

Taguchi, Kazumi (2019) Inside Sōseki's Spiritual Land: Sōseki's Kanshi and Chinese Thought. PhD thesis. SOAS University of London. <http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/32308>

Copyright © and Moral Rights for this thesis are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners.

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder/s.

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

When referring to this thesis, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given e.g. AUTHOR (year of submission) "Full thesis title", name of the School or Department, PhD Thesis, pagination.

**INSIDE SŌSEKI'S SPIRITUAL LAND:
SŌSEKI'S KANSHI AND CHINESE
THOUGHT**

Kazumi Taguchi

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2019

Department of Religions and Philosophies
SOAS, University of London

Abstract

Kinnosuke Natsume, who went under the pen name of *Sōseki Natsume*, was born in 1867, the moment in which Japan was transforming from the feudal Edo to the modern Meiji period.

Throughout his life he retained a fondness for Edo culture since it reminded him of Japan before modernisation.

Although educated in Chinese classics and acquiring an early love of *Nanga* painting he specialised in English literature and taught the subject at a number of universities.

During his student days Sōseki met his best friend Shiki Masaoka, a haiku poet, who later became a founder of the literary journal *Hototogisu*. Shiki inspired Sōseki to begin composing Chinese poems.

Whilst living in London at the behest of the Japanese government, Sōseki suffered from a nervous breakdown and received the news that Shiki had died of TB. At this point Sōseki stopped composing Chinese poems and did not begin again until he became seriously ill in 1911.

From 1911 to his death in 1916, Sōseki, whenever recovering from his worsening illness composed Chinese poems. He took the process of writing poetry as a form of meditation which helped him cope with his failing health, the pressures he faced and his increasing concern at the direction in which Japan was moving.

This study will assess the influence of Chinese thought and literature upon Sōseki in a chronological order by examining his poems in five separate stages: student days; teaching period; serious illness; *Nanga* painting phase and the writing of '*Lightness and Darkness*' (*Mei-An*) his last novel.

This analysis of his Chinese poems aims to provide understanding of and insight into his belief, *Sokuten Kyoshi* (Merging with Heaven by abandoning self), the thought he reached at the end of his life and which he sadly didn't have time to explain in detail.

Contents

Introduction	6
One	
Student Period	64
Two	
Matsuyama and Kumamoto Period	128
Three	
Serious Illness at Shuzen-ji Period	193
Four	
Nanga Period	236
Five	
<i>Mei-An</i> Period	293
Conclusion	385
Bibliography	393

Introduction

Natsume Kin'nosuke (夏目金之助 1867-1916) who wrote under the pen name of Natsume Sōseki (夏目漱石) is well known as a writer, who created some of the most original, challenging, varied and lasting novels in the Japanese language. He holds a special place in the history of Japanese literature. His novels are, however, only one element of his life's work. His creative output included talks, many articles in newspapers and periodicals, letters, a diary and a large body of poetic compositions. His favoured form of poetry was the *haiku* (a short Japanese poem with seventeen syllables and three verses) and *kanshi* (Chinese poetry).

Sōseki's *kanshi* are considered by many to be among the finest of their kind, expressing elegance, simplicity, humanity, a deep connection with nature, powerful moving imagery and a deep and living connection to the great classic Chinese poets.

This study gives an inter-textual and inter-cultural analysis of Sōseki's thought and spirituality through his *kanshi* compositions using *kanshi* in Chinese, Japanese and translations in English (by the author of this study). This study will look at the notion of loneliness and how it changes through the course of his life, finally ending up as a profound spiritual loneliness, by examination of Sōseki's *kanshi*, and looking at his life, using various religious texts, Chinese poems from the past, Sōseki's diary and letters, essays and speeches and the comments and annotations of scholars on his *kanshi*: all of which

provide an understanding to his final thought *sokuten kyoshi*, (則天去私, Merging with the heavens, abandoning self). This study aims to give a different approach to the interpretation of *sokuten kyoshi* using Sōseki's *kanshi* as a core source for the analysis of Sōseki's final thought.

There has been no major study in English which has concentrated in depth on the Chinese spiritual and literary basis to Sōseki's *kanshi* and of the corresponding spiritual evolution within the poems.

This study intends to reveal the importance of Chinese thought to Sōseki which was of fundamental importance in the development and composition of his *kanshi*.

It has been more than one hundred years since Sōseki's death on 9 December 1916. It is true to say that his thought and the literature he left behind are immortal, as Sōseki's ideas and works are still as fresh and meaningful today as they have ever been.

His stoical attitude was derived from the feudal tradition of Edo mixed with modern intellectual ideas.

At the same time Sōseki was sandwiched between two opposing cultures: feudal Japan and modern Japan. He talked about the concept of self, introduced by modern civilisation, and questioned its impact on Japanese society and the life of its people. Sōseki grew up in a time of rapid change and turbulence in which Japanese society was totally transformed. His birth coincides with the establishment of the Meiji period and it is worth taking a brief look at this era in order to understand the times he was living in and their profound effect on his life and works.

MEIJI HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the death of Emperor Kōmei in 1867, who was anti-foreign and had established a relationship of considerable trust with the Shōgun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, the Emperor's son, the future Meiji Emperor, who was only a teenager, came to the throne. This shift of power set the Meiji Restoration in action and signalled an opportunity for a change in direction in which Japan responded to the outside world with the philosophy of *bunmei kaika* (文明開化) 'Civilisation and enlightenment', the 'Civilisation' referred to was of course, Western civilisation. Jansen explained, "With the succession of the boy Mutsuhito, the future Meiji emperor, court nobles had a new field for political maneuver".¹ In November 1867, Shogun Yoshinobu returned the administration of governing Japan to the court. In January 1868, the Tokugawa Shogunate was abolished² and in April 1868, the Meiji era began to operate with a newly formed government.³

The whole structure of society changed from the certainties of feudal Tokugawa to a new emperor society based on military strength with a strong nationalist flavour. It was a tumultuous time, the end of an era of certainty and stability for an era of change and modernisation. The elements of capitalism, materialistic values and practicality replaced the old values that had a more spiritual and local

¹ Jansen, Marius B. "The Meiji Restoration" in *The Emergence of Meiji Japan*. Marius B. Jansen, Edit. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, p. 189.

² Walthall, Ann & Steele, M. William. *Politics and Society in Japan's Meiji Restoration – A Brief History with Documents*. The Bedford Series in History and Culture, Macmillan Learning Humanities, Bedford/ St. Martin's, Boston, 2017, p. 127-129.

³ Ibid, p. 142-144.

community basis.

Let us see why Japan transformed itself from a feudal country to a modern nation. The reasons for this transformation go back to events before the establishment of the Meiji era, according to the records, "On July 8, 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States Navy, commanding a squadron of two steamers and two sailing vessels, sailed into Tōkyō harbor aboard the frigate *Susquehanna*. Perry, on behalf of the U.S. government, forced Japan to enter into trade with the United States and demanded a treaty permitting trade and the opening of Japanese ports to U.S. merchant ships. This was the era when all Western powers were seeking to open new markets for their manufactured goods abroad, as well as new countries to supply raw materials for industry. It was clear that Commodore Perry could impose his demands by force. The Japanese had no navy with which to defend themselves, and thus they had to agree to the demands."⁴

We can see that this was a part of the strategy of the New Imperialists in search of raw materials and markets in Asia and Africa. The request to open up Japan for trade was made by the U.S. Government to the Japanese Emperor when the Tokugawa Shogunate was governing Japan. There is a record of three letters addressed to the Emperor of Japan from the U.S. President Millard Fillmore and the U.S. Navy Commodore C. Perry written between 1852-1853, dated November 13, 1852; July 7, 1853; July

⁴ Asia for Educators. *Commodore Perry and Japan (1853-1854)*. Columbia University, New York, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/japan_1750_perry.htm

14, 1853.⁵ The third letter is almost threatening in nature. On 31 March 1854, the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed between the Japanese Emperor and the U.S. President in which Japan agreed to open the port of Shimoda in Izu Peninsula and Hakodate in Hokkaido.⁶

Western intervention destabilised the foundations upon which the Tokugawa government was based and led to a radical transformation of society. One major change that took place once the Meiji government was established was the separation of Shinto and Buddhism in 1868 (*Shinbutsu Bunrirei*), and the restoration of Shinto (*Fukko Shinto*) as a state religion. It is known as The Separation Edict. Suzuki explains, “Kokugaku sympathisers and Shinto priests, who interpreted this edict as the ‘destruction of Buddhism’ started to demolish Buddhist buildings, statues, arts, and texts. They also eliminated Buddhist elements and influence from Shinto shrines where Buddhist -Shinto syncretism (*hongi suijaku*) had often been found.”⁷ Suzuki explains the edict further, “The idea of *fukko Shinto* not only added fuel to the anti-Buddhist movement, it became the ideology of the Meiji government to legitimate its new political power. The Separation Edict was, therefore, an inevitable consequence.”⁸

⁵ Asia for Educators. *The three letters that President Fillmore and Commodore Perry wrote to the Japanese Emperor*. http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/japan/fillmore_perry_letters.pdf

⁶ The Avalon Project. *Japanese-American Diplomacy, Treaty of Kanagawa; March, 31 1854*. Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/japan002.asp
Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. vol. 6., Miller, Hunter ed. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942.

⁷ Suzuki, Satona. *Japanese Buddhist Missionary Activities in Korea, 1877-1910*. Ph.D thesis, SOAS, University of London, London, 2000, p. 47.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

The changes introduced by the new government were not only religious and political. They affected the whole of Japanese society. The samurai class lost its privileged status, their elite became part of the new aristocracy, but the majority became commoners. Japanese could choose any occupation and there was no restriction on travel. The Meiji leaders promoted the adoption of Western dress, customs and culture. The central and local governments were modelled in Western style and the education system was established referring to the Western school system.

Although still primarily an agricultural society, industrialisation, initially subsidised by the government took place on a massive scale.⁹

Foreign experts and technology were imported. An industrial infrastructure was put in place, there were less than 200 miles of railway tracks in the mid-1880s, by the turn of the century nearly 4,000 miles of track had been built.¹⁰ Telegraphic installations were installed, a postal service set up. Silk production and the export of cotton goods increased dramatically, reducing the cost of expensive imports, as well as the beginning of an export industry in more refined items. After the Meiji restoration, huge family-based capitalist corporations (*zaibatsu*) such as Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo and Yasuda emerged, although Mitsui's origins went back to 1673 and the kimono trade and Sumitomo began by trading in copper in the early 17th century.

From the very beginning, the role of the military was of prime importance in the Meiji era. This was

⁹ Tipton, Elise K. *Modern Japan, A social and political history*. Routledge, London, 2002, p.53.

¹⁰ Francks, Penelope. *Japanese Economic Development*. Routledge, London, 1992, p. 57.

demonstrated by the proclamation in 1868 of *fukoku kyohei* (富国強兵, enrich country, strengthened army). The threat of domination and colonisation by the major Western powers and the perceived weakness of the Tokugawa administration led to an emphasis on military strength.¹¹

Tipton describes how important the armed forces were in the modernisation process, “They were the first areas of major structural change, the first to adopt Western organizational patterns and the first to hire foreign advisers. They became the largest-scale organizations in Japanese society and models of modernization for other areas, stimulating the development of other fields such as shipping, mining and munitions”¹²

At the beginning of the Meiji era, there was far more of a spirit of cultural and political experimentation. The political element was expressed by The Freedom and People's Rights Movement, started in 1874. One of leading figure of the movement was Itagaki Taisuke (板垣退助 1837-1919). The cultural side featured *kanshi* writers such as Mori Shunto (森春濤 1819-1889), Narushima Ryūhoku (成島柳北 1837-1884) and Ōnuma Chinzan (大沼沈山 1818-1891). However, by the end of the 1880s these movements were very much on the decline and the dehumanising and oligarchical nature of the Meiji regime was far more evident. Still, as Irokawa observes “A new generation that made use of this Chinese poetry attempted to convey its own life, class aspirations, and political passions through that verse and infused it with a new spirit. Poetry in classical Chinese

¹¹ Beasley, W.G. *The Meiji Restoration*. Stanford University Press. California, 1972, p. 2.

¹² Tipton, Elise K. *Modern Japan, A social and political history*. Routledge, London, 2002, p. 45.

was revived in these turbulent years; in turn it played a role in stimulating historical change. Had this not been so, Natsume Sōseki, Mori Ōgai and Hagiwara Sakutarō would probably not have considered Chinese verse to be the source of Japanese poetry, nor would they have gone on to preserve that tradition.”¹³

There were major overhauls of the village and town systems and many still suffered from appalling poverty. It’s interesting to note that the Health and Social Services Systems were still in their infancy: the amount spent on public health was less than half of that spent to purchase one warship.

There were, however advances in other areas such as the world of education especially after a system of compulsory education was introduced in 1871.

The two wars (Sino-Japanese 1894-1895, Russo-Japanese 1904-1905) that occurred during Meiji had a profound effect upon society, enflaming the militaristic and nationalist element even more.

The military advances which led to both expansion and an increased nationalist spirit pervaded society. The way of life had been turned on its head, from inward looking to outward looking with a determination to catch up with the West as fast as possible without due consideration of the consequences of such radical action on its people. Sōseki grew up as this radical transformation of society developed. He was well aware of its failings, the rapid industrialisation, the threat to individual freedom and the dangers of military expansion.

¹³ Irokawa, Daikichi. *The Culture of the Meiji Period*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1985, p. 150.

SŌSEKI'S VIEW ON BUNMEI KAIKA

Later in his life, Sōseki gave a talk titled *Gendai Nihon no Kaika* (現代日本の開花: *the Civilisation of Modern-day Japan*) at Wakayama in 1911. Sōseki concluded that civilisation was driven by two types of human action; obligation and leisure. Civilisation is an expression of human energy, and it has developed through organic processes. It was the innate nature of human beings to change and to improve their quality of life.

Sōseki states that “The civilisation of modern-day Japan” was borrowed from the west and developed almost overnight without understanding the meaning of it, compared with the way civilisation had occurred in the West with a gradual development over hundreds of years. The following are his own words about the shift of transition from Japan under Chinese Civilisation which had developed gradually since the 6th century and Japan taking the path of Western Civilisation. “...we were a country that had until then developed according to our own internal motivation. But then we suddenly lost our ability to be self-centred and were confronted by a situation in which we could not survive unless we began taking orders from the external force that was pushing us around at will. Nor was this by any means a temporary situation...not only have we been pushed and shoved along from that day to this, but unless we continue to be pushed along for years to come- perhaps forever- Japan will not be able to survive as Japan. What else can we call ourselves but externally motivated?...the civilisation of Japan today does not plod along at its own steady pace, but instead it leaps ahead from one

desperate round to the next...What kind of psychological impact does such an externally motivated civilisation have on us?...we must conclude that the process of the development of man's vital energies- that is, civilisation – progresses in waves, stringing one arc after another in a constantly advancing line...Because of external pressure, Japan has had to leap all at once from a barely attained complexity level of twenty to a level of thirty in the two great areas of energy conservation and energy consumption. The country is like a man who has been snatched up by a flying monster. The man clings desperately to the monster, afraid of being dropped, hardly aware of the course he is following.”¹⁵

What this comment reveals is that Sōseki is critical about a rapid Westernisation policy operated by the new government and doesn't necessarily believe the idea of following the civilisation of the West could lead to the civilisation of Japan, as in Sōseki's view, civilisation has to come from within. Sōseki also comments that “the civilisation of modern-day Japan” is a mechanical and not an organic process, therefore it causes frustration and anxiety within the society affecting people's psychological state. Sōseki explains, “the waves that govern Japan's present civilisation roll in on us from the West. We who ride these waves are Japanese, not Westerners, and so we feel out of place with each new surge, like uninvited guests. There is no question of our understanding the new wave, for we have not had time to appreciate the features of the old one that we have cast off so reluctantly. It is like sitting at a dinner table and having one dish after another set before us and then taken away so quickly that,

¹⁵ Rubin, Jay. Trans. “Civilization of Modern-Day Japan” in *Kokoro A Novel and Selected Essays*. Madison Books, Lanham- New York- London, 1992, p. 273-278.

far from getting a good taste of each one, we can't even enjoy a clear look at what is being served.

A nation, a people that incurs a civilization like this can only feel a sense of emptiness, of dissatisfaction and anxiety.”¹⁶ He went on to say “If the Westerners, whose mental and physical powers far surpass ours, took a hundred years to get where they are now, and we were able to reach that point in less than half that time (forgetting for the moment the difficulties they faced as pioneers), then we could certainly boast of an astounding intellectual accomplishment, but we would also succumb to an incurable nervous breakdown; we would fall by the wayside gasping for breath.”¹⁷

Sōseki warned time and time again in his writings and speeches of the negative impact of following Western Civilisation carelessly.

SŌSEKI'S LIFE

Sōseki was fostered just after he was born and then adopted, in 1868, when he was one year old. He finally returned to his own family at the age of nine. The reasons for his fostering and adoption were that his parents were embarrassed to have a child at such a late stage, as his father was aged fifty and his mother was forty-one when he was born.¹⁸

He was educated in Chinese Studies when he was young and entered the Nishōgakusha *Kangaku juku* (二松学舎漢学塾) in 1881 at the age of fifteen years old, where he learnt Classical Chinese. Sōseki

¹⁶ Rubin, Jay. Trans. “Civilization of Modern-Day Japan” in *Kokoro A Novel and Selected Essays*. Madison Books, Lanham- New York- London, 1992, p. 278-279.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 280-281.

¹⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū*. vol. 12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 587-590.

was already familiar with some Classical Chinese before he began his studies, since he started from the third grade.¹⁹ Sōseki was taught Wang Yang-Ming (王陽明 1472-1529), who was a Neo-Confucian literatus from Ming China, the founder of The School of Mind and well known for his belief in ‘the Unity of Knowledge and Action’ (知行合一).²⁰ Wang Yang-Ming is considered to have been influenced by the teachings of Daoism and Ch’an (Zen) Buddhism, when he was young.²¹

Sōseki in his youth wanted to pursue Chinese Studies, but he realised that Chinese Studies offered no guarantee of a secure occupation.

As a young man, Sōseki had to give up his interest in learning Chinese literature in order to survive in modern society. He took the path to become a specialist in Western Literature and began his studies in Western literature in 1888 at the Tokyo Imperial University. After graduating in 1893, he continued his studies as a post graduate at the same university. Whilst studying, he began to teach English at High School for teacher training. In 1895, he decided to leave Tokyo and became a full-time teacher and worked in several schools, first in Matsuyama, then in Kumamoto until his departure to London in 1900, where he was assigned by the government for research in English Literature. Sōseki stayed in London for two years, receiving private tuition on Modern English literature from an Irishman, Dr. W. J. Craig (1843-1906).²²

In 1888, Sōseki entered Tokyo University reading English and the following year met his most influential friend, Masaoka Shiki (正岡子規 1867-1902), who was a poet and a school-friend. They became close from then on until Shiki’s death in 1902.

After sharing University life with Sōseki, Masaoka Shiki left school in October 1892 and began to work

¹⁹ Sako, Junichirō. *Natsume Sōseki Ron*. Shinbi Sha, Tokyo, 1978, p. 111-114.

²⁰ Ching, Julia. *To Acquire Wisdom*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1976, p. 66-69.

²¹ Liu, Ts'un-yan. “Taoist Self-Cultivation in Ming Thought” in *Self and Society in Ming Thought* by Wm. Theodore de Bary. Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1970, p. 291-330.

²² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.26. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 272.

Yamauchi, Hisaaki. “Sōseki to Eibungaku” in *Kōza Natsume Sōseki*. vol.5, Ed. Miyoshi, Yukio. Hiraoka, Toshio. Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Etō, Jun. Yūhi Kaku, Tokyo, 1982, p. 2-7.

as a journalist in the newspaper *Nippon* (日本) in December of the same year. He also contributed to a literary journal called *Hototogisu* (ホトトギス) in 1897, and was one of the founding members of a poetic circle called *Negishi-tankakai* (根岸短歌会) in 1899.

Shiki's influence upon Sōseki is immense, since he encouraged Sōseki to write literary creative works.²³ Shiki is responsible for publishing Sōseki's first written work in *Hototogisu* entitled *The news from London* (倫敦消息)²⁴, which was a report by Sōseki's on life in London that he sent to Shiki.

Sōseki's early Chinese poems are mainly addressed to Shiki, as Shiki inspired Sōseki to compose poems and gave criticism that Sōseki trusted. Sōseki stops composing *kanshi* after losing his best friend, and it took another ten years for him to return back to composing Chinese poems in 1910.²⁵ During his stay in London, he develops the belief of 'On my own terms' (自己本位 *J. Jiko Honi*), that is to have faith in one's own opinion and ideas, rather than blindly following the prevailing views of society. This idea strengthens Sōseki's confidence in his work and life.²⁶ He later explains this in his speech, *My Individualism* (私の個人主義), a talk he gave at Gakushūin, Peers' School.²⁷ He teaches that one has to respect others' individuality if one wants to be an individual. One also has to take responsibility for one's actions if one wants to be an individual.²⁸

He visits Scotland in October 1902, before he leaves the UK, invited by Mr. John Henry Dickson (1838-1926), who had a deep interest in Japan.²⁹ Sōseki is moved by the nature and scenery of Scotland,

²³ Komiya, Toyotaka. Commentary in "Bokusetsu Roku" in *Sōseki no Shōgai*. Sōseki Bunko, Tōhoku University Digital library.

²⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.12 Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 3-31.

²⁵ Refer to the statistics in Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merukumāru Sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 9-10.

²⁶ Senkitaya, Kōichi, "Sōseki no Kojin Shugi" in *Kōza Natsume Sōseki*. vol.5, Ed. Miyoshi, Yukio. Hiraoka, Toshio. Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Etō, Jun. Yūhi Kaku, Tokyo, 1982, p. 272-275.

²⁷ Kōsaka, Masaaki, ed, *Japanese Thought in the Meiji Era*, Pan-Pacific Press, Tokyo, 1958, p.451.

Also, in Biddle, Ward William. "Authenticity of Natsume Soseki" in *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 28 No.4, Sophia University, Tokyo, Winter, 1973, p.395.

²⁸ Rubin, Jay; Natsume Sōseki "Watakushi no Kojinshugi". (Sōseki no Individualism) in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring, 1979), p.21-48.

²⁹ Hirakawa, Yoshihiro. "Kisha no Hashiranu Sekai" in *Kōza Natsume Sōseki*. vol.5, Ed. Miyoshi, Yukio. Hiraoka, Toshio. Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Etō, Jun. Yūhi Kaku, Tokyo, 1982, p. 296-308.

which gives him a strong impression of being in the story of the *Peach Blossom Spring* (桃花源記: *Taohuayuan ji*)³⁰, the Shangri-La depicted by the Chinese poet, Tao Yuanming (陶淵明 jp. Tō Enmei, 365-427). It was during this time that Sōseki was devastated by the news of the death of his close friend, Masaoka Shiki, who died on 19 September 1902.

On his return to Japan after a two year stay in London, in January 1903, Sōseki started to teach again at several universities. While teaching, he began to write his *Theory of Literature* (文学論), which he constructed from the notes that he had made during his research study in London. From 1905, he began creative writing, and encouraged by Takahama Kyoshi (高浜虚子 1874-1959) published his first story *I am a Cat* (我輩は猫である) in the literary magazine, *Hototogisu*. In the same year, Sōseki's pupils in literature started to gather at his house where literary meetings were held which by the following year were known as *Mokuyō-kai* (木曜会 Thursday meeting).³¹

In 1907, he finally leaves teaching and becomes employed by the *Asahi* Newspaper, writing articles and novels in a literary column. This was regarded as a sensational action; leaving a respectable position in academia in order to become a popular novelist.³² One of his pupils, Komiya, says that Sōseki popularised literary work for the general public.³³ Sōseki's reason for becoming a writer in the popular genre was to encourage people to carry on developing. In one of the letters Sōseki wrote to his disciples, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke and Kume Masao, dated 24 August, 1916, Sōseki advises them not to be impatient and run like a horse, but to be like an ox, and push and support not the writers, but the people from behind.³⁴

Sōseki, was determined to write popular novels for the general public which were serialised in the

³⁰ Tago, Kichirō. "Sōseki no Scotland Yuki" in *Natsume Sōseki to Meiji Nihon*, Bungei Shunjū Jūnigatsu Rinji Zōkan Gō, Tokyo, 2004, p. 58-61.

³¹ Sakamoto, Ikuo. *Kanshō Sōseki Goroku*. Ōfū sha, Tokyo, 1980, p.13.

³² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 60-63.

³³ Komiya, Toyotaka. *Sōseki Zakkī*. Koyama Shoten, Tokyo, 1935, p. 3-4.

³⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.24. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 561-562.

Asahi. He worked hard to support his family, while keeping his individual opinions and attitude and not following the social norms. During this period, he unfortunately develops the symptoms of a stomach ulcer. This illness gets worse and leads to his critical condition at Shuzenji in 1910, where he experiences thirty minutes of unconsciousness wavering between life and death.³⁵

During his recovery from illness, he received a lot of encouragement from all kinds of people, wishing him a quick recovery from his illness.³⁶ He spent a moment of quietness in Shuzenji where away from the harsh and competitive world he managed to find a tranquil state of mind. When he returned to Tokyo to be treated in a hospital, he started to write a series of essays, *Omoidasu kotonado* (思い出出すことなど)³⁷, the aim of which was to write down what he felt about life and human values. He revised some Chinese poems that he had composed during the recovery period at Shuzenji, and he also composed some new ones at the hospital in Tokyo. He placed these poems in his essays to express his inner feelings. Poetic sensitivity (風流 *J. fūryū*) is the only spiritual nourishment for him during his recovery period. “Chinese poems play an important role for him to assess the true values in his life at this period”³⁸, comments Wada.

After his recovery, he becomes busy with writing, giving lectures, and teaching his disciples, and he does not have much opportunity to have a tranquil moment in which to compose poems. However, he returns to *kanshi* whenever he does find time which is generally when he is too ill to work on producing novels. He also began to create paintings to accompany his poems. Eventually, in the final summer of his life he combined writing his final novel *Mei-An*, and the daily composition of *kanshi*, which becomes a regular afternoon routine for Sōseki in order to cleanse his thoughts and have a contrast from writing a popular novel.

Unexpectedly, Sōseki became critically ill and passed away before he was able to complete his novel,

³⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12 Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 395-400.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 414-415.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p 357-451.

³⁸ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merukumāru Sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 294.

Mei-An (明暗). He left his readers with a symbolic final poem expressing his mental state of being one with nature. According to Okazaki, the Chinese poems he composed during the final period of his life have a lot to offer, if one wants to fully understand Sōseki's thoughts.³⁹ Sōseki didn't have a chance to fully explain what *sokuten kyoshi* actually meant publicly when he was alive. His departure from the world was so sudden that even he didn't expect it. His final set of *kanshi* together with his essays and commentaries and comments from students are the only sources available in order to speculate and suggest the true nature of *sokuten kyoshi*.

Sōseki didn't compose *kanshi* for *kanshi's* sake. He composed them as part of a poetic and spiritual quest. In order to assess his spiritual development, it is necessary to examine Sōseki's *kanshi* chronologically to have a better understanding of his thought and the development of the notion of loneliness in different stages of his life which finally transforms into *sokuten kyoshi*.

This study uses the original *kanshi* poems and *kundoku* (Japanese reading of poem) from *Sōseki Zenshū* annotated by Ikkai Tomoyoshi, which covers all the *kanshi* Sōseki composed including those written before he was 20. *Sōseki Zenshū* has a very precise and efficient numerical order for all the *kanshi* which helps understand the historical and chronological relevance of the poems.

MEIJI KANGAKU & KANSHI

Chinese studies consisted of *Kanbun* (漢文 'Literary Sinitic') and *Kanshi* (漢詩 'Sinitic poetic') which were used by the Japanese elite class to operate the country and communicate in writing until sometime after the modernisation of Japan. Many specialist schools existed which taught students Chinese from an early age. However, after the introduction of a new education system in 1872 many

³⁹ Okazaki, Yoshie. *Sōseki to sokuten kyoshi*. Nihon Geijutsu Shichō, vol.1, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1943, p.416-420.

kangaku juku (漢学塾) and *terakoya* (寺子屋) which were places to learn Chinese were no longer part of the mainstream Japanese educational system and an increasing number of schools teaching Western studies were established .⁴⁰

Kaigo observed, “The Government Order of Education of 1872 envisioned a school system with a single line of organization, replacing the double line (for the warrior and the people) which characterized education of the Edo period. This change constitutes the most important characteristic of education since Meiji.”⁴¹

However, it was not so easy to change to a new educational system modelled on the Western style so quickly. It is said that “In this period, various attempts at fusing the educational legacies from the latter part of the Edo Period (1603-1867) and the new influences of Western civilization were energetically pushed throughout Japan in a process which was essentially that of repeated trial and error.”⁴²

Fukuzawa Yukichi (福沢諭吉 1835-1901) was one of the members of the Meiji Six Society (明六社 *Meirokeisha*), which was the first intellectual society in Japan formed in 1873 for the promotion of Western liberalism⁴³. The Meiji Six Society was so named because it was formed in the sixth year of

⁴⁰ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p.15.

⁴¹ Kaigo, Tokiomi. *Japanese Education- Its Past and Present*. Series on Japanese Life and Culture, Vol. XI, Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, Tokyo, 1965, p. 51.

⁴² Aso, Makoto & Amano, Ikuo. *Education and Japan's Modernization*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, 1972, p. 8. Also, refer to Passin, Herbert. *Society and Education in Japan*. Teachers College Press, Columbia University, USA, 1965, p. 81-86.

⁴³ Hane, Mikiso. “Early Meiji Liberalism. An Assessment” in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 24, No. 4., Sophia University, Tokyo, (1969), p. 353.

Meiji, 1873. Apart from Fukuzawa, it had members such as Mori Arinori (森有礼 1847-1889), Katō Hirohuki (加藤弘之 1836-1916), Nishi Amane (西周 1829-1897), Nakamura Masanao (中村正直 1832-1891) Tsuda Mamichi (津田真道 1829-1903), Nishimura Shigeki (西村茂樹 1829-1902), Mitsukuri Shūhei (箕作秋坪 1826-1886), Sugi Kōji (杉亨二 1828-1917) and Mitsukuri Rinshō (箕作麟祥 1846-1897).

Fukuzawa began to promote a new kind of modern education system following the western model and set up Keiō Gijuku in 1868 (now known as Keiō University founded in 1890) and he wrote of the importance of promoting Western Studies in 1872.⁴⁴ Sōseki was five years old in 1872 and this was the environment in which he grew up.

The Westernisation of the Japanese system meant ideas such as Herbert Spencer's 'natural rights' became popular amongst intellectuals and political activists. Howland explains, "It was Spencer's liberal defence of natural rights that initially interested Japanese readers in the 1870s... Spencer's works in translation provided two key pieces of argument critical to intellectuals and political activists in the 1870s and 80s in Japan."⁴⁵ The two key arguments were "The 'Enlightenment' model of progress", and "The 'Scientific' model of progress".

⁴⁴ Brownstein, Michael C. "From Kokuganu to Kokubungaku: Canon-Formation in The Meiji Period" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 47. No. 2, Harvard-Yenching Institute, Dec. 1987, p. 436.

Blacker, Carmen. *The Japanese Enlightenment: A study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi*. University of Cambridge Oriental Publication, 1964, p. 51.

⁴⁵ Howland, Douglas. *Society Reified: Herbert Spencer and Political Theory in Early Meiji Japan*. Society for Comparative Study of Society and History, 2000, p. 67.

Inspired by the ideas from “The ‘enlightenment’ model of progress”, Itagaki Taisuke (板垣退助 1837-1919) who was a leader of the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement established a political party named the Liberal Party in 1881 and became leader of the party. It was, however, dissolved in 1884 due to the clash between the people and the ruling class.⁴⁶

As a measure against the People’s Rights Movement, government scholars promoted “The rejection of natural rights” and “The idea that rights emanate from the State” using the idea of a ‘Scientific’ model of progress” based on ‘The survival of the fittest’.⁴⁷

After losing the Liberal party which was a pillar of the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement, members tried to continue their activities and one of the methods was to form a *kanshi* group and communicate with each other through the print media which featured *kanshi*.⁴⁸

In opposition to the increasing popularity of the Freedom and People’s Rights movement, the government realised the importance of keeping East Asian traditions in society and began to promote nationalist ideologies. Kaigo explains about the background to this as follows, “The schools of the Edo period had been reformed with the Western school as the model, but over against this movement there was a demand from the time of the Meiji Restoration that education also be reorganized on

⁴⁶ Irokawa, Daikichi. *Meiji Seishin Shi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 1995, p. 255.

Howland, Douglas. *Society Reified: Herbert Spencer and Political Theory in Early Meiji Japan*. Society for Comparative Study of Society and History, 2000, p. 69.

⁴⁷ Howland, Douglas. *Society Reified: Herbert Spencer and Political Theory in Early Meiji Japan*. Society for Comparative Study of Society and History, 2000, p. 76.

⁴⁸ Irokawa, Daikichi. *Meiji Seishin Shi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 1995, p. 256.

the basis of the Japanese educational tradition. This was made clear in the *Kyōgaku Taishi* (Principles of Education) of 1879 which claimed the support of the will of the Emperor. This text criticized the tendencies in education after the Restoration and stressed the importance of moral education.”⁴⁹

Kanō also notes that the Ministry of Education realised the importance of East Asian style moral education. In 1881 when Fukuoka Takachika (福岡孝弟 1835-1919) became education minister, nationalism was promoted further and in 1882, Kōtenkō Kenkyūsho (皇典講研究所) which was an institution for the study of national literature and the education of Shinto priests was set up by the Shintō office. Along with a re-evaluation of the East Asian tradition, Chinese studies regain popularity and in 1877 Wakan-Bungaku ka (和漢文学科 The Department of Japanese and Chinese literature) was set up at Tokyo University. In 1882, *Yōgaku Kōyō* (幼学綱要) was published by Motoda Nagazane (元田永孚 1818-1891) by means of an imperial command from the Meiji emperor. This book, with its many references to classical Chinese and Japanese literature, aimed to teach moral and social ethics to the young generation.⁵⁰

In contrast to the promotion of Western studies at places such as Keio Gijuku, in 1878 Mishima Chūshū (三島中州 1831-1919) set up Nishōgakusha in order to teach Chinese studies. From 1879 to 1881, the school had almost 300 pupils. By 1882, there were many privately managed *kangaku juku*

⁴⁹ Kaigo, Tokiomi. *Japanese Education- Its Past and Present*. Series on Japanese Life and Culture, Vol. XI, Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, Tokyo, 1965, p. 53.

⁵⁰ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 16.

(schools of Chinese learning) and Nishōgakusha, where Sōseki studied briefly between 1881 and 1882, was one of the most popular schools. However, by 1886, the popularity of Nishōgakusha had diminished due to the introduction of an education policy which imitated the European educational model.⁵¹

Again from 1885 to 1887, during Ito Hirobumi's government (伊藤博文 1841-1909), there was an extreme process of Europeanisation in the education system. The education system was reformed under the first Cultural Minister, Mori Arinori (森有礼 1847-1889), and it became compulsory to graduate from the Middle school in the modern system in order to become a government bureaucrat, this very much undermined the popularity of the *kangaku*. As a result, the demand for *kangaku juku* declined.⁵²

After winning the Sino-Japanese war (日清戦争 1894-1895), there was a need to reinforce the national identity of the country as a leader in Asia. The situation of Chinese studies after the Sino-Japanese war has been explained as, "The result was a dramatic pedagogical shift away from the Confucian classics and the devaluation of Japanese writing in *kanbun*, which had been the language of religion, government, and scholarship."⁵⁴ There was a movement to remove the study of *kanbun*

⁵¹ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p.17-18.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁴ Shirane, Haruo, and Tomi Suzuki. *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2001, p. 13-14. Featured in Footnote 15, Fraleigh, Matthew. *Plucking Chrysanthemums. Narushima Ryuhoku and Sinitic Literary Traditions in Modern Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2016, P. 5.

from the Middle school curriculum in the beginning of the twentieth century, although it was unsuccessful in eliminating it completely. “*Kanbun* was nevertheless reduced dramatically.”⁵⁵

In contrast to the decline of *kanbun*, the popularity of *kanshi* increased and poetic societies were formed in order to learn and appreciate *kanshi*. *Kanshi* were popularised amongst townsmen, former Samurai, monks and many others. *Kanshi* were also promoted in respectable newspapers many of which set up *kanshi* columns, so that people could publish, comment on and criticise compositions and exchange ideas.

Fraleigh points out that there is a tendency to consider *kanshi* as belonging to the past. However, he stresses the following point, “Yet it is important to bear in mind that there were also many *kanshi* poets active in Meiji who saw themselves as being on the very cutting edge of contemporary culture and literary expression.”⁵⁶

Meiji poetry functioned “As part of a process of social exchange among individuals and groups”⁵⁷.

Tuck argues that the poem as a tool for social exchange in the Meiji period increased dramatically due to the increasing availability of national newspapers, literary magazines and journals to the general public.⁵⁸ People could exchange poems even when they lived far away from each other. The

⁵⁵ Fraleigh, Matthew. *Plucking Chrysanthemums. Narushima Ryuhoku and Sinitic Literary Traditions in Modern Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2016, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Fraleigh, Matthew. *Plucking Chrysanthemums. Narushima Ryuhoku and Sinitic Literary Traditions in Modern Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2016, p. 10.

⁵⁷ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p.1.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.1.

print media in the Meiji period played an important role in the increase in popularity of *kanshi* nationwide.

Composing poems was not merely a scholarly pursuit, instead it became a widespread social activity. Fraleigh tells us, “They pursued it with sincere zeal in part because the act of writing Sinitic poetry enabled them to articulate themselves in reference to the shared cultural heritage that was the foundation of their education. Exchanging Sinitic poems with their peers offered opportunities for dialogue, but even in their own compositions they took part in multifarious forms of interaction with figures from the literary past (and present).”⁵⁹ We can see that *kanshi* became an important social tool for communication in the Meiji period, which grew along with the development of the printing industry.

The first phase of Meiji *kanshi* was from 1868 to around 1890. The major artists were such as Mori Shuntō (森春濤 1819-1889) and Narushima Ryūhoku (成島柳北 1837-1884) who attracted many *kanshi* enthusiasts in Tokyo. Mori published the literary journal, *Shinbunshi* (新文詩 July 1875-December 1883) in 1878 which mainly selected *kanshi* by established poets. Narushima published *Yanagibashi Shinshi* (柳橋新誌, *New chronicles of Yanagibashi*) in 1874 after traveling in Europe in 1872 to 1873, and in September 1874, became a chief editor of the newspaper *Chōya Shinbun* (朝野新聞) where he created a special section for *kanshi*. Narushima also published a literary journal,

⁵⁹ Fraleigh, Matthew. *Plucking Chrysanthemums. Narushima Ryuhoku and Sinitic Literary Traditions in Modern Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2016, p. 12.

Kagetsu Shinshi (花月新詩 January 1877- October 1884) which selected a wide range of poems from the general public.⁶⁰

Many poetry clubs were also formed during this first *Kanshi* period. Tuck explains, “Expanding beyond its previous main constituency of Confucian scholars, Buddhist monks and court nobles, other social groups such as townsmen, merchants and samurai all began to compose *kanshi* on a regular basis.

One immediate social phenomenon resulting from this was the rise of the *ginsha* 吟社 or *kanshi* society, a social group which anyone who could afford the tuition and material expenses could join in order to receive instruction in *kanshi* composition and socialise with well-known poets.”⁶¹

In the first phase of the Meiji *kanshi* period, there was a lot of enthusiasm for exchanging *Kanshi* compositions with Chinese artists. Tuck tells us that Shuntō and Ryūhoku had contacts and communicated with Qing poets such as Ye Songshi and Huang Zunxian by composing *kanshi* and they felt it was an honour to work with Chinese poets.⁶²

Tuck explains that the rhyme-matching composition method was used for “textual and cultural exchanges between Japanese and Chinese poets.”, and continues “The participants in these exchanges often did not share a common spoken language or were separated by physical distance...

As a practice dependent on direct textual linkage, interpersonal dialogue and shared knowledge of a

⁶⁰ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 23-24.

⁶¹ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 13.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 101-102.

specific canon of literary and cultural texts, rhyme-matching poetry enabled and encouraged dialogue in a way that other literary genres could not.”⁶³ We can see from Tuck’s comment that the rhyme-matching composition method enabled poets to communicate across textual, cultural and timeless contexts. The rhyme-matching composition method continued to be popular and was widely used in the second *kanshi* period. It would in fact become a fundamental element in the composition of Sōseki’s *kanshi*.

The second phase of Meiji *kanshi* was from around 1891 to around 1897, and the activity was led by Mori Kainan (森槐南 1863-1911) who was a son of Shuntō, Kokubu Seigai (国分青厓 1857-1944), Honda Shuchiku (本田種竹 1862-1907) and others. Mori worked at the *Tokyo Nichinichi shinbun* (東京日日新聞) and *Kokumin shinbun* (国民新聞) newspapers, and Kokubu and Honda worked at the *Nippon* newspaper (日本). Soseki’s best friend, Masaoka Shiki (正岡子規 1867-1902) also began to work at *Nippon* in December 1892. Shiki went to China in 1895 as a war correspondent for *Nippon* but returned back to Japan the same year due to illness.

Fraleigh informs us of a comment made by Shiki regarding *kanshi* which went as follows, “Even in 1896, the young critic and poet Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902) straightforwardly observed: ‘Comparing the development of *waka*, *haiku* and *kanshi* in the literary world today, *kanshi* are most advanced,

⁶³ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 42-44.

haiku second and *waka* third.”⁶⁴ Shiki composed *kanshi* throughout his life⁶⁵, although he is better known for his *haiku* compositions and his revolutionary reform of the *haiku* world.

Kanshi became popular even during the period of Westernisation. Ōmachi Keigetsu (大町桂月 1869-1925) made a comment about this phenomenon, “In the Meiji period, there was a flood of Western literature and philosophy. It is not particularly strange. A new type of novel became popular. This is not strange either. *Kanshi* which was believed to be a thing of the past and to have disappeared became popular against people’s expectations. On the contrary, people become good at composing *kanshi* during the Meiji period. It is the strangest thing that I have ever experienced... The Meiji 20s (1887-1896) is indeed the flourishing period for *kanshi*.”⁶⁶

The mid-Meiji period according to Ōmachi was a Golden period of *kanshi*. The introduction of mass circulation media such as newspapers was a key factor for the growth of *kanshi*. Tuck explains how newspapers played an important role in the political aspect during the second *kanshi* period. “One of the most important aspects was the exchange of verse on openly political topics, something that had a great deal to do with the increasing use of the newspaper as a space for poetic exchange. For its part, *kanshi* already had a long tradition of political engagement, and were usually featured in the

⁶⁴ Fraleigh, Matthew. *Plucking Chrysanthemums. Narushima Ryuhoku and Sinitic Literary Traditions in Modern Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2016, p. 10.

⁶⁵ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 21.

⁶⁶ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 54-55.
Iida, Rigyō. *Kanshi Nyūmon Inbiki Jiten*. Kashiwa Shobō, 1991, p. 22-24.

more highbrow newspapers, which also devoted a great deal of coverage to political issues. This is especially true of the newspaper *Nippon* 日本 ('Japan', published 1889-1906), which played host at one time or another to virtually all of the major figures involved in poetic 'reform' during the 1890s, including Shiki, Kokubu Seigai, and the *tanka* poets Amada Guan 天田愚庵 (1854-1904) and Ochiai Naobumi 落合直文 (1861-1903).⁶⁷

By the time of the second phase of Meiji *kanshi*, there was no communication with Chinese artists, and they concentrated on the development of the domestic *kanshi* movement. As well as rhyme-following as a means to communicate between poets, rhyme-matching poems with poets from the past gained popularity. Tuck explains, "Kainan and Seigai's columns rarely, if ever, featured contributions from non-Japanese poets. This second generation of Japanese *kanshi* poets preferred to engage and conduct rhyme-matching exchanges primarily with historical Chinese poets of the Tang and Song dynasties, the imagined representative of a historical glory preferable to the reality of more recent Chinese history."⁶⁸

Sōseki didn't belong to any of the *kanshi* societies nor did he have any contact with *kanshi* specialists apart from Shiki. His only brief encounter with a Tokyo *kanshi* specialist was the time when a few of Sōseki's poems were corrected by Honda Shuchiku during his stay in Kumamoto. Although Sōseki

⁶⁷ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 16.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

grew up in a social environment of reading Ryūhoku and Shuntō's new type of *kanshi* and learning to understand the rhyme-matching method, he kept well away from the professional *kanshi* community in Tokyo. Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions remain mostly private and a means of communication and gesture of male friendship with Shiki until Sōseki's departure to London in 1900.

For mainstream *kanshi* poets of the second-generation such as Kainan and Seigai, rhyme-matching was also an important method of participating in social exchanges via the print media.⁶⁹ *Kanshi* was a medium in which to maintain male-to-male friendships, rivalries, and the teacher-disciple relationship amongst educated males of the Meiji poetic circle.

Iida quoted a commentary made by Professor Kanda Kiichiro in *Meiji Kanshi Bunshū* that Meiji *kanshi* developed to the point that we have never seen in Japanese history. It was remarkable especially between 1887 to around 1904 to 1905. Iida says that the *kanshi* tradition which was nearly facing extinction revived as a new literary vision by filtering the wave of Western thought, politics and literature. This became a trigger for *kanshi* after 1887 to flourish to a point never seen before. In this sense, Sōseki and Ōgai made a great contribution by returning back to East Asian traditions.⁷⁰

The third *kanshi* period started sometime around 1897, and its popularity continued through to 1904-5, but after this period, the practice of *kanshi* composition began to decline in popularity. Soseki

⁶⁹ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 102.

⁷⁰ Iida, Rigyō. *Kanshi Nyūmon Inbiki Jiten*. Kashiwa Shobō, 1991, p. 24 & 28.

attempted to promote *kanshi* composition in his own way by inserting his poems in his series of essays, *Omoidasu Kotonado* published between 1910 to 1911 in the *Asahi*.

KANSHI AND KANGAKU ENVIRONMENT AROUND SŌSEKI

Although Sōseki composed a good number of fine *kanshi* he was never at any time in his life a member of a professional *kanshi* circle. Tuck makes the following comment, “as in exchanges between Shiki and Sōseki, or Shiki and his student friends, rhyme-matching and processes of mutual critique played a major role on a private level, in forming and cementing and expressing friendships among educated men”.⁷²

Tuck also says that Sōseki had a very little interest in publishing his *kanshi* compositions as he noted, “One of the more distinctive features of Sōseki’s *kanshi* practice as a whole is that he does not seem to have been interested in the social aspects of *kanshi* in the same way as many of his contemporaries. He did not associate with the ‘Professional’ *kanshi* poets or join any of the major *kanshi* groups, and although his extant *kanshi* have been well-received by later generations of critics, few of his verses circulated during his lifetime, for Sōseki seemingly had little interest in his work being published.”⁷³

Although Tuck considers that Sōseki had little interest in being involved with the Tokyo *kanshi* circle, he points out the fact that Sōseki asked Shiki to arrange for a *Kanshi* specialist to correct some *kanshi* a colleague at Kumamoto High School asked him to compose. Shiki responded by introducing him to Honda Shuchiku from the newspaper *Nippon*.

This study agrees that Sōseki’s *kanshi* practice was in general a private matter which took place amongst his friends or of him composing for himself for his spiritual development. However, we can’t

⁷² Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 102.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

say that he was not altogether uninterested in publishing his work of *kanshi* as later on he published a group of *kanshi* composed during and after his serious illness at Shuzen-ji in *Omoidasu kotonado* in the *Asahi* Newspaper. Prior to that period, two of Sōseki's poems during the Kumamoto days were published in the school's journal in the same year of their composition. In addition, Soseki inserted two *kanshi* compositions from his Kumamoto period in the novel *Kusamakura* (草枕) published in 1906. This study promotes the idea that Sōseki simply didn't have a chance to publish his *kanshi* compositions from his fourth and fifth period due to his sudden death.

Donald Keene, a specialist in Japanese literature has commented, "The best *kanshi* poet of the Meiji era was probably the celebrated novelist Natsume Sōseki: certainly no other *kanshi* of the time have been as carefully studied by modern critics as his. However, Sōseki published almost none of his *kanshi* during his lifetime and had no contact with 'professional' *kanshi* poets. His poems in Chinese are therefore treated in conjunction with his other works."⁷⁴

In other words, in many ways Sōseki's novels have been an obstacle for Sōseki's *kanshi* and have prevented them from being treated as independent and evaluated in their own right rather than being considered in relation to his novels.

Next we will look at the development of Chinese Studies in Sōseki's life.

EARLY ENCOUNTERS WITH KANSHI

Sōseki explains in his writing, 31 of *Garasu-Do no Naka* (硝子戸の中 *Inside the Glass door*) that when he was an elementary school student, he and a friend called Kī-chan were fond of Chinese Studies, and often discussed Chinese literature, although they did not fully understand the meaning.⁷⁵ Miura Kanō explains in his book, *Meiji Kanbun-gau Shi* (明治漢文学史) that we can

⁷⁴ Keene, Donald. *Down to The West. Japanese Literature of the Modern Era*. Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1984, p.53, footnote 40.

⁷⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.12, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 592-593.

assume from this that he was showing an interest in Chinese Studies as early as when he was an elementary school student. Miura also supports this idea by mentioning that Matsuoka Yuzuru, (漱石 人とその文学 *Sōseki hito to sono bungaku*) who was one of Sōseki's disciples and became Sōseki's son-in-law, came across a composition in Chinese written by Sōseki titled *Seisei Ron* (正成論)⁷⁶, in a fanzine magazine dated 17 February 1878, kept by Sōseki's classmate at the time, Shimazaki. (Sōseki's name is recorded as Shiohara Kin'nosuke, which is Sōseki's adopted family name, which he used until 1889)

Miura is impressed with the quality of Sōseki's writing and says that although it consists of only 300 words, it shows great skill in writing Chinese, and he concludes that this proves Sōseki's knowledge of Chinese was considerably high for a twelve year old child.⁷⁷

Another example Miura gives is taken from *Omoidasu kotonado* (思い出すことなど *Recollections*), which Sōseki wrote while he was being treated in hospital after a three-month period of recuperation in Shuzen-ji, from severe illness in 1910. The passage in *Omoidasu kotonado* relates how as a child he visited a library called *Seidō* (According to the footnote, it used to be a Confucian School, then turned into a library from 1871), and without fully comprehending it, copied out the text *Ken'en Juppitsu* (護園十筆) written by Ogyū Sorai (荻生徂徠 1666-1728).⁷⁸ Miura says this shows Sōseki's enthusiasm for learning Classical Chinese.

We can also refer to Sōseki's record of his travels, which was written in 1889 when he was twenty-three years old, titled *Bokusetsuroku* (木屑録), in which Sōseki begins his account with a sentence saying he read several thousand words of Tang and Song writing as a young child.⁷⁹ We do not know what exactly he read from these texts, however, it is clear that from a very early age Sōseki read a wide range of Chinese literature.

⁷⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.26, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p.3.

⁷⁷ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, 302-303.

⁷⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.12, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p.375.

⁷⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol. 18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 511-513.

TIME AT THE CHINESE ACADEMY (漢学塾 *KANGAKU JUKU*)

Sako Junichirō describes the period when the fifteen-year-old Sōseki took up Chinese Studies at the Chinese Academy (漢学塾 *kangaku juku*) called Nishōgakusha (二松学舎), in 1881 after quitting junior high school. Sako says that not enough studies have been done on the fact that Sōseki learnt *Yōmei gaku* (陽明学 The School of Mind, Ming Neo-Confucianism founded by Wang Yang-ming) at Nishōgakusha or its impact upon his thought, which may have helped form his concept of literature and inner values. Sako, who also studied at Nishōgakusha, says that the experience of learning the philosophy of Wang Yang-ming had a great impact upon his spiritual life. Sako feels that Sōseki might have been strongly influenced as well.⁸⁰

Sako shows the chart of the curriculum at Nishōgakusha and explains that there are three grades from 1 to 3 (3 being the starting grade), and each grade is sub-sectioned into three again. Sako says that according to the records that remain, Sōseki obtained a certificate in the first section of the Third grade in July 1881 and the third section of the Second grade in November of the same year. Texts such as *Tōshi-sen* (唐詩選 C. *Tangshi xuan*), and *Kobun Shinpō* (古文真宝 C. *Gu-wen Zhen-bao*), were featured in the first section of the Third grade. The third section of the Second grade included *Mōshi* (孟子 Mencius), *Shiki* (史記 C. *Shi ji* The Historical Records), *Santai-shi* (三体詩 C. *San-ti-shi*), and *Rongo* (論語 Analects of Confucius). As for the Daoist classics, the Zhuangzi (莊子) was studied in the second and third section of the First grade, and the Laozi (老子) was categorised in the first section of the First grade together with texts such as *Shūeki* (周易 *The Book of Changes*).

Sako also says that Sōseki's knowledge of Chinese was considerably high, since he entered into the first section of the Third grade straight away, jumping two sections. Sako stresses that Sōseki's knowledge of Chinese literature was not only limited to the texts that he learnt in those two courses

⁸⁰ Sako, Junichirō. *Natsume Sōseki Ron*. Shinbi Sha, Tokyo, 1978, p. 111-118.

mentioned above. One reason to assume this, explains Sako, is that Sōseki mentions in an interview that his father and brothers (from the Natsume family) all loved Classical Chinese Studies, and Sōseki was influenced by them and naturally took up reading Chinese.⁸¹ These factors tell us that Sōseki by the age of fifteen, had a strong interest, considerable knowledge and the capability of reading, writing and a talent for composition in Chinese, as well as a strong enthusiasm for developing his skills in studying Classical Chinese.

Sako says that Sōseki was fascinated by Chinese literature and novels and, that he wanted to pursue those interests into a profession. However, Sōseki was advised by his brother, that literature was merely an accomplishment and not a profession. Sōseki recalls that was the reason that he gave up on the idea of becoming a professional writer, at the time when he was around fifteen or sixteen years of age.⁸² This decision took place when Sōseki was studying at the Chinese Academy. Sōseki, taking his brother's advice, changed his direction and entered the Seiritsu Gakusha (成立学舎) in 1883 in order to prepare for entry to university to acquire a skill which was adaptable to the modern world, which later turned out to be the study of English Literature.

The last but not least important factor to note here pointed out by Sako, is that Ikebe Sanzan (池辺三山 1864-1912)⁸³, who worked at the *Asahi* Newspaper (1896-1911), and who was an influential figure on Sōseki in changing his occupation and leaving his teaching posts at the universities to become a full-time writer working for the *Asahi*, attended the same Chinese Academy at the same time Sōseki was a pupil. Sōseki does not mention knowing Ikebe at the time of studying at the Chinese Academy, however, after Sōseki became a writer at *Asahi*, the friendship between him and Ikebe grew to be a very strong one, until Ikebe's death in 1912.⁸⁴

⁸¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 377.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merukumāru Sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 358.

⁸³ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol16., Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, See footnote of p. 491.

⁸⁴ Sako, Junichirō. *Natsume Sōseki Ron*. Shinbi Sha, Tokyo, 1978, p.118-122.

In fact, when Sōseki wrote about the books or writings which had an influence on his work, Sōseki chose pieces by Ikebe, which were published in the *Nippon* (日本) newspaper, under the pen name Tetsu Konron (鉄崑崙 C. Tie Kunlun). Ikebe wrote an article titled *Pari Tsūshin* (パリ通信) from Paris, where he was escorting the heir of the Hosokawa family, which was a powerful clan in present day Kumamoto during the feudal period. Sōseki comments that the writing by a person called Tetsu Konron (Sōseki finds out Tetsu Konron and Ikebe Sanzan are the same person after he begins to work for *Asahi*) was extremely interesting and became a big fan.⁸⁵ Sōseki's respect for Ikebe's writing continued, and Sōseki wrote a forward to the publication of Ikebe's book after his death which showed great respect and deep sorrow for the loss of Ikebe.⁸⁶

SHIKI'S INFLUENCE ON SŌSEKI

The person who had the most decisive influence on Sōseki was Masaoka Shiki (正岡子規, his real name was Tsunenori 常規 1867-1902), who was an important *haiku* and *waka* poet in Japanese literary history from the Meiji period, and a close friend of Sōseki. When Sōseki returned back to the world of composing *kanshi* in his university days after abandoning studying Chinese literature in his youth, Sōseki's *kanshi* were all addressed to Shiki. Shiki was the most influential figure in Sōseki's *kanshi* composition until Sōseki's departure to London.

One of Sōseki's pupils, Komiya Toyotaka says it was fate that brought Sōseki and Shiki together, thereby leading Sōseki in the direction of being a literary artist. According to him, Sōseki might have finished his life being a specialist in literature or an academic research fellow if he had not encountered Shiki.⁸⁷ After knowing each other for a year, Sōseki was greatly inspired by Shiki's talent

⁸⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 156-157.

⁸⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16., Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 498-503.

⁸⁷ Komiya, Toyotaka. 'Masaoka Shiki' in "Natsume Soseki" in *Shiki to Sōseki*. Wada Toshio. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 12.

in *kanshi*, and began to take up *kanshi* composition again which he had stopped doing for some time. He composed thirteen *kanshi* in 1890 in order to show to Shiki.⁸⁸ Shiki opened up Sōseki's talent in literature, especially in composing *kanshi*, which he felt had been inferior to his skills in Classical Chinese before he met Shiki.

During Sōseki's stay in Matsuyama as a teacher of English (April 1895-April 1896), Shiki who had gone to China as a war correspondent for the *Nippon* vomited blood and came back to his hometown of Matsuyama for a while in August in order to recover. Shiki didn't go back to his home, but instead stayed with Sōseki for about two months. He started to hold a *haiku* circle with friends at Sōseki's lodgings. Sōseki was naturally inspired and joined the gatherings, where he began to compose *haiku* energetically.

Shiki created the natural environment for Sōseki to compose both *kanshi* and *haiku*. The poet and literary critique, Ōmachi Keigetsu commemorating the death of Shiki wrote that Japanese people ought to remember that the Japanese nation had lost one of their most precious human treasures, Masaoka Shiki, who had contributed to the development of humanity in the knowledge and the art of Japan.⁸⁹ Devastated by losing his close friend who shared the same interest in the world of poetry, Sōseki ceased to compose *kanshi* for a long time.

SHIKI AND CHINESE STUDIES

In order to understand the development in Sōseki's *kanshi*, we need to discuss the influential figure of Shiki. Miura says that Shiki ought to be regarded as an important *kanshi* artist as well.⁹⁰ Iida Rigyō says that among the *kanshi* specialists in Japan, there is no-one who has given an accurate evaluation of the works of *kanshi* composed by Shiki.⁹¹ There is a talk published in the *haiku* journal, *Hototogisu*,

⁸⁸ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmalsha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 27.

⁸⁹ Ōmachi, Keigetsu. 'Shiki Iku' in "Shiki Zenshū, supplement vol.2" in *Kaidō no Hana*. Iida, Rigyō. 1991, p. 74.

⁹⁰ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 302.

⁹¹ Iida, Rigyō. *Kaidō no Hana*. Kashiwa Shobō, Tokyo, 1991, p. 18.

(vol.11 No. 12, 01/09/1908, M.41) in which Sōseki speaks about the memory of Shiki. In the talk, Sōseki discusses Shiki's talent in *kanshi* composition. Sōseki says that Shiki had much more experience and skill in composing *kanshi* than him. He says that he had more confidence in writing Chinese compositions than Shiki, however, regarding *kanshi* composition, Shiki was much more advanced.⁹² Shiki learnt Chinese Studies privately at first for a year at the age of seven in 1873, at the hand of his grandfather, Ōhara Kanzan (大原観山), who used to be a Confucian scholar working for the Matsuyama domain. Then, the following year, he began to go to his grandfather's Academy to join other students to learn *sodoku* (素読 reading out loud) and *Mōshi* (孟子 Mencius), as well as going to elementary school. In 1875, when he was nine, his grandfather passed away, so he went to Tsuchiya Kyūmei (土屋久明) to continue learning *sodoku*. Shiki also began to learn *kanshi* composition in 1878. He composed his first *kanshi* titled "Listening to a Cuckoo" (聞子規) in the same year, when he was twelve years old.⁹³ Shiki continues to compose *kanshi* for another eighteen years until 1896 when he was thirty years old. During this period, Shiki composed almost nine hundred *kanshi*.⁹⁴ This figure proves his immense love of the *kanshi* form.

Shiki himself recalls his enthusiasm for *kanshi* in *Fude Makase* (筆まかせ) published in 1889, where he says that his interest in *kanshi* led him to learn *waka* (a 31 syllable Japanese poem) composition from 1875, and *haiku* composition in 1887. He recalls that he was so in love with the world of poetry and novels that he felt he could not live without thinking of them even for a day, although he signed up to study philosophy.⁹⁵

SHIKI AND DAOIST THOUGHT

⁹² Sōseki *Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 274-278.

⁹³ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 276-277.

Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merukumāru Sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 356-357.

⁹⁴ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merukumāru Sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 192-193.

⁹⁵ Iida, Rigyō. *Kaidō no Hana*. Kashiwa Shobō, Tokyo, 1991, p. 15-16.

Shiki began to attend a school in Tokyo called Kyōritsu Gakkō (共立学校) in 1883 when he was seventeen years old, and attended a lecture on the Zhuangzi. He wrote about his feeling of encountering the teaching of the Zhuangzi, saying how pleased he was to come across a book so fascinating that no other book could compete against it (哲学の発足 The emergence of Philosophy). In May 1889, at the age of twenty-three, he vomits blood for the first time as a symptom of tuberculosis.

Miura assumes that Shiki devoted himself to the composition of poetry during this period. Miura also states that according to the record the Zhuangzi text was one of Shiki's favourite books during this period. All other books listed are books on poetry.⁹⁶ Shiki, after the first encounter with the Zhuangzi, was so fascinated that he was still reading the text six years later. Now, we will find out why Shiki was so fascinated by the Zhuangzi.

Shiki entered The Tokyo Imperial University in 1890, reading Philosophy. He wrote two essays in 1891, one on the Laozi, the other on the Zhuangzi as part of his course work. Shiki deliberately avoided writing on Confucianism since he disliked the compulsion of filial piety which was part of Confucian teaching. According to Miura's evaluation on Shiki's essays, they more or less feature the views made by literary figures rather than being a work of serious research.⁹⁷ However, it seems clear that Shiki has grasped the essence of Zhuangzi's teaching.

Shiki says that Zhuangzi is an agnostic and lists four points related to Zhuangzi's concepts. Firstly, The Way exists and that it has no beginning or no ending. Secondly, everything in existence in the cosmos keeps changing, coming and going endlessly. Thirdly, there is no answer to the cause of all existence in the cosmos. Fourthly, there is no definition between right or wrong, and between beauty and ugliness. Shiki emphasises the fact that the purpose of Zhuangzi's teaching on treating life and death

⁹⁶ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 278-279.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 278-279 & 298-301.

as equal is to lead people to release their fear and live life free from grief and distress. Shiki also says that the meaning of abandoning worldly attachments is to realise a peaceful society. Miura says that Shiki is concentrating on developing his knowledge in the field of poetry, rather than pursuing Chinese Studies academically.⁹⁸ As we shall see in Chapter five, all of these observations by Shiki on Zhuangzi would be reflected in Sōseki's *kanshi* at the final stage of his life.

INFLUENCES FROM SHIKI AND THE *HAIKAI* WORLD

Sōseki composed *haiku* and resumed writing *kanshi* thanks to the inspiration of Shiki. In *Omoidasu kotonado*, he expresses his admiration for *kanshi* and *haiku*.⁹⁹ He sought instruction from Shiki regarding the composition of poetry.¹⁰⁰ Sōseki was fascinated by the literati artist, Yosa Buson (1716-1783), who was a poet and painter of the *nanga* style (Southern Song style painting) from the Edo period. This is because Shiki was very fond of Yosa Buson and introduced Buson to the Meiji literary world as an important poet/painter.¹⁰¹ Morimoto says that when he examined Sōseki's *haiku*, he found that there is a remarkable resemblance between Soseki's *haiku* and Buson's.¹⁰² Also, Sōseki practiced painting by copying some of Buson's works.¹⁰³ We will be discussing this in more detail in Chapter four.

Yosa Buson highly respected Bashō and regarded him as his master.¹⁰⁴ Bashō is the great *haikai* master, whose innovative attitude and approach to the composition of poetry revolutionised and propelled the world of *haikai* into a pure art form.¹⁰⁵ Both of these haiku poets from the Edo period show a strong affinity with the Chinese poets from the past. They studied the works of Classical

⁹⁸ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 298-301.

⁹⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12 Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 369-373.

¹⁰⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 493-498.

¹⁰¹ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merukumāru sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 142-143.

¹⁰² Morimoto, Tetsurō. *Tsuki wa Higashi ni*. Shinchō sha, Tokyo, 1992, p. 108.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁴ Makoto, Ueda. *The Path of Flowering Thorn*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1966, p. 59.

¹⁰⁵ Qiu, Peipei. *Bashō and the Dao*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2005, p.63.

Chinese poems earnestly, in order to understand the essence of the poems.¹⁰⁶ The wellspring of the creative force behind the poems is Daoist thought, namely the teaching of Zhuangzi.

Zhuangzi played a significant role in the process of developing the concepts contained in Bashō's art, according to Peipei Qiu. Another scholar, Kanaya Osamu, supports the view that Zhuangzi's teachings were of prime importance to Bashō, although it is certain that Bashō was also drawn to the teachings of Zen Buddhism. Kanaya writes, "...with regard to Bashō's thought, consideration must be given to the influence of Zen. No less important, however, as may have been made clear above, is the great significance possessed by the thought of Zhuangzi. What must not be overlooked here is the fact that such a profound understanding of Zhuangzi truly seems to have been lacking in Japan before Bashō."¹⁰⁷

Qiu in her article confirms Bashō's interest in promoting the study of the Zhuangzi to his disciples, "Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694), the founder of the Shōmon School who gained posthumous popularity as Japan's greatest *haikai* poet, repeatedly instructed his followers to study the Zhuangzi. According to his disciples, Bashō's teaching on *haikai* 'encapsulated the quintessence of Zhuangzi's thought'".¹⁰⁸ We need to see how Sōseki's *Kanshi* were affected by the inter-textual approach taken by Bashō conveying and promoting the teaching of Zhuangzi in *haiku* composition, a tradition which carried on through to Buson and Shiki.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KANSHI AND HAIKU

In order to evaluate the crossover significance of *haiku* on Sōseki's *kanshi*, we need first of all, to refer

¹⁰⁶ Qiu, Peipei. *Bashō and the Dao*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2005, p. 71.

Makoto, Ueda. *The Path of Flowering Thorn*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1966, p.17.

¹⁰⁷ Kanaya, Osamu. "The Acceptance of Daoism in Japan, and Matsuo Bashō" in *École française d' Extrême-Orient*, Paris, 1997, p. 168.

¹⁰⁸ Qiu, Peipei. *Bashō and the Dao*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2005, p.2, also, for the quotation, see footnote 3, p. 164.

back to Shiki. Shiki was fond of Wang Wei (J.Ōi 王維, 692-761), who loved the unity of poems and painting. Wang Wei was strongly influenced by Tao Yuanming, who was known as a recluse poet, as mentioned earlier. Some of Shiki's *haiku* compositions refer to Tao's works.¹⁰⁹ In 1892 at the age of twenty-six, Shiki begins his life as a professional *haiku* poet employed by the newspaper, *Nippon* (日本 Japan).¹¹⁰ In the section called '*Hairon Haiwa*' (俳論俳話) in the *Nippon* in 1897, Shiki wrote an article titled "*Haiku to kanshi*" (俳句と漢詩 The relationship between *haiku* and *kanshi*). In the article, he tells the readers that there is a close relationship between *haiku* and *kanshi*, probably because *haiku* borrowed from *kanshi*'s powerful method of expression.¹¹¹ Shiki says that *haiku* artists such as Bashō and Buson adopted the aesthetic taste and many poetic words from *kanshi*. Shiki's advice for understanding *haiku* is that one should read *haiku* as one reads *kanshi*.

Shiki was fond of Yosa Buson, who was a *haiku* poet from the Edo period and was strongly influenced by Bashō and *kanshi*. Buson is also known as a *nanga* (南画 One of the schools of Landscape Painting originating from China) artist as we discussed before. Shiki had great admiration for Buson's compositions, since according to Shiki Buson incorporated aesthetic words and the flavour of *kanshi* into *haiku*. Shiki says one of the most significant aspects of Buson's work is how he created the rhythm of Classical Chinese by adopting Chinese words.¹¹² Shiki wrote *Haijin Buson* (俳人蕪村) in 1897, but already in 1895, had praised the collections of Buson's poems in *Haikai Taiyō* (俳諧大要). Wada explains that Shiki sympathised with Buson's vividly pictorial style, and this was reflected in Shiki's own compositional style.¹¹³ It is said that Shiki is responsible for bringing the name of Buson to the attention of the Meiji literary world, by claiming that Buson's work was as important as that of

¹⁰⁹ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 181-186.

Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 286-289.

¹¹⁰ Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 280-281.

¹¹¹ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 181.

Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 281-282.

Iida, Rigyō. *Kaidō no Hana*. Kashiwa Shobō, Tokyo, 1991, p.37.

¹¹² Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998, p. 284.

¹¹³ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 142 & 182.

Bashō's.

SOSEKI'S METHOD OF *KANSHI* COMPOSITION

After losing his *kanshi* teacher, Shiki, Sōseki was now composing poems for himself. Through his compositions, Sōseki shared his feelings with poets, monks, and thinkers from the past. In order to be able to do this, Sōseki used a compositional technique known as “rhyme-matching”.¹¹⁴ Tuck gives a good explanation of how this method works:

“One important point is that rhyme-matching was based upon direct textual and lexical links among a series of poems that did not need to be composed at the same space or time.” He explains further, “To respond to works by poets who had lived hundreds or thousands of years earlier, was also common practice. In perhaps the most famous instance, the Song 宋 (960-1276) poet Su Shi 蘇軾 (J. So Shoku, 1036-1101) expressed admiration for the Six Dynasties 六朝 (222-589) poet Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 by composing rhyme-matching responses to every one of the latter's collected poems. Likewise, Shiki's *kanshi* include rhyme-matching responses to Tang 唐 (618-907) poets such as Li Bai 李白 (701-762), who died over a thousand years before Shiki was born.”¹¹⁵

Wixted also explains the rhyme-matching method, “Matching-rhyme (次韻 *jiin*) poetry is poetry in Chinese or Sino-Japanese that uses the exact same rhyme words, in the exact same order, as those of an earlier poem.”¹¹⁶

We will see how Sōseki continued the practice of rhyme-matching in his *kanshi* compositions corresponding and connecting to poets from the past by using the rhyme-matching method. This

¹¹⁴ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 17.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹¹⁶ Wixted, John Timothy. “The Matching-Rhyme *Kanshi* of Mori Ōgai: Quatrains (*zekku*)” in *Japanica Hamboldtiana* 16. Berlin, 2013, p. 109.

concept was explained by Tuck, “Rhyme-matching poetry served as a central mechanism for generating poetic discourse; any given poem was never a closed, completed text, but always stood as an invitation to other poets to respond and create a new chain of socio-poetic dialogue, even though a century or a millennium might have passed since the original poem was written.”¹¹⁷ We will examine how Sōseki used the system of rhyme-matching to develop his spiritual perspective in the main discussion.

SCHOLARS' WORKS ON SOSEKI'S KANSHI

There have been many studies on Sōseki's *kanshi*. The first four annotations on Sōseki's *kanshi* which this study uses extensively are: Ikkai Tomoyoshi's annotations from *Sōseki Zenshū*¹¹⁸ which gives all the *kanshi* with some explanations on Chinese characters appearing in the poems as well as featuring *Bokuseisuroku*; Nakamura Hiroshi's annotations, which cover all the poems but do not give detailed information on the Chinese characters; Iida Rigyō's annotations, which begin with the poems from his university days but lack the poems Sōseki composed before his twenties. His study gives references to religious texts, but contains no detailed explanation; Yoshikawa Kōjirō's annotations are written as annotations to an earlier version of *Zenshū*, and also do not feature the earliest eight poems. Yoshikawa's explanations on characters are very brief, although sometime they are used as reference points by Ikkai in his annotations. Yoshikawa commented that Sōseki's *kanshi* could be considered an expression of philosophical thought. All four of these texts have *kanshi* in Chinese and *kundoku* (訓読 Japanese reading). This study uses these four books as a base.

¹¹⁷ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 8.

¹¹⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995.

Wada Toshio's *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*¹¹⁹ analyses his *haiku* and *kanshi*. In this book, Wada divides his analysis of Sōseki's *kanshi* into three sections. In the first section, Wada analyses Sōseki's *kanshi* and *haiku* and categorises them by themes such as flowers and colours. The second section is an artist by artist comparative study between Sōseki and other poets such as Buson, Ryōkan, Tao Yuanming and others who interested Sōseki. In this section, *kanshi* and *haiku* compositions by Sōseki are analysed by Wada. The third section is dedicated to *kanshi* and divided into four sections; the first: before the journey to the West; the second: Serious illness at Shuzenji; the third: the *Nanga* period; the fourth: the *Mei-An* period. In each period Wada selects some poems and gives his interpretation and some background and additional information. Wada's book gives an overall view on Sōseki's *kanshi* but it is difficult to grasp Sōseki's spiritual development in his interpretations, as it lacks his philosophical/religious perspective.

Wada wrote another book featuring some of Sōseki's *kanshi* called *Shiki to Sōseki*.¹²⁰ This book is dedicated to illustrating the friendship between Shiki and Sōseki. It gives a good understanding of the close relationship between the two talented artists who inspired each other from the moment they became friends in January 1889. It is written chronologically and covers major events in their lives, with the inclusion of *kanshi* in some places. It provides the real impression that Sōseki was strongly inspired by Shiki and vice versa. Wada included *kanshi* by both Shiki and Sōseki which demonstrate a strong bond between two males exchanging poems to develop and inspire each other in the Meiji period in Japan.

The third book written by Wada featuring some of Sōseki's *kanshi* is titled *Sōseki Zakkō*.¹²¹ This book has four chapters analysing Sōseki's *kanshi*; "*Sōseki to Li Ga* (漱石と李賀)", "*Sōseki to Rai Sanyō* (漱

¹¹⁹ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974.

¹²⁰ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki to Shiki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976.

¹²¹ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki Zakkō*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1986.

石と頼山陽), “*Sōseki no Kanshi ni miru To Ho teki Hassō* (漱石の漢詩に見る杜甫的発想)”, and “*Sōseki Shiku* ‘塔余紅 (*Ta Yu Hong*)’ *ni tsuite* (漱石詩句「塔余紅」について)”. Wada gives his opinions of how to interpret some lines on Sōseki’s *kanshi* which differ from other commentators such as Yoshikawa. It is useful and interesting to look at and compare the different interpretations. Other chapters are essays on his personal experiences and opinions related to Sōseki. It becomes very clear that since his youth Wada had a high regard for Sōseki’s *kanshi* .

One of Sōseki’s students who after his death would become his son-in-law, Matsuoka Yuzuru, published a chronological collection of Sōseki’s *kanshi*, (*Sōseki no Kanshi*) in 1946. Unfortunately, due to restrictions, this study can’t give an overall view of his book, apart from the introduction and some *Kanshi* from the Kumamoto period. However, the introduction gives the impression that Matsuoka knew Sōseki very well as a teacher, an artist and scholar. His writing shows that he cares about Sōseki’s work and he knew Sōseki’s *kanshi* inside out. Matsuoka was one of the students who was present at the ‘Thursday meetings’ when Sōseki gave a brief description of *sokuten kyoshi* to his students. Matsuoka says that Sōseki’s *kanshi* are in many ways the essence of his work and can be considered to be his spiritual hometown.¹²²

Sako Junichirō wrote *Natsume Sōseki Ron*¹²³ and dedicated two chapters of his book to Sōseki’s *kanshi*. Sako studied at Nishogakusha, the same school where Sōseki learnt Chinese studies for about a year when he was a teenager. He points out the importance of Ikebe Sanzan, who also went to Nishogakusha, in Sōseki’s life. Sako explains that Wang Yang-ming’s Neo-Confucian philosophy, ‘School of Mind’ which he learnt at Nishogakusha had a great impact upon his life. Sako’s view is that Sōseki’s final thought, *sokuten kyoshi* is inseparable from Wang Yang-ming’s teaching. Sako also discusses Sōseki’s views on death and pessimism. Sako uses discussions between Sōseki and his

¹²² Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki no Kanshi*. Jūjiya Shoten, Tokyo, 1946, p. 10.

¹²³ Sako, Junichirō. *Natsume Sōseki Ron*. Shinbi Sha, Tokyo, 1978.

students and letters Sōseki sent to Zen monks to explain his opinion on the meaning of *Ten* ‘the Heaven’ of *sokuten*. According to Sako, the Heaven that Sōseki refers to is ‘nature’. It is a good analysis of Sōseki’s *kanshi* from a different view point. Sako gives a good amount of discussion to Sōseki’s understanding of *Michi*, the Way. Unfortunately, there is not much analysis of the actual *kanshi*.

Katō Jirō’s *Sōseki to Kanshi*¹²⁴ has a thorough analysis of Sōseki’s selected poems categorised into different themes such as “Ruined Samurai-Sōseki and ‘Modern-times’”, “Dawn of the creation- Sōseki and ‘Sorrow’”, “Sōseki and Ryōkan”, “Sōseki and Tō Enmei” and so on. One characteristic of his analysis is that he refers to Sōseki’s novels when discussing his *kanshi*. Although it may well further the understanding of Sōseki’s novels by providing a different view point, it is not dedicated to his *kanshi* and for this reason makes examining the *Kanshi* in their own right difficult. Katō gives a good analysis on Sōseki’s religious and philosophical views in many places.

