

Essays on “BUREAUCRAT”



Translations by Nanae Tamura
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Preface

Akito Arima

“Bureaucrat” is the title of the first collection of haiku written by Gania Nishimura. “Bureaucrat” is a very unusual title for an anthology of haiku, but it suggests the poet’s pride in carrying out the national government properly. I recall of Tu Fu, Pai Lo-tien and Su Dong-po who wrote poetry in Tang and Song, while keeping their spirits high to carry out affairs of the states with prides as bureaucrats. Gania served in the Ministry of International Trade and Industry as a bureaucrat always keeping in mind how Japan should be in the 21st century. He stayed in Bangkok for three years and helped to establish the economical cooperation between Japan and Southeast Asian countries. As far as we have bureaucrat with an enterprising spirit like him, I am certain that Japan has a promising future.

Right after the campus troubles in 1960s, Gania became active in the haiku gathering held in a room near by my laboratory at the department of physics, Tokyo University Faculty of Science. In this haiku gathering there were Tatsuharu Oya, Umihiko Totoki and little later, Naoki Kishimoto, Den Hihara and Masami Sanuka competing with each other. One of the members Kyoji Kobayashi named this haiku gathering “Okunoin Kukai”-“Inner room haiku gathering.” Yasuko Tsushima, who later became Gania's spouse, was also an active member of this gathering. She always surprised us with her refreshing original haiku. Gania played an important role in founding the haiku magazine “Ten’i” as a promoter. Taking this opportunity I would like to thank him for his valuable help.

When I was trying to choose about 300 from his more than 2000 haiku, I was impressed with the originality of his haiku. Here are some haiku, which he composed in his youth namely in the period of Inner room haiku gathering.

真夜中に吊られて長きマフラーなり mayonaka ni tsurarete nagaki mafurā nari
a muffler
hanging long
midnight

雪降るを諸国の位牌群れたまふ yuki furu wo shokoku no ihai mure tamau
snow falling
mortuary tablets from many provinces
throng

I remember praising the second haiku above. Wasn’t it composed when Gania, who loved traveling, visited Eihei-ji Temple in Hokuriku. Here are some more samples from “Bureaucrat”.

猿枕遠きかもめは白く揺れ bakumakura tōki kamome wa shiroku yure
a tapir pillow
sea gulls waver whitely
in the distance

極北は梟までも白き鳥 kyokuhoku wa fukurō mademo shiroki tori
even an owl
is a white bird
the Far North

罌粟の花海までもって来て流す keshi no hana umi made mottekite nagasu
carrying to the sea
I set them adrift
poppy flowers

さっそうと摩天楼より神の旅 sassō to matenrō yori kami no tabi
in style
gods start on journey
from a skyscraper

ひそひそと魔術師達が春の闇 hisohiso to majutsushi tachi ga haru no yami
stealthily
enchanters whisper
spring darkness

Gania always has a strategy of someone who works in trade and industry in his mind. At the same time he always thinks about the way to promote information industry. On the other hand when he goes to Thailand he tries to sow the seeds of silk industry he has brought from Japan. The same can be also said in composing haiku; he respects tradition on one hand and displays free spirit on another. For example;

端居せる牛飼い少年たりし父 hashii seru ushikai shōnen tarishi chichi
my father
once was a cowherd-boy
relaxes in the porch

サルビアの散る暗殺者は何処 sarubia no chiru ansatsusha wa izuko
salvia is falling--
where is
an assassin?

絵の中の扉開けば夏の海 e no naka no tobira hirakeba natsu no umi
as a door
in the picture is opened:
the summer sea

軽業師黒ペンキもて月を塗る karuwazashi kuro penki mote tsuki wo nuru
an acrobat
coating the moon
with black paint

These haiku create a world of fairy tales and story telling. Foundation of Gania's haiku lies on sketch and lyricism. But this lyricism is dry and modern. It bore fruits in some Southeast Asian countries and gave birth to some fine works he wrote while in Bangkok.

俗名も知られざる墓の暑さかな zokumyō mo shirazaru haka no atsusa kana
tombs
with no secular names
summer's heat

家鴨抱き子供が急ぐ市夕立 ahiru daki kodomoga isogu ichi yūdachi
child hurries his way
holding a duck--
market in the shower rain

炎天や魚も米も座して売る enten ya sakana mo kome mo zashite uru
blazing sun
people peddle fish and rice
sitting on the ground

大いなる寝釈迦のうしろ姿かな ōinaru neshaka no ushiro sugata kana
magnificent--
back figure of
the lying Buddha

仏の掌まずありありと盛夏かな hotoke no te mazu ariari to seika kana
Buddha's palm
first attracts the eye
mid summer day

These haiku sing of Myanmar and Thailand. He observes the climate of those countries and composes haiku as a man who makes his living there. So, his point of view is quite deep and different from that of travelers'. I've seen very few haiku, which incorporated Southeast Asia for their subject matter. So Gania is a pioneer to write haiku while staying in Southeast Asia.

潮切る舳先に蘭の花飾る ushio kiru hesaki ni ran no hana kazaru
splitting the tide
the bow is adorned
with an orchid

龍眠るとき島影鳥渡る ryū nemuri gotoki shimakage tori wataru
an island
like a sleeping dragon
birds migrate

繭一貫朱袋に入れ涼しけれ mayu ikkan shubukuro ni ire suzushi kere
silk cocoons
in a vermilion sack
the coolness--

白骨のごとき牛ゆく早かな hakkotsu no gotoki ushi yuku hideri kana
cattle passing
like a white skelton
dry spell

ハンモック吊り男部屋女部屋 hanmokku tsuru otoko beya onna beya
putting pu a hammok
for each, a room for men
a room for women

These haiku vividly show life in Thailand. Here are some more haiku about Malaysia, China and Brunei.

