said in 1939 that the four lines of the fourth stanza came to him first. He was too old to enlist but in 1916 worked for the Red Cross as a medical orderly. The poem was published in *The Times* newspaper on September 21, 1914. <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/poems/laurence-binyon-for-the-fallen.htm>.

84. With the chaplain called away, John McCrae, as brigade doctor, was asked in May 1915 to perform the burial service for a fellow Canadian and later that night began to compose his poem. <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/poems/john-mccrae-in-flanders-fields.htm>.

85. *Free XpresSion* (Australia, August 2014).

anzac morning
 from each umbrella rib
 a raindrop
 —Catherine Mair⁸⁶

sprigs of rosemary
 something about the tea urn
 makes me cry
 —Beverley George⁸⁷

As far as I am aware, Ernest J Berry is New Zealand's only haiku poet with personal experience of war, having served in Korea as a medic (1950–53). *162 Haiku: a Korean War sequence* features haibun and haiku by Ernie, with a contribution from American poet and fellow Korean War veteran Jerry Kilbride (Post Pressed, Australia, 2000). The book was awarded third place in the 2001 Haiku Society of America Merit Book Awards. Both these haiku are from that book.

liberated village
 the survivor holds out
 his severed hand
 —Ernest J Berry

winter air
 thick with bullets
 I keep whistling
 —Ernest J Berry

If we like to believe that our national identity was forged on the battlefields of World War 1, particularly Gallipoli, then I suppose that's as good a place as any. It's where, at the very least, this most docile of dominions began to question orders.

86. *Bravado* 3 (New Zealand, 2004).

87. From "Pearl Beach Village Hall" April 25, 2006, a haiku sequence (*Blithe Spirit* 16.2 (UK), 2006).

By now wounded men by the score were being brought back and laid along the track, all sorts of wounds. The stretcher bearers couldn't cope with the number and soon there were no stretchers. I got an immediate demand from [Australian] Colonel Braund for more reinforcements but sent him a firm refusal. He then said as I would not send him up more reinforcements he would have to retire to his first position. I told him he never ought to have left it.

—Lieutenant-Colonel William Malone (1859–1915), commander of the Wellington Battalion at Gallipoli⁸⁸

POSTSCRIPT: WHAT HAPPENED TO HAIKU IN ENGLISH?

In his essay ‘Tanka, Imagism and War’, John Gilliver⁸⁹ writes that tanka (and we can safely read haiku here as well) did not get into quite the right hands in England and the US before 1914 and so was not sufficiently assimilated for an English tradition to be produced.

“It might also be said that by 1918 the tanka’s moment in English poetry had passed. After the First World War poets were writing longer poems again, and their concern was to offer a discursive analysis of the social condition. The new requirement was the topical; a poet needed to be engaged with the politically and socially relevant . . . By 1919 Imagism was running out, and the war had killed Georgian poetry.”

As the world recovered from war, as millions of people died from “Spanish flu” (1918–19, anything from 20 million to 40 million), as the Depression took hold and, finally, as Japan became an enemy to the English-speaking world, the path of haiku in English began to stutter and then vanish, hidden like a Brigadoon until after World War 2.

But that is a story for another day.

88. An extract from the diary of William Malone on the *New Zealand History* website:<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/wgmalone>. Accessed May 8, 2015. Malone was killed by a British shell during the August assault on Chunuk Bair. Read more here.

89. Gilliver.



Christmas eve
my niece keeps orbiting
the tree

Pamela A. Babusci

“Christmas Eve”

Pamela A. Babusci

Jo Ha Kyū and Fu Bi Xing

Reading / Viewing Haiku

JUDY KENDALL

ABSTRACT: Theorists and critics such as John Berger, Sabine Gross and Michel Foucault have emphasized the very different experience that occurs when a text is approached through a viewing or a reading mode. The extent to which both modes are used alters the experience again. The characteristics and history of haiku encourages extensive use of both modes. Whether reading or viewing is emphasized depends on variables that include the writing system(s) used, the language, orientation and shape on the page, and the number of lines. In order to understand the varying effects of employment of these modes, the Japanese aesthetics of *jo ha kyū* will be applied to original and translated haiku by English poets and haiku written by the Japanese masters. An aesthetic formulation applied to various traditional arts such as Nō drama, the current interpretation of *jo ha kyū* can be roughly translated as “beginning, breaking or developing, and rushing to an end”; indicating that the activity begins slowly, speeds up, and then concludes very swiftly. Today, *jo ha kyū* tends to be considered as applicable only to the movements that occur in temporal-based theatre. However, it was originally applied to literature and is still very pertinent to the haiku form. In addition, the older Chinese principles of *fu bi xing* from which *jo ha kyū* originated illuminate further the process of reading and/or viewing haiku.

The characteristics and linguistic, orthographic and cultural contexts of haiku encourage unusually extensive use of both reading and viewing modes, each of which significantly alters the experience of the text. An understanding of the varying effects of employment of these modes, in both Japanese and English, is aided by drawing on recent scientific studies of eye movements when reading and viewing, and ancient Japanese and Chinese poetic aesthetics of movement.¹

Haiku are strongly visual, as Jim Kacian notes,

haiku is the most painterly of poetries, given as it is to images. Yet haiku are constructed, not of pictures, but of language. They perforce must utilize the artifices of language to communicate their images, their content.²

The visual characteristics of haiku are particularly evident in Japan in the way haiku are found in calligraphy, in *haiga*, on *tokonoma* scrolls, presented as objects to be seen as much as (or more than) texts to be read. Martin Lucas puts this well,

... the imaginative effect of this poetry is comparable to that of Chinese and Japanese landscape painting, using a few brushstrokes to sketch a foreground subject, placing it against a spacious and indeterminate background: pines, bamboo, fishing boats, waterfalls, looming out of a mist.³

Contributing to this emphasis on visuality are aspects of the haiku's form, scope and use of ideogrammatic as well as linear writing modes.

Both Kacian and Lucas recognise that haiku in English have inherited some of this bias towards the visual. In addition, they imply that the different ways in which the 'artifices of language' employed in haiku

1. Some of these ideas were discussed in person and email with Joan Xiaojuan Chen, School of Art, Central China Normal University, to whom much thanks.

2. Kacian, 'Looking and Seeing: How Haiga Works', 11.

3. Lucas, 'Haiku in Britain', 10.

reach beyond the bounds of what is normally considered language's terrain into the realm of pictures and even beyond that: unwritten, non-textual and even at times invisible elements contribute to the haiku's power. In other words, an additional and important influence on the non-textual effects in haiku is the focus on what is not written, expressed or seen in the written text.

As early twentieth century Japanese writer and poet Yone Noguchi put it, the haiku is 'a tiny star carrying the whole large sky at its back'.⁴ What is absent or not foregrounded, as in Noguchi's 'the whole large sky', is crucial to the haiku's effect, arguably even more crucial than the present or foregrounded 'tiny star'. In physical terms, the shape and location of the haiku on the page does not only outline the text of the haiku but also the spaces which surround that text. The scrupulously minimalist confines of the haiku alert the reader's attention to the space of the page, to what is not there, to the 'few things [left] unsaid'. This phrase of Shinkei's, articulated when writing to Sōgi of the aims of the *renga* poet,⁵ represent aesthetic values and practice that were 'to become a cornerstone of haiku aesthetics, valued not only by generations of Japanese haiku poets but also by pioneers of haiku in English'.⁶ Thus, what is absent in haiku becomes almost tangible and visible.

This is the Japanese aesthetic of *mu*. Donald Richie expresses it thus,

If one fills in a corner of the paper, as did the painters of the early Sung, the unfilled portion is filled as well – filled with space, which comments on the corner, gives its body, and creates its context. Similarly, as in the formal Japanese flower arrangements, not only the sprays themselves but the space between them is considered part of the finished work. This is the concept of *mu* – emptiness and silence are a part of the work, a positive ingredient. It is silence which gives meaning to the dialogue that went before; it is emptiness which gives meaning to the action that went before.

4. *English Writings*, II, 69.

5. Ramirez-Christensen, *Heart's Flower*, 140.

6. See footnote 3.

This meaning, however, is one which the spectator himself must supply.⁷

Noguchi wrote, 'The very best poems are left unwritten or sung in silence. It is my opinion that the real test for poets is how far they resist their impulse to utterance'.⁸ These sentiments have been echoed by English writers on aesthetics, with John Ruskin noting that 'no good work whatever can be perfect, and *the demand for perfection is always a sign of a misunderstanding of the ends of art*'.⁹

In haiku, *mu* is strongly articulated through the visual continuum with which the viewer|reader engages. It is at work in the haiku's combination of visual and textual, of reading and viewing modes, and in the gaps and shifts between these two modes of perception. Carefully modulated by specific uses of space, text and visual effects, readers are encouraged to take in visual as well as textual qualities, moving their attention from visual to textual and then back again. The ways in which these two forms of perception shift, link and intertwine are key to the haiku. They encourage and allow for momentary awareness of what is not there, not stated, in the background, significantly influencing a reader's attitudes and responses to the haiku.

Understanding these modes in more detail offers illumination of the workings and power the haiku carries. This can be done by a study of shifts in balance between visual and textual modes of perception, that is, moments of *mu*, created by variations in lineation (one-liner, two-, three- or four-liner haiku), orientation (vertical, horizontal, diagonal, in columns, in stripes, etc.), shape (a square block of text, a jumping frog, a skein of geese, a never-ending circle, a spiral, etc.), orthography (the Latin (English) alphabet, *kanji*, *hiragana*, *katakana* etc.), and related issues of directional and non-directional reading.

7. Richie, *Ozu*, 173-4.

8. *Selected English Writings* II, 58.

9. *The Stones of Venice*, 202.

These variations are connected to the language in which the haiku is written. The choice of orthography – whether linear Latin alphabet or more visually complex Japanese writing systems – affects every visual aspect: lineation, directional reading, orientation, shape and layout. Writers are keenly aware of this, as indicated by Cor van den Heuvel's observation, '[t]he most common argument for [English] one-liners is that the Japanese write haiku in one vertical line or column and therefore we should write in one line also, but of course horizontally in the Western style.'¹⁰ A consideration of reading and viewing modes therefore needs to begin with a comparison of their application in relation to the textually-biased Latin alphabet and the more visually-biased Japanese writing systems.

English haiku are written in the Latin alphabet. This alphabet is designed to be read. In other words, it is not ideogrammatic. Written English text requires the reader to spell out letters to make up words and then move forward through a sentence. The semantic sense progresses in a linear fashion. For a beginner reader, as the eye travels over the text, the words are constructed letter by letter. For a more advanced reader, parallel letter recognition is used: readers 'recognize a word's component letters, then use that visual information to recognize a word'.¹¹ Even when known word shapes are completely destroyed by scrambling the letters, an experienced reader can still read the text without much problem, as is evident here: 'Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy . . . '.

Thus, reading text written in the Latin alphabet involves linear and cumulative movement. However, this movement is not smooth. The physical act of reading English text consists of successive jerky leaps or saccades in eye movements over a page, punctuated by fixations upon handfuls of letters at a time, usually just to the left of the middle of a word, and skipping many short and functional words. The saccades are usually forward-moving through the text but about ten per cent

10. *The Haiku Anthology*, 11.

11. Kevin Larson, 'The Science of Word Recognition'.

of them are regressive. This form of eye movement is specific to the reading mode, as neurophysiologist R. H. S. Carpenter emphasises:

the saccade itself is a masterpiece of control engineering, in which the eye – a distinctly sluggish member that, *left to its own devices*, likes to take up to a second to settle down in a new position – is smartly accelerated and decelerated to bring the fovea to rest on its goal with a time-course that frequently lasts little more than 20 msec . . .¹²

However poems, and haiku, are not only read. They are also viewed. Andrew Michael Roberts, Jane Stabler, Martin Fischer and Lisa Ott's fascinating study, 'Space and Pattern in Linear and Postlinear Poetry: Empirical and Theoretical Approaches', examines 'the interaction of modes of reading and viewing specific to the processing of textual syntax and visual pattern'.¹³ Their analysis of 'the results of experiments using eye-tracking, manipulations of text, memory tests and readers' recorded responses and interpretations' shows that 'radical textual dislocation can override the rule that we do not fixate on blank space when reading/viewing a text.'¹⁴

Such work aims not to present a finished piece but an incomplete perception:

How pleasant —
just once not to see
Fuji through mist.¹⁵

In the words of fourteenth-century writer on Japanese aesthetics, the Buddhist priest Kenkō, what is prized is not blossom in full bloom, but 'twigs which bear no blossoms as yet and a garden strewn with withered petals'.¹⁶ This relates to the aesthetics of *mu*.

12. *Movements of the Eyes*, 237 – the italics are my emphasis.

13. 24.

14. 23, 35.

15. Bashō, *On Love and Barley*, 73.

16. *Miscellany of a Japanese Priest*, 105.

Roberts et al's observations map very well on to the experience of reading and viewing Japanese writing systems. As Carpenter has noted, the movements of the eye in reading mode are specific, accelerated and relatively uniform in direction. However, although the letter-by-letter or parallel letter recognition patterns that occur when reading the Latin alphabet are easily applied to the reading of syllabic *kana*, studies of the recognition and analysis of *kana* and *kanji* (syllabic and ideogrammatic) characters indicate a different trajectory for *kanji*, suggesting

that different processes are involved in the recognition and analysis of *kana* and *kanji* (syllabic and ideogrammatic) characters, with certain patients able to read and understand *Kanji* texts relatively fluently, while they are incapable of reading single words in *Kana*.¹⁷

In other words, the features possessed by the ideogrammatic *kanji* encourage the eye to view, while the syllabic *kana*, like the Latin alphabet, require the eye to read.

One practical reason for the emphasis on the reading mode in the Latin alphabet is that its reach of potential visual effects is minimal. Latin letters are simple. They do not consist of complex layers of radicals. They are also few. There are 26 letters to play with rather than 2,000 to 10,000 *kanji* or more. Such a restricted number results in far fewer visual effects and far more repetition of them. Consequently, aside from the occasional cases where typographical considerations are foregrounded in the presentation of a haiku, the visual qualities of Latin letters, such as the round fullness of an O or the jagged edges of a W, are rarely considered by writer or reader. Instead, the reading mode dominates.

In contrast, the Japanese writing systems, with their vast collection of ideogrammatic and syllabic characters, while still drawing on the reading mode, also make use of the viewing mode. In the *hiragana* and *katakana* writing systems, words are read, constructed syllable by

17. Carpenter, *Movements of the Eyes*, 355.

syllable in a manner similar to that required by the Latin alphabet. However, the ideogrammatic Japanese *kanji* characters are seen or viewed as much as they are read. Taking a *kanji* in is a much more in-depth engagement than the reading of a Latin letter. A single *kanji* may depict one or more of several words or concepts and hold a number of visual, aural and semantic meanings and associations. It may also consist of a number of simpler *kanji* or radicals that themselves contain ideogrammatic, semantic and aural variations of meaning, sound and association. In addition, the reading of a *kanji* may in part depend on other *kanji* that juxtapose it on the page and alter or affect its meaning. The ambiguities that result are intensified by the fact that written Japanese does not include word divisions, and uses punctuation far more rarely than in written English.

Viewers|readers of *kanji* therefore have to unpick, identify and select from several associations and visual, aural and semantic readings the ones that seem most appropriate to the context, mood and semantic sense of the text in which the *kanji* is situated. This is not all. Such a selection process is not conclusive, since the alternative but now dismissed readings and viewings of the *kanji* still hover in the background, adding to the complexities that surround and are contained within the text visible on the page. The *kanji*, therefore, like the haiku, is not just the sum of its parts, but includes within it references that reach beyond itself, indicators of that ‘whole large sky’ to which Noguchi referred.

Confronted with *kanji*, the reader remains momentarily in one place, looking in depth at the *kanji*’s elements, and its relation to the characters between which it has been placed, before shifting on to the next. This becomes very evident when watching people write in one or other writing system. With the Latin alphabet, the pen keeps moving smoothly forward across the page, looping letters together into one relatively seamless flow. With *kanji*, the pen repeatedly returns to the same spot, adding up to as many as seventeen strokes (in the case, for example, of the character for a flute *yaku* or 簫) to

create a particular character, before it progresses to the next symbol. Similarly, when reading, in contrast to the jerky linear cumulative effects associated with the reading mode, effects that predominate when using the Latin alphabet, viewing *kanji* requires a more holistic encompassing eloquent immediacy and circularity of vision.

Many writers, poets and artists affirm the impact of the viewing mode. Wole Soyinka sees ‘images [as] far more eloquent in any case than verbiage’.¹⁸ This echoes Picasso’s words to Antonina Vallentin, ‘A painting, for me, speaks by itself, what good does it do, after all, to impart explanations? A painter has only one language, as for the rest . . .’¹⁹ Similarly, Clyfford Still writes, ‘My paintings have no titles because I do not wish them to be considered illustrations or pictorial puzzles. If made properly visible they speak for themselves.’²⁰ As for John Berger, relative to reading, viewing is almost instant: ‘Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognises before it can speak.’²¹ Berger also emphasises the holistic qualities of vision, ‘continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are’.²²

The effect of all this is a rich complexity of possible readings and viewings. This is ‘calligraphic doubling’, as Michel Foucault terms it: ‘the calligram [or *kanji*] that says things twice [. . .] the calligram that shuffles what it says over what it shows to hide them from each other’.²³ However, *kanji* often have *kana* appended to them. ‘青い’, or ‘blue|green’, is pronounced ‘aoi’, with the *kanji* ‘青’ sounding as ‘ao’ and the *hiragana* ‘い’ indicating its status as adjective. This mix of syllabograms and ideograms requires subtle shifts in mode. The reader has to view and also to read or ‘spell out’. Thus, Japanese writing systems require a dual focus on text and on image, the reader|viewer

18. ‘Narcissus and other Pall Bearers: Morbidity as Ideology’.

19. Picasso’s words.

20. Still, in a letter of 24 January 1972.

21. *Ways Of Seeing*, 7.

22. 7-8.

23. Foucault, 23, 24.

switching constantly between modes. The subtle richness that results is well captured by Sabine Gross, who observes how the use of both viewing and reading modes has dramatic effects upon the reception of a text. Any semantic meaning, for the duration of the viewing mode, is cast aside: ‘as soon as letters and words are perceived as images – and thus decoded as iconic signs – they disappear as symbolic signifiers, at least for the period in which they are scanned as and processed as images’.²⁴

It is important to note that the break or cut occurring between *kanji* and *kana* also acts as a connector. This evokes the shift and link of *renga* writing. A micro-version is detectable in the haiku’s use of a *kireji* or cutting word, marking a shift in subject, mood, or content, an invitation to discover a link. It signals a moment of *mu*, occurring as the reader|viewer determines on and then puts in motion the switch from one mode of perception to another. For this moment, the reader is neither reader or viewer, but exists in space, between modes. This moment also marks a break in logic, as indicated by the British Haiku Society:

These words are like ‘verbalised punctuation’, generally with a hint of emotion or of attitude. “Haiku is grasped with all five senses, not by logic . . . in order to jump over the gap between logic and the senses.”²⁵

The break is also a link, as ‘jump’ and ‘gap’ imply, connecting closely to the aesthetic core of haiku – leaving ‘a few things unsaid’. Donald Keene reiterates this in his image of the leaping spark of the cutting word:

there should be the two electric poles between which the spark will leap for the haiku to be effective; otherwise it is no more than a brief statement.²⁶

24. *The Word Turned Image*, 16.

25. British Haiku Society.

26. *Japanese Literature*, 40-41.

The mix of modes encoded within Japanese writing systems automatically requires such a leap. This is not so obviously the case with haiku written in the more linear Latin alphabet. However, the Latin alphabet consists, outside of Braille, of visual signs and so in the process of reading it, viewing also has a crucial part to play.

This is evident when considering other visual variables in haiku, such as page orientation. If a haiku is written in traditional Japanese-style, without line-breaks in one vertical line down the page, this works against the intense focus on particular *kanji* and seems to encourage the linear cumulative effect of the reading mode. A single vertical line can be taken in at a glance, like Berger's child looking and recognising 'before it can speak'. However, in the traditional English three-liner, a haiku forms a small, compact, or compressed, square-ish shape on the page, with a three-part grouping of short syllabic lines that are easily encompassed in a glance. In addition, one of the line-endings, accompanied often by punctuation – usually a dash, often acts as a visual signal of the two-part division of the haiku's content. Such a small footprint on the page reduces the number of saccades and fixations needed before the haiku can be said to have been 'read'. A single fixation of the eye is able to take in both a group of letters and a peripheral sense of the shape and structure of the haiku, for, as Larson has noted, a single fixation includes different kinds of information-gathering:

Closest to the fixation point is where word recognition takes place. [. . .]

The next zone extends a few letters past the word recognition zone, and readers gather preliminary information about the next letters in this zone. The final zone extends out to 15 letters past the fixation point. Information gathered out this far is used to identify the length of upcoming words and to identify the best location for the next fixation point.²⁷

This is indisputable in the case of one-word haiku, such as Cor van den Heuvel's 'tundra',²⁸ where fixating on the word 'tundra'

27. <http://www.microsoft.com/typography/ctfonts/WordRecognition.aspx>.

28. *The Haiku Anthology*, 255.

necessarily involves the whole poem, shape and structure included. In addition, the reader's eye will be taking in the space that surrounds haiku and makes up part of its 'point'. In other words, it is possible to view such a haiku at the same time as reading it rather than viewing it before (or after) it is read. For haiku like these, the viewing mode occurs simultaneously with the reading mode, as part of that mode. Alternation and mutuality of mode become one. It is possible to argue that such experiences of English three-line haiku lead to a more comprehensive integrated and finished effect than that achieved by the Japanese one-liner, although one could then go on to question how close this then remains to the haiku aesthetic.

Circle haiku, or cirku, raise more issues. With cirku, the emphasis is placed on viewing. As Stephen Gill makes clear, this is an English form:

I coined the term 'cirku' myself many years ago (ca. 1996). It was later picked up by Bill Higginson as if it might be an existing Japanese term, which of course it certainly isn't, as they do not have the form and it is half Eng. in expression (cir- from circle). I do not claim to have invented the form as I am pretty sure someone else must have experimented with such things already, but in our Hailstone publications over the years we have always included them at my behest, so we have helped to establish it as a form these past 20 years. You will have read that in my own definition, you should be able to start or stop any line end within the circle. In my form, there is almost always lineation within the endlessly repeating circular form. Thus, at any of those line-heads (after the gaps) you are free to enter the poem.²⁹

Usually with cirku, the circle is seen before reading begins. In other words, the visual impact is so extreme as to exaggerate and extend the separation between reading and viewing mode. A similar phenomenon however can be created with any one-page poem that the reader approaches from physical distance, since in such cases the shape of the poem, including awareness of line length, line number and stanza breaks, will be perceived when individual letters are too

29. Stephen Gill, 23 Oct 2015 personal email.

far away or too small to read. Mario Petrucci has developed some fascinating exercises that reveal how such impressions can inform the reader in significant ways about the poem they have not yet read:

I believe the eye (as opposed to the ear) is far more interested in space than it is in metre or rhythm. Behind and beyond the sound of that inner voice we use when we read, our eyes are busy registering the shapes made by poems on the page – the promontories and vacancies of words, lines and stanzas. That's why our eyes can instantly tell apart (most) poems from (most) prose, without having to read a word of either.³⁰

In his teaching, Petrucci presents poems on transparencies, deliberately projecting them out of focus so their shapes are visible but the text is illegible. Such demonstrations reveal how much information can be carried by shape, or 'spatial form' as Petrucci calls it. It is possible to see 'a sense of uncertainty, or raggedness, in some poems. Other [readers of other poem]s pick up on a 'martial' or obsessive quality, usually if there are ordered ranks of lines or stanzas.'³¹

One-page poems are not usually approached in this way. However, with cirku it is unavoidable. The primacy of the viewing mode is enforced by the haiku's relatively unusual shape and the difficult orientation of its letters. These, together with the framed circle and framing space, are easily viewed. In contrast, it requires unusual effort actually to read the text. Some letters may be written backwards or upside down and demand physical exertion on the part of the reader before they are deciphered, turning the page or head. Additionally, constituting the letters into words is a more laborious process since word divisions are usually elided (thus, incidentally, replicating more closely the experience of reading in Japanese which also dispenses with word divisions, and, often, punctuation).

Petrucci's exercise can be applied to both Japanese and English haiku. This confirms that viewing and reading modes are used in both sets of

30. 'Spatial Form'.

31. Ibid.

writing systems. However, as noted earlier, due to the characteristics of the writing systems, there is a bias towards the reading mode in haiku written in English, albeit a bias that is dependent on visual variables such as size, form and layout.

Evident in the language used to describe viewing and reading modes is a shared emphasis on movement and trajectory: saccades, fixations, immediacy, circularity, linearity. To understand further the differences between these modes therefore and also the differences of effect that a change in bias between modes might have on a haiku, it is apposite to consider *jo ha kyū* (序破急) – the Japanese aesthetics of modulation and movement, principles which map well on to the haiku and onto a consideration of reading and viewing modes.

Although primarily applied to theatrical and temporal arts today, the principle of *jo ha kyū* used to relate to literature and specifically to the shift and link movement of *renga*, with, around 1356, the poet Yoshimoto Nijō establishing *jo ha kyū* as the sequential pattern in *renga* in his compilation of the first imperial anthology of *renga*, *Tsukibashū* (菟玖波集). Lucas amplifies this, thus:

Musical terminology was adopted to describe the development in tempo of the work, with the *renga* being divided into three phases, *jo-ha-kyū* (introduction, development, finale) corresponding, in the case of a 36-link piece, to the first 6 links, the middle 24 and the final 6. The opening section (*jo*) was expected to be sedate, without startling images or displays of virtuosity. The middle section (*ha*) was allowed to be more dynamic, with extravagant, experimental or eccentric linking being acceptable and a wide variety of images being expected. The final section (*kyū*) should flow smoothly, with more attention paid to the linking than to the excellence of individual stanzas.

One aspect of *renga* aesthetics which it is important to recognise is that a sequence was expected to be uneven. The intensity of the linking could vary from close to distant, sometimes obvious, sometimes requiring an effort of imagination to perceive.³²

32. 'Haiku in Britain', 275.

Probably drawing on Nijō's work, fourteenth-century exponent and writer of traditional Japanese Nō theatre Motokiyo Zeami then adopted and analysed *jo ha kyū* for Nō theatre, presenting it in his first treatise, *Fūshikaden* (風姿花伝, 'The Transmission of the Flower Through (a Mastery of) the Forms' or 'Teaching of Style and the Flower'), as a universal concept that could be applied to the patterns of movement of all things.

As Kunio Komparu writes in *The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives*, '*Jo* means beginning or preparation, *ha* means breaking, and *kyū* means rapid or urgent'.³³ The movement of *jo ha kyū* involves an initial slow pace, giving an impression of expectation and exploration, which gradually speeds up, and then swiftly climaxes and terminates 'like a flourish that dissolves as soon as it is created. [. . .] The overall effect is of an undulating wave of sound accompanying the flowing movements'.³⁴ The movement does not stop. It changes tempo, mood, and possibly direction, as it passes through *jo* to *ha* to *kyū*, but it remains an integral unit of movement.

Jo ha kyū is today linked with temporally-based media, such as theatre, dance and music performance, since its rhythmic premise seems supremely suited to performance and focus on movement through time in an unbroken if changing linear fashion: from start, to middle, to end. *Jo ha kyū* is also applicable to reception of that performance by an audience and to the prior act of composition of a work. *Jo ha kyū* applies to a piece on every level. It applies to performances of whole plays, individual sections of a play, a speech, a cadence, a phrase, a line (which in the poetic sections of a play consists of 5 or 7 syllables, a familiar unit in haiku), or even an individual note, word, step, breath. It is a simple progression to move from the micro-movements of the start, progression and termination of each breath of the performer to the micro-shifts in modulation that a reader|viewer|listener experiences in a haiku, whether read aloud, silently, or viewed upon the page. Zeami reflects such awareness in

33. 24.

34. Shakuhachizen.com.

words that strongly resonate with Bashō's 'learn of the pine from the pine; learn of the bamboo from the bamboo',³⁵ noting,

All things in the universe, good or evil, large or small, animate or inanimate, have each the rhythm of *jo*, *ha*, and *kyū*, [. . .] It is observed even in such things as a bird's singing or an insect's chirping.³⁶

A close analysis of a haiku by O Mabson Southard in American English shows how *jo ha kyū* might work in English language haiku,

Trailing the canoe
out into the windswept lake—
a pair of muskrats³⁷

Southard's haiku starts (*jo*) with the movement of the canoe, which is deepened, widened or scattered (*ha*) by a number of individual words, 'out', 'into', 'windswept' and 'lake', and even perhaps by the '—'. Then, with a flourish, the whole impression is transformed (and in a totally unexpected direction) by 'a pair of muskrats' (*kyū*), although perhaps 'flourish' is not quite the right word for a muskrat. The haiku's visual layout and typography instruct the reading|viewing of it. The opening word 'Trailing' is initialised and the first line is indented further left than any other line, as if to mark the place at which the reading should start. The poem is visually divided into three separated lines that suggest the tripartite movement of *jo ha kyū*. This tripartite structure is further emphasised by the successive indentations of the lines. The indentations also reiterate the order in which the lines should be read, from first line to second to last. The dash at the end of the second line indicates a break or change in subject that could be read as signalling the *kyū*.

However, while in one sense all these features work well with the principle of *jo ha kyū*, in another sense they work against it. Although

35. Higginson, *The Haiku Handbook*, 10.

36. Ueda, 'Zeami and the art of the nō drama', 189.

37. O Mabson Southard, *Where the River Goes*, 84.

the eye is encouraged to move down the page in a way that might be seen to replicate *jo ha kyū*, the eye is also encouraged to stop and give emphasis to the first capitalised word, then to flow horizontally across line one and lastly to break at the end of that line, before repeating this shift from pause to movement to pause in lines two and three. These successive breaks would seem to interfere with the cumulative progression that marks *jo ha kyū*, where each movement flows seamlessly into the next. Equally, such a seamless flow of movement appears at odds with the jerky saccades and fixations that make up the reading mode, which in fact work better with the repeated stops and returns to the margin that a three-line haiku demands.

The one-line format, in both English and Japanese, avoids the jerkiness such line breaks creates, and so is perhaps more in tune with the spirit of *jo ha kyū*. This is evident when considering British writer Fred Schofield's one-liner,

quick through the brushwood shadow of a wren³⁸

Here the long stretch of unbroken words set out in one line push against any semantic breaks within the haiku that the readers might create as they slowly take in the possible semantic meaning(s). Such a movement is in keeping with a *jo ha kyū*-like rhythm. The pull-and-drag effect that results is very powerful, and it is an effect that is all the sharper if one considers the minute movements of the reading eye, fixing on one part of a word and then jumping to the next – like a wren's quick almost unseen movements and/or short bursts of flight.

This becomes even more evident if one considers traditional vertically-orientated one-line Japanese haiku. An example by Kobayashi Issa makes this clear:

38. *Wing Beats*, 140.

大
根
引
大
根
で
道
を
教
へ
け
り

The nuances of Issa's Japanese are evident in these four different renderings of the haiku in romāji; literal English translation; and two differing literary translations into English, by David G. Lanoue (American) and by Judy Kendall (British) and Wilhelm Wetterhoff (Swedish-speaking Finn):

dai\kon*hiki*dai\kon*de*michi\o*oshi\e(\)ke\ri

The above is a romāji rendering of Issa's Japanese. The '\ ' links possible related *kanji* (Chinese characters or character) and/or *hiragana*) and the '*' marks the word divisions a Western reader would normally insert.

daikon / pulled-up / daikon / with / way / point

The above is a literal English translation of Issa's Japanese. The '/' marks the end of each *kanji*, composite *kanji* or collection of *hiragana* and *kanji* that make up one unit of meaning.

with a just-yanked radish pointing the way
(David Lanoue translation)

he pulls up a daikon points the way
(Kendall|Wetterhoff translation)

In Japanese, the original Issa poem flows without a break and yet at the same time changes speed, tone and humour. It moves from the very physical and comical image of the large daikon (Japanese radish), pulled up to act as a physical signpost (*jo*), to a more open plane, a more philosophical indication of a way forward or a way on in life perhaps (*ha*), reaching a final ‘point’ (*kyū*). However, this emphasis on progression through the haiku fails to take account of the very deep rich contribution that the visual attributes of Japanese *kanji* make, paradoxically evoking the fixation-saccade movement of the reading eye. A powerful effect is created in the Japanese by the repeated strong simple open character of ‘大’. It stands out in the poem, spacious, embracing with its widening legs and extended cross-bar the white background of the page on which it is positioned. On its own, ‘大’ means ‘large’. In Issa’s haiku, ‘大’, itself a visually-expansive *kanji*, makes up the first part of the character for daikon, ‘大根’ (the literal reading for this is ‘large root’). This visual and semantic emphasis on size is repeated as the same *kanji* appears again – coming therefore both before and after the character for ‘pull’ or ‘tug’ (‘引’ or ‘hiki’). ‘引’ or ‘hiki’ is another visually expansive *kanji*, the open strokes of which broaden out the space contained within it. The ‘k’ of ‘hiki’ echoes the ‘k’ in the two ‘daikon’ between which it sits. The effect is to make the reader feel stuck, with the daikon, and with that act of pulling,

大
根
引
大
根

Interestingly, neither of the literary English translations given here takes on Issa’s device of repetition. Perhaps, in the Japanese, which already encourages the reader to pause, digging and pulling, at each *kanji*, a repeated character is necessary to transform that movement into a sense of being stuck. In the Kendall|Wetterhoff translation,

however, that sense of hindered movement is expressed by using the one word ‘*daikon*’ as both object and subject, rather in the manner of a Japanese *kakekotoba* or pivot-word, obliging the reader therefore to hold both meanings at once). In Kendall and Wetterhoff’s version, the one word ‘*daikon*’ does double duty as passive object and active agent, causing a pause in the flow of the reading, a pause that parallels the effect of Issa’s repetition:

he pulls up a daikon [object]

and

a daikon [subject] points the way

In English, any flow in reading is compromised by word divisions, which Japanese does not have. The pun effect or *kakekotoba* in this example of the word ‘*daikon*’ tries to remedy this but the effect is heavy, leaving the reader and the sense slightly stuck in the middle of the poem instead of flowing on immediately to ‘points the way’. The first three words ‘he pulls up’ could be interpreted as *jo*, but ‘a daikon’ referring both forwards and backwards makes a strange *ha*, and ‘points the way’ besides starting rather jerkily because of the repeated focus on ‘daikon’ also, then, represents an unusually long flowing ending for *kyū*.

In Japanese, *kakekotoba* are so much more common that it is necessary to repeat the character for ‘daikon’ in order to make a sufficient impact. The effect in Kendall and Wetterhoff’s English version of a deliberate heavy pause on the double-loaded daikon takes the reader far away from a *jo ha kyū*-like progressive momentum, held back in the middle of the poem even as it tries to point forward. Additionally, reaching the end of the poem does not take the reader any further down the page.

In Lanoue’s English version, he chooses instead to emphasise the effort involved in pulling up the daikon in the awkwardness of ‘a just-yanked radish’. He also creates this effect in his tangled repetition of

sounds: the ‘j’ and ‘st’ of ‘just’ and the ‘a’ and ‘d’ of ‘yanked’ entwining closely with the ‘a’, ‘d’ and ‘sh’ of ‘radish’. This version brings the haiku closer to an approximation of *jo ha kyū*, the sounds and words link back to previous iterations but do not hinder that forward sweep as much as the heavier pun in the Kendall|Wetterhoff version.

The Japanese also works effectively with a sense of dual trajectory. A change from the slow start (*jo*) created by the appearance of two daikons is heralded by ㇿ (‘*de*’ or ‘with’). The placing of ㇿ or ‘*de*’ directly after the second ‘*daikon*’ turns that just-pulled-up daikon into an instrument of use, suggesting therefore a further action, a way forward. However, the ‘d’ of ‘*de*’ also reinforces the sense of difficulty in movement by connecting ‘*de*’ strongly with the ‘d’ in the two previous daikon, as if the ‘*de*’, that instrument of movement, is itself being pulled back. Nevertheless, the promise of progression is fulfilled as the haiku continues, moving with a flow and sense of release into the pointing of the way onward: ‘*michi o oshie kerī*’ – a rush (*kyū*) of softer and more open sounds that end with the open, simply-drawn (and simple to read) *hiragana* syllabograms which seem to offer a further expanse of space stretching right down the length of the page:

へ
け
り

The tripartite structure presented by *jo ha kyū* seems particularly apt, and more fully utilised semantically, visually and orthographically, when reading a vertical Japanese one-liner. The eye can travel freely and unimpeded through the whole poem, albeit with saccades. The poem is offered without the visual breaks that would occur with the line endings in a three-line format, and is also, usually, offered without the pauses that the English use of punctuation and word divisions would signal. The result is that the eye, when reading a Japanese vertical one-liner, travels down the line unhindered by pause

marks in the text, more nearly approaching the smooth cumulative progression through a work that is advocated by *jo ha kyū*.

This smooth movement parallels the unbroken stylised movements of a Nō or Kyogen actor sliding his feet across the stage (a style known as *suriashi*), as his voice moves from one part of the play, section, speech, line, to the next. Such foot movements are taught to the initiate as an embodiment of the principle of *jo ha kyū*. Komparu notes,

We often hear it said that Noh is an art of walking [...] The pure white *tabi* socks gliding along and reflected in the stage, moving now quickly, now slowly, give expression to the character and will of the actor. We might even say that one can experience an entire Noh play watching only the actors' feet.³⁹

Just as the actor's foot never breaks contact with the ground, supposedly to avoid the distracting vibrations of the stage floor, so the audience never misses a word or a beat. The smooth progression of movement and sound is unbroken and uninterrupted by external interference, and also acts as a connector between the shifts in movement, pace and speed that do occur. The application of this to English haiku can be seen in Schofield's 'quick through the brushwood'. A horizontally-oriented haiku like Schofield's achieves something of the same effect in terms of eye-movement. This is enabled by the lack of conventional markers of pause or break in English haiku. There are word divisions but there is no punctuation, line breaks or capital letters. However, given the page orientation, portrait rather than landscape, the sweep is brief, covering the shorter width of the page not its length. Progress is less obvious, less sure than in the vertical orientation. Of course on a micro-level the saccades that occur when reading contradict this impression of an apparently smooth sweep, but then, in the same way, one can argue that the tiny muscular contractions that occur when sliding the foot forward are at odds with the gliding motion that is achieved.

39. *The Noh Theater*, 217.

When the three-line format is employed in English, the application of *jo ha kyū* to haiku appears less straightforward. A reader is predisposed to insert a pause at a particular point or points because of visual indicators of the haiku's shape, structure and divisions between lines and words by means of gaps, punctuation and change in letter case. Also, as noted earlier, the three-liner's compact footprint on the page allows it to be as easily viewed as read. This too makes the linear modulating approach on which *jo ha kyū* depends less easy to apply.

The physical act of reading English haiku letter by letter and word by word in order to make up the poem, however, is closer to *jo ha kyū* than a Japanese reading|viewing experience might be. This is because Japanese haiku almost always involve *kanji*, which require the reader to view and take in individual concepts or characters rather than individual letters, before leaping to the next. The reader|viewer is using 'continually active, continually moving, vision', looking in depth at particular *kanji*, and then shifting to the next.⁴⁰ Thus, the complicated rich experience of reading *kanji* consists of more than the sweep in a linear fashion through the poem suggested by *jo ha kyū*. It involves Foucault 'calligraphic doubling' effect. What is read is also seen. It is necessary to pause on *kanji* to select out of the multiple possible interpretations the ones that are apposite in the context of the emerging haiku. This is likely to involve successive adjustments and re-adjustments of the selections adopted, as the haiku is gradually taken in, and dismissed readings may still have an influence over the haiku's general effect. The related series of eye movements do not suggest a linear cumulative sweep. Instead, the focus, or deep fixation, on particular *kanji*, identifying, viewing and selecting possible readings, and the subsequent leaps to other *kanji* mirror the saccade-fixation-saccade of the reading mode.

Further awareness of how the visual complexity of *kanji* contributes to the viewing|reading and interpretation of a haiku and to the movement of the eye through it, is evident in an analysis of

40. *Ways of Seeing*, 7-8.

Santōka's famous haiku, '分け入っても分け入っても青い山'. To aid comprehension, here are several versions, consisting of a romaji transcription, a literal English translation and two literary translations of the haiku in English:

Written in romaji – wa\ke|i\tte*mo*wa\ke|i\tte*mo*ao|i*yama

(\' indicates possible related groups of *kanji* and/or *hiragana*, '*' shows the word divisions a Western reader would probably insert);

Literal English translation – push one's way into / despite / push one's way into / despite|even|also|already / blue|green / mountain|hill

(' marks the end of each *kanji*, composite *kanji* or collection of *hiragana* and *kanji* that make up one unit of meaning, '|' indicates alternative readings for this word/character);

Getting further and further
Into the mountains,
But still deep blue mountains.⁴¹

or

Going deeper
And still deeper—
The green mountains.⁴²

In '分け入っても分け入っても青い山', Santōka uses the *kanji* '青' or 'ao', referring to the colour green or the colour blue. In the English translations, only one of the two colours remains. In addition, '青' includes within its visual structure a radical that denotes another meaning. If placed on its own, the radical in the bottom half of '青' can be read as 'month' or 'moon' ('月'). No one, apart from a very early learner, would consciously think of 'month' when they see

41. Takashi Nonin's translation.

42. John Stevens' translation.

‘月’, just as in English, the visual qualities of the Latin letters are unlikely to occur to readers, unless specifically highlighted in some way. However, the process of reading|viewing *kanji* involves the consideration of multiple aural and associative meanings. In Nelson’s *JAPANESE-ENGLISH CHARACTER DICTIONARY*, for example, aural readings of ‘青’ include not only ‘ao’ but ‘sei’ and ‘shō’. Possible semantic meanings include ‘blue’, ‘green’, ‘green light’, ‘pale’, ‘unripe’, ‘inexperienced’, ‘new’, ‘immature’. In this particular case, these meanings neatly coincide with some of the English metaphorical associations with ‘green’, but that is by no means always so. The top half of ‘青’ can also work as a radical if placed at the left or the bottom of the *kanji* in which it is included, and among others its semantic meanings include ‘jewel’, ‘jade’, ‘ball’, ‘tool’, ‘testicles’, ‘beautiful’, ‘round’.⁴³ Similarly, if ‘青’ is combined with a second character, a range of semantic meanings is possible, including ‘frost’, ‘cemetery’, ‘harmless snake’, ‘history’, ‘rice fields’, ‘grub’, ‘gray horse’, ‘cyanide’.⁴⁴

The complex readings of even the simplest *kanji* result in an array of dismissed meanings that sometimes remain visibly and multiply present, ready to come to the fore if the context allows. These readings contribute to the kind of movement or trajectory within the text. In the Issa haiku, the character ‘根’ or ‘root’ in ‘daikon’ (‘大根’) contributes to the overall effect of the haiku, since it emphasises difficulty of movement – the effort involved in pulling up roots in order to travel. However, the presence of ‘root’ in the poem is more visual than aural and an awareness of it requires consideration of semantic and visual roots. The reader has to delve into the *kanji* to pull it out, halting therefore that progressive *jo ha kyū* movement forward. The result is that the very act of discovery of the presence of the ‘root’ radical in the haiku emphasises the difficulty of movement that the haiku expresses.

With the complicated scenarios now emerging in terms of reading and viewing Japanese and English haiku, it is necessary to look

43. Nelson, 607.

44. Nelson, 947-948.

further back for an aesthetic that reflects these shifts in movement, mode and trajectory in haiku appreciation, an appreciation that works with depth as well as with linear flow. Bashō intimated to his disciple Kyokusui that the ancestry of *jo ha kyū* offers some answers in his own awareness of the connections between Japanese and ancient Chinese poets:

seek the distant bones of Fujiwara Teika, follow the sinews of Saigyō,
cleans the intestines of Po Chii-i, and leap into the breast of Tu Fu.⁴⁵

Jo ha kyū can be traced to ancient Japanese imperial court dance and music, *bugaku* and *gagaku*, and *gagaku* takes its origins from seventh-century Chinese music. *Jo ha kyū* is therefore believed to have been modified from the Chinese musical principles in this period, as exemplified in the Yanyue (燕樂 or court banquet music) of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD). These principles seem to respond more closely to the experience of in-depth readings of *kanji*. They include *sanxu*, 散序 – a first section of slow free rhythm; *zhongxu*, 中序 – a middle metered section usually sung at a slower speed; and *po*, 破 – an irregular but metered dance rhythm that gradually speeds up as it continues, then slows down, before finishing at speed.⁴⁶ The first two terms, *sanxu* and *zhongxu* correspond quite closely with *jo* and *ha*. *Po* however does not simply equate with *kyū*, but offers changes in speed and possibly changes in direction. This suggests modulations in comprehension, modulations that include more than one possibility – perhaps reflecting the movements the mind has to go through when taking in the effects of, for example, the introduction of ‘*de*’ in Issa’s haiku, movements that require the mind and the eye to look backwards as well as forwards. *Po* could also be a way of expressing the need to delve momentarily into a particular character to investigate its roots, its associations, its other possible meanings, as when dissecting the composite *kanji* for ‘*daikon*’ into its two parts of ‘large’ and ‘root’.