Katō jirō wrote another book on Sōseki, *Sōseki to Zen*.¹²⁵ Katō gives good textual analysis referring to texts such as *The Blue Cliff Record* and *Tōshisen* (Collection of poems from Tang period). He dedicates one chapter to *Zenrin Kushū*, which is a collection of Zen idioms. Katō’s analysis focusses more on an interpretation of Sōseki’s novels in relation to Zen philosophy, although he does give some analysis on *haiku* and *kanshi*. It is interesting to note that Katō dedicates one chapter to Maeda Togama (前田利鎌 1888-1931), who was the last person to join the ‘Thursday meeting’ as a young student. He was the youngest brother of Maeda Tsunako (前田卓子 1868-1938), who was a base model for the heroine in Sōseki’s novel, *Kusamakura* (草枕).

Tanaka Kunio analyses Sōseki’s *kanshi* from the *Mei-An* period in relation to *Mei-An* in Sōseki’s “*Mei-An*” *no Kanshi*.¹²⁶ Tanaka is convinced that there is a strong link and relationship between the novel,

¹²⁴ Katō, Jirō. *Sōseki to Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2004.

¹²⁵ Katō, Jirō. *Sōseki to Zen*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 1999.

¹²⁶ Tanaka, Kunio. *Sōseki “Mei-An” no Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2010.

Mei-An and Sōseki's *kanshi*. Tanaka tried to relate actions taken and words spoken by the protagonists to the contents of the *kanshi*. Although there might be some truth in this idea, and there could have been some overspill, it is clear that Sōseki composed his *kanshi* in order to clear his mind and get away from his daily obligation to write a popular novel.

Okazaki Yoshie's *Sōseki to sokuten kyoshi* is an interesting study of *sokuten kyoshi*. Most of the work is an analysis of *sokuten kyoshi* in relation to the novels but there is a chapter in which he discusses some of Sōseki's *kanshi*, "Sōseki's later *kanshi* and *haiku*"¹²⁷. Okazaki discusses the later period of Sōseki's *kanshi* and *haiku* in relation to his last novel *Mei-An*. Okazaki doesn't believe that Sōseki reached enlightenment in his last poem as he says that Sōseki hadn't reached a selfless state of mind. Okazaki says that Sōseki expressed the aesthetic element of *sokuten kyoshi* in his poetry and brush and ink painting. On the other hand, Sōseki explained how to attain *sokuten kyoshi* in the novel. This study gets the impression that Okazaki didn't have too high an opinion of Sōseki's *kanshi*. He commented that poetry, calligraphy, and painting were just hobbies for Sōseki. On the other hand, he does say that they were a pure way of life for Sōseki.

Watanabe Shōichi's book is titled *Sōseki to Kanshi*. One chapter of this book is dedicated to *kanshi*, "*Shirakumogō to Shikisō Sekai – Natsume Sōseki no Kanshiron*."¹²⁸ He presents some *kanshi* in full but most of the time, he discusses only a few lines. Some background is provided but there is not much analysis of the *kanshi* themselves. The chapter is more biographical in nature.

Kumasaka Atsuko contributed a chapter to "*Sōseki no Shika – Shirakumo no Ōkan*"¹²⁹ in *Sakuhinron Natsume Sōseki*. It is a short introduction to Sōseki's *kanshi* and *haiku*. Kumasaka explains Sōseki's development in poetry chronologically and it is a short but informative piece of writing. It doesn't

¹²⁷ Okazaki, Yoshie. *Sōseki to sokuten kyoshi*. Nihon Geijutsu Shichō, vol.1, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1943, p. 397-421.

¹²⁸ Watanabe, Shōichi. *Sōseki to Kanshi*. Eichōsha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 1-79.

¹²⁹ Kumasaka, Atsuko. "Sōseki no Shika" in *Natsume Sōseki*. Sōbun sha shuppan, Tokyo, 1976.p. 342-360.

give any references to religious texts, but it touches spiritual and philosophical thought. Due to the fact that it is a short essay, it can't go into much depth in its analysis of the *kanshi* .

Ōoka Shin wrote a short essay "*Sōseki ni Okeru Shika – Omo ni Kanshi no Sekai nitsuki*".¹³⁰ Ōoka gives a good explanation of Sōseki's lifelong philosophical and spiritual quest. He only analyses three *kanshi*, and there is no analysis of the words/characters. However, Ōoka gives a poetic perspective and it is very descriptive. Elsewhere Ōoka when commenting on Sōseki's *kanshi*, wrote that the quality of Sōseki's *kanshi* is such that they are a serious and deep piece of work and a long way from being a mere leisure activity. Sōseki, he says, expressed himself in a sincere and honest manner while he revealed his inner world. He also added that Sōseki applied modern poetry composition methods to his *kanshi*.¹³¹

Fujita Tomoaki wrote an article "*Sōseki Shi ni okeru Shū*".¹³² Fujita's main theme is sorrow and he explains his ideas by selecting a few lines from the *kanshi*. He also gives some background information to the lines in order to understand the situation. Although he points out the importance of 'white clouds', the focal point of discussion in his essay is the relationship between the image of birds and sorrow. There is very little explanation on religious or philosophical thought, although he does refer to the Chinese poet, Tao Yuanming. In this study's opinion it is a poetic examination of sorrow rather than a religious/philosophical analysis.

David Luan wrote an article "*Sōseki no Shoki Kanshi ni Okeru Chūgoku no Koten-shi no Eikyō ni tsuite – Hakone Ryokō no Rensaku wo Chūshin ni*".¹³³ This piece is a study on the inter-textual relationship between Chinese poems and Sōseki's early *kanshi* which were mainly composed during his trip to

¹³⁰ Ōoka, Shin. "*Sōseki ni Okeru Shika – Omoni Kanshi no Sekai nitsuki*" in *Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Sōsho, Natsume Sōseki II Nihon Bungaku KenkyūShiryō* Kankōkai Ed. Yūseido Shuppan, Tokyo, 1970. P. 225-231.

¹³¹ Ōoka, Shin. *Oriori no Uta* No. 4, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1983.

¹³² Fujita, Tomoaki. "*Sōseki Shi ni okeru Shū*" in *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Nishō-Gakusha University*. 2006, p. 215- 244.

¹³³ Luan, David. "*Sōseki no Shoki Kanshi ni Okeru chūgoku no Koten-shi no Eikyō ni tsuite- Hakone Ryokō no Rensaku wo Chūshin ni-*" in *Chiba University Shakai Bun'ka Kagaku Kenkyū* No. 4, p. 1- 23.

Hakone. Luan uses the rhyme-matching method to support his analysis. Luan illustrates how Sōseki and Shiki as beginners began to learn *kanshi* composition. Luan explains that one of the standard text books they used was *You Xue Shiyun* (幼学詩韻). Luan also says that Sōseki used some words from *Tang Shi Xuan* (唐詩選, Collection of Tang poems) and *San Ti Shi* (三体詩). He gives textual analysis in each line referring to the possible sources from the above-mentioned texts. It is a very easy way to understand how the rhyme-matching method works.

Noami Mariko's book, *Sōseki no Yomikata "Mei-An" to Kango* is part of a group research project, 'A Comprehensive Study of Publishing and Learning in the Early Edo Period' published by Cambridge University in December 2016.¹³⁴ Noami explores classic Chinese books mentioned in Sōseki's last novel *Mei-An*. Noami discusses a collection of poems compiled in the Ming dynasty and published in the Qing period called *Ming Shi Bie Cai* (明詩別裁) which is mentioned by one of the characters in *Mei-An*. Noami then goes on to write that many of the poems by the Ming poet, Gao Qingqiu (高青邱 1336-1374) were selected in *Ming Shi Bie Cai*. She says that Sōseki was fond of Gao's poetry. She goes on to give more detail about Gao's personal history as well. It is a fresh approach to an analysis of the Chinese Classics books mentioned in *Mei-An*, rather than an attempt to connect and find a relationship between the novel and *kanshi* of the final period.

Maria Flutsch translated and introduced *Recollections* (思い出すことなど *Omoidasu kotonado*).¹³⁵ It is a straightforward translation of Sōseki's *kanshi* in English and no original Chinese or Japanese *Yomikudashibun* are included. She includes the poems by Sōseki featured in *Omoidasu kotonado* but as it is a pure translation of this series of essays, there is very little analysis of the *kanshi* included in this book.

Angela Yiu dedicated one chapter to Sōseki's *kanshi*, "In Quest of an Ending: An Examination of

¹³⁴ Noami, Mariko. *Sōseki no Yomikata "Mei-An" to Kanseki*. Heibon sha, Tokyo, 2016.

¹³⁵ Flutsch, Maria. Trans. *Recollections*. Sōseki Museum in London, 1997.

Sōseki's *kanshi*" in her book, *Chaos and Order*.¹³⁶ Yiu describes Sōseki's *kanshi* as "a form of 'daily ritual' while continuing to write *Mei-An* in the morning."¹³⁷ Yiu's opinion of the final period of Sōseki's *kanshi* are "Not only do the seventy-some *kanshi* vary in language and content, but their quality also fluctuates greatly, resulting in some near perfect gems of balanced construction and some awkward accumulations of parallelisms."¹³⁸ Yiu explains her view of the meaning of *kanshi* for Sōseki as "A solid and comforting shelter for a tired spirit who has spoken out again and again about the injustice, hypocrisy, and preposterous nature of a society undergoing rapid change."¹³⁹ Yiu gives some of Sōseki's *kanshi* in English translations with comments. She also analyses *kanshi* in relation to Sōseki's novel. There are no Chinese original or Japanese *Yomikudashi* given. However, despite a certain lack of appreciation and understanding, it can be said to be a good introduction to Sōseki's *kanshi*.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CH'AN/ZEN BUDDHISM AND DAOISM

Many of Sōseki's *Kanshi* take references from Zen and Daoist texts. This study includes a short introduction to these religious/philosophical texts in order to give some background information before the discussion of Sōseki's *Kanshi* in the main chapters.

Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism

Buddhism came from India and was introduced to China as a foreign religion. The Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese by monks. One of them was Kumarajiva in the fifth century. Seng Chao (J: Sō

¹³⁶ Yiu, Angela. *Chaos and Order in the works of Natsume Soseki*. University of Hawaii's Press, Honolulu, 1998.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

Jō, 374-414), known as 'the monk Chao' was a Daoist at first, "he later turned to Mahayana Buddhism under the direction of the famous Kumarajiva (344-413) who came from Central Asia to China in 401 and who translated many of the Buddhist Sutras and theoretical works of Buddhism from Sanskrit to Chinese. The monk Chao is counted among the greatest of Kumarajiva's disciples. Chao, though he died at the age of 31, left a number of important works on Buddhist philosophy. His interpretation to a considerable extent, exercised a tremendous influence on the rise and development of Zen in China. He is rightly regarded as one of the predecessors of Zen Buddhism."¹⁴⁰

During the process of translating Buddhist texts into Chinese, Daoist terminology was used to translate Buddhist concepts. Lahiri explains, "Among the foreign missionaries who made the greatest contribution in translation were An Shih-kaio from Parthia, Dharmaraksha from Tukhara, Kumarajiva from Kucha." He continues "Taoism is ascetic and pantheistic. Buddhist philosophy is also regarded as a philosophy of asceticism which emphasises the withdrawal from the world. Here, we, in fact, find some similar ideas with Taoism and in the Taoist circle Buddhism made its headway. Buddhism entered into China as a foreign religion but soon found expression in Taoist mystic words 'The Chinese who became interested in the foreign religion were attracted by its novel formulae for attainment of supernatural power, immortality or Salvation and not by its idea. This early Buddhism (in China) was generally regarded as a sect of Taoism'[11]. The defenders and propagators had to find some

¹⁴⁰ Izutsu, Toshihiko. *Toward a Philosophy of Zen Buddhism*. Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, Teheran, 1977, p. 59, Footnote 11.

arguments to reconcile the Buddhist ideas with traditional Chinese thoughts. Thus Tao (The Way, The Truth, A Principle) was the expression used for Dharma or Bodhi, Ying-jen for Arhat, Wu-wei for Nirvana, Hsiao-hsurt (filial submission and obedience) for 'Siila.'"¹⁴¹

The school of meditation, Ch'an (Jp, Zen) Buddhism originated in the sixth century and its founder is a legendary monk, Bodhidharma (alive during the fifth and sixth centuries). The Ch'an school teaches the following; Intuition,¹⁴² intense concentration on individual enlightenment,¹⁴³ sense of Tao or Buddha-nature immanent in nature.¹⁴⁴ It also teaches that enlightenment comes in a single moment of sudden and total illumination.¹⁴⁵ The process of recovering Buddha's nature is through meditation and introspection bringing release from the illusion.¹⁴⁶

The subitist (sudden enlightenment) branch has a closer affinity with the native tradition of Daoism. For example, no trust in words or books; rich usage of metaphor and analogy; paradoxical expression; the belief in transmission of knowledge in direct experience, person-to-person, and wordless communication of mind to mind; the feeling of being a part of nature leading to enlightenment.

¹⁴¹ Lahiri, Latika. *Interpretation of Buddhist terminology at the background of Chinese traditional thoughts*. <https://www.budsas.org/ebud/ebdha180.htm>

Source: Buddhism Today. Also Footnote 11: Arthur F. Wright. *Buddhism in Chinese History*. p. 32-33.

¹⁴² Suzuki, Daisetsu. *Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki's Columbia University Seminar Lectures*. Ed. & Antn. By Soiku Shigematsu & Gishin Tokiwa, Matsugaoka Bunko Sōsho No. 5, Matsugaoka Bunko, Kanagawa, 2016, p. 54-67.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 224-231.

¹⁴⁵ Izutsu, Toshihiko. *Toward a Philosophy of Zen Buddhism*. Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, Teheran, 1977, p. 199-200.

¹⁴⁶ Suzuki, Daisetsu. *Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki's Columbia University Seminar Lectures*. Ed. & Antn. By Soiku Shigematsu & Gishin Tokiwa, Matsugaoka Bunko Sōsho No. 5, Matsugaoka Bunko, Kanagawa, 2016, p. 17-22.

Ch'an may be regarded as a reaction of powerful traditional Chinese thought against the scholasticism of Indian Buddhist texts. Ch'an popularised the idea of salvation, that a person may rise to the heights of spirituality in one's life time through one's own efforts.

A new challenge to Buddhism was made by Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529) who was a Neo-Confucian scholar. He started a new kind of Neo-Confucian teaching in the Ming period (明 1368-1644) called The School of Mind. He was called a Buddhist in disguise,¹⁴⁷ as his central thought, the unity of knowledge and action (知行合一) was so close to Ch'an doctrine. It was an important substitute for Ch'an, based on Chinese tradition at a time when China become inward looking and Buddhism was suppressed due to its foreign origin.

Daoism

The two pivotal figures in Daoism are Laozi and Zhuangzi. There is a "Biography of Laozi" written by Sima Qian (司馬遷 145-86 BCE) in *Shiji* (史記 Records of Historian) in the Han dynasty (漢 206 BC – 220). The legend of Laozi tells us that he went out to Central Asia leaving his teaching written in five thousand Chinese characters which remain as *Tao-de-Jing*. Zhuangzi (around 369 BC – around 286 BC) is believed to have written the "Inner Chapters" (1-7) of Zhuangzi and the "Outer Chapters" (8-

¹⁴⁷ Ching, Julia. *To Acquire Wisdom. The Way of Wang Yang-ming*. Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1976, p. xxiii.

22) were written and compiled by his followers/students.

Fukunaga Mitsuji described Daoism as having six main characteristics.¹⁴⁸ The first is that The Way is the truth. The ultimate and fundamental truth is The Way. The Way is beyond human perception and anything created from the human view point is false.¹⁴⁹

The second point is that The Way can be described as non-action, no form and no name. It is an expression of negation which is the only means to describe The Way. The Way is the origin of creation, and it is impossible to name it. Therefore, it has no name.¹⁵⁰

In the Daoist texts, 無 nothingness (*Wu* in Chinese, *Mu* in Japanese) is used many times. However, it doesn't mean 'Non-being' or 'Non-existence'. It is used to explain an absence. For example, 'No' sound, 'No' colour', 'No' voice, etc. 無 'Nothingness' is beyond perception, so it can't be described. However, it does not mean there is no existence, it is just beyond definition in the chaos of the universe.

One point to clarify here is that the Daoist term of 無 'Nothingness' is sometimes interpreted as being similar to the Buddhist notion of 空 'Emptiness'. This is because the Daoist term, 無 'Nothingness' was used to describe the Buddhist term, 空 'Emptiness' from the third century

¹⁴⁸ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. *Chūgoku Tetsugaku, Shūkyō, Geijutsu*. Jinmon Shoin, Kyoto, 1988, p. 21-26.

¹⁴⁹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p.77.

¹⁵⁰ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 53, 56, 66, 73, 77 & 89.

onwards. in Buddhism it is known as *Geyi* (格義) and it became popular to use this terminology which was then introduced to Japan.

The third point is that The Way is the creative force which keep changing all the time. Everything starts from The Way and returns back to the Way.¹⁵¹

The fourth point is that the Way has no self. From this view point, everything becomes equal. For example, the discriminations given by common sense such as ugliness, poverty, foolishness, greediness become equal in the viewpoint of the Way.¹⁵²

The fifth point is that the Way is nature itself and it is the flow of change of all phenomena. In order to live in the truth one has to become one with the flow.¹⁵³ However, unlike Christianity, there is no God here as a personified creator. It is also different from the Buddhist concept. In Buddhism, it is necessary to cut off the flow of change, which is known as cutting one's karma. In Daoism, one has to move with the flow, as the flow itself is the Way, it goes out and returns back.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 85.

¹⁵² Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 57.

¹⁵³ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 142.

¹⁵⁴ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 68.

The sixth point is that everything becomes one with the Way. This concept, later on, had a great impact upon Neo-Confucianism and Zen Buddhism. In Daoism, everything is a part of one, the Way. Human beings are a part of nature, so there is nothing to differentiate.¹⁵⁵

Another important point in Daoism is to have a free mind which is not fixed on anything in particular.¹⁵⁶ This is the 'Not-Even-Anything Village' (無可有鄉) from Zhuangzi, discussed in Chapter One of Zhuangzi, "Free and Easy Wandering".¹⁵⁷ In order to liberate one's true nature, it teaches one to create a space in one's mind where everything is free from worldly values.¹⁵⁸ This is an important concept, as this space in the mind enables one to connect with the creative world. The connection between a spiritual space and poetic inspiration was an important element in Sōseki's *kanshi*.

One of the poets, who writes about nature from a Daoist perspective, is the Chinese poet from the Six Dynasties period (220-589), Tao Yuanming (陶淵明). He composed the famous poem, "The Return", which he wrote to express his feelings on going back home after resigning his position at the government office. The work of Tao Yuanming whom Sōseki admired was also greatly admired by one of the Meiji intellectuals and the author of *The Book of Tea*,¹⁵⁹ Okakura Tenshin (岡倉天心 1862-1913), who said, "Most Confucian of Laoist and most Laoist of Confucians, the man who resigned a

¹⁵⁵ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 39-41. & 240-242.

¹⁵⁶ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 73.

¹⁵⁷ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 35.

¹⁵⁸ Maeda, Togama. *Rinzai · Sōshi*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1990, p. 7-11.

¹⁵⁹ Okakura, Tenshin. *The Book of Tea*. Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, 1959 (fifth edition)

governorship because he disliked wearing a ceremonial robe to receive an imperial representative – for his ode on ‘The Return’ was the very expression of the time. It is through To Enmei and other poets of the South that the purity of the dew-dropping chrysanthemum, the delicate grace of the swaying bamboo, the unconscious fragrance of plum-flowers floating on the twilight water, the green serenity of the pine, whispering its silent woes to the wind, and the divine narcissus, hiding its noble soul in deep ravines, or seeking for spring in a glimpse of heaven, become poetic inspiration”, and Okakura calls these words “the expression of the soul in Nature”.¹⁶⁰

One important difference between Ch’an Buddhism and Daoism in Japan is that Ch’an Buddhism involves being part of a religious community, whereas Daoism couldn’t take root as an official religion in Japan, because Buddhism was getting established amongst the powerful clans and didn’t want a competitor. Daoism in Japan has remained a philosophical teaching which requires no commitment to enter into a religious community.

CONCLUSION

Sōseki who is known as a great novelist born at the dawn of the Meiji period was fascinated by Chinese literature and thought from a young age, and was fond of composing *kanshi* and had a great interest in *nanga* painting. In his teens, he decided to leave Chinese Studies behind and changed direction to be a specialist in English literature. He had in his youth already shown his interest in Zen

¹⁶⁰ Okakura, Tenshin. *Ideal of The East. The spirit of Japanese Art*. Dover Publications, Mineola, New York, 2005, p. 21-22.

and revealed some knowledge of Daoism in his *kanshi*. Sōseki grew up being independent and suffering from loneliness due to his upbringing.

Shiki, who was a close friend of Sōseki, inspired him to get back to *kanshi* composition in his university days. Almost all the poems Sōseki composed in this period are for Shiki. As well as encouraging him to write *Kanshi*, Shiki also introduced Sōseki to the world of *haiku* and its important artists, Bashō and Buson, who were to play a crucial role in the development of his *kanshi*.

During his time at university, Sōseki's loneliness worsened, and he sought a solution through meditation, although it proved to be an unfruitful experience at first. From this time on, Sōseki's quest for spiritual salvation has begun. This study will be following Sōseki's spiritual quest which involved a profound understanding of Chinese thought and tracing the transition of the feeling of loneliness to a state of profound loneliness by examining Sōseki's *kanshi* chronologically.

Sōseki was not a part of any of the leading *kanshi* circles in the Meiji period, which had salons and published their works in magazines and newspapers. Sōseki's *kanshi* were different from the *kanshi* circles, as Sōseki used *kanshi* as part of the process of his spiritual development. Sōseki published his *kanshi* which he composed during and after his devastating illness at Shuzenji in *Omoidasu kotonado*, which was a series of essays published in the *Asahi* Newspaper where Sōseki was employed.

By the end of his life, Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions were an active form of meditation.

After suffering from serious illness at Shizenji, Sōseki began to work hard again. Suddenly, Sōseki lost his daughter and in the following year another important friend Ikebe, who shared his love of *kanshi* and helped Sōseki in his career as a newspaper novelist. Completely devastated psychologically and physically, Sōseki fell ill again. Whilst recovering from illness, Sōseki began to practice brush and ink painting and composed *kanshi* to accompany the paintings. This was another method of meditation which worked in conjunction with the composition of *kanshi*. In this period, Sōseki began to show the

first hints of his concept of *sokuten kyoshi*. This paper argues that his *nanga* period compositions, which have been neglected to a degree compared to his Shuzenji and final period *kanshi*, are a vital and important part of the development of his poetic thought.

In the final three months of his life, Sōseki composed *kanshi* almost every day whilst also writing the serialisation of his novel for a newspaper. At this point, *kanshi* became an important and indispensable meditative practice for Soseki. Sōseki didn't have a chance to publish these *kanshi* due to his sudden death. This study argues that Sōseki's *kanshi* reveal the gradual development of Sōseki's spirituality toward his final thought, *sokuten kyoshi*, using *kanshi* composition and brush and ink painting as a method of transforming sorrow/loneliness into a profound sadness, which is a meditative state.

The vital and vivid relationship of Chinese thought to the creation of his *kanshi*, and its powerful connection to spiritual truths and poetic beauty will be looked at in depth.

This study has been divided into five chapters each one dedicated to a different stage in Sōseki's *kanshi* development. The five stages are: Student period; Matsuyama & Kumamoto period; Serious illness at Shuzen-ji period; the *Nanga* period; and *Mei-An* period. Sōseki's *kanshi* in Chinese, Japanese *Yomikudashibun* (Japanese reading), Sōseki's diary, letters, essays, recorded speeches have been used as primary sources, and Zen texts, Daoist texts, and various Classical Chinese poems as secondary sources.

Although there are translations of some of Sōseki's *kanshi* in English in existence, this study's author felt it would be useful and illuminating to offer new translations of these beautiful, thoughtful and philosophical poems which attempt to offer more of an understanding of their spiritual and poetic roots and connections.

Chapter One

Student Period

INTRODUCTION

Sōseki's first period of *Kanshi* writings began before he was twenty years of age, with the composition of eight *kanshi* (poems number 1 to 8, featured in *Zenshu* and Nakamura's works, but not in Iida and Yoshikawa's works). The exact dates they were written isn't known. This first phase of creative *kanshi* production could be said to end with a poem addressed to Shiki dated 24 July 1891, (from Sōseki's poems to Shiki, numbers 9 to 50), although there is another undated Poem, number 51, which wasn't included in Yoshikawa's annotations from *Zenshu* because its authorship has been debated but Ikkai and Nakamura's annotations do include it. Ikkai justified its inclusion because he found no evidence of the poem not being written by Sōseki.

The period of time in which this first phase of *kanshi* writing took place was one of change for both Sōseki and society. The Meiji restoration was well under way, and Japanese society was undergoing modernisation at all levels. Sōseki too was having to make drastic decisions about his direction. He had had a great love of Chinese culture from a young age, but around the age of 17 abandoned his dream of becoming a specialist in Chinese studies and decided to study English in order to prepare for university. Once at University he chose to study English literature with the aim of becoming a specialist. However, whilst at university Sōseki had a life-changing encounter with the man who was to be his lifelong and most influential friend, Masaoka Shiki.

Shiki inspired Sōseki to once again take an interest in Chinese studies and revived his enthusiasm for composing *Kanshi*. Shiki and Sōseki's friendship was firmly bonded by the old tradition of *Kanshi* making. Sōseki asked Shiki for guidance to lead him inside the world of *Kanshi*; many of the *Kanshi* Sōseki composed during this period were addressed to Shiki. It is hard to know whether Sōseki would have renewed his love of *kanshi* if he hadn't met Shiki, certainly after their meeting and

thanks to Shiki's encouragement they would become very important to him, a gateway into another land. They were a way of combining creativity with deep visual imagery in the process often referring to Chinese texts and religious sources which gave the poems a basis in historic spiritual authority. We will now examine how Sōseki's *kanshi* developed both before and through the course of his friendship with Shiki, and what Sōseki was looking to express in his *kanshi* during this period. In order to have a better understanding of the nature and concerns of his *kanshi* it is important to take a look at the circumstances which led to their creation.

CHILDHOOD

Natsume Kin'nosuke, better known under the pen name of Natsume Sōseki, was born on February 9 1867, the time in which Japan was changing from the Edo to the Meiji period. He was the last child of Natsume Shobei Naokatsu and his second wife, Chie. His parents were considered old at the time of birth, his father being fifty and mother forty-one. Sōseki had three elder brothers and two elder half-sisters.

His father held the position of *Nanushi* (名主) in the suburbs of the capital. *Nanushi* was a title given to a person who was responsible for governing the local district which consisted of a few towns. They controlled and managed the landlords' and town's people's lives. The Natsume family, however, despite their power and wealth did not have Samurai status. The social position of *Nanushi* was somewhere between a Samurai and a commoner. They were subordinate to the Samurai class and governed the towns and people for the Samurai.

In the period before Sōseki was born, his father was a powerful and influential figure in the region. His family was allowed to have a *Gen'kan* (an entrance hall) to their house. Sōseki's house was the only one to have this in the town. One example which illustrates how influential his father was, is that the hill which led to their home was named after their family. It was called Natsume Zaka

(Natsume Hill). However, by the time Sōseki was born, the family had experienced a gradual decline in their social status due to the modernisations carried out by the Meiji Government. Their position was threatened in many ways and they faced a great deal of uncertainty in regards to their future.

Sōseki's parents were embarrassed to have a child at their advanced age. Not only that, his mother was unable to produce milk. So, soon after his birth he was handed over to foster parents who worked as second-hand tool traders in the street market. One day Sōseki's elder sister saw Sōseki hanging from a basket at the side of the market stall where his foster parents were working. She felt so sorry for Sōseki, she took him back home.

His father continued to harbour his prejudices and grudgingly accepted his return. It is clear Sōseki was an unwanted baby and considered a nuisance.¹ He did not himself remember this period as he was too young, but he learnt later of it from family members and people around him. The experience of being unwanted as an infant remained with him,² and had a strong impact on Sōseki's character.

In November 1868 the one-year-old Sōseki was adopted by a childless couple: the Shiohara family. Sōseki's adopted father, Shiohara Shōnosuke (塩原晶之助) like Sōseki's father also worked as a *Nanushi*. Shiohara Shōnosuke and his wife, Yasu were both twenty-nine years old when they adopted Sōseki. Sōseki's father knew them through acting as a go-between in the arrangement of the couple's marriage.

Hoping that Sōseki would look after them in their old age the couple spoiled him. Sōseki when he was very young believed they were his real parents but began to feel suspicious of them, as it became apparent that this was a calculated relationship rather than a loving one.³ Sōseki felt he

¹ *Sōseki Zenshū vol.12*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Garasu-do no naka", p. 588-589.

² Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Soshō 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p 16.

³ Akagi, Kōhei. *Natsume Sōseki*. Kodansha Gukujutsu Bunko, 2015, p. 38-39.

was alone⁴ in this world. It was his first insight into the state of loneliness. This notion of loneliness is one of the important themes in Sōseki's *kanshi* (Chinese Poems 漢詩).⁵

Sōseki's adopted father entered Sōseki as their adopted son in the family register in 1871; a detail which was to cause trouble later on. However, the Shiohara couple separated in April 1874 when Sōseki was 8 years old due to Shiohara finding a mistress, Hineno Katsu, the widow of a Samurai. At first Sōseki remained with his adopted mother, Yasu, however in November Yasu decided to get a divorce and delivered Sōseki to his adopted father and mistress and her daughter from a previous marriage, Ren.

Shiohara and his mistress took on the boy, soon concocting a plan to marry Sōseki off to Ren with the idea that the couple would care for them in their old age. However, in 1876 when Sōseki was nine, he was sent back to the Natsume family as Shiohara had lost his job. Despite the fact that he was now back with his real family Sōseki was still in the eyes of the law the son of Shiohara.

The period which spans his elementary school education was one of turbulence. The Shiohara family constantly changed home, Sōseki went from school to school, never anywhere long enough to put down roots. There was no stability in his young life, and there was nobody he could talk to about his situation something which must have caused him deep anxiety. From a young age he was obliged to be independent in order to deal with his insecure environment.⁶

Sōseki was pleased to return to his real family, although his father still showed him no affection.⁷ At first, Sōseki called his parents 'grandfather' and 'grandmother' as he believed that was who they were. However, one night, one of the housemaids came in to his bedroom and told him that his 'grandparents' were in fact his parents. She said it was a secret and not to tell anyone. Sōseki remembered that he felt thrilled, not because he was their son but because someone, in this case

⁴ Komiya, Toyotaka. *Sōseki Zakkī*. Koyama Shoten, Tokyo, 1935, p. 18-20.

⁵ Katō, Jirō. *Sōseki to Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobo, Tokyo, 2004, p204-254.

⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 71.

⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Garasu-do no naka", p. 589.

the housemaid, cared for him.⁸ This comment clearly demonstrates how starved of love Sōseki was as a child.

Even when he returned to live with his real parents and family he continued to feel lonely. Etō describes Sōseki's psychological status as being similar to that of an orphan but at the same time he was not given the freedom that an orphan would have.⁹ It was during this period that Sōseki began to distrust the adult world and his hatred of lies and injustice emerged: convictions that would stay with him for the rest of his life.

Sōseki's mother, Chie, was the daughter of a pawnbroker who owned a large number of warehouses. Chie had worked in a Samurai household when she was young and single. Her first marriage did not work out and she came into the Natsume family as a second wife. Sōseki's two elder sisters were by Sōseki's father's first wife who died young. Sōseki's memory of his mother was limited, since he only lived with his mother for five years before her death in January 1881 when Sōseki was almost 15 years old.

According to Sōseki's recollections, he remembered his mother as not being outwardly affectionate but offering a degree of security and warmth.¹⁰ His mother had dignity and a refined character. Sōseki's eldest brother, Daiichi, once told Sōseki that his mother had a stronger and braver personality than his father.¹¹

Sōseki was 14 years old when she died. There is no record of Sōseki writing about his mother's passing away but it is clear that Sōseki was devastated by her loss. After her death Sōseki left the school he was attending, a school with a modernised western style curriculum where students were prepared for entry into University and entered the Nishōgakusha which specialised in teaching Chinese Studies.

Sōseki stayed at the Nishōgakusha for over a year, studying Chinese Classics. At the time Sōseki

⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū vol.12*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Garasu-do no naka", p. 589-590.

⁹ Etō, Jun. *Sōseki to Sono Jidai Vol.1* Shinchō Sensho, Tokyo, 1970, p. 30-31.

¹⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū vol.12*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Garasu-do no naka", p. 609-611.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 611-614.

joined the school there were three grades with three stages in each grade, beginning with the third stage of the third grade and finishing with the first stage of the first grade. Sōseki entered at the first stage of the third grade and left at the third stage of the second grade.

Since a young boy he had been a devotee of the Chinese Classics. He relates in his book of childhood recollections 'My Childhood', how he enjoyed just simply copying out Chinese classics without even understanding the meaning of the text.¹² He was also fond of Chinese brush and ink painting, the style called *nanga* in Japanese. He writes in his essay, *Garasudo no naka* (硝子戸の中), of hours spent just looking at the paintings in his father's warehouse where he kept his collection of antique arts.¹³

Although people were now expected to learn European languages and culture if they wished to get on in the modern world, at this juncture in his life Sōseki chose the opposite direction, rejecting the move towards the modern world. He wanted to return back to the past which he associated with his mother. She had disappeared from the world he lived in and the old world and values were rapidly disappearing in front of his eyes.

Sōseki sought comfort in looking back to the past. One way to access the old world was to lose oneself in Chinese literature which he passionately wished to learn. It seems as though Sōseki was seeking salvation by studying the Chinese classics. They evoked a metaphysical world inside the mind and heart, a world in which Sōseki felt safe and comfortable. It was a world he would often return to in crucial moments of his life.

From early on Sōseki showed his talent for Chinese composition writing his first composition in Chinese, *Seiseiron* (正征論), when he was twelve. He was enthralled and engaged by the Chinese Classics. After this period of studying Chinese Classics at Nishōgakusha, there is a gap of over one year until in 1883 he entered Seiritsu gakusha, a privately-run school which prepared students for entry to University. During this period Sōseki immersed himself in the world of Chinese literature

¹² *Sōseki Zenshū vol.12*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Omoidasu Kotonado", p. 375.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 426-427.

and longed to become a Chinese Studies specialist. However, Sōseki's eldest brother, Daiichi told him that studying Chinese Classics was just an accomplishment and gave no guarantee of a secure occupation.¹⁴

Daiichi was a man of ability who worked as a translator and was expected to take over at the helm of the family but he suffered from tuberculosis and died not so long after, in March 1887 at the young age of 31. Sōseki was 21 years old when he passed away. Daiichi had been a mentor for Sōseki and wanted Sōseki, the youngest brother, to take over at the head of the Natsume family after his death since their two other brothers were irresponsible and had misspent a large part of the family fortune.

Bearing in mind the circumstances and his brother's advice, Sōseki must have felt an obligation to study for entering the University. In 1883 at the age of 16 he sold all his books in Chinese and taking English as his subject entered Seiritsu gakusha in preparation for his entry to university.¹⁵

Around this period, Sōseki, before the age of twenty had produced his first group of eight *Kanshi*. We do not have dates for these poems, but we clearly see that Sōseki, despite having to give up on becoming a specialist in Chinese literature was still practising his skills in composing *Kanshi* having learnt a great deal about Chinese Classics at Nishōgakusha. He decided to study English as a means of earning a living but still maintained a great enthusiasm and attachment to Chinese literature.

POEMS BEFORE TWENTY

Eight of Sōseki's early Chinese poems were discovered by Matsuoka Yuzuru (松岡譲, 1891-1969), one of Sōseki's followers, who later, after his death married Sōseki's first daughter. In his opinion, these poems were composed around Meiji 16-17 (1883-1884) when Sōseki was 16-17 years old. This was the period when Sōseki was at Seiritsu gakusha (成立学舎) learning English having

¹⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, "Jiki ga Kite itan'da" p. 280.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, "Rakudai" p. 163.

abandoned the study of Chinese Classics at Nishōgakusha *Kangaku juku* (二松学舎漢学塾). These are the eight remaining Chinese poems in existence from his pre-university days.

Nakamura considered these eight poems to be works of genius. The poems show the richness of Sōseki's poetic imagination, philosophical insight and intelligence as well as a mastery of Chinese. Other poems show his love of nature as it represents the ideal world. Sōseki wrote the poems under the pen name Chin'un Minka Sanbō Shujin (枕雲眠霞山房主人), 'Master of the Misty Mountain Hut who sleeps within the clouds'.

The eight poems were inserted in issue eight of a small magazine called *Jiun* (時運) published in June, Meiji 39 (1906) at Shimodate chō in Ibaragi prefecture and were selected by his friend, Okuda Hitsudō (奥田必堂). These poems were found in 1962 in Shimodate chō. According to Matsuoka, who published these poems, Okuda and Sōseki went to different schools but became close friends sharing accommodation together at one point.¹⁶ In this section, we will look at poems 1, 3, 5 and 7.

Sōseki's first ever preserved *kanshi* are a beautiful evocation of a soul in evolution. They show how from the very start the *kanshi* form allowed him to enter a world of stillness and spirituality. (Numbered chronologically in the *Sōseki Zenshū* volume 18)

Poem 1

“Konodai” (鴻の台) 其の一

鴻台冒曉訪禪扉 鴻台 曉を冒して 禪扉を訪う

孤磬沈沈断続微 孤磬 沈沈 断続して 微かなり

一叩一推人不答 一叩 一推 人答えず

¹⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 97-98.

驚鴉撩乱掠門飛 驚鴉 撩乱 門を掠めて飛ぶ¹⁷

When I visited the temple in Kōnodai before dawn,

I heard the temple bell ring intermittently within the silence.

Nobody answered despite my efforts at knocking and pushing at the temple door.

Surprised by my action, the crows flew away chaotically, flitting just above the temple gate.

The poem is in the style of *Shichigon Zekku* (七言絶句: Four lines consisting of seven Chinese characters, hereafter *Shichigon Zekku*). Kōnodai, which is the title and appears at the beginning of the first line is the name of a location in Ichikawa city in Chiba prefecture. The characters for the actual place are written 国府台. Sōseki used poetic characters with the same phonetic sounds. According to Ikai Tomoyoshi, who annotates Sōseki's poem in *Zenshū*, it is not certain whether Sōseki went to Kōnodai or not at this time.¹⁸ However, Toyofuku Kenji mentions in his writing that there was a Zen temple called Sōnei-ji belonging to the Sōtō sect which Sōseki had visited and where he had composed two poems.¹⁹ Toyofuku goes on to explain that there are many poems in Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions which strive to create a Zen like quietness and solitude by using the images of temples and monks and Soseki uses the image of a Zen temple from the very beginning of his *kanshi* composition.

In the second line, Soseki describes the quietness of the temple by introducing the sound of the temple bell.

In the third line, the expression of 一叩一推 'Knocking and pushing' is taken from poem by Jia Dao (賈島, 779-843) noted by Nakamura.²⁰ References from Chinese religious poetry and zen texts are often used by Sōseki, they set up an inextricable link with truths and insights from the past. They

¹⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 97-98.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 98

¹⁹ Toyofuku, Kenji. *Furo de yomu Sōseki no Kanshi*. Sekai Shisō sha, 1996, p 8

²⁰ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p.8.

work on both a spiritual and poetical level. In the poem here, the character 敲 is used instead of 叩. They both have the same meaning, 'knock'. Let us refer to Jia's poem.

鳥宿池中樹 鳥は宿る 池中の樹

僧敲月下門 僧は敲く 月下の門²¹

(In the quiet night) the birds stay among the trees.

Under the moonlight, a monk knocks at the gate of the temple

The second line of the poem by Jia Dao is famous because Jia couldn't make his mind up of whether to use 'Push' 推 or 'Knock' 敲. In this line, Soseki is showing that he is interested in the world of Zen, but he doesn't know how and where to start.

The fourth line shows how the deliberate action of human beings disturbs nature. The image of crows flying away is a beautiful one. It contrasts with the peacefulness of the scene, a perfect metaphor for Sōseki's searching and restless state of mind.

It can be seen that from very early on in his *kanshi* compositions Sōseki was fond of creating poems with Zen temples as the subject matter.

The next poem also evokes an otherworldly state.

Poem 3

"Poem accompanying painting"

題画 画に題す

何人鎮日掩柴扃 何人か 鎮日 柴扃を掩う

也是乾坤一草亭 也た是れ乾坤の一草亭

²¹ Matsuura, Tomohisa. Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishūkan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 122-123.

村静牧童翻野笛 村静かにして 牧童 野笛を翻し

簷虚鬪雀蹴金鈴 簷虚しくして 鬪雀 金鈴を蹴る

溪南秀竹雲垂地 溪南の秀竹 雲 地に垂れ

林後老槐風満庭 林後の老槐 風 庭に満つ

春去夏来無好興 春去り夏来たりて 好興無きも

夢魂回処気冷冷 夢魂回る処 気冷冷たり²²

I do not know whose house it is but the gate is always closed.

It is another humble house existing between Heaven and Earth.

The sound of a flute played by a child resonates in the quiet village, the sparrows are chirping under the eaves where no one can be found.

The clouds are gathering low at the bamboo grove by the mountain stream,

The wind arrives blowing full blast in the garden, wending its way through the bamboo grove.

Spring has gone, summer has arrived and there is nothing to be excited about.

But, I feel refreshed when I dream of being inside a brush and ink painting.

This poem is in the *Shichigon Risshi* (七言律詩) style; (poems consisting of eight lines of seven Chinese characters, and two lines counted as one unit. Hereafter, *Shichigon Risshi*) in each line. 乾坤一草亭 (a humble house between Heaven and Earth), a reference from Tu Fu's (杜甫, 712-770) poem, appears at the beginning of the second line,²³. Sōseki uses the words, 乾坤 (the space between Heaven and Earth) in poems 15, 64 and 69. The words derive from hexagram one of the *I-*

²² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p 100.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

jing (*Book of Changes*), Ch'ien 乾 signifying Yang, and hexagram two, K'un 坤 signifying Yin. Taking into consideration the fact that Sōseki wrote "*Lōshi no Tetsugaku*" (老子の哲学 "Philosophy of Laozi") in 1892 when he was a student as one of the essays for the course in Eastern Philosophy, it is clear that even at this early stage he was aware of the significance of the idea of Yin and Yang and was incorporating it into his work. In fact, the *I-jing* became one of his favourite books.²⁴

This poem was composed to accompany a brush and ink painting. Nakamura explains that lines one to six describe the scenery from the brush and ink painting (*nanga*). As already observed, ever since his childhood Sōseki had been fond of brush and ink painting. This is confirmed by a paragraph he wrote in *Omoidasu kotonado* explaining how when he was young he had wanted to live in one of the huts he encountered in brush and ink painting.²⁵

Nakamura says Sōseki told his friend of this wish when he was forty-four years old in Meiji 43 (1910) and that he had had composed the poem twenty-four to twenty-five years ago, so calculating backwards, Sōseki probably made this comment in the period around the composition of this poem: one of the earliest where Sōseki expresses his interest in brush and ink painting.

In lines seven and eight, Sōseki says that he feels refreshed after coming back from the world of dreams, which is contained in the brush and ink painting. There is an element of resignation from the ordinary world in the line "*Spring has gone, summer has arrived and there is nothing to be excited about*". It recalls the Zen *haiku* from Anthology, *Zenrinkushū* compiled by Eichō (1429-1504) "*Sitting quietly, doing nothing, Spring comes, grass grows by itself*".²⁶

This poem demonstrates that from the beginning of his involvement in *kanshi*, Sōseki was keen to compose poems to accompany brush and ink painting. Until his death, as far as Sōseki was concerned, Chinese poems and brush and ink paintings were inseparable and existed as one entity.

The next poem examines another theme in Sōseki's work, loneliness, it's an early exposition of this

²⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 310.

²⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Omoidasu Kotonado", p. 427.

²⁶ *Zenrinkushū*. <http://web.archive.org/web/20120302073712/http://boozers.fortunecity.com/brewerytap/695/Zenrinkushu.html>

subject, one which had many links and associations with Chinese religious and poetic imagery and which as his life progressed, contained within it many different aspects from fear and personal limitation to the path to enlightenment.

Poem 5

離愁次友人韻 離愁 友人の韻に次す

“The sorrow of parting” Rhyme-following to a friend’s poem

離愁別恨夢寥寥 離愁 別恨 夢寥寥

楊柳如烟翠堆遙 楊柳 烟の如く 翠堆遙かなり

幾歳春江分袂後 幾歳か 春江に袂を分かちし後

依稀織月照紅橋 依稀として織月 紅橋を照らす²⁷

Feeling the sorrow of parting and sadness of separation, a sensation vague as a dream.

The willow tree, a symbol of departure, looks misty like a cloud and the green hill is in the far distance.

A few years have passed since we said goodbye to each other at the river in spring time.

The hazy crescent moon is shining on the red bridge.

Shichigon Zekku.

This is one of the few rhyme-following poems actually Soseki composed with a friend, although there are no records which give us the name of that person. This *Shichigon Zekku* expresses the quintessential feelings of sadness and loneliness (愁 and 憂) that Sōseki often depicted in his poems. Many of the characters he uses are repeated elsewhere in his poetry. The characters 離愁

²⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 103.

and 別恨 in line one have almost the same meaning, ‘The sorrow of separation’.²⁸ 寥寥

‘Profound sadness’ rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem titled “春夜 雪に対して 友人を懐う”

(“At night in the Spring, looking at the snow, remembering a friend”)

寥寥孤興発 寥々として 孤興 発す

与孰慰平生 孰と平生を慰めん。²⁹

Inspiration of profound sadness comes up spontaneously,

But it is sad to be alone not to be able to share.

Line one goes straight to the heart of the matter and reveals the essence of sadness and the sensation of loneliness and separation.

In the second line, 楊柳 ‘The willow tree’ represents the farewell, a point mentioned by Ikkaï and Nakamura.³⁰

In the final line, 依稀 ‘Hazy’ appears in the last poem Soseki ever wrote, which also uses it in relation to describing the moon light. It also rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem again.

依稀藤蘿月 依稀たり 藤蘿の月

送君下翠微 君を送って翠微を下る。³¹

The moon looking through the ivy is hazy.

I am descending the mountain to see you off.

This poem captures the melancholic feeling of separation and loneliness using the corresponding visual images of the willow tree and hazy moon.

From its earliest origins the notion of loneliness has featured in Chinese poetry. It is used in *Shi-jing*

²⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 103-104.

²⁹ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 111.

³⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 104.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 14-15.

³¹ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 163-164.

(詩經, *The Classic of Poetry*), which is the oldest compilation of poems in China containing three hundred and five poems collected between the 11th to 7th centuries BC. The notion of loneliness has a long history in Chinese literature and thought. Shiba analyses the causes of loneliness and concludes that it is an anxiety which manifests itself outwardly as melancholy and suffering. He goes on to observe that human beings are inclined to self-reflection which can also cause loneliness.³² Ōta says that this type of loneliness is a worldly loneliness. He explains that there is another type of loneliness belonging to the teachings of Buddhism and Daoism. He says that loneliness of this type contains no notion of sorrow as it stands apart from the world.³³

The feeling of loneliness plays a major part in Sōseki's poems. Having been fostered out just after he was born and adopted when he was a young child he had been aware of the state of loneliness from an early age.³⁴ We will be following the development of his notion of loneliness in his later poems bearing in mind how this depiction of loneliness developed as his independence and individualism grew.

Poem 8

"Improvisation on the spot" No.2

即時 其の二

満岸蘋花白 満岸 蘋花白く

青山影欲流 青山 影流れんと欲す

漁翁生計好 漁翁 生計好く

画裡棹軽舟 画裡 軽舟に棹さす³⁵

³² Shiba, Rokurō. *Chūgoku Bungaku ni Okeru Kodoku-kan*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007 (4th edition), p. 7-16.

³³ Ōta, Teizō. *Tōyō Shisōni okeru Kodoku to Mujō*, Hosei Daigaku Shuppan kyoku, Tokyo, 1970, p i-iii.

³⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Garasu-do no naka", p. 564.

³⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 106.

*White flowers of floating weed at the waterside,
 The shadow of the blue mountain reflected on the water is swaying.
 An old fisherman lives happily in the scene as if in a painting,
 Punting along the stream in a little boat.*

This is in the *Gogon Zekku* style (Four lines consisting of five Chinese characters, 五言絶句, hereafter *Gogon Zekku*). This poem evokes a quintessentially ideal image as created by the Chinese literati, who adored the humble and peaceful country life of the fisherman. This type of image was often depicted in brush and ink painting, and often became the subject matter for *kanshi* composition. We can see here that Sōseki was following and practicing the artistic ideals and values of the Chinese literati.

The characters 青山 ‘Blue mountain’ which have a number of meanings are often used in Sōseki’s poems and feature in poems 47 and 49 noted by Ikkai.³⁶ Sōseki was fond of using colours in his poems, and this is a good example, as he uses white in the first line and contrasts it with blue in the second. The expression 影欲流 ‘The shadow of the blue mountain reflected on the water is swaying’, creates the feeling of movement. The words 漁翁 (old fisherman) refer to one of the favourite subject matters of the Chinese literati, ‘The old fisherman’, often depicted as having a free life at one with nature in a timeless world.³⁷

Let’s refer to the poem titled ‘Old Fisherman’ 漁翁 composed by Liu Zongyuan (柳宗元, 773-819).

漁翁夜傍西巖宿 漁翁夜西巖傍うて宿し

曉汲清湘然楚竹 曉に清湘に汲み楚竹を然く。³⁸

³⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 106.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983. P. 17.

³⁸ Ishikawa, Tadahisa. Ed. *Kanshi Kanshō Jiten*. Kōdansha, 2009, p. 404-405.

*The old fisherman spends a night mooring his boat on the west side of a rock.
At dawn, he prepares breakfast scooping up the fresh water from the lake and
burning up bamboos.*

Nakamura says that Soseki's travelogue, *Bokusetsuroku* (木屑録) which we will discuss later, is believed to have been inspired in part by Liu Zongyuan.³⁹

To summarise, in the poems we have discussed composed before Sōseki was twenty years old, he shows an interest in depicting Zen scenery and its atmosphere of solitary calm. He also demonstrates his love of brush and ink painting and composing poems for it. He displays his awareness of *the Book of Changes* and Yin and Yang theory and how it played an important role in Daoist teachings. He also attempts to express the feeling of loneliness and sorrow which is so profoundly embedded in Chinese classical poems and one of the domineering elements in Sōseki's life. Finally, but not least, Sōseki shows his interest in the ideal image of the Chinese literati which was to live life as a free person like the fisherman surrounded by nature.

In his first *kanshi*, Sōseki had the sensitivity and awareness and technical skill to compose well-rounded poems which create a serene and religious atmosphere. A remarkable achievement considering his young age.

COMMENTARY ON NANAKUSA SHU (『七草集』評)

While studying at Seiritsu gakusha, Sōseki left home and went to live in a rented room with friends. It was his first step on the road to independence and freedom. In September 1884 he began the prep course at the coaching school for University (大学予備門) (the school changed its name to The First Advanced Middle School [第一高等中学] in 1886). In the course of 1886 his performance at the school declined and he suffered from peritonitis. He was unable to take the examination for

³⁹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983. P. 17-18.

upgrading, and had to repeat the year. This incident made Sōseki change his approach to study, from then on until his graduation Sōseki stayed at the top of the class.⁴⁰ Around this time, he decided to become financially independent and along with his flatmate, Nakamura Yoshikoto, known as Nakamura Zekō (中村是公, 1867-1927), who later became the head of the Manchurian railway, began to work as a teacher at Etō Gijuku.

The following year, there were bereavements in his family. Having lost his eldest brother, Daiichi in March 1887, Sōseki went on to lose his second brother, Einosuke, in June of the same year. Both of them had suffered from tuberculosis. After losing two sons, Sōseki's father now wanted Sōseki to return home, as, apart from Sōseki only the third son, Kazusaburō, remained. Fortunately for his father, at the time Sōseki was suffering from acute trachoma and so returned home.

In January 1888 of the next year Sōseki was returned to the Natsume family register. Negotiations had taken place between Sōseki's father and his step-father Shiohara. Contracts had been exchanged and Sōseki's father obliged to pay Shiohara money in order to get Sōseki back on to the Natsume family register. Sōseki wrote in *Garasudo no naka* of how at the time he had felt himself to be nothing more than a disposable object.⁴¹

It also brought back memories of the loneliness Sōseki had experienced during his childhood and adolescence. Shiohara had also demanded that Sōseki sign a statement which promised that from now on they would maintain a 'respectable relationship'.⁴² Later on in Sōseki's life Shiohara visited Sōseki and using this statement to aid his request for financial support.

In July 1888, Sōseki graduated from the prep course of the coaching school for the University entrance examination. In September of the same year, Sōseki entered the regular course of the coaching school taking English as his subject. At first, Sōseki had chosen architecture but his eccentric friend and hermit, Yoneyama Yasusaburō (米山保三郎, 1869-1897), advised Sōseki that it

⁴⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, "Rakudai", p. 163.

Ara, Masato. *Natsume Sōseki Nyūmon*. Kodansha, 1967, p. 35.

⁴¹ Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Sōsho 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p. 21-22.

⁴² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.26, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, "Yōshi Rien Shōsho", p. 229.

was impossible to achieve anything greater in architecture than St Paul's Cathedral. However, one could still achieve great works in literature. Sōseki respected his friend's advice and changed his mind immediately.⁴³

Yoneyama was one of the most important and influential friends in Sōseki's life. They often discussed topics such as philosophy and the nature of the universe. Sōseki's letter to Shiki, written in January 1890, tells us that Yoneyama was fond of practicing Zen meditation.⁴⁴ Yoneyama learnt Zen from a renowned monk, Imakita Kōsen (今北洪川, 1816-1892), at Kigen-in in (帰源院) the Enkaku-ji (円覚寺) temple at Kamakura.

Sōseki was influenced by this, and later on spent time there seeking enlightenment. Yoneyama also influenced Shiki by introducing him to philosophical ideas such as Spencer's *Sōgō Tetsugaku Taikei*; these ideas gave greater substance to Shiki's poems.⁴⁵

In January 1889, Sōseki met Masaoka Shiki (正岡子規, 1867-1902). He became one of Sōseki's greatest friends and inspired Sōseki to return to composing Chinese poems.⁴⁶ The majority of poems by Sōseki from this period were read and commented on by Shiki. In May of the same year, Sōseki wrote, at Shiki's request, a commentary in classical Chinese for Shiki's compilation of writing called *Nanakusa Shū* (七草集- Collection of seven types of grasses). Sōseki also composed nine poems attached to the end of the commentary.

Nanakusa Shū was a compilation of Chinese writing, *Kanshi*, *Waka* (Japanese poem of thirty-one syllables), *Haiku* (Japanese poems consisting of seventeen syllables), *Yōkyoku* (lyrics for Noh theatre), essays and classical style writings. Shiki wrote this compilation during the summer holidays he spent at Mukōjima (向島- the island on the opposite side). Shiki used the character

⁴³ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, "Jiki ga Kite itan'da", p. 281.

⁴⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 14.

⁴⁵ Masaoka, Shiki. "Fudemakase" in *Shiki jinsei-ron shū*, Kōdansha, Tokyo, 2010, p. 29-30.

⁴⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p 567-569.

Mukayū 無何有洲 (“Not-Even-Anything Village”) which is a pun taken from Zhuangzi’s text to refer to Mukōjima. Shiki was deeply interested in the teaching of Zhuangzi.⁴⁷

“Not-Even-Anything Village” (無何有之鄉) appears in Chapter One and seven in Zhuangzi’s text. It is used to describe a free state of mind where one is released from the values and meanings of the ordinary mundane world. We should bear in mind the fact that Sōseki at the time of his mother’s death had sought refuge in the safety and security of the metaphysical world created by Chinese literature. “Not-Even-Anything Village” could be one of the candidates for the metaphysical world where Sōseki was looking for equilibrium and comfort from his mental instability. It is important to note that Sōseki often used words and references to Zhuangzi in his poems, especially in his final period.

Before discussing the poems, we need to consult Zhuangzi for a closer examination of the meaning of “Not-Even-Anything Village” as this concept is of great importance to Sōseki. It appears in chapters one and seven. Let’s take a look at chapter seven:

Tien Ken [Tian Gen] was wandering on the sunny side of Yin Mountain. When he reached the banks of the Liao River, he happened to meet a Nameless Man. He questioned the man, saying, “Please may I ask how to rule the world?”

The Nameless Man said, “Get away from me, you peasant! What kind of a dreary question is that! I’m just about to set off with the Creator. And if I get bored with that, then I’ll ride on the Light-and-Lissome Bird out beyond the six directions, wandering in the village of Not-Even-Anything and living in the Broad-and Borderless field. What business do you have coming with this talk of governing the world and disturbing my mind?”

But Tien Ken [Tian Gen] repeated his question. The Nameless Man said, “Let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with

⁴⁷ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007, p. 16.

things the way they are, and make no room for personal views- then the world will be governed.”⁴⁸

Zhuangzi’s idea of “Not-Even-Anything Village” really refers to a condition of mental abstraction where happiness is found. It is attainable by inaction through following the natural order created by nature without the intervention of self. The concept of ‘Inaction’ becomes very important for Sōseki, and we will discuss it in a later chapter. Also, the line “Allow yourself to fall in with the natural order of phenomena, without admitting the element of self,” fits in with the concept ‘*sokuten kyoshi*’ (則天去私: Merging with Heaven, abandoning self) which Sōseki reached near the end of his life. So, the metaphysical world, “Not-Even-Anything Village” is a crucial point to focus on from now on.

Shiki completed the writing of *Nanakusa Shū* (七草集) on 1 May and passed it round amongst friends asking for feedback. *Nanakusa Shū*, which contained Chinese writing and *kanshi*, definitively sparked Sōseki’s passion for Chinese classical writing which had probably been suppressed due to his study of English literature.⁴⁹

The commentary Sōseki made in *Nanakusa Shū* is based on the friendship and sentimentality of youth. Sōseki wrote his criticism in Chinese writing and attached nine poems at the end. Sōseki asked for Shiki’s correction of his poems: this is the starting point of Sōseki’s poems addressed to Shiki.

The following is an introductory writing Sōseki made before presenting his *kanshi* to Shiki.

拙作数首、附記供瀏覽。僕固不解詩。故所作粗笨、生硬可笑。然無塩与西施

⁴⁸ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 93-94. For further details, see chapter 5, p.368 of this paper.

⁴⁹ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merukumāru Sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 276.

坐、則美益美、而醜愈醜。僕豈謂敢効顰。亦欲為西施之美耳。⁵⁰

拙作数首、附記して瀏覽に供す。僕固より詩を解せず。故に作る所は粗笨にして、生硬笑う可し。然れども無塩の西施と坐すれば、則ち美は益すます美にして、醜は愈いよ醜ならん。僕豈に敢えて顰みに効うを謂わんや。亦た西施の美の為にせんと欲せし耳。

I would like to ask for your correction of my poems attached. Needless to say, I cannot understand poems. It is obvious that my technique is rough and primitive which is laughable. However, when the ugly lady sits next to the beautiful lady, called Xi Shi, from Wuyan region, her beauty stands out in contrast to the other's ugliness. Similarly, I try to mimic your poems without worrying too much about my limited ability so that your superb poems will shine up against my primitive pieces.

When responding to Shiki's interest in taking the name the "Not-Even-Anything Village" from Zhuangzi, Sōseki uses the story of Xi Shi, (西施) found in Zhuangzi's text in chapter fourteen, 'The Turning of Heaven'. Sōseki was also keen to show his knowledge of Zhuangzi to Shiki so as to share his passion. There was a trend amongst intellectuals to adopt words and stories from Zhuangzi in order to express particular feelings and ideas following a trend set by Bashō back in the Edo period.

The beautiful His-shih [Xi Shi], troubled with heartburn, frowned at her neighbours. An ugly woman of the neighbourhood, seeing that His-shih [Xi Shi] was beautiful, went home and likewise pounded her breast and frowned at her

⁵⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 493.

neighbours. But at the sight of her the rich men of the neighbourhood shut tight their gates and would not venture out, while the poor men grabbed their wives and children by the hand and scampered off. The woman understood that someone frowning could be beautiful, but she did not understand where the beauty of the frown came from.⁵¹

The story tells of how an ugly lady thought the frowning face of the beautiful lady, Xi Shi, who was suffering from sorrow, looked beautiful. So, the ugly lady mimicked the look, something which caused many people not to leave their houses and others to leave town. The message is that it is no use just copying without knowing the substance. Sōseki is admitting here that his poems do not have substance like Shiki's. Sōseki is asking Shiki for guidance in the composition of *kanshi*.

We can see that Sōseki had a high regard for Shiki's skill in *kanshi* composition. All nine poems were composed using Shiki or *Nanakusa Shū* as the subject matter. In his *kanshi* to Shiki, Sōseki clearly demonstrates his quest for philosophical truths through expressions such as "Forgetting oneself after washing off the impurities of the mundane world": a classical Chinese sentence.

Sōseki considered himself to be an eccentric and expressed his awareness of his eccentricity in his poems: yet another individualistic act. He also chose his pen name at this time. We can clearly see the image Sōseki wished to present in the pen name he adopted which was taken from a well-known historical event.

The story is that of Sun Chu from the state of Jin, in the Six dynasties period in China, who wanted to retire from government office and when trying to explain the reason for his retirement, which was to pursue a refined life, made a mistake and said '漱石枕流' ('Sōseki Chinryū: Wash mouth with stone and use stream as pillow') instead of '枕石漱流' ('Chinseki Sōryū: Use stone as a pillow and

⁵¹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 160-161.

wash mouth with stream’). His mistake was pointed out to him but he never acknowledged his error. So, ‘漱石枕流’ (*Sōseki Chinryū*: Wash mouth with a stone and use stream as a pillow’) came to be used as a metaphor for someone who would not accept being a loser.⁵²

Sōseki wrote a letter to Shiki dated 27 May, telling him that he was embarrassed that he had attached such childish poems to the end of *Nanakusa Shū* and asking him to destroy them. Sōseki went on to say that his friend, Yoneyama, whom Sōseki respected greatly, had said to Sōseki, “You gave a commentary on someone else’s writing, when you cannot even spell your own name correctly! You are a terrifyingly slow horse! Clack clack clack clack”⁵³ This letter illustrates how close and playful their friendship was. Sōseki and Shiki also became friends because both of them had a shared interest, *Yose* (寄席), the traditional style entertainment house where one of the main house acts is *Rakugo* (落語), a comic story told by one person.⁵⁴

The nine poems Sōseki composed in the *Nanakusa Shū* commentary are all *Shichigon Zekku*. The important fact to remind ourselves here is that Soseki showed all the *kanshi* in this period to Shiki for correction and feedback. The poems in this period show how close the friendship between Sōseki and Shiki was. Shiki wrote *Nanakusa Shū*. Inspired by that, Sōseki wrote *Bokusetsuroku* shortly after. Now, we examine some of the *Kanshi* Soseki composed in the *Nanakusa Shū* commentary.

Poem 10

Part 2

其二

其の二

幾年零落亦風流 幾年の零落 亦た風流

⁵² Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 49. *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 147.

⁵³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 22. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 5. (letter addressed to Shiki on 27/05/1889)

⁵⁴ Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Soshō 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p. 23.

好賃江頭香月楼 好し 賃らん 江頭の香月楼

麦緑菜黄吟欲尽 麦緑菜黄 吟 尽きんと欲し

又逢紅蓼白蘋秋 又た逢う 紅蓼白蘋の秋⁵⁵

Living in nothingness is rather tasteful.

This summer you decided to rent a room at the House of the Fragrant Moon on the bank of the (Sumida) river.

Whilst spending time composing poems featuring a rural landscape of green wheat and yellow rape blossoms,

The season has changed and autumn with the red flower of water pepper and white flower of floating weed has arrived again.

Shichigon Zekku

This poem is a depiction of Shiki spending the summer holiday in Mukōjima, “Not-Even-Anything Village”. Shiki had rented a room there and devoted himself to writing *Nanakusa Shū*. Sōseki uses *fūryū* (風流), which could be defined as an elegant but restrained poetic aesthetic, for the first time in a poem, and it appears in other poems (poem 11, 75, 80 and 146). Sōseki proposes the idea of living in a land of nothingness which Shiki had used to describe the location which had inspired his writing.

It is a colourful poem, as Sōseki believed that colours were a key element in poems. He made a comment about this in the section discussing colour in “Basic formula of the literary content” in chapter two of the first volume of *The Theory of Literature*.

“If we removed the concept of colour from poetry, it would be impossible to avoid the self-destruction of a large number of poems. They would become empty and tasteless. In regards to classic Chinese poems, it can be said that they stand out especially in regards to their appreciation

⁵⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 109.

of colour. Red light and green wine (紅燈綠酒), white flower of floating weed and red flower of water pepper (紅蓼白蘋), green wheat and yellow rape blossom (麦綠菜黃), white cloud and blue mountain (白雲青山), these words are always used in the poems and they add an exquisite flavour to them.”⁵⁶

Indeed, the white cloud and blue mountain appear many times in Sōseki's poems. They were important metaphors, used to express his state of mind.

Poem 11

Part 3

其三

其の三

江東避俗養天真 江東 俗を避けて 天真を養い

一代風流饒逝春 一代の風流 逝く春に饒す

誰知今日惜花客 誰か知らん 今日 花を惜しむの客

却是当年劍舞人 却って是れ 当年 劍舞の人なるを⁵⁷

You are staying in Mukōjima, in nourishing pure nature away from the mundane world.

A person with the most refined taste is saying farewell to the spring.

I wonder whether anyone knows that this person who is unable to part with flowers,

Was once in fact a person who danced with a sword.

Shichigon Zekku

In this poem, Sōseki is praising Shiki's artistic sensitivity and literary talent.

The person with the most refined taste (一代風流) refers to Shiki. In the last line, Sōseki introduces

⁵⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p 108.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p 110.

a different side of Shiki, depicting him as a person who danced with a sword (剣舞人). Shiki as a young boy, under the influence of the Freedom of Human Rights movement, had had an ambition to become a politician, Sōseki reminds us of this fact.⁵⁸ After the publication of *Nanakusa Shū*, Shiki increasingly devoted himself to poetry composition and the new poetic movement.⁵⁹ In 1892 Shiki gave up studying and became a newspaper journalist.

The next poem refers again to Shiki.

Poem12

Part 4

其の四

艶骨化成塚上苔 艶骨 化して成る 塚上の苔

于今江上杜鵑哀 今に于いて江上 杜鵑哀しむ

憐君多病多情処 憐れむ 君が多病多情の処

偏弔梅児薄命来 偏えに梅児の薄命を弔い来たるを⁶⁰

The beautiful bones of Umewaka Maru were transformed into fungus spread on top of a mound.

Even today, we can hear a little cuckoo crying sorrowfully on the shore of the Sumida River.

Sigh, my dear friend who has huge compassion is suffering from illness

And visits here (Sumida River) in order to mourn Umewaka Maru who was unfortunate and died young.

Shichigon Zekku

⁵⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, "Masaoka Shiki", p. 278.

⁵⁹ Matsui, Toshihiko. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Kashin Sha, Tokyo, 1986, p. 31-44.

⁶⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 111.

The subject matter of this poem is taken from one of the *Noh* plays, “Sumida River” (隅田川: *Sumida Gawa*) which tells the legend of a young boy, Umewaka Maru, the young son of a samurai family, who is kidnapped by human traffickers. Umewaka Maru dies by the shore of the Sumida River due to illness caused by the rough treatment he has endured. His mother, who in the end goes mad, chases after the kidnapers trying to save her son only to be told by a ferryman that her son has died. She goes to the spot where her son is buried and chants Buddhist sutras in front of it. The ghost of Umewaka appears and they speak to each other through the course of the night. However, when the sun rises the spirit of Umewaka disappears. The mound for Umewaka Maru still exists today in a temple in the Sumida district.

Shiki wrote about Umewaka Maru in *Nadeshiko no Maki* in *Nanakusa Shū*. A little cuckoo (杜鵑) is addressing Shiki, as the Chinese character for Shiki, 子規, also signifies cuckoo. Cuckoos are known to cry whilst bleeding. Shiki vomited blood on 9 May 1889 due to suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs, and for this reason chose the pen name Shiki. This poem shows clearly Soseki’s concern for his dear friend Shiki, who was beginning to show the symptoms of tuberculosis.

Sōseki maintained a keen interest in *Noh* plays and began to practice singing *Noh*, learning from a Hōshō school (宝生流) master in the later period. Sōseki said he didn’t like any other Japanese music except *Noh*. He explained that he had been learning for six to seven years, not for artistic appreciation but more as physical exercise using voice.⁶¹ According to his wife, Kyōko, Sōseki often enthusiastically practiced singing and was not concerned whether he was a good singer or not.⁶² Another factor that attracted him to *Noh* was the fact that many major plays were written by the son of the founder, a playwright and actor, Zeami, 世阿弥 (1363-1443), whose patron had been the third Shogun of Ashikaga Shogunate, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (足利義満, 1358-1408) from the

⁶¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, “Bun’shi no Seikatsu”, p. 428.

⁶² Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, “Utai no Keiko”, p. 198-202.

Muromachi period (室町時代, 1336-1573). Zeami was acquainted with Gozan monks and their literature both of which had been strongly influenced by Zen literature. Indeed, later in his life, Sōseki sought out poems by Gozan monks, and he was particularly fond of poems by Zekkai Chūshin (絶海中津, 1334-1405). It is clear that *Noh* plays and Gozan literature both played a part in shaping the aesthetic state which Sōseki called *fūryū*.

Within the nine poems composed for *Nanakusa Shū*, the next poem is an exception. Rather than addressing Shiki, Sōseki is expressing things about himself.⁶³

Poem 15

Part 7

其の七

洗尽塵懷忘我物 塵懷を洗い尽くして 我と物とを忘れ

只看窓外古松鬱 只だ見る 窓外 古松鬱たるを

乾坤深夜闕無声 乾坤 深夜 闕として声無く

黙坐空房如古仏 空房に黙坐して 古仏の如し⁶⁴

After washing off the thoughts attached to the mundane world, I lose the difference between myself and others and become one.

I just watch the bushy old pine tree outside of the window.

In the deep of the night there is no sound between Heaven and Earth.

I sit in silence like the statue of an old Buddha in an empty room.

Shichigon Zekku

This poem has a strong religious and philosophical flavour. The words 忘我, literally 'forgetting

⁶³ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobo, Tokyo, 1983, p. 26.

⁶⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 115.

oneself', describe a notion depicted in Zhuangzi, a concept which appears many times in different expressions in later chapters. The characters 乾坤, Heaven and Earth (Yin and Yang) from *the Book of Change* are once again employed. 空房, 'Empty room', appears in Zhuangzi's text, but as different Chinese characters, 虛室.

Sōseki also uses 忘我物, which taken literally means 'Forgetting the difference between self and others', in his essay for school work on 3 June 1889, one month after composing this poem. This essay is titled *Kyo I Ki Setsu* (居移気説・居は気を移すの説), meaning 'The place and environment you live in changes a person's attitude'. It appears in the third part of the essay, and reads thus.⁶⁵

[3]

既去寓于高田。地在都西。雖未能全絶車馬之音、門柳籬菊、環堵蕭然、乃讀書賦詩、悠然忘物我。居移気二焉。

既に去って高田に寓す。地は都の西に在り。未だ全くは車馬の音を絶つ能わずと雖も、門柳籬菊、環堵蕭然、乃ち書を読み詩を賦し、悠然として物我を忘る。居は気を移すの二なり。

I moved from my previous place to Takada. The place was in the west of Tokyo. Although it was impossible to shut away all the noises of cars and horses, the house had a willow tree at the gate, chrysanthemums at the fence, a tiny room and bareness, at last I was reading books and composing poems. In peaceful surroundings I forgot the difference between myself and others. This is the second example of the environment changing a person's attitude.

⁶⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 501.

Here Sōseki is talking about the time he moved in with his real family in *Takada no Baba*, leaving his adopted family in *Asakusa*. Sōseki was nine years old when he returned to his real family. In this short comment, Sōseki adopts the words used by Tao Yuanming (Jp. Tō En'mei; 陶淵明).⁶⁶ Ikka explains that words such as 車馬 'Carts and horses', 門柳籬菊 'Willow tree at the gate and chrysanthemums at the fence', 環堵蕭然 'A tiny room and bareness', 悠然 'In composure', all appear in the writings of Tao Yuanming. These words appear in 飲酒 *Drinking wine* and 五柳先生伝 *Biography of Mr. Five willows*, Tao Yuanming's auto-biography. All this shows that Sōseki, at this period, was keen to emulate Tao Yuanming's writing style and use of imagery, and indeed Sōseki's interest in Tao Yuanming continued throughout his life.⁶⁷

With this comment, Sōseki explains that while he is reading books and composing poems he forgets the difference between himself and others. This is an important statement, as 'Losing oneself' has the same meaning as 'The Void' (無) in Zen Buddhism and 'Becoming one with others' means 'Holding to one' (守一) in Daoism; both refer to meditative practice. Sōseki is already as a young man showing his interest in religious concepts. These ideas will evolve into the final religious thought, *sokuten kyoshi* (則天去私: Merge with Heaven, abandoning self), he developed in the last period of his life.

Sōseki began to compose *kanshi* inspired by his friend Masaoka Shiki, who had an immense influence upon the aesthetic taste of Sōseki, and who he regarded as a person who represents ultimate *fūryū*. Sōseki believed that colours, following the tradition of Chinese classic poems, were an important element in the composition of poetry, he also had an interest in *Noh*, which was influenced by Gozan literature from the Muromachi period. He showed a fondness for Tao

⁶⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 502.

⁶⁷ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, "Sōseki to Tō Enmei" p. 213-222.

Yuanming, and was influenced by his works. Sōseki's poems show his interests in the meditative practice of Daoism and Zen Buddhism which is to forget the difference between oneself and others and become one, or nothing, depending on one's view point.

BOKUSETSUROKU (木屑録)

Sōseki was inspired by Shiki's composition, *Nanakusa Shū*, to write *Bokusetsuroku* (木屑録: *Collection of wood shavings*) a travelogue of a journey around Bōsō Hantō (房総半島- Bōsō Peninsula) in September of the same year, 1889.

Bokusetsuroku comprised fourteen poems. Leaving the capital where rapid modernisation was taking place and travelling to Bōsō Hantō where he came into close contact with the local scenery and nature, inspired Sōseki to recall his poetic sensitivity and compose these poems. Luan commented, "It is clear that Sōseki was impressed by the natural beauty of the Bōsō Peninsula. For Sōseki, the journey to Bōsō was not just a sight-seeing trip but was a literary means of searching for the way in which to go beyond the concepts of realistic scenery, and see the world as depicted in Chinese poetry and *nanga* style painting."⁶⁸

His main poetic style of this period is *Shichigon Zekku* which was a part of a new style of poetry established in China during the Tang period (618-907) but he also composed two old style poems, *Shichigon Koshi* (七言古詩- poems consisting of seven Chinese characters in many lines), as well as *Shichigon Risshi*. According to Nakamura, corresponding lines in Sōseki's compositions of *Shichigon Risshi* were becoming more colourful compared to previous poems and his ability to express feeling in a compressed form is certainly more refined.

Sōseki showed *Bokusetsuroku* to Shiki who was astonished and impressed by Sōseki's ability. Sōseki and Shiki became close friends inspiring each other from this period onward until Shiki's death.

⁶⁸ Luan, David. "The Study on the travel book: Bokusetsu-roku." *Jōsai University Journal* 141, Saitama, 1976, p. 2.

Tuck noted their friendship as follows, “*Bokusetsuroku*, which seems to have been written exclusively for Shiki’s eyes, includes several examples of rhyme-following sequences conducted via letters the two exchanged over the summer. In these cordial exchanges we see evidence of the deepening friendship between the two men, but they are also of considerable interest from the point of view of literary history.”⁶⁹

The following is a translation of Shiki’s criticism.

The master fisherman can catch fish without trying too hard, as fish fight each other to get caught. The poor fisherman tries hard to choose the food, and the place to fish, but he cannot catch fish.

I do not think that Sōseki spent too much time thinking when he was composing Chinese poems and writings. He was able to compose colourful sentences and beautiful poems without much effort.

When he describes the mountain and river, he expresses them as though they are precious jades. Sometimes the expression is extremely soft, and other times, it is wildly free. It feels as though the poem leapt off the paper like a mountain, the next moment bubbling like a sea wave on the tip of a brush. When he depicts details of fish and birds, the expression is not too long, instead it is short and sharp and easy to understand. It is similar to western paintings, startling people with their fine technique and detail or Chinese paintings impressing people by their superb aesthetic taste.

Alas, Sōseki, what method of expression did you study and master in order to reach such a high standard? Old masters used to say that one has to read millions

⁶⁹ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 127.

of books and travel millions of miles in order to grasp the way of brush and ink. This is the perfect description of the level you have reached. However, you have not read millions of books yet. At the same time, your composition has the real essence of the poetry and writing that belonged to the old masters. You have not travelled millions of miles like the old masters, yet despite your lack of experience your poems and writing are as high as Tai Shan, which represents stability and courage, and as long as the Yangtze Rivers.

...You are a born genius, and you were born with talent, I cannot find any other way to describe your ability...

As a class mate at prep school, we hung round together for a long time. However, we became true friends from January in Meiji 22. When I came to Tokyo, I spent a couple of years looking for a true friend but I did not meet anyone. I began to know you as we shared the same interest in going to Yose (Comic story telling house). I felt that I had met a person I really wanted to be friends with and we became true friends. Recently, our friendship has become closer and I am overwhelmed by it. I feel that I have gained one of the most important friends, and please understand how happy I am to have you as a friend.