石の床なめるがごとき昼寝せり ishi no yuka nameruga gotoki hirune seri
midday nap--
as if licking
the stone floor

湧水に老婆洗へり無き足を waki mizu ni rōba araeri naki ashi wo
the fountain
an old woman washing
her lost legs

バリ王朝亡びて屋台華やがり bari ōcho horobite yatai hanayageri
the Bali dynasty
now long gone, flourishing
street stalls

ジャングルの奥まで草を刈り進む janguru no oku made kusa wo kari susumu
to the innermost of the jungle
they make their way
slashing the grass

Description of "as if licking", and deep concern for the "washing her lost feet". How skilled the expressions are. Gania is a free-spirited, daring person who is at the same time very precisely minded. When he carries out a plan, these two aspects work out harmoniously. For example the way he chose the title "Bureaucrat" shows his daring nature as well as his will to express his will precisely. I would be happy as his co-member of the haiku group if the reader could grasp his delicate poetic spirit and noble intent from this anthology of haiku. I hereby wish his continued success in his poetic activity. I would like to end with some more from his good ones.

抱きあう仮面の白夜舞踏会 idaki au kamen no byakuya butōkai
at a ball
two masks embrace each other
white night

海図冷ゆる大英帝国博物館 kaizu hiyuru daiei teikoku hakubutsukan
the sea map
gets chilly
the British Museum

伊太利亜の松かさ梟かと思う itaria no matsukasa fukurō kato omou
pine cone
looks like an owl
in Italy

能登の風越中に来て雪となる noto no kaze etchū ni kite yuki to naru
wind from Noto
turns into snow
on reaching Etchu

万緑に屋根たてかけて紀三井寺 banryoku ni yane Tate kakete kimiidera
the roofs
leaning against myriad greens
Kimii-dera Temple

早春の宋の青磁の殻拾う sōshun no sō no seiji no kara hirou
early spring--
I pick up a cleft
of Song Dynasty celadon

August 22, 1998 紙魚亭書屋にて (at Shimiteishooku)

Postscript --Fossil Elephant evolves -- Essay on "Bureaucrat"

Sakon So

Bureaucrat. I have never heard that this word would ever be a title of any literary works of short poem. Never heard in the past or maybe not even in the future. It is unusual. Moreover, poems in this book are unusual. This is a New World that any of the previous haiku have never created. Here are the first five haiku.

真夜中に吊られて長きマフラーなり mayonaka ni tsurarete nagaki mafurā nari
a muffler
hanging long
midnight

無花果をゆっくりと割る耳たぶよ ichijiku wo yukkuri to waru mimitabu yo
splitting a fig
slowly --
an earlobe

詩人死せば春の鬼ゆくところなし shijin shiseba haruno oni yukutokoro nashi
when the poet dies
nowhere to go for the demon
of spring

獮枕遠きかもめは白く揺れ bakumakura tōki kamome wa shiroku yure
a tapir pillow
sea gulls waver whitely
in the distance

極北は梟までも白き鳥 kyokuhoku wa fukurō mademo shiroki tori
even an owl
is a white bird
the Far North

All of these are trying to describe something that is invisible. "long muffler" is trying to create an image of "short muffler". It is hung, which means hung to death. So the expression "Long" arises. Who is the hangman? That is Midnight. "splitting- slowly," it sounds cruel. Sounds erotic as well. What does he split? As time go slowly, the object changes. "a earlobe." "yo" in Japanese is a particle of exclamation, at the same time it is a particle of indication. Who splits it? A man? Probably so. But when he splits it, he would be a something more than just a man. "when the poet dies," poem disappears? Or, as poem disappears, "poet dies"? In both ways, "spring" is another word of poem. "the demon of spring" has nowhere to go. But this poem is not trying to say that. It is announcing that "the demon spring" is coming to this world for poet. Is it the end of the world? As you can imagine, "the demon of spring" with horn and tusk is far more horrible than a poet who is just a man of spring. A word "a tapir pillow" is maybe a mintage. Tapir belongs to perissodactyl. And an imaginary animal of China. It is said to eat one's bad dream. It is also said that evil will disappear if one sleeps on the hide (summary from Kojien dictionary). In the world of this poem, sea gulls nearby are flying in flocks in great number. It is because of "sea gulls ---in the distance" flying outside the eaten bad dream "waver whitely" cheerfully. But where can you find "a tapir pillow" with such a special power?

“Far North” and North Pole are similar but different. North Pole does exist on the Earth. But “Far North” is a concept or a philosophy, super-reality. Owl does not exist in the North Pole, but does exist in Far North. And it has to be a white bird. Far North insists to be that way.

Through these five poems, we feel some marvelous strong power controlling the world of each poem.

月光にラムネのあわを積み上げよ gekkō ni ramune no awa wo tsumiage yo
on the moonbeam
heap up the bubbles
from the lemonade bottle

砂時計横にたおして春の雷 sunadokei yokoni taoshite haru no rai
sand glass
lies sideways
spring thunder

雪降るを諸国の位牌群れたまふ yuki furu wo shokoku no ihai mure tamau
snow falling
mortuary tablets from many provinces
throng

さっそうと摩天楼より神の旅 sassō to matenrō yori kami no tabi
in style
gods start on journey
from the skyscraper

なにごとか忘れをり白つつじ白し nani gotoka wasureori shirotsutsuji shiroshi
forgot something
the white azalea
is white

あきびん急に鳴り出す臯ねむる国 akibin kyūni naridasu fukurō nemuru kuni
an empty bottle
suddenly tinkles
owl's sleeping land

真っ黒な雪傘ころびキリシタン makkuro na yukigasa korobi kirishitan
in the snow, a black
umbrella falls--
a converted Christian

暖房の部屋にて指紋消えがたし danbō no heya nite shimon kiegatashi
a heated room
the finger prints
hard to erase

Again it is an unusual world.