45. Haruo Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*, 158.

46. Liang, *Music of the Billion*, 98-101.

While *sanxu*, *zhongxu* and *po* fit with the movements that occur in the appreciation of haiku, they relate not to literature but to music, albeit music that is accompanied by song. However, the ancient Chinese poetic principles of *fu bi xing*, developed before 1000 BC, are very pertinent when considering the curious sometimes contradictory effects of ‘calligraphic doubling’ in Japanese poetry.

There is controversy as to the exact meaning of *fu bi xing*. L. Kip Wheeler defines it thus, the lightning image resonating with Donald Keene’s spark between electric poles:

Fu refers to a straightforward narrative with a beginning, middle, and conclusion, that stands by itself. *Bi*, literally “against,” implies a comparison or contrast, placing two things side by side. When one takes two different *fu*, and places them together, the two create a *bi*. This results in *xing*, a mental stimulation or “lightning” that pervades the mind of the reader, bringing new insight or awareness into the nature of the individual *fu* that compose the poem. Confucius stated that this *xing* is the purpose of poetry, that the point of a poem was to make the mind contemplate its subject deeply.⁴⁷

In a further consideration of *fu bi xing*, Ming Dong Gu remarks that ‘*bi* is a static, single metaphor, while *xing* is a dynamic, total, totalizing metaphor’.⁴⁸ Other scholars also reiterate the power of *xing*, as reported by Zehou Li:

among later critics we find such remarks as, ‘*bi* is apparent, *xing* is hidden’; ‘if the words have finished but the meaning lingers, that is *xing*’; ‘metaphorical meaning, although it is precise, is shallow, while imagistic meaning [*xing*], although broad, has a lasting flavor’; and, ‘As for imagistic association [*xing*], what one sees is one thing, what is meant is another; it cannot be pinpointed by analogy, nor thought out by reason.’⁴⁹

47. https://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/chinese_poetry.html.

48. ‘Fu-Bi-Xing: A Metatheory of Poetry-Making Author(s)’, 1-22.

49. Li, quoting Wenxin diaolong, 8.1/80/5; Zhong Rong’s ‘Preface’ to Shi pin; *Zhuzi yu lei* in Juan 80, 3287; and Zheng Qiao as quoted by Xu Fuguan: *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition*, 153-4.

The changes in direction, orientation, dimension and plane introduced by *xing*, as intimated by Ming Dong Gu and Zehou Li call up Lucas's definition of the haiku's poetic spell. Lucas noted that the contemporary haiku movement

looks as if it has reached something of a plateau. This plateau is a position of conformity, complacency and mere competence. And the pressures towards conformity are acute enough to make it difficult to remain true to your own original inspirations, poetic preferences and little awkwardnesses that resist hammering into shape.⁵⁰

Deploring an 'internationally accepted formula', Lucas remarked that 'poets writing original haiku in English have focused on what is said and paid relatively little attention to how it is said'. Here, he is echoing Ueda's observation that 'an inexperienced poet often ends up composing a descriptive poem so plain and trite as to evoke no feeling at all'.⁵¹ Lucas offers the concept of the poetic spell as 'an apparently different guiding aesthetic' which prioritises 'Circular / Fluid', 'Ambiguous', 'Expansive / Reflective' qualities. To these, Lucas adds 'communication of feeling via objective description – a poem should suggest more than appears on its surface'.⁵² His aesthetic is only 'apparently different'; these qualities match Bashō's critical values of 'austere beauty; *karumi* (literally 'lightness' [. . .]); *yōja* ('surplus meaning') and 'soul'. Such qualities also hark back to *xing*, seen as 'bringing new insight or awareness [. . .] to make the mind contemplate its subject deeply'; 'dynamic, total, totalizing'; 'hidden'; 'broad' with 'a lasting flavor', so that 'what one sees is one thing, what is meant is another; it cannot be pinpointed by analogy, nor thought out by reason'.⁵³

50. Lucas with Stuart Quine, 'Haiku as Poetic Spell', *Presence* 51, 46.

51. Matsuo Bashō, 160.

52. 'Haiku in Britain', 23, 24.

53. L. Kip Wheeler, Ming Dong and Zehou Li quoting Wenxin diaolong, Zhong Rong, and Zheng Qiao.

In the aesthetics so far mentioned, movement is key – shared by *fu bi xing*, *jo ha kyū*, and, indeed, *sanxu*, *zhongxu* and *po*. For *jo ha kyū*, the movement is forwards, or downwards, through the text|drama|music. For *fu bi xing*, there is less emphasis on progression. The movement is momentary, holistic, almost atemporal. If *jo ha kyū* works on the plane of the page or paper, *fu bi xing* takes the reader|viewer in another direction, in the manner of *po* – off the paper, to another plane, from a shallower to a broader view as Zhuzi yu lei suggests, away from a temporal progressive pattern of reading towards a more holistic mode of viewing, a mode that seems more akin to the experience of reading|viewing and gathering in the inherent ambiguous richness of Chinese characters.

Jo ha kyū suggests that a reader moves through the text, preferably in a long unbroken line, with the reader appreciating the cuts, twists, changes, links and, indeed, illuminations that the text might successively offer. However, the definitions passed down for *fu bi xing* imply a movement that lifts the reader|viewer up from the text, zooming out into the air to offer a bird's eye perspective, a whole in one:

a quiet stretch of river
the gull's little kick
into flight⁵⁴

If *jo ha kyū* relates to the reading mode, where one letter or word is placed after another, while *fu bi xing* relates to the viewing mode, where the visual effects and what is held within a letter, word, character are investigated, then *xing* is an accurate description of that moment when, having taken in the whole piece (*fu*), there is a focus on the contrast of two juxtaposing images (*bi*) and a *zing* (or *xing*) of lightning awareness that indicates the haiku has found its mark. Such a process is not dissimilar to Keene's spark between electric poles, or Lucas's darker description of poetic spell:

54. Lucas, *Frogpond* 26.2, 2003.

Through the clarity of imagery, feeling emerges: a cold, dark, sharp feeling that is at the opposite pole from sentimental assumptions of what makes a poem, far more alert, far more alive:

sharpening this night of stars distant dogs⁵⁵

Here, two very different moments are linked. The clarity achieved by the horizontal accumulation of imagery allows to rise (vertically) from the depths a ‘cold, dark, sharp feeling’ that brings with it the sense of an extra dimension, an added level of understanding that words alone cannot provide, describe or analyse. Similarly, when viewing one particular Japanese, or Chinese, character, the principles of *fu bi xing* apply. The viewer|reader identifies the character (*fu*); takes in the possible contrasts, associations, semantic meanings and context the character holds or is situated in (*bi*); and then fits them together to make a holistic whole, or, indeed, finds that the character now not only fits what it says but fits more than can possibly be articulated at once or in words at all (*xing*).

Both *jo ha kyū* and *fu bi xing* (as well as *sanxu zhongxi po*) come into play when considering the effects created by different Japanese writing systems. Visual *kanji* tend to represent nouns and verbs, feelings, concepts, emotions and things. The one and possibly three syllabic scripts that accompany and/or are appended to them – *hiragana*, *katakana* and *furigana*, spell out groups of syllables that make up particular suffixes, prefixes, connector words, indicators of pronunciation, and so on. These mostly steer the onlooker to a reading rather than a viewing mode. However, indicators of pronunciation in *furigana* suggest a third listening mode in which the experience of non-linear visual *kanji* is transformed into a temporal aural linear reading.

The long-standing British Yorks/Lancs Haiku Group meetings provide an example of aural readings of haiku. Displayed on a board, haiku are read aloud by a participant and only then discussed. The

55. Haiku by Stuart Quine, *Presence* 41, 53.

haiku tends to be read aloud twice, indicating the cruciality of this act which lifts the previously visually-perceived poem firmly into the temporal sphere. The linear performance-based principles of *jo ha kyū* are thus necessarily experienced during these live readings, since in a temporal medium one word tends to follow another. Viewing the haiku on the board also allows for the holistic experience of *fu bi xing*. The viewer|listener|reader successively switches between modes, decoding words as symbolic signifiers and as iconic signs. Whichever mode is predominant, shift is constant.

Shifts between modes occur in all encounters with haiku. Usually, in English haiku, shape, form, structure, semantics and punctuation, while stimulating a viewing mode, primarily enforce a reading mode upon the reader. With Japanese haiku the reverse is true, but the viewing of *kanji* is qualified, connected and placed in time, location on the page and grammatical position, by the reading of the linear syllabic scripts that accompany it. With *furigana*, *kanji* are placed in the air, in an aural reading plucked out of other possibilities. The eye, moving from *kanji* to *hiragana*|*katakana*|*furigana* to *kanji*, experiences in rapid succession both *jo ha kyū* and the apparently diametrically opposed *fu bi xing*. These modes of viewing|reading may not occur simultaneously but their rapid alternation works with the effects that a haiku creates; association and connection and contrast create a holistic experience in which the sudden arrival of an illuminating *zing* is satisfyingly deep, rich and, sometimes, very loud:

something primitive; something rare; something essential; [...]. Poetic spells don't tell us anything, they are something, they exist as objects of fascination in their own right. You can hold them in the light and turn them about and watch each of their facets gleam.⁵⁶

Perhaps in these moments of shift, in space, not in any specific mode, is where the real power of the haiku is experienced.

56. Lucas, *Presence* 41, 53.

WORKS CITED

Bashō, Matsuo. *On Love and Barley: Haiku of Bashō*, trans. Lucien Stryk. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC/Penguin Books, 1972.

British Haiku Society. 'another kind of poetry'. Web. www.anotherkindofpoetry.org.uk/

anotherkind/?origins. Accessed 5 September 2014. British Haiku Society. *English Haiku: A Composite view* <http://britishhaikusociety.org.uk/2011/02/english-haiku-a-composite-view/>. Accessed 16 October 2015.

Carpenter, R. H. S. (ed.) 'Recognition of *Kanji* Signs and *Kana* Words'. *Eye Movements*. Macmillan, 1991.

Carpenter, R. H. S. 'Oculomotor Procrastination'. *Eye Movements: Cognition and Visual Perception* ed. by Dennis F Fisher, Richard A Monty, John W Senders New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc. 1981.

Foucault, Michel. *This is not a Pipe Ceci n'est pas une pipe*, transl. by James Harkness. University of California Press, 1983.

HailHaiku. <https://hailhaiku.wordpress.com/2008/03/16/whats-a-cirku/> Accessed 21 October 2015.

Gross, Sabine. 'The Word Turned Image: Reading Pattern Poems'. *Poetics Today* 18: 1, 1997, 16-32.

Gu, Ming Dong. 'Fu-Bi-Xing: A Metatheory of Poetry-MakingAuthor(s)'. *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* (CLEAR), Vol. 19 (Dec., 1997), 1-22.

Higginson, William. *The Haiku Handbook*. New York: Kodansha International, 1985.

Issa haiku translations: Kendall|Wetterhof. Issa translation, from Judy Kendall and Wilhelm Wetterhof's unpublished collection of visual renderings of Issa haiku, 2011.

Issa Haiku translations: Lanoue, David G. Issa translation. Web. <http://haikuguy.com/issa/index.html>. Accessed 16 September 2014.

‘jo-ha-kyu’ Shakuhachizen.com. Web. <http://www.shakuhachizen.com/jo-ha-kyu.html>. Accessed 10 September 2014.

Kacian, Jim. ‘Looking and Seeing: How Haiga Works’, reprinted in *Long Exposure* issue 3, 2015 (2002). <http://www.haigaonline.com/FINALHAIGATALKVOLII.html>. Accessed 3 February 2016.

Keene, Donald. *Japanese Literature: An Introduction for Western Readers*. New York: Grove Press, 1955, 40- 41.

Kendall, Judy. ‘The delightful ambiguities in the translation of Japanese haiku: notes on Santōka’s 分け入っても分け入っても青い山’, *Presence* 51.

Kenkō. *Miscellany of a Japanese Priest*, trans. William N. Porter. London: Humphrey Milford, 1914; repr. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1983. http://djm.cc/library/The_Miscellany_of_a_Japanese_Priest_Gusa_Porter.pdf. Accessed 3 February 2016.

Komparu, Kunio. *The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives*. New York: Weatherhill, 1983.

Lanoue, David G. Issa translation. Web. <http://haikuguy.com/issa/index.html>. Accessed 16 September 2014.

Larson, Kevin. ‘The Science of Word Recognition’ <http://www.microsoft.com/typography/ctfonts/WordRecognition.aspx>. Accessed 18 February 2014.

Li, Zehou. *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition*. Trans. Maija Bell Samei. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010.

Liang, Mingyue. *Music of the Billion*. New York: Heinrichshofen, 1958.

Lucas, Martin. ‘Haiku in Britain: Theory, Practice, Context’, 2001. <http://haikupresence.org/essays>. Accessed 21 October 2015.

Lucas, Martin, with Stuart Quine. 'Haiku as Poetic Spell'. *Presence* 41, 46-54.

Nelson, Andrew N. *The Modern Reader's JAPANESE-ENGLISH CHARACTER DICTIONARY*. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1962; second revised ed, 1988.

Noguchi, Yone. *Selected English Writing of Yone Noguchi: An East-West Literary Assimilation*, ed. Yoshinobu Hakutani, 2 vols. London: Associated University Presses, 1992.

Nonin, Takashi. 'Getting further and further'. Web. <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/taneda.html>. Accessed 1 January 2014.

Petrucci, Mario, 'Spatial Form'. <http://www.mariopetrucci.com/spatialform.htm>. Accessed 21 October 2015.

Picasso, Pablo. Quoted in http://www.cleveland.com/arts/index.ssf/2012/12/the_cleveland_museum_of_art_pr.html. Accessed 14 October 2015.

Pollatsek, Alexander and Keith Rayner. 'Eye Movements and Lexical Access in Reading'. *Comprehension Processes in Reading*, ed. David A. Balota, Giovanni B. Flores d'Arcais, and Keith Rayner. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. 1990, 143-63.

Ramirez-Christensen, Esperanza. *Heart's Flower: The Life and Poetry of Shinkei* (Stanford University Press, 1994).

Richie, Donald. *Ozu*. Berkeley: University of California, 1974.

Roberts, Andrew Michael, Jane Stabler, Martin H. Fischer and Lisa Ott. 'Space and Pattern in Linear and Postlinear Poetry: Empirical and Theoretical Approaches'. *European Journal of English Studies*, 17:1, 2013, 23-40.

Ruskin, John. *The Stones of Venice*. London: George Allen, 1904. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/30755/30755-h/30755-h.htm>. Accessed 3 February 2016.

Santōka haiku translations. Web. <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/taneda.html>. Accessed 17 September 2014.

Schofield, Fred. 'quick through the brushwood'. *Wing Beats: British Birds in Haiku*. Ormskirk: Snapshot Press. 2008.

Shakuhachizen.com. Accessed 14 October 2015.

Shinkei, in Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen, *Heart's Flower: The Life and Poetry of Shinkei*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

Shirane, Haruo. *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory and the Poetry of Basho*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Soyinka, Wole. 'Narcissus and other Pall Bearers: Morbidity as Ideology', Annual Lecture, Leeds University Centre of African Studies. 8 October 2015.

Stevens, John. 'Going deeper'. Web. <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/taneda.html>. Accessed 1 January 2014.

Still, Clyfford. Web. <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/still-1953-t01498>. Accessed 14 October 2015.

Ueda, Makoto. *Matsuo Basho*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1982.

Ueda, Makoto. 'Zeami and the art of the nō drama: imitation, yūgen, and sublimity'. *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture : A Reader*, ed. Nancy G. Hume. New York: SUNY Press, 1995.

van den Heuvel, Cor. (ed.), *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, 2nd edn. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.

Watts, Alan W. 'Haiku'. *The World of Zen* ed. Nancy Wilson Ross. London: Collins, 1962, 126.

Wenxin diaolong zhu zi suo yin. Chinese University of Hong Kong Institute for Chinese Studies Ancient Chinese Text Concordance Series. Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 2001.

Wheeler, L Kip. *Chinese Poetry*. Web. https://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/chinese_poetry.html. Accessed 5 September 2014.

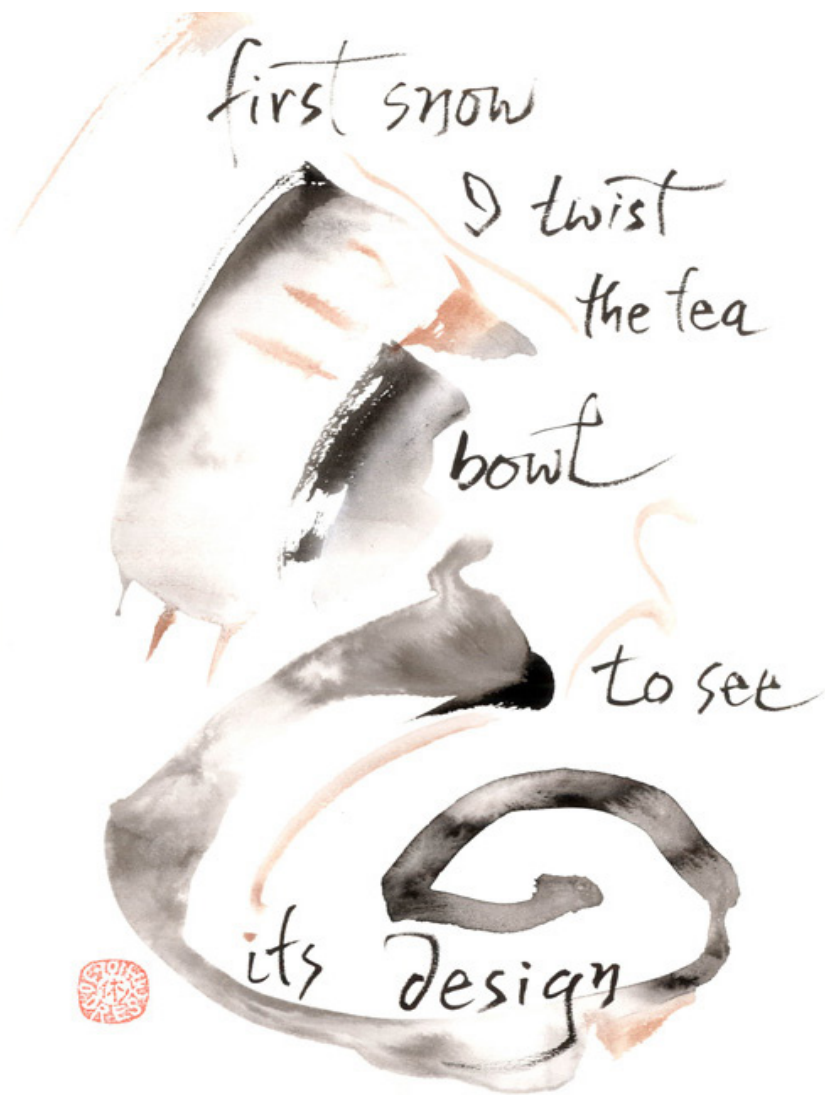
Where the River Goes. ed. Allan Burns. Ormskirk: Snapshot Press, 2013.

Xu Fuguan. *Zhongguo wenxue lunji*. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju. 1980.

Zhong Rong. *Shi pin jiao shi*. ed. Lü Deshen. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000.

Zhuzi yu lei. Juan 80, 3287 in *Sibu beiyuao* vol. 20. Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1965.





"for a moment"

Ion Codrescu

Masaoka Shiki

and the Origins of *Shasei*¹

CHARLES TRUMBULL

ABSTRACT: The short, difficult life of Masaoka Shiki coincided with a turbulent period in Japanese political and cultural history. In the wake of the “opening” of Japan to the West, the country was flooded with new ideas from abroad that prompted the young Japanese artists and literati—Shiki squarely among them—to reconsider traditional genres of painting and poetry. Shiki’s best known contribution to this cultural revolution at the turn of the 20th century was his study and revitalization of haiku and especially his theory of *shasei*, or “sketch from life.” This essay explores the aesthetic sources of *shasei* and traces the influences that Shiki’s ideas had on his followers in Japan and abroad.

1. Presented at Haiku North America 2009, Ottawa, Ont., August 8, 2009, under the title “Crosscurrents East and West: Masaoka Shiki and the Origins of *Shasei*.”

INTRODUCTION

Masaoka Shiki was the right person in the right place at the right time. He was born just as Japan was being “opened” to the West. A country that had been culturally insular for centuries was being bombarded with radically new ideas.

The crosscurrent of influences from the West was both official and informal. The Japanese government enthusiastically embraced Western economic and social institutions, including even aspects of culture and literature. Individual artists and writers on their own initiative rushed to steep themselves in Western culture and aesthetics.

[I]n the Meiji period there was an initial calculated strategy to study Western representational methods for the larger purpose of bringing Japan to a perceived level of modernity. However, a small but influential group of painters became involved in a cross-cultural exchange that could not be controlled by government planning.²

Shiki’s cousin characterized the period and how it appeared to ambitious young men: “We reached adolescence just after the dissolution of the feudal system. All had been sown afresh. But while the old order had fallen, nothing new had yet been created in its place.”³ Shiki was resolved to step into that cultural vacuum. He was so successful in providing a new framework for the old poetic genres of haiku and *waka* or *tanka* that his ideas — or reactions to them — dominated Japanese poetic theory for a century afterward. Though Shiki’s innovations are currently under something of a siege, they are still essential for an understanding of haiku as it developed in the 20th century in Japan and the West.

My focus in this paper is on that crucial crosscurrent in Japanese cultural history when West met East, on the man Masaoki Shiki and his works, and especially the aesthetic principles that he introduced

2. James T. Ulak, “Japanese Visual Arts,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 17:735a.

3. Janine Beichman, *Masaoki Shiki: His Life and Works*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1986, 8, quoting Shiki’s cousin Ryō.

TWO

to the composition of haiku, notably *shasei*. First we'll talk a bit about the literary scene that Shiki was born into. We'll briefly go over the life of Shiki and spend some time laying out his theories of aesthetics and poetics. We'll focus in on *shasei*, his approach to art or literature that involves "sketching from life," and present my theory about the deep origins of the concept. We will discuss the later permutations of *shasei* that Shiki came up with — that is, "selective realism," in which the artist or poet may choose some aspects of a scene to use in his creation; and *makoto*, or "poetic truthfulness," which allows the artist or poet to go further in subjectively portraying a scene. To wrap up, we'll talk a bit about the status of *shasei* haiku today, specifically in the West. Throughout, we will be jumping back and forth between art history and literary history, because I think the arrival in Japan and impact of Western aesthetics in both art and literature were virtually simultaneous and equally significant.

STATE OF PLAY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEIJI PERIOD (1868–1912)

Any discussion of Shiki's impact on the direction of Japanese literature must be seen against the broader aesthetic currents of the time. After the opening of Japan and the restoration of the Meiji emperors in 1868, the country embarked on a campaign of rapid Westernization and was flooded by new ideas from the West. These affected all aspects of Japanese life, including art, literature, and poetry. A few visual examples from the world of painting will dramatically show the situation that Shiki and other Westernizers in Japan were faced with in the late 19th century.

I have prepared a number of slides to illustrate important points. These images are mostly works of art and are taken from museum websites.

First are two traditional Japanese paintings that represent the "state of the art in art," if I may be permitted to say so, at the middle of the 19th century:



This first work, titled “Rough Waves,” was created by the artist Ogata Korin in 1704–9.

It is a two-panel screen in ink and gold on gilded paper. The subject matter and presentation bring immediately to mind perhaps the most famous classical Japanese woodblock print, “The Great

Wave at Kanagawa,” by Katsushika Hokusai.

These two paintings are divided in time by a century and a quarter, yet the subject matter and stylized presentation are remarkably similar. Images in this style would have been very familiar to all Japanese at the start of the Meiji Period.



radically new, from the West. First J.M.W. Turner’s “A Disaster at Sea,” from about 1835, and then “The Ninth Wave” by Russia’s most famous seascape painter, Ivan Aivazovsky, from 1850:



TWO



Now one by Gustave Le Gray, a French painter, called “The Great Wave,” and one of many wave paintings by Gustave Courbet, also French: “La Vague” (The Stormy Seas) from 1869. Now Claude Monet’s “A Stormy Sea” from 1884; and finally, one by American Winslow Homer called “Prout’s Neck, Breaking Wave” from 1887.



In all of these paintings, the basic theme is the same: the huge power of Nature, specifically the sea. Hokusai depicts pathetically small boats and a miniature Mount Fuji cupped in the troughs between the waves; likewise Turner paints, but almost invisibly, wretched humans during the fiercest of storms at sea.

It would be fun to go deeper into art criticism now, pointing out the differences between the highly stylized, rarified Japanese works and the much more realistic and vernacular Western paintings, but we have, as they say, other fish to fry.

If painting in Japan had reached a point of stagnation and lack of innovation by the mid-19th century, the same was perhaps even more

true of the literary arts. The great translator Burton Watson gives an idea of the dead end that poetry in Japan had reached at the time:

[I]n their initial enthusiasm for things foreign, some [Japanese writers] went so far as to opine that traditional Japanese literary forms such as tanka and haiku poetry, hopelessly enmeshed as they were in the culture of the past, were now obsolete and before long would pass out of existence.⁴

Moreover, what we now think of as “literature” did not exist at all in Japan at the time. Shiki’s biographer Janine Beichman explains as follows:

During the Tokugawa period (1603–1867) there had existed no word that could translate the modern English “literature,” as a term to collectively denote any kind of poem, novel, short story, essay, drama, or sometimes even history and biography. Furthermore, there was no form of literature which was considered to have an intrinsic value in itself, a means of expressing truth.⁵

That is, the various forms of the written word were quite separate, such that a haiku poet wrote haiku, a playwright wrote drama, etc., and would not venture much beyond his own bailiwick. To make matters worse, most of these genres, including haiku and the novel, were not considered art forms at all, but rather were seen as popular entertainments and were held in low regard.

After the passing of the Tokugawa period and in the early years of the Meiji Era, roughly the 1870s and 1880s, the new social climate in Japan changed the ground on which haiku composition rested. Harold Isaacson, a translator of Shiki’s work, explains these changes as follows:

4. *Masaoka Shiki, Selected Poems*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 1.

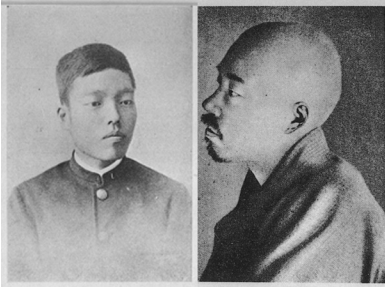
5. Beichman, 12.

The haiku is a form of Japanese literature that had been perfected in Tokugawa days, and had produced many great masters then. However, like other Tokugawa forms, it proved impossible for people in the altered circumstances of Meiji times to continue it, and it was gradually sinking into decay. . . . No criticism is intended of Meiji haiku, whose haiku are of extreme power. But their adjustments of the haiku, valid and profoundly moving as they were, the Japanese public in general found almost incomprehensible. This incompetence to follow them produced a feeling of disinterest and of vague resentment. The haiku, always intended to be of the widest, of universal interest, was becoming possible only to a smaller and smaller group of people who wrote more and more just for one another to read. Shiki began to look for a simplified manner of haiku, one which would demand the great powers of mind required for the Tokugawa style, but which would somehow continue the essential character of the haiku itself.⁶

As we said at the outset, Masaoka Shiki was the right man at the right place at the right time. Some of the things that Shiki accomplished in his short life were to help work out a concept of literature for the Japanese, to reconsider and lay the groundwork for a revivification of both haiku and tanka, and to develop an aesthetic system for Japanese short poetry — shasei and its exfoliations — that permitted the composition of innovative new works in short-verse forms.

Let's pause briefly and take a look at Shiki's life.

6. Masaoka Shiki, *Peonies Kana: Haiku by the Upasaka Shiki*, trans. and ed. Harold J. Isaacson (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1972), xii.

MASAOKA SHIKI⁷**Biographical data**

Born September 17, 1867 as Masaoka Tsunenori in Matsuyama on the southern island of Shikoku into a low-ranking samurai family (just as Bashō had been). A sister is born three years later.

His father, an alcoholic, dies in 1872 when Shiki is five.

The following year Shiki begins grade school and begins study of the Chinese classics with his grandfather, a stern teacher in the old-fashioned samurai mode. Shiki becomes quite proficient and knowledgeable in Chinese poetry under the eye of his grandfather and other teachers.

In 1880 he coughs blood for the first time and is diagnosed with tuberculosis. He takes the pen name “Shiki,” a name for the cuckoo that was believed to sing with such gusto and effort that it spits up blood doing so.

In 1883 Shiki leaves the middle school in Matsuyama, goes to Tokyo, and enrolls in school there.

In 1884 he passes the entrance exam for the University Preparatory School, a sort of high school.

The following year he fails his school exams. He also changes his career goals from radical politics to philosopher.

1888, he discovers baseball and becomes a passionate player and fan. He also discovers the field of aesthetics and reads Herbert Spencer’s *On Style*.

In 1890 he graduates from the Higher Middle School and enters the Imperial University in the Japanese literature department. The last

7. Following Beichman’s chronology.

10–12 years of his life are amazingly productive and volatile; Shiki changes directions frequently. In his last decade Shiki composes most of his more than 10,000 haiku, 2,000 tanka, and 2 journals.

In the spring of 1891 he skips his final examinations at the university and loses interest in philosophy.

In 1892 he continues writing literary criticism articles, undertakes a deep study of haiku and *waka* or tanka, and in 1893 turns his attention to his reform of haiku. He leaves the university and becomes haiku editor of *Nippon*. In that newspaper he publishes numerous editorial-type articles, including his famous criticism of Bashō's work and praise of Buson's. Development of the idea of *shasei* is dated to these years.

In 1895, with his typical impulsive enthusiasm, Shiki decides he must go to China, where Japan is waging war, as a correspondent. The war is soon over, however, and Shiki never reaches the front. He is shipped back home, suffers a lung hemorrhage from his tuberculosis, and is hospitalized in Kobe. He is not expected to live but somehow pulls through. He returns to his hometown of Matsuyama and stays with his friend Natsume Sōseki, a student of English literature and later a great novelist, who also wrote haiku influenced by Shiki.⁸

The journal *Hototogisu* begins publication in Matsuyama in 1897 under Shiki's aegis. He cannot edit it himself because of his illness. For decades to come, under a sequence of editors, *Hototogisu* (another name for the cuckoo) is the pre-eminent haiku journal in Japan. Shiki moves to Tokyo and undergoes surgery for his tuberculosis.

His medical condition continues to worsen. Beichman writes:

8. Akiko Sakaguchi suggests: "Perhaps Shiki got his knowledge of English culture through Sōseki." See her "Travelling Haiku," *Blithe Spirit* 12:3 (September 2002), 50–51. Reprinted on the Poetry Library website: <http://www.poetrymagazines.org.uk/magazine/record.asp?id=11901>. Accessed 6/19/08.

From 1897 Shiki was bedridden with tuberculosis of the spine, which caused him excruciating back pain. He also suffered from tubercular boils — essentially untreatable — that oozed pus over his hips and buttocks. His condition declined rather steadily thereafter. In 1901 he wrote: “Every day, endless to say, I run a fever. I can neither stand up nor sit down, and it has recently become difficult to even raise my head slightly. The pain also makes it impossible to turn freely in my bed, so I must lie still. When the pain is very bad, it hurts to turn to the right or the left, and even lying on my back I suffer as if I were in hell.”

Despite his condition — or perhaps because he feels driven to complete his life work even as he knows he has little time left to live — in 1898 Shiki undertakes his reform of tanka.

Meanwhile, the editorship of *Hototogisu* is passed to Takahama Kyoshi, who takes the publication from Matsuyama to Tokyo and turns it into a general literary journal, paralleling his own shift of interest away from haiku and on to novels. After 1913, however, Kyoshi returns to haiku. He continues to edit *Hototogisu* until his death in 1959.

By 1901 Shiki requires constant medical care, which is provided by his sister and his mother.

On September 19, 1902 Shiki dies in Tokyo. Hours earlier he had managed to write in his own hand his three famous last haiku (Beichman translations)⁹

絲瓜咲て痰のつまりし佛かな
hechima saite tan to tsumarishi hotoke kana

the gourd flowers bloom,
 but look — here lies
 a phlegm-stuffed Buddha!

9. From Janine Beichman-Yamamoto, trans. “Masaoka Shiki’s A Drop of Ink.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 30:3 (1975), 303–15.

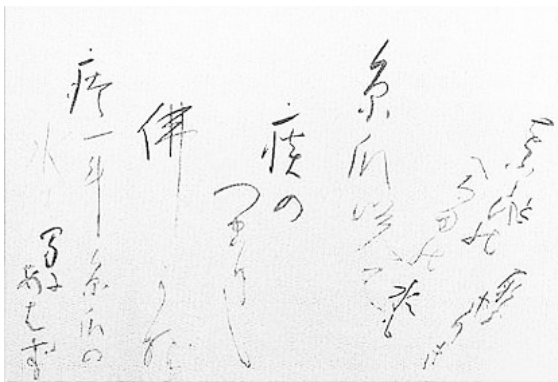
TWO

痰一斗絲瓜の水も間に合はず
tan itto hechima no mizu mo ma ni awazu

a quart of phlegm —
even gourd water
couldn't mop it up

をとゝひのへちまの水も取らざりき
ototoi no hechima no mizu mo torazariki

they didn't gather
gourd water
day before yesterday either



INFLUENCES ON SHIKI

It is difficult to pinpoint any specific influence on Shiki's thinking about literature. His biographers make it clear that he was pretty much an intellectually restless man of self-generated ideas and was prone to precipitous action. He was not a scholar who dissected and pored over every idea that came his way. He was apparently an indifferent, or at least inconsistent, student and changed his career aspirations and intellectual focus several times — politician, writer, critic, aesthete. He saw his great mission in life to reconcile philosophy, which was an honored and respected area of study in

Japan, with various kinds of writing and literature, which Shiki loved but which were held in low intellectual esteem.

Shiki admired the work of the novelist and critic Tsubouchi Shōyō, who believed, as Shiki himself noted, “that the novel was an art and not to be held in contempt.”¹⁰ Shōyō was keen to include the novel in his new category of Japanese literature, though, as Beichman points out, he specifically excluded haiku and tanka from that definition.

Shiki sought to rationalize philosophy and literature, which in Japanese thinking traditionally were diametrically opposed in status. Beichman quotes from Shiki’s *Scribblings*:¹¹

Although I intended to study philosophy, I had a passion for poetry and felt I could not live without novels. It struck me as strange: how could I like such completely opposing and incompatible things as philosophy and literature at the same time? (The reasons I thought them opposed were that philosophers were serious men, not concerned with the trivia of literature; Buddhist priests did not write novels; and I had not yet discovered that Spencer wrote poetry.) I found it odd. But I could not decide on one over the other, so I declared that philosophy would be my vocation and poetry my avocation. meanwhile I kept asking myself how the two were related. Sometime later, I learned of the existence of aesthetics. The realization that one could discuss such arts as literature and painting in philosophical terms made me so happy I all but jumped for joy. Finally, I changed my aim to aesthetics.

Beichman sums up that “[Shiki] sought a justification for Japan’s traditional poetic forms (the haiku and the tanka) in Western ideas (Herbert Spencer’s), but did not feel free to pursue literature as a vocation until he could make it conform to the rationalism and scholarly approach of the Confucian tradition.”¹²

10. Shiki, “*Nihon no shōsetsu*,” *Scribblings* [no pages given]; cited in Beichman, 13.

11. Shiki, *Scribblings*, X: 41-42, cited in Beichman, 11.

12. Beichman, “Preface”, 2.

Major influences on Shiki's aesthetic development came through the Western-style painter Nakamura Fusetsu. Shiki met him in 1894, while serving as editor of the newspaper *Shōnippon*, “and, under [Fusetsu's] influence, began to clarify still more his ideas about haiku, borrowing certain concepts of realism from art and wedding these to what he had already received from [the novelist Tsubouchi] Shōyō.”¹³

Fusetsu was influenced by his teacher, Asai Chū, who in turn had been one of the students of Antonio Fontanesi (1818–1882). Fontanesi, a leading Italian landscape artist of the nineteenth century, had been invited to Japan by the government to teach at the Technical Art School and although there for only two years, influenced a generation of Japanese artists. According to lecture notes taken by his students, Fontanesi summed up his theory of painting in these terms: “The basic method of Western painting is first, correct form, second, balance of color, and third, to always imagine as you paint that you are looking at a beautiful scene through a window.” At the same time, however, he prized observation and the sketch from life greatly.¹⁴



This is the only image by Fusetsu I could find on the web, “The Moon at Sodegaura in Shinagawa” from the series *Six Views of Tokyo with the Curved-line Aesthetic* (*Kyōkusenbi Toto rokkei*), color woodblock. It is not dated.

13. Beichman, 19.

14. Beichman, 54–55.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHASEI

Definition

So it was principally from Fusetsu — that is, from the field of painting — that Shiki derived the idea of shasei as applied to literature. Beichman writes (54): “It was under Fusetsu’s influence that Shiki added the term *shasei*, ‘the sketch from life,’ to the other terms he had used until then to denote realism, *ari no mama ni utsusu*, ‘to depict as it is,’ and *shajitsu*, ‘reality.’” In a later footnote (149) Beichman adds, “*shasei* was originally used by artists to translate the English ‘sketch’ and French ‘dessin.’”

Another definition of *shasei* offered by the Shiki Project in Matsuyama is perhaps more revealing of what Shiki found in the painters’ term: “writing exactly what you see so the reader could also experience the scene and understand what had moved you.”¹⁵ One important caveat is that shasei in painting was more about the method of painting than the selection of the subject or objects to be painted. This carried over into Shiki’s vision of the term for haiku and tanka.

The roots of shasei

So where did the idea of *shasei* originate? Where did the Japanese Western-style painters get it? The simple answer is that the idea was rooted in the doctrine of realism that was being prescribed for fine art and architecture in England and France in the mid- to late-19th century and which came to Japanese painting shortly thereafter. Let’s trace shasei’s line backwards from the painters in Japan, before we pick up our forward momentum again.

Some students have searched for precedents to shasei in Asian traditions.¹⁶ The received wisdom, however, is that shasei was

15. Masaoka Shiki, *If Someone Asks . . . : Masaoka Shiki’s Life and Haiku*, trans. Shiki-Kinen Museum English Volunteers (Matsuyama, Japan: Matsuyama Municipal Shiki-kinen Museum, 2001), 2.

16. Akiko Sakaguchi writes in *Blithe Spirit*, “In Chinese poetry there was

initially a thoroughly Western notion. Watson, for example, states unequivocally that *shasei* was an import:

Borrowing from the vocabulary of Western painting, he adopted the term *shasei*, or “sketch from life,” to describe the technique that underlies much of his own poetry and prose. The writer was to carry out minute observation of the scenes around him and to compose works based on what he saw there, conjuring up the mood or emotional tenor he desired through apt manipulation of the images found in real life. As Shiki advised poets in a piece called *Zuimon suitō* (*Random Questions and Random Answers*) written in 1899: “Take your materials from what is around you — if you see a dandelion, write about it; if it’s misty, write about the mist. The materials for poetry are all about you in profusion.”¹⁷

We have noted already that Shiki received inspiration indirectly from Western writers as well as painters. Western poetry began to become available in Japan in about 1882. Beichman records that in 1888 Shiki read Herbert Spencer’s *On Style*, in which the eminent Briton argued that clarity and lucidity are the hallmarks of good writing style and that economy of expression in turn promotes clarity. The more ornament and decoration an author includes, Spencer taught, the less likely the essence of the writing is to come through. Perhaps the one aspect of European writing that most impressed the Japanese was that the language of Western poetry was very close to everyday speech, which was certainly not the case for *tanka* and *haiku* diction. Understandably, all such thoughts would be likely to appeal greatly to a man like Shiki who was in the process of reevaluating the world’s tersest poetic forms!

Returning to the history of our painters, the Technical Fine Arts School [Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō] was established in Tokyo in 1876 by

an element *ganzen* (before one’s eyes), similar to *shasei*. So there might be also an unconscious influence of Chinese poetry. In Japan there was an element *keiki* (mood of a scene) from before Bashō’s period, but it was a little different from *shasei*.”

17. Watson, 6–7. Shiki quote is from Beichman, 46.

the government as part of its internationalization program. Three Italian artists were hired to teach Western techniques. Most influential among them was the painter Antonio Fontanesi (1818–1881). Although he taught in Japan for only two years, Fontanesi proved enormously popular among his young students, who included Asai Chū (1856–1907), who later studied in Europe and became the leading Western-style painter of the Meiji period.¹⁸ Nakamura Fusetsu, whom we have already met, was yet another Japanese painter who worked in the Western style and who was a protégé of Asai Chū's. Fusetsu brought some of his student paintings to Shiki at the *Nippon* newspaper. Shiki was quite impressed and continued to use Nakamura's graphic work to illustrate his haiku column until a year before his death, when Nakamura left for study in Europe.

The cultural and stylistic gap that was being bridged by Asai, Nakamura, and the other Western-style painters was immense. In a word, that difference was “realism.” Realism was the mode of the day in Western Europe, especially Great Britain, and the prime mover of the realism movement was the art critic and, in later life, social reformer John Ruskin (1819–1900). In a series of essays and books that were enormously influential in the West, Ruskin sought to advance the work of contemporary landscape painters, especially J.M.W. Turner, over the painting of previous generations, particularly the Old Masters.



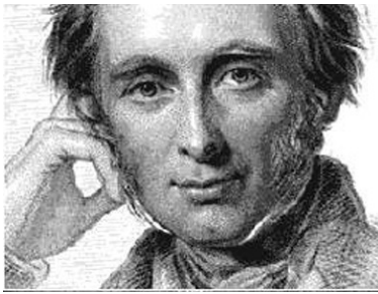
We have already seen one painting on a maritime theme by Turner. Here is another, “Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying — Typhoon Coming On (The Slave Ship),” from about 1840.

18. Beichman, 54.

TWO

Although he was primarily concerned with painting and architecture, Ruskin's writings — and certainly his influence — extended to literature and other genres as well. It is worthwhile to spend a little time looking into Ruskin's ideas because we believe they are at the root of Shiki's notion of *shasei*.

JOHN RUSKIN



I found what I believe to be the nub of Ruskin's argument in Volume III of his masterwork, *Modern Painters*. He is evaluating and ranking painters by how they select and treat their subject matter:

So, then, we have the three ranks: the man who perceives rightly because he does not feel, and to whom the primrose is very accurately the primrose, because he does not love it. Then, secondly, the man who perceives wrongly, because he feels, and to whom the primrose is anything else than a primrose: a star, a sun, or a fairy's shield, or a forsaken maiden. And then, lastly, there is the man who perceives rightly in spite of his feelings, and to whom the primrose is forever nothing else than itself — a little flower apprehended in the very plain and leafy fact of it whatever and how many soever the associations and passions may be that crowd around it.¹⁹

This is a terrific passage, full of useful ideas for the student of haiku aesthetics.

19. John Ruskin, *Modern Painters* (New York: Knopf, 1987, reprint of the original five-volume work). (365; Volume III, 209, in the original).

Ruskin is always quick to arrange painters or poets in hierarchical order, and he posits a qualitative hierarchy here as well. In doing so he presents a fourth rank, who would be a sort of superpoet.

And thus, in full, there are four classes: the men who feel nothing, and therefore see truly; the men who feel strongly, think weakly, and see untruly (second order of poets); the men who feel strongly, think strongly, and see truly (first order of poets); and the men who, strong as human creatures can be, are submitted to influences stronger than they, and see in a sort untruly, because what they see is inconceivably above them. This last is the usual condition of prophetic inspiration.

I would offer Ruskin's schema as representing the underpinnings of Shiki's haiku aesthetic structure. We'll talk more about the higher stages of Shiki's notion of shasei in a minute, but before we leave Ruskin let me point out a few other aspects of his thinking that would have endeared him to Shiki.

The essential aspect of realism for Ruskin was truth, whether in painting or literature. The fulcrum of Ruskin's argument was essentially realism vs. imagination. Aesthetic excellence, for Ruskin, was based on

*perfect knowledge of the properties of the object. Factual accuracy per se was not the artist's highest end for Ruskin. . . . But he held "the representation of facts" to be "the foundation of all art," insisting that "nothing can atone for the want of truth, not the most brilliant imagination." Indeed, Ruskin . . . went so far as to declare that "material truth is indeed a perfect test of the relative rank of painters, though it does not in itself constitute that rank.*²⁰

For Ruskin there are four pillars of greatness of style: truth, beauty, sincerity, and invention. Truth is approached through beauty. Sincerity is self-evident. "Invention" is not the same thing as "imagination," which is the re-presentation of something that is not present.

20. Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

The inventive translation of reality into art still inevitably contains a degree of subjectivity, which Ruskin tries to lower with his emphasis on sincerity. The artist must attempt to do justice to the object he describes by the honest expression of his perceptions.²¹

One aspect of an overactive imagination is an excess of ornamentation, another point that can find resonance with haiku poets.

Ruskin praises not the poet who can construct the most impressive phrase, but who can affect the reader without impressive phrases. The skill lies not in effusiveness, but rather in a certain restraint.²²

Ruskin is also credited with coining the term “pathetic fallacy”²³ (the treatment of inanimate objects as if they had human feelings, thoughts, or sensations) — another term that will not be unknown to students of haiku. The pathetic fallacy is, for Ruskin, the epitome of unwelcome imagination in an aesthetic creation. In the final analysis, Ruskin, who was the first to lay out a comprehensive and detailed definition of realism, returning to the importance of a faithful and sincere representation of an object in Nature:

The goal of Ruskinian realism is the creation of a responsible relationship between the viewer and the real by way of the art object. For Ruskin, representation is valuable because, whether it succeeds or fails, it teaches us a new relationship to the world.²⁴

21. Luc Herman, *Concepts of Realism* (Columbia, S.C.: Camden House, 1996), 30.

22. David Goff, “Truth and Falsehood in Ruskin’s *Modern Painters*” (Course notes for English and History of Art 151, Pre-Raphaelites, Aesthetes, and Decadents, Brown University, 2009).

