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FOXFIRE: THE SELECTED POEMS OF YOSA BUSON

A TRANSLATION

By

Allan Persinger

A Dissertation Submitted in

Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in English

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

May 2013

ABSTRACT

FOXFIRE: THE SELECTED POEMS OF YOSA BUSON A TRANSLATION

By

Allan Persinger

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2013
Under the Supervision of Professor Kimberly M. Blaeser

My dissertation is a creative translation from Japanese into English of the poetry of Yosa Buson, an 18th century (1716 – 1783) poet. Buson is considered to be one of the most important of the Edo Era poets and is still influential in modern Japanese literature. By taking account of Japanese culture, identity and aesthetics the dissertation project bridges the gap between American and Japanese poetics, while at the same time revealing the complexity of thought in Buson's poetry and bringing the target audience closer to the text of a powerful and moving writer.

Currently, the only two books offering translations of Buson's haiku are mainly biography, with few poems offered in translation. The first, Yuki Sawa's and Edith M. Shiffert's book, "Haiku Master Buson," contains 50 pages of biography but only has around 300 haiku. The second book, Makoto Ueda's "The Path of the Flowering Thorn," only contains around 150 haiku. My translation project includes translations of 868 haiku along with a critical introduction. This edition of Buson work is an important addition to Buson studies since over fifty percent

of the poems I include have not been translated before nor brought together in one volume.

The critical introduction included in my project supplements and expands the dialogue started in the previous two books on Buson. In the introduction, I also discuss translation theory noting how the translations themselves reflect the theory and represent the continuing debate of such scholars as Eugene Nida, Roman Jakobson, Jacques Derrida, and Paul de Man. Finally, I explain my choice to present the translations in free verse. In my translations, I concentrate on the content, the images, and the individual words since I hold it important that not only are the translations accurate, but that they fulfill esthetic expectations. Furthermore, while it is impossible to separate form and content, my translations privilege content over form since I believe it would be nearly impossible to keep the syllable count of 5/7/5 and not do drastic damage to the meaning. For example, a short one syllable word in Japanese "*ka*" is a three syllable word in English, "mosquito." Therefore to keep to the syllable count one would have to do drastic editing to the original.

Yet, as a form, haiku is more than just syllable count; a haiku also has to have a seasonal reference and convey a sense of a twist or a surprise within the closing line. Seasonal reference is part of content and is the easiest part of the translation. The twist or

surprise, that moment of enlightenment for both the reader and the poet, is very important for the genre and the translations in my dissertation especially convey that Zen moment haikus reveal along with the Japanese esthetic that is so important within Buson's oeuvre.

Signature: Allan Persinger _____

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Dedication

As in all projects of this scope, the large debt of gratitude that the writer incurs can never be adequately spoken nor recognized. Yet the need to thank and show appreciation is overwhelming.

To Dr. Kimberly Blaeser I owe much thanks for her kind support and guidance throughout. If it was not for her, I never would have been able to progress through all the stages of revision that this dissertation required. I am humbled by how much time and effort she put into helping me. I will sorely miss our conversations upon poetry and translation.

To Dr. James Kuist, whose kindness and insight are an inspiration I do not think I will be able to live up to, I owe you unwavering gratitude. You always were the voice of reason and inspiration throughout these past six years. Plus your keen eye and knowledge of the 18th century, has been a great help in maintaining consistency throughout. Our conversations were never long enough!

To Dr. Maurice Kilwein-Guevara, whose keen poetic sense and sensibility was always a light to live up to, I owe the initial concept for translating Yosa Buson in the first place. What began as a means of trying to maintain and improve upon my Japanese language skills became so much more because of your guidance.

To Dr. George Clark, you always have been a mentor from the moment I entered into the creative writing program. It was a privilege and a pleasure to work with you. You have no idea how enjoyable you are to work with!

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To Dr. Nnamdi Elleh who has always been there whenever I needed somebody, here much belated is the project you always thought I should work on.

To Dr. Robert Siegel, I will miss you. It was you who all those years ago first placed the idea of translation as an art within me when you spoke these words: “Translation reveals the weakness of the translator’s poetic language ability,” and “All poets should translate to hone their skills in their own language.” It was also you who opened up each creative writing workshop by having your students translate a poem of their own choosing. Little did you know, what inspiration those assignments were to prove.

And to my wife, Fusayo, who not only checked my Japanese and my transcriptions for errors, but who also read the poems for accuracy of meaning, I owe more than a simple thank you.

Foxfire: The Selected Poems of
蕪村乞謝 Yosa Buson

Translations by EP Allan

Critical Introduction to Fox-fire: The Collected Poems of Yosa Buson
EP Allan

1: A Brief Introduction to Yosa Buson and the Edo Era

Yosa Buson (1716-December 25, 1784) is considered to be one of four major haiku poets and one the three great poets of the Edo Era. The other two poets of the Edo Era are Matsuo Basho (1644-November 26, 1694) and Kobayashi Issa (June 15, 1763-November 19, 1827). The fourth great haiku poet Masaoka Shiki (October 14, 1867–September 19, 1902) was not an Edo poet, but was from the Meiji Era instead. These four writers are generally understood to have directly shaped haiku into the art form that it is today: Basho elevated the haiku out of its comic base into a higher art form; Buson turned it into a very literary form; Issa gave haiku its personal touch; and Shiki is the one who insisted that haiku was a viable art form during the time when haiku and other Japanese works were considered quaint and outdated.

Yosa Buson was most likely born in the village of Kema in the Settsu Province, what is now known as Osaka Prefecture. Very little is known about his early life and what is known is mainly wrapped in speculation. It is assumed that Buson was born to a wealthy landowner. Some scholars debate the reason why Buson went to Edo, present day Tokyo, to study haiku under Hayano Soa (also known as Hayano Hajin). Some think it was because Buson had squandered the family wealth or even that he was illegitimate, because Buson was reticent about writing about his childhood, and those few poems that do

exist about his birth village express a bittersweet nostalgia as illustrated by the following haiku:

325*

似 故 花
 たる 郷 い
 哉 の ば
 路 ら
 に

Hana ibara
 kokyau no michi ni
 nitaru kana

These flowering briars
 reminds me of the path
 in my hometown

While the briars, a type of wild rose, are beautiful, they are also thorny. In Japanese, to walk a thorny path means to suffer. From a distance the hometown looks beautiful, up close it is painful. Furthermore, while Buson later in his life lived less than thirty miles away, he never once returned to visit. He kept his distance, viewing his hometown in memory—not up close like the briars in the poem. Buson's pupil, Takai Kito (1741-1789), when writing about Buson in *The Record of Master Yahantei's Last Days*, omitted by Buson's request any reference to Buson's father, perhaps revealing Buson's aversion to the subject.

Yet regardless of why Buson left his hometown, we do know that while in his twenties he traveled to Edo. Besides studying poetry with Hajin, Buson also studied calligraphy, Chinese style poetry (*kanshi*) and Noh chant-

ing (*yokyoku*). Some scholars wonder if Buson studied Chinese literature under a master or if he was self-taught. However, the number of references to Chinese literature in Buson's poetry make it apparent that he was quite familiar with the subject.

According to Haruo Shirane in the book *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600-1900*, one of the things that changed during the 17th century was the rise of literacy. Literacy rose because the Tokugawa Shogunate severed the ties of the samurai (warriors) to the local lords or to the lands and instead tied them to the central authority, the Shogunate, located in Edo (modern day Tokyo). This changed the samurai into bureaucrats and politicians, making literacy and education important. By somewhere around 1650, all the samurai had become literate.

Furthermore, as Shirane writes, "The new Tokugawa rulers adopted a rule of law and morality—by letter rather than by force¹—a policy that required mass education" (11). Mass education gave rise to a literate populace of not only former samurai but also of upper class merchants and landowners. A large reading class grew and hungered not only for the literature of its day, but also for classical Japanese and classical Chinese literature. By the time Matsuo Basho was writing and changing the haiku, the farming classes had also become literate—all of which gave Basho a large audience.

¹ Before Tokugawa the samurai ruled as they saw fit, beheading people for even minor infractions. After Tokugawa, there were at least laws presiding over the samurai's actions—though these laws were also harsh and kept class structure firmly in place.

It is interesting to contemplate how the three major Edo Era poets represent the widening circles of literacy. Matsuo Basho, while not a samurai, came from the samurai class; Yosa Buson came from the wealthy landowner class, and Kobayashi Issa came from the farming class. Furthermore, by the time Buson is writing, his audience would have been highly familiar with classic Chinese literature, classic Japanese literature, and with the more contemporary 17th century writers. So not only would Buson's audience have been from a wide spectrum of social classes, they also would have known and enjoyed his references and subtle changes to well known poems and stories.

This period is known for more than just the rise of literacy. The Edo Era began when the Tokugawa Shogunate seized control. Shortly thereafter Japan became a closed country—that is, all but a few of its ports were closed to foreign trade, and those ports that were open, like Nagasaki, were not only isolated, but also served to tightly contain foreign elements and kept the foreigners themselves from penetrating Japanese society. Because the Shogunate perceived Christianity as a threat to Japanese sovereignty, he believed that sealing off Japan was also sealing out Christianity. Isolationism not only turned Japan inward and made the Edo period perhaps the most introspective of the Japanese periods, but at the same time gave a hunger and a mystique for things foreign—especially for things Chinese. During Buson's lifetime, Chinese music, art, poetry, philosophy and horoscopes, reached a peak in popularity.

Furthermore, Buson was influenced by Chinese literati painting, known in Japanese as *Nanga* (southern-style) or as *Bunjinga*² (literati painter/painting). Buson took the principles of the Chinese literati painters as a model and adopted the painting styles of the *Ming* and *Qing* artists. Since the term *Nanga* refers to a Chinese painting style that occurred during Buson's lifetime, this influence also shows how closely Japan was following Chinese culture.

After Hayano Hajin died Buson left Edo and moved to Kyoto, where he began life not as a haiku poet, but as a painter. In fact, up until his fifties Buson made his livelihood off of painting and it is not until he was fifty-one years old that Buson began to seriously write haiku. As Nobuo Tsuji in his essay, "The Creative Force of a Multi-Artist: A Guide to the Yosa Buson Exhibition," states: "If I think about it, in Buson's expansive universe, where image and word, coexist without qualitative differences, clearly it was natural for his haiku to influence his painting, and conversely, for his paintings to influence his haiku" (389). How painting influenced Buson's poetry can easily be seen throughout many of his poems. See, for example, how in the following poem Buson uses landscape painting techniques:

291

黄 水 若
ミ 白 葉
た る し
り 麦 て

Wakaba shite
mizu shiroku mugi
kibamitari

² *Nanga* and *Bunjinga* as terms are almost interchangeable.

Under young green leaves
 white water
 yellow barley

Within this poem the vivid layers of primary colors are reminiscent of the paintings Buson did for Goin³ Festival Floats with their swirling blues and deep golds. Here the three dimensional positioning of the leaves, the water and the barley also give the poem a landscape feel.

Furthermore, the items within the poem reveal the passing of time—the verdant new leaves still freshly energetic at the start of summer, the still heavy run-off from the snows melting from the mountain tops and the now yellowed barley left over from the spring growing season. Within this moment of the haiku, there is also the triumph of youth, the young leaves, which are positioned over the old, the barley.

This capturing of the moment is essential to haiku and was one of the principal touchstones of Matsuo Basho's poetic philosophy. Basho was extremely important to Buson, who looked at his own haiku as that of reviving Basho's poetical movement. There are, however, some major differences between Basho and Buson. Haruo Shirane writes:

Unlike Basho, who advocated “Awakening to the high, returning to the low” (*kouga kizoku*) and sought “lightness” (*karumi*), or the poetics of everyday life, Buson advocated “departing from the common,” an exploration of the worlds through Chinese literature and painting as well as the Japanese classics, wandering freely in a world of elegance and imagination that he found far superior to the life immediately around him (540).

³ Goin is a district in Kyoto that is famous for its shrine and for Geisha.

The following poem offers a clear example of Buson “departing from the common”:

399

夏
の
月
恋
す
る
宿
や
河
童
の

Kawataro no
koisuru yado ya
natsu no tsuki

The Kappa
loves his house —
the summer moon

The kappa is a mythic half human-half turtle trickster with a bowl of water on its head who can be made to work for humans when enticed by cucumbers. Within this poem the common, the summer moon, becomes the dwelling place of the fantastical, the kappa; therefore, while looking at the mundane moon Buson has envisioned and invoked a feeling of mystery—in this case, because of the word love, a comfortable mystery. Not all of Buson’s imaginative poetry gives rise to a feeling of ease or comfort, but can in fact create a sense of sublime misgiving as in the following haiku:

383

札
の
立
人
死
居
る
と
草
い
き
れ

Kusaikire
hito shiniiru to
fuda no tatsu

Being posted
in the fuming grass
a death notice

Notice how within this poem the word fuming not only raises the poetics out of the ordinary world but also gives the poem a hellish intensity. Not only is the hot summer grass fuming, that is to say giving off a strong reek within the broiling day, but the death notice takes on the smell of the grass and of death itself. The poem has risen above the ordinary and in doing so has left us uneasy.

As Shirane points out, Buson found the world of imagination superior to the mundane one. His preference for the elegant, for the fantastic, sometimes manifests itself as social criticism as revealed in the following poem, which at first glance the poem is about a fish that has been plucked by a fisherman out of the sea and is gasping for breath; however, the introduction to the poem establishes the event being described is a visit to a sick man:

When Kito called upon the ailing Senior Minister Heisha to offer sympathy, it was as if everybody was at the seashore listening to a traveling minstrel.

758

鉤 鰓 凜
の 吹 る に
魚 ー や

Kogarashi ni
agito fukaruru ya
kaki no uo

In wintery wind
gills puffing —
a hooked fish

The social criticism within this poem revolves around the fact that, the man was a Senior Minister, a government official, or somebody from the samurai class. Instead of being powerful, however, the man is wailing while his mouth moves like a dying fish. In sickness the man has dwindled into an object of ridicule. Social positions have been reversed by the approach of death and the man once respected for his elite position is a now pitiable figure as he clings to his former self-worth. Furthermore, by clinging to his life, the man is breaking the tenants of the Bushido or Samurai Code, which advocates non-attachment as one of its essential essences.

Buson's poetry then, like his artwork, is a complex mixture. Buson was a multi-genre artist, highly influenced by Matsuo Basho, by classic Japanese and classic Chinese literature, whose writing took the world of the moment and transformed it through the imagination. His works also show great appreciation for all types of art, including culinary arts (out of the three great Edo Era poets Buson's poems contain the most references to food), and finally also contain moments that slyly critique the time and culture of his day.

2: Yosa Buson and Translation Theory

All translation is colonization. A textual artifact is taken from the source language and reinvented in the target language, thus removing the original text from the confines of its culture, place and time. Writers like Walter Benjamin in "Task of the Translator" see this as resurrecting a text into a universal human consciousness that transcends the original limitations the text was written within. Yet even this freed text has been colonized, altered and is no longer the same, as it is reborn within a different time and culture. Therefore the translator has to decide how much the source is subverted during the translation process; how many foreign or "exotic" elements are allowed to remain; how to produce an aesthetically pleasing result that the target audience will want to read; and how to stay "true" to the original.

The idea of fidelity, that a translation is completely faithful to the source text, is what the novice to translation expects—a word-to-word plug-in without any human interpretation or variance. Perfection is then this strange idea of a symbiotic co-existence where accuracy can easily be proven. Furthermore, some people's general attitude is that for a translation to have fidelity, it would have to be able to be translated back into the source language with the exact same words without a new, hypothetical translator having any knowledge of the original.

Eugene Nida in "Principles of Correspondence" writes about the type of translation where one word from the source text is replaced by a word in the

target language: "There are, for example, such ultraliteral translations as interlinears; while others involve highly concordant relationships, e.g. the same source-language word is always translated by one—and only one—receptor-language word" (153). However there is a great problem in doing this type of ultraliteral, word by word, and interlinear, line by line, translation—languages do not neatly match and there can be multiple choices for a single word. So even within concordant translations choices have been made. Choosing a single word, as Nida so emphasized, is extremely limiting and can in fact, undermine the complexity and understanding of a text. Indeed, there might not be an actual word that corresponds. As Roman Jakobson in "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" so aptly put, "On the level of interlingual translation, there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code-units" (139).

How equivalency between code-units, or source and target language words, fails, and how translators have to make interpretive choices even when doing direct translation, can be seen when trying to translate the word 出 from Japanese into English. Some of the meanings for 出 from Nelson's Japanese Kanji—English Dictionary are *appear, come out, emerge, exit, haunt, infest, be found, get back, lead to, enter, leave, go out, attend, work at, find (oneself) at, depart, break out, originate, and transmit*. So direct equivalence does not exist between the Japanese word 出 and English, many of the given meanings are opposites and are also completely unrelated, such as *break out* and *infest*. In Japanese the primary meaning is to leave, exit, go out, etc. Yet within haiku, a form of poetry that delights in word play and multiple readings, the

translator has to make a choice of which word best fits the poetic meaning of 出, which might not be the same as the literal meaning.

Here is one poem by Yosa Buson that illustrates the difficulty in concordant translation:

14

柳かな
根をわすれたる
若草に

Wakagusa ni
ne o wasuretaru
yanagi kana

In young grass
forgotten roots —
a willow

The above translation is concordant. Everything is practically a word per word correspondence with only one inversion of the words forgotten and roots taking place. Unfortunately, the translation does not reveal the multiple meanings that are happening in the poem. *Wakagusa* (young grass) can also mean young people, or can even be a derogatory word for a monk; and *Ne o wasuretaru* (forgotten roots) can also mean forgetting sense or mind. In the corresponding translation the willow resembles a weed whose roots have invaded the young grass or whose roots have not been completely extracted. To complicate matters, there is also a saying in Japanese, “a ghost will appear where a willow grows.” Therefore, two other possible translations could read: “The

youth are forgetting their senses — a willow”, or “The damn monk is out of his mind — a willow.” In these two translations, the youth and the monk have gone crazy by planting a tree that will attract ghosts, or both groups are seeing ghosts.

For this particular poem perhaps the direct translation method works the best since the result contains the denotative meaning. Yet the connotative meanings are lost. However, there is no neat way to span the chasm between the source and the target language while keeping within the confines of a haiku and the only choice is to give the reader the secondary meanings in a footnote, a failure in delivery that at times cannot be avoided.

Formidable questions spring up. What happens to fidelity when direct translation does not convey the denotative meaning, and in fact gives the target audience the wrong image or impression? And how can a translator maintain accuracy? One of the best answers to this conundrum was written by Constance B. West, "Whoever takes upon himself to translate contracts a debt; to discharge it, he must pay not with the same money, but with the same sum" (344). In other words instead of using matching correspondors, different code-units that convey the same meaning or image need to be used.

The age-old idea that the translator has entered into a contract in which they owe an almost marital oath that has to be repaid is taken up by Jacques Derrida in “What Is A ‘Relevant’ Translation:”

Now it would be easy to show (and I have tried to do so elsewhere) that all translation implies an insolvent indebtedness and an oath of

fidelity to a given original—with all the paradoxes of such a law and such a promise, of a *bond* and a contract, of a promise that is, moreover, impossible and asymmetrical, transferential and countertransferential, like an oath doomed to treason or perjury (431).

What Derrida is responding to is once again the idea that there can not be an equal correspondence—an impossibility that automatically leads to failure.

The following haiku by Buson illustrates both how direct equivalency fails, and how the translator has to pay a different currency with the same sum:

2*

か 今 日
し 朝 の
ら や 光
よ 鰯
り の

Hi no hikari
kesa ya iwashi no
kashirayori

This morning
the bright sun shines off
sardine heads

The above translation contains direct, equivalent code-units, however, the reader will not be able to understand or see the original image. Not only is there an ambiguity of where the sardine heads are (are they in the ocean, are they displayed in a market, or someplace completely different) or if the central image is that of just the head, or even if the heads are attached or severed from the body.

One possibility without using direct translation is:

The new year morning sun
 brightly reflects off spears decorated
 by sardine heads

While the poem above does not use direct translation, it does provide a much more accurate image. First, the poem is a new year poem. Second, it was a custom during the Edo period in some Japanese villages to nail sardine heads by spears planted near the gate of a house on New Year's Eve to ward off evil spirits. Gone are some the inaccurate and ambiguous meanings. The reader now knows exactly what time of year it is and that the heads have been severed. It is still not clear within the more interpretive translation that the heads have been hung by doorways for ceremonial purposes to guard the house from evil spirits. Yet ironically the new translation is now more accurate—the same sum has been paid—but the poem is no longer equivalent.

While strict equivalency gives the illusion of accuracy, interpretive moves by the translator can give the feeling of inaccuracy. Using the above poem as an example, if a reader who can read Japanese but does not have the cultural-specific knowledge of the Edo Period (1600 through 1868), they would instantly question the introduction of such words as "New Year", and "spear," neither of which were in the original, because there they were not needed to convey meaning.

One of the arguments for a more interpretive style comes from Walter Benjamin, "If the kinship of languages manifests itself in translation, this is not accomplished through a vague likeness between adaptation and original. It stands to reason that kinship does not necessarily involve likeness" (78).

However, if the relationship between the source and the translation is no longer the same, as in the second translation, then translations become more divergent. The choices then become almost unlimited, and all that remains of the bond between the old and the new is the belief that translators want to convey an honest interpretation.

During the actual process in which a text is translated each choice precludes other choices. With each word forged within the new language, the translator has made a decision, and much like a word association game, each choice has to lead logically to the next choice. An example of how one choice changes others can be seen in a Buson poem that contains the 出 character, *deru*. Here is a brief, fragmented layout with all of the options that a translator has to make while working with this one haiku:

雉 砦 柴
 の を 刈
 声 出 に
 る
 や

柴刈 = Shibakari: gathering firewood, to gather firewood.

に = ni: at, on, in, by, to.

砦を = toride o: fort, stronghold, entrenchments.

出るや = deru ya: appear, come out, emerge, haunt, infest, be found, get back, lead to, enter, leave, go out, attend, work at, find (oneself) at, depart, break out, originate.

雉 =kiji: pheasant.

の = no: 's (possessive), of.

声 = koe: voice, tone, alarm, (bird) song, chirrup.

While the first choice is of minor importance, to choose between a gerund and an infinitive, the next choice of which preposition to use, will set the location of the poem's event. However, a translator cannot decide which one to use without determining what the preposition is modifying.

The next decision is what type of location feels or seems the most appropriate. A selection is offered: fort, stronghold, or entrenchments. While all three contain a military related word, the first two offer some type of building or structure, while the third offers an image of trenches probably with wooden stakes protecting it. This choice is important in that it relates to the pheasant's voice or song in the third line of the poem. Where is this sound coming from or going to? There is no neat, handy solution. It will depend on one of the options the translator picks.

All of these choices lead to the most important, and most difficult, decision in the poem: choosing the correct verb form for the word *deru*. Here is where we find ourselves in a converging labyrinth. Is this voice coming from the fort, going into the fort, or haunting it (which could imply either direction)? There is no one correct solution.

Finally, let's take a look at the same poem translated in two acceptable ways, which are trying to fulfill what Derrida called the "oath of fidelity:"

While gathering firewood
the fort is haunted by
the pheasant's voice

While exiting the fort
to gather firewood —
a pheasant's song

Both of these poems have tried to recreate the meaning and feeling of the source text, but have done so in very different ways and have taken different routes. However, these are not only two possible paths within this garden, there are an almost infinite choice of others. Derrida once wrote: “1. ‘Nothing is translatable’; 2. ‘Everything is translatable’” (427). The above translations underscore his logic because so many options are available to the translator.

The personality of the translator is reflected by his or her choices. An examination of three different translations of the same haiku by Yosa Buson demonstrates that no two translators will ever take exactly the same path:

205

女 月 梨
あ に の
り 書 花
よ
む (46).

Yuki Sawa and Edith M Shiffert translated this poem as:

Flowers of the pear—
reading a letter by moonlight
a woman (73).

Another translator, Alex Kerr, translated the same poem as:

A woman
reading a letter by moonlight
pear blossoms (58).

Where as yet another possibility exists:

Under pear blossoms
in moonlight reading a letter—
a woman

All three of these poems have their strengths and their weaknesses. The first translation keeps the images in the same lines as the source text but does so by rearranging the words in an awkward, overtly poetical manner, especially in the opening line, “The flowers of the pear.” The phrase, “pear blossoms,” is a lot closer, whereas a strict word per word translation would read, “pear’s blossoms”. Furthermore, “The flowers of the pear” reads as if it were written in an outmoded or dated rhetoric. Ezra Pound once commented that Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s translation of Italian sonnets was weakened by the very same flaw: “What obfuscated me was not the Italian but the crust of dead English,” and he then went on to conclude, “It is stupid to overlook the lingual inventions of precurent authors even when they are fools or flapdoodles or Tennysons” (88). Clearly, both Sawa and Shiffert’s flaw in this opening line is just that—they have not thought out what effect their language has upon the poem; or have used the spurious logic that since Buson lived in the 1700s, an outmoded English would suit the translations better. However, this makes him read like a bad poet.

The second line of the poem illustrates other aspects of how Sawa and Shiffert handled the text. This line would strictly exist as “moonlight in/by letter reading.” As can be seen, they rearranged these words into “reading a

letter by moonlight.” In other words, if the line is divided into two images, moonlight and reading a letter, they reversed the order. Also by interpreting the events within the poem as the woman using the moonlight to read the letter, they have underplayed the imagistic quality the poem contains and have failed to convey the multiple meanings so prevalent in haiku—the woman is not only using the moonlight to read the letter but she is also illuminated by the light. Sawa and Shiffert’s reading here shuts down meaning and does not reveal the full depth of the original.

The second translation, Alex Kerr’s, does perhaps the most radical rearranging of the text in that it moves the third line to the top and the first line to the bottom. Furthermore, he followed exactly Sawa and Shiffert’s rearranging of the text in the second or middle line—in other words not a single image comes in the same order of the source text. The effect of this is most curious, the final image, here of pear blossoms, seems quite disconnected from the woman and appears to be randomly thrown in. In addition, it lacks the poetic imagery that Buson the painter had. The result of this is two-fold. The first two lines sound very much, even more than Sawa and Shiffert’s piece, like standard English prose: “A woman reading a letter by moonlight.” However, the last line with its sudden arrival emphasizes the foreignness of the text by making it sound illogical. In addition, the overall effect of Kerr’s translation is one of stacked prose in which a prosodic sentence is randomly cut and scattered down the page to give the appearance of poetry without actually following the poetic demand for tension and reason.

The third and final translation here within our garden of alternating choices, tries to keep as close to the source text as possible. It keeps the major blocks of text, “pear blossoms / moonlight/ reading a letter/ a woman,” in the same order as the source, however, it has added the word “under” into the poem. This preposition helps to give the poem the same spatial quality of a painting. Furthermore, the added word places some line tension within the text that the other two lack by using enjambment. The other two translations use a type of end-stop line, made end-stop by the images in each single line not really needing nor connecting to the other, whereas under pear blossoms automatically sets the reader up for something else to follow. A sinuous tension now holds all three of the lines together, making it the ink-brush painting it was in the original with its sumie blacks (the night, the woman’s hair, the words in the letter) along side its whites (the pear blossoms, the moon light, the paper making up the letter, and the woman’s face). Under also takes into account the verb, *ari* or has, at the end of the poem. Since Japanese is constructed subject, object, verb, the pear blossoms somehow “have” the woman—all of which is neatly implied by the preposition under. Finally, the construction of the images within this milieu possesses a kind of physical, painted logic that Kerr’s lacks. The pear trees are taller than the woman and therefore are on the top of the poem in comparison to the woman who is under them.

While Kerr’s translation appeared in a Dover Thrift Edition titled The Classic Tradition of Haiku: an Anthology, it originally was in an article titled

“Lost Japan” published by the Lonely Planet—in other words a tour guide. Therefore Kerr’s purpose was not to be a translator of poetry, but to be a cultural informer for the backpacker or student traveler (the audience the Lonely Planet targets). Kerr’s translation raises the question, should poets be the ones to translate poetry?

One writer who addresses the idea that poets should translate poetry is Paul de Man in his lecture on Walter Benjamin. While referring to Benjamin, de Man writes:

One of the reasons why he [Benjamin] takes the figure of the translator rather than the poet is that the translator, per definition, fails. The translator can never do what the original text did. Any translation is always second in relation to the original, and the translator as such is lost from the very beginning. He is per definition underpaid, he is per definition overworked, he is per definition the one history will not retain as an equal, unless he also happens to be a poet (233).

In this quote, de Man’s position is that only a poet can be on equal footing with another poet. Some examples of significant figures in the history of translation include Elizabeth Bishop and her translation of female Brazilian poets, Ezra Pound and his translation of Italian poetry, and Kenneth Rexroth and his translation of Japanese and Chinese poetry.

The work of poet translators notwithstanding, de Man’s idea that a translator fails because a translator can never do what the original text did needs to be addressed. While it is true that a translation can never match the source text because the combination of a given culture at a given moment in time that prompted the source text’s writer to compose the way he or she did cannot be reproduced, a translation can match the tone, image and power which has given the original both its longevity. Some examples of successful

translation are the claustrophobic madness of a vindictive world in Kobo Abe's fiction or the Heian Court memoir of Sei Shonagon with her delightful thoughts that turn with sudden flashes of humor. In The Pillow Book, for example, Shonagon writes:

Suddenly towards dawn its [the cuckoo's] song breaks the silence; one is charmed, indeed one is quite intoxicated. But alas, when the Sixth Month comes the *hototogisu* is silent. I really need say no more about my feelings for this bird. And I do not love the *hototogisu* alone; anything that cries out at night delights me—except babies (5).

Here the reader does not really need to know the politics, culture, and the time period to enjoy this passage. Its description of the delight the writer feels upon hearing the bird song before dawn and the sudden turn of how the only thing not enjoyable are babies crying at night still takes him or her by surprise as it would have its original readers.

In returning to de Man's statement, the submissive relationship of the translator in relation to the original text needs examining. For de Man, the source text becomes Sacher-Masoch's mistress with its boots, whips and furs demanding an almost impossible fidelity of the translator who is underpaid, over-worked, and then forgotten. While lamenting this unenviable position of the translator and tactically calling for the translator to enjoy a better position in relation to the text, de Man is also recognizing a fact—in literature readers are not reading a translation to read the translator but to read the original writer. If a hypothetical browser in a bookstore picks up a copy of Yasunari Kawabata's House of Sleeping Beauties, for example, this person is interested in reading Kawabata and not Edward Seidensticker the translator. However,

this same browser might choose a Seidensticker translation over one by J.

Martin Holman if they have previously read and enjoyed Seidensticker's work or are aware that both Kawabata and Seidensticker knew each other and collaborated to produce the translations⁴ (though this is not to imply that Holman's work is in any way inferior).

Not only does the translator suffer in his or her relationship to the original, the source text demands an almost impossible fidelity. In the context of translation, the idea of fidelity returns to a hypothetical reader's assumption of a symmetrical relationship between the source and the translation. Lori Chamberlain in her essay, "Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation, writes:

The sexualization of translation appears perhaps most familiarly in the tag *les belles infidèles*—like women, the adage goes, translations should be either beautiful or faithful... For *les belles infidèles*, fidelity is defined by an implicit contract between translation (as woman) and original (as husband, father, or author). However, the infamous "double-standard" operates here as it might have in the traditional marriage (307).

It is extremely limiting to view a translation as either faithful or beautiful—couldn't it be both at the same time? Certainly the unspoken agreement for accuracy could be viewed as something other than a contract under which a "double-standard" operates where one partner has to be faithful and the other doesn't. Why couldn't it be the meeting of two like minds? Furthermore, how could a source text be unfaithful? After all, the poem or the story was written with as much talent and insight as the original artist possessed.

⁴ In fact, not only did Kawabata give one third of his Nobel Prize award money to Seidensticker, Kawabata also stated in his address that one of the reasons why he won was the lyrical qualities of Seidensticker's translations.

Since a translation can be both faithful and beautiful at the same time or even ugly and unfaithful, it would be useful to prove these claims by comparing some different translations. Here is a translation of Yosa Buson's haiku 117 by Shigeru Nishimura:

117

の 終 春
 た 日 の
 り の 海
 哉 た
 り

The spring sea swells and falls, and swells—
 Until the bell of tardy evening knells (53).

This translation is neither faithful, nor beautiful. The first line of the translation more or less translates the entire haiku. However, the second line, doesn't exist at all within the original—there is no bell, no tardy evening knells—the translator simply made them up for the purposes of creating a couplet. Furthermore, the second, or new line, is in a heavy-handed iambic meter—a plodding bell ringing upon deaf ears.

What is interesting about Nishimura's translation is that Nishimura was Japanese and felt the need to take the haiku and to appropriate it into a western form. This translation was first published in 1879, twenty-six years after Admiral Perry had forcibly opened up Japan to the world. This time period was tumultuous—the Emperor used Perry as a means of taking political control back from the Shogunates and set various scholars out to study the western world and bring back technology and new ideas, including a constitution. Fur-

thermore, Japanese culture, which had been so turned in upon itself during the Edo Era, was now looked upon as old fashioned, quaint, or even feudal.

Nishimura took a haiku and in an attempt to bring the text to the English or American reader, rewrote it into a rhymed couplet. His translation tries to re-posture and modernize Japanese culture by using a traditional English form. A more “faithful” translation would read:

The spring sea
all day long back and forth
back and forth

While the opening image of the spring sea has remained the same as Nishimura’s translation, in the remainder of the poem, the translator has made different decisions. First, in this translation the words omitted by Nishimura, “終日” (*hinemosu*) which literary means all day, have been reinstated. Secondly, both translations deal differently with the repetitive “のたりのたり” (*notarinotari*). Nishimura handles it with the phrase swells and falls, and swells. The second translation uses the image of back and forth. Both are, more or less, correct; however, each approach the same idea differently. In Nishimura’s translation the sea is going up and down or moving in a vertical plane, whereas in the second version the sea is moving in a horizontal plane. The second translation also uses line breaks (keeping to the same order as the original) to add the vertical in: back and forth / back and forth. Furthermore, the second line is longer than the third line, which is also in imitation of waves—as the sea rushes out the shore becomes longer and then becomes

shorter as the sea rushes in again. Therefore, this second translation, while being more faithful to the original, is also more beautiful.

To further underscore the point that fidelity and beauty are neither mutually exclusive nor inclusive, I offer three other translations of a different Buson haiku:

108

馬 落 紅
 の 花 梅
 糞 燃 の
 ら
 む

Sawa and Shiffert have translated this poem in two different ways. The first translation on the left is from their book Haiku Master Buson which was published in 1978, and their second translation on the right was printed in a collection edited by Robert Hass published in 1994 titled The Essential Haiku: Versions of Basho, Buson, & Issa:

The red plum's
 fallen flowers seem to be burning
 on the horse's droppings (70).

Fallen petals of red plum—
 they seem to be burning
 on the clods of horse shit (83).

While it is obvious that the main images are the same, and that it is in essence the same poem, there are major shifts in both the blocks of text and in register. Their first translation is closer to the source text and is better with its only flaw being the handling of the last line. However, their second translation suffers from much the same kind of language that their earlier pear blossom haiku translation did: the use of a formal stilted kind of poesy in the opening line, “Fallen petals of red plum.” What is more, in the second poem they

have deviated even more from the original. The opening line of the source text is, “Red plum’s,” so that the first translation is not only more accurate but is also better.