Is it possible to “heap up” “the bubbles from the lemonade bottle”? It is possible when a

pipe of moonlight exists and sucks the lemonade.

If you "lies sideways" "a sand glass", sand will not drop. Then it is no longer a sand glass. But, Only the lying sand glass is voluptuous and that makes possible to draw "spring thunder".

"snow falling", it is natural. But where the "mortuary tablets from many provinces" "throng"? Is it at the bottom of "snow falling"? Or in the Buddhist altar of my house handed down from my ancestors?

In any rate, we feel the existence of an invisible power tying these two actions, "snow falling" and "mortuary tablets from many provinces".

By existing beside the condition of a man "forgotten something", "the white azalea is white". If that is the case, can it be said, "recalling something, the red azalea is red"? It is such a strong power of making azalea white or red.

Is "owl's sleeping Land" a land where owl sleeps continuously without awaking? Such a land should exist somewhere in the world.

But, in such a land, a power that makes "an empty bottle" "suddenly tinkles" should also exist.

"converted Christians" exist. If that is the case, an umbrella to catch a deep black snowfall or an umbrella for a deep black colored snow should exist. Which means there should be a power to make both "umbrella for snowfall" and "converted Christians" exist.

Is it also true in the field of detective story or drama that "the finger prints hard to erase" in "a heated room"? I am not sure. But it seems like it. There may be a super natural power controlling over "a heated room" in a civilization of high level growth.

Now it comes to talk about the "skyscraper" poem. It is surprising to know there are gods who start on journey from a skyscraper "in style". It is hard to believe, gods starting from a skyscraper. What kind of power do they have? Is it a kind of power of a jet plane, or of a space rocket? Maybe, it is a power of god of completely new world.

The power controlling over these 8 poems, from "the moonlight" to "a heated room", is very unusual and mysterious. These have extraordinary energy which could not have been observed in any previous haiku. What are they? It is time for us to name the power. Before naming the power, I would like to talk about something related to god.

I would like to introduce what I feel about a daily god.

山川も依りて仕ふる神ながら yamakawamo yorite tsukauru kami nagara
たぎつ河内に舟出せるかも tagitsu kawachi ni fune daseru kamo

subduing mountains and rivers
the empress is about to set sail
for the fierce river

Hitomaro Kakinomoto composed this poem. If I try to translate this into modern Japanese, It goes like this. "The empress, who is a god, whom the god of a mountain and the god of a river are devoted to and serve for, is about to set sail for a swirling mountain stream." In this poem, personal god (Empress) is ranked higher than the creative god (the god of a mountain and the god of a river).

荒波や佐渡によこたふ天河 aranami ya sadoni yokotau amanokawa
the rough sea--
lying along Sado-island
the River of Heaven

Main idea of Matsuo, Basho in this haiku is a creative God. Personal God does not exist. God of tanka is a personal god. Tanka is to praise a personal god. God of haiku is a creative god. Haiku is to praise a creative god. Japanese people after the Meiji era is insensitive not only for the nature god but also for the personal god. As a result, most of Tanka and Haiku have mixed their own god.

What kind of god who dominates the anthology of haiku, "Bureaucrat." It is quite original. Creative god, personal god of old Japan, civilized god from Meiji era, so called, scientific god, or clone god which is the combination of these three gods.

Gania does not sketch, does not depict. He ignores dimension. He does not let inside correspond with outside. He is beyond the theory of cause and effect. He does not care about patina, desolate, greeting and humor. He ignores the space-time of ethnic. He is cheerful and fresh. Alias for devotee of this clone god is "Bureaucrat", which Gania contrived excellently. Needless to say that bureaucrat is a vanguard of modernization, in other word civilization. Bureaucrat who is a government official often gets a lot of criticism. But he concentrates on, so-called, clone haiku. Latter half of haiku in this book was composed about subtropics southeast Asian countries such as Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Singapore, Indochina and so on. The battle between basic energy and clone god is refreshing radiating unbelievable primary color ray. Here are some samples of the haiku.

一木の兵士の積乱雲の墓碑 ichiboku no heishi no sekiran-un no bohi
a piece of wood
making a soldier's grave
cumulus clouds

涼風に押されて祈る楽しさよ ryōfu ni osarete inoru tanoshisa yo
how pleasant--
to pray while pushed by
the cool breeze

泉湧く群青の砂ふるわせて izumi waku gunjō no suna furuwasete
the fountain
wells up quavering
ultramarine sands

全天の雲降り来て夕立ちかな zenten no kumo kudarikite yūdachi kana
skyful of clouds
coming down
an evening shower

森を出てわが心臓は紅葉す mori wo dete waga shinzō wa kōyō su
out of the forest
my heart turns
crimson

いわし雲大月書店資本論 iwashi gumo ōtsuki shoten shihonron
mackerel sky--
Otsuki Shotens'
"The Capital"

ラオス暮れタイ夕焼くるメコンかな raosu kure tai yūyakuru mekon kana
darkening Laos
sunset glow in Thailand
the Mekong

積乱雲雷をいまみごもりぬ sekiran-un ikazuchi wo ima migomorinu
cumulus clouds
pregnant with thunder
at this very present

赤とんぼ大海原に来て止まる akatombo ōunabara ni kite tomaru
a red dragonfly
comes to a stop
on the vast sea

灼熱の女陰に入りしごとき闇 shakunetsu no nyoin ni irishi gotoki yami
darkness
as if entering scorching
vagina

四方より水平線来て島霞む shihou yori suiheisen kite shima kasumu
from all directions
the sea lines approach
hazy island

These are out standing haiku from "Bureaucrat", which were all composed in overseas. They are magnificent. They are at the completely opposite side of damp, bend, stoppage and depression. Scale of hero and stage of Gania's haiku are lot bigger than those of modern haiku. A red dragonfly is travelling in the mighty ocean and stops at the center. It is not just from Enoshima to Mt. Fuji. "From all directions the sea lines approach", the island is at the center of it. Scale is huge and it is fresh as just born. Compare to these haiku, two lines from a poem by Rimbaud seems weak.

