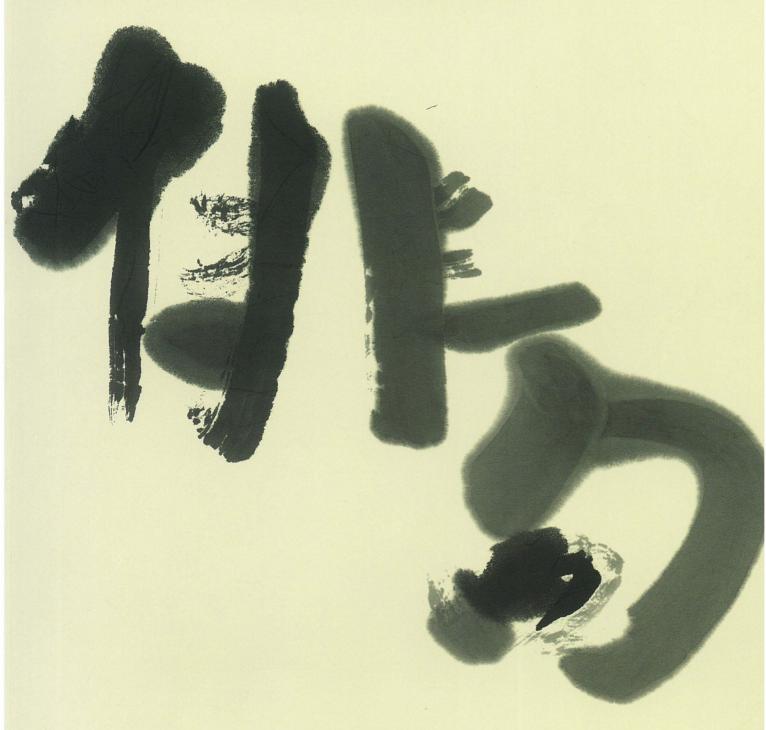
# INTERNATIONAL HAIKU CONVENTION

MASAOKASHIKI INTERNATIONAL HAIKU AWARDS



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# MASAOKA SHIKI INTERNATIONAL HAIKU AWARDS

#### Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Awards

Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Award, which is named after the founder of modern Japanese haiku, was established based on the principles set forth in Matsuyama Declaration, adopted at Shimanamikaido '99 Haiku Convention in Matsuyama held in September 1999. We hope that the establishment of this award attracts people's attention to Masaoka Shiki as a globally recognized poet and to haiku as the shortest form of world poetry throughout the world.

We are about to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Shiki's death. It is our strong hope that this establishment will be a stepping stone to the rise of awareness of haiku globally and be linked the further development of haiku in the 21st century.

#### <u>Purpose</u>

Haiku today is the most popularly written and enjoyed and the most high-spirited form of literature anywhere. Because of its brevity, haiku is very approachable to ordinary people. This has led to its abundant potentiality as a leading element in the development of world literature and it will be a leading element in the new century as well.

The Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Award will be awarded to people who have made the most remarkable contribution to the development and the raising awareness of the creativity of haiku regardless nationality or language. Recipients must have a strong interest in haiku and a broad, international outlook in their field. The award is not limited to any field of specialty, so that haiku poets, other poets, authors, researchers, translators, essayists, editors, and workers in all professions are considered equally.

#### **Awards**

Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Grand Prize

Prize money (five million yen), NHK Prize (Tobe pottery), Ehime Shimbun Prize(bamboo craft) Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Prize

Prize money (one million yen in total), NHK Prize(Tobe pottery), Ehime Shimbun Prize (bamboo craft) Masaoka Shiki International Haiku EIJS Special Prize

This prize is contributed by Stockholm School Of Economics, the European Institute Of Japanese Studies.

The European Institute of Japanese Studies (EIJS) was established in 1992 in Stockholm in order to take an important role in a research field on the economics and societies of Japan and East Asia. Particularly, issues, which have an impact on Europe, are emphasized. The establishment of EIJS was founded by endowment of funds from Swedish and Japanese Businesses and the Swedish government.

EIJS's main fields of activity are research, education, information, public seminars and executive education. EIJS is active to try to contribute to better understanding of Japan and its role in the world focused on research and education.

We have EIJS's approval for the establishment of Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Award Project, and EIJS kindly agrees to offer Masaoka Shiki International Haiku EIJS Special Prize.

#### The Award Selection Committee members

· Arima Akito

chairman of the Award Selection Committee, honorary chairman of the Haiku International Association

· Inahata Teiko

president of the Association of Japanese Classical Haiku

· William J. Higginson

haiku poet, author, researcher

· Ueda Makoto

professor emeritus of Stanford University, USA

· Kaneko Tōta

honorary chairman of Modern Haiku Association

· Jean-Jacques Origas

professor at Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, France

· Willy Vande Walle

professor at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

· Shiraishi Kazuko

poet

· Sō Sakon

poet

· Takaha Shugyō

chairman of the Association of Haiku Poets

· Haga Tōru

vice-chairman of the Award Selection Committee, president of Kyoto University of Art and Design

· Wada Shigeki

chairman of Masaoka Shiki Association

#### The Working Group members

· Haga Tōru

chairman of the Working Group

· Kawamoto Kōji

professor at Tezukayama Gakuin University

· Kido Shuri

poe

Saitō Shinji

owner of Shinya-sōsho, haiku poet

· Shinohara Toshihiro

haiku poet

Tamai Hideo

haiku poet (Ministry of Education, secretariat councilor)

· Tsukushi Bansei

haiku poet

· Tsushima Yasuko

haiku poet

· Tsubouchi Toshinori

haiku poet, professor at Kyoto University of Education

· David Burleigh

haiku poet, associate professor at Ferris University

· Nomura Kiwao

poet

· Bōjō Toshiatsu

haiku poet

· Murakami Mamoru

author

#### Commentator

 Nishimura Hidetoshi haiku poet

#### **Organizers**

Ehime Culture Foundation, the Ehime Prefecture Board of Education, the City of Matsuyama, the City of Matsuyama Board of Education, NHK, The Ehime Shimbun Co. Ltd.

#### Sponsorship

The Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, the Shikoku Bureau of International Trade and Industry, the Haiku International Association, the Association of Haiku Poets, the Modern Haiku Association, the Association of Japanese Classical Haiku, the Haiku Association of Ehime Prefecture, the Haiku Society of America, the British Haiku Society, the Swedish Haiku Society, the Romanian Haiku Society

#### Co sponsorship

Shikoku Electric Power Co., Inc, Iyo Bank, Ehime Bank, NIPPON TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE WEST CORPORATION Ehime branch Office, NTT DoCoMo Shikoku, Inc. Ehime Regional Office, NTT-ME SHIKOKU CORPORATION Ehime Branch Office







The medal is pade yellow parcelain Tobe pottery, featuring Shiki's profile and his favorite fruit, a persimmon. The ribbon is Iyo Kasuri (splashed patterned cloth). The medal is set in Sakurai lacquer work container.

### Recipients

#### Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Grand Prize



#### Yves Bonnefoy (France)

Born in 1923 in Tours, France

1943 Started living in Paris, studied philosophy at Paris University 1946 started a magazine for poetry, and published the first collection of his poems.

1953 published "Du mouvement et de l'immobilité de Douve" and attracted readers' attention.

1968 traveled in Asia, made the first visit to Japan and met Japanese haiku poets.

1981 started giving lecture at Collège de France on comparative study of function of poetry.

In "Le Nuage Rouge", "Du haiku", "Les mots, les home, la nature, la terre", he commented in detail on haiku.

His recent work is charged with his profound knowledge of haiku and demonstrates that he views haiku with amazing insight. Since his work has brought a revolution in the traditional French poetry in Europe, it is suitable that he is the very first recipient of this prize that is named after Shiki, who brought a revolution into the tradition of haiku in Japan.

LE PRÉSIDENT DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE



C'est un honneur pour la France de voir le grand prix international de Haïku Massaoka Shiki être décemé au poète renommé qu'est le Professeur Yves Bonnefoy. Je tiens à remercier de leur choix les membres du Jury et à exprimer au Maître Yves Bonnefoy mes félicitations les plus chalcureuses.

Dans l'œuvre de ce grand poète français et par delà les distances et les cultures, c'est une inspiration et une sensibilité universelles qui s'expriment à travers sa recnerche constante de l'autre et de sa différence. Le Maître Yves Bonnefoy nourrit l'espoir d'un retour à l'innocence du monde. L'apparente simplicité des Haïkus permet à ce Maître du langage de mettre en relief les affinités du Japon et de la France. Il nous donne espoir en l'Homme car il contribue à un rapprochement des cœurs.

Dans la grande tradition de Basho et jusqu'à Masaoka Shiki, l'esprit du Haïku, si rare, si subtil exprime la sérénité retrouvée des âmes. Le Maître Yves Bonnesoy se situe dans cette lignée. L'hommage qui lui est rendu aujourd'hui par le Japon nous remplit de fierté.

Jacques CHIRAC

#### Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Prize



#### Li Mang (The People's Republic of China)

Mr. Li Mang passed away on October 30, 2000. We sincerely pray for the peacefulness of the departed spirit.

Born in 1920, Fushun, Lian Ning Province, China

Worked as a director of Foreign Literature Learned Society of China, a director of Translators' association of China, a scenario writer, a fellowship of the Foreigh Literature Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Had important positions including a president of the waka and haiku researchers' society of China and a president of the Japanese literature researchers' society.

1992 attended Chinese and Japanese Popular Literature Symposium in Beijing as a leader of Chinese members.

1996 gave a keynote speech at Japanese and Chinese haiku exchange in Beijing.

He has been active as a scholar of Japanese literature for many years. He writes Chinese haiku as well as haiku in Japanese with a profound understanding of Japanese haiku. He has studied, translated, and introduced Japanese haiku in China. His achievement of communicating and deepening the understanding of haiku is remarkable.



#### **Bart Mesotten (Belgium)**

Born in 1923 in Diepenbeek, Belgium

1950 studied Theology at Gregoriaon University of Rome, Italy

1954 studied Philosophy and Letters at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

1954 taught at the Sint - Michielscolege, Brasschaat

1969 rector of the convent of the Sister of Overijse - Mechelen

1976 founded Flemish Haiku Society, editor - in - chief of *Vuursteen*,

the journal for haiku, tanka, senryu, until 1995

1993 honored by Flemish minister of education

He has been publishing his haiku since 1950, and has been prominently involved in many haiku activities including studying haiku, writing criticism of haiku, delivering lectures on haiku, and founding a haiku center. His achievement in spreading haiku and deepening understanding haiku among the people of Western Europe is extremely noteworthy.



#### **Robert Spiess (USA)**

Born in 1921 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Bachelor's and Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin

started being interested in haiku in his late teens

1963 poety editor for American Haiku, the first magazine devoted to

English-language haiku

1971 associate editor for Modern Haiku

1978 editor and publisher for Modern Haiku

Since 1949, when his haiku was published for the first time,

he has kept publishing haiku collections and the collections

received various awards.

Since the publication of his first haiku in 1949, he has published numerous books of haiku and haiku aesthetics, and written essays on haiku that reflect his precise and deep understanding of haiku as well as his knowledge of English-language poetry. He was an editor of the first English haiku journal, *American Haiku*, and for 22 years has been editor and publisher of *Modern Haiku* (USA), the oldest journal of haiku and haiku studies outside of Japan. His achievement in disseminating and deepening the understanding of haiku in English-speaking countries is without parallel.

#### Masaoka Shiki International Haiku EIJS Special Prize



Sato Kazuo (Japan)

Born in 1927 in Tokyo, Japan
Professor emeritus of Waseda University
Director of Internatinal Division of the Museum of Haiku literature
Executive Director of Haiku Internatinal Association
M. A. in English, Waseda University
furthered his study at University of California, Berkley
1992 Awarded the Minister of Education Award for "Umi o koeta haiku haiku crosses the sea - how haiku got internationally known."
1998 Honored by Haiku Society of America for his contributions to haiku
and presented with a Certificate of Appreciation at the 30th anniversary
ceremony of the Haiku Society of America.

For over 30 years, he has been introducing Japanese haiku to other countries and at the same time introducing haiku from overseas to Japan. He has been intensely involved in international activities related to haiku, comparative studies on the haiku environment overseas, and collecting haiku-related books from many places on the globe. Through these activities, he has acted as a bridge between Japanese haiku and non-Japanese haiku. He has had a tremendous impact by increasing mutual understanding between Japanese haiku and haiku in countries overseas as well as among haiku in other countries.

#### **Memorial Lecture by Yves Bonnefoy (French)**

LE HAÏKU, LA FORME BRÈVE ET LES POÈTES FRANCAIS

I

Mesdames, messieurs, que mes premiers mots soient pour remercier votre assemblée de l'honneur qu'elle me fait en me conviant à la réunion d'aujourd'hui, et en voulant bien considérer que je suis digne de prendre part à sa réflexion sur le haïku, et plus généralement sur la forme brève. Je vous prie de penser que ce n'est pas sans un sentiment d'insuffisance que je m'approche ainsi de l'expérience poétique dont votre civilisation et ses grands poètes sont les maîtres incontestés. Personne au monde comme des Japonais n'ont su faire retentir dans les consonances et dissonances de quelques mots l'entière réalité, à la fois sociale et cosmique. Vous avez marié l'infini à la parole d'une façon qui fascine, bien au delà de vos frontières, et en France en tout cas, et depuis longtemps, nous sommes nombreux à écouter vos poètes, à commencer par Bashō, lequel, et j'y reviendrai, a beaucoup compté dans ma propre vie.

Les poètes français aiment le haïku, et c'est d'ailleurs par la constatation de ce fait et quelques réflexions sur son sens que je commencerai ma petite contribution à votre recherche. Les poètes français aiment le haïku, ils lui ont même accordé depuis quelque cinquante ans une attention spécifique, avec un effort très sérieux pour en comprendre l'esprit et en tirer un enseignement pour leur propre rapport au monde, ce qui signifie qu'ils sont en mesure, jusqu'à un certain point, d'en pénétrer au moins quelques grands aspects.

Or, et voici ma première remarque, c'est évidemment par le seul truchement des traductions que nous connaissons ces poèmes, et on serait donc tenté de penser que ce qui en est l'essentiel nous est refusé de ce fait même, pour plusieurs raisons qu'il serait vain de sous-estimer. D'abord, il y a entre vos poètes et nous la différence des langues, qui fait que de grandes catégories de pensée et beaucoup d'autres notions de moindre importance, mais souvent présentes dans les poèmes, ne sont pas localisées de même

façon dans le réseau d'ensemble des relations que nos paroles entretiennent avec le monde comme elles l'ont mis en place. Il peut s'agir d'une disparité des connotations et dénotations qui caractérisent le mot japonais et le mot français que l'on veut mettre en rapport, mais il arrive aussi, j'imagine, que ce qui pour vous peut être dit, d'une façon immédiate et comme intuitive, par une seule notion, ne soit compréhensible en français qu'au prix d'un processus d'analyse difficile à mener à bien et aboutissant, en tout cas, à plusieurs idées que nous ressentons comme distinctes et dont il nous faudra donc chercher à comprendre la relation, jusqu'alors par nous inaperçue. Et quel problème est-ce là, quand cette sorte de situation apparait dans la traduction d'un poème bref, où nul développement réflexif n'est concevable! Surtout si ces notions inconnues de nous portent sur des aspects fondamentaux de votre pensée de la poésie ou de votre perception du monde le plus élémentaire.

Et tout près de cette question de la disparité des vocabulaires, voici celle de nos syntaxes, que l'on ne peut imaginer plus lointaines l'une de l'autre. Quelle distance entre la syntaxe des langues de la famille indoeuropéenne et votre façon de produire le sens à partir des notions, des informations particulières! Or, c'est dans ces rapports entre mots que l'intuition qui vous permet de rapprocher des impressions au départ très dissemblables peut se frayer sa voie dans les haïkus, j'imagine, allant plus aisément, plus rapidement que nos phrases analytiques au sentiment de l'unité, ou du rien, qui est au cœur de toute vraie poésie. Il faut peut-être toutes les strophes de l'*Ode à un rossignol*, de Keats, il faut peut-être toutes celles du *Cimetière marin*, de Paul Valéry pour accéder à l'impression de chant mélodieux dans la nuit ou de mer déserte au soleil qu'un Bashō ou un Shiki sauraient évoquer en dix-sept syllabes. Voilà qui n'augure rien de bon pour la traduction en français ou anglais de ces dernières.

Et qui plus est, la notation graphique des mots est pour vous constituée d'idéogrammes, de signes gardant souvent un peu, dans le ur apparence, de la figure des choses, et le haïku est bref, ce qui permet d'en voir tous les caractères d'un seul regard, d'où suit que le poète pourra faire passer à travers ses mots un frémissement de leur figure visible qui aidera à sa perception du plus immédiat, du plus intime, dans la situation qu'il évoque. Ce poète sera un peintre. Il pourra ajouter au savoir propre des

mots ce savoir d'au delà les mots que permet au peintre le regard qu'a approfondi une méditation silencieuse des grands aspects du lieu naturel. Que va-t-il rester de cette intuition dans les mots de nos traductions, séparés comme ils sont chez nous de l'aspect sensible des choses mêmes qu'ils nomment par la nature foncièrement arbitraire et abstraite de la notation alphabétique? Notre écriture abolit le rapport immédiat avec le monde, c'est cela qui lui vaut son aptitude toute particulière aux sciences de la matière, mais c'est cela aussi qui rend la poésie difficile, et j'avoue que je vous envie de disposer des idéogrammes. D'autant qu'ils me paraissent garder ouvert au centre des lignes qui se composent dans chacun d'eux un vide où se signifie le rien, l'expérience du rien qui est, je l'ai déjà dit, un souci majeur de toute pensée poétique, même si celle-ci cherche dans l'existence vécue ce qui peut nous donner une raison d'exister sur terre. Il y a une lucidité de l'esprit dans les signes qu'emploie votre écriture, et cette lucidité est donc au début de vos travaux poétiques, alors que chez nous elle ne paraîtra qu'à la fin, si toutefois le poète ne s'est pas perdu en chemin.