Also in both translations they have tried to soften the last line. The last line in a word per word translation would read, “horse’s shit,” or in a more direct English manner, “horse shit.” Their first translation tries to soften this into the euphemistic phrase, “on the horse’s droppings,” which we can see in their second translation, they instinctively knew didn’t work. However, in their second translation they added in the words “clods of” once again going for a more poetic diction. The question this raises, is why did they feel the need to change the line, to soften it, and to put it in a sort of stilted language?

A more faithful, yet powerful translation would read:

The red plum
blossoms scatter—probably burning
on horse shit

First, it should be noted that “落” (*chiru*) means either to fall or to scatter, therefore all the translations are idiomatically correct. Also this last translation has reversed the order of the two words blossoms and scatter. Scattered blossoms would be more in keeping to the word order of the original, but then a verb would have to be added for the line to work and to make sense, as in: “the scattered blossoms are probably burning,” but this would be too long, clumsy and wordy. Therefore, the easiest solution is to reverse the words and to drop the to be verb (there is no to be verb in the original), keeping the poem

direct and simple, but also at the same time setting the reader up for the comic punch line at the close of the poem.

What is important here is that a translation can be “faithful” and “beautiful” at the same time, while even more importantly, contrary to de Man’s opinion, accomplishing much of the same thing as the source did. If the above poem is looked at carefully it will be seen that both the source and the last translation contain the same structure and meaning. While the poem starts out manipulating a stock, poetic, haiku image (the fallen red plum blossoms), it ends with a crude slap that is fairly comic. Both the blossoms and the horse shit are fallen and scattered—both share the same kind of relationship as something discarded. This symmetry is brought out by the use of the color red—the plum blossoms are red and the horse apples are brownish red. If the plum blossoms would have been white, the more common color, the symmetry would have collapsed. Red is what links both objects together, and even the verb, burning, is brings up a bright orange or red image. Here the image of plum blossoms representational of beauty and youth have fallen, likewise the dung, the symbol of something debased, crude or depraved, has also fallen, but now the fallen petals are withering away within this fallen, debased world.

The more literal translation red plum haiku has, in my opinion, not failed nor transgressed the bond between the source text and the translator. Yet the idea of failure is not so easily dismissed. One person, Faubion Bowers, the editor of The Classic Tradition of Haiku: an Anthology from which both Kerr’s and Nishimura’s translations have been taken, appears to agree with de

Man's statement that a translator is bound to fail. In the editor's introduction,

Bowers writes:

Arthur Waley [1889-1966] an early translator of Japanese literature, wrote, "It is not possible that the rest of the world will ever realize the importance of Japanese poetry, because of all poetries it is the most completely untranslatable." To our way of thinking, Japanese poetry lacks sentence structure. It is imprecise in articles, particles, plurals and gender (viii).

Before this can be analyzed, a brief look at who Arthur Waley was and his accomplishments as an oriental scholar and translator needs to be undertaken.

According to the online Columbia Encyclopedia:

Arthur Waley 1889-1966, English orientalist, b. London as Arthur David Schloss, educated at Cambridge. He was and still is considered one of the world's great Asian scholars. His most important works include his translations of Chinese poetry and of the Japanese novel, *The Tale of Genji* (1925-33) by Murasaki Shikibu. Among his other works are *The No Plays of Japan* (1921), *The Poetry and Career of Li Po* (1959) and *The Secret History of the Mongols and Other Pieces* (1964). He never traveled to Asia.

While Waley never went to Japan nor China, he was a specialist in *oriental* literature. One does not have to go to a foreign country to learn its language, but going to the source can be quite helpful. Language and culture interplay constantly even in such places as a market or a noodle stand, and this knowledge of how the language works on a daily level can lead to greater understanding of one of the most complicated and yet exacting products of language—literature. Yet how seriously should the reader take both Waley's and Bowers' claim that of all poetries Japanese is the most untranslatable, and

what are we supposed to make of this as an opening claim in a book of collected translations?⁵

Indeed, some of the qualities mentioned as making the poetry untranslatable do not really make it as impossible as it at first may seem. Part of haiku's translatability may very possibly hinge upon daily, or common, conversational usage. For example, how the "lack" of articles and plurals might work in translation can be seen by comparing *I like apples* (りんごが好きです), to *I ate an apple* (りんごを食べました). These two simple sentences work to bring about an understanding of how the word "りんご" *ringo* or apple(s) is used. In both sentences, the plural first one and the singular second one, the noun apple is the same. However, neither sentence is all that difficult to translate, because common sense dictates idiomatically correct English.

This idea of how the translator fills in the article or the plural can further be seen as in the poem first quoted:

Under pear blossoms
in moonlight reading a letter—
a woman

The plural blossoms, and the article before the words letter and woman, have all been added to the translation—they did not appear in the source text.

However, leaving them out does not really work as in, "Under pear blossom / in moonlight reading letter / woman." Notice how here, the voice of the poem sounds stilted and ignorant in the target language. In addition, adding the plurals and the articles in is not that difficult. For one, it would be absurd to con-

⁵ The Classic Tradition of Haiku: An Anthology has the work of forty-three different translators.

template the image, in the context of this poem, of a single pear blossom, as most trees do not flower one blossom at a time. Nor does a singular work in any emotional way, because once again the logic of the situation does not demand it and it would then be a different poem.

The same logic, in reverse, applies to both the letter and the woman. It could be argued that this faceless, unnamed woman is reading several letters, however, she can only read one letter at a time. Therefore even if she had several, she would still just be reading one within the “snapshot” moment of a haiku. Also there could be more than one woman, however, “Under pear blossoms / in moonlight reading letters / women” while not technically wrong does not convey the same sense of drama as the single woman. With a lone figure more intent on the words in front of her instead of on the flowers, a sense of the common that is somehow not common is created. This fits in with Buson, who once wrote in a preface to a poetry collection from Shundei Kushu Jo: “The essence of haikai [kaiku] is to use ordinary words and yet to become separate from the ordinary. Be separate from the ordinary and still use the ordinary” (156). Ultimately, this is why the idea of the lone woman works, the image gives the taste of the unusual by leaving the questions of why she is trying to read a letter by only moonlight; what is so important about this letter that she doesn’t wait until she can read it in better light; and who this woman is and what she looks like go unanswered.

Having thus established that it is possible for the translator to choose whether to add an article or to make a noun plural without great difficulty, it is

also possible to show how Bower's complaint that Japanese is imprecise in its prepositions is not the insurmountable hurdle that he claims it is. In fact, prepositions in Japanese lead to greater freedom by offering the translator more choices. Turning once again to the same pear blossom poem, the preposition “*に*” (*ni*) occurs after the word moonlight. Kenkyusha's Lighthouse Japanese-English Dictionary gives some of the following English meanings for *ni*: to, at, in, on, for, by, and as (1250-1251). The words, to, at, on, for, and as can be easily discarded as options, because meaning would break down into something absurd like “Under pear blossoms / on moonlight...” which would then either reduce the woman into a fairy Peaseblossom or would even more improbably make the letter written on moonlight.

However, this menu of choices does offer two selections for a logical translation: “in” and “by”. The word “in” works slightly better than the word “by” because “in” becomes more inclusive by illuminating the pear blossoms, the letter and the woman. Whereas when the word “by” is used then the emphasis becomes on the missive as in “reading a letter by moonlight,” or “by moonlight reading a letter.” In these later two options, the moonlight now only illuminates the letter and disconnects the opening image of the flowers from the letter. However, neither of these selections is wrong. The ultimate choice reflects the degree of emphasis the translator places upon the relationship of the four images within the poem—the blossoms, the moonlight, the letter and the woman.

Once again Waley's argument, and Bower's agreement, that Japanese poetry is the most completely untranslatable, has long standing agreement. Waley's argument is similar to what Roman Jakobson writes about in his essay "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation." Jakobson begins by quoting Bertrand Russell's statement that nobody can understand cheese if they have never seen it. Jakobson then goes on to write:

If, however, we follow Russell's fundamental precept and place our "emphasis upon the linguistic aspects of traditional philosophical problems," then we are obliged to state that no one can understand the word "cheese" unless he has an acquaintance with the word in the lexical code of English (138).

By extension, nobody can understand Japanese poetry because we do not have the same lexical code and that is why Bower is lamenting that Japanese poetry lacks sentence structure. However, Jakobson does not end his argument with the idea that we require the exact same lexical code to understand "cheese". Jakobson goes on to state that while one given language might not have a word for cheese it could put together other words which form the same concept, or that things can be translated. In short, people, and thus their language, are adaptable and capable of absorbing new words and ideas.

This idea of how texts are translatable because they are human endeavors is a key idea behind Kwame Anthony Appiah's essay "Thick Translation:"

What we translate are utterances, things made with words by men and women, with voice or pen or keyboard, and those utterances are the products of actions, which like all actions are undertaken for reasons. Since the reasons can be complex and extensive, grasping an agent's reasons can be a difficult business (390).

This idea goes against Waley's and Bower's claim that Japanese poetry is untranslatable by claiming that since all texts are products made for a reason, they possess a purpose, and it is this purpose which makes things translatable,

even if the reason is difficult to comprehend or was unknown to the original writer. So when Buson wrote his pear blossom poem or any of his haiku, he had a reason or reasons, conscious or unconscious, for doing so. Therefore, translation becomes possible for any of his poems. Buson's quote about haiku, "Be separate from the ordinary and still use the ordinary" (156), provides a basis for understanding and thus framing his general, over-arching, poetic purpose in translated verse.

The poems that have been examined so far reveal varying moments within poetic composition. The purpose behind the pear blossom haiku with its capturing of an intimate, human moment; the repetitive movement of the sea going back and forth all day long with its meditative zen-like quality; and the plum blossoms, a symbol of youth and purity, falling into an abased world—each one possesses both similar and yet different ideas. All three poems similarly capture a moment, that slice of life vignette which reveals something larger. The differences are the varying scenes and the meaning of these scenes in and of themselves. Furthermore, Jakobson's idea that people, and their languages, are capable of absorbing new texts and ideas by understanding the reason of why the source text was written emphasizes the possibility of texts being translatable. Curiosity and the will to discover new ideas can lead to translation, and to understanding and poetical empathy on the part of the translator—an understanding which is missing in a lot of the translations in Bower's book, and indeed in a lot of translations of haiku in general.

3 Applying Theory to Translation:

By now it has been established that complete accuracy in translation is impossible because translators make choices during their writing process, and translations vary from strict correspondence to interpretive ones. This raises the obvious question: How have Yosa Buson's haiku been translated within this collection?

The first choice a translator of haiku has to make is which is more important, form or content? Eugene Nida wrote,

In poetry there is obviously a greater focus of attention upon formal elements than one normally finds in prose. Not that content is necessarily sacrificed in translation of a poem, but the content is necessarily constricted into certain formal molds. Only rarely can one reproduce both content and form in translation, and hence in general the form is usually sacrificed for the sake of content (154).

The translation methods used and followed throughout this collection concurs with Nida—content, image, and sense are prioritized. Therefore, the translations may not contain the correct syllable count. If they happen to naturally count out into 5/7/5 fine, but no moves have been made to force the poems in this way. Since usually Japanese words do not match English words such syllable equivalency is impractical. For example, "蚊屋" (*kaya*) in English is mosquito net—a two syllable word has become four syllables.

Yet, as a form, haiku contains more than just syllable count; a haiku also has to have a seasonal reference and convey a sense of a twist or a surprise within the closing line. Take for example the following poem:

183*

花 当 なら
一 販 道
木 ば たけ
の や

Nara michi ya
touki batake no
hana hitoki

On the Nara road
in a field of dong quai
a single cherry tree

Within the above poem the cherry tree becomes the seasonal reference and the twist or surprise.

The above poem is a direct translation, that is to say the words are as similar as possible and occur within the same line order. Throughout this collection, I began with direct translation and if it worked, that is to say if the translation paid the same emotional sum as the original, it was left alone. As the translation now stands, the only problematic image is *dong quai*, an English borrowing of a Chinese plant name. While dong quai is currently available in the United States in stores that sell herbal medicine, most people probably haven't heard of it, and probably do not know its purpose nor what it looks like while growing. Therefore, the only recourse because of poetic restrictions was to shore up the image within an endnote.

The endnote to the poem reads:

Touki, or dong quai, is an ancient Chinese/Korean/Japanese medicinal herb from the celery family that has purple stems and umbrella clusters of white flowers. It is used to treat cramps, infrequent periods,

irregular menstrual cycles, PMS, and problems associated with menopause. It is known as the female ginseng.

Reliance on endnotes is of course problematic. In an ideal world full of ideal translations, not one footnote would ever be needed because all the references would be completely known to the target audience. However, this is not possible. Instead, the goal of these translations has been to use endnotes only when necessary, I employ them here to convey information needed to understand cultural specifics like historical references, quotations of other poems or poets and the like, to reveal the sometimes multiple readings that are not able to be conveyed within a single poetic translation due to the separation between the source and target languages, to give the reader the ability to visualize the images, and to reveal the metaphors, plays upon meaning, and the artistry.

Take the above endnote as an example. Not only does it explain what *dong quai* looks like and thus enables a reader to visualize the images, it also gives the reader the ability to interpret the poem. Since cherry blossoms are symbols of the fleeting nature of youthful purity, it is most important that the flowers are blooming over a symbol of a woman who is either sexually experienced, or has moved beyond or is attempting to prolong her reproductive years. Since no cherry blossoms are falling in this haiku, the poem captures this precarious moment right before the descent into worldly or carnal knowl-

edge. This moment is a Zen moment, one capable of showing the importance of the past and future all made possible in this single now.

Another important element of methodology used in this translation involves transposition, or replacing one word by a different word of similar meaning. Take the following poem as an example. My first translation read:

58

日ぐれ哉
水に声なき
草霞み

Kusa kasumi
mizu ni koe naki
higure kana

The misty grass
silently cries
in the sunset

The first interpretive move was to replace the word misty with the word dewy. While the exact word in Japanese is misty or hazy, the following image is water crying silently. Mist or haze is too small or fine an image for the idea of tears whereas dew sounds heavier and conveys the idea. So the next translation read:

The dewy grass
silently cries
in the sunset

After arriving at the above moment in translation, my next step is to type in the original Japanese poem sometimes in whole or part into various search

engines with Buson's name either before or after the poem. Usually there are a plethora of sites, responses, ideas and interpretations, which range from more or less anonymous people airing their opinions to scholars of the Early Modern period. It is then a matter of sifting through this dialogue to see if I have already struck poetic gold.

What came up with the above poem involved a type of serendipity. There was a blog entry from an anonymous Japanese man made one hour before my lighting upon it. His viewed the poem as a landscape of a field with long grey spears of last years grass under which the vibrant green of new grass is springing up—all of which is wet with dew and that the falling dew was like somebody silent crying or weeping. He then went on to say how he preferred the image of a dying sun to a setting sun as an emotional correlation to the idea of weeping. For then the poem would become more of a death poem or a death haiku.

The poetic haiku tradition calls on the poet to compose their death poem, a last poetic statement to be recited or written shortly before death. Perhaps the most famous death poem is Matsuo Basho's, which reads:

Sick on an autumn journey
my spirit drifts
over withered fields

The Japanese blogger went on to say that he preferred the image of the dying sun along with the old, dead grass and the new grass weeping because he was suffering from terminal cancer and he only had a few more days left to

live. Therefore he was taking Buson's poem and claiming it as his death haiku, a statement that he felt revealed his own last days.

It should be noted that this was not Buson's death haiku (at the time of his death Buson recited three haiku in a row to his pupils). The last poem Buson wrote reads:

White plum blossoms
a dawn
in my late night

However, the new interpretation from the blogger changed the emotional weight of the poem for me. Going back to the second draft I realized, it would not move a reader towards that interpretation at all. So the next draft read:

The dew wet grass
silently weeps
in the dying sun

I kept the man's idea of the dying sun. Although, going from setting sun to dying sun is not a great leap, the emotional register is different. Both images contain the onset of night, but with the word dying the image of night takes on a new dimension. I also changed the dewy grass to the dew wet grass. Sonically, the poem sounds better with the two W sounds in the first line, which is repeated with the W in weeps. I also changed the word cry to weeps because the verb cry is also associated with a sound. Therefore weeps struggles less with the adverb silently while at the same time foreshadows the death metaphor that the poem now ends upon.

The above poem went through several steps to reach the final translation, and each step became a little more interpretive from the original literal meaning. Yet at the same time, the new translation does not stray all that far from the original. It remains still faithful, yet beautiful. However, there are other poems that went through more steps in translation and became more interpretive and less corresponding. These decisions were made in order that the poems might maintain their emotional weight. The struggle became to convey the brilliance of these poems in English without turning them into a series of opaque references. Yet, some of the poems are so anchored to the Middle-Edo Period, that they need quite hefty footnotes even in modern Japanese to explain the references. And if a language-one reader needs a long explanation, how much longer an explanation would a target reader require?

An example of a poem that depended more upon interpretation to convey emotional meaning was the following:

59*

霞	胡	指
哉	地	南
	に	車
	引	を
	去	
	ル	

Shinansha o
kochi ni hikisaru
kasumi kana

Southward bound
through barbarian lands —
mist

As this final interpretive poem stands it represents a moment in time which begins with the narrator traveling south through a landscape controlled by a wild barbaric people. The poem then twists the reader's assumption about who or what was southward bound by ending with the subject, mist. The word mist transforms everything into something mysterious, strange and exotic.

While the translation stands as a poem, it does not convey the multiple meanings, nor captures the embedded historical references. The opening line literally reads, "The South Pointing Chariot." There is great distance between these two openings. The challenge here is that this haiku is doing two different things at once: it is recounting the mythical foundation of China and is capturing that Zen moment of now.

The South Pointing Chariot was an oxen drawn cart which had a male doll with his right arm pointing outward. At the beginning of a journey the doll's arm was pointed south and then would automatically turn due to a series of axels and gears. While not the most accurate compass because it relied on gears and not magnetics, the South Pointing Chariot did accomplish its purpose. The story goes that the Yellow Emperor invented the chariot to defeat a barbarian king to the south who had conjured up a thick fog to hide his army. By defeating his enemy, the Yellow Emperor was able to form the first part of what was to become China.

The word barbarian then is literal—it is the barbarian's fog that the South Pointing Chariot is to maneuver through. However, the poem is more

than a very clever recounting of Chinese history: it also captures a Zen moment. Because mist feels mythical or oneiric with its fantastical swirling grey shapes, the landscape becomes timeless. The poem suggests that standing in the heavy mist, the poet is reliving that mysterious moment of history as if he were there. Furthermore, we the readers also become situated within the historical inclusiveness of the moment.

As can be easily seen, my translation is not corresponding. I have omitted the problematic image of the South Pointing Chariot since including it would start the poem with an obscure historical curiosity. However, the chariot was used to travel south, hence, “southward bound”. Furthermore, as a Japanese phrase does not have to state the subject, the poem now has two different subjects, the implied “I” of the poet, and the mist or fog. Therefore my translation opens up and invites multiple readings.

In many of the haiku throughout this collection, discerning the appropriate subject has involved some poetic debate. Harukiko Kindaichi, a Japanese literary critic states that in modern Japanese when the subject is unknown, the subject is by default the author. However, Kindaichi then goes on to write that assuming the poet is the unstated subject within Early Modern, or Edo Period, poetry becomes problematic because this was before the idea of the assumed narrator was codified. This standard might or might not have been true during Buson’s lifetime. Also the meaning of the poems can radically shift if an I is added in. In the haiku above, the poem works better with-

out an I. However, throughout this collection my approach varied based upon poetic needs. One example is in the opening haiku the “I” has been added to reveal the meaning or the feeling of the poem:

1*

老	山	ほ
の	ま	う
春	つ	ら
	り	い
	せ	の
	む	

Hourai no
yama matsuri semu
oi no haru

Hourai's New Year
decorations and I grow
old at spring

Here the I is added to give the emotional meaning of the poem, since it is not just a set of decorations growing old after the passing of the holiday—it is also the aging of the author that is being commented upon⁶.

Although each translation involved debates such as those characterized above, the volume cannot explain every poetic choice made within these translations. Ultimately, the poems must stand by themselves. What remains then is the result of much debate, deliberation, and constant rewriting and the methods used to convey the poetics of Buson have varied according to need. The opening statement of this essay that all translation is colonization is true, it over simplifies and does not adequately honor the undertakings of an artistic

⁶ During the Edo Period, New Years Day was sometime in February or March, was the first day of spring, and was also the day in which everybody became a year older.

translation project. Literary translation becomes an intimate study of another writer who was shaped by a different culture and place, and who may or might have not lived in a different time. This study involves a constant surrendering of one's own aesthetics. Yet at the same time, the translator can only work within the limitations of his or her linguistic and poetic sensibilities to form a work of art that can move a reader in a similar way as the original. The endeavor of translation recalls the old Zen adage spoken to initiates: one has to study the masters until their eyebrows and yours are intertwined.

Pronunciation Guide and End Notes:

As some readers might wish to sound out the poems in Japanese, all of the translations include a Romanized transcription of the original. For those that know Japanese, sometimes the transcriptions might seem to vary from normal Japanese pronunciation; however, the variations were based upon *furigana*—a Japanese pronunciation guide.

The key to pronouncing Japanese correctly lies within the vowels. There are five major vowel sounds: A, I, U, E, O. They are pronounced as follows: A as in ah, bah or ta; I as in me, see or he; U as in moo, Sue, woo; E as in hey, way, they; and O as in so, mow to toe. There are three different ways of writing a long vowel, one is to put a dash above it, one is to follow the vowel with an H, and the other is to follow the main vowel with a u. I have followed the third way throughout this text.

After the vowels the consonants more or less follow English pronunciation. Therefore words like *kumo* (cloud) would be pronounced koomoe. One of the more difficult transcriptions to follow involves the phonetic letter ㄩ which can be pronounced ha or wa, depending on if the letter is part of a word (ha) or if it is standing alone and acting as a topic marker particle (wa). Part of the difficulty in this is that in Japanese writing there is no spacing between words. If Chinese characters (Kanji) are being used this doesn't represent a problem; however, if the poem is written entirely in hiragana (one of the two phonetic alphabets) then it can sometimes be problematic. One example

of this situation would be ははは, which would be transcribed as haha (mother) wa and not hahaha. The other letter which can cause debate is を and is spelled wo but is pronounced o when it is not part of a word and is functioning as a subject marker. Therefore, in order for readers who are not familiar with Japanese to pronounce the poems correctly, the transcriptions are written to show how the words are pronounced and not how they are spelled.

As for the order and numbering of the poems, all of the poems are numbered and are in the same sequence as arranged by Takai Kito, Buson's prize student. Furthermore, the poems are also organized by season, the traditional manner of that of the *Kokinshu*, also known as the *Kokin Wakashu*, a 21 volume set of poetry that was arranged by season and was published around 920.

Finally, any number that contains a * mark shows that the poem has a endnote. The reason for endnotes rather than footnotes at the bottom of the page, is that I wanted the poems to stand as poems and not as historical or cultural curiosities. Also I did not want several footnotes to clutter up the beauty of the page. Yet at the same time, there is the need to maintain both accuracy and cultural reference so that the reader can fully understand the artistic merit of the poem—hence the use of endnotes.

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春の俳句

Spring Poems

1*

老の春
山まつりせむ
ほうらいの

Hourai no
yama matsuri semu
oi no haru

Hourai festival's
New Year's decorations and I grow
old at spring

2*

かしらより
今朝や鰯の
日の光

Hi no hikari
kesa ya iwashi no
kashirayori

This new year morning sun
reflects of spears decorated
by sardine heads

3*

長者ぶり
雑煮かゆるや
三碗の

Sanwan no
zouni kayuru ya
chouja buri

Three lacquered bowls
of rice-cake porridge —
a millionaire's feast

“Separation”

4*

うぐひすの
あちこちとするや
小家かち

Uguisu no
achikochi tosuru ya
koie kachi

Warblers
darting here and there between
elegant nests

5*

鶯の
声遠き日も
暮にけり

Uguisu no
koe touki hi mo
kure ni keru

As the sun sets
the warbler's distant voice
also ends

6

うぐひすの
麿相がましき
初音哉

Uguisu no
sosau ga mashiki
hasune kana

The warbler's
crude aspect —
a first song

7*

鶯を
雀歟か
と見し
それも
春

Uguisu o
suzume ka to mishi
soremo haru

Warblers
sparrows? See —
it must be spring

A title for a painting

8*

うぐひすや
賢過たる
軒の梅

Uguisu ya
kashiko sugitaru
ken no ume

The warbler —
so overly clever
in the plum's shelter

9

鶯の
日枝をうしろに
高音哉

Uguisu no
hie o ushiro ni
takane kana

The nightingale's light
comes out from under branches
a high song

10

飯時分
家内揃ふて
うぐひすや

Uguisu ya
kanai soroute
meshijibun

A warbler
and all the household are sitting —
mealtime

11

高う飛ぶ
茨くぐりて
鶯や

Uguisu ya
ibara kugurite
takou tobu

The nightingale
dives under thorns
then soars

12

口明て
啼やちいさき
うぐひすの

Uguisu no
naku ya chiisaki
kuchiaite

The warbler
cries from its small
open mouth

The Imperial Palace's spring scenery in the pale blue dawn

13

青柳や
我大君の
艸か木か

Aoyagi ya
waga oukimi no
kusaka kika

Green willow —
my sovereign's
grass? tree?

14*

若草に
根をわすれたる
柳かな

Wakagusa ni
ne o wasuretaru
yanagi kana

In young grass
forgotten roots —
a willow

15

梅ちりて
さびしく成し
やなぎ哉

Ume chirite
sabishiku narishi
yanagi kana

Growing sad
as the plum blossoms fall
a willow

16*

捨やらで
柳さしけり
雨のひま

suteyarade
yanagi sashikeri
ame no hima

Abandoned
the willow shines
between the rains

17

青柳や
芹生の里の
せりの中

Aoyagi ya
serifu no sato no
seri no naka

A green willow
in the middle of the village's
parsley patch

18

出る杭を
うたうとしたり
柳かな

Deru kuhi o
utau toshitari
yanagi kana

From out the picket fence
singing through the years
a willow

Souan Hermitage

19*

二もとの
梅に遅速を
愛す哉

Futa moto no
ume ni chisoku o
aisu kana

On two branches
the plum blossoms bloom one by one —
love

20

うめ折て
皺手にかこつ
薫かな

Ume orite
shiwade ni kakotsu
kaori kana

Picking plum branches
my wrinkled hands
are fragrant

21*

白梅や
墨芳しき
鴻鷗館

Hakubai ya
sumi kanbashiki
kourokan

The fragrance
of white plum blossoms and ink
Kourokan Palace

22

垣の外
誰むかしより
しら梅や

Shira ume ya
taka mukashiyori
kaki no gai

This white plum tree
was along time ago
outside the fence

23

梅がもと
場もふけりた
舞舞の

Mai mai no
niha maukerita
ume ga moto

Dancing, dancing
in a foot-worn track
round the plum tree

24

うめの宿
して出ずなりぬ
出べくと

Izubekuto
shite dezunarinu
ume no yado

I have to leave
but I don't want to
The Plum Inn

25

宿の梅
折取ほどに
なりにけり

Yado no ume
oritoru hodo ni
nari ni keru

The inn's plum branches
have become large enough
to be picked

Even while doing the impossible, washing dishes with a wooden pestle, the rulers are admonished to be punctual — the wise reign of spring

26

隈々に
残る寒さや
うめの花

Sumizumi ni
nokoru samusa ya
ume no hana

Everywhere
coldness remains —
plum blossoms

27

しら梅や
北野々茶店に
すまひ取

Shira ume ya
kitanono chaya ni
sumahi tori

The white plums
at Kitanono Tea House
have been reserved

28

うめ散や
 螺鈿こぼるゝ
 卓の上

Ume chiru ya
 raden koboruru
 shoku no ue

Mother of pearl
 scattered on the table —
 fallen plum blossoms

29*

梅咲て
 帯買ふ室の
 遊女かな

Ume saite
 obi kau muro no
 yuujo kana

Flowering plums —
 investing in an obi
 a Muro prostitute

30*

源八を
 わたりて梅の
 あるじ哉

Genbachi no
 watarite ume no
 aruji kana

At Genbachi
 plum blossoms cross the bridge —
 mastery

31

梅が宿
 人あるさまや
 燈を置カで

Hi o okade
 hito aru sama ya
 ume ga yado

Highlighted people
 place garden lamps
 The Plum Inn

Ah what a difficult thing is syllabary spelling. If the sound makes sense let us spell the way we want.

32*

うめじやうら
 どれがむめやら
 梅咲ぬ

Ume sakinu
 dore ga mumeyara
 umeji ya yara

The flowering plums
 are they spelled “mume”
 or “ume”

33

月夜哉
 枯木にもどる
 しら梅の

Shira ume no
 kareki ni modoru
 tsukiyo kana

The grey plum blossoms
 on the dead tree come back
 in the moonlit night

34*

小豆売
 小家の梅の
 つぼみがち

Azuki uru
 koie no ume no
 tsubomi gachi

Azuki beans sold
 from a small shop with budding
 plum blossoms

35

梅遠近
 南すべく
 北すべく

Ume achikochi
 minami subeku
 kita subeku

Here and there plum blossoms
 falling in the south
 falling in the north

An early spring

36*

なには女や
 京を寒がる
 御忌詣

Naniwa me ya
 kyou o samugaru
 gyokimaude

The Osaka woman
 shivering in cold Kyoto —
 a funeral service

37

御忌の鐘
ひびくや谷の
氷まで

Gyoki no kane
hibikuya tani no
kooi made

Funeral bells resound
turning the valley water
into ice

38*

やぶ入の
夢や小豆の
煮るうち

Yaburi no
yume ya azuki no
nieru uchi

Dreaming
of Servants' Day — azuki beans
boiling at home

39*

藪いりや
よそ目ながらの
愛宕山

Yaburi ya
yosome nagara no
atagosan

On Servants' Day
apologizing for leaving
Mt. Atago

40*

わすれ草
守袋を
やぶいりや

Yaburi ya
mamori bukuro o
wasuregusa

On Servants' Day
an amulet case forgotten
in day lilies

41*

傘の下
鉄漿もらひ来る
養父入や

Yaburi ya
kane morai kuru
kasa no shita

On Servants' Day
a gift of tooth blackening
under an umbrella

42*

男かな
中山寺の
やぶ入は

Yaburi wa
Nakayamadera no
otoko kana

Servants' Day
even for Nakayama Temple's
sexton

On Man Day

43*

片 袴 七
 む の く
 す の 紐 さ
 び の や

Nana kusa ya
 hakama no himo no
 katamusibi

Seven herbs
 and my hakama's belt
 in an overhand knot

44

芹 径 此
 の 尽 け
 中 たり り
 に

Korekiri ni
 komichi tsukitari
 seri no naka

Only here
 could a path end surrounded
 by parsley

45

せ 古
 り の 寺
 中 や
 ほ
 う
 ろ
 く
 捨
 る

Furudera ya
 houroku sutsuru
 seri no naka

At an old temple
 an earthenware pot abandoned
 in parsley

While vacationing with Kito at Wakinohama beach

46*

宵の春
ふとん敷たり
筋違に

Sujikai ni
futon shikitari
yoi no haru

The futon
spread at an angle —
in the spring eve

47

宵の春
僧のかり寝や
肘白き

Hiji shiroki
sou no kari ne ya
yoi no haru

The white arm
of the fitfully sleeping monk
in the spring eve

48

守良かな
尊き御所を
春の夜に

Haru no yu ni
tattoki gyosho o
morui kana

In the spring evening
A sacred old imperial palace
stands guard

49

春月や
印金堂の
木間より

Shun getsu ya
Inkindau no
kono mayori

Springtime
paused in Inkindau Temple's
trees

Listening to the Koto on a spring evening

50*

簫湘の
鴈のなみだや
おぼろ月

Soushyu no
kari no namida ya
oboro zuki

On Soushyu River
a wild goose's tears —
a hazy moon

51

折釘に
烏帽子かけたり
春の宿

Orikugi ni
eboshi kaketari
haru no yado

My cap is hanging
on a bent nail —
the Spring Inn

52*

宵の春
狐化たり
公達に

Kindachi ni
kitsune baketari
yoi no haru

Lord master
the ghostly fox
in the spring eve

While the Tang poet, So Toubu, regretted the passing of spring, Sei Shonagon praised the violet spring morning