『おお季節たち おお城たち どんな魂が 無傷だろう』
(O seasons! O castles!
What soul on earth remains without a scar?)

I should introduce a story concerning the word "scar" in this Rimbaud's poem.

いわし雲大月書店資本論 iwashi gumo ōtsuki shoten shihonron
Mackerel sky--
Otsuki Shotens'
"The Capital"

Maybe, Otsuki Book store is the first store translated "Das Capitalist" into Japanese. During the 15 years war, it was banned the sale and banned throughout the nation. Police would come to catch you only if you have one. It was revived after the world war. It is a bible for revolutionary. There were many young people who started their career from this book. Campus troubles also existed, Anpo in 60's, Zenkyoto in 70's and Nonpoli in 80's. Gania is one of the baby boomers who have lived through these periods. I don't know

whether he finished struggling with the theory of Marx. But when he was through from these, he saw mackerel sky above him clearly. It is a transparent ray of damage.

There is one unforgettable haiku composed by Murio Suzuki during the war.

遺品あり岩波文庫「阿部一族」ihin ari iwanami bunko "abe ichizoku"
among the legacies
an Iwanami paperback
"The Abe Family"

Suzuki and Nishimura are the symbol of Japanese youth in 20th century. Legacy is equal to mackerel sky. Did he become a bureaucrat while he left his transparent ray of damage over there? No. It is completely different. That is the point that I am happy about. I would like to introduce 6 haiku, which give you this kind of happiness.

法皇を天より打てりロシアの雪 hōō wo ten yori uteri roshia no yuki
snow in Russia
hits the cloistered emperor
from heaven

号令の世界しずかに青薄 gōrei no sekai shizukani aosusuki
calm
in the world of command
green pampas grass

終戦忌めがねをにぎりしめている shūsen ki megane wo nigiri shimete iru
anniversary of war's end
the glasses clutched
in the hand

きりきりと絞れる塔や秋日中 kirikiri to shiboreru tō ya aki nicchu
a tower
twisted around itself
high noon in autumn

風鈴やみ能面視線を持ちはじめ fūrin yami nōmen shisen wo mochi hajimu
wind bell stops ringing
the noh mask begins
to fix its gaze

息白く化石の象の進化の前 iki shiroku kaseki no zō no shinka no mae
white breath
a fossil elephant
before the evolution

The god that "hits a cloistered emperor" "from the heaven" is "snow in Russia", which is clone god. But it is maybe a clone god before Christian exist. Who commanded in "the world of command"? It is a clone god and his surrogate. Who is the surrogate? It is the bureaucrat. "anniversary of the war's end", does this really exist? There isn't such an anniversary as a national event, as a social event, or as a poet's whim? It is a mintage of writer. There is

only one attendant who wipes his tears "the glasses clutched". This man is called bureaucrat.

what is twisting tower standing straight as like a damp cloth? It is a clone god. It was twisted and tears of light flood out. When this sacrament appears, clone god becomes an object of bureaucrat's faith.

Countenance of "Noh-mask" scatters. It is hard to capture. But it begins projecting its eye. When it faces to a huge existence. "Noh-mask" becomes alive. What is the huge existence? Off course, it is a clone god. But the protagonist who is wearing the "Noh-mask" at that very moment is obviously the "Bureaucrat".

"a fossil elephant" evolves. It is a sacrament. Who makes it possible? It is a clone god. This haiku was created while watching "a fossil elephant" which was just about to evolve. Then he realized "white breath". What a great bureaucrat he was to realize.

Gania is identified as an identical twins with "Atomic Boy", created by famous cartoonist Osamu Tezuka. He is as powerful as the Atomic Boy. So as this anthology has to gallop far outside the haiku world as like the Atomic Boy.

Anthology of Haiku "bureaucrat" --Exquisite touch--

President of Modern Haiku Society, Tota Kaneko

With a title of "Bureaucrat", what bureaucrat Gania Nishimura is trying to express. This question made me read this Anthology with a great curiosity. When I finished reading, I got an exquisite touch. I have not experienced such a deep touch with exquisite existence for a long time. This made me think one thing or another.

It is an "exquisite touch" and hard to explain. But I can feel a sure response. Akito Arima's cordial preface, Sakon So's postscript with throbbing poem spirit, Shinya Saito's eagerly written bookmark. Reading all these stories, I tried to summarize what I have got. But it did not work out.

In this process, I recalled Kazao Tomiyasu. He became the Vice-Minister of Post and Telegraphic service in January 1936. He composed haiku under Kyoshi Takahama and published 16 anthology of haiku including his posthumous anthology. His presided haiku magazine "Wakaba" started in June 1928. He was a career bureaucrat just like Gania Nishimura.

The difference is that Kazao lived before the world war as a bureaucrat. He retired from the Vice-Minister of Post and Telegraphic service at the age of 53. He published his third anthology three years after his retirement. In the afterword he wrote that the 12th year of Showa era was a memorable year in his whole life. He admitted that the style of his haiku had changed. He lived till the age of 95 and published 13 anthology. So it is hard to define him as just a bureaucrat of before the world war. But I am sure that Gania Nishimura is a Bureaucrat of after the world war. Time environment is different. It is hard to compare Gania with Kazao under the same condition, but I recalled Kazao anyway.