Bien difficile la traduction du haïku dans nos langues occidentales, décidément! Je crois même qu'il faut se résigner à penser que cette traduction est impossible.

Η

Et pourtant il y a donc eu, il y a toujours, ce grand intérêt dans notre pays pour le haïku, pourquoi ?

Peut-être, tout simplement, parce que ses traductions, tout appauvries qu'elles soient, restent de superbes exemples de *forme brève*, ce qui, dans la situation où nous sommes, en Europe, a déjà en soi beaucoup de valeur, comme exemple et comme encouragement.

Qu'est-ce qui caractérise, en effet, un texte bref? Une capacité accrue de s'ouvrir à une expérience spécifiquement poétique.

Ne parlons plus pour l'instant des seuls poèmes limités à dix-sept syllabes, et riches d'un aspect graphique autant que d'un sens, pensons à toutes les oeuvres qui ont tenté de dire avec peu de mots, et aussi bien en français qu'en japonais, une émotion, une intuition, un sentiment, une perception. Il est clair que dans cet espace verbal de peu d'étendue, et qui doit se suffire à lui-même, il ne peut y avoir de récit, sinon dans des allusions qui n'en évoqueront un que de loin, et d'un seul coup. Et cela signifie, comme conséquence immédiate, que les mots du poème bref sont délivrés d'une certaine approche des événements et des choses, celle qui, dans les récits, les enchaînent dans une suite de causes et d'effets, au risque qu'on ne les sache plus, ces situations de la vie, que par la voie de la sorte de pensée qui analyse, généralise : qui ne connaît la réalité particulière que du dehors. Le poème bref est à l'abri de cette tentation de prendre recul par rapport à l'impression immédiate. Il est ainsi plus naturellement qu'aucun autre en mesure de coïncider avec un instant vécu.

Et au sein de cet instant il y a aussi qu'il nous oblige à ne considerér que très peu de choses, puisqu'il ne contient que très peu de mots : si bien que les relations qui peuvent dans cet instant de notre existence s'être établies en nous entre ces choses du monde vont pouvoir se déployer librement, avec toutes leurs vibrations, d'autant plus aisément audibles qu'on n'y est plus prisonnier de la pensée conceptuelle. Nous sommes rapatriés dans ce sentiment d'unité que le long discours nous ferait perdre. Or, cette expérience d'unité, d'unité vécue et non pas seulement pensée, c'est évidemment la poésie. On peut oublier cela, en Occident, parce que nos traditions religieuses, celles du Dieu personnel, transcendant par rapport au monde, ont séparé l'absolu de la réalité naturelle, mais ce n'en est pas moins, cette approche de l'Un dans chaque chose, l'émotion suprême à laquelle instinctivement tous les poètes s'attachent.

La forme brève peut être ainsi plus qu'aucune autre le seuil d'une expérience spécifiquement poétique. Quand un poème adopte une forme brève, il se tourne déjà, de ce simple fait, vers ce qui peut être poésie dans notre rapport au monde.

Or, je dois le souligner maintenant, la forme brève n'a pas été bien souvent présente dans l'histoire de notre poésie. Précisément parce que la réalité a longtemps été ressentie comme la simple création de Dieu et non le divin comme tel, la pensée théologique ou philosophique a occupé l'esprit des Européens bien davantage que l'écoute du bruit du vent ou le regard sur la feuille qui tombe, et nos poèmes doivent donc être assez longs pour qu'une pensée s'y développe. Cela est vrai même dans le cas de poèmes qui semblent relativement courts, comme le sonnet, qui a été si important pendant plusieurs siècles dans l'histoire de l'Occident. Le sonnet a bien plus que dix-sept syllabes, il n'a tout de même que quatorze vers, et c'est pour nous un poème bref, mais son effet n'est pas pour autant celui d'une forme brève. Car il commence par deux strophes d'une certaine structure formelle, deux groupes de quatre vers, puis continue et s'achève par deux autres strophes qui sont cette fois de trois vers, ce sont des nombres impairs qui succèdent à des nombres pairs, et entre les deux parties il y a donc comme une rupture qui semble vouloir signifier, et qui a été fréquemment utilisée pour signifier quelque chose, effectivement, si bien que le sonnet, aussi limité soit-il, est une pensée qui se développe, il y a même en lui de quoi ressembler au syllogisme, avec ses prémisses suivies de ses conclusions. Ah, bien sûr, l'expérience véritablement poétique est possible dans un sonnet autant que partout ailleurs. On peut même y éprouver, au neuvième vers, le passage du pair à l'impair comme un réveil dans l'esprit du sentiment du temps qui passe, c'est-à-dire de l'existence, c'est-à-dire de l'instant, lequel est une expérience possible de l'immédiat. Mais ce n'est pas un hasard si le sonnet a été pendant si longtemps dans son histoire intimement lié à la vogue du Platonisme, il est un discours au moins autant qu'un poème.

Et ne parlons pas de quelques formes assurément brèves qu'il y a eu dans notre littérature, comme par exemple l'épigramme. Car dans ce cas il ne s'agit que de faire valoir une idée de façon brillante, et l'on n'est donc pas là en rapport avec la réalité du dehors, avec la nature, mais dans l'espace de la conversation, parmi des causeurs qui ne s'intéressent qu'à des idées et à la belle langue où ces idées prennent forme. La brièveté, c'est alors pour

créer la surprise, qui fait valoir une intelligence, et les vrais poètes ne peuvent éprouver pour cette sorte-là de brièveté que de l'aversion, ils la jugent à bon droit futile, ils n'ont pas rencontré dans ces occasions une forme brève authentique.

La conséquence, bien malheureuse, c'est que l'on a fini, au XIXème siècle, par considérer ceux des poètes qui écrivaient des poèmes courts, sans autre ambition que d'exprimer une impression fugitive, comme des auteurs eux aussi futiles, ou en tout cas mineurs, inférieurs à ceux qui écrivaient des oeuvres plus vastes. D'autant que ces poètes dits mineurs se laissaient persuader qu'ils l'étaient effectivement. Je pense à un Toulet, qui n'est certes pas un grand poète, mais qui fit vibrer dans ses Contre-rimes des sons de grande subtilité. Borges, qui s'y connaissait en poésie, admirait beaucoup Toulet, mais en France on ne lui a pas encore attribué beaucoup d'importance. Presque la même chose pourrait être dite de Verlaine. Cette fois personne ne doute qu'il s'agisse avec lui d'un grand poète, néanmoins on fait volontiers de son œuvre une lecture qui la réduit aux moments d'irresponsabilité de ses journées les plus misérables, au lieu de percevoir que sa poésie est capable de la plus extrême perceptivité ou même, comme dans Crimen Amoris, de poser avec force dans cette fois un discours très éloquent les problèmes de l'être-au-monde. Verlaine! Je puis remarquer au passage que si j'avais à citer des poèmes français qui s'apparentent au haïku, je penserais tout de suite à plusieurs des siens. N'y a-t-il pas quelque chose que vous pouvez reconnaître dans une notation comme :

> L'ombre des arbres dans la rivière embrumée, Meurt comme de la fumée, Tandis qu'en l'air, parmi les ramures réelles, Se plaignent les tourterelles ?

Notez pourtant que ces vers de Verlaine ne sont pas à eux seuls un poème en soi, ils font partie d'un texte plus long, et pour trouver de la brièveté dans notre passé poétique, il faut plutôt, comme le cormoran dans le lac, plonger dans des oeuvres longues, y retrouvant des points où le poète s'est arrêté, levant ses yeux de son discours, regardant autour de lui. La brièveté était alors, pour lui, un événement imprévu, non voulu d'avance. Cela ne l'empêchait pas moins, j'en suis sûr, de ressentir bien des fois qu'îl

était là au meilleur de son projet poétique.

Ceci étant, la société française et les convictions religieuses avaient commencé, à l'époque romantique, de changer d'une façon favorable à l'appréhension poétique de la réalité. Accompagnant un certain déclin de l'idée chrétienne du monde, la pensée d'une nature riche d'une vie mystérieuse encourageait les poètes à s'attacher aux impressions qu'ils en recueillaient, et ainsi l'expérience proprement poétique pouvait s'affirmer aux dépens des aspects plus discursifs des poèmes, ce qui permettait de mieux comprendre la valeur et les capacités de la brièveté poétique, et même d'en faire usage d'une manière consciente, en considérant que ce pouvait être le cœur même de la recherche. C'est précisément ce qui a lieu chez Rimbaud, qui a commencé d'écrire par de longs poèmes riches d'idées, et en est venu, très rapidement, aux notations fulgurantes de ses poèmes de 1872 et des Illuminations. On peut dire que ces poèmes de Rimbaud sont les premières grandes créations de forme brève en français, chez un poète que l'on pourrait d'ailleurs comparer, me semble-t-il, à certains poètes du Japon par sa façon de vivre. Et ils ont constitué pour notre modernité un grand exemple, mais ils restèrent tout de même une exception, et pour ceux qui chez nous savent mieux, aujourd'hui qu'hier, que la perception du monde sensible est au cœur de la poésie, il fallait assurément d'autres témoignages encore.

Telle est la raison de l'intérêt pour le haïku que l'on a vu se développer en France dans la deuxième moitié de notre XXème siècle, et qui est aujourd'hui toujours aussi fort. Cet intérêt s'est établi quand les textes et une certaine idée des poètes japonais commencèrent à circuler, grâce à des traductions ou des commentaires, et c'est ainsi que le livre de Blyth, Haïku, a joué un grand rôle auprès de certains d'entre nous. Ces poèmes n'avaient nullement besoin pour intéresser le lecteur français de préserver dans la traduction toute leur richesse, puisque le simple fait d'être bref, de se limiter à un seul regard rassemblant quelques grandes réalités du monde naturel ou social dans une seule impression, était maintenant ce dont on pouvait comprendre la valeur spécifiquement poétique. Et rien n'empêchait, de surcroît, les lecteurs de ces poèmes, de s'informer des auteurs, de prendre conscience des moines zen, de se pénétrer d'une spiritualité qui répond très fortement aux besoins de l'esprit dans notre société moderne qui a appris à comprendre que beaucoup de ses

convictions religieuses ou métaphysiques ne sont que des mythes. La pensée qu'îl n'y a rien sous les phénomènes, que la personne humaine n'a pas à se considérer supérieure à la nature, c'est bien ce que l'on doit accepter désormais, et cela permet d'entendre le haïku. Je n'hésiterai pas à dire que les meilleurs des poètes français depuis les années 50 ont réfléchi à cette forme de poésie. Il ne s'est pas agi de ce qu'on pourrait appeler une « mode du haïku », mais de la prise de conscience d'une référence nécessaire et fondamentale, qui ne peut que rester au centre de la pensée poétique occidentale.

IV

Et ce qu'il faut que je vous dise maintenant, c'est quelle forme concrète a pu prendre cette influence. Il va de soi qu'il ne s'agit pas pour nous d'imiter le haïku, c'est-à-dire d'écrire des poèmes aussi brefs que possible, retrouvant à peu près le nombre des mots d'un haïku quand il est traduit en français. Quelques poètes ont tenté cela, de façon naïve, mais c'est se tromper de voie. Nous n'avons pas comme vous l'aspect visible des signes pour soutenir l'intuition du poète, et les aspects conceptuels du vocabulaire continuent donc de prédominer dans nos mots, même quand ceux-ci ne sont employés qu'en petit nombre, si bien que pour accéder à la profondeur et à la limpidité d'une notation semblable à celle des maîtres du haïku il faut avoir mené dans notre recours aux substantifs et aux adjectifs une longue lutte qui doit être assez présente dans le poème pour que le lecteur l'y reconnaisse, la revive, et apprenne ainsi avec le poète à voir comme celui-ci a réussi à le faire. Comme dans le passé de notre poésie nationale, la brièveté est encore aujourd'hui en France un état passager auguel il arrive que l'on accède, mais rien de plus. Nous n'avons la possibilité que de nous mettre en mouvement vers elle, au sein de textes qui restent longs, étant en somme le journal de notre recherche, la tentative ardue et jamais finie de la clarification de nous-mêmes.

J'ajoute, en ce point, qu'il y a d'ailleurs dans le poète français une conscience de soi comme personne qui reste forte, quelle que soit la qualité d'évidence des leçons d'impersonnalité, de détachement de soi qu'il

rencontre dans une poésie japonaise fortement imprégnée par le bouddhisme. Ce n'est pas aisément que l'on oublie en Occident l'enseignement du Christianisme, qui fut de dire que la personne humaine a une réalité en soi et une valeur absolue. La sensibilité poétique reste chez nous absorbée par la réflexion du poète sur soi, et les grands poèmes demeurent pris, par conséquent, dans une ambiguïté, partagés entre le souci de la destinée personnelle et le besoin de plonger dans la profondeur du monde naturel et cosmique, où cette destinée n'aurait plus de sens. Exemplaire de cette ambiguïté l'œuvre souvent admirable de Pierre-Albert Jourdan qui est mort prématurément il y a une dizaine d'années. Dans des oeuvres comme l'Entrée dans le jardin ou les Sandales de paille -- un titre, ce dernier, où vous reconnaissez une allusion à la vie des poètes-moines du Japon - il y a simultanément l'héritage de saint François d'Assise et des grands récits de Bashō.

Mais vous attendez peut-être de moi un témoignage plus personnel. Et je vous dirai maintenant que cet intérêt pour la forme brève et plus spécialement pour le haïku, c'est ce que j'ai vécu moi-même. D'abord ce fut une façon de lire les auteurs de notre passé français. Je me souviens de mon émotion quand je rencontrai dans un recueil de textes du moyen âge ce qui n'était plus qu'un fragment, seul préservé de tout un manuscrit à jamais perdu, mais ce fragment me fut toute la poésie, d'un seul coup. C'étaient ces simples mots : « Hélas, Olivier Bachelin » . Trois mots seulement, et même deux des trois pour ne former ensemble qu'un seul nom propre, celui de cet Olivier Bachelin. Mais quelle fulgurance, dans si peu de parole! D'une part, avec 《 Olivier Bachelin 》, un être qui a vécu, qui a peut-être aimé, qui a connu joie et souffrance, mais dont on ne sait absolument rien, ce qui fait qu'il peut signifier notre condition à chacun, en ce que celle-ci a de plus fondamental. Et d'autre part ce « hélas » qui indique qu'un malheur lui fut associé, ce qui nous rappelle les vicissitudes de l'existence, le hasard qui lui est inhérent, le néant qui rôde sous toute vie. Les deux pôles de notre souci sur terre, avec entre eux ce brusque rapprochement où se marque l'identité de l'être et du néant. Et on lève alors sur le monde un regard délivré des illusions, un regard sans recul, un regard qui voit tout ce qui est -- c'est-à-dire n'est pas -- comme une immédiateté silencieuse. Ce 《 Hélas, Olivier Bachelin 》, dans son laconisme extrême, me fut la poésie bien plus directement et plus fort que

beaucoup de longs poèmes, et je comparerais ces mots à un haïku si je n'avais à me souvenir qu'ils restent hantés par ce rêve occidental que la personne soit comme telle une réalité absolue.

Ce rêve était en moi aussi bien, et quand j'ai commencé d'écrire moimême sérieusement, avec aussitôt des poèmes brefs, très brefs, ceux qui constituent la première partie de mon premier livre, Du mouvement et de l'immobilité de Douve, publié en 1953, j'ai dû constater que ces textes avaient eux aussi cette préoccupation de la destinée personnelle comme une de leurs composantes, ce qui les retenaient de rencontrer vraiment la réalité en son unité, et me demandait, en somme, de m'engager dans un long travail de clarification intérieure, où le « moi » qui s'obstine dans ses illusions aurait à se dissiper dans l'évidence du monde. Travail évidemment impossible, en tout cas inachevable, au moins pour moi, mais qui ouvrait un chemin que je crois spécifique de la poésie occidentale moderne, et qui montre comment nous pouvons dans nos perspectives propres rencontrer le haïku, rencontrer cet enseignement tout ensemble de poésie et de sagesse. Ce sera en des moments où, au sein de notre écriture, là où le moi continue de monologuer, on aura réussi, à cause de quelque événement dans nos vies, à voir se dresser devant nous la réalité silencieuse, à la fois très étrangère à notre souci et mystérieusement accueillante. Un de ces moments paraît dans le livre que j'ai cité, au moins je le comprends de cette façon, et il est ainsi pour moi ce qui, pour la première fois, eut dans ce que j'ai écrit assez de parenté avec le haïku pour que je puisse me permettre de vous le citer. Ce sont simplement deux vers mais qui constitue donc à mes yeux tout un poème, que j'ai présenté séparé des autres, seul sur sa page. Il dit:

Tu as pris une lampe et tu ouvres la porte, Que faire d'une lampe, il pleut, le jour se lève,

et vous voyez ce qui y est en jeu : la découverte au matin de la pluie qui couvre la campagne, le 《 moi 》 qui dans cette grande évidence silencieuse se détache soudain de soi, si bien que plus n'est besoin de la lampe qui aurait servi à la poursuite d'une de ses activités ordinaires, et une lumière nouvelle qui paraît, ou plutôt la lumière de chaque jour qui paraît de façon nouvelle. Dans cet instant sur le seuil de la maison, après une

nuit tourmentée peut-être, la brièveté était nécessaire pour rester fidèle à mon expérience. Ajouter quoi que ce soit à ces quelques mots n'aurait fait que me la faire oublier.