53

其中に
宵あけぼの
春の夜や

Haru no yo ya
yoi akebono no
sono naka ni

In the spring night
the time between evening and dawn
is best

54

おぼろ月
内裏拝まん
女俱して

Onna gushite
dairi ogamon
oboro zuki

Together with a woman
at the Imperial Palace worshipping
the misty moon

55*

おぼろ月
女やは有
薬盗む

Kusuri nusumu
onna ya wa aru
oboro zuki

A woman has
stolen the elixir of life
the hazy moon

56

朧月
宿す小家や
よき人を

Yoki hito o
yadosu koie ya
oboro zuki

A good man
living in a small house
the misty moon

57

朧月
足でぬぐ夜や
さしぬきを

Sashinuki o
ashi de nugu yo ya
oboru zuki

At night pulling off
my shashinuki with my feet —
the hazy moon

Viewing a field

58

草霞み
水に声なき
日ぐれ哉

Kusa kasumi
mizu ni koe naki
higure kana

The dewy grass
silently weeps
in the dying sun

59*

指南車を
胡地に引去ル
霞哉

Shinansha o
kochi ni hikisaru
kasumi kana

Southward bound
through barbarian lands —
mist

60

高麗舟の
よらで過ゆく
霞かな

Komabune no
yorade sugiyuku
kasumi kana

An ancient Korean boat
slowly passes through
mist

61

春の水
日暮んとする
橋なくて

Hashi nakute
hi kuren tosuru
haru no mizu

The sun sets
and there is no bridge —
spring water

62*

橋の下
四条五条の
春水や

shyunsui ya
shijou gojou
hashi no shita

Spring water
under the Shijo
Gojo bridges

63*

はるの水
わたりて濁る
足よはの

Ashi yowa no
watarite nigoru
haru no mizu

My weak legs
cross through muddying
spring water

64

春の水
 背戸に田作らん
 とぞ思ふ

Haru no mizu
 sedo ni tatsukuran
 to-zo omou

Spring water
 the field at my backdoor
 wants tilling

65*

春の水に
 うたた鵜繩の
 稽古哉

Haru no mizu ni
 utata unaha no
 keiko kana

In spring water
 more and more roped cormorants
 practicing

66

蛇を追ふ
 鱒のおもひや
 春の水

Hebi o ou
 masu no omoi ya
 haru no mizu

A snake
 and a heavy trout fight
 in spring water

67

春雨や
人住みて煙
壁を洩る

Harusame ya
hito sumite keburu
kabe o moru

Spring rain
escaping from the walls of houses
smoke

68

物種の
袋ぬらしつ
春のあめ

Monodane no
fukuro nurashitsu
haru no ame

A seed bag
soaked in
spring rain

69

春雨や
身にふる頭巾
着たりけり

Harusame ya
mi ni furu zokin
kitari keru

In spring rain
I've gotten soaked even while
wearing a hood

70

ぬるゝほど
小磯の小貝
春雨や

Harusame ya
koiso no kogai
nururu hodo

A fine spring rain
wets the small beach's
small shells

71*

春の雨
燈を呼声や
滝口に

Takiguchi ni
hi o yobu koe ya
haru no ame

At Takiguchi
a guard calls for a light —
spring rain

72*

春の雨
池の水かさや
ぬなは生ふ

Nunawa ou
ike no mikasa ya
haru no ame

Watershield sprouts
in the increasing lake water
spring rain

A dream poem

73*

あはれなる
もの書ぬ身の
春雨や

Harusame ya
mono kakanu mino
aware naru

I cannot write
in the spring rain —
how nice

74

けふも有
暮なんとし
はるさめや

Harusame ya
kurenantoshite
kyo mo ari

In spring rain
existence becomes dark
like today

75*

蓑と傘
ものがたりゆく
春雨や

Harusame ya
monogatari yuku
mino to kasa

Two walk in spring rain sharing
a straw raincoat and an umbrella-
a love story

76*

柴漬の
沈みもやうで
春の雨

Fushizuke no
shizumi mo yarade
haru no ame

A wooden fish-trap
submerged in
spring rain

77*

春雨や
いさよふ月の
海半

Harusame ya
isayou tsuki no
umi nakaba

In spring rain
the departing full moon
half in the sea

78*

はるさめや
綱が袂に
小でうちん

Harusame ya
tsuna ga tamoto ni
kodyouchin

In spring rain
on Tsuna's kimono sleeve
a small light

79

古庭に
茶釜花さく
椿かな

furuniwa ni
chasen hana saku
tsubaki kana

In an old garden
a camellia blooms —
a tea-whisk

80*

あじきなや
椿落ちうづむ
にはたずみ

Ajikina ya
tsubaki ochiuzumu
niwa tazumi

How sadly
the nodding camellias fall
hiding a puddle

81*

玉人の
座右にひらく
つばき哉

Tamasuri no
zaiu ni hiraku
tsubaki kana

Gems opening
by the jeweler's side
camellias

82*

袖
だ
た
み
 その
家
々
の
 初
午
や

Hatsuuma ya
sono ie ie no
sodedatami

The Hatsuuma Festival
in every household
quickly folded kimonos

83

鶏
の
声
 鳥
羽
四
塚
の
 は
つ
む
ま
や

Hatsumuma ya
tobayotsutzuka no
tori no koe

Hatsuuma Festival
in Southern Kyoto —
crowing roosters

84

日
の
あ
た
る
 物
種
う
り
に
 初
午
や

Hatsuuma ya
monodaneuri ni
hi no ataru

At Hatsuuma Festival
people selling flowers
in sunshine

85

蒼とは
なれもしらずよ
落のとう

Tsubomito wa
naremo shirazuyo
fukinotau

Buds
you bloom without knowledge —
butterbur

86

命婦より
ぼた餅たばす
彼岸哉

Miyoubu yori
botamochi tabasu
higan kana

The court lady's
rice dumplings are a present —
the equinox

87

そこそこに
京見過しぬ
田にし売

Sokosoko ni
kyo misugoshinu
tanishi uri

In such a hurry
he couldn't stop to see Kyoto —
the snail seller

88

田螺あへ
津守の里や
なつかしき

Natsukashiki
tsumori no sato ya
tanishi ae

Nostalgic
eating Tsumori Village's
mud snails in dressing

89

たにしかな
堪えて水澄
静さに

Shizukesa ni
taete mizusumu
tanishi kana

In the stillness
enduring the clear water
mud snails

90

戸を破る
驚破田にしの
鴈立て

Kari tachite
soyoya tanishi no
to o tozuru

The surprised mud snail
shuts its door —
a landing goose

91

雁行て
門田たも遠く
おもはるる

Kari yukite
kadotamo tooku
omo waruru

The flying geese
make the rice-field gate
so far away

92*

帰る鴈
田ごとの月の
雲る夜に

Kaeru kari
tagoto no tsuki no
kumoru yo ni

Returning geese
the moon reflected in every paddy
this cloud dappled night

93

きのふ去ニ
けふいに鴈の
なき夜哉

Kinou ini
kyou ini kari no
naki yo kana

Some left yesterday
and some left today —
no geese this evening

In outskirts of Kyoto

94

陽炎や
名もしらぬ虫の
白き飛

Kagerou ya
na mo shiranu mushi no
shiraki tobu

In the simmering air
nameless insects
flying white

95

かげろふや
箆に土を
めづる人

Kagerou ya
ajika ni tsuchi o
mezuru hito

In the heat waves
a bamboo basket of earth
loved by a man

Poems written by the Basho Hut

96*

畑うつや
うごかぬ雲も
なくなりぬ

Hatautsu ya
ugokanu kumo mo
nakunarinu

While plowing a field
the clouds don't move
yet they pass away

97

鐘が鳴
こちの在所の
はた打よ

Hatauchi yo
kochi no zaishyo no
kane ga naru

While plowing the field
the country town's
bell rings

98

鐘供養
木間の寺の
畑打や

Hatautsu ya
konoma no tera no
kanekuyou

While plowing the field
through the trees a temple's
funeral bell

At Ohara, Northern Kyoto

99*

清水哉
中におぼろの
春雨の

Harusame no
naka ni oboro no
shimizu kana

Spring rain
an empress reflected in the water
the hazy moon

100

日くるくに
 雉子うつ春の
 山辺かな

Hi kururu ni
 kiji utsu haru no
 yamabe kana

As the sun sets
 hunting pheasants —
 spring mountains

101

柴刈に
 砦を出るや
 雉の声

Shibakari ni
 toride o deru ya
 kiji no koe

While gathering firewood
 the fort is haunted by
 the pheasant's voice

102*

亀山へ
 通ふ大工や
 きじの声

Kameyama e
 toufu daiku ya
 kiji no koe

At Kameyama Mansion
 letting the carpenter pass
 the pheasant's voice

103

兀山や
何にかくれて
きじのこえ

Hageyama ya
nan ni kakurete
kiji no koe

On the bald mountain
where is it hiding?
The pheasant's voice

104

むくと起て
雉追ふ犬や
宝でら

Mukuto okite
kiji ou inu ya
takara dera

Get up and look
a dog is chasing a pheasant
at Takara Temple

105

木瓜の陰に
兎類ひ住ム
きぎす哉

Boke no in ni
kaho tagui sumu
kigisu kana

The melancholic quince bush
perfectly matches
the pheasant

106*

妹が垣根
 さません草の
 花咲ぬ

Imo ga kakine
 samisen kusa no
 hana sakine

A young lover's hedge
 shepherd's purses
 in bloom

107*

紅梅や
 比丘より劣る
 比丘尼寺

Koubai ya
 biku yori otoru
 bikuni dera

The red plum blossoms
 at the monk's temple are worse
 than the nun's

108

紅梅の
 落花燃らむ
 馬の糞

Koubai no
 rakka moyu ramu
 uma no kuso

Red plum blossoms
 scatter probably burning
 on horse shit

109

垣越に
ものうちかたる
接木哉

Kakigoshi ni
mono uchi kataru
tsugiki kana

Through the fence
talking about household things
a grafted tree

110

裏門の寺
に逢着す
蓬かな

Uramon no tera
ni houchiyakusu
yomogi kana

The back gate
to the temple faces
wormwood

111*

畑うちや
法三章の
札のもと

Hata uchi ya
housanshou no
fudanomoto

Fudanomoto
still follows ancient laws —
plowing fields

112*

八平氏
草の武蔵の
きじ啼や

Kiji naku ya
kusa no musashi no
Heishiji

The pheasant's call
chivalry hidden in the grass
The 8 Taira clans

113

駅舎
坂を下りの
きじ鳴や

Kiji naku ya
saka o kudari no
tabiyadori

The pheasant's cry
at the bottom of a hill—
a stage coach hut

114*

入日哉
尾をふむ春の
山鳥の

Yamadori no
bi o fumu haru no
irihi kana

The copper pheasant's
tail goes through spring's
setting sun

115

遅キ日や
雉子の下りいる
橋の上

Osoki hi ya
kiji no ori iru
hashi no ue

In the long spring day
pheasants swoop down
onto a bridge

116

遅き日の
つもりて遠き
むかしかな

Osoki hi no
tsumorite tohoki
mukashi kana

In the long spring day
planning to go so far away
a long time ago

117

春の海
終日の
のたりのたり哉

Haru no umi
hinemosu notari
notari kana

The spring sea
all day long back and forth
back and forth

118

山 鳥 畠
 かけ さ う
 に へ つ
 啼 や
 ぬ

hata utsu ya
 tori sae nakanu
 yama kage ni

While plowing the fields
 if only the birds didn't cry
 in the mountain's shadow

119

あ 五 耕
 る 石 の や
 じ 粟 の
 兒

Tagayasu ya
 gokoko no zoku no
 aruji gao

Cultivating
 25 bushels of millet
 the master's face

120

親 飛
 雀 か
 は
 す
 や
 た け
 ご ー
 ろ や

Tobika hasu ya
 take gokoro ya
 oya suzume

Flying through lotuses
 and bamboo — the heart
 of sparrow parents

121

大津絵に
糞落しゆく
燕かな

Otsu ei ni
fun otoshi yuku
tsubame kana

On a painting of Otsu
scattered droppings —
swallows

122

大和路の
宮もわら屋も
つばめ哉

Yamatoji no
miya mo wara ya mo
tsubame kana

On ancient Japanese roads
in shabby straw shrines and houses
swallows

123

つばくらや
水田の風に
吹れ兒

Tsubakura ya
mizuta no kaze ni
fukare gaho

Camellias
in a windy rice-paddy —
blowing faces

124

燕啼て
夜蛇をうつ
小家哉

Tsubame nakite
yoruhebi o utsu
koie kana

A swallow cries
as a night-snake strikes
its poor house

125

曙の
むらさきの幕や
春の風

Akebono no
murasaki no baku ya
haru no kaze

Dawn —
a purple curtain
in a spring breeze

126

野ばかもの
法師が旅や
春のかぜ

No hakamono
houshi ga ryou ya
haru no kaze

Wearing a haka
a Buddhist priest journeys
in spring wind

127

片町に
さらさら染るや
春の風

Katamachi ni
sara sa somuru ya
haru no kaze

In Katamachi City
the pottery is imbued with
spring wind

128

のうれんに
東風吹いせの
出店哉

Nouren ni
kochi fukui seno
demise kana

The east spring wind blows
through a curtain —
a small shop

129

河内路や
東風吹送る
巫女が袖

kawauchiji ya
kochi fuki okuru
miko ga sode

On Kawauchi Road
the east spring wind wafts over
a shrine maiden's sleeve

130

月に聞て
蛙ながむる
田面かな

Tsuki ni kikite
kawazu nagamuru
tanomo kana

The moon listens
to a frog staring up
from a rice paddy

131

闇に座して
遠き蛙を
きく夜哉

Kaku ni zashite
toki kawazu o
kiku yu kana

Sitting in a palace
a distant frog
listening to night

132

苗代の
色紙に遊ぶ
かはづかな

Nawashiro no
shikiji ni asobu
kawazu kana

In a bed of rice-seedlings
square as drawing paper
playing frogs

133

啼蛙
 夜は夜明ケよと
 日は日くれよ

Hi wa hi kure yo
 yo wa yo ake yoto
 naku kawazu

From sun up to sun down
 from evening to dawn
 singing frogs

134*

蛙哉
 もどる夜鳥羽の
 連哥して

Renga shite
 modoru yo toba no
 kawazu kana

Composing Renka
 while returning to Toba
 frogs

135

かはづかな
 首水かけ論の
 独鈷鎌

Tokkokamakubi
 mizukakeran no
 kawazu kana

Crooked necks
 in an endless argument
 frogs

136*

うつつなき
つまみごころの
胡蝶哉

Utsutsunaki
tsumami gokoro no
kotefu kana

A dream —
the soul picked up
by a butterfly

137*

暁の
雨やすぐろの
薄はら

Akatsuki no
ame ya sugurono
susuki hara

At daybreak
rain in black burned fields
greens new pampas grass

138

よもすがら
音なき雨や
種俵

Yomosugara
otonaki ame ya
tanedawara

All night
in a soundless rain
a seed-bag

139

古河の
流を引つ
種おろし

Furukawa no
nagare o hikitsu
tane oroshi

Channelling water
from Furukawa River
to sow seeds

140

しのゝめに
小雨降出す
焼野哉

Shinonome ni
kosame furidasu
yakeno kana

At day break
a light rain begins falling
in burnt fields

Walking along a river on a spring day Kosobe no Nyudo wanted to buy a small brocaded silk bag for Noin Hoshi before he went down from the mountains. However Kosobe found some dried frogs which he gave instead. Noin gave Kosobe a return present of wood chips. Both were pleased.

141*

山吹や
井手を流る
鉦屑

Yamabuki ya
ide o nagaruru
kannakutzu

Yellow roses
drifting in Ide River —
wood chips

142

居りたる
舟を上れば
すみれ哉

Suwaritaru
fune o agareba
sumire kana

Staying in
a boat going up stream
violets

143*

骨拾ふ
人にしたしき
董かな

Kotsuhiro
hito ni shitashiki
sumire kana

A bone gatherer
sifting through the ashes —
a violet

144

わらび野や
いざ物焚ん
枯つゝじ

Warabi no ya
iza monotakan
kare tsutsuji

In a field of bracken
gathering firewood
dead azaleas

145*

野とゝもに
 焼る地藏の
 しきみ哉

No totomo ni
 yakuru Jizou no
 shikimi kana

In a burnt field
 a child's blackened guardian statue
 with grave branches

146

つつじ野や
 あらぬ所に
 麦畠

Tsutsuji no ya
 aranu tokoro ni
 mugibatake

Azaleas
 in an un-expected place —
 wheat fields

147

つつじ咲て
 石移したる
 嬉しさよ

Tsutsuji saite
 ishi utsushitaru
 ureshisayo

Blooming azaleas
 can even move a stone
 with delight

148*

躑躅哉
出てうれし野の
近道へ

Chikamichi e
dete ureshi no no
tsutsuji kana

On a short cut
through Ureshino field —
azaleas

149

飯白し
片山里の
つつじ咲て

Tsutsuji saite
katayamazato no
meshi shiroshi

Blooming azaleas —
in a remote mountain village
eating white rice

150*

つつじ哉
我頼光の
岩に腰

Iwa ni koshi
ware raikuwau no
tsutsuji kana

Sitting on a rock
I am the Raiko
of azaleas

The Doll Festival

151*

古雛や
むかしの人の
袖几帳

Furubina wa
Mukashi no hito no
sodegichyau

An old doll
timidly hides its mouth
a sleeve for a screen

152

箱を出す
顔わすれめや
雛二対

Hako o deru
kao wasureme ya
hina ni tsui

Taking a pair of dolls
out from their boxes —
forgotten faces

153*

たらちねの
つままずありや
雛の鼻

Tarachine no
tsuma mazu ari ya
hina no hana

Picking up
a cute doll by pinching
her doll's nose

154

出代や
春さめざめと
古葛籠

Degawari ya
haru samezame to
furutsutzura

Relief appears
spring rain raining and
an old suitcase

155*

雛見世の
灯を引ころや
春の雨

Hinamise no
hi o hikukoro ya
haru no ame

At the Doll Market
it's time to take in the lights
a spring rain

156

雛祭る
都はづれや
桃の月

Hina matsuru
miyako hatzure ya
momo no tsuki

While in the countryside
the Girl's Doll Festival is happening
under the peach moon

157

桃花
牛に
ならば
喰ふて
寝て

Kuute nete
ushi ni naraba
momo no hana

Eating, drinking, sleeping
like cows under
peach blossoms

158

ももの
花
吼る
犬あり
商人を

Akindo o
hoyuru inu ari
momo no hana

The shop keeper
with the howling dog has
peach blossoms

159

小家哉
桃に
したし
き
さくら
より

Sakura yori
momo ni shitashiki
koie kana

Instead of cherry blossoms
peach blossoms would fit
this little house

160*

家中衆に
さむしろ振ふ
ももの宿

Kachiyuushiyu ni
samushiro furuu
momo no yado

At home shaking straw mats
for government officials
to view peach blossoms

161

几巾
きのふの空の
ありどころ

Ikanobori
kinou no sora no
aridokoro

A kite flies
in today's sky
at the same place

162

やぶいりの
またいで過ぬ
几巾の糸

Yabuiiri no
mata ide suginu
ika no ito

Servant's day
still hasn't passed —
flying kites

The light airing of horse hooves

163

散
さ
くら
蹄
の
か
ぜ
や
木
の
下
が

Ko no shita ga
hitzume no kaze ya
chiru sakura

Under the trees
in the wind of hooves
falling cherry petals

164

桜
哉
夢
は
か
ぜ
し
の
手
ま
く
ら
の

Te makura no
yume wa kazeshino
sakura kana

Arm for a pillow
I dream of a beautiful woman
and wake to cherry blossoms

165

山
ざ
くら
徒
に
見
過
ぬ
剛
力
は

Gauriki wa
tada ni mi suginu
yama zakura

A mountain guide
usually doesn't overlook
mountain cherries

Kato Kyotai is now in Fushimi. We enjoyed our companionship in Saga.

166*

夜桃林を
出であかつき嵯峨
桜人

Yoru taurin o
idete akatsuki saga o
sakurabito

After night in the peach forest
I'm also enjoying the dawn in Saga
cherry blossoms

167

暮んとす
春ををしほの
山ざくら

Kurentosu
haru o woshiho no
yamazakura

As the season ends
spring pushes open
the mountain cherry

168*

銭買て
入るやよしのの
山ざくら

Zeni kaute
iru ya yoshino no
yama zakura

Getting pennies
to climb up the Yoshino mountains
for cherries

Drooping Cherries

169*

い
ど
ぎ
く
ら
雨
も
る
宿
や
ゆ
き
暮
て

Yuki kurete
ame moru yado ya
itozakura

Melting snow
drips through a crack in the roof —
cherry petals

170*

山
ざ
く
ら
松
に
吹
れ
て
哥
屑
の

Utakutzu no
matsu ni fukarete
yamazakura

Bad poetry
blowing through the pines —
mountain cherries

171*

山
桜
散
り
と
も
見
ゆ
れ
ま
だ
き
と
も

Mada kitomo
chiri tomo miyure
yamazakura

Watching blossoms open
even as blossoms fall —
mountain cherries

172

嵯峨ひと日
閑院様の
さくら哉

Saga hito hi
kanninsama no
sakura kana

From the people of Saga
a sun — Mr. Kannin's
cherry blossoms

173

みよし野の
ちか道寒し
山桜

Miyoshino no
chika michi samushi
yamazakura

On a short cut
to Yoshino —
cold mountain cherries

174

旅人の
鼻まだ寒し
初ざくら

Tabibito no
hana mada samushi
hajizakura

The wayfarer's
nose looks so cold —
the first cherry

175

山
ぎ
く
ら
日
は
照
つ
け
て
海
手
よ
り

Umi te yori
hi wa teritsukete
yamazakura

Near the sea
since the dry sunny weather
mountain cherries

At Yoshino

176

よ
し
の
川
桜
に
近
し
花
に
遠
く

Hana ni tooku
sakura ni chikashi
yoshinogawa

Cherry blossoms framed
by faraway clouds of blossoms
Yoshino River

177

野
道
か
な
我
家
遠
き
花
に
暮
て

Hana ni kurete
wagaie touki
no michi kana

The cherries are darkening
and my house is so faraway
down this small path

178

花ちるや
おもたき笈の
うしろより

Hana chiru ya
omotaki oi no
ushiro yori

Carrying on my back
a heavy wicker pannier
and fallen blossoms

179*

花の御能
過て夜を泣く
浪花人

Hana no onou
sugite yo o naku
naniwabito

Moved to tears
by a night of Noh and flower viewing
Osaka people

180*

阿古久曾の
さしぬきふるふ
落花哉

Akokuso no
sashinuki furuu
rakka kana

A dirty boy's
divided skirt brushed clean
of fallen blossoms

The day leaving Koyasan

181*

謡 花 かく
か な に 真 住
な 田 が て

Kakure sumite
hana ni sanada ga
utai kana

Sanada
living hidden in blossoms —
a Noh song

182

流 高 玉
れ 野 川
去 の 花
に

Tamagawa ni
kouya no hana ya
nagare saru

In Tamagawa River
Koyasan's cherry blossoms
float away

183*

花 当 なら
一 販 道
木 ば た け
の の

Nara michi ya
touki batake no
hana hitoki

On the Nara road
in a field of dong quai
a single cherry tree

Leaving Arashiyama at dusk

184

花に暮し
人はいづこの
嵯峨へ帰る

Saga e kaeru
hito wa itzuko no
hana ni kureshi

Returning to Saga
where are all the people —
the blossoms are darkening

185

消る時
嵯峨のともし火
花の香や

Hana no ko ya
saga no tomoshibi
kiyuru toki

Fragrant cherry blossoms —
Saga's torches
fading with time

Rainy days while vacationing in Arashiyama

186*

花衣
蓑やあらしの
筏士の

Ikadashi no
mino ya arashi no
hanagoromo

A raftsman's
straw raincoat in a storm
coated in blossoms

187*

花見かな
 後の世かけて
 傾城は

Keisei wa
 nochinoyo kakete
 hanami kana

A courtesan
 risks her purity
 cherry blossom viewing

188*

白拍子
 帰さにくし
 花に舞ハで

Hana ni mawade
 kaeru sa nikushi
 shirabyoushi

It's so hard to leave
 as cherry petals twirl down —
 dancing women

189

いとま哉
 花にいねふる
 花に来て

Hana ni kite
 Hana ni ineburu
 itoma kana

I've come for the flowers
 and they've made it difficult
 to say good-bye

Osaka residents visiting Kiyamachi Road

190*

朝寝哉
草履も見えて
花を踏し

Hana o fumishi
zouri mo miete
asane kana

Looking at flowers
while treading on them in sandals
a sleepy morning

191*

もどりかな
後夜きく花の
居風呂に

Suifuro ni
goya kiku hana no
modori kana

Sitting in a bath
listening to early morning bells —
time to leave

192

花の山
たまたま啼や
鶯の

Uguhisu no
tamatama naku ya
hana no yama

A nightingale
unexpectedly singing —
the mountain flowers

193*

花よりぞ
春は御室の
ねぶたさの

Nebutasa no
haru wa omuro no
hana yorizo

In the lethargic
spring the double cherry blossoms
are late

Spring dwindles one petal at a time

194*

減却す
美人の腹や
さくら狩

Sakura gari
bijin no hara ya
genkyakusu

Searching for cherry blossoms —
the beauty's stomach
has grown thin

195*

女あり
兼好を覗く
花の幕

Hana no maku
kenkou o nozoku
onna ari

Peeping around
a flower curtain I see Kenkou's
beautiful woman

Living in such a lonely place — the young nobleman with a shaved head

196*

小冠者出て
花見る人を
咎けり

Kokwaja dete
hanamiru hito o
togame keru

Coming out to scold
people for cherry blossom viewing
a young boy

197

にほひある
衣も畳まず
春の暮

Nioi aru
kinu mo tatamazu
haru no kure

My kimono
is too fragrant to fold —
the end of spring

198*

誰ための
ひくき枕ぞ
はるのくれ

Tagatame no
hikuki makura zo
haru no kure

Whose
unfashionable low pillow is this
spring is ending

199

閉帳の
錦たれたり
春の夕

Heichyou no
nishiki taretari
haru no kure

The brocade was hung
over a temple's exhibition
the spring evening

200

うたた寝の
さむれば春の
日くれたり

Utatane no
samureba haru no
hikuretari

While taking a nap
the chilly spring's
sun sets

201

春の夕
たえなむとする
香をつぐ

Haru no kure
taenamu tosuru
kou o tsugu

In the spring evening
the incense is almost
burnt out

202

花
ちりて
木
間の
寺と
成
に
けり

Hana chirite
konoma no tera to
nari ni keru

Blossoms scatter
through the trees of a temple
the season's set

203

苗
代や
鞍
馬の
桜
ち
り
に
けり

Nawashiro ya
kurama no sakura
chiri ni keru

In a bed of rice seedlings
Mr. Kuruma's cherry blossoms
have fallen

204*

甲
斐が
ねに
雲
こそ
か
かれ
梨
の
花

Kahigane ni
kumo koso kakare
nashi no hana

Clouds hanging over
the peaks of the high mountain —
pear blossoms

205

女あり
月に書ミよむ
梨の花

Nashi no hana
tsuki ni fumi yomu
onna ari

Under pear blossoms
in moonlight reading a letter
a woman

206

法師かな
藤に培ふ
人なき日

Hitonaki hi
fuji ni tsuchikau
houshi kana

Alone today
just cultivating wisteria —
a priest

207

藤のはな
米踏ム音や
山もとに

Yama moto ni
kome fumu oto ya
fuji no hana

At the foot of a mountain
noisily trampling rice to see
wisteria blossoms

208

藤の花
 春うちあけて
 うつむけに

Utsumuke ni
 haru uchi akete
 fuji no hana

Announcing spring's
 arrival — drooping
 wisteria blossoms

A Spring Scene

209

日は西に
 月は東に
 菜の花や

Na no hana ya
 tsuchi wa higashi ni
 hi wa nishi ni

Rape blossoms
 and the moon in the east
 the sun in the west

210

小風呂敷
 箒見ゆる
 なのはなや

Na no hana ya
 takenoko miyuru
 koburoshiski

Mustard blossoms
 and bamboo shoots peek out
 of the small wrapping cloth

211

海暮ぬ 鯨もよらず 菜のはなや

Na no hana ya
kujira mo yorazu
umi kerinu

In a peaceful fishing village
with fields of mustard blossoms
whales approach

Staying at Kito's house after a gathering on a spring evening

212*

入身哉 南阮の風呂に 炉塞で

Ro fusaide
Nangen no furo ni
irumi kana

Closing the fireplace
I slip into a poor
Chinese bath

213*

掛替る 床は維摩に 炉ふさぎや

Rofusagi ya
tokowa yuima ni
kake kaharu

The hearth's been covered
and now hung in the alcove
a sutra scroll

Late Spring

214

遅
ど
く
ら
逡
巡
と
し
て
ゆ
く
春
や

Yuku haru ya
shunjun toshite
osozakura

The departing spring
hesitates
late cherry blossoms

215

哥
の
主
撰
者
を
う
ら
む
行
春
や

Yuku haru ya
senjya o uramu
uta no nushi

Regretting
the departure of spring
and a rejected poem

216

ゆ
く
春
や
盥
も
漏
り
て
洗
足
の

Sensoku no
tarai mo morite
yuku haru ya

Washing my feet
in a leaking tub —
spring departs

217

仕舞けり
 春をあるひて
 けふのみの

Kyo nomi no
 haru o aruite
 shimai keru

Only today
 spring has walked
 away

Staying at Shoha's villa

218

垣のひま
 白き花見ゆ
 行春や

Yuku haru ya
 shiroki hana miyu
 kaki no hima

In the departing spring
 looking at white flowers
 through the slatted fence

219

召れけり
 座主の聯句に
 春をしむ

Haru oshimu
 zasu no rengu ni
 mesare keru

I've been invited
 for Zasu's renka gathering
 spring's passing away

220*

筑羽山
むらさきさむる
行春や

Yuku haru ya
murasaki samuru
tsukuba yama

In the departing spring
a cold purple
Mt. Tsukuba

221

限りかな
日に春の
まだ長うなる

Mada nagou naru
hi ni haru no
kagiri kana

The day is still
growing longer but spring has
reached its limit

222*

いもの神
横河へのぼる
ゆく春や

Yuku haru ya
yokawa he noboru
imonokami

The departing spring
ascends Yokawa Pagoda —
a prayer for syphilis

223*

返歌なき
青女房よ
くれの春

Henka naki
aonyoubou yo
kure no haru

The inexperienced maiden
cannot return a poem —
spring has ended

224*

春惜しむ
宿やあふみの
置火燵

Haru oshimu
yado ya oumi no
okigotatsu

A spring regret —
at the Shiga Inn
a standing charcoal brazier

夏の俳句

Summer Poems

225*

更衣 家中ゆゝしき 絹着せぬ

Kinu kisenu
kachyuu yuyushiki
koromogae

No longer dressed in silks
the whole family complains —
Seasonal Clothes Changing

226

ころもがへ よき人のせつ 辻駕に

Tsuji kago ni
yokihito no setsu
koromogae

In a street palanquin
a noble man dressed for the occasion —
Seasonal Clothes Changing

227

更衣 廿子あまりや 大兵の

Taihyou no
hatachi amari ya
koromogae

The big man
looks more than twenty years old
Seasonal Clothes Changing

228

所化に人
印籠買に
ころもがへ

Koromogae
inrou kai ni
shyoke futari

On Seasonal Clothes Changing Day
buying seal cases
two acolytes

229

はつかに白し
野路の人は
更衣

Koromogae
noji no hito
hatsuka ni shiroshi

On Seasonal Clothes Changing
the man on the field's path
is a faint white

230*

裕哉
矢数のぬしの
たのもしき

Tanomoshiki
yukazu no nushi no
awase kana

Trustworthy
as a Yukazu arrow —
a lined kimono

231

更衣 瘦臍の
毛に微風あり

Yase zune no
ke ni bifuu ari
koromogae

A breeze on
my thin leg's hair —
Seasonal Clothes Changing

232*

更衣 御手討の
夫婦なりしを

Oteuchi no
meoto narishi o
koromogae

A husband and wife
spared the death sentence —
Seasonal Clothes Changing Day

On receiving a letter accompanying an old kimono missing its thick cotton liner from a woman I knew long ago

233*

あはせかな 橘の
かごとがましき

Tachibana no
kagoto gamashiki
awase kana

The mandarine orange
scent returns memories -

her lined kimono

234

更衣
 いやしからざる
 はした銭

Koromogae
 iyashikarazaru
 hashita zeni

At the Seasonal Clothes Changing
 I am decently attired
 for a pittance

235*

鞘走る
 友切丸や
 ほととぎす

Sayabashiru
 tomokiramaru ya
 hototogisu

The Tomokiri Sword
 unsheaths itself —
 a cuckoo

236

ほととぎす
 平安城を
 筋遠に

Hototogisu
 Heianjou o
 sujikai ni

A cuckoo flying
 over the Heian Castle
 diagonally

237

子規
 柩をつかむ
 雲間より

Hototogisu
 hitsugi o tsukamu
 kumoma yori

The cuckoo
 catches a coffin
 under a cloud rift

238

春過て
 なつかぬ鳥や
 杜鵑

Haru sugite
 natsukanu tori ya
 hototogisu

Though spring has passed
 he still hasn't visited —
 the cuckoo

239

ほととぎす
 待や都の
 そらだのめ

Hototogisu
 matsu ya miyako no
 sorada nome

Waiting for the cuckoo
 to visit the capital —
 a vain hope

240*

時鳥
 繪になけ東
 四郎次郎

Hototogisu
 e ni nake higashi
 shirojirou

The cuckoo
 painting the eastern
 white sky

241*

岩倉の
 狂女恋せよ
 子規

Iwakura no
 kyoujo koiseyo
 hototogisu

Iwakura's
 madwoman has fallen in love
 the cuckoo

242*

稲葉殿の
 御茶たふ夜や
 時鳥

Inabadono no
 ocha tabu yoru ya
 hototogisu

Lord Inaba
 served evening tea
 the cuckoo

243

わ
す
る
な
よ
ほ
ど
は
雲
助
ほ
と
と
ぎ
す

Wasurunayo
hodo wa kumosuke
hototogisu

Don't forget
the wandering robber —
a cuckoo

244

哥
な
く
て
き
ぬ
ぎ
ぬ
つ
ら
し
時
鳥

Uta nakute
kinuginu tsurashi
hototogisu

How painful
no return poem from a departed lover
the cuckoo

245*

草
の
雨
祭
の
車
過
て
の
ち

Kusa no ame
matsuri no kuruma
sugite nochi

Grass in rain
after the festival cart
has passed

246

牡丹散て
 打かさなりぬ
 二三片

Botan chirite
 uchikasanarinu
 nisan pen

Falling peony blossoms
 pile up together —
 two, three petals

247*

閻王の
 口や牡丹を
 吐んとす

Enma-o no
 kuchi ya botan o
 hakantosu

The King of Hell's
 mouth spits blood —
 a peony

248

寂として
 客の絶間の
 ぼたん哉

Seki toshite
 kyaku no taema no
 botan kana

In the hush
 between guests peonies
 silently bloom

249

牡丹かな
 とどろとひびく
 地車の

Jiguruma no
 todoro to hibiku
 botan kana

A wagon's
 rumble echoes through
 tree peonies

250

ぼたん哉
 おもかげにたつ
 ちりて後

Chirite nochi
 omokage ni tatsu
 botan kana

Reminding me of
 an image of falling after death
 tree peonies

251

夕かな
 気のおとろひし
 牡丹切て

Botan kitte
 ki no otoroishi
 yuube kana

Cutting peonies
 my spirit withers
 this evening

252

山蟻の
あからさま也
白牡丹

Yama ari no
akarasama nari
haku botan

So distinguished
in the white peonies —
black mountain ants

253*

広庭の
ぼたんや
天の一方に

hironiwa no
botan ya
ten no ippou ni

Viewing a courtyard's
peonies —
heavenly women

254*

狂居士の
首にかけた
鯢鞆鼓鳥

Kyaukoji no
kubi ni kaketa
kakakkodori

The insane layman
drumming on his neck —
the cuckoo

255*

閑古鳥
寺見ゆ麦林寺
とやいふ

Kankodori
tera miyu bakurinji
toya iu

The cuckoo —
Bakurin hermitage's
lonely visitor

256

山人は
人もかんこどりは
鳥なりけり

Yamabito wa
hito nari kankodori wa
tori nari keru

The Mountain man
is a man — the lone cuckoo
is a bird

257

飯次の
底たたく音や
かんこ鳥

Meshi tsugi no
tei tatau oto ya
kankodori

Like hitting the bottom
of an empty rice-tub —
a cuckoo's song

“It is said that Kanji characters were made from bird footprints.” (Forward from an early Han Dynasty dictionary)

258

閑古鳥
字にもよまれず
足跡を

Ashi ato o
ji ni moyo marazu
kankodori

These footprints
were never used for Kanji
a solitary cuckoo

259*

かんこどり
笠置の森や
うへ見えぬ

Uhe mienu
kasagi no mori ya
kankodori

Not overlooking
a hat left behind in the forest
a solitary cuckoo

260*

かんこどり
鳩の礼儀や
むつかしき

Mutsukashiki
hato no reigi ya
kankodori

A difficult situation —
a dove's good manners and
a lonely cuckoo

261

閑古鳥
さくらの枝も
踏で居る

Kankodori
sakura no eda mo
funde oru

A solitary cuckoo
steps on a cherry twig
and remains standing

262

かんこどり
可もなく不可も
なくね哉

Kankodori
ka mo naku fuka mo
nakune kana

A lone cuckoo
neither good nor bad at singing
or silence

On the local commissioner “Sanemori”

263*

名のれ名のれ
雨しのはらの
ほととぎす

Nanore nanore
ame shinohara no
hototogisu

“Who are you - who are you”
at Shinohara in the rain
a cuckoo

264

かきつばた
べたりと鳶の
たれてける

Kakitsubata
betari to tobi no
taretekeru

Splashed
over an iris
hawk droppings

265

宵々の
雨に音なし
杜若

Yoiyoi no
ame ni otonashi
kakitsubata

Every evening
in a soundless rain
irises

On bidding farewell to my old friend Urenbou

266*

みじか夜や
六里の松に
更たらず

Mijikayoya
rokuri no matsu ni
fuke tarazu

The short summer night
under the Rokuri pine tree
passed too quickly

267

夜半の門
よらで過行
鮎くれて

Ayu kurete
yorade sugiyuku
yoha no kado

Bringing a trout
my friend left immediately
by midnight's gate

268

露の玉
毛むしの上に
みじか夜や

Mijikayo ya
kemushi no ue ni
tsuyu no tama

After a short night
on the caterpillar's hairs
dew drops

269*

川手水
同心衆の
短夜や

Mijikayoya
doushin shyuu no
kawa teutzu

In the short night
a catchpole ritualistically
washes his hands

270*

銀
屏
風
枕
に
ち
か
き
み
じ
か
夜
や

Mijikayo ya
makura ni chikaki
ginbyaubu

In the summer night
my pillow is too close to
my bright silver screen

271

蟹
の
泡
芦
間
流
る
ゝ
短
夜
や

Mijikayo ya
ashi ma nagaruru
kani no awa

In the short night
between reeds a wandering
crab's bubbles

272

大
井
川
二
尺
落
ゆ
く
み
じ
か
夜
や

Mijikayo ya
niseki ochiyuku
ooigawa

In the quick summer night
the Oi river's water level
has slowly fallen

On the guard Roukin

273*

翁丸 眠らでもるや
みじか夜や

Mijikayo ya
nemurade moru ya
okinamaro

Through the short night
the guard never slept —
an old dog

274*

捨筈 浪うち際の
短夜や

Mijikayo ya
namiuchi giwa no
sutekagari

In the summer night
at the edge of the waves
a bonfire

275

白拍子 いとま給る
みじか夜や

Mijikayo ya
itoma tamawaru
shirabyoushi

Given permission to leave
after a short night —
a woman dancer

276

町はづれ
小見世明たる
みじか夜や

Mijikayo ya
komise aketaru
machi hazure

All summer evening
the small shop lit up
the town's end

On seeing a friend from Edo off from Otsu Station

277*

志賀の松
一つあまりて
短夜や

Mijikayo ya
hitotsu amarite
shiga no matsu

This summer night
on the last stage of the Tohoku Road
Shiga's pines

278*

淀の窓
伏見の戸ぼそ
みじか夜や

Mijikayo ya
fushimi no toboso
yodo no mado

In the short night
Fushimi's hinged doors were shut
as Yodo's windows opened

279*

卵の花の
こぼるる落の
広葉哉

Unohana no
koboruru fuki no
kouyo kana

On the wide leaves
of butterbur spilled deutzias —
tofu waste

280

来て見れば
夕の桜
実となりぬ

Kite mireba
yuube no sakura
mi to narinu

I've come at night
to look at cherry blossoms
but there is only fruit

On the sad condition of those who go against Saigyo's wishes

281*

実ざくらや
死のこりたる
菴の主

Mizakura ya
shini nokoritaru
an no nushi

Still alive
after the cherries have fallen —
the hermitage's master

282

しのゝめや
雲見えなくに
蓼の雨

Shinonome ya
kumo mienaku ni
tade no ame

In the dawn
no clouds can be seen yet
rain drops on water pepper

283

砂川や
或は蓼を
流れ越す

Sunagawa ya
aruiwa tade o
nagare kosu

In Sunagawa River
perhaps water pepper
is floating by

284*

蓼の葉を
此君と申せ
雀鮓

Tade no ha o
kono kimi to mouse
suzomezushi

Water pepper blossoms
thou have this honor
striped mullet sushi

285*

若楓 日は午にせまる
三井寺や

Miidera ya
hi wa go ni semaru
wakakahede

At Miidera temple
the noonday sun nears
a young maple

286*

住居かな 鱈にさはらぬ
釣しのぶ

Tsurishinobu
kaya ni sawaranu
sumai kana

The hanging onions
do not touch the mosquito net
what a dwelling

287

若葉哉 蚊屋を出て
奈良を立ゆく

Kaya o dete
Nara o tachiyuku
wakaba kana

Exiting the mosquito net
it is time to leave Nara
young leaves

288

窓の燈の
梢にのぼる
若葉哉

Mado no hi no
kozue ni noboru
wakaba kana

A window's light
climbs to the tree tops —
fresh green leaves

289*

不二ひとつ
うづみ残して
若葉かな

Fuji hitotsu
uzume nokoshite
wakaba kana

Mt. Fuji alone
remains untouched
by green leaves

290

絶頂の
城たのもしき
若葉かな

Zecchou no
shiro tanomoshiki
wakaba kana

The mountain's summit
and castle have become great —
youthful leaves

291

若葉して
水白く麦
黄ミたり

Wakaba shite
mizu shiroku mugi
kibamitari

Under young green leaves
white water
yellow barley

292

山に添ふて
小舟漕ゆく
若ば哉

Yama ni soute
kobune kogiyuku
wakaba kana

Under the mountains
a small boat rowed slowly
through bright green leaves

293*

蛇を截て
わたる谷路
若葉哉

Hebi o kitsute
wataru taniji no
wakaba kana

Cutting a snake in half
crossing over the valley road
young leaves

294

蚊屋の内に
ほたる放して
アア楽や

Kaya no uchi ni
hotaru hanashite
aa rakuya

Releasing fireflies
inside the mosquito net —
ah, fun!