Why I recalled Kazao? I was interested in the difference in attitude of Kazao and Gania toward haiku. Kazao tried to separate himself as a bureaucrat from his haiku. Gania makes himself and his haiku exist at the same time.

Haiku magazine "Wakaba" was started as to select haiku of Kazao's colleagues at the Ministry of Post and Telegraphic service saving department. But for his haiku, he himself always asked Kyoshi to select. Haiku in his three anthologies were all selected by Kyoshi. He was trying to separate himself from the connection with bureaucrat. In his first anthology "Kusanohana" (flower of a grass) Kyoshi wrote preface. "Most of the haiku in this anthology are impartial and graceful." "Moderate and appropriate mood." Excellent haiku are as follows,

大風の中の鶯聞こゑをり okaze no naka no uguisu kikoe ori

I hear

A bush warbler singing

In a high wind

夏山の立ちはだかれる軒端かな natsuyama no tachihadakareru nokiha kana

summer mountains

blocking the way against

the eaves

みちのくの伊達の郡の春田かな michinoku no date no koori no haruta kana

spring rice field

in Date province of

Michinoku

In the second and the third anthology,

退屈なガソリンガール柳の芽 taikutsu na gasoringāru yanagi no me
a bored
gas station girl
budding willow

泡一つ抱いてはなさぬ水中花 awa hitotsu daite hanasanu suichūka
holding a bubble
never let it go
a toy flower in water

まさをなる空よりしだれ櫻かな masaonaru sora yori shidarezakura kana
in the blue
of the sky---
a weeping cherry tree

これを見に来しぞ雪嶺大いなる korewo mini kishizo setsurei ōinaru
I came here
To see this snow capped mountain
Huge--

峽はるか干菜宿あり猫も居る kai haruka hoshina yado ari neko mo iru
I see ravine in distance
an inn with dried greens
a cat as well

Kyoshi was right in his writing that you could never imagine Kazao as bureaucrat through these haiku.

Here I try to pick up some "impartial and graceful" "moderate and appropriate" haiku from Gania's anthology.

なにごとか忘れをり白つつじ白し nanigotoka wasure ori shirotsutsuji shiro shi
forgot something
the white azalea
is white

秋あかね羽黒の風にあそびをり akiakane haguro no kaze ni asobi ori
autumn skimmers
playing in the wind
of Mt. Haguro

ランドセル真赤や冬の日本海 randoseru makka ya fuyu no nihonkai
bright red
a school knapsack:
the Sea of Japan in winter

花に寝る髪も腕も多感なり hana ni neru kami mo kaina mo takan nari
lying under cherry blossoms
my hair and arms
ever more susceptible

能登の風越中に来て雪となる noto no kaze etchū ni kite yuki to naru
wind from Noto
turns into snow
on reaching Etchu

紀伊の空高野へ続く早かな kii no sora kōya e tsuzuku hideri kana
the sky of Kii
extending toward Koya
this drought

赤ん坊まで銀の帽子よ涼しけれ akanbo made gin no bōshi yo suzushi kere
even a baby
wears a silvery cap
how cool!

You can not imagine the bureaucrat Nishimura or the shadow deep inside from these haiku. Gania's haiku is just as same with Kazao's haiku. The difference is that Gania is trying to be personal and to bring up himself. The expression "bright red a school knapsack" would never come out from inhibited feeling. It is same with the expression of "susceptible" in the haiku of "lying under cherry blossoms." Gania composed some good haiku with his great knowledge of ceramic art.

はじけ散る蒼き鹿の斑漢の陶 hajikechiru aoki shika no fu kan no sue
splashing
blue speckles on a deer
pottery of Han Dynasty

昆明の霜の色して元の壺 Kunmin no shimo no iro shite gen no tsubo
showing the color of
frost in Kunmin
a Yuan jar

早春の宋の青磁の殻拾ふ sōshun no sō no seiji no kara hirou
early spring--
I pick up a cleft
of Son Dynasty celadon

酒で磨く康熙の壺に初景色 sake de migaku Kōki no tsubo ni hatsugeshiki
polished with sake
a Tanghsi jar mirrors
New Year's scenery

I can imagine that these haiku were composed when he visited China as a bureaucrat. There is not any fragment of bureaucrat Nishimura. But the individuality of assumption of haiku is superb. He seems to be composing casually as a part of game with his aesthetic sense. He must be a bright man. He is unconscious of being bureaucrat as a social status. It is same with Kazao Tomiyasu though the difference of time. He can act positively.

Now a day's Haiku is popular not only for bureaucrat but also for most of the people as one style of expression. Shinya Saito connected "minor poet" and "unknown poet forgotten in a shade" to haiku. This connection sounds rather too old and wet. The relationship between a style of haiku and a man who uses it is changing. I would say it is becoming very

dry.

Bureaucrat Nishimura is exploiting the style of haiku by means of expression in his daily life. He never thought himself as a minor poet. If he were such a wet young lover of literature, he would never have been named his anthology "Bureaucrat" to disclose his haiku to the world.

I also would like to write here that there were pros and cons about the preface written by Akito Arima, "Then I happened to realize the spirits of Tu Fu, Pai Lo-tien and Su Dong-po who were poets of Tang and Song." I understand why he recalled the poets of Tang. That is because the style of Gania's haiku is in short standard rhythm with strong roughness of completion. By including a constructing ideal similarity with the poem of Tang occurs. (It is different in the poem of Song)-- I would like to pick up some of my favorite haiku in this anthology.