23. “Pathetic fallacy,” *Wikipedia*.

24. This passage has been excerpted by Philip V. Allingham from Carol Levine’s *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense: Victorian Realism & Narrative Doubt* (London and Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), which is reviewed elsewhere in the Victorian Web [GPL].

DID SHIKI KNOW RUSKIN?

So we have painted a picture of a more or less linear progression from the Victorian ideals of John Ruskin to the Meiji-restoration aesthetics of Masaoki Shiki. I imagine in your mind's eye you see Shiki in his *yukata* sprawled on the *tatami* mat reading Ruskin's five-volume *Modern Painters* in the original English, having been tipped off to its existence by his good friend, the painter Nakamura Fusetsu. Nothing of the sort! I have to confess here that my theory of the deep origins of *shasei*, while original, I hope, is completely unproven and has holes in it only slightly smaller than Mount Fuji. Some of the problems in proving that Shiki derived *shasei* from Ruskin are:

- *Masami Kimura, the leading Japanese scholar on Ruskin and his influences on Japanese literature, sees no need to mention Shiki.* True, Kimura focuses on later periods in Japanese literary history, but if Ruskin had had an effect on the first wave of Westernized Japanese writers, certainly it would have been worth a mention.
- *Shiki had little interest in reading formal works about aesthetics.* In a note (1:4) Beichman mentions that Shiki was interested enough in the subject to own a copy of volume 2 of Eduard von Hartmann's *Aesthetik* (1887), but even with the help of German-speaking friends and even after a translation appeared in Japan, Shiki was unable to make head nor tail of the book. Beichman makes it clear that Shiki's interest in aesthetics was not scholarly and says flatly that he never read a single work on the subject (pp. 11, 12). Moreover, lists of the books in Shiki's library and those of educational institutions in Matsuyama do not include anything by Ruskin.²⁵
- *Although Shiki studied English and apparently achieved some level of proficiency, it is not clear that he could have read Ruskin in the original even if he were inclined to do so and the books had been available to him.*

25. A check of the holdings of Shiki's personal library in the records of the Matsuyama Municipal Shiki-Kinen Museum was made for the author by Kimiyo Tanaka.

- *Ruskin was not translated into Japanese until 1896.* Shiki, however, was working with the idea of shasei at least two years before that, as early as 1894. Further,

In May 1900, Tenzui (Tikuji) Kubo (1875–1934), a young scholar of Chinese classics, published a book entitled *Sansui Bi Ron* [*On beauty of mountains and water*], which included nine chapters on the natural beauty of Japan, one of which specifically introduced in translation Ruskin's discussion of clouds from his *Modern Painters* (Volume 1, Part 2, Section 3, Chapters 2–4).²⁶

- A poet who would certainly have known Shiki, Tōson (Haruki) Shimazaki, had been reading Ruskin for some years and published a “trial translation” of Volume II, Part 4, Chapter 13) of *Modern Painters* in 1896–97.²⁷

It cannot be proven that Shiki knew of Ruskin directly, but it seems likely that Ruskin's views were in the air and were part of the volatile mixture of Western ideas that the intellectuals in Meiji-Era Japan were discussing. It seems more than just likely that the essence of Ruskin's ideas seeped through to Shiki in the last years of the century. It is not too fanciful, I think, to cite Ruskin's realism and other ideas as the ultimate source for Shiki's *shasei*.

BEYOND SIMPLE SHASEI

Let's now return to aesthetic developments in Japan, moving again forward in time.

Remember now that shasei was originally focused on the “sketch from life,” a refocusing of the poet's energy away from the flights of fancy of the past poets to a new realistic portrayal of the object itself. It was not long after he began his haiku reform, however, that

26. Masami Kimura. “Japanese Interest in Ruskin: Some Historical Trends,” in Robert Rhodes and Del Ivan Janik, eds., *Studies in Ruskin: Essays in Honor of Van Akin Burd* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 215–44), quote 220.

27. Ibid., 220–21.

Shiki realized the limitations of a strict interpretation of *shasei*. While continuing to advocate the sketch from life for beginning haiku poets, he admitted the application of imagination and subjectivity to the composition of poetry. Not doing so, Shiki believed, could well lead to triteness in composition.

Drawing on Makoto Ueda's work,²⁸ Lee Gurga writes:²⁹

Shiki recommended other ways of composing haiku for more advanced poets. Shiki did, in fact, support the use of imagination in haiku, but proposed that poets attempt to use it only after they had developed a sufficiently fine perception of the world and experience of truth. Only then could they be trusted to attempt to convey their personal vision to the reader through the distillation of imagination. Shiki's suggested development of the poet — from "sketches of life" for the beginner to "selective realism" for the more advanced poet to *makoto* or "poetic truth" for the master is as valid today as it was one hundred years ago when he proposed it.

SELECTIVE REALISM

Let's now examine these higher stages of Shiki's *shasei* in some detail. The first of these is "selective realism." Ueda (12-13) provides a clear explanation of the idea. Note that selective realism does not represent a sharp break with garden-variety *shasei* but is rather an organic outgrowth of it.

On its higher level, *shasei* is selective realism, the selection being made by the poet on the basis of his individual aesthetic sensibility. Each poet has his own taste, a personal predilection for a certain type of beauty. When he confronts a landscape, he should activate his aesthetic antenna and turn it toward the part of the landscape to which he is most attracted. A poem composed through this process will be more

28. Makoto Ueda, *Modern Japanese Poets and the Nature of Literature* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1983).

29. Lee Gurga, "Toward an Aesthetic for English-Language Haiku," *Modern Haiku* 31.3 (Fall 2000), 62.

than a sketch from nature; it will be an externalization of the poet's sensibility, an expression of his aesthetic feeling, for by selecting a focus he cuts out a specific part of the landscape and frames it. That part of nature then has a center, a foreground, a background, and so forth. It will begin to live its own life because the poets have given life to it. . . .

Also note Ueda's image, again taken from the graphic arts, of the poet "framing" a scene in order to focus in on its most important elements. French philosopher Roland Barthes uses similar language:³⁰

Every literary description is a view. It could be said that the speaker, before describing, stands at the window, not so much to see but to establish what he sees by its very frame: the window frame creates the scene.

Continuing our long citation from Ueda:

Shiki seems to have thought that a student who had mastered the art of selective realism could increase the amount of subjectivity in his poetry as he saw fit. "At times," write Shiki, "the poet may even change the relative positions of things in an actual scene or subjectively replace a part of the scene by something that is not there. . . ." Shiki, who discouraged amateur versifiers from putting "makeup" on nature, here encouraged more advanced poets to do just that.

Perhaps the most famous instance of Shiki doing just that himself is his 1902 haiku (in Beichman's translation):

柿くへば鐘が鳴るなり法隆寺
kaki kueba kane ga naru nari Hōryūji

i bite into a persimmon
 and a bell resounds —
 Hōryūji

30. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, quoted in Mark Morris, "Buson and Shiki: Part Two," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45:1 (June 1985), 255-321.

Beichman (53) points out that Shiki's actual experience involved his biting into a persimmon, his favorite fruit, and hearing not the bell of Hōryūji but rather that of Tōdaiji, another temple. The following day, however, he visited Hōryūji and decided that temple would suit his haiku better because of its association with famous persimmon orchards. Shiki's haiku is successful on many other levels as well, and Beichman notes (54) "This haiku may be said to be the first in which Shiki succeeded, through realistic description, in evoking complexity of meaning that goes beyond literal realism."

The notion of humans rectifying Nature's imperfections, it might be noted, is much a part of the Japanese aesthetic—viz. ikebana and bonsai, arts in which humans seek to rearrange Nature and improve upon it.

MAKOTO

Beyond selective realism is the ultimate stage of Shiki's shasei: *makoto*, or "truthfulness." Ueda characterizes it as follows:

Makoto . . . is shasei directed toward internal reality. It is based on the same principle of direct observation, except that the project to be observed is the poet's own self. The poet is to experience his inner life as simply and sincerely as he is to observe nature, and he is to describe the experience in words as simple and direct as the ancient poets—so simple and direct that they seem ordinary.³¹

In a way, Shiki's propounding of *makoto* took his literary theories full circle, allowing a full measure of subjectivity back into poetry as long as it had the characteristics of truthfulness and sincerity. Ueda points out (268), "Traditionally Japanese readers have had a distaste for artifice and have appreciated nature and the natural," and suggests that Shiki's *makoto* could be considered a modern-day manifestation of a traditional Japanese poetic value.

What Shiki — like Ruskin — was promoting was an essential fidelity of the poet to Nature, a truthfulness. What they were eschewing was

31. Ueda, 17

empty imagination that was not rooted in the reality of a scene. They were trying to avoid in poetry what political satirist Stephen Colbert has termed “truthiness,” his term used “to describe things that a person claims to know intuitively or ‘from the gut’ without regard to evidence, logic, intellectual examination, or facts”³² — in short, poetry written without reference to observable nature.

SHIKI’S RETURN TO BASIC *SHASEI*

At the end of his life, in his final journal, *A Six-foot Sickbed* (1902), Shiki retrenched a bit and returned to a more objective view of *shasei*. Beichman translates (59-60):

The sketch from life is a vital element in both painting and descriptive writing; one might say that without it, the creation of either would be impossible. The sketch from life has been used in Western painting from early times; in olden times it was imperfect, but recently, it has progressed and become more precise. In Japan, however, the sketch from life has always been looked down on, so that the development of painting was hampered, and neither prose, poetry, nor anything else progressed. . . . Imagination is an expression of the human mind, so unless one is a genius it is only natural for mediocrity and unconscious imitation to be unavoidable. . . . The sketch from life, in contrast, copies nature, so the themes of prose and poetry based on it can change as nature does. When one looks at a work based on the sketch from life, it may seem a bit shallow; but the more one savors it, the more variety and depth it reveals. The sketch from life has defects of course . . . but not nearly as many as imagination.

南瓜より茄子むつかしき写生かな
kaboocha yori nasu muzukashiki shasei kana

Sketching from life —
 eggplants are harder to do
 than pumpkins

— trans. Burton Watson, *Masaoki Shiki, Selected Poems* #140

32. “Truthiness,” *Wikipedia*; accessed June 19, 2009.

SHIKI'S LEGACY

In closing, I wanted to share a few thoughts about the status of *shasei* in Western haiku today. Sad to report, the term *shasei* has become one of some contempt, and in the past few years a number of authors have been outdoing themselves in trying to heap abuse on poor sick Shiki and his monumental work in haiku reform a hundred-plus years ago. This view is suggested by Akiko Sakaguchi in *Blithe Spirit*:

The way of *shasei* reinvigorated hokku which had become stereotyped at that time. So it can be said that there was a gap between hokku before Shiki and haiku after him. But now *shasei*-ku itself has become stereotyped, so many of us are looking for a fresh way of making haiku. The future will not appear suddenly without the past, it will evolve from the past. It is useful to stand back and take a long view of haiku in the world.³³

The Australian Dhugal Lindsay, who lives and works in Japan and writes haiku in Japanese, provided a thoughtful insight into the problem in a 2003 interview with Robert Wilson in *Simply Haiku*:

The essence of haiku that I admire is the search for fundamental Truths. Many *shasei*-type haiku introduce facts but not Truths. I believe such Truths can even be found in the absence of facts, although they are much more readily found in our relationships with entities from the natural world. . . .

Although many excellent haiku written using the “*shasei*” (sketching-from-life) technique exist, more than often they fail. This is because they attempt to capture facts first, as concrete objects, and pin them down into the word-vessel that is haiku. The haiku that “work” are then preened from the rest, resulting in a large proportion of so-what haiku with only a few gems that have serendipitously managed to approach a Truth. This is of course a valid technique for writing quality haiku, provided that the poet possesses the where-with-all to filter out the successful haiku from the bad.³⁴

33. Akiko Sakaguchi, “Traveling Haiku,” *Blithe Spirit* 12:3 (September 2002), pp. 50–51, reprinted on the Poetry Library website; accessed June 19, 2009.

34. Robert Wilson, “Interview with Dhugal Lindsay,” *Simply Haiku* 2:3,

Lindsay does not say so in this interview, but this process of selecting a subject, writing as many haiku about it as possible — dozens or hundreds — then culling the clunkers was exactly what Shiki advocated and often practiced himself! I would observe that Lindsay seems to be focusing on what we might call Stage I *shasei*, the earliest of Shiki's ideas rather than the more developed “selective realism” and *makoto*, but he does articulate the notion of “truthiness.”

Typically, criticism of *shasei* collapses Shiki's aesthetic schema into a photographic representation of Nature while bemoaning the absence of imagination and subjectivity — the human dimension. Reviewers and editors have started criticizing one or another haiku using phrases such as “this haiku is merely *shasei*” or “poet X rarely expands past *shasei*,” meaning that the verse in question is purely descriptive, flat, and lacking resonance or any particular interest. *Shasei* has become a dirt clod to be flung at ho-hum haiku.

Randy Brooks writes about the issue in his review in *Modern Haiku* 40.1 (Winter-Spring 2009) of Richard Gilbert's *Poems of Consciousness*. Note his use of the flag phrases “merely *shasei*” and “mere snapshot”:

Lily:
out of the water . . .
out of itself.

— Nicholas Virgilio (1963)

One might claim that most American haiku are merely *shasei* haiku. Nicholas Virgilio's “lily out of the water” haiku is just an observation about the way water lilies grow and bloom. Where else other than out of the water could a water lily grow and where else other than itself could it bloom? The significance is not in the *shasei*, but in the wordless part of the haiku — the pauses, the silences, the unspoken associations. In other words, using Shirane's conception, one can misread haiku by assuming that the horizontal surface of perceptions evident in the images is all that is there in the haiku, ignoring the deeper significance

May-June 2003; accessed July 19, 2009.

found in the language, expression, syntax, cultural associations, implied social contexts, spaces, gaps, and the silences before, within, and after the words. So misreading can be abused in order merely to ridicule or seek a lack of significance, just as the art of reading calls for readers to expect more than a mere snapshot.

The pace of this criticism has recently picked up and Shiki and *shasei*, far from remaining shining examples for 20th-century haiku, are now being painted as the cause of its downfall.

Ken Jones, writing in *Blithe Spirit*,³⁵ for example, comes to the gloomy conclusion, “The ‘sketches from life’ tradition is so deeply ingrained in poets, editors, reviewers and judges that it seems possible that English-language haiku may have no literary future, and remain an eccentric, self-limiting byway on the poetry landscape.” Jones tips his hand a bit, revealing that he wishes haiku to come closer to and be accepted into mainstream poetry. In this he echoes Haruo Shirane in his address to Haiku North America 1999 in Evanston, Illinois, when he supports the use in haiku of poetic devices that we think of as Western: “Without the use of metaphor, allegory, and symbolism, haiku will have a hard time achieving the complexity and depth necessary to reach mainstream poetry audiences and to become the object of serious study and commentary.”³⁶

Whether or not this fusion is possible or desirable is, it would seem to me, moot.

The same issue of *Blithe Spirit* carries the second part of Jim Kacian’s paper presented at International Haiku Poetry Conference and Festival at SUNY Plattsburgh in 2008.³⁷ Kacian plays fast and loose

35. Ken Jones, “The Recovery of Haiku, Part 1: The Background,” *Blithe Spirit* 19:2 (June 2009), 30.

36. Haruo Shirane, “Beyond the Haiku Moment: Bashō, Buson, and Modern Haiku Myths,” *Modern Haiku* 31.1 (Winter-Spring 2000), 55.

37. Jim Kacian, “Part 2: Extracts from a Paper Delivered at the Plattsburgh International Haiku Conference, USA, 30 July 2008,” *Blithe Spirit* 19:2 (June 2009), 31; quote 31.

with the facts and the chronology in this piece. He sums up the influence of Shiki and shasei on Western haiku in these words:

The West came to haiku at the only time in its long and estimable history when it had adopted an objectivist orientation. Never mind that objectivism is philosophically untenable, that there is no way to prove through language the existence of any sort of reality “out there.” Even more implausibly, the whole grounding of the traditional art of haiku, according to Shiki, was now to be based on an imported western construct. And haiku has suffered for it ever since.

We might point out that the use of the term “objectivist” is particularly curious here. It has associations in the West with the literary movement that in the 1930s grew out of Imagism or, even more unfortunately, the political theories of Ayn Rand. It is my understanding, moreover, that Objectivists do not try to prove the existence of a reality “out there” as much as seek to value the poem itself as an objective reality and focus — literally, as in an optical objective lens — on its creation. Rather, as we saw in the quote about Ruskin above, “The goal of Ruskinian realism is the creation of a responsible relationship between the viewer and the real by way of the art object.” I am not competent to interpret Japanese literary criticism, but to my knowledge, none of the Western scholars who have written about Shiki’s work — Keene, Ueda, Shirane, et al. — use such terminology. Finally, Shiki was trying, as we have discussed here, to reconcile traditional Japanese philosophy with popular literature. Clearly he was influenced in this quest by the ideas of Spencer and, I’m sure, Ruskin, but I have seen no evidence to support Kacian’s implication that Shiki pursued his reform agenda *because* it was an imported Western construct.

Another of these new critics of *shasei* is Scott Metz. In an extensive review of the anthology of *gendai* (modern) haiku, *Haiku Universe for the 21st Century*, Metz quotes the Shirane piece twice and Richard Gilbert once (“Gendai Haiku,” on *troutswirl*, The Haiku Foundation blog) in rapid succession to make the point.

The effects and resonance of this modernization can of course still be very much felt today, in both Japanese and English-language haiku. Shiki's concept of expressing his feelings in a realistic sketch (*shasei*), "inspired, in part, by European realism . . . [which was] then . . . re-imported back to the West as something very Japanese," became that of the mainstream, and it remains for the most part that way today, even though "the essential lifeblood of the haiku tradition has never had anything to do with realism. . . ." and that, in fact, interpreting and composing haiku in this way "is basically a modern view of haiku."³⁸

There is some slippage in this line of argument, however. In determining whether realism was an essential part of Tokugawa-period haiku, Shirane seems to want it both ways. First he writes (49) "Bashō . . . would not have made such a distinction between direct personal experience and the imaginary [i.e., 'that haiku should be based on one's own direct experience, that it must derive from one's own observations, particularly of nature'], nor would he have placed higher value on fact over fiction."

Later (52) however, talking about *haikai* — in this case meaning *haikai no renga*, or *renga* — he writes that "[Bashō] believed that *haikai* should describe the world "as it is." He was in fact part of a larger movement that was a throwback to earlier orthodox linked verse or *renga*." Shirane goes on to repeat that, while he was rebelling against the "nonsense *haikai*" that had come into fashion by the late 17th century, Bashō did not exclude "fiction," i.e., less than realistic subject matter. We might call attention to the fact that this was, point by point, what Shiki did for haiku in the 1890s — rescue a literary genre that had degenerated into nonsense verse and fantasy, re-ground it in reality, then go on to admit into haiku composition elements of human emotion, imagination, and subjectivity.

The upshot of all this is, I think, that Shiki is getting a bad rap. He was nothing if not a protean critic and reformer. The last ten years of his life were an amazingly productive period. His ideas evolved

38. Scott Metz, "Reboot," *Modern Haiku* 40.3 (Autumn 2009), 104.

and changed, and he frequently contradicted himself — which is certainly a hallmark of many great thinkers. The important thing to focus upon is that his idea of *shasei* was not static, but rather evolved over time and, through the increasing admission of subjectivity, morphed first into “selective realism” and later *makoto* or poetic truth. The constant factor here was the *realism*, not the *subject matter*.



Kawahigashi Hekigotō (1873 – 1937) and Takahama Kyoshi (1874 – 1959)

Now it is also true that *shasei* had a second life in Japanese haiku history, that after Shiki’s death some of his disciples picked up the idea of sketching from life and modified it in significant ways. I think it is likely that it is the later version that is what really bends these Western critics out of shape. Recall that *Hototogisu* was taken over, without much enthusiasm, by Takahama Kyoshi, the disciple to whom Shiki felt the closest, and, in accordance with Kyoshi’s own interests, soon made into a general literary journal rather than a haiku organ. Some ten years later, however, Kyoshi regained interest in haiku, and *Hototogisu* again became a haiku journal, in fact the leading — one could say mainstream — haiku journal for decades to come.

On the other hand, a second close associate of Shiki’s, Kawahigashi Hekigotō, laid the foundations for the wholesale introduction of subjectivity in haiku. Hekigotō took over from Shiki the editorship of the influential haiku column in *Nippon*. His interests remained with haiku but lay in a quite new direction. In the vacuum created by the exit of Kyoshi from the haiku reform scene, Hekigotō was soon busy founding the New Trend (*Shin Keiko*) movement:

The aims of the New Trend Movement were to go beyond Shiki's idea of *shasei*, stress the importance of direct experience and immediacy of feelings, and encouraging a subjective approach to haiku. They sought to explore human psychology, and to do so they felt they had to liberate haiku from form and abandoned traditional rules, notably the need for season words and strict syllable count.³⁹

A number of poets most admired in Japan and abroad adhered to the New Trend movement: Ogiwara Seisensui, Nakatsuka Ippekirō, Ozaki Hōsai, Ōsuga Otsuji, and Taneda Santōka.

Meanwhile, the idea of *shasei* was picked up by the far more conservative Kyoshi, who made it into a rather rigid doctrine in a variant he called *kyakkan shasei*, or “objective shasei.” Susumu Takiguchi, the author of the only book-length biography of Kyoshi yet to appear in English, describes *kyakkan shasei* as follows:

According to Kyoshi, the haiku student must first try to sketch what he sees, for example flowers or birds, and grasp some kind of perception emanating from their objective features, i.e., their colours, shapes or the way they blossom or sing, which is not part of the student's subjectivity. He then has to turn the perception thus grasped into poetic expression which hopefully will become haiku.

However, with practice and also with keener observation and heightened sensitivity the student experiences new sympathy, or interaction even, between these objects, i.e. flowers and birds or anything else, and his “heart”. At that stage, the flowers and birds are no longer apart from the student but are “fused into his heart so that they feel as though the heart is moved by them”. The end result is that the student is depicting his own perception, namely himself, by depicting the flowers and birds in the advanced application of *kyakkan shasei*. Here, the student will have transcended the mundane distinction between the subjective and the objective.⁴⁰

39. Quote from a short sketch of Hekigotō's life, source lost.

40. Susumu Takiguchi, *Kyoshi: A Haiku Master* (Bicester, Oxfordshire: Ami-Net International Press), 1997.

Parenthetically, in the same essay we examined earlier, Ruskin, too, professes impatience with the terms “objective” and “subjective” and seeks to dispense with them in order more expeditiously “to examine the point in question, — namely, the difference between the ordinary, proper, and true appearance of things to us; and the extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy; false appearances, I say, as being entirely unconnected with any real power or character in the object, and only imputed to it by us.”⁴¹

In the late 1920s Kyoshi propounded the notion of *kachō-fūgetsu* or *kachōfuei* (“flower-bird-wind-moon”) as fit subject matter for haiku (this is, interestingly, a word that had resonance from painting — the traditional painting school of Japanese art was called *kachōga*, “flower-bird painting”). Kyoshi’s inventions rapidly became dogma for the Hototogisu group. In fact, as the years went on, Kyoshi became more and more of an autocrat, with the result that many poets in his fold fled Hototogisu to start or join new movements. The essay by Richard Gilbert’s colleague Itō Yūki, “New Rising Haiku: The Evolution of Modern Japanese Haiku and the Haiku Persecution Incident,”⁴² almost libelous in its limning of Kyoshi as a fascist and government stooge, nonetheless makes it clear that Kyoshi had a very malevolent influence on Japanese haiku.

Kyoshi’s teachings are quite different from Shiki’s, not to mention the precepts of the New Trend movement. It is easy to dislike his *kyakkan shasei* not only because of its shady provenance but also because as a dogma it could only lead to stultification and regression. I would like to suggest that it is Kyoshi’s brand of *shasei*, not Shiki’s, that is the source of such opprobrium in the West.

41. Ruskin, 363.

42. Available on the *Simply Haiku* Web journal at and published in 2007 in book form by Red Moon Press.

CONCLUSIONS

We have now wandered far afield again, however, and need to re-concentrate ourselves on “things as they are,” if you’ll excuse the expression! The thing that is, is that I have run out of space.

Today we have tried to paint the contours of the greatest crosscurrent to have affected haiku in the past century — and perhaps ever — the wave of Western realism that flooded literary Japan near the end of the 19th century and the aesthetic of *shasei*, Masaoka Shiki’s response to it. Eddies and ripples went to the very edge of our planet and are still rebounding today.

POSTSCRIPT

Stephen Addiss, one of the *Juxtapositions* editors, writes as follows:

Trumbull states:

Beichman writes (54): “It was under Fusetsu’s influence that Shiki added the term *shasei*, ‘the sketch from life,’ to the other terms he had used until then to denote realism, *ari no mama ni utsusu*, ‘to depict as it is,’ and *shajitsu*, ‘reality.’” In a later footnote (149) Beichman adds, “*Shasei* was originally used by artists to translate the English ‘sketch’ and French ‘dessin.’”

The common wisdom, however, is that *shasei* was initially a thoroughly Western notion.

I’ve done a little research. More specifically, I found that the term was used in China by the late T’ang dynasty (9th century).

In traditional China, *hsieh sheng* (*xue shong*), 写生 Japanese *shasei*, to paint or copy + real life, meant to paint directly from life, primarily referring to bird-and-flower, animal, and insect painting. In contrast, *hsieh-i* (*xue yi*), 写意, Japanese *sha-i*, to paint or copy + mind/heart/idea, meant to paint the idea or inner nature of the subject. (See

Benjamin March, *Some Technical Terms of Chinese Painting* [New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1969], pp. 18 and 22.)

The famous “Six Laws of Painting” written by Hsieh Ho (Xue He) around 500 AD begins with *ch’i-yun sheng-tung* (*qiyun shengdong*) “spirit resonance and life movement;” it is also translated “rhythmic vitality,” and “spiritual element, life’s motion.” The third law is depicting forms, and the sixth is copying models. The emphasis on life-movement over copying forms was taken up by literati painters who wrote extensively about *xue yi* and did not value exact representation. For example, the famous poet-artist-calligrapher Su Shi (1037–1101) wrote:

If anyone discusses a painting in terms of formal likeness, his understanding is nearly that of a child.

In Japan, *shasei* had been known since the Kamakura Period (1192–1333). During the Edo Period (1600–1868) it acquired several uses, including for Dutch medical illustrations and for Western art in general. It was also used to describe realistic sketches of nature made for study purposes, often in small hand scroll or album formats. Maruyama Ōkyo 円山応挙 (1733–1795) and his Maruyama Shijō school 円山四条派 are usually associated with *shasei* painting, having synthesized the older decorative *yamato-e* やまと絵 tradition with a realistic study of nature.

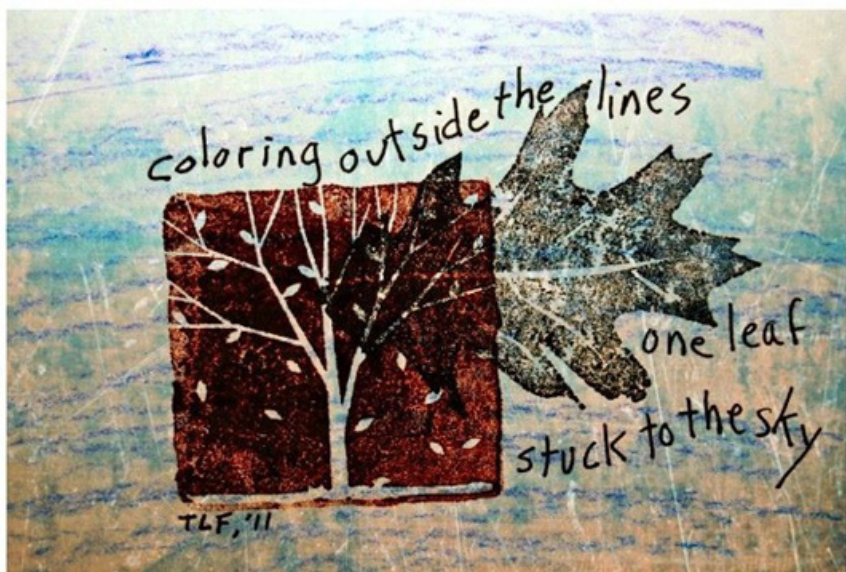
So it is clear that the term *shasei* had been used in Japan for some time, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries, and not only for Western for Western-inspired art. Whether Shiki was aware of this I don’t know.

Trumbull replies:

I appreciate Addiss’s interesting and germane comments and am certain he is right: the idea of sketching from nature was surely known in China and Japan from ancient times. I think it is also likely that Shiki knew that fact, steeped as he was in Chinese and Japanese aesthetics. Perhaps for Shiki the (re)discovery of *shasei*, whatever its origins, prompted him

to think, “well, everyone else seems to be doing this in painting and poetry, maybe we should be doing so in haiku too!”





“coloring”

Terri L. French

Deconstructing Haiku

A Dialogue

IAN MARSHALL and MEGAN SIMPSON

ABSTRACT: Considering the question of whether haiku can be deconstructed, two readers offer dueling close readings of two classic Japanese haiku and two contemporary American haiku. Though haiku, built out of pure image, seem to avoid making or privileging any definitive claims, they are also made out of the slippery element itself, language, and they test and call into question the very conventions that seem to govern the form. Ultimately, we find common ground in the notion that haiku are provocative and suggestive enough—and self-aware enough about the nature of language—to make the genre itself a kind of deconstructive practice. Even (or especially) in a genre that uses so few words, language repays close attention to the ways in which every utterance communicates more than it, or we, can ever know.

Deciphering, normalizing, or tautological, the ways of interpretation, intended in the West to pierce meaning, i. e., to get into it by breaking and entering—and not to shake it, to make it fall like the tooth of that ruminant-of-the-absurd which the Zen apprentice must be, confronting his koan—cannot help failing the haiku; for the work of reading which is attached to it is to suspend language, not to provoke it. . . .

—Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs* (72)

There we were, two literary critics out walking in the woods, and somehow the conversation made its way from haiku to deconstruction. Understandable, perhaps—haiku is a poetic form that generally concerns itself with the world outside the self, the world of nature, and the possibility of experiencing oneness with all that. And of course that's where we were, making observations about that world outside our selves in quick image-laden descriptions. Trail blaze on an oak trunk. Chickadee lilt. Leaf shadow. Cool of a stream through hemlocks. Check out this beetle.

And the deconstruction half of the discussion? Well, we're literary critics, after all, prone to over-analyzing language (and things like the nature of reality), and so there we were, talking about whether haiku can be deconstructed.

Of course they can, I said, they're made of language, sparse though it might be in any given haiku, and there are certain assumptions inherent in the form and built into every haiku—assumptions, say, about things like “oneness” or the “haiku moment.”

No, they can't, she said, because the idea of haiku is to get beyond language, to achieve a transparency of language inherent in wordlessness, and the whole point is to be suggestive—to avoid overt statement or claims that can be pinned down. If it doesn't make a specific claim, then how can you demonstrate through deconstruction that the language of the claim undoes itself? Haiku accepts the premise of deconstruction, that language is slippery and cannot be relied upon, can never be pinned down to a particular meaning.

Okay, but wait a minute; before we go any further let me clarify—if not “pin down”—my point a bit. My argument that haiku can’t be deconstructed was based on my idea of haiku as primarily, or ideally, image. Showing something isn’t the same as saying something about it, right? And to have something to deconstruct, there needs to be a statement of some kind to begin with. But I didn’t mean to imply that a statement has to be overt or singular and fixed in its meaning in order to be deconstruct-able. Certainly suggestions, implications, and assumptions lend themselves to deconstruction, as they often are expressed in terms of oppositions within a text. And deconstruction “works” by showing how a text seems to privilege one term of a binary, then showing that this privileging is arbitrary, and the hierarchy can be reversed to reveal that the text works against itself, is incoherent.

My thought was that the pure image that haiku relies on can’t privilege anything, since it isn’t thought, and thus, not subject to the patterns of binary thinking central to Western thought. Maybe that’s not surprising, given that haiku is originally a Japanese literary form bound up with a tradition of Zen thought. But, now that I’ve said all this, I should confess I’m no longer so sure that image can’t be deconstructed, as it’s a linguistic structure and certain words will be used to render it, others not—each element of the image necessarily implying something about its impact, tone, or character. In fact, I wonder if it is even possible to create a “pure” image in language.

Time for a case in point.

letting
the dog out—
the stars out

—Gary Hotham (in van den Heuvel 87)

This seems to defy deconstruction. So much suggested—so little stated. What is it that is suggested? The parallel structure in lines two and three suggests, zeugmatically, that the speaker is letting the stars out as well as the dog. In the assumption of control implied there, isn't there a touch of arrogance, an assertion of dominion over the very forces of nature? That assertion calls into question one of the implicit claims of haiku. In its privileging of a "haiku moment" lies the assumption that there is a dissolution of the boundary between self and world, an absorption of self in the present moment and in the world outside the self. But that verb "letting" presumes agency, control over something, and that means there is still a perceiving ego here—a perceiving ego separate from the world.

This is not criticism. "Letting" may be the perfect word choice here to suggest the momentary release of consciousness as it opens itself out to a sky full of stars. The point here is that even in a genre as suggestive as haiku, favoring words as clear and concrete as haiku does, there is still a message—and that message will inevitably be undercut. Oneness? No—there is still an ego present here, conscious of itself "letting" the self off the leash and out the door along with the dog.

Of course there's another possibility here—that despite the grammatical links of lines two and three, the two observations are juxtaposed but unrelated, or related only by the perception of the moment. That would be the way of haiku, and in this haiku it would also point out the misleading nature of language. The syntax leads us to see lines two and three as things sharing in the letting out—but they're not. And so we may be led to see the unreliability of language. Which means the burden of deconstruction is already accomplished for us, without our even needing to read against the grain of the poem.

Which means my argument just deconstructed itself, and I'm proving the opposite of what I set out to prove. Let's try this again.

Yes. But before we do, I'd like to say a few things about Hotham's haiku. Basically, it is—perhaps like all or most haiku—already ambiguous, even intentionally so. Therefore, there's no deconstruction work for us to do. If there isn't a norm or convention (if we can't identify a likely or apparent reading/meaning of the thing in the first place), then my question is not so much “can it be deconstructed?” (sure it can—just pick any one of the possible meanings/implications and read against it, as you just did), so much as “why bother?”

What's the point of deconstructing an already overtly ambiguous text? Of course, there are plenty out there who would ask what's the point of deconstructing any text. To them I would say it usually serves one of the following purposes, among others: (1) to illustrate something about language itself—its fallibility, its multiplicity, its inability, finally, to get outside itself at all; and (2) to “open up” an otherwise apparently closed text, giving us multiple meanings where before there seemed to be only one. And of course either of these functions can be put to more socially engaged purposes as well, to expose ideological assumptions or bias—in individual texts as well as broader cultural discourses—as poststructuralist feminist, New Historical, and postcolonial critics have done. But it seems to me, and your discussion of Hotham's haiku shows this, that haiku is already “open,” inherently so, and it depends upon the same features of language that deconstruction does in order to achieve this openness. So what's to gain by deconstructing it?

To read “against the grain” of this already open text, or, as Jonathan Culler puts it (86), to “show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts,” could lead us to the perverse position of trying to prove that Hotham's haiku is really quite restrictive and closed, not open at all; rather, it's coherent, unified. But that would be New Criticism, not deconstruction, right? Because then we'd be reconciling the oppositions and tensions in the poem, not merely recognizing them. (We could say, for example, that both control and release of control are necessary features of the speaker's experience, and not, therefore, at odds with one another, since opening-up of consciousness and the very act of letting go requires agency in the first place—intention, certainly, maybe practice and effort, as well.)

Okay, but all this doesn't mean that I'm so convinced haiku can't be deconstructed, after all. In fact, it's the evidence you present in your "another possibility," above, the stuff that starts to convince you to reverse your position and agree with my initial argument that haiku can't be deconstructed, that gets me thinking it probably usually can be deconstructed. If we take into account not just the textual details of an individual poem but also elements of the form and tradition of haiku, as you've been doing all along, then it seems to me that we will always have access to a convention, a poetic intention, a privileged way of reading, that can be read against or problematized.

So maybe according to the "way of haiku," the second and third lines of Hotham's poem are not related, but merely juxtaposed. Still, if it's the syntax that causes us to see them as related, then that's an element of the text itself that turns the text against itself, if we take as a central feature of "itself" its intention—as haiku—to merely juxtapose, to relate the lines in question only in the sense that they are co-occupants of the same perception of a moment. The fact is, as you point out, the text itself implies they are related thematically as well. Part of what you're saying, though, I think, is that the poem (or the poet) wants to tempt us to look for "real" semantic connections between lines two and three, so that it can make its point, then, of reminding us that language is unreliable. But if you mean "deceptive," then that isn't the same as saying the poem already deconstructs, because it too implies a "real" underlying meaning (or a "real" lack of meaningful connection between the ideas in lines two and three) that exists outside of language. In deconstruction, there is no outside of language.

But this seems too easy and not wholly satisfying. I'm starting to see that it's not by reading against the grain of the haiku that we gain our most significant insights. Rather, it's the process of exploring the question itself—can haiku be deconstructed—that might get us to the richer stuff. After all, what's at stake in that question, since haiku purports to be about the natural world, are more fundamental questions about our (human) relationship to nature.

I like your summary of the purposes of deconstruction — “to illustrate something about language” and “to open up an otherwise closed text.” I think both apply to deconstructing haiku, but for now let me expand on your description of what haiku are about. Besides focusing on the natural world, a typical haiku says, in essence, that it deals in pure image (or juxtaposed images) with the present moment, that the separation of self and world is overcome or dissolved in a moment of intense awareness, and that language can be so minimalist and concrete as to be not there at all interposing itself between us and the world. If deconstruction says there is no outside of language, haiku makes the opposite claim — that its language is no language at all, that its image-stuff is pure reality, or at least an invisible medium we see right through to the reality it presents. My point is that many (or most — or all) haiku, while accepting these claims and assumptions, at least on the surface, at the same time can be opened up to expose multiple meanings, some of them subverting the surface claims.

Take, for example, this one by J. W. Hackett:

Half of the minnows
 within this sunlit shallow
 are not really there
 —(in van den Heuvel 61)

Even if we assume language to be transparent here, there is still some misdirection — maybe even deception. An apparent reality is shown to be a fiction, or at least a partial fiction, and the haiku shows that the statements of language (there are minnows there) are unreliable. Or maybe it’s not language but perception itself that misleads us.

But isn’t this haiku out of the moment of perception, out of the senses? There’s the impression of a moment, but built in here is the reconsideration, rationality stepping in to correct the impressions of the senses, challenging the perception of the moment. That “haiku moment” turns out to be a fiction.

Perhaps “shallow” is the word of undoing, or unraveling here—with its freight of “shallow” understanding. The perception of all the minnows being there is shallow, corrected by rationality. But haiku is supposed to privilege the moment, the sensory perception of the here and now—that’s supposedly where the depths of experience and, yes, the meaning of the haiku lie. But here it turns out that the perception of the moment is shallow. And understanding, the rationality that sees the Truth of the Matter here, exposes the shallowness of the moment’s perception. Doesn’t this, then, undercut haiku’s privileging of intuition, finding real perception, or at least accurate perception, in rational reconsideration of sensory information? In that sense, this seems to undermine the idea of a haiku moment. It deconstructs. Unless the point is to suggest that all matter is half-illusion. But then that, too, would undercut one of the premises of haiku—that there is an actual world there that haiku should concern itself with.

Again, the point is not to show that this or any other haiku is flawed because it deconstructs. It is to point out that even here—in the most wordless and concrete and at the same time deliberately suggestive and impressionistic and interestingly ambiguous of all poetic forms—even here, we are working with the fluid element itself, language. Inherent in language, at least language artfully shaped, is the attempt to convey meaning—and that attempt always undercuts itself. Often in haiku the meaning has to do with adhering to, and then conforming to, a codified definition of what haiku is and what it accomplishes. There is an implied message in all haiku inherent in the form, emerging from a shared theme, a shared world view, and a shared aesthetic—but oneness breaks in two, there is revealed a perceiver positioned outside the world being perceived, and the language inevitably reveals its reliance on metaphor and calls attention to itself as language, itself something other than the actual world.

Well that's pretty clever, what you're doing with "shallow"—very Derridian, even deManian, in its playfulness. But I wonder if either of those guys would arrive at a similar conclusion. They might ask why undermining the idea of a "haiku moment" necessarily adds up to a deconstruction of the haiku. (Isn't it then, merely, a failed or flawed haiku?) According to this way of thinking, wouldn't any haiku that is not true to the idea of the "haiku moment" deconstruct, rather than fail, since the assertion of there being a haiku moment is inherent in any text presenting itself as haiku? Or is a failed haiku the same as a deconstructed one?

For the sake of argument, though, let me see if I can rescue this one from the deconstruction as you have presented it. Why must the initial (mis) perception referred to in the poem (seeing the shadows as additional fish), which is then corrected in the third line with the observation that they "aren't really there," constitute the poem's "haiku moment"? Why isn't the haiku moment the recognition of the initial misperception, as part of what seems to me a very accurate perception about the actual world that is also the gist of the poem's apparent central statement? Seen this way, the poem is not implying that matter is half-illusion, but rather, that our perceptions are imperfect. This seems a very different point. Is making a statement about our relationship to the natural world—how we see it, or fail to see it fully—antithetical to haiku?

But, to go in another direction, even if I have successfully restored to the poem its "haiku moment," it still seems imminently deconstruct-able. Although the first two lines are image, the haiku is anything but "pure" image, since it does make a statement, an assertion. In fact, grammatically, the whole poem is a simple and complete declarative sentence. So we have something to deconstruct. And that is the assertion that something is absent. But to make that assertion, the poem makes that thing (the whole "of the minnows," including those that "are not really there") very present. And here's where the image comes in: in order for me to "see" the poem's truth, its statement, I have to "see" all the minnows in order to then imagine, in my mind's eye, the process of separating the shadow minnows

from the fleshy minnows. And that the whole poem is located “within this sunlit shallow” is pretty rich, too: the haiku’s surprising revelation has a “wow man, that’s deep” quality to it that belies the idea of shallowness. So, in terms of binary oppositions, the haiku seems to privilege absence over presence, shallowness over deepness, and illusion over reality. I’ve already reversed the first two, and I would refer back to my initial point about the poem to reverse the last pair: if the poem’s “haiku moment” is in the perception that some of what were first thought to be minnows are shadows, then it’s this truth about perception (or reality) that’s privileged.

Ironically, then, the haiku’s success as a haiku, according to my argument, depends upon this deconstruction—we have to follow this unraveling thread in order to “get” the haiku in the first place. But is that the same as saying that it already deconstructs, so we are left with nothing to do as deconstructionists? Or does this leave us somewhere else?

While I’m not sure where it leaves us, this train of thought leads me right back to the question of Western epistemology, whose binary thinking patterns are of such interest to the deconstructionist. If haiku is an Eastern form (but is it, when practiced or translated by Westerners?), does it rely upon binary thinking to the extent to which all Western thought, according to Derrida, necessarily does? Gloria Anzaldúa gives us a different way to think about oppositions in her critique of rigid gender distinctions and other harmful “dualities” of Western thought that underlie the devaluation of and violence against women, tribal peoples, gays and lesbians (53-54, 101-02). She offers instead what she calls “balanced oppositions”—a kind of difference according to which a thing’s meaning does not derive from what it isn’t (its opposite), so each term of a pair is in balanced harmony with the other, not a hierarchical struggle. (Yin and yang come to mind as an example, though Anzaldúa does not mention this pair in her analysis.) What if what we’ve been seeing as binaries in haiku are actually “balanced oppositions”?

I wonder if this concept of balanced oppositions might in fact give us a way to account for a number of haiku’s traditional features, and even help us see how they work together: juxtaposition/contrast, revelation/insight,

“oneness” and the “haiku moment” of interconnectedness between self and world. In other words, haiku’s oppositions are inherently, as implied by the very form, balanced. This seems, in fact, to be the case with Hackett’s minnow haiku, as it seems to rely equally on both terms of its oppositions in order to “work” as a haiku and as a statement. So maybe that’s where my attempted deconstruction leaves us: with the recognition that the pairs are easily “reversible” because one side is not actually privileged; there is no hierarchy. It’s about perception of reality, the presence-in-absence, the depths of the shallows.

If we’re going to talk about oppositions, whether balanced or binary, then we’ve got to talk about this one by Kobayashi Issa:

The world of dew
is the world of dew.
And yet, and yet —
—(in Hass 191)

This can almost be read as a poem about deconstructing haiku, calling into question as it does the ostensible universal messages of haiku. Dew is a symbol of the Buddhist idea of impermanence—Robert Hass, in his note on the poem, points out the allusion to the Diamond Sutra: “all conditioned things are like a dream, a phantom, a drop of dew, a lightning flash” (289). Haiku, as an expression of Zen spirit, typically glories in its acceptance of impermanence. Life—matter—the world—it comes and goes, and all we can do is grasp each moment of its hereness, smell the coffee, gather rosebuds while we may, notice the dew, seize the day. Life is a succession of moments (or really, more an assemblage of moments, not necessarily sequential—the sequence is illusory), and to be fully in the haiku moment is satisfaction enough for a life, even if, especially if, that moment includes our awareness of impermanence.