I knew that you were good at English literature but it took long time before I came across your Chinese Writing. In other words, this travelogue of Bōsō Peninsula is the first time that I have come across your composition in Chinese writing.

When we entered the prep school for university, we studied western languages together. You showed a superior talent in western languages. You spoke western languages as though you spoke Japanese. I thought that people who are good at western languages were poor at eastern languages. Therefore, I believed that Sōseki could not understand the profound essence of Japanese and Chinese

literature. It was only when I came to read the poems and writings contained in *Bokusetsuroku* that I became aware of your natural talent.

As far as I know, people who compose poems well, stand out for their skill in expression. But they are often detached from the history and diversity of the expressive words and do not have an international aspect to their studies which can help contribute to the quality of poetry and writing. Sōseki, you have both of these qualities. You are a really unique and rare individual who may appear once in a million years. Luckily, I have become a close friend of yours, and have amassed a huge respect for you. In the past, I was shocked by your excellent command of English, and again, I was utterly astonished by reading *Bokusetsuroku*.

Are you going to surprise me again in the future? Show yet another hidden talent? With the great privilege of knowing you came the honour of reading your writing and also the opportunity to make a commentary. Now, I am returning the precious writing, please forgive me for making comments at the end.⁷⁰

Evening of 13 October 1889, written at the house of Fable at Dong-tai Shan in Shimo-Negishi.

Humbly written by Fisherman Tsunenori.

Judging from Shiki's commentary on *Bokusetsuroku*, Sōseki's talent and skills in composing *kanshi* were, already at this stage, of a high standard. It is true to say that his comprehension and application of Chinese texts and his craftsmanship were now showing through. We are now going to examine selected poems from the fourteen poems that make up *Bokusetsuroku* (in *Zenshū*, no. 18-31)

Sōseki commented in part eight of *Bokusetsuroku* on the inspiration behind the next poem's composition. He lived in the city and quenched his thirst for the appreciation of nature by looking at brush and ink paintings. Fortunately, he had a chance to travel to Bōsō Peninsula and witnessed the

⁷⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 567-9.

clouds around the mountain gathering and dispersing, and the tidal waves coming in and out. He felt calm in the midst of nature and a poetic sensitivity arose. This is the poem he composed.

Poem 20

Part 3

其三 其の三

二十余年住帝京 二十余年 帝京に住み

倪黄遺墨暗傷情 倪黄の遺墨 暗かに情を傷ましむ

如今閑却壁間画 如今 閑却す 壁間の画

百里丹青入眼明 百里の丹青 眼に入って明らかなればなり⁷¹

I have lived in Tokyo over twenty years.

I imagined famous mountains and beautiful rivers and found solace in looking at brush and ink paintings by master artists such as Ni Zan and Huang Gongwang.

Now, I am not looking at the painting on the wall

But the real vividly coloured scenery stretches a hundred miles in front of me.

Shichigon Zekku.

This poem demonstrates his continued interest in brush and ink painting. He shows his knowledge of artists, mentioning two of the four great brush and ink painters, Ni Zan (倪瓚, 1302-1374) and Huang Gongwang (黄公望, 1269-1354), from the Yuan (元 1271-1368) period in China. It is important to note that Sōseki observed in *Bokusetsuroku* how he became a composed being through watching nature and how poetic inspiration sprang up under such conditions. Nature plays a vital role in Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions. Nakamura pointed out that Sōseki had written about his

⁷¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 121.

childhood memories of *nanga*⁷². The following is a translation of an extract from *Omoidasu kotonado*, “There were about 50 to 60 hanging scrolls at home when I was a child. Sometimes they were hung in the alcove, sometimes in the storage area and sometimes they were hung for airing. I looked at each one in detail. It was my pleasure to spend time squatting in silence in front of the brush and ink paintings gazing at them for hours. Even now, I prefer to spend my time looking at paintings I like rather than going to an exaggerated densely-coloured play which resembles nothing more than an overturned paint box.

I loved the *nanga* paintings in colour the best... *Nanga* was my hobby. I didn’t have a chance to study it or become a specialist in judging art objects. My taste in *nanga* has remained the same since then. As a result, although it might be a bad habit of mine to love brush and ink paintings, I have at least managed to avoid the mistake of judging the paintings by the painters. It was the same with *kanshi* which I began to like around the same time I became interested in brush and ink painting. I felt no obligation to see them if I didn’t like them although they might be painted by great artists or they might be what is considered a real ancient masterpiece. (I divide *kanshi* into three types; one third of them I really like; one third of them I speak in dispraise of; one third of them I don’t have any opinion about whether I like or hate them.)”⁷³

Soseki says that he developed his love of *nanga* and *kanshi* at a similar time in his childhood. *Nanga* and *kanshi* were inseparable for Soseki until the end of his life. We will discuss the relationship between *nanga* and *kanshi* closely in Chapter Four.

We now move on to the next poem. Sōseki examined the background to the composition of poem 21 in *Bokusetsuroku*. The other four people with whom Sōseki was travelling did not understand his poems and his aesthetic sensitivity in regards to the appreciation of nature. Some got drunk and became loud, others had a voracious appetite which shocked even the person serving them. After having a bath, they played cards to pass the hours. Meanwhile Sōseki spent his time alone in

⁷² Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 32.

⁷³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. “Omoidasu kotonado” 24. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 426-427. (translation of original)

solitary contemplation. Sometime while in the process of composing a poem he would groan in agony. His friends laughed at him and called him an eccentric, but he did not care. Sōseki used the commentary made by Shao Changheng (邵長蘅, 1637-1704), a literatus from the Qing period in China, in order to describe his feeling, citing a paragraph from Shao's writing with which he sympathised. The following is the citation.

“When I am developing an idea, I look like a person suffering from a great pain. After I have got an idea, I cry out for joy and go crazy, walking around my desk dragging a cloth behind me.”⁷⁴

Sōseki said that he was just like the type Shao described. Others did not understand him, as they did not understand the labour involved in artistic production. Sōseki is acknowledging to himself that he was in sympathy with the Chinese literati artists from the past. We can see just how greatly he was in sympathy with Chinese artists by the fact that he cited Shao's phrase on two separate occasions, once in “*Jinsei*” in 1896, and then in “*Bunten to Geijutsu*” in 1912.⁷⁵ Let's examine the poem.

Poem 21

Part 4

其四 其の四

南出家山百里程 南のかた家山を出でて 百里の程

海涯月黒暗愁生 海涯 月黒く 暗愁生ず

濤声一夜欺郷夢 濤声 一夜 郷夢を欺き

⁷⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 524. (translation of original)

Note that Shao Chengheng is also known as Shao Qingmen (邵青門). There is an identical part in 邵青門「青門老圃伝」compiled in “宋元明清名家鈔”, kept in Sōseki's own library.

⁷⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 514.

漫作故園松籟声 漫りに作す 故園松籟の声⁷⁶

When I go far away from home and lodge at the seaside,

The moon is dark and a faint sadness emerges.

I hear the sound of waves the whole night and am not sure whether I am dreaming of my hometown.

I think I hear the sound of rattling pine trees, blown here by a wind from my true hometown.

Shichigon Zekku.

Sōseki explains the background to this poem in *Bokusetsuroku* part ten. He lay alone at night while the others slept listening to the sound of waves crashing into each other. At first, he thought it was the sound made by pine trees. He recalled a past memory of when he was a child at home. It was a very cold day, he shut the windows and read a book. The stars were shining high up in the sky, and a dry wind was blowing through the pine trees making a rattling sound. Since then several years had gone by, and he had not made progress in his studies. He felt he was getting old idly wasting his time visiting the sea and mountains. Looking back at the past when he used to study hard he felt ashamed of himself and his poor rate of progress.⁷⁷ Sōseki felt he was under achieving in the study of Chinese Classics, as he was obliged to dedicate his time to studying English Literature at University.

Nakamura comments on how depicting 'Home'/'Hometown' three times with different characters, 家、郷、故園 is according to the rules of composing *kanshi* not considered a favourable technique.⁷⁸ Sōseki was well aware of this fact, but his description of home using different characters gives a deeper and more detailed meaning to the poem. The character used the first time, 家, refers to his actual physical home. The home used on the second occasion, 郷, depicts

⁷⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 121.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 525-6.

⁷⁸ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobo, Tokyo, 1983, p. 33.

the “Not-Even-Anything Village” (無可有鄉) from Zhuangzi, a place we discussed earlier, the metaphysical world existing inside the mind.

Sōseki attached the word, 'Dream', to the character representing home town. He was dreaming of the metaphysical land (鄉夢) and referring to a passage from Zhuangzi, where Zhuangzi dreams of being a butterfly. The following is a citation from Chapter Two of Zhuangzi, ‘Discussion on Making All Things Equal’.

Once Chang Chou [Zhuang Zhou] dreamt he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn’t know he was Chuang Chou [Zhuang Zhou]. Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Chuang Chou [Zhuang Zhou]. But he didn’t know if he was Chuang Chou [Zhuang Zhou] who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Chou [Zhuang Zhou]. Between Chuang Chou [Zhuang Zhou] and a butterfly there must be some distinction! This is called the Transformation of Things.⁷⁹

Further inside his dream land, Sōseki heard the sound of a pine tree (松籟, shōrai) rattling in the wind, in reality the sound of waves. The character for the sound, 籟 (Rai), is taken from the Music of Heaven (天籟, ten’rai), from the same chapter in Zhuangzi. Here is the relevant passage in Zhuangzi.

Tzu-Ch’i [Zi Qi] of South Wall sat leaning on his armrest, staring up at the sky and breathing- vacant and far away, as though he’d lost his companion. Yen Ch’eng Tzu-yu [Yan Cheng Zi-you], who was standing by his side in attendance, said, “What is this?” Can you really make the body like a withered tree and the mind like dead ashes? The man leaning on the armrest now is not the one who leaned on it

⁷⁹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 49.

before!”

Tzu-ch’i [Zi Qi] said, “You do well to ask the question, Yen [Yan]. Now I have lost myself. Do you understand that? You hear the piping of men, but you haven’t heard the piping of earth. Or if you’ve heard the piping of earth, you haven’t heard the piping of Heaven!”

Tzu-yu [Zi-you] said, “May I venture to ask what this means?”

Tzu-ch’i [Zi Qi] said, “The Great Clod belches out breath and its name is wind. So long as it doesn’t come forth, nothing happens. But when it does, then ten thousand hollows begin crying wildly. Can’t you hear them, long drawn out? In the mountain forests that lash and sway, there are huge trees a hundred spans around with hollows and openings like noses, like mouths, like ears, like jugs, like cups, like mortars, like rifts, like ruts. They roar like waves, whistle like arrows, screech, gasp, cry, wail, moan and howl, those in the lead calling out yeee!, those behind calling out yuuu! In a gentle breeze they answer faintly, but in a full gale the chorus is gigantic. And when the fierce wind has passed on, then all the hollows are empty again. Have you never seen the tossing and trembling that goes on?”

Tzu-yu [Zi-you] said, “By the piping of earth, then, you mean simply [the sound of] these hollows, and by the piping of man [the sound of] flutes and whistles. But may I ask about the piping of Heaven?”

Tzu-ch’i [Zi Qi] said, “Blowing on the ten thousand things in a different way, so that each can be itself- all take what they want for themselves, but who does the sounding?”⁸⁰

According to his poem Sōseki heard the sound of pine trees rattling in the wind, this according to Zhuangzi is the music of the Earth. Sōseki differentiated the sounds created by the trees and waves,

⁸⁰ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 36-37.

and was not able to hear them as one sound. It is clear that Sōseki, at this point, was incapable of hearing the piping of Heaven. Hence his statement admitting in *Bokusetsuroku* that he had not progressed enough and how he was ashamed of his own incompetence. Sōseki expresses his feeling of under achievement by deliberately choosing the sound of a pine tree (松籟), rather than the piping of Heaven (天籟).

Returning back to the question of the characters used to describe 'Home' and 'Home town', the third version is 故園 (koen), which taken literally means 'Old Garden'. 故園 'Old Garden' rhymes with Li Bai's poem, titled "Listening to the sound of flute in the spring night at the town of Luo" (春夜洛城聞笛 "Chunye Luo Ching wen di").

誰家玉笛暗飛聲 誰が家の玉笛ぞ 暗に聲を飛ばす

散入春風滿洛城 散じて春風に入りて 洛城に滿つ。

此夜曲中聞折柳 此の夜 曲中に折柳を聞く

何人不起故園情 何人か起さざらん 故園の情 ⁸¹

Who is playing the flute? Its sound travels in the dark.

The sound melts in the spring wind and spreads everywhere within the town of Luoyang.

When the melody of "picking the young willow" is played amongst the tunes,

Everyone feels sentimental and yearns for their hometown.

Sōseki heard the sound of pine trees. This is the home town in abstract form, suggesting the world of brush and ink painting, as the pine tree and a humble hut with a little garden are quintessential subject matter often depicted in *nanga* paintings. So, in the third character for home town, he presents a visual image of the metaphysical home town loved by the great poets of the past.

During his near month long stay in Bōsō peninsula, Sōseki and Shiki exchanged letters. Sōseki

⁸¹ Matsuura, Tomohisa. Trans. & Ed. *Rihaku Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 98.

composed poem 23 responding to the second letter of Shiki, which contained a Shiki poem composed for Sōseki. Sōseki writes about this in part twelve of *Bokusetsuroku*. In order to have a better understanding of Sōseki's poem we will look at Shiki's poem first. The following is Shiki's poem.

Bokusetsuroku 12

子規の詩 (Poem composed by Shiki)

羨君房海酔鵝黄 羨む 君が房海鵝黄に酔い

鹹水医痾若薬傷 鹹水 痾を医すこと 傷に薬するが若く

黄卷青編時読罷 黄卷 青編 時に読み罷め

清風明月伴漁郎 清風 明月 漁郎を伴うを⁸²

I am envious of you getting intoxicated by the sea at Bōsō Peninsula.

Sea water can be a good cure for illness, in the same way that medicine cures a wound.

A yellow volume, blue edition, reading page by page.

Clear wind and bright moon, accompanying the fisherman.

Shichigon Zekku.

Sōseki made a comment on Shiki's poem saying the poem was good, but it was not true. Sōseki was so worn out that for a long time he had not had the energy to read books. He says that Shiki knew very well how lazy he was. Sōseki did not understand why Shiki had written this poem, and composed the following to console himself.

Poem 23

Part 6

⁸² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 530.

その六

脱却塵懷百事閑 塵懷を脱却して 百事閑なり

儘遊碧水白雲間 遊ぶに儘す 碧水白雲の間

仙郷自古無文字 仙郷 古より 文字無く

不見青編只見山 青編を見ずして 只山を見る⁸³

Away from the mundane world, everything is peaceful.

I am spending time playing in the other worldly space filled with green water and white clouds.

From ancient times no written words have existed in the world of the hermit.

I gaze at the mountain instead of looking at books.

Shichigon Zekku.

This poem is as always, a subtle and beautiful attempt, using precise terse language and images to depict the world of the hermit. The expression such as ‘The other worldly space filled with green water and white clouds’ (碧水白雲) is often used in Sōseki’s *kanshi* symbolising the world cut off from the mundane world. We can see the origin of the source for ‘White clouds’ from Zhuangzi, ‘Heaven and Earth’ (天地編). In this chapter, Zhuangzi wrote “乘彼白雲至于帝郷” (jp. “彼の白雲に乗じて帝郷に至る”)⁸⁴, meaning “To go to the place of the hermit by riding the white clouds”.

The significance of green water and white clouds, representing the other worldly place was important for Sōseki, especially ‘White clouds’ which had special meaning for him, he uses it sixteen times in his collection of *Kanshi*.⁸⁵ The citation referring to ‘White clouds’ originates in Zhuangzi, Chapter Twelve.

⁸³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 125.

⁸⁴ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 166.

⁸⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 126.

Yao was seeing the sights at Hua when the border guard of Hua said, "Aha-a sage! I beg to offer up prayers for the sage. They will bring the sage long life!"

Yao said, "No, thanks."

"They will bring the sage riches!"

Yao said, "No, thanks."

"They will bring the sage many sons!"

Yao said "No thanks."

"Long life, riches, many sons- these are what all men desire!" said the border guard. "How is it that you alone do not desire them?"

Yao said, "Many sons mean many fears. Riches mean many troubles. Long life means many shames. These three are of no use in nourishing Virtue- therefore I decline them."

The border guard said, "At first, I took you for a sage. Now I see you are a mere gentleman. When Heaven gives birth to the ten thousand people, it is certain to have jobs to assign them. If you have many sons and their jobs are assigned them, what is there to fear? If you share your riches with other men, what troubles will you have? The true sage is a quail at rest, a little fledgling at its meal, a bird in flight who leaves no trail behind. When the world has the Way, he joins in the chorus with all other things. When the world is without the Way, he nurses his Virtue and retires in leisure. And after a thousand years, should he weary of the world, he will leave it and ascend to the immortals, riding on those white clouds all the way up to the village of God. The three worries you have cited never touch him, his body is forever free of peril. How can he suffer any shame?"

The border guard turned and left. Yao followed him, saying,
"Please – I would like to ask you ..."

“Go away!”⁸⁶

Zhuangzi tells us that white clouds take people to somewhere outside of the ordinary world where there are no attachments and worries. As far as Soseki is concerned white clouds represent a spiritual land inside his mind where poetical sensitivities reside. During this period Sōseki is practicing how to reach that state of mind.

Sōseki also introduces the notion of Zen philosophy here using the expression ‘No written words have existed’ (無文字), taken from the idea of direct transmission of the teaching from teacher to pupil, without using the written word (不立文字) in the teaching of Zen. The expression of ‘Watching the mountain’ (見山) refers to a poem from Tao Yuanming’s *Drinking wine* (飲酒), poem number five of twenty. Let’s refer to the poem.

採菊東籬下 菊を採る 東籬の下、
悠然見南山 悠然として南山を見る。⁸⁷

Picking the chrysanthemums flowering at the bottom of the East fence,
In composure I watch the South Mountain.

Sōseki in this poem, although he said he had not achieved enough in his life, shows his preference for “Forgetting self and watching nature in silence” rather than reading books. This shows again his interest in the spirituality of Zen and Daoist thought.

Shiki’s criticism of this poem is that although not bad, it did not emerge from a real feeling, he had composed it to console himself. Sōseki himself admits in one of the poems that he had not yet grasped the true poetic essence as he could not hear the music of Heaven. More importantly,

⁸⁶ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 130-131.

⁸⁷ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 208-209.

however, it is clear that nature, existing in both the real and metaphysical world, is one of the most important elements in Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions. Sōseki also takes the expression 'white clouds' (白雲) from Zhuangzi, an image which would appear many times in Sōseki's poetry as it has a special meaning expressing a particular aesthetic state of mind and his spiritual world. In addition, Sōseki introduced the idea of not relying upon words, which is one of the important Zen beliefs. Furthermore, in order to deepen the power of the poem and strengthen the link with the insights from Chinese Literature Sōseki continuously took words from poems by Tao Yuanming. Before ending the analysis of the poems from *Bokusetsuroku*, we look at a poem Sōseki attached as a post script to *Bokusetsuroku*. Here he expresses his self-deprecation and his love of nature.

Poem 31

"Epilogue for *Bokusetsuroku*"

自嘲書木屑録後 自嘲 木屑録の後に書す

白眼甘期与世疎 白眼 甘んじて期す 世と疎なるを

狂愚亦懶買嘉誉 狂愚 亦た懶し 嘉誉を買うに

為譏時輩背時勢 時輩を譏らんが為に 時勢に背き

欲罵古人对古書 古人を罵らんと欲して 古書に対す

才似老駘驚且駭 才は老駘に似て 驚 且つ駭

識如秋蛻薄兼虚 識は秋蛻の如く 薄 虚を兼ね

唯羸一片烟霞癖 唯だ羸す 一片 烟霞の癖

品水評山臥草廬 水を品し 山を評して 草廬に臥す⁸⁸

⁸⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 139.

I accept the fact that I drifted from the world, I show the white of my eyes when people I am not interested in approach me.

I am an eccentric who has no interest in fame.

I go against the trends of the time by criticising the powerful people of the time.

I am learning from classic books in order to criticise men of old.

I am slow and stupid like an old draught horse.

My knowledge is thin and empty like the shell of an insect.

But I have a habit of loving nature.

I live in a simple hut appreciating the river and mountain.

Shichigon Risshi

'White of my eyes' (白眼) in the opening line refers to Yuan Ji (J. Gen'seki 阮籍, 210-263), a philosopher and literatus from Wei in the three kingdoms period of China. He was one of the 'Seven Sages of the Bamboo Groove', and is famous for his compilation of poems, *Yong-huai Shi Ba Shi Er Shou* (詠懷詩八十二首). This compilation of poems uses metaphor to express the depressed feeling that accompanied living life in a dark society. His works had an influence upon many poets from later generations, such as Li Bai (J. Li Haku, 李白, 701-762) and Tao Yuanming. It is said that Yuan Ji's sharp sensitivity captures in a timeless manner the loneliness of human existence.⁸⁹ We can thus understand the reason why Sōseki sympathised with Yuan Ji's poems and thoughts as loneliness was an important issue for Sōseki.

Sōseki uses this expression, 'White of my eyes' again, in poem 56, written when he was living in Matsuyama. As we can see from the translation, white eyes symbolise a cold and unwelcoming attitude. He is stating how he does not get on with people whose interest is in becoming famous and powerful.

As regards line four, it would be interesting to know which classic he was referring to when he

⁸⁹ Matsuura, Tomohisa. Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 35-36.

writes of 'Men of old'. Unfortunately, the reference here has yet to be unearthed. Shiki made a comment that lines five and six do not work in the poem. Perhaps he thought they are a little too self-pitying and fail to match the inner poetical strength of the rest of his work. In the final two lines Sōseki emphasises where his poetic sympathies lie.

This poem summarises Sōseki's stubborn and eccentric character. He is a man who is not moving through the world for the sake of becoming famous and powerful, an attitude he maintained until the end of his life. He clearly demonstrates his love of nature and *kanshi* composition.

In letters to Shiki written in December 1889 and again in January 1890, Sōseki gives some advice to Shiki who did nothing more the whole day than write. Sōseki stresses the importance of ideas more than rhetoric. He writes, at times employing English, that "Writing is an idea which is expressed by means of words on paper. Therefore, in my opinion, the idea is the essence of the writing and the arrangement of words an element which does not stand in the same ranking as the 'idea'."⁹⁰ Sōseki stresses the importance of developing ideas and knowledge through acquiring culture and defines culture as "Having awareness of the ideas which have been said and known in the world". We can see one reason for Sōseki's interest in composing *kanshi*, as Sōseki considered *kanshi* to be a means of expressing ideas in a concentrated form adapting knowledge from the past.

JOURNEY TO HAKONE

After graduating from The First Advanced Middle School, in September 1890 (Meiji 23), Sōseki entered Tokyo Imperial University. In August and September, before starting university, he travelled to Hakone (箱根) where he composed thirteen poems. There was a reason for Sōseki leaving Tokyo; Etō informs us that he suspects Sōseki had fallen in love with his sister-in-law, Tose, the wife of his third brother, Kazusaburō. The couple had married in 1888 and Sōseki went to stay with them in the house where he was born. However, there is no convincing evidence available regarding Etō's claim.

⁹⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 15-19.

Sōseki and Tose were the same age and Sōseki held her in high regard. This is demonstrated by Sōseki's comment about how enlightened a person she had been in a letter to Shiki just after her death in August 1891.⁹¹ According to Eto, Sōseki and Tose seemed to get on very well in contrast to Sōseki's brother who showed very little interest in his wife, and began to spend much of his time away from home, returning late at night. As well as this, Kazusaburō was not so talented, he worked as a local officer, whereas Sōseki, was on a much higher level of society. Sōseki had been lonely since he was a little boy; Tose was the only family member who showed kindness and genuine interest in him after his mother's death.⁹²

Other scholars hold an opposing view. Wada Toshio, goes against the opinion that Sōseki's pessimism was caused by his hidden passion for Tose. Wada referenced the opinion of Komiya Toyotaka, one of the main students of Sōseki. According to Wada, Komiya felt that the cause of Sōseki's pessimism was the fact he could not get on with people and society in general, as he was stubborn and foolishly eccentric. Wada agrees with Komiya's view and adds his own. Wada says that Sōseki was angry at the selfishness and the unkindness of people and could not bear the complicated worldly conventions which restricted his life.⁹³

We now examine a poem composed one year before Sōseki reveals his pessimism to Shiki. In line four he introduces the image of a beautiful, mysterious, anonymous lady. This poem was inserted in his letter to Shiki, dated 20 September 1889.

Poem 32

“No Title” 無題

抱劍聽龍鳴 劍を抱きて 龍鳴を聴き

讀書罵儒生 書を読んで 儒生を罵る

⁹¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 32.

⁹² Etō, Jun. *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*. Vol. 1, Shinchō Sha, Tokyo, 1970, p. 140.

⁹³ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki to Shiki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 208-2011.

如今空高逸 如今 空しく高逸

入夢美人声 夢に入る 美人の声⁹⁴

When I was a vigorous youth, I used to hold a sword listening to its sound so similar to the cry of a dragon,

I also read a lot of books in order to make fun of Confucian students.

Those days have passed, and these days, I am vacant and refined,

Listening in my dreams to the voice of a beautiful lady.

Gogon Zekku

In his letter to Shiki, Sōseki says the poem depicts his current situation. He explains that the first line evokes his youthful period, the second line refers to his life at sixteen to seventeen years old and the last two lines concern the present period. The characters, cry of a dragon (龍鳴) are taken from an old story from the Qin period, and are also found in one of the verses composed by Li Bai (701-762), who was a poet from the Tang period.⁹⁵ The second line depicts him as a youth who was not fond of students who study only to become a government official.

In the third line, Sōseki clearly shows his interest in the concept of emptiness (空), which he associated with the idea of detaching oneself from society.

Nearly one year later, in August 1890, Sōseki, in a letter to Shiki, composed another poem. Compared with the poem composed in the previous year, Sōseki now shows agony and despair. Sōseki wrote to Shiki expressing this feeling of pessimism. In his letter, Sōseki confessed that he felt lost, his heart was causing worldly desire to burn hard while he waited for enlightenment to come, but it never arrived. His desire was getting strong like a rough wave on the sea, and he really didn't know when he would reach enlightenment.⁹⁶ It is clear that Sōseki was suffering from some strong

⁹⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 141.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

⁹⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 21-23.

kind of emotional urge which he was trying to suppress.

In order to come to terms with the situation Sōseki cited Shakespeare.

“We are such stuff

As dreams are made of; and our little life

Is rounded by a sleep.”⁹⁷ (taken from Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, scene 4)

Sōseki says that he knew that life before and after death was sleep and life itself was a dream, and he felt pity for himself for not being enlightened to an adequate level. Sōseki gave a name to his pessimism, he called it a ‘Misanthropic’ illness.

As we already know, from his childhood, he had had a strong sense of justice, and had hated lies and not being truthful. He found himself trapped between his desire and his conscience. It is also to be taken into account as Wada states, that the cause of his pessimism might well have been due to his not being able to get on with the world; after all, Sōseki readily admitted to being an eccentric. From what we can glean it seems likely that his affection towards someone is clearly one of the reasons that he had to go away and that in Hakone he hoped to calm his feelings down and bring sense back to his mind. Before he left, Sōseki, in a letter to Shiki, composed a long poem, *Koshi* (古詩).

Poem 35

“No Title” 無題

仙人墮俗界 仙人 俗界に墮つれば

遂不免喜悲 遂に喜悲を免れず

啼血又吐血 啼血 又た吐血

⁹⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 23.

憔悴憐君姿 憔悴 君が姿を憐れむ

漱石又枕石 漱石 又た枕石

固陋歎吾痴 固陋 吾が痴を歎ぶ

君痴猶可癒 君が痴 猶お癒す可く

僕痴不可医 僕が痴 医す可からず

素懷定沈鬱 素壞 定めて沈鬱ならん

愁緒乱如糸 愁緒 乱れて糸の如し

浩歌時幾曲 浩歌 時に幾曲

[一句欠]

一曲唾壺碎 一曲 唾壺碎け

二曲双涙垂 二曲 双涙垂る

曲闕呼咄咄 曲闕りて呼ぶこと咄咄

衷情欲訴誰 衷情 誰にか訴えんと欲する

白雲蓬勃起 白雲 蓬勃として起こり

天際看蛟螭 天際に蛟螭を見る

笑指函山頂 笑って函山の頂を指さし

去臥葦湖湄 去きて葦湖の湄に臥せん

歲月固悠久 歲月 固より悠久

宇宙独無涯 宇宙 独り涯無し

蜉蝣飛湫上 蜉蝣 湫上を飛べば

大鵬嗤其卑 大鵬 其の卑きを嗤う

嗤者亦泯滅 嗤う者も亦た泯滅す

得喪皆一時 得喪 皆一時

寄語功名客 語を寄す 功名の客に

役役欲何為 役役 何をか為さんと欲すと⁹⁸

No Title

The hermit falls down into the mundane world

And inevitably avoids getting involved with the joy and sorrow that happens there.

Vomiting blood again and again.

It is painful to hear of how you have been suffering.

Just like in the story about the origin of my name, Sōseki,

I am amusing myself by stubbornly insisting in not following the common view of the world.

Your illness can be cured,

But the foolishness of my character cannot be improved.

I have a sentimental character

And my heart is muddled with sorrow like an entangled thread,

Sometime, I sing a couple of songs out loud.

Missing line

I sing the first verse, taking the rhythm by hitting the spittoon and smashing it.

By the time I sing the second verse, I have become emotional and tears start to drop.

When I finish a song, I make a noise with my tongue,

⁹⁸ Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 145-146.

overwhelmed by my emotion, as I do not have anyone to reveal my feelings to.

A large mass of white clouds begins to emerge,

I see the mystical dragon far away on the horizon.

With a smile on my face I point at Mount Hakone,

and head for Lake Ashino in order to stay away from the mundane world.

Time and tide are eternal,

and the universe has no end.

A day-fly soars above a puddle

A large bird ridicules its small scale.

The one who ridicules will also perish one day,

Loss and gain are transient phenomena.

I would like to ask people who are so busy competing for fame and power,

What is it you are trying to achieve by working so hard in worldly affairs?

Gogon Koshi

Sōseki, until line sixteen, is expressing both sorrow for himself at this point in his life and also sorrow for his best friend, Shiki, who was suffering from the symptoms of tuberculosis. The set of four verses after that, lines seventeen to twenty show a shift in his state of mind. It is a transitional point from a mundane to an anti-mundane world. We can clearly sense the transformation of the mood of the poem. The set of eight verses at the end are an expression of his thought derived from the stories of Zhuangzi.

The opening line describing a hermit falling down into the mundane world has a similarity with Tao Yuanming's poem, *Gui Yuantian Ju* (歸園田居), first poem, third verse. Tao's line is "I drop down in the dusty net by mistake" (誤落塵網中 誤って塵網の中に落ち).⁹⁹ Sōseki refers to Tao's poetry throughout his life, as Sōseki sympathised with Tao's attitude as a literatus who left his position as a

⁹⁹ Matsueda, Takeo & Wada, Takeshi trns. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 94.

government official and went back to live in his home where surrounded by nature he composed poems. Tao Yuanming was Sōseki's role model, we will hear more of Tao's influence on Sōseki in a later chapter.

After lamenting about the suffering in the mundane world, Sōseki knows that the only cure for his suffering of mind is to return to nature. In line seventeen, by depicting the image of emerging white clouds he suggests that he wants to go to "Not-Even-Anything Village". In line nineteen, Sōseki's intention of leaving Tokyo is clear, as the line says "I point at Mount Hakone with a smile on my face". This line resembles verse six from poem five of *Drinking Wine* by Tao. The verse says "I see the Mountain of South in composure" (悠然見南山 悠然として南山を見る), which we discussed before.

To round off the poem, Sōseki moves to the metaphysical world, expressing his thought in eight lines. He begins to talk about the vastness of time and space in line twenty-one and twenty-two. From line twenty-three to the final line twenty-eight, Sōseki discusses philosophy citing Zhuangzi. In lines twenty-three and twenty-four. Sōseki quotes the opening part of Zhuangzi, Chapter One, 'Free and Easy Wandering'. This tells of a day-fly (蜉蝣) who represents the earthy and petty human world and a big bird (大鵬) symbolising a transcendental being freed from all earthy affairs. According to Zhuangzi, only a transcendental being can liberate human beings and bring beauty, bliss and harmony to the world.¹⁰⁰

Sōseki being an individual who did not like to blindly follow other people's ideas, gives a twist and challenges the superiority of the transcendental being in line twenty-five and twenty-six. Sōseki says that there is a time in the future when even a transcendental being will vanish. So, gain and loss are transient phenomenon, and there is really, in the final analysis, no difference between the two states.

In lines twenty-seven and twenty-eight, Sōseki communicates with the audience. In line twenty-

¹⁰⁰ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 6.

seven, he clarifies to whom he is addressing his message. In line twenty-eight, he questions people who are busy becoming powerful and famous in the earthly world and why and what they are so busy working to achieve. In line twenty-eight, Sōseki uses the word ‘Working so hard’ (役役) from Zhuangzi Chapter Two, ‘Discussion on Making All Things Equal’. It perfectly illustrates what Sōseki wants to say. Below is a citation from the chapter.

Once a man receives this fixed bodily form, he holds on to it, waiting for the end. Sometimes clashing with things, sometimes bending before them, he runs his course like a galloping steed, and nothing can stop him. Is he not pathetic? Sweating and labouring to the end of his days and never seeing his accomplishment, utterly exhausting himself and never knowing where to look for rest – can you help pitying him? I’m not dead yet! He says, but what good is that? His body decays, his mind follows it – can you deny that this is a great sorrow? Man’s life has always been a muddle like this. How could I be the only muddled one, and other men not muddled?¹⁰¹

At the end of the poem, Sōseki channels his passion and anger into a challenge to the establishment and authorities. A clear indication that Soseki’s sorrow was to a great degree caused by not getting on well with people whom he couldn’t respect. After composing this poem, Sōseki heads for Mount Hakone to calm down and seek time to rest his soul and allow it to heal by staying away from the restless world.

We now move on to examine the poems composed during his stay in Hakone. According to Luan’s research on the influence of Sōseki’s early Chinese poems composed on the journey to Hakone, he

¹⁰¹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 38.

first provides us with the opinion of his fellow researcher, Iida. Luan's summary of Iida's view is that firstly Sōseki used Tao Yuanming's works as a foundation, secondly, he often used technical terms taken from Zen texts, and thirdly, he composed many poems about plum blossoms. Luan's criticism of Iida's view is that Iida's view is lacking in an explanation as to where exactly Sōseki had encountered these texts and words.¹⁰² Luan's view is that Sōseki used *The selection of Tang poems* (唐詩選), *Compilation of poems from the Tang period* (三体詩), Tu Fu (杜甫) and Su Shi (蘇軾).

This study's focus here is to analyse the influence of religious philosophies upon Sōseki's poems. For this Iida's view is best because he gives a philosophical background and this study refers to his interpretation for this poem. This study will focus on the poems depicting white clouds, poem 40 and 43, to see whether they cast a light upon the change in Sōseki's mental state.

Poem 40

Part 5

其五

百念冷如灰 百念 冷えて灰の如く

靈泉洗俗埃 靈泉 俗埃を洗う

鳥啼天自曙 鳥啼いて 天自ら曙け

衣冷雨将来 衣冷かにして 雨将に來たらんとす

幽樹没青靄 幽樹 青靄に没し

閑花落碧苔 閑花 碧苔に落つ

悠悠歸思少 悠悠として 歸思少なく

¹⁰² Luan, David. "Sōseki no Shoki Kanshi ni Okeru chūgoku no Koten-shi no Eikyō nit suite- Hakone Ryokō no Rensaku wo Chūshin ni" *Chiba University "Shakai Bun'ka Kagaku Kenkyū"* No. 4, p. 8.

臥見白雲堆 臥して見る 白雲の堆きを¹⁰³

Endless worldly burning desires cooled down and burnt to ashes as I soaked myself in a healing, hot spring and washed away all the dust I carried from the mundane world.

In the mountain, I am woken up by birds chirping.

The sensation of my clothes cooling down tells me that rain is on its way.

A dark grove quickly disappears covered by a blue mist.

Flowers in tranquil existence drop their petals on the green moss.

It is amusing to watch the transient changing phenomena in such a quiet and still world.

I am also beginning to calm down, I do not miss my home so desperately now.

I wish I could stay here, away from the city, lying down watching the white clouds spreading over the mountains.

Gogon Risshi

The first line, a stark and haunting image, 百念冷如灰 ‘*Endless worldly burning desires cooled down and burnt to ashes*’, rhyme-matches with Su Shi’s poem, “Sending of Master Can Liu” (送參寥師). Let us refer to Su Shi’s poem.

上人學苦空 上人 苦空を学び

百念已灰冷 百念 已に灰冷¹⁰⁴

The master learnt nothingness to a difficult level,

He banished endless worldly desires and became ash

If we recall the beginning section in Zhuangzi from Chapter Two, where the teacher is listening to the music of Heaven, we can see where Su Shi got his idea from. This is a citation from Zhuangzi.

¹⁰³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 155-156.

¹⁰⁴ Fukumitsu, Yu. *Soshoku no Jinsei Tetsugaku to ‘Sho’ Seisaku*. (Hakase Ronbun) Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, 2014, p. 84-85.

Tzu-Ch'i [Zi Qi] of South Wall sat leaning on his armrest, staring up at the sky and breathing- vacant and far away, as though he'd lost his companion. Yen Ch'eng Tzu-yu [Yan Cheng Zi-you], who was standing by his side in attendance, said, "What is this?" Can you really make the body like withered tree and the mind like dead ashes? The man leaning on the armrest now is not the one who leaned on it before!"¹⁰⁵

Yu explains that the expression 'Turn to ashes' is used in Zhuangzi to describe 'calmness'.¹⁰⁶ In line one and two, Sōseki explains that his soul has recovered. In line three to six, he describes that he is in a calm and tranquil state of mind brought on by his natural surroundings.

In line seven, he expresses the feeling that he is free from worldly cares and in the following line responds to the statement in line seven. In line eight, the words 'White clouds' are employed as he lies down looking at the sky. Sōseki is content, because he is in "Not-Even-Anything Village" surrounded by nature; a place where he feels safe and at ease. It is important to note that Soseki uses the expression of 'White clouds' for a calm and serene state of mind, the place where he feels safe and spiritual.

Shiki's commentary on this poem is that the ending couplet of lines seven and eight has the tenor of 'I see the Mountain of the South in composure', and as we know this poem is by Tao Yuanming. More evidence that Sōseki was inhabiting the aesthetic world of *kanshi*.

Poem 43

Part 8

其八

恰似泛波鷗 恰も似たり 波に泛かぶ鷗の

¹⁰⁵ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 36.

¹⁰⁶ Fukumitsu, Yu. *Su Shi's Philosophy of Life and the Aesthetics in Chinese Calligraphy*. PhD thesis, Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Hiroshima University, 2014, p. 85.

乗閑到处留 閑に乗じて 到る処に留まるに

溪声晴夜雨 溪声 晴夜の雨

山色暮天秋 山色 暮天の秋

家湿菌生壁 家湿りて 菌 壁に生じ

湖明月満船 湖明らかにして 月 船に満つ

帰期何足意 帰期 何ぞ意とするに足らん

去路白雲悠 去路 白雲悠たり ¹⁰⁷

I am like a seagull floating on a wave,

leisurely stopping here and there.

The sound of a mountain stream is like the sound of rain on a clear night,

The colour of the mountain is like the sky at dusk in the autumn.

There is moisture in the house, the walls are getting damp,

The lake is bright, and the boat is drenched in moonlight.

The time to go back home is getting closer but it does not bother me.

The white clouds will remain with me on my return home.

Gogon Risshi

A seagull appears in line one. A bird, according to Ikkai's interpretation which is often used as a symbol of freedom. Sōseki depicts his life in the mountain as being carefree and devoid of worldly regulation. After introducing the notion of freedom, lines three to six are all in praise of nature.

Yoshikawa and Ikkai suggest¹⁰⁸ that lines three and four refer to a poem by Su Shi, “東林の総長老に贈る” “Poem dedicated to the old teacher, the head of Dong-lin Temple”, expressing the sound of

¹⁰⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 160.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 41.

a mountain stream as the voice of sutra, and the colour of the mountain as the purified body. Su Shi attained enlightenment by listening to the sound of a mountain stream and also composed a poem for the Zen master of the Dong-lin Temple at Lu Shan (J. Rozan 廬山). Iida has the same view on line three, but line four reminds him of Tao's poem.

Yoshikawa says that the ending lines of seven and eight are rather difficult to understand. He gives his hypothetical interpretation as 'The day of leaving for home is getting closer, but no need to worry, as the white clouds send me off on the way back'.¹⁰⁹ Iida's interpretation of line seven is more or less similar to Yoshikawa. But his interpretation of line eight is different. Iida's interpretation of line eight is 'Returning home for me is not the path to Tokyo, but it is a path to a faraway sacred land where the white cloud is.'¹¹⁰ This sounds very similar to the notion of Return in Daoist teaching. However, it is not yet clear at this point. What is certain is that the image of a white cloud, "Not-Even-Anything Village" has emerged in Sōseki's mind, and he is returning home with it, he has found his spiritual land and has some peace of mind.

In summary, in the poems based around his Hakone Journey, Sōseki tells of his desire to detach himself from the worldly affairs which had caused him to feel sorrowful and pessimistic. He sought to empty his mind by travelling to the mountains and becoming close to nature far away from the distractions of Tokyo. The mountain symbolizes the poetic world of Tao Yuanming. When he goes to the mountain, he seeks to reside with the white clouds, his spiritual home, "Not-Even-Anything Village", the place where poems spring from. When he regains the white clouds in his mind, he is ready to go back to the mundane world and deal with worldly affairs.

He composed three more *kanshi* after the Hakone journey, but he soon became busy with his studies, as he was now a university student studying English literature at Tokyo Imperial University. In the following years, due to the efforts he had to make in order to be independent, he only found time to compose two poems, one in 1891, and another in 1894.

¹⁰⁹ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 41-42.

¹¹⁰ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 42-43.

CONCLUSION

Sōseki wrote *kanshi* in various phases of his life when he had the time, opportunity and inclination to explore their beautiful, delightful and poignant worlds. They would bring him both consolation, creative satisfaction and eventually some kind of enlightenment. Sōseki was introduced to Chinese literature from early on and was fond of the world of *Nanga* painting. His first set of *kanshi* were written at an early age, when he was 16-17 years old.

As in many of his later *kanshi*, his early poems contain many allusions to Chinese texts with ideas originating from the *I-Ching*, Zen religious texts, Laozi, Zhuangzi and poems by Tao Yuanming, Li Bai and Su Shi to name a few. These allusions and references were vital as Sōseki saw them as profound and beautiful images which increased the power of the poetry. The notion of loneliness was another theme of the poems, something that affected him a lot personally due to his troubled childhood which as well as loneliness had included, rejection and isolation.

However, after this early burst and despite his heartfelt love for Chinese poetry, it seems like worldly matters and his studies took him away from his first love as no more *kanshi* as far as we know were created until he met an important friend, Masaoka Shiki, who re-introduced the world of Chinese literature to Sōseki. Inspired by Shiki, Sōseki composed a number of poems over this period which were corrected by his friend. Loneliness, an enduring theme of Sōseki's work was featured. So were his unsuccessful attempts to find spiritual answers at the Enkaku-ji Zen temple. He continued to seek spirituality and illumination from Chinese religious thought using Zhuangzi and Zen texts in his *kanshi*. Expressions such as "Not-Even-Anything Village", "The piping of Heaven", "White clouds" and "Turning to ashes" appeared. All of them had their origin in classic Chinese texts and had a significant meaning in Soseki's *kanshi*.

Soseki did not belong to a professional *kanshi* circle, *kanshi* were part of Sōseki's personal development in which he could express his true feeling and spirituality. During this period, *kanshi* composition was extremely private and personal shared almost only with Shiki. *Kanshi* from this period served to bring Soseki and Shiki even closer together and helped forge a lifelong friendship.

The next stage in the development of his *kanshi* will not take place until he decides to leave his hometown Tokyo, and go and teach in Shiki's town of Matsuyama.

Chapter Two

Matsuyama & Kumamoto Period

INTRODUCTION

The second period of Sōseki's *kanshi* output coincided with circumstances which gave him the opportunity, space and time to return to a form he had left for a number of years. It covers the time (1895-1900) he spent teaching in Matsuyama and Kumamoto and ends with his departure from Kumamoto for London where he was sent by the government to study English literature.

It was a period in which Sōseki was able to develop his *kanshi* composition technique further. In Matsuyama, he was a part of a *haiku* circle that was set up when Shiki came to stay with Sōseki. Shiki began to hold a *haiku* composition meeting at the house Sōseki was renting at the time. So, inevitably, Sōseki joined and became enthusiastic about composing poems. Sōseki was a young single man living in the countryside where there were few cultural activities available compared with his hometown, Tokyo. Apart from teaching and visiting hot springs, he had a plenty of time to put his energy into increasing his understanding and practice of poetry composition. Sōseki composed five *kanshi* (poem numbers 53-58) and over four hundred and fifty *haiku* during his Matsuyama period.

After being disappointed by the experience in Matsuyama, Sōseki decided to move to another teaching position in Kumamoto. During this period, some of Sōseki's *kanshi* were corrected by his

colleague, Nagao Uzan (長尾雨山 1864–1942), whose *kanshi* were well respected. Sōseki got involved in composing *Koshi* (no restriction in how many lines) and Sōseki's *kanshi* works became more philosophical in character during this period. He composed 13 poems in his time in Kumamoto (poem number 59-72), and three poems after Kumamoto before he left for London (poem number 73-75). His *kanshi* from this period are more intricate, personal and emotionally engaged. They also show an increased understanding of religious texts.

Sōseki lived away from his hometown during this period and thought he had left behind the world and people he had difficulty in getting on with. However, the situation was not that simple. Sōseki concentrated on developing his literary talent. It was a time when he put more of his energy into composing *haiku* than *kanshi*. No matter whether it was *haiku* or *kanshi*, Sōseki began to immerse himself in the world of poetry and understand even more about the composition of poems. He could only be enriched and stimulated by the experience. His life between his first and second *kanshi* periods had been marked by sadness and loss, he had been extremely busy with studies and had found dealing with people stressful. As always, his *kanshi* are a form of meditation and a way of incorporating and transcending the mundane world which caused him unease and worry.

FROM UNIVERSITY TO MATSUYAMA, 1895-96

Sōseki lost his sister-in law, Tose, in August 1891. He had already lost two people whom he loved and

respected, his mother, Chie, and eldest brother, Daisuke. Tose was the only person left in the family Sōseki could respect and communicate with. It was a shocking event for him and he expressed his great sorrow at losing her in a letter to Shiki, dated 3 August 1891, in which he included his *haiku* compositions dedicated to her.¹ He also wrote of the great respect he held for her.

In the same letter to Shiki, Sōseki confessed that he had once foolishly believed that in order to earn a living in modern society he could become a specialist in English literature. Sōseki says English was an inevitable choice due to the demands of the time. He felt he had to serve a useful purpose in society, an idea which came from the practical side of Confucian teaching and the concept of 'Natural rights' which Sōseki had learnt from a book written by Herbert Spencer.² Spencer's theory was well received at Tokyo University and became popular.³ Spencer's theory also influenced the idea of people's rights in Japan. The two leading figures to teach Herbert Spencer at Tokyo Imperial University as observed by Hasegawa were Toyama Masakazu (外山正一, 1848-1900) and Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908).⁴

There was another man who visited Japan and researched into Japanese archaeology and culture and who gave a talk for the first time on Darwinism in Japan in 1877. His name was Edward Sylvester Morse (1838-1925). He noted afterwards, "The audience seemed to be keenly interested, and it was

¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 32-36 (letter addressed to Shiki on 03/08/1891).

² Ara, Masato. *Natsume Sōseki Nyūmon*. Kodansha, 1967, p. 50.

³ Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Soshō 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p. 22.

⁴ Hasegawa, Takuma. *Spencer to Enryō*. (Lecture Note) International Inoue Enryō Research 3, International Association for Inoue Enryō Research, 2015, p. 152.

delightful to explain the Darwinian theory without running up against theological prejudice as I often did at home.”⁵

The concept of nature in Japan was changed by the introduction of the theory of evolution. Nature became a subject to study and an object to control, instead of being something to admire and respect. Western scientific theories had by Sōseki’s time established a strong influence upon Japanese intellectuals. A tidal wave of Western culture was sweeping across Japan. However, going against this trend, Sōseki expressed his discontent at studying English literature.

At the end of the letter, Sōseki says that he had found someone from the past who he could sympathise with. This forerunner, who had studied Western science but changed his interest to Eastern philosophy later in life, was Shiba Kōkan (司馬江漢, 1747-1818) from the Edo period.

In his letter to Shiki, Sōseki mentions that he had read *Shunparō Hikki* (春波樓筆記) written by Shiba Kōkan. He was a painter and a specialist in Dutch studies from the townsman’s class, who having investigated the survival instinct in humans switched his interest to the teachings of Daoism.⁶

Sōseki explained in this letter, “Recently I have been reading Shiba Kōkan’s *Shunparō Hikki* and have found many statements and ideas that I wish I myself had written. I feel that I share his feelings and am happy to find that I have a like-minded friend from the past.”⁷ The following is a comment by

⁵ Hickman, Money & Fetchko Peter. *Japan Day By Day*. An Exhibition Honoring Edward Sylvester Morse and Commemorating the Hundredth Anniversary of His Arrival in Japan in 1877. Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 22.

⁶ Ara, Masato. *Natsume Sōseki Nyūmon*. Kōdansha, 1967, p. 46.

⁷ French, L. Calvin. *Shiba Kōkan*. Weatherhill, New York, 1974, p. 188.

Kōkan from the book,

“Now that I am an old man living in retirement, I no longer take pleasure in the ways of men nor find them of interest. I am writing down my thoughts at random, just as they occur to me. Men of future generations who share my feelings and may have occasion to read my works will understand”⁸

Senuma gives his analysis on Sōseki’s interest in Kōkan’s views as follows. “Kōkan, who was the son of a townsman, was on the one hand, cultivated by a belief in Western technology and an egalitarian society. On the other hand, he thought that everything returned to nothingness and became interested in Daoism. After encountering Daoist thought, Kōkan wrote about the notion of nothingness.

Kōkan also wrote about human desire. He pointed out that there were three desires, the most basic one of these being sexual desire. He said that human beings are conditioned to suffer due to their intelligence and common sense. Therefore, our existence is suffering itself.

In contrast, he adored nature whilst living amongst the worldly. He rejected human desires, but at the same time acknowledged them. Then, he reached the conclusion through serious investigation of many contradictory factors that the foundation for human existence was nothingness. Finally,

(FN. 7, cont.)

Sōseki Zenshū Vol. 22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 37.

⁸ *Shiba Kōkan Zenshū* Vol. 2, Yazaka Shobo, Tokyo, 1993, p. 152.

Kōkan turned his interest to Daoist thought, which found substance in nothingness.”⁹

Having read and coming under the influence of Kōkan, Sōseki wrote four essays for his university course: “*Lōshi no Tetsugaku*” (老子の哲学, “Philosophy of Laozi”)¹⁰ in June 1892, “*Bundan ni okeru Byōdō Shugi no Daihyōsha ‘Walt Whitman’ no Shi ni tsuite*” (文壇に於ける平等主義の代表者『ウオルト・ホイットマン』の詩について, “A study on poems by Walt Whitman who is a representative of the egalitarian in the literary world”)¹¹ in October, “*Chūgaku Kairyōsaku*” (中学改良策, “A plan for the improvement of the Middle School”)¹² in December and “*Eikoku Shijin no TenChi YamaKawa ni taisuru Kannen*” (英国詩人の天地山川に対する観念, “The concept held by British poets upon nature”)¹³ in 1893. During his university days, Sōseki was too busy with the practicalities involved in his course work to have time to spend on the pleasurable task of composing *kanshi*.

He graduated from the English literature course in the faculty of Art and Humanities of Tokyo Imperial University in July 1893. His was only the second year of the English literature course, and he was the only graduate from his course.¹⁴ He then went on to post-graduate studies at the same university receiving a government grant.

⁹ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007, p. 24.

¹⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.26, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 13-36.

¹¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.13, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995 p. 3-20.

¹² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.26, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 37-72.

¹³ Sōseki gave a talk with this title at a Tokyo University English Literature Discussion seminar on 29 January. The talk was well received and a series of articles on this talk were published in “*Tetsugaku Zasshi*” between March to June 1893. Source: Yajima, Yukihiko. *1893 nen 1 gatsu 29 nichi no Sōseki*. <https://serai.jp/hobby/39221>

¹⁴ Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Soshō 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p. 34.

Sōseki started to teach English at Tokyo Teacher Training School in October of the same year this was on top of the teaching job he had started a year before at Tokyo Technical School. Sōseki now began to doubt his capabilities and knowledge of English. He felt he did not fully understand English,¹⁵ although his English had reached such a standard that he had no difficulty translating *A Description of My Hut* (*Hōjō ki* 方丈記) when requested by J. M. Dixon (1856-1933) in his University days in 1891.¹⁶ (This was published under Dixon's name in "*Nihon Asia Kyōkai Kaihō*"). Sōseki's feeling of uncertainty about his knowledge of English literature led him to blame himself. He lost confidence in his ability to be a specialist in English literature and began to doubt his ability to teach English. He expressed this later in his life in 1914 in his speech, *My Individualism* (私の個人主義), given at Gakushūin School. The following is an extract from the speech translated by Jay Rubin.

“At university, I majored in English literature. What exactly is English literature, you may ask. I myself did not know the answer to that after three years of furious study. Our instructor in those days was Professor Dixon. He would make us read poetry aloud, read prose passages to him, do composition; he would scold us for dropping articles, explode when we mispronounced words. His exam questions were always of one kind: give the dates of Wordsworth's birth and death, give the number

¹⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 591-592 “Watakushi no Kojin-shugi” *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 36-37 (letter addressed to Shiki on 03/08/1891).

¹⁶ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007 (3rd edition), p. 318.

Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Sōsho 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p. 29.

of Shakespeare's folios, list the works of Scott in chronological order. Even as young as you are, surely you can see what I mean: can this in any way instill an understanding of what literature is, English or otherwise? Alright, you say, forge ahead on your own. But this is like the proverbial blind man peeking through the fence. I would wander about in the library searching for something that would get me started. But there was nothing. This was not simply because I lacked motivation; the field was represented by the most meagre collection of books. For three years I studied, and at the end, I still did not know what literature was. This was the root source of my agony.

With this ambivalent attitude, I emerged from school to take my place in the world. I became – or rather, was made into – a teacher. Questionable as my language ability was, I knew enough to get along and managed to squeeze by each day. Deep inside, however, I knew only emptiness. No, perhaps if it had been emptiness I could have resigned myself more completely, but there was something continually bothering me, some vague, disagreeable, half-formed thing that would not let me alone. To make matters worse, I felt not the slightest interest in my work as a teacher. I had known from the start that I was no educator, but I saw it was hopeless when just teaching English classes seemed like an enormous burden. I was always in a crouch, ready to spring into my true calling as soon as the slightest opening should present itself. But

this ‘true calling’ of mine was something that seemed to be there and, at the same time, was not. No matter where I turned, I could not bring myself to take the plunge.”¹⁷

Whilst Sōseki was having doubts about his professional path, he became ill. In a letter to his friend, Kikuchi Kenjirō written on 9 March 1894, Sōseki said he had been diagnosed as having the symptoms of tuberculosis at an early stage. Sōseki informed Shiki in a letter written on 12 March 1894, that at first, he had been worried about having mild tuberculosis, but he had come to terms with his fear by thinking that everyone who was born was destined to die. Sōseki became pragmatic and decided to make use of his precious life.

He made a great effort to recover his health, taking up the practice of Japanese Archery as part of his rehabilitation. He also travelled to Matsushima (松島), and Shōnan (湘南) to rest his mind and body. His physical health improved. However, he was still dissatisfied with his progress in English literature studies and expressed his discontent in a letter to Shiki written on 4 September 1894.

Sōseki grew anxious and became psychologically unbalanced. He needed to find space in his mind where he could feel safe and secure. His friend, Suga Torao (菅虎雄 1864-1943), who had attended Zen teaching given by Imakita Kōsen (今北洪川 1816-1892) at Enkaku-ji (円覚寺) temple in Kamakura, suggested that he meditate at the temple. Sōseki visited the Kigen-In (帰源院) at the

¹⁷ Rubin, Jay. Trans. “Watakushi no Kojinshugi”. (Sōseki no Individualism) in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Spring, 1979, p. 32.

Enkaku-ji Temple in December 1894 to clear his mind with the help of the monk, Shaku Sōen (釈宗円 1860-1919), who had replaced Imakita Kōsen after his death.

The monk, Sōen asked Sōseki a question. The question was “Show me your original face, the face you had before your parents were born” (父母未生以前本来の面目). Sōseki could not find the answer, and the visit to the temple ended unsuccessfully. Sōseki later wrote about this episode.¹⁸ He also wrote a letter to Saitō Agu (齊藤阿具 1868-1942) on 9 January 1895 briefly describing his experience.¹⁹

It is a well-known fact that Sōseki visited Kigen-in at Enkaku-ji temple in 1894. Mizukawa gives us the additional information that Sōseki had visited the same temple and seen Shaku Sōen the previous year, 1893, in late July.²⁰ Mizukawa also says that Sōseki helped to correct the translation of Shaku Sōen’s speech, translated by Suzuki Daisetsu (鈴木大拙 1870–1966), who was a disciple of Sōen. Shaku Sōen was preparing a speech which he was going to deliver at The Chicago World Parliament of Religions in 1893.²¹

Whether Sōseki helped to correct Suzuki’s translation of Sōen’s speech or not is still debatable. In its favour, Mizukawa presented evidence from Matsuoka Yuzuru, one of Sōseki’s students and his son-

¹⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 382-385, “Iroke wo Sareyo”.

Shaku, Sōen. “Zen no Kyōchi” in *Kindai Sakka Tsuitōbun Shūsei No.5.*, Natsume Sōseki. Yumani Shobō, 1987, p. 88-91.

¹⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 73. (letter addressed to Saito Agu on 09/01/1895)

²⁰ Mizukawa, Takao. *Sōseki to Bukkyō- Sokuten Kyoshi eno Michi*. Heinon Sha, Tokyo, 2002, p. 34.

²¹ Sharf, Robert H. “The Zen of Japanese Nationalism” in *Curators of the Buddha*. Ed., Donald S. Lopez, Jr., The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1995, p. 113.

in-law, who as we discussed earlier discovered Sōseki's poems composed before he was twenty.

According to Matsuoka, during Sōseki's stay at the Kigen-in temple, Suzuki Daisetsu asked Sōseki to correct his translation of Sōen's speech material. Mizukawa stresses that Suzuki had said on five separate occasions that Sōseki had helped him to correct his translation of Sōsen's speech.

On the other hand, Inoue Zenjō (井上禪定 1911–2006), who became the successor of Kigen-in at En'kaku-ji temple, denies Sōseki's involvement in the correction of the translation. Mizukawa, however, points out that there was a letter dated 10 September 1956 from Suzuki addressed to Inoue Zenjō, acknowledging Sōseki's help in the translation.²²

We do not know for certain whether Sōseki was involved in correcting the translation of Sōen's speech, but more importantly, we are made aware of his interest in practicing Zen. Senuma says that although Sōseki failed to achieve enlightenment he deepened his interest in Zen teaching which enriched his understanding based on nothingness originating from Eastern philosophy. Senuma confirms that the Zen teaching of self-help served as a place of refuge for Sōseki.²³ In other words, Zen practice offered Sōseki a space in the mind where he felt safe and secure. The meditative state of mind where Sōseki felt safe and comfortable remained Sōseki's spiritual land until his death.

Although he had failed in his attempt to resolve his mental condition by meditation, Sōseki felt that

²² Mizukawa, Takao. *Sōseki to Bukkyō- Sokuten Kyoshi eno Michi*. Heimon Sha, Tokyo, 2002.p. 179-188.

²³ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007 (3rd edition), p. 31.

he should actively change the path of his life and sought other work. He applied to be a journalist at *the Japan Mail*, which was an English language newspaper but his application was rejected. Finally, he decided to leave Tokyo, and in April 1895 moved to Matsuyama, his close friend Shiki's hometown. As we know, Sōseki had doubts about teaching English. The job he accepted in Matsuyama was a position to teach English at a junior high school (middle school). During his university days, Sōseki had written an essay entitled, "*Chūgaku Kairyōsaku*" (中学改良策: "A plan for the improvement of the Middle School"). Sōseki aimed to put his ideas into practice here by direct experience.

The working conditions seemed good. He received a monthly income of eighty Yen, which was the same as the salary the foreign tutors received, and higher than the salary the principle received, which was sixty Yen. Sōseki intended to start a new life in Matsuyama with a fresh approach to his teaching.

MATSUYAMA

Now, let us examine Sōseki's poems from his time in Matsuyama, which was his first residence away from Tokyo. Sōseki composed five poems during his stay in Matsuyama, and all of them were sent to Shiki. The first four poems were sent in a letter dated 26 May 1895. Shiki, who went to Manchuria in March 1895 as a War correspondent for the Newspaper, *Nippon*, during the Sino-Japanese war, vomited blood on his way back to Japan in May of the same year. He was hospitalised for two months

in Kōbe in Hyōgo prefecture, and Sōseki's letter was sent from Matsuyama to Shiki during his stay in the hospital.

After talking about life in Matsuyama which he found dull apart from visiting the hot springs which were a paradise, Sōseki mentions that he is considering entering the world of poetry and presents his four poems to Shiki asking him for help and advice.

Poem 53

Part 1

“No Title”

無題

[其一] [其の一]

快刀切断両頭蛇 快刀 切断す 両頭の蛇
 不顧人間笑語譁 顧みず 人間 笑語譁しきを
 黄土千秋埋得失 黄土 千秋 得失を埋め
 蒼天万古照賢邪 蒼天 万古 賢邪を照らす
 微風易碎水中月 微風 碎き易し 水中の月
 片雨難留枝上花 片雨 留め難し 枝上の花
 大酔醒來寒徹骨 大酔 醒めて来りて 寒 骨に徹し

余生養得在山家 余生 養い得て 山家に在り²⁴

I will cut off "the double headed snake" with a sharp blade,

and I do not care how much malicious criticism I receive because of my actions.

Yellow earth absorbed gain and loss for a thousand autumns,

The blue heavens shine upon the wise and the evil eternally.

Even a slight wind stirs up the moon on the water,

a passing shower cannot hold the flower on the branch.

The drunk has sobered up, and feels shivers in his bones,

I will spend the rest of my life in a mountain hut.

Shichigon Risshi

Iida uses a comment by Matsuoka to explain the sentiment of this poem. Matsuoka says that Sōseki composed this poem to express his feeling of moving to Matsuyama away from the capital and his home, Tokyo, in order to calm his unsettled mind and leave the slanders he received from people behind. Matsuoka explains that the poem demonstrates a different tone compared with his previous period, and manifests the positive attitude Sōseki felt just after he moved to his new location.²⁵

There is still much dissatisfaction and frustration reflected in its lines but Sōseki was attempting to come to terms with his circumstances and mental state and was preparing to do something about

²⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 174-175.

²⁵ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 61.

them.

In line 1, the opening two words, 'Cutting off' 切断 and 'The sharp blade' 快刀, give the impression that Sōseki wanted to exterminate something by vigorous action. The object to be cut is the 'Two-headed snake' 兩頭蛇.

Yoshikawa explains that the story of the 'Two-headed snake' is taken from an ancient event about a man who was a government administrator, Sun Shu-Ao of Chu from the Eastern Zhou Dynasty.

The story takes place when Sun was a little boy. One day, Sun saw the two-headed snake. There is an old saying that a person who sees a two-headed snake will die. Believing the story, Sun prepared for his death. He also wanted to prevent others seeing the same snake later. So, he killed the two-headed snake and buried it in the ground. He went back home crying, and told his mother what had happened. His mother told him not to worry. She said he would not die, as she had heard that people who acted with good intentions towards others would be rewarded.

According to historical records, Sun did not die and indeed later on became a court minister.

Yoshikawa explains that Sōseki's ideal was to cut off and eliminate all kinds of two-headed snakes from society for the sake of later generations. In the second line he explains how he was not concerned about the criticism he would receive because of the actions he had taken.

Regarding the definition of a two headed snake symbolising troubles, Iida's view of the two heads is that one represents his own home and the Natsume family, and the other refers to his teaching jobs

in Tokyo. By cutting these ties, according to Iida, Sōseki planned to start a new life.

Iida also presented another view given by Kosaka, who believes the two-headed troubles to be the feeling of love and eagerness for fame. Sōseki regarded these as worldly desires. Kosaka explains that Sōseki was trying to put into practice one of the teachings from the *The Blue Cliff Record* Case 63, which Shaku Sōen had recommended Sōseki to read. Commentary in *The Blue Cliff Record* explains “People nowadays do not know how to change and pass through; they only go running into the spoken words.”²⁶ Sōseki wanted to eliminate the human desires and ambitions which were troubling his mind.²⁷ The reason Sōseki moved to Matsuyama was to take action and to change.

In line three, ‘The Yellow Earth’ (黄土) refers to the centre of the earth according to the belief in the Five Phases²⁸, but it also according to Nakamura’s annotation means earth, grave and life after death.²⁹ ‘A thousand autumns’ (千秋) means a thousand years. ‘Gain and loss’ (得失), success and failure.³⁰ Sōseki says the gain and loss of the human world are momentary phenomena which are soon buried away in the earth, destined to become part of the planet’s long history.

In line four, ‘Blue heavens’ (蒼天) means the heavens in a religious and spiritual sense.³¹ The character ‘万古’ literally means a million years old, but Yoshikawa explains that ‘古’ is used not only

²⁶ Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 359.

²⁷ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p.62.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 63.

²⁹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 86.

³⁰ Yoshikawa, Kōjiro. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 51.

³¹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 87.

for the past but also for the future, so in this case, the meaning is ‘Eternal’. ‘The Wise and the evil’ (賢邪) mean ‘A person with virtue and a malicious person’.³² Soseki says that Heaven shows eternally what is right and wrong. In line three and four, Sōseki is trying to come to terms with his decision to move away from Tokyo and is encouraging himself to be brave.

Sōseki then goes on to reveal a more vulnerable side to his state of mind. In Ikkaï’s opinion lines five and six are metaphorical expressions of Sōseki’s insecure and transient situation. This study agrees with Ikkaï’s interpretation. In line five, ‘Moon on the water’ (水中月) meaning enlightenment often appeared in Buddhist texts.³³ By using ‘Slight wind stirs up’ to describe ‘The Moon on the water’, Sōseki is expressing how his peaceful state of mind is easily disturbed and unstable.

In line six, the words, ‘片雨’ literally meaning one sided rain, describe a passing shower. The Tang poet, Cen Can (岑参) used this expression in his poem titled, “*wan fa wu xi*” (晚發五溪).

江村片雨外 江村 片雨の外³⁴

The village by the river is outside of the passing rain

Cen Can was transferred to the Western border twice as a government official, and he composed many poems expressing life on the border far away from the capital³⁵. Sōseki sympathised with Cen Can’s poetic sentiment. He describes the transient and impermanent life of people as being similar

³² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 176.

³³ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 63.

³⁴ <https://blog.goo.ne.jp/ikiikiaki/e/ca3f341b876d1bec83989b33cc748a5d>

³⁵ Matsuura Tomohisa Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 685.

to flowers falling from a tree due to a fine passing shower. By using Cen Can's words Sōseki is connecting with the long and spiritual tradition of Chinese literature. Not only do the words beautifully express his sensations they also create a chain of connection from the past to the future. The Chinese works that he was interested in were not 'dead' but a living mass of profound insight and delicate poetry.

The last two lines, seven and eight, show Sōseki looking inward. With the opening words, 'The drunk' 大酔, Sōseki describes the agonised feeling he had back in Tokyo.³⁶ The word, 'Coldness' 寒, implies the loneliness and harshness of life. Sōseki is expressing how he feels lonely after calming his mind and recuperating from the turbulence of life in Tokyo.³⁷ The last line describes his current situation, living in a country house in Matsuyama. This poem shows that although determined to follow his path, Sōseki is lonely away from Tokyo and his friends. His attempts to find peace of mind are easily disturbed.

Poem 54

Part 2

[其二] [其の二]

辜負東風出故関 東風に辜負して 故関を出づ

³⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 176.

³⁷ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 87.

鳥啼花謝幾時還 鳥啼き花謝して 幾時か還る

離愁似夢迢迢淡 離愁 夢に似て 迢迢として淡く

幽思与雲澹澹間 幽思 雲と与に 澹澹として間かなり

才子群中只守拙 才子群中 只だ拙を守り

小人囿裏獨特頑 小人囿裏 独り頑を持す

寸心空托一杯酒 寸心 空しく托す 一杯の酒

劍氣如霜照醉顔 劍氣 霜の如く 醉顔を照らす³⁸

The spring wind was against me when I left my hometown.

Quickly the end of the season came when birds sing and petals fall. I do not know when I am going back.

The sad feeling of separation is existing far away similar to a dream.

In deep contemplation, in my cloud I feel serene and peaceful.

Amongst people who get along in the world, I remain unskilful in getting along in the world.

Surrounded by uninteresting people, I alone keep hold of my stubbornness.

I try to fill up the empty space in my heart with a glass of wine.

A biting air similar to a severe frost shines on the drunken face.

Shichigon Risshi

³⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 176-177.

The first two characters of line 1, 辜負 mean ‘Going against’. The following two characters 東風, literally ‘Eastern wind’ mean ‘Spring wind’. The last two characters, 故園, mean ‘Hometown’ which for Sōseki is Tokyo.³⁹

The third and fourth characters in line two, 花謝, mean ‘Petals falling’, and are often used in Chinese poetry paired with 鳥啼, ‘Singing of the birds’.⁴⁰ In line one and two, Sōseki, using classical references which give depth and elegance to the imagery, describes how he became a traveller going far from his home to an unknown place.

The first two characters in line three, 離愁, which we came across in Chapter one, mean loneliness caused by separation. The characters, 迢迢, mean ‘Far away’. The words 迢迢 ‘Far away’ rhyme-match with a poem composed by Li Shangyin (李商隱, 813-858). Let’s refer to the poem.

嵩雲秦樹久離居 嵩雲 秦樹 久しく離居す

双鯉迢迢一紙書 双鯉迢迢たり 一紙の書。⁴¹

The clouds of Lushan and the trees of Changan. We have been living apart for a while.

The two carp brought me a letter from far away.

Yoshikawa says that the pronunciation of the characters, 迢迢 ‘tiao tiao’ create emotion.⁴² The explanation in this line shows that the sad feeling in Sōseki’s mind is fading far away in a dreamlike

³⁹ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 52.

⁴⁰ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobo, Tokyo, 1983, p. 88.

⁴¹ Maeno, Naoaki. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 3. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009, p. 222-223.

⁴² Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 53.

way.

In line four, the characters, 幽思, meaning 'Deep thought', are accompanied by 雲 'Cloud'. They tell us he is in his secure land inside his spiritual world where he feels 澹澹, 'Serene'. Sōseki explains, in line four, how he is practicing meditation. He detaches himself from the outer world, which he says is similar to being in a dream. Deep in meditation, he is in a serene state of mind where the clouds reside.

In lines five and six, Sōseki is intertwining his feeling with his favourite poet, Tao Yuanming, as all the annotations made by Yoshikawa, Ikkai, Nakamura and Iida mention. The words, 守拙, meaning 'To hold on to one's belief and dignity' is used by Tao Yuanming in the first poem of Five Poems on *Returning to Dwell in the Country* (歸園田居). This is how Tao Yuanming expresses this feeling in the poem,

守拙歸園田 拙を守って園田に帰る

*I will guard simplicity in myself and return to my field and garden.*⁴³

Sōseki loved the idea of '守拙', and he explained this concept in his only poetic novel *Kusamakura* (草枕), Chapter 12.

"You could characterize the japonica as belonging to the type of the enlightened fool.

⁴³ Davis, A.R. Trans. *Tao Yüan-ming* (AD 365-427). Vol 1 Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, p. 52.

Some in this world doggedly retain an awkward and innocent honesty – they will be reborn as japonica. It’s the flower that I myself would like to become.”⁴⁴

In a letter to Shiki dated 18 December in the same year, 1895, Sōseki expresses his feeling as 守拙持頑, “Holding on to one’s belief and firmly staying with that decision”. A little later in 1897, Sōseki composed a *haiku* poem using 守拙. Later in his life, Sōseki named a sketchbook of his own paintings and calligraphies *Shusetsuchō* (守拙帖). Sōseki is writing about people who like pointless arguments and telling us he wishes to stay away from them. He doesn’t have time to waste with people who are false and untrue to themselves. In line six, Sōseki confirms that he is stubbornly staying true to himself and not paying attention to petty people such as those in Matsuyama.

In the final pair of lines, Sōseki expresses his loneliness in Matsuyama and his sharp awareness of his inner feelings. In line seven, 寸心 means ‘Heart’ and 托 ‘Entrust’. In line seven, Soseki reveals that he is trying to sooth his lonely feeling by drinking.

劍氣 is ‘The cold glitter of a sword’ and is used to express the harshness of ‘A biting air’ in line eight.

But Soseki confesses that he knows that drink is not a solution to the loneliness in his heart.

Sōseki began to compose a large number of *haiku* poems from 1895. The previous year, 1894, he had only composed 15 *haiku* poems. In 1895, he composed 462, in 1896, 497 poems, in 1897, 266 poems, in 1898, 102 poems and in 1899, 330 poems.⁴⁵ During the Matsuyama and Kumamoto period, he

⁴⁴ McKinney, Meredith. Trans. *Kusamakura* by Natsume Soseki. Penguin Books, London, 2008, p. 131.

⁴⁵ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 9.

dedicated his time when not teaching to the composition of poetry.

Sōseki revealed in a letter to Shiki in May 1895 his intention to enter the world of poetry. He joined Shiki's *haiku* poetic circle, *Matsukaze-kai* (松風会), in the same year. This is largely due to Shiki, who later becomes a leading figure in the new *haiku* movement. He visited Matsuyama in August after coming out of hospital in Kōbe, and stayed at Sōseki's house.

Shiki stayed with Sōseki for nearly two months, from August to October. Sōseki was renting a two floored house, he used the rooms upstairs and Shiki used the ground floor. Soon, Shiki's poetic disciples began to gather in Shiki's room and Sōseki's house was turned into a venue for poetic gatherings.

Sōseki wrote about this in his writing later on.⁴⁶ He tells of how he spent his time composing poems, but not just in order to kill time. Sōseki was composing poems in order to express his feelings and thoughts much more than before. Tanaka says "For Sōseki, composing *kanshi* and *haiku* were not leisurely pastimes. He did not compose *haiku* superficially, just because he was in a poetic environment."⁴⁷

Shiki left in late October and Sōseki although far more at peace with himself felt lonely in Matsuyama without a companion like Shiki. He was now eager to move somewhere else. He writes about this to Shiki in a letter dated 6 November 1895. Sōseki says he has run out of patience with Matsuyama and

⁴⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 274-275. "Masaoka Shiki"

⁴⁷ Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Sōsho 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969, p. 42.

is ready to move as soon as he gets an offer of work. Sōseki in his writing at the time expresses the frustrations he experienced in Matsuyama.

In November, Sōseki was requested to write an essay in the journal issued by the Ehime Prefecture Middle School. Sōseki wrote “*Guen Sūsoku*” (愚件数則)⁴⁸, a sharp criticism of the students and teaching staff.

In his writing, Sōseki states that in olden times there was mutual respect and care in the relationship between teachers and students. But nowadays, the students act like a lodger, the principal is like the owner of the inn, and the teaching staff are like the manager and apprentices of the inn. Under these circumstances, it is inevitable that the students grow arrogant, and the teachers’ status declines.

He carries on his criticism until the end. This writing is almost as if indirectly but firmly Sōseki is saying goodbye to Matsuyama.

During his stay in Matsuyama, Sōseki also thought about getting married and starting his own family. He went back to Tokyo briefly to attend a formal meeting with a view to marriage in December and met Nakane Kyōko (中根/夏目鏡子 1877–1963), his future wife, for the first time. Sōseki returned from Tokyo in early January, and composed the following poem in reply to a farewell poem by Shiki about Sōseki’s return to Matsuyama, in a letter to Shiki dated 12 January 1896.

⁴⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 3-9. “*Guken Sūsoku*”.

Poem 58

"No Title"

無題

海南千里遠 海南 千里遠く

欲別暮天寒 別れんと欲して 暮天寒し

鉄笛吹紅雪 鉄笛 紅雪を吹き

火輪沸紫瀾 火輪 紫瀾を沸かす

為君憂国易 君と為りて 国を憂うるは易く

作客到家難 客と作りて 家に到は難し

三十翼還坎 三十 翼にして還た坎

功名夢半残 功名 夢半ば残す⁴⁹*The Southern sea is a thousand miles away,**and the feeling of separation makes the sky at dusk cold.**The train whistle blows out red snow,**and then the steam ship stirs the purple wave.**It is easy for the ruler to worry about the country,**but it is difficult to return home once one becomes a traveller.*

⁴⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 183-184.

Life for a thirty-year-old is full of obstacles.

The dream of becoming an honourable person has broken apart halfway through the process.

Gogon Risshi

It's a sad, poignant reflective poem expressing frustration, sorrow and once again the experience of loneliness. 海南 in line one refers to the 'Shikoku Region' (四国) and 暮天 in line two 'The sky at dusk'. Lines one and two describe Sōseki's feeling of sadness leaving his hometown Tokyo for Matsuyama in Shikoku after a short visit.