295

尼寺や
能キ幪たる
宵月夜

Amadera ya
yoki kaya taruru
yoizukiyo

The convent
has such good netting
this moonlit evening

296*

あら涼し
裾吹蚊屋も
根なし草

Ara suzushi
susofuku kaya mo
nenashigusa

A cool breeze
blows through the mosquito net —
a rootless wanderer

297

蚊屋を出て
内に居ぬ身の
夜は明ぬ

Kaya o dete
uchi ni inu mi no
yo wa akenu

With no netting
I live inside
awake all night long

Throughout the night at Sanbongi's Tsuiro Inn — a banquet

298*

明やすき
夜をかくしてや
東山

Ake yasuki
yo o kakushite ya
higashiyama

A quick dawn —
Higashiyama hid
the short night

299

古井戸や
蚊に飛ぶ魚の
音くらし

Furuido ya
ka ni tobu uwo no
oto kurashi

In an old well
mosquitoes fly — the dark
sound of fish

300

野河哉
蚊の流れゆく
うは風に

Uwa kaze ni
ka no nagareyuku
nogawa kana

In a surface breeze
mosquitoes slowly drift over
Nogawa River

301*

坐右かな
まいらす僧の
蚊やりして

Kayari shite
mairasu sou no
zaiu kana

An offering
by the monk's side
a mosquito coil

At Saga

302*

かやり哉
大坂人の
三軒家

Sanganya
Osakabito no
kayari kana

At Sanganya Tea House
the Osaka man's
mosquito coil

303

蚊の
声す
忍冬の花の
散るたびに

Ka no koe su
nindou no hana no
chiru tabini

Every time
a honeysuckle blossom falls
mosquitoes whine

304

蚊屋つりて
翠微つくらむ
家の内

kaya tsurite
suibi tsukuramu
ie no uchi

A green mountain
inside the house —
my mosquito net

305*

若竹や
橋本の遊女
ありやなし

Wakatake ya
hashimoto no yuujo
ari ya nashi

Young bamboo —
the courtesan in Hashimoto
is she still there

306*

箐の
 藪の案内や
 をとしざし

Takenoko no
 yabu no anai ya
 otoshizashi

Bamboo shoots
 the field guide's
 vertical sword

307

若竹や
 夕日の嵯峨と
 成にけり

Wakatake ya
 yuuhi no saga to
 nari ni keru

Young bamboo
 Saga's evening sun
 grows dark

308

筍や
 甥の法師が
 寺とはん

Takenoko ya
 oi no houshi ga
 tera towan

A monk's nephew
 visits the temple —
 bamboo shoots

309*

あ
ら
ぬ
哉
籬
す
べ
く
も
け
し
の
花

Keshi no hana
magaki subeku mo
aranu kana

Poppy flowers
they have passed through
the bamboo hedge

310

か
や
り
か
な
暮
の
避
行
垣
越
て

Kaki koete
hiki no sakeyuku
kayari kana

A toad runs away
slipping under the fence —
a smoking mosquito coil

At Saga while relaxing in the Gain Brothel

311

枕
も
と
音
な
き
麦
を
う
は
風
に

Uwakaze ni
otonaki mugi o
makura moto

Silent wheat
in a surface breeze
around my pillow

312

長
旅
や
駕
な
き
村
の
麦
ぼ
こ
り

Nagatabi ya
kago naki mura no
mugi bokori

The village has no basket
for the wheat chaff —
a long journey

313

病
人
の
駕
も
過
け
り
麦
の
秋

Byounin no
kago mo sugikeri
mugi no aki

The invalid's
palanquin carried passed
early wheat

314

旅
芝
居
穂
麦
が
も
と
の
鏡
た
て

Tabishibai
homugi ga moto no
kagami tate

A traveling performer's
mirror held up by
wheat stalks

Going out to lecture on the scenery before my eyes at Basho's Hermitage, east of Kamogawa River

315*

蕎麦あしき
京をかくして
穂麦哉

Soba ashiki
kyou o kakushite
homugi kana

Kyoto's soba
is still bad but the haiku —
growing wheat

316*

狐火や
いづこ河内の
麦畠

Kitsunebi ya
itzuko kawachi no
mugibatake

Foxfire!
where are Kawachi's
wheat fields

Myself, a student and Kito at Nunobiki Waterfall

317*

春や
穂麦が中の
水車

Usutzuku ya
homugi ga naka no
mizuguruma

Ground by a mortar
ears of wheat caught
in a waterwheel

At Kaya Village in Tamba

318*

夏河を
越すうれしさよ
手に草履

Natsukawa o
kosu ureshisayo
te ni zouri

Joyfully wading
across a summer stream
sandals in hand

319*

なれ過た
鮓をあるじの
遺恨哉

Naresugita
sushi o aruji no
ikon kana

Overly ripe
sushi — a master chef's
regret

320

鮓桶を
これへと樹下に
床几哉

Sushioke o
koreeto juka ni
shyougi kana

A bowl of sushi
served under the trees
on a wooden bench

321

なき身哉
誰待としも
鮓つけて

Sushi sukete
tare matsu toshi mo
naki mi kana

While making sushi
some wait a whole year —
not me

322*

雲かゝる
彦根が城に
鮓すしや

Funazushi ya
Hikone ga jyou ni
kumo kakaru

Carp sushi —
Hikone Castle
hung in the clouds

Writing about Tosoku's third year memorial service that was held early in April but which should have been held on July 14th

323*

法の杖
近道来ませ
麦刈ぬ

Mugikarinu
chikamichi kimase
nori no tsue

Taking a shortcut
to harvest early wheat —
a pilgrim's staff

324

かりそめに
早百合生ケたり
谷の房

Karisome ni
sayuri iketari
tani no bou

Early lilies
casually arranged
the valley's hermitage

Climbing the East Hill

325*

花いばら
故郷の路に
似たる哉

Hana ibara
kokyau no michi ni
nitaru kana

These flowering briars
remind me of the path
in my hometown

326

路たえて
香にせまり咲
いばらかな

Michi taete
ka ni semari saku
ibara kana

The path ends
in fragrant blossoms —
wild roses

327

花 岡 愁
い の ひ
ばら の っ
ば れ づ

Ureitsutsu
oka ni noboreba
hana ibara

Worrying
while climbing the hill —
wild roses

In Eastern Kyoto on the day of the completion ceremony for Basho's Hermitage

328*

ば 腸 耳
せ こ こ に 目
を 庵 玉 肺
庵 卷

ji moku hai
chyou koko ni tamamaku
bashou an

A jewel for my
ears, eyes, lungs and bowels —
Basho's Hermitage

329*

美 眉 青
人 あ つ め に
哉 つ め た る
に

Aoume ni
mayu atsumetaru
bejin kana

The beautiful woman's
eyebrows pucker together —
green plums

330

青うめを
うてばかつ散る
青葉かな

Aoume o
utebakatsu chiru
aoba kana

Beat by a stick
the green plums
and green leaves fall

331

かはほりや
むかひの女房
こちを見る

Kawahori ya
mukai no niyoubou
kochi o miru

Across from me
my wife is looking here —
a flying bat

332

夕風や
水青鷺の
脛をうつ

Yuukaze ya
mizu aosagi no
hagi o utsu

In the evening breeze
water splashes
a blue heron's leg

333

古館
かはたれ時や
たちばなの

Tachibana no
kawataredoki ya
furuyakata

Orange blossoms
in the gloaming light
an old mansion

On saying farewell to Shoutou in Osaka

334*

音聞ん
芦吹風の
粽解て

Chimaki toite
ashi fuku kaze no
oto kikan

Listening to the sound
of wind blowing through reeds —
untying steamed dumplings

335*

若狭人
通ひなれたる
夏山や

Natsuyama ya
kayoi naretaru
wakasabito

Wakasa merchants
feel so familiar —
summer mountains

Reminiscences

336*

椎の花
人もすさめぬ
にほひ哉

Shii no hana
hito mo susamenu
nihoi kana

Yellow oak blossoms
people never appreciate
your fragrance

337

水深く
利鎌鳴らす
真菰刈

Mizu fukaku
toki kama narasu
makomo kari

In deep water
a sharp sickle reaps
water reeds

338

しのゝめや
露の近江の
麻昌

Shinonomeya
tsuyu no afumi no
asabatake

In the dawn
an inlet's dewy
flax field

339*

採薄を
諷ふ修根の
倉夫哉

Saijun o
utau hikone no
sau fu kana

Singing
“Water shield” Hikone’s
bumpkins

340*

藻の花や
片われからの
月もすむ

Mo no hana ya
kata warekara no
tsuki mosumu

Residing in blooming duckweed
a single warekara bug
and the moon

341

路辺の
刈藻花さく
宵の雨

Michinobe no
karu mohana saku
yoi no ame

Along the roadside
cut duckweed flowers
in an evening rain

342

柿の花
害はれ落ツ
虫のために

Mushi no tame ni
sokonaware otsu
kaki no hana

Insects harmed
the falling petals —
persimmon blossoms

A poem written at a banquet in Maryuma where haiku poets from all parts of Japan gathered for a banquet with the Osaka poet Oemaru

343*

花むしろ
吹あつめてや
うき草を

Ukikusa o
fuki atsumete ya
hana mushiro

Duckweed
blown together —
a floral mat

344

老が耳
うつほ柱や
さみだれの

Samidare no
utsuhobashira ya
oi ga mimi

An early summer rain
in the box gutter —
my poor ears

345*

湖へ
富士をもどすや
さつき雨

Mizuumi e
fuji o modosu ya
satsuki ame

Mt Fuji
reflected in a lake —
a May rain

346*

さみだれや
大河を前に
家二軒

Samidare ya
taiga o mae ni
ie niken

In an early summer rain —
two houses near
the swollen river

347

さみだれや
仏の花を
捨に出る

Samidareya
hotoke no hana o
sute ni deru

Discarded
in the May rain —
altar flowers

348*

小田原で
合羽買たり
皐月雨

Odawara de
kappa koutari
satsukiame

At Odawara
buying a straw raincoat
for May rains

349*

さみだれの
大井越たる
かしこさよ

Samidare no
ooi koshitaru
kashikosayo

In the early summer rains
I have crossed the Oi River —
I'm so clever

350*

さつき雨
田毎の闇と
なりにけり

Satsuki ame
tagoto no yami to
nari ni keri

A summer rain —
the terraced rice fields
have become dark

Though I met Seihan Hoshi for the first time, we talked like old friends

351*

水
桶
に
う
な
づ
き
あ
ふ
や
瓜
茄
子

Mizuoke ni
unatzuki afuya
urinasubi

In a bucket of water
eggplants and bitter gourds
nod

352

い
づ
こ
よ
り
礫
う
ち
け
む
夏
木
立

Izuko yori
tsubute uchi kamu
natsukodachi

Someone threw
a small stone into the quiet
thicket of summer trees

353

酒
十
駄
ゆ
り
も
て
行
や
夏
こ
だ
ち

Sake juuda
yuri mote yuku ya
natsukodachi

Ten horses sway
carrying barrels of sake through
a shady summer grove

354*

なつ 笈 おろし
 野 に 地 置
 哉 震

Oroshi oku
 oi ni nae furu
 natsuno kana

Putting down the heavy
 case — an earthquake
 in a summer field

355

夏 こゝ 行々
 野 に行々
 かな

Yukiyukite
 koko ni yukuyuku
 natsuno kana

On the way
 here going on and on
 summer fields

On a friend's visit from Tohoku

356*

瓜 の 葉
 ば 枕 さ が ぐ
 た せ が く
 け よ れ

Hagakure
 no makura sagaseyo
 uri batake

Finding a pillow
 hidden in the leaves —
 a melon in a field

360*

学問は
尻からぬける
ほたる哉

Gakumon wa
shiri kara nukeru
hotaru kana

Education
emitted from the ass —
a firefly

361

でぶむしや
その角文字の
にじり書

Dedemushi ya
sono tsunomuji no
nijirigak

Writing “horn”
in Chinese —
a snail’s tentacles

362

蝸牛の
住はてし宿や
うつせ貝

Dedemushi no
sumihateshi yado ya
utsuse kai

Living in
a movable house —
a snail

363

蝸牛
雨うたがふや
こもり居て

Komori ite
ame utagau ya
katatsuburi

Confined inside
by the dripping rain —
a snail

364*

硯かな
蠅うち払ふ
雪信が

Yukinobu ga
hae uchi harau
suzuri kana

Yukinobu
brushing a fly
from her ink-stone

365

女かな
早瓜くるゝ
こと葉多く

Kotoba ooku
hayauri kururu
onna kana

Talking non stop
that the bitter gourd season's arrived —
a woman

366*

関の戸に
水鶏のそら音
なかりけり

Kan no to ni
kuina no sorane
nakari keru

By the dam's gate
the water rail
squealed

367

蝮の
鼾も合歡の
葉陰哉

Uwabami no
ibiki mo nemu no
hakage kana

The snoring
asp is also sleeping
in the leafy shade

368

蠅いとふ
身を古郷に
昼寝かな

Hae itou
mi o furusato ni
hirune kana

Taking a nap
in my hometown —
pesky flies

For Shouha Kuroyanagi

369*

誰住て
密流るる
鵜川哉

Tare sumite
shikimi nagaruru
ukawa kana

Who lived here —
grave branches drifting
in Ukawa river

370

しのゝめや
鵜をのがれたる
魚浅し

Shinonome ya
u o nogaretaru
uo asashi

In the cloudy dawn
surface fish escape
the cormorant

371

老なりし
鵜飼ことしは
見えぬ哉

Oi narishi
ukai kotoshi wa
mienu kana

Growing old —
this year I cannot see
cormorant fishing

372*

殿原の
名古屋見なる
鵜川かな

Tonobara no
Nagoyagao naru
ukawa kana

The friendly faces
look like Nagoya retainers —
cormorant fishing

373*

鵜舟漕ぐ
水窮まれば
照射哉

Ubune kogu
mizu kiwamareba
tomoshi kana

Rowing the boat
to the end of the fishing hole —
hunting deer

374*

夏百日
墨もゆがまぬ
こころかな

Gehyaukunichi
sumi mo yugamanu
kokoro kana

100 summer days
writing calligraphy —
mindfulness

375

夏書哉
 数ふる筆の
 日を以て

Hi o motte
 kazouru fude no
 gegaki kana

Counting
 handwritten sutras
 divided by days

On Keishi recounting his dream when he was sick

376*

化粧かな
 日枝を甘子の
 降かへて

Furi kahete
 hie o hatachi no
 kawai kana

Turning to gawk
 Mt Fuji's twenty times
 taller than Mt Hiezan

377*

小河哉
 梢もせみの
 脱かゆる

Nugi kayuru
 kozue mo semi no
 ogawa kana

Cicadas
 undressing the treetops
 Ogawa River

378

石工の
鑿冷したる
清水かな

Ishikiri no
nomi hiyashi taru
shimizu kana

The stone cutter pauses
to cool off his chisel
in spring water

379

落合ふて
音なくなれる
清水哉

Ochioute
oto naku nawaru
shimizu kana

All sound disappears
in the river's meeting —
clear water

Aoto, who spent 500 yen to find the 100 yen he dropped in the river, wouldn't know about this spotted turtle hidden in clear mountain water

380*

銭亀や
青砥もしらぬ
山清水

Zenigame ya
aoto mo shiranu
yamashimizu

Spotted turtle
Aoto doesn't understand
pure mountain water

381

清水哉
 むすべば濁る
 二人して

Futari shite
 musubeba nigoru
 shimizu kana

Two people drinking
 from their hands muddied
 clear water

382*

しみづ哉
 いか引べき
 我宿に

Waga yado ni
 ika ni hikubeki
 shimizu kana

How can I return
 to my inn
 mountain spring water

383

札の立
 人死居ると
 草いきれ

Kusaikire
 hito shiniiru to
 fuda no tatsu

Being posted
 in the fuming grass —
 a death notice

384*

三十里
 この道唐の
 昼がほや

Hirugaho ya
 kono michi tau no
 sanjuri

Sixty miles
 along this Tang Dynasty road
 morning glories

385

有べかり
 黄に咲たるも
 ゆふがほや

Yuugao ya
 ki ni sakitaru mo
 arubekari

Ideally
 the blossoms would be yellow —
 moonflowers

386

余所ごころ
 花噛ム猫や
 夕見の

Yuugao no
 hana kamu neko ya
 yosogokoro

A cat has chewed
 the moonflowers —
 a cold spirit

Looking at Ritsuen Temple

387

飛石も
三ツ四ツ蓮の
うき葉哉

Tobiishi mo
mitsu yotsu hasu no
ukiba kana

Stepping stones
three, four lotus's
floating leaves

388

蓮の香や
水をはなるる
茎二寸

Hasu no ka ya
mizu wo hanaruru
kuki nisun

The lotus's fragrance
separated from the water
on three inch stems

389*

吹壳の
浮葉にけふる
蓮見哉

Fukigara no
ukiha ni keburu
hasumi kana

While lotus viewing
smoldering on the floating leaves
tobacco

390

白蓮を
切らんとぞおもふ
僧のさま

Byaukuren wo
kiran tozo omou
sou no sama

The monk pauses
contemplating cutting
the white lotuses

391*

河骨の
二もとさくや
雨の中

Kouhone no
futa moto saku ya
ame no naka

Waterlilies
both halves blooming
in the rain

392

羅に
遮る蓮の
にほひ哉

Usumono ni
saegiru ren no
nioi kana

The silk gauze
obstructs the lotus's
fragrance

393

雨乞に
曇る国司の
なみだ哉

Amegoi ni
kumoru kukoshi no
namida kana

Begging for rain
a governor's gloomy
tears

394*

負腹の
守敏も降らす
早かな

Makebara no
shubin mo furasu
kideri kana

A defeated heart
Shubin also failed —
a drought

395

大粒な
雨は祈の
奇特かな

Ootsubu na
ame wa inori no
kidoku kana

A large drop
of rain — a prayer's
miracle

396*

夏
の
月
里
人
の
声
や
夜
水
と
る

Yomizu toru
satobito no koe ya
natsu no tsuki

Watering the paddies —
the villager's voices
and the summer moon

397

夏
の
月
小
草
な
が
め
つ
堂
守
の

Doumori no
ogusa nagametsu
natsu no tsuki

A building guard
looking down on the short grass —
the summer moon

398

夏
の
月
浅
瀬
わ
た
る
や
ぬ
け
が
け
の

Nukegake no
asase wataru ya
natsu no tsuki

Stealing a march
on crossing the shallows —
the summer moon

399*

河童の
恋する宿や
夏の月

Kawataro no
koisuru yado ya
natsu no tsuki

The Kappa's
lovely house —
the summer moon

400

瓜小家の
月にやおはす
隠君子

Uri goya no
tsuki ni yaowasu
inkunshi

In moonlight
a melon clings
to the hermit's shack

401

雷に
小家は焼かれて
瓜の花

Kaminari ni
goya wa yakerete
uri no hana

After lightening
burned down the shack
melon flowers

402*

瓜 雨 あだ
 ば に う 花
 た う た は
 た た れ て
 け

Adabana wa
 ame ni utarete
 uri batake

Rain pelts
 the vain flowers —
 a melon patch

403*

た 帯 弓
 か の 取
 む の 細
 し 細 さ
 ろ よ の

Yumitori no
 obi no hososa yo
 takamushiro

Thin
 as a warrior's belt —
 a bamboo mat

404

箆 夕 細
 風 さ 脛
 さ は る に

Hosohagi ni
 yuukaze sawaru
 takamushiro

My thin legs
 hindering the evening breeze
 a bamboo mat

405*

箱根山
地獄もちかし
あま酒の

Amazake no
jigoku mo chikashi
Hakoneyama

Sweet sake —
hell is also close
to Mt. Hakone

406

ひと夜酒
昼備へけり
御仏に

Mihotoke ni
hiru sona hekeri
hitoyosake

An afternoon's
offering to the Buddha —
evening sake

407*

松が岡
あま酒造る
愚痴無智の

Guchimuchi no
amazake tsuku
matsugaoka

Making such sweet sake
for shallow-witted men —
a nunnery

Kakurinji Temple

408*

半日の
閑を榎や
せみの声

Hanjitsu no
kan wo enoki ya
semi no koe

Half a day lounging
in the coolness of the hackberry tree —
the cicada's voice

409*

大仏の
あなた宮様
せみの声

Daibutsu no
anata miyasaka
semi no koe

You share the calmness
of the temple's great Buddha —
the cicada's voice

410*

蟬鳴や
行者の過る
午の刻

Semi naku ya
gyauja no suguru
uma no koku

Shrill cicadas cry —
pilgrims going past
noon

411

ゆ あ み 時
 僧 正 坊 の
 蟬 啼 や

Semi naku ya
 sou jyoubou no
 yuamidoki

While bathing
 at the high priests residence
 shrill cicadas scream

412*

せ み 衣
 何 に と ど ま る
 か け 香 や

Kakegou ya
 nani todomaru
 semigoromo

Which fragrance will remain
 the feather light summer kimono's
 or the sachet's

413

ひ と となり
 唾 の 娘 の
 か け 香 や

Kakegou ya
 oshi no musume no
 hitoto nari

Fragrant incense shows
 a mute daughter is now
 marriageable

414*

袖 わすれ かけ
だ れ 香
た 見 や
み なる

Takegou ya
wasuregao naru
sodedatami

Formality forgotten —
a fragrant kimono's been folded
any old way

Wondering how Ganto is doing

415*

お 有と 有と
ぼ と見 と見
つ 見え 見え
か 絵 絵
な 裏 裏
な 繪 繪

Ari to miete
oogi no urae
obotsu kana

Gazing through the back
at the painting on the fan's front
hazily guessing

416

扇 とかく とかく
哉 し し
 な な
 し し
 つ つ
 る る

Tokakushite
kasa ni nashitsuru
ougi kana

Doing so much
my stringless bamboo hat
is a fan

417*

お夏かな
 それも清十郎に
 絵団の

Euchiwa no
 sore mo seijuro ni
 onatsu kana

On the painted fan
 Seijuro and Onatsu
 united

418

草の汁
 団画かん
 手すさびの

Tesusabi no
 uchiwaega kan
 kusa no shiru

A diversion —
 painting the round fan
 with grass sap

419

扇哉
 草のあなたの
 渡し呼

Watashi yobu
 kusa no anata no
 ougi kana

Summoning the ferry
 from the grassy distance —
 a fan

420*

風 真 祇
か 葛 園
ほ 原 の 会
る の や

Gione ya
makuzugahara no
kaze kaoru

At the Goin Festival
on the mountain terraces
a fragrant wind

421*

梶 僧 ぎ
が の ぞ
許 訪 よ る
ん 会
や

Gione ya
sou no toiyoru
kaji ga moto

During the Goin Festival
a monk visits
Ms Kaji's teahouse

Placing a long bench on the west bank of Kamogawa River

422*

丈 口 丈
山 の
の
が
過
た
り
夕 口 丈
す が 山
づ が の
み 過 丈
み たり

Jyouzan no
guchi ga sugitari
yuu suzumi

Jyouzan
said too much —
a cool evening

423

涼かな
見えずなり行
網打の

Amiuchi no
miezunari yuku
suzumi kana

Too early to watch
net fishing yet still going out
in the coolness

424

ながれ川
都を豎に
すゞしさや

Suzushisa ya
miyako wo tatsu ni
nagare kawa

Coolness
throughout the capital —
a flowing river

The Kappa are calling souls

425*

便にも
蓮からまたぐ
河床に

Kawayuka ni
hasu kara matagu
tayori nimo

A river balcony
straddling lotuses —
an invitation

426

川床に
僧き法師の
立居かな

Kawayuka ni
nikuki houshi no
tachii kana

On the river balcony
blocking the view —
a standing priest

427

涼しさや
鐘をはなるる
かねの声

Suzushisa ya
kane o hanaruru
kane no koe

The coolness
separates the bell
and the bell's voice

428

川狩や
楼上の人の
見しり兒

Kawagari ya
roujyou no hito no
mishiri gao

Net fishing —
the man on the balcony
is a familiar face

429*

脛白き
誰ソ夜ぶりの
雨後の月

Ugo no tsuchi
taso yoburi no
hagi shiroki

The moon followed rain —
while fishing by torchlight
a white leg

430*

水煙
君に唐網の
月に対す

Tsuki ni taisu
kimi no toami no
mizu kamuri

Towards the moon
you threw the net —
splash

431*

声す也
川狩や
帰去来といふ

Kawagari ya
kikorai to iu
koe su nari

River fishing
and I heard a voice say
“I’m returning home”

432

ゆふだちや
筆もかはかず
一千言

Yuudachi ya
fude mo kawakazu
issengen

After a rain shower
my writing brush hasn't dried —
one thousand letters

433*

白雨や
門脇どのゝ
人だまり

Yuudachi ya
kadowaki dono no
hitodamari

In an evening shower
gathered at Kadowaki's gate
many people

434

夕だちや
草葉をつかむ
むら雀

Yuudachi ya
kusaba wo tsukamu
murasuzume

In an evening shower
clinging to blades of grass —
flocks of sparrows

435*

腹あしき
僧こぼし行
施米哉

Hara ashiki
sou koboshi yuku
semai kana

The grumpy monk
walks along spilling
his relief rice

436*

水の粉の
きのふに尽ぬ
草の菴

Mizunoko no
kinou ni sukinu
kusa no ima

Yesterday's parched
barely and buckwheat was eaten
at the hermitage

437

水の粉や
あるじかしこき
後家の君

Mizunoko ya
aruji kashikoki
goke no kimi

Parched barley
such wise hospitality —
a widow shop owner

438

雲峰
 背中にたつや
 廿日路の

Hatsukaji no
 sennaka ni tatsu ya
 kumo no mine

At my back
 on the 20th day of my journey —
 thunderheads

439*

雲の峯
 津も見えそめて
 陽州の

Youshuu no
 tsu mo mie somete
 kumono mine

Youshuu's
 port begins to be seen —
 thunder clouds

440*

雲の峯
 恋はしらじな
 雨と成

Ame to naru
 koi wa shirajina
 kumo no mine

The rain became
 lovely transparent —
 thunderheads

441*

雲のみね
四沢の水の
涸てより

Kumo no mine
shitaku no mizu no
karete yori

Mountains of clouds —
Shitaku's spring water
has dried up

442

飛蟻とぶや
富士の裾野
小家より

Haari tobu ya
fuji no susono no
koie yori

Wing ants hover
at the foot of Mt. Fuji
a small house

443*

日帰りの
兀山越る
あつさ哉

Higaeri no
Hageyama koyuru
atsusa kana

On a day trip
passing a bald mountain
heat

444

暑かな
舟に寝ている
居りたる

Suwaritaru
fune ni neteiru
atsusa kana

Sitting
sleeping on a boat —
heat

445

扇かな
刀にかゆる
暑き日の

Atsukihi no
katana ni kayuru
ougi kana

In the hot day
a sword is changed
for a fan

446*

大臣かな
葛水給ふ
宗鑑に

Soukan ni
kuzumizu tamou
otodo kana

Soukan
given arrowroot water
by a lord

447

葛を得て
清水に遠き
うらみ哉

Kuzu o ete
shimizu no touki
urami kana

Though I have arrowroot
clear water is so far away —
what a pity

448

端居して
妻子を避る
暑かな

Hashii shite
tsumako o sakuru
atsusa kana

Sitting on a veranda
avoiding my wife and children —
heat

449*

褒居士は
かたい親父よ
竹帰人

Houkoji wa
katai oyaji yo
chikufujin

Layman Pang
the beggar father —
a bamboo pillow

450

東大寺
甥の僧訪
虫干や

Mushiboshi ya
oi no sou tou
Toudaiji

Airing clothes
the monk's nephew visits
Toudaiji Temple

451*

三
千
尺
逆
し
ま
に
銀
河
と
こ
ろ
て
ん

Tokoroten
sakashima ni ginga
sanzenjaku

Jelly noodles
in a black bowl — an upside-down
Milky Way

Miyajima Island

452*

い
つ
く
し
ま
と
も
し
た
て
か
ね
薫
風
や

Kunpuu ya
tomoshi tatekanetsu
itsukushima

Wavering in the balmy breeze
lights reflected in water —
Itsukushima Shrine

453*

夏神楽
神うつりませ
裸身に

Hadakami ni
kami utsurimase
natsukagura

The naked body
possessed by God —
the summer dance

454*

御祓哉
禰宜でことすむ
つくばふた

Tsukubouta
negide kotosumu
misogi kana

While squatting
even a low priest can perform
summer purification

455

夏はらへ
背中流すや
灸のない

Kyuu no nai
senaka nagasu ya
natsuharai

Washing way
the back's moxa cauterization scars —
summer cleansing

456

夏祓 加茂に橋なし
出水の

Idemitsu no
kamo ni hashi nashi
natsuharai

Flood waters
wash away Kamogawa bridge —
summer cleansing

Village fields on the banks of the Karogawa River

457

みそぎ川 秋風そよぐ
ゆふがほに

Yuugao ni
aki kaze soyogu
misogi kawa

Moonflowers
tremble in the autumn wind —
a purifying river

秋の俳句

Autumn Poems

458

秋来ぬと
合点させたる
嚏かな

Aki kinu to
gaten sasetaru
kusame kana

Now I realize
autumn's arrived —
achoo!

459

秋たつや
何におどろく
陰陽師

Aki tatsu ya
nan ni odoroku
onmiyauji

Autumn has arrived —
what is the fortune teller's
surprise?