Et je n'ai pas cessé par la suite de me retrouver loin de ce jour, de cette évidence, mais au moins je ne pouvais plus méconnaître ce qu'était la poésie, ce qui me préparait plus encore qu'auparavant à la lecture des haïkus, et j'étais donc prêt à aimer Bashō quand nous avons eu en français dans les années 60 une traduction de La sente étroite du bout du monde. Je me souviendrai toujours de mon saisissement quand j'ai lu les premières lignes du livre. Mois et jours sont passants perpétuels... Moi-même, depuis je ne sais quelle année, lambeau de nuage cédant à l'invite du vent, je n'ai cessé de nourrir des pensers vagabonds . Avec cette traduction de Bashō, avec l'anthologie de haïkus établie plus tard par Roger Munier, c'était la grande poésie japonaise qui prenait la parole en France. Je ne doute pas qu'elle va continuer de parler à nos préoccupations les plus intimes. Je puis même penser qu'il y aura dans notre poésie une expérimentation des poèmes brefs qui sera la conséquence directe des haïkus, en ce que ceux-ci ont d'universellement, d'internationalement valable : non une forme précise mais un esprit, une immense capacité d'expérience spirituelle.

Merci, encore une fois. Ce que je dois aussi à l'attention que vous avez bien voulu m'accorder, c'est de prendre mieux connaissance de l'œuvre des poètes de Matsuyama et en particulier de Masaoka Shiki. Il est souhaitable que ces poètes soient mieux connus en France, et je suis heureux de me retrouver grâce à vous en position d'en parler dans mon pays. Il est souhaitable aussi que votre projet d'une réflexion internationale sur le haïku et la forme brève se développe en particulier avec les nations européennes, et j'espère que je pourrai rapporter de ces journées parmi vous des programmes précis qui permettront de nouveaux échanges, pour le plus grand bien de la poésie qui est notre bien commun, et un des rares moyens qui nous restent de préserver la société des dangers qui pèsent sur elle.

Yves Bonnefoy

#### HAIKU, SHORT VERSE AND FRENCH POETS

Ī

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I would first like to express my sincere gratitude to your assembly for the honor of being invited to today's gathering, and of being considered worthy to take part in its reflection on haiku and the short-verse form in general. However, I would like you to be aware of the fact that it is not without a feeling of inadequacy that I thus approach the poetic experience of which your civilization and its great poets are the undisputed masters. No people in the world has ever equaled the Japanese in making the whole of reality, both social and cosmic, echo in the consonance and dissonance of a few words. You have married the infinite to the word in a way that fascinates people far beyond your borders, and certainly in France for a long time many of us have listened to your poets, beginning with Bashō, who, as I shall explain shortly, has counted for much in my own life.

French poets like haiku, and it is with this observation and a few reflections on its meaning that I would like to begin my modest contribution to your investigation. French poets love the haiku, and for about fifty years they even have devoted particular attention to it, making serious efforts to understand its spirit and draw lessons from it for their own relation to the world, which means that to a certain extent they are capable of penetrating at least some of its major aspects.

However - and this is my first observation - it is, needless to say, only through the medium of translations that we are acquainted with these poems, and one would therefore be tempted to think that what is most essential to haiku is thereby denied to us, for a number of reasons that cannot be lightly dismissed. First of all, there is the difference of language between your poets and us, as a result of which major categories of thought and many other less important notions, often present in the poems, do not hold the same position within the whole network of relations that our words maintain with the world as they have constructed it. There may be disparity between the connotations and the denotations that characterize the Japanese

and the French words that one wishes to bring together, but it also happens, I imagine, that what in your language may be expressed immediately and intuitively in one single notion, can only be understood in French at the cost of a process of analysis that is difficult of accomplishment, and leading, in any case, to a number of ideas that we feel to be distinct and whose hitherto unnoticed relationship we will in any event have to try and understand. What a great problem this becomes when this kind of situation occurs in the translation of a short poem, where unfolding reflection is inconceivable! Above all when these unfamiliar notions bear on fundamental aspects of your poetic thought or your most basic perception of the world.

Closely related to this problem of the disparity of the vocabulary, there is the disparity of the respective syntaxes, which are further removed from one another than anything one can imagine. What a distance separates the syntax of the Indo-European languages and the way Japanese produces meaning from notions and specific data! Now, it is through these relations between words that the intuition which enables you to connect initially very distinct impressions, can open up a path to haiku, leading, I imagine more smoothly and more rapidly than our analytical phrases, to the feeling of unity or nothingness which lies at the heart of all real poetry. Perhaps it requires all the stanzas of Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, perhaps it takes all the stanzas of *Le cimetière marin* by Paul Valéry, to achieve the impression of a melodious song in the night or of the deserted sea in the sun, which a Bashō or a Shiki could have evoked in seventeen syllables. All this augurs ill for any attempt at translating these seventeen syllables into French or English.

Moreover, in Japanese the graphic representation of words is based on ideograms, on signs that often have preserved in their appearance something of the shape of things, and the haiku itself is short, which allows the reader to take in all its characters at a glance, so that the poet is able to impart through his words a vibration of their visible shape that will assist his discernment of the most immediate, the most intimate in the situation that he is evoking. That kind of poet is therefore a painter. He is able to add to the actual knowledge of words the knowledge of what lies beyond words, a knowledge that grants the painter a regard deepened by silent meditation of the great aspects of natural space. What will remain of that intuition in the words of our translations, separated as they are from the sentient aspect of the very things they denote by the fundamentally arbitrary and abstract nature of alphabetical notation? The Western writing system eliminates direct relations

with the world, and it is that which comprises its particular suitability for the physical sciences, but which at the same time makes poetry so difficult, and I confess that I envy you your ideograms. All the more so because they seem to me to keep open, in the center of the lines which make up each of them, a void signifying nothingness, the experience of nothingness which is, as I have already said, a major concern of all poetic thought, even when that thought seeks out in lived existence whatever can provide us with a reason to exist on earth. There is a mental clarity in the signs that your writing system uses, and that clarity is at the forefront of your poetic works, while in the West it only comes in at the end, at least if the poet has not lost his way in the process.

It is indeed very hard to translate haiku into our Western languages. I even think that we have to resign ourselves to the idea that it is impossible to translate them.

II

And yet, in France, for a long time, there has been and there continues to be a great interest in haiku: why is that?

It may be, simply, because the translations of haiku, however poor reflections of the original they may be, remain superb examples of short verse, which, in the situation in which we find ourselves in Europe, itself has tremendous value, both as an example and an encouragement.

What is it in fact that typifies a short text? It is a heightened capacity to open oneself up to a specifically poetic experience.

Let us for a while not limit our discussion to poems of only seventeen syllables, as rich in graphic features as they are in meaning, but let us consider all kinds of writings that have endeavored to express in few words, either in French or in Japanese, an emotion, an intuition, a feeling, a perception. It goes without saying that in this narrow verbal space, that must perforce be self-sufficient, there is no room for narrative, except by way of allusions, that can only suggest indirectly and in a single stroke. And the immediate consequence is that the words of the short poem are freed from one particular approach to events and things, meaning that approach which in stories links these events and things in a sequence of causes and effects, with the danger that one no longer knows these situations in life, except through the kind of thinking that analyzes and generalizes: the kind that only knows particular reality from the outside. The short poem is preserved from

the temptation to hold one aloof from the immediate impression. Thus more than any other form it is capable of coinciding with a lived moment.

And within that moment we are bound to consider only very few things, since the poem contains only very few words: as a result, in this moment of our existence, certain relations between those things of the world may have formed within us, and they will be enabled to unfold freely, with all their vibrations, all the more audible as one is no longer a prisoner of conceptual thinking. We are drawn back into that feeling of unity of which a long discourse would deprive us. This experience of unity, of unity lived and not simply thought, is clearly poetry. We tend to forget this, in the West, because our religious traditions, those of a personal God who transcends the world, have separated the absolute from natural reality, yet even so, this drawing near of the One in every single thing remains nonetheless the principal feeling to which all poets are instinctively drawn.

Thus, more than any other form, the short verse form is capable of being the threshold of a specifically poetical experience. When a poem adopts a short form, by this simple fact it directs itself toward that which may be poetry in our relation to the world.

Ш

However, I have to point out that the short poetic form has not often been present in the history of Western poetry. Precisely because for a long time reality has been conceived of as the mere creation of God rather than the divine itself, theological and philosophical thought has occupied the European mind to a much greater extent than listening to the sound of the wind, or gazing at falling leaves, and our poems therefore have to be rather long for a thought to unfold. That is true even for poems that seem to be comparatively short, like the sonnet, which for centuries has played a major role in Western history. The sonnet, though it has much more than seventeen syllables, has only fourteen lines and in the West it is considered a short poem, which does not mean that its effect is that of a short-verse form. It begins with two stanzas of a particular formal structure, namely two groups of four lines, followed and concluded by two other stanzas of three lines each, so that odd numbers follow even numbers, and between the two parts there is something like a rupture, which seems to signify and has often been used to signify something, so much so that the sonnet, however

restricted, is a thought that unfolds, and is in that somehow akin to a syllogism, with its premises and conclusion. Of course it is perfectly possible to have a genuine poetic experience in a sonnet, just as much as in any other form. One may even experience in one's mind, at the transition from even numbers to odd ones in the ninth line, a sort of awakening to the sense of passing time, which is to say of existence, which is to say of the moment, which is a potential experience of the immediate. But it is no accident that the sonnet has for such a long time in its history been associated with the current of Platonism, for it is at least as much a discourse as a poem.

Let us not dwell on those decidedly short forms that have been found in Western literature, such as the epigram. For in this case the aim is simply to highlight a brilliant idea, and we do not find ourselves in a relation to the reality outside ourselves, with nature, but within the margins of a conversation, among talkers who are only interested in ideas and the beautiful language in which these ideas take form. Here, brevity is used to create surprise, to show off clever wit, but for this variety of brevity real poets can only feel repulsion, and rightly consider it futile, for in these cases they have not encountered an authentic short form.

The unfortunate outcome of all this has been that poets who, in the nineteenth century, wrote short verses for no other purpose than to express a fleeting impression, have been themselves considered as worthless poets, or at least as minor poets, inferior to those who wrote much longer works. All the more so since the poets who were labeled minor, allowed themselves be persuaded that that indeed was what they seemed to be. A case in point is the poet Toulet, certainly not a great poet, yet in whose Contre-rimes sounds of great subtlety vibrate. Borges, who knew what poetry is about, had a great admiration for Toulet, but in France he has not so far been accorded much importance. Almost the same thing could be said of Verlaine. In his case nobody would deny that he is indeed a great poet, yet most readings of his work reduce it to the reckless moments of his darkest days, instead of recognizing that his poetry is capable of the greatest perceptiveness or even, as in Crimen Amoris, of posing, this time with great force, the problems of being-in-the-world in a most eloquent discourse. Speaking of Verlaine, I might observe in passing that, if I was asked to cite a few poems in French that are akin to haiku, I would immediately think of several of his. Is there not something recognizable to you in a fragment like:

The shadow of trees on the surface of the foggy river Fades like smoke,

While up in the air among the real boughs

Turtledoves coo plaintively.

I have to add, however, that these lines by Verlaine do not in themselves constitute a poem, but are part of a longer text, and that if we are to find brevity in the history of French poetry, we have to plunge into long works, like a cormorant into a lake, to discover moments where the poet has briefly paused, raising his eyes from his discourse to look about him. In those instances brevity was for him an unforeseen happening, not something planned beforehand. Surely, however, this did not prevent him from feeling often that these were the very moments when his poetic project was at its best.

In the age of Romanticism, French society and religious belief had begun to change in a way that was favorable to the poetic understanding of reality. Together with a certain decline in the Christian conception of the world, the idea of a nature brimming with mysterious life stimulated poets to cling to the impressions they drew from it, so that the essentially poetic experience could assert itself against the more discursive elements in poems, and this created the conditions for a better understanding of the value and potential of poetic brevity, and even for making conscious use of it, by considering that it could be the very heart of poetic exploration. That is precisely what happened in the case of Rimbaud, who started by writing long poems brimming with ideas, and who quite rapidly turned to the incandescent notations of his 1872 poems and his *Illuminations*. One can say that these poems of Rimbaud's are the first great creations of the short form in French, in the work of a poet whom one might compare, it seems to me, to certain poets of Japan on account of his way of life. While Rimbaud's poems offered a great model for the modern age, they remained nonetheless an exception, and, for those among us in France who know better today than yesterday that the perception of the sentient world lies at the heart of poetry, more and other poetic testimonies were needed.

That is why the interest in haiku spread in France in the second half of the twentieth century, and remains strong today. This interest took root when both texts and a certain idea about Japanese poets began to circulate, thanks to translations or commentaries, and that is how Blyth's book, *Haiku*  came to play a major role for some among us. In order to interest the French reader the translations did not need to preserve the richness of the original, because the simple fact of being concise, of being limited to a single glance, concentrating a few great realities of the natural or social world into one impression, had by now become something that people could understand as of specifically poetic value. And nothing, moreover, prevented the reader of these poems from studying their authors, taking cognizance of the Zen monks, and from imbuing themselves with a spirituality that answers powerfully to the spiritual needs of modern society, which has come to understand that many of its religious or metaphysical beliefs are mere myths. The idea that there is nothing behind the phenomena, that the human individual must not consider himself superior to nature: that is what we must henceforth accept, and what enables us to listen to the voice of haiku. I have no hesitation in saying that the best French poets since the fifties have given thought to this form of poetry. It is not a kind of "haiku fashion" that we have witnessed, but an awakening to a necessary and fundamental reference, which can only remain at the center of Western poetic thought.

IV

Now I must tell you what specific form this influence has assumed. It goes without saying that we do not need to imitate haiku, to write poems that are as short as possible, and correspond more or less to the number of words in a haiku when it is translated into French. A few poets have attempted this, in a naive way, but that is to be misled. Unlike Japanese, the French language does not have the visible aspect of signs to carry over the intuition of the poet, and the conceptual aspects of vocabulary continue to predominate in the words we use, even when their number is restricted, so that, if we are to reach the depth and limpidity of writing by the haiku masters, we will have to fight a long battle in our reliance on adjectives and nouns, and the signs of this struggle will have to be sufficiently present in the poem for the reader to recognize it, relive it, and thus learn and observe how the poet managed to compose the poem. As it was in the past in French poetry, so it is still today, that brevity is a passing state that one occasionally happens to attain, but nothing more. The only thing that we can do is to move gradually towards this state, within texts that remain long, and which are in the end a record of our search, the arduous and never ending attempt to reach transparency in our relationship to ourselves and the world.

Here I want to add that the French poet still has a strong sense of himself as an individual, despite the quality of evidence offered by the lessons in non-individuality, in self-detachment, that he encounters in a Japanese poetry deeply imbued with Buddhism. In the West, it is hard to forget the teachings of Christianity, which used to claim that the human individual has a reality of his own and absolute value. For us, poetic sensibility remains absorbed in the reflection of the poet upon himself, and the great poems therefore remain caught in a kind of ambiguity, divided between the concern for individual destiny and a need to plunge into the depths of the natural and cosmic world, where this destiny no longer has any meaning. Representative of this ambiguity is the frequently admirable work of Pierre-Albert Jourdan, who died prematurely about ten years ago. Works such as l'Entrée dans le jardin (Entry into the Garden), or les Sandales de paille (Straw Sandals) - in the latter title you will no doubt recognize an allusion to the life of wandering poet-priests in Japan - embody simultaneously the heritage of St. Francis of Assissi and of the great ravelogues of Bashō.

But perhaps you expect a more personal testimony from me. I can tell you that this interest in the short verse, and especially in haiku, is something I have experienced myself. First, it was a way of reading the authors of our French past. I remember my emotion when, in a collection of mediaeval texts, I came across what was nothing more than a fragment, the only remainder of a manuscript that was lost forever, but for me that fragment embodied in a single stroke poetry as such. It was these simple words: "Hélas, Olivier Bachelin". Just three words, and two out of the three constituting a single proper name, that of Olivier Bachelin. But what a flash of intensity in an utterance so short! On the one hand, one man called Olivier Bachelin, someone who has lived, perhaps has loved, who has known pleasure and pain, but about whom nothing is known, yet who, precisely for this reason, may represent the condition of each and every one of us in its most fundamental meaning. And on the other hand, this "alas", which suggests that some misfortune had befallen him, which reminds us of the vicissitudes of life, of the risk inherent in it, and of the void that gapes beneath it, the two poles of our concern on earth, with this abrupt reconciliation between them that reveals the identity of being and of nothingness. Then one turns back upon the world a gaze freed of illusions, a gaze without recoil, a gaze which takes in everything which is, or rather which is not, with a silent immediacy. That "Hélas, Olivier Bachelin", in its extreme laconism, embodied poetry for me in a much more direct and powerful way than many long poems, and I would be tempted to compare these words to a haiku if I were not aware that they are still haunted by that Western dream that the individual as such is an absolute reality.