In line three 鉄笛 means 'A train whistle', and 紅雪 either fired power coming out of the train's chimney or the snow coloured by the sunset. 火輪 means a 'Steam ship', which according to Yoshikawa had been introduced as a new word in China in this period. 紫瀾 in line four is a 'Purple wave', a lovely image of noble nature expressed by the colour purple. Lines three and four describe the return journey by train and ship to Matsuyama. Ikkai, Iida, Nakamura and Yoshikawa all agree to the same interpretation for the six set of characters above.⁵⁰

Concerning 為君 in line five, Ikkai gives two references, one from *The Analects* by Confucius, "It is difficult to become a ruler, and it is not easy to be a subject," and the other from a poem by Cao Zhi

⁵⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 185.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 83-84.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 95-96.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 59.

(曹植, 192-232) from Wei (魏 220-265), “To become a ruler is already not easy, and to become a subject is really difficult.”⁵¹ Ikkaï says that line five is there to bring out line six. 作客 means ‘Become a traveller’. Iida says 作客 means ‘To practice the Way’ like floating with the tide. Iida also says that the fourth character in the same line, 家 ‘Home’ means enlightenment. In line five and six, Soseki is explaining that it is difficult to find the Way and attain enlightenment much more than being a person of importance like the ruler of a country.

In line seven, 三十 describes Sōseki’s age. Sōseki gives two oracles from the *I Jing* in this line, 巽 and 坎, oracles number 57 and 29. Yoshikawa explains the meaning of these oracles, 巽, ‘To fall behind’ and 坎 ‘To be unfavourable’. He gives the overall meaning of the line as “Unfortunate and with many hardships at turning thirty years old”.

Nakamura mentions that this is the first time Sōseki used the interpretation of an oracle drawn from the *I Jing* and also points out that Sōseki composed *haikus* using *I Jing* oracles in his Kumamoto period.⁵² Sōseki had introduced the names from oracles in the *I Jing* in his youthful period in a poem we examined in chapter one, poem 3, ‘Heaven and Earth’ 乾坤. However, Sōseki was not enquiring into the oracle in poem 3. So, Nakamura is correct to say this is the first time that Sōseki consults the *I Jing* in *kanshi*.

功名 in line eight, means ‘Worldly honour’ and 殘, ‘Fall to pieces’. Sōseki doesn’t hide his frustration

⁵¹ <http://kanshi100x100.blog.fc2.com/blog-entry-878.html>

⁵² Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 96.

about his current situation to his close friend Shiki.

At the end of this poem, Sōseki expresses disappointment at his lack of achievement in Matsuyama, and declares his intention to not return home but to move forward and carry on his journey somewhere else.

Disillusioned by his lack of achievement and negative experiences with the country people in Matsuyama, he decided to leave and look for a new place to move to. Sōseki had left Tokyo, because of his inability to relate to people in the teaching world. He thought that life in the country would be simpler. But in reality, it turned out not to be as straight forward as he had imagined. Although he now regretted getting out of Tokyo he did not wish to go back to his home. He decided to continue on his journey and in 1896 moved to Kumamoto, down south in Kyushu, to teach English at The Fifth High school.

KUMAMOTO-EARLY DAYS

Sōseki stayed in Kumamoto from April 1896 until September 1900, nearly four and half years, until the time he was sent to England to further his understanding of English at the request of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Sōseki was appointed as a lecturer at the fifth High School on an initial salary of 100 yen per month. Of this, Sōseki had to contribute 10 yen as a civil duty to the military fund to build navy vessels, repay 7.5 yen for the grant he received during the university days, send an

allowance of 10 yen to his father, send 3 yen to his elder sister for her allowance, and spend 20 yen on his book collection. Sōseki although he received a high salary compared with other teachers did not live in affluent circumstances. He married Nakane Kyōko, the daughter of a politician in the central government in Tokyo, Nakane Shigekazu (中根重一 1851-1906), at his rented house on 9 June 1896 and began his own family. By July he had been promoted to a more senior position.

Sōseki settled down in Kumamoto with his newly wedded wife. Apart from teaching, from August he began to compose *haiku* poems which he regularly sent every month to Shiki in Tokyo to be corrected. Sōseki's creative energy was back in motion. At this time, he told his wife, Kyōko, that he was a scholar who had to spend time studying, and because of this he had no time to spare for her. Sōseki was serious about learning. For him composing poems was not a leisure activity.

In a letter dated 15 November 1896, Sōseki wrote to Shiki that he had been asked by a colleague to compose *kanshi*. Sōseki's colleague, Katamine Tadasu (片嶺忠), had an auspicious mushroom (靈芝) growing in his garden, and asked Sōseki to compose poems about it. Sōseki says in the letter that he tried hard to compose using an old text book from his youth, *Yōgaku Shiin* (Metre for Elementary level: 幼学詩韻), and composed five poems in the *Gogon Zekku* style. But Sōseki was not confident about his compositions, so he asked Shiki to ask his friend, Honda Shuchiku (本田種竹 1862-1907) who was a *kanshi* specialist active in the Tokyo *Kanshi* world, to correct his poems. We will now analyse three of the poems.

Poem 60

Part 2

[其の二]

禄薄而无愠 禄薄くして而も愠る無く

旻天降厥灵 旻天 厥の霊を降す

三茎抱石紫 三茎 石を抱いて紫に

瑞气满门庭 瑞气 門庭に満つ⁵³

Receiving a low salary, yet you are not angry.

The compassion of the heavens brought down its miraculous wonder.

Three mushroom stems cover the stones with their purple colour.

An auspicious spirit fills the garden.

Gogon Zekku

The first two characters in line one, 禄薄, mean 'Low salary'. Ikkai, Nakamura and Yoshikawa refer to a comment by Matsuoka where he tells us that the monthly wage of Sōseki's friend, Katamine, was 12 yen, a low salary bearing in mind we know that Sōseki received 100 yen per month.⁵⁴ The last character in line one, 愠, means 'Being angry', which appears in *The Analects* (論語) and is

⁵³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 188.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 98.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 62.

interpreted the same way by Ikkai, Nakamura and Yoshikawa. In line one, Soseki is admiring the humbleness of his colleague, Mr. Katamine. Soseki is also honest enough to point out that Mr. Katamine receives a low salary.

The poem now turns its attention away from the personal world, we are carried off to a place where a more lasting spiritual beauty is revealed. The first character in line two, 旻, is explained by Yoshikawa who explains that there are a number of words used to express respect containing religious feeling for heaven in China⁵⁵, and in this case the character used expresses the compassion of heaven and its sympathy here for the genuine character of Katamine. The fourth character in line two, 厥, is the old word for the character, 其, meaning 'Its', and it is used in the Classics such as *The Book of Poems* (詩經) and *Book of Writings* (書經) noted by Ikkai. The last character in line two, 靈, means 'Miraculous wonder' according to Ikkai and Yoshikawa.

The first two characters in line three, 三莖, mean 'Three stems'. The colour, purple, 紫, at the end of line three, is used as it represents a noble colour. The first two characters in line four, 瑞氣, mean 'Auspicious spirit'.

Sōseki begins the poem describing how Katamine accepted life as it was offered to him even though his financial situation was not as comfortable as Sōseki's. Here an admiration for the simple life is expressed. In line two, Sōseki describes his interpretation of natural phenomena as the manifestation

⁵⁵ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 62.

of the compassion of heaven, the line has deep religious undertones. In line three, Sōseki gives the visual image of a miraculous wonder, and in line four, he explains the auspicious atmosphere which gives rise to spirituality. Through practicing meditation, Sōseki's poetic spirit is getting strong, but this poem doesn't reveal his state of mind, as he is composing for his colleague. Therefore, there is a limitation in expression. However, Soseki's sincere and honest character comes through in this poem as well as his ability to illuminate the transcendental power of nature.

Poem 62

Part four

[其四]

茯苓今懶採 茯苓 今 採るに懶く

石鼎那烹丹 石鼎 那ぞ丹を烹んや

日对靈芝坐 日に靈芝に対して坐せば

道心千古寒 道心 千古に寒し⁵⁶

The mushrooms at the root of pine tree, I do not feel like picking them.

A three-legged stone pot, why do I need to boil the elixir?

Every day, I meditate facing the auspicious mushrooms.

⁵⁶ Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 190.

The spiritual way is to be alert eternally.

Gogon Zekku

This poem shows Sōseki's knowledge of outer and inner alchemy (鍊丹術). The first two characters in line one, 茯苓, mean 'Mushroom', which is regarded as an elixir. The fourth character, 懶, mean 'Troublesome' or 'Do not feel like it'. Ikkai, Iida, Nakamura and Yoshikawa all give the same interpretation.⁵⁷

The first character in line two, 石鼎, means 'Stone'. The second character, 鼎, 'Pot with three legs'. The third character, 那, 'Why', the fourth character, 烹, 'To boil' and the last character, 丹, means 'Elixir for immortality'.

The first character in line three, 日, means 'Every day'. The first two characters, 道心, in line four mean 'Faith in Buddha' in Buddhist terminology, but Ikkai says an interpretation using Daoist terminology is more relevant and it should be translated as "Attainment of supreme wisdom". This study agrees with Ikkai's interpretation, as the poem is talking about longevity which is a part of Daoist practice.

The third and fourth characters, 千古, mean 'Eternal'. Ikkai refers to Yoshikawa's interpretation of the character, 古, which usually means 'Old', being understood here literally as 'Not only the past

⁵⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 190-191.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 93-04.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 98.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 62.

but the future as well'. This can be taken to mean 'Eternal' as it refers to the past and the future. The final character, 寒, means 'Alert'.

In this poem, according to Nakamura, Sōseki is in many ways using the requested subject matter, 'Auspicious mushrooms' in order to talk about himself.⁵⁸ The auspicious mushroom is a well-known elixir for attaining immortality in Daoist belief. Boiling the elixir is the process of practicing 'Outer Alchemy'. Sōseki says that he is not interested in making an elixir. He explains that he is meditating every day concentrating on one thought, in this case 'Auspicious mushrooms'. Meditation is a process of practicing 'Inner Alchemy' or Nei-yeh (Inward Training, 内業). Sōseki shows his knowledge of 'Inner Alchemy', whose practice resembles Zen meditation, which Sōseki was introduced to at Enkaku-ji Temple in Kamakura as we discussed in Chapter one. Sōseki is acknowledging the immortality of 'Inner Alchemy' carried on from the ancient past to the future.⁵⁹ In this poem, Soseki shows his interest in Daoist meditation practice for the first time.

Poem 63

Part 5

[其の五]

⁵⁸ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 100.

⁵⁹ Roth, Harold D. *Original Tao. Inward Training and the Foundations of Taoist Mysticism*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1999, p. 11-12.

氤氳出石罅 氤氳として石罅より出で

幽氣逼禪心 幽氣 禪心に逼る

時誦寒山句 時に寒山の句を誦し

看芝坐竹陰 芝を看着竹陰に坐す⁶⁰

Auspicious atmosphere coming out from the crack in a stone,

Tranquil spirituality approaches the Zen inclined mind.

Sometimes, I recite poems by Han-shan,

While sitting under the bamboo tree watching auspicious mushrooms.

Gogon Zekku

Ikkai mentions that Yoshikawa explains the first two characters in line one, 氤氳, meaning 'Wonderful auspicious atmosphere' are words created using similar phonetic pronunciation, *In-Un*.

The fourth and fifth characters, 石罅, mean 'The crack in a stone'.⁶¹

The first two characters in line two, 幽氣, mean 'Spiritually tranquil and profound presence' and the fourth and fifth characters, 禪心, 'Mind devoted to Zen'.

The second character in line three, 誦, means 'To recite'. The third and fourth characters, 寒山, the monk from Tang period, Han Shan (寒山, ?-?), who is famous for his poems. Ikkai, Nakamura and

⁶⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 192.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 191-192.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p.64.

Yoshikawa all comment upon the fact that The Collected works of Han Shan was one of the reference books beside Sōseki when he was composing *kanshi*.⁶² Nakamura also noted that Sōseki's interest in Han Shan was similar to his interest in the monk Ryōkan. Sōseki was fond of the simplicity and purity of Han Shan and Ryōkan's way of life. Sōseki's interest in these two monks is evidence of his quest for the Way.⁶³ The second character in line four, 芝, means 'Auspicious mushroom'. In lines three and four, Sōseki evokes the pleasant and spiritual image of reciting a poem by one of his favourite poets, Han Shan whilst watching auspicious mushrooms. It's an atmospheric poem which could easily accompany a *nanga* painting.

As in the previous poem, Sōseki is composing a poem about 'Auspicious mushrooms' and at the same time projecting himself onto the situation. Sōseki shows his quest for the Way by mentioning Han Shan, a legendary monk who lived near Tien-tai Mountain with his friend, Shi De (拾得). They were famous for their eccentric behaviour, although there is no firm evidence of their real existence. Han Shan and Shi De were adored by Zen monks, because of their eccentricity, simplicity and purity, and they were a popular subject matter for brush and ink painting. It is understandable bearing in mind Sōseki's character and inclinations that he would become fond of this pair. In a later period, in poem 136, he would compose another poem mentioning Han Shan.

⁶² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 191.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p.64.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 101.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

KUSAMAKURA (草枕)

During his stay in Kumamoto, Sōseki took lessons in composing *Kanshi* from Nagao Uzan (長尾雨山, 1864-1942). Nagao Uzan, like Shiki was a crucial figure in the development of Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions and under his instruction Sōseki became more natural in composing philosophical poems.

Nagao Uzan is a highly regarded Chinese Classic specialist, calligrapher, and literary artist. He studied Chinese Classics at Tokyo Imperial University graduating in 1888. He then went on to teach at Gakushūin where the top elite of Japan were educated. He was also involved in the setting up of the Tokyo Art School, later to become the Tokyo Imperial Art School, collaborating with Okakura Tenshin (1863-1913) who was its first principal. Uzan began to teach at the Fifth High school in 1897, Sōseki was one of his colleagues at the school.⁶⁴

Five of the poems Sōseki wrote between 1898 and 1899 which were all *Gogon Koshi* style, were corrected by Uzan (poem 65, 66, 67, 71, 72). Uzan commented on all five poems.⁶⁵ Two of them (poem 65 & 67) which were corrected by Uzan are used in Sōseki's novel, *Kusamakura* (草枕), published in 1906. Another two poems (poem 71 & 72) which were corrected by Uzan, were published in the Journal, *Ryūnankai Zasshi* No. 77 (龍南会雑誌第七十七号) issued on 18 February

⁶⁴ Murakami, Tetsumi. "Sōseki to Nagao Uzan" in *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, Geppō 14, p. 4-7.

⁶⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 195, 201, 204, 219, 225-226.

1900 by the Fifth High School.⁶⁶

Kusamakura is based on Sōseki's experience of visiting a hot spring inn, The Second Maeda House, during the winter holidays of 1897. The Second Maeda House belonged to the retired Upper House politician, Maeda Kagashi (前田案山子, his original given name was Kakunosuke, 1828-1904).

Maeda Kagashi used to be an instructor in *yari-jutsu* (spear fighting), and was a Hosokawa Clan Samurai (細川藩), a powerful Samurai family in the region now known as Kumamoto. After the Meiji restoration he quit his position, changed his name to Kagashi (scarecrow) and decided to live amongst farmers and become a Freedom and Human Rights Activist. He also became a member of the House of Representatives in 1890.⁶⁷

Many of Maeda's friends who shared similar views came to visit his Inn from all over Japan, and also from China. The Chinese political activist, Huang Xing (Jp. KōKō, 黄興) was a visitor here around this time though there is no evidence to show that he came into contact with Sōseki at The Second Maeda House.

However, there is a record that Huang Xing when he was in exile later visited Sōseki and presented him with a scroll featuring his calligraphy of words taken from a poem by Tu Fu, (Jp. To Ho.杜甫 712-770). One of Sōseki's pupils, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (芥川龍之介 1892-1927) mentioned that this

⁶⁶ <http://reposit.lib.kumamoto-u.ac.jp/bitstream/2298/5513/1/077-021.pdf> (poem 71 & 72)

⁶⁷ <http://kyouiku.higo.ed.jp/page2022/002/005/page3877.html>

scroll was hung in Sōseki's house.⁶⁸ Sōseki used an excerpt from this poem in his *kanshi* poem dated 30 August 1916. We will examine this poem in Chapter Five.

The poems composed between March 1898 and 1899, (poems number 65 to 72) are all in *Gogon Koshi* style except one poem (poem number 70), which is *Gogon Risshi* (五言律詩).

Koshi (古詩) literally means 'Old poem', and was a poetic style which existed before Tang style poems emerged. For the rest of his stay in Kumamoto, Sōseki was keen to practice these long compositions under the instruction of *kanshi* specialist, Uzan. Here he was also demonstrating his growing confidence by composing a different style of poem which had no restriction in the number of lines.

Now, let us examine the two poems, both corrected by Uzan, inserted in *Kusamakura*.

March 1898

Poem 65

"*Chunxing*" (jp. *Shunko*: Spring Amusement)

春興

出門多所思 門を出でて 思う所多し

春風吹吾衣 春風 吾が衣を吹く

芳草生車轍 芳草 車轍に生じ

⁶⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.29, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 331-333.

廢道入霞微 廢道 霞に入りて微かなり

停筇而矚目 筇を停めて 目を矚げば

万象帶晴暉 万象 晴暉を帯ぶ

聽黃鳥宛轉 黃鳥の宛轉たるを聴き

賭落英紛霏 落英の紛霏たるを賭る

行尽平蕪遠 行き尽くして 平蕪遠く

題詩古寺扉 詩を題す 古寺の扉

孤愁高雲際 孤愁 雲際高く

大空斷鴻歸 大空 斷鴻歸る

寸心何窈窕 寸心 何ぞ窈窕たる

縹渺忘是非 縹渺として 是非を忘る

三十我欲老 三十 我老いんと欲し

韶光猶依依 韶光 猶お依依たり

逍遙随物化 逍遙して 物化に随い

悠然对芬菲 悠然として 芬菲に対す⁶⁹

When I go outside, many thoughts emerge from my mind.

I am blown by the spring wind.

⁶⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 194-195.

Fragrant flowers sprout from the tracks of the wheels of carts on the ground.

A country road stretches off into the haze.

When I put down my walking stick and look around,

Everything is shining in the light of the clear sun.

A bush warbler sings,

Flower petals flutter to the ground.

The flat plain reaches into the distance,

I write a poem on the door of an old temple.

My melancholy merges with the clouds on high,

I see a large goose flying home alone, separated from the flock.

My heart is profound and tranquil

And I forget the conventional judgements of the world.

I am over thirty and growing old,

The beautiful spring light softly embraces the man.

My mind wanders along, changing with the moment,

At peace, I gaze on the sweet-smelling spring landscape.

Gogon Koshi

Poem 65 appears in Chapter 12 of the novel *Kusamakura*. Sōseki describes how the protagonist felt

just before he came up with the poem.

The Japonica that meets my eyes now, as soon as I lie back, is an old and intimate friend. As I gaze at it, my mind drifts pleasantly, and the impulse to poetry wells up in me again.

Lying here, I ponder, and as each line of a Chinese poem comes to me, I jot it down in my sketchbook. After a little time, the poem seems complete. I reread it from the beginning.⁷⁰

The japonica was known to be a favourite bush of Sōseki's. He liked the simplicity and purity of the japonica and used it in both his *kanshi* and *haiku* compositions. Sōseki explains the reason he likes the japonica a little earlier in the same chapter.

I throw myself back onto the grass. My hat slips from my forehead and haloes my head. The grass is studded with little clumps of wild japonica bush one or two feet tall, and my face has come to rest just in front of one. Japonica is an interesting plant. Its branches obstinately refuse to bend, yet neither are they straight: each small straight twig collides with another small straight twig at an angle, so that the whole branch consists of a series of obliques, tranquilly ornamented with rather pointless scarlet or white flowers, and a casual scattering of soft leaves to top it off. You could characterize

⁷⁰ McKinney, Meredith. Trans. *Kusamakura* by Natsume Soseki. Penguin Books, London, 2008, p. 131.

the japonica as belonging to the type of the enlightened fool. Some in this world

doggedly retain an awkward and innocent honesty- they will be reborn as japonica.

It's the flower that I myself would like to become.⁷¹

Sōseki felt sympathy with the japonica, it is unbendable yet not straight in shape, resembling in many ways Sōseki's character. By thinking of himself as a japonica bush, gave poetic inspiration to Sōseki.

Sōseki confirms this in the protagonist's monologue after composing the poem.

That's it! I've done it! I've truly captured the feeling of lying here gazing at the japonica,

all worldly thoughts forgotten. It doesn't matter if the poem doesn't actually include

the japonica, or the sea, as long as the feeling comes through.⁷²

Now, let us see what Sōseki was feeling by becoming one with a japonica bush by analysing the poem in detail.

Line one, 出門 means 'Going out from the front gate' and Ikkai says that it is often used at the beginning of old style poems. 所思 in the same lines, meaning 'Thought' was also often used in old style poems. Ikkai explains that it is used in *Gakufu* (楽府), and gives an example of a poem by 宋之問 Song Zhi-wen (Jp, Sō Shimon, 656?-712), a poet from the early Tang period. Song used this word

⁷¹ McKinney, Meredith. Trans. *Kusamakura* by Natsume Soseki. Penguin Books, London, 2008, p. 131.

⁷² Ibid., p. 132.

in his poem titled “*Xiashan ge*” (下山歌), the line reads as follows.

下嵩山多所思 嵩山より下りて思う所多し⁷³

Whilst I am coming down from Mount Song, I have many thoughts.

Sōseki is familiarizing himself with the long poetic style from the Tang period.

春風吹吾衣 in the second line gives the image of being blown by the spring wind.

芳草 in the third line meaning fragrant flower appears in The Blue Cliff Record 36 case followed by 生車轍, the traces or tracks of the wheels on the country road, indicating the breath of spring manifesting itself on the deserted road. It’s a rich and evocative expression which perfectly captures the power of nature.

廢道 in the fourth line depicts the deserted country road, followed by 入霞微, stretching far, fading into the spring haze. 廢道 ‘The deserted country road’ can be interpreted as the expression of the well-known Zen concepts, Wabi and Sabi, both of which concern the notion of profound loneliness. It suggests a meditative mind. With this beautiful image of fading into the spring haze, Sōseki is describing entering into the spiritual world, something which can’t be explained in words. The third and fourth lines are both a depiction of nature and him entering into that world.

筇 in the fifth line is usually classed as a type of bamboo as explained by Toyofuku. Later in Japan, it began to be used as a word to describe ‘A walking stick’. Toyofuku goes on to explain that this word

⁷³ <http://kanbun.info/syubu/toushisen019.html>

is not generally used on its own to mean ‘A walking stick’ in Chinese literature. However, it is cited in a poem by Ryōkan 良寛 (1758 – 1831), a Zen monk poet whom Sōseki greatly admired in the final period of his life.

「偶作」

歩随流水覓源泉 歩して流水に随って源泉を覓(もと)む

行到源頭却惘然 行きて源頭に到って却って惘然(ぼうぜん)

始悟真源行不到 始めて悟る真源行き到らざるを

倚筇随処弄潺湲 筇(つえ)に倚(よ)り随処に潺湲(せんかん)を弄せん⁷⁴

“Spontaneous composition”

I walked along the stream to find a spring.

When I came to the source and couldn't find the spring.

Then, I realized it is no use to seek the source of truth far away.

In fact, one should try to stop walking, lean on the walking stick and scoop up the water

from the stream wherever you are.

In Ryōkan’s poem, the stick is a guide to awakening to the truth one has in front of oneself.

矚目 in the same line means to see with your mind. When taken together with the meaning implied in ‘A walking stick’, Sōseki is expressing the importance of stopping and seeing what you have in front

⁷⁴ <http://rienmei.blog20.fc2.com/blog-entry-494.html>

of you with your inner vision.

In line six, Sōseki describes what one can see with the heart: 万象帶晴暉, ‘Everything is shining in the light’.

Sōseki continues to give the image of immediate experiences flowing through an open mind in the next two lines as well. Line seven, 聽黃鳥宛轉, ‘The bush warbler singing melodically’, and line eight, 賭落英紛霏, ‘Flower petals fluttering to the ground’.

紛霏 is cited in Tao Yuanming’s poem, *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring*,

忽逢桃花林、夾岸數百步、中無雜樹、芳華鮮美、落英繽紛。

忽ち桃花の林に逢う、岸を夾むこと數百步、中に雜樹無く、芳華鮮美にして、

落英繽紛たり。⁷⁵

Suddenly I came across a peach blossom forest. Along both banks of the river for a couple of hundreds of steps, there is no tree except peach trees flowering, spreading their beautiful fragrance. It was so beautiful to see the petals fluttering down.

Lines seven and eight emphasise the mood of spring by providing us with powerful visual images of exuberant nature.

平蕪 in the ninth line gives an image of a flat plain, and it is cited in a poem by Gao Shi (高適 702-705)

⁷⁵ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013. p. 152.

出門何所見 門を出でて何の見る所ぞ

春色満平蕪 春色平蕪に満つ⁷⁶

Coming out of the gate and looking around, there is nothing to see.

In front of me the spring grasses growing on a vast flat plain.

After walking and looking across the vast flat plain ahead in line nine, an old temple is reached. Line ten explains the next action, 題詩古寺扉, 'Writing a poem on the door of an old temple'. In his first recorded poem which we looked at in Chapter One, Sōseki came across an old deserted temple, at that time all he could do was knock and push at the temple door but now his sensitivity has heightened, he is able to compose a poem on the spot.

孤愁 in the eleventh line expresses the feeling of melancholy which we examined in chapter one, followed by 高雲際, 'Clouds floating high in the sky'.

Line twelve explains what is seen in the sky, 大空断鴻帰, 'A stray goose returning home alone'. In these two lines, Soseki is reflecting and depicting himself as a stray goose in the clouds which are inside his mind. It gives us a profound impression of loneliness inside a meditative state of mind.

寸心 in the thirteenth line means 'Heart' which appeared in a poem earlier in this chapter, followed by 窈窕 'Profound' which rhyme-matches with Tao Yuanming's poem in *Guiqulai ci* (帰去来辞).

Let's refer to the poem.

⁷⁶ Ishikawa, Tadahisa. Ed. *Kanshi Kanshō Jiten*. Kodansha, 2009, p. 256.

既窈窕以尋壑 既に窈窕として以て壑を尋ね、

亦崎嶇而經丘 亦た崎嶇として丘を經。⁷⁷

Entering the deep and quiet of the valley,

And going across the inaccessible hill.

縹渺 in the fourteenth line is vast and far, 忘是非 means ‘Beyond what is right and wrong’. This line refers to Zhuangzi’s text, Chapter Two, “Discussion on Making all things equal”.

Everything has its “that,” everything has its “this.” From the point of view of “that” you cannot see it, but through understanding you can know it. So I say, “that” comes out of “this” and “this” depends on “that” – which is to say that “this” and “that” give birth to each other. But where there is birth there must be death; where there is death there must be birth. Where there is acceptability there must be unacceptability; where there is unacceptability there must be acceptability. Where there is recognition of right there must be recognition of wrong; where there is recognition of wrong there must be recognition of right. Therefore the sage does not proceed in such a way, but illuminates all in the light of Heaven.⁷⁸

Lines thirteen and fourteen describe losing oneself in nature which is to lose oneself in the

⁷⁷ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013, p. 146-147.

⁷⁸ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 39-40.

Note: Watson gives an interpretation of “the light of Heaven” as “Nature or the Way” in the footnote 6.

Way.

三十我欲老 in the fifteenth line, Sōseki describes himself as he was at thirty two years of age and the feeling of ageing that accompanied him.

韶光猶依依 in the sixteenth line gives an image of the spring light enveloping him in a comforting way. 依依 ‘Gentle’ is cited in Tao Yuanming’s poem, 歸園田居 *Returning to My Farm* part 1.

曖曖遠人村 曖曖たり 遠人の村

依依墟里煙 依依たり 墟里の煙⁷⁹

The faint image of a village far away

Gentle smoke is coming out of the houses in the hometown.

Sōseki is attempting to create a feeling of comfort and security in this line indicating he is entering into his spiritual land.

逍遙隨物化 in the fifteenth line shows a clear influence from Zhuangzi’s text, as 逍遙 “Free and Easy Wandering” appears as a part of the title of Chapter One, and 物化 “Transformation of things” is cited in the final part of Chapter Two, ‘Discussion on Making All Things Equal’. It is the scene where Zhuangzi dreams of being a butterfly, but when he wakes up, he is not sure whether he dreamt of being a butterfly or if he is a butterfly dreaming of being Zhuangzi.

Here, Sōseki is in his spiritual land and presents the image of being in a carefree state of mind where

⁷⁹ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012. p. 96.

one forgets oneself in a selfless world.

悠然 in the last line means a ‘Relaxed feeling’ which rhyme-matches with Tao Yuanming’s poem which we discussed in Chapter one, followed by 对 ‘Gaze’. The line ends with 芬菲 ‘Scent of fragrant flower’, a peaceful image. We can see here Sōseki is a butterfly gazing at a flower with a lovely scent.

This long poem shows the essence of *sokuten kyoshi*. In the poem, Soseki is in a profound lonely place, which suggests he is in a meditative state of mind. He enters into his spiritual land by being one with nature and forgetting himself, in this case by being transformed into a butterfly.

Uzan admired this poem highly saying it is a noble old-style poem with composure which has the flavour of the atmosphere of a poem from the Six Dynasties,⁸⁰ which means Tao Yuanming.

March 1898

Poem 67

“*Chungri Jingzuo*” (jp. *Shunjitsu Seiza*: Sitting quietly on a spring day)

春日静坐

青春二三月 青春 二三月

愁随芳草長 愁いは芳草に随って長し

⁸⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 198.

閑花落空庭 閑花 空庭に落ち

素琴横虚堂 素琴 虚堂に横たう

蠨網挂不動 蠨網 挂かりて動かず

篆烟繞竹梁 篆烟 竹梁を繞る

独坐無隻語 独坐 隻語無く

方寸認微光 方寸 微光を認む

人間徒多事 人間 徒らに多事

此境孰可忘 此の境 孰か忘れる可けん

会得一日静 会たま一日の静を得て

正知百年忙 正に知る 百年の忙

遐懷寄何処 遐懷 何れの処にか寄せん

緬邈白雲郷 緬邈たり 白雲の郷⁸¹

Spring, February and March

My melancholy lingers like the scent of fragrant flowers.

Petals fall from the carefree flowers growing in the quiet garden.

A Qin without strings is lying in an empty room.

A motionless spider hangs from a web.

⁸¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 201-202.

Smoke rises and twists around the beams in the house like ancient calligraphy.

Sitting alone without a word,

There is a faint light in my heart.

The human world is full of mundane matters.

But I can't let go of this still state of mind

I had a chance to be at peace for a whole day.

I understand how busy the human world is.

Where can I keep this carefree outside of this world feeling?

I am going to keep this feeling in the home in my heart where the white clouds reside.

Gogon Koshi

This poem appears in *Kusamakura* Chapter Six.

青春 in the first line means the Spring, 二三月 is the period between January and March in the Chinese calendar.

芳草 in the second line, which appeared in the previous poem in line three, refers to a fragrant flower, and is cited in the *Zen* text *Blue Cliff Record*, 36 case.

沙云、始随芳草去、又逐落花回。

沙云く、「始めは芳草に随って去き、又た落花を逐って回る。」⁸²

⁸² Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzo., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. An. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2005 (9th edition), p. 57.

Sha said "First I went pursuing the fragrant grasses, then -smelling returned following the falling flowers."⁸³

Nakamura mentioned that Sōseki was fond of this line from a Zen text in the last period of his life and often enjoyed writing it out in calligraphy.⁸⁴ Here, Sōseki demonstrates his interest in reading Zen texts. In lines one and two, Soseki begins the poem with an impression of the melancholy of spring. The third and fourth lines suggest a meditative atmosphere. 閑花 in the third line is a tranquil flower followed by 空庭 'The empty garden' meaning profound loneliness which suggests a meditative state of mind.

素琴 in the fourth line refers to a simple Qin, and is cited when Tao Yuanming is mentioned in *the Book of Song*. It depicts a Qin without strings. The Qin is strongly associated with the composition of poems. 虚堂 means a quiet chamber, implying a quiet heart. This line gives the idea of composing a poem in tranquillity. 虚堂 'Quiet chamber' rhyme-matches with Ryōkan's poem.

虚室実生白 虚室 実に白きを生じ、

寒炉長無烟 寒炉 長く烟なし。

If one's mind is protected, the empty chamber lights up with a white light which invites auspicious spirits,

⁸³ Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 221.

⁸⁴ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobo, Tokyo, 1983, p. 110.

But I haven't used the cooking stove for a long time.

The annotator, Tōgō notes that 生白 'To be lit up with a white light' is taken from Zhuangzi chapter four, "In the World of Men".

*Look into that closed room, the empty chamber where brightness is born! Fortune
and blessing gather where there is stillness.⁸⁵*

虚室生白。吉祥止止。⁸⁶

We can read this line as meaning that if one has an empty mind and stays still, fortune gathers and comes to help in the composition of the poems. The important point about the third and fourth line is that both have a character meaning emptiness, 空 in the third line and 虚 in the fourth, to emphasise stillness of mind.

蠨網 in the fifth line is a spider, followed by 挂, hanging. The final characters are 不動, non-action.

This line is a powerful and impressive image of stillness in nature.

篆烟 in the sixth line describes twisting smoke. 竹梁 is a bamboo beam. In this line we can visualise incense smoke rising up into the beams.

独坐 in the seventh line means 'Sitting in solitude', followed by 無隻語 'Without any words'. This line gives us the image of Sōseki practicing meditation.

方寸 in the eighth line, 'Heart', together with the following words, 認微光, describe a dim light

⁸⁵ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 58.

⁸⁶ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 148.

growing inside the heart during meditation.

多事 in the ninth line denotes worldly affairs, and is cited in Zhuangzi, Chapter Thirty-one, 'The Old Fisherman'. The following paragraph explains what Sōseki meant by the mundane matters of the human world. It is a reply from an old man, whom Confucius regards as a sage to Confucius' request to teach him something.

“Creatures follow their own kind, a voice will answer to the voice that is like itself,” said the stranger, “this has been the rule of Heaven since time began. With your permission, therefore, I will set aside for the moment my own ways and try applying myself to the things that you are concerned about. What you are concerned about are the affairs of men. The Son of Heaven, the feudal lords, the high ministers, the common people – when these four are of themselves upright, this is the most admirable state of order. But if they depart from their proper stations, there is no greater disorder. When officials attend to their duties and men worry about their undertakings, there is no overstepping of the mark.

“Fields gone to waste, rooms unroofed, clothing and food that are not enough, taxes and labor services that you can't keep up with, wives and concubines never in harmony, senior and junior out of order – these are the worries of the common man. Ability that does not suffice for the task, official business that doesn't go right, conduct

that is not spotless and pure, underlings who are lazy and slipshod, success and praise that never come your way, titles and stipends that you can't hold on to - these are the worries of the high minister. A court lacking in loyal ministers, a state and its great families in darkness and disorder, craftsmen and artisans who have no skill, articles of tribute that won't pass the test, inferior ranking at the spring and autumn levees at court, failure to ingratiate himself with the Son of Heaven – these are the worries of a feudal lord. The yin and yang out of harmony, cold and heat so untimely that they bring injury to all things, feudal lords violent and unruly, wantonly attacking one another till they all but destroy the common people, rites and music improperly performed, funds and resources that are forever giving out, human relationships that are not ordered as they should be, the hundred clans contumacious and depraved – these are the worries of the Son of Heaven and his chancellors. Now on the higher level you do not hold the position of a ruler, a feudal lord, or a chancellor, and on the lower level you have not been assigned to the office of a high minister with its tasks and duties. Yet you presume to 'bring a beautiful order to rites and music, to select what is proper in human relationships,' and in this way to 'transform the ordinary people.' This is undertaking rather a lot, isn't it?"⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Watson, Burton. Tran. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 346-347.

Here, Zhuangzi goes on endlessly about unnecessary points in order to demonstrate that people often do unnecessary pointless things. Sōseki by referring to Zhuangzi's text implies that people are inclined to waste their lives in unnecessary and superficial matters.

此境 in the tenth line means the quiet state of mind Sōseki is experiencing, followed by 孰可忘 meaning 'How can I forget.' Sōseki is showing his determination to carry on meditating to arrive at a tranquil state of mind. In line nine and ten, he looks at the human world and finds it too busy with unnecessary things. He appreciates the fact that he has found a quiet moment in his busy life.

会得一日静 in the eleventh line, Sōseki explains how he appreciated the opportunity to have a quiet day, and be able to meditate and find peace of mind.

In the twelfth line 正知百年忙, Sōseki is saying how he came to understand the hectic nature of human life through having a quiet period of meditation. Lines nine and ten, and eleven and twelve, both couplets have very similar meanings. Sōseki repeats himself to emphasise the point.

遐懷 'Carefree remote place away from this world' in the thirteenth line, refers to the metaphysical home in Sōseki's heart. In this line, Sōseki is thinking of the spiritual land inside his mind.

Sōseki is confirming in the final line 緬邈白雲鄉 that 'The home where white clouds reside far away from the human world', the place where the white clouds and immortals reside, is in fact the home in his mind.

白雲 'White clouds' are cited in Zhuangzi, Chapter Twelve, 'Heaven and Earth'. Zhuangzi explains the

location of white clouds.

The true sage is a quail at rest, a little fledgling at its meal, a bird in flight who leaves no trail behind. When the world has the Way, he joins in the chorus with all other things. When the world is without the Way, he nurses his Virtue and retires in leisure. And after a thousand years, should he weary of the world, he will leave it and ascend to the immortals, riding on those white clouds all the way up the village of God. The three worries you have cited never touch him, his body is forever free of peril. How can he suffer any shame?"⁸⁸

So, for Sōseki the white clouds where the immortals reside is his destination and the spiritual land inside his mind. It is clear that phrases such as 'Quiet mind', 'Empty heart', 'Stay still', 'White light inside empty heart' and 'White clouds' are all important expressions for Soseki as they all refer to returning to his spiritual home.

Uzan said that the point behind the poem is to seek calmness and profundity. He also commented that the poem is full of poetic sensitivity and good taste, and demonstrates the skill and profundity of Sōseki's poetry. Uzan considered the eleventh and twelfth lines to be the most refined of all.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Watson, Burton. Tran. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 130.

⁸⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 204.

Poem 75

"No Title"

無題

君病風流謝俗紛 君病んで 風流 俗紛を謝し

吾愚牢落失鴻群 吾愚かにして 牢落 鴻群を失う

磨甌未徹古人句 甌を磨きて 未だ徹せず 古人の句

嘔血始看才子文 血を嘔きて 始めて見る 才子の文

陌柳映衣征意動 陌柳 衣に映じて 征意動き

館燈照鬢客愁分 館燈 鬢を照らして 客愁分かる

詩成投筆蹒跚起 詩成り 筆を投じて 蹒跚として起つ

此去西天多白雲 此の去 西天 白雲多からん⁹⁰

While away from the mundane world during your illness you have shown so much poetic sensitivity.

I am lonely like a stray goose separated from the flock.

I am still not enlightened, that is something similar to the impossible task of polishing a roof tile to become a mirror.

You are gifted with a great literary talent despite vomiting blood.

⁹⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 231-232.

The willow tree on the street makes me emotional as it reminds me of the thought of departure.

The light from the inn shines on my moustache and reveals the melancholy of the guest.

After composing a poem, I rest my pen, and stagger onto my feet.

I am leaving for the West, white clouds are overwhelming me.

Shichigon Risshi

After composing this poem, Sōseki left Japan for London and did not compose any more *Kanshi* until 1910. During his stay in London, he lost his best friend Shiki, who had helped him in understanding how to compose *kanshi*. Indeed, Sōseki often addressed his poems to him. This poem was to be the final poem Sōseki composed for Shiki.

Shiki was a major inspiration for Sōseki's *kanshi* composition as we know. He had revived Sōseki's childhood enthusiasm for the world of *kanshi*. In fact, until Sōseki met Shiki he had abandoned Chinese Studies altogether for English literature.

君 in the first line is addressed to Shiki. It is followed by 風流, poetic sensitivity and ends with 謝俗紛, cut off from the mundane world. In the opening line, Sōseki is describing Shiki who devotes his life to poetry and is far away from the ordinary world.

牢落 in the second line means 'Lonely', and the following words, 失鴻群, 'A stray goose separated from the flock'. Sōseki is describing himself in this line. Sōseki shows his loneliness to his best friend,

Shiki.

磨甃 in the third line mean polishing a roof tile. This word is taken from a historical event in a Zen text, 景德伝灯録 卷五 *Yingde Zhuandeng lu*, Volume 5

In the Kaiyuan reign period (713-41 CE) there was a Śramaṇa named Daoyi who was living in the Quanfa Temple and forever practising meditation. Master Huairang knew that he was a vessel of the Dharma, so he went to him and asked, ‘What is the venerable one after in sitting meditation?’

‘The desire to become a Buddha,’ was the reply.

The master then took a tile and right there in front of the hermitage, began grinding it on a stone.

‘What is the master doing?’ asked the Śramaṇa Daoyi.

‘Grinding it down to make a mirror,’ answered Master Huairang.

‘How is it possible to make a mirror by grinding down a tile?’ asked Daoyi.

‘How is it possible to make a Buddha from sitting in meditation?’ countered the master.

‘What to do then?’ asked Daoyi.

‘It is like a man driving a cart; if the cart gets stuck, does he beat the cart or does he beat the ox?’ Asked the master. Daoyi was silent. The master continued, ‘When you

practice meditation is it to practise sitting like a Buddha? If you are practising sitting like a Buddha, Buddha is not rigid form. In the Dharma of Non-Abiding you must not try to grasp or reject anything. If you are sitting to become a Buddha, that is killing Buddha. Clinging to the form of sitting is not penetrating the principle,⁹¹

Sōseki is explaining he is at the stage of polishing a roof tile, which means that he is just practising sitting and hasn't reached an enlightened state.

嘔血 in the fourth line mean 'To vomit blood', 始看才子文 'Gifted with literary talent'. Sōseki is admiring Shiki's ability to produce great literary works by working hard despite the fact that he is extremely unwell and vomiting blood. In this line, Soseki shows his deep concern for Shiki who is fatally ill although he is working hard to contribute to the literary world.

陌柳 in the fifth line depicts a 'Weeping willow on the street'. Ikkai notes that the weeping willow in Chinese tradition symbolises a parting and here Sōseki is of course referring to his separation from Shiki. It is a perfect example of how an image from Chinese classical literature illuminates the moment in question. 征意 'The feeling of departure', followed by 動 'Move' express Sōseki's emotion at parting from his best friend who was suffering from a serious illness. Sōseki must have feared that this might be the last time he saw Shiki alive.

The following line visually depicts Sōseki's sad feeling. 館燈 'The light from the inn', 照鬢客愁分

⁹¹ Whitfield, Randolph S. Trans. *Records of The Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*. Volume 2., Book on Demand, Germany, 2015. P. 112-113.

'The melancholy in the traveller's moustache', symbolise the sorrow on the face of Sōseki.

投筆 in the seventh line means 'Resting a pen' followed by 蹣跚 'Stagger'. This line shows that Soseki is emotionally distressed in having to say farewell to his best friend for possibly the last time.

此去 in the final line 'Leaving here' can be 此行 'Going somewhere' according to Ikai and Yoshikawa. Ikai notes that these phrases can be interchangeable in Tang poems in order to fulfil the phonemic rules of *kanshi*. This study chose 'Leaving here' as Sōseki's feeling is very much about where he is rather than his destination. Sōseki finds it difficult to say good bye to Shiki.

西天 in the same line 'The West' indicating the destination of his travels, England. Followed by 多白雲 'Many white clouds' which represent emotions piling up on him and the difficulty he has in leaving.

The last poem for Shiki clearly shows Sōseki's great sorrow on leaving his best friend who is seriously ill for a land far away from his country. It was Sōseki's farewell to Shiki.⁹² He didn't compose any more for another ten years, amongst many things Shiki's death has a devastating effect on his creation of *kanshi*.

CONCLUSION

Although it ran over five years, Sōseki's second period of *kanshi* writing only consisted of twenty-one

⁹² Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki to Shiki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 256.

poems. Despite the relatively small output, it was an extremely important time in the development of his *kanshi*. He was able to refine and explore his compositional talents and with the advice of Shiki by letter and during his stay in Matsuyama and another expert in *kanshi* he met in Kumamoto, Nagao Uzan, his writing continued to increase in quality and scope. Sōseki got down to composing poems seriously during this period in Matsuyama and Kumamoto and produced a large body of work although the majority of his creations were *haiku* compositions

It was a time in which Sōseki practiced sitting quietly allowing his mind the freedom to wander in the meditative calm and emptiness which became the spiritual base of his poetry.

In his Kumamoto period, Sōseki developed his *kanshi* composition technique showing his knowledge of Zen and Daoist philosophies, quoting from a number of texts and using them to underline spiritual insights. Under Uzan's supervision, Sōseki began to experiment composing a longer poem, *Koshi*, which gives the freedom to express one's emotion without the restriction of a limited number of lines.

Sōseki composed poems about the process of meditation using visual images. He repeatedly used the image of emptiness; quietness; profound loneliness; white clouds; bright light; forgetting oneself; to describe his meditative state of mind in order to enter into his spiritual land. His poems from this time are rich and vivid in emotion and imagery. His honesty and vigour shine through as he searches for the form and words often rooted in Chinese spiritual literature which will fully express his

thoughts.

As far as his career was concerned, remaining a teacher of English wasn't Sōseki's lifelong plan. Sōseki needed to go further away to the West before returning to Tokyo.

During his Kumamoto days, Sōseki was told by the Ministry of Culture to go to Britain to study English further, so that he could replace native English literature teachers after he returned home. He left for England in 1900, not knowing where he was going to stay and study. Sōseki stopped composing *kanshi* for a long time after leaving Japan and did not take it up again until he became seriously ill at Shuzen-ji in 1910.

Chapter Three

Serious Illness at Shuzen-ji Period

INTRODUCTION

The starting point for Sōseki's third *kanshi* period was his stay in Shuzen-ji where he went to recuperate from illness. Whilst there he became even more seriously ill which led to a further spell of recuperation in both Shuzen-ji and a hospital in Tokyo. Sōseki was 43 years old at the time in question: from August to October 1910.

He had been living an intense and stressful life up until this period. It is useful to take a brief look at what he had been through and how he came back after a long absence to write *kanshi* in Shuzen-ji.

After returning from London, Sōseki in order to support his family went back to a busy life of teaching literature at a number of universities. He was still feeling the loss of his best friend Shiki, and was now experiencing a strong urge to be a literary artist rather than go on teaching English as a living. Sōseki became increasingly mentally fragile during this period and was obliged to live separately from his family. Takahama Kyoshi who was Shiki's disciple, and who carried on editing *Hototogisu* after Shiki's death, suggested to Sōseki that he write something.

Sōseki responded by writing the first part of a novel later known as *I am a cat* (at the beginning, it had a different title) which was read at a number of literary circle gatherings which Kyoshi attended. It was so popular that the story was published in *Hototogisu*. Sōseki's inner urge to be a creative literary artist became stronger and stronger. He continued to suffer from the sporadic symptoms of nervous exhaustion and was still sandwiched between the dilemma of teaching English and being a literary artist.

At this point he received an offer from the *Asahi* Newspaper to be a dedicated literary artist for the newspaper. The negotiations went favourably for Sōseki and he accepted the position.¹ At last, he managed to become a full-time literary artist and was able to leave his teaching job at the universities.

Sōseki worked hard writing a story each day for the serialisation of a novel. He was far happier being a literary artist than he had been as an English teacher. He gave speeches in public lectures and his admirers began to visit his home for regular discussions. Sōseki's health, however, began to deteriorate and he suffered from stomach ulcers. He received treatment and went to Shuzen-ji to recuperate from the illness.²

Sōseki's condition worsened while he was recuperating at Shuzen-ji, and he became critically ill, at one point vomiting a large amount of blood.³ Sōseki revived but he was so extremely weak he had to lie down in bed for a few months unable to do anything.

During his recovery from illness Sōseki spent days just lying in bed, watching the clouds in the sky. As the days went by he began to find poetic inspiration from this experience and his present circumstances which had given him time and respite to look inside himself and seek peace of mind and spiritual illumination. When he was well enough he began to make notes for poems in his diary and eventually started to write *kanshi*.⁴ On his return to a hospital in Tokyo to continue his recuperation from serious illness Sōseki continued to compose *kanshi*. Sōseki also began to write *Omoidasu kotonado* which is a series of essays about his life published in the *Asahi*. Sōseki included all the *kanshi* he composed during and after his serious illness in some of the essays in *Omoidasu kotonado*.

¹ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 175-176.

² *Ibid.*, p. 214-215.

³ Sasaki, Hideaki. *Natsume Sōseki -Ningen wa Densha ja arimasenkara-*. Minerva Shobō, 2016, p. 316.

⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Omoidasu Kotonado", p. 369-371.

Many of *kanshi* from this period reveal the feeling of relief to be alive, the joy of having a quiet time, and the gratitude to the people who cared and gave support to him during his recovery.⁵ The style he chose is mainly *zekku*, whose short form didn't put too much of a strain on him physically and which was a beautifully simple form in which to express his sentiments.

LONDON, LONELINESS, PUBLICATION OF *I AM A CAT*

Sōseki left Japan on 8 September 1900, travelling to Europe by ship via China and India. He stayed about a week in Paris before he headed off to London. During his short stay in Paris, Sōseki, according to his diary visited the Paris Exposition (April 15 – November 12) three times. The exhibition also happened to feature contributions from Japan. We do not know what it was that so fascinated Sōseki but it is clear that he was certainly interested in the exhibition.

It was during his stay in London between 1900 to 1902 that he began to doubt his future as an English Literature specialist. He said that the way he had been taught English literature was to follow what others said without examining his own opinion. The student of English literature in Japan at that time had no choice but to slavishly follow the opinions of the Western literature specialists. In this respect he felt he was inferior to Western Scholars. At the same time, ironically, English literature was not established as a subject in the UK during this period. Unlike Latin or the Greek classics, English literature was regarded as a subject unworthy of serious study.

Sōseki decided to study English literature on his own terms. A perspective and attitude which on his return to Japan became the foundation for his research writing. He also, met up with Ikeda Kikunae (池田菊苗, 1864-1936), a scientist studying in Germany who visited London on his way back home.

⁵ Toyofuku, Kenji. *Furo de yomu Sōseki no Kanshi*. Sekai Shisō sha, 1996, p. 49.

Discussing philosophy and other subjects with Ikeda was a turning point for Sōseki.⁶ However, it is apparent that due to a variety of factors, isolation, his fragile state, lack of news from home, that Sōseki's time in London was not a happy one. Although the majority of scholars agree that it seems likely he suffered some type of nervous breakdown⁷, there is still some dispute over this question. Sasaki for example claims Sōseki didn't suffer from any kind of breakdown.⁸

With limited financial support from the Japanese Government he studied intensively, spending most of his time reading and writing in his room.⁹ Again, Sasaki contradicts some accounts mentioning that there were some Japanese living where Sōseki stayed and that Sōseki didn't have any problem in socialising with them. Sasaki says that it is a myth to think Sōseki was lonely and lived in poor conditions in order to buy books.¹⁰

Sōseki was consciously searching hard for a new direction. Without family support to offer mental consolation and security he felt alone and inferior in a country which was highly advanced in Western technology. He was lonely but he said later that he was grateful for this sensation of loneliness for it was through this that he discovered the idea of his own individualism, the term he called 'jiko hon'i' (自己本位 'On My Own Terms'). Later in life, in 1914, when making a speech at the Gakushūin school

⁶ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007 (3rd edition), p. 38.

⁷ Doi, Bansui. "Sōseki-san no London ni okeru Episode" in *Sōseki Zenshū Bessatsu*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p.129-133.

Marcus, Marvin. *Reflections in a Glass Door- Memory and Melancholy in the Personal Writing of Natsume Sōseki*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2009, p.18-19 & p. 34-35.

Miyamoto, Moritarō & Seki, Shizuo. *Natsume Sōseki- Shisō no Hikaku to Michi no Tankyū*. Minerva Shobo, 2000, p. 69-70.

Nathan, John. *Sōseki- Modern Japan's Great Novelist*. Columbia University Press, New York, 2018, p. 67-69.

Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 102-107.

Natsume, Sōseki. "Bungakuron – Jo". *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.14, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p.14-15.

Sōseki Zenshū vol.19. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 89. (Soseki's diary dated 01/07/1901)

Sōseki Zenshū Vol.22. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 263. (letter addressed to Kyoko Natsume dated 12/09/1902)

Okakura, Yoshisaburō. "Tomo ni Ihō ni Au" in *Sōseki Zenshū Bessatsu*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 127-128.

Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 124.

⁸ Sasaki, Hideaki. *Natsume Sōseki -Ningen wa Densha ja arimasenkara-*. Minerva Shobō, 2016, p. 205.

⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p.214-222. (letter addressed to Karino, Ohtsuka, Suga, Yamakawa dated 02/09/1901)

¹⁰ Sasaki, Hideaki. *Natsume Sōseki -Ningen wa Densha ja arimasenkara-*. Minerva Shobō, 2016, p. 205.

which educated the Japanese elite to become important figures in the operating and running of Japan, Sōseki said that it was the idea, 'jiko hon' ('On my own terms') which gave him the strength to carry on with what he believed in no matter what others said. The expression was first noted in the publication of his lecture, titled *My individualism* (私の個人主義, *Watakushi no Kojinshugi*). Sōseki also stressed the importance of taking responsibility if you acted 'On your own terms'.¹¹ Sōseki explained that power and money are very convenient but dangerous tools when it comes to imposing one's opinion upon others. Sōseki summarised the message he wanted to send out to the elite who would be governing Japan in the future into three points: "First, that if you want to carry out the development of your individuality, you must respect the individuality of others. Second, that if you intend to utilize the power in your possession, you must be fully cognizant of the duty that accompanies it. Third, that if you wish to demonstrate your financial power, you must respect its concomitant responsibilities."¹² This was an especially significant comment taking into consideration the fact that during this period Japan was increasingly aggressive, promoting nationalism and oppressing individualism. Sōseki wrote that although he disliked London, he was impressed by the strong liberal and free-thinking qualities evident in British culture.¹³

Other elements of British society, however, did not impress him. Sōseki was witness to the negative side of modernisation in London, such as pollution and poverty amongst the working class. He realised that modernisation did not eradicate poverty from human society. He also began to see Japan and Japanese people objectively¹⁴, a thought which was later expressed in a speech, *Gendai Nihon no Kaia* 現代日本の開花 (*Civilisation of Modern Japan*) he made in August 1911 in Wakayama¹⁵.

¹¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, "Watakushi no Kojin Shugi", p. 606-605.

¹² Rubin, Jay. Trans. "Watakushi no Kojinshugi". (Sōseki no Individualism) in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Spring 1979, p. 40.

¹³ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, "Watakushi no Kojin Shugi", p. 606-607.

¹⁴ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007 (3rd edition), p. 41.

¹⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, "Gendai Nihon no Kaia", p. 415-440.

Sōseki was suffering from loneliness and a poor quality of life. On top of that, he had had no communications from his wife, Kyōko, which added to his anxiety. In reality, whilst Sōseki was away in London, Kyōko's father who had once been a powerful politician, failed in business, and Kyōko with limited financial means was too busy looking after her family. Whilst Sōseki was coping with life in London, on 19 September 1902, his close and best friend, Shiki, passed away. Sōseki was informed of his death by one of Shiki's followers Takahama Kyoshi (高浜虚子 1874-1959). He had seen Shiki for the last time on 26 August 1900, just before he left for London. He had visited Shiki, who was suffering badly from tuberculosis of the spine, at his home in Negishi. Shiki had composed a farewell poem for his friend, Sōseki. This poem is cited in Sōseki's wife, Kyōko's *Memory of Sōseki*.¹⁶

萩すすき 来年あはむ さりながら

Bush clover and Japanese pampas grass,

We won't be seeing each other next year,

You are leaving.

While Shiki was alive, Sōseki sent him several letters from London. Shiki was delighted to hear from his friend and put Sōseki's letter in his journal, *Hototogisu*, under the title of *London shōsoku (News from London)*. Sōseki's letter describing life in London was so amusing that Shiki made a request for Sōseki to write him another letter. Unfortunately, Sōseki was unable to fulfil his best friend's request. He later expressed his regret at not responding to Shiki's sincere request in an essay.¹⁷ Later in life, Sōseki made a memorial scroll for his friend, gathering together a collection of his friend's letters and drawings. This scroll included the last letter from Shiki to Sōseki dated 6 November 1901.

¹⁶ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2003, "Yōkō", p. 92.

¹⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, "Wagahai ha Neko dearu"-Introduction, p. 32-33.

Around the time of Shiki's death, Sōseki was worn out by the stress caused by money worries, struggling to find an objective for his research and loneliness. It became known that his mental state was worsening. His medical condition was reported to Japan, and he was ordered to return to his homeland by the Ministry of Culture. Sōseki did not immediately follow the order, he waited until the following month, and set off for Japan on 5 December 1902. In fact, Sōseki wanted to remain in Europe and made a request to go to Paris to study there.¹⁸ His request was turned down by the Japanese government.

RETURNS HOME, LEAVES TEACHING, BECOMES A LITERARY ARTIST FOR A NEWSPAPER

Let us now discuss Sōseki's circumstances after his return from London in 1902. When he came back home he became aware of the financial hardships his family had been experiencing whilst away in London due to Kyōko's father, Nakane Shigekazu, who once had an important position in the Japanese Government, failing in business. Sōseki's life after returning from London was unstable, as shown by a letter he wrote to Watanabe¹⁹

He took residence in Sendagi in Tokyo on 3 March 1903 and in April 1903 began to teach English literature at The Tokyo Imperial University and The First High School. Sōseki's lectures at Tokyo Imperial School, replacing Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), were not popular at the beginning, as many students supported Lafcadio Hearn and disliked Sōseki's lectures because his logical teaching method which used ideas from Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and William James (1842-1910)²⁰, was so different

¹⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 222. (letter addressed to Kanō, Ōtsuka, Suga, and Yamakawa on the 09/02/1901)

¹⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 268. (letter addressed to Watanabe on 09/02/1903)

²⁰ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007 (3rd edition), p. 54.

from Hearn's emotional approach to literature. However, later, his lectures in Shakespeare became popular and a large number of students filled the lecture room when he gave a talk on Macbeth.²¹

Despite his growing popularity as a lecturer, Sōseki was not happy teaching. He preferred spending his time in the library researching his interests. He was still suffering from psychological instability and the stress he was under also undermined his mental condition. He was once again on the verge of a nervous breakdown. We can see this from the letter addressed to Suga on 2 July 1903 in which he comments that the doctor would soon be giving up on him as he was suffering from so many ailments: stomach ulcers, mental stress, a nervous condition. In an effort to calm his troubled mind he started to learn how to paint with water colours.²² Due to his unstable temper and frequent mood swings Sōseki now had to live separately from his family.

Kyōko went back to her parents' home with the children for about two months. She went to see Sōseki's doctor who told her that Sōseki's bad temper was caused by his illness which was permanent and would never be cured. After hearing this news, Kyōko decided to live her life with Sōseki, and returned to Sōseki's side.²³ In October 1903 she gave birth to their third child, Eiko. Sōseki and his family moved home to Hongō on 27 December 1903.

Sōseki was suffocated by his teaching work. He needed a release for his creative energy. From the end of November to the beginning of December 1904, inspired by Kyoshi's suggestion that Sōseki write something to put in the journal, *Hototogisu*, Sōseki began to write a story employing a cat as the protagonist. He first recited it at the *haiku* gathering which had been started up by Shiki. It was very well received and was published in the journal under the title *I am a cat* (吾輩は猫である). It was originally called *The story of a cat*, however, Kyoshi suggested using the beginning sentence of the tale, "I am a cat, and I have no name". Hence, we have the famous novel *I am a cat*.

²¹ Sasaki, Hideaki. *Natsume Sōseki -Ningen wa Densha ja arimasenkara-*. Minerva Shobō, 2016, p. 238.

²² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 282-284. (letter addressed to Suga on 02/07/1903)

²³ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 115-118.

Sōseki began to think seriously about his career and whether to continue lecturing or become a literary specialist. By this time, he had a number of followers who sought his advice. They began to visit Sōseki's house where they discussed literature, art, culture and anything they considered intellectually stimulating. The gathering later became a regular Thursday meeting called *Mokuyō-kai* (木曜会).²⁴ Sōseki was keen to help and nurture anybody who came to get advice from him.

His mental state continued to be unstable and his health was deteriorating. In 1906, his friend, Kanō Kōkichi (狩野亨吉 1865-1942) who was head of Kyōto University approached Sōseki to work as a lecturer at Kyōto University but Sōseki turned him down. Sōseki wanted to stay in his home town, Tokyo and be creative in the literary field. In July Sōseki finished the last chapter of *I am a cat*. His mental health was weak, but he was bursting with artistic creativity. Immediately after finishing *I am a cat* he began to write *Kusamakura* (草枕).

In October 1906, the Thursday meeting group officially set up, and they began to meet regularly. The main members were Morita Sōhei (森田草平 1881-1949), Komiya Toyotaka (小宮豊隆 1884-1966), Suzuki Miekichi (鈴木三重吉 1882-1936), Terada Torahiko (寺田寅彦 1878-1935), Abe Yoshishige (安倍能成 1883-1966) and others. Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (芥川龍之介 1892-1927) and Kume Masao (久米正雄 1891-1952) joined later. Their meetings continued until near the time of Sōseki's death, the final meeting taking place on 16 November 1916. Even after Sōseki's death they got together regularly on the ninth of each month to pass on their mentor's legacy, so that Sōseki's idea could spread and be understood by many people.

Around this time, Sōseki was approached by the *Yomiuri* Newspaper to be a writer for their periodical. He was also approached by the *Asahi*. Ikebe Sanzan (池辺三山, 1864-1912) was the person in charge

²⁴ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 170-174.

of negotiating with Sōseki for *Asahi*. Ikebe, who was from Kumamoto and went to learn Chinese studies at Nishōgakusha at the same time as Sōseki, had spent time in Paris as an adviser to the heir of the Hosokawa Family which was a renowned Samurai clan from Kumamoto in the feudal period. He captured Sōseki's heart. Serious negotiations took place as Sōseki was intent on becoming a full-time writer. Fortunately for Sōseki, *Asahi* offered conditions that Sōseki felt to be good enough to support him and his growing family.

Sōseki had now gone for a career in newspapers leaving his lecturer's position behind. The first article he wrote, 入社の辞 (*Nyūsha no ji*), in which he introduced himself as a writer, was published in the Tokyo *Asahi* Newspaper on 3 May 1907. Wada says that Sōseki might be referring to Tao Yuanming's *Gui-qu-lai* 歸去來辭 when he wrote this article.²⁵ In his article he writes of his desire to be a professional literary writer. It was a decision that marked a turning point in Sōseki's life. The following are his words.

Nyūsha no ji: On starting to work at the *Asahi* Newspaper

I have quitted working at University and have begun to work at the *Asahi* Newspaper. I have found that many people were surprised by my decision. Some of them asked me why I had left the University. Some people praised me. I did not imagine that leaving University to work for a newspaper was such a strange phenomenon. I am not sure whether I can be successful working in a Newspaper. Some may be right to think it is rather reckless to give up one's chosen career for a new job knowing it may end up unsuccessful. I surprised myself with my decision.

However, if some were surprised because I have left my respectable University job and become a newspaper man then they are wrong. The University may be the place where

²⁵ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 218-219.

honourable scholars gather. It is a cave where many respectable professors and lecturers retreat to. If they persevere it may be possible to be promoted to the position of Imperial Appointer. There may be other benefits too. It is the ideal place if you want to take advantage of these benefits. I am sure there are many people who want to enter Tokyo University. I agree that University is a good place to be. However, I only agree to the point that University is a good place to be, but I don't agree with the opinion that working for a newspaper is inferior to working for a University.

For me, working for a newspaper is one business. Similarly, working for the university is another activity. If you are not considering taking up teaching as a professional activity, you don't need to be a lecturer or a professor. You don't need to become an officer employed by the imperial house. Newspapers are one activity. Similarly, university is another type of business. If you say Newspapers are a coarse activity, then, university is a coarse activity as well. Only the difference is that one is run by a private company whereas the other is run by the government.

I spent four years lecturing at University. My intention was to remain at the University but I got offered a position at the *Asahi* Newspaper. I enquired about the nature of my responsibilities. They said that my duty was to provide literary writings for a specific amount when requested. I felt so grateful for this offer. For a person like myself who longed to be a literary writer as a profession, these were excellent conditions and the occupation is honourable. I no longer have to be bothered about whether I can be successful in what I am doing or not. Also, I need no longer have to concern myself with the world of professors and lecturers...

...The newspaper company told me that I didn't need to work from the office. I could write from my study at home. Unfortunately, many dogs live near my house. I believe

there were some who started to make a fuss like the librarians. But it has nothing to do with *Asahi*. At times I become unhappy or annoyed but I get my work done happily enough. It truly is an ideal situation when an employee can work happily for his employer.

I received eight hundred yen as a yearly salary from the University. I have many children and it was not enough to support my family. So, to make ends meet I taught at several schools. It is no wonder that I had nervous breakdown as I was working inordinately hard just to scrape by. Whilst I am busy I have to write something creative. Some may say that it is my fault, finding time in my busy agenda for my pastime. To be frank with you, I have to write something, otherwise I don't feel that I am living. On top of that, I need to read in order to teach and expand my knowledge. As a result, I had a nervous breakdown.

The *Asahi* Newspaper have prohibited me from teaching. Instead, they have provided me with salary enough to live and support my family. I don't see there is any need for teaching English if you can survive without it. I quit because of these conditions, even though there were those who told me not to quit. I felt a weight off my shoulder the day after I quit, the air began to circulate through my lungs.

I went to Kyōto after I left my teaching post. I met an old friend and visited the mountains, fields, temples and shrines. It was such fun compared with teaching. Cuckoos let forth their first cries in the upside-down position. I made my heart empty, and coughed out from my chest all the dust, accumulated over the last four years. This is a benefit I received due to becoming a newspaper worker...

...I feel I have an honourable duty to do my best for *Asahi* who have offered appropriate working conditions for an eccentric individual like me.²⁶

From this time onwards, he was a serious newspaper writer and became extremely busy writing for the Tokyo *Asahi*. As we have seen, explaining the reason he left teaching and became a newspaper worker he wrote about the frustration he had felt during his teaching period. He satirised people who believed being a teacher at a University was a greater occupation than working as a writer in a Newspaper. He considered both occupations to be equal. These were some of the subjects featured in his first introductory writings for the readers of the *Asahi*. Sōseki received a 200-yen monthly salary, with the condition of writing two novels a year in a series of around a hundred episodes each. Sōseki also requested a guarantee of job security and copyright. The relationship between the *Asahi* and Sōseki was both professional and correct.

Sōseki's first novel for the *Asahi* was *Gubijinsō* (虞美人草), which first appeared on 23 June 1907 and ended on 29 October of the same year. Sōseki was excited about the idea of writing and poured all his time and energy into it. Around this time, Sōseki was invited to a poetic gathering organised by the minister, Saionji Kimimochi (西園寺公望 1849-1940), called *Usei kai* (雨声会). Sōseki turned down the invitation sending his excuse in a poem he composed, "cuckoo can't attend, as he is in the middle of doing private thing". It was a gesture that showed what little interest Sōseki had in privilege and superficial affairs. *Asahi* promoted *Gubijinsō*, and it was so popular that a department store began to produce some merchandise such as *yukata* (summer kimonos) inspired by *Gubijinsō*.

It was not only writing that excited Sōseki but also the fact that he was being read by a great amount of readers who were waiting for the next story to be published. He got great inspiration from writing a novel in a newspaper on a daily basis. He could express his opinions and he could almost immediately

²⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, "Nyūsha no Ji", p. 60-63.

receive feedback and opinions from his readers. Writing in a daily newspaper was a great way to communicate with the masses and disseminate his ideas to the readers.

Sōseki moved house again in September 1907. He established himself in Waseda, in a house that used to belong to a doctor and which contained a room where the doctor had examined his patients. This space was used as Sōseki's study and became a meeting place for Sōseki and his followers. This room was later named *Sōseki Sanbō* (漱石山房), 'Sōseki's Mountain Hut'. There, every Thursday, until Sōseki became critically ill in December 2016, he and his followers would gather to talk and exchange ideas.

Another art form Sōseki took to in order to combat his mental stress was *Noh* singing. Sōseki was fond of *Noh* singing, *Utai*. He started in the Kumamoto period, but was distracted by his stay in London. Sōseki began to take up *Noh* singing again in 1907, learning from a teacher at the Hōshō school (宝生流) who had been introduced to him by Kyoshi.²⁷ In the same year, Sōseki started to suffer from stomach ulcers.

In 1907, he had his first son, and the following year, his second son was born. He had seven children in all and loved them deeply. He worked hard writing novels on a daily basis consolidating his position as a novelist. At the same time his stomach ulcers were not getting better. Around this time, he began to read a Zen idiom dictionary.

In 1909, He was given a literary prize in the form of a golden tablet, but once again he showed no interest in matters of prestige and turned it down. In September he had a break from work and went to travel in Manchuria, as his friend from his university period, Nakamura Zekō, was head of the Manchurian railway. On his return, he stayed in Kyōto. In November the *Asahi* set up a literary column and Sōseki became its editor.

²⁷ Edo Tokyo Hakubutsukan & Tohoku University. *Bungō, Natsume Sōseki- Sono Kokoro to Manazashi*. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 2007, p. 105.

Sōseki Zenshū Vol.29, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, "Yōkyoku no Keiko" by Hōshō, Arata, p. 248-253.

In 1910, his fifth daughter, Hinako, was born. Sōseki went into hospital in June for treatment on his stomach ulcers. In July, he came out of hospital. In August, he went to Shuzen-ji for rehabilitation from his illness, while there he became seriously ill.

CRITICAL ILLNESS AT SHUZEN-JI

RETURN TO POETIC AESTHETICISM

In August 1910, Sōseki went to Shuzen-ji in order to recover from the stomach ulcers that he had been treated for. However, his health deteriorated shortly after his arrival. He became critically ill and vomited a large amount of blood, a symptom of his chronic physical state. At one point, his condition got worse and almost led to his death. In Sōseki's record of his life history, this is known as 'The Severe Illness at Shuzen-ji'.

Sōseki stayed at Shuzen-ji for two months so as to get his strength back and departed for Tokyo to be treated at a hospital there on 11 October 1910. During his stay in the hospital, he began to write a series of short essays entitled *Omoidasu kotonado* (Recollections 思い出すことなど) for the *Asahi*.²⁸

Sōseki explains in *Omoidasu kotonado* that the reason for his writing the essays was to recall the remarkable moments that he had experienced during his recovery in Shuzen-ji because he did not wish to lose that special memory. Sōseki tells readers that he will be using a fair amount of the old traditions of Chinese poetry (*kanshi*) to express his feelings of that time. He is very keen to share this old tradition with the reader, as he had rediscovered his old pastime of composing Chinese poems, an activity he had abandoned ever since his departure to London in 1900.

He found writing about his inner development during his illness very exciting. Some people were pleased to hear that he had become well enough to work again but there were those who were worried

²⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 357-451. "Omoidau Kotonado"

for him and the possibility of his condition worsening again. One of the people who was most worried was Ikebe, a chief editor at the *Asahi* Newspaper²⁹ whose pen name was Iron of Mt. Kun-lun (鉄崑崙).

We already know that Sōseki respected him highly both for his work and as a person. Ikebe, who was really concerned about Sōseki's health, did not like the idea of Sōseki working at this stage at all and opposed the idea. After discussion with a specialist doctor in the field, Ikebe finally agreed to the idea of Sōseki returning to writing.

All of the *kanshi* Soseki composed during the period of recovery in Shuzen-ji and at hospital were inserted in Soseki's essay, *Omoidasu kotonado*, published in both the Tokyo and Osaka *Asahi* newspaper.

The dates of publication are shown below in the table.

Series	TOKYO ASAHI	OSAKA ASAHI	
1	29/10/1910	29/10/1910	
2	30/10/1910	31/10/1910	
3	08/11/1910	08/11/1910	
4	13/11/1910	14/11/1910	POEM90
5	18/11/1910	18/11/1910	POEM80
6	20/11/1910	20/11/1910	
7A	27/11/1910	01/12/1910	
7B	28/11/1910	02/12/1910	
8	02/12/1910	04/12/1910	POEM79
9	05/12/1910	08/12/1910	
10	10/12/1910	24/12/1910	
11	11/12/1910	25/12/1910	
12	14/12/1910	26/12/1910	
13	15/12/1910	27/12/1910	POEM84
14	16/12/1910	28/12/1910	
15	17/12/1910	30/12/1910	POEM91
16	21/12/1910	31/12/1910	
17	24/12/1910	05/01/1911	
18	28/12/1910	10/01/1910	

²⁹ See Sōseki' writings on Ikebe in *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. "Ikebe kun no Shoron ni tsuite". Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 498-503., & *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 16. "Sanzan Koji". Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 497-500.

19	29/12/1910	02/02/1911	POEM93
20	05/01/1911	13/02/1911	POEM81
21	10/01/1911	19/02/1911	
22	12/01/1911	20/02/1911	POEM78
23	16/01/1911	21/02/1911	POEM86
24	18/01/1911	22/02/1911	POEM88
25	21/01/1911	23/02/1911	POEM87
26	24/01/1911	24/02/1911	
27	28/01/1911	27/02/1911	
28	02/02/1911	28/02/1911	POEM89
29	04/02/1911	01/03/1911	POEM83
30	06/02/1911	02/03/1911	POEM82
31	15/02/1911	04/03/1911	POEM92
32	20/02/1911	05/03/1911	POEM85

³⁰ *Omoidasu kotonado*: publishing dates in *Asahi*

THE RETURN OF *FŪRYŪ*, THE POETIC SENSITIVITY

In the following *kanshi*, dedicated to Ikebe, Sōseki evokes his inner world³¹. This composition expresses the happiness that he had gained through a tranquil moment, “So, for the sake of their own wellbeing, humans must partake, in some measure at least, of tranquillity. My joy at being able to indulge in this tranquillity, even if for just a short time, has taken the form of these fifty-six characters.”³²

11 October 1910

“No Title” 無題

Poem 90 (featured in *Omoidasu kotonado* 4, published in Tokyo *Asahi* on 13 November, 1910)

遺却新詩無処尋 新詩を遺却して 処として尋ぬる無く

³⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p.786.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 366-367.

³² Flutsch, Maria. Trans. *Recollections*. Sōseki Museum in London, 1997, p. 36.

嗒然隔牖对遥林	嗒然 牖を隔てて 遥林に対す
斜陽滿径照僧遠	斜陽 径に満ちて 僧を照らすこと遠く
黄葉一村藏寺深	黄葉の一村 寺を藏すること深し
懸偈壁間焚仏意	偈を壁間に懸くるは 仏を焚くの意
見雲天上抱琴心	雲を天上に見るは 琴を抱くの心
人間至楽江湖老	人間の至楽 江湖に老い
犬吠鶏鳴共好音	犬吠 鶏鳴 共に好音 ³³

I am lost in a new poem and now I don't know where I am.

I am in the otherworldly state of mind, wandering in the woods, looking through the window.

The setting sun fills the golden passage, shining on a faraway monk.

The village is covered with yellow leaves, hiding the temple within.

The hanging scroll in the alcove or burning Buddha are a manifestation of Buddha's compassion.

Looking at the clouds in the sky forgetting oneself is like holding a qin inside your heart.

The happiest time is when you grow old amongst people of similar mind and interest.

When you live amongst people with vision, the lively sounds of the dogs' bark and the cocks' crow in the neighbourhood become the favourable symbol of peace.

Shichigon Risshi

The first words, 遺却 mean forgetting everything. In Daoist practice, it is important to forget and let things be released from the mind. 忘我, the notion of selfless mind often appears in the text of

³³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 259.

Sōseki Zenshū vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Omoidasu Kotonado", p. 367.

Zhuangzi. We have already discussed the idea of ‘The piping of Heaven’. Toyofuku says that the notion of forgetting self in the first line has a reference to Tao Yuanming’s poem, *Injiu* poem 5 (飲酒 其五).³⁴ Let’s refer to the poem.

欲辨已忘言 弁ぜんと言して 已に言を忘る。³⁵

When I tried to explain, I forgot about the words.

The following words 新詩 represents both a new poem and new poetry. Sōseki explains what new poetry means in chapter 4 of *Omoidasu kotonado*.

“It is an old taste. There is no eccentricity or innovativeness in it. In reality, it is not the style of Gorky, nor Andreyev, Ibsen or Shaw. Instead, this taste belongs to a territory which none of these artists ever encounter”. He is very keen to share this old tradition with the reader, since he says that it is rather dull to evaluate things from the Westernised view point all the time. In this respect, this old tradition may give a new insight into our spiritual values, he explains. He says that to re-encounter *kanshi* was a nostalgic experience that was the equivalent of coming back home after his journey to the West.³⁶ Sōseki says the sensation he got through this reencounter with *kanshi* was similar to being served a meal with rice for the first time after coming back from Europe.

In line one, Sōseki says that he has become absorbed in his *kanshi* and has completely lost himself in the process. In the second line, he explains further. The important word 嗒然 appears at the beginning of line two, describing the expression of a selfless state of mind of a man who has ‘lost oneself’. The characters are used by Su Shi in his poem about an artist forgetting his existence when drawing bamboo³⁷, which we examine in Chapter Four. The first character 嗒 appears in Chapter Two of the

³⁴ Toyofuku, Kenji. *Furo de yomu Sōseki no Kanshi*. Sekai Shisō sha, 1996, p. 72.

³⁵ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, 208-209.

³⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, “Omoidasu Kotonado”, p. 368.

³⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 260-261.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 210.

Zhuangzi.