460

貧乏に
追つかれけり
けさの秋

Bimbou ni
oi tsukare keri
kesa no aki

Chased tirelessly
by poverty —
this autumn morning

461

秋立や
素湯香しき
施訳院

Akitatsu ya
sayu kaubashiki
seyakuin

Autumn arrives
the fragrance of hot baths —
Seyakuin Temple

462

初秋や
余所の灯見ゆる
宵のほど

Hatsu aki ya
yoso no hi miyuru
yoi no hodo

In the early autumn
looking at distant lights
around night

In the Autumn night by the quiet window I count all my dead friends

463*

とうろうを
三たびかかげぬ
露ながら

Tourou wo
mitabni kakagenu
tsuyu nagara

I lift the lit
lantern up three times
amidst the dew

464

高燈籠
 滅なんとする
 あまたたび

Takadouro
 kienan tosuru
 amatatabi

Many times
 the high garden lantern's light
 has been extinguished

Tanabata

465

梶の葉を
 郎詠集の
 しほり哉

Kaji no ha wo
 raueishiu no
 shihori kana

Mulberry leaves
 gathered for a recitation's
 bookmark

466*

恋さまざま
 願の糸も
 白きよい

Koi samazama
 negai no ito mo
 shiroki yori

For different loves
 offering colored threads that were
 once white

467*

拍子ぬげ しる人に逢ふ
つと入や

Tsuto iri ya
shiro hito ni au
hyaushinuke

Unannounced amateurs
arrive with sacred tools —
disappointment

468*

魂祭 蚊屋の裾踏
あぢきなや

Ajikina ya
kaya no suso fumu
tamamatsuri

Tastelessly
stepping on the hem of a mosquito net
at a funeral service

469*

座敷哉 ほどけばもとの
魂棚を

Tamadana wo
hodokeba moto no
zashiki kana

The spirit shelf —
the drawing room's fragile
foundation

Relaxing for 16 days and nights in the vicinity of the Kamogawa River

470*

大文字や
あふみの空も
ただならね

Daimonji ya
aumi no sore mo
tadanarane

Daimonji's
effigy meets the unusually
low sky

471

租阿弥の
宵寝起すや
大文字

Sauami no
yoine okosu ya
daimonji

Like Amida
I go to bed early to wake for
Daimonji

472

撰待に
きせるわすれて
西へ行

Setsutai ni
kiseru wasurete
nishi e yuku

Going to Nishi Temple's
tea reception forget
your pipe

In praise of Hanabusa Ichou's painting

473*

おどり哉
月落かかる
四五人に

Shi go nin ni
tsuki ochi kakaru
odori kana

With four, five people
the falling moon begins
the dance

474

躍かな
啼町越えて
ひとと犬の

Hitato inu no
naku machi koete
odori kana

Immediately the dog's
howl floats over the town —
the dance

475

おどり哉
さそひ合せて
萍の

Ukikusa no
sasoi awasete
odori kana

Floating weeds
join together — an invitation
to dance

By Kanagawa's coast

476*

いな妻や
八丈かかけて
きくた摺

Inatzuma ya
hachijuu kakete
kikuta zuri

Suspended lightening —
Hachijuu Island's hanging
yellow silk

477

いな妻の
一網うつや
いせのうみ

Inatzuma ya
hitoami utsu ya
ise no umi

Lightening
strikes completely
Ise's bay

478

いなづまや
堅田泊りの
宵の空

Inatzuma ya
katada domari no
yoi no sora

Lightening
anchors the hard dry rice field
to the evening sky

479

稲妻に
こぼるる音や
竹の露

Inatzuma ni
koboruru oto ya
take no tsuyu

After the lightening
the sound of dew dripping
off bamboo

A poem for Shunya

480*

日ごろ中
よくて恥ある
すまひ哉

Hi goronaka
yokute haji aru
sumahi kana

All day long
humiliated regularly
sumo wrestlers

481

飛入の
力者あやしき
角力かな

Tobi iri no
rikishya ayashiki
sumahi kana

Diving into things
a mysterious people —
sumo wrestlers

482

夕露や
伏見の角力
ちりぎりに

Yuu tsuyu ya
fushimi no sumahi
chirigiri ni

The evening dew
and Fushimi's sumo wrestlers
falling down

483

負まじき
角力を寝もの
がたり哉

Maku majiki
sumahi o nemono
gatari kana

For defeated
sumo wrestlers sleep
comes hard

While wandering around willow trees

484

柳散
清水涸石
所所

Yanagi chiri
shimizu kare ishi
tokorodokoro

Drifting here and there
like dry pebbles in clear water —
fallen willow leaves

485

小狐の
何にむせけむ
小萩はら

Kogitsune no
nan ni musekemu
kohagi hara

The fox pup
what a playful spirit
in the bush clover

486

薄見つ
萩やなからむ
此ほとり

Susuki mitsu
hagi ya nakaramu
kono hotori

So close
yet so difficult to see —
bush clover

487

山は暮
野は黄昏の
薄哉

Yama wa kurete
no wa tasugare no
susuki kana

The mountains darken
and in the twilight the fields
are so pale

488*

女郎花
 女 郎 花
 花 ながら
 そ も 茎 ながら

Ominaeshi
 somo kuki nagara
 hana nagara

Golden lace
 in spite of its long stems
 it is still a flower

489

里人は
 里 人 は
 さ とも おも は じ
 女 郎 花

Satobito wa
 sato mo omohaji
 ominaeshi

The villagers
 and the village are ashamed —
 golden lace

490

秋おふたつ
 秋 お ふ た つ
 う き を ま す ほ の
 薄 哉

Aki futatsu
 uki o masuhono
 susuki kana

Autumn — the second
 rainy season swelling the fields
 faintly

491

おぼつか
かな
すずき
瘦萩
茨老

Ibara oi
suzuki yase hagi
obotsu kana

Fading roses
in pale thin clover —
a sacred place

492

をみなへし
露折
かけて
猪の

Inoshishi no
tsuyu ori kakete
ominaeshi

The wild boar
snaps the dew off
golden lace

493

ちぎり哉
春わか
ちとる
白萩を

Shirahagi o
haru waka chitoru
chigiri kana

White clover —
gone the youthful spring's
promise

494

垣ぬ潜る
薄ひともと
真蘇枋なる

Kakine moguru
susuki hitomoto
masuho naru

Passing through the fence
a single red stalk
of pampas grass

495

きちかうも
見ゆる花屋が
持仏堂

Kichikau mo
miyuru hanaya ga
jibutsudan

Morning glories also
look at the flower shop —
Jibutsudau Temple

The deep waters of the valley stream are an indigo blue

496

朝がほや
一輪深き
淵のいる

Asagao ya
ichirin fukuki
fuchi no iru

A morning glory
its singularly profound flower
in the abyss

497

朝顔や
 手拭のはしの
 藍をかこつ

Asagao ya
 tenobii no hashi no
 ai o kakotsu

Morning glories and
 an acolyte complaining about
 his indigo towel

498

夜の蘭
 香にかくれてや
 花白し

Yoru no ran
 ka ni kakurete ya
 hana shiroshi

The evening orchid —
 a hidden fragrance
 blooming white

499

蘭夕
 狐のくらし奇
 楠を炊む

Ran yuube
 kitsune no kurashi ki
 yare o takamu

Evening orchids
 a dark fox strangely burning
 in the camphor tree

Sir Benkei

500*

花すすき
ひと夜はなびけ
武蔵坊

Hana susuki
hito yoru wa nabike
musashibou

The flowering plume grass
bowing in the evening —
Musashibou

501

しら露や
さつ男の胸毛
ぬるるほど

Shira tsuyu ya
satsu o no munagi
nururu hodo

The white dew
on the man's chest hair
is so wet

502

ものふの
露はらひ行
ゆはずかな

Mono nou no
tsuyu warai yuku
yuhazu kana

The essence of Noh —
tears and laughter moving
on a bow string

Mt Meyugi

503

峰寒し
一里眉毛に秋の
立去事

Tachisare koto
ichiri meyugi ni aki no
hou samushi

Departing the eyebrows
of Mt Meyugi are two miles apart
in the cold peak of autumn

504

ひとつづづ
茨の刺に
白露や

Shiratsuyu ya
ibara no hari ni
hito tsutzutzu

White dew
on the briar's thorns —
the man continues

505

うつぽ哉
露におもたき
狩倉の

Karikura no
tsuyu ni omotaki
utsubo kana

The hunting preserve's
dew — heavy as
arrows in the air

506*

市人の
物うちかたる
露の中

Ichibito no
mono uchi kataru
tsuyu no naka

The market hawker's
goods are a swindle —
in the dew

507

身にしまや
横川のきぬを
すます時

Mi ni shima ya
yokawa no kinu wo
sumasu toki

I'm an island
in Yokawa River — time
to wash silk

508

身にしむや
亡妻の櫛を
閨に踏

Mi ni shimu ya
nakitsuma no kushi wo
nuya ni fumu

Stepping in the bedroom
I am pierced by
my late wife's comb

509

朝露や
まだ霜しらぬ
髪の落

Asatsuyu ya
mada shimo shiranu
kami no ochi

Morning dew
I still do not know the frost
of falling hair

The arrowroot's shelf like leaves thickly cover the edge of the eaves — a dark afternoon wall

510

葛の葉の
うらみ顔なる
細雨哉

Kuzu no ha no
urami gao naru
kosame kana

Arrowroot leaves
bitter faces
in misty rain

511

朝顔に
うすきゆかりの
木槿哉

Asagao ni
usuki yukari no
mukuga kana

Morning glories
thinly connected
to the Rose of Sharon

512

朝霧や
村千軒の
市の音

Asagiri ya
mura senken no
ichi no oto

In the morning fog
a city of one thousand eaves —
market noises

513

朝霧や
杭打音
丁丁たり

Asagiri ya
kuize utsu oto
tautau tari

In the morning fog
a stake is pounded and then
an axe rings

514

もの焚て
花火に遠き
かかり舟

Mono taite
hanabi ni touki
kakari fune

Burning sparks
far away fireworks
hanging over a boat

515

夕月夜
淀の御茶屋の
火花せよ

Hanabi seyo
yodo no ochaya no
yuuzukiyo

Fireworks
reflected in a teahouse pool —
the moonlit evening

516

二日月
扱明日よりは
八朔や

Hatsusaku ya
sate osu yori wa
futsukagetsu

October first
and now tomorrow meets
the second day

517

小魚哉
追れてのぼる
初汐に

Hatsushiho ni
oharete noboru
kouo kana

The first tide
drives away ascending
minnows

At a neighboring hermitage

518

桂河 月よりうつす 水一筋

Sui hitosuji
tsuki yori utsusu
katsuragawa

A line on the water
the moon above moves down
Katsura River

519

朝寝哉 かごとがましき 虫売の

Mushiuri no
kagoto ga mashiki
asane kana

The insect dealer's
basket of summer increases
my morning sleep

520

小でうちん 河内通ひの むし啼や

Mushi naku ya
Kawachi gayoi no
kodeuchin

The insects cry
going to Kawachi
in a small paper lantern

521*

鳴なめり
秋ひだるしと
みのむしや

Minomushi ya
akihi darushi to
naku nameri

The bagworm
so heavy in the autumn sun
cries

522

たばこ哉
下葉ゆかしき
蠹て

mushibamete
shitaba yukashiki
tabako kana

Worm eaten —
the sweet lower leaves
of tobacco

523

なりにけり
鶉を取老と
小百姓

kobyakushou
utzura o toru oi
nari ni keri

A pretty farmer —
the quail captures aging
as its song ends

524

鬼灯や
清原の女が
生写し

Hohotzuki ya
kiyohara no me ga
shyou urashi

The woman's Chinese lantern
really does look like
a ground-cherry

525

日は斜
関屋の鎗に
とんぼかな

Hi wa naname
kanya no yari ni
tonbo kana

The oblique sun
spears through a shop's gate —
a dragonfly

In this moonlit night it has been ten days without friends or visitors

526

中中に
ひとりあればそ
月を友

Nakanaka ni
hitori arebasa
tsuki o tomo

Very alone
in the wild leaves
my friend the moon

527

名月に
いのころ捨る
下部哉

Meigetsu ni
inokoro sutsuru
shimobe kana

The harvest moon
abandoned with the pigs
a manservant

528

身の闇の
頭巾も通る
月見かな

Mi no yami no
tzukin mo touru
tsukimi kana

Melancholic
I walk along in a hood
viewing the moon

529

月天心
貧しき町を
通りけり

Tsukitenshin
mezushiki machi wo
touri keru

The moon at its zenith
the destitute town's
road ends

A single pine tree rests against Tadanori's ancient grave

530*

月今宵
松にかへたる
やどり哉

Tsuki koyoi
matsu ni kaetaru
yadori kana

This evening the moon
has returned home —
a pine tree

531

名月や
雨を溜たる
池のうへ

Meigetsu ya
ame o tametaru
ike no ue

The harvest moon
collected in rain
above a pool

532*

名月や
うさぎのわたる
諏訪の海

Meigetsu ya
usagi no wataru
Suwa no umi

In the harvest moon
the rabbit crosses
Lake Suwa

533

旅人よ
笠嶋かたれ
雨の月

Tabibito yo
kasashima katare
ame no tsuki

A wayfarer
talking about Kasashima Island —
the moon in rain

534

月今宵
あるじの翁
舞出よ

Tuki koyoi
aruji no okina
maiide yo

Tonight's moon —
a masterful old man
begins dancing

535

仲丸の
魂祭せむ
けふの月

Nakamuru no
tamamatsuri semu
kefu no tsuki

Nakamaru's
Spirit Festival enshrines
tonight's moon

536

名月や
夜は人住ぬ
峰の茶屋

Meigetsu ya
yo wa hito sumanu
mine no chaya

The harvest moon
nobody stays at night
in the summit's tea house

537

山の端や
海を離るる
月も今

Yama no ha ya
umi o hanaruru
tsukimo ima

Now the mountain ridges
and the sea are as isolated
as the moon

538

庵の月
主をとへば
芋堀に

An no tsuki
aruji o toeba
imo hori ni

The hermitage's moon —
thinking about the master
digging sweet potatoes

539

けふの月
池は闇也
かつまたの

Katsumata no
ike wa yami nari
kefu no tsuki

Once again
the lake is gloomy
tonight's moon

Though Richau is drunk, looking at his face as he falls down, he is as elegant as Gyoku-zan

540*

千千の玉
なみだに砕く
月見れば

Tsuki mireba
namidani kudaku
chichi no dama

While moon viewing
the dew drops broke
into thousands of jewels

541*

けふの月
野守に劣る
花守は

Hanamori wa
nomori ni otoru
kefu no tsuki

The flower guard
and the field watch is inferior
to tonight's moon

Pondering an ancient prayer for rain

542

魚躍る
神泉苑の
名月や

Meigetsu ya
Shinsen no
uo odoru

The harvest moon
in a shrine's garden spring —
fish dance

On the high monk "Ganji"

543*

月を印す
鴈や端山に
一行の

Itsukau no
gen ya hayama ni
tsuki o insu

A party of wild geese
in the foothills imprinted
across the moon

544

鴈ひとつ
下りず夜を行
紀の路にも

Ki no di ni mo
orizu yo o yuku
kari hitotsu

A road narrative
the coming night swoops down —
a single goose

An adapted title “A Far Away Deer In Rain”

545

角 恋 雨
ば に の
か 朽 鹿
り ぬ は

Ame no shika
koi ni kuchinu wa
tsuno bakari

A deer in rain
even budding antlers doesn't stop
its love

546

枯 角 鹿
木 も 寒
哉 身 し
に 添
ふ

Shika samushi
tsuno mo mi ni suu
koboku kana

A cold deer
its body and antlers merge
with a dead tree

547

あ は 鹿
れ は そ の 啼
に け り 木 未

Shika nakite
haha sono kozui
are ni keru

The deer cries
to its mother over there
in the twigs

548

菜畠の
霜夜は早し
鹿の声

Na batake no
shimoyu wa hayashi
shika no koe

A mustard field
in an early frosty night
a deer's voice

549

三度啼て
聞えずなりぬ
鹿の声

Mitabinakite
kikoezu narinu
shika no koe

Crying three times
without stopping to listen —
the deer's voice

Zenshou Mansion with a late night moon

550

鹿ながら
山影門に
入日哉

Shika nagara
saneimon ni
iru hi kana

With a deer
the sun enters
Saneimon gate

All night while sleeping at a mountain temple, I was listening to a deer kicking and a novice monk slurping tea, as if I was in Shinshi's comic poem

551*

なかりけり
鹿の声
小坊主に角

Shika no koe
kobouzu ni tsuno
nakari keru

The deer's voice —
this novice doesn't have
antlers

552

鹿の声
折あしく
門こそ叩け

Oru ashiku
kado koso tatake
shika no koe

A broken ankle —
also striking against the gate
the deer's voice

An old longing

553

秋の暮
又さびしひぞ
去年より

Kyonen yori
mata sabishiizo
aki no kure

Since last year
sadness has again returned —
autumn darkens

554

秋のくれ
 ことのみおもふ
 父母の

Chichi haha no
 koto no miomou
 aki no kure

A father and mother's
 planned pregnancy —
 autumn's end

555

秋の暮
 鳴も立たり
 あちらむきに

Achira muki ni
 shigi mo tachi tari
 aki no kure

From over there
 the snipe also stands exposed
 to the darkening autumn

“Sarumaru Daifu”

556*

秋の暮
 我をまねくや
 我がでに

Ware ga de ni
 ware o maneku ya
 aki no kure

By myself
 I have beacons
 a dark autumn end

557

門を出れば
我も行人
秋のくれ

Mon o ireba
ware mo yukuhito
aki no kure

Passing through the gate
I also become a wanderer —
autumn darkens

558

弓取に
歌とはれけり
秋の暮

Yumitori ni
uta to hare keru
aki no kure

Dying
in song the wild field ends —
autumn darkens

559

淋し身に
杖わすれたり
秋の暮

Sabishi mi ni
tsue wasuretari
aki no kure

I'm lonely
having forgotten my cane —
autumn darkens

Farewell to Deceased Friends

560

秋ひとり
 行ていざとししよらん
 木會路

Kisoumichi
 yukite iza to shyoran
 aki hitori

Aging as I go
 down Kosoumichi road —
 alone in autumn

561

あきのかぜ
 釣の糸吹
 かなしさや

Kanashi sa ya
 chou no ito fuku
 aki no kaze

Mournful
 decoys on strings blow
 in the autumn wind

562*

成にけり
 書むしばまず
 秋の風

Aki no kaze
 fumi mushiba mazu
 nari ni keru

Autumn wind
 my book is not
 worm eaten

563

あきのかぜ
 羅は誰が
 金屏の

Kinbyou no
 usumono wa taga
 aki no kaze

Somebody's
 silk and gold screen —
 autumn wind

564

浜庇
 干魚
 秋風や
 かけたる

Aki kaze ya
 hiuo kaketaru
 hamabisashi

In autumn wind
 from the eaves of a beach house
 dried fish hang

Thinking about the late Ichiku

565*

いく秋ぞ
 移竹
 去来去
 移りぬ

Kyorai sari
 ichiku utsurinu
 iku aki zo

Kyorai's gone
 Ichiku's passed
 so many autumns

566

順礼の
目鼻書ゆく
ふくべ哉

Junrei no
me hana kakiyuku
fukube kana

Writing about
a pilgrim's eyes and nose —
a gourd

567

腹の中へ
歯はぬけけらし
種ふくべ

Fuku no chu e
ha wa nuke kerashi
tane fukube

Extracting teeth
from out of an abdomen —
gourd seeds

568

あだ花に
かかる恥なし
種ふくべ

Ada hana ni
kakaruru hajinashi
tane fukube

These fruitless blossoms
bear no shame —
gourd seeds

569

人の世に
尻を居へたる
ふくべ哉

Jin no sei ni
shiri o suetaru
fukube kana

Throughout life
sitting on its butt —
a gourd

570

我足に
かうべぬかるる
案山子哉

Wagaashi ni
kaubenu karuru
kagashi kana

My foot
cut the head off
a scarecrow

A Picture of a Warrior

571

御所柿に
たのまれ顔の
かがし哉

Goshyogaki ni
tana mare gao no
kagashi kana

Near the old imperial palace
a persimmon and very drunken face
a scarecrow

572*

案山子哉
何子か号は
姓名は

Seimei wa
nanishi ka gou wa
kagashi kana

The name
of all children —
scarecrow

573

かがしかな
頭巾着て居る
三輪の田に

Miwa no ta ni
tzukin kete iru
kagashi kana

In Miwa's rice paddies
existing in a hood —
a scarecrow

574

引板の音
誰呼子鳥
山陰や

Yamakage ya
tare yobu kotori
hita no oto

In the shelter of the mountains
who summoned all the small birds
with a frightening sound?

When Unribo was setting out on a trip to Kyushu he tried to persuade me to go — but I couldn't

575

案山子哉
うごかして行
秋かぜの

Aki kaze no
ugo kashite yuku
kagashi kana

The autumn wind
moves the agitated
scarecrow

576

かがし哉
細脛高き
水落て

Mizuochite
kosohagi takaki
kagashi kana

A sunken chest
and tall thin shins —
a scarecrow

577*

そばの花
酒はあしくと
故郷や

Furusato ya
sake wa oshiku to
soba no hana

Preferred
over my hometown's sake —
buckwheat flowers

578*

宮城野の
萩更科の
蕎麦にいづれ

Miyagi no no
hagi sarashina no
soba ni izure

Which is better
Miyagi's bush clover
or Sarashina's buckwheat?

579

道のべや
手よりこぼれて
蕎麦花

Michi no be ya
te yori koborete
soba no hana

Spilling from my hand
on the side of the road —
buckwheat flowers

580

落る日の
くぐりて染る
蕎麦の茎

Otsuru hi no
kugurite somuru
soba no kuki

The falling sun
passes through dying
buckwheat stalks

Title: Shirogawa River

581*

黒谷の
隣はしろしそ
そばのはな

Kurudane no
tonari wa shiroshiso
soba no hana

From Black Valley
the White River is next to
buckwheat blossoms

582*

なつかしき
しをにがもとの
野菊哉

Natsukashiki
shioni ga moto no
nogiku kana

Nostalgic —
from out wild chamomiles
asters

583

綿つみや
たばこの花を
見て休む

Men tsumi ya
tabako no hana o
mite yasumu

Gathering cotton
the tobacco flowers
look asleep

584

三徑の
十歩に尽て
蓼の花

Sankei no
juppo ni tsukite
tade no hana

The ten paths in the hidden
hermitage garden exhaust
water-pepper flowers

585*

甲斐がねや
穂蓼の上を
塩車

Kaigane ya
hotade no ue wo
shio karuma

Mt. Kaigane —
bunches of water pepper on
a salt cart

586

沙魚釣の
小舟漕なる
窓の前

Haze tsuri no
kobune kogunaru
mado no mae

Catching sandfish
the small boat rows by
in front of the window

587

鱸かな
鯉切尽て
百日の

Hyakunichi no
koi kiri tsukite
suzuki kana

The hundred day limit
has run out — cutting carp bait
for sea-bass

588

玉や吐
鱸の巨口
釣上し

Tsuri ageshi
suzuki no kyokou
tama ya haku

Pulling in
a sea-bass by its big mouth
it disgorges the lure

Alone near Ohara's fields is a wet traveling minstrel, and though the fields are decaying,
the lower leaves of the plants are still withstanding the frost even as a few flowers bloom
and since the cold autumn sun is unreliable — everything is so pathetic

589

蕎麦歟否歟
蓼歟あらぬ歟
水かれがれ

Sui karegare
tade ka aranu ka
soba ka hi ka

In the dwindling water
is it water pepper or not?
is it buckwheat or not?

590

小鳥来る
音うれしさよ
板ばさし

Kotori kuru
oto ureshisayo
itabasashi

Small birds come
with such happy sounds
to the wooden bridge

591

此森も
とかく過けり
鴟おとし

Kono mori no
takaku sugi keru
mozu otoshi

From this forest too
somehow or other the shrike
passes through the bird trap

592

山雀や
榎の老木に
寝にもどる

Yama gare ya
kaya no oiki ni
ne ni modoru

Mountain sparrows
and the old plum-yew tree
return to sleep

On monk Chikukei living outside of Kyoto in Tango Province

593*

ふた法師
眠る鴨あり
たつ鴨に

Tatsu shigi ni
Nemuru shigi ari
futa houshi

The standing snipe
the sleeping snipe —
two priests

594

ながめ哉
秋天ひきき
鴨立て

Shigi tachite
shouten hikiki
nagame kana

A snipe flying away
into the autumn sky —
a humbling view

595

寺林
ここをせにせん
わたり鳥

Watari tori
koko o senisen
tera hayashi

Migrating birds
here in the trembling
temple woods

596

わたり鳥
雲の機手の
にしき哉

Watari tori
kumo no hatate no
nishiki kana

Migrating birds
woven in the clouds —
embroidered silk

597

瀬田降て
志賀の夕日や
江鮭

Reta furite
Shiga no yuuhi ya
ameno uo

Sinking in the shallow fields
Shiga's setting sun —
salmon in the bay

598

駒迎
ことにゆゆしや
額白

Koma mukae
koto ni yuyushi ya
hitaijiru

Meeting the colt
is a grand matter —
a white forehead

599*

秋の暮
 辻の地藏に
 油さす

Aki no kure
 suji no jizou ni
 abura sasu

In the autumn sunset
 the Jizou at the crossroads
 has an oily shine

600*

秋の燈や
 ゆかしき奈良の
 道具市

Aki no hi ya
 yukashiki nara no
 douguichi

Autumn lamps
 yearning for Nara's
 Dougu Market

601*

追剝を
 弟子に剃けり
 秋の旅

Oi hagi wo
 deshi ni sori keri
 aki no tabi

On an autumn journey
 a monk shaves his disciple —
 a highway robber

602

秋
雨
や
水
底
の
草
を
踏
わ
た
る

Akisame ya
minasoko no so wo
fumiwataru

In autumn rain
crossing over a river bottom
filled with weeds

In praise of Maruyama Okyo's painting "Black Dog"

603*

あ
の
が
身
の
闇
よ
り
吼
て
夜
半
の
秋

Ano ga mi no
yami yori hoete
yowa no aki

That soul's
spooky cry draws near
in the dead of an autumn night

604*

甲
賀
衆
の
し
の
び
の
賭
や
夜
半
の
秋

Kougashyu no
shinobi no kake ya
yowa no aki

In Kouga
ninjas gamble
in the autumn midnight

605

枕上
秋の夜を守る
刀かな

Makuragami
aki no yo o moru
katana kana

Protecting the bedside
from the autumn night —
a sword

606

身の秋や
今宵をしのぶ
翌もあり

Mi no aki ya
koyoi o shinobu
asu mo ari

The soul of autumn —
this evening endures
onto the next

607*

小路行
ばらかく聞ゆる
きぬた哉

Kouji yuki
bara kaku kiyuru
kinuta kana

Going down the alley
the roses scratch listening
to the “kinuta”

608*

うき人に
手をうたれたる
砧かな

Uki hito ni
te o utaretaru
kinuta kana

A cold lover
slaps my hand —
“The Kinuta”

609

遠近を
ちこちとうつ
きぬた哉

Ochikochi wo
chikochi to utsu
kinuta kana

Far or near
somewhere striking the ground
the kinuta

610

うき我に
砧うて今は
又止ミぬ

Uki ware ni
kinuta uta kyo wa
mata yaminu

I am so miserable —
today the “kinuta” song again
never stopped

611

石を打
狐守夜の
きぬた哉

Ishi o utsu
kitsune moru yo no
kinuta kana

Striking a stone
a fox defends night from
the kinuta

612

鳥羽殿へ
五六騎いそぐ
野分哉

Tobe dono e
gorokuki isogu
nowaki kana

The Lord of Toba's
56 horsemen — quick
as a wintry blast

613

門前の
老婆子薪貪る
野分かな

Mon mai no
sutaki musaboru
nowaki kana

In front of the gate
the old woman covets the young firewood
a wintry blast

614

野分哉
我蕎麦存す
禁なる

Fumoto naru
waga soba sonsu
nowaki kana

At the foot of the mountains
my buckwheat field remains
in wintry wind

615

のはきかな
よべ問かはす
市人の

Ichibito no
yobe toi kahasu
nowaki kana

City folk
call out to avoid
the chill wind

616

野分哉
二階下り来る
客僧の

Kyakusou no
nikai ori kuru
nowaki kana

A traveling priest
comes down from the second floor—
a chill wind

Poem written at a teahouse looking at the top of Mt. Miiyare

617

秋寒し
藤太が鏑
ひびく時

Aki samushi
touda ga kabura
hibiku toki

In the cold autumn
Touda arrowheads
reverberate in time

618*

角文字の
いざ月もよし
牛祭

Tsunomoji no
iza getsu mo yoshi
ushi matsuri

Now the moon is also
a perfectly written horn —
the Cow Festival

619

うら枯や
からきめ見つる
漆の樹

Ura gara ya
karakime misturu
urushi no ki

The bare
dead tree top looks like
lacquered wood

620*

芭蕉哉
葉うらにめづる
物書に

Monokaku ni
ha ura ni metzura
bashou kana

Writing poetry
with love on the bottom
of banana leaves

621

老の松
風もひかさじ
稲かけて

Ine kakete
kaze mo hikasaji
oi no matsu

Rice drying on a rack
the wind also passes through
an old pine tree

At Lake Hirosawa

622*

後の月
池のひづみや
水かれて

Sui karete
ike no hitzumi ya
nochi no tsuki

The water is drying up —
in the pools of hooves
the hunter's moon

623

山茶花の
木間見せけり
後の月

Sanzenkuo no
kono mise keru
nochi no tsuki

A camellia flower
seen through the trees —
the hunter's moon

624*

泊る気で
ひとり来ませり
十三夜

Tomaru ki de
hitori kimaseri
juusanya

I intended to stay
and arrive alone —
the thirteenth night's moon

625

十月の
今宵はしぐれ
後の月

Juugatsu no
koyoi wa shigure
nochi no tsuki

In this October
night's drizzle
the hunter's moon

On the thirteenth night's moon my days have become very refined

626*

の 此 唐
ち 花 人
の 過 は
月 て

Karabito wa
kono hana sugite
nochi no tsuki

A Chinese custom
before the flower opens —
viewing the hunter's moon

627*

も 伏 日
ら 水 の で
ひ 小 の り
け 菊 ど
り

Hideridoshi
fushimi no kogiku
morai keru

After a year of drought
Fushimi's small chrysanthemums
are a gift

My old master departs with his ink stone after viewing Yamaga's chrysanthemums — this poem is written for him

628*

い 受 き
の て く
ち 硯 の
哉 の 露

Kiku no tsuyu
ukete suzuri no
inochi kana

The ink stone received
dew from chrysanthemums —
may it prolong life

629*

いでさらば
投壺まいらん
菊の花

Ide saraba
touko mai ran
kiku no hana

It's time then
to throw flowers in a vase —
chrysanthemums

On a still-life of chrysanthemums

630

白菊や
呉山の雪を
笠の下

Shirakiku ya
gosan no yuki wo
kasa no shita

Mt. Gosan in snow
white chrysanthemums
under an umbrella

631

手燭して
色朱へる
黄菊哉

Teshyoku shite
ushinaeru
kikiku kana

The candle reveals
a pallid waxy face and
yellow chrysanthemums

632*

見えぬ哉
 菊なき門も
 村百戸

Mura hyakuto
 kiku naki kado mo
 mienu kana

By the poor village's
 one hundred gates and doors I see
 chrysanthemums

633

菊畠
 桃の落葉よ
 あさましき

Asamashiki
 momo no ochiba yo
 kikubatake

The silly
 peach leaves fall in
 a field of chrysanthemums

634*

奴かな
 汝は菊の
 菊作り

Kiku tsukuri
 naraji wa kiku no
 yakko kana

Harvesting flowers
 thou valet of
 chrysanthemums

635*

西行の
夜具も出て有
紅葉哉

Saigyau no
yagu mo dete aru
momiji kana

As I go to Western Kyoto
I take out my bedding —
autumn leaves

636

ひつぢ田に
紅葉ちりかかる
夕日かな

Hitsuji ta ni
momiji chiri kakaru
yuuhi kana

In a field of sheep
falling maple leaves suspended
in the sun set

637

谷水の
尽てこがるる
もみぢ哉

Tanimizu no
tsukite kogaruru
momiji kana

The valley water
has dried up — scorching
the maple leaves

638

もみぢ哉
藤沢寺の
よらいで過る

Yoraide suguru
fujisawadera no
momiji kana

Before reaching
Fujisawa temple —
maples

639*

なつかしき
会津商人
むら紅葉

Mura momiji
aitzu akindo
natsukashiki

Seeing the town's autumnal
foliage a merchant from Aitzu
is nostalgic

640*

須磨の秋
波もより来る
笛の音に

Teki no ne ni
nami mo yori kuru
suma no aki

The sound of a flute
comes closer in waves —
Suma Temple in autumn

641*

雨乞の
小町が果や
をとし水

Amegoi no
komachi ga hate ya
wotoshi mizu

Praying for rain
the beautiful woman ends by
throwing water

642

村村の
寝ごころ更ぬ
落とし水

Muramura no
negokoro fukenu
otoshi mizu

Many villages
sleep comfortably through the night-
water drains into the fields

643*

毛見の衆の
舟さし下せ
最上川

Kemi no shyu no
fune sashi kadase
mogamikawa

Admiring their hair
many people on a boat ride
down Mogami River

644

新米の
坂田は早し
もがみ河

Shimmai no
sakata wa hayashi
mogamikawa

The new rice
on the hill fields is early —
Mogami River

645

落穂拾ひ
日あたる方へ
あゆみ行

Ochibahiroi
hi ataru kata e
ayumi yuku

The gleaning
sun happens to touch my side —
going for a walk

At a mountain hut

646*

猿どのの
夜寒訪ゆく
兎かな

Saru dono no
yu samu toiyuku
usagi kana

Which field is the sly monkey
visiting in the cold night —
a rabbit

647

壁隣
ものごとつかす
夜さむ哉

Kabedonari
monogoto tsukasu
yosamu kana

Just a wall between neighbors —
a messenger of things to come
the cold night

648

欠欠て
月もなくなる
夜寒哉

Kakekakete
tsuki mo naku naru
yosamu kana

Completely broken
the moon is lost and dead —
the cold night

649

起て居て
もう寝たといふ
夜寒哉

Okite ite
mou ne tatoifu
yosamu kana

Daily life —
ah sleeping through
the cold night

650*

夜を寒み
 小冠者臥たり
 北枕

Yo o samumi
 kokuwaja fushitari
 kita makura

The young servant
 layed in the cold night
 head to the north

651*

長き夜や
 通夜の連哥の
 こぼれ月

Nagaki yo ya
 tsuya no renga no
 kobore tsuki

In the long night
 staying up writing renga —
 the broken edge of the moon

652

山鳥の
 枝踏かゆる
 夜長哉

Yamatori no
 eda fumukayuru
 yo naga kana

A pheasant
 steps up and down on a branch —
 what a long night

653*

子鼠の
ちちよと啼や
夜半の秋

Konezumi no
chichiyoto naku ya
yawa no aki

The young mice
cry “father”
in the dead of the autumn night

654

秋風や
酒肆に詩うたふ
漁者樵者

Shiufuu ya
shyushi ni shi utau
gyoshya seushya

In the autumn breeze
the liquor store song sings
“Fishermen - Lumberjacks”