But Issa here—the context is that his daughter had just died of smallpox—essentially says, yes, I accept that this world is indeed

impermanent, but somehow that insight offers no solace or consolation. You know what, when your child dies, recognizing that all life is fleeting really doesn't seem to help matters. We care anyway, and care intensely. So the haiku philosophy of life doesn't hold water; it doesn't even hold the sound of water.

The word "dew" carries other freight as well. It's a *kigo* (season word) for autumn, which seems apt here, though in fact Issa's daughter's death took place on the summer solstice (as recorded in his 1819 *haibun* *A Year of My Life*) (Hass 228). There's a cruel irony in his daughter dying as the year turns to the season of full flowering, of life at its lushest, and there's an irony in planting a metonym of fall there, too. Dew, of course, also carries connotations of freshness and beauty—but all these word associations are called into question in the haiku, which is to say that the poem deconstructs haiku, subverts its customary meanings. Again, though, I'm reading the individual haiku as a deconstruction of the idea of haiku, as passed on in the haiku tradition. That is, a good haiku plays by the rules of haiku but at the same time deconstructs those rules. (Okay, I know, they're really more like guidelines than actual rules.) So I've been deconstructing by reading individual haiku as a kind of counterfriction against the conventions, and you've been saying that no, we have to look at the statement made (or not made) within the text itself. My point is that haiku are always very aware of the concerns of the genre and are actively engaged with and in dialogue with the genre, and so their meaning is in large part a product of the individual haiku's inescapable place within a tradition. And isn't this the nature of language itself? Any word exists only as part of a system and is meaningful only because of its difference from other words in that system. Every statement relies on the perceiver's knowledge of the system that the individual statement exists within and has meaning within. *Kigo* words in the Japanese haiku tradition are only one way of reminding us of the haiku system of meaning. The form itself, the image-laden content, the syntactic abbreviation, all indicate an acceptance of the conventions of the genre, with all

its expectations about all kinds of meaning—how perception works, how oneness can be achieved, what the nature of existence is. We can no more separate an individual haiku from the tradition it is part of than we can separate a word from the system in which it exists. Come to think of it, maybe that's the point of haiku. This moment, this perception, this flower, this river, this rock—they're all part of a system, and every moment where we perceive the hereness and nowness of such things serves as a recognition of how they all fit together in the system.

The seasonal references in haiku, besides serving as genre markers, also expand the meaning of the haiku, connecting the particular (the observation of a natural object) to the general (natural cycles and systems). This suggests that haiku is the poetry of synecdoche—as Robert Frost said in reference to his own work, “always, always, a larger significance. A little thing touches a larger thing” (qtd. in Sergeant 325). Why is this compatible with deconstruction? Because meaning is never limited to the small things that are the ostensible focus of the haiku. Always the haiku's observation of the small thing, the natural image, is meant to say something else as well, about life or nature. So haiku language is inherently doubled—at the very least. It claims to make no claims (because it avoids abstractions and generalizations), but in truth its claims are there, even if they are only implied by image.

In Issa's poem, then, the reference to dew is meaningful because of its symbolic associations and its role as a seasonal reference, both of which remind us of the theme of impermanence, but do so by relying on evocations that extend beyond the parameters of the poem.

If Issa's point is to express sorrow (yes, we know the world is impermanent but still we feel loss deeply), couldn't it also be read against that grain? Something along these lines, perhaps: “The world may be impermanent, but yet there is much joy, much lasting joy, in the beauties of the world—like dew on morning grass.” In this reading, the dew is not misleading us as to the nature of existence,

but offering the consolation of beauty. Or is this haiku another case where the ambiguity is already built in? Perhaps it can't really be deconstructed because it's already thoroughly ambiguous as to its intended statement—it already has a double meaning, opposite meanings, built into it, hence the word doublings of “the world of dew” and “and yet.” The doubling suggests that there are two sides to life, two ways of looking at things, balanced against (or with?) one another.

But note this—there is one word in the poem that is not doubled: “is.” I won't get into questions about what the definition of *is* is, but I will point out that here it functions like the fulcrum of the balance, or like an equal sign, saying that yes, the world of dew is in fact the world of dew. This can be taken in several ways—for example, as a claim that the world of phenomena (fleeting though they be) is in fact the world of phenomena, or that the world of phenomena (the actual dew) truly is evanescent (dew as symbol). But either way, does that mean that it matters intensely or that it is illusory? Either conception is potentially compatible with Zen thought and a haiku world view—and of course both are called into question by the “and yet's” that follow. Another possibility is that the doubling of “the world of dew” is a challenge to language—“the world of dew,” meaning those words, really do amount to “the world of dew,” meaning the phenomenal world (“the solid earth! the actual world!” as Thoreau called it). And so Issa initially grants the premise of haiku, or its ideal, that language can be so transparent that we see right through it to the thing itself. It uses, says William J. Higginson, “words more like things than like thoughts” (152). And thus the ideal of the “wordless poem” is achieved.

And yet, and yet—even with the most unadorned language, we are reminded that there is in fact language between the reader and the actual world, and for that matter between the writer and the actual world, between any literate perceiver and the world.

And if there's language, it can be deconstructed. The seeds of its own undoing (or undewing) lie there somewhere.

Yes, I see that undewing, and how it can be read as an expression of both (or either) sorrow and joy. As you say, the ambiguity is already built in. And it's not like we have to dig very deep (or at all) to discover the doublings in the poem; it might as well come with a warning label: "do not read reductively; find more than one meaning here."

Take the word "is." Not only is it not doubled, as you point out, but it's the word that makes the central assertion of the poem: that the stuff on one side of it is equivalent in some way to the stuff on the other side of it. But as you also so effectively demonstrate, what is equal to what isn't clear. Any of a number of possibilities seem equally—simultaneously—not only plausible but consistent with the principles of haiku. Okay, but what if that's not the point, for the deconstructionist? What if what we're trying to do is not pin down what "the world of dew" means in order to then deconstruct that, but show that it is not, in fact, equivalent to whatever the other "world of dew" means, despite the poem's linking verb? Okay, this is easy: the "and yet" takes care of that by calling "is" into question, right? Hmmm . . . but then does the second "and yet" reverse it back again, like a double negative, reinstating the equal sign of the "is"? If so, then what's being confirmed by my attempted deconstruction is not only that the haiku is ambiguous, not only that its various possible meanings proliferate, but also that part of its meaning, perhaps its primary meaning, is this ambiguity, this relentless undoing, this "and yet."

So to deconstruct that, would we have to show that the text simultaneously supports a reading that sees it as absolutely unambiguous? But Issa's "dew" haiku is not merely "already open" (as is Hotham's dog and stars haiku which led me to this very question in the first place); it seems, in fact, to be about that openness. That is, Issa seems to be making a point about the nature of language itself. What both matters intensely and is illusory, according to this haiku, is what it's saying about language.

But what, exactly, is it saying about language? I love your suggestion that on one side of the equation, "the world of dew" refers to itself linguistically, so that the poem is making a statement about the relationship between language and reality. But I wonder . . . is saying that words = world the

same as saying that words (transparently) deliver us to that world? I'm not so sure. Let me retrace my thinking to show where I get stuck: if words are on a par with reality, wouldn't that be a hyper-reification, a treating of words as things? If so, then they can't be transparent, much less merely referential. The idea(l) that language is transparent, or the attempt to use it as if it is, is in fact what allows deconstruction to be possible in the first place. Here's how: saying that language is transparent means that it performs such an effective and silent signification that we don't even see it as it's doing its job; we see only the stuff to which it refers, as if we're seeing reality itself, directly. Hence, the illusion and the allure of the transcendental signified, which, in the case of haiku, seems to be Nature. But language's job, understood this way, is nonetheless to signify, to refer. And it's in the gap between signifier and signified (there's no essential or natural semantic connection between a word and the thing to which it refers, meanings are conventional, arbitrary, and so on) that we find difference as well as endless deferrals of meaning. And of course you're right to insist that the systems—linguistic, literary, generic—to which the language of a text belongs are, in fact, part of that text. You offer a convincing challenge to my earlier claim that to deconstruct, we must limit our analysis to "just the text, ma'am."

In fact, it's the very doublings and indeterminacy that are inherent to haiku (in both form and tradition) that lead me to wonder if Issa is actually rejecting the idea that language is transparent, both by calling attention to language itself in so many ways in this haiku, including making a direct statement about the nature of language, and by making a much more radical claim: that words do not refer to the world but are of the world. Whether we take this to mean that words have a physical presence, like a rock or a tree or a person, or that words actually constitute the world of reality, we are, it seems to me, beyond the reach of deconstruction. We are either already in the place where deconstruction would eventually take us without having to engage in deconstruction itself to get there, or we are in a place where deconstruction just doesn't go, like, say, non-Western thought, the realm of "balanced oppositions."

Or perhaps it is the realm of no oppositions, and of no-mind (mushin), the emptying of consciousness and of self that Zen practice idealizes—and that haiku strives to enact. The classic beginner's koan has an acolyte asking, "Does a dog have a Buddha nature?" The answer is "mu," there is nothing, neither yes nor no, a refusal to take either side of a binary opposition, an answer that says the answer is not discoverable through the workings of the mind. (Here's another koan, perhaps: can haiku be deconstructed?) I can think of several haiku that seek to express the quality of no-mind. One is Bashō's "Pine Islands, ah!/Oh, Pine Islands, ah!/ Pine Islands, ah!" Just the name of a place (in Japanese, Matsushima), repeated, and some vocalizations (the "oh" and the "ahs") that take shape as emotive sound but are not quite words, released from some place other than mind—no comment or reflection or even description (Hamill 2000, xix). There is no mind getting in the way of the interaction between the place and the emotional reaction it evokes, a reaction that comes from a disembodied source, an observer we don't see, because there is no awareness of a self that is somehow separate from the scene.

Or is there? Someone put those words down, a certain self who called himself Bashō, who achieved such fame that we take an intense interest in all his words, so that we are in fact quite aware of his presence when we read his poem. And Bashō, like all haiku writers, it seems to me, is always aware that the use of words (which come from the mind), even very few words, means stepping out of the state of no-mind. One of the goals of haiku is to approach the state of no-mind by eliminating abstraction and explanation and by reducing even the concrete words devoted to representation to a minimum—but they are never gone completely. (Not even in Cor van den Heuvel's one-word haiku: the word "tundra" on an otherwise blank page [163].) And as soon as there's a word, there's something to deconstruct. In Bashō's Pine Islands haiku, at least in its English translation, the only words, "pine" and "islands," suggest puns that can serve as the starting point for deconstruction. To "pine" is to

yearn for something absent, to desire, which suggests preoccupation with self and to a Buddhist is the source of suffering. And “islands” can be read as “I-lands,” the territory of the ego. So there is no dissolution of self in world here, no stepping into no-mind, but self-absorbed yearning—yearning perhaps to take possession of those islands, or at least to be over there (instead of “being here now”), no longer separated from them by water. I won’t pretend to be able to unravel many of the possible layers of language in the original Japanese, but I will note that the Matsu (“pine”) in Matsushima might not exactly obliterate a sense of self for someone named Matsuo Bashō.

What I’m getting at, what I’ve been getting at, is that the supposed ideal of “wordlessness” of haiku, meaning that its language can represent the natural world in such a way that it becomes fully present in language, in seventeen syllables or less, is a fiction. But the best haiku are aware of the fiction and of the difficulty or impossibility of using words to achieve no-mind, or selflessness, or wordlessness. Bringing deconstruction to bear on haiku reveals that even haiku to some extent concern themselves with the problematics of representation, and recognizing this enriches our readings of haiku.

At the same time, I will also admit that the claim of deconstruction, at least in the extreme (and simplified) form that we’ve been playing around with, suggesting that language always refers only to itself and ultimately is incapable of any actual representation of reality, is also a fiction. What’s interesting in bringing these two worldviews into conjunction is that they stake out opposite extremes on the question of how language relates to the “real world.” In truth, both end up occupying some middle ground. I like how Robert Scholes puts it: “we neither capture nor create the world with our texts, but interact with it” (112). Deconstruction has been more engaged with the real world than the popular dismissal of it as mere language play would suggest; as you point out, it has been put to use in the service of the “real world” by, for example, feminist critics and new historicists, who have used deconstructive techniques to expose the power structures governing literary texts and the cultures they come from.

On the other extreme, it seems to me that haiku has been more engaged with the problematics of representation, especially as it pertains to the natural world, than it is usually given credit for. In Scholes's terms, haiku don't "capture" the world, they "interact" with it. Where we seem to be finding common ground is in the recognition that good haiku are provocative enough or suggestive enough—and most importantly self-aware enough about the nature of language—to resist making any claim too easy or self-evident. And what we've been looking at here are interesting test cases for both the power of haiku to transcend language itself and the efficacy of deconstruction. Even with so few words, words that seem to fully embrace the freewheeling possibilities of suggestion, even here, especially here, language repays close attention to the ways in which every utterance communicates more than it, or we, can ever know.

Maybe this is the time to return to a key issue you brought up earlier: what is revealed about human relations with the natural world when we bring together deconstruction and haiku? Deconstruction's reliance upon the Saussurian conception of language as a set of signifiers in relationship with one another, interacting with one another, with each signifier meaning something only in terms of relation to other words, reminds me of descriptions of ecology, itself a web of relationships and interactions. Deconstruction essentially describes an ecosystem of words. Haiku, maybe, inhabits the ecotone between these two ecosystems, nature and language. It is the place where language and nature meet. Ecotones, we know, are perilous places, where predators appear from both sides of the margin, but they are productive places, too, abundant in diversity. Here we are, rambling out of the woods and into the words, tracing the borderline between them, following the path of haiku.

Let's look at one more in this rich ecotone, another classic by Bashō—one that seems very much concerned with issues of representation and with the difficulty of trying to interact with the world in a state of no-mind while at the same time trying to capture

that experience in any kind of art, linguistic or otherwise. Ultimately, this one seems to me more about words than the woods, but maybe you can help me find the path that connects the two:

The spring we don't see
 on the back of a hand mirror
 a plum tree in flower
 —Bashō (in Hass 28)

On the surface, this haiku suggests that we are so self-absorbed we cannot see past ourselves to the actual world. Or it could be that when we look at the world, at spring, at nature waking, what we see is really just a reflection of ourselves. What we miss is something, some spring, beyond that, impenetrable because we cannot see beyond the reflection of ourselves. It doesn't seem too much of a stretch to suggest that language might be that mirror—we can't see a world beyond ourselves because our way of seeing and of knowing is so bound up with language. It sees the world for us, constructs it for us. And so we can't help but see the natural world as resource or as symbol, and spring becomes a lesson in rejuvenation for us. But here's the thing—if we could manage to see past the reflection of ourselves, what would we see in that beyond? What is the spring we don't see? Not nature itself, says Bashō, but a representation of it, a drawing of a plum tree in flower. Bashō wants to privilege the other side of the mirror, but isn't it as opaque as the reflective side? We still can't see through it to an actual plum tree in flower. Even if we get beyond anthropocentrism, we are still boxed in by artistic convention or language. Maybe it's not a prison—maybe it's a decorative box with mirrors and pictures on the inside—but it's still a container of mind holding us in, limiting our contact (contact!) with the actual world. It should be easy enough to put down the mirror, but all we do is endlessly turn it front to back and back again.

Haiku is the drawing on the back of the mirror. Look at the plum tree in flower there.

Yes, I see it . . . though I'm not sure if the one I see is the same one that's on the back of the mirror. Again, I find it interesting that by reading individual haiku against the conventions of the genre, you're revealing some deeper tensions and inconsistencies within the tradition itself—in the case of Bashō's hand-mirror haiku, the impossibility of apprehending the actual world beyond human representations of it. Even as we're invited to see the plum tree, we're denied access to "the spring" in which it blossoms. But here in this liminal space, if the haiku does indeed occupy the sort of ecotone you posit, it (spring) might in fact encroach. It might steal over into the haiku from its natural habitat. Or it might have always already been here, if not readily visible.

But before I go scrambling about in the ecotone myself in an attempt to show you what I mean, I have to say I find your idea of the ecotone to account for haiku's problematics of representation quite compelling. Though an ecotone where language and nature might meet is not exactly an ideal controlled environment for the deconstructionist, this is precisely what makes it work for me. And it explains something about our process so far. Even after reconceptualizing the apparent oppositions and contradictions in haiku as functions of either balanced opposition or no-mind (not interchangeable concepts, but perhaps compatible?) rather than binaries—and thus rendering haiku theoretically undeconstructable—our attempted deconstructions have been pretty revealing. So it's both impossible and rewarding to deconstruct haiku. Maybe the answer to the question "can haiku be deconstructed?" is "mu." But I wonder if another (albeit far more Western) way of answering the question might be "yes," but with a caveat: the end result will be something other than, and often richer than, a deconstructed haiku.

Back to Bashō, then, to see if I can find that path between word and world. As I understand it, your analysis of Bashō's haiku depends upon a reading of the poem's syntax along these lines: If we take the prepositional phrase "on the back of a hand mirror" as modifying the noun phrase that comes before it, then "The spring we don't see" is the one that's on the back of the mirror. Next, if we take the final noun phrase of the

poem, “a plum tree in flower,” as an appositive to the first, a renaming of that now modified noun phrase, then the flowering plum tree is on the back of the mirror. But there are other ways to read these same three lines, other relationships and meanings implied. (At least there are in this English translation. In Japanese, it’s quite possible we would find a kireji, or cutting-word, to indicate syntactic breaks.) For instance, what if the relationship between the first (two-line) noun phrase and the plum tree line is one of juxtaposition rather than equivalence? What if the spring we don’t see is the one on the back of the hand mirror (whatever that is), and the flowering plum tree, as the clearest image in the poem, is the spring we do, in contrast, see?

Here’s another, more radical, possibility (and I think I’ve followed the poem all the way into its ecotone for this one): What if it isn’t the other side of the mirror that Bashō wants to privilege, but the world that isn’t on either side of the mirror? If the prepositional phrase modifies the noun phrase that follows it, rather than the one before it, we get “the spring we don’t see” as one thing, and the plum tree painted on the hand mirror as the second thing. Then, if these two nouns juxtapose rather than rename one another (either is possible, yes?), then the plum tree is the image we do see, and it’s a painting on the hand mirror. So we see a representation. What we don’t see is “the spring we don’t see.” In fact, it’s so unseen that it doesn’t even come to us in the form of an image in the poem, only as an abstraction. (Is this its camouflage? In this ecotone, is it an alien species following an old game trail across an unmarked border?)

Though it does have this presence in the poem, Bashō doesn’t even attempt to represent the actual spring, since we won’t see it as long as we’re looking only at representations (such as the painting on a hand mirror, the words in a haiku). We do still “see” the flowering plum tree, but we’re seeing it for what it is, a representation. So the poem almost asks us to look away from it, to look elsewhere, maybe out there in the world, for the real spring.

According to this reading, it’s not the painting on the hand mirror that’s privileged, or even the flowering plum tree that the poem does show us; it’s the natural world outside of and beyond language. But I don’t mean this in

the sense that would reinstate Nature on the throne of the transcendental signified. It's been duly knocked off, not by any deconstruction of the poem performed by us, but by the haiku itself—as we discover through the process of testing its deconstructability. The poem not only decenters Nature, but also problematizes our assumptions about our ability to know the natural world in such a way that what we actually end up with is a haiku potentially far more respectful of nature than would be one claiming language as transparent.

And here's where I find a viable social relevance in asking if haiku can be deconstructed: such inquiries might expose a range of ideological assumptions inherent in the idea(l) of the form as well as the ways it—and its authors—often subvert these very assumptions. Is Bashō on to the fact that language can never be wholly transparent, and so rather than try to use it as such, he's warning us of the seduction of representation? Perhaps he is telling us that if we want to know the plum tree, reading a haiku about it won't do the job; we have to go to the plum tree.

So let's get out for another walk in the woods, shall we?

Unseen chickadee
leaf shadow
the sound of breathing

The presence of absence?

WORKS CITED

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1999. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1999.
- Barthes, Roland. *Empire of Signs*. 1970. 1st American ed. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.
- Culler, Jonathan. *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982.
- Hamill, Sam. "Translator's Introduction." In *Narrow Road to the Interior and Other Writings: Matsuo Bashō*. Trans. Sam Hamill. 1998. Reprint. Boston and London: Shambhala, 2000.
- Hass, Robert, ed. and trans. *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Bashō, Buson, & Issa*. New York: Ecco, 1994.
- Higginson, William J. *The Haiku Handbook: How to Write, Share, and Teach Haiku*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985.
- Sergeant, Elizabeth Shepley. *Robert Frost: The Trial by Existence*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960.
- Scholes, Robert. *Textual Power: Literary Theory and the Teaching of English*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1985.
- van den Heuvel, Cor, ed. *The Haiku Anthology*. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 1999.





*the first dip
of my paddle
winter's end*

“the first dip”

Ron C. Moss

a stick over the falls:

A Life in Haiku

JIM KACIAN Interviews COR VAN DEN HEUVEL

ABSTRACT: More than just about anyone, Cor van den Heuvel can be said to have lived a life in haiku. He published some of the first chapbooks of English-language haiku on his own imprint, Chant Press, and has continued to write and publish haiku for seven decades. He was an early member of the Haiku Society of America, and served as its president. He edited *The Haiku Anthology* in three editions, giving credibility to the burgeoning genre outside of Japan. He explored the genre's relationship with his youthful passion for baseball, and edited (with Nanae Tamura) *Baseball Haiku*, a unique contribution to the literature. Most of all, he has hewed to a personal vision of what haiku is and should be in the United States, exemplified through his personal collections, and in *A Boy's Seasons*, a memoir in haibun. Here he discusses these things with Haiku Foundation founder Jim Kacian.

A live interview at Cor's apartment in New York City scheduled for July 2014 was cancelled for medical reasons, but the opportunity wasn't lost: the questions prepared for the occasion were offered to him in October 2015, and his answers over the next 3 months yielded this slow-motion dialogue:



JIM KACIAN: You came to haiku in the late 1950s, when there was a flowering of interest in the genre coming from several directions. But you took the unusual step of creating your own imprint, Chant Press, to make your work available. How much of this was a product of the burgeoning of small press at the time, and your personal involvement in editing/publishing? What were your goals for the press? How did the press succeed in realizing them? And how would you compare that experience with self-publication as it has emerged over the past 6 decades?

COR VAN DEN HEUVEL: I began Chant Press sometime in the latter part of 1960, putting 1961 on the copyright notice of the first book, *sun in skull*, because I understood that that way, during the following year, the book would sell better if it seemed to be “hot off the press.” This was before I started working at *Newsweek* in the Makeup Department (making up the page layouts and fitting stories into them). I was then living at 40 West 12th Street in Greenwich Village, an old townhouse that had been converted into a rooming house. My younger brother, Dirk, was already living there. At some point he got me a temporary job at Dial Dictation in the Wall Street area. It was a dictation service where businessmen could dictate letters on the phone to stenographers in our office and have the completed letter delivered to them right away.

At the time, the only experience I'd had with editing and publishing was as a copyboy for the *Woman's Home Companion* magazine and

as a cub-reporter (on the police beat) for the *Concord Monitor*, a newspaper in New Hampshire's state capitol. The first was a job I held in 1955–56, when I had taken a year off from the University of New Hampshire, between my junior and senior years, to live in New York City. I became a cub reporter in Concord in 1957, after I had graduated from the university. Both jobs lasted less than a year each.

As a copyboy at the *Companion*, I learned about the slush-pile, a thing that exists in book publishing as well as at magazines. In fact I became the first reader of the fiction slush-pile. I was trusted to weed out the obviously awful of these unsolicited manuscripts and pick out only those that I thought good enough to be seen by the fiction editor. While not engaged in this part of my job, which also involved less interesting chores such as being a go-fer and a delivery boy, I actually had a chance to chat with my fellow copyboy about literature. We were both fans of J. D. Salinger and enjoyed discussing that writer's latest contributions to the *New Yorker Magazine*. At that time I knew I wanted to be a writer, but the kind of writing I was trying to write was short fiction. I was interested in such diverse writers as science fiction's Ray Bradbury, fantasy writer John Collier, Jack London, Irwin Shaw, Thomas Wolfe, and Dostoevsky, but I wasn't sure what kind of fiction I wanted to do. It was a short story about football by Irwin Shaw, along with Keats' "On Looking into Chapman's Homer," that had helped me decide at the end of my freshman year to change my major from Science to Literature. Self-publishing was far from my mind. Any publication of a book by me was a dream far in the future. My job, however, intensified my desire to get published in magazines; not literary or poetry mags, but in "slick" magazines like *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers*, and *The New Yorker*. But I don't think I ever completed a short story, so I never even gave myself a chance to get rejected, never mind published.

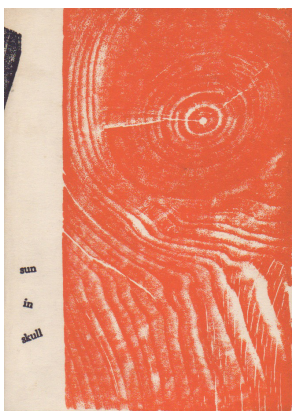
When not working at the *Companion*, I was able to engage in cultural activities in the City that, despite the short time involved, helped

broaden my awareness of important literary, art, and musical developments as they were reflected in whatever was going on there. I began to read the works of Samuel Beckett after I had been captivated by seeing *Waiting for Godot* starring Bert Lahr in its first US production. I became interested in the works of other playwrights as well, and remember getting the collections of plays from around the world edited by Eric Bentley. I became interested in avant-garde music after hearing a concert of the works of Edgar Varèse, which branched out for me to an interest in Stravinsky, Bartok, and, veering later in a different direction, to the music of Delius, Ravel, and Debussy. And from a visit to the Metropolitan Museum, what became a life-long interest, I fell in love with Japanese woodblock prints. This, while still ignorant about haiku. I acquired some beautiful reproductions from the Met and in my small studio apartment on Riverside Drive I had Harunobu's "Girl with a Lantern" (she's viewing a blossoming cherry tree at night) on the wall. Also Hokusai's "Great Wave". Years later I would give the framed "Great Wave" as a gift to Lilli Tanzer, the Founding Editor of *Frogpond* when she moved from Fishkill further upstate. I've always thought Lilli never got enough recognition for the initiative and hard work she put into creating *Frogpond*. I know how much she did, because I was president of HSA that year, 1978.

My job as a reporter in 1957 (still before San Francisco and my encounter with haiku) was important as it gave me the experience of having to write on a regular basis and to deadlines. Besides covering the criminal court I was assigned to write special interest stories for weekend editions of the paper. I remember doing long pieces on such subjects as the history of the Concord coaches of the 19th century, which were built right there in Concord and can still be seen in Western movies; another recounted a night riding with a State Policeman on patrol; and still another was a description of summer events taking place at a local park, for which, I remember, I first encountered and used the word "pergola." This kind of writing, besides teaching me to write to order, also introduced me to the fact that a newspaper writer was not only not allowed to write the

headlines to his own stories, but was often denied the chance to write the subheads, the small, bold, usually one-line headlines that mark breaks in the story. These also were written by the editors. Some were similar to a short one-line haiku in appearance, sometimes holding an image that would characterize the subject to be covered in the following paragraphs. I wanted to write my own for my own stories. I've often thought my envy of the editors being allowed this privilege may have lent a subconscious added attraction to my later love of, and desire to write, haiku.

But of course, at that time, after four years of college and three in the Air Force (between my freshman and sophomore years), two of which I spent on the Japanese island of Okinawa, I knew basically nothing about haiku. If someone had asked me I might have been able to say it was some kind of poetry from Japan that had influenced Ezra Pound and the Imagist poets, but little more. That was all about to change for I was soon to encounter the second issue of the *Evergreen Review* at a newsstand in downtown Concord, which would send me off to the poetry renaissance in San Francisco early in 1958.



To get back to Chant Press, or to move forward to it: One reason I was able to start it was that my brother loaned me \$100 to buy a small Excelsior hand-press, with a six by eight-inch chase and a font of type, which I used for all the Chant Press books except the last one, a series of haibun called *Puddles*, which I did on a computer. I was aware of poets self-publishing their chapbooks (and small magazines) in 1960: I met some at the Tenth Street Coffee

House, where I read my poetry. And by that time the bookstores I had frequented, in Boston, San Francisco, and New York had numerous examples of self-published chapbooks of poetry. Besides contemporary poets, I knew that Walt Whitman had first published

Leaves of Grass by himself and a few other famous poets of the past had also self-published. So there were forerunners to encourage me.

My goals? I wanted people to be able to read my work, and if I could sell enough copies, or if a copy got into the right hands, it might lead to an important publishing house taking an interest in my work. The Cornelia Street Bookstore in the West Village took a number of copies of my Chant Press books on consignment. It was well-known to contemporary poets both in New York and elsewhere. Though my books sold slowly there, enough moved to keep me happy. I also had copies in the Gotham Book Mart in mid-town. I never printed more than one or two hundred copies of each book, so I was not expecting to have a best-seller.

I had no interest at that time in publishing anyone's work but my own.

I felt that I was writing a new kind of poetry. The press would be devoted to it. None of the other poets I had met by that time were influenced by haiku, not at the Tenth Street, nor in Boston . . . or in San Francisco, except for Gary Snyder. And I was not sure at that time whether his work would follow a haiku path or not. Now, I think it did not; though his poetry has certainly been influenced by haiku, and he has even published a few, it has moved elsewhere. I would not meet any real haiku poets until 1971, when I found the Haiku Society on 49th Street at Japan Society's Japan House and met, among others, Anita Virgil, Bill Higginson, and Al Pizzarelli. Then I finally felt sure I too was writing something I could call haiku. Though I was calling them that when I started the press in 1960, I had seriously considered calling them something else. However nothing else really fit. I can't remember being able to come up with anything else satisfactory. Though I do recall briefly considering the Latin word for "thisness." It began with the same two letters as haiku and its first syllable had a similar sound: *haecceitas* (hike-chai-tes). I had gotten it from reading Gerard Manley Hopkins, one of my favorite poets, who used it to describe something he strived for in his poetry, the thisnesses of things and people. It would, of course, have

been a ridiculously, unwieldy, and mystifying name for a poetry as plain and simple as what I was trying to write.

My experience with the press was different in many ways from that of self-publishing today. It is much easier today, with all the advantages of computers and the internet, to publish your book yourself. And now publishing can be done even without books, without paper and ink. It can just exist in cyber-space. However, I still want my works to be in actual books. Also when I had the press, there was something exhilarating about physically creating the books myself. Added to the joy of writing the poems was that of making them become something you could hold in your hand and that was also good to look at.

The press may not have accomplished all of the things I dreamed it would. But it did achieve some of them. It brought my work to the attention of others. After I entered the community of the Haiku Society, it wasn't long until I received Merit Book Awards for several of my Chant Press books. An early rave review by Anita Virgil of three of them was very gratifying at the time and I still feel good when I think about it. And other reviews and different kinds of awards have followed. I could even look on the present interview as one of the results, in part, of the works produced by the press. Plus that early work, not only the writing of it, but also the designing and printing process, has surely helped me in creating my later works. Its long range effects hopefully continue.

JK: You have indicated that you pursued your early interest in haiku largely in a vacuum, unaware that others were exploring the genre at the same time. You mention you found the beginnings of community with the Haiku Society and in the company of William Higginson, Anita Virgil, and Alan Pizzarelli. Can you speak to the value that community has brought to your haiku life? Would you have continued endlessly on your own, or was the discovery of like minds essential to a recommitment to the study of the genre? And you've seen what the haiku has become over the years: in what ways has this growth helped and/or harmed haiku (as opposed to poets)?

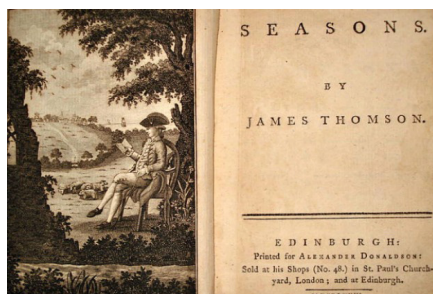
CvdH: My contact with the Haiku Society was invaluable. If I had continued on my own with no feedback from fellow poets seeking ways to make haiku an important addition to English-language poetry I would have started going in circles and would certainly not have developed my craft to a place where I can feel I've accomplished something worthwhile in American poetry.

The three names mentioned were my most important early influences, helping me to shape my work in the directions it has taken, perhaps Anita has had the most influence, both in the example of her own exceptional work and in her critical analysis of the work of others, including my own. Bill Higginson, often in ways that presented opinions and ideas that were in opposition to my own views, but which I think finally benefited us both as we adapted and found ways to reconcile our differences. I know he helped me to be a better poet. Pizzarelli's genius has been a guiding light, teaching me that in exploring our own minds we can come up with startling new images that can spark us into creating our best works.

The exchanges we had in the discussions that took place in the Society in those early days of the 70s and 80s provided a learning experience I could have had from nowhere else. One important long-term discussion, or debate, I had with Bill Higginson was about whether haiku was essentially a kind of descriptive poetry. I claimed it was and that American and English poets had a long history of refining the craft of descriptive writing to lean on when it came to their own literature and that it could combine with what we learned from the Japanese haiku and its descriptive aspects to create our own haiku. Bill claimed writing haiku was basically a naming process and was more simple than description.

I had done my Master's thesis at NYU in the mid-sixties on James Thomson's *The Seasons*, written early in the 18th century, and felt it was a landmark in English literature, moving the focus away from the figurative language of the poetry and prose that preceded it to capture the essence and spirit of the world we live in by actually

describing it. Inspired by the emerging language of description used by scientists and explorers before him, Thomson revolutionized the way we viewed our world through the lens of literature, especially in his move away from the personifications of the natural world of a poet like Michael Drayton, who apostrophized English rivers as if they were human beings. The



process of refining description took a big step with the Romantics, especially in the work of John Keats, another favorite poet of mine. He was influenced by Thomson. It is said he sometimes carried a pocket edition of *The Seasons* around with him. Some of Keats' own descriptions come close to the solidity (a sense of the physically real) and vividness of haiku. In "The Eve of St. Agnes" this happens for me in his description of the winter wind coming in the door so strongly as to lift the rugs from off the floor and in the scene where the moonlight shines through the stained glass window to light Agnes as she undresses for bed. Next after the Romantics, the Imagists readied the language for haiku by cleaning it up even further by calling for clarity, precision, and simplicity.

Thinking about Bill's claims for naming now, I can see that he might have cited my presentation of the word "tundra" as a one-word haiku as an example of a haiku that can only be described as a naming. To be characterized as a description, a haiku would have to have at least two words. It so happens that I have a two-word haiku in my very first chapbook from Chant Press. It is:

rain

tracks

The two words are flush left one under the other with one line of space between them. It could be described as a two-line haiku or a two-word haiku. Or a three-line if you count the line of space.

One may say that a one-word haiku is naming, but one could add that it is the exception that proves the rule. All haiku are descriptions except one-word haiku.

Many others contributed to the discussions at the Haiku Society as well as the three poets mentioned above. Some of the others were Alexis Rotella, Agnes Davidson, Edith Polster, Adele Kenney, Patricia Neubauer, though these, except for Davidson and Polster, came later. We all also in those early days wrote a lot of letters back and forth to each other. And phone calls. To and from some poets already named but also to several who were not able to come to the meetings, such as Nick Virgilio, who often called me from Camden early in the morning, and John Wills, who tended to call very late at night from Tennessee. Michael McClintock in California I kept in touch with by mail. Some Canadian poets joined the discussions, particularly Rod Willmot.

The growth of haiku here in this country and around the world has been, as you suggest in your question, both good and bad. Good because there are more chances of good haiku writers emerging from all these would-be practitioners of both haiku and its various related forms to bring haiku to further heights of excellence; and bad because too many bad poets, or poets who completely misunderstand the real value of haiku, will spread that misunderstanding and not only spoil it for others who might be taken in by them, but may mislead potential readers to get the idea haiku is only what these writers represent it to be and so fail to look at real haiku and miss an opportunity to enrich their lives. One of the problems is that it is not always easy for even seasoned practitioners of the genre to recognize which new developments that take place will end up making haiku better or not. One can examine them only as best one can and hope for the best. I have a feeling the growth and popularity haiku is experiencing will, in the long run, work to haiku's advantage.

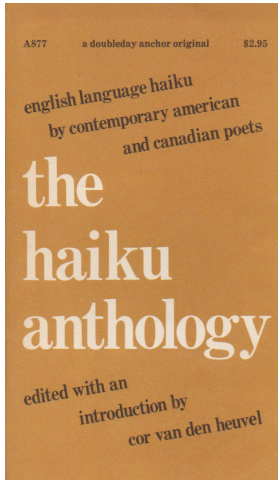
JK: Let's turn to your role in haiku editing: in the introduction to the first edition of *The Haiku Anthology* (1974) you wrote: "A great diversity lies in the pages ahead. But though these poets are all moving along individual paths, they are all following the haiku 'way'." Can you describe in more detail the qualities of this haiku "way"? Do you continue to subscribe to this position some 40-plus years later? Which raises the broader question: what key characteristics make a poem a haiku?

CvdH: For me a poem is a haiku if it is a one- to three-line poem with an ontological thrust that seems to put whatever is described in the poem actually before me. It's almost as if I could knock on it as I might knock on my desk. The poem does so by providing a sensory key: a sound, a visual image, a smell, a taste, or a touch or a combination of any of these in such a way as to give me an emotional feeling of being one with it and with all of existence. For a good short definition of a haiku I don't think we can do better than the Haiku Society's original definition: a poem "recording the essence of a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature." This is actually presented as the definition of a Japanese haiku. The definition of an English-language haiku (or any haiku not Japanese) is given in the next entry as: (2) A foreign adaptation of (1).

That leaves a lot for poets to play with—your idea of an adaptation may be quite different from mine. So I just take the first part as the definition of a haiku in any language. The Society recently revised its definitions and now uses the word "image" to characterize haiku. I voted against the revision. The first version was fine the way it was. It was originally created by Harold Henderson, William J. Higginson and Anita Virgil. I think that key phrase, "keenly perceived," was originally coined by Michael McClintock. Higginson worked on the most recent revision with some others, but I feel he was probably the moving force in making the change. In some of his talks about haiku he often liked to use the word "image" and would point out how it was embedded in the word "imagination." To me, the new definition

seems to imply that English-language haiku is just an offshoot of Imagism. It is not, it is something new.

If you take the word “Nature” in its broadest sense, it can be seen as representing all of Existence. In my attempt at a definition at the



beginning of this answer, I used the word “existence” rather than Nature. I meant it to include Nature, of course, but I think haiku can include more than just what is commonly thought of as “the natural world.” It can also mean anything that is an extension of that world. This is both a sensory and imaginative experience that can only be called forth by the reader’s mind reacting to the words of the poem. As Blyth and others have pointed out, haiku is a poetry of the senses, but the senses that are awakened by the poem also spark the imagination, which will call up an

image. Which Bill Higginson would have been glad to tell us about. I think it was also McClintock who once pointed out that a man’s house is as much a part of nature as a beaver’s lodge. You can extend that to anything man-made.

I will try to give some samples of what I mean when I say Existence as well as Nature. If the poem depends on the reader relating to something in the “so-called” natural world, most haiku poets will go along with that. It’s those other parts of existence which pose problems for some poets.

Here is a poem that presents something that is not from the “natural world” but which I think fulfills the criteria for haiku that I’ve outlined in the first paragraph:

kaleidoscope
the little sound of a star
shattering

This poem by Ellen Compton is not presenting a star, it is presenting the sound of a toy.

But along with that sound, a visual image of the toy and what we ordinarily view inside that toy, patterns created by mirrors and pieces of colored glass, will be called to mind. Echoing from the sound and the image we see, because of the mention of a real star, the image of a real star exploding somewhere far off in the universe. All this arising from how we view the kaleidoscope in the poem. Memories of childhood may also be invoked or just a general recalling of long ago experiences with such toys and a flush of nostalgia may mix with other emotions.

Now to take a poem that seems more divorced from the natural world than Ellen Compton's poem, here is a haiku taking place at some kind of formal meeting:

long meeting
I study the pattern
embossed on the napkin
— Miriam Borne

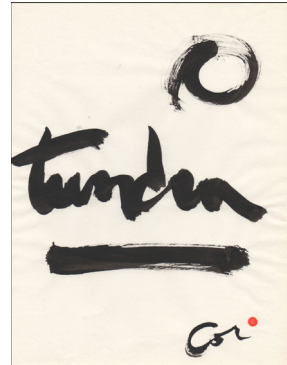
This is actually a hybrid, being both a haiku and a senryu. Senryu because it shows us something about human nature, but also a haiku because it presents a sensory experience vividly. It is an image of something very ordinary, but it becomes almost ontologically present through the magic of the words chosen by the poet and so relates us to the real world of material existence. And so it also meets my criteria for haiku.

It should also be pointed out that haiku is a poem of suggestion. Often the description does come close to naming, because haiku are so short. It suggests. As in this poem the words are enough to not only put a paper napkin in front of me, but aids me to actually visualize a pattern on it. It's this kind of magic I love most about haiku. This is the kind of haiku that often are so simple, you can look right through the words to what the poem is about.

I admit that there can be other kinds of haiku, and I can sometimes be led to admire them. They will appeal for more intellectual reasons, or for musical effects, or for other things poems in general can do. And I have included some in *The Haiku Anthology*.

JK: In the third edition of *The Haiku Anthology* you do not include your famous poem “tundra” —why not? And related: if “tundra” is not it, what is the minimum amount of text necessary to make a poem a haiku? And to what extent can typographical elements determine such a thing (that is, how does organic form (if we may so term “tundra”) participate in creating the opportunity for a reader to encounter a poem with the special set of tools one brings to haiku)?

CvdH: I felt it was becoming too much the poem that defined me, to the neglect of my other work. So I didn’t think it needed to be included again. There is something a little greedy of a poet who takes a single word from the language and sort of puts his or her brand on it. An interesting phenomenon once, I’m not sure if I were to try another one-worder it would not seem unseemly. I think someone has already published a shorter word as a haiku. The word “shark” on white space is only one syllable, whereas tundra has two. I’m not sure, but I think it was “written” and published by Alexis Rotella. Of course, many of us can think of single words that might work, and it’s largely by chance who gets to publish it first.



I think a shark swimming around alone on a page makes a very effective haiku. The *k* at the end sticks up like the shark’s tell-tale fin cutting through the surface of the water. And the sound of the word is sharp and cutting like the fish itself. Whoever got it down first deserves credit, perhaps Charlie Trumbull could tell us by finding it in his catalog of haiku. Also, I think the word could vividly call up the vastness of the sea as well as the shark as it rides on the wave

of a page, and that in turn could provide a horizon and perhaps a cloudscape above that . . . tinted by a setting sun. The best haiku are all about suggestion.

I think someone also published *island* as a one-word haiku. And I'm pretty sure there have been a few other good ones. I just recently saw mention of a magazine or perhaps it was a book—devoted to just one-word haiku. I haven't investigated it yet. And I'm not sure now where online I saw the reference.

JK: You've long advocated haiku beyond the confines of the haiku community. For instance, in your letters to Bly (1973–74), you passionately defend “the barest simplicity of words and image” and advocate for the removal of the poet's need to “transform” through the use of language. You argue that this simplicity of language is what creates an “ontological thrust” in haiku. Later, in the introduction to the third edition of *The Haiku Anthology* (1999) you wrote “When I first read Alan Watts' characterization of haiku as “the wordless poem”, I thought it was because a haiku had so few words, but now I believe it goes deeper than that (whether Watts intended it to do so or not). Haiku, for the reader, is wordless because those few words are invisible. We as readers look right through them. There is nothing between us and the moment.” Have your ideas about how language and literary device is used in haiku changed in light of the more recent scholarship about pre-modern haiku which has explicated their use of literary allusion and other poetic techniques popular at the time, complicating some of our earlier assumptions about the supposed simplicity of many of the poems of this period?

CvdH: I'm of two minds about this question. My ideal haiku is the kind I've discussed and championed for many years. It's an ideal of simplicity and sensory presence that I found realized in the haiku of John Wills, in such works as

a bluegill rises
to the match wavers
and falls away

and his famous one-liner

dusk from rock to rock a waterthrush

In my discussions with Wills about simplicity in haiku, he said he was interested in trying to get a simplicity so simple as to skirt the edges of the banal. Any simpler and the poem would be lost. He cited as an example of going as far in that direction as he could and still come up with a fine haiku, the following:

the glitter
of the gravel bed
this morning

I think he felt that in not mentioning the river, but revealing it by the glitter of the gravel bed he had produced a magical effect that made the haiku not just fine, but exceptionally so. I see a very shallow part of a wide river with the morning sun easily shining through the clear water to awaken a glitter all over the gravel on the bottom, and at the same time throwing sparkles across the surface of the river. A beautiful evocation of a shining river.

He said he was trying to reach the same kind of goals in haiku, that Bashō had sought near the end of his life when he was trying to achieve what he called *karumi* (lightness).

Another haiku of Wills' about a river's gravel bed adds more elements so that probably most of us can relate to it more easily than to the almost bare haiku we have just considered:

along the gravel
speckled trout their shadows
out before them

However, I like both of them. The plain one was in the first edition of my anthology. The trout one is in the third. So John Wills was seeking simplicity and plainness fairly early in his haiku life.