Let us refer to Zhuangzi's text, the opening story of Chapter Two, "Discussion on Making All Things Equal". In this chapter, Zhuangzi teaches that subjectivity creates conflict and attachment. The only way to free oneself from this condition is to merge with the One.³⁸ In the opening of the Chapter the text shows that it is necessary to forget the existence of oneself first, in order to merge with the One where everything is equal. The passage depicts the dialogue between Tzu-Ch'i [Zi Qi] of South Wall, who is a sage, and his disciple, Yen Ch'eng Tzu-yu [Yan Cheng Zi-you]. The disciple questions his master when he sees him sitting at his desk in a selfless state of mind.

Tzu-Ch'i [Zi Qi] of South Wall sat leaning on his armrest, staring up at the sky and breathing- vacant and far away, as though he'd lost his companion. Yen Ch'eng Tzu-yu [Yan Cheng Zi-you], who was standing by his side in attendance, said, "What is this?" Can you really make the body like a withered tree and the mind like dead ashes? The man leaning on the armrest now is not the one who leaned on it before!"

Tzu-ch'i [Zi Qi] said, "You do well to ask the question, Yen [Yan]. Now I have lost myself."³⁹

南郭子綦隱几而坐。仰天而噓。嗒焉似喪其耦。 ...

今者吾喪我⁴⁰

In the second line, Sōseki uses the image of one forgetting oneself and merging the mind in an imagined forest. Also, he uses the characters 遙林 to describe the forest. The character, 遙 means far away and is part of the title used in the first chapter in the text of Zhuangzi, 逍遙遊篇, 'Free and Easy

(FN. 37, cont.) Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, 164-165.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 138.

³⁸ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 31-33.

³⁹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 36.

⁴⁰ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 31-32.

Wandering’ signifying releasing the mind in a free and careless state unattached to the ordinary world.

Sōseki is in a state where he is able to forget himself and wander freely inside his mind.

Lines three and four show that Sōseki is in a poetic world. Sōseki mentioned in *Omoidasu kotonaddo* that when he was in the hospital there was in fact no temple to be seen and there was no musical instrument, *qin*,⁴¹ which he mentions in line six. The *qin* 琴 represents the poetic sentiment of forgetting oneself. Sōseki says that these expressions ideally suited the feeling he had at the time. ‘Yellow leaves’ in the fourth line also refers back to Su Shi’s poem noted by Iida. Let’s refer to the line.

扁舟一棹歸何處 扁舟一棹 何處にか歸る、
家在江南黃葉村 家は江南黃葉の村に在り。

Where are you returning to with boat and pole?

My home is a village covered with yellow leaves to the south of the river.

Su Shi composed this poem in response to a brush and ink painting. In line three and four, Sōseki is giving a visual image of the inside of his mind.

Sōseki uses images from a story about a Zen monk in line five and poems about a Daoist recluse in line six, as examples of the ultimate goal of Zen and Daoist teaching. Line five refers to the practice of the Dharma by the Zen monk from Tang China, Tan’ka (丹霞禪師 739-824) who burnt the statue of Buddha made out of wood in order to get warmth offered by the compassion of Buddha, suggesting that real teaching does not exist in material things. 抱琴 ‘Holding a qin’ in line six refers to Li Bai’s poem, suggesting poetic aestheticism in an unworldly place. The poem is about a meeting with a hermit deep in the mountain.

明朝有意抱琴來 明朝 意有らば 琴を抱いて來たれ。⁴²

⁴¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 367.

⁴² Matsuura, Tomohisa. Trans. & Ed. *Rihaku Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012 (17th edition), p. 94.

Please come back again tomorrow holding a qin in your heart.

In respect to 見雲天 'The clouds and sky' in line six, Sōseki mentions in 24 of *Omoidasu kotonado* that he sometimes gets flashbacks from the scenery depicted in *nanga* painting. Sōseki says that he often had the image of beautiful clouds and sky in his mind especially after he fell ill.⁴³ Sōseki is saying that the clouds and sky that he pictures in his mind are images gleaned from *nanga* painting.

The word, *koto* (*Qin*) in the same line can also be traced back to the Liezi (列子), another Daoist teaching. The *qin* player had a friend who understood his playing very well. However, after losing this friend who understood his music so well, the *qin* player destroys his *qin* and never plays again, since he thinks there is no longer anyone who can understand his music.⁴⁴ In Sōseki's case, Sōseki, during his stay in London, lost his best friend, Shiki who shared *fūryū*, the poetic sentiment and understood him best. After his separation from Shiki, Sōseki stopped composing Chinese poems for a long time and did not take it up again until he fell seriously ill. Here, in line six, Soseki is saying how he has found a friend who understands poetic sensitivity. That friend is Ikebe, precisely the person Soseki is addressing this poem to.

In Chinese poetry, the word, *Qin* (琴), can represent an important friendship and at the same time it can represent poetic aestheticism in an unworldly space. In the case of this poem, Sōseki uses it to express both meanings. Here again, Sōseki is referring to a poem by Li Bai. Li Bai composed a poem which tells of how after getting drunk with a guest he begins to feel sleepy. He asks the guest to come back the following morning with his qin. Li Bai is referring back to Tao Yuanming's poem for this scene. The important image that the *qin* presents here is the notion of detachment from the ordinary world. One point to mention in here is that Sōseki was very fond of Tao's poems as shown in line seven and eight. Indeed, at one point, Sōseki copied out, in Chinese calligraphy, the Tao poem, *Gui-qu-lai ci* (歸去來辭), which is compiled and kept today.

⁴³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 426-427.

⁴⁴ Kanda, Hideo. *Sōshi no Sosei*. Meiji Shoin, Tokyo, 1988, p. 198.

Lines seven and eight conjure up a small peaceful community, and by using the words, 'Dogs and cocks' refers to Tao Yuanming's *The tale of the Peach-Blossom Spring* and Chapter Eighty from the Laozi. The space Tao depicts in his story, *The tale of the Peach-Blossom Spring* is the imaginary space inside the mind where people feel calm and comfortable. Let's refer back to Laozi's peaceful community.

Let the county be small and people few-

Bring it about that there are weapons for "tens" and "hundreds,"

Yet let no one use them:

Have the people regard death gravely and put migrating far from their minds.

Though they might have boats and carriages, no one will ride them;

Though they might have armor and spears, no one will display them.

Have the people return to knotting cords and using them.

They will relish their food,

Regard their clothing as beautiful,

Delight in their customs,

And feel safe and secure in their homes.

Neighbouring states might overlook one another,

And the sounds of chickens and dogs might be overheard,

Yet the people will arrive at old age and death with no comings and goings between them.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 36.

In Laozi's text the last three lines of the English translation from the original Chinese rhyme-match with Tao and Sōseki although there are slight variations, listed as follows,

鄰國相望。鷄犬之聲相聞。民至老死。不相往來。

隣国相望み、鷄犬の声相聞こえて、民、老死に至るまで、相い往来せず。⁴⁶

Now, we compare with Tao's version of the poem.

有良田、美池、桑竹之屬。阡陌交通、鷄犬相聞。

其中往來種作、男女衣著、悉如外人。

黄髮垂髻、並怡然自樂。

良田、美池、桑竹の屬有り。阡陌交り通じ、鷄犬相聞こゆ。

其の中に往來し種作する男女の衣著は、悉く外人の如し。

黄髮・垂髻、並びに怡然として自ら楽しみめり。⁴⁷

There are good lands, beautiful ponds, mulberry and bamboo. There is a crossroads

and you can hear the sound of cocks crowing and dogs barking at each other.

The clothing of the men and women in the fields planting seeds make them look as though

they are from a foreign country.

Old men and children are smiling, everyone looks happy.

⁴⁶ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. *Rōshi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 2013, p. 302-303.

⁴⁷ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, 2013, Tokyo, p. 153.

Here we can see clear rhyme-matching between Laozi, Tao Yuanming and Soseki. Let us see now what Sōseki found so fascinating in the ideas of Laozi and Tao Yuanming.

Fukunaga explains that a community with a very small number of people is the core of Laozi's political system of non-action. It is an enclosed community and is very similar to *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring* written by Tao Yuanming. Inside this utopia-like society, people don't get ground down by civilisation and live their lives simply and peacefully.⁴⁸

The idea of *The tale of the Peach-Blossom Spring*, written by Tao Yuanming, has fascinated many people over the generations, as observed by Haga Tōru.⁴⁹ He explains that, Li Bai, Wang Wei, Su Shi, and Sōseki, refer to the story in their poems, suggesting the scenes or adopting the phrases, 'Grove of peach trees'(桃花源), 'A small opening from which a light seemed to come'(髣髴若有光), 'Cocks crowing and dogs barking at each other'(鷄犬相聞), 'This inaccessible spot'(絕境).⁵⁰

The story is simple and short. It is about a peaceful small community hidden from the outer world, discovered by a fisherman who gets lost in the mountain while making his way through narrow paths and groves. He stays there for a few blissful days. After he returns to his town he tries to go back again, however, he fails to find it. Haga says that the Western equivalents would be similar to *The Garden of Eden* or *Arcadia*. It is a place where one feels comfortable and at peace. Haga says that it is a topos that exists in the space created by literature. However, it is not merely a utopia or a land inhabited by hermits.

As we know Sōseki was fond of *nanga* painting and that images and scenery from *nanga* were inextricably linked with *kanshi*. His best friend, Shiki, whom we know very well by now, strongly promoted poems and paintings by Buson a haiku poet and *nanga* artist from the Edo period. Buson

⁴⁸ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. *Rōshi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 2013, p. 304.

⁴⁹ Haga, Tōru. *Yosa Buson no Chiisana Sekai*. Chūkō Bunko, Tokyo, 1988, p. 145-150.

⁵⁰ Davis, A.R. Trans. *Tao Yūan-ming* (AD 365-427). Vol 1 Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, p. 193-197.

painted many different types of scenery. Haga states that Buson is one of the pioneers who re-discovered *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring* in mid-eighteenth century Japan.

In the last two lines, Sōseki promotes the idea of the ideal peaceful community that Laozi had written about, later depicted as a detailed story and poem by Tao Yuanming and visualised by the *nanga* painter, Buson. The key path to getting into the poetic land inside the mind is by ‘forgetting oneself’, so Zhuangzi explained.

Sōseki dedicated this poem to Ikebe, who had studied at the same Chinese Academy with Sōseki when they were in their teens. He is telling Ikebe, who had been his best friend during illness and was well acquainted with his poetical aestheticism, that he has recovered well enough to be able to compose a longer poem now. According to Tuck’s account, Ikebe answered one of Soseki’s poems from this period, and this may well be the poem Ikebe responded to. After losing Shiki, Soseki composed rhyme-matching poems with no one but the ancient historical poets except on one occasion with Ikebe. This was noted by Tuck who observed, “A partial exception to this is Ikebe Sanzan 池辺三山 (1864-1912), who was something of a mentor and confidante to Sōseki at the Tokyo *Asahi* Shinbun, and who in 1910 produced a *jiin* piece based on one of Sōseki’s *kanshi* that had appeared as part of the latter’s *Omoidasu kotonado* 思い出すことなど, which was being serialized in the *Asahi* at the time. The poem to which Sanzan was responding seems to have been addressed to him anyway, composed on the occasion of his calling to visit Sōseki during illness. Sōseki did not initiate the exchange or reply to Sanzan’s verse in kind.”⁵¹ Up until now Sanzan’s *kanshi* reply to Soseki hasn’t been found. It would be helpful to see it. It would be further proof of the close nature of their relationship.

Sōseki had recovered his poetic inspiration, *fūryū*, which gave him a peaceful state of mind and provided him with the strength to recover from illness and find consolation for the loss of his best friend, Shiki.

⁵¹ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 128, footnote 41.

BECOME ONE WITH NATURE

We have looked at a poem he composed when he was recovering at a hospital in Tokyo after his serious illness at Shuzen-ji. Now, we turn to the poem he composed just after vomiting blood and recovering in bed at Shuzen-ji. This poem was placed in chapter 20 of *Omoidasu kotonado*,⁵² as noted in Sōseki's diary on 29 September.

The only thing he could do, whilst lying in bed barely able to move, was to watch the sky. The sky and white clouds were important themes for Sōseki as we discussed earlier. White Clouds can represent the poetic sentiment. At the beginning Sōseki couldn't compose a long poem. So, he started with *Gogon Zekku*, four lines of five characters. This is the poem he composed during his recovery whilst he was lying down looking at the sky. As ever his language is simple and precise, the images crisp and clear.

29 September 1910

Poem 81 (featured in *Omoidasu kotonado* Chapter 20, published in *Tokyo Asahi* on 5 January, 1911)

“No Title” 無題

仰臥人如唾 仰臥 人 唾のごとく

默然見大空 默然として 大空を見る

大空雲不動 大空 雲動かず

終日杳相同 終日 杳として相い同じ⁵³

I lie down on the bed and keep silent as though I can't speak.

⁵² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, “*Omoidasu Kotonado*”, p. 417.

⁵³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 243.

Sōseki Zenshū vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, “*Omoidasu Kotonado*”, p. 417.

My daily duty is to look at the clear blue sky.

The clouds in the sky are not moving.

The whole day we are together and part of each other.

Gogon Zekku

In line one, 仰臥人如唾, Sōseki explains the condition of not being able to speak in the *Omoidasu kotonado*, he says that during this period of recuperation he felt uncomfortable when he had to talk to visitors for more than ten minutes at a time. He says that the experience disturbed his inner peace, the vibration of the visitor's voice entering his ears like a wave of air rushing into his heart. Sōseki recalls he bore in mind the old saying 'Silence is golden' and saying nothing lay face up in bed.

In line two, 默然見大空, Sōseki says that he was grateful that he could see the blue sky in the gap between his window and the roof of the building opposite. It was the season when the sky is limitless. Sōseki describes his daily routine of watching the clouds in silence.

In the third line, 大空雲不動, Sōseki explains that the large sky, which was empty within, proffered its silent shadow which reflected in his heart. Sōseki goes on to describe this inner feeling of emptiness in his heart which he identified with the stillness, simplicity and transparency of clouds. When Soseki thinks of clouds, he is in a peaceful state of mind. In other words, white clouds represent Soseki's spiritual land.

In the final line, 終日杳相同, Sōseki expresses how he is with the clouds, referring to how his poetic sensitivity is present and remains with him. He is indulging in a poetic world, merging with the clouds and forgetting himself. This experience develops to the state of mind which Soseki, at the final stage of his life called *sokuten kyoshi* (則天去私).

By mentioning silence in the first line Soseki is referring to meditation in quietness. In the second line, he states that his world is in emptiness. Sōseki explains in the third line that the mind in emptiness is not moving, and confirms in the fourth line that he is in a meditative state of mind every day. It is a simple and direct expression of this state of being.

This simple and pure piece of writing, which shows Sōseki immersing himself in his poetic sentiment, *fūryū*, is regarded as a quintessential poem from his Shuzen-ji period⁵⁴, and Sōseki's own calligraphy of this poem has been enlarged and is engraved on a stone and placed at Shuzen-ji as a memorial.

Let's refer to another example of a simple and pure poem Sōseki composed during his period of recuperation at Shuzen-ji. This poem was written slightly before the previous poem and was noted in his diary entry for 25 September, a day before he was told that he had been close to death.

25 September 1910

Poem 80 (featured in *Omoidasu kotonado* Chapter 5, published in Tokyo *Asahi* on 18 November 1910)

“No Title” 無題

風流人未死 風流 人未だ死なず

病裡領清閑 病裡 清閑を領す

日日山中事 日日 山中のこと

朝朝見碧山 朝朝 碧山を見る⁵⁵

I survived a critical episode and finding myself still alive am entering into a poetic state.

Due to illness I am living in a calm and tranquil environment away from the busy world.

⁵⁴ Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki Sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1934, p. 166-167.

⁵⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 242.

Every day, I spend time in the mountains far away from worldly affairs.

Every morning when I wake up, I gaze on the beautiful green mountain.

Gogon Zekku

The third line, 山中事, ‘The mountains far away from worldly affairs’, rhyme-matches with a poem from the Tang period, Taishang Yinze (太上隱者) compiled in *Tang Shi Xuan* (唐詩選). It is a line from his poem, “*Ren da*” (人答).

山中無曆日 山中 曆日無し

寒盡不知年 寒尽くれども年を知らず⁵⁶

There is no calendar when you are training in the mountains.

Now the winter has passed and we are in a new year, although I don’t know what year it is.

‘*There is no calendar in mountain life*’ (山中無曆日) in Taishang Yinze’s poem is well-known in Zen vocabulary. Here, Soseki is also rhyme-matching with Zen teachings.

In the fourth line, 碧山, ‘The green mountain’, harks back to a poem by Li Bai, “Dialogue in the mountain” (山中問答), Soseki is rhyme matching with the first line of Li Bai’s poem.

問余何意棲碧山 余に問ふ 何の意か碧山に棲むと

笑而不答心自閑 笑って答えず 心 自ずから閑なり⁵⁷

People ask me why I go off into the green mountain.

I smile and do not answer. My mind is peaceful as it is.

Ishikawa explains that Li Bai got the idea from a collection of poems on drinking (飲酒) by Tao

⁵⁶ Maeno, Naoaki. Annot. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009. p.443-444.

⁵⁷ Matsuura Tomohisa Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 622.

Yuanming, although the style differs.⁵⁸ The important point is that the person's smile is beyond explanation.

Sōseki made the following comments in his diary entry for this day. "Mystical speechless state of mind, rest in self-immersion, effortless painless imagination, (similar to a cloud drifting out of a painting scroll, emerging and disappearing spontaneously,) liberated non-action, lying down in silence without purpose, resting in inactivity, composed spirituality, action without obstacle, brain function without objective".⁵⁹ These notes describe how thoughts sprang up whilst he lay on his bed in silence merging with nature.

In *Omoidau kotonado*, he explained how he achieved a state of poetic inspiration. "When I am away from the mundane world and my mind is clear and not disturbed, the words sprout spontaneously and become poems coming from many directions depending on the feeling of the time. I realise afterwards that those moments are the most precious moments in my life."⁶⁰

Sōseki returns furiously to composing Chinese poems during his convalescence. He had definitely recovered his *fūryū*, the poetic sentiment, and composing poems gave him the energy he needed to recuperate. From this period onwards, composing poetry became a form of meditation bringing him a calm state of mind. It is important to note as Ikka mentioned that the third and fourth lines of this poem were evaluated highly by a Chinese researcher who specialises in Japanese Classic Literature Xie Liuyi (謝六逸) in the literary magazine, *Kaizo* in 1926. Xie commented that the two lines (third and fourth) from the poem composed by Mr. Natsume Soseki's poem in *Omoidasu kotonado* are exceptionally good.⁶¹

At this point, after a month in a critical condition he is simply pleased that he is getting his strength back and enjoys the serene state he has achieved after going through a serious illness. He has had time

⁵⁸ Matsuura Tomohisa Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 240.

⁵⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 215.

⁶⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. "Omoidasu Kotonado". Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 369-373.

⁶¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 262.

and opportunity to once more enter the timeless world of *kanshi*. He was not aware that he had been unconscious for thirty minutes and on the verge of death. Now, we move on to a poem he composed expressing the feeling he had after he became aware that he had nearly died.

EQUALITY OF LIFE AND DEATH

It was important for Sōseki to have a calm mind, so as not to aggravate his stomach condition. He began to compose *kanshi* during his recovery from a serious illness in Shuzen-ji.

Now, we discuss the approach he took in order to maintain his peaceful state of mind in the everyday world by examining a poem composed on 16 October. He placed this poem just after the section in *Omoidasu kotonado* where he expresses his feelings on discovering he had been critically ill.⁶²

He only found out about having a near-death unconscious period of thirty minutes through reading the notes his wife took at the time of this extremely critical episode.⁶³ He expresses the feeling he had on finding out the fact that he had been completely unaware of his proximity to death as follows, “It is terrifying indeed to be told by someone else that one is about to take that leap, from death to life, or worse still to be told that one has taken that leap and returned to life.”⁶⁴

He composed the first version on 16 October, and made a second version the next day and then a final version the day after. After composing the second version he notes in his diary on the 17 October that “This is a real poem, not a poem for poetry’s sake”⁶⁵ One Japanese scholar made a comment on this poem, “This poem is not the expression of a momentary feeling but of a deeper feeling about human life which came through his experience of coming so close to death.”⁶⁶

It is the first poem he wrote on his return to Tokyo. He composed it during his stay at the Nagayo

⁶² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p. 397-403.

⁶³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 195.

⁶⁴ Flutsch, Maria. *Recollections*, Sōseki Museum in London, 1997, p. 59.

⁶⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 233.

⁶⁶ Shimizu, Shigeru. “*Geppō No.7*”, *Sōseki Zenshū*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, p.4-7.

Hospital. It is a longer poem than the poems composed in Shuzen-ji, consisting of sixteen lines of five characters and it shows that Sōseki is getting healthier and stronger.

16 October 1910

Poem 91 (featured in *Omoidasu kotonado* Chapter 15, published in *Tokyo Asahi* on 17 December, 1910)

“No Title” 無題

縹緲玄黄外 縹渺たる玄黄の外
 死生交謝時 死生 交ごも謝する時
 寄託冥然去 寄託 冥然として去り
 我心何所之 我が心 何の之く所ぞ
 帰来覓命根 帰来 命根を覓むるも
 杳宵竟難知 杳宵として 竟に知り難し
 孤愁空遶夢 孤愁 空しく夢を遶り
 宛動蕭瑟悲 宛として蕭瑟の悲しみを動かす。
 江山秋已老 江山 秋已に老い
 粥藥髯將衰 粥藥 髯將に衰えんとす
 廓寥天尚在 廓寥として 天尚お在り
 高樹独余枝 高樹 独り枝を余す
 晚懷如此澹 晚懷 此くの如く澹に

風露入詩遅 風露 詩に入ること遅し⁶⁷

At one point, I went into the world outside of consciousness,

I was halfway between life and death.

In darkness, I didn't have anything to hold on to,

Where did my spirit try to go?

After returning, I sought for the root of where I came from,

It is hazy and difficult to explain in words.

Loneliness and sorrow keep coming back like in a vague dream,

My heart is moved by the loneliness which sounds like an Autumn wind.

The Autumn grows deep on mountain and river,

Having rice soup and medicine, my hair turned grey and I grow old.

Heaven is vast and empty,

The tree is there although all the leaves have fallen off its branch.

Finding a tranquil state of mind in old age,

I compose poetry with a tranquil mind inspired by Autumn sentiments.

Gogon Koshi

In line one and two, Sōseki is setting the scene at the time of his being critically ill and unconscious. He adopts the characters, 玄 meaning the colour of Heaven and 黄 meaning the colour of the Earth, and 外 meaning outside. These three characters taken together signify being outside of heaven and earth,

⁶⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 263-264.

in other words in the cosmos. In the second line, 死生交謝 describes the interchanging of life and death.⁶⁸ Sōseki in these first and second lines is referring back to the time when he became unconscious. He was totally unaware of this incident until he was told by his wife. Soseki decided to compose a poem about this extraordinary experience using *kanshi* to express his innermost feelings.

Lines three to six are important in relation to Daoist thought, since in these lines Sōseki introduces Daoist concepts. We will examine the words in line three, 冥然 and 杳然 in line six. According to the commentary on the *Zenshū* of the *kanshi*, 冥然 means dark. In the previous version from the 17 October, Sōseki had written 杳然 which means distant and obscure. Ikka Tomoyoshi (一海知義), who translated and gave a commentary on the 1995 version of *Zenshū*, notes that the Yoshikawa version (the earlier version of a translation of Sōseki's *kanshi* in *Zenshū*) had used 杳然 which is found in poems by Du Fu and others, a word ideal for Classical poetry, however Sōseki felt differently.⁶⁹ The characters, 冥,杳,杳, are all associated with darkness.

When we refer back to the text of the *Zhuangzi*, the word 窅然 appears in chapter one. The passage explains that ordinary values cannot be applied in the world beyond the understanding of human cognition. 窅然 signifies losing consciousness. The passage gives two examples to illustrate the meaninglessness of the values established by human society, since human values differ depending on the situation and condition.

The first example is the person from one country who goes to another country to sell cups, which are regarded as valuable in his own country. However, the people in the other country have different traditions and customs, for them cups have no meaning regardless of their significance to the people of the other country.

The second story is that of the King of Yao, who was respected as a great king and ruled his country with

⁶⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 265.

Sōseki Zenshū vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Omoidasu Kotonado", p. 403.

⁶⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p.265.

an ideal political system, but who became useless in comparison to the real sages who embody the absolute values that humans cannot comprehend. When the King of Yao realises this, he loses the notion of who he is, and thus, the expression of the word, 眈然, ‘Losing consciousness’ (by realising the greatness of the unworldly sages) is adopted here.⁷⁰

Going back to lines three and six of the *kanshi*, we can adopt the meaning of losing consciousness in line three, and lose oneself in the experience of the unimaginable for line six. In lines three to six, Sōseki is asking himself where he has been, and knows that he can’t explain as there is no answer to it.

The words, ‘My spirit’, 我心, in line four are originally the characters 靈台, which appear in “Mastering Life” chapter nineteen of the *Zhuangzi*,⁷¹. They appear in Sōseki’s 16 October version and the meaning is the same. According to Fukunaga, in chapter nineteen Zhuangzi teaches how to achieve a state of non-action through following nature and abandoning the self-conscious mind. Fukunaga says the concept suggested here is non-action achieved through *sokuten kyoshi*, (merging with heaven, abandoning self: 則天去私), the concept Sōseki reached in the very last period of his life.⁷² Fukunaga explains that the meaning of *sokuten kyoshi* is to follow the law of nature and eliminate human attachment. Fukunaga continues to explain that “Mastering Life” takes “The Secret of Caring for Life” chapter three of Zhuangzi as a base and it teaches how to be a master of living one’s life to the full extent. Soseki after suffering from a devastating illness is keen to learn how to nourish nature within himself.

In order to understand line five, we need to discuss the concept of ‘Return’. Line five shows a development in the expression of words, from ‘Where it comes from’ (何処来) on the 16 October to ‘Where it exists’ (何処在) on the 17 October and finally to ‘Return to the root’ (帰来覓命根)⁷³. In

⁷⁰ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 22-23.

Watson, Burton. Tran. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 33-34.

⁷¹ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*, vol. 2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 22-23.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.465-466.

⁷³ Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p.266.

Daoism, the nature of the Way is empty and tranquil. To return back to its root means to attain tranquillity.⁷⁴ To attain tranquillity means to go back to one's own nature, which means to become one with the Way.

This is only possible by removing one's worldly awareness, knowledge, desires, and perception. One has to become selfless, so that one's mind is empty in order to reside with the Way within oneself. The Way is moving constantly, existing everywhere and it is inexhaustible. When one merges with the Way, one becomes an infinite existence in the Way.⁷⁵ Now, we refer to Laozi's text, chapter sixteen, which talks about returning to one's origins.

Take emptiness to the limit;

Maintain tranquillity in the centre.

The ten thousand things side-by-side they arise;

And by this I see their return.

Things come forth in great numbers;

Each one returns to its root.

This is called tranquillity.

"Tranquillity"-This means to return to your fate.

To return to your fate is to become constant;

To know the constant is to be wise.

Not to know the constant is to be reckless and wild;

⁷⁴ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*, vol. 2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p.220-225.

Watson, Burton. Tran. The Complete Works of Chang Tzu. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 142-143.

⁷⁵ Fukunaga, Mitsuji trans. *Rōshi*. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1968, p. 92-93.

If you're reckless and wild, your actions will lead to misfortune.⁷⁶

(De-Dao Jing, chapter 16)

Laozi's text shows us that to return to one's origins is to recover a tranquil state of mind. Zhuangzi's text also explains the concept of return in chapter sixteen "Mending the Inborn Nature". It says,

The men of ancient times who practiced the Way employed tranquillity to cultivate knowledge. Knowledge lived in them, yet they did nothing for its sake. So they may be said to have employed knowledge to cultivate tranquillity. Knowledge and tranquillity took turns cultivating each other, and harmony and order emerged from the inborn nature.⁷⁷

For Sōseki, it was crucially important to be tranquil at this point in order not to aggravate his weakened health. After introducing the concept of 'Return', Sōseki explains in line six, as we discussed before, that the origins of life are unexplainable. Soseki admits that nature can't be explained by words.

Line seven to ten are a depiction of nature in autumn, in which his poetic inspiration creates powerful visual images which evoke an atmosphere of loneliness. However, it is no longer personal loneliness. It is shifted to profound loneliness detached from human feeling.

In line eleven and twelve, he makes a contrast between the wide and vast sky/heaven in line eleven and a bare tree on earth. This could be a depiction of him as a person showing his intention of removing all the attachments mentioned in line twelve. However, Iida and Nakamura interpret bare tree as a personification of Soseki weakened by illness.⁷⁸ In line thirteen and fourteen, Sōseki expresses his intention to return gradually back to the world of *kanshi*. The characters, 風露, which literally mean

⁷⁶ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 68.

⁷⁷ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 171.

⁷⁸ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 201-202.
Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 160.

‘wind and dew’ are the quintessential expression of poetry composition in *kanshi*.

It is clear that in this poem Sōseki is making a reference to the concept of ‘Return’ in Daoist teachings. For Sōseki, to return to the origins, to recover a tranquil state of mind which Laozi and Zhuangzi teach, is to return to the poetic inspiration of *kanshi*, the world of *fūryū*. Sōseki returned to a poetic state by examining his feelings on being so close to death, and becoming one with nature through an inactive state of mind. “Return” to nature for Soseki is to recall *kanshi* and “Mastering Life” for Soseki was to become one with composing *kanshi* by forgetting oneself, and this is Soseki’s *sokuten kyoshi*, which Soseki began to express in his final *kanshi* period as we shall see in chapter five.

NANGA AND NATURE

In *Omoidasu kotonado* 24, Sōseki tells of the interest he had maintained in *nanga* (brush and ink) painting since his childhood. During his recovery from his illness, he says that he imagined a beautiful cloud and sky in his mind. He says that his imagination after his return to Tokyo from Shuzen-ji was occupied with paintings of nature just as it had been when he was a child.

Luan confirms this point in his explanation of what *nanga* meant for Sōseki,

“The foundation of Sōseki’s imaginary world of East Asian inspired scenery came through admiring Nanga paintings as a text in his early teens. The visual image stayed in his mind and was unforgettable. When he recalled the image, it both made him calm and gave him energy.”⁷⁹

The following poem is composed and noted in Sōseki’s diary for 8 October 1910, a few days before he left Shuzen-ji. Sōseki noted in his diary that he is both happy and at the same time unhappy. He wants

⁷⁹ Luan, David. “The Study on the travel book *Bokusetsu-roku*”. *Jōsai University Journal* 141, Saitama, 1976, p. 6.

to go back and at the same time, he wants to stay. He says that the reality is that his schedule will not be changed unless he experiences severe pain. He writes that his face is starting to look pink.

He retouched this poem on 15 October 1910, after he returned to Tokyo. He noted in his diary that it had rained hard since dawn and that he was polishing up a Chinese poem and a *haiku* in ecstasy.

8 October 1910

Poem 88 (featured in *Omoidasu kotonado* Chapter 24, published in Tokyo *Asahi* on 22 February, 1911)

“No Title” 無題

秋露下南礪 秋露 南礪に下り

黄花粲照顔 黄花 粲として顔を照らす

欲行沿礪遠 行くこと礪に沿いて遠からんと欲し

却得与雲還 却って雲とともに還るを得たり⁸⁰

Autumn dew running down to the south,

Yellow flowers, their faces shining clearly.

Wanting to follow the path along the river,

Returning back to the world together with clouds.

Gogon Zekku

⁸⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 256.

The last two characters in line one, 南礪 the south of the river, rhyme-match with the first line of a poem called 南礪中題, (“*Nanxian Zhongti*”), by Liu Zohg-yua (柳宗元, 773-819) found in the *Compilation of Tang Poems*.

秋氣集南礪 秋氣 南礪に集まる

獨遊亭午時 獨り遊ぶ 亭午の時⁸¹

A sign of autumn on the south side of the river,

where I walk along alone at noon.

The south represents Shuzen-ji which is in that direction if you look from Tokyo. It is a wonderfully evocative poem. By mentioning the word autumn in the first line and visualising the season with the image of yellow flowers in the second line, Soseki creates a perfect seasonal atmosphere.

The last two lines, according to Ikkai’s explanation are taken from Yoshikawa’s interpretation, Sōseki is referring to a poem by Wang Wei 王維 in his poem titled 送別 (“*Songbie*”). Let us refer to Wang Wei’s poem.

但去莫復問 但だ去れ 復た問うこと莫けん

白雲無盡時 白雲は尽くる時無からん⁸²

Please set off and I will ask nothing of you.

White clouds are emerging infinitely at your destination in the Southern Mountain.

The text says that Wang Wei used white clouds as a symbol for life in the mountain. We know that life in the mountain means awakening the poetic state by composing a poem far away from worldly affairs, something which *nanga* artists often depicted. Life in the mountain also means practicing meditation.

⁸¹ Maeno, Naoaki, *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009, p. 68.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

One of his students confirms in his book dedicated to Sōseki that from an early age Sōseki had been fond of Wang Wei's poems. Matsuoka noted that Sōseki mentioned Wang Wei's poem in *Kusamakura* and wrote calligraphy of the poem.⁸³

Here, Sōseki is becoming one with the clouds and wandering freely in his imagination. Sōseki in the last line confirms that he is within the clouds, which explains how he has come to have a peaceful mind through meditation. He says that he is returning back with the 'Clouds' which symbolise Sōseki's poetic world and which are reflected in a serene and calm state of mind. This is Sōseki's spiritual land.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we discussed the *kanshi* Sōseki composed during and after his recuperation from serious illness in Shuzen-ji and Tokyo. After a ten-year break Sōseki was once more composing *kanshi*. During this break, there had been many changes in Sōseki's life. Amongst many things he had experienced life in London, and lost his best friend, Shiki. He had psychological problems due to stress, had experienced financial difficulties, and problems with his family. He had also changed his occupation from teaching English literature to writing novels and essays for a Newspaper. As a result, Sōseki damaged his health and became seriously ill.

His period of convalescence brought a moment of quietness to Sōseki's mind and body. It didn't take too long for Soseki to recall the poetic sensibility which he had loved since his childhood. It had a strong shared memory with Shiki. Soseki also found a new friend Ikebe who could share the same poetic sensitivity.

Whilst in recovery he began to compose *Kanshi* in order to keep calm and build up his vitality within. During the recovery, Sōseki explains that 'The clouds' which symbolise his spiritual home inside his

⁸³ Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki Sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1934, p. 171.

mind returned back to him. Soseki began to compose inspired by the time he spent with clouds and nature often using the short form of *Gogon Zekku* to express the simple and pure feelings he had thanks to this calm state of mind.

When Sōseki returned to Tokyo to get further treatment in the hospital he began to write *Omoidasu kotonado* in the *Asahi* newspaper where he worked. All the poems he composed during his recovery period were inserted in *Omoidasu kotonado*. Eight out of the seventeen poems composed in this period are in the short form, *Gogon Zekku*. The poems are simple yet refined, expressing peace of mind during recovery, happiness at being alive and gratitude to people.

Soseki began to understand that he needed to have some peace in order to have inner calmness in his mind. This is the period in which Sōseki began to express his spiritual quest through *kanshi* compositions. Sōseki's poems reveal the simplicity of nature and his love of being with nature and forgetting his own existence. In this period Soseki began to experiment his usage of words such as 'Quiet moment', 'Forgetting oneself', 'One with the way', and 'The equality of life and death'. Soseki also began to grasp the idea of "Following the law of nature and eliminating human attachment" which appears in Zhuangzi and is described as *sokuten kyoshi* by Fukunaga.⁸⁴ Looking at the clouds, forgetting himself, and merging with clouds was the beginning of his exploration of the concept of *sokuten kyoshi*.

Sōseki recovered from illness and began to work hard again. Until he once again fell ill he was too busy to compose *kanshi*. The next stage is Sōseki getting more interested in 題画, which is *nanga* painting combined with poetry written in calligraphy.

⁸⁴ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 465.

Chapter Four

Nanga Period

INTRODUCTION

Eighteen months would pass by before Sōseki returned to *kanshi* composition. When he resumed, his work would show even more evidence of a spiritual journey which was to a large degree inspired and based on Chinese religious texts. *Kanshi* had always been a form of meditation and a means by which to communicate with the transcendental, a road which would lead to his own concept of enlightenment *sokuten kyoshi*. This period would also see him deeply involved in the world of *nanga* which had always been part of the world of *kanshi*. It was a visual accompaniment to *kanshi*, its images capturing the essence of the poetry, its themes and its deep connection with nature, and the absence of self. Sōseki's work was enriched by his involvement in this form.

After a period of recuperation from serious illness in which Sōseki began to compose Chinese poems, Sōseki became extremely busy again. He was unable to find time and the peaceful frame of mind necessary for the composition of poems.

Exhausted from writing novels serialised in a daily newspaper, giving public talks and writing articles, in 1911 he once again fell ill. His stomach ulcer condition had worsened. He now needed rest and repose and took to brush and ink painting to accompany his *kanshi*.

Adding to his woes, Sōseki was also devastated both mentally and physically by the unexpected loss of his fifth daughter Hinako on 29 November 1911. He writes of having "a hole in his stomach and heart".¹ He was also annoyed by the matter of his being awarded the title of "Literary Doctor" by the government. Although Sōseki declined the offer, the government did not accept his rebuttal.

¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.20, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 358. (Diary 03/12/1911)

Sōseki, in his newspaper column, kept his readers abreast of this episode, and of the silly exchanges taking place between him and the government.²

In addition to the crushing loss of his daughter, he lost another important friend. In February 1912, Ikebe, one of the people who really understood Sōseki both as an individual and artist, died suddenly. He was a person who had shown great concern for Sōseki's condition during his illness at Shuzen-ji in 1910; they had been very close. Ikebe was a friend who shared Sōseki's love of *kanshi*. All these oppressive factors and events magnified around another feature of his life: his loneliness.

Sōseki's *Nanga* painting period runs from May 1912 to spring 1916. Sōseki turned to painting at this time because he was unable to write his novels due to illness. He took to brush and ink as a way of expressing his artistic sensitivities and continued to paint even after he got better.

Since childhood, he had been very fond of *nanga* (Chinese style brush and ink painting) which he mentions in *Omoidasu kotonado*. He enjoyed creating an imaginary poetic world within his paintings. Many of the *kanshi* composed during this period were written to accompany his *nanga* paintings. The subject matters he was fond of were bamboo, stone, the place deep in the mountain, streams and a person in a simple hut.

In accounts by Sōseki's wife, Kyōko Natsume, in *Sōseki no Omoide* (漱石の思い出: *Memory of Sōseki*)³, she tells us that Sōseki was painting *nanga* around 1913 and would spend a long time finishing paintings. Sometimes taking so long that the paper he was writing on nearly wore out. Some of his greatest works of paintings and poems were created at a time when he was recovering from nervous exhaustion. Painting and poetry were the means by which he sought to overcome his mental instabilities.

² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 346. "Hakase gō Mondai to Mardoc Sensei to Yo", *Ibid.*, p. 360. "Hakase gō Mondai no Nariyuki",

Sōseki Zenshū Vol.26, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 287-288. "Gakui Mondai ni Tsuite".

³ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2003, p. 316-317.

At the start, Sōseki composed ten poems which had a strong association with brush and ink paintings. All the poems composed after 1913 were attachments to his paintings. These poems can be described as a development of the idea of the state of *fūryū* from the Shuzen-ji period.

Later, in his final period in 1916, he invited two young Zen monks who were keen readers of his novels to stay in his house whilst they were in Tokyo. Sōseki admired the young Zen monks, appreciating their religious practice and discipline. After the two monks left, Soseki painted brush and ink paintings for each one of them to accompany his *kanshi* compositions, and in correspondence helped them with advice and encouragement to advance in the composition of their own poems.

Sōseki painted and composed poems for himself and for his friends on request. This activity was a kind of preparation for the later stages of his poetic evolution when instead of keeping a diary he began to compose one *kanshi* almost every day.

Before we examine Sōseki's Chinese poems from this period, we need to look at *nanga* and the *nanga* artist, Buson. This will help us understand the tradition and sources in which he was working.

Some of Sōseki's *nanga* paintings took Buson's paintings as role models. Buson was a *nanga* artist and *haiku* poet from the Edo period who painted scenes from *the Peach Blossom Spring* (*Tao hua yuan ji*: 桃花源記) by Tao Yuanming, an influential Chinese poet. As we have discussed, Sōseki refers to words and expressions from Tao's works many times in his Chinese poems.

BUSON and SOSEKI

Yosa Buson (与謝蕪村 1716-1783) was a poet and *nanga* painter who first established himself as a painter but who also composed a large number of poems.

As a poet he is regarded by some as 'Number two' in ranking, coming, in Yasuhara Eri's opinion for example, after Basho.⁴ However, Shiki argued that Buson's literary work is superior to Basho's, as demonstrated by his writing *Haijin Buson* (俳人蕪村, 1899), which caused a sensation in Japan's literary world. Buson's work as a poet had been going through a process of rediscovery and re-evaluation ever since the Meiji period and clearly had a strong influence on Sōseki's literary work.⁵

According to Morimoto, many of Sōseki's *haiku* poems resemble Buson's compositions.⁶ Wada notes that Buson was fond of referring to Chinese poetry in the composition of his *haiku*. In fact, through the course of his life, Buson's passion for Chinese poetry deepened and was reflected in his compositions. It is natural that Shiki who found Buson's work invaluable, and Sōseki who learnt under Shiki, were both influenced by the artistic refinement demonstrated by Buson.⁷

Sōseki definitely learnt many *kanshi* expressions from Buson's *Haiku*, and some of the inspiration for his *kanshi* came from reading Buson's *haiku* compositions.

Morimoto points out that Sōseki drew a sketch copied from Buson's "*Taigi Umachōchin zu*" (太祇馬提灯図). He drew it in his diary on 9 April 1915,⁸ one year before his death, shortly after he completed the work, *Garasu-do no Naka* (硝子戸の中 *Inside the Glass door*).

Sōseki also noted down a story that Buson had written. The main theme of which is spontaneity. The story tells that Buson and his friend, Taigi (Tan Taigi 1709-1771), were rushing through a rainy storm late in the night after a poetic gathering. They could not keep their umbrella open and then the light in their lantern blew out. Buson, bewildered by the situation regrets not bringing the horse keeper's lantern. His friend, Taigi replies that this is a rather silly statement, since no one

⁴ Yasuhara, Eri F. "Buson's Bashō: The Embrace of Influence" in *Matsuo Bashō's Poetic Spaces*. Ed. Eleanor Kerkham. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 243.

⁵ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p. 185-189.

⁶ Morimoto, Tetsurō. *Tsuki wa Higashi ni*. Shinchō Sha, 1992, p. 104-120.

⁷ Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976, p.189.

⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 470.

knows what will happen next. Buson realises that reasoning does not solve the real problem, one has to adapt to the situation in each moment.⁹

Buson may well have been influenced by the teaching of Zen, and the idea that it is no use rationalising phenomena, as phenomena is 'void' at the same time. However, it is the importance of being spontaneous, the Daoist notion of *jinen* (自然) explained by Zhuangzi that is the essential element corresponding to the notion that all existence in the cosmos keeps changing infinitely and is in constant motion, appearing then disappearing.¹⁰

Zhuangzi teaches in Chapter Two of the text not to define what is right and what is wrong, since they are part of the Way and everything is equal within the Way.¹¹ Sōseki, after experiencing being unconscious for over thirty minutes on the border line of life and death, understands this concept of everything is equal within the Way. We will see how Sōseki expresses the equality of all things by referring to Zhuangzi's text in his *nanga* period.

Sōseki stimulated by the concept of spontaneity in Zhuangzi's teaching composed a series of ten poems titled '*Spontaneous compositions in Spring time*' dated 24 May 1912. They were the first *kanshi* he had written since his Shuzen-ji period in October 1910. The last poem from that time had been dedicated to Ikebe, who sadly passed away in 1912. Ikebe had been a key figure in his life and was another important friend, like Shiki, who shared a deep interest in Chinese classics.

During this current period, Sōseki composed poems with picturesque scenes which reflected his enjoyment of being at one with nature. After he fell ill again, Sōseki, with time on his hands and in a more peaceful environment was able to lose himself in a world of poetry and nature. The title "Spring day" (春日) can be taken as an expression of the feeling that he was at another starting point in his life. Now, Sōseki had found a new friend, nature, which became a great companion and inspiration for the poetic state of *fūryū*.

⁹ Morimoto, Tetsurō. *Tsuki wa Higashi ni*. Shinchō Sha, 1992, p. 88-89.

¹⁰ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. *Chūgoku Tetsugaku, Shūkyō, Geijutsu*. Jinmon Shoin, Kyoto, 1988, p. 24-25.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

PREPARATION FOR COMPOSING POEMS TO ACCOMPANY NANGA

24 May 1912

Poem 94

“Spontaneous composition in spring day” (春日偶成) No.1

莫道風塵老 道う莫かれ 風塵に老ゆと

当軒野趣新 軒に当たりて 野趣新たなり

竹深鶯乱囀 竹深くして 鶯 乱れ囀り

静昼臥聴春 静昼 臥して春を聴く¹²*It is easy to say that worldly affairs are the cause of my growing old,**The view over the balcony in my house shows the wild essence of nature in each season.**Nightingales are singing in full motion in the bamboo grove,**I am listening to the sound of spring whilst lying down.*

Gogon Zekku

風塵老 in line one rhyme-matches with the tenth line of a poem from the Tang period composed by Gao Shi (高適, J: Koseki, 70?-765). Gao Shi composed this poem for his friend, Tu Fu (杜甫).

豈知書劍風塵老 豈に知らんや 書劍もて風塵に老いんとは¹³

In those days, I didn't imagine that my studies and swordsmanship would as I grew old become part of my worldly affairs.

¹² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 276-277.

¹³ Matsuura Tomohisa Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 604.

In Sōseki's poem, 'Growing old' has a positive tone as Sōseki had found a moment of peace in which he was surrounded by nature.

当軒 in line two 'The view over the balcony', was used by the Tang poet, Li Bai (李白)

疊嶂隔遙海 疊嶂 遙海を隔て

當軒寫歸流 当軒 気流を写す¹⁴

There are many steep mountain ranges covered with hazy green across the sea,

The curvy long wave coming close to the balcony crashes down endlessly.

Sōseki as well as rhyme-matching with Li Bai's poem, also rhyme-matches in the same line with characters used by Fang Gan (方干, 809?-888?) from the late Tang period. He used the characters 野趣, meaning 'Wild essence' which are compiled in the *San'ti Shi* (三体詩) volume 3. Sōseki in an exercise to stimulate a visual image for painting, shares his admiration for the vitality of nature with two poets from the Tang period.

野趣自多愜 野趣 自から多く愜く

名香日总闻 名香は人と共に聞く¹⁵

The wild essence of nature is very pleasant on its own,

Fine incense is best to test and appreciate with companions.

竹深, 'Deep in the Bamboo grove' in line three is used by Liu Chang (劉敞, 1019-1068) from the Sung period, in the poem titled "Yuhou Huiwen" (雨後回文), compiled in the *Jianzhu Song Yuan Ming Shixuan* (箋註宋元明詩選)

緑水池光冷 緑水 池光冷やかに,

¹⁴ <http://kanshi100x100.blog.fc2.com/?mode=m&no=1676>

¹⁵ <http://www.yuwen360.com/showinfo-184-143722.html>

青苔砌色寒 青苔 砌色寒し
 残花落暗庭 残花 暗き庭に落ち、
 亂鳥啼深竹 乱鳥 深き竹に啼く¹⁶

The cool light on the pond full of green water,

A feeling of coolness coming from blue moss on the stone pavement.

The garden is dim, petals on the ground appear here and there.

Deep in the Bamboo Grove, the ripple of birds' singing echoes loudly

Sōseki wrote out a copy in calligraphy of this poem, and indeed at first the poem was attributed to him as he had put his name at the end of the piece. He was clearly practising his calligraphy and preparing himself for his later brush and ink paintings. He was composing poetry using visual images taken from the great masters' works.

Sōseki's disciple and son-in-law, Matsuoka Yuzuru, confirms that Sōseki's depiction of scenic nature-based images is a major feature of this period and a striking contrast to his poems from previous periods. "This clearly confirms Sōseki's interest towards painting, especially *nanga* paintings."¹⁷

臥聽春, 'Listening to the sound of spring whilst lying down' in the fourth line is used by Li Shangyin (李商隱, 812-858) from the late Tang period in a poem titled "*Ci gu guo fen ning zhai*" (次故郭汾寧宅; 故郭汾寧の宅に次す)

In Li's poem, it is autumn whereas in Sōseki's, autumn is replaced by spring.

西園碧樹今誰主 西園碧樹 今 誰か主なる
 與近高窗臥聽秋 与に高窓に近づき 臥して秋を聴く¹⁸

¹⁶ http://kawausotei.cocolog-nifty.com/easy/2006/12/post_ffa4.html

¹⁷ Iida, Rigyo. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 213-214.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 215. Also, <http://www.zwbk.org/MyLemmaShow.aspx?lid=45328>

Green trees in the garden of the West, who is the master?

Together we approach the high window, listening to the sound of autumn whilst lying down.

Sōseki was inspired by Li's poem to express the spontaneous sound of nature. In the latter half of the first line, Li uses 'Who is the master?' 誰主 (*Shuizhu*). Sōseki uses the same expression 誰主, in the second poem of the series, 'Spontaneous compositions in Springtime', which we will examine next.

The theme of 'Who is the master?' runs through the poems of this period and also later poems. Now, we will examine how far Sōseki in his *nanga* period was under the influence of Chapter Two of Zhuangzi, "Discussion on Making All Things Equal".

Let us recall the scene from the beginning of Chapter Two of Zhuangzi which we analysed in Chapter three. The student Yan Cheng Ziyou says to his teacher Ziqi that he has become like cold ashes and isn't at all like the person he knew. The teacher answers that he is experiencing a moment in which he forgets his existence and who he is. This notion of forgetting oneself is the ultimate destination which Zhuangzi is at pains to stress in Chapter Two. We see this notion appear again later in Sōseki's poem.

Zhuangzi talks about the piping of Heaven. To emphasise the point the teacher asks who is making the sound. This is what Sōseki refers to when he uses the expression 誰主, 'Who is the master?'.

Zhuangzi's point here is that there is nothing making the piping of Heaven happen. The important thing is to accept the piping of Heaven as it is. By doing so, reason and the belief in cause and effect are negated. Heaven here is not some concept remote from Earth and its people. Heaven stays as it is. In other words, it is nature, something beyond the world of logic. It accepts everything and becomes one. In becoming one, one forgets oneself. Through this process one finds one's true self.

The following passage in Zhuangzi, using the Chinese character 閑閑, describes the characteristic of the great understanding as broad and unhurried. Sōseki uses this character 閑 signifying serenity and quiet when composing Chinese poems. We need to read more of Zhuangzi to have an insight into the characteristics of the 'Great understanding'.

In the following passage, Zhuangzi explains about 'Little understanding', which is worldly understanding, to give a contrast to 'Great understanding'. 'Little understanding' from Sōseki's point of view pertains to the conditions in the mundane world which have inflicted him with stomach ulcers, a nervous breakdown and loneliness.

Great understanding is broad and unhurried; little understanding is cramped and busy. Great words are clear and limpid; little words are shrill and quarrelsome. In sleep, men's spirits go visiting; in waking hours, their bodies hustle. With everything they meet they become entangled. Day after day they use their minds in strife, sometimes grandiose, sometimes sly, sometimes petty. Their little fears are mean and trembly; their great fears are stunned and overwhelming. They bound off like an arrow or a crossbow pellet, certain that they are the arbiters of right and wrong. They cling to their position as though they had sworn before the gods, sure that they are holding on to victory. They fade like fall and winter-such is the way they dwindle day by day. They drown in what they do- you cannot make them turn back. They grow dark, as though sealed with seals- such are the excesses of their old age. And when their minds draw near to death, nothing can restore them to the light.¹⁹

In the next passage Zhuangzi writes about the various psychological states existing in the human mind, which occur spontaneously and come and go by their own volition. These are also part of the piping of Heavens: nature. Spontaneous, it has no form, and keeps changing constantly. By accepting human life as heaven and nature, one can shed the burdens of this mundane

¹⁹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 37.

existence and transcend human affairs. This is precisely the thought Sōseki sympathised with when he began to compose poems again after the painful emotional turmoil of losing precious people in his life.

Joy, anger, grief, delight, worry, regret, fickleness, inflexibility, modesty, wilfulness, candor, insolence- music from empty holes, mushrooms springing up in dampness, day and night replacing each other before us, and no one knows where they sprout from. Let it be! Let it be! [It is enough that] morning and evening we have them, and they are the means by which we live. Without them we would not exist; without us they would have nothing to take hold of. This comes close to the matter. But I do not know what makes them the way they are. It would seem as though they have some True Master, and yet I find no trace of him. He can act- that is certain. Yet I cannot see his form. He has identity but no form.²⁰

Sōseki begins to depict the spontaneous characteristics of nature in his poem by emptying his mind and getting inside the world of *kanshi*. Let us proceed to the next poem to see how Sōseki introduces the phrase, ‘Who is the master?’ (誰主).

Poem 95

“Spontaneous composition on a spring day” (春日偶成) No 2

竹密能通水 竹密にして 能く水を通じ

花高不隠春 花高くして 春を隠さず

風光誰是主 風光 誰か是れ主なる

好日属詩人 好日 詩人に属す²¹

²⁰ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 37-38.

²¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 278.

Water flows effortlessly through the bamboo grove,

Flowers are blossoming from a high place in a branch above, but they can't hide the colour of the spring.

Wind and light, who is their master?

This fine day belongs to the poet as the poet understands the essence of nature.

Gogon Zekku

Sōseki begins with words taken from a Zen text. Ikka noted that 竹密 'Dense bamboo bush' in the first line and 山高 'High mountain', (in Sōseki's poem, it is 花高 'Flowers in a high position') appear in a poem by a zen monk, Shanjing (善静), compiled in 伝灯録 (*Chuan'deng Lu*: C'hen/Zen historical book from Northern Sung China) volume 20.²²

A student monk is just about to leave his teacher's temple. Monk Shanjing (善静), the teacher, asks the pupil which direction he will take in order to leave their location which is surrounded by steep mountains. The student monk cannot answer. So, his teacher answers instead, and this poem is his answer.

竹密不妨流水過 竹密にして流水の過ぐるを妨げず

山高豈碍白雲飛 山高くして豈に白雲の飛ぶを碍げんや²³

Water flows easily through dense bamboo bush,

White clouds float freely amongst the steep mountains.

Although the teacher is literally asking the student how he is going to get away though the steep mountains, in fact, the real question is how to live our daily life surrounded by a forest of problems. Wherever we look there are obstacles, stress and loss. How can we carry on when

²² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 278.

²³ http://rinnou.net/cont_04/zengo/20120801.html

faced with these living conditions? Here, the teacher in his poem provides the answer: our teachers should be the clouds and water and their unfastidious, carefree and simple existence. Human beings due to their conditioning manage to worry their lives away fretting about small things. To live life simply like clouds and water is the main point.

We recall Sōseki looking at clouds and feeling at one with them when he was lying in bed during his convalescence after his serious illness at Shuzen-ji. For him the cloud is a symbol of poetic sensitivity and a calm state of mind. When composing poems he made an effort to empty his mind and be clear like water and clouds.

風光 in the third line referring to the landscape, followed by 誰是主 ‘Who is the master?’ has already been discussed in our analysis of Spontaneous composition in spring time poem No. 1 when we referred to a poem by Li Shangyin (李商隱).

In addition, the word master/creator (主) is *also* used by Su Shi (蘇軾), a poet from the Sung period. He explains the creator in the poem “The Red Cliff” (赤壁).

且夫天地之間、物各有主、苟非吾是所有、雖一毫而莫取、惟江上之清風、
山間之明月、耳得之而爲聲、目遇之而成色、取之無禁、用之不竭、之造物者
之無盡藏也、而吾子之所共食²⁴

且つ夫れ天地の間、物各おの主有り。苟くも吾の有する所に非ざれば、一毫
と雖も取ること莫し。惟だ江上の清風と、山間の明月とは、耳 之を得て声
を為し、目 之に遇いて色を成す。之を取れども禁ずること無く、之を用う
れども竭きず。是れ造物者の無尽蔵なり。而して吾と子との共に食う所なり
』と。

Everything that exists between heaven and earth has an owner. If something does
not belong to you, you should not take even a strand of hair. But there are

²⁴ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed.& Trans. *Sotōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011 (27th edition), p. 327-328.

exceptions, the breath of fresh air going across the river and the moon appearing amongst the mountains. One can enjoy the sound of wind and wonder at the beauty of the moon. There is no limit to this taking. It is inexhaustible. This is precisely the inexhaustible stock offered by the creator, nature. You can enjoy it together with others as well.

Su Shi confirms that nature is inexhaustible and everyone is able to benefit from it.

好日 ‘This fine day’ in the fourth line is used in the Zen text, Blue Cliff Record (碧巖録) Sixth Case.

日日是好日 日日是れ好日²⁵

*every day is a good day*²⁶

meaning each new day is the best day of your life no matter whether it is a fine day, a rainy day, a joyful day or a hard day.

Sōseki ends his poem with the words, “This fine day belongs to the poet as the poet understands the essence of nature”, confirming that by creating sounds with words he too is a part of the piping of Heaven. Sōseki in the second poem synthesises two teachings, Ch’en/Zen and Zhuangzi.

Poem 98

“Spontaneous composition on a spring day” (春日偶成) No.5

抱病衡門老 病を抱いて 衡門に老い

憂時涕淚多 時を憂いて 涕淚多し

²⁵ Irie, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. An. *Hekigan Roku*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007 (13th edition), p. 104.

²⁶ Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 37.

江山春意動 江山 春意動き

客夢落煙波 客夢 煙波に落つ²⁷

Suffering illnesses, living in a shabby house, growing old feeling mentally and physically exhausted,

I am worried about the times we live in and feel emotional and tearful.

Nature in the rivers and mountains begins to show signs of spring, (brings poetic sensitivity)

I dream I am a traveller sailing through life fading in the fine mist rising from the surface of the water

Gogon Zekku

抱病 ‘Suffering illnesses’ at the beginning of the first line, is Sōseki explaining not only his state of health, but also that of his country, Japan. Sōseki expressed his views in a speech titled *Civilisation of Modern Japan* (現代日本の開化) in which he pointed out his concern about Japan taking a path of modernisation overnight compared with the Western countries who had developed a modern society in gradual steps noted by Iida.²⁸

Sōseki is a writer with a belief in individualism based on Western enlightenment. He could clearly see that Japan and the Japanese people would soon get exhausted if they followed the path of Western modernisation as it was not happening organically. He had lived through a period of constant and rapid change, the old customs and traditions had been swept aside, but only superficial notions based on Western society had replaced them. Sōseki warned time and time again that Japan could fall apart, if it continued to blindly hurl down the route of modern Westernisation.

²⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 276-277.

²⁸ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 232-233.

Kanshi artists from the past used *kanshi* to make social comments to express their sorrow at the country and people's life. This poem is a fine example of Soseki learning from one of the great Tang period poets, Du Fu who experienced hardships under harsh political conditions.

抱病 'Suffering illnesses', 衡門 'Shabby hut' and 老 'Grow old' are all used by Du Fu (杜甫) from the Tang period in his poem titled "*Dongtun Yueye*"(東屯月夜)²⁹

抱病漂萍老 病を抱く 漂萍の老

防辺旧穀屯 辺を防ぐ 旧穀の屯

春農親異俗 春農 異俗に親しむ

歳月在衡門 歳月 衡門に在り³⁰

Suffering illness, an old man floating like a weed,

Protecting the border, at the village famous for its rice harvest.

In the spring when the farming starts, having to learn new customs,

Years go by, living in a shabby hut.

憂時 'Worried about the times we live in' in the second line is Sōseki's expression of his personal concern about how Japanese people and society had been affected by rapid modernisation and wholesale changes. Ikai pointed out the commentary made by Yoshikawa about this line. Yoshikawa says that it is significant having a poem such as this in the *kanshi* genre, as usually in contemporary Japanese *Kanshi*, the poem tends to be composed from the viewpoint of a recluse.³¹

²⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p.281.

³⁰ <http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/repository/thesis/d2/D2003094.pdf>

³¹ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 143.

Yoshikawa also in a comment at the introduction says that Sōseki's poems show that he was not a shallow, uncritical Orientalist nor Oriental culture enthusiast.³² This study agrees entirely with Yoshikawa's view. Soseki sometimes made comments in his diary emphasising the fact that the poem he was writing was a real poem based on his experience. Soseki was an individualist and didn't just follow the mainstream trends of the *kanshi* community in Japan at the time.

江山 'Rivers and mountains': nature, is used by Su Shi (蘇軾) in *Su Dongpo Shiji* (蘇東坡詩集), titled "*Guo Badong Xuan bubo*" (過巴東縣不泊; 巴東県を過ぎりて泊らず)

江山豪俊養 江山は豪俊を養い

礼数英雄困 礼数英雄を困します³³

Nature nurtures exceptional genius,

Rule and strategy give trouble to the hero.

Here, Sōseki is saying that literary art represented by nature creates a refined person, and military rule makes people suffer. He was indirectly criticising the government increasingly militaristic position. The triumph in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, had spurred the authorities to ever greater ambitions and nationalistic tendencies.

Iida notes³⁴ 春意 'Sign of the spring' in the same line is also used by Su Shi in the same collection as well, with the title "*Xhao De-lin jianyin hushang zhouzhong duiyue*" (趙德麟錢飲湖上舟中對月; 趙德麟 湖上に錢飲し 舟中 月に対す)

老守惜春意 主人 春を惜しむの意

主人留客情 主人 客を留むるの情³⁵

The master of the house is lamenting the ending of spring,

³² Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 19.

³³ <https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hant/過巴東縣不泊聞頗有萊公遺跡>

³⁴ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 223.

³⁵ <http://sou-yun.com/Query.aspx?navigate=1&type=poem&id=135998&lang=t>

It is the same feeling as when the host tries to stop the guest leaving.

Sōseki uses 春意 ‘Sign of the spring’ as poetic sentiment here. So, altogether, nature in the mountains inspires poetic sensitivity.

客夢 ‘The dreams the traveller has’ in the fourth line³⁶ rhyme-matches with a poem by Zhen Shan-min (真山民, ?-?) from the Sung period titled “*Lanxi zhouzhong*” (蘭溪舟中; 蘭溪の舟中にて)

櫓聲搖客夢 櫓声 客夢を揺かし

帆影掛離愁 帆影離愁を掛く

Whilst travelling the sound of rowing shakes my dream,

The boat appearing before your eyes manifesting the sorrow of separation.

Regarding the characters 客夢, Ikai interprets them as a ‘Traveller’s dream’, Nakamura also interprets them the same way but also includes the concept of ‘A traveller in life’. Iida has a different interpretation saying it is ‘A dream you had whilst travelling abroad’. Yoshikawa’s interpretation is similar to Nakamura’s interpretation, ‘Dream of a traveller in life’. This study adopts the idea of Yoshikawa and Nakamura, ‘The dreams of a traveller in life’. The reasons are firstly that Iida’s interpretation is difficult to connect to the previous line, secondly that this study believes Sōseki is being philosophical, interpreting life as a journey. We need to examine the following characters for confirmation.

煙波 ‘Fine mist rising from the surface of the water’ in the same line is used by Cui Hao (崔顥, 704-754) in a poem entitled “*Huang He Lou*” (“Yellow Crane House” 黃鶴樓)³⁷

日暮鄉關何處是 日暮 鄉關 何れの処か是れなる

煙波江上使人愁 煙波 江上 人をして愁へしむ³⁸

³⁶ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 223.

³⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 282.

Dusk is approaching. Whereabouts is my hometown, I wonder?

The scenery, from the misty water surface stretching far to the river bank, makes my heart sentimental and I long for my hometown.

A poem by *Cui Hao* which is in *Shichigon Risshi* style, uses ‘White clouds’ (白雲) twice, in line one and again in line four. As we have observed ‘White clouds’ are an important theme in *Sōseki’s* poetry, and it is therefore important that we investigate what his precursors made of this image.

Line 1

昔人已乘白雲去 昔人已に白雲に乗りて去り

The hermit who once visited here left riding a white cloud.

Line 4

白雲千載空悠悠 白雲千載 空しく悠悠たり

Only the white cloud remains floating, its character unchanged for thousands of years.

‘White clouds’ are mentioned as we have seen in *Zhuangzi* Chapter Twelve, “Heaven and Earth”.

*... riding on those white clouds all the way up to the village of God.*³⁹

We have to bear in mind 帝郷 is translated as ‘Village of God’ but it also means ‘The home of the hermit’. It is clear that *Cui Hao* was referring to *Zhuangzi* in this poem, and *Sōseki* too was also indirectly referring to him.

After expressing his sorrows for the time he is living in, *Sōseki* changes his focus to nature which gives him energy and poetical sensitivity. Dreaming, as a traveller sailing through life, he is disappearing into his poetical land where he can shelter from the pain of sorrow.

³⁸ Maeno, Naoaki. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009 (8th edition), p. 202.

³⁹ Watson, Burton. Tran. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 130.

Poem 100

“Spontaneous composition on a spring day” (春日偶成) No.7

流鶯呼夢去 流鶯 夢を呼びて去り

微雨湿花来 微雨 花を湿して来る

昨夜春愁色 昨夜 春愁の色

依稀上緑苔 依稀として 緑苔に上る ⁴⁰

The sound of the Nightingale woke me up,

My dream disappeared, the fine rain moistens the flowers.

Last night I had a melancholy feeling for the end of spring,

The subtlety of the green moss reminds me of that moment.

Gogon Zekku

Ikkai noted⁴¹ 流鶯呼夢去 ‘The sound of the Nightingale woke me up’ in the first line shares a similarity with the situation of waking up from a dream and seeing a nightingale which appears in part of Li Bai’s poem, titled “*Chunri zuiqi yinzhi*” (春日醉起言志; 春日 酔より起きて 志を言う)

覺來眊庭前 覚め来たって庭前を眊むれば

一鳥花間鳴 一鳥 花間に鳴く

借問此何時 借問す 此れ何れの時ぞ

春風語流鶯 春風 流鶯に語る ⁴²

After waking up from drinking, looking at the garden,

⁴⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 283.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁴² Matsuura, Tomohisa. *Li Haku Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012 (17th edition), p. 229.

I notice a bird is singing hiding behind a flower.

May I ask what time of the season we are in now?

It is the time of the year when the wind chats with the singing nightingale who flies through the air like a wave – it is full spring.

In the first line, Sōseki condenses Li Bai's *Zekku* to one line and takes readers inside a moment when on a spring day you are woken up from your dream by the call of a nightingale.

微雨 'Fine rain' in the second line rhyme-matches with a poem by Tao Yuanming titled *Du Shan hai jing* (讀山海經) volume 1 noted by Iida.⁴³

微雨從東來 微雨東より來り

好風與之俱 好風之と俱にす⁴⁴

A fine rain approaches from the east,

bringing pleasant winds with it.

In this poem, Tao Yuanming is expressing his love of living in a hut far away from the busy city enjoying himself gardening and reading. Sōseki resonates to Tao Yuanming's depiction of peaceful life by rhyme-matching with 微雨, fine rain in the second line. By depicting the fine rain bringing moisture to the flower, Sōseki is also showing that nature takes care of everything without saying anything. It brings to mind the Zen teaching that "Every day is a good day".

春愁 'Melancholy feeling for the end of spring' in the third line rhyme-matches with a poem by Bai Ju-yi (白居易, 772-846) titled "*Lingyuan qie*" (陵園妾; 陵園の妾).

年月多, 时光换, 年月多く 時光換る、

春愁秋思知何限 春愁秋思 何ぞ限あるを知らんや⁴⁵

⁴³ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 228.

⁴⁴ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *To Enmei Zenshu* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 71.

How many years have passed since I stayed here? It is a long time,

*I feel melancholic in the spring and in the long autumn night get lost in thought, my
grief continues without an end.*

It is a highly emotional poem. The loneliness of the moment is perfectly captured by the
'Melancholy feeling for the end of spring' which originates in Bai Ju-yi's image.

依稀 'Subtlety' rhyme-matches with a well-known poem by Zhao Gu (趙嘏, 806?-852?) titled
"Jianglou Shugan" (江樓書感; 江樓にて感を書す)

獨上江樓思渺然 獨り江樓に上れば 思ひ渺然

月光如水水連天 月光 水の如く 水 天に連なる

同來翫月人何處 同に來たりて月を翫びし 人は何れの処ぞ

風景依稀似去年 風景 依稀として 去年に似たり ⁴⁶

When I mount the platform at Jiang-lou, my feelings expand without boundary

*Moonlight is pouring like transparent water, and the water flowing in the river looks as
though it is leading to the heavens.*

*The person with whom I looked at the moon and enjoyed time together, where has she
gone?*

The view I am looking at is faintly similar to the view I had with her last year, but...

Sōseki is emphasising emotion and melancholy by rhyme-matching with Zhao Gu's poem about
missing someone who has passed away and no longer with him. Soseki might be thinking of his
youngest daughter who passed away suddenly at a young age.

⁴⁵ <http://www.shicimingju.com/chaxun/list/64330.html>

⁴⁶ Matsuura Tomohisa Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 133.

This poem is a good example of Sōseki's lyric poetry, employing many references from his precursors' examples. We see emotionally charged visual images appearing in anticipation of the themes he would use in his *nanga* painting.

Poem 101

“Spontaneous composition on a spring day” (春日偶成) No. 8

樹下開襟坐 樹下 襟を開いて坐せば

吟懷与道新 吟懷 道と与に新たなり

落花人不識 落花 人識らず

啼鳥自残春 啼鳥 自ら残春⁴⁷

Sitting under the tree in a relaxed manner,

Feeling as though I am merging with the Way, filled with poetic inspiration.

People are not aware of the falling of petals,

A bird sings a farewell song to the remains of spring.

樹下 ‘Under the tree’ and 坐 ‘Sitting’ in the first line are images which refer to Buddha getting enlightenment for the first time whilst sitting under the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya.⁴⁸

開襟 ‘Open the collar’ meaning ‘In a relaxed manner’ rhyme-matches with a poem by Bai Ju-yi (白居易) titled “*Kaijin*” (開襟)

開襟何處好 襟を開くは何れの処か好き

竹下池邊地 竹下池辺の地⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Sōseki *Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 284.

⁴⁸ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 230.

Where is the best place to relax?

The place along the river, under the bamboo.

The rhyme-matching words 開襟 mean to free oneself from restriction. By placing the character, 坐, sitting, at the end of the line Sōseki confirms that he is visualising meditation.

吟懷 ‘Poetic inspiration’ in the second line rhyme-matches with a poem 梅花 ‘Plum blossom’ by Lin Bu (林逋, 967-1028) from the Song period who is famous for his love of plum blossom. The use of the plum tree as a symbol for independence has a long history in Chinese literature.

吟懷長恨負芳時 吟懷 長に恨む 芳時に負けしを

為見梅花輒入詩 梅花を見し為に 輒ち詩に入る⁵⁰

It will be sad to let go of the spring in full blossom without expressing its glory in poetry,

Whenever I see a plum flower, I always compose a poem.

道 (The Way) in the same line means the Way as understood in Daoist texts: nature. Sōseki states here that the poetic sentiment in his case is to merge with nature. Sōseki, in the first two lines explains that he is at one with nature through meditation and how he is being inspired to compose poems.

落花, ‘Petals falling’ in the third line rhyme-matches with a poem by Wang Wei (王維, 699-761), who is famous for his brush and ink painting, calligraphy and playing music as well as his poetry⁵¹, compiled in *Wang You-cheng Shiji* (王右丞詩集) volume 14, titled “*Hanse sishang zuo*” (寒色汜上作)

落花寂寂啼山鳥 落花寂寂 山に啼く鳥

⁴⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 284.

⁵⁰ Ishikawa, Tadahisa. Ed. *Kanshi Kanshō Jiten*. Kōdansha, 2009, p. 587.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

楊柳青青渡水人 柳柳青青 水を渡る人⁵²

The petals fall down in absolute quietness, the birds are singing in the mountain,

The willow trees along the Yangzi river are bright blue, people are crossing the water.

人不識 ‘People are not aware’ in the same line rhyme-matches again with a different poem by 王

維 Wang Wei’s titled “*Zhuli guan*” (竹里館 “House of the bamboo village”)

獨坐幽篁裏 独り坐す 幽篁の裏

彈琴復長嘯 琴を弾じて復た長嘯す

深林人不知 深林 人知らざるも

明月來相照 明月 来たりて相照らす⁵³

I sit alone deep inside the bamboo grove,

Playing qin and singing for a long time.

No one knows of my enjoyment far inside the bamboo grove,

But the bright moon understands my joy and directly through the bamboo grove it shines

its light all over me.

Sōseki who was practicing how to compose poems to accompany paintings, was studying Wang Wei’s poems for reference as Wang Wei as well as being a fine poet was also known as a master of Southern Song brush and ink painting.

残春 ‘Remains of spring’ in line four rhyme-matches with a poem by Bai Ju-yi, titled “*Chou Huang*

Fu Binke” (酬皇甫賓客)

⁵² Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 230

⁵³ Maeno, Naoaki. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2010 (9th edition), p. 363.

竹院君閑銷永日 竹院に君、閑にして永日を銷し

花亭我酔送残春 花亭に我、酔ひて残春を送る⁵⁴

You spend the whole day in tranquillity at the temple in the bamboo grove,

I say farewell to the spring drinking at the flower house.

In Bai Ju-yi's poem, two friends are in their own homes, one is having a peaceful time and the other is drunk and saying farewell to the spring. With this scenery as a backdrop, Sōseki depicts images of the laws of nature which are taking place, such as a bird singing on one hand and spring coming to an end spontaneously.

In lines three and four, Sōseki shows how polished his sensitivity in expressing nature had become. He cites words from poems by Wang Wei, who was well known for his superb calligraphy and brush and ink painting. Sōseki, in his mastery of the skills required for poetry composition, brush and ink painting and calligraphy is getting close to becoming an artist in the ancient Chinese classical tradition.

As we have seen, reading Chinese literature and studying and appreciating brush and Ink paintings had, since his childhood, long been among his favourite pastimes. He had been obliged to give up these activities which gave him so much pleasure in order to become a specialist in English literature and survive in the modern world.

Whenever he became ill and/or had some free time, he would always return to Chinese poems. Chinese poems represent his childhood and the home in his heart. Sōseki feels safe and at ease when he is using his creative energy to compose Chinese poems which enable him to visualise the images in his mind.

⁵⁴ http://fanti.dugushici.com/ancient_proses/22941

POETRY, NANGA, CALLIGRAPHY

Now, we will move on to examine the Chinese poems which accompany Sōseki's *nanga*. In addition to these poems he also wrote poetry in his own calligraphic style.

The first poem accompanying a *nanga* is not for a Sōseki painting. In fact, he was asked to compose a poem to accompany a work by Yokoyama Taikan (横山大観, 1868-1958) who was one of the leading artists taught and nurtured by Okakura Tenshin (岡倉天心, 1863-1913), the founder of The Tokyo Imperial Art and Performing Art School, who promoted and protected the legacy of traditional art and archaeology in Asia. After leaving his position at University, Okakura was invited to work at Fine Art Museum, Boston in 1904 and became a head of Asian Art in 1910, and was known in the West as the writer of *The Book of Tea* (茶の本) which was written and first published in English in 1906. Okakura was in many ways a forerunner of Sōseki and had a great insight into Daoism and Zen, as he explained in his book.⁵⁵

Sōseki noted in his diary entry dated from 23 to 30 July 1912, "Taikan told me that he would give me a painting. He asked me to do some calligraphy for him. I couldn't refuse his request, so I said I would compose him a poem. The poem came first."⁵⁶

Poem 108

"Returning the favour having been offered a painting by the great painter Yokoyama"

(C., 酬横山画伯惠画 J., 横山画伯の画を恵まるるに酬ゆ)

独坐空斋裏 独り坐す 空斋の裏

丹青引興長 丹青 興を引くこと長し

⁵⁵ Okakura, Tenshin. *The Book of Tea*. Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, 1959 (fifth edition), p. 35-52.

⁵⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 399. (noted in a diary entry written between 23 to 30 July 1912)

大観居士贈 大観居士 贈り

円覚道人蔵 円覚道人 蔵す

野水辞君巷 野水 君が巷を辞し

閑雲入我堂 閑雲 我が堂に入る

徂徠随所澹 徂徠 随所に澹く

住在自然郷 住みて自然の郷に在り⁵⁷

Sitting alone in an empty room,

Gazing at a painting which offers endless pleasure.

The painting is a gift from the great artist Taikan,

It belongs to layman Enkaku seeking the Way.

In the painting, a river circles a village and disappears into the distance,

And tranquil clouds are entering my house.

The water and clouds never stop they go around forever gracefully,

They belong to the hometown of nature.

Gogon Risshi

Again, we can see here Sōseki is studying Wang Wei extensively. 独坐 ‘Sitting alone’ and 空齋裏 ‘Empty room’ nearly rhyme-match with a poem by Wang Wei titled 竹里館 “House of the bamboo village” which we discussed earlier. Sōseki uses 空齋裏 ‘Empty room’ instead of 幽篁裏 ‘Bamboo grove’. This line gives us the image of sitting in a meditative state of mind.

丹青 in the second line means painting, 引興長 ‘Endless pleasure’ in the same line rhyme-matches with a poem by Du Fu titled “*Qiuye*” (秋野 ‘Autumn field’).

⁵⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 292.

禮樂攻吾短 礼楽 吾が短を攻め

山林引興長 山林 興を引くこと長し⁵⁸

The Confucian rituals reveal my weakness,

Mountain and wood give me endless pleasure.

Du Fu states his love of nature and how he is not in favour of Confucian rituals. Sōseki agrees with this by saying that the painting gives him endless pleasure. In this line, Sōseki shows he is entering inside the painting.