真夜中に吊られて長きマフラーなり mayonaka ni tsurarete nagaki mafurā nari
a muffler
hanging long
midnight

極北は鼻までも白き鳥 kyokuhoku wa fukurō mademo shiroki tori
even an owl
is a white bird
the Far North

雪降るを諸国の位牌群れたまふ yuki furu wo shokoku no ihai mure tamau
snow falling
mortuary tablets from many provinces
throng

外套の僧の一群バスを待つ gaitō no sō no ichigun basu wo matsu
clad in coats
a group of priests
waiting for the bus

冬耕や蔵に七千五百巻 tōkō ya kura ni nanasen gohyakkan
winter plowing
in the treasury
seventy five hundred volume

空蟬の容に客死せる詩人 utsusemi no katachi ni kaku shiseru shijin
looking like
a cicada shell, the poet
has died abroad

枯山河大海原のただ中に karesanga oounabara no tadanaka ni
withered landscape
in the midst of
the mighty ocean

臨月の積乱雲のまっただ中 ringetsu no sekiran-un no mattada naka
all around me
thunder clouds
about to give birth

灼熱の女陰に入りしごととき闇 shakunetsu no nyoin ni irishi gotoki yami
darkness
as if entering scorching
vagina

万緑の巨木を倒すインディアン banryoku no kyoboku wo taosu indian
myriad green leaves
hewing down huge trees
Indians

Needless to say that the poem of Tang is known as a period of completion for rhythm of short poem (Risshi, Chinese quatrain). It is full of passion. Its idea is positive. With these elements, I can understand why Akito Arima recalls the bureaucrat poets of this period similar to Gania.

It is also very interesting that the word "Bureaucrat" sounds Eastern. The meaning of the word "public servant" is the same with bureaucrat but it sounds Western. I understand the modern capitalism as bureaucratic capitalism. But this word doesn't fit to western society. It fits to some of the eastern countries. Gania's haiku is very eastern and the word bureaucrat fits very well. The word "public servant" is too light for his haiku. Gania's appearance looks somewhat western, but I would say his inside is eastern.

When you compare with the poets in Tang, it is all right to compare with Pai Lo-tien who was a Minister of Justice. But I don't think it is right to compare with Tu-Fu and Gania. Tu-Fu had a high spirit but as a bureaucrat he had failed repeatedly. Maybe it is better to compare with Han Yu. Both Han Yu and Pai Lo-tien are successful brain. Especially in Han Yu's poem, there is no word of "tears." It is same with Gania's haiku that there seems hardly any "tears."

I don't agree to compare with Su Dong-Po of Song. They have same career as bureaucrat, but the contents of the poems are calm and objective as most of the poems of Song are. This fact does not adjust to Gania's.

But then I was quite surprised to see the name of Li Po. The flabbiness of the root, which exudes from the deep back of Gania's haiku, recalled Li Po. Maybe the free atmosphere of Gania's haiku is similar to Lo Po's free idea.

Anthology review

Essay on Gania Nishimura's anthology "Bureaucrat" --Virtual absolute--

Yasuko Tsushima

Gania Nishimura lives on dream. As I observe his work at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, the way he lives is not so different from Futen no Tora-san's (Japanese famous movie character) way of living. He goes off without letting us know when to come home. When he comes home he gives us a lot of fuss then goes off again. If I describe Gania's life in one sentence, it is exactly like what Basho said, "Handling reality out of virtuality." As Gania puts himself in the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, which I would call virtual world, he is trying to figure out the direction of real world economy. In this sense, Gania is one of the few men who are in the same circumstance with Basho in this modern world. It is to say that he lives in the world of Haiku for 24 hours a day.

As you see Ganiya's work, only few of his haiku were composed in Japan. He is like living in a dream. And most of his haiku was composed in Europe, America and Asia. He writes about spring, winter and autumn in Asian countries where there is only summer. He writes about Japanese people in European and American climate. He has been doing this solitary operation for the last 30 years. His poems were created in an absolute virtual where his real life and real circumstance are also virtual.

He points out one more characteristics in his afterwprd that many of his work has deeply connected with the death of his friends, estimable people and those who loved him. Also, "It is not a requiem but an identification with people who is in the shadowy kingdom of the dead." This means that he is not imaging readers in this world when he composes haiku. His work is for an exchange with the readers in the land of the dead. He is trying to work on people in virtual while being in the absolute virtual. Arima would be the only one reader from this world. None of Gania 's work, which has been piled up for the last 30 years, has been published. Finally Akito Arima selected 300 out of 2000 poems.

Sakon So described Gania's haiku in his "Essay on Bureaucrat", "Gania does not sketch, does not depict. He ignores dimension. He does not let inside correspond with outside. He is beyond the theory of cause and effect. He does not care about patina, desolate, greeting, and humor. He ignores the space-time of ethnic." He also points out; "Gania's poem is unusual." And " This is a New World that any of the previous haiku have never created." He named the energy, which gives power to Gania in the absolute virtual, "Clone god." Shinji Saito named Gania "a giant star of minor poet" and indicates the similarity with Kunio Yanagida. He describes Gania's haiku "cramping beauty" as "It is like a chink of flash which gives a crack in the air pocket of Modern haiku history."

These praises are to be a great cheer for his unusual work created from his unusual background. Form of haiku had never had an unusual representor like Gania after the Meiji era. It is not only his personal ability but also a valuable existence which haiku world finally acquired. Gania Nishimura was kept under Seiton Yamaguchi in order to bloom at this end of a century.

Before closing this essay on Gania, I would like to name some of the readers in the land of dead.

Koyufuku Hori (Person of influence of the Hori sect Isami . Hori sect is the oldest ditty school which Meiji administration acknowledged. He loved Gania from his childhood and taught him. Gania has his name, Kofuhide Hori.)