That dream existed likewise in me, and when I began writing seriously myself, writing from the outset short, very short verses, the ones that make up the first part of my first book Du mouvement et de l'immobilité de Douve (On the movement and immobility of Douve), published in 1953, I was forced to admit that these texts too were burdened by that preoccupation with individual destiny, and this prevented them from genuinely encountering reality in its unity, and prompted me, in short, to embark upon a long work of inner clarification, where the ego that stubbornly clings to its illusions would be forced to disperse in the evidence of the world. Obviously an impossible task, or at any rate a never ending one, at least for me, but it opened up a path that I believe to be of specific relevance for modern poetry in the West, and it showed how from our own perspectives we may encounter haiku, encounter that teaching where poetry and wisdom are combined. That encounter will take place at moments whenever, in the midst of our writing, where the ego continues its soliloguy, we should succeed, because of something that happens in our lives, in seeing silent reality raise itself before us, a reality which is quite alien to our concerns and at the same time mysteriously hospitable. One of these moments appears in the book I have already cited, at least that is how I understand it, and so it is for me the first thing I ever wrote that is sufficiently akin to haiku for me to allow myself to quote it. It consists simply of two lines, but in my view they constitute a whole poem, which I have presented separately from others, on a page by itself. It runs:

Tu as pris une lampe et tu ouvres la porte. Que faire d'une lampe, il pleut, le jour se lève.

(You have taken a lamp and you open the door. What use is a lamp, it's raining, the day breaks.)

You will see what is at issue here: the discovery in the morning of the rain that veils the countryside, the ego which in that great silent

manifestation suddenly detaches itself from the self, so that there is no longer any need for the lamp which would have served the pursuit of one of his ordinary activities, and a new light appears, or rather the light of every day appears in a new way. In that moment on the threshold of the house, perhaps after a tormented night, conciseness was necessary if I was to remain true to my experience. Adding anything to these few words would only have had the effect of making me forget the experience.

Since that time I have found myself very often far away from that clarity, from that quality of evidence, but at least I could no longer deny what poetry was, and this prepared me better than before for the reading of haiku, and so I was ready to appreciate Bashō when, in the sixties, a French translation of *The Narrow Road to the Interior* was published. I still remember my excitement when I read the first lines of the book. "The months and days are eternal travellers ... In which year it was I do not recall, but, like a wisp of cloud borne upon the wind, I too have been carried away by wanderlust." With this translation of Bashō, with the anthology of haiku compiled later by Roger Munier, it was the great Japanese poetry that took the stage in France. I have no doubt that it will continue to speak to our most intimate preoccupations. I even dare to think that there will be in French poetry a spate of experimentation with short-verse forms which will be the direct result of haiku, of what they have of universal, of international value: not a precise form, but a spirit, an immense capacity for spiritual experience.

Thank you once again. I also owe it to the attention you have so graciously accorded me that I have become better acquainted with the work of the poets of Matsuyama, in particular Masaoka Shiki. It is desirable that these poets become better known in France, and I am happy that, thanks to you, I am in a position to talk about them in my country. It is also to be hoped that your project for an international reflection on haiku and short verse will develop particularly with the European nations, and I hope that I will be able to take back home from these days spent among you, precise programs that will allow for new exchanges, for the greater good of poetry, which is our common good and one of the few means that remain for preserving society from the dangers that beset it.

Yves Bonnefoy

(translated from the French by W. F. Vande Walle with D. Burleigh)

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

For a long time now, haiku has spread its wings and gained popularity all over the world. It is now written in many places and many languages. Likewise, it has come to be a popular form of poetry in the regions where Dutch is spoken. I would like to tell you something about haiku in our region, and discuss some of the difficulties that are involved in adopting a Japanese form of poetry in a language foreign to it, i.e. Dutch. But let me first and foremost use this occasion to say a word of thanks.

#### Thanks

It's almost the 21st of September; summer is nearing its end. But the person in front of you is many summers old and has already moved well into the middle of the autumn of his life. I once wrote a haiku for a friend, who, like me, on that time, was seventy-five years old.

An oak in autumn its leaves wither ever more golden.

In much the same way I feel the glow of the setting sun on those withered leaves of mine. It is the heart-warming glow of enjoying recognition for doing what I have liked best. For the last 25 years I have been trying to illuminate, by transposing into another language what is one of the most beautiful fruits of the Japanese literary garden, i.e. the haiku.

I would like to thank all of you who had a part in my selection for this prize, the Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Award: the persons that put my name on the list of nominees, and especially the members of the jury who had the difficult task of picking one name out of so many. I do not consider my achievements more important than those of many others. It is my wish and my hope that those of the poets who were not awarded this time will be selected on a future occasion. I would also express my thanks to all the different groups of sponsors and organizers.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I thank you and I promise that, in

the autumn of my life, I will continue writing haiku and working for its promotion as long as my health permits me. Someone once made the following remark about me: "For him, haiku is a way of living and being". As long as I live, haiku shall remain my source of inspiration.

#### Haiku in the Dutch-speaking regions

In the years 1956 and 1957 I was commissioned to produce a series of broadcasts on exotic poetry for the Flemish Educational Broadcasts. During my quest for poetry of foreign nations, I hit upon the four volume book by R.H. Blyth, entitled Haiku. Little did I foresee that fourteen years later I would publish a collection of my own haiku under the title "Dag, Haiku" (Haiku by the day). It was like a welcome salute for haiku in Flanders. It turned out to be a hit: in less than two years, four reprints were made.

During the seventies a number of haiku collections were published in Flanders and Holland, among them my second volume of haiku entitled "Dag, pauwoog "( To the Peacock Eye ). Then, the person in front of you, together with a small group of interested people decided to set up a center in Flanders with a view to collecting all writings related to haiku and published in Dutch, French, English and German, and promoting the study and writing of haiku. Many Dutch speakers understand those four languages. The name of that center is Haikoe-centrum Vlaanderen (Haiku Center Flanders). Next year it will celebrate its 25th anniversary.

#### A few difficulties

In the Dutch-speaking countries there are a great number of practitioners of haiku, who have only a very limited grasp of what haiku is about in Japan, in the past and today. I suppose this will be the case in many other countries where haiku has been introduced. Some of them tend to cling to one or another particular period, which they relentlessly champion as the one and only norm, which all non-Japanese haiku poets all over the world have to adhere to.

The result of this is twofold. First of all, they are mistaken, because they remain blind to all other classical or modern Japanese masters of haiku. Secondly, such a rigid and uncompromising attitude inevitably leads to friction and disagreement between the different haiku groups and circles, if only because not everyone champions the same Japanese model.

Moreover, they seem to forget that in Japan too, in the past as today, not every haiku poet has the same ideas about haiku. Shiki for instance had not many good words for some views held by Basho, while after Shiki, a variety of tendencies and schools has come into being, who disagree with Shiki, great reformer of haiku though he may have been.

Of special interest to me was the view Katō Shūson voiced during my first visit to Japan in 1978. The poet first seemed rather surprised that, if such was indeed the case, haiku had to be intent on drawing its inspiration from the native culture, - which is true for all categories of art - . "I can perfectly well imagine, Shūson said, that you will have a completely different approach to what we call the cutting word (kireji) and the season word (kigo) Furthermore, you are far removed from the Shintō and Buddhist views of life, which are the source for most Japanese haiku poets. In Japan too we tend to live less and less in unity with nature and gradually there is more room for differing visions of life and the world. It is likely that in Japan too we will take another direction, or at least allow for more diversified approaches. We will have to make more allowance for modern and technical conditions of living and for differing philosophical and religious sensitivities".

Indeed, haiku is going its own way outside Japan. Harold G. Henderson, a man who has contributed much to the development of haiku in English, has said:"It shall be the poets who determine what English haiku will become." The word 'English' may be substituted by any other language.

Concerning the future evolution of haiku I would like to quote two other statements. The first is of Joan Giroux, a scholar of Japanese literature. She said: "English haiku must not be pale imitationes of Japanese haiku, or mere pseudo Buddhist travesties. Native haiku in English must be an outcome of the poet's own experience, a rediscovery of the richness of the poet's own cultural tradition. Subjects must be native there is no place for the cherry blossom, the hototogisu, the rice planter, the Buddha statue or the windbell. There is a place, however, for such typically Western subjects as apple blossoms, swallows, wheatfields, beaches, gray cathedrals, ice cubes - anything which may be an expression of the haiku moment for Western man." (Joan Giroux, The haiku form, p.151)

The second statement was made by Ban'ya Natsuishi. In a relatively

recent (1998) address delivered in Brest (France) he said: "The Japanese haiku was formerly the cultural basis for the seasonal feelings. But in our globalization period, this common basis became merely a local phenomenon limited only to Japan. The contemporary haiku, which transcends the Japanese season feelings, and strongly transmits a psychological movement coming from very ancient times, can inspire sympathy crossing all bounderies. The haiku was considered, Ban'ya Natsuishi said, a dusty old thing from the Japanese feudal period, but we can also consider it from a universal point of view, as we live in a century which offers us unexpected possibilities."

#### Conclusion

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Those were the things I wanted to say to you. But one of them prevails: my sincere gratitude for the honour you bestowed upon me. Of course it would be inappropriate to finish this speech without a haiku of the poet who means so much to all of us, Masaoka Shiki. He wrote about how a cherry tree can blossom for the second time in autumn; Siki wrote:

The Autumn wind Upon cherries in flower, Hokkekyo-ji.

I consider this recognition as the second blossoming on the tree of my life, for which I extend my heartfelt thanks to you.

Thank you again.

Bart Mesotten

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Moriyuki Kato, Governor of Ehime, Mr. Tokihiro Nakamura, Mayor of Matsuyama, and Dr. Akito Arima, Chairman of the Selection Committee. I would also like to thank the people of Ehime, who so generously provided support for this award and to NHK and Ehime Press for their support for this event. And also to the dear companions in haiku who kindly have come here today.

This occasion is the most humbling one in my haiku career. In receiving this gracious award I more than ever feel my obligation to Masaoka Shiki and his accomplishments. I trust that I shall be able to fulfill this obligation by promoting Shiki's values and aesthetics among North American haiku poets, in particular his ability to equate or bring together in his haiku what at first sight might seem to be disparate elements, but which Shiki adroitly makes into a harmony that stirs deep feelings within us.

And I wish to encourage haiku poets in the West to be as intuitive as possible in their haiku. We learn knowledge from facts, but from intuition we gain in wisdom. Intuition can be developed. By our attending closely to entities with our senses, and in the process of forgetting the ego and not allowing intellection to interfere, we can penetrate into the suchness or essentiality of the very things around us.

Although confined to his bed and in severe pain, with only a small garden for him to see throughout the seasons, Shiki was able to achieve remarkable depths of intuition, for he gave objects his closest sense-attention.

I am exceedingly grateful to each of you for your truly wonderful kindness. Please allow me to present to the Shiki Musuem some books and copies of MODERN HAIKU (USA) journal, including the one in which your "Matsuyama Declaration" was published. I also shall be sending to the Shiki Museum a subscription to MODERN HAIKU for all future issues. We are instituting as a regular feature in the journal translations of

contemporary Japanese haiku.

In conclusion, I would be remiss not to prominently mention MODERN HAIKU's Associate Editor of many years, Lee Gurga, who has been of exceptional assistance to me in myriad ways and most certainly to the world-wide haiku community.

And my deep appreciation is given to the grand lady of Japanese haiku, Yohiko Yoshino, whose generous hospitality, she extended to a group of us who came from the United States is a precious treasure we will carry back with us.

My heartfelt thanks go out to each of you.

Robert Spiess

# INTERNATIONAL HAIKU CONVENTION

#### Award Ceremony and International Haiku Symposium

Date: Sunday, September 10, 2000, 1:00 PM

Place: Sub-Hall of Ehime Prefectural Convention Hall

Events: Address of Seki Hiroshige, the President of Ehime Culture Foundation (13:00PM)

Address of Kato Moriyuki, the Governor of Ehime prefecture Address of Nakamura Tokihiro, the Mayor of City of Matsuyama Announcement and introduction of award recipients (13:15 PM) by Dr. Arima Akito, the Chairman of the Selection Committee

Award ceremony (13:35 PM)

Memorial Lecture by Yves Bonnefoy, the Grand Prize winner (13:45 PM)

International Haiku Symposium (panel discussion) (15:00 PM)

#### Congratulatory Banquet

Time: 17:00 PM (after the symposium)

Place: the Shinju-no-ma of the Ehime Prefectural Convention Hall

#### Masaoka Shiki Special Exhibition

Date: from Thursday, August 10, 2000 to Thursday, September 19

Place: Shiki Kinen Museum, Special exhibition room
Contents: "Shiki's writing -voice from his writing brush -"

#### International Haiku Workshop

Date: Saturday, September 9, 2000

Place: Shiki Kinen Museum

Contents:

Venue 1 / Audio visual room, first floor (13:00 - 16:30)

Theme: "The Poetics of Haiku"

Moderator: Kawamoto Kōji (a member of the Working Group,

professor at Tezukayama Gakuin University)

Panelists: Kido Shuri (a member of the Working Group, poet)

Saitō Shinji (a member of the Working Group, owner of Shin'ya Sosho) Tsukushi Bansei (a member of the Working Group, haiku poet, haiku critic)

Murakami Mamoru (a member of the Working Group, author)

Venue 2 / Washitsu (Japanese style room) (13:00 - 15:00)

Theme: "In Search of the Potential of Haiku Translations"

Moderator: Ruth Vergin (lecturer at Ehime University)

Commentator: Lee Gurga (past president of the Haiku Society of America, haiku poet)

William J. Higginson (a member of the Selection Committee,

haiku poet, researcher)

David Burleigh (a member of the Working Group, haiku poet,

associate professor at Ferris University)

Randy Brooks (professor at Millikin University, IL)

(\*)Lee Gurga's participation in the Symposium was supported

by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

#### EPIC International Haiku Salon

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Date:

Saturday, September 9, 2000 16:00 - 18:00 PM

Place:

Ehime Prefectural International Center

Supervisor: Yoshino Yoshiko

#### Cultural Exchange Program

Date:

Monday, September 11, 2000 10:00 - 11:30

Place:

Contents:

Matsuyama Higashi high school (the school from which Masaoka Shiki graduated) Cultural exchange between the recipients and high school students through their haiku

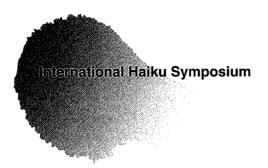
Date:

Monday, September 11, 2000 14:00 - 17:00 Uwa town: Kaimei school, Uwa museum

Places:

Ōzu city,: Garyū-sansō villa, ferryboat ride

Contents: Volunteer guides showed the recipients places of interests and explained traditional culture.



Moderator: Haga Tōru (Vice-chairman of the Award Selection Committee, President of Kyoto

University of Art and Design)

Panelists: Arima Akito (Chairman of the Award Selection Committee, Honorary President of the

Haiku International Association)

Kaneko Tōta (Honorary President of the Modern Haiku Association)

Jean-Jacques Origas (Professor at Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales)

Sō Sakon (Poet)

Haga: We were very impressed with the wonderful lecture given a short while ago by the Grand Prize Winner, Mr. Yves Bonnefoy. He talked about haiku, the meaning of its form as a short poem, and gave a very deep insight into the philosophical and poetical aspects of haiku for about forty minutes. It was a very impressive talk, with lucid explanation and profound thought. One of the working committee for the award selection, Kawamoto Kōji, Professor Emeritus of Tokyo University, translated it into Japanese. It was an excellent translation, and Mr. Bonnefoy's rather difficult French was nicely rendered into understandable Japanese, which at same time was able to convey Mr. Bonnefoy's feeling toward haiku.

Mr. Bonnefoy has been interested in haiku from early on and he began to speculate deeply on the form of the short poem taking haiku as its starting point. In the course of his lecture he quoted several short poems that he had written and explained about them through his experiences. I would like to moderate this panel following his lecture.

First, I would like to ask each panelist to give us a few words about the talk, and also to ask each of them to present a haiku. Toward the end of Mr. Bonnefoy's speech, he related one of his experiences regarding the short poetic form, and he introduced a fragment which consists of three words which he came across in an anthology of medieval literature. The fragment itself was a perfect poem, he said. It was a moment for a poem to come into being. When Mr. Bonnefoy was studying the anthology, he discovered it as a poem then and there. It was only "Hélas, Olivier Bachelin." (Alas, Olivier Bachelin.) Nothing was known about Olivier Bachelin. However, Mr. Bonnefoy was very much attracted to this phrase as a medieval poem.

Arima: While I was listening to Mr. Bonnefoy, I truly thought of him as French. I personally like Descartes, because Descartes's thought was also very lucid and understandable. Recently words like "lucid" and "understandable" have become unpopular, because the contemporary age is called a complicated age, and people tend to take it that everything must be complicated. But when I listened to Mr. Bonnefoy's lecture, I was impressed with his clear and comprehensible analysis, which made us understand the difference between haiku and Western poetry, and some of the background thought from various viewpoints including religion, and then he got his ideas into shape. Ah ... shall I present a haiku?

Haga: Yes, please. If we compare "Alas, Olivier Bachelin" to haiku, what haiku can be composed?

Arima: It is difficult, but I will try:

ああ芭蕉新秋はいま地に満ちたり aa Bashō shinshū wa ima chi ni michitari:

> Alas, Bashō ... the earth is now filled with fresh autumn

Is it all right?

Haga: It has too many syllables, doesn't it?

Arima: Oh, no, it is a short-form poem, so it's OK, but how about this one?

秋風やバシュランともにこの世にあり aki-kaze ya Bachelin tomo ni kono yo ni ari:

> Autumn breeze with Bachelin together, still in this world

Ah, this has still too many syllables for haiku ...

Haga: Mr. Kaneko, please.

Kaneko: I made up a nice haiku.

ああオリビエ・バシュランひぐらし aa Olivier Bachelin higurashi

Alas, Olivier Bachelin — an evening cicada

Haga: I see. It cries kana, kana, kana, kana, right?

Kaneko: I feel like I have become Bachelin.

Haga: Then you are crying kana, kana, kana ... right? Indeed it is a good haiku. How about Mr. Origas?