655

秋はものの
そばの不作も
なつかしき

Aki wa mono no
soba no fusaku mo
natsukashiki

An autumn thing
longing for buckwheat noodles —
crop failure

A vision while visiting Genchouan hermitage

656

音聞む
椎にむかしの
丸盆の

Marubon no
shii ni mukashi
oto kikamu

From the round tray
I can still hear the sound
of ancient oaks

657

いとま哉
横河の児の
椎拾ふ

Shii hirou
yokawa no chigo no
itoma kana

As I lounge
a young child in Yokowa valley
gathers acorns

At the ancient army headquarters

658

とうがらし
からき涙や
餉に

Kareii ni
karaki namida ya
tougarashi

In cooked dried rice
hot tears —
cayenne peppers

659

俵して
蔵め蓄へぬ
番椒

Tawara shite
osame takuwahenu
taugarashi

The straw bag saves
the recently reaped
cayenne peppers

660*

折くるる
心こぼさじ
梅もどき

Ori kururu
kokoro kobasaji
ume modoki

Breaking and thinning
the heart overflows —
the winterberry

661

梅もどき
折や念珠を
かけながら

Ume modoki
oru ya nenju wo
kake nagara

Winterberries —
broken prayer beads
dangling

662*

番椒 立ぬ垣根や
にしき木を

Nishiki ki wo
tatenu kakine ya
taugarashi

A decorated proposal tree
has been placed by a wall —
cayenne peppers

663

いとう哉 時なつかしむ
推子の

Osanego no
toki natsukashimu
ichou kana

A young child
has no time for nostalgia —
a ginkgo tree

On an outing for mushrooms in Narutaki, Northern Kytoto

664

峰の月 頭を挙げば
茸狩や

Take gari ya
kaube o ogureba
mine no tsuki

Mushroom gathering —
the heads are full
as the peak of the moon

665*

茯苓は
伏かくれ松露は
あらはれぬ

Bukuriyau wa
fushi kakure shouro wa
arawarenu

shouro mushrooms
cannot be seen —
red fungus

666*

うれしさの
箕にあまりたる
むかご哉

Ureshisa no
mi ni amaritaru
mukago kana

I'm delighted
with my undeserved winnowing fork
mountain yam bulbs

667

鬼貫や
新酒の中の
貧に処ス

Oni tsura ya
shinshyu no naka no
bin ni shyosu

The devil succeeded —
such poor behavior
from new sake

668*

弥陀仏
惠心の作の
栗備ふ

Kuri sonau
eshin no saku no
midabotoke

Chestnut offerings
for Eshin's statue —
Midabotoke

669

鶏頭花
吹たふされて
にしき木は

Nishiki ki wa
fukitafu sarete
keitokuwa

A blown over
decorated proposal tree —
cockscorn flowers

670

宿に在
有職の人は
くれの秋

Kure no aki
iusogu no hito wa
yado ni masu

In the dark autumn
the knowledgeable man
stays home

Staying at Rakutou, Basho's hermitage, in Eastern Kyoto

674*

冬
ち
かし
時
雨
の
雲
も
こ
こ
よ
り
ぞ

Fuyu chikashi
shigure no kumo mo
kokoyorizo

Winter is close
the late fall rains and the clouds
start here in the east

冬の俳句

Winter Poems

675

初時雨
 得たりかしこし
 みのむしの

Minomushi no
 etari kashikoshi
 hatsushigure

The bagworm
 is so clever —
 the winter rain begins

676*

雫哉
 眉に烏帽子の
 初しぐれ

Hatsushigure
 mayu ni eboshi no
 shitsuku kana

The winter rains begin —
 an Eboshi hat over the eyebrows
 drips

677

時雨哉
 静にぬらす
 楠の根を

Kusu no ne o
 shizuka ni nurasau
 shigure kana

The roots of the camphor tree
 so calm in the damp
 early winter rain

678

時雨るや
 蓑買ふ人の
 まことより

Shigururu ya
 kino kau hito no
 makoto yori

In the early winter rain
 buyers of straw raincoats
 sincerely choose

679*

しづるるや
 鼠のわたる
 琴の上

Shigururu ya
 nezumi no wataru
 koto no ue

In the early winter rain
 a rat crosses over
 the top of a koto

680*

古傘の
 婆娑と月夜の
 時雨哉

Furugasa no
 basa to tsuki yo no
 shigure kana

An old umbrella
 flapping in the moonlit night —
 an early winter rain

681*

以たる
我も古人の夜に
しぐるゝや

Shigururu ya
ware mo kojinn no
yo ni nitaru

An early winter rain—
my night and the ancient's
are the same

682

愁ふ哉
暮ひそみ音に
夕時雨

Yuushigure
hiki hisomi ne ni
ureu kana

In the evening rain
the hidden toad
grieves

Many people hiking in Takeo Mountain offer one branch of red maple at its temple, when the Gods are away visiting the Izumo Shrine, and the old leaves are enduring the frost

683*

紅葉哉
けぶりを握る
炉に焼て

Ro ni takite
keburi o tagiru
momiji kana

The smoke from
the lit hearth shapes
the red maple leaves

684

初冬や
日和になりし
京はづれ

Hatsufuyu ya
hiyori ni narishi
Kyoto hazure

As winter begins
the weather became fine
on the outskirts of Kyoto

685

居眠りて
我にかくれん
冬ごもり

Eneburite
ware ni kakuren
fuyugomori

While dozing
I am dead to the world —
hibernating

686

冬ごもり
壁をこころの
山に倚

Fuyugomori
kabe o kokoro no
yama ni yoru

While hibernating
my walls rest against
the heart of the mountains

687

冬ごもり
燈下に書すと
かかれたり

Fuyugomori
touka ni shosu to
kakare tari

In hibernation
I am beneath a lamp writing
catching a cold

688

勝手まで
誰が妻子ぞ
冬ごもり

Katte made
dare ga tsumako zo
fuzugomori

Still in the kitchen
whose wife and children
are hibernating

689

冬ごもり
仏にうとき
こころ哉

Fuyugomori
hotoke ni utoki
kokoro kana

In hibernation
the image of Buddha is a cold
spirit

690

嵐雪と
ふとん引合う
侘寝かな

Ransetsu to
futon hikiau
wabine kana

Ransetsu's
tug of war with the futon —
a lonesome sleep

691

いばりせし
ふとんほしたり
須磨の里

Ibarisheshi
futon hoshi tari
suma no sato

Having been pissed on
the futon has sufficiently dried
Suma Village

692

古郷に
ひと夜は更る
ふとんかな

Furusata no
hito yo wa fukuru
futon kana

In Furusato
the villagers stay up late —
futons

693

かしらへや
 かけん裾へや
 古衾

Kashira heya
 kaken susoe ya
 furobusuma

At the head of a room
 suspended by its hem
 an old quilt

694

大兵の
 かり寝あはれむ
 蒲団哉

Taihyau no
 kari ne awaremu
 futon kana

Taking pity
 on my great stature's light sleep —
 a futon

695

虎の尾を
 踏つつ裾に
 ふとんかな

Tora no o o
 fumitsutsu suso ni
 futon kana

Stepping on
 a tiger's tail — the hem
 of a futon

The Tenth Night*

696

十夜哉
茶もだぶだぶと
あなたうと

Anatau to
cha mo dabudabu to
juuya kana

You and
the tea are shaking, quivering —
the tenth night

697

時雨哉
衣鉢つたへて
蓑笠の

Mino kesa no
ihatsu tsutaete
shigure kana

Assuming the mantle
of a straw coat and hat I weather
the early winter rain

698

屏の内
犬のとがむる
夜興引や

Yoko hiki ya
inu no tagamuru
hei no uchi

Drawn to a night's
entertainment a dog scolds
behind a fence

699

枇
杷
の
花
鳥
も
す
さ
め
ず
日
く
れ
た
り

Biwa no hana
tori no susamezu
hi kuretari

The birds also praise
loquat blossoms
as the sun sets

700

茶
の
花
や
白
に
も
黄
に
も
お
ぼ
つ
か
な

Cha no hana ya
shironi mo kini mo
obotsu kana

Tea blossoms —
a white and yellow
heaven

701

茶
の
花
や
石
を
め
ぐ
り
て
路
を
取

Cha no hana ya
ichi o megurite
michi o toru

Tea blossoms
growing around a rock
catch the road

702*

咲びくも
おもはであるを
石落花

Saku biku mo
omo wa dearu o
tsuwa no hana

I think it is strangely
blooming out of season —
butterbur

703*

口切や
五山衆なんど
ほのめきて

Kuchikiri ya
gozan shu nando
honome kite

To begin talking —
how often do the monks of Gozan
dimly shine

704

口切や
小城下ながら
只ならぬ

Kuchikiri ya
ko jyayka nagara
tada naranu

To begin talking —
staying at the small castle town
isn't free

705

霰酒
雪中庵の
炉びらきや

Ro biraki ya
setsuchuan no
ararezaki

Uncovering the brazier —
Setsuchuan Hermitage's
“Hailstone Sake”

706

たまる夜に
觸躰に雨の
狐火や

Kitsunebi ya
dokuro ni ame no
tomaru yo ni

Foxfire —
a skull in rain
endures the night

707

川ちどり
綱もきくよや
羽織着て

Haori kite
tsuna mo kiku yo ya
kawa chidori

Wearing traditional coats
strung in a straight line —
river plovers

708

風雲の
夜すがら月の
千鳥哉

Kazegumo no
yo sugara tsuki no
chidori kana

Wind clouds
under the moon all night long —
plovers

709

磯ちどり
足をぬらして
遊びけり

Iso chidori
ashi o nurashite
asobi keru

Plovers along the beach
getting their feet wet
playing

710*

打よする
波や千鳥の
横ありき

Uchiyo suru
nami ya chidori no
yoko ariki

Through the pounding
waves the plovers
walk undisturbed

711

水鳥や
百姓ながら
弓矢取

Mizudori ya
hyakushuu nagara
yumiyatori

Waterfowl —
together the peasants grab
their bows and arrows

712

里過て
古江に鴛を
見付たり

Sato sugite
furue ni oshi o
mitzuketari

In the village before
Furue I've caught sight of
mandarine ducks

713

水鳥や
舟に菜を洗ふ
女有

Suidori ya
fune ni na o arau
onna ari

Waterfowl —
on a boat washing greens
a woman

714

加茂人の
火を燧音や
小夜衛

Kamo bito no
hi o kiri oto ya
sayo chidori

The increasing fires from people
grow out of control and an alarm sounds
night plovers

715

嵯峨寒し
いざ先くだりて
都鳥

Saga samushi
iza mazu kudarite
miyakodori

Saga is cold
hey let's be the first to descend
seagulls

716

早梅や
御室の里の
売屋敷

Saubai ya
omuro no sato no
uri yashiki

Early plum blossoms
from the village's greenhouse
sold from a stand

717

神無月
水仙見せよ
宗任に

Munetau ni
suisen miseyo
kannatzuki

The main responsibility
of daffodils — to be seen
in the Godless Month

In Osaka, Takatsui at a new neighborhood restaurant ten sailors came in and sat on the straw mats, demanding that the restaurant quit hiding its drink, only to begin quaffing from half-filled quart glasses

718

五勺かな
真帆も七合
小春風

Koharu nagi
maho mo shichigau
go shyaku kana

Becalmed in the Indian summer
ten men going full sail —
thirty-seven gallons of sake

719

石の上
きのふやちりぬ
冬の梅

Fuyu no ume
kinofu ya chirinu
ishi no ue

Winter plums blossoms
today they are falling
over stones

720

千葉どのの
 仮家引ケたり
 枯尾花

Chiba dono no
 kariya hiketari
 kare obana

The Lord of Chiba's
 temporary residence has drawn
 withered plume grass

721

たんぽぽの
 わすれ花あり
 路の霜

Tanpopo no
 wasure hana ari
 michi no shimo

Dandelions —
 forgotten flowers
 in the frost's path

On a painting of an old woman by a fire

722

小野の炭
 匂ふ火桶の
 あなめ哉

Ono no sumi
 nihou hioke no
 aname kana

The coal from Ono
 in the wooden brazier glows
 hurting her eyes

723

われぬべき
年もありしを
古火桶

Ware nubeki
nenmo arishi o
furu hioke

This year too
I will still have
my old wooden brazier

724

うづみ火や
終には煮る
鍋のもの

Utzumi hi ya
tsuhi ni ha niyuru
nabe no mono

The coal has been burning
and finally a boiling
pot of food

725

炭うりに
鏡見せたる
女かな

Sumi uri ni
kagami mi setaru
onna kana

Selling coal
while gazing in a mirror —
a woman

726

火桶かな
心に遠き
裾に置て

Suso ni oite
kokoro ni touki
hioke kana

Wearing long underwear
the mind is so far away
from the wooden brazier

727

窺ひけり
火桶の穴より
炭団法師

Tadon houshi
hioke no ana yori
ukagai keru

Staring at the charcoal balls
in the pit of a wooden braizer —
a priest

For a short time while traveling down a road in Takamatsu, a married couple sat together happily after entering that house today

728*

野河哉
早あしもの
炬燵出て

Kotatsu dete
satsu ashi motono
nogawa kana

Quickly the couple
slipped under the kotatsu —
Nogawa River

729

炬燵かな
妻うつくしき
腰ぬけの

Koshi nuke no
sai utsukushiki
kotatsu kana

The wife looked beautiful
extracting her butt
from out the kotatsu

730

ふすま哉
ころりころりと
沙弥律師

Shyami ritsushi
kororikorori to
fusuma kana

The junior Ritsui priest
suddenly rolls over
a folding screen

731*

夜半の冬
音貧しさよ
鋸の

Nokogiri no
oto mazushisa yo
yowa no fuyu

The sound of poverty
sawing charcoal in the dead
of a winter night

732

飛驒山の
質屋とざしぬ
夜半の冬

Hidayama no
shitzuya to zashinu
yowa no fuyu

Hidayama's
pawnshops don't close
in the wintry midnight

733

むささびの
小鳥はみ居る
枯野哉

Musasabi no
kodoriwa mi oru
kareno kana

Flying squirrels
and small birds inhabit
the desolate fields

734

大とこの
糞ひりおはす
かれの哉

Daitoko no
kuso hiri ohasu
kareno kana

The virtuous priest's
excrement—an unreasonable burden
in the desolate field

735

水鳥や
枯木の中に
駕二挺

Mizudori ya
kareki no naka ni
kago nichau

Waterfowl
amid the withered trees
two palanquins

736

子を捨る
藪さへなくて
枯野哉

Ko o sutsuru
yabu sahe nakute
kareno kana

In a withered field
even the thicket is crying —
an abandoned child

737*

草枯て
狐の飛脚
通りけり

Kusa karete
kitsune no hikyauku
touri keru

In withered grass
a fox carrying messages
passes by

738

狐火の
燃へつくばかり
枯尾花

Kitsunebi no
moe suku bakari
kare obana

Foxfire
only a bewitching flame
in brittle pampas grass

739*

息杖に
石の火を見る
枯野哉

Ikitsue ni
ishi no hi o miru
kareno kana

A resting staff
looks like a flash of fire
in the withered field

On visiting Basho's grave at Konbukuji Temple.

740*

我の死して
碑に辺せむ
枯尾花

Ware no shishite
hi ni hotori semu
kareobana

When I am dead
may my tombstone also be near
withered plume grass

741

馬の尾に
 いばらのかかる
 枯野哉

Uma no bi ni
 ibara no kakaru
 karen kana

A horse tail
 caught in the briars
 of a withered field

742

蕭条として
 石に日の入
 枯野かな

Shoujou toshite
 ishi ni hi no iru
 karen kana

Passing desolation —
 the sun dropping into the rocks
 of a withered field

Poem about a sick senior minister praying to be reinstated

743

瘦脛や
 病より起ツ
 鶴寒し

Yase hagi ya
 yamu yori tatsu
 tsuru samushi

Standing on
 thin legs with open sores —
 a cold crane

744

待人の
足音遠き
落葉哉

Machibito no
ashi oto touki
ochiba kana

The expected visitor's
footsteps sound so far away —
fallen leaves

745

菊は黄に
雨疎かに
落葉かな

Kiku wa ki ni
ame orosuka ni
ochiba kana

Yellow chrysanthemums
in a sporadic rain
fallen leaves

746

古寺の
藤あさましき
落葉哉

Furudera no
fuji asamashiki
ochiba kana

An old temple's
foolish wisteria
in fallen leaves

747

往來待て
吹田をわたる
落ば哉

Yukiki machite
suta o wataru
ochiba kana

Coming, going, never waiting
passing through the fields —
fallen leaves

Poor Chinese pick up decaying leaves in place of paper — thus writing from the heart as if they were wealthy. Yet Japanese poetry talks about the pain of fallen leaves from the inside — raked together only to be thrown away. I have followed both ways a great many times.

748

もしほ草
柿のもと成
落葉さへ

Moshi hogusa
kaki no moto naru
ochiba kana

What if grass stalks
were used instead of old fallen
persimon leaves

749

西吹ケば
東にたまる
落葉かな

Nishi fukeba
higashi ni tamaru
ochiba kana

Blown by western winds
to the east suffering
fallen leaves

750

鰓汁の
宿赤赤と
燈しけり

Fukujiro no
yado aka aka to
tamoshi keru

Abalone soup
the household's bright
shinning light

751

鰓汁の
我活きて居る
寢覚哉

Fukujiro no
ware ikite oru
nezame kana

I subsist by
staying awake for
abalone soup

752

秋風の
呉人はしらじ
ふくと汁

Shyuufuu no
gobito wa shiraji
fuku to shiro

Autumn wind's
donation to pure poetry —
abalone and soup

753

鯨汁 叩くは僧よ 音なせそ

Oto naseso
tataku wa sou yo
fuku to shiro

Making an uproar
a monk claps his hands
for abalone and soup

754

白眼△哉 世上の人を 河豚の面

Fugu no tsura
sejou no hito o
niramu kana

The blowfish's face
stares coldly up at
the world of men

755

友とはむ 鯨になき世の 缶うつて

Hotogi utsute
fuku ni nakise no
tomotowamu

Hitting the earthen jar
the abalone alone in its world
and no friends visit

756*

町人よ 鰻喰ふて居る 袴着て

Hakama kite
fuku kuute iru
machibito yo

Wearing Hakama
inside while eating abalone —
townsfolk

At my gate is my student Kakuei. The sadness from the loss of his favorite child endures as he makes his own sutra chanting, “Buddha, Buddha.”

757

夜の鶴 涙水るや らうそくの

Rafusoku no
namida suiru ya
yoru no tsuru

A candle's
tears rain down —
cranes in the night

When Kito called upon the ailing Senior Minister Heisha to offer sympathy, it was as if everybody was at the seashore listening to a traveling minstrel

758

鉤の魚 鯉吹るるや 凧に

Kogarashi ni
agito fukaruru ya
kaki no uo

In the wintery wind
gills puffing —
a hooked fish

759

こがらしや
 ひととつまつく
 戻り馬

Kogarashi ya
 hitato tsumatzuku
 modori uma

The cold wind
 strikes piercing
 the returning horse

760

こがらしや
 畠の小石
 目に見ゆる

Kogarashi ya
 hatake no koishi
 me ni mieru

The eyes can see
 the field's grit blowing
 in the winter winds

761

こがらしや
 何に世わたる
 家五軒

Kogarashi ya
 nanni yo wataru
 ie go noki

The winter wind —
 what in the world is living
 in the house's five eaves

762

萩の風
この頃までは
風よ

Kogarashi yo
konogoro made wa
ogi no kaze

The winter wind
recently arrived
blowing the reeds

763

吹あてる
鐘に小石を
木枯や

Kogarashi ya
kane ni koishi o
fuki ateru

The winter wind
is blowing so hard pebbles
strike the bell

764

水の声
岩に裂行
こがらしや

Kogarashi ya
iwa ni seki yuku
mizu no koe

The winter wind
rips through the reef —
hissing water

Thirty-three pestles

765*

寺の霜
みそみめぐりや
播盆の

Suribachi no
miso mi meguri ya
tera no shimo

Going around curiously
looking at the mortars for miso —
a temple in frost

766

顔ばかり
百まで生る
麦蒔や

Mugimaki ya
hyaku made ikiru
kao bakari

Planting buckwheat
and living until one hundred —
his only aspects

767

草の露
消ればぞ又
初雪や

Hatsuyuki ya
kiyurebazo mata
kusa no tsuyu

The first snow
melts away and again
the grass is dewy

768*

初雪の
底を叩ば
竹の月

Hatsuyuki no
tei o tatakeba
take no tsuki

The first snow —
the floor of a bamboo woods
struck by moonlight

The seven steps of poetry:

769

雪折や
雪を湯に焚
釜の下

Yukiore ya
yuki oyu ni taku
kama no shite

A snow break
and the snow starts to boil
under the kettle

770

雪の暮
鳴はもどつて
居るような

Yuki no kure
shigi wa modotsute
iruyouna

The snow is ending
the snips are returning
to live

771

雪の中
 我かくれ家も
 うづみ火や

Utzumi hi ya
 wage kakure ga mo
 uki no naka

A lonely fire —
 my house is secluded
 by snow

772

簑と笠
 容す
 いざ雪見

Iza yuki mi
 katachitsukurisu
 mino to kasa

Lets go watch the snow
 our appearances shaped by
 straw coats and umbrellas

773

雪の人
 淀の小橋を
 鍋さげて

Nabe sagete
 yodo no kobashi o
 yuki no hito

Hanging pots —
 on a bridge over an eddy
 snowmen

774*

雪白し
加茂の氏人
馬でうて

Yuki shiroshi
kamo no ujibito
uma deute

In the white snow
Kamo clansmen
out on horses

775*

雪折や
よし野の夢の
さめる時

Yukiore ya
yoshino no yume no
sameru toki

Bent by snow
my dream of Yoshino cherries
fade in time

776

漁家寒し
酒に頭の
雪を焼

Gyuke samushi
sake ni kashira no
yuki o taku

The fisherman's house is cold
yet all the sake in my head
makes the snow boil

777*

納豆汁
室の揚屋の
朝霜や

Asa shimo ya
muro no ageya no
nattojiro

On a frosty morning
in a room of a brothel —
natto soup

778

納豆汁
よよとまいりぬ
入道の

Niudou no
yoyoto maiirinu
nattojiro

Just entering the priesthood
and already avoiding the temple —
natto soup

779*

つるべ縄
剣を握る
朝霜や

Asashimo ya
tsurugi o nigiru
tsurube nawa

The morning frosts
grips the sword and
the bucket's rope

780

宿かさぬ
火影や雪の
家つづき

Yado kasanu
hokage ya yuki no
ie tsutzuki

Each separate home
casts shadows of firelight on
the silent snowy houses

On returning from Kitou and Naniwa*

781

霜百里
舟中に我
月を領す

Shimo hyakuri
shu chyu ni ware
tsuki o ryausu

One hundred villages in frost
I am on shipboard as
the moon reigns

782

牙寒き
梁の月の
鼠かな

Kiba samuki
utsubari no tsuki no
nezumi kana

With a cold eye tooth
gnawing the girders of the moon —
a rat

783

山
中
の
相
雪
中
の
ぼ
たん
哉

Sanchuu no
shou yuki naka no
botan kana

In the mountains
together in the snow —
peonies

784*

町
は
づ
れ
い
で
や
頭
巾
は
小
風
呂
敷

Machi hazure
ide ya tzukin wa
ko furoshiki

Going out to the edge
of a town wearing a hood —
a small furoshiki

785

引
か
ふ
で
耳
を
あ
は
れ
む
頭
巾
哉

Hikikoude
mimi o awaremu
tzukin kana

Piteously drawn back
behind my ears —
a hood

786

みどり子の
頭巾眉深き
いとをしみ

Midori ko no
tsukin mabukaki
itohoshimi

An infant's
eyebrows peaking out from a hood—
love

787

めし粒で
紙子の破れ
ふたぎけり

Meshi tsubude
kamiko no yabure
futagi keru

Grains of cooked rice
in ripped paper clothing
two prostitutes

788

此冬や
帑衣着ようと
おもひけり

Kono fuyu ya
kamiko kiyō to
omoi keru

This winter
I expected to wear
paper clothes

789*

老を山へ
捨し世も有に
紙子哉

Oi o yama e
suteshi semo aruni
kamiko kana

In the old mountains
generations have thrown away
paper clothes

790*

我頭巾
うき世のさまに
似ずもがな

Waga zukin
ukiyo no sama ni
nizumo gana

My hood
matches the condition
of this fleeting world

791

ささめごと
頭巾にかづく
羽折哉

Sasa megoto
zukin ni katzuku
haori kana

Everybody whispering
my hood resembles
a broken wing

792*

頭巾着て
 声こもりくの
 初瀬法師

Zukin kite
 koe komoriku no
 hase houshi

Wearing a hood
 the Hase priest's voice
 is muffled

On Love

793*

顔見せや
 夜着をはなる
 妹が許

Kao mise ya
 yogi o hananaru
 imo ga moto

Meeting for the first time
 at the younger sister's house
 wearing louse night clothes

794

かほ見せや
 既うき世の
 飯時分

Kaomise ya
 sude ukiyo no
 meshijibun

Meeting for the first time
 and already its a floating world —
 mealtime

The frost at daybreak looks to be breaking up but then reneges on its promise and the day becomes gloomy with a heavy snow

795

東山 顔見せや
ふとんをまくら

Kaomise ya
futon o makura
higashiyama

Meeting for the first time
wearing a heavy quilts —
Mt. Higashiyama

796*

冬至かな 蛇足誘う 新石衛門

Shinimon
Jyasoku o sasou
tougì kana

In the painting of
Shinimon Gate Jyasoku invokes
the winter solstice

797

冬至かな 故園に遊ぶ 書記典主

Shoki tensu
yue en ni asobu
tougì kana

A ceremonial scribe
walking in Yue-en garden
the winter solstice

798

水仙や
寒き都の
ここかしこ

Suisen ya
samuki miyako no
koko kashiko

Here and there
in cold Kyoto —
daffodils

799

水仙や
美人かうべを
いたむらし

Suisen ya
beijin kaube o
itamurashi

Buying daffodils
the beautiful woman
looks pained

800

水仙や
鶉の草茎
花咲ぬ

Suisen ya
mozu no kusa guki
hana sakinu

A shrike in the grass stalks
and still the daffodils
aren't blooming

801

冬されて
 小鳥のあさる
 葦畠

Fuyu sare ya
 kodori no asaru
 nira batake

Exposed to winter
 the small birds are pecking
 the leek field

802

霜あれて
 葦を刈取
 翁かな

Shimo arete
 nira o karitoru
 okina kana

The frost has
 wilted the leeks
 and the old man

803

葱買て
 枯木の中を
 帰りけり

Nebuka kaute
 kareki no naka o
 kaeri keru

Buying stone leeks
 amid the dead trees life
 returns

804

古葉哉
北へ枯臥
ひともじの

Hitomoji no
kita e karefusu
furuba kana

With old drooping
withered leaves to the north —
a leek

805*

寒かな
ねぶか流るる
易水に

Ekisui ni
nebu ka nagaruru
samuki kana

In Ekisui
floating garlic leaves
in the cold

806

さむさ哉
鼠の音の
皿を踏

Sara o fumi
nezumi no oto no
samusa kana

The sound of a rat
stepping on my plate —
coldness

In the suburbs of Kyoto

807

静なる
かしの木はらや
冬の月

Shizuka nara
kashino ki hara ya
fuyu no tsuki

In the stillness
an oak tree's spirit —
the winter moon

808

冬こだち
月に隣を
わすれたり

Fuyu kodachi
tsuki ni tonari o
wasuretari

The forgotten
moon borders
bare winter trees

The next two haiku are from a dream

809

二村に
質屋一軒
冬こだち

Futamura ni
shichiya iken
furukodachi

For two village's
a pawn shop in one house —
bare winter trees

810

このむらの
人は猿也
冬木だち

Kono mura no
hito wa sara nari
fuyukodachi

This village
is inhabited by monkeys
and bare winter trees

811

鴛に
美を尽してや
冬木立

Oshidori ni
bi o tsukushite ya
fuyukodachi

Even the mandarine duck's
charm has no meaning under
bare winter trees

812*

斧入て
香におどるくや
冬こだち

Ono irite
ko ni odoroku ya
fuyukodachi

Carrying an axe
I smell the fragrance of frightened
bare winter trees

813

鉢叩 我夜あはれめ
鳴らし来て

Narashi kite
waga yo awareme
hachitataki

A cry approaches
and my night is spent in pity —
a begging priest

814

鉢たたき いんで寝よやれ
一瓢の

Itsupeu no
inde ne yoyare
hachitataki

The monk's round gourd face
looks so sleepy before
he beats his iron bowl

815*

はちたたき 坊主のはしや
木のはしの

Ki no hashi no
pouzu no hashi ya
hachitataki

The worthless monk
is beating his worthless
iron begging bowl

816

鉢 敲
 それは 觸 臙 敷
 ゆ ぶ が ほ の

Yuugao no
 sore wa dokuro ka
 hachitataki

Is that a skull
 or a bottle gourd being used
 for a begging bowl?

817

鉢 叩
 雪に 君 あり
 花 に 表 太

Hana ni hyota
 yuki ni kimi ari
 hachitataki

Flowering bottle gourd
 you are in the snow —
 a wandering priest begging

818*

は ち 敲
 も う 寝 た 里 を
 西 念 は

Sainen wa
 mou neta sato o
 hachitataki

Sainen
 the village was also sleeping
 and you are ringing your bowl

Distant Bonfires

819*

御火焚や
霜うつくしき
京の町

Ohotaki ya
shimo utsukushiki
miyako no shi

Bonfires
so beautiful in the frost
Kyoto City

820

御火たぎや
犬も中中
そぞろ顔

Ohotaki ya
inu mo nakanaka
sozoro kao

Bonfires —
the dog too has a very
surprised face

821*

足袋はいて
寝る夜ものうき
夢見哉

Tabi haite
neru yo monouki
yumemi kana

Wearing tabi socks
asleep in the melancholic night —
dreaming

822*

雪吹哉 刀投出す 宿かせと

Yado kase to
katana nagidasu
fubuki kana

Shackled inside
outside it is throwing katanas
a blizzard

823

鼠かな 密はみこぼす 寺寒く

Tera samuku
shikimi wa mikobosu
nezumi kana

At the cold temple
in the shrine maiden's grave branches
a gnawing rat

824

翁かな えものすくなき 杜父魚と

Kakubutsu no
emono sukunaki
okina kana

Bullheads —
a never ending game
for old men

Eight poems on poverty

825

愚に耐よと
窓を暗す
雪の竹

Gu ni taeyo to
mado o kurauso
yuki no take

The window darkens
with enduring folly
bamboo in snow

826*

かんこ鳥は
賢にして賤し
寒苦鳥

Kankodori wa
kan ni shite iyashi
kankudori

The cuckoo
its wisdom is so humble
suffering in the cold

827

我のみの
柴折くべる
そば湯哉

Ware no mono
shika orikuberu
sobayu kana

Breaking and burning
my straw raincoat for firewood
to boil soba

828*

紙ぶすま
折目正しく
あはれ也

Kamibusuma
orime tadashiku
aware nari

Being well mannered
using a paper sack for a futon
how pitiful

829

水る燈の
油うかがふ
鼠かな

Mizuru hi no
abura ukagau
nezumi kana

Spying out
the oil for floating lights —
a rat

830

炭取の
ひさご火桶に
並び居

Sumitori no
hisago hioke ni
namebe iru

Charcoal scuttles
for calabash braziers
sitting in a row

831*

鍋を鳴らす
隣家寒夜に
我を厭ふ

Ware o itou
rinka kanya ni
nabe o narasu

I'm so detestable
in the cold night my neighbor's
pots are ringing

832

噛ム夜哉
筆の水を
齒豁に

Ha aroi ni
fude no mizu o
kamu yo kana

Using the water
from the writing brush to blacken
coarse teeth

833

あられ哉
矢種の尽る
一しきり

Ichi shikiri
yadane no tsukuru
arare kana

Exhausting the remaining
arrows in the quiver's partition —
falling pellets of snow

834

玉霰
 漂母が鍋を
 みだれうつ

Tama arare
 hyoubo ga nabe o
 midare utsu

Hailstones
 in Hyoubo strike the pot
 with a gloomy disorder

835

古池に
 草履沈ミて
 みぞれ哉

Furuike ni
 zouri shitzumite
 mizore kana

Old pond —
 sandals sinking
 in sleet

836

山水の
 減るほど減りて
 水かな

Karazake ya
 heru hodo herite
 mizuru kana

The mountain spring water
 is truly disappearing
 water

837

乾鮭や
 琴に斧うつ
 ひびきあり

Karazake ya
 kin ni ono utsu
 hibiki ari

Cutting dried salmon
 my hatchet is a reverberating
 harp

838

から鮭に
 腰する市の
 翁かな

Karazake ni
 koshi suru ichi no
 okina kana

Dried salmon
 sitting on their butt in the market
 old men

839

からざげや
 帯刀殿の
 台所

Karazake ya
 tachihaki dono no
 daidokoro

Dried salmon
 in Minister Tachihaki's
 kitchen

840

吟を彫
乾鮭に白頭の
詫禪師

Wabizenji
karazake ni hakutou no
gin o iru

At Wabizenji Temple
the white heads of dried salmon
chanting sutras

A picture drawn from life — plum blossoms coming out from a steel frame

841

鉄より
火の迸る
寒梅や

Kanbai ya
hi no hotobashiro
magane yori

Winter plum blossoms
fire spurting out
from twisted steel

842

老が肘
手折響や
寒梅を

Kanbai o
teori hibiki ya
oi ga higi

Breaking the branches
of winter plums echoes —
an old elbow

A friendly feeling

843

天高し
門なき寺の
寒月や

Kangetsu ya
mon naki tera no
ten takashi

The wintery moon —
a gateless temple
high in the heavens

844

あからさま
鋸岩の
寒月や

Kangetsu ya
nokogiri iwa no
akara sama

The wintery moon —
Mt. Nokogiri's
Buddha of Light

845

竹三竿
枯木の中の竹
寒月や

Kangetsu ya
karaki no naka no
take sankan

The wintery moon
within the withered trees
three bamboo poles

846

寒月や
衆徒の群議の
過後

Kangetsu ya
shyuto no gengi no
sugite nochi

The wintery moon —
many priests have multiple opinions
before death

847

寒月や
古うた諷ふ
誰が子ぞ

Kangetsu ya
furu uta utau
dare ga kozo

The wintery moon —
whose child is satirizing
the old songs?

848

細道に
なり行声や
寒念仏

Hosomichi ni
nari yuku koe ya
kannebutsu

Down the narrow lane
a voice passes crying
a midwinter prayer

849

寒念仏
近道いくつ
極楽の

Gokuraku no
chika michi ikutsu
kannebutsu

Taking a short cut
to paradise —
a midwinter prayer

850*

来たりけり
上の町まで
寒垢離や

Kangori ya
kami no machi made
kitari keru

The time for cold water
ablutions has arrived
in “the Emperor’s City”

851

一手桶
いざまいりそふ
寒ごりや

Kangori ya
izama iricho
hitsuteoke

During a temple visit
a cold water abluion
from a one handled bucket

852

鯨売
市に刀を
鼓しけり

Kojira uri
ichi ni katana o
narashi keru

Selling whale meat
at the market drumming
with a katana

853*

しづしづと
五徳居えつけり
薬喰

Shitzushitzu to
gotoku sue keru
kusurigu

Residing in the fifth
virtue of silence —
eating meat

854

薬喰
隣の亭主
箸持参

Kusurigu
tonaru no teishu
hashi jisan

Eating meat
my neighbor's husband has brought
his own chopsticks

855

くすり喰
人に語るな
鹿ヶ谷

Kusurigui
hito ni kataruna
shishiketane

Eating meat
everybody is talking about
Deer Valley

856

妻や子の
寝顔も見えつ
薬喰

Tsuma ya ko no
negao mo mietsu
kusurigui

My wife's and children's
faces look so sleepy —
eating meat

857*

客僧の
狸寝入や
くすり喰

Kyakusou no
tanukine iri ya
kusurigui

The traveling priest
is playing possum
eating meat

Lotuses in the spring mud

858

とし忘
こよひはゆるせ
霊運も

Reiun mo
koyoi wa yuruse
toshi wasure

The lotus's spirit
is also shaking this evening —
a new year's drinking party

859

雑魚寝哉
立間もなき
にしき木の

Nishikiki no
tachigiki mo naki
zakone kana

The once colorful trees
are eavesdropping on the dead
sleeping together

860

とし木樵
小枝も捨ぬ
おとるひや

Otoru hya
koeda mo sutenu
toshigikori

Inferior
sprigs are not discarded —
new year wood cuttings

861

うぐひすの
啼や師走の
羅生門

Uguhisu no
naku ya shiwazu no
rashoumon

The bushwarbler
is crying this January —
Rashomon Gate

862

御経に
似てゆかしさよ
古曆

Onkyou ni
nite yukashi seyo
furugoyomi

Copying
sutras from the past —
an old calendar

863

としひとつ
積るや雪の
小町寺

Toshi hitotsu
tsumuru ya yuki no
komachidera

For one more year
the snow has piled up
on the small village temple

864*

金飛脚
瀬田を廻や
ゆく年の

Yukutoshi no
seta o meguru ya
kinbikyaku

In the departing year
going all around Seta —
the bill collector

865

見られたり
老はたうとく
とし守夜

Toshi moru yo
oi wa tafutoku
miraretari

All year the night guards
have been watching our valuables
the aged

866

としのくれ
五百目もどす
石公へ

Sekikyou e
gohyakume modosu
toshi no kure

Lord Seki
has returned four pounds of silver —
the year ends

867

とし守や
 乾鮭の太刀
 鱈の棒

Toshi moru ya
 karazaki no tachi
 tara no bou

The new year is guarded
 by long swords of dried fish —
 poles of cod

As the year ends wearing a bamboo hat with straw sandals is so easy

868

芭蕉去て
 そののちいまだ
 年くれず

Basho sarite
 sono no chiimada
 toshi karezu

Already Basho's
 departed before
 the year's end

Footnotes

Spring

1: Hourai no yamamatsuri is a new year's festival with decorations shaped like a mountain where legendary wizards lived. I have added the words "and I" within this poem to try and convey the feeling. Up to the Meiji Era (1868) it was the practice that everyone's birthday was New Year's Day, which is why there isn't an actual birth date recorded for Buson, just the year. Therefore on the first day of spring (New Year's Day) everyone grew a year older underlying a cyclical image of as new life begins the living are getting older (a fleeting life or Ukiyo type of thought). Finally, in Edo Japan New Year's Day was not January first, but would have occurred some time in February or March because Japan followed a lunar calendar. Keeping this in mind, throughout the rest of the book whenever Buson refers to a month I have added two on to Buson's number so that it represents about the same month that Buson was referring to. Example: the first month would be March not January, the second month would be April not February, etc.