TWO

It seems to me that Buson often achieved an effective simplicity to a greater degree than most other great Japanese haiku poets. My favorite haiku by Buson is:

evening breeze
water laps against
the heron's legs

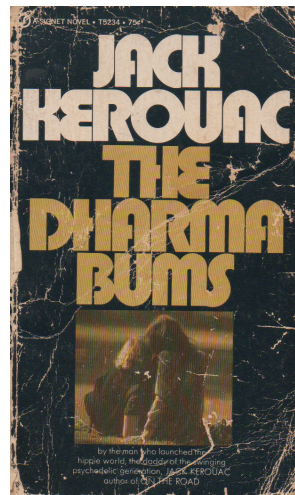
However, a lot of Shiki's sketches from life were also haiku of great simplicity. Especially:

the sparrow
hops across the porch
with wet feet

In his novel *The Dharma Bums*, Jack Kerouac has the Gary Snyder character quote this poem to demonstrate how haiku should be “as plain as porridge.” (He quotes the Blyth translation which uses “verandah” instead of porch.)

I mentioned “two minds” about this question at the beginning of my answer. My other mind thinks it may be possible that haiku can do other things, and still present haiku moments. All the other things that poetry in general does: that is to use figurative speech, literary (and other) allusions, musical effects, and all the things that words can do, except go on for more than 3 lines or 20 or so syllables. Now if haiku poets, can do these things and still achieve the kind of sensory presence I have sought in haiku without having the words disappear, then of course I'm prepared to praise them.

Those writing in English a so-called *gendai*-style haiku seem to me to be basically following the Japanese *gendai* haiku poets, who, in turn,



have been imitating free-verse poets of the Western surrealist and dada movements from early in the twentieth century.

Some of my early work in haiku also shows those influences. For example:

the windshield-wipers
vanish over the horizon
Geronimo leaps to his horse

This appeared in my first chapbook (1961). And I included it in the first edition of *The Haiku Anthology* (1974).

I've also included haiku with literary allusions and other kinds of poetic practices in the *Anthology*. (For example, Rod Willmot's haiku about a "page of Shelley.") I support various approaches to haiku. Still I favor those with an ontological thrust. Admiration and appreciation of other literary accomplishments present in the poem may come after the initial thrust of the poem, or may even precede it. But beyond those pleasures, at some point there will be that presence where/when the words themselves temporarily disappear.

Besides the *gendai* style of haiku, and those haiku with literary amenities, there is another kind of new haiku that I think often fails to present a haiku moment. It's not the haiku way I've been trying to follow. It has actually been a trend that has had many adherents for some years. That is the juxtaposition of a psychological, emotional, or an intellectual situation or thought with a brief reference to an element in the natural world, as if the combination will create a haiku moment. I don't think it is that easy. It's one type of "new" haiku that owes its popularity, not to Richard Gilbert's theories of juxtapositions, though some of those writers might find verification for working in this vein from Gilbert. As I've mentioned elsewhere, I trace this trend back to Adele Kenney's fairly well-known haiku about a flight of geese combined with the phrase "once there was so much to say." The poem first appeared, I think, in the 1990s or

earlier. I remember seriously debating with myself as to whether I should include it in the third edition (1999) of *The Haiku Anthology*. I finally decided not to.

Though it's possible that at the same time there may have been a natural inclination for other poets to go in this direction, I think the gradual move that way actually had her poem as a direct cause. Now, and for some time, the haiku magazines and whole books are full of this kind of "haiku." Its "success" in finding editors who like it is, I think, helping to encourage more and more poets to write not only that kind of haiku but also poems following most, or all, of Gilbert's multitude of various kinds of juxtapositions, though most of them have probably never read Gilbert. Just look at the title of the Haiku Foundation's magazine [*Juxtapositions*].

JK: At the same time as responding to those influences from Japan (if we may so characterize Watts' et als. contributions), you evinced an interest in a particularly North American ethos for haiku in English. This inclination is noticeable in each edition of *The Haiku Anthology*, and grows more pointed with each edition. What were your intentions in taking haiku in this direction? Did the *Anthology* meet these intentions? What were the consequences of this orientation on the genre, in your mind? How do you consider subsequent anthologies such as *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*, which have taken a decidedly broader view of the genre in English?

CvdH: I assume you mean by ethos, the kind of haiku I call for in my answer to what I look for in haiku, basically a sensory presence. Instead of looking for it in *Haiku in English*, where I expected to see a variety of kinds of haiku and not just the kind I like most, I was hoping to find it in Allen Burns' *Where the River Goes*. And in most cases I did. But in a large number of his choices I found the sensory presence sadly missing. As a result I felt no æsthetic unification with existence, no poetic magic of words turning into a reality on the page. Burns seems to think if a poet names a species of bird, insect, or animal it will come alive and present in the poem. I don't think it

works that way. At least it doesn't for me. The "poem" becomes not a poem, but something like a note in a Bird Guide or other kind of nature guide. It reminds me of my differences with Bill Higginson about naming and describing. I still think just naming in a haiku is not enough, or only very rarely so. The reader needs more to experience a haiku moment.

As long as I've mentioned *Where the River Goes*, I missed two of my favorite American haiku about nature in that anthology: Robert Spiess' snow-covered beaver lodge under a full moon and Anita Virgil's shadows on the pine bark. Two classics.¹ "Shadows" is a marvel how it reveals the reflections of sunlight from off the river flickering on the tree without mentioning them, the sun, or the river.

JK: One of the consequences of increased interest in haiku in the West has been the greater and more varied availability of translations of haiku from the East. How do translations of modern and contemporary Japanese haiku affect your ideas about language use in haiku? Could you talk about any examples of powerful haiku that might rank in quality with those you argued with Bly about where the words are not "invisible"?

CvdH: I find that I'm often disappointed with most contemporary Japanese haiku called *gendai*. They are often surreal and offer the reader strange juxtapositions that don't, for this reader, work together to produce any æsthetic experience, nothing that I would call a haiku moment. A few of Kaneko Tohta's poems manage to hold my interest. His sharks in the garden darting around in the mind and some others. I don't care much for such pieces as his turning into a motorcycle; it tries too hard to surprise. Well, it does that, but that is not the kind of surprise I want from haiku. Ban'ya Natsuishi departs even more from my idea of haiku, especially with his Pope series. His

-
1. Winter moon;
a beaver lodge in the marsh,
mounded with snow
— Robert Spiess

Quiet afternoon:
water shadows
on the pine bark.
— Anita Virgil

haiku about the parting waterfall leading into the future intrigues, but . . .

Since Santōka and Hōsai, there are a number of Japanese haiku poets I like. I've found them among those who pretty much stick to the real world. Most of them have broken from the Kyōshi school of only birds, flowers, and other traditional nature images to present the broader universe that we actually live in. Still, their works reveal a palpable presence to the reader's imagination.

For English-language haiku poets who are doing new things with haiku in which I can notice the words with appreciation (that is they are not invisible) while at the same time finding haiku moments in them, I've noticed a few who have impressed me. One is Scott Mason, who seems to be setting new records for winning awards from various English-language haiku contests from around the world. Here are two examples of his work that I would want in *The Haiku Anthology* if I were ever to do a fourth edition:

finally home . . .
my car engine ticks
to the stars²

her hoop earrings
tigers leaping
to mind³

The ticking of the car engine as it cools suggests the ticking of a clock. So the passage of time is foregrounded as the poet steps out of the car and looks up at the starry sky and perhaps considers how long it takes for the lights of the stars to reach us. The security and warmth of home is contrasted with the immensity of the universe and its cold indifference to our concerns. Somehow the ticking emphasizes the distance and the space stretching up above the poet/reader's house

2. Read at Spring Street Haiku Group July 8, 2015

3. *Frogpond* Vol. 38 No. 3

and driveway and helps him, as he steps out of the car after a long trip, to take pleasure in the sense of at last being home, and to have the beauty of the heavens soaring above him. And in the end he feels, too, a kind of relationship with those distant stars. It's the ticking of the engine "to" the stars that makes the connection.

The tigers leaping through the earrings is like a day at the circus with a beautiful woman. Not only do the tigers leap, at the same time the hoops are swinging on some lovely earlobes, but after the show is over, we wonder how the magician/poet was able to accomplish the feat.

And that is when we find the words no longer invisible. We might notice that a lesser poet might have used the whole common phrase "bring to mind," but that would have brought the tigers to a dead stop and dropped them to the ground. It's better to have "bring" unstated, it can exist as a faint after-echo in the mind rhyming with "rings" and "ping". In the same vein, having "leaping tigers" instead of "tigers leaping" would have also slowed or stopped the movement of the tigers. As it is, the tigers flow right through the hoops into the mind. A perfect little circus act and yet so much more.

I have to admit there have been many fine and even great haiku that earned my admiration where the words have not been invisible, but rather whose choice of them by the poet has been a part of the reason for my liking the poem. The primary reason, though, will still be the sensory presence the poem has given me. Are the "invisible words haiku" better than those whose words are visible? There's room for both in my book. And you'll find many examples of both in *The Haiku Anthology*. Still, for me, and my own work, I try for the wordless poem—though if the other kind comes to me, I'll not turn it away.

JK: You just mentioned Santōka and Hōsai—who are your favorite modern and contemporary Japanese haiku poets? Do you feel their work has affected your personal work? The work of other contemporary poets working in English-language haiku? What are the consequences of this influence?

CvdH: Let's start there: the unusual poet/monks Hōsai (Ozaki Hōsai 1885–1926) and Santōka (Taneda Santōka 1882–1940). Their diary-like haiku work best in series — they have a cumulative effect. Some of their individual haiku rise to a level that I would call outstanding. I remember when I first saw substantial collections of their work (in English translation, my Japanese would hardly fill a thimble) that I was very much in love with it. My only collections of their work that I owned were part of the library I donated to the Foundation a while ago so I can't reread them right now. But as I think back some bright moments swim into view like Santōka's going deeper and deeper into the mountains and Hōsai's piece about what might be in a drawer in his desk that he's not opened for a while. You can learn how much their writings actually meant to me, how they glowed with a magical radiance, by reading the short forewords I wrote for Hiroaki Sato's translations of their selected works, two books full of word-delights.



The haiku of Yamaguchi Seishi (1901–1994) have impressed me. Here are a couple that stay in my mind:

in the summer grass
the wheels of a locomotive
come to a stop.

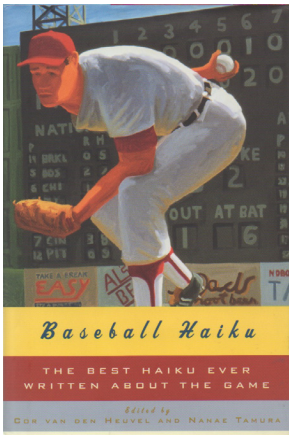
the night game
at the bottom of the stadium
the brightest spot on earth

A number of haiku by Mizuhara Shūōshi (1892–1981) reveal a sense of mystery and intrigue. Many of his images are original and evocative:

the huge dog
rises to greet the guest
May darkness

a night game's
bright lights across
the great river

The two baseball haiku that I've quoted are from *Baseball Haiku* (translations by Nanae Tamura and myself).



However, I can't say that there have been any Japanese haiku poets that have influenced me to any degree since Shiki (Masaoka Shiki 1867–1902). He was the last one that I can honestly say had a direct effect on the way I write haiku. His disciples, Kyoshi (Takahama Kyoshi 1874–1959) and Hekigotō (Kawahigashi Hekigotō 1873–1937), both interested me for the different approaches they took in following the haiku way: Kyoshi taking the traditional route and Hekigotō breaking rules and writing in a free style. I should say that Hekigotō helped confirm me in my belief that we in the West did not have to try to conform to the formal rules of Japanese haiku. On one of my trips to Matsuyama I hiked around the area at the edge of the city where I understood his gravesite was located. With a small Japanese/English dictionary in hand I inquired of people with the question in Japanese, “Where is Hekigotō’s grave?” When I found it and had paid my respects, I asked one of the caretakers at the cemetery to use my camera to take a picture of me standing beside the vertical tombstone. The photo is in a scrapbook in my archives (at the Foundation).

Besides the influence of his exceptional haiku, Shiki’s critical work has supported me in my belief in the importance of description in

the writing of haiku. I take his advocacy of sketching in haiku to be a direct call for description, for how else do you sketch with words, but by using them to describe something.

A list of the English-language haiku poets that have influenced me the most would have to include a lot of names. Some of those who would top the list are: John Wills, Alan Pizzarelli, Anita Virgil, Gary Hotham, Michael McClintock, Robert Spiess, Martin Shea, and Jack Kerouac.

Kerouac for his prose as much as his haiku. That passage in *The Dharma Bums* mentioned earlier where he has Japhy Ryder talk about haiku being as simple as porridge and then has him quote Shiki's haiku about the sparrow trailing rain drops (suggested, not stated) across the porch, has been a talisman since I first read it years ago, a talisman telling me to keep haiku simple.

Some of the simple descriptions in his prose are shining examples of how arrangements of words can become exceptional poetry without being put into poetic shapes on the page, without being versified. In his novels and short prose pieces like "Home for Christmas" ("It's a Sunday afternoon in New England just three days before Christmas . . . ") and "The Railroad Earth" ("There was a little alley in San Francisco at Third and Townsend in redbrick of drowsy lazy afternoons . . . "), he has descriptions that can coalesce into haiku moments, images that shine vividly on the page like simple, natural haiku.

This may be a good place for me to pay homage to some of the other prose writers who have influenced the way I write and whose work I love. They have all written descriptive passages in their work that have the power to let me create an ontological presence, to give me moments "of keen perception." These passages can almost have the same magical effect as a haiku.

They are: Thoreau; Jack London; Thomas Wolfe; James Joyce's *Dubliners*; Hemingway (John Wills shared my enthusiasm for Hemingway, especially his short stories, and particularly "Big Two-

Hearted River”); Nabokov’s *Speak, Memory*; Sigurd Olson; Raymond Chandler; Ross Macdonald; and Alain Robbe-Grillet (in translation).

While I’m at it, here are my favorite non-haiku poets: James Thomson’s *The Seasons*; William Wordsworth’s “An Evening Walk”; John Keats, Emily Dickinson; Gerard Manley Hopkins; Robert Frost; Elizabeth Bishop; William Carlos Williams; Francis Ponge (in translation); and Charles Simic.

JK: In *Tundra 2* (2001) you reviewed three books: Bill Higginson’s *Haiku World*, and *The Haiku Seasons*, and Clark Strand’s *Seeds from a Birch Tree*. At the end you said: “This emphasis on the importance of group activity and his [Higginson’s] belief that the spread of haiku will encourage global unity and result in a better understanding of the environment, commendable as these things may be, could, if not balanced with other considerations, support a view of haiku detrimental to its development in English. . . . That is, to see haiku as a kind of writing useful to society or for an individual’s spiritual well-being, but one that has little or nothing to do with the creation of poems of literary merit.” The question, then, is: What makes a haiku of literary merit? How does creating “poems of literary merit” intersect with what you call the “haiku way”? Do you think English-language haiku has gained or lost literary merit since you wrote this?

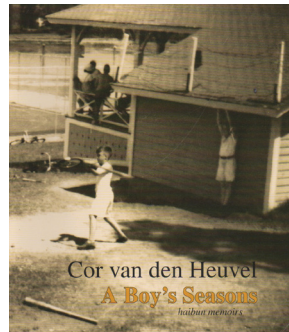
CvdH: In general haiku have literary merit if they fulfill the criteria spelled out in my definition given earlier and which do so with originality and panache. And if they are, as Pound said, the best words in the best order.

I believe with Hiroaki Sato that there can be many different kinds of haiku, just as there can be lots of different kinds of sonnets or limericks, etc. But to have literary merit, they must rise to the height of doing what words are not ordinarily expected to do in our daily lives, but rather soar into the realm of magic and become a kind of reality that has the radiance found in the discovery of new worlds, as Keats proclaimed in “On Looking Into Chapman’s Homer” and actually demonstrated with his famous *Odes*. You rarely do this by

calling for peace, or asking people to protect the environment. Nor by just juxtaposing two disparate things.

JK: In your 2010 experiment in memoir, *A Boy's Seasons*, you explore haibun as a strategy to achieve effects of reminiscence. The result, it seems to me, is episodic rather than fluid, and cumulative rather than discrete. How do you judge the success of your method? Were you surprised by the merits and difficulties of discontinuity, or was this effect your intention all along? If you were to attempt such a volume again, would you repeat this approach? If not, what else might you try?

CvdH: I wouldn't attempt another such volume again. Based on the seasons and certain national holidays, plus the subject of my paper route for a change-of-pace haiku sequence, and the three haibun on the subject of boyhood fights, it had to be episodic. I'm actually quite pleased with how the book turned out and with the nice job Single Island Press did in designing and publishing it. Nick Avis' glowing review was very gratifying as well. However I have no desire to do another book-length haibun. Mostly because I am a very slow writer and I'm sure I don't have enough time left to do one that would please me. I do have enough published and unpublished individual haibun in my files, however, to fill a book. A few quite long.



JK: As you consider the diversity of practices now—for example the range of what was included in the recent anthology, *Haiku 21*—do all of these paths still follow the “way” you have advocated? If not, could you talk about which paths seem to you to have moved beyond its scope and why? Do you see these as successful strategies in both short and long terms? How do you judge the overall “health” of haiku in English today, and are you optimistic for its future?

CvdH: *Haiku 21* is not one of my favorite books. But then I must admit I have not examined it all that closely. When the editors were putting together the book, they asked me to send them 20 of my

haiku published since 2000 for possible inclusion. I did and they selected one poem for the anthology. I declined to have it in the book. Obviously the editors were going along a different path than I was. One of the editors has a large selection of his haiku and senryu in the third edition of *The Haiku Anthology*. So apparently he was once on the same or similar path of haiku that I was. Of his haiku that I have seen published in the haiku magazines in recent years, which comes to a fair number, I don't think I've seen a single one that I'd choose to include in a fourth edition. His path has taken him to a kind of poetry that I no longer recognize as haiku. If it is a kind of haiku, so far it has not interested me.

Of course, time moves on, and so do tastes in art and literature. I hope that as these new approaches to haiku and the various *haikai* genres come into favor, as they seem to be doing already, that there will continue to be a cadre of followers in the line of Bashō, Buson, & Shiki; and of Wills, Spiess, & Virgil, of Pizzarelli, Mountain, & McClintock, and of Virgilio, Rotella, & Hotham. That the haiku spirit I know and love will live on.

Noting the history of haiku over the centuries, the ups and downs of Japanese haiku, I have to be optimistic that even though there may come times when the genre may seem to have withered and died, or become stale and hackneyed, or has just gone down a noisy dead-end, there will eventually come a poet like Shiki who will usher in a new period of flowering.

JK: Finally, please choose one (or so) of your haiku from each of your past 6 decades of practice that you feel particularly please you, or have met their goals, or realized an influence in the practice of the genre, or some combination of these things. And if you please, comment on them as you would like.

CvdH: Before I try to choose some favorites, I've just realized I've not said anything about the influence of the movies and painting on my work. I believe they have been very important, so I'd like to say a few words about them. First, the artists.

Others have commented on the influence of Edward Hopper's paintings on my work and I would guess of all the painters who have affected my writings, he has been paramount. His moods and subject matter, the loneliness he conveys, from an usherette in a theater to a woman in a hotel room, and the usual environments of average American lives that he depicts, from houses on lonely highways to gas stations and barber shops, are from the same world as my haiku, the things that I have tried to capture in words.

Very close to Hopper, I would next choose Winslow Homer as being a very large influence, especially for his scenes of nature, forests and the rockbound coast of Maine; and for his recreation of boyhood activities, showing them out in a boat, dreaming in a meadow, or playing in a playground. Asher Durand for his rocks looming out of the autumn woods. Charles Warren Eaton for his winter sunsets dimly lighting up his towering pine trees. Vincent van Gogh, Hiroshige, Joseph Cornell, and many others.

And finally, the movies. The films of Michelangelo Antonioni were very important to me in the 70s and 80s, maybe even earlier. *L'Eclisse*, *La Notte*. The empty spaces, the nothingness of nothing happening, the strange landscapes drifting timelessly. The silences. I discovered Morandi's painting in an Antonioni movie, I think it was in *La Notte*. There was one of his paintings of bottles hanging on a wall in someone's apartment or office.

Then there were the movies of Yasujiro Ozu. More emptiness, but now a warm, inviting emptiness, not the cool, distant spaces of Antonioni, but an intimate inviting space to dream in, small as a five-stool noodle bar, or as big as a baseball stadium.

So many different kinds of movies: the silent films of Chaplin, the westerns of John Ford, the Busby Berkeley musicals with their rows of beautiful girls kicking up their legs in unison, the lights and shadows of film noir, and, when I was a boy, the Saturday matinees of the cowboy heroes of the silver screen in their wide-brimmed ten-gallon hats mounted on fabulous horses almost as famous as their riders. . . .

Now to the poems: From my earliest haiku I'm still very fond of

a tidepool
in a clam shell
the evening sunlight

That's from the Maine coast. A shell left by the receding tide on the wet sand of a beach.

Another early one I like is:

through the small holes
in the mailbox
sunlight on a blue stamp

Moving to a later period:

the sun goes down
my shovel strikes a spark
from the dark earth

windy stars
the distant gas station lights
go out

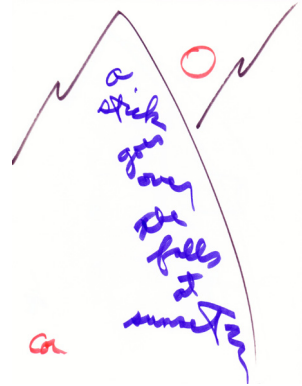
And four from even later . . .

raining at every window

starting to rise
to the top of the wave
the duck dives into it

summer afternoon
the long fly ball to center field
takes its time

a stick goes over the falls at sunset



and last, three more-recent poems, the first an example of extreme simplicity:

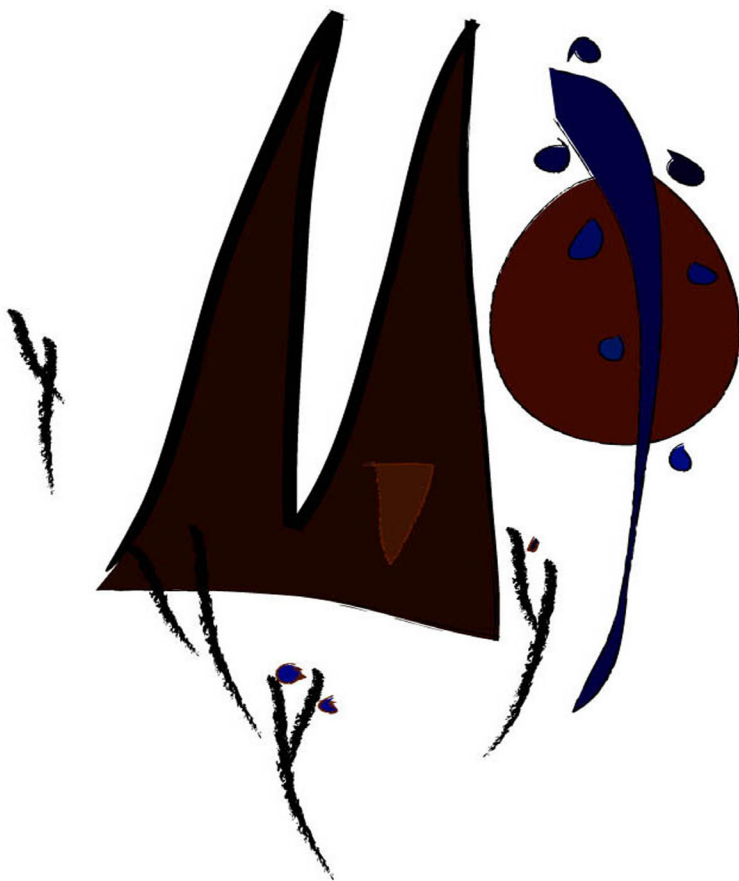
beach towels
on the porch railing
sea breeze

rainy afternoon
alone at the bar listening
to a distant ballgame

the catcher goes out
to talk to the young pitcher
the blue sky of May

Thanks for letting me retrace my haiku path. I found some things along the way I'd forgotten about.





on my own i created a day i got through

“on my own”

Marlene Mountain

“Do We Know What a Haiku Is?”

The Haiku Anthology in Retrospect

MELISSA ALLEN

van den Heuvel, Cor (editor). *The Haiku Anthology: English Language Haiku by Contemporary American and Canadian Poets*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974.

van den Heuvel, Cor (editor). *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, revised edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986.

van den Heuvel, Cor (editor). *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, third edition. New York: Norton, 1999. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934.

It has been more than forty years since Cor van den Heuvel published the first edition of *The Haiku Anthology* (hereafter referred to as *THA*), seventeen years since the third and presumably final edition was published, and the book is still in print, with over 50,000 copies of its three editions sold as of 2009 (van den Heuvel, “Chronicles”). One copy at least is likely to be on the bookshelf of anyone in the English-speaking world who has ever read or written haiku with any degree of seriousness. What can we say now about the effect that this extraordinarily influential work has had on English-language haiku (ELH)—and about the effect that ELH had on the later editions of the anthology?

What influence van den Heuvel intended for *THA* to have might be inferred from the definite article that begins the anthology’s title. Apparently this was not to be just an anthology among others; it was to be *sui generis*, and, as it turned out, the book did in fact very nearly hold this distinction for close to four decades. *THA* was popular immediately, and although other anthologies have of course been published before and since, not until the appearance in 2013 of *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years* did any anthology come close to rivaling *THA* as a comprehensive selection of English-language haiku. Even that more up-to-date and wide-ranging anthology, from the same publishing house (Norton), hasn’t shown any signs of putting *THA* out of print.

What accounts for *THA*’s unique level of success? Part of it must be put down to timing. In 1974, ELH was quite young as a literary movement, at least as a literary movement conscious of its own existence. Although individual English-language poets, such as Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, Paul Reps, Jack Kerouac, and Richard Wright, had discovered and experimented with haiku at various times over the previous sixty years, they had worked mostly in isolation from each other, and none had ever chosen haiku as their sole or even primary form of poetic expression. The world’s first ELH journal, *American Haiku*, was established only in 1963, creating the

first vector for the dissemination of the theory and practice of haiku in English and the first natural center for a community of ELH writers. Several other haiku journals followed in the late sixties and early seventies, and the Haiku Society of America (HSA), founded in 1968, made the community explicit. But it was still perfectly possible in those days for ELH poets to be unaware that any other ELH poets existed.

In fact, when Cor van den Heuvel stumbled across the HSA in 1971, it was his first intimation that he was not virtually the only person seriously writing haiku in the English language—although he had been doing so for over a decade, longer than almost anyone else. *THA* arose out of the fortuitous combination of an incipient literary movement still seeking focus and definition and an energetic poet with more than enough focus for everyone and a history of aiming directly and unhesitatingly at the literary target he sought.

Van den Heuvel himself recounts this extraordinary history in “My Haiku Path.” In 1958, still a very young man, working in New Hampshire as a newspaper reporter, he read about the San Francisco literary scene in the famous second issue of *The Evergreen Review* and promptly left to see it for himself. There, happening to end up at a party with the poet Gary Snyder, he heard Snyder talk about haiku: “[T]his was the first time the word ‘haiku’ had caught my interest. . . . A day or two later I looked in the library for books on haiku. I was soon reading and studying R. H. Blyth’s translations and those of Harold G. Henderson and Kenneth Yasuda.” Feeling straightaway that “haiku seemed to embody the essence of what [he] had been looking for in poetry,” he decamped from San Francisco without further ado and “by the early spring of 1959 . . . was living alone in a small cottage in Wells Beach, Maine, trying to write [his] own haiku.”

In “Path,” van den Heuvel clearly explains what was “the essence of what [he] had been looking for in poetry”: “I had been searching for the secret of turning words into things. . . . The secret seemed to lie in

the combining of simple description with naming, then refining the result into elements of pure suggestion. The words would then call up an image in the mind that had not only the ontological thrust of real existence, but elicited from the reader an emotional conviction that he was one with the things that comprised that image and by extension one with all of being, all of nature—all of the universe . . .”

This conviction that haiku was “pure suggestion” that created in the reader “the ontological thrust of real existence” and a sense of being “one with . . . the universe” was powerfully inspirational for van den Heuvel, resulting in his writing highly accomplished, even brilliant haiku that remain classics of the genre. In *The Haiku Handbook*, William J. Higginson and Penny Harter conclude that “[t]he freshness of van den Heuvel’s movie and amusement park images, and his spare handling of the language, were not to be equaled in haiku by other Americans until almost a decade later” (66). As I’ll examine, van den Heuvel’s ideas about the nature of haiku were also to manifest themselves in his editing of *THA* over a decade later.

When, in 1971, van den Heuvel discovered the HSA, and with it the entire existing ELH community, he acted with the same resolve and competence that he had back in the fifties when he determined first to go to San Francisco to learn about poetry and then to go back to the East Coast and write haiku. Just as he had met Snyder at the opportune moment, he now “met William J. Higginson, Anita Virgil, Alan Pizzarelli and a number of other writers who were to become important American haiku poets” (“Path”). As Higginson explains in *The Haiku Handbook*, van den Heuvel “immediately began a careful reading of all the haiku materials he could find. As he went he made note of poems he particularly liked” (71). This sheaf of favorite poems was to become the first, 1974 edition of *THA*. Legendarily, when van den Heuvel stopped by the Doubleday offices with his completed manuscript to inquire about publication, he discovered that two other writers had already proposed haiku anthologies to the publisher—but theirs had not yet been compiled.

Van den Heuvel, with his work complete, got the contract and the lock on haiku history (van den Heuvel, “Chronicles”).

That *THA* was published by a major publisher was certainly a factor in its success. Higginson and Harter point out that “the several other anthologies of haiku published before and since were all lovingly produced in short press runs. *The Haiku Anthology* was a trade paperback from Doubleday, and enjoyed wide distribution. Interest in haiku grew, and several new readers and poets became involved in the haiku magazines” (71). In his *Modern Haiku* review of the second edition of *THA*, Wally Swist observes that this publication “marked the first time that a sizeable and qualitative compilation of North American haiku was made available to the general reading public” (49).

THA certainly greatly expanded the borders of the ELH community and simultaneously expanded the wider public’s understanding of haiku. But the anthology didn’t just extend a welcoming hand to ELH outsiders; it provided those who were already devotees of ELH with an invaluable resource for growing their own understanding and mastery of the genre. Swist observes that “many of the haiku poets that came to full maturation in the genre and began writing highly effective work later in the 1970’s and 1980’s weaned themselves by reading and rereading van den Heuvel’s anthology” (49). For these poets, Jim Kacian says, *THA* “offered an argument for what was excellent, distinctive, and likely to last” (334).

Overall, according to Swist, “The first edition of *The Haiku Anthology* was both precursor and harbinger to the evolutionary explosion of English language haiku in recent years. . . . To any erstwhile literary observer of the past decade what van den Heuvel’s anthology accomplished was startling” (49).

Because of the outsize influence of *THA* on the course of ELH, it’s worth closely examining not only what the nature of this influence was but what is actually in the anthology—and what is not. What did van den Heuvel value in haiku? What did he actually think haiku

was? And how was he influenced in the compilation of later editions of the anthology by trends in the development of ELH?

The first edition of *THA*, as one might expect for an anthology of a young and relatively undeveloped form, is not extensive or wide-ranging: it contains some 230 haiku by 38 poets, all of them North American. (The subtitle of this edition, changed for subsequent editions, is “English Language Haiku by Contemporary American and Canadian Poets.”) It’s unlikely that anyone who had been regularly reading North American haiku journals would have been surprised by any of the poets chosen — as the *Modern Haiku* reviewer, James P. Rooney, says, “It is pleasant to find many familiar haiku in this new haiku anthology.”

Rooney frequently references *American Haiku* in his review and cites as notable inclusions in the anthology the work of perennial American Haiku contributors O. Southard (Mabelsson Norway in this edition), Foster Jewell, Nicholas A. Virgilio, and Robert Spiess. Rooney does also praise the inclusion of Marjorie Bates Pratt and Anita Virgil as “poets who have not been widely published,” but nothing in this anthology seems like new ground to him (45). Rather, as Charles Trumbull points out, it’s “an indication that American haiku had come of age and was beginning to develop its own canon.”

The introduction by van den Heuvel, a feature of each of the editions, gives us invaluable information about what it is that the editor intended to accomplish with his work. The tone of the introduction of the first edition is sometimes plaintive or defensive, as in the first sentence: “Until now, the poets represented in this anthology have been largely ‘invisible.’ . . . The movement of which they are a part, however, has now reached a point where its accomplishments can no longer be ignored” (xxvii).

Not only have the accomplishments of haiku poets often been ignored by the larger literary world, insists van den Heuvel, they have, at times, been mocked: “In the midst of this proliferating interest and activity with haiku throughout the world, the ‘literary

world’—critics and poets alike—sees English language haiku either as worthless fragments, blank and incomprehensible, or as little more than examples of a form of light verse whose only use is as an educational aid to interest children in poetry” (xxix).

Clearly, van den Heuvel sees it as part of his mission to rescue haiku from this state of neglect and ignominy by making it at last visible, so that its depth and worth as poetry can be seen. But he also doesn’t shy away from pointing out that ELH is in its infancy as a genre and that there is little consensus, in fact, as to what ELH actually is: “Haiku in English is still in the process of finding its ‘way.’ Beyond a general agreement that haiku should be short, concise, and immediate . . . individual poets may often diverge widely in their conceptions of what a haiku is and how one is created. . . . Is it basically a religious or an esthetic experience?” (xxx)

In this edition, at least, van den Heuvel seems agnostic on this matter. He cites James W. Hackett as an example of a poet who believes haiku is inextricably linked with Zen and spirituality and Nicholas Virgilio as an example of a poet who favors “imaginative creation” as the source for his work—both poets are featured prominently in the anthology and their points of view are treated evenhandedly (xxxi). Van den Heuvel concludes generously that “‘haiku’ may be on its way to becoming a much broader term than it has been in the past. This may or may not be a good thing . . . Japanese haiku has survived countless controversies in its centuries-old history and haiku in English will too. As [Harold] Henderson says, what haiku in English will become ‘will depend primarily on the poets who write them’” (xxxiii).

Indeed, though the first edition of *THA* eventually went out of print, “the poets who were weaned on it,” as Swist says in his review of the second edition that appeared in 1986, “strove ahead with their own writing and editing—their own exploration in the form and the content of haiku” (49). Swist applauds the new edition for showcasing “the growth, serious interest, and fresh vitality, that newer devotees

have brought to [the] genre” (50). The increased number of poems in the second edition—from just over 200 by 38 poets to nearly 700 by 66 poets—reflects the huge growth in the number of ELH haiku poets in those twelve years, some significant portion of which must certainly, as Swist suggests, be due to the influence of *THA* itself.

Notably, the second edition, though issued by a different publisher (Simon & Schuster) than the first, contains van den Heuvel’s introductions to both the first and second editions, as if to assert the historical importance of that first introduction. Reflecting the increasingly healthy state of the genre, the second edition’s introduction is far less defensive than the first edition’s. In his earlier introduction van den Heuvel cited the typical arguments made against haiku by the mainstream poetry community; now he turns around and hurls some pointed criticism of his own back. “Someone . . . once likened the English language haiku movement to a small puddle far from the mainstream of poetry. If so, the puddle is doing very well on its own. While the mainstream moves, for the most part, sluggishly through gray fogs of obscurity and intellectualization, the puddle is ablaze with color and light” (9).

In this introduction, van den Heuvel repeats his earlier assertion that “haiku will become what the poets make it” (9). In this vein, he describes what he sees as the three major new trends in haiku since the first edition: “the emergence of the one-liner as a common form for haiku and senryu; the growing practice of writing longer works, such as sequences and renga; and the increasing importance of human relationships, especially sex and love, as subject matter” (10).

In addition, van den Heuvel admits that there have been “many other successful explorations of the possibilities of haiku and its related genres. Usually these have been accomplished by the individual genius, or style, of a particular poet,” such as Marlene Mountain, Alan Pizzarelli, or Raymond Roseliep. The first and third of these poets, now solidly entrenched in the canon of ELH, appear in this edition for the first time, though both were already writing when the first

edition was published. The horizons of ELH were unquestionably widening during this time, but so too, apparently, were van den Heuvel's own.

Reading this edition of the anthology after reading the first feels something like meeting a child for the first time when she's very small and then not again until she's a teenager—there is continuity in both appearance and character, but there are also sea changes. The first edition contains a preponderance of three-line Shiki-like nature sketches, which was the dominant mode for haiku at the time, and though there are certainly striking variants—among them, notably, van den Heuvel's own classic one-word haiku, “tundra”—they're few and far between. Throughout the second edition, although the old standbys like Robert Spiess, John Wills, and J. W. Hackett are still represented in abundance, the reader is constantly stumbling on poets like Alexis Rotella, George Swede, Marlene Mountain, and Bob Boldman—innovators in form and subject matter who feel more than just one generation removed from the previously mentioned poets.

When one can move in the space of three pages from a straightforward sketch poem like Lenard D. Moore's “Summer noon; / the blueberry field divided / by a muddy road” (148) to Marlene Mountain's classic one-line haiku “pig and I spring rain” (151), it's natural to ask oneself, “What exactly am I reading here?” There's a similar distance, physical and mental, between Robert Spiess's “Winter moon / beaver lodge in the marsh, / mounded with snow” (233) and George Swede's “Night begins to gather between her breasts” (234). It seems certain that the popular conception of haiku at the time of the anthology's publication was much narrower and less daring than represented in this anthology, and so, as Kacian says, in its second incarnation *THA's* “breadth of poetic styles and content offered a compelling argument for the vitality of the genre” (340).

Unlike the first and third editions, the second edition includes an appendix containing renku (called *renga* by van den Heuvel), haiku sequences, and a small selection of reviews of books of haiku. The

editor clearly felt that given the increasing popularity of the first two of these types of writing, a fully representative haiku anthology should include them, but he also seems to have felt that they weren't "real" haiku or at least hadn't come to full maturity in the English language. Of renga, he says, "Its importance for this anthology is that the practice of writing [it] has helped stimulate innovation in the writing of haiku and senryu and has encouraged the exchange of ideas and a sense of community among poets by bringing them in closer contact with one another" (12). (In the third edition of *THA*, renga and sequences are absent, suggesting that van den Heuvel ultimately questioned their significance to the development of ELH.)

All this variety seems to have both thrilled and confused van den Heuvel. Towards the end of his introduction to the second edition, he asks the frank question, "After about twenty-five years of English language haiku, do we know what a haiku is?" And then he answers himself: "There seems to be no general consensus—which may be a sign of its health and vitality" (19).

Van den Heuvel is still wrestling in this introduction with the question of whether Zen, or at least some kind of quest for "enlightenment," is essential to writing haiku. He acknowledges that this is a point of view that is falling out of favor these days, citing the work of poet and critic Hiroaki Sato as influential in the effort to "get the Zen out of haiku" (19). Still, van den Heuvel struggles to give up this point of view entirely, and devotes several paragraphs to some tortured logic based on an account by Bashō's disciple Doho of the nature of the process of writing haiku: "achieving detachment from the self, becoming one with existence." "If that's not enlightenment," van den Heuvel says defensively, "it certainly seems like a step in the right direction" (20).

(There were, of course, plenty of other onlookers who saw *THA* and haiku more generally as a bastion of Zen. Notably, Bruce Ross, editor of arguably the only other major general haiku anthology published between 1974 and 1999, *The Haiku Moment*, claims that "the poets of

The Haiku Anthology have a greater knowledge of Oriental literature and poetics than the preceding two generations of American haiku poets. . . . They also develop subjectively perceived experience to emphasize the Zen-like mental climate of Wallace Steven's 'supreme fiction,' as in the well-known lily haiku by Nick Virgilio. They also evoke revelations through haiku expressed as a transcendence of the normal self and of the normal perception of objects" [18].)

In the end, though, enthusiasm wins out for van den Heuvel over dogma, and he concludes that "ultimately haiku eludes definition." Paraphrasing Rod Willmot, he elaborates: "It may be a good thing . . . if, rather than working towards a restrictive definition, we continue in our present direction, where haiku poets are creating 'a whole variety of poetics and criticisms, coexisting rather than competing'" (21).

The second edition of *THA* stayed in print until, in 1999, van den Heuvel brought out the third edition, containing about 850 poems by 89 poets, 44 of whom appear in *THA* for the first time. By now, the ELH community had matured to the point where there were thousands of participants worldwide, dozens of journals and presses, an untold number of books and chapbooks, and perhaps most importantly, a growing body of serious scholarship, especially by native speakers of Japanese with a broad historical perspective on the development of haiku and its place in contemporary Japanese society. Notable among these scholars were Hiroaki Sato, mentioned above, and Hiruo Shirane.

In addition, the development of the World Wide Web meant that there was beginning to be an online ELH community. Within a few years this community would explode to unimaginable proportions, vastly increasing the audience and the participants for ELH, not to mention the sheer number of haiku in existence. The web helped widely disseminate information about the genre that was previously only available to the relatively tiny number (several hundred) of subscribers to print journals such as *Modern Haiku* and *Frogpond*. In

some ways, the third edition of *THA* can be seen as the last stand of the old guard of ELH, the last chance to produce a stable canon of poetry from the first forty years of haiku in English.

In this effort, most haiku poets seem to have felt that the third edition succeeded. Issued by yet another publisher, W.W. Norton, a noted publisher of anthologies, the new anthology sold briskly from the start and earned its fair share of praise. The *Modern Haiku* review, by Charles Rossiter, says that the anthology reads “like a family reunion of a growing and healthy family . . . a new generation providing the energy and perspective of youth and the memories of those who’ve passed away” (93). Rossiter continues, “[I]f you are at all interested in haiku, you want to own this book. It is simply the best, most extensive collection of English language haiku in existence, and a joy to read” (93).

The praise this time, though, was less unanimous than it had been for previous editions—ironically, likely a result of the ever-growing diversity among ELH poets that van den Heuvel championed so vigorously in the first two editions of *THA*. Criticisms tended to fall into two areas: the lack of diversity, geographical and otherwise, among the anthology’s participants, and the lack of historical accuracy in van den Heuvel’s definition of haiku.

Of the first criticism, Kacian explains, “The first volume . . . was predictably a gleaning of the best haiku in English to be found, and not surprisingly the great bulk of these poems had been written by North American poets. By the second volume . . . and especially the third . . . interest and activity in the genre had moved far beyond North America, a change not reflected in these subsequent editions” (334). Worldwide, Kacian continues, “The success of *THA*, with its focus on North American poets, gave rise to the idea that there was an ‘American style’ of haiku, to be both admired and resisted” (349).

Indeed, the only non-North Americans in the second edition of *THA* are the Australian Janice Bostok and the Japanese Tadashi Kondo. In the third edition, there are no contributors at all from outside North

America, including from the United Kingdom, where the British Haiku Society had existed since 1990, or from Australia, where there was also a small but thriving ELH community.

Furthermore, there was a feeling on the part of some that van den Heuvel's location on the East Coast led him at times to overlook poets from other parts of the country. Even Rossiter, despite his enthusiasm for the third edition, says disappointedly, "van den Heuvel has never claimed to be comprehensive but rather representative . . . but the exclusion of these four poets [Randy Brooks, Bill Pauly, Ken Hurm, and Paul O. Williams] is a major oversight that might even affect the representativeness of the collection—they are all associated with the Midwest" (94). (Rossiter himself is from the Chicago area.)

A graver criticism of *THA*, and more generally of the HSA definition of haiku promoted by van den Heuvel in each of the editions of the anthology, came from the two scholars of Japanese literature mentioned above, Hiroaki Sato and Hiruo Shirane. They proposed that HSA, van den Heuvel, and the ELH community at large seriously misunderstood the nature of Japanese haiku and that this misunderstanding had led them to unnecessarily limit the range of form and subject matter in ELH. At the time of publication of the third edition of *THA*, this criticism focused on van den Heuvel both because the anthology was a large and available target and, undoubtedly, because of the outsized role that the anthology played in disseminating what Sato and Shirane saw as mistaken information.

Sato, a poet and prolific translator who served as HSA president from 1979-1981, wrote the *Frogpond* review of the third edition of *THA*, which was in fact originally published in slightly different form as a 1999 essay in the *Japan Times* titled, encouragingly, "American haiku now holds its own." He acknowledges in his review that "Cor van den Heuvel is the most important anthologist of haiku composed in English" (Sato, "One Way," 75). But he also complains that "the HSA definition of Japanese haiku—that haiku is a poem recording 'a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human

nature’ — which van den Heuvel has enshrined in each edition of *The Haiku Anthology*, was, from the start, oddly at variance with Japanese views of haiku, and the divergence has, if anything, grown in recent decades” (79).

In fact, in the same issue of *Frogpond*, Sato devotes an entire separate article to elaborating on the issues he takes with the HSA definition of haiku and other forms of poetry. “It is doubtful,” he says, “that a Japanese definition of haiku will emphasize such flash-like enlightenment as the motivational force of haiku composition. The standard [Japanese] dictionary definition of the haiku does not refer to the content, except to say that in most instances a seasonal word (*kigo*) is included” (Sato, “HSA” 72-73). Furthermore, Sato points out, “the main reason for the creation, maintenance, and expansion of *kigo* is cultural” — and in a different culture, season words don’t have the same importance that they do to the Japanese (73).

Van den Heuvel’s belief that haiku should have only certain types of content leads him, Sato believes, to unnecessarily exclude from *THA* certain types of poems, such as Marlene Mountain’s self-titled “pissed-off poems” about women’s rights and environmental issues (Sato, “One Way” 79). But in the end, Sato concludes, van den Heuvel does, in fact, give “considerable leeway to the HSA definition. And in any case, the anthologist must necessarily take a position, and in the position he has taken, van den Heuvel eminently succeeds” (80).