In the third line, Sōseki introduces the artist, Taikan. In the fourth line, he introduces himself. 円覚道人 ‘Layman Enkaku seeking the Way’ refers to Sōseki himself, as he had on a couple of occasions been to the Enkaku-ji temple in Kamakura to practice Zen meditation. Here, we see that Sōseki considers himself to be a lay Zen practitioner.

野水 ‘Stream’ in the fifth and 閑雲 ‘Tranquil clouds’ in the sixth line are references to Taikan’s painting. Sōseki considers Taikan’s painting of flowing water and floating clouds to be the quintessential manifestation of nature in poetry. The 野水 ‘Stream’ which represents purity and is featured in Taikan’s painting leaves Taikan’s home which is depicted in the fifth line by 辞君巷 ‘Leave your house’.

In the sixth line, Taikan’s painting enter into Sōseki’s house indicated by 入我堂 ‘Enter into my room’ which can be translated as entering into Sōseki’s mind. Looking at the painting brings him a tranquil mind and poetic sensitivity which is depicted by 閑雲 ‘Tranquil clouds’ in the same line. We see the image of Sōseki as clouds floating in the sky over the stream. By this time Sōseki has lost himself and is deep inside the painting.

⁵⁸ http://www.zwbk.org/zh-tw/Lemma_Show/12603.aspx

去来 ‘Coming and going’ in the seventh line depicts the action of water flowing and clouds moving. 随所 ‘Go everywhere’ followed by 澹 has the same meaning as 淡 meaning gentle or soft, describing the gentle movement of water and clouds.

自然郷 ‘Hometown of nature’ in the final line is the place where water and clouds reside. Sōseki in other poems uses 白雲郷 ‘Home of white clouds’ and 仙郷 ‘Home of the hermit’ to express the same idea. 自然郷 ‘Hometown of nature’ and 白雲郷 ‘Home of white clouds’ both describe Sōseki’s source of poetic sensitivity which is the spiritual land inside his mind.

Yoshikawa mentions that the characters 自然 (Ziran) ‘Spontaneity’ in their original Chinese meaning translate as ‘Nature’ in Japanese, and are often used in Sōseki’s novels around this time.⁵⁹ 自然 ‘Spontaneity’ is the essential characteristic of the Way as described in Daoism. We refer to Daoist texts.

Heaven models itself on the Way;

And the Way models itself on that which is so on its own.⁶⁰

天法道。天は道に法り、

道法自然。道は自然に法る。⁶¹

Chapter 25, Te-Tao Ching (commonly known as Tao-Te Ching)

Next, we refer to Chapter seven of Zhuangzi, “Fit for Emperors and Kings”.

The Nameless Man said, “Let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with things the way they are, and make no room for personal views- then the world will be governed.”⁶²

⁵⁹ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 153.

⁶⁰ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 77.

⁶¹ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Rōshi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 2013, p. 94.

⁶² Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 94.

無名人曰。汝遊心於淡。合氣於漠。順物自然而無容私焉。而天下治矣。

無名人曰わく、「汝は心を淡らかなるに遊ばしめ、気を静かなるに合え、物の自然に順いて私を容さむること無ければ、而ち天下治まらん。」と。⁶³

We see from these extracts from both Laozi and Zhuangzi's texts that the descriptions of 自然 (Ziran) 'Spontaneity' are the same as Sōseki's final concept, *sokuten kyoshi*: Merging with Heaven, Abandoning self.

In this poem, Soseki demonstrates how by looking at a brush and ink painting he becomes one with nature. He gets inside the painting by forgetting himself. He reaches into his spiritual land and composes a poem in a calm state of mind.

During the final period in his life which comes after his *nanga* period, one of Sōseki's disciples, Matsuoka Yuzuru, made a note at one of the Thursday meetings in October 1916 when Sōseki talked about *sokuten kyoshi* to his students.

One of his students asked Sōseki's opinion about the comment "I believe, because it is irrational." made by Tertullianus (155-240).

[Sōseki asked him to repeat the question, and repeated it once to himself quietly.]

Sōseki: "I think that's an interesting comment. But I think it is better not to make things so complicated. In my opinion, it is better to use a simpler expression. For example, willow trees are green and flowers are red. It is fine to be as simple as that. It means to perceive everything as it is presented in front of you. That's the way it is, isn't that so? For example, if my daughter opens the sliding door to say good night to me at this moment. And then, I find out that my daughter has suddenly lost the sight in one of her eyes. It would be a drastic incident for any parents in the world who have a young daughter. Things would now normally become chaotic, the parents

⁶³ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 227-228.

might well cry and shout hysterically and become nearly paralysed with shock. But if that happened to me right now, I think I am capable of accepting the situation as it happens, and keeping calm.”

[Hearing the teacher’s comment, we were all shocked.]

Students said together: “Excuse me, teacher, but isn’t that too cruel?”

[The teacher (Sōseki) replied very calmly,]

Sōseki: “Generally speaking, the truth is cruel.”

[He answered in a calm manner and continued speaking.]

Soseki: “In general, if people practice (meditation), it is possible to reach some kind of enlightenment spiritually. However, the law of physics can’t reach to the same level as spiritual enlightenment. I feel that I have overcome the fear of death. But I am sure I won’t want to die when it becomes a reality. It is a natural human reaction.”

[One of students asked Sōseki,]

Student: “If so, does being enlightened mean to break down the power of natural instinct?”

Sōseki: “It does not. It means to follow and control it freely. But to be able to do so, it is necessary to practice (meditation). Such a thing (Practicing meditation) may seem like an attempt to escape reality, but in fact, in my opinion it is the highest attitude in life.”

Student: “Teacher, do you think you have acquired the highest attitude by yourself?”

Sōseki: “At last, recently, I attained that state of mind. I named it, “*sokuten kyoshi*”.

Other people have used different expressions to explain it. In short, one leaves the small self which we usually understand as individual self, then lets oneself go with the way of the broader universal existence. I feel that it is difficult to put into words,

although I have just tried to explain. When we are faced with the broader existence, our ordinary sound beliefs, ideas and principles become a small matter. At the same time, the things considered as petty in general are given existences as they require. In other words, everything becomes equal from the viewpoint of the observer. It means there is no discrimination.”⁶⁴

The dialogue between Sōseki and his students at the Thursday meeting happened at a later stage than the time of the composition of the poems from this period. But this study considers it is important to refer to at this point, as the *nanga* period is an important stage in Sōseki’s development and one in which he becomes closer to the idea of *sokuten kyoshi* in his *kanshi* compositions.

Now, we start to examine the poems Sōseki wrote to accompany his own brush and ink paintings.

November 1912 (cited in the diary November, 1912)

Poem 112

“Poem for my painting” (題自画)

山上有山路不通 山上に山有て 路通せず

柳陰多柳水西東 柳陰に柳多くして 水西東

扁舟尽日孤村岸 扁舟 尽日 孤村の岸

幾度鷺群訪釣翁 幾度か 鷺群 釣翁を訪う⁶⁵

Mountain over mountain, no road leads there,

Willow trees, one behind another, rivers stretching to the east and west.

⁶⁴ Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki Sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1934, p. 213-215.

⁶⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995. P. 298.

A small boat is moored in the bay for a whole day by the side of the remote village,

A flock of geese occasionally visits the fisherman.

Gogon Zekku

This poem is the first one to accompany his own painting. Sōseki noted in his diary (“Fragment” 断片 “*Dan’pen*”), “Completed two paintings, one is a Chinese style painting, the other is a painting of a daffodil and daisy”.⁶⁶ This Chinese style painting has been compiled and can be seen in 漱石遺墨集 (*The memorial collection of Sōseki brush and ink paintings*).

The poem is based on *The Tale of the Peach Blossom Spring* by Tao Yuanming, which we discussed earlier in this study. It is a place deep in the mountains which is difficult to get to. As previously mentioned we know that Sōseki had a great interest in Tao Yuanming’s poems. Sōseki wrote Tao’s poem *Gui-qu-lai ci* (歸去來辭) out in calligraphy, and it remains amongst the legacy he left behind him.

A poem titled “Going to a village in Shanxi” (C., 遊山西村, J., 山西の村に遊ぶ) by Lu You (陸游, 1125-1210) also has a similar story. In Lu You’s poem a person passes through mountains and crosses rivers until finally a beautiful village suddenly comes into view. Lu You’s piece bears a strong resemblance to Tao’s story. The idea of an ideal hometown in the mind created by Tao has been a popular theme amongst the literati and has passed on down through the generations.

Sōseki uses visual images such as 山上有山 ‘Mountain over mountain’, 柳陰多柳 ‘Many willow trees’, 舟 ‘Boat’, 孤村 ‘Remote village’, 鷺群 ‘Flock of geese’, and 釣翁 ‘Old fisherman’, all of which are important elements in brush and ink painting. We can see Soseki is making an effort to compose poems to accompany his own brush and ink painting.

⁶⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 427. (dated in diary, November 1912)

Matsuoka made a commentary about this poem observing that the poem was very much a depiction of a painting.⁶⁷ We can see that Sōseki is taking steps to develop his *Kanshi* in order to accompany his own brush and ink paintings, taking inspiration from his favourite poet Tao Yanming and a master of poetry, painting and calligraphy, Wang Wei.

The following poem which Sōseki mentioned in his diary has a strong association with Tao Yanming's poem. Sōseki wrote about the accompanying painting in a letter addressed to a painter and a good friend of his, Tsuda Seifū (津田青楓 1880-1978), noting "I painted a daffodil and daisy with extra care on the balcony today. I am pleased about enjoying the act of painting rather than caring about the end result. After finishing a painting, the pleasure derived from painting either increases or decreases depending on the end result. On this occasion I didn't tear it to pieces but kept it for myself. So please have a look at it when we see each other next time." Sōseki shows he is enjoying himself through the medium of painting.

November 1912 (diary, November 1912, letter 18 November 1912 to Tsuda)

Poem No. 113

"Poem for my painting" (題自画)

独坐聴啼鳥 独り坐して 啼鳥を聴き

関門謝世嘩 門を関ざして 世嘩を謝す

南窓無一事 南窓 一事無く

閑写水仙花 閑に写す 水仙の花⁶⁸

Sitting alone quietly listening to the singing of the birds,

Keeping the gate closed, shutting out the noisy world.

⁶⁷ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 188-189.

⁶⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995. p. 300.

Sitting down beside the South facing window, nothing to be annoyed at,

I paint a daffodil in tranquillity.

Gogon Zekku

The first line is a direct depiction of a painting and describes a person sitting alone, in meditation, listening to the birds singing.

関門 ‘Closed gate’ in the second line and 南窓 ‘South facing window’ in the third line both appear in Tao Yuanming’s poem titled *Gui-qu-lai ci* (帰去来辞).

倚南窓以寄傲 南窓に寄りて以て寄傲し、
 審容膝之易安 膝を容るるの安んじ易きを審にす。
 園日涉以成趣 園は日々に涉って以て趣を成し
 門雖設而常關 門は設くと雖も常に閉ざせり。⁶⁹

In a relaxed frame of mind leaning at the South facing window,

I feel comfortable in my home although it is a simple hut.

The garden, day by day, becomes increasingly poetic,

The gate is always closed and no-one visits.

謝世嘩 in the second line is cited in another poem by Tao Yuanming titled *Yin jiu* (飲酒 *Drinking wine*) poem 5, and here Tao uses the expression 無 ‘Not exist’ and 喧 ‘Noisy’ instead.

結廬在人境 廬を結んで人境に在り
 而無車馬喧 而も車馬の喧しき無し⁷⁰

I live in a small hut in a town,

⁶⁹ Matsueda, Takeo & Wada, Takeshi. Trns. *TōEnmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013, p. 144.

⁷⁰ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *TōEnmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 208.

And I don't get annoyed by the sounds of horse carriages ridden by the government officials.

The gate is closed shutting the noisy world out. By this, in the second line, Sōseki is indicating a meditative state of mind. Nakamura explains that 無一事 'Nothing to be annoyed at' at the end of the third line and 閑 'Tranquillity' at the beginning of the fourth line correspond with each other⁷¹

南窓 'South facing window' taken from Tao Yuanming's poem followed by 'Nothing to be annoyed at' in the third line indicates Sōseki is relaxed and inside his spiritual land.

In the fourth line, Sōseki describes how he is painting a daffodil with a quiet mind. Sōseki's mind becomes pure reflecting the sincerity of a flower.

It is clear that Tao Yuanming's poems inspired Sōseki not only poetically but also visually. From his early teens Sōseki had been interested in Tao Yuanming's poems. In his mind Sōseki is returning back to his spiritual home guided by the poems of Tao Yuanming and the depiction of Tao Yuanming's poems in brush and ink paintings which carry him away from the noisy world.

Poem 116

"Spontaneous composition" (偶成)

竹裏清風起 竹裏 清風起こり

石頭白暈生 石頭 白暈生ず

幽人無一事 幽人 一事無く

好句嗒然成 好句 嗒然として成る⁷²

When a serene wind is passing through the bamboo grove,

⁷¹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobo, Tokyo, 1983, p. 189.

⁷² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995. p. 303.

A dim white light emerges around a stone.

A recluse like me has nothing but the quiet moment,

And a pleasant poem rising spontaneously by itself.

Gogon Zekku

竹裏清風 The first line evokes serenity and a sensation of freshness. Bamboo symbolises emptiness in the heart as bamboo is hollow inside and grows upright as does a righteous character. The central image is the wind blowing inside the bamboo bushes creating refreshing currents of air.

清風 is cited in a poem title “Prologue to the Red Cliff” (前赤壁賦) by Su Shi. It is a free style poem called 文賦 (*Wenfu*)

清風徐来、清風徐に来たって、

水波不興 水波 興らず⁷³

A refreshing wind is drifting quietly over the water surface,

The Yangtze River flows endlessly without motion

Sōseki is depicting a timeless world symbolised by a serene wind blowing through the bamboo bushes.

According to Ikkai, 石頭 in the second line means ‘Stone’ and 暈 in the same line signifies the blurred image which can be created in brush and ink painting. Here, it means a dim light; an image of Sōseki’s meditative mind.

幽人 in the third line refers to a person who lives a quiet life avoiding the world; a hermit. Sōseki often used this word in his poems. The Tang poet Li Bai has a poem titled “*Shanzhong yu youren duizhuo*” (山中與幽人對酌; 山中にて幽人と対酌す; “Drinking with a hermit on the mountain”).

⁷³ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed. & Trans. *So Tōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011 (27th edition) p. 315.

兩人對酌山花開 兩人對酌すれば山花開く
 一杯一杯復一杯 一杯一杯また一杯
 我醉欲眠卿且去 我酔うて眠らんと欲す 卿且く去れ
 明朝有意抱琴來 明朝 意あらば 琴を抱いて来たれ ⁷⁴

Whilst drinking and pouring wine into each other's cups, the mountain flowers blossom.

One glass, another glass, and then another.

I start to feel sleepy. Could you go back home for a while?

Tomorrow morning, if you feel like coming back, please bring your qin with you.

This is a well know poem of Li Bai. One thing to note here is that the entire third line is cited in *Song Shu* 宋書 卷93 隱逸伝の陶せん伝 (*History of Song volume 93, Biography of Tao Qin as a recluse*). It concerns an episode in which Tao is getting drunk with a guest. At a certain point he says to his guest, "I am starting to feel sleepy. Could you go back home for a while?". When Li Bai uses 幽人 (The hermit) in his poem, he is referring to his forerunner, Tao. Sōseki by using the poem by Li Bai here is making a reference to Tao and depicting himself as a hermit. The following words 無一事 'Nothing to be annoyed at' appeared in the previous poem. The continuous usage of the words 'Nothing to be annoyed at' and depiction of himself as a hermit tell us that Soseki is spending time painting and composing poems away from worldly matters.

好句 in the last line is used by Su Shi in a poem titled 望海樓晚景 "Wanghai lou wan'jing" ("Evening view of Wanghai-lou" 望海樓の夕景色). Su Shi was accomplished at brush and ink painting and also composed poems for his paintings.

横風吹雨入楼斜 横風 雨を吹き 楼に入って斜めなり
 壯觀応須好句誇 壯觀 応に須らく好句もて誇るべし ⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Matsuura, Tomohisa. *Li Haku Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012 (17th edition), p. 94.

⁷⁵ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed. & Trans. *So Tōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011 (27th edition), p. 104.

The rain blown by the wind is falling sideways.

This scene of energetic nature must be captured in a fine poem.

Sōseki's point here is that nature inspires people to compose fine poems.

嗒然 in the same line as already discussed in chapter three, means the expression of forgetting the existence of oneself, in other words the selfless state of mind. 嗒 appears in Chapter Two of Zhuangzi. Su Shi emphasises Zhuangzi's point in Chapter Two in his own poem by using 嗒然. 晝晷補之所藏与可 “Composition for the painting of bamboos by Yuke kept by Chao buzhi”

与可画竹時	与可 竹を画くの時
見竹不見人	竹を見て 人を見ず
豈独不見人	豈 独り人を見ざるのみならんや
嗒然遺其身	嗒然として その身を遺る
其身与竹化	其の身 竹と化して
無窮出清新	無窮に清新を出だす
莊周世無有	莊周 世に有ること無し
誰知此凝神	誰か知らん 此の凝神を ⁷⁶

When Yuke paints bamboo, he sees only bamboo not a person.

Not only does he not see a person

But he enters into the selfless state of mind and forgets about the existence of himself.

He transforms himself into bamboo.

Again and again he paints pure bamboo.

There is no thinker like Zhuangzi in the world today.

Who can understand the miracle of concentration in a mind such as his?

⁷⁶ http://chinese.hix05.com/sushi/sushi_3/sushi312.chohoshi.html

In the fourth line, Sōseki refers to Chapter Two of *Zhuangzi* by using 嗒然 ‘Spontaneously’ from Su Shi’s poem. He tells of how whilst engaged in composing poems he is able to forget himself and experience a selfless state of mind. In this poem, we see that he began to be more fluid and confident in using his own expressions and when selecting the words from the religious texts and ancient poems to suit his painting. He was at the time recuperating from illness, his images and his imagination carried him into a world where the true value of nature was revealed. A nature that included both the wonder of creation and the beauty of the interior selfless centre of the mind.

1914

Poem 122

閑居偶成、似臨風詞兄 (閑居偶成、臨風詞兄に似す)

“Poem composed for a poetic friend, Rinpū, spontaneous composition at a quiet residence”

野水辞花塢 野水 花塢を辞し

春風入草堂 春風 草堂に入る

徂徠何澹淡 徂徠 何ぞ澹淡たる

無我是仙郷 無我 是れ仙郷⁷⁷

The streams in the field flow away from the river bank where flowers grow in the wild.

A pleasant spring wind enters the simple hut.

The water flows away and the wind comes in, it is such a carefree and simple action.

A state of selflessness like this is indeed the ideal home for an immortal.

⁷⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995. P. 313.

This is a poem Sōseki composed for his fellow poet Sasakawa Taneo (笹川種郎 1870 – 1949) who was two years behind him at Tokyo Imperial University and shared a passion for poetry. Rinpū 臨風 is Sasakawa's pen name. Sōseki wrote a letter to Rinpū dated 8 November 1914 explaining the reason why he had composed this poem.⁷⁸

野水 'Stream in the field' rhyme-matches with Ryōkan's poem.

野水浸遠郭 野水遠郭を浸し

美花照翠微 美花 翠微に照る⁷⁹

Streams in the field stretch to far away villages

Beautiful flowers are showing vivid colours at the foothill of the mountain.

花塢 in the same line appears in a book of poetry criticism called *Liu-yi shi-hua* 六一詩話 by Ouyang Xiu (歐陽脩, 1007-1072)⁸⁰. In his writing, Ouyang Xiu introduces this word citing a poem by Yan Wei (嚴維, 713-?) from the Tang period.⁸¹ Ouyang Xiu writes of how the evocation of nature in Yan Wei's poem is so finely expressed that it almost seems real to the reader. This line became a fine example of describing calm spring for poets ever after.

柳塘春水漫 柳塘春水漫に、

花塢夕陽遲 花塢夕陽遲し⁸²

From the embankment where the willow tree grows, I view the river level rising with the melting snows that herald the arrival of spring.

From the bank with flourishing flowers, I see the sun setting slowly over the horizon.

⁷⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 357. (letter addressed to Sasakawa Rinpū on 08/11/1914)

⁷⁹ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 162-163.

⁸⁰ Toyofuku, Kenji. *Furo de yomu Sōseki no Kanshi*. Sekai Shisō sha, 1996, p. 81.

⁸¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.18, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995. P. 314.

⁸² http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/syou_gensai/68235290.html

Inspired by these Chinese poems from artists in the past, Sōseki's visualisation of scenery is flourishing. The stream, field and river bank with flowers in line one conjure up an immediate sensation of nature in motion.

草堂 in the second line refers to a simple hut, used as a residence where one can retire from the world to live a carefree life in composure, engaging in activities such as composing poems. A well-known example of this is Tu Fu 杜甫 naming his residence 'Huanhua Caotang' 浣花草堂, Bai Juyi 白居易 also named his residence 'Lushan Caotang' 廬山草堂. Sōseki is informing the reader that spring has arrived to Sōseki's hut.

In the third line, 徂 means 'Flowing away' and the subject is 'Water/streams' from the first line. 徠 means coming in and the subject is wind from the second line. 澹淡 means simple and carefree and describes the way of nature.⁸³

Sōseki's depiction of nature in the third line expresses the Daoist idea of *Zōka* (ch. *Zaohua*, 造化) 'Inexhaustible nature' a concept which had a strong impact on the *haiku* poet Matsuo Bashō (松尾芭蕉, 1644-1694) in the Edo period. We refer to Bashō's understanding of *Zōka*, as Bashō was considered a great master of poetry by Buson whose poems and paintings were greatly respected by Sōseki.

The word "*Zōka*" that Bashō uses to explain his artistic concept, is a very important word, and it also appears in the Zhuangzi. Qiu gives a thorough analysis⁸⁴ of this term and she notes, "In Bashō's critical thought, 'Following *zōka* and returning to *zōka* (*Zōka ni shitagai, zōka ni kaere*)' is a key concept." According to Qiu, *zōka* is firstly the state of mind where the artist aims to find the creative spirit. Secondly, it is different from the meaning of 'Nature' that we use in contemporary

⁸³ Refer to poem 108 in this chapter for information.

⁸⁴ Qiu, Paipai. "Daoist Concepts in Bashō's Critical Thought" in *East Asian Cultural and Historical Perspectives*. 1997, p. 324-330.

terms.⁸⁵ Barnhill comments how the meaning of nature is not a universal concept, it varies depending on the cultural context.⁸⁶

Qiu also refers to the Zhuangzi for an explanation of the meaning of *zōka*, and describes it as, “a working of the Dao, the Way of the cosmos”, “the single dominating force in the universe that creates and transforms all beings.”, “The ongoing process of the creation”. In the end, she concludes with the idea, “In Bashō’s statement, ‘Follow *zōka* and return to *zōka*,’ can thus be translated into ‘Follow the Natural and return to the Natural.’” *Zōka* then is the fundamental creative force in the cosmos, which is continuously evolving and transforming. Now we refer to Bashō’s own words.

“In the *waka* of Saigyō⁸⁷(西行 1118-1190), the *renga* of Sōgi⁸⁸(宗祇 1421-1502), the paintings of Sesshū⁸⁹(雪舟 1420-1506) and the tea ceremony of Rikyū⁹⁰(利休 1522-1591), one fundamental principle runs through all arts: those who pursue art follow *zōka*, and have the four seasons as their companion. Everything they see is like a flower and everything they imagine is like the moon. If one sees no flower, he is the same as a barbarian; if one has no moon in mind, he is no different from the birds and the beasts. Go beyond the barbarians and depart from animals; follow *zōka* and return to *zōka*.”⁹¹

⁸⁵ Qiu, Paipai. “Daoist Concepts in Bashō’s Critical Thought” in *East Asian Cultural and Historical Perspectives*. 1997, p. 324. Qiu refers to Konishi Junichi’s “Bashō to gūgensetsu” in *Nihon gakushiin kiyō*, 182-3, 1960. Also see Thomas, Julia Adeney. *Reconfiguring Modernity*. 2001, p. 32-83.

⁸⁶ Barnhill, David Landis. “Zōka: The creative in Bashō’s View of Nature and Art” in *Matsuo Bashō’s Poetic Spaces*. 2006, p. 33. See footnote 3 in Barnhill for further information.

⁸⁷ Qiu, Peipei. *Bashō and the Dao*. 2005, p. 212. A priest who is regarded as one of the greatest poets from the late Heian and the early Kamakura period who had an influence on Bashō.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 214. A *renga* artist/Zen priest from the late Muromachi period.

⁸⁹ *Kōji-en*, Iwanami Shoten, 1998. A priest and painter from the late Muromachi period, who went to China in 1467 to study painting, and brought back the technique of depicting nature and brush and ink painting.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, A tea master from the Azuchi-Momoyama period, who learnt from Jōō, and established the concept of *wabi-cha*, which is a tea ceremony seeking the aestheticism in simplicity.

⁹¹ Qiu, Peipei. “Reinventing the Landscape: The Zhuangzi and the Geographical Imagination of Bashō” in *Matsuo Bashō’s Poetic Spaces*. 2006, p. 68. See footnote 18 for the further information on the translation. Kanda, Atsuhō. *Bashō Ichidai Shū*. 1926, p. 572.

Zōka for Bashō is “The creative force of nature that has the spontaneous tendency and ability to exhibit transformations that are beautiful.”⁹² Bashō may have been influenced by literary writings as Qiu pointed out, for gaining the concept of *zōka* and *jinen/shizen* (自然), although this needs to be explored by finding out the sources popularised by Gozan Zen monks. Bashō definitely studied the Chinese poets and their poems from the past seriously to develop his poetic spirit, sensitivity and aesthetic feeling. For example, he mentions Tao Yuanming in a *haibun* titled “Deep in Bamboo” written in the Ninth Month of 1684.⁹³ With Li Bai on his mind he also wrote another *haibun* called “Three Names”, on the 15th of the Eighth Month in 1685⁹⁴. Here, we can see where Buson, a follower of Bashō, got a lot of his ideas on Chinese poetry from.

Muramatsu says that Bashō strongly believes that it is important to live one’s life keeping the poetic spirit within oneself. When one forgets it, one becomes the same as an animal. Bashō learnt from the Zhuangzi that one has to forget oneself in order to merge with the One (nature) to be in ‘The country of Not-Even-Anything’.⁹⁵ Kanda says that it is Zhuangzi’s concept of nature that supports Bashō’s concept fundamentally.⁹⁶ Kanda also says elsewhere, that Bashō’s aesthetic concept is influenced by the Zhuangzi.⁹⁷

Let us remind ourselves of ‘The village of Not-Even-Anything’ which we discussed briefly in Chapter one. The following is The Nameless Man’s comment from chapter seven of Zhuangzi.

“I’m just about to set off with the Creator. And if I get bored with that, then I’ll ride on the Light-and-Lissome Bird out beyond the six directions, wandering in the village of Not-Even-Anything and living in the Broad-and Borderless field.”⁹⁸

予方將與造物者爲人。厭則又乘夫莽眇之鳥。以出六極之外。而遊無何有之鄉⁹⁹。

⁹² Barnhill, David Landis. “Zōka: The creative in Bashō's View of Nature and Art” in *Matsuo Bashō's Poetic Spaces*. 2006, p. 44.

⁹³ Barnhill, David Landis. Trans. *Bashō's Journey*. 2005, p. 99-100.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 102.

⁹⁵ Muramatsu, Tomotsugu. *Bashō no Tegami*. 1985, p. 215.

⁹⁶ Kanda, Hideo. “Bashō to Chūgoku Bungaku” in *Bashō*. 1958, p. 426.

⁹⁷ Kanda, Hideo. *Sōshi no Sosei*. 1988, p. 174-175.

⁹⁸ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 93.

(Note: ‘the creator’: 造物者 [jp. *Zōbutsusha*, ch. *Zaowu Zhe*] which has the same meaning as 造化 [jp. *Zōka*, ch. *Zaohua*])

We can see here a chain of knowledge reaching from Zhuangzi to Bashō to Buson, to Shiki, and then to Sōseki, although Sōseki gained knowledge about Zhuangzi from other sources as well.

無我 in the fourth line means selfless, which is *Kyoshi* in Sōseki’s final thought. It is equal to ‘Forgetting oneself’ 忘我 in Daoist terms. They are written as different characters but both mean the same. Here it describes the process of meditation. After introducing a Zen idiom, Sōseki in the same line gives an image of 仙郷 which means the place where the immortal resides which is the ideal place for a poet to live and in Zhuangzi is ‘The village of Not-Even-Anything’.

Sōseki uses images from Zen and Daoism and he weaves these two teachings together to create his own. Wada in a comment on this poem observes that it reflects a strong desire for a direction in life through being with nature. He feels that Sōseki was getting close to the poetic expression he developed in the final period of his life.¹⁰⁰

November 1915

Poem 129

題自画 (自画に題す)

“Poem for my painting”

机上蕉堅稿 机上 蕉堅稿

門前碧玉竿 門前 碧玉竿

喫茶三盃後 喫茶 三盃の後

⁹⁹ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 297.

¹⁰⁰ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 307.

雲影入窓寒 雲影 窓に入りて寒し¹⁰¹ (雲影 寒 窓に入る)

Shōkenkō by Zekkai Chūshin is lying on top of my desk.

Vivid blue-green bamboos are growing in front of the gate.

At ease, drinking three cups of tea looking outside from my desk.

I notice the room is becoming chilly by the shadows of the clouds creeping through the window.

(I see the shadow of poetic sentiment entering into my mind, and I am in the world of Han Shan.) Note: this is an alternative interpretation of the fourth line.

Gogon Zekku

蕉堅稿 *Shōkenkō* in the first line is a collection of Chinese poems by Zekkai Chūshin (絶海中津, 1334-1405) who was a Zen monk from Gozan 五山 which was well known for its literature, 'Gozan Literature' 五山文学 in the Muromachi period (1336-1573). Monks from Gozan travelled to China and brought back many poems and religious texts. Zekkai was a monk specialising in Chinese poetry who went to Ming China in 1368 and returned to Japan in 1378. Zekkai contributed greatly to the development of the Rinzaï sect (臨濟宗) of Zen. Shōken Dōjin (蕉堅道人) is one of Zekkai's pen names and 蕉堅稿 *Shōkenkō* is a collection of his Chinese poems.¹⁰²

Sōseki was known to be a big fan of 蕉堅稿 *Shōkenkō* and this line confirms that Sōseki kept Zekkai's book at his side as observed by Ikkai, Nakamura, Toyofuku and Yoshikawa.¹⁰³ In this poem, Sōseki is in the mood of Zen.

¹⁰¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 129.

¹⁰² Matsuura, Tomohisa. Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishūkan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 230.

¹⁰³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 323-324.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 203-204.

Toyofuku, Kenji. *Furo de yomu Sōseki no Kanshi*. Sekai Shisō sha, 1996, p. 85.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 175.

碧玉竿 in the second line signifies ‘Vivid blue-green bamboo’ like precious blue-green coloured jewellery. The monk, Ryōkan 良寛, according to Tōgō, also used this image of bamboo outside the house in one of the poems in his first hand-written edition of *Sōdōshū*. Tōgō also mentions that this poem rhyme-matches with Han Shan’s poem in the lines which write about dust in the pot, as rice has not been cooked for a long time.¹⁰⁴

Yoshikawa says that 碧玉竿 ‘Vivid blue-green bamboo’ is probably the depiction of bamboo, and it is more than likely an expression created by Sōseki.¹⁰⁵ This study’s opinion is that the first character 碧 ‘blue-green’ represents a Zen text, Blue Cliff Record (碧巖録). The second character 玉 ‘Jade’ means treasure. The third line 竿 ‘Bamboo’ represents the Zen teaching of emptiness. Together with 門前 ‘In front of the entrance’ at the beginning of the line, it describes entering the world of the precious teaching of Zen.

喫茶三盃 in the third line means ‘At ease, drinking tea’. In his poem Ryōkan uses three bowls. It is said that Sōseki started to enthusiastically read this poem in November 1914 and this line confirms Sōseki was reading Ryōkan during this period. In this poem, Ryōkan who received some food from his friend shows his gratitude for the kind offering in the poem. Ryōkan is expressing his pleasure at being able to enjoy a cooked meal.

解良叔問子見恵芋及李、賦以答（解良叔問子より芋と李とを恵まる賦して以って故答う）

“Returning a poem thanking Kera Shukumonoshi for his gift of taros and pears”.

急著釜底下塩豉 急ぎ釜底に著け 塩豉を下すに

飢腸灑來恰如錫 飢腸 灑ぎ来れば 恰も飴のごとし

三盃喫了稍知飽 三盃 喫し了って稍 飽くを知る

¹⁰⁴ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975 (5th edition), note in p. 104.

¹⁰⁵ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 175.

惟恨詩人不携罍 惟 恨むらくは詩人の罍を擁えざるを。¹⁰⁶

I placed the food in the pot and quickly seasoned it with salt.

Food for the starving stomach was like sweet candy.

I had three bowls, and I ate my fill.

The only disappointment I felt was that the poet didn't bring a jar of sake.

Ryōkan's poem depicts an honest, pure character living under minimal conditions. Sōseki loved the simplicity and purity of Ryōkan's poem and reflected this easy-going spirit in his own poem.

雲影 in the fourth line means the appearance of clouds. The following words 入窓 mean 'Entering the window' followed by 寒 'Cold feeling'. All annotations interpret this as a feeling of cold accompanying the shadow of a cloud as it enters through the window.

Considering this poem to be a Zen poem and the fact that Sōseki had already mentioned Zekkai at the beginning, plus the image of bamboo as a symbol of Zen teaching in the second line, and the reference to Ryōkan's poem in the third line, this study suggests that 寒 'Cold feeling' in the fourth line could be interpreted as the poet Han Shan 寒山 as the character 寒 'Cold' rhymes with part of his name. The fourth line says that clouds are appearing inside Soseki's mind, and Soseki is getting poetic inspiration from Han Shan inside his spiritual land of poetry.

Han Shan is another legendary Zen monk from the Tang period whom Sōseki liked as we discussed in poem 64 in Chapter two of this study. He was known for his excellent poems and eccentric character although there is little historical evidence about his true identity. Han Shan and his friend Shide (拾得) taken as a pair are a popular subject matter in brush and ink painting. This poem is Sōseki's dedication to the Zen poet monks whose character was known to be so unique and

¹⁰⁶ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975 (5th edition), p. 88-89.

individual, free from any prejudice and worldly attachment and dedicated to living a life in the Way.

As regards the painting that accompanies this poem, Sōseki draws a man in a small hut resembling a painting by Buson titled “*Gika*” (宜夏) in the *Jūgi Chō* (十宜帖) series¹⁰⁷. Sōseki was in full motion inside the world of poem and brush and ink painting studying Zekkai, Ryōkan and Han Shan’s poems and Buson’s paintings.

Poem 132

“Quiet residence spontaneous composition” 閑居偶成

Spring 1916

幽居人不到 幽居 人到らず

独坐覚衣寛 独り坐して 衣の寛なるを覚ゆ

偶解春風意 偶たま解す 春風の意

来吹竹与蘭 来たりて竹と蘭とを吹くを¹⁰⁸

There is no one to visit the hermit’s hut.

Sitting alone in silence, my loose clothes make me feel relaxed.

Suddenly I understand the compassion of the spring wind.

The spring wind is blowing into my garden, the bamboo and orchid are swaying.

Gogon Zekku

¹⁰⁷ Yosa, Buson. *Bunjin-ga Suihen* Vol. 13, Chuō Kōron Sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 57.

¹⁰⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 327.

幽居 in the first line appears in the sixth line of a poem by Tao Yuanming titled 答龐參軍 *Da long san jun* (龐參軍に答う *Replying to General Ho of the San Army*).

Tao received a poem from a good learned friend, General Ho, whilst the army was passing near to Tao's region.

衡門之下 衡門の下

有琴有書 琴有り書有り

載彈載詠 載ち弾じ載ち詠じ

爰得我娛 爰に我が娛しみを得たり

豈無他好 豈に他の好きもの無からんや

樂是幽居 是の幽居を楽しむ

朝為灌園 朝には園に灌ぐことを為し

夕偃蓬廬 夕には蓬廬に偃す ¹⁰⁹

This simple hut has a qin and books.

Playing qin and reciting books are my favourite pastimes.

Although there are many nice things in life, I enjoy this quiet existence away from world affairs.

I spend every day watering the garden in the morning, lying down in my simple hut in the evening.

Tao's poem describes the daily life of the recluse Sōseki refers to in the first line of his poem. In poem 116 earlier in this chapter, we commented on the fact that the characters 幽人 'A hermit' or

¹⁰⁹ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 51-52.

‘A recluse’ appeared in the title of a poem by Li Bai. 幽居 is the residence of a recluse as Tao Yuanming’s poem describes.

独坐 in the second line is ‘Sitting alone in silence’, Sōseki uses this phrase five times in his *kanshi* poetry. We know that Sōseki went to Enkaku-ji temple to practice Zen meditation under the instruction of monks from December 1894 to January 1895. This evidence shows that ‘Sitting alone in silence’ that is to say meditation, was for Sōseki, from his youth until the final period of his life, a very important matter.

竟衣寬 ‘My loose clothes’ in the same line means feeling at ease, which appeared in poem 101 earlier in this chapter. It also suggests Sōseki is feeling comfortable meditating.

In the third line 偶解春風意 ‘Suddenly I understand the compassion of the spring wind’ and the fourth line 来吹竹与蘭 ‘The spring wind is blowing into my garden, the bamboo and orchid are swaying’, Sōseki is telling us that he is now enlightened and that he can hear the sounds as the piping of Heaven 天籟 as featured in the second chapter of Zhuangzi we discussed earlier in this chapter.

Tzu-ch’i [Zi Qi] said, “You do well to ask the question, Yen [Yan]. Now I have lost myself. Do you understand that? You hear the piping of men, but you haven’t heard the piping of earth. Or if you’ve heard the piping of earth, you haven’t heard the piping of Heaven!”

and later,

Tzu-ch’i [Zi Qi] said, “Blowing on the ten thousand things in a different way, so that each can be itself- all take what they want for themselves, but who does the sounding?”¹¹⁰

In this poem, Sōseki enters a selfless state of mind listening to nature expressed by the sound of bamboo and orchid blown by the spring wind. This is a visual image of Sōseki’s final theme, *sokuten*

¹¹⁰ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 36-37.

kyoshi (則天去私 ‘Merging with Heaven, abandoning self’). This poem is a simple expression of Sōseki’s spirituality.

Poem 133

“Poem for my painting” (題自画; 自画に題す,)

Spring 1916 大正 5 年春

唐詩読罷倚闌干 唐詩を読み罷めて 闌干に倚れば

午院沈沈緑意寒 午院 沈沈として 緑意寒し

借問春風何処有 借問す 春風 何れの処にか有ると

石前幽竹石間蘭 石前の幽竹 石間の蘭¹¹¹

After reading Tang Poems, I go out onto the balcony and lean on the handrail looking towards the inner garden.

In the afternoon, time passes quietly in the garden, and the green coloured plants still have a wintry hue.

Whereabouts is the spring wind blowing, may I ask?

It is blowing amongst mystic bamboos rustling quietly in front of the garden stones and among the orchids, spreading its aroma ever so slightly between the stones.

Shichigon Zekku

倚闌干 ‘Lean/leaning on the handrail’ in the first line appears in the Zen text, *danlin leiju jian* 禪

林類聚 volume 18, 餠餅 “*Hu bing*”.

¹¹¹ Sōseki *Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 329.

佳人寂寞倚欄干 佳人寂莫として欄干に倚り

斷腸曲調無人聽 断腸の曲調 人の聴くなし ¹¹²

A beautiful lady leaning on the handrail feeling lonely

A heart-breaking melody, there is no one to hear it

Sōseki is full of poetic sentiment when he went out to lean on the handrail, as he explains that he was reading a Tang poem inside the house. Sōseki wants to create a sense of profound loneliness preparing for the second line. We also know that the character 倚 ‘Leaning’ rhyme-matches with Tao Yuanming’s poem titled *Gui-qu-lai ci* (歸去來辭) which we discussed in poem 113 earlier in this chapter.

沈沈 ‘Time passes quietly’ in the second line appears in a poem titled 春夜 “Spring night” by Su Shi 蘇軾.

春宵一刻值千金 春宵 一刻 值千金

花有清香月有陰 花に清香有り月に陰有り

歌管樓臺聲細細 歌管 樓臺 聲細細

鞦韆院落夜沈沈 鞦韆 院落 夜沈沈 ¹¹³

A Spring night is so precious that even a short moment is more valuable than anything else

Flowers are spreading their aroma, the moon is hazy creating a poetic state.

The sound of singing and dancing accompanied by a string and bamboo orchestra coming from the hall earlier becomes faint.

There is a swing left alone in the courtyard. The night is passing very quietly.

¹¹² http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/mobile/index.php?index=X67n1299_018.

¹¹³ http://chinese.hix05.com/sushi/sushi_1/sushi121.shunsho.html.

緑意寒 in the same line refers to the sensation of early spring. The season is the beginning of the spring which is the transitional period from winter. Thus, there is a profound loneliness in the atmosphere, and Sōseki is expressing the sense of coldness in the green.

In the first and second lines, Sōseki creates a state of tranquil and almost sad solitude: a visualisation of the selfless state of mind.

借問 ‘May I ask’ in the third line appears in a poem by Tao Yuanming titled 悲從弟仲德 (從弟仲德を悲しむ, *Mourning for my cousin, Zhongde*), and is noted by Iida.¹¹⁴

銜哀過舊宅 哀しみを銜みて旧宅を過ぎり

悲涙應心零 悲涙 心に応じて零つ

借問爲誰悲 借問す 誰が爲にか悲しむと

懷人在九冥 懷う人は九冥に在り¹¹⁵

Feeling sad, I dropped by the house I remember from the past

Overwhelmed by emotion tears started to fall.

May I ask who I am feeling sorrow for?

The person I am missing is my cousin who is in the other world.

借問 ‘May I ask’ also rhyme-matches with a poem by Li Bai, titled “*Chunri zuiqi yinzhi*” (春日醉起言志; 春日 醉より起きて 志を言う), which we discussed in poem 100 earlier in this chapter.

春風何処有 ‘Whereabouts is the spring wind?’ in the third line and 石前幽竹石間蘭 ‘Mystic bamboos rustling quietly in front of the garden stones’ in the fourth line are very similar to the final two lines of the previous poem. Sōseki is referring once again to the spontaneous sounds of nature

¹¹⁴ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 302.

¹¹⁵ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 158.

written in Zhuangzi. The words bamboo and stone evoke an image of Zen painting, as they are popular subject matters in brush and ink painting. This poem is a synthesis of Daoist and Zen teachings and is a fine example of Sōseki's individual approach to the composition of poetry.

CONCLUSION

Sōseki's poems from this period have a strong inclination towards quiet poetic sensitivity something which had been admired throughout the course of history by the Chinese literati. During his *nanga* period Sōseki, directly and indirectly, also began to express his notion of 'the Way' (*Michi*) using the poetic inspiration of *fūryū*.

We have discussed what Sōseki wanted to express through composing poems as an accompaniment for his brush and ink paintings. He tells us that the process of composing poems required entering a selfless state of mind and becoming one with nature.

Sōseki introduced the notion of selfless state of mind in "Discussion on Making All Things Equal" from Chapter two of Zhuangzi to clarify this idea. Zhuangzi teaches us to listen to the sound of heaven which is to listen to the sound of nature whatever sounds it creates.

We have also seen that Bashō shared a similar fascination with Zhuangzi's philosophy which was a fundamental idea in the composition of their poems. The importance is to accept that nature continuously evolves and changes, and human death is a part of that movement, and that change is inevitable and one has to accept that fact positively. One just simply follows the change and becomes one with nature. To be able to do that, one has to forget oneself and be with the Way then one can attain true creative sensitivity and energy.

Sōseki used visual images for the idea of becoming one with nature. People living in a small village deep in the mountains or by rivers, a recluse living in a simple hut, clouds, bamboo, orchid, old fisherman and birds are all examples of the images he utilised.

In the poems from this period, Sōseki refers to poets such as Wang Wei, Li Bai, Su Shi and Ryōkan. Above all, a powerful image for Sōseki was taken from the story written by Tao Yanming titled *The Tale of the Peach Blossom Spring*. He made a strenuous effort to visualise the story taking examples from Buson's paintings. The visual images he employed referred to a depiction of the home in the mind and gave psychological consolation to Sōseki. For Sōseki it is crucial to develop his skill in brush and ink painting because it is a direct physical, emotional and spiritual experience which enables him to shift his mind from the ordinary to the land of spirituality.

Sōseki began to synthesis Zen and Daoist thought in a poem creating his own style which was to become the foundation of *sokuten kyoshi*. Sōseki's *nanga* period was a necessary step in the process of Sōseki finding his own particular path to attaining the Way, *sokuten kyoshi*, which we will discuss closely in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Mei-An Period

INTRODUCTION

Having been in bed for one month due to illness, on 25 November 1914, Sōseki gave a talk at Gakushūin titled *My Individualism*. His audience comprised the young students of this elite school who would be expected to run Japan in the future.

Sōseki explained that during his stay in London he had learnt that it was a part of an individual's freedom to have individual opinions. He called his idea of individualism 'On my own terms' (自己本位). He also talked about the responsibility and consideration you had to take into account if you wanted to be an independent individual. He said it was also important to respect the individualism of others.

Towards the end of 1914, around the time of his illness, Sōseki became a devoted reader of the works of Ryōkan (良寛, 1758-1831)¹. Sōseki was an enthusiastic collector of Ryōkan's calligraphy and poems as we can see from his letter to Morinari Rinzō (森成鱗造 1884-1955) on 16 March 1916. Wada says that the influence of Ryōkan upon Sōseki was spiritual rather than poetical.² As we know already, Ryōkan was a Japanese Monk from the late Edo period who is renowned for his excellent poems and eccentric character. He also called himself 'Ryōkan, The Great Fool' (大愚良寛). Sōseki mentioned the great fool, 大愚, in his second from last poem which we will examine later.

¹ Mizukawa, Takao. *Sōseki to Bukkyō- Sokuten Kyoshi eno Michi*. Heimon Sha, Tokyo, 2002, p.165.

For further information, refer to Miyazawa, Seijun. "Natsume Soseki to Bukkyō – tokuni Tariki Jodomon tonon kankei – jō & ge" in *Nihon Bukkyō* No. 42 & 43, Nihon Bukkyō Kenkyukai, 1977.

² Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 207.

Sōseki started to use some words from Ryōkan in poems during his *nanga* period and in his final period, used references from Ryōkan's poems even more frequently.

We are going to examine Sōseki's *kanshi* from his final period focusing on how Sōseki describes his spiritual world, and assess how this relates to his final thought *sokuten kyoshi*.

Before we examine Sōseki's *kanshi*, we need to learn what Sōseki was thinking and feeling during the final period of his life. In order to do this we will be referring to Sōseki's words. On 1 January 1915, Sōseki began to write a series of essays called *Tentōroku* (点頭録). These essays became part of the work from his final period along with his novel *Mei-An* (明暗) and the *kanshi* he composed almost every day from 14 August until 20 November 1916. *Mei-An* was first published in the *Asahi* Newspaper on 26 May 1916. Sōseki went on to write 188 episodes until he fell critically ill.

In January 1916, his health was still poor, so from 28 January to 16 February he went to a hot spring town, Yugawara, where his old friend Nakamura Zekō was staying. Sōseki was now unable to continue writing *Tentōroku* due to severe pain in his arms.

Tentōroku, although it had to be discontinued, provides us with clues, expressed in his own words, as to what Sōseki was thinking, feeling and interested in, in this the final period of his life. We will now explore the content of *Tentōroku* before we discuss the *kanshi* of his final period.

TENTŌROKU (点頭録)

New Year has arrived again. Looking back, I feel that the past is just like a dream. I feel strange thinking of how I have got to this age.

If I carry on thinking further, the past ceases to exist even as a dream. It becomes nothingness. In fact, recently I often think of my past as a nothingness. The other day when I was walking in Ueno park on my way to visit a museum in Ueno for an

exhibition, I felt, even though I was walking to my destination, as if I was not moving an inch.

This is not because I have become senile. I felt this even though I was aware of leaving home, getting onto the train, getting off at the station, and walking on the ground. At that moment I thought of a poem I had come across somewhere which goes “I have been trying to get there for a whole day, but I have never left”. I thought this poem expressed the same feeling that I have explained here.

If I may explain further using a more complicated philosophical vocabulary, this poem explains that the past is nothing more than a mere temporary image. It has a similarity with the idea in The Diamond Sutra (金剛經) that “the memory of the past is unobtainable”.

As we know the thoughts we have in the transitory present flow to the past immediately. Also, the present moment changes to the future without any stages. If we were to take this theory further, the things we say about the past can apply to the present. Similarly, we can say the same about the future. Consequently, in the end, one’s life is more uncertain than a dream.

If I try to understand myself from the point of view that I have mentioned previously, I should not have aged when the new year comes. It seems that it is the calendar and mirror that age me. But the calendar and the mirror do not, in fact, mean anything.

At the same time, the astonishing thing is, it is an indisputable fact that, I, in this present time, am existing between heaven and earth. Whilst I am aware of my every action, the truth is that it is becoming the past. So, having my attention on the point of transition from present to the past and looking behind myself, I find that the past is not just a mere dream. It is like a torchlight clearly showing myself aging as time

passes. Therefore, each year, like everybody else I have to grow old and get closer to death.

As I have mentioned here, there are two ways of looking at life, and these two views exist in juxtaposed positions without any contradiction which is a strange phenomenon beyond logical explanation. I don't have any intention of explaining this strange phenomenon, nor do I have enough skill to analyse it.

All I can say at the beginning of the year 1916 is that I have decided to live my entire life going along with the flow and bearing in mind the two different interpretations of existence.

If I see things from the viewpoint of nothingness, it is unnecessary my greeting the spring this time round. Rather, it is as if I wasn't born at the beginning of the Meiji period. But, if I see things from the view point that I am existing, I am grateful for surviving another year despite my troubled ill health. By surviving another year, the things I have to do increase in volume, and I hope the quality of my work to a certain extent improves.

Therefore, because I have been feeling I don't have enough time left, I can't describe how happy I am for the fact that heaven is granting me another year of life. I am trying to use my time as best I can for what remains of my life.

A famous monk called Zhaozhou (趙州和尚 778-897) known as 'Zhaozhou, the old Buddha', had a religious awakening at a late age (趙州古仏晚年發心). He had the praiseworthy intention of deciding to enter the religious life, The Way (道), at the age of sixty-one.

The monk Zhaozhou said if someone was better than him, he would ask to be taught by him, and if someone was lesser than him, He would teach the person even if that person was an old man.

For twenty uninterrupted years, the monk Zhaozhou was trained by a monk called Nan'quan (南泉). The monk Zhaozhou was eighty years old when he finished his training. He then went to Guan'yin temple in Zhaoxian, and began to teach people Sutra. He lived until one hundred and twenty years old instructing people in the religious life.

I can't predict when my life will end, as it is not up to me to decide. I have many illnesses but I am ten years younger than the age when monk Zhaozhou decided to enter into the religious life. I feel I can contribute something, if I make an effort, using my energy to the fullest extent, although I may not live until one hundred and twenty.

My intention is to try my best to follow and copy the monk Zhaozhou's attitude as long as heaven allows me to live. I may not be able to copy the attitude and long life of Zhaozhou who was called 'Old Buddha'. I may be weak, but I will do my best to use whatever gifts I am given from heaven to express my gratitude for the time I have in front of me.

I have to make this statement at the beginning of *Tentōroku* (点頭録), as I felt an urgent need to express my thoughts.³

This is Part one of *Tentōroku*. Sōseki clarifies his intention that following the example of the monk Zhaozhou he is interested in mastering the Way. In this, although he didn't know it, final period of his life, Sōseki is continuing his inner quest.

³ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 627-648. "Tentōroku".

In the following comment where he discusses non-existence and existence, “Bearing in mind the two different interpretations of existence”, Sōseki is talking about the Daoist notion of everything as One and the Zen teaching of everything as nothingness. Sōseki refers to Daoist texts such as Laozi, Zhuangzi and Lizi, and Zen texts such as *The Blue Cliff Record*, *The Record of Linji* and *The Record of The Transmission of The Lamp* in his *kanshi*. We now need to see how Sōseki explores these points in his poems.

The subject matter of the second to fifth parts of ‘*Tentōroku*’ is “Militarism”. Mizukawa says that Sōseki’s contribution to the world at the final period of his life began as social criticism at a global level.⁴ Senuma explains that 1916 was the time that The First World War entered into its third year and the German-Austrian allies were winning against the opposing allies. It is unusual for Sōseki to express his opinion on world affairs and politics, and it shows his attitude as a thinker.⁵ Sōseki begins with the comment he gave when he was asked about the impact of the First World War. Sōseki chose to write about militarism here as militarism was spreading all over the world like an infectious disease. He wanted to make his view known to his readers, as he was determined to do his best to pass on whatever ideas he had in his mind in the time he had left on this earth.

In Sōseki’s view, in short, the First World War didn’t have a root in either religion, morality, beliefs or a passion deeply rooted in the people. Although there were many tragedies and struggles, it was a momentary phenomenon. It did not have any impact on our inner values and beliefs. Sōseki says the First World War created a serious situation of which we had no previous experience. It was a hypocritical event which was showy but worthless and had no important causes as a base.

As a third topic, Sōseki chose to discuss Treitschke (1834 – 1896) who had been a German historian and political commentator. Sōseki brings up a person from near history to discuss how Germany developed the glorification of militarism. Sōseki explains that Treitschke believed in the power and the unification of the state, and was against humanist and liberal movements.

⁴ Mizukawa, Takao. *Sōseki to Bukkyō- Sokuten Kyoshi eno Michi*. Heion Sha, Tokyo, 2002, p. 167.

⁵ Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007, p. 290.

It is not this study's concern to discuss Sōseki's political views and Sōseki did not participate in any political movements. However, he made his views clear to the public just like Chinese poets such as Tao Yuanming had done in the past, by standing on their own feet and not being intimidated or threatened by power, since individualism was an important backbone for Sōseki as a person and in his literary art.

Sōseki was seriously concerned and worried about the direction in which the world powers were headed. Amongst his final poems, deeply engaged in religious thought, Sōseki also expresses his views on world affairs.

POEMS FROM THE FINAL PERIOD

Sōseki composed seventy-five poems in his final period. It almost became a daily activity like writing a diary. Sōseki stopped writing his actual diary during his final period. The last date that he wrote his diary is 27 July 1916. This study treats the *kanshi* of Sōseki's final stage of life as a kind of replacement for his diary, as Sōseki expressed his thought and feelings in his *kanshi* compositions. The *kanshi* of the final period start on 14 August 1916 and end on 20 November 1916, nineteen days before his death.

Sōseki began to write his last novel, *Mei-An* (Lightness and Darkness) on 26 May 2016. Sōseki explained in a letter to his disciples Kume Masao and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, who were members of the Thursday Circle, the relationship between writing a novel and composing *kanshi*.

On 21 August 1916 Sōseki wrote a letter to Kume and Akutagawa explaining, "I am writing *Mei-An* as usual in the morning. My feelings towards writing a novel are a mixture of three sensations: pain; pleasure; mechanical processes. I am happy about the fact that it is not too hot. But writing a story such as this for nearly a hundred episodes makes me feel vulgar. So, three or four days ago, I began

to compose *kanshi* as a daily task. I write one poem per day, and it is *Shichigon Risshi*. It is difficult to compose. I have no idea how many poems I can compose, as I will stop when I get bored.”⁶

The important point to stress here again is that Sōseki treated some of his *kanshi* as though he was writing a diary. So, we have to bear in mind that Sōseki expressed a great deal of his personal feeling in his *kanshi* in this final period.

Sixty-five poems out of seventy-five poems in this period are *Shichigon Risshi*. Nakamura said that to compose *Shichigon Risshi* every day required a lot of effort, but it was a necessary creative activity in order to cancel out all the tainted worldly things.⁷

His *kanshi* in the latter half of this period show a strong expression of *Michi* (道), the Way. At the same time Sōseki began to talk about the concept, *sokuten kyoshi* (則天去私: merging with heaven, abandoning self). Sōseki did not have a chance to explain the exact meaning of *sokuten kyoshi*, due to his sudden death.

Sōseki's *kanshi* in the latter half of this period do however give an opportunity to explore what it was Sōseki wanted to express through the concept of *sokuten kyoshi*.

In order to understand the personal feelings and the ideas at the very end of his life which were now firmly placed within the framework of Chinese spiritual thought we need to analyse in depth a number of the *kanshi* from his final period.

14 August 1916

Poem 134

“No title” 無題

⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 554-556. (letter addressed to Kume & Akutagawa dated 21/08/1916).

⁷ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 212.

幽居正解酒中忙 幽居して正に解す 酒中の忙

華髪何須住醉郷 華髪 何ぞ須いん 醉郷に住むを

座有詩僧閑拈句 座に詩僧有りて 閑かに句を拈り

門無俗客静焚香 門に俗客無くして 静かに香を焚く

花間宿鳥振朝露 花間の宿鳥 朝露を振るい

柳外帰牛帯夕陽 柳外の帰牛 夕陽を帯ぶ

随所随縁清興足 所に随い 縁に随いて 清興足り

江村日月老来長 江村の日月 老来長し⁸

By living away from the world, I understand the disgusting custom of drinking and making merry.

I don't need to live in a worldly place in my grey-haired old age.

A monk is in the middle of composing a poem in a leisurely manner in the study.

There are no worldly guests and I burn incense in tranquillity to calm my mind.

A bird perched on a flower flies away, shaking off the morning dew.

Cows, bathed in sunset, return in the evening.

There is poetic inspiration in all places at all times.

Living in a village by the side of the river, I feel the day gets longer as I get older.

Shichigon Risshi

⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 330-331.

In this poem Sōseki explains his feelings on coming back to the world of *kanshi*. He is keen to let us know he has plenty of poetic sensitivity to express. In the final period, Sōseki's *kanshi* are now definitively a means of expressing his spiritual world.

In the first line 幽居 literally means 'Quiet residence' which rhyme-matches with a poem by Wei Ying-wu 韋應物 (737-792), titled 幽居 "Youju",

獨無外物牽 獨り外物の牽ひくなく

遂此幽居情 この幽居の情を遂とぐ⁹

I am not attached to any position in society nor am I interested in wealth.

I free myself by living the life of a recluse.

酒中忙 in the same line originally means a clamorous drinking party. In this line, Sōseki uses this expression to refer to the life of worldly affairs and Yoshikawa suggests that in Sōseki's case this could mean writing novels.¹⁰ Sōseki in the first line is explaining his daily life of writing an episode of his novel in the morning and composing *kanshi* in the afternoon.

華髮 in the second line means grey hairs. Sōseki describes himself as aging rapidly. According to Nakamura, Sōseki began to age fast in his final year and his grey hair and beard became a prominent feature.¹¹

何須 in the same line means unnecessary, it is followed by 醉郷 which depicts a drunken/half-conscious state of mind. This line corresponds with the first line and confirms Sōseki's wish to stay

⁹ <http://sankouan.jugem.jp/?eid=11>.

¹⁰ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 182.

¹¹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 215.

away from the vulgar everyday world. Sōseki is also explaining he is far from the world of the novel when composing *kanshi*.

詩僧 in the third line refers to a monk specialising in poetry. Sōseki in the last stage of his life was known to admire the monk, Ryōkan, known for his poems and calligraphy as well as his simplicity and the genuine pure quality of his character. We can see that Sōseki is immersing himself in the life and works of the Zen monk poet, Ryōkan. 拈句 in the same line means ‘Composing a poem’ which describes the action he is engaged in.

俗客 in the fourth line signifies people who don’t understand *fūryū*, poetic inspiration. There was no guest at Sōseki’s house and his mind was clear. Sōseki spent his time 静焚香 ‘Burning incense in tranquillity’, which expresses his meditative state while composing.

花間宿鳥 in the fifth line means ‘Birds nesting behind the flower’ describing nature.

柳外歸牛 in the corresponding line of the couplet means cows going back to a faraway cowshed near the willow trees, depicting a harmonious idyllic landscape showing the influence of Tao Yuanming’s literary world. This line also prepares us for the visual image of the destination described in the final line.

随所随縁 in the seventh line is ‘Any encounter, anywhere’ which has a strong flavour of Zen. Ryōkan used this expression 随縁 ‘Spontaneous encounter’ often. The following is an example.

随縁須自恰 縁に随って須く自ら恰ぶべし。¹²

I sincerely enjoy following whatever happens spontaneously.

¹² Tōgō, Toyoharu. Edit. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Jōkan. Tokyo Sōgensha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 164.

清興足 in the same line means there is plenty of poetic inspiration. Sōseki, in this line, is expressing his enthusiasm for composing *kanshi*.

江村 in the final line describes the village along the river. 老来 in the same line means ‘Growing old’.

It is followed by 長, ‘Time flowing peacefully’. This final line gives a visual image of a peaceful community as described in the story, *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring*, which refers back to Laozi’s ideal community where you can overhear chickens and dogs. Sōseki composed a similar line in poem 90 on 11 October 1910 when he was recovering from a serious illness at Shuzen-ji. Here Sōseki again confirms that he wants to live in a peaceful community surrounded by nature which exists in his mind: his spiritual home.

21 August 1916

Poem 141

“No title” 無題

尋仙未向碧山行 仙を尋ぬるも 未だ碧山に向かって行かず

住在人間足道情 住みて人間に在りて 道情足る

明暗双双三万字 明暗双双 三万字

撫摩石印自由成 石印を撫摩して 自由に成る¹³

Although I am seeking the world of the immortals, that doesn’t mean I head to the mountains.

I can appreciate plenty of poetic inspiration living amongst people.

¹³ Sōseki *Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 345.

So far I have written 30,000 words of the novel "Lightness and Darkness, the extreme opposites".

The writing comes spontaneously, as I contemplate while rubbing the stone.

Shichigon Zekku

Sōseki explained the motivation for the composition of this poem in a letter to Kume and Akutagawa dated 21 August 1916, which was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

In this letter, Sōseki explains that he was inspired to write this poem by reading about a decoratively engraved stone mentioned in a previous letter from Kume and Akutagawa. He said he had composed this *Shichigon Zekku*, and wanted to present it to Kume and Akutagawa. Sōseki goes on to say that Kume might not be interested at all, but Sōseki had heard Akutagawa composed poems, and this was the reason Sōseki was presenting the poem to them. We can see here that Sōseki is encouraging and inspiring his followers to enter into the world of *kanshi*. In his final period, Sōseki mainly composed *Risshi*, a poem with eight lines, with the exception of a few *Zekku*, a poem with four lines. This is one of them, as Sōseki is guiding Akutagawa to the world of *kanshi* using a less complex style.

In this poem, Sōseki expresses simply his life of not being a hermit and living amongst people, writing a popular novel and composing poems.

尋仙 in the first line means 'I am interested in visiting a world where immortals lives'. It rhymes with a poem composed by Li Bai (701-762), 廬山謠寄盧侍御虛舟 (*Lushan yao: qi Lu shiyu*

Xushou): jp. 廬山の謠、廬侍御虚舟に寄す)

五嶽尋仙不辭遠 五岳に仙を尋ねて遠きを辞せず、

一生好入名山遊 一生好んで名山に入りて遊ぶ¹⁴

¹⁴ <https://baike.baidu.com/item/庐山謠寄盧侍御虚舟>.

I am willing to go far away to visit an immortal in Wu-yue

I would love to stay and spend a carefree time in the mountains for my entire life.

碧山 in the same line literally means ‘Blue mountain’. This word rhyme-matches again with Li Bai’s poem, 山中答俗人 (“*Shanzhong da suren*”, jp. 山中にて俗人に答う), first line.

問余何意棲碧山 余に問う 何の意ぞ碧山に棲むと

笑而不答心自閑 笑って答えず心自ずから閑なり

桃花流水杳然去 桃花流水 杳然として去る

別有天地非人間 別に 天地の 人間に非ざる有り¹⁵

You ask me why I live deep in the mountains away from people.

I just smile and don’t answer. My mind is as calm as it can be.

The stream carrying floating peach petals flows to far away.

There is another world existing, different to this world.

We can see 碧山, ‘Blue mountain’ represents the mountain where the hermit lives.

The third and fourth lines of Li Bai’s poem present an image of Tao Yuanming’s *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring*.¹⁶ Sōseki, in the first line, shows us that whilst living in the ordinary world, he is deep in the mountain inside his spiritual land.

¹⁵ Matsuura, Tomohisa. Trans. & Ed. *Rihaku Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 72.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

人間 in the second line means ‘The secular world’. 足道情 in the same line means there is plenty of poetic inspiration. Yoshikawa interpreted 道情 as philosophical sentiment or religious sentiment.¹⁷ Sōseki is describing his daily activities here, so this study has translated this as poetic sensitivity, although we can’t ignore the fact that it could be translated as religious sentiment. Sōseki is telling us he has plenty of poetic inspiration although at the same time he is writing a novel about human affairs in the everyday world.

明暗双双 in the third line represents a contrasting pair such as lightness and darkness. Sōseki explains his use of this phrase in his letter to Kume and Akutagawa and how it is an idiom taken from a Zen text. This phrase is cited in *The Blue Cliff Record*, 51 and 66 cases. The commentary from 51 is given below.

COMMENTARY

“The last word is spoken for you.” When Hsueh Tou made up his verse on this last word, he intentionally went to extremes falling into the weeds to help people. His verse was thorough-going as a verse, but he only versified a little of the fine detail. If you want to see all the way through, this is still not enough.

Daring to say even more, Hsueh Tou opened his mouth and said, “The time of light and dark pair by pair” to open a road for you and also to finish it off for you in one line. Then at the end he provided even more explanations for you. Just as Chao Ch’ing one day asked Lo Shan, “When Yen T’ou says, ‘So, so, not so, not so,’ what is his meaning?” Lo Shan called out, “Great Master,” and Master Chao Ch’ing responded. Shan said, “Both light and both dark.” Ch’ing bowed in thanks and left. Three days later he again questioned Lo Shan, “A few days ago I received your compassionate instruction; it’s just that I couldn’t see through it.” Shan said “I’ve told you the whole thing already.” Ch’ing said, “Master, please light the way.” Shan

¹⁷ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 95.

said, “If so, Great Master, go ahead and ask about what you are in doubt over.” Ch’ing said, “What is ‘both light and both dark?’” Shan said, “Born the same and dying the same.” Then Ch’ing bowed in thanks and left.

Later there was a monk who asked Chao Ch’ing, “How is it when being born the same and dying the same?” Ch’ing said, “Shut your dog mouth.” The monk said, “Try to eat food with your mouth closed, Great Master.” This monk then came to ask Lo Shan, “How is it when being born the same and dying the same?” Shan said, “Like an ox without horns.” The monk asked, “How is it when being born the same but not dying the same?” Shan said, “Like a tiger with horns.” The last word is precisely this truth.¹⁸

The translators’ note says that “The image here is of ghosts clinging to trees and grasses, likened to people clinging to things, especially to words and expressions.”¹⁹

三万字 in the third line is literally 30,000 words. Sōseki explains in his letter that he is writing *Mei-An* and has done around a hundred episodes. He said he was writing about 1,800 words per episode. So, he had written about 180,000 words now. However, 180,000 as a number didn’t fit the style of the poetry, so he chose to use 30,000 words to make the phrase sound poetical.

撫摩 in the fourth line means stroking and rubbing. 石印 is a decorated engraved stone seal. Sōseki had a custom of stroking a stone while he was contemplating what to write.²⁰ It is an action of kneading the poetic inspiration without. 自由成 at the end of the line means ‘To be formed freely’.

Sōseki is saying that he is not deep in the mountain but despite writing a novel for a living he is full of poetic inspiration. Sōseki introduces a Zen idiom as the title of the novel. The action of rubbing a stone is a visual image of heating up your creative energy, which may be related to Chinese alchemy. This poem shows Sōseki’s enthusiasm for composing poetry.

¹⁸ Thomas Cleary and J. C. Cleary Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala, Boston & London, 1992. p 302-303.

¹⁹ Ibid, p304.

²⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 345.

23 August 1916

Poem 144

“No title” 無題

寂寞光陰五十年 寂寞たり 光陰五十年

蕭条老去逐塵縁 蕭条と老い去りて 塵縁を逐う

無他愛竹三更韻 他無し 竹を愛す 三更の韻

与衆栽松百丈禪 衆の与に 松を栽う 百丈の禪

淡月微雲魚楽道 淡月 微雲 魚は道を楽しみ

落花芳草鳥思天 落花 芳草 鳥は天を思う

春城日日東風好 春城 日日 東風好しく

欲賦帰来未買田 帰来を賦せんと欲して 未だ田を買わず²¹

I have lived for fifty years, loneliness has occupied my life.

I have grown old sadly following worldly affairs.

Now I simply admire the sound of bamboo in the middle of the night,

I plant a pine tree with my fellow friends and enjoy the flavour of Zen.

Hazy moon, faint clouds, fish enjoying the freedom of swimming.

Falling petals, sweet-smelling grass and birds flying towards the heavens.

²¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 352.

The pleasant spring wind blowing through the city,

Composing a poem about returning home, but I haven't managed to buy a home yet.

Shichigon Risshi

A day after Sōseki wrote this poem, he replied again to a letter from his followers, Kume and Akutagawa. Sōseki wrote that no one had come to the last Thursday meeting, so he had spent his time in reading articles written by others, on which he had been asked to give commentaries. Sōseki observed that as he wrote his letters he listened to the sound of cicadas. He said he was re-touching *kanshi* he had composed in the past.

Sōseki also told his students, Kume and Akutagawa that it was necessary to become an ox rather than a horse. Sōseki advised them not to get frustrated nor to be stupid, but to be patient. Sōseki said that people show respect for the act of patience, whereas they easily forget a momentary sparkle. Sōseki concludes the letter by stressing the importance of being like an ox and encouraging not other writers but people, supporting them with patience and a detached mind.²²

寂寞 in the first line means 'Profound loneliness', or 'Silence' in Zhuangzi's case. As we discussed before 'Loneliness' had been a main theme in Sōseki's life since he was a young child. Sōseki uses these words in three other poems in his final period including his final one (poems 146, 172 and 208). At the final stage of his life, Sōseki's notion of 'Loneliness' had shifted to 'Profound loneliness'. It is a loneliness removed from human sorrow. The characters 寂寞 'Profound loneliness' have a Zen influence. These characters are often used in Ryōkan's poems. Let us refer to three rhyme-matching poems as examples.

相忘寂寞浜 相忘る 寂寞の浜。²³ (Example 1)

²² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 558-562. (letter addressed to Kume & Akutagawa dated 24/08/1916).

²³ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 39.

Forgetting everything on a quiet beach

何意凄風暮 何ぞ意わん 凄風の暮

寂寞涙沾裳 寂寞 涙 裳を沾す。²⁴ (Example 2)

When I thought about a friend who was not there, a strong wind blew and night fell.

I felt a profound loneliness and my clothes were soaked with tears.

寂寞秋風裡 寂寞たり 秋風の裡

独立緇衣人 独立す 緇衣の人²⁵ (Example 3)

In the midst of a lonely Autumn wind,

A monk who has renounced the world stands alone.

We have examined the nuance of the words 寂寞 ‘Profound loneliness’ used by the Zen monk, Ryōkan. They also rhyme-match with the words which appear in Zhuangzi Chapter Thirteen and Fifteen. In this translation of the text, it is translated as ‘Silence’. Let’s refer to Zhuangzi.

Zhuangzi Chapter 13.

Emptiness, stillness, limpidity, silence, inaction- these are the level of Heaven and earth, the substance of the Way and its Virtue. Therefore, the emperor, the king, the sage rest in them. Resting, they may be empty; empty, they may be full; and fullness is completion. Empty, they may be still; still, they may move; moving, they may acquire. Still, they may rest in inaction; resting in inaction, they may demand success from those who are charged with activities. Resting in inaction, they may be merry; being merry, they may shun the place of care and

²⁴ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 113.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

anxiety, and the years of their life will be long. Emptiness, stillness, limpidity, silence, inaction are the root of the ten thousand things.²⁶

夫虛靜恬淡寂漠無爲者。天地之平。而道德之至。故帝王聖人休焉。休則虛。虛則實。實者倫矣。虛則靜。靜則動。動則得矣。靜則無爲。無爲也則任事者責矣。無爲則兪兪。兪兪者。憂患不能處。年壽長矣。夫虛靜恬淡寂漠無爲者。萬物之本也。²⁷

According to Zhuangzi, 'Silence' is one of the important elements of the Way and its virtue, which makes people happy and removes anxiety, and as a result people live longer lives. 'Silence' keeps all the movement within, in order to be pure and simple so that nothing can be disturbed. 'Silence' can be translated as 'Meditative state' as it is quiet contemplation. Zhuangzi explains further that 'Silence' is a part of the root from which everything originates.

In Chapter 15, Zhuangzi explains 寂寞 'Profound loneliness'/'silence'/'meditative state of mind' further.

But to attain loftiness without constraining the will; to achieve moral training without benevolence and righteousness, good order without accomplishments and fame, leisure without rivers and seas, long life without induction; to lose everything and yet possess everything, at ease in the illimitable where all good things come to attend- this is the Way of Heaven and earth, the virtue of the sage. So, it is said, limpidity, silence, emptiness, inaction- these are the level of heaven and earth, the substance of The Way and its virtue. So, it is said, the sage rests; with rest comes peaceful ease, with peaceful ease comes limpidity, and where there is ease and limpidity, care and worry cannot get at him, noxious airs cannot assault him. Therefore, his virtue is complete and his spirit unimpaired.²⁸

²⁶ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 142-143.

²⁷ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 221-225.

²⁸ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p.168.

若夫不刻意而高。無仁義而脩。無功名而治。無江海而間。不道引而壽。無不忘也。

無不有也。澹然無極而衆美從之。此天地之道。聖人之德也。故曰。夫恬惔寂漠。虛

無虛爲。此天地之平。而道德之質也。故曰。聖人休。休焉則平易矣。平易則恬惔矣。

平易恬惔。則憂患不能入。邪氣不能襲。故其德全而神不虧。²⁹

Zhuangzi says that being peaceful and maintaining a meditative state of mind, then emptying your mind and being non-action are the manifestation of nature itself, therefore they are the true substance of the Way and Virtue. 寂漠 'Silence' is the meditative state of mind achieved by the lonely process of looking inside oneself which is 'Profound loneliness'.

Fukunaga explains that 寂漠 can have the same meaning as 寂寥 which is used in Laozi's Dao De Jing Chapter Twenty-five. Now, we refer to Laozi's text for further explanation on the words 寂漠 used as 寂寥.

Chapter 25

There was something formed out of chaos,

That was born before Heaven and Earth.

Quiet and still! Pure and deep!

It stands on its own and doesn't change.

It can be regarded as the mother of Heaven and Earth.

I do not yet know its name:

I "style" it "The Way."

²⁹ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p.337-338.

Were I forced to give it a name, I would call it “The Great.”

“Great” means “to depart”;

“To depart” means “to be far away”;

And “to be far away” means “to return.”

The Way is great;

Heaven is great;

Earth is great;

And the king is also great.

In the country there are four greats, and the king occupies one place among them.

Man models himself on the Earth;

The Earth models itself on Heaven;

Heaven models itself on The Way;

And The Way models itself on that which is so on its own.³⁰

有物混成。先天地生。寂兮寥兮。獨立而不改。周行而不殆。可以爲天下母。吾不知

其名。字之曰道。強爲之名曰大。大曰逝。逝曰遠。遠曰反。故道大。天大。地大。

王亦大。域中有四大。而王居其一焉。人法地。地法天。天法道。道法自然。³¹

³⁰ Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 77.

³¹ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Rōshi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 2013, p. 94-95.

In Dao De Jing, 寂寥 is translated as 'Quiet and still'. It is one of the characteristics of 'The Way' or 'The Great' which is moving all the time, spreading far away, then returning to the root. Henricks noted, "The Way is that reality that truly exists out of its own power, the one and only thing that does not depend for its existence on other things."³² This is a description of nature and Sōseki practiced being one with nature through having a quiet mind, which can lead to the explanation of *sokuten kyoshi*, Sōseki's thought at the final stage of his life.

光陰 in the same line, means 'Time' and is followed by 'Fifty years' which is Sōseki's age. Sōseki is explaining in the first line that he had meditated and thought about the fifty years of his life.

蕭条老去 in the second line means 'Growing old in profound sadness'. Sōseki finally settled for this expression after further developing his original words 'Growing old with many illnesses'. 逐塵縁 in the same line means following worldly affairs which describes him writing the novel in the newspaper.

Sōseki used 蕭条 'Profound sadness' paired with 寂漠 'Profound loneliness' in this poem and poem 146. Both words express very similar meanings. Let us see how Sōseki used these two words in line seven and eight of poem 146.

蕭条古仏風流寺 蕭条たり 古仏 風流の寺

寂漠先生日涉園 寂漠たり 先生 日涉の園

The old Buddha is in a profound state of mind in the temple inside a poetic world.

I am in a profound state of mind whilst walking in my garden.

蕭条 'Profound state of mind' sets the atmosphere for the following words, 'The old Buddha'.

Yoshikawa in his analysis says that it is possible to interpret in Japanese 風流の寺 'Temple inside

³² Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 237.

a poetic world' as 風の流がるる寺 'The wind is blowing through the temple' if we consider lines six and seven as a couplet.³³ Sōseki was in his spiritual world, so this study has chosen Ikka's reading, 風流の寺 'Temple inside poetic inspiration' as it describes Sōseki's poetic state of mind.

寂漠 'Profound state of mind' in the second line describes Sōseki's own feeling and the following words 先生 'Mr.' which reminds us of Tao Yuanming's writing of Chinese prose, 五柳先生傳 *Biography of the Gentleman of the Five Willows*, which is about Tao himself depicted as living in poverty but having no concern about it and enjoying the composition of poetry.³⁴

Yoshikawa mentions that 日涉園 'Walk in the garden' rhyme-matches with Tao Yuanming's poem, *Return Home!* (*Gui qu lai ci*: 歸去來辭).³⁵ Let's refer to Tao's composition.