2: It was a custom in some villages on New Year's eve to nail the heads of sardines on spears in front of the gate posts of houses to ward off evil spirits.

3: "Zouni kayuru" literally rice cakes with vegetables boiled in rice porridge. Also the idea of richness comes in through the fact that in Japanese history rice was considered a form of wealth — the more rice the Daimyos, or feudal lords, grew the wealthier they were.

4: The title of this poem, "Riraku" means scattered, and is a standard poem title in Chinese. Throughout this book the titles or poems were written by Buson and I have translated them directly. Uguisu is a Japanese bush warbler, warbler or nightingale.

5: Kure ni keri: literally to grow dark. However, other meanings include, sun set, seasonal end, or to end.

7: This poem is a type of "Ki kasanari," that is a poem using two set poetry phrases or images, in this case nightingales and sparrows.

8: This poem refers to a poem in the Kokin Wakashu -- the first of a twenty book series conceived by Emperor Uda (887-897) and ordered by his son Emperor Daigo (897-930). The book was perhaps published around 920. Furthermore, the poem referred to was selected by Kino Tsurayuki, a poet and one of the compilers of the series.

14: I have translated here the literal meaning. "Wagakusa"(young grass) can also mean young people, or can even be a derogatory word for a monk, and "Ne o wasuretaru"(forgotten roots) means forgetting sense or mind. Furthermore, willow trees are said to attract ghosts. Two other possible translations could read: "The youth are forgetting their senses — a willow", or "The damn monk is out of his mind — a willow".

16: The verb “Sasu” has many different meanings, which are easy to tell if a Kanji (Chinese character) is used. However, as the verb here is written in Hiragana (a phonetic alphabet) it could mean to shine, to stab, to point out or to select. I have chosen shine as the most logical, but as haiku delights in word play and in using different meanings all at the same time there could be various translations. Furthermore, “hima” could be free, at leisure or the time between events.

19: This poem is comparing plum blossoms with cherry blossoms. Plum flowers bloom separately or one by one, whereas cherry blossoms bloom all at the same time. Therefore after the long winter wait, the plum blossoms can be enjoyed longer.

21: Kourokan Palaces were built in Fukuoka Kyushu, Osaka and Kyoto to meet foreign ambassadors and had many guest houses.

29: Plum blossoms are a symbol of purity, but in a floating world sense are short lived. Prostitutes are a common symbol or subject in floating word art, and here in this poem several things are taking place. The blossoms are short lived as is the woman’s profession, however the woman is investing in an obi, that is an expensive hand embroidered silk garment. Properly maintained an obi increases in value so the woman is investing her profits for when she can no longer work as a prostitute while at the same time the obi could also be used for attracting clients.

30: Genbachi is a bridge in Osaka, close to Sakura no Miya, a place famous for cherry blossoms.

32: This poem was written in argument by Ueda Akinari, 1734-1809, (also known as Ueda Shuusei) a contemporary author, scholar and wakka poet to Motoori Norinaga, 1730-1801, contemporaries of Buson as to the changing of the phonetic spelling. Ueda was a scholar in “kokugaku” or National Learning, and in philology. “Mume” is the old classic spelling of plums and “ume” was, and still is, the modern way of spelling plums. Ueda evidently wrote that “mu” should be pronounced “n” and Buson is showing how this is not always true as “mume” never would have been pronounced “n-me.”

34: Azuki beans are small, red beans used to make bean paste, a type of sweet dessert. The poem also makes use of the image of plum buds which are small and red and about the same size of an azuki bean.

36: Naniwa is the old name for Osaka.

38: Yabuiiri, or Servants’ Day, took place March 16th, and was a holiday when servants could return home to their families.

39: Yosome, worrying about others or an outside perspective. The feeling here is that one servant is having to take care in how he/she takes their leave to the other servants.

40: Wasuregusa means day lilies; however, there is also the pun in this poem on the word wasure, to forget.

41: Kane: tooth blackening. Up until sometime during the Meiji period when Japan modernized, black teeth were considered fashionable. Sei Shonagon (966-1025) in “The Pillow Book” has a list of things she considered beautiful like “A melon in sunshine, perfectly black teeth...” Teeth were blackened to prevent tooth decay through a dye, the main ingredient of which was a smelly brown liquid made of acetic acid called kanemizu (tooth water) with iron dissolved in it. Gallnut and tannin powders were added in to turn the dye non-water soluble, however even then the dye had to be applied daily.

42: Nakayamadera Temple is one of the temples (number 24) in a 33 temple pilgrim route. The 西国三十三所, Saigoku Sanjūsan-sho, is in Kansai and the principle images is that of the goddess Kanon. The temple has a statue of an eleven faced Kanon, the goddess of safe childbirths. This became famous when Toyotomi Hideyoshi the unifier of Japan, went to the temple to pray for a safe delivery of his son.

43: Man Day is an ancient Chinese holiday and is on the seventh day of the new year, March 7th. On this day people eat rice cooked with seven different vegetables. In Japan the rice is cooked with seven herbs.

A hakama was originally a male kimono or formal dress worn by men; however, today it is worn by both sexes.

46: Takai Kito (1741-12/9/1789) was a haiku poet and a student of Buson. Most of the poems in this collection were ordered by Kito, with some additions coming later.

50: There are two ways to translate the poem. “Listening to the Koto on a spring evening” or “Listening to ‘Spring Evening’ on a Koto. ‘Spring Evening’ is a title of a poem by Sohoku or Sushi (December 19, 1036 - August 24, 1101) a famous Chinese song writer. A koto is a classic Japanese musical instrument.

Soushu is the Japanese name for two Chinese rivers flowing into Lake Dongting, a large shallow lake in northeaster Hunan Province, noted for its mystical beauty.

52: Foxes are tricksters and shape-shifters in Japanese lore. The word baketari could mean ghostly, it could also mean that the fox has changed shape into the lord master.

53: So Tuba (1036-1101) a Tang Dynasty poet, in Japanese his name is Sushi or Sohoku (see footnote 50). Another Chinese name for him is Su Dongo. His most famous prose-poem, the two-part Red Cliff Ode was also illustrated by both Chinese and Japanese artists. Su is generally shown riding a mule and wearing a large hat. Su was an influential theorist, stressing the importance of artistic personality in both poetry and painting. For Su, a successful painting had neither formal likeness nor technical skill, but conveyed the artist's spirit or mind. His ideas and paintings, usually of an old tree, bamboo, and rock.

Sei Shonagon (966-1017) was a Heian Court Lady who wrote the classic work “The Pillow Book.” The book is famous for her observations and lists, and gives a wonderful glimpse into Heian court life. See footnote 41.

55: This poem refers to a Chinese legend written in 2 BCE, “The Philosophers of Huainan” (Huai nan Tzu). Chang’e and her husband Houyi were immortals who were banished to the earth to live out their lives as mortals. Houyi hunts for an elixir to regain immortality and eventually brings one back home in the form of one pill, which if shared would make both of them immortal again. However while Houyi is out hunting Chang’e swallows the whole pill. This causes her to float up to the moon where she is still living to this day.

57: Sashinuki hakama are a type of traditional Japanese clothing. Hakama are a pleated, wide-legged pants that tie closed and have a distinctive bare triangle at the side of the hips. They are worn over full-length kimono, so this triangle cut out shows the kimono fabric and not skin or underclothing

59: Shinansha, or South Pointing Chariot was a prototype of a compass but had no magnets and did not automatically detect which direction was south. The pointer, a small statue of a man with a single arm pointing out, was aimed southward by hand at the start of a journey, then, whenever the chariot turned, the mechanism rotated the pointer relative to the body of the chariot to counteract the turn and keep the pointer aiming in a constant direction, to the south.

Legend has it that the Yellow Emperor, the first emperor of China, invented the south pointing chariot. Chi You, a rival from a barbarian tribe, conjured up a mist to attack, but with the use of the chariot the Yellow Emperor was able to win.

62: Shijo and Gojo are major streets in both old and modern Kyoto that cross the Kamo River.

63: Weak legs was a reference to the legs of women and children.

65: A traditional way of fishing was to use roped cormorants to catch the fish in a river. The neck ring is tight enough so that the bird cannot swallow the fish. Once the fish is caught the cormorant is wound back to disgorge its catch.

71: Takiguchi was the place the guards for Seiryoden Castle stayed. It was located in the northeast of the castle grounds and also contained a waterfall. Northeast is the direction from which demons come and go. Therefore water is normally kept in the northeast to purify the direction.

72: Nunawa is the archaic word for Junsai or watershield, a plant that grows in ponds and whose leaves are considered a delicacy.

73: There are different ways to interpret this poem. The word aware could also be written as pity or pitiful. Furthermore, there is also a debate if the subject is Buson or the rain itself, in which case the poem would read: Such a pity / the spring rain / cannot write by itself

75: There is some confusion as to the subject. It could be two people, one wearing a straw raincoat, the other carrying an umbrella. The one in the raincoat might be a man, the one with the umbrella, a woman. Or the subject might be Buson as a traveler, wearing a raincoat and carrying an umbrella...

76: Fushizuke has two meanings, a wooden fish trap or a method of capital punishment where the victim was put in a wooden cage with weights that was then thrown into deep water.

77. Izayou is the night following the full moon or the sixteenth night's moon. In a lunar calendar the full moon is on the fifteenth night.

78: Tsuna: the name of a Geisha that Buson particularly liked; or Minamoto no Tsuna, a famous warrior who cut a devil's arms off with the Hige-kiri Katana on a bridge in Kyoto. This was the same place that Tsuna, the geisha, lived.

80. Since the entire camellia flower falls at once instead of petal by petal, it is said to nod like a head before falling.

81: Tamazuri is either a beautiful woman or a craftsman who polishes jewelry.

82: Katsuuma Festival is currently held on the second of February at Inari Shrines. Sode-datame is a method of folding kimonos when there isn't enough room to formally fold the cloth.

92: Tagoto no tsuki means the moon reflected in every rice paddy. A famous woodblock print of this is by Utagawa Hiroshige titled Shinshu Tarashina Tagoto no Tsuki. The mountain in the print is where the elderly were once abandoned to die.

99: The poem takes place in Jyakkou-in, a temple in Ohara, where the head abbess is from the imperial family. The first abbess was Empress Dowager Kenrei.

102: Mt Kameyama is around Tenryu-zan in Saga, Kyoto where Kameyama mansion was constructed for the Gosaga and Kamayama emperors.

106: Shepherd's purse is a flowering herb used to stop bleeding, menstrual bleeding and nosebleeds. It is also used to help contract the uterus after child birth.

107: "Biku yori otaru bikuni dera," is a quote from the first essay in Kensho's Essays in Idleness."

111. The Housanshou was a three article legal code decreed by Emperor Kao Tsu of the Han Dynasty in China that fashioned a simple legal system. Fudanomoto is a place name, probably in Nagasaki or Mie Prefectures.

112: The Taira, or Heishi, Clan was a hereditary name given by the emperor to royal family members who become subjects. The clan is killed off during the Genpei War (1180-1185) and was written about in the story “The Tale of the Heike.”

114: The copper pheasant or mountain bird (yamadori) was first written about by the poet Hyakunin Isshu in the 8th century and lives throughout Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushuu.

134: Toba is the southern area of Kyoto.

136: There are two possible ways of translating this poem. The standard version is based on the post-Meiji interpretation that when the subject is not known, the subject is the author, and would read “Dreaming / of picking up a spirit — a butterfly.” However, mine is based upon the fact that Buson lived before the Meiji Era, and therefore the subject might not have been him. A reason for this interpretation is Buson liked Soushi, a Chinese philosopher, who wrote a story about dreaming of a butterfly and waking not knowing if he was human or a butterfly.

137: In the early spring grasses were burned to get rid of insects and to help the grasses grow on the banks and ridges between the rice fields. Suguro no is a phrase describing the blackened look of the fields after burning. The poem is describing the look of the old dead burned grass and the new green starting to grow.

141: Kosobe no Nyudo, also known as Fujiwara no Takinobu, was the chief of the emperor’s guards and was also known for his refinement. Noin Hoshi (Tahibana Nagayasu) was one of the famous 36 poets in the Heian Era. When they first met they had a poetry writing competition to see who was the most refined and afterwards they became friends.

Yamamuki ya ide is a set phrase in poetry. Ide is a place in Kyoto prefecture and is a small dam used for irrigation.

143: In a Japanese funeral service after the body is cremated friends and relatives pick up the remaining bones with ceremonial chopsticks and place the remains in an urn.

145: Jizou is the guardian of travelers and dead children. It was believed that if a child died it was because of some sin that occurred in the child’s previous life, and that the soul returned to hell for further purification. Jizou is the Buddhist deity that is supposed to ease the suffering of the souls in hell. Here the statue has been burnt or blackened by the spring burn off.

148: Ureshino, is a place name near Kobe famous for its Azalea Park

150: Raiko, or Minamoto no Yorimitsu 948-8/29/1021 was one of the leaders of the Minamoto Clan and was renowned for his military exploits. This poem is referring to a folk tale where Raiko suppresses a demon at Mt. Ohe.

151: There are two ways to translate this poem. The other translation would read: “Waiting for citrus flowers / there is the smell / of old people’s sleeves.”

Also the middle line, mukashi no hito no, is quoted from a poem in “The Tale of Ise.”

The Doll Festival takes place on March Third.

153: Tarachina no tsuma in ancient Japanese was a way for a wife to call her husband. In more modern Japanese it became a way to describe a lovely wife. Furthermore, there is the pun on a chick’s nose. In classic drawings both men and women were drawn with a small nose in a round face. The nose looked like the hiragana letter ku ,” く “. Female doll’s were made with this kind of nose. So this poem is punning on picking up the doll by the nose, and pinching a woman’s nose.

155: Hinamise was a market place set up before the Doll Festival that sold supplies for the festival.

160: Kachyuushyu are government officials during the Edo Period that would go around and inspect farms and houses. Here the farmers are getting ready for the visit by shaking out the straw mats for the officials to view the peach blossoms.

166: Kato Kyotai (1732-1792), a poet and friend of Buson, was born in Nagoya.

168: Zeni kaute is literally exchanging gold and silver coins into pennies. The reason would be so one could stop to rest at tea houses or temples while climbing the mountains.

169: Drooping Cherries is a caption or title of a painting.

170: The middle line, “Matsu ni fukarete” is taken from a part of one poem which was criticized as a “Junk Poem” in the collection titled “Kokin Wakashu.”

171: On a mountain cherry trees do not blossom all at the same time, so the colors of the mountain varies.

179: Naniwa, is the old name for Osaka. There are several different ways of writing Naniwa in Kanji (Chinese Characters). In this poem Buson is using the writing that includes the seasonal word flowers. Furthermore, Osaka is famed for being mercantile and uncultured.

180 Akokuso (My Shit Boy) was a pen name for Ki no Tsurayuki, who was one of the famous Heian poets who was one of the four poets to compile the Kokin Wakashuu.

Akokuso is also a way to call a dirty boy. Furthermore sashinuki is a type of formal hakama, a divided skirt.

181: Koyasan, is a name of group of mountains between Nara and Osaka and is the home of the temple complex and headquarters of the Buddhist sect Shingonshu, which was started by Kobo Daishi. Koyasan is also famous for its cemetery. Not only does Kobo Daishi have a tomb where he is sleeping, many important people have a cenotaph erected there.

Sanada Yukimura (1567 - June 3, 1615) a famous samurai who fought against the Tokugawa clan. He and his father lived anonymously at the foot of Mt. Koyasan after losing the battle for Osaka Castle.

Utai is a special type of Noh Song.

183 Touki or dong quai is an ancient Chinese/Korean/Japanese medicinal herb from the celery family that has purple stems and umbrella clusters of white flowers. It is used to treat cramps, infrequent periods, irregular menstrual cycles, PMS, and problems associated with menopause. It is known as the female ginseng.

186: Arayashiyama is a mountain and a town southwest of Kyoto. In the poem there is a pun on name, Arashiyama, which in English would be "Storm Mountain."

187: Keisei originally meant a very beautiful woman. Later came to mean that of a courtesan. What is happening in this poem is that a courtesan's works at night, whereas cherry blossom viewing is done during the day so she is risking her "pure spirit" or looks maybe by becoming tan.

188: The opening line of this poem is flowers dance, however the last line, shirabyoushi, is a woman dancer from the Heian period; therefore to avoid repeating the same word, I have used the word twirl instead. Shiraboushi is also a performance danced by both men and women.

190: Kiyamichi Road is a famous road in Kyoto noted for its cherry blossoms.

191: Suifuro is a round wooden bathtub in which the bather had to sit.

193: The poem is referring to a famous double blossom cherry tree at Ninnaji Temple in Kyoto.

194: The word genkyakusu to dwindle, to lessen, or to be reduced, is also used in the poem. I therefore tried to vary the meaning. The end line is stomach is reduced. Furthermore, bijin no, or beautiful woman's, I have replaced with beauty's because there could be two ways of reading this poem, one, the beauty is an actual woman, two, the woman represents spring.

195: Kenko Yoshida (1283-1350) was an author and Buddhist monk. His most famous work is "Tsurezuregusa" or "Essays in Idleness." This poem relates to the following story:

On April 15th at midnight on a bright moonlit night Kenko visited Senbonji Temple. He went into the temple and saw a woman. Her figure and her perfume were uniquely beautiful. When Kenko got close to her, her fragrance was so strong it felt like it was caressing him, and he worried that when he left the temple that the scent would linger on him and that people would gossip because of the lateness of the hour.

196: The reason why the young noble man's head is shaved is that he has entered the priesthood.

198: In early Edo a low pillow was used, but by Buson's time a higher pillow was popular.

199: Heichyou, is the closing of an exhibition by a temple of a rare or valued statue.

204: The mountain referred to in the poem is Shiranezan in Yamanashi Prefecture. Furthermore, Mt. Shiranezan is the second highest mountain in the prefecture while the highest is Mt. Fuji.

212: Nangen means southern clan or group, and refers to South China. It was thought that the Northern Chinese were wealthy and that the Southern were poor. Also the opening word of the poem, 'Rofusage,' is a recessed fire-pit or fireplace in the floor that is used for heating water for the tea ceremony. In "Sado" (tea ceremony) usually a gathering was held in the late spring when the fire-pit was closed because of the sorrow of shutting it down.

213: Toko is usually written toko-no-ma and is an alcove in which items for artistic appreciation, such as calligraphy and/or pictorial scrolls along with flower arrangements are displayed. Furthermore, Yuima, refers to the Vimalakirti-nirde'sa Sutra.

218: Kuroyanagi Shoha (1727-1771) was a pupil influenced by Buson's style of poetry. Shoha studied Chinese classics in a school founded by Ito Jinsai (1627-1705). Shoha came to learn haikai under Buson. His conversations with Buson influenced Buson's preface to the Shunde'i Verse Anthology.

Also the end line of the poem is literally through the open spaces in the fence or through the gaps in the fence.

219: Zasu is the title for the head monk of Hieizan Temple, part of the Tendai School. Rengu or Renka is "linked verse." In Renka one poet would compose a poem of 5/7/5 syllables and the next poet would compose an addition of 7/7 syllables, and then the next would compose 5/7/5 and so on.

220" Tsukubasan: the "purple mountain" is one of the major tourist attractions for mountain climbing and has an important Shinto Shrine built upon it. It has two peaks, one said

to be female, the other male. Unlike most of the Japanese mountains, Mt. Tsukuba is not volcanic but is in fact made of granite.

222: Imonokami or Housogami is the God of Bad Luck, Small Pox or Syphilis. Imo means pox. Also the Yokawa Pagoda is one of the three pagodas at Mt. Hieizan Temple complex. The idea within the poem is going to the temple to pray to Housogami to avoid or to be cured from small pox or syphilis.

223: Henka is the answering poem in a renga series. Also aonyoubou is an inexperienced court lady or a maid of honor.

224: Oumi is the old name for Shiga. It also means the center. Furthermore this poem is also based on a poem by Basho:

Regretting
spring's departure —
Oumi's residents

Summer

225: Koromogae, beginning in the Heian Period, The Seasonal Clothes Changing Day, currently June 1st, was when all commoners had to change from their silk winter clothes into their cotton summer clothes and was considered to be the beginning of summer. This holiday is currently repeated on October 1 where people change from their summer clothes to their winter clothes.

230: “Yukazu” was an early summer event, a contest of long-distance archery held at Sanjusangendo Temple in Higashiyama Kyoto.

232: Oteuchi: A death sentence carried out with a katana. During the Edo period the death penalty was imposed by the master of a samurai family for retainers who committed some indiscretion or violation of a family ban.

233: This poem plays on a poem from the Kokinshu:

Waiting for May
the fragrance of orange flowers
is the same as
an old lover's

235: The Tomokirimaru, Friend Cutting Sword, is another name for the Hige kiri Katana (see footnote 78).

Hototogisu (cuckoo) can be written in the following ways:

杜鵑, "woods cuckoo"

子規, "egg measurer" (referring to the bird's practice of laying eggs in the nest of other birds)

時鳥, "bird of time"

不如歸, "homelessness" (referring to the bird not building a nest of its own)

蜀魂, "spirit of Szechuan"

霍公鳥, "speedy cuckoo bird"

田鵑, "rice field cuckoo"

沓手鳥, "shoe hand bird"

杜宇, "woods' roof"

240: Shirojirou, literally “The Whitening Sky” the original name of Jiro Kano, a member of the Kano school of painting, which was founded by his father, Masanobu Kano. The Kano School is one of the most famous schools of Japanese painting and was the dominant style of painting from the 15th century until the Meiji period. By the time Jiro Kano

became a member the school was already divided into many different stylistic branches. The poem is addressing a painting of a hototogisu by Kano, and at the same time was addressing an actual hototogisu.

241: In this poem Iwakura refers to a place in Kyoto that was famous for its asylum.

242: Masanori Inaba and Masamichi Inaba were the Lords of Odawara Castle and were famous practitioners of the tea ceremony.

245: This poem refers to the Kamo Aoi Matsuri in Kyoto, which has a large cart pulled by cows in a procession of 100 people. The Festival began as a formal procession to appease the gods after a series of heavy rains and winds destroyed the crops during Emperor Kinmei's (509-May 24, 571 a.d.) reign.

247: Enma-O: The Judge of Hell in esoteric Buddhism. In Buddhist iconography Enma-O is pictured with an open, angry mouth. My translation is based on Tsutomu Ogata's interpretation.

253: This poem was in "Goshahougu" a haiku book that featured old and then current poets and was edited by Kito.

254: Togan Koji, a layman disciple of Higashiyama Unkyoji Temple who had hair and wore common clothes. He preached performing on a drum worn around the neck, the Kakko, while dancing. The sound of the drum was considered similar to the song of the cuckoo, "Teppenkaketa."

255: Based on a poem from the "Goshahougu:"

The cuckoo
may also feel lonely
flying away - Otsuyu Nakagawa

There is also a pun within this poem on "Kankodori ga naku." which is a slump in business, or when there are no customers. Bakurinji is the name of a hermitage and a reference to Otsuyu Nakagawa, a haiku poet who founded the Bakurinji school of poetry.

259: The idea here is that the cuckoo does not build its own nest but uses the nests of other birds and so is eyeing the hat to see if it is a good place to lay eggs.

260: This poem is punning on a Japanese proverb: "Hato ni sanshi no rei ari." (Doves perching on the lower three branches of a tree respect good manners.)

263: Saito Betto Sanemori was a local commissioner who died in battle at Shinohara. Because he was 73 years old, he dyed his hair to go fight against an advancing enemy when the rest of the soldiers had fled. When he attacked he refused to answer the question, "Who are you?" He died when his horse rolled over on him. The enemy soldiers

cut his head off and took his head to their general. It turned out that Sanemori had saved the general's life when the general was two years old.

266: This poem was written when an old friend, Unribou (1693-1761), visited and talked to Buson all through the night. Unribou was a poet in the middle of the Edo Period from what is currently Aichi Prefecture. He was a pupil of the Kagami Shikan School and was one of the 10 students of Basho. This is the same poet as referred to in poem 575.

The pine tree, Rokuri no Matsu, was a large tree at Amano Hashidate, the hermitage where Buson lived for several years.

269: A catchpole is someone of lesser rank than a sheriff or constable and usually went after debtors. "Kawa chouzu," means 1, water for washing the face and hands; 2, ritualistic cleansing of the hands and face before entering a temple or a shrine; 3, going to the toilet.

270: This poem could be referencing a large silver screen that Buson himself painted towards the end of his life. To see the image go to:

<http://bunka.nii.ac.jp/SearchDetail.do?heritageId=216110#>

273: Okinamaro, the name of a guard dog in Sei Shounagon's "Pillow Book."

274: Sutekagari was a bonfire lit to lure thieves away instead of posting a guard.

277: "Hitotsu amarite" has three possible meanings, all of them played upon within this poem. 1, The last stage of the Tohoku Road, which was just before a traveler would reach Kyoto; a phrase called out in backgammon before playing the last tile; the name of a famous pine tree in Otsu, Shiga. Furthermore, the Tohoku road was the famous haiku walk that Basho wrote about.

278: Fushimi and Yodo are two towns within the outskirts of Kyoto that were on opposite side of a bay.

279: I've tried to capture both meanings for "unohana": a shrub with small white flowers (deutzia) and tofu waste.

281: This poem refers to a poem by Saigyō (1118 – March 23, 1190), a late Heian and early Kamakura period noble who became a monk and a poet: Let me die in spring / under the flowering trees / around the full moon.

284: Suzumeshi (Sparrow Sushi) a type of sushi that originally used stripped mullet minnows; sea bream is now used. The minnows were cut open, gutted and then stuffed with sushi rice. Also during Buson's lifetime bamboo leaves were normally used to serve this sushi, here it appears to be water pepper instead of bamboo. Water pepper is also served with trout sushi.

285: Miidera Temple, formally called Onjoji temple, was founded in 672 and is the head temple of Tendai Buddhism's Jimon sect. It is also temple number 14 in the Saigoku Kannon Pilgrimage, a 33 temple pilgrimage in western Japan. Buson visited Miidera in September of 1779 after visiting Basho's grave.

286: Banded or hanging onions were suspended from the eaves or the roof as a way of keeping the onions cool.

289: The way of writing Mt. Fuji here uses an alternate Kanji, Chinese character, compound and reads "Not Two." The idea is that Mt. Fuji is a singularly unique mountain.

293: This is based on a Chinese story about Emperor Ryuu Hou. or Ling Bang (BCE 247-195), commonly known in Japan as Kouso who was an emperor in the Han period of China. When he confronted a big snake along a valley road, he cut it to continue on (extracted from the "Record of Grand Historian.")

296: Nenashigusa: rootless duckweed, or a way of describing rootless wanderers.

298: Sanbongi is a place located in Kyoto along the western bank of the Kamogawa River between Marutamachi and Kojinguchi.

301: Mosquito coils were first made in the Heian period and are mentioned in the "Manyoshu" - the first collection of poetry. Also the coils were made from mugwort and contained sulfur.

302: Sangenya: three tea shops named Sun, Moon, Flower near Arashiyama, a city near Kyoto.

305: Hashimoto, a pleasure quarters in Osaka, southeast of Takatsuki City that was near Buson's home town. Also the place had a bamboo forest.

"Ari ya nashi," is part of a famous phrase from Ise Monogatari, "Is my love still in Kyoto or not".

Finally this haiku is also illustrated by Buson with a painting of a house in a bamboo grove.

306: Otoshizashi, was to carry the katana in a vertical manner and was considered rude. In this poem the guide to the bamboo grove was carrying his sword vertically like the way bamboo grows.

309: Magakibushi, the title of a song that was popular in the early Edo period, 1655-1661, that was written by a prostitute named Magaki. There is also a painting by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797 – October 12, 1858) which appears to be about Magaki passing her pipe through a fence to a lover. And while this painting came after Buson, it could go a long way in explaining the action or story line of this poem: the poppies are passing through

the magaki (roughly woven fence or bamboo hedgerow) like the pipe that Magaki passed to her lover.

315: The first few lines of this poem are quoting a haiku by Basho that says that Kyoto's soba and its haiku taste bad. Here Buson appears to be saying that while the soba is still not delicious, because his school, a revival of the Basho style of poetics, was in Kyoto that things were developing (growing wheat).

316: Foxfire is a will-o'-the-wisp or grave/ghost lights and is derived from the folk belief that foxes can breath fire from their mouths. Furthermore, Kawachi is a place near Buson's birth village. Another possible translation could read:

Grave lights
are you leading me to Kawachi's
wheatfields

317: Nunobiki no Taki Waterfall is located on Mt. Nunobiki. Mt. Nunobiki was a place where Japanese asceticism and shamanism was practiced. It is one of the selected one hundred best waters of Japan. Also Mt. Nunobiki is referenced in Ise Monogatari / Eiga Monogatari, written in the Heian period.

318: Kaya village now located in Kyoto Prefecture is famous as a scenic destination and it was visited by many famous poets. Tamba is a mistake and should read Tango.

319-322: Narezushi is a type of sushi made by pressing salted fish in a large wooden bucket of rice for a few days up to over a year. This type of sushi was first made in the Yayoi period (300BC-300AD). Usually fresh water fish but sometimes boar or deer meat was used depending on the location.

Buson appeared to have loved his narezushi and wrote over 16 haiku about it.

322: This poems alludes to a Chinese poem taken from the book Gao Tang Rhapsody by Song Yu. The poem name is "Chouunbou" and it was written by a king, probably named Kaiou of Chu, about a dream he had where he made love to a goddess. Upon taking his leave, the goddess said, "To see you again I will become a cloud in the morning and rain in the evening."

323: Tosoku was a poet from Kyoto who died in 1773. This poem is referring to his third year memorial, which is actually held on the second year. Depending on the school or sect, Buddhist memorial services are held on the cremation ceremony and then are held on the 7th day, the 14th day, the 21st day, the 28th day, the 35th day, the 42nd day, the 49th day, the 100th day, the 1st year, the 2nd year, the 6th year, the 12th year, the 16th year, the 22nd year, the 24th year, the 26th year, the 32nd year, the 36th year, and finally on the 49th year (to get the Buddhist names for these years, add one year).

Nori no tsue is a staff for visiting temples, or is a staff used for visiting funerals.

325: This poem references a poem by Touenmei (Tao Yuanming) a Chinese poet (Peach Blossom Spring) who lived from 365-427 A.D. “My hometown is becoming abandoned / so why do I remain here?” The poem is about Yuanming quitting his job as a government official to return home. In Buson’s poem however, the path home is strewn with thorns and is not so idyllic.

328: The Basho Hermitage was rebuilt through Buson’s effort and is located at Konpu-kuji Temple. The hermitage was built for use in the tea ceremony following Sen no Rikyu (1522-1591), one of the principle founders of the modern tea ceremony.

“Ears, eyes, lungs and bowels,” is a phrase from Sima Guang (1019-1080), a Chinese historian. The quote the poem is referencing is:

Wandering about here and there, I only let my mind dwell on pleasant things. The full moon arrives in its own time. The cool breeze comes of itself. My strolling is not due to any need. I do not stop from any necessity. My eyes, ears, lungs and bowels are all my own personal possessions — I utterly follow my will, am utterly unbound in scope! I had not known what is meant to be an inhabitant between Sky and Earth. What pleasures are greater than this? Therefore, I named the whole concept, “The Garden for Pleasure in Solitude” (Taken from Ascetic Culture: Renunciation and Worldly Engagement edited by Karigouder Ishwaran, Boston, Brill Academic Publishers. June 1, 1999. p51).

329: This is referring to a story about Seishi, one of the four most beautiful of historical Chinese women. When she was suffering from an illness in the chest, Seishi contracted her eye brows and looked very beautiful doing so. Some ugly women saw her and immediately contracted their eyebrows together, unfortunately for them they looked even uglier. This became a proverb: think before you imitate.

334: Chimaki is a type of steamed dumplings usually cooked within bamboo leaves and is normally eaten on Children’s Day in modern Japan, which takes place on May 5th, also on that day Koi kites are normally flown so the day has the association of being windy.

335: Wakasabito: within this poem are merchants selling medications, or food for the emperor, that come from Wakasa, a city north of Kyoto, and are in this poem traveling to Kyoto to sell their fish, produce, or medicines. Wakasa was also at this time one of the ports open to foreigners.

336: Shii, is the chinquapin oak, yellow oak, or rock oak. It has a very distinct fragrance. Also this poem is quoting from a haiku by Basho:

The oak tree
does not appreciate
cherry blossoms

339: Saijun: a laborer's song used when harvesting lotus roots or water shield; a set of Chinese songs using poems in the old style with one short line followed by a long line.

340: Warekara does not have an English equivalent and is a type of insect that lives in seaweed.

343: Otomo no Oemaru was a haiku poet also from Osaka who lived from 1722-1805, and would have been 6 years younger than Buson. Otomo no Oemaru's name puns on "Kataware," which means a fragment or broken piece.

345: The opening kanji refers to Emperor Kore (290-215BC). Legend has it that in the fifth year of his reign the land in Omi was split and formed the lake that now reflects Mt. Fuji.

346: This poem is usually compared to a poem by Basho:

Early summer rains
gather quickly —
the Mogami River

348: This poem was written when Buson was traveling to Hakone, one of the stops of the Tokaido Road, and is located in what is now Kanagawa Prefecture.

349: The Oi River was a place where people crossed when the bridges were washed out.

350: Tagoto no yami (terraced rice fields), a pun on "Tagato no Tsuki," refers to a place in Nagano where old people were carried up into the mountains to be abandoned.