One notes, however, that van den Heuvel’s position toward haiku hardened somewhat between the second and third editions of *THA*. This is evident partly from the poems he chose for the anthology: One of the more striking omissions from the third edition was van den Heuvel’s own one-word haiku, “tundra,” undoubtedly one of the most famous, and also one of the most avant-garde and controversial, entries in the first two editions. And though this edition still contains many one-line haiku and otherwise innovative poems, along with a few concrete haiku, almost all of them were already present in the second edition. Of the new poets chosen for this edition, most write

in a more “traditional” manner—meaning more in accordance with the description of haiku that van den Heuvel gives in the introduction to the edition.

Here, he has abandoned his contention from the first and second editions that haiku is what the poet makes it, exchanging this relatively relaxed attitude for a much more rigid notion of what haiku is. (It’s possible that Sato is echoing those earlier statements of van den Heuvel’s when he declares at the end of his article about the HSA definitions: “Today it may be possible to describe haiku but not to define it . . . Both in form and content, all you can say is that a haiku, be it composed in Japanese, English, or any other language, is what the person who has written it presents as a haiku” [73].)

As we examine van den Heuvel’s main contentions about haiku in the third edition’s introduction, it will be instructive to view them in the light of an article by Haruo Shirane that coincidentally appeared in the same edition of *Modern Haiku* in which the review of the third edition of *THA* appeared (and was also presented as a paper at Haiku North America in Chicago in 1999, where the third edition of *THA* debuted). This article, “Beyond the Haiku Moment: Bashō, Buson, and Modern Haiku Myths,” contains historical information about the development of Japanese haiku that revolutionized many English-language poets’ understanding of haiku. The fact that the article appeared at virtually the same moment as the final edition of *THA* makes it possible for us to identify 1999 as the moment of the beginning of a transformation of an understanding of haiku that had held sway since at least the fifties to a more nuanced, historical understanding.

In “Beyond the Haiku Moment,” Shirane sets out to debunk “three key definitions of haiku—haiku is about direct observation, haiku eschews metaphor, and haiku is about nature—which poets such as Bashō and Buson would have seriously disputed” (48). All three of these definitions are mentioned in the introduction to the third edition of *THA* as essential to the writing of good haiku.

For instance, van den Heuvel asserts: “Haiku help us to experience the everyday things around us vividly and directly, so we see them as they really are . . . Haiku is basically about living with intense awareness, about having an openness to the existence around us—a kind of openness that involves seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching” (xi-xii). In contrast, Shirane writes, “One of the widespread beliefs in North America is that haiku should be based on one’s own direct experience, that it must derive from one’s own observations, particularly of nature. But . . . this is basically a modern view of haiku, the result, in part, of nineteenth century European realism” (49).

Similarly, van den Heuvel praises “haiku and the way of life it represents: living in the present moment—now” (xii). He adds that “the greatest haiku are those that take me directly to the haiku moment without calling attention to themselves” (xxix). But, Shirane points out, “the emphasis on the ‘haiku moment’ in North American haiku has meant that most of the poetry does not have another major characteristic of Japanese haikai and haiku: its allusive character, the ability of the poem to speak to other literary or poetic texts” (55).

“For Bashō,” Shirane explains, “haiku had two axes: the horizontal (the present) and the vertical (across time)” (53). Rather than insist on haiku preoccupying themselves with the present moment, he says, “I would in fact urge the composition of what might be called historical haiku or science fiction haiku” (54).

Again, van den Heuvel instructs us that in haiku, “Such devices as figures of speech or rhyme are rarely employed, for these tend to take away from the thing as it is. The haiku should take us right to the haiku moment and present us with the tree or a leaf, the spring rain or the autumn wind . . . just as they are, no more, no less” (xxix). Shirane’s counterpoint is that “Without the use of metaphor, allegory, and symbolism, haiku will have a hard time achieving the complexity and depth necessary to reach mainstream poetry audiences and to become the object of serious study and commentary. The fundamental

difference between the use of metaphor in haiku and that in other poetry is that in haiku it tends to be extremely subtle and indirect, to the point of not being readily apparent. The metaphor in good haiku is often buried deep within the poem. For example, the seasonal word in Japanese haiku tends often to be inherently metaphorical, since it bears very specific literary and cultural associations” (55).

In the conclusion to his article, Shirane addresses some of the same issues that Sato did in his critique of *THA*: “For North American poets, for whom the seasonal word cannot function in the fashion that it did for these Japanese masters, this becomes a more pressing issue, with the need to explore not only metaphorical and symbolic possibilities but new areas—such as history, urban life, social ills, death and war, cyberspace. Haiku need not and should not be confined to a narrow definition of nature poetry, particularly since the ground rules are completely different from those in Japan” (62).

The scholar and translator David Burleigh, by analyzing the contents of *THA* alongside the contents of anthologies of modern Japanese haiku, has upheld Shirane’s contentions about the failure of *ELH* to allude to other literature and thus to engage in a conversation between texts in the manner of Japanese haiku. He describes the multiple references in the Japanese anthologies not only to Japanese literature but to Western literature such as the Bible, Chekhov, and Blake. He then examines “a book that most readers probably possess, and often look at, the third edition of *The Haiku Anthology* (1999).”

In *THA*, by way of cultural or literary allusion, Burleigh finds only “several references to Christmas . . . as well as one or two to other traditional observances, like Ash Wednesday or Hallowe’en.” He continues: “There are no references at all, as far as I could see, to the Bible which . . . is . . . a major literary work and one of the main foundations of our culture, whose language rattles through much of what we say and think and write regardless of belief. There is one mention of Beethoven, but I found only three allusions to literary works in English, two of them to Thoreau . . .

[and the other] the only haiku in the whole collection that mentions a Western poet [Shelley] by name, or even not by name.”

Burleigh concludes from the rarity of literary allusions in *THA* that “English haiku prefer in general not to allude to literary works in English or . . . to refer to Western culture much at all, which I find perplexing. . . . The haiku whose contours I am outlining, then, are an English one in which almost no reference is made to any poetic tradition in its own language, and a Japanese one which is well able to refer back to its own poets in that form, and does so, but also very occasionally invokes words, phrases, characters, from Western literary works, and is certainly not averse to this.”

It’s tempting to wonder how much Burleigh’s observation is true of ELH in general and how much a result of Cor van den Heuvel’s personal preferences in haiku, which emphasizes direct observation of the stuff of everyday life and eschews elaborate literary devices. van den Heuvel himself might wonder this: In response to scholarship such as Burleigh’s, he told Carmen Sterba, “I hope there will always be some American haiku poets who will continue to write in the simple sketching style of Shiki. For it is that example that inspired American haiku poets to bring a new kind of simplicity to our country’s literature. A suggestive simplicity which . . . allows words to create an ontological thrust that presents an image you can reach out and touch.”

In the twenty-first century, ELH has moved forward, experimenting with new forms, modes, and subject matter partly inspired by a new understanding of Japanese haiku. In this environment, *The Haiku Anthology* remains a touchstone of the traditional, albeit open-minded and highly discerning, vision of haiku that Cor van den Heuvel so clearly described and promulgated. *THA* still provides a wide-ranging, flexible selection of haiku of high literary standards and will probably continue to serve as a significant entry point to ELH for many readers and writers for the foreseeable future.

WORKS CITED

- Burleigh, David. "In and Out of Japan: The Contours of Haiku." Address to Haiku North America Conference, Ottawa, Canada. 2009. *Haiku Reality*. Web. 14 Nov. 2015.
- Higginson, William J., and Penny Harter. *The Haiku Handbook: How to Write, Teach, and Appreciate Haiku*. 25th Anniversary Edition. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2009. Print.
- Kacian, Jim. "An Overview of Haiku in English." *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*. Ed. Kacian, Philip Rowland, and Allan Burns. New York: Norton, 2013. 305-377. Print.
- Rooney, James P. Rev. of *The Haiku Anthology: English Language Haiku by Contemporary American and Canadian Poets*, edited by Cor van den Heuvel. *Modern Haiku* 5.2 (1974): 45. Web. 14 Nov. 2015.
- Ross, Bruce. "Haiku Mainstream: The Path of Traditional Haiku in America." *Modern Haiku* 43.2 (2012). Web. 14 Nov. 2015.
- Rossiter, Charles. Rev. of *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, third edition, edited by Cor van den Heuvel. *Modern Haiku* 31.1 (2000): 93-95. Print.
- Sato, Hiroaki. "The HSA Definitions Reconsidered." *Frogpond* 22.3 (1999): 71-73. Print.
- . "One Way of Getting Here." Rev. of *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, third edition, edited by Cor van den Heuvel. *Frogpond* 22.3 (1999): 75-80. Print.
- Shirane, Haruo. "Beyond the Haiku Moment: Basho, Buson, and Modern Haiku Myths." *Modern Haiku* 31.1 (2000): 48-63. Print.
- Swist, Wally. Rev. of *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, second edition, edited by Cor van den Heuvel. *Modern Haiku* 18.1 (1987): 49-51. Print.
- Trumbull, Charles. "The American Haiku Movement Part 1: Haiku in English." *Modern Haiku* 36.3 (2005). Web. 2 Jan. 2016.

van den Heuvel, Cor. Interview by Alan Pizzarelli and Donna Beaver. "History of American Haiku Part III, *The Haiku Anthology*." *Haiku Chronicles*. Produced by Pizzarelli and Beaver. 2009. Web. 1 Jan. 2016.

———. Interview by Carmen Sterba. "Essence #3." Troutswirl: The Haiku Foundation Blog, 2010. Web. 1 Jan. 2016.

———, ed. *The Haiku Anthology: English Language Haiku by Contemporary American and Canadian Poets*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974. Print.

———, ed. *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, revised edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986. Print.

———, ed. *The Haiku Anthology: Haiku and Senryu in English*, third edition. New York: Norton, 1999. Print.

———. "My Haiku Path." Address to International Haiku Convention, Matsuyama, Japan. 2002. The Haiku Foundation Digital Library. Web. 15 Nov. 2015.



Cor's Cores:
Contemporary Poets Comment
on Selected Haiku

STEPHEN ADDISS
MARGARET CHULA
TOM CLAUSEN
PATRICIA DONEGAN
MICHAEL FESSLER
TY HADMAN
GARY HOTHAM
H. F. NOYES
BRUCE ROSS
ALEXIS ROTELLA
JOHN STEVENSON

STEPHEN ADDISS

an empty wheelchair
 rolls
 in from the waves

This haiku has a nice element of surprise. The first line attracts our attention—why is the wheelchair empty? The next line, a one-syllable verb, tells us that the wheelchair is in its typical action rather than at rest. The final line gives us more information, but instead of completing the thought, it opens up more questions—what has happened to the person who had been in the wheelchair? Is s/he out in the waves and in danger, or is this merely an object that the tide has taken out and is now bringing in again? What shall we think, what shall we do?

the shadow in the folded napkin

This is a perfect example of the ability of a haiku to suggest rather than define. On the surface, it seems like a passing observation, but the appearance of an unexpected shadow moves us into a world full of mystery. What is a shadow in our world of objects? Is it as real as the objects? Will the shadow vanish if one opens the napkin, or will this just create new shadows? Do we live in a changing world of shadows that we habitually ignore? Yet the simplicity of the phrase does not allow us to become too philosophical. A moment of perception: a shadow in a folded napkin—that's all.



MARGARET CHULA

from behind me
 the shadow of the ticket-taker
 comes down the aisle

TWO

Cor's senryu has a cinematic quality to it—an Orson Welles *film noir*, with its shadowy underworld of corruption. But this miscreant is a young boy who has sneaked into a baseball game. “Shadow” is the seasonal word, indicating that it's a sunny day—summer. “Shadow” also harks back to the 1950s radio program, *The Shadow*, which Cor probably listened to as a boy. The Shadow was a crime-fighting vigilante with psychic powers. His refrain was: “The Shadow knows.” Whether this is an actual ticket-taker looming up behind him or only the boy's imagination is part of the mystery. And, like both a good mystery and a successful senryu, we want to know what happens next.



TOM CLAUSEN

dispute at second base
the catcher lets some dirt
run through his fingers

after the grand slam
the umpire busy
with his whisk broom

These two brilliant baseball haiku share a focus on a detail that is a magical part of the game just beyond the major and most noticed happenings every game. Fans gather to watch the futility of batters at a dominating pitcher's best stuff or to witness a star batter coming through over and over, finding a way to get a big hit or perhaps clubbing a triumphant homer. Besides the big acts in the game are nuances and subtleties that provide depth and layers to the joy of witnessing our National Pastime.

Catchers are traditionally the ‘field generals’ of most teams, and very often how a game goes can hinge on the catcher guiding a pitcher or the pitching staff through the game and season. In the “dispute at second base” we do not know exactly what the dispute is but can

imagine a base runner has just attempted a steal and been called safe on a very close play, with the catcher having made a tremendous throw to try to nail him. While the dispute unfolds with maybe even the manager out arguing the call the catcher stays at home and with a poignant measured sense of hope and recognition of the fate of the call being beyond his control he takes a handful of dirt and lets it slip away “through his fingers.” This is not something you see every day but when you see it you know it as something indisputably from the realm of art and poetry.

The same can be said about the second haiku where an umpire is cleaning up after a big fly ball has cleared the bases in what is one of the most hoped-for moments for any batter . . . a grand slam. Four men crossing home plate on one hit and no doubt celebrating the huge event at home plate creates quite a scene, and then order is restored by the umpire redefining home plate and moving the game along to the next act.

Both these baseball haiku are gems at capturing the precise action that is not to be missed. It is that observant eye that characterizes Cor’s wonderful haiku. A deserved close look at any of his haiku brings the reader to a insightful place where poetry and art live in the eye and heart of the beholder.



PATRICIA DONEGAN¹

a stick goes over the falls at sunset

A warm autumn day. The sunlight warm on my face and shoulders. Basking. The light comes and goes . . . the light not here, then here, and then gone. I am not here. Now I am here. And then not here again.

1. *haiku mind: 108 Poems to Cultivate Awareness & Open Your Heart* (Boston: Shambhala, 2008), 123-124.

TWO

The cycle of life. As we watch a stick going over the falls in fading sunlight. So what, so ordinary, But what a *so*, a *so* filled with wonder, it is extraordinary. As the Zen masters say, the “just so” of things as they are, the big *it*, is all there really is, where the ordinary and extraordinary are *one*. As in this ritual: the Hawaiian hula dancer throws a white flower *lai* into the volcano in prayer to the goddess Pele; the ritual seems extraordinary, but on another level it is ordinary: a plant thrown into a pit. Just as the ordinary stick becomes extraordinary in the sunlight in our lucid perception. All depends upon our perception: of being totally present, of having the doors of perception cleansed *a la* William Blake. This present moment is the seed of wonder that grows the more we attend to it. And even if all the world’s libraries (of paper and cyber books) were destroyed, like the Alexandria Library eons ago, something would remain because human beings possess this sense of wonder we can always tap into. So we watch the stick go. And then we, too, go. Yet the wonder remains for the next stick at sunset. The next open eye to perceived the grace of luminosity.



MICHAEL FESSLER

hot night
turning the pillow
to the cool side

I would call this a haiku of recognition. When you read it, you think, “Oh, yes, I’ve done that myself.” That is, you recognize the experience, and that evokes a pleasant recall. It’s one of my favorite kinds of poetry. Pope wrote of the “often thought but ne’r so well expressed.” And that applies to Cor’s poem. What is well expressed here? Everything really. The first line sets the scene and season (summer), the second gets things going, and the third line resolves it. I think the last line is just right. In fact, it’s so right that it’s hard to

imagine it otherwise. But in the hands of a lesser poet it might well have been. It might have been something like, ‘to get relief,’ which would have been DOA. Cor’s poem has a pleasant sound structure as well: lots of *t*’s, and the *l*’s of pillow/cool chime nicely.²

dispute at second base
the catcher lets some dirt
run through his fingers

Cor van den Heuvel’s, and a classic. Here’s the replay: there’s an argument raging at second about the runner (out or safe? tag before leg? leg before tag?). The catcher is viewing the scene from home plate. He’s not directly involved in the dispute. He’s biding time, so to speak, waiting to see what the outcome will be. As he watches, he lets some dirt run through his fingers. (Reminiscent of sand trickling through an hour glass.) Catchers do that. It’s one of their habits. They’re closer to the ground than anyone on the field and they often pick up a handful and then let it slip away. Cor observed it. Details. Details. That’s why he’s a hall-of-fame haiku writer.³

raining at every window

It has become fashionable recently to try one’s hand at the monostitch, but Cor van den Heuvel is one of the poets who was instrumental in introducing the form back in the early days of American haiku. Though best-known for his impressive outlay of three-line haiku, he has a number of iconic one-liners to his name as well (not to mention “tundra”, the classic one-worder). Why do I like “raining” so much? Good haiku call attention to. And that’s what Cor has done here and is so adept at generally. With just four words he is showing us the rain. The observation might at first seem to be about location, but in fact it’s about plenitude. The rain is a miracle. It’s all around us.⁴

2. from “Remarkable Haiku,” *bottle rockets*, Volume 13, No. 1 (No. 25) 2011.

3. from “The Pleasure of Their Company,” *bottle rockets*, Volume 12, No. 1 (No. 23) 2010.

4. from “A Primary Art,” *bottle rockets*, Volume 14, No. 1 (No. 27) 2012.

TY HADMAN

an empty wheelchair
 rolls
 in from the waves

The scene is painful, troubling, alarming, and mysterious. Good haiku demand the reader's participation and imagination, dropping the reader,⁵ leaving the participant to fill in the missing details. This art is easier said than done. Too many missing details often lead to vagueness which is to be avoided, but here we have mystery combined with high tension, which of course is quite different. This tension must be resolved by the reader. Where is the invalid? What happened and why? Male or female? Young, old, or middle-aged? Why is the person alone rather than being accompanied by a close friend, family member, or nurse? Why can't the person walk, because of problems related to aging or due to a serious accident? Is the condition temporary or permanent? We do not and cannot know or determine the answers to these and other nagging questions with any certainty, but in any case, regardless, those precise details are not so important because the outcome is inherently the same, liberation.

This haiku is imbued with *sabi* and *kagiyaki* at their best. The use of *sabi* is a technique employed and not an uncommon characteristic in Cor van den Heuvel's work. *Sabi*,⁶ beauty associated with aloneness and in the finest haiku like Cor's, includes timelessness. The element of *kagiyaki*⁷ (that which causes glee or exultation) is also prominent though not readily apparent, very subtle and deeply embedded, thus raising this haiku to a superior and spiritual level.

5. *The Sea and the Honeycomb—A Book of Tiny Poems* edited by Robert Bly; "Dropping the Reader" —a preface by Robert Bly; ix-xi; Beacon Press, Boston, 1971.

6. *A History of Haiku—Volume Two* edited by R.H. Blyth; "Introduction" by R.H. Blyth; vii-viii; The Hokuseido Press, Tokyo, 1964.

7. "Talk by Kenkichi Yamamoto—interpreted by Takako Lento"; 8-12; *Frogpond* Vol. 1, No. 4, 1978, Haiku Society of America, New York.

Maybe the person confined to a wheelchair was bored and frustrated and therefore decided to go for a swim alone — good therapy in more ways than one, or perhaps the situation had become intolerable and the invalid came to the sea to consciously or subconsciously drown. Either way, there is resolution resulting in liberation. In both cases, courage and human dignity reign.

I live in Puerto Eten, a sleepy fishing village on the northern coast of Peru. I would like to die here, like the “grandfathers”. “Grandfather” is the name I give to any very old pelican that flies from the nearby pelican colony on the sea cliff to the shore, very near the water’s edge (like the invalid in the wheelchair) where waves gently lap calmly and endlessly — as “grandfather” stares intently with wise and contemplating eyes at the vast sea, waiting with great dignity for the moment of death to arrive.

Finally, I cannot help but recall the final scene in Herman Hesse’s long novel, his masterpiece, *Magister Ludi* (also published as *Das Glasperlenspiel – The Glass Bead Game*) when Joseph Knecht “disappears” in the lake when going for an early morning swim at an old age, different, but nonetheless similar to the “grandfathers” and the mysterious occupant of the wheelchair in Cor van den Heuvel’s haiku, courageous and liberated.

And isn’t that how life terminates when death is faced with courage and dignity, somewhat painfully and disturbingly; death definitely a mystery, and the infinite fluid human spirit, joyously and triumphantly liberated in eternity?



GARY HOTHAM

There was Cor van den Heuvel's take on life in a modern civilization from his chapbook, *The Window Washer's Pail*, printed in 1963:

in the hotel lobby
the bare bulb of a floor lamp
shines down on its distant base

1/ Perhaps wordier than I would like for a haiku. Certainly things could be done to tighten it up. But this is from 1963 or earlier. If anything it should follow the 5-7-5 format. So have to commend Cor for making us think differently about the format.

2/ Where's the nature in this? Cor is introducing subject matter that is not typical. What kind of hotel are we in? A bare bulb gives it a seedy feel. They can't afford to cover it up with a fancy shade. There is light but not natural light. And he doesn't even name it. We know there is some since it shines up the lamp's base. Could be a very plain round one or something worrisome with claw feet.

And another scene from modern life.

through the small holes
in the mailbox
sunlight on a blue stamp

But one that is fading away. But when printed—also from his 1963 chapbook, *The Window Washer's Pail*, it was the way to receive written communication from others. So there we have it: Cor is home from work and as he checks for his mail the sun is in the right angle to light up one piece of mail and it is the stamp. I think the scene creates a positive feeling—sunlight and a piece of mail—with a real stamp.



H. F. NOYES

Cor is a masterful poet of nostalgia. Two favorites from his senryu are

old movie —
the aisle lights on
the red carpet

and

end of the line
the conductor starts turning
the seats around

This haiku, however, has a more universal effect in its uncanny capturing of the actual feel of a warm summer afternoon:

summer afternoon —
the long fly ball to center field
takes its time

It restores, for me, my boyhood days of vacant-lot baseball — the lazy play on those warm Sunday afternoons when the game went on too long, but nobody wanted to be first to call it a day.⁸



BRUCE ROSS

a stick goes over the falls at sunset

melting snow
the sun shines into the back
of an empty truck

8. *Favorite Haiku Volume 3* (Winchester VA: Red Moon Press, 2000).

TWO

Like many of van den Heuvel's haiku, these have an atmosphere of metaphysical loneliness, a desired aesthetic state of communion with the universe, what the Japanese term *sabi*.⁹



ALEXIS ROTELLA

end of the line
the conductor starts turning
the seats around

I think about this haiku a lot. Every ending is a new beginning. I sense a certain melancholy that the ride is about to be over, yet renewed that I can stay on the train and start again, to look out the window and see into people's back yards. "End of the line" is a metaphor, as are many of Cor's haiku that depict daily life.



JOHN STEVENSON

the shadow in the folded napkin

What I have always found uniquely striking about Cor van den Heuvel's haiku is the clarity of his images. In fact, I have felt that this clarity is his true subject. Through images presented in such sharp and undisturbed focus, with nothing between the reader and that which is presented, we see how mysterious and almost miraculous the most ordinary experience truly is. What is most profound is also most ordinary but it takes extraordinarily intense vision to make this apparent.

9. *Modern Haiku* 43.2, Summer 2012.

Unfolding Destiny:

Harold G. Henderson's *The Bamboo Broom*

MICHAEL DYLAN WELCH

Henderson, Harold G. *The Bamboo Broom*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934.

In the history of haiku in English before R. H. Blyth, perhaps three books are preeminent. They are Asataro Miyamori's *An Anthology of Haiku Ancient and Modern* (Tokyo: Maruzen, 1932), Harold Gould Henderson's *The Bamboo Broom* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), and Kenneth Yasuda's *A Pepper-Pod* (New York: Knopf, 1947). Miyamori's book is by far the largest, at about 850 pages, consisting, after an extensive introduction, mostly of translations and commentary. This structure seems to have directly influenced Blyth's books, or they are, at least, directly similar. Miyamori's book may also be responsible for the use of titles employed by both the Henderson and Yasuda books, as well as in books by Harold G. Stewart (*A Net of Fireflies* in 1960 and *A Chime of Windbells* in 1969). However, these other books seem to have come up with rhyme more on their own, as the Miyamori translations do not rhyme, and are all in two lines instead of three (previously, though, early rhyming translations appeared from Curtis Hidden Page and William N. Porter, and Dorothy Britton would employ rhyme in her haiku translations as late as 1974). Of these early books, among very few such books devoted to haiku in the first half of the twentieth century, only Henderson's *The Bamboo Broom* still reads well today, with the notable exception of the titles and rhymes used in its translations.¹ *The Bamboo Broom* was greatly expanded for Henderson's 1958 volume, *An Introduction to Haiku* (New York: Doubleday), where whole paragraphs and sections reappear, with much additional information, including hundreds of additional poems. But it is worth taking a closer look at Henderson's first book about haiku to see which information was available to burgeoning haiku aficionados in 1934, and to see which information still holds up today.

Henderson begins his preface, as so many translators do, by confessing to treason, for all translation is a treason on the original language—and

1. Titles do not appear when poems are discussed in the text, and appear only when sets of poems appear with no discussion; in every case, the title feels redundant, adding information that is already clear or implied, and I omit all titles when quoting poems here, noting that not all of them have titles.

even more so for haiku, he tells us. The reasons for these translation difficulties are because “there are no articles in the Japanese language, practically no pronouns, and in general no distinctions between singular and plural,” and that “there is no punctuation in haiku, its place being taken by *kireji* (literally, ‘cut-words’) . . . which have no translatable meaning, but which often indicate an unfinished sentence” (vii–viii). He also notes that “There are no diphthongs; ‘haiku,’ for example, is a three-syllable word [in Japanese]: ‘ha-i-ku” (ix), yet proceeds to hew closely to the 5-7-5 form in his translations, although not slavishly. In contrast, he says “there is no rime in the originals, and my use of it in the English rendering of haiku therefore needs defense” (ix). He explains that “I happen to like rime in a short poem of this sort, and I think that it is at least allowable,” yet does this in spite of saying that the Japanese do not use rhyme at all because “all Japanese words end either in a vowel or in ‘n,’ and riming would soon become intolerably monotonous” (ix–x)—as indeed many readers find to be the case in English-language haiku, too. This problem is more pronounced in Japanese, of course, but it is still a problem in Henderson’s translations, especially when rhyme is so often coupled with inverted or unnatural syntax for the sake of the rhyme. He also says “all titles to haiku [in his translations] are my own invention” even though “there are no titles to the originals” (x). But he persists. In Henderson’s versions, the rhymes and titles seem far more intrusive and distracting than any set syllable count.

A more positive feature of the book is that each translation also comes with romaji versions and literal, word-for-word English transliterations of each Japanese word, a practice Henderson repeated in *An Introduction to Haiku*. This feature enables Western readers to sound out the poems in Japanese, to hear their sounds. The transliterations also help us see the Japanese syntax and image order. This information empowers readers who do not speak Japanese to have at least some understanding of the original, and lets them have a go at making their own translations in a way that very few books of haiku translation do.

Whatever the virtue of his personal choices regarding titles and rhyme, Henderson launches readers into his book with the following prediction and optimistic desire, an encouraging harbinger of things to come, yet it was still only 1934: “If the reading and writing of English haiku ever becomes general, some better form than the one used in this book can doubtless be found. I can only hope that the readers of this book will join in the search for it” (x). Such a statement reminds us how little searching had been done thus far. What follows Henderson’s prediction are chapters on characteristics of haiku, early haiku, Bashō (the book uses the correct macron, where many other early books on haiku did not), Bashō’s pupils, other early eighteenth-century poets, Buson, Issa, Shiki, and modern haiku (post-Shiki). The structure of Henderson’s *An Introduction to Haiku* is identical, with the addition of a chapter on Buson’s contemporaries, removal of the chapter on modern haiku (already dated in 1934; even more so in 1958, and perhaps difficult to update in the wake of World War II), and the addition of an appendix describing fifteen *kireji* and other particles. Though published in 1934, Henderson’s easy-to-read overview of Japanese haiku poetry provides much information that is still valuable today. While much of the book’s content is preserved in *An Introduction to Haiku*, the excerpts that follow here are notable for being available to students of haiku more than eighty years ago, when practically no other reliable information was accessible from major publishers.

Henderson starts his chapter on characteristics of Japanese haiku by noting and advocating “the twin arts of reading and of writing haiku” (1), arts that both beginning and more advanced English-language haiku poets should also learn—to practice both the reading and writing of this poetry. By “reading,” Henderson means knowing what to look for in each poem—the characteristics the chapter explores. Indeed, in a later chapter, Henderson writes that “a trained haiku-reader will see more” than just the surface meaning (24). He is not writing just about haiku in Japanese, but reminds readers, with more prophetic optimism, that “there is no reason why haiku

should not be written in English or any other language” (1). He says this even though “no two Japanese would quite agree on exactly what constitutes a haiku” (2)—a truth that has not changed in a century. Henderson decries past translations of haiku as epigrams (2), seemingly a criticism of Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935), a professor of Japanese at Tokyo Imperial University who equated haiku to epigrams in his 1902 article, “Bashō and the Japanese Poetical Epigram,” published in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*. Henderson proclaims that “all haiku worthy of the name are records of high moments,” and that “in the hands of a master a haiku can be the concentrated essence of pure poetry” (2). Henderson outlines a number of haiku’s characteristics, including the power of suggestion, and employing a “clear-cut picture which serves as a starting-point for trains of thought and emotion” (3), reminding us that haiku suggest a mood, but that “Only the outlines or important parts are drawn, and the rest the reader must fill in for himself” (3)—and that we should read the poem multiple times to absorb as many of its reverberations as we can. Indeed, as Henderson emphasizes, “The point is that good haiku are full of overtones. The elusiveness that is one of their chief charms comes, not from haziness, but from the fact that so much suggestion is put into so few words” (3).

Henderson also talks of *rensō*, or associations, and of *ki*, or seasonal topics. He says “The custom of using *ki* [*An Introduction to Haiku* changes this sentence to say *kigo* (*Introduction* 5)] has hardened into an almost inviolable rule” (6). The following passage is worth quoting almost in full: “It may be noted . . . that the use of *ki* is probably at the base of a charge that has been advanced that haiku are more concerned with Nature than with human affairs. Such a statement is of course ridiculous. Haiku are more concerned with human emotions than with human acts, and natural phenomena are used to reflect human emotions, but that is all” (6). Indeed, one way haiku seems to be mistaught is as a nature poem, when it is more accurately the *seasons* that haiku is aiming at—after all, a *saijiki*, or season-word almanac, collects seasonal references, not nature

references, often a quarter of which have no nature content at all. If anything, as the Haiku Society of America definition of haiku puts it, in haiku poetry nature is linked to *human* nature and the emotions that *human* experience produces. This approach need not disallow a “pure nature” sort of haiku, but to my thinking the best haiku employ not just seasonal awareness but *emotional* awareness also, and both awarenesses are bolstered by empathy. What may be startling to some readers is Henderson’s statement that it is “ridiculous” to think of haiku as dwelling only with nature and not also embracing human affairs. Some oversimplified definitions would have us believe that senryū focus on human affairs and that haiku do not. But here, Henderson insists that *haiku* reflect human emotions, which are served by natural phenomena, not the other way around.

Another point of emphasis is that, in haiku, “a comparison of two or more ideas [is] expressed in the poem itself, and it must always be looked for” (8). Here we find one of those twin arts mentioned earlier—the reading half of knowing how to read and write haiku. Henderson then talks in more detail about comparison and the varieties of *kireji* that help to produce this comparative structure, one that proves effective because of how it helps to provide implication and suggestion. Ultimately, he reminds us that “Really great haiku suggest so much that more words would lessen their meaning” (10).

Henderson’s next chapter dives into early haiku. He does not explain that the term “haiku” was (in 1934) a relatively recent coinage, but a footnote does say that “haiku” were originally called “hokku,” and that the terms are “used interchangeably” (11). Today, among specialists at least, “hokku” has largely regained its original meaning as the “starting verse” of renga and renku. I would not agree that the terms are interchangeable (a point William J. Higginson makes in his *Haiku Seasons* and *Haiku World* books [Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1996]), but recognize that Henderson’s claim could have felt accurate in 1934. He gives an example of an early poem and says that “it is ‘not haiku’ [because] it is not even meant to express or

evoke any real emotion” (13), underscoring the idea that expressing or implying emotion is haiku’s main goal, although one may disagree with that stance and permit haiku that stress ideas or intellectual constructs rather than just images, experiences, and feelings. Here it is worth quoting one of Henderson’s rhymed and word-full translations, one that he says is a “real haiku” because its complete meaning cannot be put into words:

Dewdrops, limpid, small—
And such a lack of judgement shown
In where they fall!

Henderson says that this poem, by Sōin, is “not only a picture of dew falling in all sorts of places, but also an allegory of our short human life” (16). Whether one sees such an allegory or not, I cannot help but pursue the urge to shorten the poem:

white dew—
no care
for where it falls

The chapter on Bashō emphasizes the mystical nature of his poetry, in contrast to the more humanist poems of Buson, and the more personal poems of Issa. Here is a rare translation that avoids rhyme, but is still wordy, despite not being 5-7-5:

Oh, many, many things
Are brought to mind
By cherry-blossoms—

In the course of discussing Bashō’s life, Henderson refers to the poet’s “best-known work,” *Oku no Hosomichi* (*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*), the title of which he translates as “Distant Byways” (25). In *An Introduction to Haiku*, this becomes “Narrow Road in Oku” (*Introduction* 24). Here is Henderson’s translation of one of

Bashō's most famous haiku, from *Oku no Hosomichi*, which he says "is probably the most-discussed haiku in the language," although he does not explain that claim (27):

The summer grasses grow.
Of mighty warriors' splendid dreams
The afterglow.

I again feel the urge to shorten this version, but have the luxury of having seen dozens of translations of this and other Bashō poems, and must remember that Henderson had almost none of that context. Even Miyamori, who translated so much, apparently did not translate this famous poem, so even though Henderson had seen Miyamori's book (published in English two years before *The Bamboo Broom*; Henderson specifically acknowledges it), it did not provide any guidance or precedent for this particular poem.

Later, Henderson tackles Bashō's "most famous haiku of all" (33), here again a rare translation without rhyme, the appearance of which Henderson stair-steps instead of centering (33):

An ancient pond;
Plash of the water
When a frog jumps in

For comparison, here are the two translations by Miyamori in *An Anthology of Haiku Ancient and Modern* (130):

The ancient pond!
A frog plunged—splash!
The old pond! A frog plunged—
The sound of the water!

Miyamori also shares nine other English-language translations, and one in French (132–133), seven of them in three lines, one in two lines, and one a long one-liner (all by other translators). Bashō

had obviously received quite a bit of notice, even at the time of Miyamori's 1932 book, and the various translations published to that point might have influenced Henderson's translation in a cumulative way—the way our translations today are similarly influenced. In *An Introduction to Haiku*, the poem is further influenced as follows (*Introduction* 20), a version that features the slant rhyme of “pond” and “sound”:

Old pond—
and a frog-jump-in
water-sound.

One point Henderson makes about this poem is worth particular attention, especially because his observation seems to have been omitted from *An Introduction to Haiku*. He says that, beyond the objective sensory image of the frog jumping into the pond, “there must have been *external* quiet for the sound to have been heard and *internal* quiet for it to have been noticed strongly enough to make Bashō compose a poem about it” (34; emphasis added).

The next chapter covers Bashō's pupils. We get a sense of how widely influential the poet was, through poets and poems from the various schools of haiku that arose in his wake. Here, in a footnote (48), Henderson acknowledges his debt to Miyamori's *One Thousand Haiku, Ancient and Modern*, a 1930 publication for a primarily Japanese audience that was revised, as mentioned already, in 1932. Henderson declares that this book “has an important English introduction, and interesting notes on many individual haiku” (48). Indeed, Miyamori's book is worth its own separate reassessment.

Towards the end of his chapter on Bashō's pupils, where he also makes a brief mention of senryū, Henderson refers to Bonchō, one of Bashō's best-known pupils, who sometimes made fun of “the whole haiku-business” and its “pseudo-poetic imitations” (53). So it seems our modern concern over pseudo-haiku was also a worry for theorists more than three centuries ago.

Henderson's next chapter explores other haiku poets from the eighteenth century. He quotes Onitsura as saying "*Makoto no hoka ni haikai nashi*," or "Nothing is haiku unless it is sincere" (57). In *An Introduction to Haiku*, Henderson revises his translation to say "Outside of truth, there is no poetry" (*Introduction* 73), which strikes me as a significantly different meaning, but perhaps both are true. The reference to sincerity points to intent and emotion, whereas the second version points, it seems, simply to saying what is true. The word *makoto* has overtones of the heart or mind, both meaning the essence of humanity, or at least the essence of the self, not necessarily just emotion or intellect. In Japanese, *makoto* means both "sincerity" and "truth," but in English the terms differ somewhat. In haiku, should we tell the truth, whatever it is, and is that enough to make for effective poetry, or should we at least be sincere? Perhaps the solution is to tell our *own* truth.

In *The Bamboo Broom's* first chapter Henderson noted that "good haiku are full of overtones," and that "The elusiveness that is one of their chief charms comes, not from haziness, but from the fact that so much suggestion is put into so few words" (3). In contrast to this, when presenting the poems of Chiyo, "the greatest of the women haiku-composers" (61), he says that some Japanese critics have claimed that, in Henderson's summation, "her music is too pure" (61), and that they think "her poems are not hazy enough to be haiku" (62). More significantly, Henderson counters criticisms of Chiyo by offering a defender's perspective, that "it is very easy to mistake haziness for profundity, and that there are so-called haiku, produced by the hundred thousand, which are not profound at all, but merely foggy," which Henderson calls "one of the dangers of the apparently easy haiku-form" (62). Such comments would seem to apply even today, perhaps more than ever, with the advent of the sometimes self-involved pseudo-profundity of certain avant-garde gendai haiku, in both English and Japanese.

At the close of his chapter on early eighteenth-century poets, Henderson raises the notion of "internal comparison" in haiku

(64), of how the haiku's two juxtaposed parts relate to each other, producing reverberations. This may well be the first reference to this concept in literature about English-language haiku, a key concept that Henderson brought to writers of haiku in English, much emphasized in *An Introduction to Haiku*. He means, of course, the way the poem's two parts interact with each other, much as in a chemical reaction, sometimes (one hopes) producing more than the sum of the poem's two parts. It is not enough merely to have two parts in a haiku — by which I mean parts that are both grammatically and imagistically distinct. Rather, it's the interaction of those two parts that produces much of haiku's effectiveness, its deepest power that is also its hardest challenge, far beyond the difficulty or “discipline” of merely counting syllables.

Henderson's next three chapters cover Buson, Issa, and Shiki, telling readers what we now know so well about their lives and their poetry. He says of Buson that he decried “the over-formalization of the appreciation of nature,” which Henderson says “was—and is—one of the dangers in Japanese aestheticism” (71). Despite all the commentary he offers, Henderson notes in the Buson chapter that “haiku were not written to be weighed down with commentary” (77), but the key phrase here is *weighed down*, not to avoid entirely. One of the virtues of Henderson's book, even in the expanded publication of *An Introduction to Haiku*, is that the commentary strikes a fine balance between too little and too much. He gives us pointers for directions the poems could take us, but lets us go the full distance ourselves.

The Issa chapter begins by telling readers that Issa was “Perhaps the best-loved of all haiku poets” and that “He was not a prophet like Bashō, nor a brilliant craftsman like Buson; he was just a very human man” (83). I have written elsewhere about the value of making oneself vulnerable in haiku, and we find that trait particularly true in Issa's poetry. As Henderson notes, “Issa, with all his frailties, wrote poetry that ‘opens his soul to us, therefore we love him’” (83).

Henderson contrasts Issa, who “left no real school behind him” (95), with Shiki, who reformed haiku more broadly than anyone in Japanese history, leaving several strong schools that thrived after his untimely death — emphasizing that “Shiki was more important as an innovator than as a poet” (105). As some students of Japanese haiku history will know, Shiki at first berated Bashō (later moderating his opinions), promoting the objective realism of Buson instead. Yet Henderson reminds us that “Shiki was not satisfied with tearing down. He wished to build up as well, and to lay the foundations for a new school of haiku” (97). This new school became several schools, some in disagreement with each other, but Shiki succeeded in revolutionizing haiku poetry, adapting it for the twentieth century as Japan began to become heavily influenced by Western culture and literature after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Indeed, as Henderson tells us, “Shiki liked, and popularized, the purely objective form of haiku,” adding that the poet even went so far as to say that “only a tyro asks what a poem means; the only question is ‘What is its effect?’” (103).

Here I can’t help but interject that Henderson, when he began publishing his own haiku in the late 1960s and early 70s, used the pen name “Tairo.” In the Haiku Society of America’s twentieth-anniversary history, *A Haiku Path* (New York: Haiku Society of America, 1994), Alfred Marks notes that Henderson “chose the name because as a poet he is a tyro — just a beginner” (*Haiku Path* 144). However, in the context of the Shiki quote, I wonder if Henderson saw himself not only as a beginner at haiku composition, but as a person who frequently asked after a poem’s meaning rather than its effect. Either way, Henderson seemed to poke a little fun at himself by calling himself Tairo.

The concluding chapter of *The Bamboo Broom* was removed from and sadly not updated in *An Introduction to Haiku*. This chapter celebrates modern haiku — modern, at least, for the time. Indeed, *The Bamboo Broom* still remains worthwhile for this chapter alone, if nothing else, since it was omitted from the author’s later book.

Henderson mentions that some of the example poems he quotes were taken from the March 1928 issue of the haiku journal *Hototogisu* (originally started by Shiki), and he acknowledges Naito Meisetsu's *Atarashiki Haiku no Tsukurikata* (Tokyo: Shibundo), published in 1932, as a source of much information in the chapter. Henderson says that "it would probably be safe to say millions [of people] are not only reading haiku, but writing them as well" (109). According to a government census² Japan's population in 1930 was 64,450,005. The country's population has doubled since then, and current estimates of active haiku writers today range from seven to twelve million, or up to roughly one person in ten. If the same percentages were true in 1932, there might have been three to six million active haiku writers at the time. Henderson adds that there are "many haiku-magazines, newspapers are constantly conducting haiku-contests, and books and pamphlets on the subject are appearing in enormous quantities" (109). It is remarkable to realize that he was saying this in the early 1930s. Of the situation then, he says "today haiku are in some ways flourishing as never before" (109). He would be truly amazed at worldwide haiku activity more than eighty years later.

Henderson reports that "The 'Hototogisu' magazine publishes from one to two thousand [haiku] each month" (115), a number that has ballooned to 10,000 haiku in each issue today, each and every month—surely more than anyone could ever possibly read. These large numbers suggest, as Henderson says, that "Perhaps even more important than the work of the leaders are the haiku composed by what may be called the rank and file," with their great numbers of poems producing "much the same effect as walking through a picture-gallery" (115). Worldwide haiku activity will surely never surpass Japan's, but outside the country of its origin, today's haiku activity does greatly surpass that of 1974, the year Henderson died.

It is difficult to get the modern sense of the "modern" poems Henderson quotes when they are burdened by overwrought punctuation and

2. See data at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Imperial_Japan. Accessed 2 February 2016.

capitalization, and his seemingly Victorian penchant for rhyme, not to mention the ponderous syntactic hoops he sometimes jumps through to produce them. Nevertheless, ignoring the worst of such convolutions, here are a few translations of “modern” haiku from the last chapter of *The Bamboo Broom*, these by Meisetsu (111), Sōseki (the famous novelist; 114), Omiya (117), and Kōjaku (121), the third of which at least does not have rhyme, but which Henderson refers to as “haiku,” in quotation marks, with the intentional suggestion that perhaps it is not.

... And the butterflies
Love and follow the flower-wreath,
That on the coffin lies!

The winds that blow—
Ask them, which leaf of the tree
Will be next to go!

If one is old,
And likes fruit, it is
Red fruit one eats.

Jazz, floating along
On the odor of saké;—
Spring’s song!

Perhaps these and the other poems in this chapter are not all that modern after all, when read generations later, but the subject matter nevertheless seems expanded from that of prior centuries. One wishes, despite the pains of reading these versions, that Henderson had translated more contemporary haiku of the time, and had included more of this content and prose commentary in *An Introduction to Haiku*. However, we do have the brief record left in *The Bamboo Broom*. In discussing Japan’s “modern” haiku (the term “gendai” is not used), Henderson points out that the Hototogisu (cuckoo) school tries for sincerity, and that “they prefer the objective form of

statement, and usually take their pictures from actual scenes” while practicing an “economy of words” (110). Henderson notes that “The one great criticism that might be made of the school as a whole is that the theories formulated by Shiki do not attack the fundamental question of what distinguishes poetry from prose,” adding that “Consequently they are willing to accept as haiku all records of any genuine emotion, whatever it may be” (110–111). Yet, despite this criticism, the Hototogisu school was, at that time, more conservative than the Hekigoto and Seisensui branches of the Nihonha school, which Henderson calls “the radicals of the haiku-world,” saying that “their innovations have surpassed anything that Shiki ever dreamed of” (117). Henderson notes that “Shiki had taught that a haiku need not have just seventeen syllables [in Japanese], as long as it sounded right, but these schools write haiku of thirty syllables or more,” declaring themselves “free from the necessity of *kisetsu*, the season signs, and other characteristics of the older haiku” (117). Henderson responds by observing that “The question is whether in doing this they have left themselves free to write haiku at all” (117), an insight that seems to apply even today amid avant-garde expressions of gendai haiku that too often amount to a Japanese regurgitation of Western surrealism.