Origas: I am remembering last year, in the same season, when I was talking as a panelist here, in the same place. Last year when the Matsuyama Declaration was issued, we could not imagine who would receive the first Grand Prize, or even whether it would be possible to select the Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Prize winner, and all we were able to do was to decide the first starting point. Never did I dream that a French poet would become the Grand Prize winner. I have known Mr. Bonnefoy through some of his books. It is an interesting experience that, in this modern society of ours, I was able to meet Mr. Bonnefoy for the first time in Matsuyama! (Laughs) This is my introductory remark about him which made it possible for me to avoid meeting Professor Haga's demand, even though he is conducting the symposium so well. In fact, I have enjoyed composing haiku for more than twenty years. When I get together with friends ... Anyway I will present a haiku for sake of friendship and courtesy:

白雲が大雨になり朝と昼 shira-kumo ga ō-ame ni nari asa to hiru

> White clouds turn to heavy rainfall morning and midday

夏草や兵どもがゆめの跡 natsu-kusa ya tsuwa-mono domo ga yume no ato

Summer grass —
of the brave warriors all that
remains of their dreams

Or:

義朝の心に似たり秋の風 Yoshitomo no kokoro ni nitari aki no kaze

The autumn wind — how like it is to the heart of Yoshitomo

And there is also a haiku which refers to Kiso Yoshinaka. There are some Noh songs which include other names of warriors, like Atsumori or Sanemori, and they form a great legend. Maybe Olivier could be such a name, which could form the heart of a story. "Alas, Olivier Bachelin", a medieval Frenchman who disappeared along with his name, leaving behind in this world ...

Now Mr. Sō, what do you think?

Sō: I would like to quote a Mexican poet, Octavio Paz, who translated Bashō's *Narrow Road to Oku*. He says: "A human being is a memory of his country." When I was reading this medieval poem which contains a French person's name, I was thinking of my own hometown. About two hundred years before Bashō's time, there lived a hero called Totoki Jūrōzaemon, in Yanagawa, Fukuoka Prefecture, in Kyūshū. He was loved by a snake princess who lived near the town. They married, and eventually a child was born. From then on, in each generation, the backs of the children in that family were covered with scales. Gradually, with each generation, about ten scales fell off. When the Meiji Era came, the next descendant's child had only one scale on his back, and that man's son is ME. When I was a child, I asked if my back had a scale on it and then I was told: "Since there is no scale on your back, you will not be able to become a great man." I remember that very well. That memory brought me the following haiku, or it might be a senryū:

蛇姫の恋人十時十郎左衛門よ Hebi-hime no koibito Totoki Jūrōzaemon yo

> Lover of the Snake Princess — Totoki Jūrōzaemon

Haga: The name Totoki Jūrōzaemon is very good. It evokes many different things, just like the name Olivier Bachelin.

One more thing. Mr. Bonnefoy, quoting from his own work, said that he felt there was something close in it to haiku. It was a poem from his first book of poetry, *Du mouvement et de l'immobilité de Douve* (On the Movement and Immobility of Douve), published in 1953. This is what he said:The

self, clinging to its own various illusions, is to be dissolved in the plainly apparent existence or manifestation of the outer world. That is what short-form poetry is. On the way to such a difficult clarification of himself, he encountered haiku. Haiku is itself a mixture of poetry and wisdom, wholly indifferent to our concerns, and yet welcoming us so very warmly. Soundless reality suddenly manifests itself before us, and it is this kind of experience that short poetic forms and haiku can convey. "If I dare to seek for such an experience in my poetry ..." is what he said, before he quoted the following two-line poem from his own poetic works:

You have taken a lamp and you open the door. What use is a lamp, it's raining, the day breaks.

That's the poem he quoted. It's a wonderful poem. Indeed, as Mr. Bonnefoy said, where totally unrelated to the illusions humans have about each other or one has about oneself, the real world truly exists. This poem seems to show us that. Well, this time to start with Mr. Sō. If you were going to make this poem into a haiku, what kind of haiku would you make?

Sō: "You open the door. What use is a lamp?" you said. That's a poem, I think. That is, there is the light of the lamp, over there it's raining, the day is breaking. They are mutually unrelated but appear to be related to one another. I have no idea which of the elements, A, B and C, correspond with or contrast with which of the others, but certainly there is a reality that sinks deep into our mind, and that, I think, is a poem. I mean, my understanding of poetry is that it exists close to the place or primary condition where life divides itself from death. There is one thing I would like to know. According to the opinion of one Japanese poet, the word "temple" in Japanese is derived from the word tera, meaning a light source shining from this world into the next one. Mr. Bonnefoy's lecture a little while ago was of a quite exceptional kind. By "exceptional" I mean that probably it is the kind of lecture that we can seldom hear in the haiku world, where there are a lot of meetings and lectures, yet at those meetings we can rarely hear a talk of this kind, or even in the world of modern verse, such a fine talk was it. He captured the essence of poetry, taking into account the whole of European thought and the question of God, and he grasped it while keeping the important concept of an absolute God and Creator in his mind, so I was very impressed with his splendid lecture. Well, what I was asked was to compose a haiku, so I made one, not haiku, but more like senryû, a different genre of short poem.

涙雨なのに笑雨お天気雨 namida-ame nanoni warai-ame otenki-ame

A torrent of tears, and for all that, teeming laughter, a sun shower

Haga: The appearance of the sky keeps changing from one thing to another. According to the change, perhaps the mood of the person looking up at it also changes, from laughter to tears. Accordance between heaven and mankind.

I asked Mr. Bonnefoy yesterday about the first line "You take a lamp in your hand." He addresses himself as if he were another person. The person he observes from outside himself is as "you". He himself takes up the lamp and he addresses himself "you". And when he no longer needs the lamp and opens the door, instantly the fields stretch out before him in the continuous rain, and the day is breaking across the fields. Mr. Origas. What about you? A while ago you composed this:

shira-kumo ga ō-ame ni nari asa to hiru

White clouds turn to heavy rainfall morning and midday

I felt it was quite close to Mr. Bonnefoy's poem.

Origas: Today Professor Haga introduced a poem from *Début et fin de la neige* (The Beginning and the End of Snow) through his own translation. The letters are too small for the audience to see, but there are two lines and then a space, then four lines and a space, three lines and another space, and lastly two more lines. We modern people are too exhausted to need any stimulation. Looking at this is really refreshing. Even this makes us feel like we're taking a forest bath.

Haga: The poem Mr. Origas referred to goes like this:

昨日はまだ 部屋の奥の暗がりを 雲がとおりすぎていった。 だがいま、鏡はうつろ。

降る雪が 空とのもつれを解いてくる。

Still yesterday
Clouds went passing by
Through the dark depths of the room.
But now the mirror is empty.

Falling snow
Disentangles itself from the sky.

The entangled clouds are dissolved into the snow that begins to fall, the sense of this comes over well. This is a poem entitled "Le Miroir" (Mirror), of which the first verse is made up of four lines and the second verse of only two lines. This is a collection poems about snow. He says nothing about what else was going on. French poetry until now, and indeed European poetry, including the works of Goethe and Baudelaire and the rest, have always gone like this — saying that is why I'm going to fight against the world, or this is how my life has been ordained, or that history is like this, or the fate of men and women is intertwined like that — this kind of argument and debate used to be what traditional European poetry started from. However, as Mr. Bonnefoy said earlier in his lecture, since around the time of Rimbaud, the trend has changed and poets have gradually ceased to incorporate such lengthy discourse into their poetry. To seize reality in an instant has become more popular among poets. Rimbaud, and Mallarmé were like this. So was Paul Claudel, who came to Japan as the French ambassador. Then in the fifty years since the war, many different poets have appeared, leading to Mr. Bonnefoy today. Haiku has become interwoven with French poetry itself, and had a great influence on it, I think.

Kaneko: Let me say something about this poem about the lamp first. It was mentioned before that this poem was composed when Mr. Bonnefoy opened his eyes to nature. The lamp is no longer necessary,

the dawn with the rain falling is enough, the expanding vista in the rain. So I took this poem as his discovery of nature.

In Mr. Bonnefoy's discussion of the discovery of nature, he said that from short-form poetry he was able to learn the way to open his heart to the experience of poetry itself. The experience of poetry is not a kind of speculation. Nor is it a story. It is plain reality. Short-form poetry is drawn to that. Being receptive to plain reality is the essence of short-form poetry, that is how I took it. And so I think Mr. Bonnefoy, recognizing that, and encountering Japanese haiku and so on, gradually opened his eyes to nature. And that has given birth to this poem. That is how I understand it. This has great meaning for us, too. Thinking of haiku, we heard how in France the poet Toulet was said to be second-rate or third-rate. People who write haiku, it seems to me, tend to deprecate themselves like Toulet. There are those who refer to themselves as merely "minor poets". Although I have always tried not to deprecate myself like that, I felt really empowered by what Mr. Bonnefoy said. The world of haiku is an opening of the heart to the poetic experience of daily life, quite plainly and directly, and that opening of the heart toward reality is the basis of it, and that kind of writing, about ordinary experience, is haiku. I have thought for a long time that when the direct experience of daily life is written about with sensibility, the poem is certainly good enough to rank with first-class poetry.

When we talk about haiku, we use a proverb: "Putting a huge mountain into the seed of a poppy". The seed of a poppy is tiny, but to the extent that we can invest it with our spirit, or with profound experiences, we can place a huge mountain or a vast expanse of space inside it. And that thought surely starts from writing down an impression of the experience of ordinary life. Mr. Bonnefoy too remarked earlier that, even though a work is short, the world can be described in it. There we have the essence of the matter, it seems to me. Having realized that, and gradually given more importance to that position, he was able to awake to nature. Even more, that he said this in his talk from the European point of view, that is really epoch-making, isn't it?

After reading this poem I translated it into Japanese. It is easy to do if I translate it literally:

雨降り止まぬ夜明けランプなどいらぬ ame furi-yamanu yo-ake ranpu nado iranu

Unceasing rainfall at the break of day — we have no need of a lamp

That is enough, but if we put a bit of haikai feeling into it, it might go:

雨降り止まぬ夜明け禿げ頭でよい ame furi-yamanu yo-ake hage atama de yoi

Unceasing rainfall at the break of day — it's fine to be bald-headed

(Laughs) Something like that.

Haga: That was very self-regarding. (Laughs) And very interesting.

Arima: After listening to today's discussion, I think I would like to be a little self-promoting too. Last

year when I gave a talk about haiku here, I spoke about the differences between Western poetry and Japanese poetry, and especially between Western poetry and haiku. Western poetry always tends to put heavy emphasis on love, God and oneself. The center of Western poetry is thought. In contrast to that, Japanese haiku, as I explained, are composed with a feeling for the way people live in nature, without thinking about it in any difficult way, and in fact we express our love toward nature in haiku. As I also said, Western people have been writing long poems full of ideas, but gradually they also became interested in nature, came to love nature, and found poetry in their daily lives, which led to the appearance of short-form poetry. Listening to Mr. Bonnefoy's lecture today, I had the strong feeling that, although short-form poets of that kind are not the mainstream yet, there are notable trends toward regarding nature with affection. Though it may appear self-congratulatory, I am very moved to think that, in the poetry of France and other Western countries, nature is being thrown into higher relief than it was before.

Now there is one thing I would like to confess. I first encountered Mr. Bonnefoy, of course not personally, but through a book, when Hirai Shôbin, who is here today, introduced him to us in translation twenty or thirty years ago. At that time I realized what a wonderful poet he was, and learnt that he was even interested in Japanese haiku. Then last year, when I learnt about this award, I remembered a wonderful poem by him called "The garden" that appeared in the volume *Twenty-nine Modern French Poets*, which I had previously bought. The first person whom I thought of as a candidate for this award was Mr. Bonnefoy. But I never went about my job as head of the award committee in a self-serving way. How long was it, three hours, or more, that we discussed the matter? And we continued until we had reached a full consensus, in the Japanese way. I am really proud that, as a conclusion, everyone was satisfied with the decision by which Mr. Bonnefoy would become the recipient of this award.

Last of all, thinking of the lamp, and the mirror that we heard about, I would like to hold a mirror up to the lamp, just for fun:

秋雨や鏡のなかの昼行灯 aki-same ya kagami no naka no hiruandon

> The autumn rainfall! Reflected in the mirror a midday lantern

(Laughs) That's a good verse, isn't it?

Kaneko: The "autumn rain" is a bit overdone, I think. (Laughs)

Arima: Should I polish it up a bit, then? (Laughs)

Haga: In his lecture, Mr. Bonnefoy spoke about the key attribute of short-form poems. "What is it in fact that typifies a short text?" he asked. And his answer to this question was: "It is a heightened capacity to open oneself up to a specifically poetic experience." Unlike traditional long poems in the West which include stories and ideas, short-form poetry is free from the temptation to tell a story and so distance itself from direct impressions. I mean, narrative and discursive poems more or less avoid direct personal impressions, while short-form poetry is free from this temptation. So it follows that a short-form poem can capture the living moment of experience in nature much better than any other kind of poem. Poems which contain stories or ideas always end up bringing in some argument, or plot, or question of cause and effect. They hardly ever express the direct impressions that the poets

themselves have ... that is what Mr. Bonnefoy said. That is a very profound insight, and one which can give us an important clue when we think about the poetics of haiku. So now I would like each of you to say something about the attributes of haiku.

Arima: I think that at this point we should take up the matter of Masaoka Shiki. So far as I know, Shiki seems to have been the first Japanese who, when he was only twenty-five years old, made clear the difference between the long poems of the West and the short verses of Japan. Shiki made these remarks in the Meiji period, when haiku was considered to be minor poetry. Western poems were rather long, he said, because they had to express some thought or story, but Japanese verses were able to be short because they described nature. He wrote that it was of no consequence which one was major or which was minor. Listening to Mr. Bonnefoy, I found his understanding of short-form poetry exactly in accordance with Shiki's. So I am quite convinced that he deserves to be the first winner of the Grand Prize. What I mean by this is that I think Mr. Bonnefoy has beautifully described the essence of haiku and short-form poetry. I was especially interested in the fact that his insight is based on his own experience as a poet, that having written long thoughtful or philosophical poems for a long time, he at some point suddenly came to recognize the quality of short-form poems.

Another matter we have to consider, though I am afraid it is moving away from short-form poetry, is the symbolic nature of written characters. As Mr. Bonnefoy said, Chinese characters or *kanji* cannot be represented in a phonetic alphabet, something which Ezra Pound wrote a great deal about. I think it shows how much thought Westerners give to the question of ideograms. But some modern Western poets like E.E. Cummings have, I think, been trying to make even the alphabet more plastic, experimenting in their work, for example, by making one letter larger than the rest or by arranging all the letters in the shape of a triangle.

Haga: To be sure, Masaoka Shiki was someone who grew up self-taught in the Meiji period, the so-called era of "Civilization and Enlightenment", and what he tried to understand and confront was the world of Western poetry. He struggled to discover a new meaning for haiku and tanka within Japanese civilization. That's what made his revolution possible. As part of that revolution, he studied the technique of shasei or "sketching from life". It was very effective. Mr. Bonnefoy said in his lecture that poets are painters. That's exactly what Masaoka Shiki was, more than one hundred years ago. He observed things carefully and expressed them through words instead of paint, and through his efforts the moribund tanka and haiku were able to be reborn as something completely new. Now I understand more clearly than before that Shiki was the Rimbaud of Japan. If we look for a Rimbaud in Japan, it can only be Masaoka Shiki.

Kaneko: I feel the same way about Shiki, although there are still many misunderstandings or unresolved questions about what Shiki called shasei or "sketching from life", but I think that "sketching" relates to the direct experiences of poets just as Mr. Bonnefoy said. Which is to say that writing about direct experiences in haiku is "sketching". Of course, we have to consider how to write from a technical point of view, but I fear we were too particular about it in the past. The point is to write about direct personal experiences. The direct experiences of our daily life are significant, as Mr. Bonnefoy has just demonstrated to us. Haiku is about those trifling experiences, but I am of the opinion that haiku can rank as first-class poetry if it is written with a pure sensibility, so I feel as if my opinion has been confirmed today.

Besides, if you look at the academic writings of the time, you can see that the theory of evolution was very popular in the second decade of the Meiji era. Darwin and Spencer had been introduced to the Japanese by then. Under the influence of these advanced ideas, some people at that time began to insist on the superiority of long poems, or free-style poems, or new-style poems, or novels. They regarded

them as examples of evolutionary progress. Masaoka Shiki objected to these notions and argued that the shorter poems became, the better they got. That was really wonderful, I think. And the haiku was already there as a model to back it up. Shiki began classifying haiku immediately after making this assertion. After he set about this task in 1891, he claimed that haiku itself represented progress. He took up Spencer's theory of abridgement and went on to insist that haiku was the most energetic form of poetry. He classified haiku in order to prove his assertion historically. I think he showed quite extraordinary determination for somebody so young.

Shiki started writing a novel, *Tsuki no Miyako* (The Capital by Moonlight), in 1891, the same year that he started classifying haiku. The next year, he sent the manuscript to Kōda Rohan, only to be severely criticized, gave up writing novels, and committed himself instead to becoming a poet. It is often said that Shiki took up haiku because he had failed as a novelist, but in my opinion this view is completely wrong. It was just the other way round. He had started working on haiku earlier. He was young and ambitious enough to try and write a novel at the same time. The novel just didn't work out, that's all. I would like to stress this point now that I'm in Matsuyama. The popular notion that Shiki chose to write haiku because he had failed as a novelist must be dispelled once and for all.

Haga: Anyway, when we talk about Masaoka Shiki, we get animated, don't we?

Kaneko: I am getting more and more inspired. (Laughs)

Haga: Shiki really was an innovative person. Completely! There are few people who have done so much in such a short life, aren't there? They say Sakamoto Ryōma was the *shishi* of the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate, but Shiki was the *shishi* of Meiji literature. Brandishing a sword. A *shishi* means in English a "man of high purpose". Shiki was indeed one of the *shishi* of Meiji Civilization.