園日涉以成趣 園は日々に涉いて趣を成し

門雖設而常閑 門は設けたりと雖も常に閑せり³⁶

I wander in the garden every day. Walking there is poetically inspirational.

I have a gate, but it is not in use as no one visits me from the outside world.

When Sōseki uses the words 寂漠 'Profound state of mind', it helps us to understand the nuance of the words by recalling the lines from Tao Yuanming's writing explained above.

After examining lines six and seven of his poem in 146, we return to lines one and two of poem 144. We can see Sōseki's intention in using 蕭条 and 寂漠, both meaning 'Profound state of

³³ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 205.

³⁴ Matsushige, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013, p. 181-185.

³⁵ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 201.

³⁶ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Tō Enmei den*. Shinchosha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 131-132.

mind'; 'Profound silence'; 'Meditative state of mind' to lead to Sōseki's poetic world, which is his spiritual land. Sōseki revealed his state of mind in lines one and two.

In lines three and four, Sōseki explains his tastes in nature. Sōseki shows his love of the rattling sound of bamboos at night. Sōseki is referring to "The piping of Heaven" from Zhuangzi which we have already discussed in the first chapter when he mentions the rattling sound of bamboos. In line four, Sōseki explains that he planted a pine tree, 栽松. Ikkai, Yoshikawa and Nakamura all mentioned that the characters 栽松 rhyme-match with the story 臨濟栽松 taken from the *The Record of Linji* (臨濟錄) which is a record of commentaries made by the Zen monk, Linji (Jp. Rin'zai 臨濟, ?-886), the founder of the Rin'zai sect of Zen Buddhism in Japan.³⁷

The story is taken from *The Record of Linji*, Part IV: "Record of the Karman [of the Master's Career]", 39.1

When the master was planting pine trees, Huangbo asked him, "What's [the point of] planting so many [pine trees] deep in the mountains?" The master said, "First, to create an ornament for the main gate. Second, to make known a standard for future generations." Having finished speaking, he hit the ground [i.e., here] with the hoe three times. Huangbo said, "All the same, you have already eaten thirty blows of the stick by me." The master again hit the ground with the hoe three times, and [feigned indifference by] emitting a sharp sound as he slowly exhaled. Huangbao said, "My personal-realization-of-the-meaning-beyond-words [i.e., my Chan] has reached you- it will flourish greatly in the world."³⁸

³⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 353.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 232.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 200-201.

³⁸ Broughton, Jeffrey. L. with Watanabe, Yoko. Trans. *The Record of Linji. A New Translation of the Linjilu in the Light of Ten Japanese Zen Commentaries*. Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 90.

師栽松次、黃檗問、深山裏栽許多作什麼。師云、一與山門作境致、二與後人作標榜。道了、將鑿頭打地三下。黃檗云、雖然如是、子已喫吾三十棒了也。師又以鑿頭打地三下、作噓噓聲。黃檗云、吾宗到汝、大與於世。³⁹

Linji planted pine trees as an act of religious compassion manifested in daily life, and there is no cause to be concerned about the function or end result of his action. However, here, Linji explains the reasons for him planting trees when he was asked by master Huangbao: first for making the scenery beautiful, second for guiding the junior, both of which are practical answers which go against purity of action. Linji answered in a practical manner in order to surprise his master. Linji challenged his master to be alert by giving a contradictory statement on Zen teaching.

In modern society, it has become important to be practical and efficient and the simple daily activities such as collecting wood for fire by ourselves and bearing the water by bucket so as to be self-sufficient have been neglected. The practical life has been considered as more important and better than us being directly involved in doing those activities. Thus, we need to produce a lot of energy to support our modern lives, the result of which is pollution and the destruction of nature.

Sōseki who was well aware of the evils of modernisation used the words 栽松 planting pine trees taken from the Record of Linji to warn us to be aware of the outcome of modernisation. Hence, the fourth line describes how Sōseki, bearing Linji's actions in mind, planted pine tree with his friends in his garden.

The fifth line takes an image from a Daoist text. 魚樂道 in the fifth line is a reference to 'Fish swimming spontaneously', an expression which relates to Zhuangzi Chapter Six "The Great and Venerable Teacher" (太宗師篇). It is the image of fish swimming spontaneously in nature. Sōseki changed this image three times from 'A person thinks of the way' to 'A person seeks the way', then

³⁹ Iriya, Yoshitaka. An. *Rinzai Roku*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 185-186.

to 'The spring enjoys the way' before settling on the image of a fish.⁴⁰ The transition of this idea in four stages shows how Sōseki tried to express the spiritual development from the self into nature and is an example of how he attempted to describe *sokuten kyoshi* in his poems.

We refer to Zhuangzi Chapter six where a disciple of Confucius asked his teacher how to attain the Way. Confucius when responding wanted to take the opportunity to learn a lesson in unattachment.

Tzu-kung said, "Well then, Master, what is this 'realm' that you stick to?"

Confucius said, "I am one of those men punished by Heaven. Nevertheless, I will share with you what I have."

"Then may I ask about the realm?"⁴¹ said Tzu-kung.

Confucius said "Fish thrive in water, man thrives in The Way. For those that thrive in water, dig a pond and they will find nourishment enough. For those that thrive in the Way, don't bother about them and their lives will be secure. So, it is said, the fish forget each other in the rivers and lakes, and men forget each other in the arts of The Way."⁴²

子貢曰。然則夫子何方之依。曰。丘。天之戮民也。雖然。吾與汝共之。子貢曰。敢問其方。孔子曰。魚相造乎水。人相造乎道。相造乎水者。穿池而養給。相造乎道者。

無事而生定。故曰。魚相忘乎江湖。人相忘乎道術。⁴³

Zhuangzi explains here that fish enjoy real freedom in lakes and rivers, and people can enjoy the freedom of life by forgetting themselves. In Sōseki's spiritual land, this is *sokuten kyoshi*.

⁴⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 353.

⁴¹ Watson noted that he translated as 'realm' and it can be translated as 'process'. Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 87

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.87.

⁴³ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 273-274.

When Sōseki uses 魚樂道 ‘Fish enjoying the Way’ together with the characters 月 ‘Moon’ and 雲 ‘Cloud’, in this line, he is telling us he is at one with nature; moon and cloud. This is again an expression of *sokuten* from *sokuten kyoshi*.

芳草 in the sixth line means ‘Sweet smelling grass’. It is cited in The Blue Cliff Record 36 case

始随芳艸去 始めは芳草に随って去き、

又逐落花回 又落花をおって回る ⁴⁴

The Blue Cliff Record 36 case is the story of Ch’ang Sha [Chang Sha] wandering in the Mountain. The underlined sentence below corresponds to the line mentioned above.

One day Ch’ang Sha [Chang Sa] went wandering in the mountains. Upon returning, when he got to the gate, the head monk asked,

“Where are you coming from, Master?”

Sha said, “From wandering in the mountains.”

The head monk asked, “Where did you go?”

Sha said, “First I went pursuing the fragrant grasses; then I returned following the falling flowers.”

The head monk said, “How very much like the sense of springtime.”

Sha said, “It even surpasses the autumn dew dripping on the lotuses.” Hsueh

Tou [Xue Dou] added the remark, “Thanks for your reply.” ⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzo., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. An. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2005, p. 57.

⁴⁵ Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 221.

Fragrant grasses represent the pleasant and peaceful feeling of a spring day. Tanaka noted that the lines from the Blue Cliff Record show the image of awareness being lost in the sensuousness of the real world.⁴⁶ However, it is important to stress the point that it is nature that makes you forget yourself. It is a simple but direct expression of praising nature and Sōseki was fond of this image. The underlined part is a line in the poem mentioned in the translation. Sōseki's wife, Mrs. Kyōko Natsume noted in her writing that Sōseki was fond of writing this line taken from The Blue Cliff Record in calligraphy.⁴⁷

鳥思天 in the same line is literally 'The bird longs for the heavens'. The fifth and six lines show the image of the carefree and spontaneous life of fish and birds, expressing Sōseki's desire to liberate himself from human attachment. We see here the fluidity and creativity of Sōseki's thought in composing poetry.

After admiring nature in his spiritual lands for four lines, Sōseki in line seven brings the reader back to the everyday world. 春城 in the seventh line is 'The city in the spring'. 東風 in the same line refers to 'The spring wind'. 日日 and 好 put together in the same line (日日好) create the expression 'Every day is a good day'. These words are cited in The Blue Cliff Record 6 case.

Yen Men said, "I'm not asking you about before the fifteenth day in order to say something about after the fifteenth day."

Yun Men himself answered for everyone, "Every day is a good day."

雲門垂語云、十五日已前、不問汝。十五日後、道將一句來。

自伝云、日日是好日。

This concept is explained further in the notes.

⁴⁶ Tanaka, Kunio. *Sōseki "Mei-An" no Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2010, P. 167.

⁴⁷ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 366.

He's gathered it up. Though the frog jumps, he can't get out of the basket. Whose house doesn't have a bright moon and pure wind? But are you aware of it? The sea god knows its value, he doesn't know its price.⁴⁸

Sōseki describes how nature brings a nice breeze to his house in the city by itself. This brings back to the mind 'Who is their creator?' which we discussed in Chapter Four in this study and the explanation of "The piping of Heaven" from Zhuangzi in various chapters in this study.

欲賦 in the final line means 'Wanting to compose a poem' followed by 歸來 referring to Tao Yuanming's prose, *Return home!* (*Gui qu lai ci* 歸去來辭). Sōseki shows his admiration for the action of Tao Yuanming who retired early from his position as a government official and returned to his hometown in order to keep his pride and dignity and not to be a cog in the wheel of the government.⁴⁹

未買田, the last words in the final line, mean 'Have not bought home'. Sōseki explains the reality at the end of a poem that he is not ready to buy a home and retire from work.

In this poem, Sōseki describes his meditative state of mind in two lines and takes us inside his spiritual land by describing nature until line six. Sōseki comes back to the real world in lines seven and eight, showing his admiration for Tao Yuanming who chose to live in dignity and be himself by living within nature and composing poems about it.

30 August 1916

Poem 148

"No Title" 無題

⁴⁸ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003, p. 37.

⁴⁹ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, p.218-219.

経来世故漫為憂 世故を経来たりて 漫りに憂いを為し

胸次欲攄不自由 胸次 攄べんと欲して 自由ならず

誰道文章千古事 誰か道う 文章は千古の事と

曾思質素百年謀 曾て思う 質素は百年の謀と

小才幾度行新境 小才 幾度か 新境を行きしも

大悟何時臥故丘 大悟 何れの時か 故丘に臥せん

昨日閑庭風雨悪 昨日 閑庭 風雨悪しく

芭蕉葉上復知秋 芭蕉葉上 復た秋を知る⁵⁰

I have many worries caused by worldly affairs.

I try to express my feelings, but it is difficult to open my heart.

It is said that literature is an immortal work.

I am interested in the simplicity of Zen, it is a lifelong commitment.

I tried a few times with my meagre talent to charter new territories.

I long to reach the absolute truth and get enlightened and I wonder when the time will come.

There was a strong wind and rain last night in the quiet garden.

Beaten by the strong rain and wind, plantain leaves show the arrival of autumn.

Shichigon Risshi

⁵⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 362-363.

Sōseki noted after composing this poem that Huang Xing (黃興: jp. Kōkō, 1873-1916) had written a piece of calligraphy for him which said “Literature is immortal” and this is how the origin of the third and fourth line came about.⁵¹ Huang Xing was a revolutionary who participated in the Xinhai uprising (辛亥革命 1911-1912). He came to Japan in May from the USA where he took refuge as an exile, and returned to Shanghai in July 1916. There is no information on how they got to know each other, but in chapter two of this study we discussed there is a possibility that they met at the Maeda Inn in Kumamoto, where the owner, Mr. Maeda Kagashi (前田案山子, 1828-1904) who was a politician, supported the Human Rights Movement and used his hot spring inn as a salon where intellectuals could meet.

Maeda’s daughter, Tsunako (卓子 1868-1938), who became a model for the character, Nami (那美) in Sōseki’s novel, *Kusamakura*, was known to be a supporter of the Association for the Chinese Revolution founded in Japan by revolutionaries such as Sun Yatsen (孫文 1866-1925) and Huang Xing. Tsunako’s sister married Miyazaki Tōten (宮崎滔天 1871-1922), who was a Japanese revolutionary and supported the Xinhai uprising from Japan. He was a wandering Samurai warrior and a *naniwabushi* reciter.⁵²

Maeda’s sixth son, Togama (利鎌 1888- 1931), who was introduced to Sōseki by Togama’s sister Tsunako who adopted Togama as her son, became Sōseki’s disciple during the final period.⁵³ Fujita says that Togama was loved by Huang Xing when Togama was a child. They probably met each other

⁵¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 363.

⁵² Fujita, Yoshimi. “Bungaku to Kakumei to Renai to Tetsugaku to – Issatsu no Hon no Genryū wo Tazunete”. *Risshō Daigaku Bungakubu Ronsō* 80, Tokyo, 1984, p. 16-22.

⁵³ Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2003, p. 62-63.

at Togama's father's residence in Kumamoto.⁵⁴ Influenced by Sōseki, Togama wrote a book titled *Rinzai, Zhuangzi*,⁵⁵ which helped to continue interest in Sōseki's thought.⁵⁶

Now we move on to examine the poem.

世故 in the first line refers to 'Worldly affairs'. It is cited in a poem by Su Shi (蘇軾, 1037-1101) in one of his *koshi*, the long poem style.

天才既超詣 天才 既に超詣

世古亦屢更 世古も亦屢しば更たり⁵⁷

Your natural talent has already mastered the heart of study

You had many experiences in the world of men.

Sōseki writes in the first line that he was worried. The subject of Sōseki's worry here is not a personal one. Sōseki wrote in his final commentaries, *Tentōroku* (点頭録) which we discussed at the beginning of this chapter of his concern about The First World War commenting that it was superficial. Sōseki began to show his concern for the situation of the world and where it was heading to in this poem.

胸次 in the second line refers to inner feeling. But Sōseki tells us he found it difficult to explain his inner feeling about current world affairs.

⁵⁴ Fujita, Yoshimi. "Bungaku to Kakumei to Renai to Tetsugaku to – Issatsu no Hon no Genryū wo Tazunete". *Risshō Daigaku Bungakubu Ronsō* 80, Tokyo, 1984, p. 30.

⁵⁵ Maeda, Togama. *Rinzai • Sōshi*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1990.

⁵⁶ Katō, Jirō. "Sōseki no Suimyaku- Maeda Togama Ron." *Sōseki to Zen*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 1999, p. 246-267.

⁵⁷ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed. & Trans. *So Tōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011 (27th edition), p. 240-242.

文章千古事 in the third line means ‘Literature is an immortal work’. Nakamura says that 文章, ‘Literature’ used here has a broader sense, as this line corresponds with 質素 in the following line, ‘Simplicity of Zen’.⁵⁸ These words are cited in a poem by Du Fu (杜甫, 712-770).

文章千古事 文章は千古のこと

得失寸心知 得失寸心 知る

Writing has eternal life.

Only the heart of the writer knows whether it is good or bad.

Du Fu’s first line expresses the immortality of writing. He is correct as we are still sharing the ideas offered by artists from thousands of years ago. Bearing in mind the nature of his life and work, novels, commentaries, newspaper articles, Sōseki felt the same way and wanted his writing to last for a long time after his death so his ideas could be shared with later generations. The dangers of modernisation which Sōseki warned us about one hundred years ago in his writings are still relevant today as we witness the consequences of modernisation, in the form of for example psychological problems caused by loneliness, and physical dangers like pollution, global warming and famine.

會思質素百年謀 in the fourth line expresses Sōseki’s opinion that to become a simple monk was a lifelong commitment. Yoshikawa and Iida say that Sōseki is referring to his speech *The Civilisation of Modern Japan* (『現代日本の開花』).⁵⁹ In *The Civilisation of Modern Japan*, Sōseki explains that it took Western Civilisation one hundred years to come to modernisation. Sōseki is saying that to develop a simple way of life will similarly take one hundred years.

⁵⁸ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983. P. 238.

⁵⁹ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p.356.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p.207.

行新境 in the fifth line means ‘Opening up new territory’. Sōseki is describing the challenge involved in writing his poetic novel, 草枕 *Kusamakura*. He also made this observation about “Opening up new territory” in a commentary noted in *Yo ga “Kusamakura”*, (余が『草枕』).⁶⁰ Ikka and Iida both comment on it and Iida states that there is no firm evidence to regard Sōseki’s ‘*Kusamakura*’ as a subject of ‘Opening up new territory’.⁶¹ When we take into consideration the nature of *Kusamakura* which was a poetical novel including two philosophical *kanshi* in it, this study is of the opinion that in many ways it can be regarded as new territory in the development of popular novels.

大悟 in the sixth line mean ‘Being enlightened’. 臥故丘 is ‘To lie back in my old home’ but not the geographical home. It is the Daoist idea of returning to the roots which was mentioned in chapter three of this study where we quoted the first half of chapter sixteen from Laozi’s text. Here, we will examine the whole chapter.

Take emptiness to the limit;

Maintain tranquillity in the centre.

The ten thousand things-side by side they arise;

And by this I see their return.

Things come forth in great numbers;

Each one returns to its root.

This is called tranquillity.

“Tranquillity”- This means to return to your fate.

⁶⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 25. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 209-212, “*Yo ga ‘Kusamakura’*”.

⁶¹ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p.357.
Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 364.

To return to your fate is to be constant;

To know the constant is to be wise.

Not to know the constant is to be reckless and wild;

If you're reckless and wild, your actions will lead to misfortune.

To know the constant is to be all-embracing;

To be all-embracing is to be impartial;

To be impartial is to be kingly;

To be kingly is to be like Heaven;

To be like Heaven is to be one with Tao;

If you're one with the Tao, to the end of your days you'll suffer no harm.⁶²

The last two lines of this chapter have a strong resemblance to *sokuten kyoshi*. 'Merging with heaven, abandoning self' is "*To be like Heaven is to be one with Tao*". The final line "If you're one with the Tao, to the end of your days you'll suffer no harm", describes clearly the longing for a peaceful home in the heart which Sōseki sought for all his life. He finally came to express the nature of The Way through the idea of *sokuten kyoshi*.

Lines seven and eight, using the image of plantains in autumn beaten by the strong rain and wind, describe how Sōseki survived through serious health conditions and was grateful to be alive. Nakamura noted that Sōseki expressed his feeling about his life using plantain leaves in the Autumn as a metaphor.⁶³

⁶² Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991, p. 68.

⁶³ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 239.

Later, at the Thursday meetings at the beginning of November, Sōseki began to explain to his students the meaning of *sokuten kyoshi*.⁶⁴ Sōseki went on to explain that he would like to teach a new and true theory of literature at the university with the view point of equality of things. Sōseki also said that it was not because he wanted to amend his old theory of literature which he wrote in the past. But because he felt an inner urge to pass on to people his newly acquired philosophy and theory of literature which came from an absolute state of mind where everything is equal. Sōseki said that he felt as though Heaven was giving him an order to do this.⁶⁵

13 September 1916

Poem 163

“No Title” 無題

挂劍微思不自知 劍を挂くる微思 自ら知らず

誤為季子愧無期 誤って季子と為り 期無きを愧ず

秋風破尽芭蕉夢 秋風 破り尽す 芭蕉の夢

寒雨打成流落詩 寒雨 打ちて成す 流落の詩

天下何狂投筆起 天下 何ぞ狂える 筆を投じて起ち

人間有道挺身之 人間 道有り 身を挺して之かん

吾当死処吾当死 吾当に死すべき処 吾当に死すべし

⁶⁴ Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974, p. 320.

⁶⁵ Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki Sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1934, p. 214-215.

一日元来十二時 一日 元来 十二時 ⁶⁶

I have a desire in my heart to offer thanks to the departed and I don't know why.

It may be a mistake to think I play the role of Jizi from the ancient story, as I still haven't done my duty yet.

The autumn wind tears apart the dream of the plantain leaves,

The sound of cold rain inspires me to compose a roaming poem.

I am going to abandon my writing and stand up and fight against this insane world.

There must be a path for humanity and I am devoting my life to following it.

I will die when I am destined to.

No matter what happens, there are only twenty-four hours in a day.

Shichigon Risshi

Sōseki often expresses his love of quiet and calm, peaceful moments and staying away from noisy worldly affairs. This poem, however, shows another side of Sōseki. He wrote a letter to his friend, Suzuki Miekichi on 26 October 1906 explaining his feeling towards literature and criticising the protagonist of *Kusamakura* (草枕).

“To live life beautifully, in other words living like a poet occupies a very small part of any meaningful life. So, it is not good to follow the example of the protagonist in *Kusamakura*. We can accept that way of life. But in my opinion, we have to follow Ibsen's character if you want to create a modern society of meaningful values”. He goes on to say “I am promoting the world of poetic literature on one hand. But on the other, I want to study passionately to realise the ideal world just like the men of noble outlook in the restoration period who were in a life-and-death situation.”⁶⁷

⁶⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 393-394.

⁶⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.22. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 605-606. (letter addressed to Suzuki on 26/10/1906).

This poem shows clearly that Sōseki is living in the current world and reacting to the present situation, as we discussed at the beginning of this chapter when we looked at Sōseki's final commentaries, *Tentōroku* (点頭録).

挂劍 in the first line gives us the image of a sword hanging on a tree in a graveyard, placed there in order to repay the wish held by the departed when the person was alive. The tale was taken from an old story about a man called Jizi (季子, BC. 576-484) who worked as an official in China. When Jizi visited the country of Xu on the way to a mission in the north region, the king of Xu took a fancy to Jizi's sword. Jizi, however, needed his sword at the time, so he could not give it to the king of Xu. On his way back home, Jizi visited Xu to give the sword to the king but discovered that the king had passed away. So, Jizi hung the sword on a tree in front of the king's grave. (the story was taken from *Shi-ji* 史記).

Sōseki mentioned this story in his novel, *I am a cat*. It is believed that *I am a cat* was indeed for Sōseki a 'Sword' in the sense of a dedication to his dear friend Shiki.⁶⁸ Yoshikawa says that the novel *Mei-An* might well be another 'Sword' Sōseki dedicated to another great friend, Ikebe.⁶⁹ An annotation for Sōseki's writing about Ikebe Sanzan in "*Sanzankoji*" in *Sōseki Zenshū* volume 12 notes that Sōseki was remembering Ikebe when he was composing this line.⁷⁰

微思 in the same line, literally means 'My thought' and 不自知 in the same line 'To not know the reason'. Sōseki tells us that he was unable to have the opportunity to show his gratitude to Ikebe for their friendship when he was alive. Ikebe negotiated with Sōseki for his position in *Asahi* and looked after Sōseki at the newspaper when he was working there as chief editor, especially when Sōseki was in a critically ill condition.⁷¹ Sōseki also wrote that their friendship became even closer after Ikebe

⁶⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, "Jyo 'Wagahai wa Neko dearu' Chūhen jijyo", p. 32-35.

⁶⁹ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 231-232.

⁷⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994, "Sanzankoji", p. 497-500.

⁷¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 249 & 251.

left the *Asahi*, and how he was looking forward to deepening their relationship, sadly this was not possible as Ikebe died suddenly on 28 February 1912.⁷²

誤為季子 in the second line literally means ‘I am mistakenly playing the role of Jizi driven by my ‘Emotion’ and 愧無期 ‘I am ashamed that I still haven’t fulfilled my intention’. Sōseki shows his despair of not yet being able to return his gratitude to Ikebe.

In the third line, Sōseki uses a plantain tree 芭蕉 as metaphor for himself and writes that his calm state of mind was disturbed by the autumn wind 秋風, which is a metaphor for sad feelings. Sōseki clearly shows he was emotionally distressed.

In the fourth line, Sōseki writes about the action of composing a poem inspired by the sound of cold rain.

天下何狂 in the fifth line can be taken to mean ‘What madness is happening in Japan?’ 投筆起 in the same line ‘Standing up, quitting the occupation of a writer’ refers to the story of Ban Chao (班超, 32-102) who abandoned his career as a literatus and government official and joined the military as shown in *The History of the Later Han Dynasty* (後漢書) noted by Ikkai and Yoshikawa⁷³. In his poem, Sōseki is criticising an aggressive government determined to carry on with its militaristic programme.

人間有道 in the sixth line means ‘There is a way people should act in order to be human beings’ and 挺身之 in the same line ‘I devote myself to taking action’. In this line, Sōseki expresses his determination to react to events.

当死処 in the seventh line reads as ‘I will die when the time arrives’.

⁷² *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, “Ikebe kun no Shiron nit suite”, p. 498-503.

⁷³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 395.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2004, p. 232.

十二時 in the last line mean ‘twenty four hours’. Sōseki says that there are only twenty-four hours in a day. In this poem, Sōseki explains that he wants to take action and it is necessary to devote himself to following The Way in order to make the fullest use of the time he has left in his life.

Yoshikawa notes this poem is extremely intense.⁷⁴ Nakamura notes that many poems from Sōseki’s final period seek quietness and spirituality, but this poem has an exceptionally intense expression.⁷⁵

Sōseki was angry about the result of modernisation which had caused ugly and meaningless wars in the world, destroying nature and making people’s lives stressful and insane, all for pointless and senseless reasons. In this poem, Sōseki is attempting to revive the tradition of *kanshi* which played a major role in discussing political ideas. Tuck said poetry played an important political role in the media in the Meiji period and he wrote, “The growth of print media had further implications for poetic sociality. One of the most important was the exchange of verse on openly political topics, something that had a great deal to do with the increasing use of the newspaper as space for poetic exchange. For its part, *kanshi* already had a long tradition of political engagement, and it was usually featured in the more highbrow newspapers, which also devoted a great deal of coverage to political issues... *Nippon*’s editorial line was consistently antagonistic towards the Meiji government, and as a result we find poetry exchanges in *Nippon*’s pages between readers and the paper’s journalists that are openly satirical, covering political topics such as bureaucratic corruption, international treaties and environmental disasters... The result was the composition of large numbers of *kanshi*, *tanka* and *haiku* in which was expressed an ardent nationalism that painted the Meiji government as traitors, and the poets themselves as the true patriots.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 230.

⁷⁵ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 264.

⁷⁶ Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012, p. 16-17.

Nippon was a newspaper for which Shiki worked before he became seriously ill⁷⁷. Sōseki might well have been hoping to later present political poems in the *Asahi* to Ikebe as a ‘sword’, but Sōseki passed away before he could realise his objective.

16 September 1916

Poem 166

“No Title” 無題

思白雲時心始降 白雲を思うとき 心 始めて降り

顧虚影処意成双 虚影を顧みる処 意 双を成す

幽花獨發涓涓水 幽花 独り発く 涓涓の水

細雨閑來寂寂窓 細雨 閑に来る 寂寂の窓

欲倚孤筇看斷碣 孤筇に倚りて 斷碣を看んと欲し

還驚小鳥過苔缸 還た小鳥を驚かせて 苔缸を過ぐ

蕙蘭今尚在空谷 蕙蘭 今尚お空谷に在り

一脈風吹君子邦 一脈 風は吹く 君子の邦⁷⁸

When I concentrate on merging with the white clouds high above, my heart calms.

Myself and my shadow share the same feeling of loneliness.

⁷⁷ Mentioned in this study’s introduction, p. 17-18 & p. 30.

⁷⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 400.

The flowers opening quietly deep in the mountains along the smooth flowing stream.

A light drizzle moistens the still window.

Leaning on a stick looking at a broken monument.

Crossing the moss-covered bridge, surprising the birds.

The mystic fragrant noble flowers still exist in a deserted valley,

Sending serene earnest scents to calm my country.

Shichigon Risshi

Sōseki begins the poem with the image of home in mind, as expressed by 白雲 'The white clouds' in the first line, which so often appear in Sōseki's poems. When the white clouds appear, they bring a calm state of mind to Sōseki. They are a symbol for Sōseki's tranquillity and the peaceful home in his mind. Sōseki expresses clearly here how the white clouds bring him tranquillity.

虚 and 双 in the second line confirm Sōseki's meditative state of mind. 虚 'Emptiness' is explained through the words of Confucius to his pupil Yen Hui [Yan Hui] in Zhuangzi Chapter Four, 'In the World of Men'.

Confucius said, "Goodness, how could that do? You have too many policies and plans and you haven't seen what is needed. You will probably get off without incurring any blame, yes. But that will be as far as it goes. How do you think you can actually convert him? You are still making the mind your teacher!"

Yen Hui [Yan Hui] said, "I have nothing more to offer. May I ask the proper way?"

"You must fast!" said Confucius. "I will tell you what that means. Do you think it is easy to do anything while you have [a mind]? If you do, Bright Heaven will not sanction you."

Yen Hui [Yan Hui] said, “My family is poor. I haven’t drunk wine or eaten any strong foods for several months. So, can I be considered as having fasted?”

“That is the fasting one does before a sacrifice, not the fasting of the mind.”

“May I ask what the fasting of the mind is?”

“Confucius said, “Make your will one! Don’t listen with your ears, listen with your mind. No, don’t listen with your mind, but listen with your spirit. Listening stops with the ears, the mind stops with recognition, but spirit is empty and waits on all things. The Way gathers in emptiness alone. Emptiness is the fasting of the mind.”

Yen Hui [Yan Hui] said, “Before I heard this, I was certain that I was Hui. But now that I have heard it, there is no more Hui. Can this be called emptiness?”

“That’s all there is to it,” said Confucius.⁷⁹

Zhuangzi states that “Emptiness is the fasting of the mind.” We can consider that “Fasting of the mind” is “Forgetting oneself”. In Sōseki’s concept, it is *Kyoshi*, ‘Abandoning self’ which is the same as ‘Forgetting oneself’.

The third and fourth lines also express the images of a meditative state of mind.

幽花 in the third line refers to a mysterious flower, 涓涓 in the same line is the murmur of a brook.

涓涓 is cited in Tao Yuanming’s *Gui qu lai ci* (歸去來兮)

泉涓涓而始流 泉は涓涓として始めて流る。⁸⁰

A fountain begins to murmur

涓涓水 ‘Water flows smoothly’ also rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem.

⁷⁹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 57-58.

⁸⁰ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013, p. 147.

溪間水涓涓 溪間には 水 涓涓

山林鳥啾啾 山林には 鳥 啾啾⁸¹

Water flows smoothly in the valley.

The birds are singing in the forest.

With 幽花獨發 'Mysterious flower opening alone' together with 涓涓水 'Water flows smoothly' in the third line Sōseki creates a beautiful and serene visual image and atmosphere and tells us he is entering into the meditative state of mind.

細雨 in the fourth line depicts 'Fine rain'. 閑來 in the same line means 'Come quietly' and 寂寂 'Silently' with an emphasis on stillness. Sōseki tells us he is in a meditative state of mind by using 寂寂 'Silently' as we discussed before. 窓 'Window' is a metaphor for the entering point into the mind.

欲倚 in the fifth line means 'Lean against', 孤筇 'A stick' and 斷碣, the focal point of the line, a 'Broken monument'. The meaning of 'Stick' has already been examined, in poem 65, 'Spring Amusement' in Chapter Two. This line shows deliberate and unnatural action.

苔缸 in the sixth line means 'A bridge covered with moss'. The deliberate action of crossing the bridge surprises the birds and makes them fly away and is described at the beginning of the line, 還驚小鳥. Sōseki here shows the result of unnatural action which disturbs nature. In lines five and six Sōseki is expressing his opinion about the impact of modernisation in which men are destroying nature deliberately.

⁸¹ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Edit. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Jōkan. Tokyo Sōgensha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 158.

蕙蘭 in the seventh line means ‘Fragrant noble flowers’ noted by Yoshikawa. Nakamura explains that Sōseki is expressing his admiration of purity and integrity. 空谷 means ‘Deserted valley’. These fragrant noble flowers are known as the crown jewels of the quiet valley and Sōseki uses them as an expression of his meditative state of mind.

君子邦 in the final line means ‘Japan’. Sōseki commented in poem 163 composed on 13 September that 天下何狂, ‘The country is going through madness’. Sōseki’s intention is to show that ugly things were happening in Japan and the world but by the meditation expressed in the image of fragrant noble flowers this impurity can be blown away from the mind.

17 September 1916

Poem 167

“No title” 無題

好焚香炷護清宵 好し 香炷を焚いて 清宵を護らん

不是枯禪愛寂寥 是れ 故禪の寂寥を愛するならず

月暖三更隣雨静 月暖かにして 三更 雨の静かなるを憐れみ

水閑半夜聴魚跳 水閑かにして 半夜 魚の跳ぬるを聴く

思詩恰似前程遠 詩を思えば 恰も前程の遠きに似

記夢誰知去路遥 夢を記すれば 誰か知らん 去路の遥かなるを

独坐窈窕虚白裏 独り窈窕虚白の裏に坐すれば

欄紅照尽入明朝 蘭紅 照らし尽くして 明朝に入る⁸²

I am going to spend the night burning incense and sitting in silence.

It doesn't mean I am just indulging myself in Zen meditation abandoning everything to solitude.

There is a dark⁸³ moon, and I admire the sound of the rain falling quietly at midnight.

I listen to fish jumping, at midnight, in the calm stream.

Thinking of composing a poem is similar to the uncertainty and ambiguity of a journey.

When I look back on my life, it is very far away, like trying to recall a dream when waking up.

I sit in profound stillness alone in a white emptiness.

By the time the candle with orchid oil goes out, it is morning.

Shichigon Risshi

好 in the first line describes his intention, 'I am going to' noted by Yoshikawa, Ikkai and Nakamura.⁸⁴

香炷 means 'Burning incense' and 護清宵 'Staying up all night'. Sōseki is making the most of his time, as he had already explained there were only twenty-four hours in a day. He is expressing his determination to work hard burning incense and inspiring himself.

枯禪 in the second line mean 'Devoting oneself to Zen, sitting and abandoning everything else'. 愛

寂寥 in the same line is 'Indulging in solitude'. Ikkai note that the line says Sōseki was not sitting in

⁸² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 402.

⁸³ Here, the word is translated as 'dark' rather than 'warm' because 'warm' does not correspond with 'rain' as stated in Ikkai and Nakamura's annotation.

⁸⁴ *Sōseki Zenashū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 403.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p.270.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 238.

silence at night because he was devoting himself to Zen.⁸⁵ He is emphasising the fact that he is not a monk.

月暖 ‘The soft light of the moon’ in the third line doesn’t match with the following words in the same line 雨静 ‘The rain falling quietly’. Nakamura and Ikkai say that this is a mistake (maybe a printing error) and it should be 月暗 ‘The darkness of moon’, which fits better with the rain.⁸⁶ This study agrees with their interpretation.

三更 is ‘Midnight’, and 隣 ‘Take as a precious thing’. Sōseki is experiencing a pleasant feeling in the precious midnight moment, meditating as he listens to the sound of quiet rain. This is an image of purifying one’s mind.

水閑 in the fourth line means ‘Quiet stream’, followed by 半夜 ‘Midnight’, then 魚跳 ‘Fish jumping’.

半夜 ‘Midnight’ rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem.

寂寞過半夜 寂寞として 半夜を過ぎ

只聞遠溪声 只 聞く 遠溪の声⁸⁷

Midnight has passed in profound silence.

I hear only the sound of a stream in a far-away valley.

Ryōkan’s poem refers to meditation at midnight. We recall that the scene of ‘A fish swimming freely’ from Zhuangzi means ‘Forgetting oneself’, therefore Sōseki is in a meditative state of mind. This line tells us he is forgetting himself at midnight in a meditative state of mind which means that he is in his spiritual land.

⁸⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 403.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 403.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p.270.

⁸⁷ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 249.

In the fifth line, 思詩, means ‘Developing ideas for a poem’ and 前程, literally, ‘Uncertainty to the length of the journey ahead’. In this line, Sōseki is wondering how long this poem will take to finish, and at the same time, he is wondering how long he has got to live.

記夢 in the sixth line is ‘Trying to remember the dream’, and 誰知 in the same line means ‘Who knows’, followed by 去路遙, ‘My life recedes as it passes’. Sōseki says that looking back his life seems to be transitory as if he was trying to remember a dream. Line five and six make you aware of the impermanent nature of life.

In the seventh line, 独坐 depicts ‘Meditating alone’ and 窈窕 means profound and silent. 虚白 in the same line means ‘White emptiness’. This word is taken from Chapter Four of Zhuangzi’s text, “In the World of Men” and appears as 虚室生白, “The empty chamber where brightness is born”.

Here, Zhuangzi’s text depicts Confucius explaining to his student the point that “The Way gathers in emptiness alone. Emptiness is the fasting of the mind.” Confucius explains further,

“You have heard of flying with wings, but have never heard of flying without wings. You have heard of the knowledge that knows, but you have never heard of the knowledge that does not know. Look into that closed room, the empty chamber where brightness is born! Fortune and blessing gather where there is stillness. But if you do not keep still- this is what is called sitting but racing around.”⁸⁸

聞以有翼飛者矣。未聞以無翼飛者也。聞以有知知者矣。未聞以無知知者也。

瞻彼闕者。虚室生白。吉祥止止。夫且不止。是之謂坐馳。⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 58.

⁸⁹ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 148.

In this passage, Zhuangzi explains that people’s minds are often concerned with fame and profit without stopping although their body might be still. They are living their lives like racing horses which are eager to win and make a profit. This is because they have not emptied themselves of their thoughts.

Zhuangzi’s teaching of “The empty chamber where brightness is born” meaning one enters a selfless state of mind and becomes enlightened is the same as Sōseki’s idea of *sokuten kyoshi*.

The description ‘The empty chamber where brightness is born’ is the visual image of ‘Blessings gather where there is stillness’. Zhuangzi stresses the importance of serving heaven not people, in order not to injure one’s soul. Sōseki, who suffered a great deal in the world of human affairs and who as a result was seriously ill with stomach ulcers, could only agree with the idea of serving heaven not people. Serving heaven is to be one with nature, which is the *sokuten* from *sokuten kyoshi*. *Sokuten* means being one with nature, which is being one with The Way.

There is evidence that Sōseki was familiar with this chapter, as he mentioned it in a letter to Kaga Shōtaro (加賀正太郎) on 29 April 1915. Sōseki was asked to give some ideas for the naming of a mountain house. He suggested 虚白山荘, ‘The mountain house of white emptiness’ as one candidate and explains that he took the reference from Zhuangzi’s 虚室生白, “The empty chamber where brightness is born”.⁹⁰

Nakamura noted that Ryōkan, the poet-monk who Sōseki greatly admired was fond of citing Zhuangzi in his poems.⁹¹ 虚室生白 “The empty chamber where brightness is born” rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem.

虚室実生白 虚室 実に白きを生じ

⁹⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 416-417 (letter addressed to Kaga on the 29/04/1915).

⁹¹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 271.

寒炉長無烟 寒炉 長く烟なし⁹²

The empty room has a bright white light.

For a long time there has been no smoke on the cold stove.

Ryōkan is saying that his heart is empty and pure although he hasn't cooked a hot meal for a long time: describing a monk living in poverty but with an empty mind full of light.

裏, the final word in the seventh line means 'Inside'. Sōseki is inside himself meditating with an empty mind.

In the final line, 欄紅 means 'Orchid oil', 照尽 'Burn away' and 入明朝 'The morning has arrived'.

We know that Sōseki meditated until the dawn from this line and saw the bright white light emerging from inside his empty mind.

6 October 1916

Poem 184

"No title" 無題

非耶非仏又非儒 耶に非ず 仏に非ず 又儒に非ず

窮巷売文聊自娛 窮巷に文を売りて 聊か自ら娛しむ

採擷何香過芸苑 何の香を採擷して 芸苑を過ぎ

徘徊幾碧在詩蕪 幾碧に徘徊して 詩蕪に在り

⁹² Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 283.

焚書灰裏書知活 焚書灰裏 書は活くるを知り

無法界中法解蘇 無法界中 法は蘇るを解す

打殺神人亡影処 神人を打殺して 影亡き処

虚空歴歴現賢愚 虚空歴歴として 賢愚を現ず⁹³

I am not a Christian, nor a Buddhist, nor a Confucian.

I sell my literature in the backstreet and take pleasure in doing it.

I wonder how many fragrant flowers I have picked in the garden of literature.

Now, I have been wandering around in the green, and I am in the world of poetry and brush and ink painting.

Books come to life after being burnt to ashes.

In the lawless world real laws come into existence.

Abandoning attachments to the world of meaning, the concept of god, Buddha.

Good and bad manifest themselves in the pureness of the sky.

Sōseki, in the first line, denied belonging to any religion, 非耶非仏又非儒, ‘Not a Christian, not a Buddhist not a Confucian’. Ikkai says that similar words are cited by a Tang poet, Bai ju-I (白居易, 772-846) in his poem 池上閑吟 “Chishang Xianyin”, 非道非僧非俗吏 “Not a Daoist, not a Buddhist monk, not a Confucian official”. A poet monk from the Edo period who specialised in the Sencha tea ceremony, Baisaō (売茶翁, 1675-1763), also cited in his poem, 偶作 “Spontaneous

⁹³ Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 434-435.

composition”, 僧に非ず道に非ず又儒に非ず “Not a Buddhist monk, not a Daoist, not a Confucian”.⁹⁴ Ryōkan also cited a similar pattern in his poem but did not mention religion, 非広又非狭非布也非糸⁹⁵ “It looks wide but not wide, it looks narrow but not narrow, it looks like cloth but not cloth, it looks like thread but not thread”.

One interesting point is that Sōseki excluded Daoism in this line. Perhaps we need to bear in mind Laozi’s famous phrase ‘The Way has no name’. We have to remind ourselves that being an individual was a very important issue for Sōseki. Sōseki chose not to belong to any religion, which explains the first line.

窮巷 in the second line is a ‘Narrow backstreet’. These words rhyme-match with Tao Yuanming’s poem titled 讀山海經 *du shan’hai jing*, the first poem of the thirteen poems, noted by Iida and Ikkai,⁹⁶

窮巷隔深轍 窮巷は深轍を隔つるも⁹⁷

This narrow backstreet refuses to allow officials in carriages to enter and leave the deep marks of their wheels on it

聊自娛 in the same line mean ‘Take pleasure in’ and rhyme-matches again with Tao Yuanming’s poem, 飲酒序文 (In the introduction to the poem *Drinking wine*), as noted by Ikkai.⁹⁸

輒題數句自悞 輒ち数句を題して自ら娛しむ⁹⁹

⁹⁴ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 435.

⁹⁵ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 134-135.

⁹⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 435.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 492.

⁹⁷ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013, p. 71.

⁹⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 435.

⁹⁹ Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012, p. 202.

I compose a few poems and take pleasure in reading.

In the first and second line, Sōseki introduces himself and explains that he doesn't belong to any religion and he works at writing novels which he enjoys.

採擷, in the third line means 'Pick up' and 芸苑 'The literary garden'.

徘徊, in the fourth line means 'Wander' followed by 幾碧 'Many green mountains'. We already know that 碧山 'Green mountain' is the place where the hermit lives as discussed in poem 141 earlier in this Chapter. In this study's opinion 在詩蕪 in the same line means 'Being in the world of poetry and brush and ink painting'. Nakamura, Ikkai, and Yoshikawa suggest that 蕪 means 'A grass plain'.¹⁰⁰

The character 蕪 means the painter-poet Buson (蕪村), therefore it means brush and ink painting.

Evidence for this is that Sōseki twice in line two rhyme-matches with words from Tao Yuanming. This is a more likely interpretation taking into account the fact that Buson painted many scenes from Tao Yuanming's *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring* and especially as we should recall that Sōseki had been fond of *nanga* painting since he was a young boy.

焚書灰裏 in the fifth line literally 'Burning books and turning to ashes' is based on a historical incident 焚書坑儒 "Burning books and burying Confucian scholars" which took place in the Qin 秦 period conducted by the emperor Shi-huang-di (始皇帝 BC 259-BC 210). Here, however, Sōseki expresses the idea that truth cannot be found in a book, Ikkai, Nakamura and Iida confirm this interpretation.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 435.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 297.

Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 266.

¹⁰¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 435-436.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 493-494.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 297.

書知活 in the same line means ‘The book is revived’. Taken together with the previous words, the book revives after turning to ashes, and it means that the truth exists in nothingness. Sōseki’s hidden expression here is the Zen expression of 不立文字 “Spiritual enlightenment by communication through mind to mind”, which he had used in previous poems. In Zen teaching, it has to be the direct transmission of knowledge from teacher to pupil.

無法界中 in the sixth line means ‘In the world without religious code’ and 法解蘇 ‘Can revive the religious code without code’. This line corresponds to the previous line, and Sōseki confirms his desire to abandon attachments to the everyday world and embrace the enduring and eternal.

打殺神人 in the seventh line means literally ‘Beating to death the ultimate founder of religious law’.

A similar expression is cited in *The Record of Linji* (Ch. Linjilu, Jp. Rinzaïroku 臨濟録) “Sangha Instruction” noted by Iida, Nakamura and Ikkai.¹⁰²

道流、你欲得如法見解、但莫受人惑。向裏向外、逢著便殺。逢佛殺仏、逢租殺祖、逢羅漢殺羅漢、逢父母殺父母、逢親眷殺親眷、始得解脫、不與物拘、透脫自在。

道流、你如法に見解せんと欲得すれば、但だ人惑を受くること莫れ。裏に向かい外に向かつて、逢著すれば便ち殺せ。佛に逢うては仏を殺し、租に逢うては租を殺し、羅漢に逢うては羅漢を殺し、父母に逢うては父母を殺し、親眷に逢うては親眷を殺して、始めて解脫を得、物と拘ず、透脫自在なり。¹⁰³

¹⁰² Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 495.

Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 436.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 298.

¹⁰³ Iriya, Yoshitaka. An. *Rinzai Roku*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007 (25th edition), p. 96-97.

“Stream-enterers! If you’re thinking you want to attain a beholding [of reality] according to dharma [that is, a beholding of reality as it truly is], you must not get discombobulated by *persons* [i.e., by heterodox masters]/by [other] *persons*/by ‘the *person*’.] On the inside [within the mind] or on the outside [external *vishayas*], whatever you meet, instantly kill it [i.e., cut off the notion of something upon the moment of meeting it]. Meeting ‘a buddha,’ kill ‘a buddha’ [i.e., do not maintain the notion of ‘a view unique to a buddha’]. Meeting ‘a patriarch,’ kill ‘a patriarch’ [i.e., do not maintain the notion of ‘a Chan-patriarch level of understanding’]. Meeting ‘an arhat,’ kill ‘an arhat’ [i.e., do not maintain the notion of ‘an arhat level of understanding’]. Meeting ‘your mother and father,’ kill ‘your mother and father’ [i.e., do not maintain the notion of ‘ignorance’ and ‘passion’]. Meeting ‘your relatives,’ kill ‘your relatives’ [i.e., do not maintain the notion of ‘the *klesas*’]. [In this manner] for the first time you will attain liberation. ¹⁰⁴

A simple version of the translation would be:

Everyone, if you want to acquire real enlightenment, you should not be deluded by people. In both the inner world and outer world, kill anyone you come across. If you come across Buddha, kill Buddha. If you come across your old teacher, kill your old teacher. If you come across arhat, kill arhat. If you come across your parents, kill your parents. If you come across relations, kill relations. After doing so, then you will be released from your attachment to the world. You can live your life freely and have no boundaries.

Sōseki also mentioned the relevant part from *the Record of Linji* in his essay “*Bunten to Geijutsu*” (文展と芸術). Sōseki explains that artists when they are in the creative process can’t think of anything

¹⁰⁴ Broughton, Jefferey. L. with Watanabe, Yoko. Trans. *The Record of Linji. A New Translation of the Linjilu in the Light of Ten Japanese Zen Commentaries*. Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 59.

else but their creative activity and there is no room for rational meanings and worldly common sense.

Sōseki says that it is an absolute creative state of mind. ¹⁰⁵

亡影 in the same line means ‘No sign of anyone’ [as I killed them all]. In this line, Sōseki wanted to stress that one has to be free from all prejudice and attachment in order to enter into the absolute state of mind where everything is equal.

虚空 in the last line depicts ‘Empty sky’, and expresses both the Zen and Daoist concepts of the truth in an equal and indiscriminate world after abandoning all prejudices and attachments. 歴歴 in the same line means ‘Clearly’ and 現賢愚 ‘Reveal the enlightened one and unenlightened one’ as noted by Ikkai and Iida. ¹⁰⁶

Nakamura made a note on a recollection of one of Sōseki’s students, Matsuoka Yuzuru. According to Matsuoka, Sōseki in the latter days of his life said unlike religious specialists he couldn’t believe in an almighty god who could save humankind. He added that there is no need to look for god externally, if you are in touch with your inner world. ¹⁰⁷

Sōseki in this poem makes clear that reading books and following teachers doesn’t help people to reach the truth, one has to find an absolute truth inside oneself by removing all worldly attachments and prejudices.

8 October 1916

Poem 186

“No Title” 無題

¹⁰⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, “Bunten to Geijutsu”, p. 514.

¹⁰⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 436.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 495.

¹⁰⁷ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 298.

休向画龍漫点睛 画龍に向かつて 漫りに睛を点ずるのを休めよ

画龍躍処妖雲横 画龍 躍る処 妖雲 横たわる

真龍本来無面目 真龍 本来 面目無く

雨黒風白臥空谷 雨黒く 風白くして 空谷に臥す

通身遍覓失爪牙 通身 遍く覓むるも 爪牙を失い

忽然復活侶魚蝦 忽然と 復た生きて 魚蝦を侶とす ¹⁰⁸

Take due care when drawing the eyes on the dragon.

Once the eyes of the dragon are drawn ominous clouds appear.

There are no fixed features on a real dragon,

The real dragon resides in the boundless valley where black rains fall and autumn winds blow.

There are no teeth or tusks on any part of its body,

After losing its life, a dragon suddenly revives and lives amongst fish and shellfish.

Shichigon Koshi

休 in the first line means 'To not do'. 画龍点睛 is taken from a historical event that happened to the painter, Zhang Seng-yao 張僧繇 (The date of his birth and death are unknown) from 梁 (Liang dynasty) noted by Ikkai and Nakamura.¹⁰⁹ Zhang was painting a dragon on the wall. Once Zhang had painted eyes on the dragon, the dragon rose and disappeared into the heavens.

¹⁰⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 438-439.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 439.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 300.

lida noted that the dragon mentioned in this poem was a false poisonous dragon.¹¹⁰ Sōseki in the first line warns not to draw eyes on the dragon without taking care.

妖雲 in the second line is ‘Ominous clouds’. This line stresses the danger of the fake nature of the dragon in the drawing.

真龍 in the third line means ‘True dragon’ and 無面目 ‘To not have a fixed appearance’.

雨黒 in the fourth line is usually in the order 黒雨, meaning ‘Downpour’. 風白 in the same line is in the order 白風 meaning ‘Autumn wind’ and 空谷 the last word of the line means ‘Deserted valley’ as noted by Ikkai and Nakamura.¹¹¹

通身 in the fifth line refers to the ‘Entire body’. 覓 means ‘Search’ and 失爪牙 ‘Losing nail and tusk’.

Ikkai and Nakamura explain that if it loses a nail or tusk, the dragon dies.¹¹²

Line three, 無面目 “To not have a fixed appearance” and line five, 通身遍覓失爪牙 “There are no teeth or tusks on any part of its body” are based on Zhuangzi Chapter Seven, “a story of Hun-tun [Chaos]”. Let us refer to the text.

The emperor of the South Sea was called Shu [Brief], the emperor of the North Sea was called Hu [Sudden], and the emperor of the central was called Hun-tun [Chaos]. Shu and Hu from time to time came together for a meeting in the territory of Hun-tun, and Hun-tun treated them very generously. Shu and Hu discussed how they could repay his kindness. “All men”, they said, “have seven openings so they can see, hear eat, and breath. But Hun-tun alone doesn’t have any. Let’s trying boring him some!”

¹¹⁰ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 501.

¹¹¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 439.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 300.

¹¹² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 440.

Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 301.

Every day they bored another hole, and on the seventh day Hun-tun died¹¹³

南海之帝爲儵。北海之帝爲忽。中央之帝爲渾沌。儵與忽時相與遇於渾沌之地。渾沌待之甚善。儵與忽謀報渾沌之德曰。人皆有七竅。以視聽食息。此獨無有。嘗試鑿之。

日鑿一竅。七日而渾沌死。¹¹⁴

Hun-tun [Chaos] in Zhuangzi's story is existence itself that is to say nature. Zhuangzi's message here is that pure nature gets destroyed by the action of human beings who think they are knowledgeable and contribute to making things better in terms of their fixed ideal world.

忽然 in the sixth line means 'Suddenly' and 侶魚蝦 'To live with fish and shellfish', who are regarded as being at a low level of existence. This too is a reference to Zhuangzi finding The Way in the filthiest of things. Now, we refer to Chapter Twenty-two of the Zhuangzi, "Knowledge Wandered North".

Master Tung-kuo [Dong-guo zi] asked Chuang Tzu [Zhuangzi], "This thing called the Way-where does it exist?"

Chang Tsu [Zhuangzi] said, "There's no place it doesn't exist."

"Come," said Master Tung-kuo [Dong-guo zi], "you must be more specific!"

"It is in the ant."

"As low a thing as that?"

"It is in the panic grass."

"But that's lower still!"

"It is in the tiles and shards."

"How can it be so low?"

¹¹³ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 97.

¹¹⁴ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 314.

“It is in the piss and shit!”

Master Tung-kuo [Dong-guo zi] made no reply.

Chung Tzu [Zhuangzi] said, “Sir, your questions simply don’t get at the substance of the matter. When Inspector Huo [Fu zi] asked the superintendent of the market how to test the fatness of a pig by pressing it with the foot, he was told that the lower down on the pig you press, the nearer you come to the truth. But you must not expect to find The Way in any particular place – there is no thing that escapes its presence! Such is the Perfect Way, and so too are the truly great words. ‘Complete,’ ‘Universal,’ ‘All-inclusive’ – these three are different words with the same meaning. All point to a single reality.¹¹⁵

侶魚蝦 ‘to live with fish and shellfish’ rhyme-matches with the poem by Su Shi.

侶魚蝦而友麋鹿 魚蝦を侶として麋鹿を友とし、¹¹⁶

Playing with fish and deer as with a friend.

Sōseki wanted to express here that there is no superior or inferior. All exists as one. Also, the real dragon is found in the process of looking for the truth, not in the completed works. Nakamura says this poem expresses the state of mind of being “A great fool”¹¹⁷, which was a nickname for Ryōkan, the poet-monk whose simplicity and purity Sōseki greatly admired in the final period of his life.

Iida selected the comment made by one of Sōseki’s pupil, Matsuoka Yuzuru on this poem. “Compared with the fierce looking fake dragon in painting, the true dragon is extremely easy and simple, and plays happily with fish and shellfish as friends. The fake one fancies itself to be an important dragon, the real dragon sinks deep to be simple. The Human world is exactly the same. At the time, Sōseki

¹¹⁵ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The Complete Works of Chang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 240-241.

¹¹⁶ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed. & Trans. *Sotōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011, p. 322.

¹¹⁷ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 301.

had an earnest desire to find an eternal path, and this is exactly what Sōseki was thinking about. In the past he composed poems with lines such as “I wish to be a citizen of great peace” and “The happiness of people is to grow old near the lake”. At this point Sōseki had arrived at his destination.”¹¹⁸

The style of this poem is *Koshi* with six lines and is different from the other poems which are *Risshi* with eight lines. What Sōseki wanted to point out here is that one has to reduce one’s ego and become simple and sincere in order to understand the truth of nature where eternal life exists. Sōseki wanted to exist and relate to the people, not with the authorities. A good example of how Sōseki was as a person was an incident in the past when he turned down the offer of the title of Professor granted by the government in 1911. He told the government by means of a letter to The Ministry of Education on 21 February 1911 that he wanted to remain as Mr. Natsume rather than be a Professor.¹¹⁹ The government didn’t accept Sōseki’s desire and the case remained unresolved. Sōseki wrote a series of articles about this in the *Asahi*.¹²⁰ There are in the records, two interviews published in the *Chūo* and *Asahi* Newspapers relating to this issue.¹²¹

12 October 1916

Poem 190

“No Title” 無題

途逢啐啄了機縁 途に啐啄に逢いて 機縁を了す

殻外殻中孰後先 殻外 殻中 孰れか後先

¹¹⁸ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 501.

¹¹⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.23. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 408.

¹²⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, “Hakase Mondai to Mardoc sensei to Yo”, p. 346-353. & “Hakase Mondai no Nariyuki”, p. 360-362.

¹²¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, “Shigai to natte Suterareta Hakasegō”, p. 403-404. & “Chokurei no Kaishaku ga chigau”, p. 405-407.

一様風旛相契処 一様の風旛 相契う処

同時水月結交辺 同時の水月 交りを結ぶ辺

空明打出英靈漢 空明 打出す 英靈漢

閑暗踢翻金玉篇 閑暗 踢翻す 金玉篇

胆小休言遺大事 胆小なるも 大事を遺ると言う休れ

会天行道是吾禪 天に会して道を行うは 是れ吾が禪 ¹²²

Myself and my teacher hit it off very well together and by chance I grasped the opportunity for enlightenment.

A chick comes out of its shell by the simultaneous action of the chick pecking from inside and the parent chicken pecking from the outside.

At first, it is difficult to distinguish whether it is the flag or the wind that is moving when debating about the flag streaming in the wind; both happen at the same time.

The moon is reflected on all water surfaces, one heart is equal to one teaching; the moon and the image of moon reflected on the water are the same

Infinite lightness brings out a spiritual person,

Silent darkness has no place for refined literature.

Small minds may say that I have abandoned important matters.

Grasping the way of heaven and putting it into practice, this is my Zen.

Shichigon Risshi

¹²² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 446.

途逢 at the beginning of the first line implies ‘Meet on the street’. 啐啄 is taken from the Zen idiom and represents the time the chick is hatching from the shell, the first character 啐 describes the chick pecking the shell from inside and the second character 啄 describes the mother pecking the shell from outside. It is cited in the Blue Cliff Record code 16.

子母不相知、是誰同啐啄。「子と母と相知らず、是れ誰か同じく啐啄す」と。¹²³

*“Chick and mother hen do not know each other; who is it that breaks in and breaks out together?”*¹²⁴

This Zen text refers to the time when the teacher is stimulating the student outwardly and the student is being awakened for enlightenment inwardly.

The following character 了 represents ‘To complete’ and the first line ends with 機縁 signifying ‘A chance to receive teaching which develops an inner ability to follow the path of Buddha’¹²⁵.

Sōseki is expressing how enlightenment happens by chance when the time is ripe and does not necessarily take place at the monastery. It can happen at any time anywhere.

殼外殼中 in the second line means ‘Inside shell and outside shell’ followed by 孰後先 representing ‘Which one comes first’. The second line confirms the idea in the first line that the action occurs simultaneously.

一樣 in the third line represents ‘Indistinguishable’ followed by 風旛 referring to a historical event taken from Zen text. It is cited in *Jin-de zhuandeng-lu* (jp. *Keitoku Dentōroku*, 景德伝灯録) vol. 5. It is in the story of Great Master Huineng (jp. Enō, 六祖慧能), the Sixth Chinese Patriarch.

¹²³ Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. An. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007 (13th edition), p. 226.

¹²⁴ Thomas Cleary and J. C. Cleary Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala, Boston & London, 1992, p. 108.

¹²⁵ Morohashi, Takasuke. *Dai Kanwa Jiten*. Vol. 6. Tokyo: Daishūkan Shoten, 1991. (2nd edition), p. 555.

One evening at dusk Huineng was resting in one of the temple gangways; as the wind was stirring the temple banner, he overheard two monks in discussion, one saying, 'the banner moves,' whilst the other was saying, 'the wind moves.' So, it went on, backwards and forwards, without them ever once agreeing. Then the master said to them, 'Would it be permissible for an ordinary layman to come in on your deep discussion? Quite frankly, it's neither wind nor flag that moves. What is moving is only your hearts.'¹²⁶

Sōseki in the third line is teaching us that we can argue what is right and what is wrong endlessly. It is not the debate of deciding right and wrong which brings you enlightenment, but it is the direct experience of the absolute truth. If your mind is busy with reasoning and not still, you can't grasp enlightenment.

同時水月 'The Moon and the moon reflected on water are the same' in the fourth line corresponds to the third line, and shows the moon, or the moon reflecting its image on the water, both are the same thing and you can see them but you can't grasp them. It is cited in *Jin-de zhuandeng-lu* (jp. *Keitoku Dentōroku*, 景德伝灯録) vol. 7., noted by Ikkai and Iida.¹²⁷

The master then also cited Emperor Shunzong of the Tang (r. 805-6) asking Chan master Shili, 'How can the living beings of this great earth see into their nature and become Buddha?'

Shili had answered, 'Buddha nature is just like the moon in water – it can be seen but not taken hold of.'¹²⁸

It is followed by 結交辺 the meeting point of the water and the moon, signifying both are equal.

¹²⁶ Whitfield, Randolph S. Trans. *Records of The Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*. Volume 2. Book on Demand, Germany, 2015, p. 84.

¹²⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 447.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 520-521.

¹²⁸ Whitfield, Randolph S. Trans. *Records of The Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*. Volume 2., Book on Demand, Germany, 2015, p. 184.

空明打出 in the fifth line means ‘The emptiness clearly reveals’. 空明 ‘The Moon light’ rhyme-matches with Su Shi’s poem.

桂櫂兮蘭槳 桂の櫂 蘭の槳

撃空明兮泝流光 空明に撃ちて 流光に泝る。¹²⁹

A pole made out of bay tree and a tiller made from orchids

Punting under the Moon, moving through the moon light.

Su Shi’s poem shows people travelling by boat at night holding tools made out of precious plants guided by the moonlight. It is followed by 英靈漢 representing a ‘Person with a great spirituality’. This line expresses the spiritual journey using the image of a river, boat and moonlight. Sōseki is admiring people who devote and sacrifice their life to becoming spiritual beings.

The spiritual beings Sōseki mentions in this line are two young monks. Sōseki invited two monks to stay at his house between 23 to 30 October 1916. Their friendship began when one of the monks, Kimura Genjo, wrote to Sōseki about his impression of reading one of Sōseki’s novels in 1914 and asked Sōseki to answer back. Sōseki who was very sincere in helping earnest learners responded. (letter dated 19 April 1914). Later on, another monk also wrote to Sōseki and continued communicating with him by letter. Sōseki exchanged letters with the monks before and after their visit to his house. (Letters dated: 25/09, 26/09, 18/10, 20/10, 04/11, 10/11, 15/11)¹³⁰ Sōseki admired their spirituality, a result of their devotion to meditation, although they were a lot younger than him.

閑暗 in the sixth line depicts ‘Darkness where there is no discrimination’ therefore it means ‘Emptiness in the world of Buddha’s law’ according to Nakamura,¹³¹ followed by 踢翻 meaning ‘To

¹²⁹ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed.& Trans. *Sotōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011, p. 318-319.

¹³⁰ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 573- 589.

¹³¹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 308.

kick', and the line ends with the words 金玉篇 indicating 'A book containing elaborate and beautiful literature'.

Sōseki is stressing the fundamental belief in Zen teaching of giving importance to direct experience rather than book learning, 不立文字, saying that excellent literature cannot be compared to the world of direct experience.

胆小 in the seventh line implies 'Timidity', followed by 休 used as 'Don't'. 大事 placed at the end of the line means 'A serious affair'. 胆小 'Timidity' is used in this line to describe small minded people with prejudices and fixed ideas. Sōseki is confirming to the world that he has not forgotten to practice The Way in real life.

会天行道 in the last line means 'Becoming one with heaven and understanding its principle by practicing the way of being one with heaven'. The following words are 是吾禅, signifying 'This is my Zen'. In the last line, Sōseki is definitively explaining that he chooses to live his life practicing The Way by merging with heaven. This expression is coming closer to his final concept of 'Merging with heaven, abandoning self', *sokuten kyoshi*.

会道 "Encountering The Way" is explained in *Jin-de zhuandeng-lu* (jp. Keitoku Dentōroku, 景德伝灯録) vol. 7., noted by Iida.¹³²

'Chan masters at the capital all say that one must practise Chan meditation, that if there is no practice of Chan meditation then no one will attain liberation.'

The master replied, 'The Dao comes from the awakened heart, so what would it have to do with meditation? A sutra says, "If you imagine the Tathagata as sitting or lying down, this is walking evil ways. Why? Because he is without coming and going, without birth and death."

¹³² Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 522-523.

This is Tathagata's pure Chan. All dharmas are empty, this is the pure meditation of the Tathagata, yet ultimately there is no proof of it. Is "meditation" not irrelevant? Palace attendant Jian asked, "When your disciple returns, the Emperor is bound to ask questions; may the Venerable Sir be so compassionate as to point out the essential teaching on the heart.'

The master replied, 'The Dao is without light or darkness; light and dark carries a meaning of alternation. Although light and dark are without end, yet there is an end.'

Jian said, "Light is likened to wisdom whilst darkness is compared to the passions. If someone who practises the Dao does not bring the passions to light and destroy them by wisdom then by what means can he escape the endless round of birth and death?'

The master replied, 'To illuminate the passions with wisdom – this is the immaturity of the Two Vehicles, the goat-cart and the deer-cart. The superior wisdom and great capacity are not at all like this.'

Jian asked, 'What then is the Great Vehicle's understanding of liberation?'

The master answered, 'The nature of awakening and ignorance is not two. This nature not being two is the True Nature. Now the True Nature does not decrease in the foolish nor does it increase in the wise; it abides in the passions yet is not confused, lives in the depths yet is not quiescent. Neither temporary nor permanent, nor coming or going, it is not in the middle, outside or inside. It is not born, does not die, and the characteristic of this Nature is Suchness. Ever abiding and changeless, it is called Dao.'¹³³

In short, an awakened heart of emptiness is the nature of Dao. Meditation is a process to attain emptiness and not the end result. According to one of Sōseki's students, Matsuoka, Sōseki had said that he had reached the state of mind he called, *sokuten kyoshi*, 'Merging with the heaven, abandoning self'. Sōseki explains that some people use other expressions to describe this concept. It

¹³³ Whitfield, Randolph S. Trans. *Records of The Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*. Volume 2., Book on Demand, Germany, 2015, p. 86-87.

is a state of mind similar to the abandoning of the ordinary small self and transcending to the higher self, although it can't be described through using words.¹³⁴

1 November 1916

Poem 205

丙辰十月、余、為元成禪人作墨竹。越一日、見壁間所佳図、興忽発。乃為珪堂禪人抽毫作松一株、配以石二三。不知禪人受余贈否也。

丙辰十月、余、元成禪人の為に墨竹を作る。越えて一日、壁間に佳くる所の図を見て、興忽ち発す。乃ち珪堂禪人の為に毫を抽きて、松一株を作り、配するに石二三を以てす。禪人、余の贈を受くるや否やを知らざるなり。

October the year of the Fire Dragon (1916), I painted a bamboo for the monk Genjō (元成). Next day, I found inspiration by looking at a painting on the wall in the alcove. Immediately, I picked up my brush to do a painting for the monk Keidō (珪堂), and painted a pine tree and placed a couple of stones underneath it. I don't know whether the Zen monk will accept this painting or not.

君臥一円中 君は臥す 一円の中

吾描松下石 吾は描く 松下の石

勿言不会禪 言う勿れ 禪を会せずと

¹³⁴ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 523.
Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki Sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1934, p. 214.

元是山林客 元と是れ 山林の客¹³⁵

You sleep within the circle of a monastic family.

I am drawing the stones which lie under the pine tree.

You may say I don't understand Zen,

I feel it suits me to live in the mountains, far away from the world.

Gogon Zekku

This is a poem Sōseki composed for one of the monks who visited his house, whom we discussed in the previous poem.

臥 in the first line represents 'Sleep', followed by 一円中 indicating 'Within a circle' which is taken

from a Zen text, The Blue Cliff Record code 69 noted by Ikkaï.¹³⁶

至中路、南泉於地上画一円相云、道得即去

中路に至り、南泉、地上に一つの円相を画いて云く、「道い得れば即ち去かん」

137

When they got halfway there, Nan Ch'uan drew a circle on the ground and said, "If you can speak, then let's go on."¹³⁸

At the beginning of this poem Sōseki addresses a monk. This is a personal poem which Sōseki dedicated to a monk. Sōseki uses the characters for a circle (一円) to signify a monastic life and

¹³⁵ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 469-470.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 471.

¹³⁷ Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. An. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2005 (9th edition), p. 325.

¹³⁸ Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 386.

“People of one house”. There is another example which confirms this in *The Record of Transmission of the Lamp* Book Four 53 noted by Iida.

馬祖 人をして書を送りて到らしめ、書の中に一円相を作けり¹³⁹

Patriarch Ma (Mazu, Japanese: Baso, 707-788 CE) once sent someone to deliver a letter [to the master]. On breaking the seal he saw that the letter was a drawing of an empty circle.¹⁴⁰

The second line simply explains what Sōseki painted for the monk which is a pine tree and stones placed at the bottom of tree. It is said that you are enlightened if you know the meaning of a pine tree growing on top of stones. We already know the meaning of ‘Planting a pine tree’ 栽松 discussed in poem 144 in this Chapter. Sōseki is telling us that the monk is an enlightened one by his choice of subject matter in his painting.

不会 in the third line means ‘To not understand’ noted by Ikkai,¹⁴¹ and Sōseki is saying about himself that he is a lay man and so people may think he doesn’t understand Zen.

元是 in the last line is a reference from Zen. It is cited in *The Record of Linji* (臨濟録示衆).

道流、心法無形、通貫十方。在眼曰見、在耳曰聞、在鼻嗅香、在口談論、在手執捉、在足運奔。本是一精明、分爲六和合。一心既無、隨處解脫。

道流、心法は形なくして、十方に通貫す。眼に在っては見と曰い、耳に在っては聞と曰い、鼻に在っては香を嗅ぎ、口に在っては談論し、手に在っては

¹³⁹ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 571. (quote taken from *Record of Transmission of the Lamp* Book Four 53).

¹⁴⁰ Whitfield, Randolph S. Trans. *Records of The Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*. Volume 2., Book on Demand, Germany, 2015, p. 50.

¹⁴¹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, p. 471.

執捉し、足に在っては運奔す。本と是一精明、分かれて六和合と為る。一心
既に無なれば、随処に解脱す。¹⁴²

Stream-enterers! Mind dharma [true mind/buddha mind/one mind] is formless and pervades the ten directions. In the eye it is called seeing in the ear it is called hearing; in the nose, smelling; in the mouth, speaking; in the hand, grasping; and in the feet, walking or running. At the outset this one spirit-brightness [the one buddha nature/one mind, in the manner of a sleight-of-hand seems to] divide into the six [causal] combinations [i.e., the six sense organs that come into being due to the coming together of causes and conditions]. This one mind is no [mind]. Every *place* is liberation.¹⁴³

Katō dedicated one chapter to the interpretation of 元是, which can be translated as ‘Once it was ...’ or ‘It is originally...’. Katō says that its meaning in this case is ‘It is originally...’. He explains that these characters refer to a famous Zen teaching, “All things come from nothingness” (本来無一物).¹⁴⁴ Applying Katō’s interpretation, Sōseki is saying ‘I am not a Zen monk, but I come from nothingness’.

The following words 山林客 mean ‘A hermit’. According to Zhuangzi, 山林 ‘The bamboo forest in the mountain’ is the place where the recluse resides noted by Yoshikawa.¹⁴⁵ In Zhuangzi’s text, it is cited in Chapter Two, “Discussion on Making All Things Equal”. It is the part when the teacher explains to his pupil about the piping of the Heaven. “Can’t you hear them, long drawn out? In the mountain forests that lash and sway, there are huge trees a hundred spans around with hollows and opening like noses, like mouths, like ears, like jugs, like cups, like mortars, like rifts, like ruts.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Iriya, Yoshitaka. An. *Rinzai Roku*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007 (25th edition), p. 39-40.

¹⁴³ Broughton, Jefferey. L. with Watanabe, Yoko. Trans. *The Record of Linji*. A New Translation of the Linjilu in the Light of Ten Japanese Zen Commentaries. Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 40.

¹⁴⁴ Katō, Jirō. *Sōseki to Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2004, p. 278-298.

¹⁴⁵ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 298.

¹⁴⁶ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 36.

山林客 ‘Hermit’ rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem. In Ryōkan’s poem, 士 is used instead of 客; both mean ‘Person’. Tōgō also confirms that 山林士 ‘Hermit who lives deep in a mountain’ is cited in Zhuangzi.

元非山林士 元 山林の士に非ず

誰敢官途馳 誰か敢えて官途に馳せん。¹⁴⁷

Originally, I was not a person who lives as a recluse deep in the mountain.

I never dreamed of becoming a government official.

In this line, Sōseki sincerely confirms that he is seeking spirituality and is practicing the way, although he is not a specialist. We recall that Sōseki went to a Zen temple when he was a student at University. Here, it can be interpreted that Sōseki is hinting at the syncretism of Zen and Daoism. It is a simple and pure poem composed for a monk friend in which he speaks directly from the heart about his beliefs.

19 November 1916

Poem 207

“No Title” 無題

大愚難到志難成 大愚 到り難く 志 成り難し

五十春秋瞬息程 五十の春秋 瞬息の程

観道無言只入静 道を観るに 言無くして 只だ静に入り

¹⁴⁷ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 287-288.

拈詩有句独求清 詩を拈るに 句有りて 独り清を求む

迢迢天外去雲影 迢迢たる天外 去雲の影

籟籟風中落葉声 籟籟たる風中 落葉の声

忽見閑窓虚白上 忽ち見る 閑窓 虚白の上

東山月出半江明 東山 月出でて 半江 明らかなり¹⁴⁸

It is hard to reach the state of a great fool.

Fifty years have passed away so quickly without accomplishing my intentions.

I experience The Way sitting in silence.

I seek only purity in my poetry.

I follow the moving clouds to the end of heaven,

I listen to the piping sound of falling leaves blown off the trees by the wind.

I notice a faint light coming through the window,

I realise the moon is up over the Eastern Mountain and is shining on half of the river.

大愚 in the first line represents 'A great fool'. The Great Fool Ryōkan is the monk Ryōkan's name as we have said before. We know already that Sōseki showed a strong admiration for Ryōkan's works in his final period. These characters also appear in Chapter Twelve of Zhuangzi's, "Heaven and Earth". However, Nakamura noted that Sōseki is addressing Ryōkan, and not referring to Zhuangzi.¹⁴⁹ We refer to Zhuangzi's text

¹⁴⁸ Sōseki Zenshū vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 474.

¹⁴⁹ Nakamura, Hiroshi. Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 330.

in Chapter Twelve of “Heaven and Earth”.

知其愚者。非大愚也。 其の愚を知る者は、大愚に非ざるなり。¹⁵⁰

*He who knows he is a fool is not the biggest fool.*¹⁵¹

This study agrees with Nakamura that ‘The great fool’ Zhuangzi describes here is not ‘The great fool’ Sōseki is talking about in this poem.

Ikkai and Iida noted that ‘The great fool’ is addressed to Ryōkan and his friend from his university days, Yoneyama Yasusaburō (米山安三郎, 1869-97).¹⁵² Yoneyama who called himself Mountain Hermit the Great Fool (大愚山人) had a significant influence on Sōseki’s life (this study talked about him in the first chapter) but unfortunately died at a young age. Sōseki wrote about him in 1889 in part 24 of his collection of *kanshi* writing, the travelogue, *Bokusetsuroku* (木屑録). Sōseki commented that Yoneyama didn’t have any attachment to worldly things. He went to a Zen temple, read Zen texts and talked about Zen. At the point where Sōseki described Yoneyama as sometimes playing with young children catching cicadas, Shiki made a commentary saying that “It is impossible to be like a Great Fool” (大愚不可及 大愚及ぶ可からず).¹⁵³ Sōseki when writing about fifty years of his life in poem 207 was recalling Shiki and Yoneyama both of whom had a significant influence on his thought. Ikkai and Iida’s commentary on Sōseki addressing Ryōkan and Yōneyama when he said ‘The great fool’ 大愚, is very convincing.

However, we can’t dismiss Zhuangzi completely. Yoshikawa said that the idea of ‘The great fool’ 大愚 originally came from Zhuangzi.¹⁵⁴ Iida also explained that ‘The great fool’ 大愚 in this line also

¹⁵⁰ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 208.

¹⁵¹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 139.

¹⁵² *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 474-475.

Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 580.

¹⁵³ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 544-545.

¹⁵⁴ Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002, p. 300.

included the meaning from Zhuangzi of “The usefulness of useless”. Let us refer to one example of “The usefulness of useless” from Zhuangzi. It is Zhuangzi Chapter One, “Free and Easy Wandering”.

Hui Tzu said to Chuang Tzu, “I have a big tree of the kind men call *shu*. Its trunk is too gnarled and bumpy to apply a measuring line to, its branches too bent and twisty to match up to a compass or square. You could stand it by the road and no carpenter would look at it twice. Your words, too, are big and useless, and so everyone alike spurns them!”

Chuang Tzu said, “Maybe you’ve never seen a wildcat or a weasel. It crouches down and hides, watching for something to come along. It leaps and races east and west, not hesitating to go high or low- until it falls into the trap and dies in the net. Then again there’s the yak, big as a cloud covering the sky. It certainly knows how to be big, though it doesn’t know how to catch rats. Now you have this big tree and you’re distressed because it’s useless. Why don’t you plant it in Not-Even-Anything Village, or the field of Broad-and-Boundless, relax and do nothing by its side, or lie down for a free and easy sleep under it? Axes will never shorten its life, nothing can ever harm it. If there’s no use for it, how can it come to grief or pain?”¹⁵⁵

Zhuangzi is saying that although it may be useless from the viewpoint of the ordinary world, the useless tree can be planted in Not-Even-Anything Village where everything is equal, and one can lay down under the tree and have a free and easy time. Bearing in mind Zhuangzi’s text, the meaning of ‘The great fool’ in Sōseki’s poem is a person who is regarded as useless in the ordinary world. Unlike other people this person has no attachment to and interest in worldly desires, but instead lives a free life following the Way in “Not-Even-Anything Village”.