Henderson does not leave his readers of 1934 without hope, however. On the last page of *The Bamboo Broom*, he says that “The haiku-form is peculiarly Japanese, but I believe most strongly that it has characteristics which transcend the barriers of language and of nationality. . . . What the final English haiku-form will be, I do not know. It may be two lines, or three, or four [interesting that he does not propose a single-line alternative]; it may be rimed or unrimed. But I am sure that whatever it is, it will be a definite form, *for haiku is a poem and not a dribble of prose*” (124; emphasis in the original).

It was fortuitous, of course, that Henderson updated and greatly expanded *The Bamboo Broom* for publication as *An Introduction to Haiku* in 1958, and spoke more directly of English-language

haiku in his later book *Haiku in English* (New York: Japan Society, 1965; Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle, 1967). It would still be ten years before he, along with Leroy Kanterman, would cofound the Haiku Society of America in 1968 through the Japan Society in New York City (Henderson was a professor at Columbia), but he had clearly been a catalyst in that direction even if he himself had not been more than lightly involved in the organization's origin. While the translations in *The Bamboo Broom* may be easily criticized for their titles, rhyme, wordiness, and the compromise of an often convoluted syntax employed to get at the rhymes, it is easy to look beyond such criticisms to see substantive content, certainly in the prose, that provided more solid information about haiku to Westerners than had hitherto been available. Indeed, in *A Haiku Path*, a book dedicated to Harold Henderson, Alfred Marks says that *The Bamboo Broom* was "the first distinguished linguistic work on the haiku in Western languages," adding that through the book "the haiku destiny began to have its way" (*Haiku Path* 143). It's a destiny, I believe, that will always be unfolding.



Intertextual Poetics:

Haiku and the Avant-garde

CE ROSENOW

Haiku Poetics in Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Poetry. By Jeffrey Johnson. Lanham, MD: Lexington. 2011. New Studies of Modern Japan Series. 248 pages. \$90

Jeffrey Johnson's *Haiku Poetics in Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Poetry* provides a valuable resource to poetry scholars. For the first time, a full-length study demonstrates the intertextual relationship between haiku and twentieth-century avant-garde poetry. Specifically, Johnson's project focuses on haiku poetics more than on the traditional haiku form and then examines the impact of haiku poetics on avant-garde poetry. It provides evidence from multiple avant-garde movements including those of Brazil, Britain, France, Mexico, Spain, and the United States, movements that also exerted influence on one another. An overview of the three sections of the book demonstrates the scope of Johnson's project and the primary support for his claim that haiku poetics had a substantial influence on avant-garde poetry.

The book is organized chronologically and divided into three parts. Part 1: Haiku and Avant-Garde Poetics, clarifies Johnson's focus. In the Introduction, he explains that his interest is in a poetic mode he terms "synaesthetic," and it includes poetry that has been influenced by haiku, haiku poetics, and/or variations on haiku. Chapter 1 includes a consideration of haiku terminology, haiku history, traditional Japanese haiku, nineteenth-century translations, and an overview of the impact of haiku poetics on avant-garde poetics throughout the twentieth century. This chapter also presents the important concept of *yūgen* and argues that *yūgen* was central to the changes haiku inspired in western poetics. Johnson explains that *yūgen*

elevates the role of suggestion, shows little but implies a lot, and requires an intuitive leap of imagination on the part of the reader. The *yūgen* suggestiveness at the core of these poetics serves a dual function, both semiotic and literary. The semiotic function renders this poetic language as index The literary function of haiku operates allegorically. (16)

This concept surfaces throughout the book, at times in analyses of haiku or haiku-related poems such as those by U.S. poets Ezra Pound and Jack Kerouac. Its most useful application for Johnson's

argument, however, is in considering avant-garde poetry where the connection to formal haiku poetics is not immediately apparent such as the concrete poetry of Brazilian writer, Haraldo de Campos.

Johnson next creates an effective transition from orthodox haiku to the innovative uses of haiku poetics that he addresses in the rest of the book by examining how haiku moved beyond the Japanese literary tradition. He explores early translations of Japanese haiku, including those by George William Aston, Basil Hall Chamberlain, and Paul-Louis Couchoud, and addresses their influence on writers outside of Japan. For example, he notes “the visual aspects of haiku that were of such great importance to Couchoud also helped determine the direction of the future of avant-garde poetry for many years to come” (36). Couchoud focused largely on Buson’s haiku. Johnson suggests that the visual element found in those haiku later appears in poetry by early twentieth-century writers including Amy Lowell and Antonio Machado. By moving from translation to early adaptations of haiku and to innovative poems resulting from an awareness of haiku, Johnson creates the necessary foundation for his consideration of several avant-garde poetic movements.

Part 2: Haiku in the Teens and Twenties Avant-Garde, considers the impact of haiku poetics on avant-garde poetry in four countries. Chapter 2 addresses Imagism and, while drawing on examples from several British and American Imagists, bookends its discussion with sections on Amy Lowell and Ezra Pound. This chapter details the specific contributions Imagist poetry made to later avant-garde movements. For instance, after examining various poems, Johnson concludes that

the major step in these poetics . . . was the employment of paratactic juxtaposition, often images from nature, deployed in lieu of description – part of a non-linear means of organization that also enabled the co-joining of elements that logically would not otherwise be joined. The use of paratactic juxtaposition and lack of connectors was integral to the process of breaking with linear narrative forms. By extension,

syntax which has a linear, metonymical, and hierarchical function in language, also came under attack, and that is why Mallarmé's, the Futurists', Surrealists', and other avantgardists' attitude toward syntax ranged from indifference to hostility. (82-3)

Demonstrating the impact Imagism had on future avant-garde movements helps substantiate Johnson's claim of haiku's importance on a century of poetic innovation.

Chapter 3 reveals the significant impact haiku had on French avant-garde poetry. Johnson begins with Mallarmé's interest in Asian poetic forms and with translations by Paul-Louis Couchoud and Albert de Neuville that raised awareness of classical Japanese haiku. After a consideration of Julien Vocance's haiku in response to World War I and his efforts to "evoke partly through silence what eloquence could not express," (103) the chapter concludes with an analysis of the relationship between haiku and Surrealism. Johnson examines work by Paul Eluard and the ways in which his haiku present an insight and "such an insight is (often) framed in juxtaposition, and that is precisely the most important point of articulation between Surrealist practice and haiku poetics . . ." (105). He argues that juxtaposition of images in Eluard's poems "all move toward the mystery, rupture, and non-dual or united antinomies of Surrealism" (107). The discussion of the relationship between haiku and Surrealism is significant because, prior to this study, little critical attention had been paid to this relationship.

In Chapter 4, Johnson considers Spanish haikai. He explores Antonio Machado's connection to *Japonisme* and his early experimentation with haiku and then follows with discussions of work by many Spanish poets including Federico García Lorca's image-centered poetry and theater. By this point in the book, it is clear that similar influences and trends can be traced in many avant-garde movements' engagement with haiku poetics; however, two sections of this chapter are distinctive. The first is the section on literary magazines and the recognition of their significant role in circulating haiku

and encouraging engagement with haiku poetics. The second is the final section of the chapter. Its analysis of visual experimentation in Guillermo de Torre's poetry, and his "purely visual analogies inspired by haiku," lead directly to the ensuing chapter's discussion of the Latin American vanguard and also establishes de Torre as a predecessor to the Concretists (149).

Part 3: Haiku and Bridging the Historical Avant-Garde to the Fifties and Beyond, contains the two final chapters, one addressing the Latin American Vanguard and the other Beat poetry. Chapter 6 picks up the thread of visual poetry from the preceding chapter in order to demonstrate that avant-garde poetry in Latin America is both related to, and unique from, the poetry of other avant-garde movements. One of the chapter's strengths is the attention it gives to José Juan Tablada. Tablada is a central figure in the dissemination of haiku outside of Japan and also a key experimenter with haiku and visual poetry; however, there is limited English-language scholarship addressing these aspects of his work. The chapter also takes a long view of haiku experimentation by examining not only work in the early twentieth century but then exploring mid- and late-century interest in haiku. For instance, poets such as Francisco Monterde and Jorge Luis Borges participated in the early years and then re-engaged in the 1950s and '60s. Octavio Paz also began working with haiku in the '50s, and, like Tablada, was "involved in visual analogy, the optical revolution in poetry ... which would lead to Concrete Poetry" (172). The chapter concludes with a section on *Concretismo*, or Concretism, drawing clear connections to traditional Japanese haiku as well as to the work of poets including Mallarmé and Pound.

The final chapter in the book focuses on Beat poetry. Johnson notes that Beat poetry "fully inherited the avant-garde, *Japonisme*-haiku aesthetic vein of poetry" discussed in previous chapters but that Beat poetry is also marked by lyricism and informed by Buddhism. He begins with a consideration of work by Kenneth Rexroth. Rexroth's translations and his poetic adaptations create the foundation upon

which the others developed their own approach to haiku, and Johnson acknowledges that Rexroth is “a Beat predecessor and like-minded poet” (195). Rexroth’s translations, which are often of tanka, and his poetry employ juxtaposition consistent with the final-line juxtaposition that is addressed in earlier chapters. This formal technique and “his pointing out the connection of haiku to the avant-garde movements” ranging from Imagism to Surrealism are, Johnson argues, central to the base Rexroth constructs for the Beat poets.

Johnson then goes on to consider poems by three prominent Beat poets: Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and Gary Snyder. Kerouac’s haiku are discussed both in terms of their humor, which connects them to early Japanese haikai, and in terms of jazz (190), while the analysis of Ginsberg’s longer poetry concerns in part “finding a way to retain the essence of haiku images and thread them through much longer poems,” (204). In the section on Snyder’s poetry, Johnson notes a much stronger connection between haiku and the poet’s overall oeuvre than is found in the work of the other poets. He states, “haiku is connected to or perhaps the foundation of the insights, the nature centered worldview, the disciplines, and many aspects of Snyder’s poetry, and perhaps his life’s work” (210). The Beat poets, as with the mid-century poets Latin American in the previous chapter, contribute to the ongoing interest in haiku poetics after the initial era of experimentation and engagement in the first part of the century.

Haiku Poetics in Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Poetry takes on a formidable task in tracing the engagement with haiku poetics over a century of work by avant-gardists from several countries and literary traditions. The scope of such a project runs the risk of certain shortcomings, and a few are found in this study. There is at times a tendency toward overstatement and generalization, and in some cases the connection between the examples of avant-garde poems and haiku poetics is tenuous. Additionally, Johnson omits any mention of the English-language haiku movement itself, a movement that

begins just past mid-century complete with the creation of national haiku organizations and journals. It would be interesting to know if this movement, and the shift toward mainstreaming haiku, made haiku poetics any more or less appealing to avant-garde movements later in the century.

The above caveats aside, *Haiku Poetics in Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Poetry* reveals new insights into the work of individual poets while simultaneously demonstrating the centrality of haiku and haiku poetics in several avant-garde poetry movements of the twentieth century. It is a substantial and welcome addition to haiku scholarship.





"Montauk IXX"

Ellen Peckham

Haiku Resources

Dissertations and Theses on Haiku (and
Senryu, Renga and Tanka) in English

RANDY M. BROOKS, PH.D.

I. THESES ON HAIKU IN ENGLISH

Abbas, Haruchi Ando. "Three Mediators of Haiku in America." University of Iowa, 1988. MA thesis. 83 pages.

Haruchi Abbas's thesis compares three early translators of Japanese haiku and their various suggestions for the development of haiku in English. The three "mediators" are Harold G. Henderson, Reginald Horace Blyth, and Kenneth Yasuda.

Giroux, Joan F. "Problems and Possibilities in Writing Haiku in English." University of Ottawa, Ontario, 1968. 143 pages. MA thesis in English.

Joan Giroux's dissertation was edited and published as a book, *The Haiku Form*, by the Charles E. Tuttle Company in 1974. This dissertation and book was one of the first "primers" on how to write haiku in English. Giroux examines the difficulties of writing haiku in English "due to basic differences of language and poetic tradition. It is important that would-be writers of English haiku be aware of the problems." She argues for the development of "a truly native English haiku tradition based on the western Judeo-Christian culture."

Iadonisi, Richard Alan. "'Like Ray Charles Is To Country': Otherness And The American Haiku." Indiana University, 1999. Dissertation. 213 pages.

Richard Iadonisi employs a feminist analysis in his study of marginalized writers of American haiku. In contrast to white male poets such as Ezra Pound, Jack Kerouac, and Gary Snyder, who attempt to re-invent haiku in English, these marginalized writers "tend to adhere closely to the formal properties, especially the 5-7-5 format." In his abstract he writes "marginalized poets call attention to the 'haiku moment' in which the poet loses the self through a merging with the natural world only to subvert it—Lowell by inserting homosexual desire, Wright by including elements of the blues, Vizenor by incorporating Ojibway dream songs and the trickster, and Sanchez by imbuing the poems with a sense of 'sisterhood.'"

Jones, Bob. "Haiku Nature." University of Newcastle, 1993. Dissertation. 450 pages.

Lucas, Martin. "The Appearance of Zen in the West." Lancaster University, 1995. MA thesis.

Lucas, Martin. "Haiku in Britain: Theory, Practice, Context." University of Wales, Cardiff, 2001. Dissertation. 359 pages.

Martin Lucas' dissertation provides a brief history of the development of haiku in Japan, including its relationship with tanka and renga. He also discusses a short history of the "initial adaptation to the English-language context in North America." A significant portion of the dissertation is an extended review of theoretical issues "of the key requirements of haiku, both in terms of form and content". Lucas summarizes positions on form, content, punctuation, layout, season words, tense, internal comparison, metaphor, expression of thought or feeling, imagination and experience, music, Zen, haiku moments "and haiku myths". The third part is an account of haiku in Britain—key journals, collections and successful haiku writers. The last section is a discussion of haiku in the context of renga, haibun and other poetry and art. Lucas concludes with a recommendation for the future of haiku in English:

"If we are to accept, as I have suggested we should, that the future of English haiku is as a free verse form, rather than a strict seventeen syllable arrangement, the complexity of the task of composition would appear to be reduced still further. Even if we stiffen the challenge by requiring the presentation of a single moment of actual experience, in the present tense, it does not appear particularly demanding. But the first thing we should note when assessing this demand is that it is the very simplicity of the exercise that causes aspiring haiku poets to stumble. Stripping out imaginative excesses and rhetorical flourishes is an ascetic practice which appears, for many, to go against the grain. The Western poetic palate tends to crave exotic flavours, whereas haiku is as understated as a bowl of boiled white rice. What succeeds in haiku, what startles, is honesty rather than innovation. As in Cor van den Heuvel's

hot night
 turning the pillow
 to the cool side

What moves us is the unifying power of shared experience, presented so as to be immediately accessible. It is this quality of naked awareness which is the value, and the difficulty, of the art" (346-347).

Lynch, Thomas Paul. "An Original Relation To The Universe: Emersonian Poetics Of Immanence And Contemporary American Haiku." University of Oregon, 1989. Dissertation. 321 pages.

Tom Lynch starts with an overview of the origins and development of haiku in Japan and in contemporary North America. He argues that the surge of interest in haiku in America derives from "a major tradition in American literature" namely, the transcendental philosophy of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman. He argues that American haiku is "a conjunction of the Emersonian tradition in American literature with the Japanese haiku tradition." In this thesis he cites "affinities between Buddhism, especially the Zen sect, and characteristically 'Emersonian' ideas such as the Edenic impulse, the Essential Self, divine immanence, the effacement of the subject/object dichotomy, and the possibility of an 'original relation to the universe.'" From this perspective, Lynch reviews the "theoretical debates in the haiku journals" and analyzes haiku by ten contemporary American haiku poets, including John Wills, Cor van den Heuvel, Gary Hotham, Anita Virgil, Lee J. Richmond, Raymond Roseliep, Alexis Rotella, George Swede, Marlene Mountain, and Bob Boldman. In his chapter on American haiku poets, Lynch makes a distinction between "wordless" and "language-centered" haiku. He writes: "In the following discussion I make the distinction between 'wordless' haiku and 'language-centered' haiku. Leroy Gorman seems to have been the first critic to apply the term 'language-centered' to haiku. Gorman uses this term to refer primarily to haiku that make use of the techniques of concrete poetry, such as unconventional letter or word arrangements, and that minimize or abandon the referential nature of language. I would like to expand the definition, however, to refer to any haiku that depends on characteristics of language other than its referentiality. So, for example, Bashō-style haiku would be

‘wordless’ since in his poems we are primarily interested in what the words signify rather than in any visual or aural features of the words themselves; whereas many of the poems of the Teitoku school would be ‘language-centered’ since they depend on puns, rhythmic patterns, metaphors, and other tropes” (50).

Record, Alison Kirby. “Haiku Genre: the Nature and Origins of English Haiku.” Indiana University, 1981. Dissertation. 269 pages.

Alison Kirby Record examines the early years of haiku in English and the challenges of adapting Japanese traditions into another language and culture. She notes the importance of calls to experiment with writing haiku in English by Harold G. Henderson, Kenneth Yasuda, and R.H. Blyth. She also reviews early debates on haiku poetics, definition, form and techniques published in *American Haiku* magazine in the 1960s and *Cicada* magazine in the 1970s. Record concludes: “Throughout this study one theme has persisted, which is the complete lack of agreement about English haikuists concerning either the nature of the classical Japanese model, or the appropriate form and essence of its English namesake” (223). She also notes that: “The survival of English haiku depends on the tension between the individual talent and the power of its tradition. Since there is no real tradition for English haiku, it must borrow from its Japanese origins. English haiku poets tend to vacillate between reliance on the Japanese tradition when it serves their purposes and rejection of the same tradition when it does not” (227). Record concludes in her abstract “that English haiku can survive as a unique poetic genre only if the poets writing it achieve a deeper understanding of the principles which guided the classical haiku poets of Japan. Since the majority of haiku poets writing in English have either discarded the classical principles, or have transformed them almost beyond recognition, the poetry termed ‘haiku’ bears little or no resemblance to the Japanese model.”

Scott, Rob. “The History of Australian Haiku and the Emergence of a Local Accent.” Victoria University, 2014. MA Thesis. 168 pages.

Rob Scott studies “aspects of haiku’s cultural transmission and evolution in Australia from a genre oriented to the early Japanese models, to one

which is informed by a growing international haiku community and an emerging local sensibility.” Scott argues that the most distinctive elements of Australian haiku derives from local content, especially the adaptation of *kigo*. He writes, “One of the strengths of Japanese haiku has been its ability to reflect its own culture through the use of *kigo*. This study includes a detailed discussion of the two main conceptualisations of *kigo* (season and culture) and potential sources of *kigo*, or *kigo* alternatives (keywords) in Australia are identified in the context of the depth and resonance they could bring to Australian haiku.” He concludes with observations about “a growing homogenisation of haiku as a direct consequence of globalization” which results in “a perceived loss of Australian identity in Australian haiku.”

Sheirer, John. “Contemporary American and Canadian Haiku: An Introduction, Anthology, and Bibliography.” Ohio University, 1986. MA thesis. 100 pages.

Sommerkamp, Sabine. “Der Einfluss Des Haiku Auf Imagismus und Jungere Moderne: Studien Zur Englischen und Amerikanischen Lyrik.” University of Hamburg, Germany, 1984. Dissertation.

Swede, George. “The North American Haiku: Empirical Studies to Establish Defining Criteria and Future Trends.” Greenwich University, 1995. Dissertation. 128 pages.

Swede provides a brief history of haiku in North America and discusses which of “the eight most important rules governing the composition of traditional Japanese haiku still seem to be meaningful to North American poets and which seem to have outlived their usefulness.” He has a chapter on how “North American poets have distinguished haiku from its closest relative, the *senryu*” concluding that “distinctions based on straightforward content criteria are more clear and useful than those stemming from assumptions about authorial intent.”

Ungar, Barbara. “Haiku in English.” Stanford University, 1978. Stanford Honors Essays in Humanities 21. Stanford University Press, 1978. 76 pages.

For her undergraduate honors thesis, Barbara Ungar completed a study on haiku in English including the Imagist poet Amy Lowell, Jack Kerouac's haiku, and a chapter on Michael McClintock and "New Directions in American Haiku." She reviews the work and poetics of each of these three poets as representative of three periods of haiku in English that she summarizes as "exotic interest, avant-garde experimentation, and serious inquiry and adaptation."

Theses on American Haiku Poets

Nicholas Virgilio

Moser, Elizabeth Sands. "Looking Past the Lily: Layers of Meaning and Interconnectivity in Nick Virgilio's Haiku." Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 2012. MA thesis in English, 49 pages.

This is a study of Nick Virgilio's art of writing haiku. Moser writes, "Few American haiku poets can claim to be as enthusiastic and prolific as Nick Virgilio. Over a twenty-five year period, the Camden poet amassed a collection of over 20,000 haiku, many of them unpublished. His poetry covers the contemporary American experience, from gritty urban life in Camden to the erosion of rural American communities in the face of industrialization. The poet writes about the loss of his brother in Vietnam and the toll of such losses on the American psyche. Most of all, through his poetry, workshops and lectures, Virgilio worked tirelessly to get America back in touch with the life-giving power of nature that surrounds our everyday lives." Reading Virgilio's haiku, Moser applies "the idea of 'layers of meaning' to discuss the movement of the poems' point of view from the individual to the community to the entire society."

Robinson, Michele. "Japanese and American Influences on Poetic Form and Content in Nicholas A. Virgilio's Haiku." Rutgers University, 2004. Dissertation.

Gerald Vizenor

Blaeser, Kimberly M. "Gerald Vizenor: Writing in the Oral Tradition." University of Notre Dame, 1990. Dissertation. 323 pages.

An edited version of this dissertation has been published by the University of Oklahoma in 2012. A review on Amazon.com asserts, “Blaeser’s is the first study to reveal the full importance of haiku in Vizenor’s work. His poetry, which draws equally from Zen aesthetics and Ojibway dream songs, contains concise, economical descriptions, made up equally of absence and presence—a style characteristic of Vizenor’s writing in other genres as well.” Of special interest is Blaeser’s study of his work as examples of a writer employing “postmodern theories of the ‘open text,’” and indeterminacy “to elicit reader response”.

2. THESES ON JAPANESE AMERICAN HAIKU, SENRYU AND TANKA

Goudie, Teresa Makiko. “Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma and Post-Internment Japanese Diasporic Literature.” Murdoch University, 2006. Dissertation. 320 pages.

Theresa Goudie studies writings, including tanka poetry, composed by three generations of Japanese Americans—the immigrant, first American-born, and third generation. In the dissertation abstract, Goudie explains that she “examines the literary archive of the Japanese diaspora in North America and uncovers evidence of an intergenerational transmission of trauma after the internment of all peoples of Japanese descent in America during World War Two. Their experience of migration, discrimination and displacement was exacerbated by the internment, the single most influential episode in their history which had a profound effect on subsequent generations.”

Kobayashi, Junko. “‘Bitter Sweet Home’: Celebration of Biculturalism in Japanese language Japanese American Literature, 1936–1952.” University of Iowa, 2005. Dissertation.

Junko Kabayashi examines Japanese literature written by Japanese Americans before and after the Pacific War as a means of studying “how bilingualism played a central role in the formation of Japanese American identity.” She argues that “Japanese language literature provided writers protected space within which they engaged politically

charged discussions on such topics as racialized and gendered politics of loyalty and retaining biculturalism under the increasing pressure of Americanization. After the war, as the issue of disloyalty receded, Japanese language literature acquired a new role as a critical resource for Japanese Americans to commemorate wartime experiences, and to rebuild cultural and psychological ties with Japan and Japanese culture.”

Yoshimizu, Ayaka. “Performing Heteroglossia: Contesting ‘War Bride’ Discourses, Exploring ‘Histories of Kokoro’ with Four Senryu Writers.” Simon Fraser University, 2008. MA in Communication. Dissertation. 202 pages.

Ayaka Yoshimizu explores “the diasporic memories and poetic practices of four ‘Japanese war brides’ in the state of Washington, U.S.A.” Her qualitative research was based on a two-month ethnographic study where she studied four women in a small community of senryu writers. She concludes that: “Based on a Bakhtinian analysis of ‘heteroglossic utterances’ I theorize the writers as heteroglossic subjects who performatively move between ‘culturally different’ discursive spaces, each of which has a set of power-relations and a set of discourses that organize it. When the writers tell their experiences in the discursive space of senryu, I argue, these stories disturb their identity determined by the dominant ‘war bride’ discourses.”

3. THESES ON AMERICAN POETRY AND HAIKU

Modern American Poets

Fogle, Arvie Leo. “Imagism and the Japanese Haiku.” University of Colorado, 1969. MA thesis. 98 pages.

Kita, Yoshiko. “Imagism Reconsidered, with Special Reference to the Early Poetry of H.D.” University of Durham, 1995. Dissertation. 249 pages.

Kita argues that H.D.’s poetry is inconsistent with Ezra Pound’s criteria for Imagist poetry, and therefore illustrates the diversity of Imagism. Her research draws on letters to Amy Lowell and analysis of H.D.’s

early poetry. She states that: "I will consider Imagism in respect of Japanese poetics; for as regards the relationship between Pound's theory and the haiku and the Chinese ideograph, there are some important issues which have been hardly discussed. So, these issues provide room for reconsidering the formation of Imagism."

McDonald, Keiko Iwai. "The Japanese Tradition of Ezra Pound's Poetry: The Effects of Haiku and Noh Plays on the Formation of His Theory of Poetic Imagery." California State University, Sacramento, 1966. MA Thesis. 77 pages.

Shikina, Seiji. "The Adaptation of the Haiku Form in the Poetry of the Imagists." University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1986. Dissertation. 187 pages.

Seiji Shikina argues that: "the adaptation of the haiku form in the poetry of the Imagists is too persistent to conjecture a coincidence." The dissertation starts with a short history of Japanese haiku and aesthetic theories of haiku poets. Then Seiji examines Imagism as a literary movement. This study focuses on the aesthetic theories and poetry of Ezra Pound, John Gould Fletcher, and H.D. Shikina writes that: "There exist the distinct characteristics of the haiku in the imagistic poems discussed throughout this study: the use of super-pository technique, its suggestive quality, its extreme succinctness and understatement, its exact presentation of an image, and the search for oneness between man and nature." The researcher concludes that: "The original Imagists studied Japanese poetry from different angles: Pound saw in the haiku the technique of super-position and the ideogrammic method; Fletcher gained an insight into the spirit of the haiku. He also analysed the main quality of the Japanese poetry in his book *Japanese Prints*; and H. D. came to the understanding of the Oriental philosophy by way of the Freudian psychoanalysis."

Skey, Miriam. "A Comparison of Nature Poetry by Emily Dickinson and Haiku Poets." University of Toronto, 1966. MA thesis.

Ueda, Makoto. "Zeami, Basho, Yeats, Pound: A Study in Japanese and English Poetics." University of Washington, 1961. Dissertation.

The Beat Poets

Giles, Todd R. "Transpacific Transcendence: The Buddhist Poetics of Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder, and Philp Whalen." University of Kansas, 2010. Dissertation. 175 pages.

Giles studies three Beat poets and their search "for a larger geographic and temporal connection to help them break through tightening social, artistic, and spiritual strictures of postwar America. The East-West cross-fermentation which developed after the war provided these poets with an inroad for post-Modernist textual and philosophical experimentation set against a backdrop of Cold War anxieties, urban sprawl, gray flannel suits, and ultra-conservative poetics." He notes their interest in Buddhist texts and interest in "Chinese shih and Japanese haiku forms".

Thimme, David Gerhardt. "Gary Snyder's Idiosyncratic Buddhist Poetics and the 'Razoredge'." University of Louisville, 2006. MA thesis in English, 90 pages.

David Thimme examines how "Gary Snyder's poetry conveys Zen states of consciousness through unconventional grammar and syntax." He views Snyder's works "from a Buddhist perspective, which emphasizes Eastern forms such as haiku and the Zen koan, shows how the disruption of ordinary 'dualistic' thinking potentially improves the aesthetic of 'nonduality.'" He also notes that "Snyder altered the haiku form to adapt it to the English language. His suppressions of articles and personal pronouns accentuate his deliberately choppy tone and echo the compression of haiku. The poetic form was assimilated into Zen practice for its capacity to communicate concrete experiences and deep intuitions, or what poet and Buddhist commentator Robert Haas describes as a 'moment seized on and purely rendered'" (29).

4. THESES ON JAPANESE HAIKU AND RELATED LITERATURE

Albertson, Nicholas. "Beyond Shasei, Beyond Nature: Idealism and Allusion in the Poetry of Shimazaki Tōson, Doi Bansui, and Yosano Akiko." University of Chicago, 2013. Dissertation. 295 pages.

Albertson studies “the early poetry of Shimazaki Toson (1872–1943), Doi Bansui (1871–1952), and Yosano Akiko (1878–1942), three writers who took Japanese Romantic poetry to its height in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Instead of following the realistic trend of *shasei* (sketching from life), each of these poets pursued a lyricism that sought ideals of nature and mined poetic allusions from classical poetic tropes.” Chapter 3 examines tanka by Yosano Akiko and how she employs “supernatural symbolism to entangle the modern discourse of love (*ren'ai*) as a spiritual ideal with classical poetic tropes. Deities, sin, and other supernatural and religious elements are prominent in Akiko’s poetry, but they have largely been overlooked by scholars who seek biographical explanations for her verses.”

Fox, Charles Edward. “The Future in the Past: Kitahara Hakushu and the Modern Poetic Sequence.” University of Michigan, 1998. Dissertation. 501 pages.

Charles Fox studies the development of autobiographical tanka sequences by Kitahara Hakushu. He writes: “Hakushu turned increasingly to the traditional tanka form, bringing to it his well-known tendency to concentrate on sensual experience as well as his characteristically romantic preoccupation with the experiencing self. The pressures of his era had spawned both the *rensaku* (continuous compositions) from the traditional tanka and what eventually would be termed the ‘I-novel’ in prose fiction, and Hakushu built upon the *rensaku* by fashioning modern tanka poetic sequences structured around the sensibility of a single unified consciousness and the development of that persona’s sensual powers and range of emotions.” Fox concludes, “Through the medium of his art, I argue, Hakushu condenses the myriad fragmentary utterances of his tanka into interwoven and complexly nuanced representations of selfhood.”

Gannon, Wilma. “Influence of Zen Buddhism on Haiku Poetry.” Colorado College, 1972. MA in teaching. 38 pages.

Hanami, Ichiro Leopold. “The priest Jakuren and his poetry: A reflection of late-twelfth century poetics.” Stanford University, 1997. Dissertation. 331 pages.

Ichiro Hanami studies the development of aesthetic poetic ideals that later became associated with haiku. In his abstract he states: “In aesthetic terms, the Shinkokin period (1170–1206) is, perhaps, the most influential period in Japanese literary history. The Heian aesthetics of colorful splendor and logical reasoning were replaced by the desolate monochromatism of *sabi* and the mystery and depth of *yugen*, ideals that resurface in haiku, *noh* drama and such. Scholars have discussed these ideals as representing the poetry of the Shinkokinshu, but none have addressed the process of its development.”

Isabel, Seliger. “Speaking Theory Through Poetry: Yosano Akiko (1878–1942) on Poetic Composition and Women’s Writing.” University of Hawaii, 2001. Dissertation. 292 pages.

Isabel Seliger studies the poetic theories of modernist tanka writer Yosano Akiko. This study focuses on Akiko’s book, *Speaking Theory Through Poetry: Yosano Akiko* (1878–1942) on Poetic Composition and Women’s Writing. Isabel writes: “She evaluates and resists the aesthetic standards and socio-political determinants of literature, as well as an art theory that promotes expressive freedom in tanka composition and women’s writing.”

Kramer, Robert Walter. “The Tea Cult in History.” University of Chicago, 1985. Dissertation.

Robert Kramer studies the “‘tea cult’ produced during the Edo period (1603–1868) in Japan.” In Chapter 5 he discusses aesthetic concepts of *wabi*, *sabi* and *furyu* “as ideals pursued and limits established in different tea gatherings.”

Lineberger, Scott Alexander. “The genesis of haikai: Transforming the Japanese poetic tradition through parody.” Columbia University, 2007. Dissertation. 323 pages.

In the abstract Scott Lineberger writes: “Why were forms as different as haikaika, haikai no renga, and maeku-zuke all categorized together under the rubric of haikai? Conversely, how are these poetic genres different in form and content from their orthodox counterparts?

This dissertation answers these questions by tracing the historical development of *haikai* from its beginnings in the Kokinshu through its various permutations in the medieval period and finally its maturation in the Edo period (1603–1867)."

MacDonald, Ian McCullough. "The Mock One Hundred Poets' in Word and Image: Parody, Satire, and Mitate in Seventeenth-Century Comic Poetry (Kyoka)." Stanford University, 2005. Dissertation. 335 pages.

MacDonald writes: "In the early 1600s, Japan's nascent mass-publishing industry began printing editions of literary classics, such as courtly romances, medieval didactic tracts, and collections of poetry. By the end of the seventeenth century, an increasingly literate public was fueling a demand for parodies based on these works. My dissertation focuses upon one such text, *Inu hyakunin isshu* (*The Mock One Hundred Poets*, 1669), an illustrated parody of *Hyakunin isshu* (*The One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each*, ca. 1230), the famous anthology of classical poetry compiled by the courtier Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241)." He argues that poetry satire like this was "a form of parody that was firmly rooted in the literature of the past, especially the venerable form of comic verse known as *kyōka* ('madcap verse'), and a natural outgrowth of classical poetics. The Mock Poets not only resulted from increased literacy but also contributed to a public discourse on how to 'read' classical poetry."

McKee, Daniel J. "Leaves of Words: The Art of Surimono as a Poetic Practice." Cornell University, 2008. Dissertation. 639 pages.

Daniel McKee's dissertation challenges "the conventional treatment of surimono as pictorial greeting/announcement cards that comprise a subcategory of *ukiyo-e*, a definition based on a short-sighted understanding of the genre's history that rises from a distorting projection of western social forms and interests onto a Japanese case." He argues that instead of viewing *surimono* as an art object, it should be viewed as semiotic "ritual poetic exchanges". He concludes that: "The result of the broad view taken in this study, which includes both *haikai* and *kyōka* practices, in relation to customs of composition, inscription and presentation established in *waka* and *renga*, is a new

view of *surimono* as an art form defined by its poetry, in which, in keeping with the classical ideal of the poetic presentation, the work itself becomes a material manifestation of poetic ideas, tones, principles and approaches to representation.”

Meli, Frederick Mark. “The Genesis of Aware: Emotion, Perception, and Aesthetic Value in Early Japanese Poetry.” State University of New York at Buffalo, 1997. Dissertation. 311 pages.

Frederick Meli summarizes in his abstract: “This dissertation is an attempt to understand the original meaning and early development of the Japanese term ‘aware’ and to grasp the structure of the conscious experience that is represented by the term. ‘Aware,’ a word in which in modern Japanese means ‘pity’ or ‘misery,’ is generally thought to be most important as a technical term in the field of literary aesthetics. The term’s important position is due in no small part to the theories of nativist philosopher Motoori Norinaga, who used ‘aware,’ along with ‘mono no aware’ (the pathos of things) to signify the ideal of all literature.” He concludes: “Through analyzing the use of the work in the poems, along with the perceptions involved and the emotions relayed, I come to ascertain certain essential elements of a conscious experience of aware. Such an experience, I conclude, consists in the discovery of immediate aesthetic value in feelings of longing and lack, rooted in perception of the objects of that longing and symbols of those objects.”

Ramirez-Christensen, Esperanza U. “Shinkei: Poet-Priest of Medieval Japan.” Harvard University, 1983. Dissertation. 542 pages.

Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen’s dissertation includes a biography of Shinkei and translation of his book, *Sasamegoto* (*Murmured Conversations*). Esperanza writes: “Based on material in his *waka*, *renga*, and critical essays, the biography presents numerous translations from his works. It may be read as a kind of literary autobiography revealing some of the crucial inner forces motivating his thought, as well as the underlying themes and stylistic qualities of his poetry.” Shinkei is known as “one among ‘the seven sages of renga’ who revived the flagging art in the mid-Muromachi period by investing it with a far

deeper significance than it had heretofore possessed in its more than one-hundred years' history. *Sasamegoto* is Shinkei's most comprehensive statement of that significance. Its main concern is to define the nature and function of Poetry as a means of liberating the mind from narrow subjectivity, and paradoxically enough, from the tyranny of words. The collective art of linked verse is a uniquely suitable vehicle for such a concept because compared to other genres, the poet's mind or *kokoro* is here rendered more immediately palpable in the process of relating to another's verse. Uniting the receptive and interpretive faculty with the creative, it is quintessentially the example of poetry as praxis, or as Shinkei calls it, a Way."

Taki, Hiromi. "The Development of Contemporary Tanka as Seen in the Life and Work of Nakajo Fumiko." University of Sydney, 1997. Dissertation. 511 pages.

Hiromi Taki studies contemporary tanka as exemplified in the works of Nakajo Fumiko. This dissertation "covers the first ten years after the end of the Second World War when the whole Japanese culture and its values were questioned and when tanka poets were severely hit by the criticism of tanka as a second-rate art. Though many tanka poets were shattered by the criticism, the tanka world slowly began to indicate some changes for a new era. The attempts to search for new talent and the revival of female tanka are detailed in this thesis."

Tanouchi, Aki. "The Renga Techniques and Their Effects in the Kanginshu." Ohio State University, 1987. MA thesis. 105 pages.

Tuck, Robert. "The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan, 1870-1900." Columbia University, 2012. Dissertation. 322 pages.

In his abstract Robert Tuck explains: "This dissertation examines the influence of 'poetic sociality' during Japan's Meiji period (1867–1912). 'Poetic sociality' denotes a range of practices within poetic composition that depend upon social interaction among individuals, most importantly the tendency to practice poetry as a group activity, pedagogical practices such as mutual critique and the master-disciple

relationship, and the exchange among individual poets of textually linked forms of verse. Under the influence of modern European notions of literature, during the late Meiji period both prose fiction and the idea of literature as originating in the subjectivity of the individual assumed hegemonic status. Although often noted as a major characteristic of pre-modern poetry, poetic sociality continued to be enormously influential in the literary and social activities of 19th century Japanese intellectuals despite the rise of prose fiction during late Meiji, and was fundamental to the way in which poetry was written, discussed and circulated.” The last chapter focuses on Shiki and other proponents of new literary haiku emphasizing the haiku poet’s individual expression. However, Tuck writes, “no major ‘new haiku’ group ever completely discarded the notion that haiku was at base a group activity, and that the haiku society should be the basic unit of organization in the haiku world” (285).

Theses on Japanese Haiku Poets

Bashō

Aitken, Robert. “Bashō’s Haiku and Zen.” University of Hawaii, Honolulu, (1950). MA thesis.

Aitken’s thesis was the basis for his subsequent book, *A Zen Wave: Bashō’s Haiku & Zen*, published by John Weatherhill, Inc., in 1978. This thesis is a reading of haiku by Bashō as examples of various Zen Buddhist principles.

Barnhill, David Landis. “The Journey Itself Home: The Religiosity of the Literary Works of Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694).” Stanford University, 1986. Dissertation. 180 pages.

Barnhill’s dissertation on Bashō uses theories of religion developed by anthropologists Glifford Geertz and Victor Turner. Examining Bashō’s literary works, Barnhill writes that “Bashō’s way of life reflects and embodies his world view in a religious way.” He views Bashō’s religiosity as “outsiderhood, the permanent location of oneself outside of both secular and religious structure.” Barnhill argues that “it is misleading to claim that the persona in Bashō’s journals is Buddhist. By discussing

Bashō as a seer and analyzing the dialectical nature of his works, I suggest certain similarities between Bashō and Buddhism. However, by examining Bashō's works in light of what William LaFleur has called the Buddhist episteme of medieval Japanese culture, I argue that Bashō's literary works embody a religiosity that cannot be identified with Buddhism. It is instead an eclectic and unique development of the traditions of impermanence, itinerancy, and fate."

Ebersole, Gary L. "Matsuo Bashō and the Way of Poetry in the Japanese Religious Tradition." University of Chicago, Dissertation. 1981.

Kerkham, Carol Eleanor. "Matsuo Bashō *Oku no hosomichi*: A Critical Study." Indiana University, 1974. Dissertation. 341 pages.

Venrick, Reed Emerson. "Bashō and Buson Compared Across the Genres of Haiku, Haiga, and Haibun Genres." University of South Florida, 1994. MA thesis. 77 pages.

Buson

Crowley, Cheryl Anne. "Haikai Poet Yosa Buson (1716–1783) and the Back to Bashō Movement." Columbia University, 2001. Dissertation.

Cheryl Crowley writes: "Haikai poet and painter Yosa Buson was a leader of the revival haikai movement (ca. 1765–1785). Buson was not given to elaborate theorizing about *haikai*, and wrote few sustained expositions of his poetics, but one document, the preface to the 1777 verse collection *Shundei kushū* (*Shundei verse anthology*) contains a lengthy statement about his poetic theory. Here he writes that the principle of *rizoku* (transcending the ordinary), was the key to excellence in *haikai*, *kanshi* (Chinese poetry), and painting. Buson's *rizoku* theory was at the core of the most characteristic aspects of his poetic practice. It was a fundamental principle informing the Back to Bashō movement, that is, the efforts of poets like Takai Kitō, Katō Kyōtai, Miura Chora, and others to resist the trend towards vulgarity and commercialism that characterized contemporary haikai and recapture the brilliance of the early Bashō school style."

Johnsson, Herbert. “Haikai Poetics: Buson, Kitō and the Interpretation of Renku Poetry.” Stockholm University, 2006. Dissertation. 437 pages.

Herbert Johnsson studies “the poetics of haikai in eighteenth-century Japan” promoted by Buson and his followers, especially their practice of composing *haikai no renga*.

Kondo, Tadashi. “A Study of Translations of Haiku: On Bashō’s ‘Old Pond’.” Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, 1975. Dissertation.

O’Mara, Joan Hertzog. “The Haiga Genre And The Art Of Yosa Buson (1716–84) (Volumes I and II).” University of Michigan, 1989. Dissertation. 524 pages.

O’Mara explains that “this dissertation examines the form which most consistently and clearly expresses the unity Buson perceived between his painting and his poetry: the *haiga*.” She defines haiku “as a composite work in which at least one inscribed haiku and a usually abbreviated painting exhibit linkage based on content.”

Papapaviou, Cleopatra Helen Claire. “The Haiga Figure as a Vehicle of Buson’s Ideals: With Emphasis on the Illustrated Sections of *Oku No Hosomichi* and ‘Nozarashi Kiko’.” University of California, Berkeley, 1981. Dissertation. 324 pages.

Papapaviou studies Buson’s haiga characterizing his success as a poet-painter through “a synthetic approach. This approach may be said to represent one of Buson’s major ideals; it is also apparent in his literary works and in the close inter-relationship of his poetry and painting. The study focuses on Buson’s synthetic approach through the consideration of his *haiga*, and, in particular, his treatment of the figure motif.”

Persinger, Allan. “Foxfire: The Selected Poems of Yosa Buson, a Translation.” University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, 2013. Dissertation. 391 pages.

Persinger’s dissertation “is a creative translation from Japanese into English of the poetry of Yosa Buson, an 18th century (1716–1783)

poet.” He explains that he chooses to translate the haiku as free verse. “In my translations, I concentrate on the content, the images, and the individual words since I hold it important that not only are the translations accurate, but that they fulfill æsthetic expectations. Furthermore, while it is impossible to separate form and content, my translations privilege content over form since I believe it would be nearly impossible to keep the syllable count of 5/7/5 and not do drastic damage to the meaning.”

Yokota, Toshiko. “Buson as Bunjin: The Literary Field of Eighteenth-century Japan.” University of California, Irvine, 2000. Dissertation. 468 pages.

Toshiko Yokota argues that Buson has been misrepresented as an intellectual *literati*. He writes that traditional biographers “construct a consistent but erroneous image of Buson as *bunjin* from his literary works and paintings.” Applying Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of social practice, Yokota argues, “My analysis of the diversified social aspects of Buson’s life and works from a broader socio-historical perspective contributes to demystifying Buson’s romanticized image as *bunjin* who worked only for aesthetic purposes, and helps us to understand that Buson’s two-fold practice as a *bunjin* poet-painter was socio-historically constituted.”

Issa

Hislop, Scot Andrew. “In Defense of Skinny Frogs: The Poetry and Poetics of Kobayashi Issa.” Cornell University, 2002. Dissertation. 365 pages.

In his abstract Scot Hislop writes: “In this dissertation I argue from the poetics of Kobayashi Issa (1763–1827) and other Edo era poets that reading the texts attributed to Issa as ‘literary texts’ results in misreadings.” The dissertation includes chapters on Issa’s *haikai no renga*, a discussion of the difference between haiku and *hokku*, and a chapter on Issa’s haibun.

Pellissier, Hank Fidele. "Jodo-shinshu influence in the 'insect' haiku of Kobayashi Issa." California State University, Dominguez Hills, 1994. MA thesis. 74 pages.

Hank Pellissier summarizes his thesis: "Kobayashi Issa is one of Japan's most beloved writers of haiku. He was also a Jodo-Shinshu priest. This essay describes the Jodo-Shinshu presence in fifty-eight of Issa's "insect" haiku. Pellissier concludes, "The investigation reveals a spiritually 'independent' poet who was often devout, occasionally ambivalent, and sometimes downright hostile to the creed that ordained him. Jodo-Shinshu's influence, although powerful, was consistently overruled if it clashed with Issa's egalitarian instincts, compassion for all creatures, or insights and emotions regarding his own suffering."