Mr. Origas, you are researching Shiki and teaching him.

Origas: Certainly, I have read Shiki I don't know how many times so far, and also last year read Shiki's work with my students in a research seminar. I think Shiki's official job, and the work of haiku classification, started after he entered a newspaper company called *Nippon* around the end of 1892. My feeling is that there is one more flowering of his work from 1896. This is Shiki's "Shō-ra-gyoku-eki", published serially in Nippon. This is such good work that it makes us feel intoxicated. I would like to mention some of Shiki's particular characteristics, the first one being that he doesn't only do haiku. On the first page of "Shō-ra-gyoku-eki", three haiku appear. But although there are haiku, they are embedded in prose. In a sense, that is the haiku's existence. The haiku appears more vividly in that formation.

The second feature is flowers, or flowers and birds. In Tokyo today, it might be called "flower art". In the first two haiku in "Shō-ra-gyoku-eki", a lot of flowers appear:

秋桔梗撫子なんど燃えにけり hagi kikyo nadeshiko nando moe ni-keri

> Bush clover, bellflowers and also pinks have sprouted

Next is:

# 一八の一輪白し春の暮 ichihatsu no ichirin shiroshi haru no kure

Among the irises a single white bloom in the late spring

This haiku about an iris, in particular, is like one out of an elementary-school textbook, but I continue to be interested in it. I have never seen an iris of this kind. I have only seen it in a book, but I learned that it has a magnificent blossom and one that has a handsome shape. And after all, a flower lives in time. This is a really Japanese kind of sensibility. As a foreigner, I am unable to appreciate it, but in some sense I am aware of the passage of time. And, since this is spring, the autumn flowers — bush clover, bellflowers, pinks — which we are told have "sprouted", have only emerged about two millimeters from the ground and we can't make out their shapes yet. And there are the white irises in the evening, and many other little grasses just in front of them that came out a moment before and haven't yet turned into little flowers. That is exactly what time is.

The third point is that everything is small. Since this is a garden, the haiku has started from a narrow and limited place. But it isn't always like that. When Shiki became so ill that he couldn't move, he described exactly what he wanted to do. Like he wanted to go to the zoo. Something vulgar, in a sense. I am very happy to read it. And there is an immediate and, if we must say so, simple, innocent pleasure taken in things outside himself. I will give you two examples. In the same "Shō-ra-gyoku-eki", there is a passage entitled "Takekurabe". That is in praise of the author Higuchi Ichiyō, when her story Takekurabe (Growing Up) was published. It is really beautifully written. Though there may be nothing directly relating Shiki and Ichiyō to one another, there is some bond of common understanding, the essence of which Shiki felt within weeks of that novel being published, though he lay sick in bed. As another example, there is a piece entitled "Shirayuri" (White Lily). After some research we found that Shirayuri appears to have been the first literary magazine dealing with French literature. Shiki has the ability to respond innocently to things from foreign countries. That is nothing so glib as saying, "Hey, let's get international!" but something more sincere and dependable.

Haga: Thank you for those fine comments. In particular, the last one that it is natural that a haiku poet should not remain exclusively concerned with the literature of his own country. Shiki showed his greatest curiosity about the world while he himself lay sick in bed. Mr. Bonnefoy has also translated Shakespeare's *Hamlet, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet*, and other works into French. He is said to be the best translator of Shakespeare into French. He has also translated Yeats. Besides that, he has read Bashō too. He is a person who has that kind of broad outlook. I think it is for the very reason that his world is wide that he has been drawn towards this short-form poem, sparkling like a black diamond. Mr. Bonnefoy well deserved the award named after Masaoka Shiki.

Sō: Moving far away from Mr. Bonnefoy, and also far away from Shiki and Ichiyō who came up in our discussion, I would like to touch a little on Matsuyama today, or Ehime at present. Well, *Ehime Shimbun* is a good newspaper, isn't it? When I was reading it today, I found the following haiku in a readers' column:

老人の歳となりぬ終戦日 rōjin no yowai to narinu shūsenbi

The age the old man has reached — anniversary of the war

The distinguished selector admired this haiku as follows. Fifty-four years after the war ended, the poet's aging figure today is compared with what he was like when he was young. That was said to be an excellent haiku full of deep emotion. Well, everybody, do you think so? I didn't think so! Isn't this just one strand extracted from a story? One incomprehensible, thick, raw lump of experience which, in terms of haiku inspiration, I thought disappointing, indeed the opposite of haiku, and pretty uninteresting and undistinguished. But now I will say something good about the *Ehime Shimbun*, which is that when I turned a few pages on, I found a column called "Get together, haiku kids", containing only children's haiku. And among them I found this:

蝉鳴けばじいちゃん竹で追い払う semi nakeba jii-chan take de oi-harau

> When a cicada sings with a piece of bamboo grandpa drives it away

I thought it was a masterpiece. The writer of the first haiku, who is recollecting about having "become an old man", I don't know how old he is, but I guess he is probably about seventy years old, right? That person and the "grandpa" overlap with one another. Why does the grandpa drive the cicada away when it sings? It is because the cicada is noisy, isn't it? He wonders what is supposed to be so nice about the singing of cicadas that we have to listen to year after year. It's terrible, a noise like that. That may be to think the same way as a European. There is one such interesting grandpa living in Ehime Prefecture, and I wonder how many grandpas there might be in ten thousand who would drive a cicada away with a piece of bamboo? One? I would not like everybody to become such a grandpa in fifty years' time. But I would much rather associate with this grandpa than the one crouching inside "The age the old man has reached — anniversary of the war". I feel like having a drink with him, but I don't want to have a drink with a man who is drooping. When I read a piece like this, I am afraid there are still quite a lot of people who think that a story is a haiku.

I'll say something else that I had already thought of saying. I was well aware that I would be sitting with the haiku poets Mr. Arima and Mr. Kaneko here. I'd like to express my admiration for them, although I don't usually do so. Mr. Arima had this haiku at the front of the latest issue of *Ten'i* (Heaven's Will) haiku magazine:

逃げ水の逃れきったる日本海 nige-mizu no nogare-kittaru Nihon-kai

> A mirage running away and disappearing into the Japan Sea

What do you think of this haiku? I think this must surely be Mr. Arima's masterpiece. "Nige-mizu", needless to say, means a mirage, shimmering heat. The mirage is escaping because it can't stand the tepid warmth of spring on the inland surfaces of Japan, and finally it has managed to get away from this, and has vanished into the Japan Sea. It is a haiku which I feel can stand beside Bashō's:

暑き日を海に入れたり最上川 atsuki hi wo umi ni iretari Mogami-gawa A scorching hot day carried into the sea by the Mogami River

Mr. Arima's haiku draws the reader in like that, and is as grand and generous as Bashō's. You can see Russia, and maybe even the North Pole, across the Japan Sea. I was so glad to know that his work evokes images like that.

I will say something in praise of Mr. Kaneko Tōta. This is a famous haiku:

梅咲いて庭中に青鮫が来ている ume saite niwa-jū ni ao-zame ga kite-iru

> The plum tree in bloom blue sharks are coming all over my garden

This is the kind of haiku that, after you've read it once, you can never forget it, and so I remember it even now, but if I say what impressed me most about it, it is that the plum tree, which blooms quietly in the temperate zone, and the fierce blue sharks, which are perhaps only found in a tropical zone, trembling at distant points of the earth's axis, though this may be exaggerating, come together with lightning speed in one small corner of Japan ... it was the fearfulness of that which moved me.

Mr. Bonnefoy spoke here earlier about Rimbaud, and then the idea was put forward that Shiki was just like Rimbaud, but I think Rimbaud is a predecessor of Mr. Kaneko Tōta. There is one unforgettable verse by Rimbaud that I could say is just like haiku. It's in his *Illuminations*, and goes as follows:

降りていく大伽藍、昇っていく湖がある orite-iku daigaran, nobotte-iku mizuumi ga aru

There is a huge temple going down, And a lake going up.

It goes against the laws of natural science. And there is this verse:

おお季節、おお城、傷のない魂は何であろう. ō kisetsu, ō shiro, kizu no nai tamashii wa nan de arō

Oh season, oh castle, what is the undamaged soul?

There is an excellent translation by Nakahara Chūya:

季節よ、城よ、無垢な心がどこにある kisetsu yo, shiro yo, muku-na kokoro ga doko ni aru

Oh season, oh castle, where is the unblemished heart?

Perhaps we cannot say this is the spirit of haiku itself, but I think it expresses the source of haiku. "There is a huge temple going down, and a lake going up" says that the laws that govern nature cannot be denied, but is revolutionary in showing that each person has a different perception of space, and

this has something in common with Mr. Bonnefoy's "You take the lamp in your hand, it's raining, the day is breaking."

Haga: Surprisingly, Mr. Sō praised both haiku masters, Mr. Arima and Mr. Kaneko.

So: Only today! (Laughs)

Haga: His talk was very interesting and caught the essence of haiku as short poems. He also paid lipservice to Ehime prefecture. Western poems are generally long, but here and there can be found moments where the poet, without even being aware of it himself, evokes nature and manages to reach the real essence of poetry, like a cormorant diving down into a lake. It is necessary to understand that point. I talked to Mr. Bonnefoy about that yesterday, and even in a long poem there will be some lines that reflect the direct experiences of the poet, lines condensing those brief moments. It's just like a drop of water suddenly being filled with light as it falls, so our life in the world and our experience as human beings can be condensed and illuminated in only two lines. He told me that Western poems contain such moments. The lines by Rimbaud that Mr. Sō quoted just now have this quality. And Rimbaud wrote short poems too. I think in Mr. Bonnefoy's poem too we can see the world reflected and illuminated whole, as in a drop of water.

Forty-nine years ago, in 1951, a celebration was held to mark the 50th anniversary of Shiki's death. Nakamura Kusatao was invited here, along with other haiku poets from Matsuyama who were disciples of Shiki and Kyoshi. Kusatao composed a haiku for the 50th anniversary of Shiki's passing, and I think it's a very good and interesting verse. It is prefaced by the following note: "I came back to my hometown to attend the 50th anniversary celebration being sponsored by Matsuyama city, and it took place in the city hall on September 19th, an auspicious day. The ceremony opened with the playing of a *shakuhachi*. It continued to be played during the intervals. It reminded me of the haiku composed in his later years:

春の夜を尺八吹いて通りけり haru no yo wo shakuhachi fuite tōri-keri

> On a spring night someone passed by playing the shakuhachi

And Kusatao composed a haiku of his own:

病夜の尺八いまいさほしの音に爽やか byōya no shakuhachi ima isao shi no ne ni sayaka

Shakuhachi heard from a night-time sickbed now background for a eulogy — a brighter sound

Then he composed another one. The prefatory note goes as follows: "Eight priests of middle and advanced years chanted a sutra kneeling side by side in a straight line. The picture of Shiki on the altar was a profile portrait of him taken while he lay in bed." You can see that picture in the booklet you have received today. Looking at that picture, Kusatao composed this haiku:

## 遺影の頭僧より魁偉供華秋草 iei no zu sō yori kaii kuge aki-kusa

The departed's portrait more formidable than the priests offering autumn flowers

The priests were lined up on the dais. Shiki's profile portrait looked even more priest-like than those Buddhist priests. There were some flowers arranged for the anniversary. Kusatao offered this haiku.

Now, as participants in this gathering, we would like to deliver a message from Matsuyama on behalf of Masaoka Shiki and the many other haiku poets who came from this city. A workshop on short-form poetry as literature was held yesterday afternoon, and Professor Kawamoto drew together the opinions of the members who took part.

--- Introduction of the Matsuyama Message 2000, and each panelist's expression of agreement. ---

Origas: I'd like to reiterate just one thing. Today, the first proposal among the many possibilities that we considered last year has been substantially fulfilled. Another proposal is to establish an International Haiku Research Center here. If we reflect well upon today's events, I think that is something that absolutely must be brought to realization.

Haga: Certainly, as one result of our activities from last year until now, of the re-evaluation of haiku in international terms, and of the new departure we anticipate, we very much hope to set up an International Haiku Research Center, or what might be called the Masaoka Shiki Center, even if it doesn't have a building. I would be gratified to see that realized. I'd like to express my hearty thanks to today's panelists. And thank you all very much for your kind attention.



Tithe Matsuyama Message 2000 (Supplement to the Matsuyama Declaration) Reviewing the prospect of world haiku in the 21st century, and the shape that the haiku must then take, the following shall be added to the Matsuyama Declaration announced in September 1999.

- 1. The essence of haiku is to be found in the condensation and ellipses that result from its extreme brevity, and in the suggestiveness of the empty space around it. The haiku enables us to express momentary lived experiences in a concrete way without the interruption of logical thought. (From Mr. Bonnefoy's lecture.)
- 2. A fixed form and rules are the usual requirements of a poem, and they are the products of traditional wisdom. In the case of haiku, *kigo*, or seasonal references, and a pattern of 5-7-5 syllables, are the standard requirements. However, if poets depart from these requirements in order to create avant-garde poetry, it is pointless to try and prevent this.
- 3. It is not seasonal references alone that create haiku. Season terms may in fact limit the range and choice of subjects, and lead to the danger of haiku becoming stereotyped. Season terms are generally used by poets to deepen the meaning of their work, but the limitations of their usage must also be overcome. Summer is not always hot, and autumn dusk is not always forlorn.
- 4. Haiku are not the result of facile "encounters" or "communication" with nature, but are instead created by discovering new aspects of the natural world, or by careful observation of it.
- 5. What exactly is meant by terms like *haikai* (the humor of haiku), *haii* (poetic significance in haiku), and *haimi* (the flavor of haiku)? Are they merely pleasantries, a flash of Zen enlightenment, *wabi* and *sabi* (desolation and solitude), or expressions that startle and surprize? How can the technique of "cutting" in haiku be defined? There have been no clear answers to these questions so far. The establishment and development of a "poetics of haiku" is the first matter to which we should address ourselves.

#### **Proposals**

- 1. An "International Haiku Research Institute" should be established for the following purposes:
  - The advancement of higher research into the poetics of haiku.
  - The collection of materials relating to haiku.
  - The holding of workshops and other gatherings to promote exchanges about haiku.
  - The dissemination of information related to haiku throughout the world.

The institute should serve as one of Japan's contributions to the world. The most appropriate place for this institute to be set up is in Matsuyama, since Matsuyama is the mecca of short-form poetry.

- 2. The following awards have already been established as part of the Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Prizes for poets, scholars, interpreters and promoters of haiku in and out of Japan who contribute to the development of haiku as an international poetic form:
  - The Haiku Grand Prize.
  - The Haiku Prize.
  - The Haiku EIJS Special Prize.

The following additional awards should be created to recognize excellent haiku collections in Japan, and to assist with their publication:

- The Nakamura Kusatao Prize.
- The Ishida Hakyō Prize.
- The Kawahigashi Hekigotō Prize.
- The Tomizawa Kakio Prize.

Kawamoto Kōji Kido Shuri Saitō Shinji Tsukushi Bansei Murakami Mamoru

September 10, 2000

The Matsuyama Message 2000 is hereby authorized as addendum to the Matsuyama Declaration.

Arima Akito Ueda Makoto Kaneko Tōta Jean-Jacques Origas Sō Sakon Haga Tōru

September 10, 2000

*Note*: The Matsuyama Message 2000 is a brief summary of the discussion and conclusions of the workshop on "The Poetics of Haiku" which was held on September 9, 2000.



# Workshop at venue 1

Theme: The Poetics of Haiku

—The Prospect of Haiku in the 21st Century

Kawamoto Kōji Murakami Mamoru Saitō Shinji Kido Shuri Tsukushi Bansei

#### Commentary

#### The Poetics of Haiku and its Internationalization

Regarding haiku from a cultural perspective, it is clear that Japanese people set themselves in the context of the landscape and the seasons. (Haiku resulted from these circumstances.) Although that kind of stance has come to be rejected since the Meiji period, the westernized social and economic conditions of today have brought the earth and mankind so close to disaster that the haiku, in which attention is focused on the realities of ordinary life and nature, rather than on individuals and egos, is being re-evaluated.

On the other hand, when we consider haiku from the viewpoint of literary appreciation, there are difficulties to be faced in the understanding of them even inside Japan. How much greater then, some think, are the difficulties to be faced in making haiku understood abroad. To put the question another way: Can haiku in other countries be related to the haiku in Japan with its fixed form and season words? Haiku is one form of literature, and its essential value as literature should be nurtured.

If you consider all these questions, you will understand that the theme chosen for today's workshop, "The poetics of haiku", is exactly what we ought to be discussing. In trying to establish a "poetics", we aim to reveal the essence of haiku, and to make this common knowledge so that people both inside and outside of Japan will no longer be perplexed about it.

Here we take up some of the crucial points for discussion, and explain in detail about these points, which are to be included in the particulars of the Matsuyama Message 2000 (a supplement to the Matsuyama Declaration).

#### Fixed Form

One of the biggest issues is form. There are always certain norms or standards for poetry, and in the case of haiku, the fixed form and season words are what can be considered as the norms. However, thinking about the development of haiku as a genre, some experiment or departure from the norms is also necessary. Non-season words or free forms will expand the possibilities of haiku. In English and French poetry, successful experimentation led to the emergence of free verse. Free-verse poems themselves are more effective when they have grown out of fixed-form poetry. As for haiku, Masaoka Shiki, who tried to reform modern haiku, did not urge strict adherence to the fixed form, but allowed great scope for experimentation (see "Haikai Taiyō"). The traditional fixed form with season words lies at the end a line stretching down from the hokku (opening verse) of a haikai sequence. In view of this, for those who compose haiku in the future, although their verses will be short, a pattern of five and seven syllables will not necessarily be indispensable.