We can also recall that Sōseki described his favourite flower, the japonica, as a fool in his novel *Kusamakura* which we examined in Chapter Two of this study.

¹⁵⁵ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 35.

The following characters 難到志難成 meaning ‘Difficult to attain and difficult to become’ can be understood by letters he wrote to two monks noted by Ikkai.¹⁵⁶ Sōseki wrote in a letter to one monk who visited him, Genjō, on 10 November that he would attain the way using his own methods and using his own capabilities.¹⁵⁷ Sōseki also wrote a letter five days later addressed to another monk, Keidō, saying he was a fool who at the age of fifty years old had an inner urge to acquire The Way and he was astounded by the long passage of time required to attain the truth.¹⁵⁸

Sōseki is telling us in line one that it is difficult to become a person like his friend Yoneyama, Ryōkan, Zen monks and Daoist sages who attained an absolute truth.

五十春秋 in the second line means ‘Fifty years that he has lived his life’. 瞬息 is the phrase ‘A short time like one blink and one breath’. Sōseki is stating that he is fifty years old now and feels his life has passed in a second.

觀道 in the third line is ‘Searching for the truth’ followed by 無言只入靜, ‘Entering into a state of quietness without words’. Sōseki went to practice Zen at Enkaku-ji in Kamakura in his youth on the recommendation of Yoneyama. During his illness at Shuzen-ji, Sōseki reencountered the world of quietness whilst he was lying on a bed recovering. Sōseki noted in his diary dated 16 September 1910 the following comment. “To wait for recovery from weakness by just lying on a bed in quietness with the help of liquid foods is dull and boring. However, it was also an opportunity to attain a quiet and beautiful mind. I regained the mind of a baby when I was in my forties. I am grateful to the people who practice purity of mind.”¹⁵⁹ This line shows Sōseki practicing meditation in order to encounter The Way at the age of fifty.

拈詩 in the fourth line describes the state of ‘Contemplating for poetic composition’. 独求清 means ‘Only seeking for the purity in unworldliness’. Sōseki’s quest for serene quietness and poetic

¹⁵⁶ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 474-475.

¹⁵⁷ *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997, p. 586-587.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 588-589.

¹⁵⁹ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 205.

sentiment had become prominent since his serious illness at Shuzen-ji in 1910. Sōseki expressed his feeling in his diary during his recovery at the hospital in Tokyo. “I long for serene quietness and hate noise.” and “I want to meet friends who understand poetic sensibility. I don’t wish to meet with people who discuss life, art and so on.”¹⁶⁰ Later, at fifty years of age when Sōseki decided to seek The Way, he explains that the process of composing a poem is equal to meditation for attaining the truth.

In the next four lines, Sōseki provides visual images which refer to Zhuangzi’s text.

迢迢 in the fifth line means ‘Far away in the distance’ and Sōseki used this expression in his poem from his Kumamoto period in 1895 discussed in Chapter two. Let’s refer to this poem.

離愁似夢迢迢淡 離愁 夢に似て 迢迢として淡く

幽思与雲澹澹間 幽思 雲と与に 澹澹として間かなり

The sad feeling of separation is like something far away similar to a dream.

In deep contemplation, in my cloud I feel serene and peaceful.

迢迢 ‘Far away’ also rhyme-matches with Ryōkan’s poem.

吾師是胡為 吾が師 是胡為れぞ

迢々真檀臻 迢々として真檀に臻れる。¹⁶¹

My teacher, Bodhidharma.

He went far away to somewhere in China.

¹⁶⁰ Sōseki Zenshū vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 242-243.

¹⁶¹ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. Ryōkan Zenshū. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 181-182.

It is clear that Sōseki is emphasising a place far away. It is followed by 天外 indicating ‘Beyond the sky’. 去雲影 at the end of the line describes ‘The shadow of the clouds passing by’. The clouds are a symbol for poetic inspiration, and here Sōseki indicates he is in a world of poetic inspiration where the ideas are flowing in and flowing out. Sōseki’s mind is far away from the world outside and his poetic inspiration continues and never stops.

籟籟 in the sixth line, we see 籟, ‘Piping’ referring to Zhuangzi’s story of 天籟 ‘The piping of the heavens’, which we discussed in detail in Chapter One and Four. 落葉声 means ‘The sound of falling leaves’. This line describes how The Way manifests itself in the sound of falling leaves.

忽見 in the seventh line depicts ‘Suddenly seeing’ indicating sudden awakening, followed by 閑窓 ‘A calm atmosphere in the window’, and the line finishes with 虚白 which we discussed in poem 167, meaning ‘White emptiness’, taken from Zhuangzi’s text noted as 虚室生白, “The empty chamber where brightness is born”. Sōseki explains that he is being awoken into the poetic world.

東山月出 ‘The moon is up in the Eastern mountain’, rhyme-matches with a poem composed by Ryōkan.

東山明月出 東山に 明月出で

楼上正徘徊 楼上 正に徘徊す。¹⁶²

The bright moon is up in the East Mountain

I went up to the balcony and walked around searching for the moon.

In this poem Ryōkan expressed his longing for a friend who was far away.

¹⁶² Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 105.

東山月出 ‘The moon is up in the Eastern mountain’ also rhyme-matches with a poem composed by Su Shi.

小焉、月出於東山之上、徘徊於斗牛之間。

小焉にして、月 東山之上に出で、斗牛の間に徘徊す。¹⁶³

*After waiting for a while, the moon comes up in the East Mountain,
and moves around between Sagittarius and Capricorn.*

In this poem Su Shi expressed the spirit of free wandering and becoming a free person like a hermit growing wings and flying away to Heaven. Sōseki describes how he was missing his friends with whom he could share poetic sensitivity in this world, and he entered their world by losing himself in the world of poetry. It is followed by 半江明 ‘The moon shining on half of the river’. the word 江 ‘River’ is an image of ‘The fish forgetting itself in the water’. we can refer to Zhuangzi Chapter Six “The Great and Venerable Teacher”.

“Fish forget each other in the rivers and lakes, and men forget each other in the arts of The Way.”¹⁶⁴

魚相忘乎江湖。人相忘乎道術。¹⁶⁵

The scene depicted in the final line shows the image of forgetting oneself through nature and merging with the moon and the river. This is a poem expressing *sokuten kyoshi*.

Another point to take into consideration is the fact that there is a word, 半 ‘Half’ in front of 江明 ‘The Moon shining on the river’. It means that half of the river is bright and half of the river is dark. The title of the novel Sōseki was writing at the final period was *Mei-An (Lightness and Darkness)*.

¹⁶³ Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed.& Trans. *Sotōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011, p. 316.

¹⁶⁴ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 87.

¹⁶⁵ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 273.

Every day Sōseki worked in the morning writing his novel and whenever he had time spent the rest of the day composing *kanshi*. In the final line, Sōseki could be drawing us back to reality and indicating that the morning was approaching by the expression ‘The moon is up in the East Mountain’. For him this meant it was time to write *Mei-An*.

20 November 1916

Poem 208

“No Title” 無題

真蹤寂寞杳難尋 真蹤 寂寞として 杳かに尋ね難く

欲抱虚懐歩古今 虚懐を抱きて 古今に歩まんと欲す

碧水碧山何有我 碧水 碧山 何ぞ我有らん

蓋天盖地是无心 蓋天 蓋地 是れ無心

依稀暮色月離草 依稀たる暮色 月は草を離れ

錯落秋声風在林 錯落たる秋声 風は林に在り

眼耳双忘身亦失 眼耳 双つながら忘れて 身も亦た失い

空中独唱白雲吟 空中に独り唱う 白雲吟 ¹⁶⁶

The real way doesn't leave a trace, and is difficult to find.

Using all ideas, ancient and modern, I have sought to live with an unattached mind.

Green mountain and water; nature doesn't have an ego.

¹⁶⁶ Sōseki *Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 476.

All that exists between heaven and earth has no notion of desires and ambition.

At twilight, the moon rises over the grassy plain,

The autumn wind blows in and out creating echoes in the wood.

I lose my sense of hearing and sight, and forget my body exists,

Alone, leaving my body and floating in the air, I recite a poem about white clouds.

真蹤 in the first line means ‘Traces of the real Way’ implying The Way is free and pure like a bird flying across the sky and fish swimming in the river leaving no trace afterwards. 寂寞 depicts ‘Profound loneliness’, which we discussed before and can be interpreted as meaning a meditative state of mind. We refer to a rhyme-matching poem of Ryōkan.

把手青雲外 手を青雲の外に把り

相忘寂寞浜 相忘る 寂寞の浜。

We go beyond the ordinary world and holding hands,

We forget ourselves on the beach in profound loneliness.

This is a poem by Ryōkan who practiced the Zen way of living and lived a simple life: his only belonging being one bowl. Ryōkan returns to his hometown and enjoys roaming free with another monk, Tenge Shōnin, 天華上人, (no biographical information available). They wander in quiet loneliness forgetting themselves. We know already that loneliness here is not loneliness as we consider it in the conventional world. It is a meditative state of mind that one can’t describe. The first characters, 相忘 ‘Forgetting oneself’, the words from Zhuangzi’s “The fish forgetting itself in the water” we are familiar with from the previous poem. We can see here again that Ryōkan was familiar with Zhuangzi’s text.

These characters are followed by 杳難尋 ‘So far and difficult to find’ which corresponds with the essence of The Way which is something that can’t be described. Nakamura noted that the true Way is free and has no boundary, and leaves no sign of its action just like we can’t trace the fish jumping in the water and the birds flying in the sky.¹⁶⁷

虛懷 in the second line is the same as 虛心 noted by Ikkai,¹⁶⁸ indicating ‘A pure and selfless state of mind’. 虛心 ‘A pure and selfless state of mind’ is cited in Zhuangzi Chapter Thirty-one, “The Old Fisherman”. The scene is one where Confucius’s pupil speaks to a stranger, as the stranger has asked the pupil what Confucius’s occupation is. The pupil replies that his teacher has good faith, has educated people and brought beautiful order to society. The stranger says to the pupil that Confucius by acting as he has, has been greatly separated from The Way. The pupil then tells Confucius all about the conversation between him and the stranger. Confucius approaches the stranger and asks him to teach him The Way. Let’s us refer to the text at this point.

“What do you want?” asked the stranger.

“A moment ago, Sir,” said Confucius, “you made a few cryptic remarks and then left. Unworthy as I am, I’m afraid I do not understand what they mean. If I might be permitted to wait upon you with all due humility and be favoured with the sound of your august words, my ignorance might in time be remedied.”

“Goodness!” exclaimed the stranger. “Your love of learning is great indeed!”

Confucius bowed twice and then, straightening up, said,

“Ever since childhood I have cultivated learning, until at last I have reached the age of sixty-nine. But I have never yet succeeded in hearing the Perfect Teaching. Dare I do anything, then but wait with an open mind?”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983, p. 331.

¹⁶⁸ *Sōseki Zenshū* vol. 18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, p. 476.

¹⁶⁹ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968,

客曰、子將何求、孔子曰、曩者先生有緒言而去、丘不肖、未知所謂、竊待於下風、
幸聞咳唾之音、以卒相丘也、客曰、嘻、甚矣、子之好學也、孔子再拜而起曰、丘少
而脩學、以至於今、六十九歲矣、无所得聞至教、敢不虚心、¹⁷⁰

Sōseki shows his determination to empty his mind in the way Confucius does in Zhuangzi's text in order to grasp the Way. In the same line, 步古今 signifies 'visiting both the world of old and new'. Sōseki when referring to 'Old' meant the Zen and Daoist teachings, and by 'New' he was referring to the two monks he met, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

碧水碧山 in the third line depicts the image of 'Profound nature' where as discussed before the hermit resides. 何有我 means 'Has no self'. Sōseki tells us that nature has no self. This is a simple and direct expression of the profound significance of nature which is a typical image from the brush and ink Nanga world.

The next line starting with 蓋天蓋地 meaning 'Heaven and earth' is a reference to The Blue Cliff

Record code 3

且図知有向上事、蓋天蓋地、又模索不著。

且く向上の事有るを知らんと図れば、蓋天蓋地、又た模索不著。¹⁷¹

The intent is that you'll realise there is something transcendental; it covers the sky and covers the earth, yet it cannot be grasped.¹⁷²

(FN. 169. Cont.) p. 345-346.

¹⁷⁰ Kanaya, Osamu. Trans. & Annot. *Sōshi*. Vol. 4. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007, p. 149.

¹⁷¹ Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. An. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007 (13th edition), p. 68.

¹⁷² Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977, p. 18.

This is followed by 是無心 'It is selfless'. In the third and fourth lines, Sōseki wants to stress the point that there is no self in nature.

依稀暮色 in the fifth line meaning 'Hazy colour of sunset' is followed by 月離草 'The moon departing from the grasses' depicting the rising moon. This is a visualisation of Sōseki's mind as it leaves the ordinary world and enters into a meditative state of mind, as indicated by the moon rising above the grass. This is also a beautiful expression of sunset. 依稀 'Hazy' rhyme-matches with Ryōkan's poem.

依稀藤蘿月 依稀たり 藤蘿の月 ¹⁷³

The moon looking through the wisteria is hazy.

After giving the visual image of sunset with the moon rising, Sōseki uses the sound of nature. 錯落秋声 in the sixth line means 'A jumble of autumn sounds' and is followed by 風在林 'The wind is blowing through the bamboo forest'. In this line Sōseki is referring to a section from Zhuangzi's text, 'The piping of Heaven'.

In lines five and six, Sōseki expresses the process of 'Forgetting himself' by using the visual image of the rising moon and the sound of the wind which signifies the sound of heaven.

These four lines are the visualisation of his meditation technique which is part of the process of composing a poem. These lines show us how Sōseki removed his self by visualising and merging into the scenery he depicted, in the same way ever since his childhood he had metaphysically walked into his *nanga* paintings.

眼耳双忘 in the seventh line refers to 'Losing the sense of seeing and hearing' and rhyme-matches with Zhuangzi Chapter Six, "*The Great and Venerable Teacher*".

¹⁷³ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975, p. 163.

Even now they have joined with the Creator as men to wander in the single breath of heaven and earth. They look upon life as a swelling tumor, a protruding wen, and upon death as the draining of a sore or the bursting of a boil. To men such as these, how could there be any question of putting life first or death last? They borrow the forms of different creatures and house them in the same body. They forget liver and gall, cast aside ears and eyes, turning and revolving, ending and beginning again, unaware of where they start or finish. Idly they roam beyond the dust and dirt; they wander free and easy in the service of inaction.¹⁷⁴

彼方且與造物者爲人。而遊乎天地之一氣。彼以生爲附贅縣疣。以死爲決？潰癰。夫若然者。又惡知死生先後之所在。假於異物。託於同體。忘其肝膽。遺其耳目。反覆終始。不知端倪。芒然彷徨乎塵垢之外。逍遙乎無爲之業。¹⁷⁵

Sōseki in his final poem explains about the transcendental absolutists who wander free and have no fixed value in anything even life and death as expressed by the words of Zhuangzi. The transcendental absolutists know that our flesh and blood are no more than a temporary appearance and momentary phenomenon. It is very striking that Sōseki writes about the unimportance of life and death once you enter into The Way. It is as though he predicted his final time was approaching when he composed this poem. The following words are 身亦失 'Forgetting your body' indicating Sōseki is abandoning self. This is precisely what Sōseki is describing as part of his concept, *kyoshi*.

空中独唱 in the last line 'Alone, leaving my body and floating in the air, I recite' is followed by 白雲吟 'a poem about the white clouds'. The image of 'White clouds' as we have said refers to his spiritual home. In Zhuangzi, it is the place where the hermit resides as we discussed before. Sōseki has lost awareness of his senses and has merged with the white clouds, this means *sokuten kyoshi* (becoming one with heaven, abandoning self).

¹⁷⁴ Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 87.

¹⁷⁵ Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966, p. 269.

白雲 'White clouds' is cited many times in Ryōkan's poems. Let us refer to one of them.

相逢又相別 相逢うて 又 相別る

去来白雲心 去来 白雲の心

惟留霜毫跡 惟 霜毫の跡を留むるのみ

人間不可尋 人間 尋ねるべからず。¹⁷⁶

We meet and we depart again.

It is like the heart of white clouds coming and going voluntarily.

Only our writings remain afterwards.

People can't visit this place as it doesn't belong to the human world.

Ryōkan's poem says people who are part of The Way are like white clouds. After their departure, you have their writings. No one can describe the place where they are. Sōseki, Ryōkan and Zen monks, Daoist sages, poets from the past, they are all there in the white clouds.

There is another rhyme-matching poem on white clouds by Ryōkan.

城中乞食了 城中 食を乞い了って

得々携裏帰 得々として 裏を携えて帰る

帰来知何処 帰り来る 知(らず)何れの処ぞ

家在白雲陲 家は白雲の陲にあり。¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975. P. 390.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

I finished today's begging for food.

I am returning back home with a bag of food I collected.

I don't know where I am going back to.

My home is by the side of white clouds.

White clouds were Sōseki's spiritual home, and we now know that they were Ryōkan's home as well. The last two lines of Sōseki's final poem also bear a strong resemblance to Liezi (列子) "Huangdi, Part 2". Liezi appeared in Zhuangzi as a person who rides on the white clouds and disappears into the sky. Liezi's student wanted to learn how to ride on the white clouds, but wasn't able to get Liezi's attention. The student left and came back later, then, Liezi explained to the student the process of training.

將告汝所學於夫子者矣。自吾之事夫子、友若人也、三年之後、心不敢念是非、口不敢言利害、始得夫子一眄而已。五年之後、心庚年是非、口庚言利害、夫子始一解顏而笑。七年之後、從心之所念、庚无是非；從口之所言、庚无利害、夫子始一引吾並席而坐。九年之後、橫心之所念、橫口之所言、亦不知我之是非利害歟、亦不知彼之是非利害歟；亦不知夫子之爲我師、若人之爲我友：內外進矣。而後眼如耳、耳如鼻、鼻如口、无不同也。心凝形釋、骨肉都融：不覺形之所倚、足之所覆、隨風東西、猶木葉幹殼。竟不知風乘我邪？我乘風乎？¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ A Concordance to *The Liezi*. The ICS Ancient Chinese Texts Concordance Series Philosophical works No. 25, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Institute of Chinese Studies, The Commercial Press, 1996, p. 7.

座り給え、わたしはあなたに先生から学んだことを告げよう。私が彼に仕えて三年、私の心はもはや是非を弁別しなくなり、私の口は利害を語らなくなった、そのときはじめて先生から一瞥されたのだ。五年して、私の心は再び是非を弁別し、私の口は利害を語り始めた、その時はじめて先生の顔は晴れやかになって笑われた。七年たつと、私は思いのままにしても、是非の観念がもはやなくなり、思うままに言っても、もはや利害にこだわらなくなった。その時はじめて先生は私を招き、側の座席に坐らせた。九年たって、私の心の思惟と口から出る言葉のままにしたところで、自分に関わる是非や利害についても、他人に関わる是非や利害についても、もはや意識しなくなり、さらには師がいるとか友人がいるとかを意識しなくなった。外と内とが一つになり、そうってしまうと、わが目は耳のようになり、耳は鼻のようになり、鼻は口のようになって、私のすべての感覚は同一化した。私は心が動かなくなり、身体は解け、骨や肉が溶解するのを感じた。身体がなにかに寄りかかっているのも、足が地を踏みしめているのも感じられなくなったが、私はわが身を風にまかせて、木の葉か乾いたもみ殻のように東西にただよい、ついにはわたしが風に乗っているのか、風が私に乗っているのかもわからなくなった。¹⁷⁹

Please sit down, I will tell you what I learnt from my teacher. After three years learning under him, my heart stopped telling right from wrong, and my mouth stopped talking

¹⁷⁹ Sakaide, Yoshinobu., Igawa, Yoshitsugu. Trans. *Rōshi to Dōkyō* by M. Kaltenmrk. Jinbun Shoin, Kyoto, 2001, p. 115.

about worldly affairs. It was the first time my teacher snapped at me. After five years, my heart began to tell right and wrong, and my mouth began to talk of worldly affairs. My teacher looked happy and smiled at me. After seven years, I stopped having a concept of right and wrong, and I didn't worry about worldly affairs. This is the time my teacher called me and asked me to sit next to him.

After nine years, I became detached from my thoughts and the words coming out of my mouth, right and wrong and all matters related to me as well as right and wrong and matters relating to others. Furthermore, I became detached from whether I had a teacher or friends. It was a unity of inner and outer worlds. Once this happened, my eyes became ears; ears became nose; nose became mouth, all of my senses became one. My heart stopped beating, my body melted, and I felt my bone and flesh dissolve. I stopped feeling my body was attached to something, and didn't feel my feet standing firmly on the ground. My body taken by the wind, drifting to the east and west like a leaf or dried husk. In the end, I lost track and I was no longer sure whether I was riding on the wind or if the wind was riding on me.

In the final poem, Sōseki merged with the white clouds without any notion of himself as he had lost all awareness of his senses, just like in Liezi's story. This poem was the very last poem Sōseki composed in the fifty years of his short-lived life. Sōseki wasn't aware himself, but unfortunately, his condition worsened and he became seriously ill two days after composing his final poem. Sōseki died early in December.

One of his students, Matsuoka Yuzuru wrote that this particular poem became his final *Shichigon Risshi* and he felt that it was not so much chance but more like fate that this poem was his last one. Matsuoka felt that the final poem contained all the aspect of poems he composed before and was a superb encapsulation of his final thought *sokuten kyoshi* and it was not too much to say that Sōseki had practiced composing all his other poems in order to produce this final poem.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, the

¹⁸⁰ Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976, p. 585.

beauty of Sōseki's final poem is that it is easy to visualise and yet deeply philosophical. It is a direct expression of his thought from fifty years of his life as a literary artist and thinker who had a strong passion to be an individual. It dealt with his loneliness and transformed this loneliness into a profound loneliness which was a meditative state of mind and expressed the process of the meditative state of mind in his *kanshi* compositions.

CONCLUSION

In the fifth Chapter, we have focused on Sōseki's *kanshi* compositions in relation to his final thought, *sokuten kyoshi*. In his final *kanshi* period (August 1916 – November 1916) when he began writing his last novel, *Mei-An*, Sōseki composed *kanshi* almost every day in many ways replacing his previous activity of writing a diary. Sōseki spent the morning writing a novel and, in the afternoon, composed *kanshi* to relax and refresh himself in the other worldly place. By doing this he regained his spiritual and creative energy.

Around October it became clear that Sōseki was expressing his final concept, *sokuten kyoshi* in his *kanshi*. The poems from his final period are mainly *Shichigon Risshi*, the fixed long form which are a perfect way to express in *kanshi* all the complex thoughts which he had been accumulating for fifty years of his life. Sōseki reveals how the process of composing *kanshi* is an act of meditation in which one becomes one with nature by forgetting oneself. Sōseki explains this concept over and over again in his *kanshi* using a number of exceptionally beautiful expressions.

By this time, his loneliness is no longer loneliness, but is transformed into profound loneliness which is an expression of a meditative mind. The act of composing *kanshi* was a spiritual experience for Sōseki and led him to a state of enlightenment. Composing *kanshi* was now nothing more nor less than a spiritual journey for Sōseki.

Combining his own visions and insights with the legacy of deep transcendental metaphors and concepts left by the Zen and Daoist traditions, in the very final period of his life, Sōseki through his

kanshi composition began to explain the meaning of *sokuten kyoshi*. This was the only form he used to express this concept. We can say that the world of *kanshi* was the place where Sōseki revealed the spiritual land inside his heart.

Conclusion

This study has examined in depth Sōseki's spiritual land which is Sōseki's spiritual home inside his mind. This study has argued that Sōseki's *kanshi* are the fullest expression of this philosophical journey and that Chinese thought as expressed in classical Chinese writing, poetry and painting and by Japanese artists and poets under the sway of Chinese literature, is the fundamental creative and philosophical force behind this exploration.

This study maintains that Sōseki's *kanshi* stand on their own as beautiful, profound and powerful pieces of work which can be studied without having to rely on reference to his novels.

We have seen that Sōseki's quest for spiritual enlightenment began at an early stage in his life when he was a university student and lasted until his death. He didn't belong to any religions as such, as he was a man who believed in the power of the individual in society. At the same time, he sought comfort and relief in spiritual salvation. Sōseki's spiritual land is *kanshi* because through them he was able to engage in a meditative process which resulted in a quiet mind. This state was a necessary stage on the path to enlightenment. *Kanshi* is a reflection of Chinese thought as Sōseki refers to writings from Daoist and Zen texts, and historical poets to share the ideas which lead to the salvation of the mind. Throughout Sōseki's life, he came back to *kanshi* whenever he needed to calm his mind in order to recover his mental and physical strength.

Kanshi were Sōseki's important home inside the mind and a deep source of spiritual force. At an early stage, *kanshi* composition were for Sōseki a means of bonding male friendship: an East Asian tradition which continued into the Meiji period. Sōseki's interest in *kanshi* which began early on in his life introduced to him by his father and eldest brother, and learnt briefly at the Nishogakusha *Kangaku* academy, flourished when he met Shiki who was the most important and influential friend in his life. They shared the same interest in Chinese literature and philosophy. Shiki also introduced the world of the poet/*nanga* artist, Buson, to Sōseki. *Kanshi* for Sōseki after encountering Shiki became even more rooted in the imagery and spiritual concepts contained in Chinese thought.

Another friend who had an important impact on Sōseki was Ikebe Sanzan who was also fascinated by the world of *kanshi*. Sōseki met Ikebe, who was a chief editor at the *Asahi* Newspaper, when they negotiated for Sōseki to work as the paper's literary writer. Ikebe helped and supported Sōseki during and after his serious illness at Shuzen-ji. One of the reasons Sōseki becomes inspired to compose *kanshi* again after a long break since losing his best friend Shiki, is because Ikebe like Shiki had a rich and profound appreciation of *kanshi*. All the *kanshi* Sōseki composed in his 'Serious illness at Shuzenzi period' are published in the *Asahi* Newspaper, inserted in a series of essays entitled, *Omoidasu kotonado*, published while Ikebe was editor-in-chief at the *Asahi*. Composing *kanshi* gave Sōseki sufficient vitality to recover from his illness. Ikebe understood Sōseki and Sōseki respected Ikebe's literary talent and they kept up a close friendship until Ikebe's death early in 1912. Later in the same year, Sōseki spent some time practicing brush and ink paintings in order to recuperate from the mental wound of losing his great friend Ikebe and his youngest daughter, Hinako, who died in November 1911.

From the very beginning of his life, Sōseki suffered from loneliness. The environment he was brought up in, the fact that he didn't know where his real home was, all contributed to this state of sadness and isolation. While growing up, he was fascinated by the world of *nanga* whose images carried him away into a beguiling, contemplative land. When Sōseki was a boy, *nanga* was a form of escape to this other world. When studying *nanga* painting he was able to forget the loneliness which tormented him.

This study argues that the *kanshi* from Sōseki's '*Nanga* period' are equally as important as the *kanshi* from the 'Serious illness at Shuzenji period' and '*Mei-An* period'. The world of brush and ink painting (*Nanga*), which Sōseki had been familiar with since childhood, go hand-in-hand and play an equally important role in attaining a quiet mind. They are a vital visual aid to Sōseki guiding him in accompaniment with the *kanshi* into the spiritual world inside his mind. Poems by one of Sōseki's favourite poets, Tao Yuanming were depicted by Buson, who was another poet/painter Sōseki admired. Sōseki believed *kanshi* and brush and ink painting were inseparable. From November 1912 through to spring 1916, Sōseki on many occasions painted brush and ink painting to accompany his

own *kanshi* compositions. Sōseki's *kanshi* from the *nanga* period inspired Sōseki to physically enter into the world of *kanshi* and by using a different medium directly enable him to experience the meditative delight of the world beyond the grasp of the conscious mind.

Sōseki's early *kanshi* from his youth use characters such as 愁, 憂 to express his concept of 'Sadness'.

There were a number of reasons which provoked this feeling of loneliness and sadness: the people he respected most in his family, his mother and his eldest brother were no longer in this world; he felt he was lost in his life as he was studying a subject (English literature) which was not his true passion; although he had many friends at the university he found it difficult to deal with the everyday world. Sōseki looked to Zen to remove the cause of the sadness which haunted his mind. Sōseki from this time on, shows his interest in quiet contemplation and the teaching of Zen, although his first experiences of seeking peace of mind at a zen temple were unfruitful.

Meditation was an important means by which Sōseki's countered his physical and psychological illnesses and his notion of loneliness. In his final period of *kanshi* composition, Sōseki often uses the characters 寂寞 'Profound loneliness', or 'Silence' to replace the notion of loneliness in his earlier poems. As we have discussed, 'Loneliness' was one of the main themes in Sōseki's life from a very young age. In his final period Sōseki, reached a different type of 'Loneliness', one that was removed from human emotions and sorrow.

This study traced rhyme-matching the characters for 寂寞 'Profound loneliness' or 'Silence' back to Zhuangzi's text. In Zhuangzi, it is described as one of the important elements of the Way. It is a meditative state of being which gives comfort to the mind and removes anxiety. It is the space in the mind from which everything originates. The meditative state of mind prevents restlessness within in order to be pure and simple. 寂寞 or 寂漠 'Silence' is the meditative state of mind achieved by the lonely process of looking inside oneself which can be considered 'Profound loneliness'. Sōseki's favourite poet in the last stages of his life, Ryōkan, composed poems rhyme-matching with these Chinese characters.

This study discussed how 寂漠, 'Profound loneliness' or 'Silence' can have the same meaning as 寂寥 which is used in Laozi's Dao De Jing. It is a description of The Way and refers to the place from which everything originates and returns. Human beings are a part of the Way and the means to becoming part of the Way involves 'Profound loneliness' or 'Silence' which is a meditative state of mind.

Through entering a meditative state, it is possible to attain a quiet mind. Sōseki uses both 虚堂 and 虚室 meaning a 'Quiet chamber', to imply a quiet heart and tranquil mind. 虚堂 'Quiet chamber' as used by Sōseki in his *kanshi* rhyme-matches with Ryōkan's poem. The employment of these characters in his *kanshi* show that Sōseki is emptying his mind in order for his spiritual land to be simple and pure.

Sōseki also introduces the characters 虚白 'Quiet chamber with brightness'. It is a condensed expression of the characters which appear in Zhuangzi as 虚室生白 'The empty chamber where brightness is born'. These words represent a meditative state of mind which leads to enlightenment. 虚室生白 "The empty chamber where brightness is born" also rhyme-matches with Ryōkan's poem. Sōseki used this expression to show his spiritual land is growing more powerful and how enlightenment is becoming a possibility.

This study looks at the methods used to attain a quiet mind and to reach enlightenment as expressed in Sōseki's *kanshi* and how they relate to his final thought, *sokuten kyoshi* 'Merge with Heaven, abandoning oneself'. Sōseki said to his students that it is impossible to describe *sokuten kyoshi* in words; as much as it is possible this study examines this fundamental concept as it appears in the *kanshi*.

One important method for attaining a meditative state of mind and being with the Way is to 'Forget oneself'. Sōseki uses the characters 嗒然 and 忘我 to describe 'Forgetting oneself': it is a selfless

state of mind. This notion of 'Forgetting oneself' was used by historical poets such as Li Bai and Su Shi. The concept originates with Zhuangzi. One has to forget oneself in order to listen to 'The piping of Heaven' 天籟, the sound of the Way. This concept as expressed by Zhuangzi has much in common with Sōseki's *sokuten kyoshi*.

Sōseki uses the expression, 打殺神人 'Beating to death the ultimate founder of religious law' from a Zen text. Sōseki got this idea from Linji's teachings. *The Record of Linji* teaches how one needs to kill all the people one loves including your teacher, parents and friends. This savage expression is used to emphasise how in order to liberate one's spirituality one needs to diminish all worldly attachments inside the mind: The state of *kyoshi*, abandoning self.

Sōseki explains that for an artist, it is necessary to remove all worldly attachments and become totally involved with the creative process. There is no space for worldly affairs, reason, human pettiness or common sense if one wishes to enter into communion with the essence of one's mind.

Sōseki also incorporated other expressions from Zen teachings in his *kanshi* to show the process of enlightenment such as: 不立文字 from the teaching of Bodhidharma explaining spiritual enlightenment through communication from mind to mind, which means the true teaching is a direct spiritual transmission from teacher to pupil without words; 栽松 from *The Record of Linji*, showing an act of planting pine trees as a direct action of enlightenment; 芳草 from The Blue Cliff Record, visualising sweet smelling grass as an image of forgetting oneself in nature.

'White clouds' 白雲 are an important symbol of enlightenment in Sōseki's *kanshi*. They are a visual depiction of the spiritual land inside his mind. They are also used to describe The Way. Whenever Sōseki imagined the return of 'White clouds' he was depicting a calm and peaceful state of mind which transcended the pain and confusion of existence. 'White clouds' 白雲 for Sōseki symbolise the *sokuten* of *sokuten kyoshi*. 'White clouds' 白雲, are of course deeply embedded in Chinese

philosophy and poetic imagery. As is seen in rhyme-matches with poems by Ryōkan who Sōseki had great respect and admiration for, Wang Wei who was a great role model for Sōseki as a poet/calligrapher/artist, and many others.

Sōseki also uses 自然郷 ‘Hometown of nature’, 白雲郷 ‘Home of white clouds’ and 仙郷 ‘Home of the hermit’ to express the same idea of his spiritual land. White clouds are the spiritual home inside Sōseki’s mind, and they can only be reached by attaining a selfless state. 白雲 ‘White clouds’ rhyme-match with their original source, Zhuangzi, Chapter Twelve, ‘Heaven and Earth’. Zhuangzi explains that this is the place where the hermit lives. The place beyond the reach of the ordinary self, rooted in the material and superficial.

Another image favoured by Sōseki and Shiki to express a state of non-attachment and meditative calm is “Not-Even-Anything Village” (無何有之郷) which appears in Chapter one and seven in Zhuangzi’s text. This expression is used to describe a free state of mind similar to the world of ‘White clouds’ where one is released from the values and meanings of the ordinary mundane world.

Expressions such as 魚樂道 ‘Fish enjoying the freedom of swimming’ 鳥思天 ‘Birds flying towards the heavens’ in Sōseki’s *kanshi* describe his ultimate concept of liberation, *sokuten kyoshi*.

Sōseki’s love and respect for the historical poet, Tao Yuanming lasted from the beginning to the end of his life. Sōseki rhyme-matched with Tao Yuanming’s poems many times. He loved the images and world depicted in *The tale of the Peach Blossom Spring* which Sōseki used as a guide to enter into the spiritual land inside his mind. Sōseki was fond of the image of a peaceful community away from the ordinary world that Tao Yuanming had created. Tao Yuanming’s poems were used to rhyme-match with poems from other great poets such as Li Bai, Wang Wei, Cui Hao, and Su Shi, to mention just a few.

Tao Yuanming was Sōseki’s role model as a literary artist throughout his life. Sōseki admired Tao’s attitude of how to live one’s own life freely and gracefully. Tao Yuanming expressed this in his

poem *Return home!* (*Gui qu lai ci*: 歸去來辭). Sōseki loved this piece of literature so much, he wrote the poem in calligraphic form as a direct expression of respect and devotion. Sōseki's calligraphy of *Return home!* remains a treasure up until the present time.

This study ends with lines from a poem by Sōseki which share the same meaning with Tao Yuanming's poem, which rhyme-matches to Laozi's *Dao-de-jing*. These poems demonstrate that Sōseki's spiritual land was encapsulated in his *kanshi* which were strongly connected and rooted in Chinese thought.

Laozi *Dao-de-jing*. (Chapter 80)

鄰國相望。鷄犬之聲相聞。民至老死。不相往來。

隣国相望み、鷄犬の聲相聞こえて、民、老死に至るまで、相い往来せず。

Neighbouring states might overlook one another,

And the sounds of chickens and dogs might be overheard,

Yet the people will arrive at old age and death with no comings and goings between them.

Tao Yuanming's version. (*The tale of the Peach-Blossom Spring*)

有良田、美池、桑竹之屬。阡陌交通、鷄犬相聞。

There are good lands, beautiful ponds, mulberry and bamboo. There is a crossroads

and you can hear the sound of cocks crowing and dogs barking at each other.

Sōseki's version. (Poem 90)

人間至樂江湖老 人間の至樂 江湖に老い

犬吠鷄鳴共好音 犬吠 鷄鳴 共に好音

The happiest time is when you grow old amongst people of similar mind and interest.

When you live amongst people with vision, the lively sounds of the dogs' bark and the cocks' crow in the neighbourhood become the favourable symbol of peace.

Kanshi were a source of delight and wonder to Sōseki when he was a young child, they provided a path for him to come to terms with his life when he was a young man. Through their connections with the rich and profound spiritual insights of Chinese thought, they took him on a creative journey which not only produced some profoundly beautiful pieces of work full of marvellous imagery and haunting perception but which also enabled him to follow a spiritual journey which progressed and evolved into his final concept of enlightenment, *sokuten kyoshi*.

His first known important work, composed when he was just a youth was *kanshi*. His last creative piece, written just before he died was also a *kanshi*. The Tao concept of returning to the origin, to the unblemished purity of the human soul, free from attachment could not have been better reflected than in the life of the truly great, humble, profound and adventurous free spirit that was Natsume Sōseki.

Bibliography

- Abe, Kimio. *Matsuo Bashō*. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, Tokyo, 1961.
- Akiyama, Yutaka. *Sōseki no Mori wo Aruku*. Transview, Tokyo, 2008.
- Akutagawa, Ryūnosuke. "Sanbō no Naka" in *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.29, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 331-333.
- Ama, Toshimaro. "An Outline of Natsume Sōseki's Meian (Light and Darkness)" in *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1 & 2, 2007, p. 69-70.
- Ama, Toshimaro. "The Eyes of Pure Objectiveness: Natsume Sōseki's Search for the Way" in *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1 & 2, 2007, p. 112-144.
- Ara, Masato. *Natsume Sōseki Nyūmon*. Kōdansha, 1967.
- Asia for Educators. *Commodore Perry and Japan (1853-1854)*. Columbia University, New York, 2009, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/japan_1750_perry.htm
- Asia for Educators. *The three letters that President Fillmore and Commodore Perry wrote to the Japanese Emperor*. http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/japan/fillmore_perry_letters.pdf
- Asia for Educators. *The Charter Oath (of Meiji Restriction), 1868*. Columbia University, New York, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/japan/charter_oath_1868.pdf
- Aso, Makoto & Amano, Ikuo. Education and Japan's Modernization. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, 1972.
- The Avalon Project. *Japanese-American Diplomacy, Treaty of Kanagawa; March, 31 1854*. Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/japan002.asp
Source: Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America. vol. 6., Miller, Hunter ed. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942.
- Bai Ju-yi. <http://www.shicimingju.com/chaxun/list/64330.html>
http://fanti.dugushici.com/ancient_proses/22941
- Barnhill, David Landis. Trans. *Bashō's Journey*. State University of New York Press, Albany, 2005.
- Barnhill, David Landis. Trans. "Zōka: The creative in Bashō's View of Nature and Art" in *Matsuo Bashō's Poetic Spaces*. Ed. Eleanor Kerkham. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006, p.33-59.
- Barrett, T.H. "History" In *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. ed. Donald S. Lopez Jr. The University of Chicago press, Chicago and London, 2005.
- Beasley, W.G. *The Meiji Restoration*. Stanford University Press. California, 1972.
- Blacker, Carmen. *The Japanese Enlightenment: A study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi*. University of Cambridge, Oriental Publication
- Broughton, Jefferey. L. with Watanabe, Yoko. Trans. *The Record of Linji*. A New Translation of the Linjilu in the Light of Ten Japanese Zen Commentaries. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Brownstein, Michael C. "From Kokugan to Kokubungaku: Canon-Formation in The Meiji Period." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 47. No. 2, Harvard-Yenching Institute, Dec. 1987.
- Cen Can. <http://blog.goo.ne.jp/ikiikiaki/e/ca3f341b876d1bec83989b33cc748a5d>
- Chang Chung-yuan. *Creativity and Taoism*. The Julian Press: New York, 1963
- Chan'men Nian'rong Ji. http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/ko/X67n1299_020
- Ching, Julia. *To Acquire Wisdom. The Way of Wang Yang-ming*. Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1976.
- Chuan'deng Lu. http://rinnou.net/cont_04/zengo/20120801.html
- Cleary, Thomas & Cleary, J. T. Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts, 1977.
- A Concordance to The Liezi. *The ICS Ancient Chinese Texts Concordance Series Philosophical works* No. 25, The Commercial Press, 1996, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Institute of Chinese Studies.
- Danlin leiju jian. http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/mobile/index.php?index=X67n1299_018
- Davis, A.R. Trans. *Tao Yüan-ming (AD 365-427)*. Vol 1 Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983.
- Dodd, Stephen. *Writing Home (Representations of the Native Place in Modern Japanese Literature)*. The Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2004.
- Doi, Bansui. "Sōseki-san no London ni okeru Episode" in *Sōseki Zenshū Bessatsu*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Donald, H. Shevely. ed. *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1971.
- Du Fu. http://www.zwbk.org/zh-tw/Lemma_Show/12603.aspx

- Edo Tokyo Hakubutsukan & Tōhoku University. *Bungō, Natsume Sōseki- Sono Kokoro to Manazashi*. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 2007.
- Egan, Ronald C. *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi*. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, and the Harvard- Yenching Institute, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 1994.
- Etō, Jun. "Sōseki to Chūgoku Shisō" in *Natsume Sōseki II*. Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Shiryō Sōsho, Yūsei Dō, Tokyo, 1982.
- Etō, Jun. *Sōseki to Sono Jidai*. Vol. 1, Shinchō Sha, Tokyo, 1970.
- Fang Gan. <http://www.yuwen360.com/showinfo-184-143722.html>
- Farootunian, Harry D. "The Functions of China in Tokugawa Thought" in Irie, Akira. Ed., *The Chinese and the Japanese*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1980.
- Flutsch, Maria. Trans. *Recollections*. Sōseki Museum in London, 1997.
- Fogel, Joshua A. Ed., *Late Qing China and Meiji Japan: political and cultural aspects*. East Bridge, Norwalk, 2004.
- Fraleigh, Matthew. *Plucking Chrysanthemums. Narushima Ryuhoku and Sinitic Literary Traditions in Modern Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London, 2016.
- Francks, Penelope. *Japanese Economic Development*. Routledge, London, 1992.
- French, L. Calvin. *Shiba Kōkan*. Weatherhill, New York, 1974.
- Fujita, Shin'ichi. Edit. "Yosa Buson" (Ga Hai Futatsu no Tatsujin). *Nihon no Kokoro* 202, Bessatsu Taiyō, Shūeisha, Tokyo, December 2012.
- Fujita, Tomoaki. "Sōseki Shi ni okeru 'Shirakumo' no image ni tsuite" in *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Nishō-Gakusha University*. 2005, p. 278 – 299.
- Fujita, Tomoaki. "Sōseki Shi ni okeru Shū" in *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Nishō-Gakusha University*. 2006, p. 215- 244.
- Fujita, Yoshimi. "Bungaku to Kakumei to Renai to Tetsugaku to – Issatsu no Hon no Genryū wo Tazunete". *Risshō Daigaku Bungakubu Ronsō* 80, Tokyo, 1984.
- Fukae, Hiroshi. *Sōseki to Nihon no Kindai*. Ōfūsha, Tokyo, 1983.
- Fukumitsu, Yu. *Su Shi's Philosophy of Life and the Aesthetics in Chinese Calligraphy*. PhD thesis, Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, 2014.
- Fukunaga, Mitsuji. *Chūgoku Tetsugaku, Shūkyō, Geijutsu*. Jinmon Shoin, Kyoto, 1988.
- Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Rōshi*. (Chūgoku Koten Sen Vol. 6), Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1968.
- Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Rōshi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 2013.
- Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi*. Vol.1, Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966.
- Fukunaga, Mitsuji. Trans. *Sōshi* vol.2. Asahi Shinbun Sha, Tokyo, 1966.
- Fukushima, Riko "Sōseki no Kanshi wo Megutte" in *Sōseki Zehshū, Geppō*, vol 4, 1996.
- Furukawa, Hisashi. *Sōseki no Shokan*. Tokyo Dō Shuppan, 1982.
- Girardot, N. J. "'Finding the Way': James Legge and the Victorian Invention of Taoism" in *Religion* (1999) 29, p107-121.
- Gao, Jifen. "Sōseki Sakuhin ga Kanbungaku kara uketa Eikyō." *Kyushu Kango Fukushi Daigaku Kiyo* Vol. 14 No. 1, p. 3-13, Kumamoto, 2013.
- Gao Shi. http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~shici/shi4_08/rs486.htm
- Haga, Tōru. *Yosa Buson no Chiisana Sekai*. Chūkō Bunko, Tokyo, 1988.
- Hagiwara, Sensensui. *Bashō, Buson, Shiki*. Gengen Sha, Tokyo, 1955.
- Hakuchō, Masamune. "Natsume Sōseki Ron" in *Masamune Hakuchō Zenshū*. Vol 20 Fukutake Shoten, Tokyo, 1983, p.26-27.
- Hane, Mikiso. "Early Meiji Liberalism. An Assessment". *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 24, No. 4., Sophia Iniversity, Tokyo, (1969)
- Hane, Mikiso. "The Sources of English Liberal Concepts" in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 24, No. 3, p. 259-272.
- Hardacre, Helen with Kern, Adam L. Ed., *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*. Brill: Leiden, New York, Köln, 1997.
- Hasegawa, Takuma. *Spencer to Enryō*. (Lecture Note) International Inoue Enryō Research 3, International Association for Inoue Enryō Research, 2015
- Henricks, Robert G. Trans. *Lao-tzu Te-Tao Ching*. Rider, London, 1991.
- Hickman, Money & Fetchko Peter. *Japan Day by Day*. An Exhibition Honouring Edward Sylvester Morse and Commemorating the Hundredth Anniversary of His Arrival in Japan in 1877. Peabody Museum of Salem, Salem, Massachusetts, 1977.
- Hirai, Kunio. "Natsume Sōseki- Junsui na Geijutsuka tamashii no Shoyūsha". *Ōtemae Joshi Daigaku Ronshū*

- No. 21, Hyōgo, 1987, p. 45-84.
- Hirakawa, Yoshihiro. "Kisha no Hashiranu Sekai" in *Kōza Natsume Sōseki*. vol.5, Miyoshi, Yukio. Hiraoka, Toshio. Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Etō, Jun. Yūhi Kaku, Edit. Tokyo, 1982.
- Honda, Kenshō. "Natsume Sōseki" in *Kindai no Bungaku* (zenki). Nihon Bungaku Kōza vol.V, Kawade Shobō, Tokyo, 1954, p.174-183.
- Hōshō, Arata. "Yōkyoku no Keiko" in *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.29, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996, p. 248-253.
- Howland, Douglas. "Society Reified: Herbert Spencer and Political Theory in Early Meiji Japan" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. 2000. p. 67-86
- Howland, Douglas. "Translating Liberty in Nineteenth-Century Japan" in *Journal of the History of Ideas*. January 2001, Vol. 62, No. 1., p. 161-181.
- Iida, Rigyō. *Kanshi Nyūmon Inbiki Jiten*. Kashiwa Shobō, 1991.
- Iida, Rigyō. *Kaidō no Hana*. Kashiwa Shobō, Tokyo, 1991.
- Iida, Rigyō. *Sōseki Shi-shū Yaku*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1976.
- Iida, Rigyō. *Zenrin Meiku Jiten*. Kokusho Kankō Kai, Tokyo, 1975.
- Ikeda, Mikiko. *Natsume Sōseki (Me niwa Shiru Tōzai no Ji)*. Kokusho Kankōkai, Tokyo, 2013.
- Ikkai, Tomoyoshi. *Sōseki to Kawakami Hajime - Nihon no Nidai Kanshi-jin*. Fujiwara Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Ikkai, Tomoyoshi. trans. *Tō Enmei* (Chūgoku Shijin Senshū 4). Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1962.
- Imanishi, Jun'ichi. "Sōseki to Zen" in *Journal of Buddhist Studies* 32, Komazawa University, 2001, p. 27-40.
- Imoto, Nōichi, *Bashō: Sono Jinsei to Geijutsu*. Kōdansha, Tokyo, 1968.
- Irie, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. Trans. & Annot. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007.
- Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. Trans. & Annot. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2005.
- Iriya, Yoshitaka., Mizoguchi, Yūzō., Sueki, Fumihiko., Itō, Fumio. Trans. & Annot. *Hekigan Roku*. Vol. 3. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007.
- Iriya, Yoshitaka. An. *Rinzai Roku*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007.
- Irokawa, Daikichi. *Meiji Seishin Shi*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 1995.
- Irokawa, Daikichi. *Meiji no Bunka*. Iwanami shoten, Tokyo, 1970.
- Irokawa, Daikichi. *The Culture of the Meiji Period*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey, 1985.
- Ishikawa, Tadahisa. Ed. *Kanshi Kanshō Jiten*. Kōdansha, 2009.
- Izutsu, Toshihiko. *Toward a Philosophy of Zen Buddhism*. Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, Teheran, 1977.
- James, William. *Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*. Routledge, London and New York, 2002.
- Jansen, Marius B. "The Meiji Restoration" in *The Emergence of Meiji Japan*. Marius B. Jansen, Edit. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995
- Jin-de zhuandeng-lu*. <http://blog.goo.ne.jp/logos1961/e/c8c5f8f237579fee39c99ff7f8ebf709>
- Kaigo, Tokiomi. *Japanese Education- Its Past and Present*. Series on Japanese Life and Culture, Vol. XI, Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, Tokyo, 1965.
- Kajiki, Gō. "Natsume Sōseki ▪ Shōwa Sengo" in Kanichi Imanishi & Naotaka Yamaguchi Edit. *Nishō Gakusha no Gakugei*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2010. p. 9-65.
- Kaltenmark, Max. *Lao Tzu and Taoism*. Stanford University Press, California, 1969.
- Kame, Setsuko. Trans. *Leçons Sur Tchouang-Tseu*. Lecture at Collège de France by Jean Françoise Billeter. Misuzu Shobō, Tokyo, 2011.
- Kamachi, Noriko. "The Chinese in Meiji Japan: Their Interactions with the Japanese Before the Sino-Japanese War" in Irie, Akira. Ed., *The Chinese and the Japanese*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1980.
- Kanaya, Osamu. "The Acceptance of Daoism in Japan, and Matsuo Bashō" in *École française d' Extrême-Orient*, Paris, 1997, p. 161-168.
- Kanaya, Osamu. Trans. & Annot. *Sōshi*. Vol. 4. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007.
- Kanda, Atsuo. *Bashō Ichidai Shū*. Nihon Haisho Taikei Kankōkai, Tokyo, 1926.
- Kanda, Hideo. *Sōshi no Sosei*. Meiji Shoin, Tokyo, 1988.
- Kanda, Hideo. "Bashō to Chūgoku Bungaku" in *Bashō*. Ed. Imoto Nōichi. Kadokawa Shoten, Tokyo, 1958, p. 417-428.
- Kanda, Hideo. *Sōshi no Sosei*. Meiji Shoin, 1988.
- Kang, Sang-jung. *Sōseki no Kotoba*. Shūeisha, Tokyo, 2016.
- Karatani, Kojin. "The Discursive Space of Modern Japan" in *Japan in the World*. Ed., by Masao Miyoshi and

- H. D. Harootunian, Duke University Press, USA, 1993.
- Kataoka, Yutaka. "Gendai no 'Kiki' to Natsume Sōseki- Heiwa no Bunka gaku" in *Bulletin of the Faculty of Human and Culture Sciences*, Sakushin Gakuin University No. 3, 2005, p. 120 - 103.
- Katō, Jirō. *Sōseki to Zen*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 1999.
- _____. *Sōseki to Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2004.
- Katō, Shūichi. *A History of Japanese Literature*. Vol. 3 The Modern Years, Trans., by Don Sanderson. The Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1983.
- Keene, Donald. *Down to The West. Japanese Literature of the Modern Era*. Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1984.
- Knauth, Lothar. "Life is Tragic. The Diary of Nishida Kitaro" in *Monumenta Nipponica*. Vol.20. No. 3/4. 1965, p. 335-358.
- Kohn, Livia. "Taoism in Japan: Positions and Evaluations" in *Cahiers d' Extrême-Asie*, vol. 8. l'Ecole Française d'Extrême- Orient, Paris, 1995, p. 389-412.
- Komiya, Toyotaka. Commentary in "Bokusetsu Roku" in *Sōseki no Shōgai*. Sōseki Bunko, Tōhoku University Digital library.
- Komiya, Toyotaka. Commentary in *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 14, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1976, p. 865-894.
- Komiya, Toyotaka. Commentary in *Sōseki Zenshū*, vol. 12, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1975, p. 837-866.
- Komiya, Toyotaka. *Sōseki Zakkī*. Koyama Shoten, Tokyo, 1935.
- Komori, Yōichi. "Watakushi no Kojin Shugi no Shisō" in *Geppō 16, Sōseki Zenshū*, p.13-16.
- Komori, Yōichi. *Sōseki wo Yominaosu*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 1995.
- Komori, Yōichi. *Sōseki Ron - 21 Seiki wo Ikinuku Tameni*. Iwanami Shoten, Toyo, 2010.
- Kon, Eizō. *Bashō*. Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, Tokyo, 1985.
- Kōsaka, Masaaki, ed, *Japanese Thought in the Meiji Era*, Pan-Pacific Press, Tokyo, 1958.
- Kumamoto University *Ryūnankai*. <http://reposit.lib.kumamoto-u.ac.jp/bitstream/2298/5513/1/077-021.pdf>
- Kumasaka, Atsuko. "Sōseki no Shika" in *Natsume Sōseki*. Sōbun sha shuppan, Tokyo, 1976.
- Kurosu, Jun'ichirō. *Nichijō Seikatsu no Sōseki*. Chūō Daigaku Shuppanbu, Tokyo. 2008.
- Kurozumi, Makoto. "Kangaku: Writing and Institutional Authority" in *Inventing the Classics* (Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature) ed. Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki. Stanford University Press, California, 2000, p. 201-219.
- Lahiri, Latika. *Interpretation of Buddhist terminology at the background of Chinese traditional thoughts*. <https://www.budsas.org/ebud/ebdha180.htm> Source: Buddhism Today
- Li Bai. <http://kanshi100x100.blog.fc2.com/?mode=m&no=1676>
- _____. <https://baike.baidu.com/item/庐山谣寄卢侍御虚舟>
- Li Shangyin. <http://www.zwbk.org/MyLemmaShow.aspx?lid=45328>
- Liu Chang. http://kawausotei.cocolog-nifty.com/easy/2006/12/post_ffa4.html
- Liu, Ts'un-yan. "Taoist Self-Cultivation in Ming Thought" in *Self and Society in Ming Thought* by Wm. Theodore de Bary. Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1970, p. 291-330.
- Lopez, Donald S. *Prisoners of Shangri-La*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1998.
- Luan, David. "The Study on the travel book: Bokusetsu-roku." in *Jōsai University Journal* 141, Saitama, 1976, p. 1-24.
- Luan, David. "Sōseki no Shoki Kanshi ni Okeru chūgoku no Kōten-shi no Eikyō ni tsuite - Hakone Ryokō no Rensaku wo Chūshin ni-" in *Chiba University Shakai Bun'ka Kagaku Kenkyū* No. 4, p. 1- 23.
- Lynn, Richard John. "Huang Zunxian and His Association with Meiji Era Japanese Literati (Bunjin): The Formation of the Early Meiji Canon of Kanshi" in *Japan Review*, 2003, 15, p. 101-125.
- McKinney, Meredith. Trans. *Kusamakura* by Natsume Soseki. Penguin Books, London, 2008.
- Maeda Kagashi. <http://kyouiku.higo.ed.jp/page2022/002/005/page3877.html>
- Maeda, Togama. *Rinzai • Sōshi*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1990.
- Maeno, Naoaki. Annot. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009.
- Maeno, Naoaki. Annot. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009.
- Maeno, Naoaki. Annot. *Tō Shisen*. Vol. 3. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2009.
- Mair Victor H. Trans. *Wandering on the Way* (Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu). University of Hawai'i press, 1994.
- Marcus, Marvin. *Reflections in a Glass Door- Memory and Melancholy in the Personal Writing of Natsume Soseki*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2009.

- Masaoka, Shiki. *Shiki Jinsei-ron Shū*. Kōdansha, Tokyo, 2001.
- Masaoka, Shiki. *Bokujū Itteki*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1927.
- Masaoka, Shiki. "Fudemakase" in *Shiki jin'sei-ron shū*, Kōdansha, Tokyo, 2010, p. 29-30.
- Matsui, Toshihiko. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Kashin Sha, Tokyo, 1986.
- Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki Sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1934.
- Matsuoka, Yuzuru. *Sōseki no Kanshi*. Jūjiya Shoten, Tokyo, 1946.
- Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 1. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012.
- Matsueda, Takeo. & Wada, Takeshi. Trans. *Tō Enmei Zenshū* Vol. 2. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2013.
- Matsuura, Tomohisa. Trans. & Ed. *Rihaku Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2012.
- Matsuura, Tomohisa. Ed. *Kanshi no Jiten*. Taishūkan Shoten, Tokyo, 2007.
- Mehl, Margaret. *Private Academies of Chinese Learning in Meiji Japan*. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen, 2003.
- Mehl, Margaret. "Chinese Learning (kangaku) in Meiji Japan (1868-1912)" in *History* No. 85, 2000, p. 48-66.
- Mehl, Margaret. *Private Academies of Chinese Learning in Meiji Japan: The Decline and Transformation of the Kangaku Juku*. University of Hawai'i Press, Hawai'i, 2005.
- Miura, Kanō. *Meiji Kanbungaku Shi*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998.
- Miura, Kanō. *Meiji no Kangaku*. Kyūko Shoin, Tokyo, 1998.
- Miyamoto, Moritarō & Seki, Shizuo. *Natsume Sōseki- Shisō no Hikaku to Michi no Tankyū*. Minerva Shobo, Kyoto, 2000, p. 69-70.
- Miyamoto, Saburō & Kon, Eizō. *Matsuo Bashō*. Ōfū Sha, Tokyo, 1984.
- Mizukawa, Takao. *Sōseki to Bukkyō- Sokuten Kyoshi eno Michi*. Heion Sha, Tokyo, 2002.
- Morimoto, Tetsurō. *Tsuki wa Higashi ni*. Shinchō Sha, 1992.
- Morohashi, Takasuke. *Dai Kanwa Jiten*. Vol. 10. Tokyo: Daishūkan Shoten, 1990.
- Morohashi, Takasuke. *Dai Kanwa Jiten*. Vol. 6. Tokyo: Daishūkan Shoten, 1991. (2nd edition)
- Murakami, Tetsumi. "Sōseki to Nagao Uzan" in *Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995, Geppō 14.
- Muramatsu, Tomotsugu. *Bashō no Tegami*. Taishūkan Shobō, Tokyo, 1985.
- Murayama, Yoshihiro. *Kangaku-sha wa Ikani Ikitaka*. Daishūkan Shoten, Tokyo, 1999.
- Nagao, Uzan. <http://kohkosai.web.infoseek.co.jp/syuu-zouhin/kaisetu/jiku-japan/nakao.htm>
- Nakamura, Hiroshi. *Sōseki Kanshi no Sekai*. Dai Ichi Shobō, Tokyo, 1983.
- Nakamura, Sōichi. *Ryōkan no Ge to Shōhō Genzō*. Seishin Shobō, Tokyo, 1979.
- Nathan, John. *Soseki- Modern Japan's Great Novelist*. Columbia University Press, New York, 2018.
- Natsume, Kyōko. *Sōseki no Omoide*. Iwanami Shoten, 2003.
- Natsume, Shinroku. *Chichi Natsume Sōseki*. Bungei Shunjū Sha, Tokyo, 1956.
- Nishitani, Kenji. "On Natsume Sōseki's Meian (Light and Darkness)" in *The Eastern Buddhist*. Vol. XXXVIII No. 1 & 2, 2007, p. 91-111.
- Noami, Mariko. *Soseki no Yomikata "Mei-An" to Kanseki*. Heibon sha, Tokyo, 2016.
- Nonomura, Katsuhide. "Bashō to Sōshi to Sōgaku" in *Bashō*. Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Shiryō Kankōkai Ed. Yūsei Dō, Tokyo, 1969, p. 234-240.
- Odagiri, Susumu. Ed. *Natsume Sōseki (Shinchō Nihon Bungaku Album 2)*. Shinchōsha, Tokyo, 1983.
- Ogawa, Takashi. *"Rinzaïroku" - Zen no Goroku no Kotoba to Shisō*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2008.
- Ogawa, Tamaki. & Yamamoto, Kazuyoshi. Ed. & Trans. *Sotōba Shisen*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2011.
- Okakura, Kakuzō. "The Ideal of the East" in *Okakura Kakuzō (collected English writings vol.1)*. Heibonsha, Tokyo, 1984.
- Okakura, Tenshin. *Ideal of The East. The spirit of Japanese Art*. Dover Publications, Mineola, New York, 2005.
- Okakura, Tenshin. *The Book of Tea*. Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, 1959 (fifth edition)
- Okakura, Yoshisaburō. "Tomo ni Ihō ni Au." In *Sōseki Zenshū Bessatsu*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Okazaki, Yoshie. *Sōseki to Sokuten Kyoshi*. Nihon Geijutsu Shichō, vol.1, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1943.
- Ōno, Jitsunosuke. *Ri Taihaku Kenkyū*. Waseda Daigaku Shuppan Bu, Tokyo, 1959.
- Ōoka, Shin. *Oriori no Uta* No. 4, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1983.
- Ōoka, Shin. "Sōseki ni Okeru Shika – Omoni Kanshi no Sekai ni tsuki" in *Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Sōsho, Natsume Sōseki II Nihon Bungaku Kenkyū Shiryō Kankōkai* Ed. Yūseido Shuppan, Tokyo, 1970. P. 225-231.
- Ōta, Teizō. *Tōyō Shisō ni okeru Kodoku to Mujō*, Hōsei Daigaku Shuppan kyoku, Tokyo, 1970, p i-iii
- Ouyang Xiu. http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/syou_gensai/68235290.html
- Parkes, Graham. Ed. *Heidegger and Asian Thought*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1987.
- Pas, Julian F. *Historical Dictionary of Taoism*. The Scarecrow Press, INC. London, 1998.

- Passin, Herbert. *Society and Education in Japan*. Teachers College Press, Columbia University, USA, 1965.
- Pollack, David. "Framing the Self. The Philosophical Dimensions of Human Nature in Kokoro" in *Monumenta Nipponica* vol.43, No.4, Winter, 1988, p.417-427.
- Porcu, Elisabetta. "Jōdo Shinshū in the Narrative writing of Natsume Sōseki" in *Pure Land Buddhism in Modern Japanese Culture*. Brill, Leiden & Boston, 2008.
- Qiu, Paipai. "Adaptation and Transformation: A Study of Taoist Influence on Early Seventeenth-Century Haikai" in *Translations and Transformations*. Ed. Amy Vladeck Heinrich, Columbia University Press, New York, 1997, p. 185-203.
- Qiu, Paipai. *Bashō and the Dao*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2005.
- Qiu, Paipai. "Daoist Concepts in Bashō's Critical Thought" in *East Asian Cultural and Historical Perspectives*. Ed. Steven Totosy de Zepetnek and Jennifer W. Jay. Research Institute for Comparative Literature and Cross-Cultural Studies, University of Alberta, Canada, 1997, p. 323-340.
- Qiu, Paipai. "Onitsura's Makoto and the Daoist Concept of the Natural" in *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 51, no. 2. (Apr., 2001), p. 232-246.
- Qiu, Paipai. "Reinventing the Landscape: The Zhuangzi and the Geographical Imagination of Bashō" in *Matsuo Bashō's Poetic Spaces*. Ed. Eleanor Kerkham. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006, p. 61-77.
- Rimer, J. Thomas & Yamazaki, Masakazu. trans. *On the Art of the Nō Drama* (The Major Treatises of Zeami). Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. 1984.
- Roth, Harold D. *Original Tao. Inward Training and the Foundations of Taoist Mysticism*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1999.
- Rubin, Jay. Trans. "Watakushi no Kojinshugi". (Sōseki no Individualism) in *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Spring, 1979.
- Rubin, Jay. Trans. "Civilization of Modern-Day Japan" in *Kokoro A Novel and Selected Essays*. Madison Books, Lanham- New York- London, 1992.
- Ryōkan. <http://rienmei.blog20.fc2.com/blog-entry-494.html>
- Saitō, Mareshi. *Sōseki ni Okeru Kanshibun – Shōsetsu tonno kakawari kara*.
https://www.taishukan.co.jp/kokugo/webkoku/kikanshi/kanbun_203/kanbun203_p06-09.pdf
- Sakade, Yoshinobu., Igawa, Yoshitsugu. Trans. *Rōshi to Dōkyō* by M. Kaltenmrk. Jinbun Shoin, Kyoto, 2001.
- Sakade, Yoshinobu. *Dōkyō towa Nanika*. Chūō Kōron Sha, Tokyo, 2005.
- Sakamoto, Ikuo. *Kanshō Sōseki Goroku*. Ōfū sha, Tokyo, 1980.
- Sako, Junichirō. *Natsume Sōseki Ron*. Shinbi Sha, Tokyo, 1978.
- Sasaki, Hideaki. *Natsume Sōseki -Ningen wa Densha ja arimasenkara-*. Minerva Shobō, 2016.
- Sasaki, Shōhei. "Chūgoku, Nihon no Sansui Hyōgen" in *Yosa Buson*. Vol.13, Chūō Kōron Sha, 1974.
- Satō, Yasumasa. *Natsume Sōseki Ron*. Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo, 1986.
- Sawada, Janine Anderson. "Religious Conflict in Bakumatsu Japan Zen Master Imakita Kōsen and Confucian Scholar Higashi Takusha" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 1994, 21/2-3, p. 211-230.
- Seidel, Anna. "Chronicle of Taoist Studies in the West 1950-1990" in *Cahiers d' Extrême-Asie*, vol. 5. l'Ecole Française d' Extrême-Orient, Paris, 1989-1990, p. 223-348.
- Senda, Minoru. Ed. *Kan Shina-kai Bunka to Kodai Nihon: Dōkyō to Sono Shūhen*. Jinbun Shoin, Kyoto, 1990.
- Senkitaya, Kōichi, "Sōseki no Kojin Shugi" in *Kōza Natsume Sōseki*. vol.5, Ed. Miyoshi, Yukio. Hiraoka, Toshio. Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Etō, Jun. Yūhi Kaku, Tokyo, 1982.
- Senuma, Shigeki. *Kindai Nihon no Shisōka 5 Natsume Sōseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, Tokyo, 2007.
- Senuma, Shigeki. & Fukuda, Kiyoto. *Sōseki (Haijin no Shoga Bijutsu Vol. 8)*. Shūeisha, 1979.
- Seri, Hiroaki. *Rohan to Dōkyō*. Kaichō Sha, Fukuoka, 2004.
- Shaku, Sōen. "Zen no Kyōchi" in *Kindai Sakka Tsuitōbun Shūsei No.5., Natsume Sōseki*. Yumani Shobō, 1987.
- Sharf, Robert H. "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism" in *Curators of the Buddha*. Ed., Donald S. Lopez, Jr., The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1995.
- Shiba Kōkan Zenshū* Vol. 2, Yazaka Shobō, Tokyo, 1993.
- Shiba, Rokurō. *Chūgoku Bungaku ni Okeru Kodoku-kan*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2007.
- Shimizu, Shigeru. "Sōseki no Kanshi no Tsukurikata" in *Sōseki Zenshū, Geppō* vol. 7, 1994.
- Shimode, Sekiyo. *Dōkyō: Sono Kōdō to Shisō*. Hyōron Sha, Tokyo, 1971.
- Shirane, Haruo and Suzuki, Tomi. Ed., *Inventing the Classics*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2000.
- Shively, Donald H. Ed., *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1971.

- Snodgrass, Judith. *Presenting Japanese Buddhism To The West*. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC., 2003.
- Song Zhi-wen. <http://kanbun.info/syubu/toushisen019.html>
- Sōseki Bungaku Kenkyū kai. Comp. *Encyclopedia Natsume Sōseki*. Yōsensha, 2016.
- Sōseki Bunko Kankei Bunken Mokuroku. *Tōhoku Daigaku Fuzoku Toshokan Natsume Sōseki Library*, <http://www.library.tohoku.ac.jp/collect/Sōseki/tenji.html>
- Sōseki Zenshū* vol.12. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1994.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.13. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.14. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.16. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995.
- Sōseki Zenshū* vol.18. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995.
- Sōseki Zenshū* vol.19. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1995.
- Sōseki Zenshū* vol.20. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.22. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.23. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.24. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1997.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.25. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Sōseki Zenshū* Vol.26. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1996.
- Su Shi. <http://sou-yun.com/Query.aspx?navigate=1&type=poem&id=135998&lang=t>
 _____. http://chinese.hix05.com/sushi/sushi_3/sushi312.chohoshi.html
 _____. http://chinese.hix05.com/sushi/sushi_1/sushi121.shunsho.html
 _____. <https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hant/過巴東縣不泊聞頗有萊公遺跡>
- Suzuki, Daisetz Teitarō. *A Brief History of Early Chinese Philosophy*. Probsthain & Co. London, 1914
- Suzuki, Daisetsu. *Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki's Columbia University Seminar Lectures*. Ed. & Antn. By Soiku Shigematsu & Gishin Tokiwa, Matsugaoka Bunko Sōsho No. 5, Matsugaoka Bunko, Kanagawa, 2016.
- Suzuki, Masaaki. "Pari no Natsume Sōseki" in <http://www.cgu.ac.jp/Portals/0/data1/cguwww/06/09/009-05.pdf> p. 141- 164.
- Suzuki, Satona. *Japanese Buddhist Missionary Activities in Korea, 1877-1910*. Ph.D thesis, SOAS, University of London, London, 2000.
- Tago, Kichirō. "Sōseki no Scotland Yuki" in *Natsume Sōseki to Meiji Nihon*, Bungei Shunjū Jūnigatsu Rinji Zōkan Gō, Tokyo, 2004.
- Takagi, Fumio. "'Jinsen' Shichizetsu no Kundoku" in *Sōseki Sakuhin no Uchi to Soto*, Kindai Bungaku Kenkyū Sōkan 4, Izumi Shoin, Osaka, 1994.
- Takagi, Fumio. *Sōseki Bungaku no Shichū*. Shinbi Sha, Tokyo, 1971.
- Takahama, Kyoshi. *Shiki • Sōseki*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2010.
- Takeda, Katsuhiko. *Sōseki no Tokyo*. Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, Tokyo, 1997.
- Takeda, Katsuhiko. *Sōseki no Tokyo* (II). Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, Tokyo, 2000.
- Takeda, Mitsuhiro. "'Jikohon' I' and 'Sokutenkyoshi': Attitudes towards the self in Natsume Sōseki's life and works(I)" in *Nara Kōgyō Kōtō Senmon Gakkō Kenkyū Kiyō* No. 45, 2009, p. 1-12.
- Takemori, Tenyū. Ed. *Natsume Sōseki Hikkei II*. Gakutōsha, 1985.
- Takizawa, Katsumi. *Natsume Sōseki*. Mikasa Shobō, 1943.
- Tamamura, Takeji. *Gozan Zen Sō Denki Shūsei*. Kōdansha, Tokyo, 1983
- Tanaka, Kunio. *Sōseki "Mei-An" no Kanshi*. Kanrin Shobō, Tokyo, 2010.
- Tanaka, Yasutaka. *Natsume Sōseki*. (Shashin Sakka-den Sōsho 4), Meiji Shoin, 1969.
- Tao Yuanming. <http://tao.hix05.com/Sengai/sengai01intro.html>
- Thomas Cleary and J. C. Cleary Trans. *The Blue Cliff Record*. Shambhala, Boston & London, 1992.
- Thomas, Julia Adeney. *Reconfiguring Modernity*. University of California Press, California, 2001.
- Tipton, Elise K. *Modern Japan, A social and political history*. Routledge, London, 2002.
- Togawa, Shinsuke. *Sōseki Tsuisō*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2016.
- Tōgō, Toyoharu. Ed. *Ryōkan Zenshū*. Vol. 1. Tokyo Sogen Sha, Tokyo, 1975.
- Tokunaga, Mitsuhiro. "An Alarm to Our Modern Social Environment - The Case of Sōseki Natsume-" in *Research Bulletin of Fukuoka Institute of Technology*, Vol. 39. No. 1, 2006, p. 17- 25.
- Toyofuku, Kenji. *Furo de yomu Sōseki no Kanshi*. Sekai Shisō sha, 1996.
- Tripitaka. http://tripitaka.cbeta.org/mobile/index.php?index=X67n1299_018

- Tu Fu. <http://plaza.rakuten.co.jp/kunishi/diary/201211270000/>
 _____. <http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/repository/thesis/d2/D2003094.pdf>
- Tuck, Robert James. *The Poetry of Dialogue: Kanshi, Haiku and Media in Meiji Japan 1870-1900*. Columbia University, New York, 2012.
- Turney, Alan. Trans. *The Three-Cornered World* (Japanese title: *Kusa Makura*). Peter Owen Publisher, London, 2002.
- Ueda, Makoto. *The Path of Flowering Thorn*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1966.
- Ueda, Shizuteru. "Sōseki and Buddhism: Reflections on His Later Works. (Part 1)" in *The Eastern Buddhist*. Vol. XXIX No. 2, Autumn 1996, p. 159-171.
- Uchida, Michio. "Natsume Sōseki in Manchuria and Korea" in *Acta Asiatica*, Tōhō Gakkai, Tokyo, 2000.
- Viglielmo, Valdo H. "The Concept of Nature in the Works of Natsume Sōseki" in *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. VIII No.2, October 1975, p. 143 - 153.
- Viglielmo, Valdo H. "Sōseki's Meian Revisited: A Fresh Look at a Modern Classic" in *The Eastern Buddhist*. Vol. XXXVIII No. 1 & 2, 2007, p. 71- 90.
- Wada, Toshio. *Shiki to Sōseki*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1976.
- Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki no Shi to Haiku*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1974.
- Wada, Toshio. *Sōseki Zakkō*. Merkmal sha, Tokyo, 1986.
- Wakabayashi, Bob Tadashi. Ed., *Modern Japanese Thought*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.
- Wakabayashi, Bob Tadashi. "Katō Hiroyuki and Confucian Natural Rights, 1861-1870" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Dec., 1984), p. 469-492.
- Wakamizu, Shun. "'Kokyū' no Shijin Tō Enmei" in *Chūgoku Kankei Ronsetsu Shiryō* No.43 (2001) vol.2 (Jō)
- Walthall, Ann & Steele, M. William. *Politics and Society in Japan's Meiji Restoration – A Brief History with Documents*. The Bedford Series in History and Culture, Macmillan Learning Humanities, Bedford/ St. Martin's, Boston, 2017
- Wang Wei. <http://baike.baidu.com/view/4307283.htm>
- Watanabe, Shōichi. *Sōseki to Kanshi*. Eichōsha, Tokyo, 1974.
- Watson, Burton. Trans. *The complete works of Chuang Tzu*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1968.
- Watson, Burton. *Ryōkan (Zen monk-poet of Japan)*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1977.
- Wei Ying-wu. <http://sankouan.jugem.jp/?eid=11>
- Whitfield, Randolph S. Trans. *Records of The Transmission of the Lamp (Jingde Chuandeng Lu)*. Volume 2., Book on Demand, Germany, 2015.
- Wilde, Oscar. *A Chinese Sage*. Mermaid Turbulence, Ireland, 1997.
- Wixted, John Timothy, "Kanshi in Translation: How Its Features Can Be Effectively Communicated," *Sino-Japanese Studies* 21 (2014), article 1.
- Wixted, John Timothy. "The Matching-Rhyme *Kanshi* of Mori Ōgai: Quatrains (*zekku*)" in *Japonica Hamboldtiana* 16. Berlin, 2013, p. 109-168.
- Yajima, Yukihiko. *1893 nen 1 gatsu 29 nichi no Sōseki*. <https://serai.jp/hobby/39221>
- Yamamoto, Kenkichi. Edit. *Natsume Sōseki*. Meiji no Koten Vol. 9. Gakken, Tokyo, 1981.
- Yamauchi, Hisaaki. "Sōseki to Eibungaku" in *Kōza Natsume Sōseki*. vol.5, Ed. Miyoshi, Yukio. Hiraoka, Toshio. Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Etō, Jun. Yūhi Kaku, Tokyo, 1982.
- Yan Wei. http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/syou_gensai/68235290.html
- Yasuhara, Eri F. "Buson's Bashō: The Embrace of Influence" in *Matsuo Bashō's Poetic Spaces*. Ed. Eleanor Kerkham. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006,
- Yingde Zhuandeng lu, (*Keitō dentō roku*). <http://www7b.biglobe.ne.jp/~zuiun/135baso.html>
- Yiu, Angela. *Chaos and Order in the works of Natsume Soseki*. University of Hawaii's Press, Honolulu, 1998.
- Yosa, Buson. *Bunjin-ga Suihen* Vol. 13, Chuō Kōron Sha, Tokyo, 1974.
- Yoshida, Kōhei. Ed. "Kōda Rohan to Kangaku" special edition by *Nihon Shisō Shi*. Vol. 57, Pelican Sha, Tokyo, 2000.
- Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Sōseki Shi Chū*. Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 2002.
- Yoshikawa, Kōjirō. *Tō Enmei den*. Shinchosha, Tokyo, 1975.
- Yu, Bengcheon. *Natsume Sōseki*. Twayne Publishers, New York, 1969.
- Zenrinkushu. <http://web.archive.org/web/20120302073712/http://boozers.fortunecity.com/brewerytap/695/Zenrinkushu.html>