Shiki

Beichman, Janine. "Masoka Shiki: His Life and Works." Columbia University, 1974. Dissertation. 257 pages.

Beichman's dissertation was the basis for her book, *Masaoka Shiki*, published by Twayne Publishers in 1982. It starts with a literary biography followed by chapters on his haiku, tanka, essays and diaries. Beichman challenges common characterizations of Shiki as an objectivist or as champion of *shasei* approaches. She notes that most of "Shiki's writing was autobiographical." She also writes that "Shiki's style is usually described as objective and realistic. In his best writings, however, I find a large lyric and personal element as well. The combination of realism and lyricism, plus an assumption of closeness to the reader, creates Shiki's distinctive tone." Instead of "sketch from life" she argues that she finds "a delicate balance of such opposing elements as realism and fantasy, objective description and subjective expression."

Kang, Rosemary Se-Soon. "Soseki and Shiki: Their Friendship in Haiku and Kanshi." University of Tasmania, 2006. MA thesis. 162 pages.

5. THESES ON HAIKU AND LINGUISTICS

Kaneko, Michiko. "The Poetics of Sign Language Haiku." University of Bristol, Centre for Deaf Studies, 2008. Dissertation. 339 pages.

In the abstract Michiko Kaneko writes: "This dissertation explores the poetic features of sign language haiku. Sign language haiku can be defined as a very short piece of poetic signing, which is influenced by the traditional Japanese haiku form. Traditional Japanese haiku form is known for strict formal discipline, objective description of nature, and strong visual appeal. Sign language haiku retains some of the basic features of traditional haiku, but has turned itself into a new poetic form which inherits characteristics both from general artistic signing and the particular discipline of haiku." Kaneko organized a haiku festival and this research studies the haiku that were created in British Sign Language (BSL) for the festival. She concludes: "Because brevity is the fundamental feature of sign language haiku, all the poetic features are condensed and have become highly symbolic. There is a close deep relationship between form and meaning in sign language haiku, which requires an investigation into both formal and thematic aspects. Theme-wise, sign language haiku inherits topics linked to nature from the traditional haiku discipline, but also adds issues of Deafness and identity from the larger body of sign language poetry. In terms of formal features, sign language haiku makes the most of its visual-spatial nature, resulting in highly expressive, emotional, and embodied language. Features such as hand shapes, rhythm, symmetry, blending of poetic spaces, and use of eye gaze are all indispensable parts of sign language haiku as in sign language poetry in general."

Miller, Rachel Marie. "The Emotional Weight of Poetic Sound: An Exploration of Phonetic Iconicity in the Haiku of Bashō." Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 2014. MA thesis. 64 pages.

Marie Miller conducts linguistic research on how "sound symbolism, and more specifically phonetic iconicity, plays a role in conveying emotional weight in the context of poetry." She reports that: "plosive to nasal ratio may indeed play a role in the perception of emotion in poetry, particularly in the case of poems with high plosive to nasal ratios, which were perceived as markedly more active and positive than other poems."

Yamamoto, Shiho. "Pitch Contour of Japanese Traditional Verse." University of Montana, Missoula, 2011. MA thesis in Linguistics. 83 pages.

Yamamoto studies "how pitch pattern is realized in Japanese traditional verses. My observation consists of four parts: (i) investigation of lexical pitch and accentual combinations of contemporary haiku in prose and in verse (ii) investigation of lexical pitch and accentual combinations of Basho's traditional haiku (iii) observation of nonsense haiku and (iv) pitch range measurements of contemporary haiku in prose and in verse." She reports the following findings: "Japanese speakers (i) tend to recite contemporary haiku that include familiar lexemes with expected pitch patterns, compared with Basho's traditional haiku that include more lexemes unfamiliar to the subjects (ii) have two major pitch template choices, which I term plateau and default, when reciting nonsense verses, and the occurrences of these pitch patterns are supported by Japanese phonological notions such as default-accent, down-step or declining, and (iii) tend to read haiku in verse with a wider pitch range than that in prose."

6. THESES ON HAIKU AND PSYCHOLOGY

Bruce, W. Anne. "Abiding in Liminal Space(s): Inscribing Mindful Living/Dying With(in) End of Life Care." University of British Columbia, 2002. Dissertation. 250 pages.

In this nursing study, W. Anne Bruce examines "mindfulness meditation" in health care. She writes: "The purpose of this study was to explore mindfulness by those who regularly practiced mindfulness meditation and were caregivers in a Zen hospice or living with a life threatening illness." She concludes: "These perspectives may help nurses and health care professionals go beyond dualistic views and provide guidance for abiding in the midst of suffering that may be beyond words."

Harris, Robert Bruce. "Effect of Personality on the Interpretation of Haiku Poetry." United States International University, 1973. MA thesis. 48 pages.

Kocher, Philomene. “‘Their Capacity to Delight’ Knowing Persons with Dementia Through Haiku.” Queens University, 2008. Masters of Education thesis.

Philomene Kocher “explores the use of haiku poetry to connect with persons with dementia. The happenings during two one-hour sessions provide the main focus for this study. These sessions were part of an ongoing spiritual care program on the secure dementia unit of a long-term care facility. The sessions were co-facilitated by the chaplain who leads the ongoing program, and by myself as both guest poet and researcher. Haiku were used as prompts to reminiscence. Words and phrases from the stories that were spoken during the session became the building blocks for creating collaborative haiku within the group setting.”

Stephenson, Kittredge Taylor. “Extending the Writing Paradigm: Is Writing Haiku Poetry Healing?” Texas A&M University, 2009. MA thesis in psychology. 37 pages.

Kittredge Stephenson studies haiku writers “to evaluate its healing potential. Participants, 98 introductory psychology students at a large southwestern university, wrote for 20 minutes a day on three consecutive days and completed self-report measures of happiness, satisfaction with life, spiritual meaning, creativity, physiological symptomatology, depression, anxiety, and health/illness orientation at baseline and 3-week follow-up. A series of ANCOVA linear contrasts were used to examine differences between groups writing narrative about a neutral topic, haiku about a neutral topic, haiku about nature, or haiku about a negative life event. It was found that writing haiku demonstrated increased levels of creativity overall. In addition, the nature haiku group reported significantly lower levels of physiological symptomatology than the negative life event haiku group and had significantly lower illness orientation than the haiku control group.” Kittredge concludes that the results “suggest that writing haiku poetry is a creative activity that leads one to be more sensitive to the writing topic, whatever it may be. Narrative writing, by contrast, appears to help integrate one’s experience. The difference between the heightened sensitivity of writing haiku and the integrative capacity of narrative are compared and recommendations made for future research.”

Stephenson, Kittredge Taylor. "Haiku, Nature, and Narrative: An Empirical Study of the Writing Paradigm and Its Theories." Texas A&M University, 2014. Dissertation.

In this extension of the 2009 master's thesis, Kittredge Stephenson analyzed short-term and long-term measures of 235 college student writers based on "writing type (narrative, haiku, or haibun), image content (nature or non-nature), and affective valence (positive or negative)." The short-term effects measured included: arousal, affective valence, and flow. The longer-term measures included: "negative (anxiety, depression, physiological symptomatology) and positive attributes (spiritual meaning, creativity, mindfulness)." Kittredge found that the writing groups "experienced greater salubrious change when their writing included narrative: mindfulness, change in affective valence, and flow all increased." Kittredge found "no significant differences between participants who wrote haiku about nature versus a non-nature topic. Relative to those writing haiku in response to negative nature images, those writing haiku in response to positive nature images evinced decreased depressive symptomatology, increased physiological symptomatology, and greater positive change in affective valence."

7. THESES ON TEACHING HAIKU AS LITERATURE AND WRITING

Curran, Jessica Lee. "From Mourning to Meditation: Theorizing Ecopoetics, Thinking Ecology." Stony Brook University, 2012. Dissertation. 210 pages.

Jessica Curran writes that "this dissertation analyzes the works of Emily Dickinson and Henry David Thoreau, situating them in a contemporary ecocritical context, but more importantly, in a widened sense of ecopoetics. The project's thesis states that the ecopoet, in mourning the loss of nature as idealization and salvation, embraces a state of radical metaphor-making, which in turn allows for a heightened sense of intimacy and necessitates a commitment to meditation. The cultivation of intimacy and the practice of meditation lie at the heart of ecological thinking and being." She further explains: "In shaping this narrative of ecopoesis, multiple genres are discussed in relation to meditative practice as a form of diurnal awareness, including the epistle, ode, haiku, journal, lyric fiction, and elegy."

DeVito, Becky. "Writing as Inquiry: How Might the Practice of Writing Poetry Function as an Epistemic Tool for Poets?" Harvard University, 2010. Dissertation. 372 pages.

Becky DeVito studies "the cognitive processes of poets as they go about their normal business of composing a poem. In this study, I ask: In what ways, if at all (and to what extent), has the process of writing a poem functioned as a process of inquiry for these poets? I also study how, if at all, the poets perceive that sustaining a practice of writing poetry has impacted their meaning making in other areas of their lives, and their perceptions on whether they have conducted inquiry through their writing practices. I examine the poet responses in light of trends found in other data from the study." She recruits seven published tanka poets and "asked them to compose a poem using a think aloud protocol, and ended each session with a qualitative interview to gain a more complete sense of how the poem came into being, as well as to obtain the poets' perceptions on how they normally go about the process of writing poetry." Recruited from the Tanka Society of America, the poets include: Miriam Chaikin, Elaine Mokhtefi, John Stevenson, and four poets who chose to remain anonymous.

DiJoseph, Robin. "Small Moments in a Big World: Haiku for Children." Bank Street College of Education, New York, 2008. MA thesis. 102 pages.

For her thesis, Robin DiJoseph creates "An original book of haiku poems for six-and seven-year-olds on common childhood experiences, e.g., losing a tooth, taking a bath, playing a game." Her thesis includes "responses to work by six groups of children in different educational settings." And it "Contains a chapter on reading and writing haiku poems in a first and second grade classroom."

Dufort, Shirlee Perazzo. "Haiku Evolutions and a Fresh Rationale for Creating Collaboration, Connection and Community in the College Classroom." State University of New York at Albany, 2008. Dissertation. 161 pages.

Dufort's dissertation focuses on strategies and benefits of "community and collaborative learning in the college classroom." She especially

considers “research and ideas from the fields of psychology (attachment theory, resilience theory, and logotherapy), cognitive science, medicine, business, group dynamics, and physics” related to a classroom community based on collaborative learning. Her primary example of collaborative activity is students writing haiku poetry. She argues that “While academic prose is useful in some ways, poetry is useful in others, and an approach combining the two serves to increase the accessibility and usefulness of the ideas under discussion.” Dufort uses haiku because it provides “evocative and approachable writing that is economical with words.”

Friedland, Ellie. “Look and Look Again: A Heuristic Inquiry Into Education as Awareness.” The Union Institute, 1994. Dissertation. 184 pages.

In this dissertation, Ellie Friedland examines her own experience with Zen Buddhist traditions of contemplation and writing. She narrates her own growth and education over a three-year period of Zen practice in two areas: (1) writing haiku and tanka, and (2) studying and acting Shakespeare. “She approaches these content areas as awareness practices: Zen is the contemplative; writing is an internal expressive practice; and studying and acting Shakespeare includes public, externally-focused creative expression.” Friedland begins with the hypothesis that “an important purpose of education can and should be ‘to make you wonder and answer that wondering with the deepest expression of your own nature.’”

Iida, Atsushi. “Revisiting Haiku: The Contribution Of Composing Haiku To L2 Academic Literacy Development.” Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 2011. Dissertation. 216 pages.

Atsushi Iida studies the effectiveness of using English-language haiku composition in a second-language classroom. He writes that this dissertation “explores the interaction between academic prose and the effect of writing different text types, focusing on Japanese poetry, haiku.” This is an empirical study of 20 college freshmen at a private Japanese university. Iida’s data come from “multiple sources: pre- and post-essays, the books of haiku, weekly journals, self-reflections, and face-

to-face interviews.” He concludes: “This empirical study demonstrated that, for the participants, the task of composing English haiku had positive effects on the development of their L2 academic literacy skills and helped them to gain a greater awareness of voice in L2 writing. It also showed that English haiku composition was a valuable task for the participants in L2 learning.”

Motz, Betty Lee. “Haiku: A Means of Creative Self Expression.” University of Akron, 1971. MS thesis. 39 pages.

8. THESES ON USING HAIKU IN OTHER ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES

Burgess, Jesse Hugh. “The Aesthetic Qualities of Zen Haiku in Music.” California State University, Dominguez Hills, 2007. MA thesis. 136 pages.

Jesse Burgess examines “the aesthetic qualities of Zen haiku and discusses their application to music.” He asks: “Is there a music like a haiku, one that manifests an essential minimum of Zen haiku aesthetic qualities and justifies it as in the Zen haiku attunement?” Then Burgess “examines pieces of music from many different cultures and epochs and explains why some can be considered to manifest the Zen haiku attunement and others cannot.”

Charles, David Alfred. “The Novelty of Improvisation: Towards a Genre of Embodied Spontaneity.” Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 2003. Dissertation. 378 pages.

David Charles employs Bakhtin’s concepts to examine improvisation in theatre. He writes: “Improvisation has often been viewed and valued in terms of its service and resemblance to scripted traditions of theatre. Such a stance seriously undermines the significance and impact of this global performance modality, and has resulted in improvisatory modes being largely ignored or downplayed in modern historical accounts of theatre.” In this study, Charles discusses “more widely recognized theatrical movements, such as the Roman mime, Italian Commedia dell’Arte, Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed, Viola Spolin’s

Theatre Games and Keith Johnstone's Theatresports, the inclusion of lesser known (and marginal) practices, such as Japanese *renga*, Nigerian Apidan and Jacob Levy Moreno's psychodrama, further elucidates and complicates improvisation's generic qualities."

Chen, Janet Jieru. "Four Seasons after Haiku of Bashō for Ensemble of Chinese Instruments and Spring Air and Winter Night for *Dizi*, *Zheng* and String Quartet." Duke University, 2012. Dissertation. 150 pages.

For her dissertation, Janet Chen composes a work, *Four Seasons after Haiku of Bashō*, for a large ensemble featuring Chinese instruments. She explains that the piece "uses timbre and sonority to depict the vivid colors of the four seasons." The dissertation also includes a second composition, *Spring Air and Winter Night*, blending Chinese and string instruments.

Handlin, Jim. "A Haiku Manual." Bank Street College of Education, 1985. MS thesis in education.

Handlin, Jim. "Haiku as a Tool for Training the Intuition of Educational Leaders." Columbia University, 1988. Dissertation. 125 pages.

Jim Handlin develops "a set of haiku materials that can be used to train the intuition of educational administrators so they can better negotiate the different interpretations of organizational experience that can be summarized as the: (1) efficiency or rational system theories; (2) the human resource theories; (3) the political or power theories; and (4) the cultural or symbolic theories. The danger for administrators is to choose one theory and make the world fit it. Consequently, administrators in their training should become conversant with the literature and practice of all four perspectives as well as being required in their training to develop approaches that integrate the various perspectives. While much has been done to popularize a multiple perspective approach to administration, very little scholarship has explored a methodology to develop an integrating approach. This study explores haiku as one such methodology." Handlin argues that "haiku exposes a complicated multi-valued, ambiguous, multi-

dimensional reality; not a black or white, either/or world. Because haiku incorporates the nature of ambiguity within itself as nature does, it allows for the process of discovery, for brainstorming and creative guessing through spontaneous use of the intellect and feelings. Thus, haiku is a methodology for helping administrators to conceptualize and work with the ambiguity that underlies the multiple perspective approach to administration.” He concludes that haiku is “a useful, practical, creative tool that administrators can use to stimulate their creativity, improve their conceptual and analytical abilities and enhance their ability to negotiate ambiguity.”

Igarashi, Yoko. “Japanese Poetry in Western Art Song.” Boston University, 2012. Dissertation. 133 pages.

Yoko Igarashi studies early twentieth century Western art songs based on Japanese tanka as “a late manifestation of *Japonisme*, the Japanese influence on Western art and music. The songs discussed in this dissertation include ‘Japanisches Regenlied’ (1909) by Joseph Marx, ‘Three Japanese Lyrics’ (1912–13) by Igor Stravinsky, ‘Petits Poèmes Japonais’ (1919) by Francesco Santoliquido, and ‘Romances on Texts by Japanese Poets’ (1928–32) by Dmitri Shostakovich.” The dissertation provides a history of Japonisme in Western art and music. Igarashi summarizes that: “The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the relationship between the original Japanese poems and their translations into European languages, and to discuss their transformation” and “Japanese influences in Western music.”

Levis, Jason L. “Plum Blossom Warm Gentle Wind Shimmering Stillness for Bass Trombone and Ensemble.” University of California, Berkeley, 2012. Dissertation. 43 pages.

Jason Levis composes *Plum Blossom Warm Gentle Wind Shimmering Stillness* for solo bass trombone and ensemble. He explains that “The title reflects my interest in haiku, and the possibility of containing in a brief statement, a moment of total clarity and harmony. While reflecting on Professor Thow’s passing, sitting on my front porch, watching the blooming plum tree in front of my house shake and stir ever so gently when the wind would pick up, I experienced one of

these moments of deep quietude. Even as the title is not a haiku in its traditional form, it contains a moment for me where something brief and subtle can have a sudden impact and lasting resonance.”

Lukey, Dania Marie. “Embodying the Aesthetics in Everyday Life: Exploring the Metacognitive Process of Creating Functional Objects Through Narrative Inquiry.” California State University, Sacramento. MA thesis. 167 pages.

Dania Lukey’s thesis focuses on her “journey as a budding artisan of weaving and ceramics and as a devotee of poetry. Over the course of the year, the author created a journal using her exploration into these crafts as a platform to explore the convergence of ideas from disciplines thought of as divergent: Zen and Buddhist ideas of life and aesthetics, systems theory of inter-relationships, cognitive science’s ideas of embodied knowledge, and ideas from the philosophers of art and education.” Haiku becomes part of her artistic exploration. She writes that “the value of reading a haiku is in the reader’s journey through it, not the words, not even insight if they are to have arrived at one. While the reader is following with ‘intentionless intention,’ they replace themselves over and over in the universe, grounding themselves as an interdependent member of their environment” (22).

Meyh, George. “Haiku, an Interpretation of Nature.” Glassboro State College, 1970. MA thesis. 11 pages.

George Meyh’s thesis provides guidelines for using haiku in nature education. He gives an overview of the basics of haiku aesthetics and proposes its use as a means of studying nature.

Pointer, Stephanie Jo. “The Discovery of Self Through Creative Exploration.” The University of Montana, Missoula, 2006. MA thesis. 49 pages.

Stephanie Pointer’s thesis is a journal of her participation in a program of “Integrated Arts” which included an Artist-Forest-Community Residency in the Helena National Forest. She explains that she was seeking to become closer to nature to improve her artwork. She writes:

“This presentation primarily documents a voyage of discovery into the business of mounting a solo show. More importantly, the purpose of this paper is to give the reader a feeling for the creative encounter. This paper strives to provide an ability to view the work and experience that transformational moment which is so captivatingly elusive. For this reason I have included a section devoted to a selection of my imagery and Haiku poetry to accompany them.”

Smith, Steven Lyle. “Haiku Seasons.” University of North Texas, 2000. Master of Music thesis. 50 pages.

Steven Smith composes *Haiku Seasons*, a choral work that uses several haiku to portray moments in nature. Smith explains that “The intent of *Haiku Seasons* is to create an image of nature isolated from human interaction. Thus, the image is a pastoral setting with many independent parts all coexisting in a relatively silent world. I combine aspects of tonality, time, space, and silence to create this image.”

Tercek, Mary Jo. “Typographic Interpretation of the Poetic Forms of Haiku, Senryu and Renga in Book Form.” Kent State University, 1995. MFA. 84 pages.

Whalley, Richard. “A Wisp of Spring Cloud.” Harvard University, 2004. Dissertation. 84 pages.

Richard Whalley is a composer trying “to find ways of achieving greater intimacy through engaging my audience’s imagination and memory in the experience of listening to music.” He uses a haiku as the basis of a four-movement work for a large chamber ensemble. In his abstract he writes: “In many ways this strikingly simple haiku by the American poet Tom Tico epitomizes what I strive to achieve in composition: an insight on the world that has the power to transport us from the logistics of everyday life into a deeper realm of existence. A wisp of spring cloud drifting apart from the rest . . . slowly evaporates. What, for me, is so beautiful about this haiku is how within just 18 syllables—through attention to a fleeting detail within something so familiar, yet so awe-inspiring as the sky—a reader is transported very powerfully into a spiritual association with nature.”

Wong, Tsan Martin. "Automatic Generation of Modern Haiku Poetry." City University of Hong Kong, 2008. MA thesis. Dissertation. 112 pages.

Tsan Wong develops an artificial intelligence program to generate haiku. He writes that his "goal is to generate a modern haiku poetry automatically." He explains that "Besides just generating few lines of human-understandable text, to be a successful generated poem, one must fulfill certain kinds of requirements: for example, Grammatical: The most basic requirement that a text should fulfill, Meaningful: a poem should be meaningful so that it is human-understandable. Poetic feature of a poem: This is the most abstract aspect that is quite difficult to describe using few words. To deal with poetic feature, the issue is sometimes subjective in nature." His approach uses "popular web 2.0 technologies, blogosphere, and web search engine, to generate modern haiku poetry." Here is an example of a haiku generated by his JAVA-servlet application Wong titled HAIG (Haiku Artificial Intelligence Generator):

Drifting snow and windy
That leaves us dreaming
Chase the moon

Yoshimoto, Mika. "Second Language Learning and Identity: Cracking Metaphors in Ideological and Poetic Discourse." University of Ottawa, 2008. Dissertation. 301 pages.

In this autoethnography, Mika Yoshimoto examines "the identity struggles of Japanese women learning English as a second language from the perspective of sociocultural theory and critical theory in a postmodern stance." She draws on her own experience as a Japanese woman learning English and studies "three female Japanese students learning English in a Canadian University in Ontario." This study focuses on the use of "four different discourse genres; narrative, haiku, metaphor and academic discourse. I choose to write narrative discourse to express our stories poetically. My decision to create was inspired by haiku, a genre that expresses my changing values and never-ending painful transformations. The untranslatable nature of language and this journey of women inspire haiku that emerges in a third space

of the said and the unsaid. Finally, I turn to academic discourse to compose the meta-story of what I am doing and why, and to situate my identity and my research in a theoretical framework.” Mika shares original haiku throughout the dissertation.

9. CREATIVE WRITING THESES WITH HAIKU & RELATED LITERATURE

Bartholomew, Wayne. *The Bronze Dame*. Youngstown State University, 2008. 118 pages.

For his creative writing thesis, Wayne Bartholomew has written a pulp detective novel employing haiku-like stanzas. He explains that *The Bronze Dame* is an experiment, in which I attempt to blend the rigorous structuring of the East with the itinerant, gritty styling of the West.” His conception of haiku is primarily syllable count. He states: “In terms of the East, I adhere to the ‘traditional’ English formatting rules for the structuring of haiku (the vehicle in which I tell my tale): three lines, with a syllable count of five, seven, and five, in the first, second, and third line, respectively. However, I choose to omit the obligatory *kireji* (pause) that comes at the end of either the first or second line, opting instead for pauses when and if I see fit. I also choose to omit the *kigo* (season word), in which the *renga* (reference to the natural world) is set. The result is a terse, tightly edited voice that tells the story of a witty, perceptive hero, who, in Chandler’s words, is the ‘best man in his world, and a good enough man for any other.’”

Cox, Aubrie. “Out of My Dreaming Heart: A Collection of Tanka.” Ball State University, 2013. MA Thesis. 62 pages.

Aubrie Cox writes: “This collection essentially synthesizes two aspects of Japanese culture: tanka and *kyōka* poetry and *yokai*. Both have roots in exploration of the human psyche and our relationship with the natural world. The challenge while respecting these traditions and elements deeply ingrained within Japanese society has been to utilize my own Western traditions and understandings to create new interpretations of both the poetic form and folklore.”

Eliason, Kristen. "Treatise On Drowning." Notre Dame University, 2008. 76 pages.

McGinn, Florence. *Following the Blood Trail*. California State University, Dominguez Hills, 1996. MA Thesis. 115 pages.

Florence McGinn writes, *Following the Blood Trail* is a collection of free-verse poetry and English-language haiku. Its purposeful structure examines private meaning and aesthetic process. It explores feminine experiences, sensuality, Asian American reflections, and writing process through archetypal metaphors of life quest and blood price to voice a confirmation of freedom and purpose."

Mikulec, Patrick B. "Haiku: the Internal Comparison Technique." Reed College, 1981. MA thesis. 42 pages.

Rogers, Mary M. "Pieces of Paradise: An Investigation of the Japanese Haiku Tradition With Original Haiku, Tanka and Free Verse." Clark University, 1993. MA thesis. 79 pages.

Mary Rogers writes: "Multiple verse forms and various poetic subjects dominate this manuscript. I am primarily interested in short verse forms, either traditional forms, free verse forms, or experimental forms that blend free verse craft, traditional structures, and/or visual and spatial elements. The sonnet, the prose poem, the elegy, stanza forms (couplet; quatrain; tercet for example), and concrete or pattern poetry are included. Many of these poems are autobiographical in nature. For example, I develop 'the memory sonnet', using the sonnet form as a vehicle for autobiographical writing. One traditional form, the haiku, is explored in detail, illustrating an understanding of its centuries-old tradition, while also developing the form into more modern and contemporary applications. For starters, the entire collection is structured around the seasonal element of haiku, broken into 4 subtle parts—spring, summer, autumn and winter. I capture, within the form, a moment of 'intense perception' so often attributed to haiku."

Whalen, Peter John. "Three: Short poetic forms, experimental free verse and the mixing of genres." The University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2000. Dissertation. 113 pages.

Younkin, Christopher Stuart. "Origami." Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, 2013. MA Thesis. 52 pages.

Younkin describes his two-part creative thesis: "The first part, 'Origami,' features short poems that meditate in the space where the everyday world disrupts imagination, leading at times to revision of memory, lyrical grumbling, and mythologizing experience. Many of these poems are influenced by traditional Chinese and Japanese poetic forms. Part two, 'No places,' is a long poem that explores a mystifying and imposing suburban landscape of massive strip malls, endless housing tracts, and car-centered infrastructure. The poem consists of lyrical and narrative modes juxtaposed with haiku."

10. THESES IN ENGLISH ON HAIKU IN OTHER NON-JAPANESE LANGUAGES

Brower, Gary Layne. "The Haiku In Spanish American Poetry." University of Missouri, 1966. Dissertation. 430 pages.

Brower examines Spanish American haiku, placing works into three categories: Western poetry, Westernized haiku and "those which do not even seem to function as 'good' poetry." The five chapters include "The Basis for the Misunderstanding of Haiku in the West; A Comparison of the Technical Devices of Spanish American and Japanese Haiku; Spanish American Interpretations of Haiku; A Comparison of Themes and Images; Spanish American Haiku." —from *Japan & Korea: An Annotated Bibliography*

Konz, Barbara Dianne Cantella. "From Modernism To Vanguard: The Aesthetics Of Haiku In Hispanic Poetry." University of Texas, 1975. Dissertation. 349 pages.

Ishikawa, Juan Ryusuke. "Tácticas de aproximación hacia formas representativas de la presencia asiática en la literatura latinoamericana: Trayectoria del chino-culi y el haiku." University of California, Berkeley, 2005. Dissertation. 248 pages.

Ishikawa writes: “My dissertation explores the limits of representation, and the dialectic relation between two distinct cultures in what Kristeva sees as ‘the stranger within ourselves’. It is composed of two main parts. In the first part, I analyze the depiction of the Chinese coolie as an exoticized subject, opening the debate on how to ‘represent’ this immigrant.” He goes on to explain: “In the second part, through the analysis of haiku, I challenge this parameter by positioning my argument against the Latin American representation of the ‘other’ to that of representing Latin America through the ‘other’. Through haiku, the Latin American space is now the object of representation. I therefore displace the traditional representative form from ‘subject’ to that of ‘object’. I argue that since haiku is an imported form that depends on Latin American space—geography, climate, time, etc.—in order to manifest its poetic value, it problematizes cultural hierarchy: instead of representing a subject through Latin American literature, Latin America is now the object of representation through an adopted Japanese literary tradition.”

Rivas, Zelideth Maria. “Jun-nisei Literature in Brazil: Memory, Victimization, and Adaptation.” University of California, Berkeley, 2009. Dissertation. 208 pages.

Zelideth Rivas summarizes her dissertation: “Japanese immigration to Brazil began in 1908 when Japanese arrived to provide labor for the coffee plantations. Today, Brazil has the largest diasporic population of Japanese descendants. This dissertation explores the literature of the Japanese-Brazilian *jun-nisei*, people who were born in Japan and who immigrated to Brazil as children.” This literature includes memoirs, short stories and “poetry from the tanka anthology *Koronia man'yoshu* (*Colonia Man'yoshu*, 1981).”

Sakuma, Tomoko. “Language, Culture and Ethnicity: Interplay of Ideologies within a Japanese Community in Brazil.” University of Texas at Austin, 2011. Dissertation. 204 pages.

Tomoko Sakuma writes: “This dissertation is a sociolinguistic study of the ideologies about language, culture and ethnicity among Japanese immigrants and descendants in Brazil (hereafter, *Nikkeis*) who gather

at a local Japanese cultural association, searching for what it means to be ‘Japanese’ in Brazil. This study focuses on how linguistic behaviors are ideologically understood and associated with cultural activities and ethnic identities.”



willow
fluff



soap
bubbles

the voice of the
turtle



“willow fluff”

Stephen Addiss

JUXTA *Haiga*

Commentary by **STEPHEN ADDISS**

The haiga in this issue of *Juxtapositions* fall into two groups. The first show the influence of the Sino-Japanese ink-painting tradition, including the use of seals, although in all three cases the poet-artists add something of their own that makes their aesthetic Western as well as Eastern.

The closest to the ink-painting tradition is “the first dip” by Ron C. Moss (149). He works with empty space, subtle ink-play, and no color—but wait—Chinese *literati* declared that one could summon up seven different colors merely by tones of ink. Here the lower reflection in lighter tones not only echoes the bird on a branch, but does so with a slight rippling that shows the poet-artist’s unobtrusive skill. The seal at the top, and the modestly-placed poem in the lower right are enough to keep the work multi-dimensional.

Although Pamela A. Babusci (47) creates many haiga with only tones of ink, here she added color dots to rhythmic vertical and horizontal brushstrokes to represent decorated Christmas trees. We can enjoy the East Asian influence; the horizontals, in particular, resemble bamboo leaves. The dots animate the composition; they seem ready to roll off onto the ground, but perhaps the well-placed red seal orders them to keep them in place. By limiting her lines and colors, Babusci invites us to share the childlike wonder that animates her niece’s circumgyrations.

Another form of rotation is shown in Ion Codrescu's "first snow" (85). Here the multi-colored brushstrokes move the tea bowl around in our hands, giving us a three-dimensional experience in two dimensions. This solves the old problem of how to depict round tea bowls in flat paintings or photographs. And by allowing the calligraphy of the poem to interact with the movement of the painting, Codrescu lets us experience the moment even more fully.

The three haiga in the second group are more abstract, coming from a modernist or post-modernist background, and they each have a different kind of three-dimensionality, more akin to collage. For example, Ellen Peckham (241) uses two basic forms and two colors overlaid on each other. Two active sharply defined black forms dart over the bottom of the softer golden background, and then three similarly sharp golden forms thrust over the black. The result is a sense of active energy, as though the golden forms were chasing and biting the black ones.

Terri L. French (123) also offers us at least three layers, or (like Peckham) four if you count the calligraphy as a layer. Her haiku adds a marvellously ambiguous element—yes, we can see one leaf partially over a blue layer, and there is a tree as well in a different scale: the leaf is larger than the tree from which it may have come, and exists in a differently hued world. So who or what is coloring outside the lines? The artist? The leaf? The viewer? Above all, we should not get stuck on a single interpretation.

Marlene Mountain (183) demonstrates a great variety of techniques and styles in her many haiga, all of them appealing; I chose one that combined one of her most evocative poems with a strong image. Somehow the difficulty of just getting through the day comes upon all of us, and the haiku is here printed simply and quietly—yet it is embellished with both softer brush-lines and hard-edge forms that vibrate and dance as they seem to grow and find their own balance in space.

Commentary by JIM KACIAN

Stephen Addiss's haiga contribution to this issue (281) clearly locates him in both camps: combining traditional techniques and materials but adding a contemporary sense of design and whimsy. The slide of the main line suggests the fluid paths taken by willow fluff, by soap bubbles, borne on the wind, but does it not also conjure a human figure? Or perhaps not quite human, but a djinn, or maybe even the sprite god of the wind, whose sport it is to blow the ephemera of life to destinations unknown. The series of descending circles, which seem both to grow more solid and to dissipate at the same time, adds weight and gravity to the composition. At another glance the image is nothing so much as a bare foot, and such a foot in its nakedness might add a seasonal element that ties the three images together in idyllic summer.

Next consider the poem, which can seem a mere list: fluff, bubbles, turtle voice. This last seems the odd man out, but is in fact the contextualizer. Turtles lack vocal cords, and perhaps the poet is placing this sound in the realm of fancy, yet another sensation conjured by a djinn. But perhaps he knows that turtles communicate by sound nonetheless, especially with their hatchlings, and that a sense of community is established among turtles through this shared voicing. And of course we track turtles by the bubbles they send up when they are beneath the water's surface. The imaginative and the real share space in several ways throughout this work.

Note, too, the style of the calligraphy — Addiss is one of the finest calligraphers of our time, so his decision to render the text in scratchy, irregular characters is not idle, but rather brings a child-like feel to the whole composition. And the text placement, blown about like the light tracings it incorporates, adds a final satisfying element to this rather marvelous example of contemporary haiga.

JUXTA *Contributors*



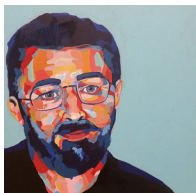
The haiku and haiga of **STEPHEN ADDISS** have appeared widely. His books include *Cloud Calligraphy*, *A Haiku Menagerie*, *The Art of Zen*, *Haiga: Haiku-Painting*, *The Art of Chinese Calligraphy*, *Haiku People*, *A Haiku Garden*, *Haiku Humor*, *Tao Te Ching*, *Japanese Calligraphy*, *Haiku: An Anthology*, and *The Art of Haiku*.



MELISSA ALLEN has an undergraduate degree in Russian language and literature from Yale University and a master's degree in library science from the University of Wisconsin. She has been studying about and writing haiku and haibun since 2010 and has been widely published.



PAMELA A. BABUSCI is an internationally-known and award-winning haiku/tanka & haiga artist. She works in sumi-e, calligraphy, acrylics, watercolors & oil pastels, collage, and abstract clay sculptures. She has illustrated several books, including *Full Moon Tide: The Best of Tanka Splendor Awards*, *The Delicate Dance of Wings*, and *Chasing the Sun: selected haiku from HNA 2007*. She is the founder and editor of *Moonbathing: a journal of women's tanka*, the first all-women's international tanka journal.



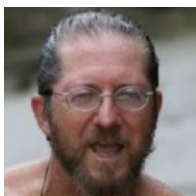
DR. RANDY M. BROOKS is Dean of Arts & Sciences at Millikin University. He teaches courses and workshops on *haikai* poetry traditions. He owns Brooks Books and co-edits of *Mayfly* haiku magazine. He is on the editorial board for the Red Moon Press Anthologies, the Executive Committee of the HSA, maintains the HSA website, edits the web sampler issues of *Frogpond*, serves as the webmaster for Modern Haiku Press and as web editor of *Modern Haiku* and as web designer for the American Haiku Archives.



ION CODRESCU teaches art and history of art at the Ovidius University in Constanța, Romania. In 2007 he received his Ph.D. in Visual Arts from the National University of Arts in Bucharest with a thesis on “The Art of Juxtaposing Image and Text in Japanese and Western Haiga Painting”. He is the author of 14 books of poetry, haiga and essays. His poems, poetic prose and essays have received many prizes in around the world, and he has illustrated more than 100 books, magazines and journals.



TERRI L. FRENCH is a freelance writer and poet living in Huntsville, AL. She was reintroduced to haiku about ten years ago by discovering the Haiku Society of America via a Google search. Since then Terri has written and published hundreds of haiku, senryu, haibun and haiga. She served two terms as the Southeast Coordinator of the HSA and two years as the editor of the senryu and kyoka journal, *Prune Juice*.



JIM KACIAN is the founder of **The Haiku Foundation** (2009), founder and owner of **Red Moon Press** (1993), editor in chief of *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*, the definitive work on the subject, and author of more than a score of books of poetry, nearly all of which feature haiku and related genres.



DR. JUDY KENDALL lectured at Kanazawa university in Japan from 1995 to 2002. She is a Reader in English and Creative Writing at Salford University in northern England, and has written several books on the poet Edward Thomas. She contributes regularly to *Presence*, and is also an award-winning poet with four published collections.



Professor of English and Environmental Studies at Penn State Altoona, **IAN MARSHALL** is author of four books, most recently *Walden by Haiku* (Georgia, 2009) and *Border Crossings: Walking the Haiku Path on the International Appalachian Trail* (Hiraeth, 2012). He is a former president of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment. The walk in the woods that led to “Deconstructing Haiku” with Megan Simpson occurred when they were first dating. They are now married.



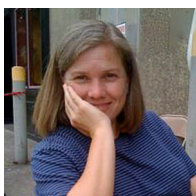
RON C. MOSS is an artist and poet from Tasmania, Australia, a place of rugged wilderness that inspires his work. He is recognized as an outstanding illustrator and designer of many poetry books, and his achievements in haiku and related genres have been widely published and honored with awards. Ron is the artist in residence for the online journal *A Hundred Gourds* and the annual *Muttering Thunder*.



MARLENE MOUNTAIN contends that the concept of ‘no-self’ was created for her long ago by men who knew they had plenty of self by just being male. women need plenty of self to get thru the thickness of established thought/s. in my earlier painting years i often heard ‘wow you paint like a man.’ i didn’t. i painted as my ‘self.’ many years later i was told i was painting ‘center core’ images, very female. i rejected my ‘man’ paintings because they didn’t ‘say anything. eventually i forgave my harsh criticism.



ELLEN PECKHAM has read, published and exhibited in the US, Europe and Latin America. In 2012 she exhibited at the Dalet Gallery in Philadelphia. A related illustrated biography, *Continuum* was published at that time. In late 2015 a book of her *haiga* and related collages was published by Paper Crown Press. Her archives of drafts, edits and art are collected at the Harry Ransom Center for the Humanities. A 7-minute visual biography, *Parallel Vocabularies*, is available on DVD and via her website.



CE ROSENOW’s research explores the relationship between American poetry and Japan. Related articles have appeared in journals including *Literary Imagination*, *Notes and Queries*, and *Philological Quarterly*, and she co-edited with Bob Arnold *The Next One Thousand Years: The Selected Poems of Cid Corman*. She is a former president of the Haiku Society of America.



MEGAN SIMPSON is Associate Professor of English and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Penn State Altoona. Author of *Poetic Epistemologies: Gender and Knowing in Women’s Language-Oriented Writing* (SUNY Press, 2000), her current research focuses on formally innovative cross-cultural poetics and ecocritical approaches to African American literature. Her critical essays have appeared in *MELUS*, *ISLE*, *Reader*, *College Literature*, *Obsidian*, and elsewhere.



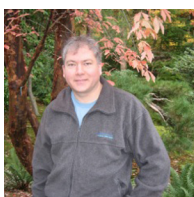
SANDRA SIMPSON has always loved history so had fun delving into the origins of haiku in English — and in Europe — despite the pall of World War 1 hanging over the period and being a major focus of her article. An award-winning haiku poet, Simpson lives in Tauranga, New Zealand. She is long-time editor of *Haiku NewZ* and, more recently, the South Pacific editor for the Red Moon anthologies.



CHARLES TRUMBULL is retired from editing and publishing positions at the US National Academy of Sciences, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and Encyclopædia Britannica. A past president of the Haiku Society of America and recipient of its Sora Award for service, from 2006 to 2013 he was editor of the journal *Modern Haiku*. In 2013–14 he was Honorary Curator of the American Haiku Archives at the California State Library, and he served as secretary of the New Mexico State Poetry Society in 2013.



COR VAN DEN HEUVEL published his first haiku chapbook, *sun in skull* in 1961 and has not stopped since. He joined the Haiku Society of America in 1971 and served as its president in 1978. In 1974 he edited *The Haiku Anthology*, now in its third edition with W.W Norton. In 1990 he was the U.S. representative at the International Haiku Forum in Matsuyama, and in 2002 received the Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Prize. His most recent book is *A Boy's Seasons: Haibun Memoirs* (Single Island Press, 2010).



MICHAEL DYLAN WELCH is the poet laureate of Redmond, Washington, a longtime officer of the Haiku Society of America, and co-founder of Haiku North America and the American Haiku Archives. He has presented at the American Literature Association, American Literary Translators Association, and Haiku North America, and was keynote speaker for the 2013 Haiku International Association convention. He is contributing editor for *Spring: The Journal of the E. E. Cummings Society*.

JUXTA *Staff*



The haiku and haiga of **Stephen Addiss** have appeared widely. His books include *Cloud Calligraphy*, *A Haiku Menagerie*, *The Art of Zen*, *Haiga: Haiku-Painting*, *The Art of Chinese Calligraphy*, *Haiku People*, *A Haiku Garden*, *Haiku Humor*, *Tao Te Ching*, *Japanese Calligraphy*, *Haiku: An Anthology*, and *The Art of Haiku*.



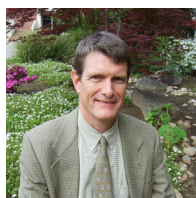
DR. RANDY M. BROOKS is the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and Professor of English at Millikin University. He teaches courses on the global haiku traditions at Millikin. He and his wife, Shirley Brooks, are publishers of Brooks Books, and co-edit *Mayfly* haiku magazine. In addition to his collection of haiku, *School's Out*, he is co-editor of the *Global Haiku Anthology* (2000) and the *Midwest Haiku Anthology* (1992). He has served on the editorial board for the Red Moon Anthologies since 2005.



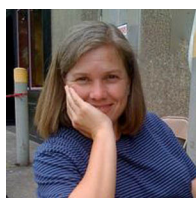
Bill COOPER serves as distinguished university professor and president emeritus at the University of Richmond. He has authored books and articles in cognitive science, higher education, and international relations. His haiku appear in a variety of journals and in collections *The Dance of Her Napkin* (2012) and *Overtones* (2014).



JIM KACIAN is the founder of **The Haiku Foundation** (2009), founder and owner of **Red Moon Press** (1993), editor in chief of *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*, the definitive work on the subject, and author of more than a score of books of poetry, nearly all of which feature haiku and related genres.



Senior editor **PETER McDONALD** is the Dean of Library Services at California State University, Fresno. He is the director of the Fresno Poets Association and has worked tirelessly on behalf of poetry coast to coast. Peter is an award-winning author, essayist and poet. He comes with decades of experience in journal publishing and has served as an editor on numerous publications, including the Cambridge University Press inaugural E-journal Advisory Board in the 1990s.



CE ROSENOW's research explores the relationship between American poetry and Japan. Related articles have appeared in journals including *Literary Imagination*, *Notes and Queries*, and *Philological Quarterly*, and she co-edited with Bob Arnold *The Next One Thousand Years: The Selected Poems of Cid Corman*. She is the former president of the Haiku Society of America.



DAVE RUSSO's haiku have appeared in *Frogpond*, *Modern Haiku*, *Acorn*, and other journals. He is included in the *New Resonance 5* anthology from Red Moon Press. Dave organizes events for the North Carolina Haiku Society and is the web administrator for NCHS and The Haiku Foundation.



SANDRA SIMPSON began proof-reading in 1977 with Mrs Muldoon, first doing the reading and then being allowed to check the galley proofs. Since then she has used the skill as a newspaper sub-editor and technical editor for large, multi-disciplinary consultancies in both hemispheres. Sandra is an award-winning haiku poet, editor of the online *Haiku NewZ* and South Pacific editor for the annual *Red Moon Anthologies*. She has co-ordinated a writers' festival program in her hometown of Tauranga, New Zealand since 2001.

JUXTATWO (dedicated to haiku poet, editor and publisher Cor van den Heuvel on the occasion of his 85th birthday) features new articles by Sandra Simpson (“Snapshot: Haiku in the Great War”), Judy Kendall (“*Jo Ha Kyū* and *Fu Bi Xing*: Reading|Viewing Haiku”), Charles Trumbull (“Masaoka Shiki and the Origins of *Shasei*”), and Ian Marshall and Megan Simpson (“Deconstructing Haiku: A Dialogue”); an interview of Cor van den Heuvel by Jim Kacian “(*a stick over the falls*)”; commentary on some of van den Heuvel’s most iconic poems by several authors; book reviews by Melissa Allen, Ce Rosenow, and Michael Dylan Welch; a annotated bibliography of haiku dissertations and theses by Dr. Randy M. Brooks; and *haiga* from Stephen Addiss, Pamela A. Babusci, Ion Codrescu, Terri L. French, Ron C. Moss, Marlene Mountain, and Ellen Peckham, with commentary by Stephen Addiss and Jim Kacian.



JUXTATWO is the print version of *Juxtapositions* 2.1. A journal of haiku research and scholarship, *Juxtaposition* is published by The *Haiku* Foundation.

ISBN 978-0-9826951-3-5