Regarding the fixed form of haiku from the viewpoint of other countries, the rhythm of 5 - 7 - 5 is scarcely translatable. Rather, set against the concept of the existence of God (philosophical thought) in Western literature, or the meaning of life expressed in it, the impact of the unfamiliar ellipsis and brevity of haiku must be very great. The haiku that Western people feel interested in, and what Japanese people consider haiku, may well be completely different. Moreover, Westerners who read "haiku" composed by non-Japanese people may have a double misunderstanding of the differences between haiku and conventional poetry.

As Mr. Yves Bonnefoy stated in his very stimulating lecture:

"The essence of haiku is to be found in the condensation and ellipses that result from its extreme brevity, and in the suggestiveness of the empty space around it. The haiku enables us to express momentary lived experiences in a concrete way without the interruption of logical thought." This agrees substantially with our conclusions.

#### Season Words

Another important standard in haiku is its relation to the seasons, and indeed most Japanese poetry deals with the four seasons or with love. It is, however, somewhat doubtful whether this

tradition emerged naturally as a result of Japan's unique climate. There are no verses indicating seasonal norms or customs of appreciating the different seasons in Japan's earliest chronicles, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon Shoki*. These customs became notable together with the import of Chinese culture during the era of the *Man'yōshū*. Especially in the era of the *Kokinshū*, the first Imperial anthology, this usage was refined as an "improvised performative device" at verse-making contests. Tracing back, we find the first poet who dealt with the change of seasons in a poem was the Empress Jitō (645 - 702), who appears in the *Man'yōshū*:

#### 春過ぎて夏来たるらし白妙の衣ほしたり天の香具山

haru sugite natsu kitaru rashi shiro-tae no koromo hoshitari ama no Kagu-yama

Spring has passed summer seems to have come robes of white cloth spread out to dry on heavenly Mount Kagu

She was a liberal empress who introduced the lunar calendar into Japan from China, and an imported Chinese perspective on the seasons may have found its way into her work. A poem that occurs slightly earlier than this, "shunjū yūretsu-ka", by Princess Nukada, is believed to have been composed in imitation of a Chinese poem. It is apparent therefore that the customs connected with the seasons that we think of as originating in Japan may need to be more closely examined.

Furthermore, the *kigo*, or season words, emerging from this have developed in very complex ways. Nowadays only experts know how to classify season words. If you experience nature directly, the season words should change rapidly as time passes and become easier for people to understand. For example, one of the representative season words for summer in modern haiku is "*taki*" (waterfall). Until the Edo period, a waterfall was thought of as scenery to be enjoyed all year round. This word was classified as a summer season word between late Meiji and the beginning of the Shōwa period. Immediately afterwards, the following well-known haiku were composed:

瀧の上に水現われて落ちにけり taki no ue ni mizu arawarete ochi ni keri

At the top of the waterfall water appears and plunges

Gotō Yahan

神にませばまこと美し那智の瀧 kami ni maseba makoto utsukushi Nachi no taki

> For the sake of God truly beautiful the Nachi falls

Takahama Kyoshi

瀧落ちて群青世界とどろけり taki ochite gunjō - sekai todoro keri

The water plunges — a sea-green world thundering

Mizuhara Shūōshi

The birth of new season words may lead to the creation of new literature. On the other hand, among the increasing number of season words, we find words such as the "tropical season words" which Kyoshi once picked up, and which were connected with Japanese colonization in the pre-war period and later dropped.

The merits and demerits of season words were considered. One panelist and poet felt that haiku with season words contain a sense of déjà vu. Viewed in an even more negative light, season words form an artificial constraint, and do not allow flexible expressions such as the "samusa no natsu" (cold summer) used in a poem by Miyazawa Kenji. There is the problem of season words causing lack of imagination. Intercourse with the natural world helped to form the language and poetry of Japan, and from this the season words emerged (which was certainly a wonderful thing), but paradoxically this has produced a situation in which the season words themselves may act as a constraint on our responses to the natural world and on natural composition. Among modern haiku poets the one who best embodies naturalness is the free-form haiku poet Taneda Santōka whose life of wandering brought him finally to Matsuyama, where he died. Since his whole life was filled with nature, he did not need season words to establish his relation with it, and they became unnecessary in his work. His approach to haiku has considerable appeal for haiku lovers overseas.

To summarize, season words are useful insofar as they are able, in a single word, to evoke particular intentions and a variety of imagery, and at the same time create a lingering sense of pathos (mono no aware) toward nature or the universe. In a haiku, a poet can either struggle to find new imagery within the framework of established practice, or abandon season words entirely to open up a new approach to nature.

#### **Tradition**

The two most important requirements for haiku would appear to be a fixed form and season words. Generally speaking it can be said that these conditions form the basis of haiku, and the meaning of that "tradition" was considered. But the tradition itself is unconfirmed, and whether or not it had a real historical existence has not, as was remarked above, been adequately investigated. Quite a lot of poets may have been misled or constrained by dogmatic ways of thinking about this. For instance, the term "traditional haiku" is of quite recent vintage. Following the emergence of avant - garde haiku in the 1960s, young poets in the schools adhering to the use of fixed form with season words started calling their work "traditional haiku" to distinguish it from the avant-garde, and not the other way round. The establishment of a poetics must proceed together with the investigation of objective facts.

#### The Poetics of Haiku and the Essence of Haiku

At the end of the preceding discussion, we returned to the matter of the essence of haiku. Compared with Western poetry, the definition of haiku is somewhat strange. When we discuss Western "poetic forms", we do not refer to the content of the poems. French people do not argue about whether the sonnet as a form is light-hearted or sublime. Only in the case of haiku does the discussion begin from whether the content reveals qualities like wabi and sabi (desolation and solitude), or a certain way of looking at the world. Historically speaking, haikai renga was originally defined as humorous verse, and this in turn produced other humorous verse-forms, like senryū and zappai, and then in the Meiji period led to tsukinami haiku, or conventional haiku, and to criticism of wabi and sabi. All of this helps to show the unique circumstances surrounding the growth of haiku.

Let us mention some of the ordinary facts about haiku in the West. Haiku tends to be described in terms of the philosophy of Zen Buddhism. Condensed, tightly formed, and close to silence, its relation with the present is felt from the empty space around it. In the United States, Jack Kerouac and other writers of the Beat generation appear to have accepted haiku in this way. And what is even more interesting is that the most avant-garde poets of that generation were drawn, not to the work of modern haiku poets, but to that of Bashō. How can this be explained? What occurs to us is that,

when haiku are rewritten as prose, they cease to have any appeal. As soon as haiku are transformed into prose, their raison d'être as haiku disappears. From these short poems, abbreviated almost to the point of disappearing, a sense of eternity arises. It is evidence of a paradox, in which eternity is revealed in the space of an instant. Actually, haiku in translation do not always make proper sense to Western people. In order to grasp the meaning of haiku, certain preparatory steps are necessary, a certain tradition of interpretation is required. This is the case with Bashō's well-known haiku:

古池や蛙飛び込む水の音 furu-ike ya kawazu tobi-komu mizu no oto

The old pond ... a frog leaps in — the sound of water

It is very difficult to explain why this haiku is interesting. When we talk about Zen here, some Western people understand its implications. But it is unsatisfactory to explain haiku only in terms of Zen. In that sense alone, the establishment of a poetics of haiku has great importance.

As is already clear, there are a number of clues, like humor and Zen, which can help us to appreciate the essence of haiku. One of the important elements which has not yet been discussed, is to how to differentiate haiku from waka in terms of the expressions that it uses, its innovative diction, and the sense of unexpectedness. For instance, some very well-known haiku, are composed in very ordinary language, such as the verse by Gotō Yahan about a waterfall above, or Bashō's verse about a frog. These may be too obvious examples, but the poets create a sense of unexpectedness or surprise which is the essence of good haiku. The same thing can be seen in the best-known verse by Masaoka Shiki, who is the central figure of today's convention:

鶏頭の十四五本もありぬべし keitō no jū-shi-go-hon mo arinu beshi

> Cockscombs... there must be fourteen or fifteen of them at least

This haiku too can be broadly grouped among those that convey a sense of unexpectedness, and its "shock of recognition" produces the realism. To convey this unexpectedness through translation is surely not impossible.

The above is only a fragment of the intense discussion that took place in the limited time available. As these issues are seriously debated, this will lead to the establishment of a poetics of haiku in the future. We very much hope that something along these lines will be actively pursued in a place like Matsuyama.

#### Haiku Poets from Matsuyama, Ehime

Lastly, we must not forget the many haiku poets, besides Masaoka Shiki, who emerged from here in Matsuyama City, in Ehime Prefecture. They were all unique, and though they sometimes had their disagreements, they were nonetheless all Shiki's spiritual successors, and without any of them, "contemporary haiku "would never have come into being. It was an historic miracle that one single region could produce all these poets. We hope to have an opportunity to review their work here in Matsuyama, Ehime.

#### 落葉松は寂しき木なり赤蜻蛉 karamatsu wa sabishiki ki nari aka-tonbo

The larch tree alone and lonely a red dragonfly

Kawahigashi Hekigotō

## 町空のつばくろめのみ新しや machi-zora no tsubakurome nomi atarashi ya

In the sky over the town only the swallows are new!

Nakamura Kusatao

# 霜柱俳句は切字響きけり shimo-bashira haiku wa kire-ji hibiki keri

Columns of frost how the cutting-words of haiku reverberate

Ishida Hakyō

# 蝶墜ちて大音響の結氷期 chō ochite dai-onkyō no keppyō-ki

Butterfly falling with a tremendous clatter in a time of ice

Tomizawa Kakio

( Compiled by Tsukushi Bansei )



# Workshop at venue 2

Theme: In search of the Potential of Haiku Translation

#### Commentators

David Burleigh
Associate Professor, Ferris University
Yokohama, Japan

Mr. Burleigh grew up in Ireland and has lived in Japan for twenty years. His first exposure to haiku was through an Irish poet. He has contributed haiku to some journals, mainly in Japan, and published privately three small collections. A few of his haiku have been included in anthologies, such as *Haiku World*: An International Haiku Almanac. He has also collaborated on translating an anthology of modern Japanese haiku, A Hidden Pond (Kadokawa Shoten, 1997) with Katō Kōko, who runs a haiku group in Nagoya. The Haiku Society of America awarded it the "Best Translation" prize in their book awards for that year.

Randy Brooks
Professor, Millikin University
Decatur, Illinois, U.S.A.

Dr. Brooks directs the writing major at Millikin University, a private university in Decatur, Illinois, USA and serves as the Midwest Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America In April 2000 he and Dr.Lee Gurga organized a gathering of haiku poets, editors and scholars at the Global Haiku Festival hosted by Millikin University, the Sister Cities Program and the Haiku Society of America. Dr. Brooks has won many awards for his haiku including the Harold G. Henderson Award in 1998 and numerous Merit Book Awards from the Haiku Society of America. He and his wife, Shirley Brooks, has been co-editors and publishers of Brooks Books, (formerly High / Coo Press) and currently edit Mayfly magagine. Dr. Brooks and his wife have been dedicated to publishing books, magazines and hypertext collections of haiku in English since 1976 when they founded High / Coo Press. A collection of his selected haiku, *School's Out*, was published in 1999 by Press Here (Foster City, California)

Lee Gurga Haiku Poet, Dentist Lincoln, Illinois, U.S.A

Lee Gurga was born and raised in Chicago, and currently works as a dentist in the farming community of Lincoln, Illinois. In 1997 he served as president of the Haiku Society of America. He is currently associate editor of Modern Haiku (USA), the oldest and most respected journal of haiku and haiku studies outside Japan. He is also the haiku selector for the Illinois Times newspaper. His haiku have won the top prize in contests in the USA, Canada, and Japan. His books In & Out of Fog (Press Here, 1997) and Fresh Scent: Selected Haiku (Brooks Books, 1998) were both awarded 1st Place in the Haiku Society of America Book Awards. His latest book is love haiku: Masajo Suzuki's Lifetime of Love, co-translated with Emiko Miyashita (Brooks Books, 2000). Gurga's participation in the symposium was supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

William J. Higginson Poet, Author, Lecturer and Translator New Mexico, U.S.A.

Mr. Higginson is best known as the author, with Penny Harter, of the *Haiku Handbook: How to Write, Share and Teach Haiku* (Kōdansha International) and has recently published two companion books, *Haiku Seasons and Haiku World: An International Poetry Almanac* (Kōdansha International). He has been a very important figure in introducing haiku to the United States and his international anthology of haiku for children, *Wind in the Long Grass*, is now used in a reading program for elementary school children.

#### **Moderator**

#### Ruth Vergin

Ms. Vergin has been in Japan 26 years and has been working with the Shiki Kinen Museum Volunteer Guide group for about 10 years. The group is now working on a book of translations of Shiki's haiku.





#### Handout by Lee Gurga and Emiko Miyashita

#### 1. Issues of translation of haiku from Japanese to English:

(Numbered examples of translations follow the text.)

<u>Form</u>: Japanese haiku have been translated into English in one line, two lines, three lines, four lines. Sometimes in 17 syllables, sometimes in other forms. They have been translated with and without rhyme, capitalization, punctuation, etc. See examples below for different combinations.

#16: two lines, unrhymed iambic pentameter

#22: two lines, rhymed iambic pentameter--more or less

#17: three lines, rhymed iambic pentameter #18: three lines, 17 syllables, unrhymed

#19: three lines, 16 syllables, rhymed

#23: four lines, all capitals

#24 : four lines, rhymed first and fourth lines

#### The Line in Japanese and English

In English, since the line is the basic unit of poetry, strong effects can be created with enjambment. However, this device should be used with care as enjambment can be meaningful or it can appear completely arbitrary. Examples below:

#2: notice differences in where the two translators end the first line.

#8: line breaks after "insert" and "if" are rather awkward in English.

#12: awkward break after "betrayed" in first version).

#### Word Order: more important in English than Japanese

Word order is much more important in English:

#8: "like stabbing someone" is entirely different than "like someone stabbing!"

#13: usually leaving the verb alone in the last line is not effective in English.

#### Preserving aspects of language in spite of linguistic differences

Translating from an ideographic and syllabic language to an alphabetic one makes for many unique challenges For example, in #8 below, the kanji for "edge" has the knife imbedded in the kanji. To translate this into English, it is necessary to explicitly state "knife."

Sometimes we can preserve rhetorical choices in the original, for example, the repeated words in #14

Sometimes we make something curiously new, as in #15 with the shifting of the "white" from the "shiratama" to the "little white lie."

#### How to transsate Kireji?

Unfortunately, there is no formula for this, so it must be determined on a case by case basis.

#### Verb forms and tenses

See #3 for different tenses in the two translations of the same poem.

#### The use of pronouns

Uncommon in Japanese haiku, they must often be used in the translations. See #6 below for the same poem with and without a pronoun.

When to translate and when to use Japanese word in translation, e.g., kimono, obi, etc.

#1 : Hōryūji, #5 : shōji, #9 : kimono

#### Cultural notes

For example, in #1, one must certainly explain to the reader what Horyūji is!

#### Knowledge of target culture

Essential to avoid embarrassing or awkward word choices For example, the dictionary will tell you that "tweet" is one word to represent the sound of a bird singing. However, this word is so closely associated in people's minds with the cartoon character "Tweety Bird" that using it risks evoking a humorous response in the Western reader.

#### Word choice and tone

In #8, "insert a knife" sounds like the printed instructions for assembling a lawnmower. In #10, a "fist" is for hitting, so it seems to work against the tone of the poem here. Look at some of the sounds that Bashō's frog makes: "plop" in #20, "the sound of water" in #21, "splash" in #23, and "kdang" in #25. Surely these all can't be correct!

#### Contemporary vs archaic language

Should one use the same word choice when translating Bashō and contemporary haiku? #17 vs #26 for a wide range of choices for Bashō.

#### Conventions of typography: capitalization, punctuation, etc.

One has to choose which conventions of English poetry one is going to use in the translations: #23 has all caps and four uses of punctuation.

#4 and #5 show two translations of the same poems with different punctuation.

#19 uses all conventions of 19th century poetry, including an initial capital for each line, rhymed iambic pentameter and a period at the end of the poem.

#18 has only 17 syllables, but the translation contains two commas, a colon and two exclammation marks!

#27 shows the other extreme, with no caps or no punctuation.

#### Literal accuracy vs poetic accuracy

Academic or literal translations v.s. poetic translations. Compare the two different translations of #7, for example. The first uses "halfpenny" and the second uses "two coins". While the second is more literally accurate, it gives no indication of the value of the coins, which is an important element of the poetic effect of the haiku.

# 2. Our Proposal: Translation Teams

We believe that in order to translate poetry, the best results are obtained with a team composed of a native speaker in the original language and a native speaker in the target language.