無花果をゆっくりと割る耳たぶよ ichijiku wo yukkurito waru mimitabu yo

splitting a fig

slowly--

an earlobe

雪降るを諸国の位牌群れたまふ yuki furu wo shokoku no ihai mure tamau
snow falling
mortuary tablets from many provinces
throng

罌粟の花海までもって来て流す keshi no hana umi made motte kite nagasu
carrying to the sea
I set them adrift
Poppy flowers

もず鳴くやひきちぎつたる白き紙 mozu naku ya hikichigittaru shiroki kami
a shrike screams--
the white paper
torn apart

片蔭の鏡さびしきもの増やす katakage no kagami sabishiki mono fuyasu
in the shade
a mirror, with more and more
lonely things

終戦忌めがねをにぎりしめている shūsenki megane wo nigiri shimete iru
anniversary of the war's end
the glasses clutched
in the hand

思い出の花衣なり旅鞆 omoide no hanagoromo nari tabikaban
in my memory
flowery clothes
this travel bag

Kazuo Fujimoto (great talent in Mathematics. A friend who died before he could realize his wishes.)

真夜中に吊られて長きマフラーなり mayonaka ni tsurarete nagaki mafurā nari
a muffler
hanging long
midnight

猿枕遠きかもめは白く揺れ bakumakura tōki kamome wa shiroku yure
a tapir pillow
sea gulls waver whitely
in the distance

月光はラムネのあわを積み上げよ gekkō wa ramune no awa wo tsumiage yo
on the moonbeam
heap up the bubbles
from the lemonade bottle

鏡中に灯ありし冬いまだ kyōchū ni akari arishi fuyu imada
a lamplight
in the mirror
winter still

真黒な雪傘ころびキリシタン makkuro na yukigasa korobi kirishitan
in the snow, a black
umbrella falls--
a converted Christian

Shigeyuki Kurakawa (my close friend from Ministry of Finance, Budget Bureau. Died at
the age of 36 from hard work.)

枯山河大海原のただ中に karesanga ōunabara no tadanaka ni
withered landscape
in the midst of
the mighty ocean

高野にも鬼住みにけり美術展 Kōya nimo oni suminikeri bijutsuten
in Koya also
ogres live:
an art exhibition

絵の中の扉開けば夏の海 e no naka no tobira hirakeba natsu no umi
as a door
in the picture is opened:
the summer sea

きりきりと絞れる塔や秋日中 kirikiri to shiboreru tō ya aki hinaka
a tower
twisted around itself
highnoon in autumn

法王を天より打てりロシアの雪 hōō wo ten yori uteri roshia no yuki
snow in Russia
hits the cloistered emperor
from heaven

座禅する足だけ残る風涼し zazen suru ashi dake nokoru kaze suzushi
Zen meditation
the feet alone
in the cool breeze

Shohei Musunoki (Cartoonist. Active in "Garo".)
詩人死せば春の鬼ゆくところなし shijin shiseba haru no oni yukutokoro nashi
when the poet dies
nowhere to go for the demon
of spring

なにごとか忘れおり白つつじ白し nanigoto ka wasure ori shirotsutsuji shiroshi
forgot something
the white azalea
is white

冬耕や蔵に七千五百巻 fōkō ya kura ni nanasen gohyakkan
winter plowing
in the treasury
seventy five hundred volume

風鈴やみ能面視線を持ちはじめ furin yami nōmen shisen wo mochi hajimu
wind bell stops ringing
the noh mask begins
to fix its gaze

座禅窟より見る白鳥の来る沼を zazenkutsu yori miru hakuchō no kuru numa wo
from the meditation cave
I stare the swamp
where swans come

息白く化石の象の進化の前 iki shiroku kaseki no zō no shinka no mae
white breath
a fossil elephant
before the evolution

Group of craftsman (Group of missionary for production technique after the world war two
under an idea of "Asia as one.")

空蟬の容に客死せる詩人 utsusemi no katachi ni kakushiseru shijin
looking like
a cicada shel, the poet
has died abroad

号令の世界しずかに青薄 gōrei no sekai shizuka ni aosusuki
calm
in the world of command
green pampas grass

一木の兵士の積乱雲の墓碑 ichiboku no heishi no sekiranun no bohi
a piece of wood
marking a soldier's grave
cumulus clouds

夏暮れてアジアの雲は低く厚し natsu kurete ajia no kumo wa hikuu atsushi
gathering summer dusk
clouds of Asia
low and dense

灼熱の女陰に入りしごとき闇 shakunetsu no nyoin ni irishi gotoki yami
darkness
as if entering scorching
vagina

獅子の門笑ひつづけし熱風裡 shishi no mon warai tsuzukeshi neppū ri
the Lions Gate:
their ceaseless laughter
in the burning wind

いwashigumo ōtsuki shoten shihonron

mackerel sky ---

Otsuki Shoten's

"The Capital"

and others.

Discussion Square

Giant Star of Minor poet

Haiku poet, President of Shinyasosho sha Shinji Saito

When I describe Hidetoshi Nishimura (Gania) as "Bureaucrat and a Minor poet", most of the people give me a dubious look. Combination of Bureaucrat and Minor poet sounds very much in different nature. A capable officer in a sunny side and unknown poet forgotten in the shade. They are completely at the other ends. What is more, bureaucrat is not popular these days. It is dear to recall the "Period of winter for Bureaucrats." The word bureaucrat sounds to the masses as a pronoun of inhuman dyed with hatred and antipathy (envy and jealous attached.)