351: Seinhan Hoshi, another name for Unribou, see footnote #266. Also during the Edo Period there was no refrigeration so fruit and vegetables were placed in cool or cold water.

354: Oi is a portable bookcase used by a itinerant priest.

356: Hagakure is a ninja term which means hiding in the leaves.

360: There is a delightful painting of a student gazing blankly that Buson made for this poem. Also this poem is quoting or referring to the Mouguyuu (the Japanese for Mengquiji 蒙求集 "Helpful collection for first education", also called Meng-qui 蒙求).

This a short encyclopedia written in the Tang Dynasty by writer Li Han (618-907). The special topic of this encyclopedia are examples in history of good and evil behavior. The 596 entries are arranged in rhymed double-pairs of short sentences, composed to make them easy to memorize. (Taken from China Knowledge). The poem then is imitating one

of the moral lessons from the Mougyuu, a type of intellectual that doesn't really learn but only talks virtually out his ass. Furthermore, nukeru is to emit or exit.

364: Yukinobu Kano (1643-1682) a female painter from the Kano school.

366: A water rail is a type of bird that hides in reeds and makes a squealing pig type of noise. The verb within the poem is cry but I changed it to squeal to imitate the sound of the bird.

369: Shouha Kuroyanagi (1727-1772) a poet and student of Buson. Buson evidently met him after returning from Kagawa Prefecture (named Sanuki during Buson's time) at a haiku gathering near To-i Temple at Yamabuki Street. This poem appears to have been written during one of their haiku gatherings.

372: Ukawa can refer to a river for cormorant fishing, or can be the actual name of a river that is between Nagoya and Kyoto. In this haiku it is most likely the first definition.

373: Tomoshi was a way of hunting deer with torches at night.

374: A type of discipline where monks would stay inside for 100 days chanting and practicing Zen meditation. Kokoro means heart/spirit/mind. The idea within the poem is that writing calligraphy for 100 days has made the mind or spirit great.

376: Keishi Tennogiya (Tomijuro Nakamura) 1719-1786, a famous kabuki actor who portrayed women. Also the opening line of the poem is quoting from the Manyoshu.

377: Ogawa could also be pronounced Oogawa. The meaning here is difficult. The poem could be referring to the Kamogawa River in Kyoto in which case Ogawa is a no longer used nickname for the river, or it could be the name of a river in Nara. Ogawa could also just mean a small river, or could be the name of a stream.

380: Fijitsuna Aoto was another name for Zaemon Aoto. A famous story written in "Taihei Ki volume 35 (Taihei Ki was a 40 volume collection first published in 1371 and was translated by Dr. Helen Craig McCullough), was about Zaemon Aoto, who made somebody buy a 500 yen torch to search for 100 yen dropped in a river.

Zenigame, spotted turtle. The spotted turtle's shell looks like the half-yen coin that was in circulation during the Edo Era.

382: Shimizu: spring water from mountains.

384: Hirugao: this could be translated either as morning glory or bind weed. Also one ri is about four kilometers or two miles.

389: Fukigara: Shredded tobacco, flaked tobacco, cigarette butts.

391: Kouhone: a species of waterlily, Japanese spatterdock or candock. Divided in two it was used as a medicine and as a dye.

395: Shubin was a monk who competed with Kukai (774-835), also known as Kobo Daishi, the monk who founded the Shingonshu Buddhist sect, in a prayer for rain and was defeated.

396: Yomizu toru: drawing water into the rice paddies at night.

399: Kawataro was another name for the Kappa, a mythical half-turtle, half-human trickster figure who had a bowl of water on his head and loved eating cucumbers.

402: Adabana: non fruit bearing flowers, meaningless flowers, vanity

403: Hosoi obi: Basho's Narrow Belt. Matsuo Basho wore the Hosoi Obi belt after his travels of "The Narrow Road to the Deep North," which became the name of his travelogue published in 1702.

405: Amazake: sweet sake drunk in summer to forget the heat.

407: Matsugaoka: a town in Kamakura noted for Tokei-ji Temple. Tokei-ji was a temple that functioned as a refuge for women who were seeking release from marriage. Also the poem puns on the word "ama," which sounds like the word for sweet and for nun in Japanese.

408: This poem is based upon a poem in Santaishi by Li She or Risho (773-831). "Idly spending my days, I found spring was ending. Climbing a mountain I met a monk and talked joyously." This poem was also referenced by Basho.

Hackberry Tree, a tree with widely spread leaves that was prized for its shade.

409: The Daibutsu was about a 60 foot metal statue at Hoko-ji Temple, a prince resident temple, in the Higashiyama Ward of Kyoto, and was commissioned by Hideyoshi Toyotomi, a famous general who started as a peasant and worked his way up the ranks. Later in life Toyotomi became a famous patron of arts.

This poem also refers to the following haiku by Basho:

Stillness
pierces the rocks —
the cicada's voice

410: Uma no koku, the hour of the horse, was from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The traditional Chinese way of measuring time divided the day into 12 hours, each one named after a zodiac sign.

412: Kakegou: a sachet of incense that was normally placed in a pocket. However, in this poem it appears to have been hung on a pillar.

Semigoromo: A feather like thin summer kimono.

414: Sodedatami: a way of folding a kimono in an informal or casual way.

415: Ganto Sunaoka, a painter from Yuki city in Ibaraki Prefecture, a precursor poet of Buson.

“Ari to Miete” is a reference to a poem in the Shin Kokin Wakashu by Sakanoue Korenori (a poet from the early to middle Heian Period) and is about the legendary “hahakigi” tree, which can be seen from far away but not up close.

417: Euchiwa: a fan painted with a picture. In this poem the fan is painted with a picture from the Tale of Onatsu and Seijuuro. In the story, Onatsu was the daughter of an Edo innkeeper and Seijuuro was a servant. Because of the difference in their social status they were not allowed to get married, so they eloped and got caught. Seijuro was killed and Onatsu went insane. Within this poem, the couple are both on the fan, which both reveals their sad story and at the same time unites them, which was my way of dealing with the phrase, “sore mo” or “here too.”

420:Goine: Festival during the month of July of the Goin-sha, Goin carts, which is one of the former names for Yasaka-jingu Shrine. The book, Kakemeguru Omoi (Yosa Buson: On the Wings of Art) contains reproductions of some of the artwork that Buson painted for festival carts.

Makuzahahara: a terrace at the foot of Mt. Higashiyama in Kyoto’s Pillow Ward.

421: Kaji was the name of the female owner of the teahouse that artists and writers visited because of its elegant name that was located south of the gateway of Gion-jinja Shrine during the middle of the Edo Era.

422: Jyouzan Ishikawa: a composer of Chinese poems from Mikawa (currently the eastern part of Aichi Prefecture) who retired at Shisando in Ichijouji Village, Kyoto. Jozan composed a poem that swore that he would never enter Kyoto by crossing over Semi River, which flows into Kamogawa River and is located south of Shimogamo Shrine.

425: The word tayori here is a little confusing. Tayori can mean 1, a letter; 2, dependence, help, support; 3, tie, relationship, link. Here, instead of letter I used invitation, a type of letter, to try to tie the poem back to its introduction.

Kawayuka: a balcony constructed in summer over a river, so that the cool of the river can act as a natural air-conditioner.

429: Yoburi: to catch river fish while waving a torch in a summer night.

430: Mizu kamuri: Literally spraying water. Here I translated it as splash more for the effect of the net hitting the water.

431: Kikorai to iu: a quote from a poem titled “Returning Home” by Tao Yuanming. The phrase also means to quit one’s job and return to one’s hometown.

433: Kedowaki Dono: was another name for Taira no Norimori. Because Norimori lived by the side of the great Rokuhara Gate (located east of the Kamogawa River in Kyoto between Gojou and Shichijou) where the Taira family resided, he was called Kadowaki Dono. In “The Tale of Heike” Kedowaki asks his older brother, Kiyomori, to save his son-in-law, Naritsume Fujiwara, by letting him stay at his house.

435: Hara ashiki sou: a monk who has a temper that has a short, hot temper, who is irritable, or grumpy. This is also a reference from Kenko Houshi’s “Essays on Idleness” (Tsurezuregusa) essay number 45.

Semai: was a national holiday that took place in August, where rice was given to poor monks.

436: Misunoko: parched barely flour. This was believed to have good health affects because people’s stomachs were thought to have been weakened by the summer heat.

439: Youshuu: the Japanese spelling of the Chinese city Yangzhan in Jiangsu Province. Yangzhan was the capital of southern China around 581 BC, and was a wealthy merchant city famous for its poetry and arts. Also Marco Polo claimed to be an official administering salt under the Mongol emperor Kubilai Khan around 1282-1287.

440: Ame to naru koi: A quote from the 19th legend of “Monzen” A 60 volume set of books compiled around 530 A.D. of Chinese prose and poetry that also was influential on Japanese literature. The volumes contain about 100 writers and span around a 1000 year time period from the Zhou to the Northern and Southern Dynasties.

441: Shitaku: the Japanese spelling for the Chinese poet’s name, Tao Yuan, and a reference to a poem by him about how when the ground is full of water in spring, in summer there are many strangely shaped clouds.

443: Hageyama: a bald mountain or a denuded mountain. This could also be a place name, Mt. Hageyama, which is located either in Aichi or Hogo prefectures.

446: Soukan Yamazaki (1465-1553) was the pen name of Norishige Shina, a famous poet who was an early writer of haiku. For several years he travelled never staying more than one night at any place. Finally he settled down for the last 25 years of his life at Kanonji Temple in what is now Kagawa Prefecture. His hermitage is known as “Ichiya An” or “The One Night Hermitage.”

Kuzumizu was a summer drink made from cooled arrowroot gruel.

449: Houkoji: The Japanese name for Layman Pang (740-808) together with his wife and daughter was a famous lay practitioner of Zen Buddhism. Him and his daughter, Lingzhao (762-808), often went on pilgrimages together and often debated each other about Buddhist scriptures. Lingzhao usually won these debates. Layman Pang visited many temples and made a bamboo pillow to sit on, and eventually had his daughter sell the pillow.

Chikufujin: a folded bamboo pillow held so one can cool off in the summer night.

451: Tokoroten: agar, a gelatin substance derived from seaweed, noodles, also known as gelidium jelly. This poem is also referencing a poem by Li Po, "The Cataract in View."

452: Masaoka Shiki, the famous haiku poet from the Meiji Era, wrote that this poem revealed Buson's keen eye. Itsukushima Shrine is located on Miyajima Island.

453: Natsukagura: Natsu is summer and kagura is the name of ancient sacred music and dance.

454: Misogi, summer purification, is a washing ritual that now takes place on June 30th. Negide: a Shinto priest, usually, of the second rank.

457; The line Aki Kaze Soyogu references a poem by Fujiwara no Ietaka (1158-May 5, 1237) a Kamakura waka poet whose poems are in the Shinchokusen Wakashu. He also was related by marriage to Jakuren.

Autumn

463: The image within this poem is that of lifting up a lantern as if looking out for a caller — here most likely the dead friends. Dew here represents the idea of a fleeting life, or the shortness of life...

466: This poem is a description of the early autumn festival, the Festival of the Weaver (Sirius) also known as Tanabata. Two stars named Princess Orihime (Vega) and Prince Hikoboshi (Altair) can only meet on Tanabata over the Milky Way. Girls offer 5 colored threads during this festival to improve their art skills. So the image within this poem is that of the two stars meeting and young women offering colorful strings to them.

467: This poem is referring to a ceremony that was held on September 6th, where people went into other people's houses to see women and sacred tools. One place famous for this ceremony was Ujiyamada area in Ise.

468: The actual word "ajikina" means without flavor. Furthermore, the mosquito net would have been used for covering the dead. This poem is also punning on the word "Adikina," which was a ceremony honoring the ancestors and was originally held on New Year's Day but was changed to September 15th (the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month) in the Kanto area by Buson's time.

469: Tamadana or spirit shelf is a small room shrine for ancestors that sits on a shelf.

470: Daimonji is a festival in Kyoto that currently takes place on August 16 where the letter "大" is set on fire on the side of a mountain.

473: This poem was commissioned for Buson to write a poem commemorating the paintings of Hanabusa Ichou, an Edo era painter, calligrapher and poet.

476: There are a couple of meanings within this poem. First Hachijou is a measurement of about 20 yards. The island Hashijou took its name from the bolts of silk that it produces measuring 20 yards long. In the poem the lightning could be suspended for 20 yards in the sky, or it could be the yellow silk that is suspended in the sky to dry and looking like bolts of lightning.

480: Shunya was a pseudonym for Buson's student, Kito.

488: Ominaeshi translates as "Golden Lace" a type of flower, however a literal translation would read "The Prostitute Flower." Some older meanings of the word are a high ranking noble woman, or the name of a tragic women figure, who killed herself when she thought that she was going to be abandoned. After her suicide she turned into the "golden lace" flower. When her former husband came to her grave, he went to pick one of the flowers to remember her by. But in the wind the flowers kept bending away from him. He took this as a sign that even in death she was trying to avoid him, and he killed himself too.

500: Benkei Mushashibou (1155–1189): A famous warrior-monk known for his loyalty and honor who served under Minamoto no Yoshitsune. There are many stories about his exploits, including the Noh play *Ataka*, and a kabuki adaption of the same play.

506: Kataru here is written in hiragana so it could have two possible meanings: to call/chant/or invoke; or to swindle

521: This poem is referring to a line from Sei Shonagon's Pillow Book, "The bagworm is crying please come here." However, the bagworm does not make any sound and it is thought that Sei Shonagon (966 - 1017) was actually referring to a type of cricket.

530: Tadanori: Taira no Tadanori, the brother of the clan head Taira no Kiyomori, and one of the generals in the Genpei War fought against the Minamoto clan. A poem by him was found in his quiver after his death: "Were I still traveling as night falls, making a sheltering tree an inn, would my host tonight be the blossoms themselves?"

532: Like the man in the moon, the Japanese say there is a rabbit making mochi (rice cakes) in the moon.

540: Gyokuzan: the name of an ancient emperor known for his elegance.

541: A flower guard is a talesman for guarding against thieves.

543: While Ganji is a name, the word before it is "Tandai" which could mean a high monk, a monk who judges the validity of both koan questions and answers, a general, or an army headquarters.

551: Shinshi is a pen name for Kikaku Takara (1661-1707) who was one of Basho's 12 students.

556: Sarumaru Daifu is a legendary poet from the early Heian Era whose poems appear in the *Kokin Wakashu*. There are doubts as to whether Sarumaru no Daifu existed and some consider him to be Prince Yamashiro no Oe.

562: The idea here is that because the autumn wind has kept the book dry it has not gotten damp from humidity and so it hasn't been worm eaten.

565: Tagawa Ichiku (1710-1760) a poet from the school of Kensho Matsushiki which revived the style of poetry made by Basho. Mukai Kyorai was a poet who worked with Nozawa Buncho to edit Basho's school anthology "Monkey's Raincoat" in 1689. This poem also contains two puns in that the first character or letter of Kyorai (去, to go) is used as the verb and the first character of Ishiku (移 to pass) is also used as the verb.

572: The pun in this poem is over the character“ 子”which means child or children, it is also the last character in scarecrow which would literally translate as “Frightening Mountain Child.”

577: One of the meanings of buckwheat flowers is “sake for bees” meaning that bees like the flowers as much as people like drinking sake.

578: This poem is a type of “Ki kasanari,” that is a poem using two set poetry phrases. Miyagi no no hagi is one and Sarashina no soba is another. Miyagi is near Sendai and Sarashina is in Nagano, both of these places are on the Tohoku road and were visited by Basho.

581: Usually I have not been translating proper nouns, but in order to understand the puns in poem the name“Kurodani” (Black Valley) “Shirokawa”(White River) need to be translated. Kurodani is a place in Kyoto.

582: Natsukashii can mean nostalgic, affectionate longing, or longing and can also be used to express the feeling of having/seeing/doing something after a long time. Furthermore, the idea here is that asters grew out of, or came from, wild chamomiles (literally in Japanese, wild chrysanthemums).

585: Mt. Kaigane, a place name, also a set phrase in a “Uta Makura” that is a common word or theme used in waka, haiku and tanka. The literal meaning of the first two characters is heroic.

590: Chikukei (1706-1758) a pen name for a painter (Kien Yamagisawa) who was one of the pioneers of Japanese literati painting. Tango was a province and is now part of Kyoto Prefecture.

599: Jizou: Buddhist guardian of travelers and dead children, here the statue has an oily shine because it has been anointed by a worshiper.

600: Nara, the capital before Kyoto, is famous for its stone lamps.

601: The word monk does not appear in the original. I have added the word based on an interpretation by Dr. Harukiko Kindaichi.

603: Maruyama Okyo (1733-1795) one of the most influential painters of the Edo Era in Kyoto of the Shijo school. Maruyama was not only well versed in Japanese painting but also in Chinese and Western techniques.

604: Kouga is an old name of a town located in modern Shiga Prefecture that is famous for its school of Ninjas.

607: Kinuta — a mallet used for pounding or fulling cloth to bring out its luster. Also the name of a classical song for koto and samisen by Sayama Kenshou (died 1694) which imitates the rhythm of the pounding.

608: There are several layers of meaning within this poem. The word uki could be cold or sad. Then uta means song if one Kanji is used or hit or slap if a different Kanji is used. Also the mallet is used to hit cloth, and the samisen is played with a large pick, which sort of “slaps” the strings.

618: The horn letter “角” that is the letter that means horn is thought to be similar in shape to a cow’s horn. It was written about in the book “Tsurezuregusa” or “Essays in Idleness” by Yoshida Kenko (1283-1350).

The Cow Festival takes place in Western Kyoto and is currently held on October 12th.

620: The person or legend this poem refers to is Huai Su (Soukaiiso in Japanese) a Tang Dynasty monk and calligrapher (737-799) who planted banana trees in the courtyard of the temple he lived and used the leaves to practice on because he couldn’t afford paper to write on, and thus could write as much as he liked. Basho, Matsuo: a poet whose last name means banana because he planted a banana tree by his hut. The last line of the haiku could therefore be either a reference to Matsuo Basho or to banana plants themselves. This poem also pairs Basho with Huai Su.

622: Nochi no tsuki, literally the “after moon,” is the first full moon after the harvest moon, which is also called the hunter’s moon.

624: The thirteen nights here is referring to the hunter’s moon just before it is full.

626: To do Moon Viewing (viewing the harvest moon) the right way in Japan, one had to also set offerings to, and then admire the moon approximately one month later. This time it was not the full moon of the 15th night which received special attention, but the moon of the 13th night (Jusanya 十三夜), which is very large, but not quite full. This imperfect moon, appealed more strongly to Japanese (as opposed to Chinese) aesthetic sensibilities. This practice started in the Heian Period.

627: Fushimi: one of the seven wards of Kyoto. The meaning of the place name is “Hidden water,” or “underground water.” The idea of the poem is that the chrysanthemums have been able to bloom during the drought because of the underground water. Also “marau” is a verb which means to receive a gift.

628: This poem refers to a Noh play, "Makurajido" and is about a Chinese emperor's retainer, who accidentally steps on the emperor's pillow. Because of this the retainer is exiled to Mt. Rekken with the pillow he stepped on. On the pillow were written words, which the retainer writes on the leaves of the numerous chrysanthemums on the mountain. When the dew and rain would wash away the words, he saved the water and drank

it. Drinking the magic chrysanthemum water, revives his youth and keeps him alive for 700 years. He eventually gives the water to Emperor Wei as a sign of atonement.

Yamaga is a place in Kyoto.

Furthermore there is the legend, “The life of the writing brush is determined by the sun, the life of ink by the moon, and the life of the ink stone by the passing of ages. An ink stone is a rectangular stone dish with a sloping interior for an ink-stick to be rubbed against the slope in water to produce the ink (sumi) used in calligraphy. Finally, in this poem then are two symbols of longevity, the chrysanthemum dew and the ink stone, which is what Buson is wishing for his old master.

629: Touko mairan is a competition in which two people throw or drop flowers into a vase.

632: Chrysanthemums are both the crest of the imperial family, and a flower that is difficult to grow. The idea of the poem is that though the village is poor they take the time to grow chrysanthemums, thus showing how they are loyal to the emperor.

634: Yakko is a word meaning servant, valet, footman, clown, guy and is usually used in a derogatory manner. Also I changed the first chrysanthemums into the word flowers to avoid repetition.

635: Momiji can mean maple leaves, autumn leaves or autumnal foliage.

639: Aitzu is now part of Western Fukushima Prefecture.

641: Komachi means beautiful woman. The word itself comes from a legendary Heian court poet, Ono no Komachi who was famous for romantic poetry.

640: As the poem here is referring to Suma Temple, I have added the word temple into the translation. The temple is part of the Shingon Sect and houses a famous flute — the Aoba Flute. There are also monuments to Basho, Matsuoka and Buson at the temple.

643: Mogami River is in Yamagata Prefecture and is famous for its river cruises where the boatman sings traditional songs.

646: Saru can mean monkey, mimic, or sly one. I have combined the meanings into sly monkey for this poem because it would indicate that the rabbit is sly like a monkey.

650: Kita Makura, north pillow or head to the north, means that the servant is dead and has been laid out in Buddhist custom.

651: Renga or Renka is linked verse usually done by a group of poets. One poet will write three lines of 5/7/5 and the next will write two lines of 7/7 and then the next will

write 5/7/5, and so on until the group decides to stop. Also the broken edge of the moon could be translated as crescent moon.

653: Yowa could be translated as midnight or the dead of night. Furthermore, “Chichi” is the word for father, it is also the sound of the young mice crying.

660: Umemodoki — Japanese Winterberry, a plant used in bonsai which sprouts many bright red berries in autumn.

662: A foot high tree decorated with 5 colors. In Aomori and Iwate this was a courtship custom — a man placed a decorated tree by the gate of a woman’s house that the man wanted to marry as a proposal.

665: Shouro - a type of edible mushroom which would translate as “pine dew.”The red-fungus is a type of soil bacteria which evidently prevents the pine-dew mushroom from growing.

666: Mukago are small bulbs on wild yam vines. The line “Mi ni amaritaru” is originally from a poem in the “Kokin Wakashu”. In the original the line reads “an undeserved honor” but in this poem Buson has replaced the word honor “mi” with the word winnowing fork “mi”.

668: Eshin — Eshin-in Temple, which used to be called Ryusen-ji. It is said to have been reestablished in the middle of the Heian period by the Buddhist priest Genshin, the writer of “Oujoyoshu.”Genshin later takes the name of Eshin, the temple he stayed at. Mida is a version of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light.

672: Kakari Udo has two meanings; one, a guest who has been asked to stay; two, a guest who sponges off the host. Furthermore, yoki means good quality and which I have loosely translated as expensive.

673: Master could be Buson’s original teacher, Soua, or it could be a reference to Basho who did many walking poetry tours of north Japan.

674: Rakutou, the Basho Hermitage, is in Kampukuji Temple complex located east of the Kamo-gawa river in Eastern Kyoto. The idea is that the rain clouds are starting from Rakutou and are moving westward over Kyoto.

Winter Haiku

676: Eboshi: a type of hat worn by Shinto Priests — originally worn to indicate a man who had passed his coming of age ceremony. It was usually lacquered and very rarely worn outside of rituals.

679: Koto: a musical stringed instrument. With 13 strings and movable bridges.

680: Buson in a letter to Kito explains that “Basa” is the sound made by wind and falling rain hitting something thin.

681: This poem refers to the following poem by Iio or Ino Sogi (1421-1502), a Zen monk who was a leader in writing Renka, or linked verse:

At my hermitage
the world falls —
more early winter rain

The word world within this poem could also be translated as society, or ancient/old society. Furthermore, Buson’s poem also refers to the following poem by Matsuo Basho who was quoting Sogi’s poem:

The world is still falling —
more early winter rain
at Sogi’s Hermitage

Finally Buson is also referring to a poem by Kondo Joko (died 1708), Basho’s first pupil, a samurai who became a monk, and who welcomed Basho back after Basho’s journey in Tohoku.

The ancient people’s
night was also like this —
windy and cold

The above poem is from Joko’s book, “Nochi no tabi” or “Later Travels.”

683: Takaosan Mountain located in Hachioji is closely associated with Tengu, a minor God, and the God Daitensu Naisuha — a Buddhist temple, Takaosan Yakuin Yukiji, is on the mountain. In Shinto it is believed that during the 10th lunar month (December) that all of the Gods leave their shrines and visit the Izumo shrine, located in Taisha on the northwest coast facing Korea. This shrine is believed to be the oldest in Japan. Finally this time is known as “The Godless Month.”

The 10th Night: In Joudoshu Temple people would stay up praying from the 5th night of the 10th lunar month (December) to the morning of the 15th.

690: Ransetsu Hattori was a haiku poet, 1654 — November 6th 1707, and one of the ten major students under Matsuo Basho. A famous haiku by him is:

A leaf falls —
damn the people are scattered
in the wind.

702: The last line is butterbur flowers or bog rhubarb flowers, but since the word bloom occurs earlier I have omitted the word flower.

703: Gozanshu refers to “The Five Mountain System” or more specifically to a group of Zen temples built from 1127-1279 and to the monks of these five most important mountains. The term mountain here refers to temple or monastery because many monasteries were built on isolated mountains. Also I have changed the term “the populace of Gozan” to the monks to refer back to the idea of it being a temple.

710: The end image here is literally the plovers walk in a flat horizontal line, with the twist being that they are walking through the waves unmoved or disturbed.

728: A kotatsu is a low heated table, usually with a blanket that fits between the frame and the table top, used in winter to keep the legs warm.

731: Yowa no fuyu literary translated as the dead of or middle of night in winter or the midnight of winter.

732: Hikyaku is a courier, a postal carrier, or messenger, so the poem could also read ‘In withered grasses / a courier fox / passes by.’

739: Ikidue is a palanquin bearer’s resting staff. Also the characters “石” (stone) and “火” (fire) when directly combined together can mean flint or a flash or spark of fire.

740: Konpukuji Temple. The main temple where Basho’s grave is associated is Henkozan Ganjoji Temple, not Konpukuji, however in temple complexes each temple building has its own name.

749: The use of the phrase ‘western wind’ refers to autumn winds whereas the phrase ‘eastern wind’ refers to spring winds. So in this poem the fallen leaves are being blown towards spring.

756: Hakama is a traditional clothing originally only worn by men. It is tied at the waist and falls to the ankles. There are two types of Hakama, divided and undivided.

765: Suribachi are earthenware mortars that are glazed on the outside. The inside of the bowl has a ridged pattern to facilitate grinding.

774 The Kamo Clan is from Northwestern Kyoto and traces its roots to the Yayoi period (300 BC to 300 AD).

774: A furoshiki is a square of cotton or silk cloth used for carrying obento boxes (square lacquered boxes that stack upon each other used for lunch boxes).

775: Yoshino is a town near Nara famous for cherry trees; it is also the name for the cherry tree from the town.

777: Natto is a food made of fermented or corrupted soya beans. The beans become brown with a viscous white coating of slime and have a slight musky aroma. It is a common staple eaten with rice at breakfast.

779: the last line is the rope of the well-bucket.

781: Naniwa is the ancient or classical name for Osaka.

789: This poem refers to a legend of an old woman throwing away paper clothes.

790: Ukiyoe is a type of art which translates as fleeting or floating world and refers to the transitory nature of life. Usually the subjects were prostitutes, geisha and kabuki actors as this lifestyle was thought of being separated from the responsibilities of the everyday. Usually these were woodblock prints and were becoming very popular around Buson's lifetime and they were able to be mass produced, and therefore affordable.

792: Hasedera is a temple of the Jodo sect, famous for its statue of Kannon Buddha.

793: Kaomise is for a couple in an arranged marriage to meet for the first time.

796: Soga Jasoku was a painter of the Soga school who lived around 1424.

805: Ekisui, one of the three major rivers in China, is also the first word in the title of an anonymous novel, Ekisui Rembeiroku, about Yoshinaka (whose name can also be pronounced Yoshihisa) Kira. The novel is about one of the most famous historical samurai vendettas known as The Forty Seven Ronin. During a visit of the emperor to Edo Castle Kira's student Asano Naganori pulled his sword and tried to kill Kira. When this failed Asano was ordered to commit seppuku. Later Asano's 47 retainers break into Kira's residence and killed him. In most novels Kira is the villain and Asano is the hero.

812: an ono can either be translated as an axe or a hatchet.

813: Hachitadaki refers to a begging priest who goes about beating an iron bowl.

815: Ki no hashi refers to a worthless person, the second line of this poem is parallel to the opening. A stricter translation would read:

A worthless person
and a worthless monk
begging by beating his bowl

818: Sainen was a popular name given to a low ranking priest.

819: Ohotaki is a festival where bonfires are lit at shrines in Kyoto during the 11th lunar month.

821: This poem is referring to a proverb: If you wear tabi socks while sleeping you cannot be with your parents when they die. A tabi sock is like a mitten with one sleeve for the big, or parent, toe and the other sleeve for the smaller, or child, toes. The tabi is divided to wear with the traditional wooden sandal, the getta.

822: a katana is the samurai sword. In this poem the speaker is shackled inside the house, I've added the word outside for clarification.

826: Kankudori is a set haiku phrase which means birds suffering in the cold. There is also a pun here on kankodori, an alternate for hototogisu which means cuckoo.

828: Kami busuma is a paper sack stuffed with straw and used as a futon.

831: The ringing of the pots is referring back to begging by beating the iron bowl. The idea within the poem then is that the narrator is detestable for not answering his neighbor's begging for food.

850: Kami no machi, which translates as the Emperor's City, is a name for Kyoto. However, it can also refer to Chogen — a famous red-light area in Kyoto's Chogon district.

853: The Five Virtues are part of Confucian philosophy and are: Ren—charity and humanity; Yi—honesty and uprightness; Zhi—knowledge; Xin—faithfulness and integrity; and Li—correct behavior. Kusurigui means eating meat for winter nourishment or eating meat for medical reasons. Part of Li, correct behavior, would be eating the correct foods.

857: Tanukine is to pretend or feign sleep, however a tanuki is a type of raccoon, so the idea here is similar to playing possum.

861: Shiwazu is the 12th lunar month, either January or February in the Edo calendar. Also Rashomon Gate, built in 786, was the grand gate for southern Kyoto. It was 106 feet wide by 26 feet high, with a 75-foot stone wall and topped by a ridge-pole. By the 12th century it had fallen into disrepair and had become an unsavory place, with a reputation as a hideout for thieves.

People would abandon corpses and unwanted babies at the gate. Nothing of the gate remains today.

864: Seta is a small town in Shiga Prefecture. It was also customary in Japan for loans to come due on new year's day. So the Kanebikyaku, or money courier (what I've translated as bill collector) is making the rounds for everybody to pay their debt.

868: The introduction to the poem is referring to a haiku by Matsuo Basho.

Education

Ph.D. English-Creative Writing Ph.D. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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Areas of Study: Literature of Travel and Isolation

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Presentations

- Presentation titled "Navigating 18th Century Haiku" Translations-A Cross-Cultural Exchange Through Poetry: An International Festival and Conference, Bates College, Maine, 2011
- Presentation titled "Over the Snickering Cat Sills" Consequentiality: Global Political and Social Order Expanding Human Consciousness Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, 2006
- Presentation titled "The Poets of Milwaukee"-A one hour TV documentary on me as a Milwaukee poet, sponsored by The Shepherd and Milwaukee Area Technical College and aired on the Milwaukee Cable Access Channel, 1987

Awards

- The Association of Writers and Writing Programs Award Selection for the poem "Purpose (Matsuyama Japan)." AWP, 2011
- War Poetry Contest Honorable Mention for the poem "The Patriotic Farmer." Winning Writers Inc., 2008
- War Poetry Contest Third Place for the poem "The Sacrifice." Winning Writers Inc., 2005
- First Place Hachimori Photo Contest (Hachimori, Akita, Japan) for the photograph titled "Shrine and Seagulls," 1991
- The Cole Younger Poet's Award for the poem "Oliver Wendell Holmes' Singing Barn." University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1989
- The American Poet's Award for the poem "Joe Mathius." The Academy of American Poets, 1989

Translations

- Yosa Buson: Five Haiku in Ken *Again, 2010
- Yosa Buson: "In Temple Lodgings and "Fox-fire" in Cicada, 1994
- Charles Baudelaire: "The Moon's Sadness" in The Shepherd, 1986
- Raymond Queneau: "The Pig" and "The Mollusk" in Jazz Street, 1985

Poetry, Fiction and Academic Publications

- "The Cherry Blossom" in Poetry Everywhere, 2010-poetry
- "Omega," "The Patriotic Farmer" Award Winning Writers, 2008-poetry
- "Leavings of the Previously Departed," "Guilt" Ken* Again, 2007-poetry
- "Why Mr. Nice is Always So" Poetry Express, 2007-poetry
- "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" Studies in Language and Literature, 2006-essay
- "The Parental Argument," "The Broken Ones," "There is something Desperate about a Warm November Day" Quill and Ink, 2006-poetry
- "The Rats of Hell" Omega 6, 2006-poetry
- "our little lives float on the winds of Improbability" Dispatch, 2006-poetry
- "The Theater is Closed" English Journal Matsuyama University, 2006-poetry
- "Ancestral Pleasures," "The Green Day," "Weeds," "Possibilities of the Infinite" Ken* Again, 2005-poetry
- "Hollywood Delight," "The Stampede" Dispatch, 2005-poetry
- "In the mornings of despair" In Our Own Words Vol.6 Anthology, 2005-poetry
- Blake's 'London' Studies in Language and Literature, 2004-essay
- "Drifting through Eternity" Facets, 2004-poetry
- "Peeling off Years" Anon, 2003-poetry
- "Blame," "Oliver Wendell Holmes' Singing Barn" Ken*Again, 2003-poetry
- "America," "mornings of despair," "Ennui," "President Chimp," "Non-stop Vomit" Omega, 2003-poetry
- "Portrait of a Somali Woman," "Cerunnus's May Dance," "Blackholes," and "I've come to say Good-bye" Moongate, 2002-poetry
- "Post Meditations Three and Five" The Free Verse Journal, 2001-poetry
- "Murasaki's Maid" Proze-Ax, 2000-poetry
- "Impaled" and "In unsuspected silver rooms 3" Underworld, 2000-poetry
- "Cat Paws" and "The Epic" Ken*Again, 2000-poetry
- "Expectations" The Adirondack Review, 2000-poetry
- "Tedium" and "The eater of dreams" Widethinker.com, 2000-poetry
- "Scenes of Bangkok" Asian Trails, 2000-travel article

- "In the gutter" The Fairfield Review, 2000-poetry
- "Matsue" Asian Trails, 1999-travel article
- "The Book of Samuel, Book 4" Zimmer-zine, 1999-poetry
- "Post Meditation 6" The American Vendatist, 1999-poetry
- "Frank Temptation" Eternity, 1999-fiction

Editorial Work

Shumei America, Pasadena, CA

- Helped edit forthcoming translation of Mokichi Okada's philosophy titled: The Essential Teachings of Meishusama
- Helped edit forthcoming translation of the Miho Institute of Aesthetics brochure describing its April 2012 opening, the philosophy the school is based on, school policies, and addresses from the institute's president and principal
- Reader/Grammar Editor for Dr. Nnamdi Elleh's manuscript "The Role of Traditional Architecture in Contemporary Buildings: Readings from Africa and Asia," 1994
- Grammar Editor for Dr. Nnamdi Elleh's book "African Architecture: Revolution and Transformation" published by McGraw Hill, 1996