### Our process of translation:

- 1. Gloss of individual words in the poem
- 2. Rough translation
- 4. Discuss problems of rough translation from both sides until agreement is reached
- 5. Decide on whether or not to include cultural notes

### Lee Gurga & Emiko Miyashita

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#### Translations of Shiki:

#1 kaki kueba kane ga narunari hōryūji

> I bite into a persimmon and a bell resounds-hōryūji ( JB )

I eat a persimmon and a bell starts booming-hōryūji (BW)

#2 furuniwa ya tsuki ni tampo no yu o kobosu

> old garden-- she empties a hot-water bottle under the moon ( JB )

Old garden-in the moonlight, dumping
out water from a hot-water bottle
( BW )

#3 ikutabi mo yuki no fukasa o tazunekeri

> again and again I ask how high the snow is ( JB )

I keep asking how deep the snow's gotten ( BW )

#4 yuki furu yo shōji no ana o mite areba snow's falling!
I see it through a hole in the shutter . . .
( JB )

It's snowing !
I can see it throughthe hole in the shōji (BW)

#5 shōji akeyo Ueno no yuki o hitome min

open the shutter!
I 'll just have a look
at Ueno's snow!
( JB )

Open the shōji-let me get a good look at this Ueno snow! ( BW )

#6 kaburitsuku jukushi ya hige o yogoshikeri

> I sink my teeth into a ripe persimmon-it dribbles down my beard (JB)

Plunging into a ripe persimmon-getting my beard all messy with it (BW)

#7 nimon nagete tera no en karu suzumi kana

Throwing in a halfpenny I borrowed the temple veranda In the evening cool (RHB)

I toss in two coins, borrow the temple porch to cool off on (BW)

## Translations of Masajo Suzuki:

#8 into a white peach like stabbing someone the knife's edge

> A white peach—insert a knife in its flesh, as if stabbing someone

#9 sheer summer kimono-it pushes them into misery this love of mine

In gossamer silk falling in unlawful love-saddening others

#10 longing for him
I warm a green acorn
in my hand

Missing somebody-making a fallen green nut grow warm in my fist

#11 a glass of beer
I serve it to a man
I will never love

A glass of beer with somebody who will never seize me in his arms

#12 shall I betray him or let him betray me? the shrike's shrill cry ( G&M )

> Shall I betray him, or let myself be betrayed by him? Shrike's sharp shriek ( K&T )

#13 fuyu no tabi kōsui wa shaneru go ban wo mochi

winter's journey perfume Chanel No. 5 carry

winter journey the perfume I carry is CHANEL No. 5

#14 shinishi hito wakareshi hito ya tōhanabi

died man divorced man: distant fireworks

the one who died the one who divorced me-distant fireworks

#15 shiratama ya aisu hito nimo uso tsuite

white jewel loving person also fib telling

sweet rice dumplingseven to my love a little white lie

Translations of Basho's " furu ike ya ":

- #16 An old time pond, from off whose shaddowed depth Is heard the splash where some lithe frog leaps in. --Clara A. Walsh
- #17 A lonely pond in age-old stillness sleeps . . . Apart, unstirred by sound or motion . . . till Suddenly into it a lithe frog leaps. --Curtis Hidden Page
- #18 There is the old pond!

  Lo, into it jumps a frog:
  hark, water's music!
  --John Thomas Bryan
- #19 Old garden lake!
  The frog thy depth doth seek,
  And sleeping echoes wake.
  --Hidesaburo Saito

- #20 The old pond,
  A frog jumps inPlop!
  --R.H. Blyth
- #21 The old pond; A frog jumps in,--The sound of water. --R.H. Blyth
- #22 The old green pond is silent; here the hop
  Of a frog plumbs the evening stillness: plop!
  --Harold Stewart
- #23 AN OLD SILENT POND...
  INTO THE POND
  A FROG JUMPS,
  SPLASH! SILENCE AGAIN.
  --Peter Beilenson and
  Harry Behn
- #24 Breaking the silence
  Of an ancient pond,
  A frog jumped into water-A deep resonance.
  --Nobuyuki Yuasa
- #25 Silent old pool Frog jumps Kdang! --Edward Bond
- #26 Old pond . . .
  a frog leaps in
  water's sound.
  --William J. Higginson

Translation of Ishihara Yatsuka:

#27 faintly white
it sticks to my face
the autumn wind
--Tadashi Kondō &
William J. Higginson

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(BW)

"Cut" and "Heart": The Keys to Haiku Translation William J. Higginson The Shiki Museum of Matsuyama City 9 September 2000

While there are many fine points that must be considered in translating any kind of poem, I believe that the special challenge of translating a haiku lies in identifying the gap, or "cut" (切れ) --there may be more than one--and treating the materials on either side of that cut in some special ways that will bring out the "heart" (心) of the poem.

There are a number of places where a haiku may be "cut" (切れ). Some of the cuts fall obviously at the point where a "cutting word" or kireji (切れ字) pauses the grammatical and syntactic flow of the haiku. However, not all haiku have kireji, and even in haiku with kireji, we may find other points where the grammar and syntax of the haiku pause, causing a gap as significant as any that might have been marked with a kireji.

#### THREE PRINCIPLES

Here are some basic rules that may be applied, once the cut is found:

#### 1. KEEP THE TWO PARTS THAT ARE CUT SEPARATED.

Usually, the two elements in the poem which are separated by the cut are grammatically independent. Each is a phenomenon in itself, each is to be appreciated separately before they are joined in the special juxtaposition of the haiku. If there is no grammatical connection between the two parts of the poem separated by the cut, do not insert any grammatical connection between them in the translation. For example, in Bashō fully realized in and of itself.

#### 2. KEEP THE TWO PARTS THAT ARE CUT IN THEIR ORIGINAL ORDER.

The psychology of an experience depends not only on what happens during the experience, but also on the order in which it happens. Thus, the elements of a haiku on either side of a cut must not only be grammatically independent, they must be kept in their original order. To take Bashō

autumn dusk-a raven comes to a stop on a bare branch

or

autumn dusk-on a bare branch a raven comes to a stop

we may be writing a striking poem in English, but it is not Bashō

on a bare branch a raven comes to a stop-autumn dusk

# 3. IF POSSIBLE WITHOUT DISTORTING THE LANGUAGE OF THE TRANSLATION, MAINTAIN THE ORDER OF THE PHRASES IN THE ORIGINAL.

As seen in this example, where possible without distressing the receiving language, one should also maintain the line integrity and order. However, this is not always possible, because of the very different syntactic order found in many pairs of languages, particularly Japanese and English. So, if a reordering of some of the materials from one line to another cannot be avoided for the sake of presenting smooth English, such reordering is permissible, provided that the cut between the two parts of the poem is maintained, and no material from either side of the cut "leaks" into the other side in the translation.

I believe that the "heart" of each haiku is often found in the attraction or tension between the two parts of the haiku on either side of the "cut". Careful attention to the location and nature of this cut will help the translator quickly get to the heart, the core meaning of the poem in the original language. Applying the three "rules" above as much as possible will help to establish a similar core meaning in the translation, which will then be able to reveal its heart to readers in the foreign language.

#### **EXAMPLES**

One of the problems translators face is that just where the cuts come in a haiku may not be immediately obvious. But usually it is not too difficult to establish their locations. As examples of the varied locations of cuts in different haiku, and the relationships of those cuts to the locations of *kireji*, I offer the following poems by Masaoka Shiki for consideration. My Japanese and English sources are:

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Beichman = Janine Beichman, *Masaoka Shiki*, Boston : Twayne Publishers, 1982 (cited by page number).

H and H = *Haikai and Haiku*, Tokyo: Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkokai, 1958 (pages 83 and following, cited by poem #).

In the following examples, "WJH" after an English version indicates my tentative translation.

## <u>Case 1: End - Phrase Kireji = Cut</u> (句果に切れ字=切れ)

a. 稲刈るや焼場の煙た、ぬ日に (362t) ine karu ya / yakiba no kemuri / tatanu hi ni

rice reaping-no smoke rising from
the cremation ground today
( Beichman, 57 )

b. 蜩や神鳴り晴れて又夕日 (387t) higurashi ya / kaminari harete / mata yūhi A higurashi! The thunder-storm is over, The evening such shines again. ( H and H, #28 )

c. 島々に灯をともしけり春の海 (66t) shimajima ni / hi o tomoshikeri / haru no umi

from island to island lamps begin flickering-the spring sea  $(\ WJH\ ;\ another\ version\ in\ H\ and\ H,\ \#2\ )$ 

- d. 夕陽に馬洗ひけり秋の海 (348b) sekiyo ni / uma araikeri / aki no umi ( A version in H and H, #25 )
- e. 榎の實散る此頃うとし隣の子 (405t) enomi chiru / konogoro utoshi / tonari no ko ( A version in H and H, #31 )

# <u>Case 2: Mid-Phrase Kireji = Cut</u> (句中に切れ字=切れ)

a. 名月の出るやゆらめく花薄 (330t) meigetsu no / deru ya yurameku / hanasusuki

the harvest moon
rises . . . trembling
pampas grass plumes
( WJH; another version in Beichman, 49)

b. 灯ちらちら絶えず若葉に風渡る hi chirachira / taezu wakaba ni / kaze wataru ( A version in H and H, #19 )

# Case 3: Kireji and Cut at End of Haiku (俳句果の切れ字+俳句果の切れ)

- a. 大國の山皆低きかすみ哉 (54t) taikoku no / yama mina hikuki / kasumi kana ( A version in H and H, #1 )
- b. 大凧に近よる鳶もなかりけり ōtako ni / chikayoru tobi mo / nakarikeri

that big kite
even the hawk
won't go near
( WJH ; another version in H and H, #5 )

c. 蛇落つる高石がけの野分哉(344b) hebi otsuru / taka-ishigake no / nowaki kana

1st version:

the snake falls from a high stone wall-such a storm

revised:

a snake falls from the high stone wall-such a gale

(WJH; another version in H and H, #24)

d. 鴛鴦の羽に薄雪つもる静かさよ oshi no ha ni / usuyuki tsumoru / shizukasa yo (A version in H and H, #33)

# <u>Case 4: Kireji at End of Haiku + Cut</u> (俳句果の切れ字+切れ)

a. 稲の花道灌山の日和かな (420b) ine no hana / dōkanyama no / hiyori kana

> rice flowers-fair weather on Dōkanyama ( Beichman, 57 )

( Determinant, 37 )

b. 赤蜻蛉筑波に雲もなかりけり akatonbo / tsukuba ni kumo mo / nakarikeri (A version in H and H, #27; 389b)

## Case 5: One Kireji, Double Cut (切れ字一つ,切れ二つ)

a. 涼しさや島かたぶきて松一つ (165b) suzushisa ya / shima katabukite / matsu hitotsu

coolness . . .
an island leans
with a single pine
(WJH; another version in H and H, #16)

b. 潮青し雪の山々鳥歸る shio aoshi / yuki no yamayama / tori kaeru (A version in H and H, #8) a. ひらひらと蝶々黄なり水の上 hirahira to / chocho ki nari / mizu no ue ( A version in H and H, #6)

## <u>Case 7: No Kireji</u>, Two Cuts (切れ字無い, 切れ二つ)

- a. 畑モアリ百合ナド咲イテ島ユタカ (273t) hata mo ari / yuri nado saite / shima yutaka (A version in H and H, #23)
- b. 障子あけて病間あり薔薇を見る shōji akete / yamai hima ari / bara o miru

shouji open
with a break in illness
I see the roses
(WJH; another version in H and H, #21)

c. 家一つ梅五六本 こ、もこ、も ie hitotsu / ume go - roppon / koko mo koko mo

1st version:

a single house five or six plume trees and another and another

or:

a single house
five or six plume trees
and here one and another
(WJH; another version in H and H, #10)

## **David Burleigh's Comment**

Just before I came here, after the announcement of the awards, I went to the library to look up Yves Bonnefoy, the French poet who is with us here, and I found in a book a little interview with him where he'd been asked about what he thought about translation. He has actually translated quite a lot of Shakespeare and so on into French. And he has, likewise, been translated into English. Of course, the gap between English and French is not as great as between English and Japanese, but, when he was asked if translation is possible, he replied simply: No, of course it's not possible. As an example he took only the title of a poem by Yeats. There were only three words, and one of those was a place name, but he gave about five different ways of possibly doing this in French. Finally he said: Look, the nuances are all different, and so it's actually impossible to translate. If those kinds of problems occur between English and French, then how are we going to manage between English and Japanese, where the gap is so much greater? Nonetheless, it's very interesting to try. I myself think that, whatever the results of an attempt at translation, be they good or bad, the exercise itself is valuable. This is because you have to examine the original so carefully, minutely scrutinising every word to clarify the meaning, and the effort that this involves brings you closer to the text than any other kind of reading. This, I believe, is what Bonnefoy really meant.

I'm going to talk a little bit about my own experience of trying to do collaborative translation of haiku from Japanese to English. There are a lot of standard problems that you encounter, to do with haiku in particular, and Japanese in general, like the question of singular and plural. Is it one frog or a lot of frogs in Bashō's poem? And do you put in "I" where the original does not contain this, because often you can't express things well in English without having personal pronouns? There is bound to be some repetition of these matters, most of which Lee has already covered, among the speakers present here today. I myself did a certain amount of collaborative translation with Kōko Katō, who lives in Nagoya and is the leader of a group there. I was asked to assist her, and we worked on an anthology of twentieth-century haiku called A Hidden Pond, which was published in 1997. I had done some work with Professor Kazuo Satō before this too, though I had no training for it other than a certain instinct. My instinct was mainly based on what sounded right to me in English. My job was initially one of correction, of trying to improve the English versions

I had been given, but in the case of the anthology I found I wanted to gain a closer understanding of the originals, which I sometimes discussed at length with Kōko Katō. The largest part of my work with her was on single poems, or two or three at most, by a variety of different poets. I had also worked with Professor Satō on a selection of single verses. This is a different experience perhaps from working on an individual collection, and

I eventually became aware of a certain danger in it. With a single poet, you can more successfully create a style or "voice" that will convey the writer's personality, but with a large number of poets it is very difficult to do this. The danger is that you will make them all sound the same, and that the style or voice will become that of the translators. Ideally, I think, every poet ought to have a sympathetic "other" in the target language who carefully understands their work and renders only that.

At first, I was inclined to try and make a syllabic version of each haiku, and my effort was directed towards achieving a pattern of five-seven-five in English. But if it didn't work, I was prepared to abandon that. Although you can decide on general principles before you start, I think a lot of the final decisions have to be made on a case-by-case basis. I will just give a couple of examples to show what can happen. It is quite common to make reference in haiku to the anniversary or memorial day of a certain poet, usually to mark the day they died, as a form of greeting. While this can be stated very briefly in Japanese, the English word "anniversary" has five syllables by itself, before you even add the poet's name, so it is impossible to render this concisely. Again, I remember once being confused

by a reference to "mums" in an English version of a haiku, because to me this word is a short form of a word for "mother", so I imagined a group of young mothers, instead of the chrysanthemums the writer had intended. The abbreviated form had been used because the word "chrysanthemum" is rather long in English, much longer than it is in Japanese. So, neither the syllabic pattern that some translators have inclined to, nor the principle of brevity that many now prefer, can comfortably be employed without exception.

There are innumerable points of detail that one might go into regarding individual versions of haiku in translation, and we will be looking at some specific examples later. But there is one general point that I would like to draw attention to, again based on my own experience. When I was taking a rough translation and trying to refine it, I found that I sometimes reversed the order of the content, so that what was at the beginning of the Japanese poem, I would put at the end of the English version, and vice versa. It didn't happen all the time, but it happened regularly enough for me to become aware of this phenomenon or tendency, and to begin to wonder about the reasons for it. Sometimes the reason may be just that the syntax seems more natural that way in English, though it has sometimes also been suggested that in Western poetry the general movement is from large to small, from the grand scene or subject to the tiny detail, whereas in Japanese poetry the movement is from small to large, in the opposite direction. I don't think anyone who examines this question will find that this rule is absolute, even if it occasionally seems true, but it remains an interesting idea in my opinion.

But perhaps the most important thing of all in the work of translation is to try and create something that will be attractive to the reader, that will give the person reading it some pleasure. Since we will be looking at verses by Shiki later on, I would like to introduce a couple of haiku by Bashõ in translated versions that have, for one reason or another, given me some pleasure. The first is a verse that I particularly like in Japanese:

荒海や佐渡に横たふ天の河 ara-umi ya Sado ni yokotau Ama-no-gawa

I like this because I grew up beside the sea on a stormy northern coast, and so it is a scene I can easily imagine. The English version I am going to quote is by a contemporary Irish poet called Ciaran Carson, and it serves as an epigraph in one of his collections:

Wild rough seas tonight: yawning over Sado Isle, snowy galaxies.

Now, there is a certain amount added to that. "Tonight" is not in the original, for instance. But I like the use of "yawning" to suggest enormous space, as in a "yawning gulf". The phrase "snowy galaxies" makes a change from the more usual "Milky Way", while it also connects the verse to other things in this poet's work. What particularly pleases me, however, is what must seem to many people a duplication at the beginning. "Wild rough seas" looks like a tautological description for the two adjectives are very close in meaning, but in the dialect of the north of Ireland, where both Carson and I come from, "wild" also has the meaning "very", so there is a nice ambiguity in its deployment here. The other verse that I wish to pick up is, like Carson's, regularly syllabic, and likewise taken from Bashō's most famous journal, the *Oku no Hosomichi*. The translation of the journal, by Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu, is not in fact my favorite version of it, but still contains good or interesting things. The original verse is:

# むざんやな甲の下のきりぎりす muzan ya na kabuto no shita no kirigirisu

And the translated version goes:

merciless indeed under the ancient helmet a cricket crickets

Again there are one or two additions, words like "ancient" and "indeed", which nonetheless are sufficiently implied in the Japanese not to be noticeably redundant. I take it that "merciless" is an attempt to vary the more common "pitiful" of other versions. But what makes this version particularly notable, and distinguishes it from others, is the third line: "a cricket crickets". Poets sometimes use nouns, and even adjectives, as verbs, and "crickets" here I take it just means that the insect is making the sound a cricket makes. Presumably Bashō could hear it rather than see it, and meant the reader to as well. It is very appropriate, then, that the rendering in English here sounds almost exactly like the insect's name in Japanese, and that both give an impression of its call. This is rather clever, as well as being felicitous.

Sometimes there are happy accidents like these, even between languages as different as English and Japanese. One can only try.