The word Bureaucrat is described in Kojien (Japanese dictionary) as "Colleagues in the same government service". Very simple definition. How about the definition of "bureaucratism and bureaucratic government." It is described as "Trend, atmosphere and spirit following the bureaucratic government. Its characteristic is absolutism, secret, troublesomeness, formality and uniformity." Or "Politics carried out by some privileged bureaucrats who have authority." It seems to me that they treat the word awfully. I am worried why he named his first anthology "Bureaucrat." Even if Mr. Nishimura was called as a minor poet from those who have eyes to see, some kinds of people define him with contempt and compassion. It is not necessary to draw two minor images by himself.

But again, for good or for evil, Mr. Nishimura is a bureaucrat and a minor poet. He is the only one who could have completely different concepts within oneself. Even if the Kojien treated the word bureaucrat poorly, and the reality of bureaucrat through daily experience seemed disgusted, origin of the word bureaucrat has an image of clear ideal and morals. It is clear from Akito Arima's description that Tu-Fu and Pai Lo-Tien of Tang and Song poets as bureaucrats with pride and having high spirit to carry out the government properly. And he set Mr. Nishimura as a descendant.

If Tu-Fu and Pai Lo-Tien are too much, I could nominate Kunio Yanagida. As you know Kunio Yanagida also was a bureaucrat and minor poet. He composed 21 lyrics in "Bungakukai" during his impressionable youth. Then he studied Agriculture at university and became bureaucrat departing from the literally world. The common part of Tu-Fu, Pai Lo-Tien and Yanagida is romantic unity of literature and will of national administration and relief.

Poem is will. I do not trust the poet who doesn't have a spirit of reciters. Real bureaucrat is the one who dreams about the unity of poem and will. I observe that Mr. Nishimura is one of those who fulfill those postulates.

Avant-garde literature only exists as minor. By expressing unappeared beauty and ideal initiatively, he has to be proud loneliness, stubbornness and singleness. He receives a praise of crabbed and heretic. But minor poet is to be a power to destroy the concept of beauty, which is fixed in the brain of unawake people. And to grasp people in his track of soul and transform into people's substance. That is minor poet.

I suppose Gania Nishimura is a minor poet. His poem will not be recorded in collected works of anthology. His name will not be recorded in Haiku history. This does not mean that his haiku is poor in literary value. It means that he is ignored by the world of haiku, because of his isolation, unambitiousness and mysophobia for not running around in the politics of haiku world. Collected works of literature or history of literature is like an alibi for winner to justify oneself. It is better to know that things are edited under the commercial condition of journalism, self-righteousness of editor and an editor's selfishness. Writers who are recorded in the history of literature are usually selected within the family affair of those related. --I may say that the history of literature is a product of compromise between publisher and writer.

Needless to say, becoming a major is not a bad thing. It means that the majority because of its popularity accepted his holding beauty and idea without any incompatibility. It is necessary for a best seller writer to realize that he is some what looked down on.

The difference between bureaucrat and minor poet is clear when bureaucrat is defined as "politics, existence, daily, daytime, order and majority", and minor poet is defined as "literature, non-existence, non-daily, nighttime, disorder and minority." Poet has to be torn off between night and day. Haiku of Gania, who is a permanent revolutionary scooping out his bureaucracy from inside himself, is supported by the strain to be "twitching beauty."

無花果をゆっくりと割る耳たぶよ ichijiku wo yukkuri to waru mimitabu yo
splitting a fig
slowly--
an earlobe

空蟬の容（かたち）に客死せる詩人 utsusemi no katachi ni kaku shiseru shijin
looking like
a cicada shell, the poet
has died abroad

枯山河大海原のただ中に karesanga ōunabara no tadanaka ni
withered landscape
in the midst of
the mighty ocean

号令の世界しずかに青薄 gōrei no sekai shizuka ni aosusuki
calm
in the world of command
green pampas grass

抱きあう仮面の白夜舞踏会 idaki au kamen no byakuya butōkai
at a ball
two masks embrace each other
white night

The first haiku is filled with *esprit* of Jean Cocteau. In the second haiku "cicada's shell", we can see through himself as a minor poet. It shows the cicada shell and poet as a non-existence in this world. The third haiku "withered landscape" shows a bird's-eye view of Japan at the end of the century, yet the mighty ocean is reflected to the withered landscape. The fourth haiku was composed in a foreign country but it does not have to be limited. Wherever (battlefield, work, home) the command (threat) pushes its way is a hell. Wherever command exists, there is always a sorrow of small ones. For the fifth haiku, there is a picture by Munch with the same title. "Man dances with somebody else's mask of death on to prolong his life for just only one night." (Mari Hashimoto)

"Bureaucrat" seems to be a flash to crack the air pocket of modern haiku history. This is a suitable book for a season of meditation.

Afterword

This anthology became possible to be published under the guidance of Mr. Akito Arima and Mr. Sakon So. Mr. Arima selected 300 haiku out of more than 2000 pieces of my imperfect speeches.

Mr. So taught me how the loneliness should be in modern haiku and the existence of poet itself. He also gave me a encouraging postscript for this anthology.

I thank them very much for their great help.

Mr. Shinji Saito gave me a direction over the whole matters and helped me deciding haiku for this anthology. I have never imagined that working with Shinya for this anthology was such a great pleasure fulfilled with a joy of creation.

I appreciate his cooperation very much.

Adding to the help of these respected seniors, there are some more people whom I would like to thank to. I realized through editing these hundreds of my work, many of my haiku have connection with the death of my friends, respected people and those who loved me. It is not a requiem but an identification with people who is in the shadowy kingdom of the dead.

The happiness of making an anthology is to be able to keep what he has been as a treasure through this somewhat eternal relationship.

Sept. 8,1998

Gania Nishimura at Matsuyama Chozen Ro



Cover art by Fumihiko Ooga